

## Le Diamant et la Marguerite

Mara Winter

This new concert program by Phaedrus imagines the experimental early development of the Renaissance traverso consort through two of the most dynamic musical patrons of the late-15th and early-16th centuries: Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian I, and his only daughter, the Archduchess Margaret of Austria. After her appointment as Governor of the Netherlands in 1507, the bibliophile Archduchess began to curate what flourished into a "highly decorated library for women", according to Antonio de Beatis, an Italian canon who visited the Archduchess between 1517-1518<sup>1</sup>. The contents of the library of the Archduchess Margaret illuminate a constellation of music, literature and art treasured by one of the first women to fashion her own public image in a position of authority with the same intensity as her male political counterparts, while maintaining an equally illustrious spiritual and emotional private life.<sup>2</sup> The library, housed in her Mechelen palace, contained some of the most important musical and intellectual works of her time.<sup>3</sup>

The music programmed in today's concert takes inspiration from one particularly mysterious book recorded in the Mechelen library's inventory: a lost treatise by the Franciscan Jacques de Marchepallu, known only by its title, *Traité du Diamante et de la Marguerite* (The Book of the Diamond and of the Daisy).<sup>4</sup> While the contents of the lost manuscript remain unknown, it is thought that the book was given as a gift to the Archduchess by her father, Emperor Maximilian I. The simultaneously impressive and tender imagery conveyed by the title draws together the two figures of father (Emperor) and daughter (Archduchess). On a more subtle level, the vivid string of words detached from its original theoretical context elicits connotations with the authoritative, public facing images of both figures, as well as the carefully curated aesthetic backdrop of Maximilian I and Margaret's surroundings. The melancholic, ornate, and at times intimidating aspects of the music generated by the Burgundian-Habsburg court composers and scriptoriums convey, in both sound and appearance, the complex layering of delicate and refined musical structures with the assertion of power. The mysterious title of the missing treatise serves as an allegory for the distant yet heartfelt, precious quality of the Burgundian chansons in the Augsburg Liederbuch, the instrumental consort music in the Codex Leopold and the Linz fragments, and most especially, the deeply haunting physical appearance of the *basse danse* manuscript kept under lock and key in the personal library of Margaret of Austria.

### Burgundian and Habsburg Symbolism

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<sup>1</sup> Antonio de Beatis, *The Travel Journal of Antonio de Beatis, 1517–1518*. Translated by J.R. Hale (ed.) and J.M.A. Lindon. Hakluyt Society 1979, pp.92–3.

<sup>2</sup> Eichberger, Dagmar. "A Renaissance Princess Named Margaret. Fashioning a Public Image in a Courtly Society." The Margaret Manion Lecture. 1999.

<sup>3</sup> Eichberger, Dagmar, and Grantley McDonald. "The Court of Savoy in Mechelen: Musical Manuscripts in the Library of Margaret of Austria." *Margaret of Austria's Basse Danse Manuscript*, edited by David J Burn et al., Alamire Foundation, Leuven, 2022, pp. 137–138.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 138–138.

From a historical point of view, Margaret of Austria is an important link between two of Europe's leading noble families, whose ties with one another were made official only in 1477, when the Habsburg heir Maximilian of Austria married Mary of Burgundy. Margaret was the only daughter of Maximilian's Habsburg dynasty, and for much of her life served as a pawn in various political marriage brokerages in order for her father to secure strategic positions throughout his empire.<sup>5</sup> The intermingling of Burgundian and Habsburgian cultures can be identified in the detailed images which accompany the allegorical biographies of Emperor Maximilian I—*Freydal*, *Weisskunig*, *Triumphzug* and others—which preserve a record of how these powerful circles came face-to-face during political and social events. To call these larger political dynamics into conversation with the instrumental forces present in the Habsburg and Burgundian courts, Holly Scarborough has observed that depictions of St. Andrew's Cross and fire irons, both originally symbols connected to the Burgundian dynasty, occur on the drum in combination with the transverse flute in Maximilian I's numerous vignettes showing mummeries and grand processions. In the words of Scarborough, "since this Burgundian association appears with the flute and drum, and Maximilian's tradition of mummeries began in Burgundy, a connection between the two seems plausible."<sup>6</sup>

