

Guillaume Du Fay

Opera Omnia 02/09

Nuper rosarum flores

Edited by Alejandro Enrique Planchart



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02/09 Nuper rosarum flores - Terribilis est

Guillaume Du Fay

Cantus

Contratenor

Tenor primus

Tenor secundus

The first system of the musical score is for the vocal parts. It features four staves: Cantus (Soprano), Contratenor (Alto), Tenor primus (Tenor 1), and Tenor secundus (Tenor 2). The Cantus and Contratenor parts have lyrics: "Nu - - - per ro sa - - rum flo - res, ex do -". The Tenor parts are currently silent, indicated by a circle on the staff. The music is in 3/4 time with a key signature of one flat (B-flat).

8

The second system of the musical score continues the vocal parts. The lyrics for the Cantus and Contratenor parts are: "no pon - ti - - fi - cis, hy - e - me li - - cet hor - ri - da,". The Tenor parts remain silent. The music continues in 3/4 time with a key signature of one flat.

15

The third system of the musical score continues the vocal parts. The lyrics for the Cantus and Contratenor parts are: "ti - - - bi, vir - - go cae - li - ca, pi - -". The Tenor parts remain silent. The music continues in 3/4 time with a key signature of one flat.

22

The fourth system of the musical score continues the vocal parts. The lyrics for the Cantus and Contratenor parts are: "e et san - - - cte de - - - di -". The Tenor parts remain silent. The music continues in 3/4 time with a key signature of one flat.

57

con - se - cra - re di - gna - tus

con - - se - - cra - - re di - - gna - - - tus

71

est; i - gi - tur, al - ma pa -

est; i - - gi - tur, al - - - ma pa - - -

85

rens na - ti - tu - i et fi - li -

rens na - - - ti - tu - - i et fi - li -

99

a, vir - go, de - cus vir - gi -

a, vir - - - go, de - - cus vir - - gi -

113

num, tu - - us te Flo - ren - ti - ae de - - - -
num, _____ tu - us te _____ Flo - - ren - ti - ae _____
Ter - - - - - ri - -
Terribilis est locus iste
Ter - - - - - ri - - - bi - - - lis _____
Terribilis est locus iste

127

vo - - - - tus o - rat po - pu - lus, ut _____ qui _____
de - vo - - tus o - rat po - - pu - lus, ut _____
- - - bi - - - lis est _____
_____ est _____

141

_____ men - - - te et _____ cor - po - re _____ mun - do
_____ qui _____ men - - te et cor -
_____ lo - - - - - cus
_____ lo - - - - - cus _____

155

quic - - - - - quam ex - - o - ra - - ri,
po - re mun - do quic - - - - - quam ex - o - ra - ri, _____
i - - - - - ste. _____
_____ i - - - - - ste. _____

169

o - - - - -
o - - - - -

183

ra - ti -
ra - ti -

197

o - - - - - a cru - - - - - tus et me - - - - - ri -
o - - - - - ne tu - a cru - ci - a - tus et me - ri -
Ter - ri - bi - lis est

Ter - ri - bi - lis est

211

tis tu - - - - - i se - - - - - cun - dum car - nem
tis tu - - - - - i se - cun - - - - - dum car - - - - - nem
lo - - - - - cus i - - - - - ste.

lo - - - - - cus i - - - - - ste.

225

na - - - - - ti

na - - - - - ti

231

do - mi - - ni - - i - - - - - tu - - - i

do - mi - ni - - - - - tu - - - i

239

do - mi - ni - - - - - tu - - - i

do - mi - ni - - - - - tu - - - i

247

do - mi - ni - - - - - tu - - - i

do - mi - ni - - - - - tu - - - i

253

gra - - - ta be - ne - - -
gra - - - ta be - - - ne - - -
Ter - - - ri - - - bi - - -
Terribilis est locus iste

259

fi - ci - - a - - -
fi - ci - - a - - -
ri - - - bi - - - lis est - - -
lis - - - est - - -

267

ve - ni - am - - - que re - a - - - tum ac - - -
ve - ni - am - que re - a - - - tum ac - ci -
lo - - - cus i - - -
lo - - - cus - - -

275

ci - - - pe - - - re me - re - - - a - - - tur.
pe - re me - re - - - a - - - tur.
ste.
i - - - ste.

