



Music of
Byzantium

Cappella Romana

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COVER: *The Archangel Gabriel* (detail). Tempera and gold on wood, 4½ x 29½ in., 15th century. THE HOLY MONASTERY OF ST. CATHERINE, Sinai, Egypt
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CAPPELLA ROMANA

Alexander Lingas, Artistic Director

BYZANTINE MUSIC 1261–1557

- | | |
|--|------|
| 1 Kontakion ('To you my Champion') MS St. Petersburg Gr. 674 (ca. 1270) | 4:03 |
| 2 Imperial Acclamations for Constantine XI Palaiologos (1449–1453) After MSS Athens 2622 (14th c.) and 2406 (1453) | 2:15 |
| 3 Kontakion for Theophany Romanos the Melodist (6th c.), MS Konstamonitou 86 (15th c.) | 1:39 |
| 4 Festal Trisagion ('As many of you as have been baptized') Xenos Korones (14th c.), MSS Athens 2456 (15th c.) and Ambrosianus L36 (14th c.) | 6:40 |
| 5 Anagrammatismos for Theophany St. John Koukouzelis (14th c.), MS Sinai 1566 (15th c.) | 8:40 |

- 6 **Sticheron Apostichon Idiomelon for St. Basil** 2:58
Byzas (8th c.?), MS Ambrosianus A 139 sup. (14th c.)
- 7 **Kalophonic Coda for St. Basil/A New Addition** 10:09
Gregorios the Domesticos (14th c.)/
John Plousiadenos (ca. 1429–1500), MS Sinai 1234
(autograph of Plousiadenos)
- 8 **Kyrie *Cunctipotens genitor*** 3:44
Latin chant (from Byzantine notation), MS Athens 2401 (15th c.)
- 9 **Kanon in Honor of St. Thomas Aquinas: Ode 1** 4:07
Plousiadenos, Melody by John of Damascus, MS Vatopedi 1529
- 10 **Communion for Mid-Pentecost** 1:53
Plousiadenos, MS Dochiarou 315
- 11 **Lament for the Fall of Constantinople** 11:55
Manuel Chrysaphes (15th c.), MS Iviron 1120 (1458)
- 12 **Lamentatio Sanctae Matris Ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae** 4:34
Guillaume Dufay (ca. 1400–74)
- 13 **'O great and most sacred Pascha'** 1:38
Hieronymos Tragodistes of Cyprus (fl. 1550–60)

Texts

1. Kontakion ("To you my Champion")

To you my Champion and Commander I your city saved from disasters dedicate, O Mother of God, hymns of victory and thanksgiving; but as you have unassailable might from every kind of danger now deliver me, that I may cry to you, Hail, Bride without bridegroom!

2. Imperial Acclamations for Constantine XI Palaiologos

The Clergy in the sanctuary: May the Kings have many years.

Choir: May the Kings have many years.

Choir: To Constantine Palaiologos, the most faithful King and Emperor of the Romans, many years!

Clergy: May the Kings have many years.

1st Domestikos: Lord, save the Kings.

2nd Domestikos: And hear us.

3. Kontakion for Theophany

Today you have appeared to the inhabited world; and your light, O Lord, has been marked upon us; who with knowledge sing your praise. You have come, you have appeared, the unapproachable Light.

4. Festal Trisagion ('As many of you as have been baptized')

Amen. As many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ. Alleluia.

The second [repeat]. The third [repeat]. Nga, nga.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Both now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

You have put on Christ. Alleluia.

[With] strength. As many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ. Alleluia.

5. Anagrammatismos for Theophany

You Lord, who take away the sin of the world, came in the form of a servant asking for Baptism, though you did not know sin. The waters saw you and were afraid; again; the waters saw you,

Lord, and were afraid, were afraid. The Forerunner trembled and cried out, saying, 'How will the lamp enlighten the Light? The servant place his hand on the Master? Make me and waters holy, and the waters, O Savior, ti ti ti ti ... make me holy, O Savior, and the waters.

6. Sticheron Apostichon Idiomelon for St. Basil

Mode I, by Byzas

O godly and sacred bee of Christ's Church, all-blessed Basil; for you armed yourself with the sting of divine longing and wounded the blasphemies of heresies hated by God; and you treasured up for the souls of the faithful the sweetness of true religion; and now, as you pass through the divine meadows of inviolate pasture, remember us also as you stand before the consubstantial Trinity.

7. Kalophonic Coda for St. Basil

by Gregorius the Domesticos

From all the Saints, *again*: From all the saints, you have received the imprint of the virtues, our Father Basil, our Father Basil: the meekness of Moses; the zeal of Elias; say: the confession of Peter; again: the confession of Peter; the theology of John.

