



14th Century Italian Ars Nova

CHANNEL CLASSICS

CCS 5793

# Landini

and his time

Ensemble  
Alba  
Musica  
Kyo



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Alba  
Musica  
Kyo**

**Toyohiko Satoh:**  
*lute, cetra*

**Chiyomi Yamada:**  
*voice*

**Taka Kitazato:**  
*shawm, recorder,  
dolziana*

**Hiroshi Fukuzawa:**  
*viella*

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Karatsu, Japan

DDD  
DIGITAL

# Landini and his time

## 14th Century Italian Ars Nova

### ANONYMOUS (14TH CENTURY)

[ 1 ] Saltarello 2.46

### FRANCESCO LANDINI (CA. 1325-1397)

[ 2 ] Gram piant' agli ochi / ballata 3.55

[ 3 ] Conviens' a fede / ballata 3.30

[ 4 ] Donna, la mente mia / ballata 2.24

[ 5 ] De! dinmi tu / caccia 2.06

[ 6 ] S'i' ti son stato / ballata 2.51

### ANONYMOUS (14TH CENTURY)

[ 7 ] Istampita 'Lamento di Tristano' 3.43

[ 8 ] Saltarello 2.14

### JACOPO DA BOLOGNA (14TH CENTURY)

[ 9 ] Vestisse la cornachia / madrigale 2.55

[10] I'me sun un che / madrigale 2.09

### MATTEO DA PERUGIA (?-1418)

[11] Sera quel zorno / ballata 6.12

### ANONYMOUS (CA. 1325)

[12] Estampie 5.00

### LORENZO DA FIRENZE (?-CA. 1371)

[13] A poste messe / caccia 5.51

[14] Povero çappator / madrigale 2.36

[15] Non so qual i' mi voglia  
(text Boccaccio) / ballata 3.00

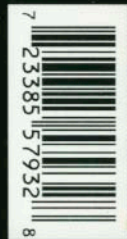
[16] Come in sul fonte  
(text Boccaccio) / madrigale 7.05

**TOTAL TIME 59.30**



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ENSEMBLE ALBA MUSICA KYO, *recording session*

#### THE ALBA MUSICA KYO ENSEMBLE

The members of the ensemble are Toyohiko Satoh, Chiyomi Yamada and Taka Kitazato, three Japanese musicians, who live in the Netherlands. In addition to European music composed during the period from the 14th to the 17th century, they also play contemporary music and music based on traditional Japanese tunes. They often work with other musicians, depending on the music they want to perform.

The lute is the center of the ensemble with one voice, woodwind instruments, string instruments and percussion.

**KYO** in Japanese means: 'the capital', 'today', 'crazy', 'bridge', or 'harmony' at the same time. And **ALBA** means: 'dawn' or 'beginning'. Therefore the name of the group can mean something like 'The dawn of today's music' or 'The beginning of crazy music', or even 'The start of noble Japanese music', etc.

The members of the ensemble who perform on this recording are:

Toyohiko Satoh	- lute, cetra
Chiyomi Yamada	- voice
Taka Kitazato	- shawm, recorder, dolziana
Hiroshi Fukuzawa	- viella

## MUSIC OF THE TRECENTO

At the dawn of the fourteenth century, the *Trecento*, an Italian tradition of polyphonic music with texts in the vernacular tongue began to develop. The first centres were the towns and courts of Lombardy in the north. Before, French musical and literary influence had been strong both by the imported culture of emigrated troubadours from Southern France and by some of the teachers at the Paduan university who had studied music at the University of Paris. The new Italian style was different from the contemporary French music, being less intellectual and more expressive with the realistic images in the text. Only near the end of the Trecento the two styles came to be fused.

Marchetto of Padua, composer and theorist at the university of his town and the 'founder' of Italian polyphony, described an Italian and a French manner of performing rhythm, which are clearly distinct. Marchetto composed a motet for the consecration of the Scrovegni-chapel, at Padua in 1305, which was decorated with frescoes by Giotto.

The most important singer and composer of the earlier Trecento, Jacopo, came from Bologna. He worked for the courts of the Scaligeri in Verona and of the Visconti in Milan; both these courts were of-

ten in contact with Bologna for political reasons. According to the chronicler Filippo Villani, Jacopo, in a contest with another composer at the Veronese court, 'intoned (while the lord spurred them on with gifts) many *madrigals*, many *soni* and *ballate* of remarkable sweetness and of most artistic melody, with which he made it clear how great and how sweet was his learning in the art<sup>\*</sup>

Of these types of composition the *madrigal*, the most popular musical form in the early Trecento, belongs to the pastoral genre; the texts evoke the idealized landscape and amorous world of shepherds and shepherdesses. Its form consists of two or more tercets, followed by a ritornello of one or two lines which is set off musically by a different rhythm from that in the tercets and by a shift in subject matter: usually the ritornello gives a reflection or comment on the narration in the tercets. The madrigal seems to have been a polyphonic composition from the outset, calling for at least two voices. In the course of time the originally simple structure became covered by virtuoso ornamentation, garlands of little notes as if to illustrate the flowery images of the text.