### The Transverse Flute in Burgundian-Habsburg Culture

The iconography contained in Maximilian I's autobiographical works between 1515-1519 connect us to a world in which the transverse flute excelled as a social tool and political symbol which helped fuse Burgundian and Habsburg courts together, all the while charting a volatile trajectory into the more intimate consort-style instrument it became celebrated for in the subsequent years of the 16th century. Maximilian's *Freydal*, *Triumphzug*, and other works bring the transverse flute to a prominent position in depictions of entertainment at the Habsburg court, showing no less than 52 instruments in various combinations: among them the flute and drum, solo flute, and even a flute and drum alongside two singers. Interestingly, the images also contain some of the earliest representations of groupings of two or even three flutists performing simultaneously, as shown in the famous *Triumphzug* woodcut.

To add to the iconographic evidence, city and court payment records fill in an even more detailed description of the usage of the transverse flute throughout the time of Maximilian I. In Augsburg, professional *Stadpfeiffer* performed in flute and drum ensembles: records of payments to 'swoegelpfeiffen und trummenschlahern' are preserved in the city accounts from 1506 and 1514.<sup>7</sup> Scarborough points out that two flute players, Anthony Dornstetter, and his

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<sup>5</sup> Eichberger, Dagmar, et al. "Margaret of Austria. A Princess with Ambition and Political Insight." *Women of Distinction: Margaret of York and Margaret of Austria*, Davidsfonds, Leuven, 2005, pp. 49–49.

<sup>6</sup> Scarborough, Holly. "Picturing the Flute of Maximilian I: A Study of the Transverse Flute and Its Symbolic Use as a Political Instrument in the Mummeries of Freydal ." Basel, Fachhochschule Nordwestschweiz, Fachhochschule Nordwestschweiz, 2022, pp. 45–46, <https://irf.fhnw.ch/entities/publication/a5268518-13bc-424a-99c8-9f5367c6b561>. Accessed 2022.

<sup>7</sup> Hadden, Nancy. "From Swiss Flutes to Consorts: History, Music and Playing Techniques of the Transverse Flute in Switzerland, Germany and France ca. 1470-1640." *University of Leeds*, University of Leeds, 2010, p. 110.

colleague Anndres Wellner, were paid by Maximilian over the course of the year 1500 for their musical services.<sup>8</sup>

In regards to the utilization of the flute in consort: the years between 1510-1519 contain evidence of the initial use of the traverso in polyphonic repertoire. A copperplate engraving made in Bergamo by Andrea Previtali around 1510 shows musicians playing three flutes in consort and reading music from a part book.<sup>9</sup> In Maximilian's own *Triumphzug* woodcut print, the three flute players leading the procession reveal yet another possible early hint that flutes were already being built in sets for the performance of polyphonic music. To lend additional weight to this idea, in Cologne, between the same years that Maximilian's allegorical works were being created from 1515-1519, Arnt von Aich printed a set of musical part books which were the first to propose the performance polyphonic vocal music on the transverse flute ("*fleiten, schwegelen, vnd an deren Musicalisch Instrumenten*").<sup>10</sup> An additional source from Augsburg in 1540 opens the possibility that polyphonic arrangements of dance music were performed by the traverso consort: court records mention that a case of four *schwegeln* (transverse flutes, three tenors and one bass) was reported missing from the dance hall there.<sup>11</sup>

Meanwhile, in the Burgundian court of Philip the Fair, 'certaines joueurs de flutes alemans' were reported in 1504<sup>12</sup>. In Mechelen, where the Archduchess Margaret kept her residence, four inventories between 1502/3-1533/4 indicate that the city bought and maintained cases of multiple *fleutes, flutes, and fleuten/floyten*, the latest case of flutes having been purchased by Petrus Alamire himself between 1533-1534.<sup>13</sup> While the terms used in the Mechelen inventories specify neither transverse flutes or recorders, it is notable that the instruments purchased always came in a case which carried a set of flutes inside. The repeated purchases of these cases of flutes throughout the first three decades of the 16th century in Mechelen could at least indicate a movement towards the 'family principle' of wind instruments played by professional musicians at the time, a possible ongoing tradition of performance for the transverse flute in the early 16th century which was bolstered by the publishing of Arnt von Aich's partbooks and iconographical depictions throughout the same time period.<sup>14</sup>