A New Addition

by John Plousiadenos

Our Father Basil, our Father Basil—tetetete, anenaneane, anenaneitanenane, anenanena neitanenane, tererere rererere, tererere rererere rrrererererererererere, tererere, tererere—our Father Basil, like Paul you do not cease to cry out; again: like Paul you do not cease; say: Who is weak, and I am not weak? Say: Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is scandalised? Who is scandalised, and I am not on fire? Who is scandalised, and I am not on fire? And I am not on fire? And I am not on fire?

(from the original setting by Byzas)

Therefore as you now dwell with them, intercede that our souls may be saved.

8. Kyrie Cunctipotens genitor

Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

9. Kanon in Honor of St. Thomas Aquinas: Ode 1

Longing to praise the famous teacher of theology, I approach You, O Christ, as one of infirm utterance. Inspire me with wise speech so that I may worthily adorn him by songs and harmonious melodies.

As a star from the West he illumined the church of Christ: the musical swan and subtle teacher, Thomas the wholly blessed, called Aquinas (=sagacious). Coming before him let us cry: Hail, teacher of the universe.

Sweet-smelling and pleasant myrrh gushed forth the precious coffin in which your all-holy and lawgiving body reposes, most reverend father, teacher of piety and the opponent of impiety.

Inexplicably you conceived God, pure Virgin Mother, above reason you brought Him forth without seed, and in giving birth remained a virgin, even as you were before childbirth, O all-blameless one, wherefore we honor you as Theotokos.

10. Communion for Mid-Pentecost

He who has seen me has seen the Father, and he who eats my flesh and drinks my blood dwells in me and I in him, says the Lord. —John 14:9 and 6:56

11. Lament for the Fall of Constantinople

O God, the heathen have come into your inheritance; they have defiled your holy temple, O Lord. They have given the dead bodies of your servants to be meat for the birds of the air and the flesh of your saints to the beasts of the earth. They have shed their blood like water round about Jerusalem and there was no one to bury them. We have become a reproach to our neighbors, subjected to scorn and derision from those around us.

How long, O Lord? —Again—How long, O Lord? Will you be angry forever? How long shall your jealousy burn as fire? How long, O Lord? Pour out your wrath on the nations that do not know you, and on kingdoms which have not called upon your name. Do not remember our old sins, but quickly help us, and have mercy on us. —Psalm 79 (78 LXX):1–6, 8

12. Lamentatio Sanctae Matris Ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae

Triplum and Duplum:

O most merciful fount of all hope, Father of the son whose tearful mother I am, I come to lay my complaint before your sovereign court, in that your power and human nature, have allowed such grievous harm to be done to my son, who has honored me so.

Now I am bereft of goodness and joy, without anyone alive to hear my laments. To you, the only God, I submit my complaints, of the grievous torment and sorrowful outrage, which I see the best of men suffer without any comfort from the whole human race.

Tenor:

All her friends have dealt treacherously with her; there is not one of her lovers to comfort her.

13. 'O great and most sacred Pascha'

O great and most sacred Pascha, Christ! O Wisdom and Word and Power of God! Grant that we may partake of you fully in the day that has no evening of your Kingdom.

Notes

The Eastern Roman Empire—commonly called ‘Byzantium’ after the ancient name of its capital Constantinople—not only survived the downfall of (Old) Rome by a thousand years, but also created a musical tradition that is commonly known today as ‘Byzantine chant.’ Its origins, like those of its Western siblings (Gregorian chant, Ambrosian chant, etc.) are to be found in the oral traditions of Christianity’s first millennium. These were codified and further developed with the aid of Byzantine musical notation, which appears in Greek sources from the tenth century onward.

The kontakion is a native Constantinopolitan form of hymnography perfected by St. Romanos the Melodist (6th c.) as a form of strophic narrative sermon consisting of one or more prologues followed by a series of metrically identical stanzas (*oikoi*). The **Kontakion ‘To you my Champion’ (1)** is a relic of Byzantium’s glorious past proclaiming to its inhabitants the Virgin Mary’s special role as the protector of their capital city. It was probably written in celebration of Constantinople’s deliverance from an Arab siege in the seventh century, after which it was added to the famous Akathistos Hymn (6th c.) in honor of the Mother of God as a second prologue.

The last emperors of Byzantium were also keenly aware of ancient precedents, maintaining to the best of their abilities imperial ceremonial from a much happier age. This remained true even for Constantine XI, enthroned in 1448 and the last Roman emperor of Constantinople. Although his realm consisted of little more than the capital and the Peloponnesus, the church continued to pray for him using forms that were centuries old. These are represented on the present disc by **Imperial Acclamations (2)**, which were sung at Eucharistic liturgies celebrated by a bishop.

