CAPELLA
TIAGO SIMAS FREIRE
SANCTÆ
CRUCIS

La Zagala mas hermosa

MASS FOR THE MOST BEAUTIFUL SHEPHERDESS

Coimbra 1646, Nativity of the Virgin Mary

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La Zagala Más Hermosa. Messe pour la plus belle des bergères. Coimbra 1646, Nativité de la Vierge Marie.
La Zagala Más Hermosa. Missa para la zagala más hermosa. Coimbra 1646, Natividad de la Virgen.

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O baneo de Jurunjo
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Marie Remandet | *soprano*
Maria Bayley | *soprano*
Laura Lopes | *soprano*
Maria de Fátima Nunes | *alto*
Sylvain Manet | *alto*
Almeno Gonçalves | *tenor*
Martin Billé | *tenor, five course guitar*
Imanol Iraola | *bass, adufe, drum, tambourine, castanets*
Eric Chopin | *bass*
Tiago Simas Freire | *cornett, mute cornett, recorder, bagpipe, tabor pipe, cavaquinho*
Adrien Reboisson | *shawm, recorder*
Arthur Tinguely-Hézard | *sackbut*
José Rodrigues Gomes | *dulcian, recorder*
Filipa Meneses | *viol*
Sara Águeda | *cross-strung harp*
Arnaud De Pasquale | *organ, virginal*

Tiago Simas Freire
music, artistic and scientific director

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MARIAN AND PASTORAL ICONOGRAPHY IN THE FEMININE:
IMAGES OF MUSIC IN PAINTINGS FROM THE BAROQUE PERIOD IN PORTUGAL

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MUSICAL AMBIENCE AND INSTRUMENTAL RICHNESS

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APRESENTAÇÃO

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AMBIENTE MUSICAL E RIQUEZA INSTRUMENTAL

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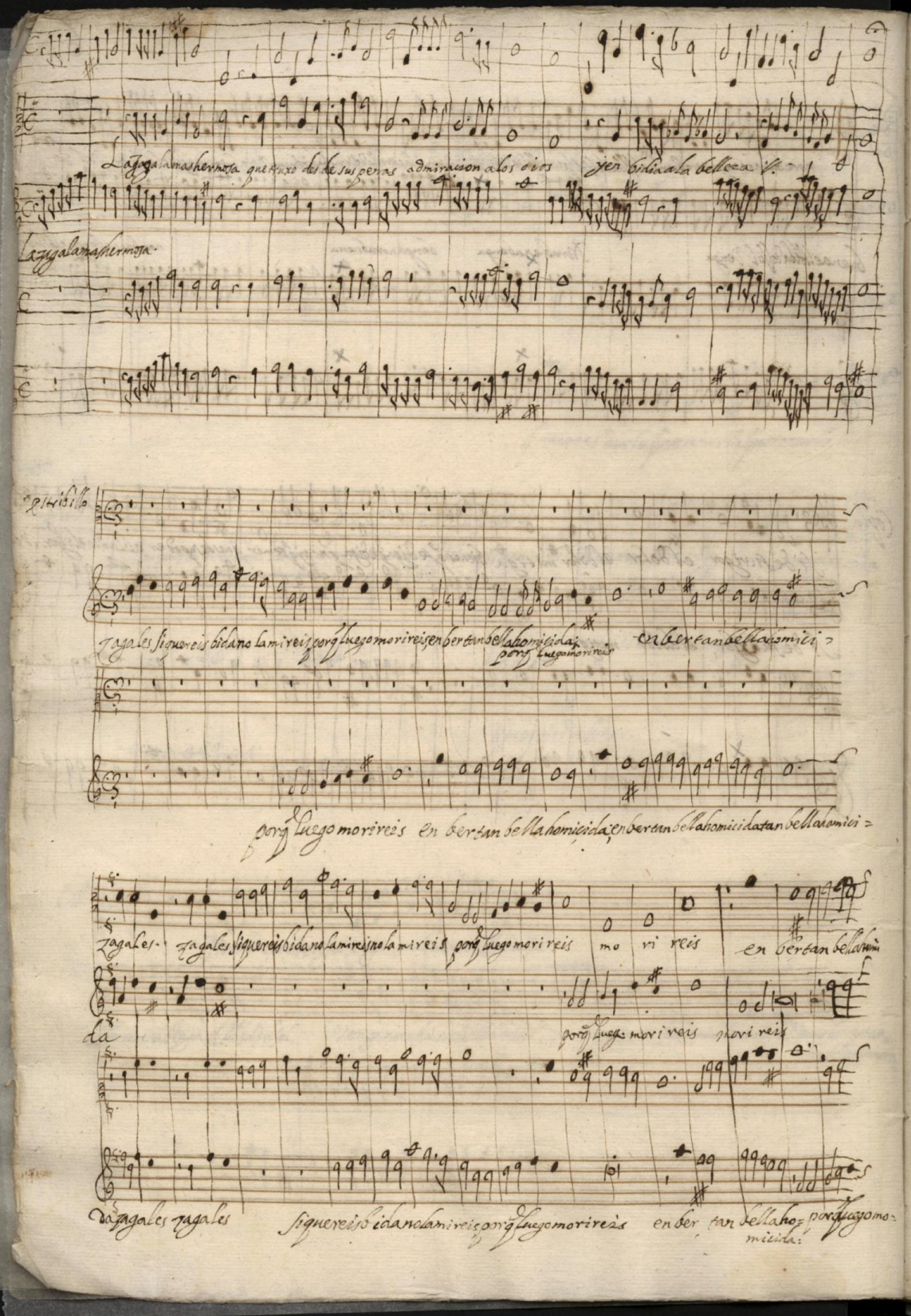
TEXTOS CANTADOS

