



Exploring Loss

with

Ensemble Tramontana

Orlande de Lassus (1532 - 1594)

Lamentationes Hieremiæ Prophetæ / Lamentations of Jeremiah the Prophet

for five voices

The first Lamentation for Good Friday (Lamentations 2: 8-10)

8 Heth. The Lord hath purposed to destroy the wall of the daughter of Sion: he hath stretched out his line, and hath not withdrawn his hand from destroying: and the bulwark hath mourned, and the wall hath been destroyed together.

9 Teth. Her gates are sunk into the ground: he hath destroyed, and broken her bars: her king and her princes are among the Gentiles: the law is no more, and her prophets have found no vision from the Lord.

10 Jod. The ancients of the daughter of Sion sit upon the ground, they have held their peace: they have sprinkled their heads with dust, they are girded with hair-cloth, the virgins of Jerusalem hang down their heads to the ground.

Dietrich Buxtehude (c. 1638 - 1707)

Klaglied, BuxWV 76b

1. Must death then unbind
What nothing can unshackle?
And must he bewrest from me,
Who clings fast to my heart?
Ah! My father's woeful passing
Brings with it such bitter grief,
That when the heart is torn from the breast,
The pain exceeds that of death.

6. Now he plays his songs of joy
Upon the celestial keyboard,
While angels now and then
Sing along with their sweet graces.
Here are our songs of mourning
Where dark and sorrowful notes
Intertwine in an anguished counterpoint.
There, all is with joyfulness refreshed.

7. Sleep well, you beloved one,
Live happily, you blessed soul;
I, your son, now deep in grief,
Inscribe upon your hollow tomb:
"Here lies he whose wondrous playing
Brought delight even to God Himself:
Now has his spirit joyfully
Joined the choir of heaven."

Orlande de Lassus (1532 - 1594)

Lamentationes Hieremiæ Prophetæ / Lamentations of Jeremiah the Prophet

The second Lamentation for Good Friday (Lamentations 2: 13-15)

13 Mem. To what shall I compare thee? or to what shall I liken thee, O daughter of Jerusalem? to what shall I equal thee, that I may comfort thee, O virgin daughter of Sion? for great as the sea is thy destruction: who shall heal thee?

14 Nun. Thy prophets have seen false and foolish things for thee: and they have not laid open thy iniquity, to excite thee to penance: but they have seen for thee false revelations and banishments.

15 Samech. All they that passed by the way have clapped their hands at thee: they have hissed, and wagged their heads at the daughter of Jerusalem, saying: Is this the city of perfect beauty, the joy of all the earth?

Heinrich Isaac (c. 1450 - 1517)

Quis dabit capitam meam aquam

Prima pars

Who will give water to my head?
Who will fill the fount of tears for my eyes,
that I may weep by night, that I may weep
by day?
Thus the widowed turtle dove,
thus the dying swan,
thus the nightingale mourns.
Alas, wretched, o grief!

Secunda pars, upper voices:
Suddenly the laurel
by the lightning bolt,
the same laurel celebrated
by the choir of the muses,
by the choir of the nymphs.

Secunda pars, Bass
May we rest in peace.

Tertia pars

beneath whose canopy
Phoebus's lyre sounds mellower
and [his] voice sweeter;
Now all are mute,
now all are deaf.

Orlande de Lassus (1532 - 1594)

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The third Lamentation for Good Friday (Lamentations 3: 1-2, 4-5, 7, 9)

1-2 Aleph. I am the man that see my poverty by the rod of his indignation. He hath led me, and brought me into darkness, and not into light.

4-5 Beth. My skin and my flesh he hath made old, he hath broken my bones. He hath built round about me, and he hath compassed me with gall, and labour.

7, 9 Ghimel. He hath built against me round about, that I may not get out: he hath made my fetters heavy.

...

He hath shut up my ways with square stones, he hath turned my paths upside down.

Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (1525 - 1594)

Anima nostra sicut passer

(Psalm 123/124: 7)

Our soul is like a sparrow that has escaped from the fowler's snare;
the snare is broken and we are free.

