

**THE KINGS OF THARSIS:
MIEVIAL AND RENAISSANCE MUSIC FOR EPIPHANY**

Schola Antiqua of Chicago
Michael Alan Anderson, Director
Discantus Recordings, New York, 2011

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| 1. <i>Reges Tharsis</i> | John Sheppard (d. 1558) |
| 2. <i>Salvator Mundi</i> | Sheppard |
| 3. <i>Omnes de Saba</i> | Leonin (d. 1201) |
| 4. <i>Epiphaniam Domino</i> | Guillaume Du Fay (d. 1474) |
| 5. <i>Hostis herodes impie</i> | Orlande de Lassus (d. 1594) |
| 6. <i>Hostis herodes impie</i> | Tomás Luis de Victoria (d. 1611) |
| 7. <i>Hodie celesti sponso with Magnificat</i> | Plainchant |
| 8. <i>Mi fe, vengo de Belén</i> | Francesco Guerrero (1528-1599) |
| 9. <i>Los Reyes siguen la'strella</i> | Guerrero |
| 10. <i>A un niño llorando</i> | Guerrero |

Epiphany (from the Greek meaning “manifestation” or “appearance”) is the traditional Christian feast that celebrates the revelation of God the Son as a human being in Jesus. Christians in the West mark the feast with the story of the biblical Magi, the “three kings” that followed the star and brought the famous gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh for the baby Jesus. Although the feast pales in comparison with the commemoration of Christmas in today’s church, Epiphany was a major feast of the liturgical year centuries ago and, as such, demanded special attention in the realm of liturgical music. This album features pieces written expressly for the season of Epiphany, chiefly by sixteenth-century composers who fashioned ornate polyphonic choral works to commemorate the feast.

The most compositionally ambitious pieces in this collection are two motets by the English composer John Sheppard, *Reges Tharsis* (**Track 1**) and *Salvator mundi* (**Track 2**). Little is known about Sheppard, except that he served the Chapel Royal in the 1550s until his death in 1558. His surviving works suggest the prevalence of the Latin rite, dating to the reign of Mary Queen of Scots. Most of his music is incomplete, but it is often restorable (with addition of plainchant to the tenor). Sheppard wrote more than sixty motets for all seasons of the liturgical year, and his most outstanding compositions feature vigorous counterpoint around a plainchant for a many-voiced choir. The two motets on this recording are both rooted in plainchant and scored for six voices. *Reges Tharsis* means “The Kings of Tharsis,” which we take for the title of our recording. The placename is a biblical reference to some distant realm, possibly as far west as modern-day Spain. The musical basis of the motet is a responsory chant of the same name sung on the feast of Epiphany, with text drawn from Psalm 72. Sheppard situated the plainchant in the tenor voice in long, sustained notes, as was customary in his motets. The composer’s *Salvator mundi* is a hymn that was used during the brief evening service of Compline specifically from Christmas until the week after Epiphany. The tenor again unfolds the notes of the chant, which are elongated in the texture and decorated by the more active surrounding voice parts. It is an example of *praxis alternatim*, in which strophes in plainchant alternate with those in polyphony.

Reges Tharsis et insulae munera offerent,
Reges Arabum et Saba dona
Domino Deo adducent.
Et adorabunt eum omnes reges terrae,
omnes gentes servient ei.
(Gloria Patri et Filio et Spiritui Sancto.)

The kings of Tharsis and of the isle will bestow gifts,
The kings of Arabia and Saba will bring offerings
To the Lord God.
And all the kings of the earth will worship Him,
All peoples bow before Him.
Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy
Spirit.

Salvator mundi, Domine:
Qui nos salvasti hodie,
In hac nocte nos protege
Et salva omni tempore.

O Lord, Savior of the world,
Who has saved us this day,
Protect us through this night
and save us in all times.

Adesto nunc propitius
et parce supplicantibus
Tu dele nostra crimina
Tu tenebras illumina.

Be present to us now in your kindness
and spare your suppliants:
Blot out our sins
and illuminate the shadows.

Ne mentem somnus opprimat
Nec hostis nos surripiat
Nec ullis caro petimus
Commaculetur sordibus.

