

Asteria

*"Music for a Rash Prince -
Medieval love songs from the court of Charles the Bold"*

Artist Bios

ASTERIA burst onto the national Early Music scene in 2004, winning Early Music America's first Unicorn Prize for Medieval and Renaissance Music with a performance heralded by the New York Times as "intimate and deeply communicative...meltingly beautiful." This engaging duo brings out the passion and emotional impact of late medieval vocal and instrumental music with timeless love songs of wide appeal, transporting their listeners back to the age of chivalry.

Eric Redlinger's skill on the lute and sweet tenor voice are complemented by his expertise in early music, earned through study at the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis and extensive archival research into original sources. Following graduation from Middlebury College, Eric spent several years immersing himself in the European musical archives of the Hague, Basel and Marburg. During this time he also did post-graduate studies in composition and musicology at the Frankfurt Conservatory of Music, worked in the studio of New York based avant-garde composer Philip Glass and studied medieval lute with Crawford Young and voice with Richard Levitt at the Schola. He now makes his home in New York, where he has studied with Drew Minter and Gary Ramsey.



Sylvia Rhyne brings to the partnership not only her quicksilver soprano but also a strong dramatic connection with the audience, gained from a professional career in musical theater. She has starred internationally as Christine in "The Phantom of the Opera," and on Broadway as Joanna in "Sweeny Todd" under the direction of Harold Prince, Susan Schulman and Stephen Sondheim.

Raised in London and the Pacific Northwest, Sylvia grew up surrounded by classical music, opera and dance. She pursued a passion for early music at Carleton College, guided by Stephen Kelly, taking leading roles in early operas and operettas on her way to a degree in music. She studied also with Wesley Balk at St. Olaf College and recorded with Dennis Russell Davies and the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra. Arriving in New York, Sylvia was invited to sing with the New York City Opera and began ongoing coaching with Marcy Lindheimer.



Upon meeting, Eric and Sylvia immediately discovered their mutual interest in earlier repertoire and began to rendezvous regularly in New York's Central Park to work on late Medieval and Renaissance pieces, gradually developing their passionate approach to the music - seeking out the musical and emotional center of these richly nuanced songs.

To further their study, they have spent much of the past few years in Burgundy, where this music originated. Asteria's artistic vision lies not only in delving into ancient manuscripts for the songs themselves, but in an intense study of the daily life, social mores and political tensions of the time, lending a tremendous depth to their performance of these emotionally charged texts.

Following their presentation at the Boston Early Music Festival by Early Music America in 2005, Asteria has found themselves in demand around the world. They have enjoyed appearances at international festivals and venues such as The Cloisters, Chartres Cathedral, Dumbarton Oaks, the Berkeley Early Music Festival (featured artists), Simon Bolivar Amphitheatre in Mexico City, The Regensburg Tage Alter Musik and at the Landshüter Hofmusiktage, Germany.

To learn more about Asteria, and to hear songs from their highly acclaimed albums, visit their website: www.asteriamusica.com. Their albums can be purchased on their website or from Amazon.com and iTunes, and downloaded from www.magnatune.com.

Program Notes

The artistic legacy of the court of Burgundy remained legendary well after the demise of chivalry at the end of the Middle Ages. Nowhere was this more evident than in the superb love songs written during the reign of Charles the Bold at the end of the 15th century. Charles, a prince of the French royal family, was raised in a household that bathed in extravagance, with elaborate feasts and tournaments a regular part of daily life. He was raised, as most children of noble birth at this time, surrounded by personal tutors for history, philosophy and, of course, music. His father, Philip the Good, also had a keen appreciation for music and went so far as to personally supervise the selection of singers for his chapel. Charles, who both sang and played the harp, continued his father's legacy upon Philip's death in 1467, ultimately presiding over a musical establishment that was the envy of Europe.

Though the quality of his chapel choir was widely praised, it was in the domain of secular music that the musicians and composers of Burgundy particularly excelled. The courtly love songs that delighted Charles (by one account Charles insisted on having a new song sung to him each and every evening) are like tiny vignettes of life at court, with knights, ladies and gossip taking center stage. Today's program presents songs by three of his most famous court composers: Antoine Busnoys, Robert Morton and Hayne van Ghizighem. The presence of any one of these men, who each enjoyed international reputations, would have raised the artistic quality of the court to an enviable level; all three together quite literally made history.

