



Dionysos Now!
aims to bridge
old and new music,
appealing to new
audiences and
allowing as many
people as possible
to discover this
polyphonic music
in surprising ways.

POLYPHONY

WWW.DIONYSOSNOW.COM

Polyphonic music is a style of musical composition where multiple independent melodies are played simultaneously. Each melody has its own distinct rhythm and harmony, and when combined, they create a rich and complex texture.

OUR MISSION

“Presenting the soundtrack of the Renaissance, singing music composed 500 years ago is like returning to a past universe. In our concerts we want to take the audience into this forgotten sound cosmos and share our fascination with it through singing.

With Dionysos Now! I would like to demonstrate that Renaissance vocal polyphony is extremely interesting music that deserves to be made known to a wider audience.”

— Tore Tom Denys, artistic inspirator

A CREATIVE PLATFORM

Dionysos Now! is not just an ensemble. It is an international platform of creativity, where polyphonic music serves as the guiding force, weaving together various art forms into a harmonious tapestry of expression.

At its core, Dionysos Now! is a sanctuary for creators and enthusiasts alike, offering a vibrant space where polyphonic reigns supreme.

Music, particularly polyphonic music, serves as the beating heart of Dionysos Now!, setting the rhythm and the tone for all its endeavours.

Dionysos
Now!
by Tore Tom Denys

ADRIAEN WILLAERT



WHERE DID IT START?

During the Renaissance, the Flemish singing and composing style, polyphony, became European musical standard. Music Chapels, founded or adapted after the 'Brabant model' performed this polyphony. Polyphonic music became both a prestige project and a means of propaganda for church and court. Flemish composers/singers were sought after, left Flanders for France, Germany, Italy, Austria etc. Among these composers is Adriaen Willaert, one of the most famous but forgotten musical geniuses of his time.

Although Adriaen Willaert was one of the most important composers of the Renaissance, he disappeared completely from the European musical heritage (canon) at the beginning of the 20th Century. Like many other composers of the renaissance, not only portrait paintings of Adriaen Willaert disappeared in museum cellars. His compositions also disappeared under a thick layer of dust in museums.

- Born ca. 1490 in Rumbeke/Roeselare, Belgium
- Studies first law, then music at the university of Paris (Sorbonne) and Leuven.
- Becomes a member of the court Chapel in Ferrara after a travel to Rome in 1515.
- 1527 : Adriaen Willaert is appointed Chapel Master of San Marco in Venice. He will be the head of the Doge's Chapel for 35 years till his death in 1562.
- Adriaen Willaert is the founder of the Venetian School.

Adriaen Willaert, *Missa 'Mittit ad Virginem' & Motets*



PURE POLYPHONY

A. WILLAERT, *ST JOHNS PASSION*



St John Passion

6 singers
(with or without G. Ligeti)

Passio Domino Nostri Jesu Christi secundum Joannem (*St Johns Passion*). The a cappella gospel of Good Friday, in dialogue with G. Ligeti's equally turbulent high-emotion music for harpsichord.

St John Passion

6 singers + harpsichordist(s)
(with interludes music by G. Ligeti)

After more than 400 years, Dionysos Now! picks up Adriaen Willaert's *St John Passion* out of the Italian museum dust. It was long assumed that this passion was composed by Cypriano de Rore, but musicologists now attribute it to Willaert with certainty. Willaert composed a stunningly fluent polyphonic score that contrasts sharply with the poignant story of the suffering and crucifixion of Jesus Christ.

Tore Denys, a fellow townsman of the composer, is the inspirer behind Dionysos Now! Based in Vienna, he has launched a multi-year project to promote the still-unknown music of this master polyphonist.

PREVIEW



PURE POLYPHONY

A. WILLAERT, *MISSA MITTIT AD VIRGINEM*

Missa Mittit ad Virginem

A. Willaert – motetten/ madrigalen

7 SINGERS



A polyphonic mass by Adriaen Willaert that we can practically be sure has not been performed since the Renaissance. In that sense, therefore, it is a world premiere. The manuscript of this mass (in the form of a large choir book) is in the library of Modena (Italy).

