



# Chansons de printemps

SONGS FOR MAY DAY

—and other days—

by Guillaume Du Fay,

Gilles de Bins (dit Binchois)

et Arnold de Lantins



performed by members of Blue Heron Renaissance Choir

Lydia Heather Knutson, *soprano*

Aaron Sheehan, *tenor*

Mark Sprinkle, *tenor*

Scott Metcalfe, *vielle*

with remarks by

Sean Gallagher, Harvard University

Saturday, April 30, 2005

The French Library, Boston

# Program

Ce mois de may  
Belle, vueilliés vostre mercy donner  
Je me complains piteusement  
*Guillaume Du Fay (c. 1397–1474)*

Tout mon desir et mon voloir  
*Arnold de Lantins (fl. c. 1430)*  
J'atendray tant qu'il vous playra  
Malheureux cueur, que vieulx tu faire?  
*Du Fay*

De plus en plus se renouvelle  
*Gilles de Bins, dit Binchois (c. 1400–1460)*  
Je ne vis oncques la pareille  
*Du Fay? Binchois?*  
Ce jour de l'an voudray joye mener  
Mon cuer me fait tous dis penser  
*Du Fay*



# Texts & Translations

**Ce moys de may** Ce moys de may soyons lies et joyeux  
et de nos cuers oſtons merancole.  
Chantons, dansons et menons chiere lye  
pour deſpiter ces felons envieus.

Plus c'onques mais chascuns soit curieux  
de bien servir sa maiſtreſſe jolye.  
Ce moys de may soyons lies et joyeux  
et de nos cuers oſtons merancole.

Car la saison semont tous amoureux  
a ce faire, pourtant n'y fallons mye.  
Carissimi! Dufaÿ vous en pry  
et Perinet dira de mieux en mieux:

Ce moys de may soyons lies et joyeux  
et de nos cuers oſtons merancole.  
Chantons, dansons et menons chiere lye  
pour deſpiter ces felons envieus.

**Belle, vueilliés voſtre  
mercy donner** Belle, vueilliés voſtre mercy donner  
a moy qui suy voſtre leal servant.  
Car de mon cuer et quant que j'ay vayllant,  
sur toutes je vous en vueil ahirter.

Je ne me vuel a nulle presenter,  
ains vuel du tout faire voſtre commtant.  
Belle, vueilliés voſtre mercy donner  
a moy qui suy voſtre leal servant.

Certes ne puis, belle, pour vous durer,  
morir me font envieus mesdisant.  
Je n'ose a vous, senon par doux semblant,  
belle, mon mal dire ne monſtrer.

Belle, vueilliés voſtre mercy donner  
a moy qui suy voſtre leal servant.  
Car de mon cuer et quant que j'ay vayllant,  
sur toutes je vous en vueil ahirter.

*This month of May let us be gay and joyful,  
and banish melancholy from our hearts.  
Let us sing and dance and make merry  
to spite these envious malcontents.*

*More than ever, let each and every one take care  
to serve his pretty mistress well.  
This month of May let us be gay and joyful,  
and banish melancholy from our hearts.*

*For the season itself beckons every lover  
to do so, thus let us not fail one whit.  
Beloved friends! Dufaÿ begs you,  
and Perinet will go him one better:*

*This month of May let us be gay and joyful,  
and banish melancholy from our hearts.  
Let us sing and dance and make merry  
to spite these envious malcontents.*

*Beauty, may it please you to show mercy  
to me, who am your loyal servant.  
For from my heart and whatever I have of worth  
I wish to leave to you above all others.*

*I do not wish to offer myself to anyone else,  
but wish simply to do your bidding.  
Beauty, may it please you to show mercy  
to me, who am your loyal servant.*

*Surely I cannot endure for you, beauty;  
envious slanderers make me die.  
I dare not, unless by sweet seeming,  
beauty, tell nor show you my ills.*

*Beauty, may it please you to show mercy  
to me, who am your loyal servant.  
For from my heart and whatever I have of worth  
I wish to leave to you above all others.*

**Je me complains  
piteusement** Je me complains piteusement,  
a moi tout seul plus qu'a nullui,  
de la grieste, paine e tourment  
que je souffre plus que ne di.  
Dangier me tient en tel soussi  
qu'eschever ne puis sa rudesse,  
et fortune le veult aussi,  
mais, par may foy, ce fait jonesse.