Asteria, specialists in music of the late Middle Ages, recreate the luxurious and passionate atmosphere of court life in medieval Burgundy through the words and music of the time, along with illustrative stories and historical anecdotes for those not fluent in old French.

Program (with text synopses in English)

Plus jay le monde regarde

Robert Morton (~1430-1476)

Plus jay le monde regarde
Plus je voy mon premier chois
Avoir le bruit et le vois
De los de grace et de beaulte

*The more I have regarded the world
The more I recognize in my chosen one
The nobility, the voice, and
The gifts of grace and of beauty.*

Quant ce vendra

Antoine Busnoys (1430-1492)

Quant ce vendra au droit destaindre
Comment pouray mon veul constraindre
Et mon cueur faindre a mon douloureux partement
De vous mon leal pencement, a qui nulluy ne peut actaindre

*When it comes to true torment
How shall I be able to contain my desire?
Alas - my heart falters at my sad parting
From you, peerless, to whom I direct my loyal thoughts.*

Allez regrets

Hayne van Ghizeghem (1445-1497)

Allez regrets vuidez de ma presance
Allez ailleurs querir vostre acointance
Assez avez tourmente mon las cueur

*Go, Regrets, leave my presence.
Go elsewhere to seek a friend.
Enough you have tormented my weak heart!*

Sur Mon Ame

Anonymous, from the Dijon Chansonnier MS 517 (~1460)
(lute solo; arrangement: Asteria)

De tous biens pleine

Hayne van Ghizeghem

De tous biens plaine est ma maistresse
Chacun luy doit tribut donneur,
Car assouvye est en valeur
Autant que jamais fut déesse.

*My mistress is full of all good things,
Everybody owes honor to her,
For she is as accomplished in worthiness
As ever was any goddess.*

N'auray-je jamais mieux

Robert Morton

*N'auray-je jamais mieux que jay
Suis je la ou je demeurai,
Mamour et toute ma plaisance?
...N'aurez vous jamais connaissance
Que je suis tout votre et serai?*

*Will I never have better than I have?
Am I to remain where I am,
My love and my whole pleasure?
Will you never understand
That I am completely yours and always will be?*

Le souvenir de vous me tue

Robert Morton

*Le souvenir de vous me tue,
Mon seul bien, quant je ne vous voy.
Car ie vous jure, sur ma foy,
Sans vous ma liesse est perdue.*

*The memory of you kills me,
My one treasure, when I cannot see you.
Because I swear to you upon my honor,
Without you my joy is lost.*

~PAUSE~

Gentilz gallans

Hayne van Ghizeghem

*Gentilz Gallans soions toujours joyeux
Et je vous en prie tres humblement
Et si servons les dames loyaulment
Sans reposer le vray cueur amoureux*

*Gentle Gallants, let us remain always joyful
And I pray you this most humbly.
And thus, serve the ladies loyally
Without hiding the true, loving heart.*

En voyant sa dame

Antoine Busnoys

En voyant sa dame au matin
Pres du feu ou elle se lace
Ou est le cueur qui ja se lasse
De regarder son beau tetin

*Seeing his lady in the morning
Near the fire where she rests
Where is the heart that would ever deprive itself
Of contemplating her beautiful breast?*

Au gre de mes yeulx

Antoine Busnoys

Au gre de mes yeulx je vous ay choisie
La plus acomplie qui soit soulx les cieulx

*At the whim of my eyes I have chosen you
The most accomplished who exists beneath the heavens.*

Ma Dame Helas

Charles the Bold (1433-1477)
(lute solo; arrangement: Asteria)

Le corps sen va

Antoine Busnoys

Le corps sen va et le cueur vous demeure.
Le quel veult faire avec vous sa demeure
Pour vous vouloir aimer tant et si fort
...A vous servir jusques ace que je meure

*The body departs and the heart remains with you –
That which wishes to make with you its home
From the desire to love you so strongly and completely,
To serve you until I die.*

Ma dame trop vous mesprenes

Charles the Bold

Ma dame trop vous mesprenes
Quant vers moy ne vous gouvernes.
Aultrement qui l'oserait dire, dire,

*My lady, you cause me great pain
When you do not give me an audience.
Who would dare say this but me?*

Other Materials

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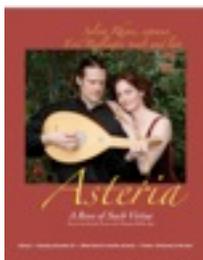


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