Let not sleep oppress the mind,
nor the enemy steal us away:
Let not our bodies be stained, we pray,
with any foulness.

Te reformator sensuum
Votis precamur cordium
Ut puri castis mentibus
Surgamus a cubilibus.

To you who reshape the senses,
We implore with the prayers of the hearts,
That we may arise from our beds,
Pure and chaste in mind.

Deo Patri sit gloria
Eiusque soli Filio
Cum Spiritu Paraclito
Et nunc et in perpetuum. Amen.

To God the Father be the glory,
and to his only Son,
with the Spirit, the Paraclete,
now and forever. Amen.

Plainchant undergirds other pieces on this album, the earliest of which is *Omnes de Saba* (**Track 3**) by Magister Leoninus (Leonin). One of the first nameable composers in western music, Leonin flourished in Paris in the closing decades of the twelfth century. He wrote elaborate two-voice duets called *organum*, based on especially virtuosic plainchant that would normally be sung by cantors in the Mass or Office. In *Omnes de Saba*, the gradual for Epiphany, one can hear the contrast between soloists and chorus and between polyphony and chant. The long, wordless passages sung on vowels, the quicker dance-like sections, and the highly melismatic chant sung by the choir all reinforce the ecstatic character of these pieces.

Omnes
de Saba venient:
aurum et thus deferentes
et laudem Domino annunciantes.
Surge,
et illuminare Ierusalem!
quia gloria Domini
orta est.

All
will come from Saba:
they will carry gold and frankincense
and declare praise to the Lord.
Rise up,
and shine forth, O Jerusalem!
for the glory of the Lord
breaks upon you.

(Text in italics indicates a section sung in *organum duplum*)

Polyphony alternates with plainchant in the sequence *Epiphaniam Domino* (**Track 4**), a text that originated in France, probably around the year 900. The sequence functions an exegesis of the Gospel text that was to be read on the feast of Epiphany. The musical structure of the sequence represents one of the most sophisticated expressions of medieval musical culture and is marked by clearly audible symmetrical repetitions in paired versicles. In the ninth and tenth centuries, texts (or *prosa*e) were created to fit the melodies of the sequences, in part as a means of remembering the musical structure of the melody, and also as a way to enrich the moment before the Gospel with images and theological concepts essential to the celebration. Polyphonic verses for *Epiphaniam Domino* were composed by Guillaume Du Fay around 1433-34. In these splendid choral interjections, Du Fay places the melody of the plainchant—now rhythmicized and ornamented—in the highest of the three voices (*cantus*). The melody is still quite recognizable in this arrangement, especially for those who know the chant well.

Epiphaniam Domino canamus gloriosam, Qua prolem Dei vere magi adorant;	Let us sing to the Lord proclaiming his glorious Epiphany – When the magi rightly adore the offspring of God;
Immensam Chaldaei cuius Persaeque venerantur potentiam, Quem cuncti prophetae cecinere venturum gentes ad salvandas.	Whose immeasurable power both Chaldeans and Persians worship, Him whom all the prophets proclaimed would come to save the Gentiles.
Cuius maiestas ita est inclinata, ut assumeret servi formam. Ante saecula qui Deus et tempora, homo factus est in Maria.	His majesty was of such a nature that he took on the form of a servant. He, who was God before all ages and times, was made man in Mary.
Balaam de quo vaticinans, 'Exibit ex Iacob rutilans,' inquit, 'stella Et confringet ducum agmina regionis Moab maxima potentia.'	Balaam, prophesying of him, said: 'From Jacob shall come forth a brilliant star And it will shatter the hosts of the princes from the region of Moab with mighty power.' (Numbers 24: 16-18)
Huic magi munera deferunt praeclara: aurum, simul thus et murrum; Thure Deum praedicant, auro regem magnum, hominem mortalem murra.	To Him the magi offer precious gifts: gold, frankincense, and myrrh; With frankincense they proclaim he is God, with gold the great king, with myrrh a mortal man.
In somnis hos monet angelus, ne redeant ad regem commotum propter regna.	An angel advises them in a dream that they not return to the king obsessed about his kingdom.
Pavebat etenim nimium regem natum, verens amittere regni iura.	He felt very threatened indeed by the new-born king, fearing to lose his kingly right.
Magi stella sibi micante praevia	With the guiding star moving quickly before them

pergunt alacres itinera, patriam
 quae eos ducebat ad propriam
 linquentes Herodis mandata;
 Qui percussus corde nimia prae ira
 extemplo mandat eludia magica
 non linquid taliter impunita,
 sed mox privari eos vita.

