

## Matthaeus Pipelare

### Background

The period of Josquin des Prez was a watershed in music history. Unlike Renaissance art where most of the great painters were Italian, the great musicians of the time were Franco-Flemish; that is they were from the region that is now Belgium and northern France. However, most of them did not stay in Flanders, but left to become maestro di cappella in one of the great Italian courts.

Matthaeus Pipelare (b. c. 1450, d., c. 1515) was a South Netherlandish composer. In the Mss. his name is written as Pipe followed by a small clef with the two notes *la, re*. His name indicates that either he or a forebear played woodwind instruments, perhaps as a town piper.

In the *Musicae Activae Micrologus* of Andreas Ornithoparchus, as translated by John Dowland in 1609, Pipelare was one of several composers whose works 'flow from the very fountaine of Art'. Pipelare wrote in almost all the forms of his day, and his style is characterized by a wide diversity, ranging from dense polyphony, as in the first section of the St John Credo, to a homophonic style, as in *Vray dieu d'amours*.

Much of Pipelare's music approached the somber melancholy style of his Flemish contemporary Pierre de la Rue, such as parts of the *Missa 'Mi mi'*. But other compositions, such as the chanson *Morkin ic hebbe*, are gay and light. Pipelare wrote in almost all the forms of his day, and his style is characterized by its wide diversity, ranging from the dense polyphony in the first section of the St John Credo, to the homophonic style of *Vray dieu d'amours*.

He may have been in Ghent, but we know that he was active at Onza Lieve Fraukirke, the Antwerp Cathedral. However, he left to become Master of the Choristers for the Confraternity of Our Lady at 's-Hertogenbosch (Bois-le-duc), remaining there from the spring of 1498 until about 1 May 1500.

### Masses

The *Missa 'Floruit egregius infans Livinus'* is in an early style. The cantus firmus, which migrates freely from voice to voice, employs altogether 20 chants for St. Livinus.

The Livinus Mass may have been written at Ghent. All movements except the Kyrie conclude with the same musical section in triple meter to produce a final 'refrain' reminiscent of the works of Faugues. Born to an Irish princess and a Scottish nobleman, Livinus was raised and studied in Ireland. He also studied in England and was ordained by St. Augustine of Canterbury. Livinus went to Flanders with three companions as a missionary. He became Bishop of Ghent, but was martyred c. 633 by having his tongue torn out. The famous painting *The Martyrdom of St. Livinus* by Rubens, originally in Ghent, is now in Brussels. Jennifer Bloxam has provided a fascinating investigation of the plainsong for the rhymed Office for Livinus dating from the twelfth through the sixteenth centuries. Altogether sixteen chants are included in the Pipelare Mass. There is the possibility that this Mass may have included instruments, and, further that perhaps there existed the possibility of an instrumental Mass with instruments performing the parts without voices, much like the later Organ Mass in which the plainsong was set in polyphony for the organ to play, a practice that continues at Low Mass today.

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The *Credo de Sancto Johanne Evangelista* is a work of grandiose proportions. It seems to be intended for use on the Day of St. John, Apostle and Evangelist, December 27. The work is in five voice-parts and contains the plainsong antiphon *Occurrit beato Johanni ab exilio*, which appears twice as a cantus firmus in the tenor. The antiphon is no longer in the liturgy.

Like several of his contemporaries Pipelare wrote a *Missa 'Mi mi.'* The Mass derives its name from the opening motif—a descending fifth in each part, the first note being *mi* in one hexachord and the second note being *mi* in another hexachord. These descending fifths occur in the first Kyrie, in the bassus at the beginning of the Credo, and at the beginning of all parts in the Sanctus. The Agnus Dei of plainsong Mass X is paraphrased in the superius of Agnus I; it appears as a cantus firmus in the superius of Agnus II and again in Agnus III where there is the rebus *Crescit in duplo* that indicates augmentation.