Tore Tom Denys has transcribed this fantastic work of the Mass Ordinary (Kyrie-Gloria-Credo-Sanctus-Agnus) into a 'modern' score in order to perform it that way.

The title of the mass, literally translated 'Sends to the Virgin' refers to the beginning of the first phrase of the Latin hymn from which the melody for the construction of the mass composition was borrowed. The strophic hymn, which can also be heard on the LP and used to be sung by the congregation in church on 25 March as a 'hymn together', tells the story of the 'Annunciation of Mary' in which God sends the archangel Gabriel to Mary to tell her that she is pregnant.

The motets that frame the mass also focus on Mary, and are all vocal gems of compositions that also resonate here for the first time.

PURE POLYPHONY

THE LEGACY OF ADRIAEN WILLAERT



The Legacy of Adriaen Willaert

7 SINGERS

The album *Adriano 6* by Dionysos Now! pays tribute to Adriaen Willaert (1490–1562). The centerpiece of this recording is the *Missa Laudate Deum*, a so-called parody mass based on Johannes Mouton's motet of the same name.

This remarkable mass showcases Willaert's masterful command of polyphony and serves as an homage to his mentor. The *Missa Laudate Deum* comes from the rare *Liber quinque missarum* (1536), a collection of five masses where Willaert demonstrates his refined continuation of the Parisian School. By integrating Mouton's hymn of praise with his own innovations, Willaert created a masterpiece that remains a milestone in the history of mass composition.

In addition to the mass, the album features a selection of Willaert's madrigals and motets. Works like *Qual dolcezza gamai* and *Amor mi fa morire* reveal his ability to merge expressive text with intricate music. Inspired by poets such as Dragonetto Bonifacio, these dramatic madrigals highlight Willaert's sensitivity to text interpretation and his contribution to new musical forms. Motets like *Videns Dominus* and *Ecce Dominus veniet* stand out for their profound emotion and technical brilliance.

PURE POLYPHONY

PALESTRINA, PAPAE MARCELLI

Palestrina, Papae Marcelli

7 SINGERS

Polyphony for a pope : The most famous mass by the “prince of music” supplemented by works by composers who crossed his path.

Missa Papae Marcelli, or Pope Marcellus Mass, is a mass sine nomine by Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina. It is his best-known mass and is regarded as an archetypal example of the complex polyphony championed by Palestrina. It was sung at the papal coronation Masses (the last being the coronation of Paul VI in 1963).



PURE POLYPHONY

LASSUS, LAGRIME DI SAN PIETRO

Lassus, Lagrime di San Pietro

7 SINGERS

The *Lagrime di San Pietro* is a cycle of 20 madrigals and a concluding motet by the late Renaissance composer Orlande de Lassus (Roland de Lassus).

Written in 1594 for seven voices, it is structured as three sequences of seven compositions. The *Lagrime* was to be Lassus' last composition: he dedicated it to Pope Clement VIII on May 24, 1594, three weeks before his death, and it was published in Munich the next year.



DOUBLE BILL

DIONYSOS NOW! & MAXIME DENUC

Dionysos Now! & Maxime Denuc

**6 SINGERS &
ORGANIST/PERFORMER**

Pure polyphony in combi with French organ-player Maxime Denuc.

Two musical worlds that could not be further apart than those of Dionysos Now! and Maxime Denuc are intertwined in a highly adventurous double bill. Renaissance vocal music meets techno-dub on church organ!



Dionysos Now!, led by tenor Tore Tom Denys, rediscovers music by the in Roeselare born Renaissance composer Adriaen Willaert. In addition to his motets, they perform the lost “Missa Mittit ad Virginem”, a six-part renaissance song Willaert composed in 16th-century Ferrara. The vocal ensemble consists of international talents with a very personal timbre and great attention to written content and phrasing.

Directly opposite this vocal ensemble is Maxime Denuc, a trendsetter in electronic music and robotics. Together with Raphaël Hénard, he forms Plapla Pinky, an electronic duo focusing on club music that mixes rave, baroque and contemporary music. Maxime is an artistic researcher and in recent years has mainly focused on developing his solo work on church organs. In this project he will present a robot-controlled project he developed with engineers from Bots Conspiracy and Shakmat.