Omnis nunc caterva tinnulum iungat
 laudibus organi pneuma

Mystica offerans regi regum, Christo,
 munera pretiosa,

Poscens, ut per orbem regna
 Omnia protegat in saecula sempiterna.

the cheerful magi take up their journey,
 and the star led them to their own country—
 ignoring the mandates of Herod;
 Herod, unnerved to the core, in great anger
 commanded that this supernatural trickery
 not go unpunished,
 but that they pay with their lives.

So now let the entire assembly
 join in praises
 with instrumental melody,
 Offering to the King of Kings—to Christ—
 precious gifts with mystical meaning,

Beseeching him to protect all nations
 on earth throughout all ages.

The chanted hymn *Hostis herodes impie*, usually sung at the service of First Vespers on the feast of Epiphany, forms the basis for two works by different composers on this recording, each of which exhibits *praxis alternatim*. The hymn's text—presented as strophes and normally sung to a repeating plainchant—refers to Herod's cruelty to the youth of Bethlehem, itself commemorated on December 28 (Feast of the Holy Innocents); however, Herod's crime remained a theme throughout the Christmas and Epiphany seasons. As prince of the earthly kingdom, Herod became a poetic foil for Christ, prince of the spiritual kingdom. The hymn also notably ventures into other topics of the broader Epiphany season. There are allusions to the baptism of Jesus at the hand of John, at which occasion the three persons of the Trinity first appeared, as well as to Christ's first miracle, namely the turning of water into wine at the wedding in Cana.

Orlande de Lassus, the composer of one of the polyphonic settings of the hymn *Hostis herodes impie* (**Track 5**), was one of the most prolific and admired composers of the sixteenth century. He served for some thirty years as chapel master for the Dukes of Bavaria (Albrecht V and later Wilhelm V). Albrecht V in particular was very much committed to preserving Catholicism in the face of the German Reformation, and Lassus supplied him with much music to this end. The sheer size of Lassus's output of sacred music alone is breathtaking: more than 75 masses, 500 motets, and 100 settings of the Magnificat. His *Hostis herodes impie*, dates from around 1580 and is scored for five voices in its polyphonic strophes. The plainchant is declaimed in the first tenor voice, which is itself hidden in the middle of the texture.

In 1581, the Spanish composer Tomás Luis de Victoria composed a similar polyphonic setting of *Hostis herodes impie* (**Track 6**) in alternation with plainchant but for four voices. He composed the hymn during his activity in Rome as chaplain of San Girolamo della Carità. Victoria presents the melody in two different ways, though always encountered in elongated notes. It is heard audibly in the soprano part during the first polyphonic verse, only to be relegated to the tenor part for the second polyphonic verse.

Hostis Herodes impie
 Christum venire quid times?
 Non eripit mortalia
 qui regna dat caelestia.

Ibant magi quam viderant
 stellam sequentes previam:
 lumen requirunt lumine
 Deum fatentur munere.

Herod, O wicked enemy,
 why do you fear the coming of Christ?
 He who bestows the celestial kingdom
 seizes not a worldly one.

The Magi proceed, following
 the star which they see before them:
 They seek the Light by its light
 and acknowledge God by their gift.

Lavacra puri gurgitis
celestis agnus attigit:
peccata que non detulit,
nos abluendo substulit.

Novum genus potencie:
aque rubescunt ydrie,
vinumque iussa fundere
mutavit unda originem.

Gloria tibi domine
qui apparuisti hodie
cum patr'et sancto spiritu
in sempiterna secula. Amen.

The celestial Lamb approaches
the baths of the pure sea:
The Lamb, Who has brought no sin,
by absolving sin has raised us up.

He is a new child of power:
the water jugs grow red,
for, having given the command,
he has changed water into original wine.

