Pegasus Early Music and NYS Baroque *present*

The Holly, the Ivy and the Rose

A 15th century English Christmas

Ashley Mulcahy, mezzo-soprano; leiken, tenor;
Christa Patton, harp & winds, curator;
Kelsey Schilling, winds; Dongmyung Ahn, vielle; Deborah Fox, lutes

Proface, welcome	Ritson Manuscript, late 15th c.
The story begins	
Hail Mary full of grace	Trinity Carol Roll, 1415
Marvel not Joseph	Ritson Manuscript
Nowell sing we	Selden Carol Book, early 15th c.
English Dance	Douce Manuscript, c.1270
The Holly, the Ivy, and the Rose	
Grene growth the holly	Henry VIII Ms, c.1510–13
Ivy is good and glad to see	Edgerton Collection, 1430-44
O rosa bella	John Bedyngham c.1422-1460
Ave Regina Caelorum	Leonel Power c.1380–1445 Selden Carol Book
Around the Yule log	
Brynge us in good ale	Bodleian Library, c. 1390-1400
Nowell dieu vous garde	Ritson Manuscript
As I lay upon a night	Selden Carol Book
Blessid be	Childe, Bodleian Library
Lullay lullow	Ritson Manuscript
Ave Regina Caelorum	Walter Frye d.1474? Trent Codices c. 1550
Winter pastimes	
I am a jolly foster	Henry VIII Ms, c.1510-1513
Tandernaken	
Where be ye, my love	
Thou some saith	
Pastime with good company	

Program notes

Welcome! As we settle in for the long cold upstate New York winter, let us enjoy the music and tradition of this season. There is nothing quite so evocative as English music that celebrates the tidings of winter and Christmas. Today's program revels in the carols and polyphony of 15th century England, in a musical language that has a distinctive style all its own.

The carol of earlier centuries was an exuberant dance song. Frescos from 14th century Italy show women moving in a stylized fashion following a singing drummer, and an illumination from a miniature in *Le Rommant de la Rose* (around 1400) depicts people dancing in a circle, a woman performing acrobatics, and another spinning plates while musicians play in the background.

The 15th century English carol is related to these earlier European forms. We don't know if they were danced but the polyrhythms present in these pieces suggest some kind of movement. In general, the musical form is verses alternating with a chorus, or *burden*, in one to three-part harmony.

Some carols were secular and could indeed have been danced to; some were used more in church settings as part of the liturgy, for sacred processionals; and some were used for courtly or household entertainments. Although carol texts could be on any topic, and include political, amorous, and courtly texts, most of them are concerned with the Virgin or the saints of Christmas. The themes of the holly, the ivy, and the rose appear quite often in the carols, prompting the title of our concert.

We have more than one hundred thirty musical carols (and texts for almost five hundred, gathered from various manuscripts, and identifiable because of their forms); most are in English, but some are in Latin, and some are *macaronic*, using more than one language at a time. Most of these carols are gathered in four different manuscripts: Trinity Roll, Selden MS, Egerton MS, and Ritson MS. These are manuscripts of mostly sacred music; so whatever the use of the carols was, we understand that they were known and valued by the learned church musicians who wrote them down for posterity.

Although much of this music is by composers who remain anonymous to us, there are several pieces for which we do know the composers. These are the sacred pieces *Ave regina caelorum*, which you'll today in two different settings, one by Leonel Power and the other by Walter Frye (and this one will also be performed in 3- and 4- part settings). In these settings we get a sense of the sacred polyphony of mid-15th century England, including stylistic traits such as imitation, jagged interactive rhythms, harmonies that cross each other, and the famous *fauxbordon* style, where the voices move in parallel intervals. We have very few pieces left from the sacred composers of 15th century England, mostly because so many manuscripts were destroyed during Henry VIII's dissolution of all Catholic monasteries and convents in the 16th century.

Towards the end of our program, we head into the early renaissance period with music found in the so-called Henry VIII manuscript, British Additional NS 31922. This manuscript contains one hundred twelve secular pieces, including twenty songs attributed specifically to the King. The music is both vocal and instrumental (or at least is not texted), and includes songs of love and youth, theatrical pieces, and some of the best-known "hit songs" from the European continent such as *J'ay pris amours, Fors Seulement,* and *De tous biens plaine.* This collection was clearly compiled by someone at court, very likely Henry Guildford (1489-1532), master of revels and comptroller of the royal household. It shows us that Henry VIII was himself a fine musician, and that music was an integral

part of court life in his reign. The quirky harmonies, often without thirds, are in an idiosyncratic style, caught between medieval and renaissance.

Wishing you all a lovely holiday season and a cozy winter!
---Deborah Fox and Christa Patton

DF: *Many thanks to Christa Patton for curating this program, with her extensive knowledge of medieval and renaissance music, her vast experience with instrumentation, and her ear for a good tune.*
Thanks to Grant Herreid for his arrangement of Grene growth the Ivy.