281 [O]

A - - - - - men. _____

A - - - - - men. _____

A - - - - - men. _____

A - - - - - men. _____

02/09 Nuper rosarum flores – Terribilis est locus iste

Sources

Mod B, fols.67v-68v (new 69v-70v), "Du fay." Text in all voices. Tenors: statements 1-3 on fol. 68r copied once with \circ , C , and ϕ directly above each other, fourth statement in fol. 70v with ϕ , followed by the Amen.

Tr 92₁, fols. 21v-23r, "G. Dufay." Text in cantus and contratenor. Tenors: statements 1-2 copied in fol. 22r with \circ and ϕ (sic), above each other, statements 3-4 and Amen copied in fol. 22v with ϕ and ϕ above each other.

Text source

Florence, Biblioteca Mediceo-Laurenziana, MS Conv. Sop. 388, fol. 204v.

Clefs and Mensurations

		1	57	169	225	281
Cantus	c1	[\circ]	ϕ	C	ϕ	\circ
Contratenor	c3 \flat	[\circ]	ϕ	C	ϕ	\circ
Tenor 1	c3 \flat	\circ	C	-	ϕ	\circ
Tenor 2	c4 \flat	\circ	C	-	ϕ	\circ

Texts

Cantus and Contratenor	
Nuper rosarum flores Ex dono pontificis Hieme licet horrida Tibi virgo caelica Pie et sancte deditum Grandis templum machinae Condecorarunt perpetim	Despite cruel winter, recently roses came, a gift of the pope to a temple of magnificent design dedicated piously and blessedly to you, o heavenly Virgin. May they ornament it forever.
Hodie vicarius Iesu Christe et Petrus Successor, Eugenius, Hoc idem amplissimum Sacris templum manibus Sanctisque liquoribus Consecrare dignatus est	Today the vicar of Jesus Christ and Peter's successor, Eugenius, has though it well to consecrate this same most spacious temple with his hands and holy water.
Igitur alma parens Nati tui et filia Virgo decus virginum Tuus te Florentiae Devotus orat populus Ut qui mente et corpore Mundo quicquam exorarit	Therefore, o gracious mother and daughter of your offspring, o virgin, ornament of virgins, your people of Florence pray to you devoutly that together with all mankind, with pure mind and body, their prayer may move you.
Oratione tua Cruciatu et meritis Tui secundum carnem Nati domini tui Grata beneficia Veniamque reatum Accipere mereatur. Amen	Through your prayer, your suffering, and your merits may the people deserve to receive from their Lord, born of you according to the flesh, the benefits of grace and the remission of sin. Amen

Tenors 1 and 2	
Terribilis est locus iste.	This is an awesome place.

Both tenors use the beginning of the introit *Terribilis est locus iste* (LU 1250) for the feast of the Dedication of the Church in two different rhythmic configurations. Tenor 1 gives the melody an octave above the written pitch of the chant and Tenor 2 gives it a fourth above the written pitch. Structure: $c/t > c/t > c/t < c/t + P$

The motet is not an isorhythmic motet but rather a mensural transformation motet, where the single rhythmic pattern, which includes the introductory rests and is coextensive with the *color* in both tenors, is sung under four different mensurations. The upper voices are rhythmically free, but they are isomelic in the four-voice sections, so that the motet sounds like a set of four variations, each introduced by an independent duet. The rests in the two tenor patterns are carefully interlocked, so that the two tenors sound together only in ten of the twenty eight breves when the tenors are sounding. Apparently in compensation, this is the work of Du Fay with the most extensive use of double notes in the upper voices, and the double notes occur virtually always when one of the tenors is silent.¹ The double notes are indicated by coloration, most often of the upper note but occasionally of the lower. When the lower note is colored the color brackets appear below the staff.