PROGRAMME | PROGRAMA | PROGRAMME | PROGRAMA

01	Invocation of the Virgin	*Surge, propera amica mea (motet, prima pars)*	A5	Anonymous, 1546	P-Cug MM 48, ff. 10v-11
02	Nativity of Mary	*Hodie nata est virgo Maria (motet, seconda pars)*	A5	Anonymous, 1546	P-Cug MM 48, ff. 11v-12
03	Childhood of Mary	*La zagala más hermosa * (tono humano)*	A4	Anonymous, 1646	P-Cug MM 234, ff. 6v-7
04	KYRIE	*Missa La zagala más hermosa **	A9	Anonymous, 1646	P-Cug MM 234, ff. 1-15
05	Annunciation to Mary	*Tento de 2º tom*	virginal	Anonymous, 2nd half 17th century	P-BRad Ms 964, f. 239
06	Visitation of Mary to Elizabeth	*Ave Maria gratia plena (motet)*	A8	Pedro de Cristo, c.1550-1618	P-Cug MM 18, ff. 95v-97
07	GLORIA	*Missa La zagala más hermosa **	A9	Anonymous	P-Cug MM 234, ff. 39-41v
08	Nativity of Jesus	*Ola toro zente pleta (vilancico)*	A7	Anonymous, c.1651	P-Cug MM 232, ff. 37v -39
09	ALLELUYA	*Missa La zagala más hermosa **	A9	Anonymous	P-Cug MM 234, ff. 41v-42, 48-48v
10	Flight into Egypt	*Ai dina dina dana (vilancico)*	A7	Anonymous, 1646	P-Cug MM 239, ff. 48v, 21v
11	CREDO	*Missa La zagala más hermosa **	A9	Anonymous	P-Cug MM 234, ff. 42v-48v
12	Death of Jesus	*Stabat mater dolorosa (motet)*	A4	Pedro de Cristo	P-Cug MM 33, ff. 6v-7; P-Cug MM 53, ff. 10v-11
13	SANCTUS	*Missa La zagala más hermosa **	A9	Anonymous	P-Cug MM 234, ff. 49-50
14	Resurrection of Jesus	*Regina caeli * (Marian antiphon)*	A8	Anonymous, 1650	P-Cug MM 51, ff. 33v-34v
15	Pentecost	*Outro tento de 2º tom*	harp	Anonymous, 2nd half 16th century	P-Cug MM 242, ff. 12v-13
16	AGNUS DEI	*Missa La zagala más hermosa **	A9	Anonymous	P-Cug MM 234, ff. 50v-51v
17		*Ite missa est*		Anonymous (Pedro Talésio, 1618)	P-Cug MI 111, p. 104
18	Coronation of Mary	*Las zagalas del valle * (tono [ao divino])*	A8	Anonymous, c.1646	P-Cug MM 229, ff. 20-22

* world premiere recording



La zagala mas hermosa que truxo des de sus penas admiracion a los ojos y en bidia a la belleza