In the *Missa sine nomine* (1) the cantus firmus is not confined to the tenor, and phrases and motifs from the pre-existent material so permeate the music that one might use the term “saturation technique.”

The *Missa entretenir mes amours* is based on a chanson by Antoine Bunois. The altus part of the third Agnus Dei of the Mass contains only one note, which is symbolically notated with a Rebus that reads “*Ecce quam bonum et iocundum habitare fratres in unum,*” a reference to an antiphon sung at Thursday Vespers. The altus part of this Mass is written as a series of numbers written in the space for A, indicating that the note A is to be held for an equivalent number of breves. The Mass has several other interesting features. One is the use of Greek terminology to indicate how to perform some of the voice parts. In the Gloria the inscription *Descendendo in diatesron* means that the part is to be performed a fourth below the actual notation. In Agnus I the inscription *ne sonites netesnemenon* (nete synemmenon) *sume in me se* (mese) means that the part should begin a fourth lower. As the Mass proceeds, the cantus firmus is performed either in duple or triple time without a change in the notation; it is, rather, by the mensuration of the section that the performance changes.

The *Missa 'L'homme armé'* contains some of Pipelare's most exciting writing, building up to the grandiose final Agnus Dei. The work survives in three Mss. and in two prints by Roman printers (Antico in 1516 and Giunta in 1522). The Mass is lacking in a display of technique that often characterizes *L'homme armé* Masses. Canon does not appear until Agnus III, where an additional bassus part is indicated by the rebus *Apprende arma et scutum Et e[x]surge in adiutorium michi*. The Mass has a powerful climax with *Agnus III* sounding like a fanfare.

The *Missa 'Dicit Dominus'* is a study in the complexity of rhythmic structure: the cantus firmus appears in various mensurations conflicting with those of the other parts. This Mass survives in only one source. Before the Mass begins, the source provides the melody upon which the Mass is based. The text comes from St. Luke and reads "*Dicit Dominus: Nihil tuleritis in via, neque virgam, neque peram, neque panem, neque pecuniam, neque dua tunicas habeatis.*"

The *Missa 'Fors seulement'*, with its rich sonorities, is primarily a cantus firmus mass with the famous melody from Pipelare's own chanson (second setting) rhythmically differentiated from the other parts. It was perhaps Pipelare's best known work since it survives in eight manuscripts. The most interesting of these is MechAs s.s, Malines, Archives de la Ville (Mechelen, Stadsarchief). Alamire (or his workshop) was the scribe. It is a beautiful Ms. and contains various miniatures depicting the archducal crown, the double-headed eagle, and coats of arms of the H.R. Empire. Folio 1 contains a miniature depicting an enthroned figure surmounted by an archducal crown. He is surrounded by eleven others. Five are probably his family. The remaining six are standing, three representing a pope, a cardinal and a bishop, and three others represent the nobility, the army and the peasantry. The enthroned figure is thought to be Emperor Maximilian, but could also be Charles V. There are also a number of miniatures showing the Emperor Charles V as a young boy. In addition to the *Missa Fors seulement latente que je meure* by Matthaëus Pipelare, the Ms. contains five Masses by Pierre de la Rue [Missa Pascale, Missa Conceptio tua, Missa Ave maria, Missa de sancta cruce quinque vocum, Missa (de feria) and the Missa quinque vocum supra alleluja].

The *Missa fors seulement latente* is one of many Masses based on the famous chanson. This is the only Mass by Pipelare in five voice parts and the only one written entirely in duple meter. The complete presentation of the tenor of the chanson (setting ii) appears in all movements except the Agnus Dei, where Agnus I contains the first part of the melody in augmentation, and Agnus III contains the entire melody in normal time-values.

Sequence and unpretentious singable lines characterize the *Missa Johannes Christe care/Ecce puer meus*. The texture of this Mass is largely *a 3* since the cantus firmus is absent much of the time. Unfortunately one folio of the Ms. containing the Mass is missing. The recto side of the missing folio contained the altus and most of the bassus of the first part of the *Qui tollis* section of the Gloria, and the verso side of the missing folio contained the superius and the tenor of the same section. The missing parts have been reconstructed in the edition with confidence that they are nearly identical to the original parts. This work and the St John Credo were probably written in 1498 or 1499.

