

New Perspectives in Fifteenth- and Sixteenth-Century Music Notations



Leuven, Alamire Foundation – Park Abbey, 4–6 May 2022

Brussels, KBR (Royal Library of Belgium), 7 May 2022



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New Perspectives in Fifteenth- and Sixteenth-Century Music Notations

2022 marks the eightieth anniversary of the publication of Willi Apel's *The Notation of Polyphonic Music, 900–1600*, a landmark in early music research that even today remains the standard reference book for scholars interested in deciphering early polyphonic notations. This conference addresses music notations from a more limited time period—the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries—aiming to address a wide range of different perspectives that go beyond simply how the music should be transcribed, from the history and theory of notation to performance practice and beyond. It considers different types of notation and their interactions, from monophonic chant notation to polyphonic mensural notation. By engaging with these different perspectives, the conference seeks to advance scholarship and to set the groundwork for future research in a long-established and newly animated field.

Convener

Paul Kolb (Alamire Foundation, KU Leuven)

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David Burn (Alamire Foundation, KU Leuven), Marie-Alexis Colin (Université libre de Bruxelles), Barbara Hagg-Huglo (University of Maryland), Paul Kolb, Katelijne Schiltz (Universität Regensburg), Thomas Schmidt (University of Manchester)

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PROGRAM

Wednesday 4 May

13:00-14:00 Registration

14:00-14:15 Opening

14:15-15:45 Chant Repertories (Chair: Miriam Wendling)

Barbara Hagg-Huglo (University of Maryland), “The Notation of Du Fay’s Chants for the Office *Tenebre diffugiunt*: Some Editorial Problems”

Henry Drummond (Alamire Foundation, KU Leuven), “Sung Liturgy at Sint-Catharinadal: Revision and Reuse in the Early Modern Low Countries”

Spyridon Antonopoulos (City, University of London), “Notating Modulation according to the Treatise of Manuel Chrysaphes”

15:45-16:15 Coffee

16:15-17:45 Accidentals and Proportions (Chair: David Burn)

Sam Bradley (Boston University), “Phantoms of the Opera Omnia”

Peter Urquhart (University of New Hampshire), “Just How Necessary are Accidentals, c. 1500?”

Brett Kostrzewski (Boston University), “Simultaneous versus Successive? The Horizontal Notation of Proportional Relationships, ca. 1500”

18:00 Keynote I (introduced by Paul Kolb)

Margaret Bent (All Souls College, Oxford), “Notational Translation, Notational Revision”

19:00 Opening reception (Brasserie De Abdijmolen)

20:30 Cappella Pratensis Concert (Park Abbey Church)

Thursday 5 May

9:30-11:30 Rethinking Canons (Chair: Fabrice Fitch)

Jason Stoessel (University of New England, AU), “The Poetics of Mensural and Proportional Canons: Perspectives from North Italian Visual Culture, c.1480–c.1520”

Guillaume Bunel (Sorbonne Université), “The Poetic ‘Canons’ of Jean Molinet (1435–1507): Literary Amusements and Musical Notation in the Works of a *Grand Rhétoriqueur*”

Katelijne Schiltz (Universität Regensburg), “‘Ut cancer’: Retrograde Techniques between Notation and Sound”

Adam Knight Gilbert (University of Southern California), “Heard but Not Seen but Not Heard: Hidden Canon in Fifteenth-Century Song and Mass”

11:30-12:00 Coffee

12:00-13:00 Fifteenth-century English Polyphony (Chair: Nicholas Bleisch)

Philippa Ovenden (Sheffield), “Music Notation and Compositional Grammar in Leonel Power’s *Gloria*”

Kalina Tomova (Bulgarian Academy of Sciences), “New Solution to the Notation of the Carol *Alma redemptoris mater* from Trinity Roll, Cambridge”

13:00-14:00 Lunch

14:00-15:00 Obrecht’s *Missa Scaramella* Reconstructed (Chair: Katelijne Schiltz)

Fabrice Fitch (Royal Conservatoire of Scotland) with Paul Kolb (Alamire Foundation, KU Leuven), “Work in Progress: On Reconstructing Enigmatic Canons in Obrecht’s *Missa Scaramella*”

Featuring a performance by Park Collegium of selected movements from the reconstructed mass

15:00 Keynote II (introduced by David Burn)

Emily Zazulia (University of California, Berkeley), “What Kind of Thing is Musical Notation? Views from the Fifteenth Century”

16:00-16:30 Coffee

16:30-18:00 Canons and Notational Image (Chair: Paul Kolb)

Thomas Schmidt (University of Manchester), “Shapes in Space: On Ligatures as Visual Devices”

Julie E. Cumming (McGill University), “Chant Paraphrase Canons in the *Choralis Constantinus*: Notational Complexity, or Improvised Polyphony?”

Zoe Saunders (Paris), “Creative Canonic Notations and Notational Anomalies in the Alamire Choirbook Montserrat, Biblioteca del monestir, Ms. 766”

19:00 Conference dinner (Brasserie De Abdijmolen)

Friday 6 May

9:30-11:30 Music Printing (Chair: Thomas Schmidt)

John Milsom (Liverpool Hope University), “Music Typesetting and Musical Intelligence”

Bernhold Schmid (Munich), “Proofreading for Orlando di Lasso’s *Magnum Opus Musicum* (Munich: Nicolaus Heinrich, 1604)”

Royston Gustavson (Australian National University), “Notational Practice in the Workshop of Christian Egenolff”

Louisa Hunter-Bradley (Royal Holloway, University of London), “Choirbooks, Notation, and Type Commission: Plantin’s Nod to the Manuscript Tradition”

11:30-12:00 Coffee

12:00-13:00 Beyond Vocal Notation I (Chair: Antonio Chemotti)

John Griffiths (University of Melbourne), “The Alphanumeric Sixteenth Century: Tablature Reassessed”

Eric Thomas (University of Huddersfield), “‘Oral Residue’ in the *ricercari* of the Petrucci Lutenists (1507-1511)”

13:00-14:00 Lunch

14:00-15:30 Beyond Vocal Notation II (Chair: Adam Knight Gilbert)

Kateryna Schöning (Universität Wien), “Letter Tablatures and Diastematic Thinking in Instrumental Music, Ex Tempore Practice within the Tablature Notation”

Augusta Campagne (Universität für Musik und darstellende Kunst, Vienna), “Musical Typoglycemia: Filling in Missing Gaps in Italian Keyboard Parts Meant for Accompanying”

Adam Bregman (University of Southern California), “Song and Dance: The Notation of the *basse danse* in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries”

15:30-16:00 Coffee

16:00-18:00 Cultural/Notational Transfer and Reception (Chair: Henry Drummond)

Antonio Chemotti (Alamire Foundation, KU Leuven / KBR), “Correcting Correct Books: Handwritten Emendations in a Copy of Valentin Triller’s Hymnbook”