La zagala mas hermosa

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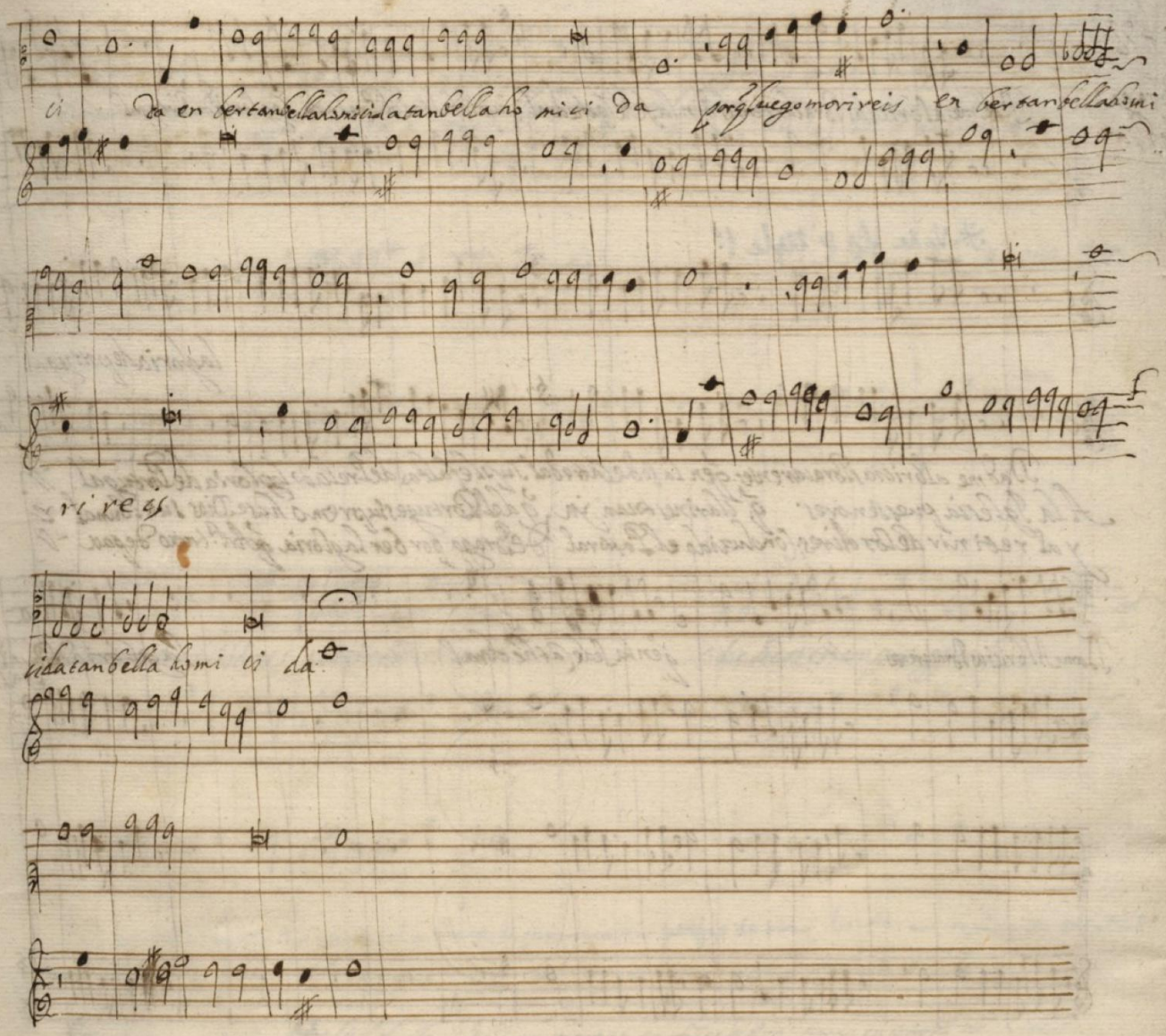


A MASS FOR THE MOST BEAUTFUL SHEPHERDESS. SEPTEMBER 8TH, 1646

In 17th century Iberian musical practices, the boundary between the sacred and secular spheres is often elusive. Despite the instructions of the Counter-Reformation, which advised against references to secular melodies in liturgical music, an extraordinary example of this permeability between liturgical and secular repertoires is an unpublished Parody Mass preserved solely in a *cartapácio* from Coimbra (P-Cug MM 234) and based upon the music of the *tono humano* "*La zagala más hermosa*" for the day of the Nativity of the Virgin. The title in the source reads *8 setembro 1646 - Missa de Nossa Senhora da Natividade - La zagala mas hermosa - A9. 3 coros*. The most beautiful shepherdess described in the secular vernacular work (found in the same source) thus becomes the image of the Virgin Mary in the liturgical Latin work. The sacred and the secular join hands here in a broad understanding. Indeed, the association of the figure of the Virgin with a shepherdess – a parallelism with her son, "Christ, the good shepherd" – is an Iberian cultural trait that is particularly strengthened when the Friar Isidoro of Seville designates Mary as the Divine Shepherdess, after a vision in which the Blessed Mother appeared to him as a shepherdess in 1703.

The four-voice music of the *tono humano* is transformed into a nine-voice mass distributed into three choirs (1+4+4) with a thoroughbass, which we have imagined as follows: the first choir with a single voice embodies Mary's voice; the second choir with four singers illustrates heaven; and the third choir with four singers and instruments (known as the *chusma* – the sonorous choir) represents earth.

