PROGRAM

12:00 and 2:00 • West Building, West Garden Court

Eya: Ensemble for Medieval Music
Crossley Hawn, soprano
Allison Mondel, soprano, symphonia, director
Sarah Issaelkhoury, mezzo-soprano

Florence: The Cultural Crucible
Presented in honor of Della Robbia: Sculpting with Color in Renaissance Florence

I.
Lauda, Anonymous, Florence Laudario, early 14th century
"Lamentomi et sospiro per più potere amare"

Lauda, Anonymous, 15th century
"Gesù, sommo conforto" (I)

Canto, Anonymous, Florentine, late 14th - early 15th century
"Canto della Prudenza"

Motet, Francesco de Layolle (1492 - c. 1540)
"Ave Maria"

II.
Lauda, Anonymous, Florence Laudario, early 14th century
"Del dolcissimo Signore"

Lauda, possibly Luca Bettini (1489 - 1527)
"Ecco 'l Messia"

Lauda, Feo Belcari (1410 - 1484)
"Da, che tu m'hai dimostrato"

Chanson, Heinrich Isaac
"Helas, que pourra devenir"

III.
Lauda, Anonymous, Florence Laudario, early 14th century
"Vergine sancta Maria"

Chanson, Guillaume Du Fay (1397 - 1474)
"Du tout m'estoie abandoné"

Lauda, Simone Verovio (c. 1550 - 1607)
"Gesù, sommo conforto" (II)

Chanson, Alexander Agricola (1446 - 1506)
"J'ay beau huer"
The Musicians

Eya is an award-winning vocal ensemble based in Washington, DC, specializing in the interpretation of medieval music for women’s voices. Launched in 2010 and directed by Allison Mondel, Eya has established its place in the Washington, DC, community as an early music ensemble of impeccable vocal quality and deep, creative spirit. Eya presents concert programs that interweave diverse repertories of the twelfth through fifteenth centuries, from Hildegard von Bingen to Notre Dame, to the flyleaves of early English manuscripts and beyond. Through this lens, these programs seek to tell a story that forges new points of connection between contemporary audiences and medieval repertoire, underlining our common humanity with these early poets and composers.

Our performers are some of the finest, young, early music specialists in the area and appear regularly with the Washington Bach Consort, Apollo’s Fire, the Folger Consort, and Cathedra. Eya has performed at a variety of notable venues, including the Music Center at Strathmore, the Washington National Cathedral, Dumbarton Oaks, the Boston Early Music Festival Fringe, Georgetown University, Williams College, and the College of William and Mary.

Eya is the proud recipient of the 2013 Greater DC Choral Excellence Award for Best Specialty Group: Early Music, as well as a 2015 nominee for Most Creative Programming. The ensemble will be releasing a second album, The Three Marys, in March 2017. Eya (pronounced “EH-yah”) is a Latin exclamation of joy.

Crossley Hawn, soprano

Soprano Crossley Hawn enjoys an engaging career as a soloist and ensemble singer in the greater Washington area and has been praised by DC Theatre Metro Arts for her “lovely, vibrant soprano” and “great acting and agile vocals.” She performs with ensembles such as the Folger Consort, the Washington National Cathedral Choir, the Washington Bach Consort, and the Evolution Contemporary Music Series. Crossley recently completed her master’s degree in vocal performance at the Catholic University of America. She is a cantor and chorister at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, where she had the honor of canting the Funeral Mass of U.S. Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia in February 2016. Recently, she performed as soloist for Handel’s Messiah with the Reston Chorale. This winter, she toured with the U.S. Air Force’s professional choir, the Singing Sergeants.

Allison Mondel, soprano and director

Lauded by the Washington Post for her “ethereal soprano” and “spare, otherworldly radiance,” Allison Mondel is a highly versatile performing artist and teacher. She received her master’s in early music vocal performance from the Longy School of Music and is a specialist in medieval music, notably in the notation and performance of the chants of Hildegard von Bingen. Mondel enjoyed the honor of singing Hildegard’s music at President Obama’s second Inaugural Prayer Service at the Washington National Cathedral. Mondel has led teaching and coaching sessions and offered lectures on early music at the Peabody Conservatory, Williams College, Georgetown University, the Arts Club of Washington, and the Washington Early Music Festival. Mondel has appeared as a soloist or ensemble singer with the Boston Early Music Festival and Tanglewood, Bach Sinfonia, Chantry, and Cathedra. She teaches voice in the National Cathedral’s chorister program and at Georgetown University.

