

# **PARTHENIA, a Consort of Viols**

**BEVERLY AU**, bass viol

**LAWRENCE LIPNIK**, tenor viol

**ROSAMUND MORLEY**, treble and tenor viols

**LISA TERRY**, bass viol

with guest artists

**JULIANNE BAIRD**, soprano

**ROBERT MEALY**, renaissance violin

## ♦ **LES AMOURS DE MAI** ♦

Revoici venir du printemps

Claude Le Jeune (c.1530-1600)

♦

### **Chansons set to poems of Pierre de Ronsard**

Ricercare

Gabriel Coste (fl. 1538-1543)

Mignonne, allon voir si la roze

Guillaume Costeley (c.1530-1606)

Ah je meurs

Jean de Castro (c.1540-c.1600)

Petite Nymfe folatre

François Regnard (fl.c.1573-1579)

Rossignol mon mignon

Claude Le Jeune

♦

Ricercar

Julio Segnida Modena (1498–1561)

Fantasia à 4

Claude Le Jeune

Divisions on *Frais et Galliard*

Giovanni Bassano (c.1558-1617)

♦

Villageoise de Gascogne

Claude Le Jeune

Quand je voy tout le monde rire

André Pevernage (1543-1591)

Onques amour ne fut sans grand' langueur

Pevernage

♦

## ♦ **INTERMISSION** ♦

### **Suite of French Dances**

Michael Praetorius (1571-1621)

Passameze

Gaillarde

Courante

Pavane de Spaigne

Three Voltas

♦

Ma belle si ton ame

Anonymous

Divisions on *Susanne ung jour*

Giovanni Bassano

Mon pere et ma mere  
 Voulez vous donc toujours, madame  
 Françon vint l'autre jour

Pierre Bonnet (fl.1585-1600)  
 Pierre Bonnet  
 Pierre Bonnet

Parthenia is represented by GEMS Live! Artist Management and records for MSR Classics.

### ◆ NOTES ON THE PROGRAM ◆

Few of us have failed to feel a refreshed spirit with the coming of spring. Such a renewal was so beautifully described by the poets whose texts were honored with musical settings by composers of *chanson* and *air* in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. The songs on our program present the subject of love in all of its power and pain, and within the excitement of springtime. With the revival of classical humanism, the group of poets who called themselves *Le Pléiade*, whose most revered member was Pierre de Ronsard (1524-1585), sought to capture for the French language the essence of ancient Greek poetry, in which music and text were inseparable and sung recitation of these poems was considered to be a powerful cathartic experience. These ideas were furthered in the Academy, in *musique mesurée à l'Antique*, for which Claude Le Jeune became the principal composer. In such music, the syllables of French poetry were set to long and short value notes rather than to accented and unaccented notes as in Italian music. This distinct rhythmic flow produced an irregular pattern of 2- and 3-beat units, which gave a special flavor to French vocal music. This can be heard in many of the songs on our program; one of the best known and most beautiful is Le Jeune's *Revoici venir du printemps*.

Instrumental music itself was not yet as important to French composers as vocal; compared with England and Italy there is little still extant which is partly a reflection of the fact that much instrumental music was improvised. However, some beautiful fantasies were written, such as these by Du Caurroy who used as his starting point the folk tune *Ma belle si ton ame*, also known with the text *Une jeune fillette*. The five fantasies are like five instrumental verses of the song. An unusual fantasy is that of Henri Le Jeune, preserved in Marin Mersenne's monumental treatise, *L'Harmonie Universelle*. This piece seems to have an English pavane as its model; English ensemble music was arguably the most loved in France at this time and the English-built viola da gambas were the instruments that were most sought after by French players. The taste for virtuosic instrumental divisions came from Italy where many French songs such as *Frais et Galliard* and *Susanne ung jour* were used as the basis for such variations. There is evidence that singers also used these instrumental divisions. As French culture in many of its manifestations began to dominate the courts of Europe, French dancing became the standard, and Michael Praetorius' *Terpsichore*, preserves a comprehensive collection of French dance tunes harmonized into 4 and 5 parts. Without Praetorius, these dances might otherwise have been lost.

- Rosamund Morley

### ◆ BIOS ◆

PARTHENIA, hailed by the New Yorker as "one of the brightest lights in New York's early-music scene," is a dynamic ensemble exploring the extraordinary repertory for viols from Tudor England to the court of Versailles and beyond. Known for its remarkable sense of ensemble, Parthenia is presented in concerts across America, and produces its own lively and distinguished concert series at Corpus Christi Church in New York City, collaborating regularly with the world's foremost early music specialists and has been

featured on radio and television and in prestigious festivals and series as wide-ranging as Music Before 1800, Maverick Concerts and the Regensburg Tage Alter Musik.