Paul G. Feller (Northwestern University), “Sacred Music, Indigenous Agency, and the Missionaries’ Present Absence in the Late Sixteenth-century Guatemalan Highlands”

William Watson (Washington, DC), “Sweet Hallucinations of an English Rose”

Warwick Edwards (University of Glasgow), “The Great Word–Note Shift”

20:30 Ratas del viejo mundo Concert (Park Abbey Church)

Saturday 7 May

10:00-11:30 Theoretical Interpretations of Notation (Chair:
Barbara Hagg-Huglo)

Bernadette Nelson (CESEM/FCSH, Nova University, Lisbon),
“Merely an Abstraction? or Three into Two Won’t Go: The ‘tres
breves negros’ of Josquin and Morales in Iberian Treatises and
Further Symbolism”

Giacomo Pirani (Università di Pavia, Cremona), “Music Notations
and Monastic Reform in Johannes Gallicus’ *Ritus canendi*”

Luigi Collarile and Johannes Keller (Schola Cantorum Basiliensis
FHNW, Basel), “Nicola Vicentino’s Vision: Context and
Challenges of His Chromatic–Enharmonic Notation”

11:30-13:00 Break for lunch

13:00-15:00 Private exhibition at the KBR (Antonio Chemotti
and Ann Kelders)

ABSTRACTS

Notating Modulation according to the Treatise of Manuel Chrysaphes

Spyridon Antonopoulos

Manuel Chrysaphes (fl. 1440–1470) was Byzantium’s last *lampadarios*, a director of the palatine chapel choir under John VIII and Constantine XI Palaiologos, and one of the most important composers, scribes, and music theorists of the Palaiologan period. His oeuvre includes over three hundred compositions from simple psalmody to virtuosic kalophonic chant, as many as five autographed manuscripts, and the treatise, *On the Theory of the Art of Chanting*. Completed in 1458, the treatise consists of three sections: an introduction, in which the theorist reveals his purported motivations for authoring the treatise (“to correct the erroneous views certain people have on the psaltic art”); an exposition on the art of composition, in which Chrysaphes argues that the melody resides not in the notated neumes but in their specific arrangement into melodic *theseis* (the building blocks of Byzantine chants); and a lengthy exposition on the *phthorai* (lit: “corruptors”), those symbols of modal modulation which were written in cinnabar and proliferated in musical manuscripts of Late Byzantium. In this last section, Chrysaphes describes the system of modulation according to the eight modes, along with “best practices” for utilizing the *phthorai* in the composition of Byzantine psalmody. Crucially, this handbook cites dozens of specific chants as models, primarily kalophonic (florid, melismatic) chants by some of the most celebrated composers of Late Byzantium, including John Koukouzeles, John Kladas, Xenos Korones, and Chrysaphes himself. This paper will describe the theory of modulation expounded by Chrysaphes in his treatise and, for the first time, provide transcriptions of selected compositions cited in the treatise. The transcriptions and analysis of these compositions will serve to highlight one prominent fifteenth-century musician’s conception of well-composed Byzantine chant. More importantly, the paper aims to demonstrate the dialectic

between theory and practice and the role of notation itself in the establishment of authority in elite, intellectual circles in the Byzantine East.

Phantoms of the Opera Omnia

Sam Bradley

In this paper, I coin the term “phantom accidentals,” which concerns signature-style sharps, naturals, or flats that appear in a single voice part, and disappear on the next staff. I consider such ephemeral partial signatures to be “phantoms” when the staves they appear on have no pitches that would be affected by the signature (for example, in a piece with a no-flat signature, a “phantom” B-flat would appear for a single staff in, say, the Altus part, but that staff would have no instances of the pitch-class B). Firstly, such phantom accidentals are not only extraneous musical notation, but are literally meaningless, and arguably even defy meaning, which surely is strange in the context of a notational practice of providing the barest notation necessary to make performance possible. But secondly, a surprising number of the phantom accidentals I have found seem as though they are intended to alter pitches found in other voice parts, and found their way into the wrong line somehow. This is also peculiar, as the two predominating notational formats (parts, in either choirbook or partbook, and to a much lesser extent, scores) seem equally unlikely to invite such errors. A format that could explain such accidentals, however, is the ten- or eleven-line composer’s staff, for which some examples survive. I will argue that the presence of such phantom flats may suggest that some repertoire may have circulated among scribes in this format.

Song and Dance: The Notation of the *basse danse* in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries

Adam Bregman

The shifting notational styles used for music of the *basse danse*—the preeminent courtly pastime of the late Middle Ages and early Renaissance in France and Burgundy—tell us a great deal about its evolution over the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Sparse indications in source materials have made the interpretation of the musical notation for the dance difficult at times for modern scholars and performers. Recent research into the genre—related to a forthcoming facsimile publication of Brussels Royal Library MS 9085, Margaret of Austria’s *basse-danse* manuscript—has revealed, however, that the monophonic, isometric dance notation, complemented by the choreographic tablature, expresses much more than a simple preservation of a bygone artform. It tells the story of a dance that did not restrict itself to a singular mode of performance during its lifetime. Nor did its music exist in a vacuum, unrelated to other contemporary musical repertoires: Several of the surviving dance tenors have been linked to polyphonic and monophonic song tenors, as well as to derivative polyphonic settings.

In a recent article on the fifteenth-century *basse danse*, David Fallows commented that there is no reason to doubt the relationship between the songs and dance tenors that share common titles, “But the *basse danse* repertory fails to offer information about the polyphonic songs except in hinting at the further distribution and success of those songs. It also seems likely that the polyphonic songs tell us almost nothing about the dances derived from them.” This paper responds to Fallows’ view, showing that much can be learned from the polyphonic songs whose tenors became dance tunes, and vice versa, by exploring the meter and rhythms that animate the dance, as well as the modes in which the melodies were disseminated.

In sum, this paper analyzes the notation of the *basse-danse* repertory with three goals in sight: 1) To show that the songs from which certain tenors were derived have more to teach us about the dance; 2) to trace the evolution of a dance that enjoyed a rich life of

performance that was anything but static; and 3) to argue that the music of the *basse danse* was not merely “further distribution” of specific successful songs but, rather, another form of expression of Franco-Burgundian musical artistry.

The Poetic “Canons” of Jean Molinet (1435–1507): Literary Amusements and Musical Notation in the Works of a *Grand Rhétoriqueur*

Guillaume Bunel

Among the French poets known as *grands rhétoriqueurs*, Jean Molinet stands out for the number of accurate references to music in his poetic work, for his closeness to several leading composers of the time (notably Johannes Ockeghem, Antoine Busnoys, Loyset Compere), and for the occasional use of signs borrowed from musical notation in some rebus-poems.

