

# Quam Pulchra est

Program for soprano, tenor and organ

**Toccata quarta secondo Tuono**

Claudio Merulo (1533 – 1604)

**Egredimini, filiae Sion**

**Jesu mi dulcissime**

Alessandro Grandi (1570 – 1630)

**O bone Jesu**

Claudio Monteverdi (1567 – 1643)

**Canzon quarti toni dopo il Postcommunio**

Girolamo Frescobaldi (1583 – 1643)

**Salve Regina**

**Laudate Dominum**

C. Monteverdi

**O quam Pulchra**

C. Monteverdi

**Ricercare II**

Fabritio Fontana (? – 1695)

**Exaltabo te, Domine**

Domenico Mazzocchi (1592 – 1665)

**Peccavi super numerum**

**O sacramentum pietatis**

Paolo Lorenzani (1640 – 1713)

# From the counterpoint to the recitative style in the sacred repertoire.

Towards the prima or the seconda pratica?

The arrival of the new aesthetic at the end of the XVI century unloosed some conflicts between composers of this period. Some of them believe that the new style could be used just for secular music. For others this seconda pratica was a new way of composing both repertoires: secular and sacred music.

A large part of this repertoire shows an aesthetic divided between two styles. The basso continuo leaves the possibility to create contrapuntist lines that remain us the renaissance. At the same time the long and ornamented melismas of the voice need as well as the text a certain freedom. That is going to be the challenge of the continuist in this repertoire: prima or seconda pratica?. **La Cecchina** suggest a middle point between both styles, giving importance to the text as much as the accompaniment.

The program is conceived around the emblematic figure of **Claudio Monteverdi**, one of the most famous composers of his time. He is known not just for his music but also for showing the path from polyphony to basso continuo: the end of the *contrapuncto* era leaves space for a new practice called the recitative style, in which the text once again gains the importance that it lacked in the polyphonic style.

The music chosen for this program is sacred and has its own style: highly ornamented melodic lines, unprepared dissonances, and melodic inventions, which exploit the brilliance and warmth of the human voice. It is a new way of composing which presents the meaning of the text in a vital and subtle way.