Noteworthy among Parthenia's inventive programs have been presentations of the complete viol fantasies of Henry Purcell at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, the complete instrumental works of Robert Parsons at Columbia's Miller Theatre, as well as the

popular touring program “When Music & Sweet Poetry Agree,” a celebration of Elizabethan poetry and music with actor Paul Hecht. Parthenia performs often at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, both in Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium and in the Museum's Medieval Sculpture Hall, and appeared in conjunction with the exhibition "Searching for Shakespeare" at the Yale Center for British Art.

Parthenia's enduring interest in the bonds between poetry and music will be heard in a forthcoming release of 16<sup>th</sup>-century settings of the poems of Pierre de Ronsard, *Les Amours de Mai*, with soprano Julianne Baird and Renaissance violinist Robert Mealy. Parthenia has also recorded *Within the Labyrinth*, *Parthenia Sampler*, *A Reliquary for William Blake*, and *Trumpet after Dark*, with jazz trumpeter Randy Sandke.

Parthenia has commissioned, premiered and recorded many new works by composers such as Phil Kline, Brian Fennelly, Will Ayton, Randy Sandke, Frances White, Nicholas Patterson, funded in part through grants from the Fromm Foundation, American Composers Forum, the Camargo Foundation, Roger Williams University, the Viola da Gamba Society of America, and private donors. An ASCAP/CMA Award honored Maverick Concerts' 2002 Season, which included two world premieres of works by Brian Fennelly, commissioned especially for Parthenia by Maverick Concerts. Through a 2006 grant from the Jerome Foundation, Parthenia premiered "Nothing Proved," a song cycle for viol consort, voice and interactive audio processing, set by composer Kristin Norderval to the extraordinary poetry of Queen Elizabeth I. More information about Parthenia's activities can be found at [www.parthenia.org](http://www.parthenia.org).

JULIANNE BAIRD, soprano, has been hailed a “national artistic treasure” (The New York Times) and as a “well-nigh peerless performer in the repertory of the baroque.” With more than 125 recordings to her credit on Decca, Deutsche Grammophon, Dorian, Newport Classics and MSR Classics, Julianne Baird is one of the world's ten most recorded classical artists. She has participated in leading roles in a series of acclaimed recordings of Handel and Gluck operatic

premieres. In addition, recent projects include recordings of Handel arias from *Alcina* and *Rinaldo* with the Dryden Ensemble and a newly commissioned opera written for her and based on “The Wife of Bath's Tale” of Chaucer.

Julianne Baird is recognized internationally as one whose “virtuosic vocal style is firmly rooted in scholarship.” Her book, *Introduction to the Art of Singing*, Cambridge University Press, now in its third printing, is used by singers and professional schools internationally. “The Musical World of Benjamin Franklin” (CD and Song Book) is published by The Colonial Institute. [www.colonialmusic.org/BF.htm](http://www.colonialmusic.org/BF.htm)

One of America's leading historical string players, ROBERT MEALY has been praised for his “imagination, taste, subtlety, and daring” (Boston Globe); The New Yorker described him as “New York's world-class early music violinist.” He has released more than 50 discs on numerous major labels, ranging from Hildegard of Bingen with Sequentia, to Renaissance consorts with the Boston Camerata, to Rameau operas with Les Arts Florissants. Mr. Mealy has appeared at music festivals from Berkeley to Belgrade, and from Melbourne to Versailles; he has also toured with the Mark Morris Dance Group and accompanied Renée Fleming on the David Letterman Show. In New York, he is a frequent leader and soloist with the New York Collegium, ARTEK, the Clarion Society, and Early Music New York. Since 2004, he has been concertmaster for the distinguished Boston Early Music Festival Orchestra, leading them in their Grammy-nominated recordings of Lully's *Thésée* and *Psyché* and Conradi's *Ariadne*. He has appeared frequently as guest director and concertmaster for the Phoenix Symphony and the Colorado Music Festival. A devoted chamber musician, he is a member of the medieval ensemble *Fortune's Wheel*, the Renaissance violin band the *King's Noyse*, and the 17c ensemble *Quicksilver*. Mr. Mealy is Adjunct Professor of Music at Yale University where he directs the Yale Collegium and teaches courses on rhetoric and performance; for a decade previously, he directed the Harvard Baroque Orchestra. In 2004, he received Early Music America's Binkley Award for outstanding teaching at both Harvard and Yale.

#### ◆ TEXTS ◆

**Revoici venir du Printemps**, L'amoureuse et belle saison.

Le courant des eaux recherchant Le canal d'été s'éclaircit:

Et la mer calme de ces flots Amolit le triste couroux:

Le canard s'égai' se plongeant, Et se lave coint dedans l'eau:

Et la gru' qui fourche son vol, Retraverse l'air et s'en va.