The *Faictz et dictz*, the major collection of Molinet’s poetic works, also include seven short poems labelled as “canons”, which function similarly to musical canons of the time. Like the latter, these poems are accompanied by inscriptions that specify, in a deliberately obscure form, the “rule” (*canon*, in the etymological sense) of the poem’s arrangement. Some manuscript sources of these poems contain cryptic notations, which the reader is expected to complete. Until today, those unique notations have aroused very little interest from critics. In addition to an obvious proximity to versified canons found in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century musical works, Molinet’s canons employ some of the characteristic compositional procedures of the musical language of the period: repetitions, retrograde movement, possibility of alternative readings. Certain notational features are also shared by these poems and by contemporary musical works: inverted notations, written resolutions. Actively involving the reader, and allowing for unusual and open-ended modes of reading, they constitute a unique synthesis of verbal and musical notation, drawing ingeniously on the vast array of notational and compositional techniques of the late fifteenth-century court arts.

Musical Typoglycemia: Filling in Missing Gaps in Italian Keyboard Parts Meant for Accompanying

Augusta Campagne

In the second half of the sixteenth century, specific parts for keyboard players to accompany from started to appear in Italy. These parts could be either just bass lines, parts in choir-book layout, intabulations in keyboard tablature, open scores or short scores. Unfortunately, none of these notations is complete; many blanks need to be filled in to produce an idiomatic accompaniment and each manner of notating has its advantages and disadvantages and carries different kinds of implicit information. As shown by phenomena such as typoglycemia or crossword puzzles, the brain is capable of filling in such gaps, provided we have the right expectations and knowledge about the context. One of the methods our brain uses is chunking, breaking down the information into smaller units and putting them together into a meaningful whole. This method can also help to fill the gaps and blanks found in musical notations in the keyboard parts. Recently Elam Rotem and I published *Keyboard Accompaniment in Italy around 1600* where we examined intabulations, short and open scores, and basso continuo parts. Using the material from our publication, I will show that by identifying and extracting some exemplary chunks, it is possible to create a context to fill in some of the blanks in the various kinds of notation. In opposition to the general belief that basso continuo notation is something completely new and should be approached in a different manner, I argue that an idiomatic accompaniment is not necessarily dependent on the kind of notation and that, by chunking information, it is possible to fill in some of the gaps.

Correcting Correct Books: Handwritten Emendations in a Copy of Valentin Triller's Hymnbook

Antonio Chemotti

For literary scholars and book historians, handwritten annotations in early modern books are a well-established research field, fuelled by

an ongoing interest in the history and materiality of reading. This paper seeks to offer a small contribution towards mapping the practice of annotating printed music sources, focussing on a copy of Valentin Triller's hymnbook (pub. 1555) that was heavily annotated c. 40 years after its publication. Mistakes were a frequent occurrence in the process of printing music and handwritten interventions that rectify blatant errors are not uncommon. In this paper I will focus on slightly different sorts of emendations, those made by a scribe who corrected readings that seem, in fact, perfectly right. By investigating his *modus operandi*, I seek to understand his dissatisfaction with the music as it was edited and notated in the print, revealing his scribal preferences and the changing meanings of notational signs.

Nicola Vicentino's Vision: Context and Challenges of His Chromatic–Enharmonic Notation

Luigi Collarile and Johannes Keller

How to graphically represent a new and extended range of intervals is a fundamental question in the complex musical vision (“*prattica musicale*”) described by Nicola Vicentino in his treatise *L'antica musica ridotta alla moderna prattica* (Rome 1555). The first part of this paper examines specific aspects of Vicentino's notation. The elements he used were not invented *ex novo* but are the result of improvement and resemantisation of existing notational practices. Vicentino's effort to create a differentiated representation of a highly complex pitch system clearly distinguishes him within the theoretical and musical landscape of his time. The notational solutions proposed by Lusitano, Danckerts, Zarlino and other music theorists to representing intervals of the chromatic and enharmonic genus reveal a substantially different approach.

Working with reconstructions of Vicentino's keyboard instruments (the *arciorgano* and the *archicembalo* with 31 or 36 keys per octave) force the modern-day “users” of those instruments to renegotiate the relationship between note names, musical notation, key names and actual sounding pitch. The second part of this paper presents Vicentino's approach to these concepts and reflects on its

implications. This includes a critical comparison with conventional contemporary Western music notation and theory, exposing certain limitations which challenge the application of popular strategies for digital music notation, such as MEI (“music encoding initiative”).

Luigi Collarile and Johannes Keller, both fellows of the ongoing research project Vicentino21 (Schola Cantorum Basiliensis FHNW) share their state-of-the-art perspective on Nicola Vicentino’s highly microtonal approach to polyphonic music notation.

Chant Paraphrase Canons in the *Choralis Constantinus*: Notational Complexity, or Improvised Polyphony?

Julie E. Cumming

Katelijne Schiltz identified twenty-five canons in Volume II of Isaac’s *Choralis Constantinus* (*Musik-Konzepte*, 2010), each of them a section of a larger chant setting. Seven of them are two-voice canons based on chant at the time interval of a semibreve. These chant-paraphrase canons can be improvised, by paraphrasing the chant melody so that it conforms to the rules of stretto fuga (a canon at a short time interval, first identified and discussed by John Milsom) for the canon’s pitch interval of imitation. Was this a labour-saving device, or evidence of compositional virtuosity?

The process of paraphrasing the chant to create a two-voice canon is relatively simple, as I will show. However, many other compositional issues remain to be solved. Which voices carry the chant melody, at what pitch levels, in relation to the final of the composition as a whole? What are the strategies for composing the non-canonic voices? These issues are complex, resulting in an impressive variety of approaches. The notation of the canonic voices in the *Choralis Constantinus* print is also varied, using both specific indications of the pitch interval of the canon, or a custos to show the first pitch of the comes. Examination of these brief canonic sections provides new insight into Isaac’s compositional process.

Sung Liturgy at Sint-Catharinadal: Revision and Reuse in the Early Modern Low Countries

Henry T. Drummond

This paper will examine the revision of liturgical chant manuscripts at a single Premonstratensian house in the Low Countries, with focus on a period of religious upheaval in the seventeenth century. Sint-Catharinadal, founded in Vroenhout in 1271 for a community of sisters, had a difficult history. From its founding until the seventeenth century, the house relocated several times: first to Breda, and then to its present location in Oosterhout. During this period, its chant books also underwent substantial revision. Its surviving manuscript sources that contain music for the Divine Office show textual and notation changes that accord with later publications of the Premonstratensian antiphoner; however, unlike manuscripts from neighbouring Premonstratensian houses these revisions are partial and at times inconsistent. Taking stock of the surviving collection of sources preserved at Sint-Catharinadal, this paper will show how the process of revising older chant sources was a gradual, complicated, and at times non-linear process. The rationale behind this partial revision will be questioned, and the practical use of these sources in the celebration of the Divine Office considered. What emerges is a location-specific and context-dependent picture of chant sources, where older and newer notation styles could coexist despite the calls for conformity and consistency that became ever more prominent in the early modern period.

