

PL-13: Renaissance Masses II

Thursday, 27.07.2023, 16:00–17:30

Room: Plenary Hall

Chair: Paul Kolb

What's the Motive? Thematic Considerations and Questions of Symbolism in Josquin's *Missa de Beata Virgine* as Further Revealed Through the Music of Morales ^{PL-13: 1}

BERNADETTE NELSON (NOVA UNIVERSITY, LISBON)

Much of course has been written about Josquin's *Missa de Beata Virgine* and, in what concerns this paper, the famous *sesquialtera* passage in the superius at ›Qui cum Patre‹ in the Credo and its general contrapuntal complexity is frequently highlighted and commented on, although the possible *raison d'être* of this passage may still be open to interpretation. In his classic *Spanish Cathedral Music in the Golden Age* (1960), Robert Stevenson proposed that this use of *sesquialtera* was for symbolic Trinitarian purposes, an interpretation he relates to a similar use of blackened (triple-time) notation in the Christe of Morales's *Missa Mille regretz* and in other works by Josquin. This and further aspects of symbolism in the music of Josquin have since been thoroughly explored by Willem Elders. Some hesitancy in embracing the Trinitarian interpretation of the ›Qui cum Patre‹ passage, however, may be expressed in current literature.

Springboarding from a consideration of the thematic and contrapuntal contexts of the *sesquialtera* passages in both Josquin's *Beata Virgine* mass and Morales's *Missa Mille regretz*, this paper presents a set of intriguing connections between these and

other works by the two composers. Combined with questions of motivic interplay and recall, these involve important structural and compositional decisions that were conceivably made for symbolic purposes, serving to underline the meaning (mostly Trinitarian or Christological) of the texts being set. In his insightful interpretation and emulation of Josquin, therefore, Morales can perhaps be seen a vital ›historical witness‹ for interpreting Josquin's creative exegesis.

On the use of repeat signs in Obrecht's *Missa scaramella* ^{PL-13: 2}

FABRICE FITCH (ROYAL CONSERVATOIRE OF SCOTLAND)

A series of recent studies by Paul Kolb and Antonio Chemotti has have taken a broad view of the usage of certain notation signs, such as ligatures, dots, and even rests. This paper examines the use of repeat signs in Jacob Obrecht's output, focusing on an apparently unique technique found in his fragmentary *Missa Scaramella*. In the two ›Osanna‹ sections, the material of one of the two extant voices consists entirely of a series of melodic fragments, each contained within a pair of repeat signs. Thus, each fragment is repeated before the singer moves on to the next one. Taking place against statement of the cantus firmus in another voice, this *obligo* has implications for the parts of the Mass that I have reconstructed. In this paper I focus on one of these sections, the first ›Agnus dei‹, in which rules derived from the two ›Osanna‹ voices have been used to supply new material.

The reconstructed Agnus I will be performed as part of this presentation.