



The Attaignant Consort

Kate Clark – Cantus

Amanda Markwick – Altus

João Carlos Santos – Tenor

Giuditta Isoldi - Bassus

The Attaignant Consort's 3-CD set documenting the history and repertoire of the renaissance transverse flute was awarded a Diapason d'Or in 2013, and marked the ensemble as a leading exponent of this still little-known instrument.

All members of the ensemble are specialists on historical flutes from the renaissance to the romantic periods, coming together as the Attaignant Consort to share their deep love of the poetry, music, and spirit of the Renaissance. Starting from facsimiles of original manuscripts and printed part-books, **the consort performs all its programmes from memory**, reflecting the aural tradition of sixteenth-century instrumental practice, and freeing the musicians to improvise on the works, as their historical counterparts did.

<https://www.attaignantconsort.com>

Le Parler et le Silence

Programme description

The “new” instrumental music of the 17th century: fantasias, ricercars, and canzonas for 3- and 4-part consort; ensemble and solo *airs de cour* from Paris (probably the last vocal form to be adopted by the flute consort); and then, crossing the bridge to the 18th century, pieces for two and three early baroque flutes, with theorbo – the lingering echo of the consort principle.

Musicians

4 flutes

1 lute/theorbo

Context and relevance

Thomas Morley wrote that in the fantasia

‘...the composer is tied to nothing, but that he may add, diminish and alter at his pleasure ... quick motions, slow motions, Proportion and what you [wish]...’

The “emancipation” of instruments from vocal forms in the seventeenth century forced the flute consort to adapt to new styles of composition that would take the keyless, cylindrical, renaissance traverso to the very limits of its capabilities. This programme focuses on the fantasia, ricercar, and canzona, conceived as new, purely instrumental forms, that allowed musicians to explore a rhythmic virtuosity and exuberance that must have dazzled listeners of their day. Girolamo Frescobaldi’s *Fantasia seconda* of 1608 - ambitious in the length and number of its sections, and in its use of sliding chromaticisms - is our boldest example of this principle.

The programme also includes English and Dutch secular songs, and French 4-part *airs de cour* from the early seventeenth century. French *airs de cour* would show up again at the beginning of the eighteenth century (and at the end of our programme), embellished in the baroque style, and transposed into tonalities suitable for the conical, one-keyed baroque flute that charmed and captivated Louis XIV. These works are accompanied by the rich resonance of the theorbo.

Highlights

- Italian ***Fantasias*** by Giovanni Bassano and Girolamo Frescobaldi, and ***Canzonas*** by Luzzasco Luzzaschi and Gioseffo Guami
- Dutch 2- and 3-part secular songs, including Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck’s ***Yeux qui guidez mon ame***
- English songs, including Francis Pilkington’s ***My choice is made***, and John Dowland’s ***Pavane Lachrime***, interwoven with ***Fantasias*** by Thomas Lupo and Orlando Gibbons
- French ***airs de cour*** by Charles Tessier, Antoinet Boësset, and Pierre Guéron including ***Le Parler et le Silence***
- Theorbo ***Chaconnes*** by Robert de Visée, and Robert Ballard’s ***Première entrée de luth***
- Instrumental ***airs de cour*** by Michel Lambert and Jacques Hotteterre, and Joseph Bodin de Boismortier’s first ***Sonate à quatre parties***

<https://www.attaignantconsort.com>