### On the Pieces

The anonymously composed and textless piece *Damoiselle* survives in SuStB Augsburg 2 Cod 142a, referred to henceforth as the "Augsburger Liederbuch". The manuscript was completed in 1513 by the Augsburg piper Jakob Hurlacher and later found in the library of the patrician

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<sup>8</sup> Scarborough, Holly. "Picturing the Flute of Maximilian I", p. 41.

<sup>9</sup> Ehlich, Llane, and Albert Jan Becking. *Renaissance Flute Iconography*, [renaissanceflute.ch/index.htm](http://renaissanceflute.ch/index.htm). Accessed 6 Aug. 2023.

<sup>10</sup> Aich, Arnt Von. *Das Liederbuch Des Arnt von Aich*. Arnt von Aich, 1515.

<sup>11</sup> N. Hadden, "From Swiss Flutes to Consorts," 2010, p. 109

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 45.

<sup>13</sup> Lasocki, David. "A Listing of Inventories and Purchases of Flutes, Recorders, Flageolets, and Tabor Pipes, 1388-1630." *Musicque de Joye: Proceedings of the International Symposium on the Renaissance Flute and Recorder Consort*, Utrecht 2003. STIMU, 2005, Utrecht.

<sup>14</sup> Scarborough, Holly. "Picturing the Flute of Maximilian I" p. 51

Johann Heinrich Herwart. The collection contains polyphonic music in mensural notation by luminaries such as Josquin des Prez, Alexander Agricola, Heinrich Isaac, Ludwig Senfl, and Paul Hofhaimer, a testament to Augsburg's connections with the circle of Maximilian I.<sup>15</sup> *Damoiselle* extemporizes a harmonic character closely related to the gestures from the following chanson by Josquin de Prez, ***Plus nulz regretz***, preserved earlier in the pages of the same manuscript. A close listening of the two pieces performed back-to-back calls up a meta-commentary on the colors and articulations exchanged smoothly between the flutes and the voice, an essential theory of instrumental vocality which would form one of the crucial principles of traverso consort performance practice throughout the 16th century.

The *basse danse* tenor ***La margarite*** is one of the monophonic melodies transmitted in a chain of isometric, blackened breves in the famous dance manuscript, Brussels, KBR, Ms. 9085, referred to henceforth as "Br9085". The manuscript, notated with gold and silver ink on black parchment, "has long epitomised Margaret of Austria's love of music and luxurious artworks," according to Grantley McDonald.<sup>16</sup> Br9085 was kept in the latticework iron cabinet in Margaret's library alongside the "Traité du diamant et de la marguerite", where her most special books were stored separately from the rest of the Mechelen library. The *basse danse* (and *bassadanza* in Italy) "comprised stately, elegant, gliding steps, from which the genre receives its name as the 'low' dance".<sup>17</sup> "La margarite" can be translated as pearl or daisy, the flower used frequently as a symbol in imagery commissioned by Margaret of Austria.<sup>18</sup> Perhaps *La margarite* was named for Archduchess Margaret, as the intended recipient of the manuscript.<sup>19</sup> Here, a second high cantus voice has been added over the original isometric tenor, composed following the extant two-voiced dance model by M. Gulielmus, *Falla con misuras/La bassa castiglyra* (La Spagna).