Pipelare was a master of large complex structures, but that he did not need complicated organization to bring out his finest writing is nowhere more obvious than in his *Missa de feria*, which though simple in style contains some of his most memorable music. The *Missa de feria* is a simple setting for daily use based on plainsong Masses XV and XVIII. It is common for Ferial Masses to be based on these plainsong melodies. In observing the general characteristics of polyphonic 15<sup>th</sup>-century ferial Masses it appears that Johannes

Ockeghem's *Missa sine nomine* (Collected Works, edited by Dragan Plamenac, Vol. 2, pp. 77-82) is also a *Missa de feria*.

### Motets

Pipelare's motets show the same diversity of style as his masses. The *Salve regina* and *Ave Maria ... virgo serena* display an early style in their use of short notes in syncopated rhythms. The *Salve Regina* is a setting of the Marian antiphon in *alternatim praxis*. Marian antiphons are part of the Office liturgy of Compline. There are four Marian antiphons. Each is used for a different time in the church calendar. The *Salve Regina* is sung from Trinity Sunday until the beginning of Advent. In this setting the odd verses are sung in plainsong and the even verses are sung in polyphony. The work is in five voice parts, except for the second section which is in four parts. The plainsong melody is paraphrased throughout the polyphony, especially in the tenor part. The first and third polyphonic sections contain a canon, indicated by the rebus "Fuga."

The *Ave Maria...Virgo Serena* is in five voice parts and is based on the sequence of the same title found in the *Variae preces*. The work is in two parts. The tenor, which is presented in both parts, is like a solfeggio exercise and assumes somewhat the nature of a cantus firmus. The motet survives in only one source, the Petrucci print of 1508, *Motetti a cinque: Libro primo*. This is a set of five part-books. The print is incomplete however, for the contra II part book of the print no longer exists. In the edition the missing voice-part has been reconstructed in the manner of Pipelare, using only the melodic, contrapuntal and rhythmic devices that are commonly used by him and are characteristic of his general style. Of equal importance was to stay within the style of this particular composition, yet allow the part to be absorbed into the composition unobtrusively with the primary effect of an added richness of sonority.

There is a more careful declamation of the text in *Memorare mater Christi*, which is closely modeled on Josquin's *Stabat mater*. This work is for seven voice parts. Each voice part symbolizes one of the Seven Sorrows of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the voice parts are labeled first dolor, etc. At the beginning of the superius there is a miniature showing Mary surrounded by seven swords. The first tenor part contains the Spanish villancico *Nunca fue pena mayor* (the words written in red) by Juan de Urrede, a south Netherlandish composer from Bruges. Urrede left Bruges for Spain and served the first Duke of Alba, who is believed to have written the text of the villancico. Urrede's *Nunca fue pena mayor* was widely known even though Urrede himself was not as widely known.

In the *Magnificat*, the composer allows the voices to move within carefully considered vertical sonorities. The *Magnificat* is in the Third Mode and is constructed in *alternatim praxis* through all twelve verses; i.e. the plainsong begins the first verse and then alternates with polyphonic settings of the even verses. The first plainsong formula for Tone 3, with the ending on A, remains in the superius part throughout. Here Pipelare looks to the future, not only in his careful treatment of dissonance but also in his sense of balance both among the voice parts and in the phrase structures.

For his other motets, *Exortum est in tenebris* is a *sainte chansonette* in that the words of Psalm cxi.4 are underlaid to the music of *Fors seulement*.

*Hic est vere martyr*, in four parts, survives only in a keyboard intabulation (therefore there is no further text).

*Laudate, pueri, Dominum* is the Hosanna of the *Missa sine nomine* (i) with new words. *Sensus carnis mors est* is another contrafactum, a *tricinium* with secular words set to the Agnus II of the *Missa Mi mi*.