With this fascinating intersection of repertoires and natures as its starting point, the programme is built according to the great diversity of genres and styles that would very likely constitute the music of the religious ceremonies of the Monastery of Santa Cruz de Coimbra in the mid-17th century, particularly on the occasion of the major feasts whose liturgy seems to be the stage of some truly spectacular performances, attracting and enchanting large assemblies. This diversity also reflects the variety of repertoires often found within a single manuscript, as in the case of *cartapácios*.

Alternating with the *ordinarium* of the Mass (*Kyrie*, *Gloria*, *Credo*, *Sanctus*, *Agnus Dei* and a part of the *proprium* – the Alleluia – which is also set to music in the source), we present *vilancicos*, *tonos* and *motets* that trace the life of the Virgin Mary, evoking her joys and her sorrows – a shepherdess to become Queen of Heaven and Earth.

We begin with a motet in two parts, the first of which is a praise of the beloved (*Surge, propera amica mea*) from the Song of Songs, and the second which specifically celebrates the birth of the Virgin Mary (*Hodie nata est virgo Maria*). This motet by an anonymous author (*incertus autor*) was printed by Tielman Susato in Antwerp in 1546 and is copied in open score in a manuscript from the Monastery of Santa Cruz in Coimbra. This is followed by an evocation of Mary's childhood in the *tono humano* "*La zagala mas hermosa*", the origin of the parody Mass. In this *tono*, the beauty of the most beautiful shepherdess is described as very dangerous, as all those who behold her risk death. The annunciation to the Virgin Mary by the angel Gabriel is illustrated with an instrumental piece in the second tone, the lunar tone, humble, dignified, serious and reconciling, which can be both mournful and cheerful, according to 16th and 17th century sources. We celebrate the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary with the prayer "*Ave Maria gratia plena*", proclaimed by his cousin Saint Elizabeth, by Pedro de Cristo, the emblematic chapel master of the monastery of Santa Cruz. The joy of the Nativity of Jesus is commemorated with the *vilancico de negro* "*Ola toro zente pleta*", in which we find probably one of the oldest uses of the word "samba" evoking the celebration held before the baby Jesus. We reflect over the pain of the flight into Egypt, imagining Mary carrying her fragile newborn in her arms, with the *vilancico* "*Ai dina dina dana*", which serves as a gentle lullaby describing the simultaneously divine and human natures of the infant Jesus. The suffering and death of Jesus, observed by his helpless mother, are illustrated by an expressive "*Stabat mater dolorosa*" by Pedro de Cristo. And the joy of Jesus's resurrection is praised with the "*Regina caeli*", the Marian antiphon sung on 8 September. The Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit descends upon the Virgin and the apostles, is symbolised by another instrumental piece in the second tone. And finally, the Coronation of Mary is set to music with the *tono humano* "*Las zagalas del valle*", converted into *tono ao divino*. We use this secular work – originally celebrating the city of Braga – to transform it into a devotional work, following one of the most frequent historical procedures for adapting texts to the divine: the text "*Viva Braga!*" becomes "*Viva Maria!*". And so, *Capella Sanctae Crucis* proposes an illustration of the crowning of the Virgin, a major religious event, celebrated not by angels in heaven but by shepherdesses and nymphs on earth, blending the sacred, the secular and the mythological, perfectly in harmony with 17th century humanism.

Today, as we witness the secularisation of religious art, it is extremely enriching to discover and relive the divinisation of the profane experienced in 17th century Iberia. These phenomena of intellectual, cultural, aesthetic and artistic (re)appropriation are fascinating insights into the chameleonic complexity of human nature.

Tiago Simas Freire
(Lyon, 2017-2024)

