

VOXNOVA ITALIA SCELSI, BYZANTIUM AND THE ALCHEMISTS

tenor, baritone, bass

Byzantine Alleluia from the 8th century, Roman rite

Fugues from "Atalanta Fugiens" by Michael Maier

"Regarding the Experiments of Marium Prophetissima" by Veronika Krausas

"Bogurodzica" (Polish medieval Ave Maria)

"Ave Praeclara" by Nicholas Isherwood

Giacinto Scelsi: Wo Ma, 4 Songs of Capricorn, Le Grand Sanctuaire, Three Latin Prayers (Ave Maria, Pater Noster, Alleluia)

From the Byzantine Alleluia that begins this ritual to the Scelsi Alleluia that brings it to a close, a circular program weaves a path through the world of Christian theology, Jewish tradition and alchemy, brought together by the universalist music of Giacinto Scelsi. Michael Maier was an alchemist composer whose three voice fugues speak of bizarre cures and spiritual unions. Veronika Krausas set a text by Quintan Ana Wikswo evoking the first female alchemist, Maria the Jewess. The Japanese rin, unifying instrument in this program, is heard throughout. Bogurodzica is a sort of Ave Maria universally recognized and sung in Poland. "Ave Praeclara" is a text by the alchemist Albert the Great, written after a dream in which the Virgin Mary blamed him for not honoring her. It is dedicated to Giacinto Scelsi and forms a bridge to his works. The music of Giacinto Scelsi is represented in remarkable diversity. Wo Ma is a vocal fireworks display. The Songs of Capricorn are a radical piece uniting the vocalism of Japan and Western contemporary music. Le Grand Sanctuaire is a short cycle of two Christian works that are beautiful in their simplicity. The Three Latin Prayers could seem like Gregorian Chant, but listening closely reveals the presence of the "diabolus in musica," the tritone and other musical deviations. The three voices sing in unison, like in Bogurodzica and our ritual ends in unity and synchronism.