

# Fa una canzona

Italian madrigal for unaccompanied\* mixed chorus (SATB)

Orazio Vecchi (1550-1605)  
ed. Drew Collins

Allegro  $\text{♩} = 104$

Soprano  
Alto

1. Fa\_u - na can - zo - na sen - za no - te ne - re,  
2. Per en - tro non vi spar - ge - re du - rez - ze,  
3. Ne vi far ci - fraò se - gno con - tra se - gno,  
4. Con ques - to sti - le\_il for - tu - na - to\_Or - fe - o  
5. Ques - to\_è lo sti - le che que - tar già fe - o

Tenor  
Bass

5 Se mai bra - ma - sti la mia gra - zia\_ha - ve - re.  
Che le mie\_o - rec - chie non vi so - no\_a - vez - ze.  
So - pra\_o - gna co - sa quest' è'l mio di - se - gno.  
Pro - ser - pi - na la giù pla - car po - te - o.  
Con dol - cez - za à Saul lo spir - to re - o!

\*\* Fal - la d'un tuo - nó ch'in - vi - ta\_al dor - mi - re, Dol - ce - men - te,

15 dol - ce - men - te fa - cen - do - la - fi - ni - re.

\* The performer should feel free to double voice parts with instruments such as double reeds, flutes, recorders, lute and/or light unpitched percussion.

\*\* If sung with more than one singer per part, m.9-12 may be sung TTBB with equal number of singers on each of the three lines.

# Text and Translation for "Fa una canzona"

Fa una canzona senza note nere,  
Se mai bramasti la mia grazia havere.

Make a canzona without note nere;  
if ever you have coveted my favor,

*Falla d'un tuonó ch'invita al dormire,  
Dolcemente facendola finire.*

*Make it in a tone that invites sleep  
Sweetly, sweetly making it come to an end.*

Per entro non vi spargere durezze,  
Che le mie orecchie non vi sono avezze.

Don't put in dissonances,  
because my ears are not used to them,

Ne vi far cifraò segno contra segno,  
Sopra ognà cosa quest' è'l mio disegno.

Don't put in proportions or complex signs,

Con questo stile il fortunato Orfeo  
Proserpina la giù placar poteo.

And then you will have a style that Orfeo  
used to placate Proserpina in the depths.

Questo è lo stile che quetar già feo  
Con dolcezza à Saul lo spirito reo!

The same style that  
sweetly quieted the evil spirit in Saul.

-Translation is close but not exact, and was not completed by the editor.

The word "madrigal" typically refers to Italian vocal music of the 16th century. The derivation of the word, though unclear, indicates several possible origins: "pastoral song"; secular song (as opposed to spiritual); a song "in the mother tongue"; or one "belonging to Mother Church" (in which case the lusty spirit of many a madrigal strays far from its original purpose!). Through the madrigal, artists of the 16th century sought to develop a more refined poetry than previously in use, and to enhance its meaning with music. By the end of the 16th century, the music itself became exaggerated and mannered, employing musical "word-painting," dramatic effects, and vocal virtuosity. The madrigal was readily adopted in England, where composers adapted it to the peculiarities of the English language and imbued it with the English penchant for merriment and melancholy.

This lilting commentary on love and song is an example of the light Italian "canzonetta."

Not only did Orazio Vecchi, best known for his madrigal comedy "L'Amfiparnasso," rework Arcadelt's "Il bianco e dolce cigno" (50 years after it was written), starting with a quotation from the original and adding contrasting roulades in rapid parlando to highlight the character of the prima pratica in his predecessor's madrigal, he also composed a new work entitled "Fa una canzona" (1580), a charming and humorous parody of Arcadelt's "Il bianco" and its chromatic style. "Fa una canzona" exemplifies the fusion of styles, Italian drawing on an artistic Franco-Flemish model that had come under the spell of popular Italian music at the turn of the 16th century and was already exerting its influence on the English at the end of the century. Among the essential ingredients that finally brought on Italian hegemony were the theoretical compromises, the humanistic philosophies, and, above all, the reliance on and delight in *la dolcezza*.

*-These notes were written by several different authors, none of whom was the editor. In fact, they were - quite simply - plagiarized! God bless the internet!*