Do mi nus in Cœlo Alle lu ya

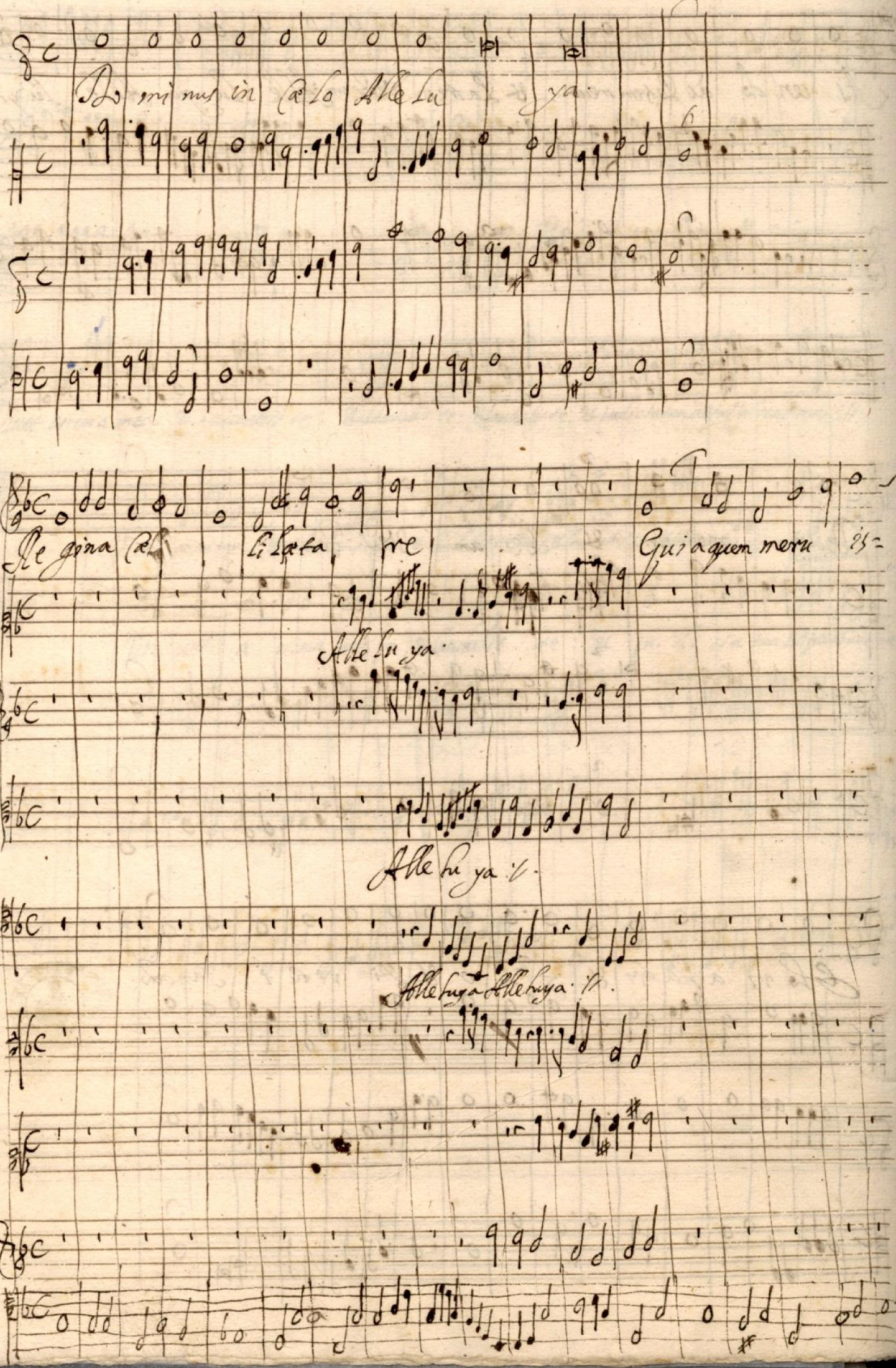
A 6

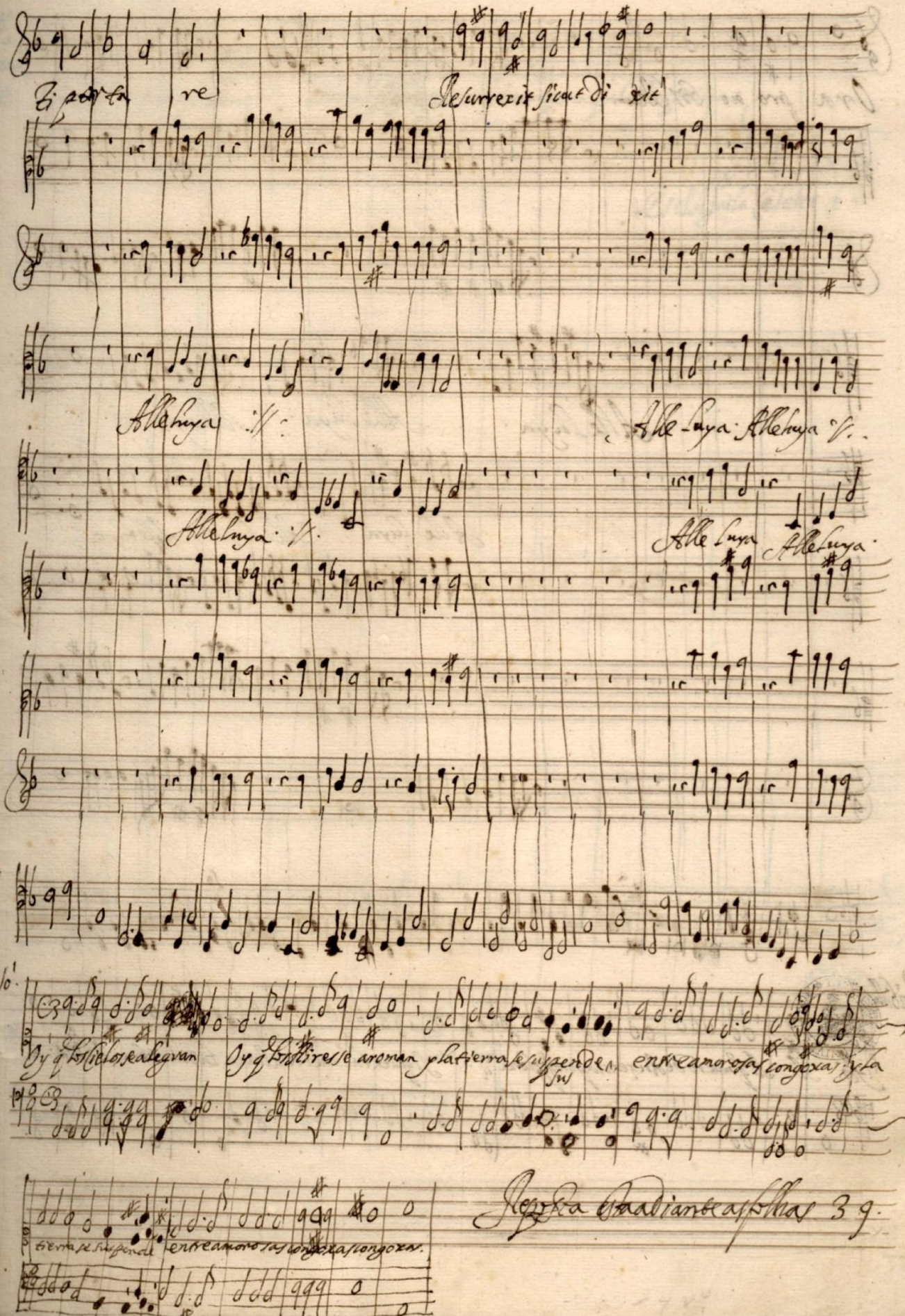
Re gina Cœ li læta re Qui a quem meru is=

Alle lu ya

Alle lu ya ℣.

Alle luya Alle luya ℣.





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CORONATION OF THE VIRGIN BY VASCO PEREIRA LUSITANO (1604): MUSICAL ENVIRONMENT AND INSTRUMENTAL RICHNESS

It was during the initial discussions concerning Marian iconography in 17th-century Portugal, a venture undertaken in parallel with this project dedicated to the mass "*La zagala más hermosa*", that the work of Vasco Pereira Lusitano inevitably came to light, illustrating the Coronation of the Virgin in a profoundly rich musical setting. Dating from the artist's mature phase (Lusitano was already 68 at the time of its creation; he was a scholarly man with his own library), the work was painted in Seville under the influence of Luis de Vargas and Juan de Roelas – as the inscription on the obverse itself reveals: [*V*]*asco pereira lusitano pin/tava em sevilla. año 1604, en/el mes de febrero* (*Vasco Pereira Lusitano painted in Seville. year 1604, in the month of February*) – and was dispatched to the now defunct Church of All Saints of the Jesuit College in Ponta Delgada (Azores), where the Sacred Art Centre of the Carlos Machado Museum is currently located. The painting was rediscovered, by chance, in 1973, in a state of utter ruin, when the College was handed over to the Municipality of Ponta Delgada for the establishment of the Carlos Machado Museum. It was hidden