

N O T E S
F R O M

MUSICA SACRA

MARY BEEKMAN
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Musica Sacra
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DEAR FRIENDS,

Welcome to Musica Sacra's 2022-2023 Season! We are thrilled to open our season with our first large-scale orchestra program since before the pandemic. It is an exciting moment for us and we are glad that you chose to share it with us.

Musica Sacra continues to offer livestreams of our concerts this season, so anyone can enjoy our music near or far. Spread the word and invite your friends and family to join us.

In the back of the hall, we are offering Musica Sacra's five acclaimed CDs: *Song of Songs; Love, Lust and Laudations; Welcome Yule!; Piteous Beauty; and Baltic Inspirations*. They make great gifts for any occasion, or just to expand your own library. Our CDs are also available for download in MP3 format on our website, www.musicasacra.org.

Please also join us for the rest of our season. On December 10th, we will present *An American Christmas*, which will combine Daniel Pinkham's *Nativity Madrigals* with music of Ola Gjeilo, Adolphus Hailstork, and Carson Cooman, as well as spirituals and carols from Appalachia. Guest conductor Lorraine Fitzmaurice will lead us on March 11th, 2023 in a program to be announced. Finally, in May of 2023 we will present *Double Takes: Two Texts, One Perspective*, presenting pieces by Lauridsen, Barber, Hailstork, Rautavaara, and others. You can purchase a subscription for the remainder of our season at the ticketing table in the back of the hall.

As always, our work, especially large projects like this one, is possible only through generous contributions from our donors. If you enjoyed today's performance, please consider making a tax-deductible donation to Musica Sacra either at the ticket table in the back of the hall, or else on our website, www.musicasacra.org.

We hope you enjoy our exploration of the different ways living composers pair strings with the sound of a chorus, and we look forward to seeing you again in December!

Sincerely,
David Halstead, President



photo © kiera willhelm



MARY BEEKMAN
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

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Kyra Saltman, *Executive Director*
Terry Halco, *Accompanist and
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Musica Sacra is funded in part by the
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Musica Sacra is a member of the Greater Boston Choral Consortium, a cooperative association of diverse choral groups in Boston and the surrounding areas.

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Musica Sacra, P.O. Box 381336, Cambridge, MA 02238-1336
(617) 349-3400 www.musicasacra.org

Music of Today for Chorus and Strings

MUSICA SACRA

Mary Beekman, *Artistic Director*

Terry Halco, *Accompanist*

Saturday, October 22, 2022, 8:00 pm

First Church, Congregational, Cambridge, Massachusetts

Please silence your phones and devices.

Please hold applause until ★ between pieces.

BERLINER MESSE (1990-2002)

Arvo Pärt (born 1935)

Bjorn Poonen, *tenor*

Paul Gallagher, *bass*

I. Kyrie

II. Gloria

III. Erster Alleluiavers

IV. Zweiter Alleluiavers

V. Veni Sancte Spiritus

VI. Credo

VII. Sanctus

VIII. Agnus Dei

★

AD GENUA (TO THE KNEES) (2016)

Anna Thorvaldsdóttir (born 1977)

Myfanwy Callahan, *soprano*

★

THE FRUIT OF SILENCE (2014)

Pēteris Vasks (born 1941)

★

DARK NIGHT OF THE SOUL (2010)

Ola Gjeilo (born 1978)

Katie Von Kohorn, *soprano*

Terry Halco, *piano*

NOTES

Musica Sacra happily presents tonight's concert of choral music accompanied by strings. The sonorities of each group—chorus and bowed instruments—creates a whole more glorious than the sum of its parts. All of the composers represented tonight come from Northern Europe, a place which in the recent past has fostered some of the most innovative and creative developments in choral music.