In later Byzantine usage the custom of reciting kontakia in their entirety had, with the exception of the *Akathistos* and another hymn appointed for the funerals of priests, disappeared. It was customary to sing only the prologues of most kontakia, the tunes of which were apparently so well known that they rarely appear in musical manuscripts. The prologue to the ancient **Kontakion for Theophany (3)** is an exception, having been recorded in a 15th-century manuscript now located at the monastery of Konstantonitou on Mount Athos.

Xenos Korones, a church musician in 14th-century Byzantium, was one of a group of singers and composers who led a movement to renew Byzantine chant through the introduction of new and distinctly personal styles of melodic composition. His setting of the **Festal Trisagion 'As many of you as have been baptized (4)**—the ancient baptismal hymn that replaces the Divine Liturgy's usual Trisagion ('Holy God, Holy Strong, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us') on great Feasts of the Lord—is an arrangement of an anonymous setting labeled 'short' in musical manuscripts.

One of the most picturesque elements of the Orthodox Church's celebration of Theophany is the annual Blessing of the Waters, a service that recalls the cosmic significance of Christ's baptism in the Jordan, an event heralding the renewal and restoration of all creation. The singer, theorist, and saint John Koukouzelis (14th c.), who was the leading figure musical revolution mentioned above, enhanced this rite by writing a coda to its traditional series of four hymns by Patriarch Sophronios of Jerusalem (7th c.). Koukouzelis's composition is called an 'anagrammatismos' (i.e. an anagram) because it rearranges the words of the original hymn. The **Anagrammatismos for Theophany (5)** is a musical meditation on a text familiar to worshippers that temporarily escapes the confines of human speech with abstract music set to nonsense syllables (tititi. . .), a form of wordless prayer known as 'teretisms' that may be viewed as a kind of institutionalized Pentecostalism.

The next two items are evening chants in honor of St. Basil from the monastic tradition of Byzantine hymnography. The **Sticheron Apostichon Idiomelon for St. Basil (6)** by Byzas (8th c.?) is an example of the classic repertory of the Sticherarion, a volume of hymns intended for intercalation between the verses (*stichoi*) of the Palestinian monastic office's psalms and canticles. During the 14th and 15th centuries it became customary for Byzantine composers to write 'kalophonic' ('beautiful-sounding') versions of these classic hymns, setting them in part or in their entirety in a more elaborate idiom that set apart certain phrases for deeper contemplation. How this worked in practice may be observed from the next hymn in the series by Byzas, which is sung with two kalophonic additions from the fifteenth-century Kalophonic Sticherarion *Sinai 1254* (folios 199v–200v), an autograph manuscript of the composer and theorist John Plousiadenos (ca. 1429–1500). The first **Kalophonic Coda for St. Basil (7a)** by the Athonite composer Gregorios the Domestikos (14th c.) begins in a manner identical to that of Byzas's original setting, but soon proceeds to highlight particular phrases through repetition and melodic elaboration. The second and optional **New Addition (7b)** by Plousiadenos himself follows similar procedures after a brief wordless teretism, leading into the conclusion of the hymn from the classic setting (a third optional set-

ting in Sinai 1234 by Koukouzelis was not chosen for this performance). A problem arises, however, at the point of transition between this second addition and the original hymn because Plousiadenos has concluded his work what appears to be a fifth too high. The solution adopted on this recording of singing the concluding phrase in parallel fifths may at first hearing seem unusual, but is supported by the following evidence: a) the tonal system of Byzantine music is constructed from scales of four notes ('tetrachords') and recognizes the functional equivalence of transpositions at the fourth or fifth; and b) Plousiadenos was, as is discussed below, himself a composer of simple polyphony in the (usually improvised) style known to the Latin West as *cantus planus binatin*.

This incursion of Western medieval performance practice on a disc of late Byzantine chant should not be overly surprising, for Greeks and Latins had lived uneasily together in the Eastern Mediterranean ever since the sack and occupation of Constantinople (1204–61) by crusader knights. During the 14th and 15th centuries the shrunken Byzantine Empire and the remaining Western colonies were often forced to cooperate in desperate attempts to defend themselves against the Ottoman Turks.

A curious case of cultural interchange is the transmission in Byzantine neumes of the Gregorian *Kyrie Cunctipotens genitor* (8) in MS Athens 2401. Discovered in modern times by Michael Adamis, it clearly demonstrates the interest of Byzantine cantors in the music of their Western colleagues. Perhaps of greater significance is the way in which the scribe translated what he heard into Byzantine notation, providing valuable information about the way contemporary Gregorian chant was being performed. On this disc the *Kyrie* is sung both unadorned and with unwritten extra voices reflecting contemporary techniques of polyphonic improvisation.

