Regina cæli lætare
Pierre de Manchicourt (c.1510–1564)

Attaingnant, Liber decimus quartus XIX musicas ... P. de Manchicourt [Paris, 1539]

'in Resurrectione Domini'

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Regina caeli laetare

Manchicourt
Manchicourt

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al - le - lu - - lia:

al - le - lu - - lia:

Qui - a quem me - ru - i -

Qua - quem me - ru - i -

Qui - a quem me - ru - i -

Qui - a quem me - ru - i -

Qui - a quem me - ru - i -
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Pro nobis Deum, ora pro nobis, pro nobis Deum

Pro nobis, pro nobis, pro nobis Deum

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia
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Pierre de Manchicourt, a contemporary of Nicolas Gombert and Jacobus Clemens non Papa, was active in both Burgundy and Spain during the reigns of Charles V and Phillip II, culminating in his appointment by the latter as maestro de capilla flamenca in Madrid in 1559. The fact that Attaingnant, publisher of the French Royal Court, devoted his fourteenth and final volume of motets in 1539 entirely to Manchicourt’s work (an honour he bestowed on no other, and emulated by Flemish publishers Susato and Phalèse in 1545 and 1554 respectively) bears testament to the composer’s reputation in his day. Manchicourt’s highly polyphonic style of composition lost favour around the time of his death, as the liturgical reforms of the Council of Trent took hold — marking the transition from the High Renaissance to the less florid Late-Renaissance style of Victoria and Palestrina.

Composers of the High Renaissance often reserved their finest writing for the four Marian devotional antiphons, among which Regina caeli laetare seems to have elicited some of the most complex and beautiful output of the period: for example, Gombert’s two settings, in ten and twelve parts, are the only motets (among his output of more than 160) that he composed for such vocal forces.

Manchicourt’s choice of only six parts may seem comparatively unremarkable; likewise, his elaborate polyphonic setting of substantial parts of the original chant, and the employment of a canon in the upper two parts, were nothing unusual in his day. However, this canon has a couple of interesting twists: firstly, the pitch relationship between the canonic voices is inverted in the secunda pars, the second voice (or comes) swapping from a fourth below to a fourth above the first voice (or dux). Secondly — and more ingeniously — the direction ‘Sans souspirer ne chantez pointz’ (lit. “without breathing, and don’t sing dots”) requires the comes to omit minim rests and remove the dot from any dotted notes, such that the comes starts four semibreves later but ends the prima pars three-and-a-half semibreves earlier than the dux (and in the secunda pars, five and four semibreves respectively). In the process, a vocal line that is already highly melismatic becomes unusually syncopated. Manchicourt replicates both of these features in the other voices, creating a scintillating exemplar of the complex polyphonic style of High Renaissance composition.

**Editorial Notes:**

This edition is set a minor third higher than the original, and the uppermost voice parts are swapped in the secunda pars in deference to the aforementioned inversion of the canonic pitch relationship. As per the source, the signa congruentiae [§ ] denoted in the respective canonic dux voices (m.9, m.58, m.65, m.112) signify the comes entry and end points. Editorial accidentals are indicated above the note.

Original note values are retained: thus, consistent with 16th-century convention, the mensuration sign and its modern-equivalent time signature signify a semibreve tactus. Bar lines are added only to aid reading and direction: ‘strong’ and ‘weak’ beats implied by their position should never take precedence over phrasing or word stress. Ligatures and coloration in the source are acknowledged with overarching square brackets and open brackets respectively.

Word underlay reflects editorial judgment and is freely adjusted. Editorial addition or re-iteration of words not explicit in the source is indicated in italic. Dashed ties signify joining of re-iterated notes where considered necessary to suit the word underlay.

Regína caeli, laetáre, allelúia:
Quia quem meruísti portáre, allelúia,
Resurréxit, sicut dixit, allelúia.
Ora pro nobis Deum, allelúia.

(Marian Antiphon for the Office of Compline, from Holy Saturday to the Saturday after Pentecost)