by a canvas with identical iconography, but of mediocre brushwork and unknown authorship, dating from around 1730. The reasons for its concealment are unknown, but it has been speculated that it was due to the loss of its chromatic layer, which had removed Vasco Pereira's panel from the former golden aura and the counter-Reformation decorum that had distanced it from its expected didactic function. Or perhaps, it was an attempt to preserve it from the eyes of thieving hands during the expulsion of the Jesuits.

Observing the multitude of musical elements accompanying this visual masterpiece, the analytical gaze swiftly fixes upon the music book with epigraphic notation, opened and held by one angel for another angel, wielding a sackbut, to read. (Another open book, surely containing another vocal part, is partially visible at the bottom of the painting behind an angel playing the recorder; other notational supports for the remaining polyphonic parts are hidden.) Vasco Pereira Lusitano's meticulousness is such that it is possible to decipher both the text and the music, on a portion of the open folios.

egarding the text, notably on the left page one can identify the words "*S/urg*[*e*] *prope*[*ra*] [*amica*] *mea*" (Song of Songs, 2:10), and on the right page, "*Tota pulchra es amica mea*" (Song of Songs, 4:7). With these text fragments, the painter undoubtedly seeks to reference the lover evoked in the Song of Songs (or Song of Solomon) from the Old Testament, a figure so often idealised and associated with the Virgin Mary.