We open with Arvo Pärt's *Berliner Messe*, a work composed in Pärt's early minimalist phase. Raised Lutheran in the Estonia of Soviet Russia, Pärt converted to the Russian Orthodox faith in 1976, in which he experienced the role of plainchant* in worship. It was at this time, after peregrinations among compositional styles of neo-classicism and serialism*, interspersed with self-imposed silences and the study of medieval and Renaissance music, that he developed the style, heard in this mass, for which he is celebrated. He named it *tintinnabuli*, Latin for bells, and described his new philosophy:

I have discovered that it is enough when a single note is beautifully played. This one note, or a silent beat, or a moment of silence, comforts me. I work with very few elements—with one voice, two voices. I build with primitive materials—with the triad*, with one specific tonality. The three notes of a triad are like bells and that is why I call it *tintinnabulation*.

Pärt has been called a “mystic minimalist,” and this work does conform to the principle of minimalism in painting as explained by the curators of the *American Century*, the Whitney Museum's retrospective of 20th century art:

Both aesthetics [Minimalism and Pop]....relied on repetition and serial forms. The Minimalists used standardized units and repetitive structures as a way to downplay the role of personal choice and individual expression in the artistic process—affirming instead the purely physical properties of their work.... By rejecting the idea that art expresses the personality of its maker, Minimalism shifted the focus onto the viewer.

Pärt eliminates personal choice in his composition by strictly following self-devised formulas for rhythm and movement. His rhythmic rule is that each word in the text shall have its own measure; as a result, the first syllable of every word occurs on a downbeat, and each measure is as long as the number of syllables in the word. In this environment the stressed beat (*thesis*) and the unstressed beat (*arsis*), which have parsed rhythm in musical line from the beginnings of Western European music, have no context in which to operate. In that medium of composition the downbeat is the strongest emphasis in the measure, but in Latin the word stress is usually on the penultimate syllable. Thus, the only time in Pärt's music that the word emphasis and rhythmic structure agree is in words of two syllables. Once again, this music conforms to the traditions of Western European music only by chance, and not by design.

Pärt's harmonies are also byproducts of the interplay of the voices moving in accordance with strict rules governing their respective melodic lines. Soprano and tenor are each confined to the notes of one triad,* giving each movement its tonal flavor. In the Kyrie the triad is g minor; in the Credo it is e major. The bass and alto voices have much more freedom in their movement, although their lines most often

move stepwise, and they move in tandem, tethered to each other by the interval of a sixth. In this work he relaxes his rules somewhat, perhaps to allow for some personal expression. In fact, he has revised the Credo since the first time we performed this work in 2000, liberating the words from their containment within their own measures. In the *Veni sancte spiritus*, he abandons the rules governing linear movement altogether and honors the Western European heritage of plainchant* with the words grouped rhythmically according to thesis and arsis. All four voices are governed by the same principle: an e minor triad forms the basis for the melody, reinforced by a low E pedal tone in the orchestra. Tonal variety is achieved through the stepwise manipulation of one of the notes in the triad. Sometimes the melody will move to c rather than to b, thereby outlining a C major triad. Other times it will move to d rather than e, creating a G major triad. And sometimes the g of the e minor triad will become an f#, creating a b minor triad.

The Icelandic composer Anna Thorvaldsdóttir wrote *Ad Genua (To the knees)* as a commission by Philadelphia's choral group The Crossing and its director, Donald Nally, in 2016. As described on her website:

Her music is composed as much by sounds and nuances as by harmonies and lyrical material—it is written as an ecosystem of sounds, where materials continuously grow in and out of each other, often inspired in an important way by nature and its many qualities, in particular structural ones, like proportion and flow.

This description of sounds and nuances aptly describes the parts in the string quintet, which employ various effects throughout the work, including bowing with no pitch, bowing with the wooden part of the bow rather than the hairs, saltando,* harmonic overtones, glissandos*, and pizzicatos.* The frequent

iterations of the phrase *I fall* in the poem that she sets, sung by soprano solo, provide inspiration for the choral lines. Following the soloist's declamation of the words *the wild stampede of my fear*, the choral parts imitate each other with the melody's setting of *I fall, I fall, I fall* in increasingly shorter intervals, wonderfully depicting the panic and chaotic thinking inspired by fear. Sometimes the voices enter sequentially in descending halftones of the chromatic* scale. Other times the singers may have a descending glissando* on the word fall. The chorus will also at times echo the soloist, or sing her line for her, or double her line with minor variations. At the end of the work, when the soloist sings the final line of the poem—*I fall to my knees and worship th' eternal music*—the vocal lines pass among themselves the steps of a descending diatonic* scale through its octave to the fifth below, an apt accompaniment to illustrate the final two words. This scale also provides a bookend to complement similar material played by the string quintet early in the piece to accompany the soloist's first completion of her initial line.