Negotiations for the reunion of the Greek and Latin churches became more urgent as the Ottoman threat grew. This movement climaxed under Pope Eugenius IV (1431–47) with the Council of Florence, at which a small Byzantine delegation of bishops and theologians assented to union with the Roman Catholic Church on 5 July 1439 in return for military aid. The aid promised by the West at Florence was never delivered and public opposition prevented the official promulgation of the union—the terms of which were viewed as total capitulation to Papal supremacy and other Latin doctrines—in Constantinople until December of 1452, after which most Orthodox refused to attend services at St. Sophia. Among the prominent Byzantine converts to the Latin cause was John Plousiadenos, who was later consecrated bishop of Venetian-held Methone. Plousiadenos dis-

played his pro-Latin sympathies in a number of literary and musical works including a **Kanon in Honor of St. Thomas Aquinas (9)** set to melodies from well-known works by John of Damascus, transcribed here from the manuscript Vatopedi 1529. Plousiadenos's **Communion for Mid-Pentecost (10)** is an interesting example of efforts by Byzantine composers actually to employ Western musical techniques, in this case the improvised polyphonic 'chanting by the book' practiced by their Italian colleagues. His setting for Mid-Pentecost is taken from a manuscript presently located in the Athonite monastery of Docheiariou (MS 315), in which the upper part is labeled '*to tenorei*' ('the tenor') and the lower part is described as '*to keimenon*' ('the text').

The fall of New Rome to Mehmed the Conqueror on 29 May 1453 was an event that resonated politically and culturally in East and West. Manuel Chrysaphes, a court musician to the Constantine XI, marked the event with his **Lament for the Fall of Constantinople (11)** a setting of verses from Psalm 79 (78 LXX), sung here in a transcription by Markos Vasileiou from Chrysaphes's autograph MS Ivron 1120 (1458). The Franco-Flemish composer Guillaume Dufay, who early in his career had written music celebrating the wedding between an Italian noblewoman and a member of the Byzantine imperial family, composed four laments for the fall of the Constantinople. The **Lamentatio Sanctae Matris Ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae (12)** is the only one of these works now extant. Dufay probably wrote them in 1455 as part of an effort to convince Pope Callixtus III to mount a crusade against the Turks, one of many such schemes that were never realized.

After the empire's demise, Byzantine chant gradually developed Western and Eastern dialects in areas under, respectively, Venetian and Ottoman rule. Hieronymos Tragodistes of Cyprus (fl. 1550–60) was a scribe who left his native island for Venice, where he studied with the eminent musical theorist Gioseffo Zarlino. His experiences there led him to compose during the 1550s a treatise dedicated to a Roman Catholic Cardinal entitled *On the Need of Characters for the Music of the Greeks*, in which he proposed a thorough revision of the Byzantine notational system. In an appendix, he included a polyphonic setting in Renaissance style of '**O great and sacred Pascha**' (13), the concluding stanza of the Easter Kanon by St. John of Damascus. Although this composition proved to be an isolated experiment, the improvisation of polyphony remained in common in Venetian-held areas. Evidently flourishing on El Greco's native island, it became known popularly as 'Cretan Music' and survives today on several of Greece's Ionian Islands.

—Alexander Lingas

Founded in 1991, **Cappella Romana** is a vocal chamber ensemble dedicated to combining passion with scholarship in its continuing exploration of the musical traditions of the Christian East and West, with emphasis on early and contemporary music. Its name is derived from the medieval concept of the Roman *oikoumene* (inhabited world), which included not only 'Old' Rome and Western Europe but also 'New Rome' (Constantinople), 'Third Rome' (Moscow), and the commonwealth of Slavic and Syriac countries.

Flexible in size according to the demands of the repertory, Cappella Romana is one of the Pacific Northwest's few professional chamber vocal ensembles. It has a special commitment to mastering the Slavic and Byzantine repertoires in their original languages, thereby making accessible to the general public two great musical traditions that are little known in the West. Leading scholars have supplied the group with their latest discoveries, while its music director has prepared a number of the ensemble's performing editions from original sources. In the field of contemporary music, Cappella Romana has taken a leading role in bringing to West Coast audiences the works of such European composers as Michael Adamis, Ivan Moody, Arvo Pärt, and John Tavener, as well as promoting the work of North Americans.