**Tout mon desir  
et mon voloir** Tout mon desir et mon voloir,  
raison aussy qui me meſtrie,  
ont comande que par devoir  
ce jour de l'an sans nul envie  
face chanson joyeuse et lie,  
qui soit gaye, gente, et jolye,  
pour estriner ma doulche amy.

Celle dame de heault povoir  
et de puissante signourie,  
en elle ay mis tout mon espoir,  
et l'ay sur toute aultre choisie.  
C'est celle a qui tous jours je pry  
qu'ele soit garde de ma vie,  
pour estriner ma doulche amy.

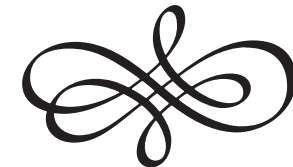
Dorenavant nul aultre avoir  
ne quier avoir, je vous affie,  
senon que je puisse manoir  
en sa grace sans departie.  
Dont humblement je luy supplie,  
quant tans sera qu'elle ne m'oblige  
pour estriner ma doulche amy.

*I lament piteously,  
to myself alone more than to any other,  
the grief, pain, and torment  
that I suffer more than I tell.  
Caprice keeps me in such anguish  
that I cannot escape her harshness,  
and Fortune wishes it so,  
but, by my faith, that's youth.*

*All my desire and my will,  
reason, too, which rules me,  
have commanded me, out of duty  
this New Year's Day, that without any worry  
I make a joyous and cheerful song  
which shall be gay, courteous, and pretty,  
as a gift for my sweet love.*

*That lady of high power  
and powerful dominion:  
in her I have placed all my hope  
and have chosen her above all others.  
It is she to whom I pray every day  
that she guard my life,  
as a gift for my sweet love.*

*Henceforth I want nothing more,  
nor seek more, I swear to you,  
than that I may remain  
in her grace, without fail.  
Thus humbly I beg her  
that whatever may be, she not forget me:  
as a gift for my sweet love.*



*J'atendray tant qu'il vous playra  
qu'il vous playra* J'atendray tant qu'il vous playra  
a vous declarer ma pensee,  
ma tres chiere dame honouree,  
je ne say s'il m'en desplayra.

Mais toutes fois, pour complaire a  
voſtre personne desiree,  
J'atendray tant qu'il vous playra  
A vous declarer ma pensee.

Car j'ay eſpour, quant avendra  
qu'a ce vous seres acordee,  
que ma douleur sera cessee,  
je le vous ay dit longtemps a.

J'atendray tant qu'il vous playra  
A vous declarer ma pensee,  
ma tres chiere dame honouree,  
je ne say s'il m'en desplayra.

*Malheureux cueur,  
que vieulx tu faire?*  
—Le Rousselet

Malheureux cueur, que vieulx tu faire?  
Vieulx tu tant a une complaire  
que ung seul jour je n'aye repos?  
Penser ne puis a quel propos  
tu me fais tant de paine traire.

Nous n'avons ne joie ne bien,  
ne toy ne moy, tu le sces bien,  
tous jours languissons en deſtreſse.

Ta leaulte ne nous vault rien,  
et qui pis eſt, seur je me tien  
qu'il n'en chaut a noſtre maistresse.

Combien qu'aies volu parfaire,  
tes plaisirs craignant luy deſplaire,  
accroissant son bon bruit et los;  
Mal fen eſt prins, pour ce tes los,  
que brief pense de te desfaire.

Malheureux cueur, que vieulx tu faire?  
Vieulx tu tant a une complaire  
qu'en un seul jour je n'aye repos?  
Penser ne puis a quel propos,  
tu me fais tant de paine traire.

*I will wait as long as it please you  
to declare my thoughts to you,  
my very dear and honored lady;  
I don't know whether it will displease me,*

*but nevertheless, in order to please  
you whom I desire,  
I will wait as long as it please you  
to declare my thoughts to you.*

*For I hope that, when it comes to pass  
that you agree to this,  
my suffering will cease,  
as I told you long ago.*

*I will wait as long as it please you  
to declare my thoughts to you,  
my very dear and honored lady;  
I don't know whether it will displease me!*

*Unhappy heart, what do you mean to do?  
Do you so wish to please one woman  
that I will have no rest, not even for one day?  
I cannot think for what purpose  
you make me bear so much pain.*