*Virga tua et baculus tuus* is a *bicinium*, setting Psalm 22, verse 4 for two voices. The last two works are found in the Georg Rhau publications *Tricinia...*, 1542, and *Bicinia...*, 1545.

### Flemish Lieder and Chansons

Among his Flemish lied, *Een vrolic wesen* seems intended as a solo with instrumental accompaniment, as was an earlier setting by Barbireau, or as an instrumental piece. The title contains a play on words, meaning either *vrolic* (merry) or *vrouelic* (womanly) and *wesen* (either tune or being).

*Ic weedt een molenarinne* (I know a millerin) is based on a folk melody. For Pipelare's setting this is obviously a windmill. Rhineland settings of the melody would refer to a water mill.

*Mijns liefskins bruyn ooghen* (My sweetheart's brown eyes) survives in four sources, but only one ascribes it to Pipelare. This lied is one of several that are used in Noel Bauldewyn's *Missa Myns liefskins bruyn ooghen*.

*Morkin ic hebbe ter scolen gelegghen* is another rollicking Flemish lied. Only the beginning of the text is provided and could mean "Little mother I have been to school a long time" or "Little mother I got layed at school."

The *Vray dieu d'amours* chanson is found in two versions. However they are similar enough to consider the second version, which exists in only one source, to be a variant or reworking of the first version. Pipelare approached the style of Pierre de La Rue in the sombre melancholy of some of his works, such as parts of the *Missa 'Mi mi'*, but other compositions, such as the chanson *Morkin ic hebbe*, are gay and light. Pipelare wrote in almost all the forms of his day, and his style is characterized by its wide diversity, ranging from a dense polyphony, as in the first section of the St John Credo, to a homophonic style, as in *Vray dieu d'amours*.

*Fors seulement* (1) is a setting of the melody of Ockeghem's famous chanson.

In *Fors seulement* (ii) Pipelare creates a new melody in a second version which was extremely popular, to judge both by the many manuscripts and prints that contain it and by the many compositions that in turn were based on it. Pipelare bases his own *Missa Fors seulement* on his own melody. The delightful chanson *Vrai dieu d'amours* is in *ballade* form. The first few measures of the superius are found in Tinctoris, *Liber de arte contrapuncti*, 1447.

*Vray dieu que pene m'esse* with attributions to Compère and Gaspart and is probably not by Pipelare.

## List of Works by Matthaëus Pipelare

complete edition, *Matthaëus Pipelare: Opera omnia*, three volumes, ed. R. Cross, CMM, xxxiv

