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UNIVERSITY OF  
OREGON  
School of Music  
and Dance

## COLLEGIUM VOCALE GENT

Sunday, April 17, 2016 | 7:30 p.m. | Beall Concert Hall

**Lagrime di San Pietro**

Orlandus Lassus (ca. 1532-1594)

Il magnanimo Pietro  
 Ma gli archi  
 Tre volte haveva a l'importuna  
 Qual a l'incontro di quegli occhi santi  
 Giovane donna il suo bel volto in specchio  
 Cosí talhór  
 Ogni occhio del Signór lingua veloce  
 Nessún fedél trovai, nessún cortese  
 Chi ad una raccontár potesse  
 Come falda di neve  
 E non fu il pianto suo rivo  
 Quel volto, ch'era poco inanzi stato  
 Veduto il míser quanto differente  
 E vago d'incontrár chi giusta pena  
 Váttene vita va  
 O vita troppo rea  
 A quanti già felici in giovanezza  
 Non trovava mia fé sì duro intoppo  
 Queste opre e più  
 Negando il mio Signór  
 Vide homo, quae pro te patior

**Philippe Herreweghe, director**

Soloists of the Collegium Vocale Gent

Dorothee Miels – cantus I

Susanne Ryden – cantus II

Simon Berridge – altus I

Chris Watson – altus II

Koen van Stade – tenor I

Peter Kooij – tenor II

Adrian Peacock – bassus

**XXI.**

Vide homo, quae pro te patior,  
 Ad te clamo, qui pro te morior.  
 Vide poenas, quibus afficior.  
 Vide clavos, quibus confodior!  
 Non est dolor, sicut quo crucior?  
 Et cum sit tantus dolor exterior,  
 Intus tamen dolor est gravior,  
 Tam ingratum cum te experior.

Behold, man, what I suffer for you;  
 I cry unto you, you for whom I die;  
 Behold the agonies that I endure;  
 Behold the nails that transpierce me;  
 There is no pain like that of the cross,  
 And great as this outward pain might be,  
 The inner pain is even worse,  
 To have experienced such ingratitude from you.

**PROGRAM NOTES BY James McQuillen**

Born in Mons (in modern-day Belgium) in 1532, Orlande de Lassus began his career as a singer and composer in various Italian cities. At 21, he briefly held the prestigious post of maestro di cappella at the Papal Basilica of St. John Lateran. Not long thereafter, he joined the court of Duke Albrecht V of Bavaria, where he remained employed for the rest of his life while still traveling extensively and absorbing musical influences. He composed and published prolifically in various genres both sacred and secular—including, but not limited to, Masses, motets, madrigals, and chansons—to create a vast body of work culminating in his great masterpiece, the *Lagrime di San Pietro*, or “Tears of Saint Peter.” A brilliant stylistic summation of expressiveness and concision in a large-scale structure, it was described by the musicologist Alfred Einstein as “an old man’s work, comparable in its artistry, its dimensions, its asceticism only to the Musical Offering and the Art of Fugue.”

Lassus spent seven years on the piece, as he suffered from declining health and underwent treatment for “melancholia,” completing it with a dedication to Pope Clement VIII just weeks before his death in 1594. The number seven figures prominently: the music is scored for seven voices in seven of the eight church modes; many movements are cast in seven sections; and the total number of movements is 21—which is to say, seven times the number of the Trinity. Seven resonates with both Peter and the work’s penitential theme. In the Gospel of Matthew, Peter asks, “Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him, till seven times?” and Jesus replies, “Until seventy times seven.” Seven is also the number of the Penitential Psalms of David and the Sorrows of Mary (who is said to bestow seven graces on the devout who say the Hail Mary seven times daily).

