

principally the organ, and working for some years in Venice, Landini returned to Florence to be the resident organist and composer in the church of San Lorenzo, a post he held until his death.

As all educated persons in his day, Landini was well acquainted with the works of Dante Alighieri (1265-1321), and it was from this source that he chose texts for many of his songs. Dante defined for his time the idealism of courtly love, envisioned in the *Divine Comedy* in the role of his beloved Beatrice, who meets him at the gates of Paradise and guides him toward the love and knowledge of God. Beatrice's physical beauty is seen as the outward, visible sign of inner virtue. Preoccupation with female beauty and virtue permeates not only the writings of Dante, but also those of Petrarch and Boccaccio. It is not surprising to find that beauty and chastity were the focus of songs about women as well as the focus of their portraits throughout the Renaissance.

The artist who created the most sublime portraits of women in the Renaissance, Leonardo da Vinci, was also a gifted musician. Historians writing about the ducal courts in Ferrara and Milan record that he was invited to play in both venues on the lira, the Renaissance forerunner of the viola. He devoted serious thought to the improvement of that instrument and the invention of others, and built some of the prototypes himself. In his treatise on the philosophy and technique of painting, Leonardo accorded music the highest place, after painting, among the arts.

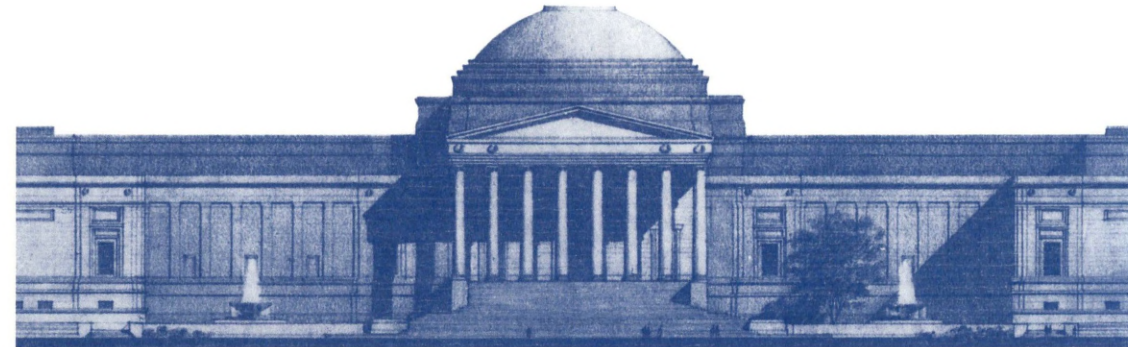
The program selected for this concert by Anonymous 4 consists entirely of *ballate*, songs that follow the repetition scheme ABBAA. In Landini's hands, the *ballata* progressed from an unaccompanied call and response dance tune to a sophisticated composition for two or three voices with complex harmonies, a strong tonal center, and a regular meter.

*For the convenience of concertgoers
the Garden Café remains open until 6:30 p.m.*

The Sixtieth Season of

THE WILLIAM NELSON CROMWELL and
F. LAMMOT BELIN CONCERTS

National Gallery of Art



2394th Concert

ANONYMOUS 4

Presented in honor of the exhibition
*Virtue and Beauty: Leonardo's "Ginevra de' Benci"
and Renaissance Portraits of Women*

Sunday Evening, 28 October 2001
Seven O'clock
West Building, West Garden Court

Admission free

PROGRAM

(Performed without intermission)

The Second Circle

Love Songs of Francesco Landini (c. 1325–1397)

Echo la primavera

Reading I: (Dante is captured by Love)

Angelica biltà

Che chosa è quest'amor

Reading II: (Dante swoons at the sight of Beatrice)

Nella partita

Non dò la colp'a te

Quanto più caro fay

Reading III: (The greeting denied)

Lasso! per mie fortuna

Occhi dolenti mie

Muort'oramai

Reading IV: (The God of Love appears to Dante)

Per allegreçça

Nella mia vita

Abbonda di virtù

Non avrà ma' pietà

Reading V: (Dante reveals his purpose)

Cara mie donna

Gram piant' agli occhi

Echo la primavera

The use of cameras or recording equipment during the performance is not allowed. Please be sure that all personal electronic devices are turned off.

Renowned for their astonishing vocal blend and virtuoso ensemble singing, the four women who comprise **Anonymous 4** (Marsha Genesky, Susan Hellauer, Jacqueline Horner, and Johanna Maria Rose) came together in 1986 to experiment with the sound of medieval chant and polyphony as sung by higher voices. The ensemble takes its name from the designation given by musicologists to an anonymous thirteenth-century Englishman, who as a student in Paris wrote about the vocal polyphony then being performed at the Cathedral of Notre Dame. The members of Anonymous 4 combine musical, literary, and historical scholarship with contemporary performance intuition as they create innovative programs, interweaving music with poetry and narrative.

Active in promoting new as well as ancient music, the ensemble has collaborated with England's Chilingirian String Quartet to premiere a new work by British composer John Taverner. An appearance at the Boston Early Music Festival with the six-man ensemble, Lionheart, and a live broadcast on New York's public radio station, WNYC, included new works by Steve Reich and Richard Einhorn. Performances in such prestigious venues as the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Kennedy Center, London's Wigmore Hall, Frankfurt's Alte Oper, and Vienna's Theaterverein have met with resounding success.

Anonymous 4's recordings for Harmonia Mundi USA have garnered important awards and enjoyed robust sales. The newest example is *1000: A Mass for the End of Time*. Prior successes include *The Lily and the Lamb* and *Legends of St. Nicholas*, named early music recordings of the years 1996 and 1999, respectively, by *Classic FM*; *On Yoolis Night*, which received France's Diapason d'Or award; and *An English Ladymass*, named 1992 classical disc of the year by *CD Review*.

Francesco Landini, also known as Magister Franciscus de Florentia, was born in Florence in about 1325 and died there in 1397. He was the son of the painter Jacopo del Casentino, who was an apprentice to Giotto and a cofounder of the Florentine Guild of Painters. Jacopo no doubt had high hopes for his son to succeed him as an artist, but an attack of smallpox rendered Francesco blind at an early age, and he turned to music as his field of study. After mastering several instruments,