***D'ung aultre amer*** represents a suite of polyphonic *res facta* compositions, utilizing the original monophonic chanson melody in the tenor or cantus voice as a basis around which the other newly-composed voices create new contrapuntal dimensions.<sup>20</sup> The two-voice settings of *D'ung aultre amer* from E-Sc 5-1-43 propose a possible repertoire besides dance music for the ensemble of two flutes depicted in early 16th century iconography. Both pieces accompany the original melody with short, repeated phrases, first underneath the original cantus line, then over the original tenor in the second duo. ***Dung plus amer***, an incomplete, textless composition surviving in A-Llb 529, Fragment 29 (part of the "Linz Fragments") was previously identified by the title of its mistakenly interpreted incipit, "Domine martine". However, David Fallows identified it as the anonymous three-voice setting *D'ung plus amer* which can otherwise only be found in

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<sup>15</sup> Tlusty, B. Ann, et al. "Music." *A Companion to Late Medieval and Early Modern Augsburg*, Brill, Leiden, 2020, p. 555.

<sup>16</sup> McDonald, Grantley. "The Brussels Basse Danse Manuscript in Context." *Margaret of Austria's Basse Danse Manuscript*, edited by Grantley McDonald, Alamire Foundation, Leuven, 2022, p. 89.

<sup>17</sup> Bregman, Adam, and Adam Gilbert. "The Music and Dances of Brussels, KBR, MS. 9085." *Margaret of Austria's Basse Danse Manuscript*, Alamire Foundation, Leuven, 2022, p. 24.

<sup>18</sup> Meconi, Honey. "Margaret of Austria, Visual Representation, and Brussels, Royal Library, Ms. 228." *Journal of the Alamire Foundation*, vol. 2, no. 1, 2010, p. 19, <https://doi.org/10.1484/j.jaf.6.20100001>.

<sup>19</sup> Bregman and Gilbert, "Music and Dances of MS. 9085", p. 28.

<sup>20</sup> Banks, Jon. "Defining the Repertory." *The Instrumental Consort Repertory of the Late Fifteenth Century*, Ashgate, Aldershot, 2006, p. 58.

one concordant and likewise textless transmission in the Pixérécourt Chansonnier.<sup>21</sup> At the end of the set, we will hear Agricola's four-voice setting of *D'ung aultre amer* with the text underlaid in the tenor voice of the chanson, as it was transcribed in the Augsburg Liederbuch.

The *textless* composition transcribed on folios 55v-56r of the Innsbruck manuscript, D-Mbs Mus. MS 3154, referred to henceforth as the "Leopold Codex", is attributed to the elusive composer known only by the name "Jo. de Salice". Very little information about Salice survives, and only one other polyphonic piece attributed to him survives under the name "W. de Salice" in Tr90, f.297v, also without text. The textless polyphony transcribed in the Leopold Codex bears a number of significant resemblances to the earliest instrumental pieces to be called 'ricercare', featuring overlapping voices held together by a series of melodic sequences.<sup>22</sup>

*Sans faire de vous departie*, a chanson composed by Pierre Fontaine in the mid-15th century, inspired the slightly-altered monophonic *basse danse* tenor transmitted under the same name in Br9085. With its two additional untexted phrases, the *Sans faire* tenor outlines the same number of pitches as the first phrase of another *basse danse* from Br9085, *Le petit rouen*, both arriving on the same final pitch in similar motion. Since Pierre Fontaine came from the town of Rouen, one speculation has been that *Le petit rouen* was derived from the model of *Sans faire de vous departie*.<sup>23</sup> The *Hoftanz* transcribed in Munich BSB Mus. MS 1516 is subsequently derived from *Le petit rouen*, and is an example of the Germanic equivalent of the *basse danse*, very likely performed during Habsburg court festivities.

*Le serviteur* is the monophonic chanson melody which forms the basis of the next set of polyphonic variations. All extant settings of *Le serviteur*, including the one partially preserved in the Linz Fragments, are composed around the superius, rather than the tenor, showing a particularly fast-moving and mannered counterpoint. The use of the original melody by Dufay indicates the possible origins of the 'res facta' genre in the 15th century.<sup>24</sup> *I' so' I tuo servitor* is an anonymous, Italian version of the popular chanson, preserved in the Pixérécourt Chansonnier alongside other chansons with concordances in the Linz Fragments.