### Masses

- Missa de feria, 4vv, C ii (paraphrase and c.f. from plainsong masses XV and XVIII)  
Missa De tous bien plaine ? (attributed to Pipelare in Munich BS 3154)  
Missa 'Dicit Dominus', 4vv, C ii (c.f. T from polyphonic composition in A-Wn 11883)  
Missa 'Floruit egregius infans Livinus', 4vv, C ii (c.f.: text in honor of Livinus, patron saint of Ghent)  
Missa 'Fors seulement', 5vv, C ii (c.f. T of his own chanson, second setting)  
Missa 'Johannes Christe care'/'Ecce puer meus', 4vv, C iii (c.f. sequence 'Johannes Christe care' and antiphon 'Ecce puer meus' in honor of St John the Evangelist; the work is partly reconstructed in modern edition.  
Missa 'L'homme armé', 4vv, C iii (c.f. popular tune)  
Missa 'Mi mi', 4vv, C iii (Ag has material from plainsong Ag, Mass X)  
Missa omnium carminum, 4vv, MS lost in World War II  
Missa Pour entretenir mes amours (equals Missa sine nomine ii in C iii),  
the Busnoys model for this Mass was identified by Prof. Adam Knight Gilbert, UCLA  
Missa sine nomine (i), 4vv, C iii (c.f. and paraphrase)  
Credo de Sancto Johanne evangelista, 5vv, C ii (c.f. ant 'Occurrit beato Johanni ab exilio')  
Missa, 8vv, MS lost in World War II  
An Anonymous Mass in München, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek , 3154, fols. 215-224r (c. 1488-92) may be by Pipelare (see Thomas L. Noblitt, ed. *Der Kodex des Magister Nicolaus Leopold, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München, Mus. Ms 3154, Das Erbe deutscher Music*, 80-83
- Ave castissima, 4vv, C i (text: incipit only)  
Ave Maria ... virgo serena, 5vv, C i (paraphrase of sequence melody; Ct ii reconstructed in modern edition)  
Exortum est in tenebris (Ps cxi.4) [= Fors seulement], 4vv, C i  
Hic est vere martyr, 4vv, C i (survives only in keyboard intabulation)  
Laudate, pueri, Dominum, 4vv, 1538 8, ed. H. Albrecht (Kassel, 1959) [= Hosanna of Missa sine nomine (i)]  
Magnificat, 4vv, C i (*alternatim praxis* with plainsong, 3rd tone)  
Memorare mater Christi, 7vv, C i (for the feast of the Seven Sorrows of the BVM; c.f. T of Urreda's Nunca fue pena mayor)  
Salve regina, 5vv, C i (*alternatim praxis* with plainsong)  
Sensus carnis mors est [= Ag II of Missa 'Mi mi'], 3vv, C i (text: paraphrase of Romans viii.6)  
Virga et baculus tuus (Ps xii.4), 2vv, C i
- Een vrolic wesen, 4vv, C i (Barbireau's Superius in Superius)  
Fors seulement (i), 4vv, C i (Ockeghem's Superius in the Altus)  
Fors seulement (ii), 4vv, C i (the basis for Pipelare's mass)

Ic weedt een molenaarinne, 4vv, C i (paraphrase; based on a folksong)  
 Mijns liefskins bruyen ooghen, 4vv, C i (survives in 3 transpositions)  
 Morkin ic hebbe, 4vv, C i (text: incipit only)  
 Vray dieu d'amours, 4vv, C i (survives in 2 versions)  
 Vray dieu que pene m'esse, 4vv, C i (also attrib. Compère and Gaspart; probably not by Pipelare)

- R. Cross: 'The Life and Works of Matthaëus Pipelare', *MD*, xvii, pp. 97–114  
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 G. H. Black, Jr., Matthaëus Pipelare's *Fors seusement* (II) Chanson, and its Related Motet and Mass Performance Editions and Commentary, Doctoral dissertation, Louisiana State University, 2003  
 V. Borghetti: 'Petrus Alamire und die Missa Fors Seusement von Mathaeus Pipelare', *The Burgundian-Hapsburg Court Complex of Music Manuscripts (1500–1535) and the Workshop of Petrus Alamire* (Leuven, 1999), pp. 309–24  
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 V. Borghetti: 'Il Manoscritto, la messa, il giovane imperatore: la messa "*Fors seusement* di Pipelare e la politica imperiale della Casa d'Austria', *Imago musicae*, xx (Lucca, 2003), 65–107A.  
 Brinzing.: *Fragmente mit mehrstimmiger Musik des 16. Jahrhunderts im Fürstlich Ysenburg- und Büdingischen Archiv Büdingen*, Kleinüberlieferung mehrstimmiger Musik vor 1550 in deutschem Sprachgebiet, ii (Göttingen, 2001)  
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#### Web Sources

[http://massesfromtherenaissance.com/composers\\_home/matthaëus\\_pipelare\\_home.html](http://massesfromtherenaissance.com/composers_home/matthaëus_pipelare_home.html)  
 contains a transcription of *Credo de Sancto Johanne evangelista* and *Missa Fors seusement*

<http://www.princeton.edu/~rwegman/mass.htm>  
 Renaissance Masses 1440-1520, Prof. Robert Wegman, Princeton University, an invaluable listing of Renaissance Masses.