As for the music, we observe three staves on each folio, arranged horizontally (as is often employed in music editions), where each staff features a C clef on the third line (typical for a tenor voice) and where only the first one displays the sign of rhythmic mensuration at the beginning. Thus, it is assuredly a book of separate parts (the most common method of polyphonic music-making around 1600) with a tenor part, and for this reason performed on the sackbut – an instrument corresponding to this vocal range. The music is written without a flat in the key, with rhythmic mensuration in *tempus imperfectum diminutum* (𝔠), and this voice begins in the lefthand folio with a breve rest followed by a semibreve E and three minims D-E-F. We cannot ascertain the number of parts in the musical work being performed, but we can conclude that the work would be polyphonic. At the top of each folio, there seems to be an indication of a hypothetical author, but unfortunately, it is difficult to decipher. Based on the identified notation, we tried to locate a work with a similar musical incipit, but so far without success. Nevertheless, several 16th-century composers wrote motets using other musical solutions illustrating this same text from the Song of Songs. And we managed to identify a motet whose beginning is "*Surge propera amica mea*" copied precisely in a 16th-century source from the Monastery of Santa Cruz de Coimbra (P-Cug MM48, ff. 10v-12), but here in open-score format. To our great surprise, the second part of this motet celebrates none other than the birth of the Virgin: "*Hodie nata est Virgo Maria*"! Naturally, it became imperative, both conceptually and artistically, to include this motet in our programme, despite being dated precisely a century before the Marian Parody Mass presented here. Thus, we open the festivities with this motet, which simultaneously illustrates the evocation of the Virgin lover (as in Pereira Lusitano's painting) in its first part (track 1) and the celebration of the Virgin's birth (like the mass "*La zagala más hermosa*") in its second part (track 2).

This motet has a concordance in the *Sacrarum cantionum*, a collection printed by Tielman Susato in 1546 in Antwerp, which comprises 84 five-voice motets by various authors distributed across four volumes printed in five separate parts. The "*Surge propera amica mea*" can be found in the second volume (*liber secundus*) on folio 4 of each part, where one can read the attribution "*Incertus author*" (as in the case of other works printed by Susato), indicating that its author was already unknown at the time. This designation is also found at the top of the folio of the Crucian manuscript (spelled "*Incertus autor*"). Copies in open score format in Crucian manuscripts of works found in other sources in choir book or in separate parts are frequent. This process of entabulation, overlaying the different voices on the same medium, is often associated with the study of the copied compositions.

In Pereira Lusitano's *Coronation of the Virgin*, the central characters (the Virgin accompanied by the Child and the Eternal Father accompanied by the Holy Spirit represented by a white dove) are surrounded by a small crowd of winged angels, some depicted in full body, while others are only represented by their heads. Most of those depicted in full body are engaged in musical performance with various instruments. In the upper part, on the left of the Virgin, there is a shawm, a sackbut, and two viols (treble and bass); on the right of the Virgin, there are two recorders (small instruments in four-foot), an organ (with metal pipes on the façade, with a player and a blower), a sackbut (accompanied by the angel holding the book), and a guitar (with five double courses). In the lower part, at the Virgin's feet, one can see a cornett, two recorders (again, instruments in four-foot), two dulcians (tenor and bass), a harp (with its tuning key), and a drum with a timbre, its drummer holding a wooden drumstick with a spherical tip in his right hand.

We know that the combination of shawms and sackbuts, clearly visible in the upper part, constitutes the first ensemble of professional instrumentalists to be hired permanently by Iberian cathedrals from the 15th century onwards, with their number slightly increasing throughout the 16th century, as confirmed by the surveyed iconography. By the 17th century (or even from the late 1500s), a "modern" pair of instruments – dulcian and cornett – had expanded the "old" Iberian instrumental ensemble. Given that Pereira Lusitano places the shawms and sackbuts (the "older pair") at the top – at the level of the crowning Father – and the cornett and dulcians (the "modern pair") at the bottom – at the feet of the Son and his crowned Mother – we might even hypothesise a generational organisation of the wind instruments in the pictorial composition.

The wind instruments accompanying the Marian parody mass "*La zagala más hermosa*" of 1646, throughout the rest of our programme, are those typical of the 17th century – the cornett and the dulcian. However, for the motet "*Surge propera amica mea*" (track 1), from the mid-16th century, we decided to expand the instrumental panel with shawm and sackbut in order, above all, to illustrate the richness of sound evoked in Pereira Lusitano's Coronation of the Virgin. Thus, just as in the pictorial work that inspires us, one can hear the cornett, shawm, sackbut, dulcian, viol, guitar, harp, and organ, accompanying the voices of the singers. And in the second part of the motet, with the text "*Hodie nata es virgo Maria*" (track 2), the reeds (shawm and dulcian) and the cornett give way to recorders (in four-foot) evoking the sweetness of the Virgin's birth, and the organ yields to the virginal, evoking the purity of Mary's virginity. Curiously, amidst such instrumental richness, none of Pereira Lusitano's angels seem to be singing, with all the characters having either closed or semi-closed lips. In our sound representation of the painting, however, we naturally wanted to give voice to the text, with all five parts sung, as well as played.