For his text, Lassus chose 20 of the 42 stanzas written by his near contemporary Luigi Tansillo (1510–1568) on the remorse of Saint Peter after his betrayal of Christ, all in the ottavo rime form of eight lines with a rhyme scheme of ABABABCC. He concluded with a verse—also in eight lines, but with every line rhyming—by the 13th-century Parisian theologian-poet Philippe de Grève. The Tansillo settings are madrigali spirituali, or sacred madrigals, while the final movement is a motet; in context, the one obvious distinction is that the former are written in the Italian vernacular and the latter in Latin. Lassus drew on the traditions of both genres, stripping the melismatic flourishes typical of the secular madrigal and imbuing the motet with heightened poetic expression, using tone painting and other refined techniques of *musica reservata*, which aimed to wed text and music to achieve maximum affect.

The *Lagrime* is an intense psychological drama centered on Peter’s torment, his tears brought out by his memory and imagining of the piercing, accusing eyes of Christ. Lassus’ setting—alternately rich and lean, chordal and antiphonal—proceeds with a keen sense of the rhythms of the text, with no reliance on repeated patterns or existing plainchant or other melodic sources. His subtle tonal scheme progresses in sections through the church modes by number, skipping the eighth and instead using for the finale the *tonus peregrinus*, or “wandering tone,” in which the reciting tone abruptly shifts. Along with the change of language and verse form, the music signals in anguished chromaticism the dramatic change of perspective from Peter’s lament to Christ’s rebuke: “My agony is greater still, when I see you so ungrateful.”

**XVI.**

O vita troppo rea, troppo fallace,  
 Che per fuggir qua giù si breve guerra,  
 l'erder m'hai fatto in cielo eterna pace:  
 Chi piu desia goderti in su la terra  
 Piu tosto senza te schernito giace:  
 E chi vorria lasciarti, e gir sotterra,  
 Non vuoi, malgrado suo, giamai lasciarlo  
 Vaga di sempre a nuovo duol serbarlo.

O life, too cruel, too deceitful,  
 Who, in order to avoid a brief conflict in this world,  
 Has made me lose eternal peace in heaven;  
 Who most desires to delight in you on this earth,  
 The soonest will lie, scorned and deprived of you;  
 And him who would want to leave you and rest below the ground,  
 You will never quit, despite his wish,  
 Desiring to subject him to new afflictions.

**XVII.**

A quanti già felici in giovinezza  
 Recò l'indugio tuo lunghi tormenti;  
 Che se inanzi al venir de la vecchiezza  
 Sciolti fusser del mondo, più contenti  
 Morti sarían; poi che non ha fermezza  
 Stato alcun, che si temi, o si paventi;  
 Onde io vita a ragion di te mi doglio  
 Che stessi meco, e stai più che non voglio.

To how many, happy in their youth,  
 Has your procrastination brought lingering torments,  
 And who, before reaching old age,  
 Had they but been delivered from the world, more happily  
 Would have died, for firm constancy there is none  
 In any condition, whether one fears or whether one dreads;  
 Whence, life, I have reason to deplore  
 That you should be beside me and stay longer than I wish.

**XVIII.**

Non trovava mia fé sì duro intoppo  
 Se tu non stavi sì gran tempo meco:  
 Se non havesser gli anni e il viver troppo  
 Portato il senno e la memoria seco,  
 Pensar dovea, ch'io vidi dar al zoppo  
 I pié, la lingua al muto, e gli occhi al cieco,  
 E quel che più maravigliar fé l'ombre  
 Render l'anime à i corpi, onde eran sgombre.

My faith would not have encountered so arduous an obstacle  
 If you had not spent so much time with me;  
 If the years and too long a life  
 Had not borne away with them perception and memory,  
 I should have remembered that I saw the lame made  
 To walk, the dumb given his tongue, the blind his eyes,  
 And that which most astounded the shades,  
 Souls restored to bodies from which the had fled.

**XIX.**

Queste opre e più, che'l mondo et io sapea,  
 Ramentar mi dovean che il lor fattore  
 Fontana di salute esser dovea,  
 E sgombrar del mio petto ogni timore;  
 Ma come quel, che per l'età ch'havea,  
 Era di senno e di me stesso fuore,  
 Nel gran periglio ricercando aita  
 Per tema di morir negai la vita.