Another widely transmitted chanson in the late-15th and early-16th centuries was *Tout a par moy affin qu'on ne me voye*, originally composed either by Walter Frye or Gilles Binchois. In the polyphonic setting by Alexander Agricola preserved in the Augsburg Liederbuch, only the tenor voice of the chanson is underlaid with text, surrounded by a lush tapestry of contrapuntal, untexted outer voices. If one is familiar with the musical language of *Tout a par moy*, a cleverly embedded quotation from the chanson can be found hiding near the end of the first section of the two-part *textless* composition on folios 50v-51r and 54v-55r in the Leopold Codex.

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<sup>21</sup> Lewon, Marc. "Musical Life of the Late Middle Ages in the Austrian Region (1340-1520)." *A-Lib 529, Fragment 29 – Revisited*, 2013, <https://musikleben.wordpress.com/2013/03/03/fragment-29-revisited/>. Accessed 6 Aug. 2023.

<sup>22</sup> Banks, Jon. "Defining the Repertory", Ashgate, Aldershot, 2006, p. 73.

<sup>23</sup> Bregman and Gilbert, "Music and Dances of MS. 9085", p. 48.

<sup>24</sup> Banks, Jon. "Defining the Repertory", Ashgate, Aldershot, 2006, p. 58.

Parts I and II of the **textless** composition on folios 56v-58r of the Leopold Codex both begin with a contrapuntal two-voice introduction, exchanged in pairs by the two upper, then two lower voices. These duos eventually give way to some of the most technically demanding counterpoint in the instrumental consort repertoire, composed anonymously in an expansive, four-voice setting.

The **Danse de cleves** from Br9085 represents the transition from 15th to 16th century *basse danse* style: the tenor migrates to melodic mensural notation, hinting towards the eventual popularization of the new cantus-based *basse danse commune* formula which would constitute the genre in subsequent years.<sup>25</sup> The two arrangements performed by the traverso consort pay homage to the surviving two-voiced polyphonic *basse danse* compositions, as well as the later four-voiced *basse danse* compositions printed in collections by Pierre Attaignant in his *Second livre de dancieries* in 1547.<sup>26</sup>

The polyphonic *basse danse* arrangement for **Marchons le dureau** from Br9085 is derived from a monophonic song sung by French soldiers during the invasion of Arras in 1492.<sup>27</sup> This polyphonic version of the *basse danse* has been composed for three voices, borrowing stylistic inspiration from the imitative, proportional displacements found in the consort *ricercare* compositions in the Codex Leopold. This new *basse danse* arrangement experiments with the idea of *varietas* described by Johannes Tinctoris in his late-15th century counterpoint treatise:

"any composer or improviser of the greatest genius may achieve this diversity if he either composes or improvises now by one quantity, then by another, now by one perfection, then by another, now by one proportion, then by another, now by one conjunction, then by another, now with syncopations, not with *fugae*, then without *fugae*, now with pauses, now without pauses, now diminished, now as written."<sup>28</sup>

Around half of the notation of the related, combinative chanson **Puis qu'aultrement/Marchiez la dureau** can be found on Fragment 9 of the Linz Fragments, which is possible to perform today from the complete version which has been transmitted in the Dijon Chansonnier.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Bregman and Gilbert, "Music and Dances of MS. 9085", p. 38.

<sup>26</sup> Attaignant, Pierre. *Second Livre de Dancieries*. Pierre Attaignant, 1547.

<sup>27</sup> McDonald, Grantley. "The Brussels Basse Danse Manuscript in Context.", p. 92.

<sup>28</sup> Tinctoris, Johannes. *Liber de Arte Contrapuncti*. Seay ed., American Institute of Musicology, 1961.

<sup>29</sup> Lewon, Marc. "Musical Life of the Late Middle Ages in the Austrian Region (1340-1520)." *A-Lib 529, Fragment 9 (a)*, 2013, <https://musikleben.wordpress.com/2012/11/21/marchez-la-dureau/>. Accessed 6 Aug. 2023.