Glory be to you, O Lord,
who have appeared today,
with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
throughout all ages. Amen.

Although all of the pieces mentioned are based on chant, only one work on this recording is presented as a monophonic melody. *Hodie celesti sponso* (**Track 7**) is an antiphon enumerating the principal themes of Epiphany. The antiphon frames the recitation of the Magnificat, the canticle of Mary from the Gospel of Luke. *Hodie celesti sponso* and its accompanying Magnificat constituted the musical highlight of the Vespers on Epiphany and directly preceded the Gospel reading at that service.

Hodie celesti sponso
iuncta est ecclesia,
quoniam in Iordane
lavit Christus eius crimina:
Currunt cum muneribus
magi ad regales nuptias,
et ex aqua facta vino
laetantur convivae. Alleluia!

Magnificat anima mea Dominum:
Et exultavit spiritus meus
in Deo salutari meo.
Quia respexit humilitatem ancillae suae:
ecce enim ex hoc beatam me dicent
omnes generationes.
Quia fecit mihi magna qui potens est:
et sanctum nomen eius.
Et misericordia eius a progenie in progenies
timentibus eum.
Fecit potentiam in brachio suo:
dispersit superbos mente cordis sui.

Deposuit potentes de sede,
et exaltavit humiles.
Esurientes implevit bonis:
et divites dimisit inanes.
Suscepit Israhel puerum suum,
recordatus misericordiae suae.
Sicut locutus est ad patres nostros,
Abraham et semini eius in saecula.

Today the church is joined
to the heavenly groom,
for Christ washes her sins
in the Jordan:
The magi hasten with gifts
to the regal wedding feast,
and the guests rejoice
in the wine made from water. Alleluia!

My soul magnifies the Lord,
And my spirit rejoices
in God my salvation.
For he has regarded the humility of his
handmaid: henceforth
all generations will call me blessed.
For he who is mighty has magnified me:
and Holy is his name.
His mercy is from age to age
on those who fear him.
He has shown strength in his arm:
he has scattered the proud
in the imagination of their hearts
He has put down the mighty from their seat,
and lifted up the humble ones.
He has filled the hungry with good things,
and has turned the rich away empty.
He has helped Israel his servant
mindful of his mercy,
As he spoke to our fathers—
Abraham and his seed forever. (Luke 1:46-55)

Gloria Patri et Filio,
et Spiritui Sancto;
Sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper,
et in saecula saeculorum. Amen.

Glory be to the Father and the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit;
As it was in the beginning, is now,
and ever shall be,
throughout all ages. Amen.

Hodie celesti sponso ...

Today the church is joined ...

The album concludes with three devotional works for Epiphany (**Tracks 8-10**) known as villancicos (or *villanescas*). All are from the hand of the Spanish composer Francisco Guerrero in his collection of 31 *Canciones y villanescas espirituales* (Venice, 1589). Guerrero's villancicos feature a four- or five-part refrain (*estribillo*) set against a stanza (*copla*) for a smaller ensemble or soloist. They are rhythmically light-hearted, usually in triple meter, with frequent syncopation, changes of meter, and syllabic declamation that follows the accents of the text. The dialogue that takes place in *Mi fe, vengo de Belén* (**Track 8**) suggests possible use on the stage, betraying the villancico's secular origins. The choral sections of Guerrero's villancicos contrast free imitative part-writing with moments of stark homophony, in which the parts unite to declaim the text sonorously and with great spirit.

¿De dónde vienes, Pasqual?
Mi fe, vengo de Belén.
¿Y qué viste?
En un portal vi un zagal,
do s'ençierra todo'l bien.

"Where are you coming from, Pasqual?"
"Truly, I come from Bethlehem."
"And what did you see?"
"In a manger, I saw a child
Containing all that is good."

Jo vide un gentil zagal
qu'es el bien de nuestros males,
y los coros çelestiales
le adoran por celestial.

I saw a noble child -
who is the remedy of all our sins -
and the celestial choirs
adore him from on high."

¿Aqueso viste, Pasqual?
Mi fe, vengo de Belén.
¿Qué más viste?
En un portal vi un zagal,
do s'ençierra todo'l bien.