These deeds and more, which the world and I both knew,  
 Should have reminded me that their author  
 Was the fountain of salvation,  
 And delivered my breast from all fear;  
 But like him, whom age has deprived  
 Of his senses, so I found myself.  
 In great peril, seeking help,  
 For fear of dying I renounced life.

**XX.**

Negando il mio Signor, negai quel ch'era  
 La vita, onde ogni vita si deriva;  
 Vita tranquilla, che non teme o spera,  
 Né puote il corso suo giunger a riva:  
 Poi che dunque negai la vita vera  
 Non è, non è ragion, che unqua più viva:  
 Vatten, vita fallace, e tosto sgombra;  
 Se la vera negai, non chiedo l'ombra.

In denying my Lord I denied that which  
 Is the life from which all life springs,  
 The peaceful life that neither fears nor hopes,  
 And in its course cannot reach the shore;  
 Since, therefore, I have disavowed the true life,  
 There is no reason that I should continue living;  
 Go then, deceitful life, get you gone without delay:  
 If I have denied the true life, I do not want its shadow.

**I.**

Il magnanimo Pietro, che giurato  
 Havea tra mille lance, e mille spade  
 Al suo caro Signor morir à lato,  
 Poi che s'accorse vinto da viltade  
 Nel gran bisogno haver di fé mancato,  
 Il dolor, la vergogna, e la pietade  
 Del proprio fallo, e de l'altrui martiro  
 Di mille punte il petto gli feriro.

The magnanimous Peter, having sworn,  
 Even in the midst of a thousand lances, and a thousand swords  
 To die by the side of his beloved Lord,  
 Then realized that, overcome by cowardice,  
 In great distress he had lacked faith,  
 And pain, shame and pity  
 For his own failing and for the torment of the other  
 With a thousand darts pierced his breast.

**II.**

Ma gli archi, che nel petto gli aventaro  
 Le saette più acute, e più mortali,  
 Fur gli occhi del Signor quando il miraro;  
 Gli occhi fur gli archi, e i sguardi fur gli strali  
 Che del cor non contenti seri passaro  
 Fin dentro à l'alma, e vi fer piaghe tali,  
 Che bisognò mentre che visse poi  
 Ungerle col licor de gli occhi suoi.

But no bow discharged in his breast  
 Sharper and more deadly arrows  
 Than the eyes of the Lord when they looked upon him;  
 His eyes were the bows, and His looks the darts  
 That from his afflicted heart passed  
 Into his soul, where they caused such sounds  
 That he needed for the rest of his life  
 To anoint them with the liquor of his eyes.

**III.**

Tre volte haveva a l'importuna e audace  
 Ancella, al servo, et a la turba rea  
 Detto e giurato, che giamai seguace  
 Non fu del suo Signor, ne'l conoscea:  
 E'l gallo publicato contumace  
 Il dì chiamato in testimon v'havea,  
 Quando del suo gran fallo a pena avvisto  
 S'incontrar gli occhi suoi con quei di Christo.

Thrice he had said to the importunate and audacious  
 Maid, to the servant, and to the wicked multitude,  
 Had said and sworn never to have been a disciple  
 Of his Lord, nor to have known Him;  
 The cock, proclaiming his perjury,  
 Called upon the day as witness.  
 When of his great fault but barely aware,  
 His eyes encountered those of Christ.

**IV.**

Qual a l'incontro di quegli occhi santi  
 Il già caduto Pietro rimanesse  
 Non sia chi di narrarlo hoggi si vanti,  
 Che lingua non saría, ch'al ver giungesse,  
 Parea che'l buon Signor cinto di tanti  
 Nemici, e de' suoi privo dir volesse:  
 Ecco che quel, ch'io dissi, egli è pur vero,  
 Amico disleal, discepol fiero.

What upon the encounter with those holy eyes,  
 The already downcast Peter must have felt,  
 No one today would venture to relate,  
 For there could be no tongue that could attain to the truth  
 It seemed that the good Lord, surrounded by so many  
 Enemies, and deserted by his own, wished to say:  
 Lo, behold that which I said was the pure truth,  
 Disloyal friend, cruel disciple.