*We have neither joy nor any good,  
neither you nor I, you know it well:  
every day we languish in desire.*

*Your loyalty is worth nothing to us,  
and what is worse, I am sure  
that it does not charm our mistress.*

*However much you wished to accomplish—  
fearing to displease her by your pleasures—  
enhancing her good name and renown,  
these your praises are taken ill,  
so that shortly she means to destroy you.*

*Unhappy heart, what do you mean to do?  
Do you so wish to please one woman  
that I will have no rest, not even for one day?  
I cannot think for what purpose  
you make me bear so much pain.*

*De plus en plus  
se renouvelle* De plus en plus se renouvelle,  
ma douce dame gente et belle,  
ma volonte de vous veir.  
Ce me fait le tres grant desir  
que j'ai de vous ouir nouvelle.

Ne cuidies vous que recelle,  
comme a tous jours vous estes celle  
que je veuil de tout obeir.  
De plus en plus se renouvelle,  
ma douce dame gente et belle,  
ma volonte de vous veir.

Helas, se vous m'estes cruelle,  
j'aueroie au cueur angoisse telle  
que je coudroie bien morir,  
mais ce seroit sans desservir,  
en soustenant voſtre querelle.

De plus en plus se renouvelle,  
ma douce dame gente et belle,  
ma volonte de vous veir.  
Ce me fait le tres grant desir  
que j'ai de vous ouir nouvelle.

*Je ne vis  
oncques la pareille* Je ne vis oncques la pareille  
de vous, ma gracieuse dame,  
car vo beaulte eſt, par mon ame,  
sur toutes aultres nonpareille.

En vous voiant je mesmerveille  
et dis queſt ceci noſtre dame?  
Je ne vis oncques la pareille  
de vous, ma gracieuse dame.

Voſtre tres grant douceur resveille  
Mon eſprit, et mon oeil entame  
Mon cuer, dont dire puissans blame,  
Puisqu'a vous servir m'apareille.

Je ne vis oncques la pareille  
de vous, ma gracieuse dame,  
car vo beaulte eſt, par mon ame,  
sur toutes aultres nonpareille.

*More and more is renewed,  
my sweet, noble, and fair lady,  
my urge to see you.  
This gives me a very great desire  
to hear news of you.*

*Do not imagine that I will hide away,  
for you are forever she  
whom I want to obey in everything.  
More and more is renewed,  
my sweet, noble, and fair lady,  
my urge to see you.*

*Alas, if you are cruel to me,  
I will have such anguish of heart  
that I would gladly die,  
but this would be without deserving it,  
while upholding your cause.*

*More and more is renewed,  
my sweet, noble, and fair lady,  
my urge to see you.  
This gives me a very great desire  
to hear news of you.*

*Never did I see the equal  
of you, my gracious lady,  
for your beauty, upon my soul,  
surpasses all others.*

*When I see you, I marvel  
and ask, Is this Our Lady?  
Never did I see the equal  
of you, my gracious lady.*

*Your very great sweetness awakes  
my ſpirit, and my eye touches  
my heart, which I may boldly say,  
for I am ready to serve you.*

*Never did I see the equal  
of you, my gracious lady,  
for your beauty, upon my soul,  
surpasses all others.*

*Ce jour de l'an vouldray joye mener* Ce jour de l'an vouldray joye mener, chanter, danser, et mener chiere lie, pour maintenir la coutume jolye que tous amants sont tenus de garder.

Et pour certain tant me vouldray poier que je puisse choisir nouvelle amie, ce jour de l'an vouldray joye mener, chanter, danser, et mener chiere lie.

A laquelle je puisse presenter cuer, corps et biens, sans faire despartie. He, dieus d'amours, syés de ma partie, que fortune si ne me puisst grever.

Ce jour de l'an vouldray joye mener, chanter, danser, et mener chiere lie, pour maintenir la coutume jolye que tous amants sont tenus de garder.

*Mon cuer me fait tous dis penser* Mon cuer me fait tous dis penser a vous, belle, bonne, sans per, rose odourans comme la grainne, jone, gente, blanche que laine, amoureuse, sage en parler.

Aultre de vous ne puis amer ne requerir ny honnourer, dame de toute beaulté plainne: mon cuer me fait tous dis penser a vous, belle, bonne, sans per, rose odourans comme la grainne.