The Great Word-Note Shift

Warwick Edwards

The Great Word–Note Shift occurs rather suddenly around the mid-fifteenth century and on several different levels. At its most visible it takes the form of a change in the order with which the words and notes of “figured” music are usually copied. Before the GWNS, words are generally copied before their associated notes; afterwards, it is music-first, by and large. The shift is well-known to students of

fifteenth-century notation, but to my knowledge has yet to be investigated systematically and explained.

On probing the phenomenon, it quickly becomes evident that the change is symptomatic of a far more significant shift just below the surface. Namely, a move away from the assumption that each note or group of notes belongs to a specific syllable and needs ideally to be positioned on the page accordingly. After the GWNS the manner in which words are set out in relation to notes implies a quite different set of values. There are some exceptions entailing the continued copying of words and music in the traditional way, notably in the field of chant and to some extent also in the notation of English polyphony. But in general, this is a shift whose effects are set to last well into the sixteenth century.

This upheaval is symptomatic, in turn, of yet another a shift that is taking place at a deeper level still. Among its witnesses are Martin Le Franc, writing around 1440 on a “novel practice” (*une nouvelle pratique*) in music, and Johannes Tinctoris on a “new art” (*ars nova*) of composition, datable in his view to around forty years before publication of his book on the art of counterpoint, *Liber de arte contrapuncti* (c.1477). It is no accident that this perceived shift arrives at the same time as changing ideas on music’s position in the liberal arts expressed through its transfer from the quadrivium to the trivium. What this means for the relationship between words and music is the release of an underlying tension that can be traced back to the thirteenth century and the emergence of the idea that certain kinds of polyphonic music are measurable. It soon leads to the rhythms of sung words having to adapt to the rigidities of mensurally notated music. With the GWNS, this challenge is at last side-stepped, for in its aftermath words can take their chance. Music has by now reached such a state of perfection that, as Hans Ott puts it, writing on Josquin as late as 1538, it has the power to express what words alone cannot.

The aftershocks following the GWNS do not last for ever, however. The beginnings of a “modern” approach to setting out words and their notes on the page can be seen most readily in printed publications from the late 1510s onwards, especially in Germany. But it is not until around 1540 the composers themselves begin to

make explicit acknowledgement of what might be characterised as music's obligation to words. The GWNS is a massive earthquake indeed.

Localized Notational Practices, Indigenous Agency, and the Missionaries' Present Absence in the Late Sixteenth-century Guatemalan Highlands

Paul G. Feller

Indiana University's Lilly Library preserves a collection of fourteen music manuscripts that were presumably produced within the Huehuetenango region of Guatemala between the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. This musical corpus and its inscribed notational practices constitute a rare example of cultural transfer within peripheral institutions of the Spanish Empire that displays a negotiation between indigenous and colonizing idiosyncrasies. Scattered textual annotations in Nahuatl and Spanish reveal that these sources were produced in three rather isolated villages by several, possibly Maya music directors (*maestros*). The manuscripts also contain unique polyphonic pieces in Spanish and various local dialects whose notations betray an exemplary case of colonial hybridity due to their peculiarities and their conservatism. The scant information provided by the sources and a lack of cohesive contemporary data, however, have contributed to a scholarly approach to the Huehuetenango repertory that interprets its notational quirks either as scribal mistakes or as markers of mediocrity.

This paper weighs evidence concerning the production of the Huehuetenango manuscripts, building upon fragmentary contemporary documentation and palaeographical analysis. This presentation will argue that the notational practices in these collections resulted from a situation wherein different Maya groups gained an unforeseen degree of agency after the Dominicans handed control of the region over to the Mercedarians. In a scenario of decreasing missionary activity, the local chapel-masters increasingly assumed many of the friars' functions as well as the task of

preserving European and locally made musical pieces. The palaeographic analysis will suggest that the manuscripts crystallize a collective endeavor that privileged both conservatism and the adaptation to local linguistic and performative needs. Scribal oddities are thus understood as traces of locality rather than mere “errors.” In this way, the musical and textual notations in the Huehuetenango manuscripts frame the sources as complex multimedia objects that channel a performative effort of identity negotiation in a colonial context.

Work in Progress: On Reconstructing Enigmatic Canons in Obrecht’s *Missa Scaramella* Fabrice Fitch (with Paul Kolb)

The fragmentary *Missa Scaramella* by Jacob Obrecht survives uniquely in two of an original set of four part-books (Berlin, Former Preußische Staatsbibliothek, Ms. Mus. 40634 (now in Kraków, Biblioteka Jagiellońska). For some time I had been working on the reconstruction of the missing discantus and tenor parts with the late Philip Weller (†2018). In the process, and more recently with the collaboration of Paul Kolb, it has been possible to identify and reconstruct a couple of enigmatic canons for the Credo. In this paper we report on these discoveries, setting out the bases for our hypotheses, which include a proposed reconstruction of the notation of the tenor and matching canonic inscriptions. Although there are precedents for the notation that Obrecht would most likely have chosen, few if any can boast the elegance and compositional sophistication of what we can confidently propose as his solutions (particularly in the case of the “Patrem”). The presentation will be illustrated with performances of the relevant sections, including a reconstruction of the discantus.

Heard but Not Seen but Not Heard: Hidden Canon in Fifteenth-Century Song and Mass

Adam Knight Gilbert

As Katelijne Schiltz has documented, compositions like the anonymous *Averte oculos/Avertissiés vostre doulx euil* employ canonic riddles and unusual notational features to indicate ways in which notation could be altered for symbolic effect. This paper builds on this scholarship and a rich compositional tradition to focus on two other aspects of canon in fifteenth-century counterpoint: two elements not indicated on the page, and not necessarily even heard in the composition as performed, but that nonetheless reflect essential aspects of the compositional process, and—in the process—reveal hidden canonic elements.

The first of these is the element of solmization. Although usually limited to the pedagogical contexts of *musica practica* and notation of contrapuntal intervals, singers and composers could simultaneously read, perform, and communicate through notated pitches and their solmized vocables. Applying solmization to anonymous chansons in the manuscript Escorial IV.a.24 and in Ockeghem's *Missa Quinti toni* reveals extensive solmization palindromes, especially those that radiate outward from common points of mutation. Perhaps this should be no surprise considering that the songs in EscB set texts about fickle Fortune, and that *Missa Quinti toni* ends with a symbolic statement of the incremental *voces musicales* that is itself an extended melodic palindrome.

The second element is that of retrograde and retrograde-inversion canons concealed within single voices of counterpoint. These are passages in which a single voice—when reduced to its simplest scaffolding of pitch—can be performed against its retrograde or retrograde-inversion creating perfect two-voice counterpoint. In the works of Ockeghem and Josquin, such passages can extend beyond 30 pitches, revealing striking patterns built around central “crux” motives found at the center of notated retrograde canons. These procedures can be traced from the works of Binchois and Dufay, play a major role in Ockeghem's chansons and

Missa Quinti toni, and pervade Josquin's *Missa L'ami baudichon*, and offer insight into the development of pervasive imitation.