**V.**

Giovane donna il suo bel volto in specchio  
 Non vide mai di lucido cristallo,  
 Come in quel punto il miserabil vecchio  
 Ne gli occhi del Signor vide il suo fallo;  
 Ne tante cose udir cupido orecchio  
 Potría, se stesse ben senza untervallo  
 Intento a l'altrui dir cento anni e cento,  
 Quant'ei n'udíó col guardo in quel momento.

A young woman gazing at her fair face in a mirror  
 Never saw it with such crystal clarity  
 Than at that moment the wretched old man  
 In the eyes of the Lord saw his fault;  
 Nor could an avid ear, though  
 It were to listen without interruption  
 For a hundred, hundred years to the words of another,  
 Learn as many things as that look at that moment.

**VI.**

Così tal'hor (benché profane cose  
Siano a le sacre d'agguagliarsi indegne)  
Scoprir mirando altrui le voglie ascose  
Suol amator, senza ch'à dir le vegne.  
Chi dunque esperto sia ne l'ingegnose  
Schole d'Amor, a chi no'l prova insegne,  
Come senza aprir bocca, o scriver note  
Con gli occhi ancora favellar si puote.

Thus sometimes (though profane matters  
Are not worthy of being likened to the sacred)  
The lover reveals to another his secret desires  
Without having to utter a word.  
Who then could be an expert in the ingenious  
Schools of love, when he cannot be taught  
How, without opening his mouth, or writing a word,  
He can still speak with his eyes?

**VII.**

Ogni occhio del Signor lingua veloce  
Parea, che fusse, ed ogni occhio de' suoi  
Orecchia intenta ad ascoltar sua voce.  
Più fieri, parea dir, son gli occhi tuoi  
De l'empie man, che mi porranno in croce;  
Né sento colpo alcun, che si m'annoï  
Di tanti, che'l reo stuolo in me ne scocca,  
Quanto il colpo, ch'uscio de la tua bocca.

Each of the Lord's eyes a swift language  
Seemed to be, and every eye of His people  
An ear intent on listening to His voice.  
Even crueller, He seemed to say, are your eyes  
Than the pitless hands that will place me on the cross;  
Nor shall I feel any blow among the many  
That the wicked multitude will deal me  
Would me as much as that which issued from your mouth.

**VIII.**

Nessun fedel trovai, nessun cortese  
Di tanti ch'ho degnato d'esser miei;  
Ma tu, dove il mio amor via più s'accese,  
Perfido e ingrato sovra ogn'altro sei;  
Ciascun di lor sol col fuggir m'offese,  
Tu mi negasti; et hor con gli altri rei  
Ti stai à pascer del mio danno gli occhi,  
Perché la parte del piacer ti tocchi.

I found no one faithful, no one kind  
Among all those whom I deemed worthy to be mine;  
But you, for whom my love was most enkindled,  
Are perfidious and ungrateful above all the others;  
Each of them offended me only by fleeing;  
You denied me, and now together with the other evil-doers,  
You wait to sate your eyes upon my doom,  
For a share of the pleasure is yours.

**IX.**

Chi ad una ad una raccontar potesse  
Le parole di sdegno e d'amor piene,  
Che parve a Pietro di veder impresse  
Nel sacro giro de le due serene  
Luci, scoppiar faría chi l'intendesse:  
Ma se d'occhio mortal sovente viene  
Virtù, che possa in noi, ch'il prova pensi,  
Che puote occhio divin ne gli human sensi.

He who, one by one, could recount  
The words filled with wrath and with love  
That Peter believd he saw imprinted  
In the sacred turning of His serene  
Eyes, would shatter whoever heard him:  
But if from a mortal eye virtue ften comes,  
That can exert power upon our thoughts,  
Then what can the divine eye do tot he human senses?

**X.**

Come falda di neve, che agghiacciata  
Il verno in chiusa valle ascosa giacque,  
A primavera poi dal sol scaldata  
Tutta si sface, e si discioglie in acque  
Così la tema, che entro al cor gelata  
Era di Pietro allor, che'l vero tacque,  
Quando Christo ver lui gli occhi rivolse  
Tutta si sface, e in pianto si risolse.