Resjoys sui et veuil chanter et en mon cuer n'a point d'amer; ayms, ay toute joye mondayne sans avoir tristesse ne paine, quant veoir puis vo beau vis cler.

Mon cuer me fait tous dis penser a vous, belle, bonne, sans per, rose odourans comme la grainne, jone, gente, blanche que laine, amoureuse, sage en parler.

*This New Year's Day I wish to be joyful, sing, dance, and make merry, to uphold the fair custom that all lovers are bound to observe.*

*And indeed, so do I wish to aspire to be able to choose a new lover, this New Year's Day I wish to be joyful, sing, dance, and make merry.*

*To her I may present heart, body, and wealth, without restraint. Oh, God of Love, be my ally, that Fortune may not harm me.*

*This New Year's Day I wish to be joyful, sing, dance, and make merry, to uphold the fair custom that all lovers are bound to observe.*

*My heart makes me think always of you—fair, good, without peer, a rose sweet-smelling as cardamom, young, noble, white as fleece, loving, wise in speech.*

*I can neither love, nor court, nor honor another, O lady full of every beauty: my heart makes me think always of you—fair, good, without peer, a rose sweet-smelling as cardamom.*

*I am filled with joy and want to sing and in my heart is no trace of bitterness; I love, I have every earthly joy, without sadness or pain, when I behold your fair, radiant face.*

*My heart makes me think always of you—fair, good, without peer, a rose sweet-smelling as cardamom, young, noble, white as fleece, loving, wise in speech.*

# the Musicians

Soprano **Lydia Heather Knutson** has performed around the world, appearing on radio and at leading international music festivals in the US, Canada, Europe, Latin America, and Australia. She is a founding member of the medieval ensemble Fortune's Wheel, was for many years a member of the women's ensemble of Sequentia, Cologne, and has been singing with Blue Heron since 2003. Her voice has been described as "crystalline, beautiful and supple" (*La Jornada, Mexico City*), "a constant delight" (*Boston Globe*), and her technique "magnificent" (*La Repubblica, Rome*). She has recorded for Dorian, Erato, and BMG Classics/Deutsche Harmonia Mundi. In addition to singing, Dr. Knutson is a chiropractor with a private practice in Cambridge.

A violinist and conductor with a repertoire extending from the fifteenth century through the eighteenth, **Scott Metcalfe** directs Blue Heron and the Renaissance choir Convivium Musicum, and is concertmaster of the Trinity Consort in Portland, Oregon, under Eric Milnes. He has conducted *Messiah* in Seattle, Bach's *St. John Passion* in Princeton, and Monteverdi's *Vespers* and Handel's *Amadigi* at Monadnock Music in New Hampshire. Metcalfe was a founding member of La Luna and of The King's Noyse, played in every BEMF orchestra from 1993 through 2003, and appears on recordings on harmonia mundi, ATMA, Dorian, Wildboar, and elsewhere. He holds a bachelor's degree from Brown University, where he majored in biology, and is currently completing a master's in music at Harvard. Recently he has taken up the vielle and is also learning to play Irish fiddle.

**Aaron Sheehan**, tenor, is now enjoying his fourth season singing with Blue Heron. Other groups that he has performed with are Theater of Voices, the Handel & Haydn Society, Fortune's Wheel, and Liber unUsualis. Last fall he sang the title role in the Harvard Early Music Society's production of Monteverdi's *Orfeo*, and in June he will appear as Ivan in the Boston Early Music Festival production of Mattheson's *Boris Godunow*. He also keeps an active teaching schedule with students from Brown University and New England Conservatory's Extension School.

Tenor **Mark Sprinkle** enjoys an active and varied career as a soloist and ensemble singer in repertoire ranging from the fourteenth to the eighteenth centuries. He has appeared as a soloist with Concerto Palatino and with the Handel & Haydn Society under Grant Llewellyn and Christopher Hogwood, and sang in the Boston Early Music Festival productions of Rossi's *Orfeo*, Lully's *Theseé* and Conradi's *Ariadne*. In May 2005 he will sing the Evangelist in Bach's *St. John Passion* with the Andover Choral Society. He worked for many years with Emmanuel Music and can be heard on their recordings of the motets of Heinrich Schutz and the *St. John Passion*. He is on the voice faculties of Phillips Exeter Academy, Salem State College, and Boston College.

# Thanks

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