These hidden solmization palindromes and single-voice canons exemplify the rich tradition of riddle culture found in fifteenth-century song. In the first case, notation conceals an aural literacy linked to sounding out or voicing the notes on the page. The second conceals hidden canon heard only by the composer crafting the contrapuntal voices, before obscuring them in the final notated product. Both traditions illustrate concepts fundamental to fifteenth-century Dionysian and Cusan theology: the concept of a bridge between the senses, and the paradoxical dance between concealment and revelation.

The Alphanumeric Sixteenth Century: Tablature Reassessed

John Griffiths

To coincide with the eightieth anniversary of Willi Apel's *The Notation of Polyphonic Music*, 2022 will see the publication of the first substantial study of tablature notation in early modern Europe since Apel's book. The fruit of a decade's work and the study of thousands of works for close to forty instruments, it extends far beyond the alphanumeric representation of sound that co-existed alongside mensural notation until its demise around the middle of the eighteenth century. This paper seeks to offer new ways of defining tablature, to reconsider its functions, and to propose a revision of the historiography that unconsciously marginalised one of the mainstream notational systems of the renaissance. More specifically, the paper explores the essence of the graphic systems of tablature and proposes numerous terminological changes. Tablature is shown as more than a simple notation for "playing by numbers," instead an alternative way of thinking about music and transmitting it. In a musically bilingual society, tablature was the preferred notation for writing music in score, also the only renaissance notation to incorporate performance-related information that was impossible in conventional notation. The roles of tablature within the notational

mainstream included its use as a compositional tool, for conducting scores, and for the transmission of elite repertoires into the urban sphere.

Notational Practice in the Workshop of Christian Egenolff Royston Gustavson

There has been little study of the notational practice of sixteenth-century music printers. The music editions of Christian Egenolff are ideal for such a study: a majority of his music output is reprinted from earlier known editions and so a direct comparison can be made between the notation of the new edition with that of the source edition. In addition to reprinting some of his own successful titles, Egenolff reprinted several music editions printed by Peter Schöffer the Younger either in full or in part, as well as music printed by Montanus & Neuber, Öglin, Rhau, and Simprecht Ruff.

There are a surprising number of notational changes between some of the editions. For example, Egenolff reprinted his own 1535 *Reutterliedlin* in 1536, and the 1536 edition shows typesetting changes on almost every page. While some changes are corrections, others relate to notational practice. The dotted *minima-semiminima* combination in the 1535 edition is regularly replaced with *minor color* in the 1536 edition; other changes include changing clefs to have fewer stems above the staff. In Egenolff's 1552 reprint of Schöffer's 65 *Lieder* [c.1536], a majority of the notational changes appear to have been made to aid the singer through modernisation of notation (e.g., dissolution of some *minor color* and ligatures) or placement of signs on the page (e.g., reducing leger lines, better consideration of line breaks).

Egenolff printed a comparatively small amount of music—there was less typesetting in his entire music output than in a complete copy of the bible—and all of his known music editions fall into two distinct periods (1532–c.1536 and c.1550–1553) and so consideration is given as to whether his workshop employed only one music typesetter at a time.

The Notation of Du Fay's Chants for the Office *Tenebre diffugiunt*: Some Editorial Problems

Barbara Hagg-Huglo

Guillaume Du Fay composed the chant for the office *Tenebre diffugiunt* in Savoy, but the earliest sources with notation are from the cathedrals of Cambrai and Aosta, and the printed antiphoner of Cambrai of 1508–16 has some readings that diverge from earlier manuscripts. All available sources for the mass propers date from after Du Fay's death. In this presentation, I discuss inaccurate notation in the printed antiphoner and the problem of the notation of melismas by scribes who could no longer draw neumes of chant correctly. One neume, the *scandicus flexus*, is found in the earliest manuscripts with Du Fay's chant, but type for it was not used in the printed antiphoner. Where melismas of responsories only in the printed antiphoner and in much later Aostan sources have significant variants in neumatation, it is difficult if not impossible to know how Du Fay wanted them to be sung. These editorial problems may be evidence of scribes forgetting how to copy chant but could also reflect changes in its performance.

Choirbooks, Notation and Type Commission: Plantin's Nod to the Manuscript Tradition

Louisa Hunter-Bradley

The extant correspondence and archival records of the Officina Plantiniana provide us with our most important clues in reconstructing the history of Christopher Plantin's printing business, and his focus on differentiation and reputation. Plantin sought to create deluxe polyphonic music books for an elite audience. In combining the highest quality of paper with his use of elaborate paratexts, Plantin sought to distinguish his polyphonic music publications from his peers and add to his reputation for works of the highest typographic quality. By providing a comparison of notation between Plantin, his predecessors and his peers, as well as analysing the commission of a new music type by Hendrik van den Keere via

the unique records held at the Plantin-Moretus Museum, I will demonstrate the publisher's desire for clarity and purpose, the value created by the visual presentation of the notation (both symbolic and material) upon Plantin's publications, as well as a clear link to manuscript's influence on the development of Plantin's printed music.

Simultaneous versus Successive? The Horizontal Notation of Proportional Relationships, ca. 1500

Brett Kostrzewski

The question of “simultaneous” versus “successive” mensural relationships has laid at the center of debates about the relationship between proportions and tempo for the last several decades. Simultaneous relationships, when multiple signs or proportions occur in different voices at the same time, are unambiguous: one can empirically determine the proper relationship between the voices insofar as there is inevitably a single correct interpretation. Successive relationships, in which signs or proportions begin in all voices at once, lack such an empirical solution, insofar as nothing in the notation precludes almost any interpretation of the change in tempo that might be indicated. For this reason, consensus states that, at least for performance, the interpretation of successive relationships was, and remains, more flexible than that of simultaneous relationships because the notation does not permit the same empirical verification. The debate, however, has thus far largely ignored the small but significant handful of examples where aspects of notation do in fact argue for a relatively strict observance of successive proportions. Sometimes, a bit of music reappears in a later section or *pars* of the same work, under a different mensuration or proportion but with note values adjusted accordingly. In other cases, a work will appear in different sources with similar adjustments to the mensuration and note values. This paper surveys a number of such cases from the repertoire of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, raising the question of their implications for successive mensural signs in general practice. Combined with

theoretical testimony from Tinctoris, Franchinus Gaffurius, and others, I argue that mensural relationships generally were not interpreted in substantially different ways in successive versus simultaneous contexts.