Sarah Issaelkhoury, mezzo-soprano

Sarah Issaelkhoury, mezzo-soprano, can be seen performing with several ensembles in the Washington, DC, metro area, including the Washington Bach Consort, Cathedra, Chantry, and more. Her recent solo engagements have included the Virginia Consort, the Washington Bach Consort Cantata Series, and recitals with the Dacor-Bacon House and St. John’s Wednesday Concert Series. Issaelkhoury’s operatic roles include Baba the Turk (The Rake’s Progress), Rosina (Il Barbiere di Siviglia), Angelina (La Cenerentola), Dorabella (Cosi Fan Tutte), and Miss Todd (The Old Maid and the Thief). Issaelkhoury holds a bachelor of music degree from James Madison University and a master’s from the University of Michigan.
Program Notes

The musical landscape of Renaissance Florence reveals a splendid symbiosis of contrasting elements: sacred and secular, foreign and native, highborn and humble. These elements nurtured the development of an unusually vibrant cultural climate that supported the creative lives of artists, architects, musicians, politicians, clergy, and ordinary citizens within the relatively small confines of a magnificent Italian city.

In this program, Eya traces these coexisting elements within the cultural and social fabric of Florence from the Trecento (late fourteenth century) through the late sixteenth century. Each part of the program begins with a chant from a unique manuscript utilized by a devout confraternity and continues to explore the varied forms of vocal music that define this rich cultural moment. The program also offers a snapshot of the local musical tastes and political leanings that influenced poetic inspiration and musical composition.

The union of sacred and secular is perhaps most evident in the lauda, an Italian sacred song. The texts of these songs, notably in the vernacular, were often interchanged with other musical settings, a tradition known as cantasi come (“sing like [this song]”), evidence that tunes were well-known and frequently paired with different texts. Authors commonly penned secular texts suited to particular occasions such as Carnival, and hence borrowed music from a lauda setting in order to suit their particular song, a canto or canzona. Notable poets on the program include Lorenzo de Medici and Girolamo Savonarola, as well as several women, Lucrezia de Medici and Caterina de Ricci, the latter a nun and ardent supporter of Savonarola’s political reforms of the fifteenth century.

In addition to these distinctive Florentine traditions, the musical culture of the city was profoundly influenced by the influx of composers from Burgundy and the Low Countries whose work flourished under the support of legendary Florentine patrons like the Medici. Franco-Flemish music was considered the gold standard of polyphonic composition throughout the European continent, and this was certainly the case amongst Florentine circles. Eya explores the works of several generations of Franco-Flemish composers who are represented in a sumptuous chansonnier (songbook) from the era of Lorenzo the Magnificent (late fifteenth century), as well as several works by native Francesco de Layolle, composing in the style of the Burgundians, which further testifies to the preeminence of northern composers within the Florentine macrocosm.

Program notes by Allison Mondel

Upcoming Events of the Seventy-Fifth Season of The William Nelson Cromwell and F. Lammot Belin Concerts

Ji, piano
March 5, 3:30
West Building, West Garden Court

Alexander Wu, piano, and the Serendip Trio
“Washingtonians on Wednesdays”
Return to Camelot: Music from the Kennedy White House Concerts, 1961–1963
March 8, 12:10
West Building, East Garden Court

Cappella Pratensis
Commemorating the 500th anniversary of Hieronymus Bosch’s death
March 12, 3:30
West Building, East Garden Court

Inscape
“Washingtonians on Wednesdays”
March 15, 12:10
West Building Lecture Hall

Kruger Brothers and Kontras Quartet
Appalachian Concerto
Presented in honor of East of the Mississippi: Nineteenth-Century American Landscape Photography
March 19, 3:30
West Building, East Garden Court

General Information

Admission to the National Gallery of Art and all of its programs is free of charge, except as noted.