*Soni* is the general term for all instrumental accompaniments for dancing, specified in the manuscripts as 'istan-

pita', 'saltarello' or 'trotto' and the like. Sometimes these are grouped in pairs of contrasting movements; others, as the famous Lamento di Tristano, suggest a poetic context by their title. The *ballata* of the early Trecento was a monophonic dance song.

The *caccia*, the other most popular genre next to the madrigal, is a canon for two upper voices (the first 'chases' after the other) and a free moving tenor. The poetry often consists of a realistic description of a hunting scene, akin to the pastoral subjects in the madrigal.

Later in the century the city-republic of Florence was the most important centre of musical activity. While the pastoral setting in the texts was never entirely abandoned, yet the subject matter tended more towards borrowings from classical mythology or to describing specific urban topics.

Lorenzo Masini (Lorenzo da Firenze, d. 1371 or 1372) was a canon at the church of San Lorenzo. Almost nothing is known about his life. His music demonstrates his skill as a composer in using techniques of sequence, imitation and canon writing: his *caccia A poste messe* is a virtuosic three voice canon, while *Povero zappator* uses the technique of isorhythm (with repeated rhythmical patterns), otherwise very little used in Italy.

Francesco Landini (c 1325-1397), the most famous of all Trecento composers, was born in Florence as the son of a painter. Having lost his sight in his youth, he dedicated himself to the art of music. He was an excellent organist, but seems to have been a master on several other instruments as well. Francesco is mentioned in the contemporary literature as having brought fame to the city of Florence by his art. He appears to have been a very cultured and learned man, a poet as well as a theorist and musician, who in addition was interested in contemporary philosophy, namely that of William of Ockham, in defense and praise of whom he wrote a Latin poem. According to one of the stories about his life his excellence in poetry earned him the crown of laurels, which was given to him by king Pierre de Lusignan of Cyprus, Petrarca being one of the members of the jury. Other stories describe Landini as a modern Orpheus, enrapturing even the birds with his musical skill. His oeuvre alone forms the most important part of the body of preserved Trecento compositions. Landini's favourite genre was the polyphonic ballata. Originally this had been a monophonic form comparable to the French virelai, to be sung and danced. Landini turned it into a polyphonic form, for two or three voices, in a less virtuosic but more graceful style than the earlier madrigal. The stanzas of a ballata

open and close on a refrain, the *ripresa*. These refrains surround two *piedi* with identical rhyme and metre, and a *volta* of which the first line rhymes with the last line of the *piedi* while its last line rhymes with the concluding *ripresa*. Musically a ballata has two sections, one for the refrain and the *volta* and one for the *piedi*, thus producing the scheme *A b b a A* for one stanza, in which *A* stands for the *ripresa*, *b* for the *piedi* and *a* for the *volta*. In its literary content the ballata is not so much a pastoral descriptive piece, such as the madrigal was, as an expression of courtly and personal feelings. In his compositional technique Landini, much more than his predecessors, shows influences of the French notation and performance of rhythm. Still stronger is this influence in the work of Matteo da Perugia (d. 1418), maestro di cappella at the Duomo of Milan, whose style was clearly influenced by the composers of

the *Ars subtilior*, the later French outgrowth of the *Ars Nova* style of composition in which rhythmic refinement was explored to the limit of its possibilities.

Most of the Italian Trecento repertoire is preserved in a few commemorative codices of the early fifteenth century, which are dedicated to the works of famous composers of the past. Such codices are the famous *Squarcialupi-codex* in which most of the works recorded here can be found, and the codex *Panciaticchi 26*, both in Florence. The instrumental music is preserved mainly in a manuscript now in the British Library, Add. 29987.

*Jacques Boogaart*

\*Cited from F.A. Gallo, *Music of the Middle Ages II*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985, 128.

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## COLOPHON

Channel Classics Studio  
C. Jared Sacks  
Bert van der Wolf

Tom Peeters  
Charlotte Boersma  
Jacques Boogaart  
Richard Nelson, New York

## TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Brüel & Kjaer/Sennheiser  
Rens Heijnis (custom made)  
DCS 900  
SONY DAE 3000  
Renswoude, the Netherlands  
7, 8, 9 September 1992

production  
executive producer  
producer, recording-  
engineer/add. editing  
editing  
cover design  
text  
drawing cover:

microphones  
mixing console  
analogue to digital converter  
digital editor  
recording location  
recording date