

PRIMA  
CLASSIC

# CHRISTE REDEMPTOR

POLYPHONIC MOTETS FOR VOICE & LUTE

*Duo Mignarda*

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## POLYPHONIC MOTETS FOR VOICE AND LUTE

### INTRODUCTION

Our collection of music for the Christmas season explores polyphonic music of the 15th and 16th centuries in historically-appropriate adaptations for the ideal combination of solo voice and lute. The music on this album offered the welcome opportunity to return our roots as church musicians dedicated to singing the traditional Latin Mass, and with the exception of the instrumental “Recercar” by Francesco da Milano, all of the music was arranged for solo voice and lute by Mignarda from the original polyphonic vocal music. Based upon surviving evidence, such arrangements were common practice in the 16<sup>th</sup> century by musicians either adapting to the available resources or, in the case of Palestrina, using the lute to work out parts during the compositional process.

All of the music is sung in historical Latin, the universal language of the liturgy and once in standard use by educated persons throughout Europe. The text of “Personent Hodie” is primarily Latin with a German accent, but we add a further twist with a verse in English at the end. Even with the common theme of texts in Latin, we present quite diverse styles by 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> century composers from the German states, England, France, Spain, and Italy.

The title, “Christe Redemptor,” establishes a theme for our album. While the office hymn is proper for the Christmas season, Tomás Luis de Victoria composed more than one setting of “Christe Redemptor,” with an alternate text and music for Feast of All Saints. We offer this contemplative collection of intimate performances of historical polyphony to celebrate Christmas throughout the year.

# 1. HODIE CHRISTUS NATUS EST

ADAM GUMPELZHAIMER, 1591

Adam Gumpelzhaimer (1559 – 1625) was a German composer who worked at St. Anne's Church in Augsburg from 1581 to 1625 as kantor, preceptor, and de facto musical director. Gumpelzhaimer was a collector of the works of his German contemporary, Hans Leo Hassler, amassing a large collection of Hassler's manuscripts and prints. *Hodie Christus natus est* is a two-voice canon that was published by Gumpelzhaimer in 1591, in his *Compendium musicae pro illius artis tironibus*.

*Hodie Christus natus est:  
Hodie Salvator apparuit:  
Hodie in terra canunt Angeli,  
laetantur Archangeli  
Hodie exsultant justi, dicentes:  
Gloria in excelsis Deo.  
Alleluia.*

*Today Christ is born:  
Today the Savior appeared:  
Today on Earth the Angels sing,  
Archangels rejoice:  
Today the righteous rejoice, saying:  
Glory to God in the highest.  
Alleluia.*



*Verbum caro factum est  
Per virginem Mariam.*

*In hoc anni circulo  
Vita datur seculo  
Nato nobis par vulo  
Stella solem pertulit  
Sol salute contulit  
Nihil tamen abstulit  
Die hac sanctissima  
Omnibus dignissima  
Nobis datur gloria  
De virgine Maria.*

*The Word is made flesh  
through the virgin Mary*

*Into this circle of ages  
An infant born for us  
Bestowing life on the world.  
From a star a son rises from nothing,  
Yet suffers to bring salvation.*

*All worthy people give glory  
To this sacred day.  
To the Virgin Mary.*



## 2. VERBUM CARO FACTUM EST

ANONYMOUS, TRENT MS., 15TH C.

The earliest known version of the text occurs in a manuscript from the twelfth century, in the Bibliothèque nationale de France, (Lat. 1139, f. 48) in a macaronic combination of Latin and Provençal. Mignarda's version is transcribed and arranged for solo voice and lute from the 15th century Trent manuscript tr92, where it is set for three parts. The time signature is absent from the manuscript source so the triple-time *tempus perfectum* is editorial but surely fitting based upon the musical context.

### 3. VERBUM CARO FACTUM EST (LUTE)

ANONYMOUS ENGLISH, 15TH C.

This version of Verbum caro factum est de virgine Maria is from the Bodleian Library MS. Arch. Selden B. 26, dated circa 1450. The two-voice English carol is typical of a large body of English carols from the 15th century, and is arranged here for solo lute by Ron Andrico, Mignarda Editions.

