

# Musica figurata 1

## 15. Seminar

Institut für Alte Musik  
Ruth Bruckner - WS 2024/25

# General

Attendance and examination requirements

# Debriefing

What was covered last time?

Where did we leave off in the history of music?

# Burgundian School

What is that?

When is that?

Where is it?

# Burgundian School

1420 - 1470

Burgundy as the centre

Territory of northern France, Belgium and Holland  
(Flanders)

Dukes as patrons of the arts

# Burgundian School

Important chapel of singers at court, up to 37 singers, sing a mass every day with polyphony, including improvisation

Precursor of Franco-Flemish vocal polyphony

Menestrels du Duc: instrumentalists of the court

trompette de guerre (for fanfares, and signals for war, but not polyphony)

trompette de menestrels: train trumpets (one and a half octaves)

bas instruments (joueur de luz, joueur de vielle, harpeur...)

alta capella = loud (most popular with Herzog)

bassa capella = quiet

# Burgundian School

Until then, the main focus was on singers, but from then on musicians were also highly regarded

Previously a great tradition of poets and musicians in one person (Machaut, Vitry), now come independent poets and professional musicians who are not so interested in text poetry; musicians also don't like so much text, take shorter forms and music is at the centre

many more sources, more music preserved

Music is also collected in a completely new way, previously if music was wanted, then requested by a professional writer, now also private copying

# Burgundian School

- Music developed in Burgundy but spread throughout Europe, (International style)
- most of the composers who made a career came from the same area as those of the Ars subtilior and Ars nova
- among the most famous musicians at the burg. The court included many foreign musicians, wind players mainly from Germany
- Groups of four of the same instruments



# Burgundian School

1st generation:

Guillaume du Fay (his style developed very strongly, lived a long time, international career, visited various courts to bring something new, is Burgundian, but almost never there)

Gilles Binchois (much more uniform than Du Fay, about 45 chansons, rather conservative texts, within the courtly convention, no lighter poetry, all three-part music except one, a lot of sacred music that is not so well known, had a position at the Burgundian court and stayed there, did not travel to Italy or anywhere else)

Nicolas Grenon

Johannes Brassart

Pierre Fontaine

Jacobus Vide

Maistre Guille du Fay de Binchois.



**T**apissier Carmen Cesaris  
Na pas longz teps sy bien chäter  
Quilz esbahirent tout Paris

# Burgundian School

- A.+H. de Lantins (their father was already active together with Ciconia; the brothers travelled together to the Council of Constance, where they were recruited by an Italian court, then worked in Pesaro and Venice)
- Johannes de Lymburgia (only sacred pieces, but very many)
- Robert Mortin (somewhat later, came from England in the 1440s to 60s)
- Pietro Bono so important as a composer that on one side of a coin is the duke and on the other the composer

# Burgundian School

2nd generation

Ockeghem: first requiem mass known, Missa cuius vis toni, mass has no key, can be sung in different modes; Missa de prolationes; among other things, wrote a piece about Binchois' death; Josquin wrote a piece about Ockeghem's death

Busnois

Agricola

Caron

Ghizeghem

Regis

Tinctoris

Walter Frye

# Burgundian School

Oltremontani:

Trained in the north and then travelled to Italy

Ciconia one of the first

Very common during the Burgundian school

# Burgundian School

## Style

after Ars subtilior is a rupture, relative simplicity

almost homophonic structure

clear cadences

very short phrases

regular structure (4 bar phrases)

Contratenor begins to be below tenor: Contratenor bassus

Ars subtilior remains for a very long time, even with composers who are otherwise Burgundian. Some composers have written a piece in the ars subtilior style to show that they can do it.