Pēteris Vasks, a Latvian born and raised in the USSR, like Pärt, began his compositional career with the aleatoric music* favored at the time. Like Pärt's mass, however, *The fruit of silence*, composed in 2014, shows his transition to a minimalist style of writing. He echoes the simplicity of Mother Teresa's five-line poem with a strophic structure in homophony* wherein each line of the prayer starts similarly to that of the first and then subtly changes through small modifications, first in the accompaniment to the melody and then to the melody itself. With each line, the melody ascends a note higher in expressing the fruit of the action until *peace*, the final result, soars to the highest note of the piece.

Ola Gjeilo, a Norwegian by birth now living in New York City, wrote *Dark Night of the Soul* in 2010, using the text at the suggestion of the Executive Direc-

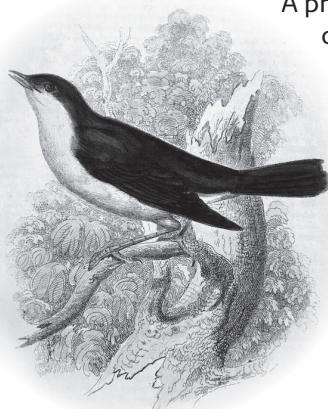
tor of the Phoenix Chorale in Arizona. The work has three parts, with the beginning and ending parts set to a restless ostinato* of arpeggiated* chords played by a piano in a molto-vivace tempo in the irregular meter of 7/8. This accompaniment calls to mind the driving repetitive arpeggios characteristic of some of the music of the well-known minimalist composer Philip Glass. Gjeilo casts his chorus and quintet of string quartet with piano as equal partners in their collaboration. As he writes:

One of the things I wanted to do in this piece was to make the choir and piano fairly equal, as if in a dialogue; often the piano is accompanying the choir, but sometimes the choir is accompanying the piano (or violin) as well, with the choir kind of taking the role of a soft, but rich “string orchestra” texture.

In the middle section, comprised of three different motifs, the mood changes abruptly, with the chorus humming in accompaniment to a chorale*-like treatment in the piano; this chorale* gets taken up towards the end of the section by the chorus, this time accompanied by sustained chords in the strings. The ensuing section following the chorale in the piano contains an accompaniment of arpeggiated* chords in the piano similar to those of the opening, but their mood is tempered by lushly rhapsodic solo vocal lines. Just before the return to the restless energy of the opening material, a final section in 7/4 provides a sense of introspection and freedom suited to the idea of *sheer grace*.

MARY BEEKMAN
Artistic Director

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Glossary of terms

Aleatoric music—according to Werner Meyer-Eppler, the man who coined the term, music characterized as having a course in general but determined by chance in the particulars. Pierre Boulez and Karl-heinz Stockhausen are probably the best known proponents of this style.

Arpeggio—a melody made up of the notes in a chord played in succession rather than simultaneously. The adjectival form is “arpeggiated.”

Chorale—originally defined as a melody for church, it has come to be known also as including the harmonization of the melody. Bach wrote many chorales in this manner.

Diatonic—an adjective used to describe a major or minor scale.

Chromatic—in Western European music a diatonic* scale will be composed of the specific arrangement of five whole steps and two half steps. In a chromatic scale, all twelve half tones between octaves are used.

Glissando—sliding through an interval rather than proceeding by step. Trombones provide a wonderful example of glissando.

Homophony—a musical texture in which all voices move at the same time to provide the harmonic movement. Hymns and chorales are illustrations of homophonic texture.

Ostinato—this Latin word for “stubborn” describes a motif, sometimes just one note, that repeatedly continues in one voice, usually the lowest.