About the Performers

Ashley Mulcahy is a Massachusetts-based mezzo-soprano active as a soloist and ensemble singer. In recent seasons, Ashley has performed with ensembles including the Boston Early Music Festival, Pegasus Early Music, Newberry Consort, Parthenia Viol Consort, Blue Hill Bach Festival, Upper Valley Baroque, Ensemble Altera, and the Handel and Haydn Society. Ashley also co-directs Lyracle, a voice and viol ensemble. Presenters include the Howard Brown International Early Music Series, the Academy of Early Music, and Early Music Hawaii.
Ashley is a graduate of the Voxtet Program at the Yale School of Music and Institute of Sacred Music, where she had the opportunity to work with many internationally renowned conductors, including Nicholas McGegan, Masaaki Suzuki, David Hill, and Simon Carrington. Ashley particularly enjoys combining her interests in the arts and humanities, and she is a frequent contributor to Early Music America's publications. ashleymulcahy.com

leiken is a singer and performance-maker based in Brooklyn, NY. Both a medieval and new music specialist, their practice fuses these disparate worlds exclusively through collaboration and frequently explores queer spirituality, identity, and ephemera. A sought-after vocalist for concert, opera, and theatre, leiken has performed all over the world at legendary venues like Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Theatre du Chatelet, the Hirschhorn Museum, the Getty Villa Museum, and Hong Kong's Queen Elizabeth Stadium, alongside iconic artists such as Sequentia, Ran Blake, Four Larks and Eve Beglarian.

Christa Patton, curator, historical harpist and early wind specialist, has performed throughout the Americas, Europe, and Japan with many of today's premier early music ensembles including Piffaro the Renaissance Band, Early Music New York, Boston Camerata, The King's Noyse, Folger Consort, Newberry Consort, Apollo's Fire, Parthenia, ARTEK, and Chatham Baroque, to name a few.
As a Baroque harpist specializing in 17th century opera, Christa has performed with New York City Opera, Wolf Trap Opera, Opera Atelier, and the Opera Theater of Saint Louis. As an educator and scholar, she has served on the faculty of Rutgers University and the Graduate Center at CUNY. She is also musical director of the Baroque Opera Workshop at Queens College, specializing in the works of early 17th century composers. In the recording industry, Christa has fulfilled the roles of both recording artist and producer.

Early strings specialist **Dongmyung Ahn** is a performer, educator, and scholar whose interests span from the twelfth to eighteenth centuries. She performs with Pegasus, Raritan Players, The Sebastians, and TENET Vocal Artists. She played rebec in the critically acclaimed production of the Play of Daniel at the Cloisters. A dedicated educator, Dongmyung teaches music history at Columbia University, New York University, and Queens College. Dongmyung earned her Bachelor of Music with high distinction and her Master of Music from Indiana University where she studied baroque violin with Stanley Ritchie. She received her PhD in musicology from the Graduate Center, CUNY, and has published articles on medieval liturgy and Jewish-Christian relations in Henry VIII's court, and a book review on gender and voice in the Journal of the American Musicological Society. She recently wrote an essay for Huffington Post about her experience as a stuttering music history professor.

Kelsey Andrew Schilling has a busy performance schedule including regular appearances with the Atlanta Baroque Orchestra, Bach Collegium–Fort Wayne, Dallas Bach Society, Music of the Regiment, North Carolina Baroque Orchestra, Raleigh Camerata, Washington Bach Consort, and the Washington National Cathedral

Baroque Orchestra. Additionally, this year marked his debut performances with Piffaro, Seicento Baroque Ensemble, and the Smithsonian Academy Orchestra. On shawms, dulcians, crumhorns, and recorders, Kelsey is a founding member of the Renaissance wind ensemble Forgotten Clefs, which has made appearances at the Smithsonian Institution and Boston Early Music Festival Fringe Series, and has been featured on Public Radio International. An avid traveler, Mr. Schilling has performed in thirty-three states and seven different countries on three continents. Additionally, Kelsey has recorded for Dorian Sono Luminus, Naxos, and Onyx Classics. He holds degrees in Early Music and Germanic Studies from Indiana University.

Deborah Fox, lutes, is a lutenist with a span of repertoire ranging from medieval to baroque music, as a soloist, chamber music player, and baroque opera continuo. She has performed with major early music ensembles and festivals from Newfoundland to Australia. She graduated *cum laude* from Smith College, and received the Certificate of Advanced Studies in Early Music at London's Guildhall School. Her teachers have included Paul O'Dette, Pat O'Brien, and Nigel North. She is the founder and director of Pegasus Early Music in Rochester, NY, and the director of NYS Baroque in Ithaca and Syracuse, NY.