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

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Cover Luca della Robbia, Madonna and Child (detail), c. 1475, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Widener Collection

Back cover West Building, Constitution Avenue entrance, viewed from Sixth Street NW, 1941, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gallery Archives
J'ay beau huer
Ed io sia sempre affiso
Tu se' tutto el mio amore,
Car je conoys que peu de moy luy chault;
Je ne luy puys, pour or ne pour avoyr,
J'ay pour elle maint dolereulx assault;
Che fa ogne cor sereno.
Laude al crocifisso
E '1 mio beato porto
J'ay beau huer...
Elle let fet pour mieulx moy decepvoyr.
J'ay beau huer...
Qui point ne croyt, je Paperboy de voyr.
De celle la qui plus a mon gre vault.
La croce e '1 crucifisso
Suavemente pieno
Iesu, tu hai el mondo
Patir tal crudeltade?
Deh qual'amor t'ha vinto
L'immensa tua bontade?
E santo redentore.
Iesu, sommo conforto (II)
Sia nel mio cor scolpito,
Plus ni voy tout que de cryer bien hault.
Son dur courage je ne peys desmovoyr.
Plus si voy tout que de veyr bien hault,
Car je conoys que peu de moy. lay chault;
Elle let fer pour mieulx moy deepovoyr.
J'y beau huer...

However much noise I make
I cannot move her hard heart.
There is nothing to be done but to cry aloud,
For I know that she cares little for me;
She does it the better to deceive me.
However much noise...

Jesus, highest solace
Iesu, sommo conforto,
Tu se' tutto el mio amore,
E '1 mio beato porto
E santo redentore.
O gran bonita,
Dolce pieta,
Felicel que che teco unito sta.

Jesus, with great desire
I would like to cry out my love.
I would like to shout so loud that all the world could hear me
And, in paradise, every saint would answer me;
And my great love would have pity on me.
And deign to brighten his benign face for me.

Laude al crocifisso
Lamentet noi et sospiro per piu potere amare
Con grande desidero l'amor vorrei gridare.
Vorreig gridar tant'alto, tutto '1 mondo m'audisse.
Et dentro 'n paradiso ogne sancto rispondessi,
Et al mi' grande amore piéret il ne venisse;
La sua benigna faccia mi degni rischiaramre.

Iesu, sommo conforto...

Jesus, highest solace
Lauda al crucifix
Jesus, highest solace,
You are all my love,
And my blessed refuge
And holy redeemer.
O great goodness,
Sweet mercy.
Happy is he who is united with You!

Jesus, What force has caused
To suffer such cruelty?
That you may be received among her elected:
More glory and greater fame
That penance which we call upon for help:
With tender and joyful love.
Which makes every heart serene.
O great goodness...

Lamentati et sospiro...

Canto della prudenza
Se mai salvono al cielo piatosi prieghi
Degli afflitti mortali:
Donna, che e nostri quori hor sciogli hor leghi,
Scarpa da tuti e mali
Eli libera da tua pungenti striali
Chi penserit per suo aturo chiamu:
Più glori et maggior fama
Aquisti la huo che vince et nos contende:
O voi che in tanti aff anni ci vedete
Per non l'aver seguita
Et tutti e nosti danni or conosciente
Ei la misera vita:
Pergetta questa donna alta et gradita
Che vi ri ceva fra suo gente elett.
Prudenza ognuno accetta
Che il chummin ver di nostra vita prende.

Song of Prudence
If ever the prayers and pleading of afflicted mortals
Reach you in heaven,
Lady, that our hearts may melt, and the binds
From all evils
May be freed of those stinging burbs.
That penance which we call upon for help:
More glory and greater fame
Are bought by that man that wins but does not contend.

Oh you [Prudence], we have so many troubles
For not having followed in your way.
All of our friendships are ruined,
And our life miserable:
Pray to this lovely woman that she welcome you,
That you may be received among her elected:
Prudence accepts each one
No matter the path that each life takes.
Con quella faccia lucida e vermiglia,
Come pietosos padre ad una tiglia,
E tu pietosamente subvenisti:
Ogni letizia stava per me persa,
Che rutilava lucido splendore.

Tutti sono isplendienti,
Quando la tuo' pietade ad me apristi:
E con quel don che or m'e doppio dardo,
La somma Gerarchia.

E la madre sua Maria.

Venite, e fate feste
Sempre t'avro nel mezzo del mie' core.

Vengane e non dimori
A1 signore de signori,
Su da gli etemi chori,
Venite alme celeste
Chiari sanza tenebrore.

Tu principio creatore.

Servo di Cristo, con quel dolce sguardo,
T ti chiamavo, e tu alfin venisti,
Da, che tu m'hai dimostro
Ecco i Messia,
Del dolcissime Signore... Of the sweetest Lord...