Pizzicato—an indication that a string should be plucked rather than intoned with the bow. You usu-

ally hear the bass in a jazz ensemble use pizzicato almost exclusively.

Plainchant—A unison melody that was the earliest form of music in the Christian church and modeled after chants in the Judaic worship tradition. While each European region developed its own melodies for the various parts of Christian worship, these chants were eventually codified into a book known as the *Liber Usualis* at the end of the 19th century. Every text in everyday worship—from liturgy to psalms to hymns—has music specific to it, although some services, like that of Holy Communion, have more than one. Some of the chants, such as *Ubi caritas*, started out as part of an oral tradition that preceded musical notation, such that their exact age is impossible to determine, while others originated later in history.

Saltando—literally “jumping” in Italian, the string player allows the bow to bounce on the string rather than having the bow pressure consistent on the string.

Serialism—the end point of Schönberg’s 12-tone music, which dictated that the notes of the chromatic scale always be played in a particular order. In serialism, every element of the music is similarly controlled in a strict order.

Triad—a chord of two consecutive intervals of thirds vertically stacked to form a fifth. A major triad stacks a minor third on a major third, while a minor triad stacks a major third on a minor third; in both instances the outer notes of the two triads form a perfect fifth. This chord is the basic building block for Western European music from the Baroque to the early 20th century.

TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS

BERLINER MESSE · Arvo Pärt; text from Latin Mass and Pentecostal hymns

I. KYRIE

Kyrie eleison.	Lord, save us.
Christe eleison.	Christ, save us.
Kyrie eleison.	Lord, save us.

II. GLORIA

Gloria in excelsis Deo.	Glory be to God on high.
Et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis.	And on earth peace to men of good will.
Laudamus te, benedicimus te,	We praise you, we bless you,
adoramus te, glorificamus te.	we worship you, we glorify you.
Gratias agimus tibi propter magnam gloriam tuam.	We thank you for your great glory.
Domine Deus, rex coelestis,	Lord God, heavenly King,
Deus Pater omnipotens.	God the Father Almighty.
Domine Fili unigenite,	O Lord, the only begotten Son,
Jesu Christe, Altissime,	Jesus Christ, most high,
Domine Deus, Agnus Dei, Filius Patris.	Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father.
Qui tollis peccata mundi,	Who takes away the sins of the world,
miserere nobis.	have mercy upon us.
Qui tollis peccata mundi,	Who takes away the sins of the world,
suscipe deprecationem nostram.	receive our prayer.
Qui sedes ad dexteram	You who sit at the right hand of
Patris, miserere nobis.	the Father, have mercy upon us.
Quoniam tu solus sanctus, tu solus Dominus,	For you alone are holy, you alone are the Lord,
tu solus Altissimus, Jesu Christe,	you alone are the most high, Jesus Christ,
Cum Sancto Spiritu	With the Holy Spirit
in gloria Dei Patris. Amen.	in the glory of God the Father, Amen.

III. ERSTER ALLELUIAVERS

Alleluia, alleluia.	Alleluia, alleluia.
Emitte Spiritum tuum et creabuntur:	Send forth your spirit, and they shall be created:
et renovabis faciem terrae.	and you will renew the face of the earth.
Alleluia.	Alleluia.

IV. ZWEITER ALLELUIAVERS

Alleluia, alleluia.	Alleluia, alleluia.
Veni Sancte Spiritus	Come, Holy Spirit,
reple tuorum corda fidelium:	fill the hearts of your faithful
et tui amoris in eis ignem accende.	and kindle in them the fire of your love.
Alleluia.	Alleluia.

V. VENI SANCTE SPIRITUS

Veni Sancte Spiritus,
et emitte caelitus lucis tuae radium.
Veni, pater pauperum,
Veni, dator munerum,
Veni, lumen cordium.
Consolator optime,
dulcis hospes anime,
dulce refrigerium.
In labore requies,
in aestu temperies,
in fletu solatium.
O lux beatissima,
reple cordis intima tuorum fidelium.
Sine tuo numine nihil est in homine,
nihil est innoxium.
Lava, quod est sordidum,
riga, quod est aridum,
sana, quod est saucium.
Flecte, quod est rigidum,
fove, quod est frigidum,
rege, quod est devium.
Da tuis fidelibus in te confidentibus
sacrum septenarium.
Da virtutis meritum,
da salutis exitum,
da perenne gaudium.
Amen. Alleluia.