The motet has one of Du Fay's clear instances of word painting, when the word "successor" is set in imitation between cantus and contratenor (measures 44-46). That this was probably deliberate is confirmed by the absence of imitation at the corresponding places in sections 2 and 3, and the elimination of the two minim figure when the imitation returns in section 4, which renders the imitation almost imperceptible.

The proportions of the motet are generated by the mensuration changes of the two tenors, which include the introductory rest underneath all the duets. The mensuration changes yield the proportion 6:4:3:2 (the coda lies outside the proportional scheme).

The motet was composed for the dedication of the cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore on 25 March 1436 by Pope Eugenius IV after the completion of the enormous dome designed by Filippo Brunelleschi. This was an extraordinary occasion, all the more since the popes did not normally officiate in the consecration of a church. Shortly before the consecration the pope had sent the cathedral the golden rose (usually a gold sculpture of a two or three flowers, hence the plural in the text of the motet). This was a traditional papal gift reserved for kings and other high nobility and bestowed only once a year, and it is this gift and the dedication of the church that are chronicled in the text of the motet. A description of the ceremony Gianozzo Manetti, *Oratio de saecularibus et pontificalibus pompis in consecratione basilicae florentinae*,² provides no details other than the entire set of ceremonies included much magnificent music with voices and instruments, but no mention of this piece or of whether singers and instrumentalists performed together.

The historical occasion for the motet and its musical architecture has given rise to an immense literature on the relationship between the motet and the cathedral. Charles Warren attempted to show that the dimensions of the motet were a musical representation of the dimensions of the cathedral itself.³ His analysis of the motet was quite accurate, but he misunderstood the architectural proportions of the cathedral. This was pointed out by Charles Brewer in a still unpublished paper,⁴ and Christine Smith in her work on Renaissance architecture.⁵ Craig Wright provided a detailed study showing that the proportions of the motet reflect the dimensions reported in the Bible for the temple of Solomon, regarded in the west as the model for all churches. As Wright shows the connections between the motet and the temple go beyond the 6:4:3:2 proportions of the motet and include the modules of seven

¹ On this see Jon Michael Allsen, "Style and Intertextuality in the Isorhythmic Motet, 1400-1440," 468.

² In Eugenio Battisti, "Il mondo visuale delle fiabe," *Archivio di filosofia, 1-3: Umanesimo e esoterismo* (Padua: A. Milani, 1960), 310-20.

³ Charles Warren, "Brunelleschi's Dome and Dufay's Motet," *The Musical Quarterly* 64 (1963), 92-105.

⁴ Charles Brewer, "Defrosted Architecture: The Incommensurability of Dufay's 'Nuper rosarum flores' and Brunelleschi's work for Santa Maria del Fiore," Paper read at the Annual Meeting of the American Musicological Society, Austin, October 26-29, 1989.

⁵ Christine Smith, *Architecture and the Culture of Early Humanism: Ethics, Aesthetics, and Eloquence, 1400-1470* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 94.

breves out of which the sections are built (i.e. the duets consist of 4x7 breves and so do the four part sections), and the text, surely written by Du Fay, has an unusual structure, four stanzas of seven heptasyllabic verses.⁶

The fact that the cathedral was dedicated to the Virgin and that the dedication took place on the feast of the Annunciation also left other symbolic traces in the motet. The Virgin's womb was widely regarded as a temple for having held her Son,⁷ and the number symbolism in Du Fay's motet can also be read in a specific Marian way.

The hermeneutics of the motet have been brought full circle in a detailed study of Marvin Trachtenberg, an architectural historian that shows that a more detailed and historically accurate way of examining the structure of Santa Maria del Fiore, which was a collage of a number of models, among which one of the most prominent was the contemporary ideas of what the Temple of Solomon was like, restores the symbolic connections of the motet with the actual church without excluding those with the Temple of Solomon or the Marian tradition.⁸

The motet was written for the singers of Eugenius IV, and we happen to know who they were on that occasion: Guillaume Du Fay, Gilles Flannel, called L'Enfant, Jehan de la Croix, called Monami, Jacques Ragot, Guillaume Le Métayer, called Malbecque, Richard Herbare, Jehan Marsille, Alfonso Garcia de Zamora, Enrico Silvestri da Fondi, and André Francmont.

