

Sunday, February 25, 2024, 4:00 PM

Saint Anthony Park United Church of Christ

Pre-concert conversation one hour before the performance

LA MORRA

Ivo Haun de Oliveira, voice • Michal Gondko, lute
 Corina Marti, harpsichord, recorders • David Hatcher, viola da gamba
special guest Nigel North, lute

SHAPING THE INVISIBLE

Italian Music from the Time of Leonardo

<i>Bona dies, bona sera</i>	Marchetto Cara (c. 1465–c. 1525)
<i>Rostibolli gioioso</i>	Domenico da Piacenza (c. 1400–c. 1476)
<i>Recercare</i>	Francesco Spinacino (c. 1500)
<i>Amando e desiando</i>	Benedetto Gareth (c. 1450–c. 1514)
<i>Quella bella e bianca mano</i>	Antonio Caprioli (c. 1500)
<i>Recercada</i>	Marco Antonio Cavazzoni (c. 1490–c. 1560)
<i>Deh, chi me sa dir novella?</i>	Don Michele Pesenti (c. 1470–1528)
<i>Pavana – Il saltarello de la pavana – La coda</i>	anonymous, MS Castell'Arquato
<i>Se mai per maraveglia</i>	anonymous
<i>Ecce video celos apertos</i>	Nicolas Craen (c. 1440–c. 1507)
<i>Cela sans plus</i>	Giovanni de' Medici [Pope Leo X] (1475–1521)
<i>Fortuna disperata / Sancte Petre</i>	Henricus Isaac (c. 1450–1517)
<i>Donna, il pianto</i>	Giovanni Serragli, documented (1502–1527)
<i>Recercare</i>	Francesco Canova da Milano (1497–1543)
<i>De mon triste deplaisir</i>	Jean Richafort (c. 1480–c. 1550) Francesco Canova da Milano
<i>Fantasia "De mon triste"</i>	Francesco Canova da Milano (1497–1543)
<i>Pavana – Il saltarello de la pavana – La coda</i>	anonymous, MS Castell'Arquato
<i>Tu ne quaesieris / Recercar</i>	Horace / Marco dall'Aquila (c. 1480–after 1538)
<i>O tient' a l'ora</i>	Nicolò Brocco (early 16th c.) / anonymous

PLEASE SILENCE ALL ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Lira da braccio player by Bartolomeo Montagna, c. 1500



Shaped essentially like a violin, the Lira da braccio had a wider fingerboard and flatter bridge. Generally, it had five strings, with two added strings below the fingerboard that served as ‘drones’ and were tuned in octaves.

The artist, scientist and polymath Leonardo da Vinci (1452–1519) also possessed a curiously musical mind. His interest in the science of acoustics led to the improvement of existing instruments and the invention of new ones. Da Vinci could play several instruments proficiently, most notably the Lira da braccio, which he would play to accompany his singing and poetry readings. For Leonardo, music was *figurazione delle cose invisibili* — “shaping the invisible.”

Late 15th and early 16th century Italy was a place with an extraordinarily vivid musical life. The *oltramontani* (as the Italians referred to the Franco-Flemish composers from the north) created some of their most groundbreaking works in the service of wealthy Italian nobility. All of this newly-composed music created the need for skilled Italian performers who excelled at this style of self-accompanied, improvised solo-singing.

This was also a golden age for Italian instrument makers, as workshops flourished in cities like Cremona and Brescia, led by a “Who’s Who” of innovative craftsmen, such as Guarneri, Amati, Maggini, Rogeri and later Stradivari. Skilled instrumentalists, both foreign and Italian, took advantage of superior Italian instruments to elevate the performing arts to new heights.

During Leonardo’s lifetime, these different musical worlds began to cross-fertilize each other, paving the way for the creation of new, thoroughly Italian musical genre: the *frottola*, which was a comic or amorous popular song, often for several voices.

This program offers a hand-picked selection of songs and instrumental music composed in Italy around the turn of 15th and early 16th centuries – the time when Leonardo da Vinci created two of his arguably most famous works: *Mona Lisa Gioconda* and *The Last Supper*.

Program note provided by La Morra with additional contributions by Michael Adams



La Morra © Dirk Letsch

LA MORRA

LA MORRA is well-established as one of Europe's leading ensembles for Late Medieval and Early Renaissance art music.

An international vocal-instrumental formation named after Henricus Isaac's famous instrumental fantasia, LA MORRA makes its home in Basel, the cosmopolitan cultural capital of Switzerland, where the tradition of historically informed performance of early music at the renowned Schola Cantorum Basiliensis dates back to the 1930s.

Under the joint artistic leadership of Corina Marti and Michal Gondko, LA MORRA re-configures itself according to the requirements of the repertoire, usually numbering four to seven musicians.

Reputed for the evocative, thoroughly researched programming as well as interpretations that "never fail to keep the listener's attention alive" (*Gramophone*), the ensemble is constantly busy performing and recording. It has travelled extensively across Europe as well as in the United States and in the Far East, appearing in the most prestigious early music festivals and concert series. LA MORRA's CD releases are enthusiastically received. Among the proofs of this are numerous phonographic distinctions and the constantly high ratings in the international music press.

CORINA MARTI • ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Swiss harpsichord and recorder player Corina Marti is recognised internationally for her “strikingly superior and expressive” interpretations (Toccatà), and “infallible” performances (Diapason). She leads a full life as a soloist, chamber musician and teacher, travelling regularly across Europe, both Americas, the Middle and Far East. Her extensive discography of repertoire ranges from the fourteenth-century istanpitte and intabulations to and beyond the chamber music and solo concertos of the High Baroque, reflecting the breadth of her musical interests and technical skills. She has appeared with Hespèrion XXI, Coro della Radiotelevisione Svizzera Italiana and the Helsinki Baroque Orchestra, and is artistic co-director and founding member of La Morra. Her research into aspects of the repertoire and the reconstruction of Late Medieval and Early Renaissance keyboard instruments and recorders have contributed substantially to the present-day revival of these instruments. She teaches the next generation of early music performers at the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis in Basel (where she studied herself) and in masterclasses worldwide.

MICHAL GONDKO • ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

In Michal Gondko’s “deft and fluid” (Early Music Today) lute playing “phrases come across like extempore thoughts chasing each other across the imagination, an effect many try for but very few succeed” (Lute News). One of the leading lutenists of his generation, he pursues his artistic goals as a soloist, musical director and accompanist, being particularly fascinated with European polyphonic art music of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. Passion for it prompted him in 2000 to found La Morra. A sought-after soloist, he has also shared the stage with such musicians as Dame Emma Kirkby and Jordi Savall. More recent collaborations include a duo partnership with the eminent lutenist Nigel North. His musical path began in his hometown Warsaw (Poland), where he studied classical guitar. He subsequently graduated from the acclaimed Schola Cantorum Basiliensis, where he studied lute with Hopkinson Smith. Concert tours have since taken him to most European countries, as well as to the USA, the countries of the Middle East, China and Japan.

A special thanks to the donors who designated their gift to MUSIC IN THE PARK SERIES.

A full list can be found on page 30.