Music Typesetting and Musical Intelligence

John Milsom

The craft of music typesetting in the sixteenth century remains a surprisingly under-researched subject. To an extent, this is because next to nothing is known about the hundreds of men (and conceivably also women) who typeset the many thousands of polyphonic editions printed from 1501 onwards. Who were these typesetters? Were they musically trained and musically literate? Could they edit as they worked, or did they merely aim to replicate their manuscript copy, whether using metal type or (more rarely) a mix of type and woodblocks? How can we answer those questions, when the manuscript exemplars from which they worked have perished? In this image-rich presentation, I take a broad view of sixteenth-century music typesetting of vocal polyphony, paying close attention to the challenges of aligning music symbols with the syllables of literary text. A sliding scale of outcomes is explored. At one extreme, the typesetter might make little or no attempt to match syllables to notes, leaving it to the singers' intelligence to marry words with music in performance; this approach economised on time at the printing house. At the other extreme, syllables and notes could be very carefully aligned, whether in accordance with the manuscript copy, or through application of the typesetter's own musical intelligence; but this outcome required more effort, more rigorous proofreading, more time, and therefore more financial investment. The techniques used by typesetters to vary the spacings between music symbols will be examined in detail, especially in single-impression editions printed either from founts of standard linear music type, or from the more arcane, complex and versatile technology of so-called "nested" music type, as favoured by some printing houses in northern Europe.

Merely an Abstraction? or Three into Two Won't Go: The “tres breves negros” of Josquin and Morales in Iberian Treatises and Further Symbolism

Bernadette Nelson

The only time Lusitano references a composer in his *Introduitione facilissima* (1553) occurs in the section ‘battuta’ (tactus) where he cites the nine black breves in the tiple of the ‘qui cum patre’ passage in the Credo of Josquin’s *Beata virgine* mass as an example of performing three black breves in imperfect time (i.e. *sesquialtera* proportion). Mention of this passage both here and in his (c. 1560?) MS contrapuntal treatise is presumably indicative of a far wider context in which such notational and indeed performance issues connected with it were familiarly discussed. This discourse later also embraced the “tres breves negros” in the “Christe” of Morales’s *Mille regretz* mass which, by the early seventeenth century, if not much earlier, had become a topic of debate and some dissension, especially among Iberian musicians and theorists apparently hazy about then obsolete notational values. This is particularly witnessed in the “Reposta sobre os tres breves negros de Christovaõ de Morales” included in João Álvares Frouvo’s *Discursos* (Lisbon, 1662), which includes curious scored-up mistaken interpretations of the “offending” passages in the Josquin and Morales. Intriguingly, because of a slightly ambiguous caption given with the Josquin example, Frouvo unwittingly further highlights musical links between them.

This paper looks at the perceived problem of the “three black breves” in the Josquin and Morales masses and at varying solutions offered for their interpretation from the sixteenth century onwards (including today). It also explores ideas relating to possible Trinitarian and Christological symbolism in the Josquin and Morales passages concerning —besides their symbolic use of black breves— thematic choices and links, imitative textures and contrapuntal manipulation.

Music Notation and Compositional Grammar in Leonel Power's *Gloria*

Phillipa Ovenden

On folios 17v–18r of the Old Hall Manuscript is copied a *Gloria* by the English composer Leonel Power (d. 1445). Replete with an array of proportion signs and unique coloration techniques, this composition has been characterised by Margaret Bent as a notational tour de force. The appearance of blue coloration in this composition is particularly noteworthy, since it is not known to have been employed in any other compositions of this period, and is mentioned in only three surviving theoretical sources. These include treatises by the English theorists John Tucke (c. 1500) and John Dygon (1530s), and an anonymous treatise written in Hebrew (early fifteenth century), whose author condones the use of yellow, green and azure coloration. The extraordinary notational complexity of Power's *Gloria* appears at face value to present insurmountable challenges to a performer who wishes to read directly from the manuscript. However, a reassessment of the notation from the perspective of a performer illustrates that the vibrant colors of the piece align closely with important structural moments in the composition, such as cadences. Coloration may thus be seen as a visual aid that helps the reader navigate the contrapuntal structure of this substantial composition. This observation invites us to consider whether notation may be regarded, along with other compositional parameters, as a component of the permanent and habitual faculty of a medieval musician—or, to employ Bent's terminology, their internalised musical “grammar”.

Music Notations and Monastic Reform in Johannes Gallicus' *Ritus canendi*

Giacomo Pirani

Johannes Gallicus' contribution to the philological assessment of pseudo-Guidonian solmisation has been thoroughly investigated by modern scholarly readers of the *Ritus canendi vetustissimus et novus*

(1458–64). His revealing to what degree Guido d’Arezzo’s works were (un)related to the solmisation system has been rightly interpreted as a reflection of the linguistic and cultural legacy of his master, the humanist Vittorino da Feltre. On the other hand, Gallicus’ negative attitude towards mensural polyphony has been considered a consequence of his entering the semi-eremitical Carthusian Order, the firmest in banishing that so-believed “improper” musical practice.

The constructive side of Gallicus’ programme (focused on making music teaching easier and widely available) has enjoyed far less critical attention, having been hastily and generically labelled as “reformist”. Previously un-known or underestimated aspects of the carthusian monk’s life and work illustrate now a much more specific interaction between Gallicus and the political and spiritual milieu of the mid-fifteenth century. The *Ritus canendi* manifesto-like preamble dedicated to pope Pius II and its implicit references to cardinal Nicolaus Cusanus call for a reassessment of Gallicus’ role in the post-conciliarist reform movements that aimed at a change in monastic life, governance, and education.

In terms of music notation, Gallicus’ proposal has been understood by musicologists and philologists as a mere restoration of the alphabetical notation used by Boethius, but, as I would like to point out, Gallicus was sceptical about considering notation a self-standing and universal discipline or “science” at all. My paper will prove that Gallicus’ opinion was consistent with his peculiar epistemology, but radically conflicting with the fifteenth century trend to establish notation (pedagogical as well as mensural) as a proper discipline in schools and universities. Eventually, I will show how downgrading notation allowed Gallicus to handle diverse sets of symbols and notes in the most flexible and imaginative way, and how he repurposed his “soft” or “weak” conception of notation in the context of monastic and ecclesiastic reform.

Creative Canonic Notations and Notational Anomalies in the Alamire Choirbooks Montserrat, Biblioteca del monestir, Ms. 766

Zoe Saunders

The Alamire choirbook Montserrat, Biblioteca del monestir, Ms.766 [MontsM 766] transmits nine complete early sixteenth-century settings of the Mass Ordinary and one polyphonic Kyrie by composers such as Barbireau, Bruhier, Forestier, La Rue, and Pipelare. Two of the masses remain anonymous. The manuscript presents several intriguing notational anomalies, including inconsistent notation of canons, cleverly employed mensuration signs, entire mass sections or individual voices notated all in black, and missing mass sections. In this paper, I examine the manuscript from a notational standpoint with the aim of clarifying the editorial practices of its scribes and better understanding the function of the manuscript.