VI. CREDO

Credo in unum Deum, Patrem
omnipotentem, factorem coeli
et terrae, visibilium omnium et invisibilium.
Et in unum Dominum, Jesum Christum,
Filium Dei unigenitum,
et ex Patre natum ante omnia saecula,
Deum de Deo, lumen de lumine,
Deum verum de Deo vero,
genitum, non factum, consubstantiale
Patri, per quem omnia facta sunt,
qui propter nos homines
et propter nostram salutem descendit de coelis.
Et incarnatus est de Spiritu Sancto
ex Maria virgine, et homo factus est.

Come, Holy Spirit,
and send forth the heavenly ray of your light.
Come, father of the poor,
Come, giver of rewards,
Come, light of hearts.
Best comforter,
sweet guest of the soul,
sweet refreshment.
Rest in labor,
mildness in heat,
solace in grief.
O most blessed light,
fill the innermost hearts of your faithful.
Without your will there is nothing in man,
nothing is innocent.
Cleanse what is filthy,
water what is parched,
heal what is wounded,
bend what is inflexible,
warm what is chilled,
correct what has gone astray.
Give your faithful, who trust in you,
the sevenfold gift.
Give virtue's reward,
Give salvation's end,
Give joy eternal.
Amen. Alleluia.

I believe in one God, Father
Almighty, maker of heaven
and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.
And in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only begotten Son of God,
begotten of the Father before all worlds,
God of God, light of light,
true God of true God,
begotten, not made, being of one substance
with the Father by whom all things were made:
who for us humans
and for our salvation came down from heaven.
And was incarnate by the Holy Ghost
of the Virgin Mary, and was made man.

Crucifixus etiam pro nobis sub
Pontio Pilato, passus et sepultus est.
Et resurrexit tertia die
secundum scripturas,
et ascendit in coelum,
sedet ad dexteram Patris,
et iterum venturus est
cum gloria judicare vivos
et mortuos,
cujus regni non erit finis.
Et in Spiritum Sanctum,
Dominum et vivificantem,
qui ex Patre Filioque procedit,
qui cum Patre et Filio
simul adoratur et conglorificatur,
qui locutus est per prophetas.
Et unam sanctam catholicam
et apostolicam Ecclesiam.
Confiteor unum baptismum
in remissionem peccatorum.
Et expecto resurrectionem
mortuorum et vitam
venturi saeculi. Amen.

VII. SANCTUS

Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus,
Dominus Deus Sabaoth.
Pleni sunt coeli et terra gloria tua.
Hosanna in excelsis.
Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini.
Hosanna in excelsis.

VIII. AGNUS DEI

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,
miserere nobis.
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,
dona nobis pacem.

And was crucified also under
Pontius Pilate, suffered, and was buried.
And on the third day he rose again
according to the Scriptures,
and ascended into heaven,
and sits at the right hand of the Father:
and he shall come again
with glory to judge both the living
and the dead;
whose kingdom shall have no end.
And in the Holy Ghost,
the Lord and Giver of Life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son
together is worshipped and glorified,
who spoke through the Prophets.
And in one holy catholic
and apostolic Church.
I acknowledge one baptism
for the remission of sins.
And I look for the resurrection
of the dead, and the life
of the world to come. Amen.

Holy, holy, holy,
Lord God of hosts.
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest!
Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest!

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,
give us peace.



AD GENUA (TO THE KNEES) · *Anna Thorvaldsdóttir; text by Guðrún Eva Mínervudóttir*
(born 1976)

I fall to my knees
I fall
I fall
I fall
to my knees and
ask forgiveness for
lazy thoughts,
unseemly hunger
and
the beautiful, wild stampede of my fear

I fall to my knees
I fall
I fall
I fall
to my knees and into
the dark haze
of the purple, innocent sky
I fall deep into the sky and beg
for clarity,
true satisfaction
and union of the soul

I give myself up
I give
I give up

I fall to my knees
I fall
I fall
I fall
to my knees and worship
the eternal music



THE FRUIT OF SILENCE · *Peteris Vasks; text by Mother Teresa (1910–1997)*

The fruit of silence is prayer.
The fruit of prayer is faith.
The fruit of faith is love.
The fruit of love is service.
The fruit of service is peace.