### 4. GABRIEL ARCHANGELUS APPARUIT

PHILIPPE VERDELOT, 1532

While the Christmas season celebrates the birth of Christ, we step back and provide a bit of context with this motet celebrating the Nativity of St. John the Baptist. The text of “Gabriel archangelus” is based on Luke 1:13-15 and sets the stage for the coming of Christ. The musical setting is by Philippe Verdelot (c.1480 – 1552) and was first published in 1532 in *Motteti del Fiore primus liber cum quatuor vocibus* by music publisher Jacques Moderne.

*Gabriel archangelus apparuit Zachariae, dicens:  
Nascetur tibi filius, nomen ejus Joannes vocabitur:  
Et multi in nativitate ejus gaudebunt.  
Erit enim magnus coram Domino.  
Vinum et siceram non bibet,  
Et multi in nativitate ejus gaudebunt.*

*The angel Gabriel appeared to Zachariah, saying:  
A son shall be born to you, his name shall be  
called John:  
And many shall rejoice at his birth.  
For he will be great in the sight of the Lord.  
Wine and strong drink he will not use,  
And many shall rejoice at his birth.*

# 5. CHRISTE REDEMPTOR OMNIUM

TOMAS LUIS DE VICTORIA, 1581

Christe Redemptor omnium is the Vespers hymn for the Christmas season. The anonymous 6th century text and chant melody is also employed for All Saints, and the name for this version was changed in 1631 to “Placare Christe Servulis.” The hymn is very similar to “Jesu, Redemptor Omnium, quem lucis ante originem,” which is a modification of both the words and tune of the original that was made by Urban VIII in 1629, and recorded by Donna Stewart on the album *Adoro Te*. Tomas Luis de Victoria’s setting of the hymn was published in 1581 in *Hymni totius anni*, which also included a separate setting of the text specifically for All Saints. Victoria’s Christmas setting includes seven verses sung with plainchant alternating with four-part polyphony, with three lower parts assigned to the lute in our historically-appropriate arrangement.

1 *CHRISTE, redemptor omnium,  
conserva tuos famulos,  
beatae semper Virginis  
placatus sanctis precibus.*

2 *Beata quoque agmina  
caelestium spirituum,  
praeterita, praesentia,  
futura mala pellite.*

3 *Vates aeterni iudicis  
apostolique Domini,  
suppliciter exposcimus  
salvari vestris precibus.*

4 *Martyres Dei incliti  
confessoresque lucidi,  
vestris orationibus  
nos ferte in caelestibus.*

5 *Chori sanctarum virginum  
monachorumque omnium,  
simul cum sanctis omnibus  
consortes Christi facite.*

6 *Auferte gentem perfidam  
credentium de finibus,  
ut unus omnes unicum  
ovile nos Pater regat.*

7 *Sit Trinitati gloria,  
vestrasque voces iungite  
ut illi laudes debitas  
persolvamus alacriter.*

Translation from *The Primer*, 1604

O Christ, Redeemer of us all,  
And of the Father only Son,  
Thy birth alone unspeakably  
Before beginning was begun.

The Father's light and brightness both,  
The lasting hope thou art of all ;  
Attend unto thy servants' plaints  
Throughout the earth on thee that call

Be mindful, author of our health,  
That thou sometime didst take on thee,  
Of a pure Virgin being born,  
The form of our humanity.

And so this day doth witness well,  
By yearly course as it doth pass,  
That only from thy Father's seat,  
This world to save thy coming was.

This day the heaven, the earth and sea,  
This day within them all that live,  
As cause that thou to us art come,  
With songs rejoice and praises give.

And we which thy most holy blood  
Did freely to redemption bring,  
In honour of thy day of birth,  
A new song unto thee do sing.

Glory be unto thee, O Lord,  
The which the Blessed Virgin bore,  
With the Father and Holy Ghost,  
From this time forth for evermore.