The inconsistent notation of canonic voices throughout the manuscript is the most striking of these notational curiosities. In some instances, the scribes wrote out exact canons that could have been realized without difficulty with simple signa congruentiae, while at other times they left complicated canonical constructions notated in ways that are not evidently clear, or not indicated at all. Yet other canons are notated with great creativity. I first present canons in the two anonymous masses that have never been discussed in detail, the polytextual cantus firmus mass *Missa Assumptione beata virgine* and the *Missa memor esto*, on the motet by Josquin. Then, drawing also upon canon notations in masses transmitted in MontsM 766 that have been previously discussed (such as those in Forestier's *Missa Cœur langoreulx*, *Missa Baise moy*, and *Missa L'homme armé*), I consider the ways in which these scribes notated canons (or didn't notate them) throughout the manuscript in order to propose possible reasons for these inconsistencies. By comparing the versions of these canons in MontsM 766 with those in concordant sources, where extant, we can identify instances in which the scribes may have functioned as interpreters. Finally, I examine other ways in which the composers and scribes of the masses transmitted in MontsM 766 employed

notational devices to highlight certain mass sections visually as well as aurally.

“Ut cancer”: Retrograde Techniques between Notation and Sound

Katelijne Schiltz

In this paper I will give an overview of my current book project about retrograde techniques (including retrograde canons, backward reading, and palindromes) from the Middle Ages to the present. Building on my work on music and riddle culture, I would like to show the various perspectives (disciplinary as well as interdisciplinary) through which we can study this phenomenon in music in general and in the Renaissance in particular. Notation obviously plays a major role, and I will focus especially on the various ways composers, scribes, and/or printers hint at retrograde reading, thereby also discussing possible (symbolic) motivations, questions of performance practice, and the sounding result.

Proofreading for Orlando di Lasso’s *Magnum Opus Musicum* (Munich: Nicolaus Heinrich, 1604)

Bernhold Schmid

In the Munich Hauptstaatsarchiv (D-Mhsa), there is a collection of 37 pages from Orlando di Lasso’s *Magnum Opus Musicum* containing handwritten entries correcting mistakes. The pages come from different partbooks (Cantus, Altus, and Tenor). This newly discovered material is in fact part of a set of proofs, the full set of which must have consisted of more than 1200 pages. Missing notes, words, and syllables are added, and note values, wrong pitches, accidentals, and displaced text underlay are corrected. As in current practice, the scribe made a sign within the musical text or in the text underlay to mark the mistake, and the corrections were written in the page margins. Comparing these pages with some extant copies of the

Magnum Opus Musicum, this paper will provide insight into the production process of partbooks around 1600.

Shapes in Space: On Ligatures as Visual Devices

Thomas Schmidt

The function of ligatures in mensural notation has been much discussed from a variety of viewpoints. What seemed relatively uncontroversial for a long time was that in fully texted vocal parts, scribes used ligatures to regulate aspects of text placement as they did in chant (although even that has been called into question); Stanley Boorman and others have pointed to ligatures visually highlighting correspondences within and between voice-parts; more recently, Paul Kolb has drawn attention to instances where scribes use ligatures to clarify aspects of mensuration. What has remained largely unexplored however is the deployment of ligatures in untexted lower voices – where they appear on a fairly grand scale, especially in sources of the second half of the fifteenth century, but serve no apparent pragmatic purpose in helping to orientate singers or readers on the page. Are they a mere “scribal whim” (David Fallows), or is there a deeper meaning to those chains of ligatures? Drawing on recent studies on “scriptas image” in medieval manuscripts, my paper explores how this use of ligatures encourages a type of visual reading, adding a layer of meaning that is not (or not primarily) designed to facilitate sight-reading performance.

Letter Tablatures and Diastematic Thinking in Instrumental Music, Ex Tempore Practice within the Tablature Notation

Kateryna Schöning

This paper presents the newly discovered only letter tablature for the harp in the German area (D-LEmI 8°191) known so far and raises the question of the features of letter notation in tablature writing. The “Ältere Deutsche Orgel Tabulatur” (“Old German organ tablature”)

is not only found in fifteenth-century sources for string instruments, but was also used for that purpose in the sixteenth century. Although letter tablature notation may not be tied to the idioms of the keyboard instruments, it proves a general tendency to consider and notate music for the instruments diastematically. The choice of instrument was secondary. A different diagrammatic picture of the “organ tablature” can be obtained in the middle of the sixteenth century (as will be shown in detail in the *Fundamentum* of D-LEm I 8° 191.) In the second part of the paper, the issue of the sign inventory of German handwritten tablaturs (for both types, organ and lute) will be discussed: Handwritten transmission of the material is of telling importance. In contrast to prints, the notation in the lute manuscripts (already by the 1550s) shows the way extempore elements are recorded assigns, which in turn invites us to reconsider the relationships between notated and free components in the tablature notations. The prescriptive possibilities in tablature will be discussed here, e.g. the notation of compilations of variants and of syntactical working with templates, and some performance signs.

The Poetics of Mensural and Proportional Canons: Perspectives from North Italian Visual Culture, c. 1490– 1520

Jason Stoessel

In her recent book on the poetics of late-medieval music writing, Emily Zazulia has set out a new history of notational aesthetics through the lens of notational fixity, signs and metasigns, and notational aesthetics. Zazulia’s account is underpinned by close readings of informant theorists and musical sources. Yet, the subject of fuga only plays a small role. By examining representations of notated fugae in pictorial and decorative imagery, I show that a poetics of late medieval musical writing also permeate the visual cultures of courts, churches, and monasteries at major northern Italian centres around 1500. I also explore how depictions of the material object of the music book or music sheet reinforced the status of fugae as real icons of musical learning. The cultural

movements that buttressed these developments were multifaceted, but they were linked by the continued growth of humanist education and ideals. In this way, the findings of this research serve to complement and enhance current knowledge about the role of musical notation in creative processes, but supplement our understanding of this phenomenon's role in contemporary Italian culture.

“Oral residue” in the *ricercari* of the Petrucci Lutenists (1507-1511)

Eric Thomas

Intabulations in lute prints follow a process where previously composed music was arranged and adapted idiomatically to the instrument. The study of the independent instrumental forms of *ricercare* and fantasia also assumed a similar compositional procedure; music was composed, either mentally or written, and then transcribed into lute tablature. This has resulted in studies with methodologies derived from the analysis of vocal music, diminishing the idiomatic features of these genres. However, in practice lute tablature notates a certain action from the performer (the placement of fingers on specific frets and strings), with the musical features, vocal or idiomatic, being reconstructed aurally in performance. Lute tablature was a relatively new form of notation when the first lute prints were published by Petrucci between 1507 and 1511, with only three earlier sources of lute tablature surviving, the Wolfenbüttel tablature (c. 1450, *kontrapunct*), Pesaro MS. (c. 1490–1500, Italian tablature), and the Thibault MS. (c. 1500–1510). Without the long development of mensural notation, and lute tablature notating an action rather than a sound, a high level of ‘oral residue’ from the unwritten performance practices of *contrappunto alla mente* and the Italian plectrum lute tradition can be found in the Petrucci lute prints. Such “oral residue” can be found in various genres of early modern Italian literature, with different approaches to the transcription of varying Italian dialects. Through an analysis of the intabulations by Francesco Spinacino, Joan Ambrosio Dalza, and Fransiscus

Bossinensis of the *frotte*, French chansons, and dances found in their respective prints, I will show how the adaptation of unwritten performance practices in their *ricercari* relates to debates on approaches to the transcription of dialects in early modern Italian literature. The arrangement of textures from these traditions, the displacement of mode, and their relationship to the other genres found in their respective prints, the *ricercari* show varying approaches in how to represent unwritten performance practices in a written format.