Le soleil éclaire luisant D'une plus séreine clarté:

Revoici.....

Du nuage l'ombre s'enfuit, Qui se jou' et court et noircit,  
Et forets et champs et coteaux Le labour humain reverdit,  
Et la pre découvre ses fleurs. Revoici...  
De Vénus le fils Cupidon L'univers semant de ses traits,  
De sa flamme va rechauffer Animaux, qui volent en l'air,  
Animaux qui rampent aux champs, Animaux qui nagent aux eaux.  
Ce qui memement ne sent pas, Amoureux se fond de plaisir. Revoici...  
Rions aussi nouw: et cherchons Les ébats et jeux du Printemps:  
Toute chose rit de plaisir: Célébrons la gaie saison. Revoici.... **Jean-Antoine de Baif**

*Spring comes again, the season of beauty and love/ The clear flowing water seeks its summer channel/ The calm sea mollifies the sad turbulence/ The duck loves to dive and preen in the water/ the crane crosses the sky and departs/ The sun shines serenely radiant and chases away the darkening clouds/ Forests, fields, hills are made green again by human work/ Meadows show their flowers/ Venus' son Cupid throws his darts all over the world rekindling love in the animals who fly, crawl and swim/ Even senseless things feel the pleasure of Love/ Let us laugh and seek the revels and games of Springtime. Revoici...*

**Mignonne, allons voir si la rose**, Qui ce matin avait déclose  
Sa robe de pourpre au soleil,  
A point perdu cette veprée, Les plis de sa robe pourprée  
Et son teint au votre pareil.  
Las! voyez comme en peu d'espace, Mignonne elle a dessus la place,  
Las! ses beautés laissé choir.  
O vraiment maratre nature, Puisqu'une telle fleur ne dure  
Que du matin jusques au soir;  
Donques si me croyez, mignonne Tandis que votre age fleuronne  
En sa plus verte nouveauté,  
Cueillez, cueillez votre jeunesse:  
Comme à cette fleur la vieillesse Fera ternir votre beauté. **Pierre de Ronsard**

*Sweet one, let us see if the rose/ which has opened its crimson robe to the sun/ hasn't this evening lost/ the weavings of its purple dress/ and its complexion so like yours./ Alas! in such a short time she has shed her beauty/ Nature is so harsh to let a flower last only from morning to evening/ Believe, dearest, in the bloom of youth, in its freshness./ Pluck it now while you can for old age will pluck your beauty.*

**Ah! je meurs**, Ah! baise moi, Ah! maitresse approche toi.  
Tu fuis comme une faune qui tremble. Au moins, soufre que ma main  
S'ébat' un peu dedans ton sein, Ou plus bas si bon te semble. **Pierre de Ronsard**

*Oh! I die; kiss me, come near me. Your flee like a trembling fawn. At least let me caress your breast or even lower if it seems good to you.*

**Petite nymfe folatre** Nymfette que j'idolatre,  
Ma mignonne dont les yeux Logent mon pis et mon mieux  
Ma doucette, ma sucrée Ma grace, ma Cytherée,  
Tu me dois pour m'apaiser Mille fois le jour baiser.  
*Response:* Où fuis tu mon amelette, Mon diamant, ma perlette,  
Las! revien mon sucredoux Sur mon sein, sur mes genoux  
Et de cent baiser appaise De mon coeur la chaude braise. **Pierre de Ronsard**

*Little nymph that I adore/ my sweet one in whose eyes reside my worst and my best./ My sweet one, my sugar, my grace, my Cytherée/ You must give me peace by kissing me a thousand times a day./ Where do you flee my soul, my diamond/ my pearl?/ Alas, return my sweet to my breast, on my knees I ask you to appease my burning heart with your kisses.*

**Rosignol mon mignon** Qui dans ceste saulaye,  
Va seul de branche en branche À ton gre voletant  
Et chantez à l'envy de moy Qui vay chantant celle qui faut

Toujours que dans ta bouche j'aye.  
Nous sou'pirons tous deux Ta douce voix s'essaye  
À sonner l'amitié d'une qui t'ayme tant.  
Et moi triste je vay, la beauté regretant  
Qui m'a fait dans le Coeur Une si aigre playe.  
Toutefois rossignol, nous différons d'un point  
C'est que tu es aymé et je ne le suis point.  
Bien que tous deux ayons les musiques pareilles  
Car tu fleschis ta voix au doux bruit de tes sons.  
Mais la mienne qui prend à despit mes chansons  
Pour ne les escouter se bouche les oreilles.