"What did you see, Shepherd?"
"Truly, I come from Bethlehem."
"What more did you see?"
"I saw a child in a manger,
containing all that is good."

Los Reyes siguen la'strella,
la'strella sigue al Señor
y el Señor dellos y della
sigue y busca'l pecador.

The Kings follow the Star
the Star follows the Lord,
and the Lord of them all
follows and seeks the sinner.

Teniendo de Dios notiçia,
buscan con divino zelo
la'strella'l sol de justicia,
los Reyes al Rey del çielo.

With the news from God,
they look with divine zeal;
the Star for the Sun of Justice,
the Kings for the King of Heaven.

Guiados son d'una'strella

They are guided by the Star -

la'strella de su Señor
y el Señor dellos y della
sigue y busca'l pecador.

the Star of their Lord -
and the Lord of them all
searches for the sinner.

A un niño llorando al hielo,
van tres reyes a adorar
porque el niño puede dar
peinos, vida, gloria y cielo.

To a boy crying in the cold
go three kings to worship;
for this child can grant
the kingdom, life, glory and Heaven.

Nace con tanta baxeza,
aunque es poderoso rey,
porque nos da ya por ley
abatimiento y pobreza.

He is born so lowly
although he is a powerful King,
for through his reign he gives us
comfort and simplicity.

Por esto, llorando al hielo,
van tres Reyes a adorar
porque el niño puede dar
reinos, vida, gloria y cielo.

Because of this, the three kings
go to worship [the boy] crying in the cold;
for this child can grant
the kingdom, life, glory and Heaven.

SCHOLA ANTIQUA OF CHICAGO

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Find us online at <http://www.chicagochant.org> and <http://www.facebook.com/ScholaAntiqua>

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ABOUT SCHOLA ANTIQUA OF CHICAGO

Schola Antiqua of Chicago is a professional vocal ensemble dedicated to the performance of medieval plainchant and polyphonic music before the year 1600. An ensemble that executes this repertory with “sensitivity and style” (*Early Music America*), Schola Antiqua takes pride in providing the highest standards of research, performance, and education involving many underserved repertoires in the western musical canon. Founded in 2000 under the direction of Professor Calvin M. Bower from the University of Notre Dame, the organization has received invitations to perform from the Indianapolis Early Music Festival, Chicago’s Newberry Library, the Chicago Cultural Center, the University of Chicago, the University of Notre Dame, the American Guild of Organists, and other institutions across the Midwest. In 2006-2007, Schola Antiqua was Artist-in-Residence at the University of Chicago. The ensemble is currently Artist-in-Residence of the Lumen Christi Institute.

The Schola has recorded the CD accompanying Theodore Karp’s *Introduction to the Post-Tridentine Mass Proper, 1590-1890* (American Institute of Musicology, 2005) and in 2009 released its first independent CD, *Long Joy, Brief Languor*, which contains the only known recording of the *Missa Quem malignus spiritus*, one of the earliest “cyclic” masses known in Western music. *Fanfare* magazine has called this recording “essential” for the serious collector of English polyphonic music. The group’s following album *West Meets East: Sacred Music from the Torino Codex* features first recordings of music from an important fifteenth-century manuscript and has received reviews in *Early Music America* and *Notes*.

ABOUT THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Michael Alan Anderson, a founding member of Schola Antiqua of Chicago, was named the ensemble’s second Artistic Director in 2008. He is Assistant Professor of Musicology at the Eastman School of Music (University of Rochester), where he specializes in medieval and Renaissance music. Anderson received a Ph.D. in the History and Theory of Music at the University of Chicago in 2008. His awards include the Alvin H. Johnson American Musicological Society 50 Dissertation-Year Fellowship, the Grace Frank Grant (Medieval Academy of America), the Whiting Foundation Fellowship (University of Chicago), and several travel and research grants. He has published articles in several journals including *Early Music*, *Early Music History*, *Plainsong and Medieval Music*, and *Studi musicali*. In 2010, Anderson was named a finalist in the Early Music Scholars Competition, presented by the Chalice Consort (San Francisco). He is also a member of the editorial board for the *American Choral Review*, a semiannual journal of Chorus America.