## 6. RECERCAR (LUTE)

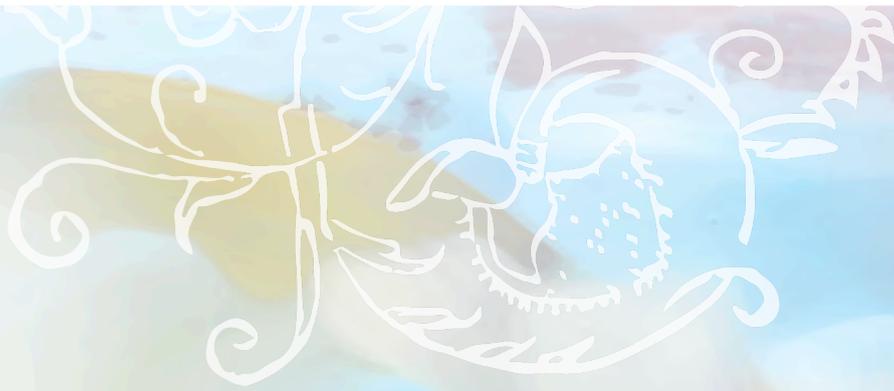
FRANCESCO DA MILANO, 1536

This recercar (literally, searching piece) is from one of the earliest prints of lute music by the famous Francesco da Milano (1497 – 1543), *Intabolatura de liuto de diversi...*, published in Venice in 1536. Recercars were frequently used to establish both mode and mood as a prelude to a larger piece. Francesco was lutenist to three different popes, and this piece is a perfect example of the clear, transparent, imitative lute music that established Francesco's enduring reputation. We include this piece for the serene, angelic mood it creates as a prelude for "O magnum mysterium."

## 7. O MAGNUM MYSTERIUM

CRISTÓBAL DE MORALES, C.1540

The Christmas responsory text, O magnum mysterium, proper *In Nativitate Domine* and *In Circuncisione Domini* (In the Nativity of the Lord, in the circumcision of the Lord). Morales' setting differs from the more commonly known version by fellow Spaniard Victoria with its higher register and the duet-like voice exchange between the two top lines. Morales also included the additional responsory, 'Domine, audivi' from Habakkuk 3:2-3.



*O magnum mysterium  
et admirabile sacramentum,  
ut animalia viderent Dominum natum,  
jacentem in præsepio.*

*Beata Virgo, cujus viscera meruerunt  
Portare Dominum Jesum Christum.  
Domine, audivi auditum tuum et timui:  
Consideravi opera tua et expavi:  
In medio duorum animalium.*

*O great mystery,  
and wonderful sacrament,  
that animals should see the new-born Lord,  
lying in a manger.  
Blessed is the Virgin whose womb was worthy  
To bear Jesus Christ the Lord.  
Lord, I heard your oracle with dread;  
I considered your works and became frightened  
in the midst of the animals.*

## 8. ANGELUS AD PASTORES AIT

HANS LEO HASSLER, 1591

Hans Leo Hassler (1564 – 1612) from *Cantiones sacrae* (Augsburg, 1591). German composer who studied in Italy and melded Italianate elements with his own national style.

*Angelus ad pastores ait:  
annuntio vobis gaudium magnum,  
quia natus est vobis hodie Salvator mundi.  
Alleluia.*

*The angel of the Lord said to the shepherds:  
“I bring you tidings of great joy,  
for the Saviour of the world has been born to you today.”  
Alleluia.*

Quatuor Vocum. IIII. CANTVS.

Ngelus ad pastores ait, ad pastores ait, ad pa  
it, ij annunci o vobis  
gaudium ma gnum annuncio vobis, gaudium ma gnum, quia natus est  
ij uobis hodie, quia natus est vobis hodie  
e saluator mundi, saluator mundi, Alle- luia, alle lu-  
ia, ij alle luia, ij alle luia, alle lu- ia, al-  
le- luia, ij alle lu ia, ij alle luia, ij  
alle lu- ia, Allelu- ia.

Dixit

## 9. PERSONENT HODIE

TRADITIONAL GERMAN, 1582

While it dates from much earlier, “Personent hodie” is a hymn that first appeared in print in *Piæ Cantiones Ecclesiasticae et Scholasticae Veterum Episcoporum*, 1582. The hymn is a retrospective of the Nativity that includes a verse recounting the visit of the Magi. “Personent hodie” is associated with the Feast of the Holy Innocents, December 28, which commemorates the children slain by King Herod in his attempt to cancel the competition.