**Pierre de Ronsard**

*Sweet nightingale moving alone from branch to branch in this willow tree/ I am envious of your song which is always in your mouth./ We both sigh, your sweet voice sings of the love of one whom I love so/ I go sadly, regretting the beauty of she who made such a bitter wound in my heart./ Yet nightingale, we differ in that you are loved and I am not/ Though we share the same music, you bend your voice in sweet sound, but despite my songs she stops up her ears.*

**Quand je voy tout le monde rire,** C'est lors que seul je me retire  
A part en quelque lieu caché, Comme la chaste Tourterelle,  
Perdant sa compagne fidelle Se branche sur ung tronc seiché.

*When I see everyone laughing/ That's when I retire alone/ Hidden in some secret place/ Like the chaste turtledove/ Upon losing her faithful companion/ Perches herself on a dead tree.*

**Oncques amour** ne fut sans grand' langueur,  
Langueur ne fut jamais sans esperence,  
Voilà le point, où gist tout le malheur,  
Qu'on voit souvent espoir sans jouissance.

*Never was there love without great languor/ Never was there languor without hope/ That is the point where misfortune lies/ That one sees hope without fulfillment.*

**Ma belle si ton ame** se sent or' allumer  
De ceste douce flamme Qui nous force d'aymer,  
Allons contans, allons sur la verdure,  
Allons tandis que dure Nostre jeune printemps.

Avant que la journée de nostre age qui fuit  
Se sente environné des ombres de la nuit  
Prenons loysir de vivre nostre vie  
Et sans craindre l'envie baisons nous à plaisir.

Ça, finette affinée, ça rompons le destin  
Qui clot nostre journée souvent des le matin.  
Allons....

*My beauty, if your heart feels this sweet flame that compels us to love/ Come to the greenwood while spring is young./ Before the day of our youth has fled and feels the shadows of night/ let us live our life and kiss to our pleasure without fear of shame./ Hither, pure one, let us break the destiny which closes our day at dawn.*

**Susanne ung jour** d'amour sollicité Par deux vieillards, convoitant sa beauté,  
Fut en son coeur triste et déconfortée Voyant l'effort fait a sa chasteté.  
Elle leur dit "Si par déloyauté de ce corps mien Vous avez jouissance,  
C'est fait de moi si je fais résistance Vous me ferez mourir en déshonneur.  
J'ai mieux périr en innocence Que d'offenser par péché le Seigneur."

**G.Guérioult**

*Susanne one day solicited by two old men who lusted for her beauty/ was sad and distressed in her heart for this affront to her chastity. She said "If you take my body I am done for. If I resist you will have me disgracefully killed. But I prefer innocent death than to offend my God with such sin."*

**Mon pere et ma mere** leur foy ont juré Que dans six semaines je my mariray,  
Au joly bois m'en vois, au joly bois j'iray.  
Que dans six semaines je my mariray A un vieux bonhomme que je tromperay  
Au joly bois...  
Si le viellard gronde je le draperay Et en Cornouaille je l'envoyeray  
Au joly bois...

*My parents have arranged for my marriage to an old man in six months./ I will run away to the sweet woods. I will deceive him./ If the old man growls I will wrap him up and send him to Cornwall.*

**Voulez vous donc toujours madame** faire resistance à l'Amour?  
N'esteindrez vous jamais la flamme qui me consomme nuit et jour?

Je souffre un si cruel martyre, pour acquerir vostre amitié:  
Mais tant plus pour vous je soupire moins vous avez de moy pitié.

Craignez vous que la renommée vous face un jour rougir le front?  
Vous ne sçauriez estre blasmée faisant comme les autres font.

*Madam, will you always resist love? Will you never extinguish the flame which burns me night and day?/ I suffer such a cruel martyrdom to get your love: but the more I sigh, the less pity you have on me./ Do you think your good name will make you blush one day? You will never be blamed for doing what others do.*

**Françon vint l'autre jour**, me trouva toute seulette,  
Lors il me parla d'amour d'une façon si discrète,  
Que jamais d'affection je n'aurai qu'à Françon.

Il me dit tout doucement "Rebaise moi ma mignonne:  
Refuse tu ton amant de qu'à chacun tu donne  
Qui non point l'affection qu'à ton gentil Françon?"

"Non je n'en ferai rien" dis-je alors toute fachée:  
"Si je vous faisais du bien, je sais que votre pensée  
Changerait d'affection et perdrais mon Françon."

*Françon came the other day and found me alone/ He spoke to me of love in a manner so discreet that I will never love any other than Françon/ He said sweetly "Kiss me my darling, do you refuse me that which you give to any other/ who does not love you as much as your Françon?/ "No, I'll give no more" I said all angry/ "if I yield to you I know that your thoughts would soon turn to another and I would lose my Françon.*