# Burgundian School

- Tuning according to function but actually still Pythagorean: if leading tone then high, if in standing tone, then third purer
- from the middle of the century onwards, the first indications that one plays F sharp instead of G sharp, then it is purer
- third and sixth slowly become consonant, as an interval and as a tuning

- Martin le Franc:

Description of how English music at the Council of Constance influenced composers on the continent: contenance anglaise, English already had fauxbourdon in the late 14th century, many more thirds and sixths in the pieces

# Burgundian School

Musical change in the second half of the 15th century

The 4-part standard is established: cantus - contratenor altus (same register as tenor) - tenor - Ct bassus

most. Music for ecclesiastical use from then on always in this instrumentation

Return to the diatonic modality

less chromaticism, also mentioned in theor. writings (Tinctoris, Gaffurius: as few sharps as possible, only in cadences), previously the accidentals were very important (cl 3 to 1, gr. 6 to 8), now one suddenly prefers to remain modal



# Burgundian School

- a great deal of melancholy and tranquillity in the music of the time, but the 16th century also saw the emergence of lighter genres of chanson, Decameron stories, the courtly songs are sometimes exaggeratedly sad, everything is stylised
- Marguerite d'Autriche: it is fashionable to be melancholic

# Sources Burgundian School

## Escorial A

in the Spanish monastery El Escorial  
no painting, very simple, miniature book, music to follow,

## Codex Oxford

probably Venice as place of origin; one main scribe: Johannes de Qudris, musician who made it for his own use  
various dated pieces, also Ars subtilior, most important source for songs by Binchois and Dufay, white mensural notation

## Bologna Q15

1420-1425 produced in Padua, second phase 1430-35 in Vicenza, also a musician's manuscript, private project, was very familiar with the repertoire, music that was being written, in the circle of Bishop Pietro Emigliani, ink erosion a problem, scanned using digital methods

## Trento codices

7 paper manuscripts written over 75 years in northern Italy, 1440 the oldest  
1585 pieces, many errors, badly written,

## Modena B

1440-50 at the court of the Este family, 131 pieces, motets, magnificats, liturgical works, also by English composers such as Dunstable, Lionell Power

# Burgundian School

*Burgois.*

**G**ristre plaisir & douloureuse poie / a pre doulueur recort enmye  
Enbuchies sont assis a nels boye.  
De dena meue en aibre d'nes yeulx  
Tristre plaisir .f.

Ry en plourat souner oblieux magpagnet cobien q'pule poye .f.

**T**enor. Tristre plaisir .f.

**Q**u'ontenor. Tristre plaisir .f.

C'est mo' flor est toute ma memoire  
Pouvre d'adieu est sur moy en vieux  
Bis seroit il si me deuoit quoin meure  
Qu'il me fut pour ce qu'ouy memoire  
Tristre plaisir .f.

# Burgundian School

Works:

Binchois – Triste plaisir



<https://open.spotify.com/intl-de/track/66RckhLAPf592kaRHC5clg?si=51b61edaafc547f5>

# Burgundische Schule

## Works

### Guillaume Dufay: Nuper rosarum flores

Performed in 1436 on the occasion of the consecration of the Cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore



<https://open.spotify.com/intl-de/track/0kXaDKTOBfIEPIHFocT8K1?si=ee2363c9bac0498e>

# Burgundische Schule

## Works

Hayne van Ghizeghem: De tous bien playne



<https://open.spotify.com/intl-de/track/4z4sYMcyTp0TSwMjb6oYNb?si=af0d949a46604524>

# Burgundische Schule

## Works

Johannes Ockeghem: Mort tu as navre



<https://open.spotify.com/intl-de/track/2HdmUiQmxo1u4wqgvO7iLT?si=6a882638fcd45f7>

# Burgundische Schule





# Musica ficta

Ficta = extra signs that have to do with attractiveness  
from fingere = to deceive

for two reasons: beauty, or necessity (cadences)

causa pulchritudinis

causa necessitas

you have to find your own way for it, develop a taste for it

# Musica ficta

Tones that Guido has not theorised

also arises from a melodic taste

as early as the 13th century, chorales were sung with # and b to emphasise the attractiveness of certain notes

Today we associate Gregorian chant with diatonicism, but there are already sources in the 13th century that indicate that people wanted more attractiveness for certain notes

This is in a treatise in Pseudo-Garlandia (copied text from Garlandia and another part written about melodic turns) but he gives no indication when exactly to use it

some theorists say: let us return to purity of modes (Johannes de Moravia), there is too much musica ficta