The tenors have no text in Tr 92, but in ModB they have the full text, but the text is written as text (i.e. like an incipit) rather than underlaid except for the Amen. This might mean that the tenors were either vocalized or played on instruments, but it is also possible to sing the introit text to them and I have underlaid it following where the syllables fall in the chant. The breakup of words with long rests between syllables is a common feature of the motet repertory in the 14th and early 15th centuries, such an underlay would not appear strange to singers in 1436.

The structure of the motet, particularly in the second section, where the semibreve of the upper voices in Φ moves twice as fast as the putative semibreve of the tenors in \mathbb{C} , indicates a strict 1:2 ratio between the cut and uncut values in this piece. The tempo of the semibreve in *integer valor* in Du Fay's works of this period can be taken between MM 72 and 96 in order to make the motivic word be heard and the phrases to be sung in one breath. For *Nuper rosarum flores* an initial tempo of MM 72 tends to sound sluggish, but the music begins to flow well with an initial tempo of MM 84. Even at this tempo sections 2-4 sound virtuosic but not frantic when the semibreve is taken twice as fast as in *integer valor*. I suggest a return to *integer valor* for the Amen. There is no obvious indication of this in the manuscript, but there is a hint of it in the metric organization of the music. All of Du Fay's music notated in Φ is organized in groups of two breves, that is, imperfect *modus*, but the Amen consists of two perfect longs, a metric organization that in Du Fay's music is always associated with *integer valor* signatures.

Performance of the work with a strict 1:2 relation between the semibreves in *integer valor* and *tempus diminutum* will keep the actual performance time of the sections in the written proportions indicated by the notation. There is another possibility for performers who would prefer to take the opening at around MM 96 to the semibreve but feel that this makes sections 2-4 sound rushed. It is to treat the upper voices "as if the tenors do not exist," and use a 3:4 proportion at the semibreve level at the shift between sections 1 and 2, letting the tenor singers adjust to the new tempo. From this point on the semibreve remains constant to the end, although the Amen should still be taken at *integer valor*. This is based on the relationship between \circ and Φ as proposed by Italian theorists,⁹ and became the prevalent relation between perfect and imperfect time in Du Fay's music from the late 1430s on. Du Fay began to move in this direction with the motet *Ecclesiae militantis*, where the relationship between the upper voices and the tenors is entirely artificial. It reaches its apex in *Fulgens iubar ecclesiae*, where the proportions are clearly paper proportions and the motet is unperformable as written unless one takes the opening at an impossibly slow tempo. In all the works of Dufay where this is a possibility the mensural shifts always take place when the tenors are silent for a number of measures and tenor singers can hear the new tempo and adjust to it even at first sight.

⁶ Craig Wright, "Dufay's *Nuper rosarum flores*, King Solomon's Temple, and the Veneration of the Virgin," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 47 (1994), 395-441. For the edition and translation of the text I am indebted to Leo Franc Holford-Strevens.

⁷ Wright, "Dufay's *Nuper rosarum flores*," 431-33, but in closer association with the Florentine cathedral in Vivian S. Ramalingam, "*Nuper Rosarum Flores*, Brunelleschi's Dome, and the Iconography of Mary," Paper read at the meeting of the Midwest Chapter of the American Musicological Society, Chicago, 12-13 October 1996.

⁸ Marvin Trachtenberg, "Architecture and Music Runited: A New Reading of Dufay's 'Nuper rosarum flores' and the Cathedral of Florence," *Renaissance Quarterly* 54 (2001), 740-55.

⁹ See Anna Maria Busse Berger, "The Relationship of Perfect and Imperfect Time in Italian Theory of the Renaissance," *Early Music History* 5 (1985), 1-28. One should also remember that in the 1440s Du Fay adopted the English usage, that is using \mathbb{C} for the fast duple meter that other continental composers notated with Φ .