*Personent hodie voces puerulæ, laudantes jucunde  
Qui nobis est natus, summo Deo datus,  
Et de virgineo ventre procreatus.  
In mundo nascitur, pannis involvitur præsepi ponitur  
Stabulo brutorum, rector supernorum.  
Perdidit spolia princeps infernorum.  
Magi tres venerunt, parvulum inquirunt, parvulum inquirunt,  
Stellulam sequendo, ipsum adorando,  
Aurum, thus, et myrrham ei offerendo.  
Omnes clericuli, pariter pueri, cantent ut angeli:  
Advenisti mundo, laudes tibi fundo.  
Ideo gloria in excelsis Deo.*

*Sing aloud on this day  
Children's voices delightfully praise Him  
begotten for us from God on high,  
and born of the Virgin's womb.  
Born into the world enveloped in swaddling cloths,  
placed into a manger in an animal stable.  
Celestial ruler,  
ruination of the prince of darkness.  
Three wise men came, seeking the child,  
inquiring about the infant, following the star,  
in order to pay homage themselves  
and to offer him gold, frankincense, and myrrh.*



## 10. TRIBUS MIRACULIS

GIOVANNI PIERLUIGI DA PALESTRINA, 1590

This beautiful and compelling motet for four voices serves as the Magnificat antiphon at Second Vespers of the Feast of the Epiphany. The three miracles in Palestrina's setting include:

- 1) The visit of the Magi (Jan. 6),
- 2) The baptism in Jordan, now given its own feast but formerly observed on the Octave Day of the Epiphany, and
- 3) The marriage feast of Cana, observed on Epiphany II. The three miracles are observed as Epiphanies that confirm the divinity of Christ.

*Tribus miraculis ornatum, diem sanctum colimus:  
Hodie stella Magos duxit ad praesepeum:  
Hodie vinum ex aqua factum est ad nuptias:  
Hodie in Jordane a Joanne Christus baptizari voluit,  
ut salvaret nos, Alleluia.*

*We observe this holy day, ornamented with three miracles:  
Today a star led the Magi to the manger;  
Today wine was made from water at the wedding;  
Today in the Jordan Christ desired to be baptised by John,  
so that He might save us, Alleluia.*

# MIGNARDA

The premiere professional lute song duo in the US, Mignarda has been sharing their engaging approach to historical music since 2003, setting a new standard for repertoire, interpretation and musicianship. Based in Cleveland Heights, Ohio, they have produced eighteen critically-acclaimed CDs and published a series of editions of historical music for voice and lute.

Lutenist **Ron Andrico** was a seasoned professional performer of historical music and in theatre before discovering the lute while completing a degree in composition. He promptly set about researching the historical context of early music, and his research has led to publication of a growing series of important music editions and articles of scholarly excellence that have to do with identifying, elucidating and performing the sources of 16th century lute music. In addition to historical music for voice and lute, Andrico edited and published the original lute solos of virtuoso lutenist Ronn McFarlane. He was honored to collaborate on a project with noted Harvard musicologist, John Ward and Edward Doughtie, author of *Lyrics for English Airs 1596 – 1622*. He is the author of the internationally-popular blog, *Unquiet Thoughts*.

Mezzo soprano **Donna Stewart**, known for her warm tone and crystalline delivery of text, has received critical acclaim for awakening modern audiences to an appreciation for historical music. Her firm grounding in the practical application of Gregorian chant and medieval and renaissance polyphony stems from two decades with a five-voice *schola cantorum* dedicated to providing liturgical music for a



weekly Latin Tridentine Mass. Drawing on the unique experience of singing this music in its liturgical context, she has developed an understanding of the use and form of historical sacred music, which lies at the very heart of all early music. In addition to her solo work with Mignarda, she has performed and recorded on the Koch and Onda labels with internationally-renowned Baroque orchestra Apollo's Fire, and has applied her gift for communicating the deeper meanings of texts to both renaissance lute song and old-time harmony, hymnody, and heartsongs. She has released, with great success, two albums of solo Gregorian chant.