As a snowflake that lies frozen  
In winter in a narrow, hidden valley,  
In spring, after being warmed by the sun,  
Melts away and dissolves into water,  
So fear, that lay frozen in the heart  
Of Peter when the truth struck him,  
When Christ turned His eyes upon him,  
Melted away and transformed itself into tears.

**XI.**

E non fu il pianto suo rivo o Torrente.  
Che per calda stagion giamai seccasse:  
Che, benché il Re del Cielo immantinente  
A la perdita gratia il ritornasse,  
De la sua vita tutto il rimanente  
Non fu mai notte ch'ei non si destasse,  
Udendo il gallo a dir quanto fu iniquo,  
Dando lagrime nove al fallo antiquo.

And his tears were neither brook nor torrent  
That a hot season could dry up,  
For, although the King of Heaven forthwith  
Restored the fallen one to grace,  
For the remainder of his life  
There was never a night that he did not awaken,  
Hearing the cock proclaim how great had been his sin,  
And shedding new tears at his bygone fault.

**XII.**

Quel volto, ch'era poco inanzi stato  
Asperso tutto di color di morte,  
Per il sangue, che al cor se n'era andato,  
Lasciando fredde l'altre parti e smorte:  
Dal raggio de' santi occhi riscaldato  
Divenne fiamma; e per l'istesse porte,  
Ch'era entrato, il timor fuggendo sparve  
E nel suo loco la vergogna apparve.

That face which but a few instants before  
Was all covered with the colour of death,  
Because the blood did not flow back from the heart,  
leaving the other parts cold and wan,  
Reheated by the beams of the holy eyes,  
Became inflamed and by the very same door  
That it had entered fear fled away;  
And in its place shame appeared.

**XIII.**

Veduto il miser quanto differente  
Dal primo stato suo si ritrovava,  
Non bastandogli il cor di star presente  
A l'offeso Signor, che sì l'amava  
Senza aspettar se fiera, ò se clemente  
Sententia il duro Tribunal gli dava,  
Da l'odioso albergo, ove era allora  
Piangendo amaramente uscì di fuora.

The unhappy wretch, seeing how different  
From its former state his life would be,  
Did not have the heart to tarry in the presence  
Of the offended Lord who had so greatly loved him,  
And without waiting to know whether harsh or merciful  
Would be the sentence the implacable tribunal passed on him,  
From the loathsome inn where he was  
He went outside, weeping bitterly.

**XIV.**

E vago d'incontrar chi giusta pena  
Desse al suo grave error, poi che paura  
Di maggior mal l'ardita man raffrena,  
Per l'ombre errando de la notte oscura  
Ne va gridando ove il dolor il mena:  
E la vita, che inanzi hebbe sì a cura:  
Hor più, ch'altro odia, e sol di lei si duole,  
Et, perché lo fé errar, più non la vuole.

And longing to meet one who would inflict  
The just penalty for his grave error, for dread  
Of a greater evil restrained his hand,  
Roaming through the shades of the dark night  
He went crying aloud wherever his grief led him,  
And life, for which he had once been so concerned,  
He now loathed more than any other thing, and was only grieved by it;  
And since it caused him to err, he wanted no more of it.

**XV.**

Vattene vita va, dicea piangendo,  
Dove non sia chi t'odi, ò chi ti sdegni;  
Lasciami; so che non è ben, che, essendo  
Compagnia così rea, meco né vegni:  
Vattene vita va, ch'io non intendo,  
Che un'altra volta ad esser vil m'insegni:  
Né vo per prolungar tue frali tempre,  
Uccider l'alma nata a viver sempre.

Go life, get you gone, he said weeping,  
In which there is no one who does not loathe me, or despise me;  
Leave me: I know that it is not good to go with me,  
Since I am such evil company;  
Go life, get you gone, for I do not intend  
You to teach me to be cowardly again;  
Nor, in order to prolong your feeble whims,  
To kill the soul born to live for ever.