*

DARK NIGHT OF THE SOUL · *Ola Gjeilo; text by St. John of the Cross (1542–1591)*

One dark night,
fired with love's urgent longings
—ah, the sheer grace!—
I went out unseen,
my house being now all stilled.

In darkness, and secure,
by the secret ladder, disguised,
—ah, the sheer grace!—
in darkness and concealment,
my house being now all stilled.

On that glad night,
in secret, for no one saw me,
nor did I look at anything,
with no other light or guide,
than the one that burned in my heart.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

From a choral repertoire spanning five centuries, Musica Sacra performs works both familiar and rare, with a crisp passion that awakens the listener to yearnings and joys, sorrows and delights—all that defines and inspires the best in human lives.

Since 1959, Musica Sacra has been performing choral music with the highest standards of musical excellence and a sound that has been called “breathtaking” and “uncommonly fresh and direct.” Mary Beekman, Artistic Director since 1979, continues to thrill Musica Sacra’s singers and audiences with a unique, varied, and engaging repertoire.

Musica Sacra is a non-profit organization funded by the generous donations of its supporters and in part by grants from the Massachusetts Cultural Council and the Inavale Foundation.

MARY BEEKMAN holds a BA in music from Harvard University and an MM from the New England Conservatory of Music, where she focused on Baroque Performance Practice. She has directed the Harvard-Radcliffe Graduate Chorale, the Concord Madrigals, Chorus pro Musica, and, as Interim Choirmaster, the Harvard University Choir. Her teachers include John

Ferris, Donald Teeters, Lorna Cooke deVaron, and Richard Pittman, and she has worked with Robert Shaw, Robert Fountain, Anton Armstrong, and Andre Thomas. In addition to her work with Musica Sacra, she is the Music Director of the Belmont Open Sings and on the faculty of the Powers Music School. Musica Sacra’s performance of Lassus’ *Cum essem parvulus* under her direction was selected for the *Norton Anthology of Music*.

TERRY HALCO is active as an accompanist, organist and singer in the Boston area. He received his musical training at Baldwin-Wallace College in Ohio and the New England Conservatory. Mr. Halco is the accompanist for Chorus pro Musica and the choruses of the University of Massachusetts Boston. He is currently Director of Music at Harvard-Epworth Methodist Church in Cambridge, and has been the Music Director at Payson Park Church in Belmont, First Presbyterian Church in Brookline, and Christ Lutheran Church in Belmont. He has been the accompanist for the Emerson College Chorale and the Simmons College Chorale, with which he toured England and Puerto Rico. He has also performed with the Tanglewood Festival Chorus and Capella Alamire.

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The list below reflects contributions received during the year before October 1, 2022.

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Isabelle Beekman

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Christopher & Esther Pullman
Ruth & David Rose
Michael & Priscilla Savage
Andrew Warner & Julie Neuspel
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Sarah & Charles Weeks
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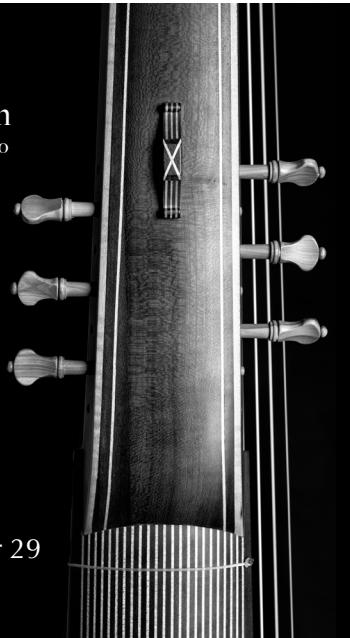
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