**The couple met in Cleveland, Ohio**, singing Gregorian chant & renaissance polyphony in a small *schola* for a weekly Latin Mass. Their first concert came a few months later, in October of 2003. The newly-formed *duo Mignarda* retreated to a remote log cabin in the wilderness of the Siskiyou Mountains to immerse themselves in the repertory and the aesthetic of the 16th century - emerging occasionally to seek advice from insightful performers Nigel North, Hopkinson Smith, and Anthony Rooley, and to tour as a trio with the Baltimore Consort's Ronn McFarlane. Eventually relocating in the eastern US, they made their home for a decade in a handmade house in the forest of rural upstate New York before settling back in Cleveland Heights, Ohio. Now in their 20th year as a duo, they have travelled tens of thousands of miles to share their music with audiences across the U.S.

## MIGNARDA'S APPROACH TO EARLY MUSIC

Since founding Mignarda in 2003, the duo has garnered widespread attention for their unique sound and for their choice of repertory. Known as “musician’s musicians,” they have received critical acclaim from reviewers and accolades from top early music specialists, vocalists, instrumentalists, and choral directors. Given that a duo devoted to such arcane repertory is in and of itself a rarity, Mignarda’s music has reached beyond the bounds of early music audiences, finding appeal with a broad range of listeners from pop aficionados to sacred music specialists. How did they manage this? It’s certainly not due to aggressive



PR or music industry connections, but rather the appeal of an honest sound informed both by historical research and by extensive rehearsal.

Not satisfied with off-the-shelf editions of repertory, Ron Andrico put his compositional skills to work to create hundreds of new arrangements of 16th century polyphonic vocal ensemble music for solo voice and lute from original sources, following directly in the footsteps of notable historical intabulators including Vincenzo Galilei and Adrian Le Roy.

The process of touching each and every note and setting each and every lyric has provided a rare insight into the original composers' ideas of text underlay, rhythmic organization and musical phrasing — just as was done when the music was new.

The 20th century was a high-water mark for the early music revival, with eminent scholars discovering and making available long forgotten masterpieces of music. But many scholars and music editors took the visible evidence of historical music quite literally, not fully informed of the practical aspects of musical performance and quite ignorant of routine historical conventions of original notation and transposition. This resulted in modern editions of historical music appearing in high registers, promoting the misconception that music for voice and lute was meant to be sung by very high voices accompanied by very small lutes. Deeper research revealed that the situation was more nuanced, and the printed or hand-written historical scores were only meant to offer a guideline for highly skilled and pragmatic musicians of the time.

Following hints provided by research into historical convention, Mignarda's sound restores the repertory to a more relaxed vocal range that more readily communicates to the listener richly layered and highly refined historical texts. Employing lower-pitched lutes and the occasional historically justified downward transposition, Mignarda's sound takes full advantage of the depth and warmth of Donna Stewart's natural voice. But Mignarda interpretations are the result of intensive research into the contextual importance of historical dance, poetical forms, and rhetorical conventions —and a great deal of reflection and rehearsal that results in intellectual and emotional involvement in the meaning of the words, paired with a musician's understanding of the rhythmical outline of the musical phrasing.

When Mignarda produced its first album in 2005, the duo was offered an opportunity to sign with the Naxos label. While the Naxos distribution and publicity would have been much more effective and immediate, the duo took what was then the innovative step of creating their own label and handling their own distribution. This decision was not without consequence – particularly in the absence of corporate or academic sponsorship, a well-endowed board, or a trust fund. Mignarda's loyal audience includes over 10,000 YouTube subscribers and more than 20,000 Spotify followers, all of which have been earned one listener at a time.

Eighteen albums later, Mignarda is very pleased to appear on the Prima Classic label, and we're delighted to join a very impressive roster of artists on a label with superior production standards.

# CREDITS

All music edited and arranged from original sources by Ron Andrico ©*Mignarda Editions*  
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Lutes  
Ten-course lute in F by Nico Van der Waals  
Eight-course lute in G by Richard Fletcher

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