New Solution to the Notation of the Carol *Alma redemptoris mater* from Trinity Roll, Cambridge

Kalina Tomova

The notational problems of the carol *Alma redemptoris mater* from GB-CtcO.3.58 (also known as the Trinity Roll) have been an object of debate between Manfred Bukofzer and John Stevens since the first edition of *Musica Britannica IV – Mediaeval Carols* came out in 1952. The main difficulties in interpreting the source arise from the presence of *punctus divisionis* and *punctus syncopationis*, which can considerably change the rhythmic profile of the verse of the carol depending on the reading. Adding to this is the fact that infringements of the *similis ante similem* rule can be found in *Alma redemptoris mater* as well as on numerous occasions in the English sources of the fifteenth century and especially in the carol repertory. Despite these notational discrepancies there is enough ground for creating a possible solution for this carol. Examples of both infringements and adherence to the rules of mensural notation can be found on numerous occasions in the carol repertory, sometimes even in the same pieces, so always methodically infringing the *similis ante similem* rule does not seem like a plausible solution for *Alma redemptoris mater*. Drawing parallels between the use of *punctus syncopationis* and the adherence to the *similis ante similem* rule, as well as considering through examples the employment of coloration for creating syncopation in the carol repertory, in order to determine

an appropriate length for a syncopated passage, a new possible interpretation of the notation of the carol is proposed.

Just How Necessary are Accidentals, ca. 1500?

Peter Urquhart

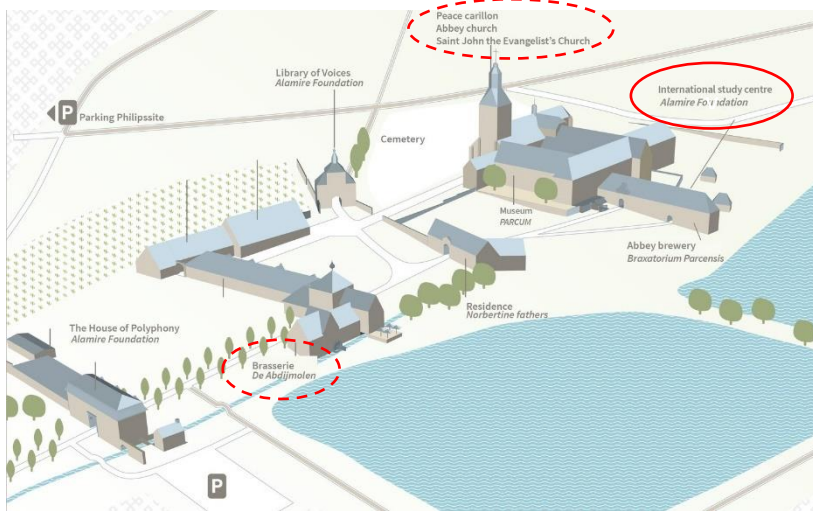
My title is intentionally vague. Necessary for whom? For singers at the time? for us today? for the composer and the composition? Or were compositions an abstract fabric, to be worked out in performance? These and other questions hover over any treatment of accidentals in music of this time. For this paper, the emphasis will be on what is found in the sources when composers used a particular compositional device, one that has given rise to many conflicting interpretations—the sequence. Sequential patterns arise in the late fifteenth century, become quite common in the sixteenth century, and create some of the most vexing and interesting problems for our interpretation of pitch content. Sequences by Josquin, Bauldeweyn, Févin, and even Gombert, reveal certain normative features that can guide interpretation of such passages and the few accidentals that are presented.

Sweet Hallucinations of an English Rose

William Watson

Few pieces of fifteenth-century music have achieved as widespread and enduring a modern popularity as the English carol, “Ther is no rose of swych vertu.” The carol survives in just two fifteenth-century manuscripts, of which only one, the Trinity Carol Roll, includes musical notation. By contrast, over the past century the carol has proliferated in a multitude of formal and informal editions. It has been recorded tens, possibly even hundreds of times. It has even inspired a seemingly unending series of modern compositional settings of the medieval text. But if you were to choose at random from among these modern artifacts and compare your choice to the notation you can see in the Trinity Carol Roll, you would almost

certainly find a discrepancy. In a large majority of modern editions and over 90% of surveyed recordings, “Ther is no rose” alternates between two-voice verses and a three-voice burden. But in the Trinity Carol Roll there is no third voice in the burden, nor is there any indication that one should be added. The “treble” and “bass” lines are present, but the middle voice—which gives the burden a characteristic, faburden-like sound—would seem at first glance to have been conjured out of thin air. Ultimately, the origin of this auditory-notational mass hallucination is no great mystery. The third voice first appeared in the fourth volume of *Musica Britannica*, which was published in 1952 and edited by John Stevens. All subsequent editions and recordings of “Ther is no rose” that include the third voice owe it to this singular, twentieth-century source. While the route that Stevens took to arrive at this editorial choice is clearly laid out in his critical commentary, it is far from simple and not beyond critique. More significantly, Stevens’s editorial argument abuts against several topics of interest for recent research on late-medieval music, including: the relation between notated repertoires and improvisatory practices; the complex feedback loop between notation, style, and cultural identity; and the power of notation to influence music’s performance and reception, for modern and medieval musicians both. The unusually rich recent reception history of “Ther is no rose” thus presents us with a rare opportunity to illuminate these issues from an angle not often available to fifteenth-century music studies. By reading Stevens’s edition against its scant medieval sources and its considerable modern impact, we can gain a deeper and more empathetic appreciation for the profound power that editorial choices about notation can have.



From 4–6 May, the conference venue is in the **International Study Centre** (Gastenkwartier) at Park Abbey in Leuven. The reception and conference dinner will be in the **Brasserie De Abdijmolen**, and the concerts will be in the **Abbey Church** (Sint-Jan Evangelistkerk).

The abbey is a short walk (0.5km) from the bus stop “Heverlee - Abdij van Park” and the following busses from De Lijn stop there:

- line 4 direction Herent-Haasrode
- line 630 direction Wijgmaal-Haasrode
- line 5 direction Wakkerzeel-Vaalbeek
- line 6 direction Wijgmaal-Hoegaarden

On 7 May, the conference will be held in the Panorama Room at the **KBR** in Brussels (main entrance at Mont des Arts 28). The KBR is a short walk from the train station Brussels Central. From Leuven, take an IC train towards Oostende or Blankenberge. Brussels Central is the second stop, after 22–25 minutes.