As we have mentioned, Pereira Lusitano's work features a drum in the lower right corner. Although we have not included percussion in the performance of this motet, we do use a variety of percussion instruments in the vernacular works on this programme that specifically cast our minds to more pastoral realms: a drum (accompanying a bagpipe and a shawm) in "*La zagala más hermosa*"; castanets (an instrument described in a vernacular work from MM234, accompanying the guitar – "*tocando las castañuelas, apuntaron las biguelas*"), the adufe (depicted in Portuguese iconography in the hands of a young shepherdess around 1738 –, and the tambourine in the *vilancico* "*Ola toro zente pleta*" (a literary and musical genre where percussion instruments are often mentioned); the tabor pipe and castanets once again in "*Las zagalas del valle*" (celebrating the coronation of Mary).

With this suggested soundscape, we consider the prevailing Sevillian naturalism, which we combine with the veristic details that bring us closer to the travels, erudition, and musical instruments observed firsthand by Vasco Pereira Lusitano (such as the zoomorphic embellishments on the stringed instruments, the tuning key, or the epigraphic and thus legible music books). However, we did not exclude the overall symbolic nature, which may simply be intended to commemorate the ethereal character of the Marian composition being celebrated, which Pereira Lusitano most probably sought to immortalise in the memory of worshippers.

Sónia Duarte and Tiago Simas Freire
(Oporto – Lyon, April 2024)

CAPELLA SANCTAE CRUCIS is a laboratory of study and performance focused on the Portuguese polyphony of the 16th and 17th centuries, founded by Tiago Simas Freire in 2012. Part of the vast multidisciplinary project *Mundos e Fundos* of the Centre for Classical and Humanistic Studies of the University of Coimbra (CECH-UC), it builds bridges connecting research and musical practice, seeking a sounding result that revives the value of the Portuguese musical heritage, which remains barely known to this day.

It owes its name to the musical chapel of the Monastery of Santa Cruz in Coimbra, a centre of extraordinary artistic activity, particularly during the 16th and 17th centuries, from which the musical sources that constitute the main objects of our study originate.

The passions that drive the team are evident: the emotion of maximum proximity to the sources; the constant questioning and experimentation; the admiration of the harmony of the spheres represented by Renaissance music; the enthusiasm for the emotional metamorphoses of early Baroque music; and the ambition to discover Portuguese repertoires that are little known to musicians and the general public.

Working mostly on unpublished manuscripts preserved in the General Library of University of Coimbra, the programmes are conceived to recreate the richness of each work's original context. Faithful to a philological approach, historically and culturally formed beyond what is expressed in the sources, the interpretation challenges and explores sound texture and balance, discourse and phrasing, instrumentation, and ornamentation. The present-day Man is thus transported, through this aesthetic experience, to a widening of his imaginary, past, present, and future.

The ensemble regularly performs at several international festivals and its projects are hosted by artistic residencies at CCR de Ambronay (EEEmerging), Riga's Mazā Ģilde, Pavia Barrocca Festival, Cité de la Voix de Vézelay, Royaumont Foundation, CNCM Voce de Pigna and the University of Coimbra. Has received sponsorships from Creative Europe, DRAC Rhône-Alpes, Centre National de la Musique, Adami, Caixa Cultura Programme, Direcção Geral das Artes, Cité de la Voix, Coimbra University, Centro de Estudos Clássicos e Humanísticos, Bullukian Foundation, Renaud Foundation, BCP bank.

Its project "Bridging Musical Heritage", a partnership between the University of Coimbra, the University of Valladolid, Artway, *O Bando de Surunyo* and *Capella Sanctae Crucis*, was the winner awarded the REMA Award for the best European cooperation project in 2024.

After the release of our first album "Zuguambé" on Harmonia Mundi, *Capella Sanctae Crucis* has dedicated itself to the creation of a series of CD-books entitled "Mundos e Fundos" as part of a collaboration between the University of Coimbra and Artway Records, devoted to the rediscovery of the Portuguese musical heritage.

More than an ensemble, it is a project aiming to rescue a very rich and little-known musical heritage. Each concert is a new discovery of sound cathedrals lying dormant in Portuguese archives. Each programme is a new page in the history of Portuguese music.

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