Since its founding the ensemble has presented annual concert series in Portland featuring works ranging from medieval chant and polyphony to twentieth-century choral music and chamber music. Since 1993 the group has presented the same series in Seattle, the only classical music organization to do so. Critics have consistently praised these concerts for their unusual and innovative programming, including numerous world and American premieres. The group has also frequently collaborated with such noted artists as noted conductor Paul Hillier, chant specialist Ioannis Arvanitis, and composer Ivan Moody.

Cappella Romana tours regularly and made its European debut in March 2004 at the Byzantine Festival in London with concerts at the Queen Elizabeth Hall, St. Paul's Cathedral, and the Greek Orthodox Cathedral of St. Sophia. The Metropolitan Museum of Art presented the ensemble in its New York debut for the exhibit 'Byzantium: Faith and Power (1261–1557)' in April 2004. Cappella Romana has released two compact disc recordings on the Gagliano label, *Tikey Zes Choral Works* and *When Augustus Reigned*, and a third, *The Akathistos Hymn* by Ivan Moody, on the Gothic label. Its next release on Loft/Gothic Records is *Epiphany*, a recording of medieval Byzantine chant, to be released in Spring 2004.

Alexander Lingas, Cappella Romana's founder and musical director, is presently an Assistant Professor of Music History at Arizona State University's School of Music and a Fellow of the University of Oxford's European Humanities Research Centre. After receiving a B.A. with a double major in Music (Composition) and Russian Language from Portland State University, he continued his studies at the University of British Columbia, receiving from it a Ph.D. in Historical Musicology. From Michaelmas term of 1998 until Trinity term of 2001 he was British Academy Postdoctoral Research Fellow at Oxford University's St. Peter's College. He has also served as a lecturer and advisor for the Institute of Orthodox Christian Studies at the University of Cambridge.

Dr. Lingas has received a number of academic awards, including Fulbright and Onassis grants for musical studies in Greece with noted cantor Lycourgos Angelopoulos, a Junior Fellowship in Byzantine Studies at Harvard University's Dumbarton Oaks in Washington, D.C., and a two-year Postdoctoral Fellowship from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada for study in Oxford under Bishop Kallistos (Ware) of Diokleia.

He has spoken on BBC Radio 3 and lectured at Yale University, the Liszt Academy in Budapest, Hungary, and The Metropolitan Museum of Art. In addition to publishing scholarly articles in journals, encyclopedias, and books, Dr. Lingas has composed music for the Orthodox Church, while also having served as a cantor in Portland, San Francisco, Vancouver, and Oxford. In May 2001 he collaborated with Ioannis Arvanitis, Lycourgos Angelopoulos, and the Greek Byzantine Choir on the first celebration in 500 years of Vespers according to the ancient Rite of Hagia Sophia, which was held in the chapel of St. Peter's College. His upcoming projects include books for Overseas Publishing Associates on Sunday Matins in the Rite of Hagia Sophia and Byzantine experiments in polyphony, as well as a general introduction to Byzantine Chant for the Yale University Press.

During the academic year 2003–2004 Dr. Lingas is living in Princeton, New Jersey, as the recipient of two prestigious awards: a membership in the School of Historical Studies of the Institute for Advanced Study and an NEH Area Studies Fellowship from the American Council of Learned Societies.

CAPPELLA ROMANA



Alexander Lingas, Artistic Director/Soloist *a, b, c, d*

Ioannis Arvanitis, Guest Director/Soloist *a, c*
John Michael Boyer *a, b, c, d*

John S. Boyer *a, b, c, d*

Rachel Taylor Brown *b*

LeaAnne DenBeste *b, d*

Don Ebel *b*

Doug Fullington *d*

Leslie Green *d*

Virginia Hancock *b, d*

Stephanie Kramer *d*

David Krueger *c, d*

Christopher Kula *a, c*

Gayle Neuman *d*

Kendrick Perala *a, b, c, d*

Mark Powell *a, b, c, d*

Travis Powers *d*

Adam Steele *a, b, c, d*

Wendy Steele *d*

David Stutz *c*

(a) Tracks 3, 4, 5: From a live concert recorded at Holy Rosary Church, Seattle, Washington, 6 January 2001.

(b) Tracks 2, 8, 9, 12: From a live concert recorded at Holy Rosary Church, Seattle, Washington, 5 January 2002.

(c) Tracks 6, 7: From recording sessions at St. Mary's Cathedral, January 7–10, 2003, Edited by Alexander Lingas and Roderick Evenson.

(d) Tracks 1, 10, 11, 13: From a live concert recorded at Holy Rosary Church, Seattle, Washington, 18 October 2003.

Musical editions:

Tracks 1, 2, 8, 9, 10 by Alexander Lingas; 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 by Ioannis Arvanitis

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