O Dulcis Scotia – Music in Medieval Scotland

"Ex te lux oritur, O dulcis Scotia" – A light rises from you, Oh sweet Scotland.
(Uppsala Manuscript, 13th c.)

Gaïta

Chris Elmes	Bagpipes, medieval fiddles, oud, percussion
Cait Webb	Shawms, harps
David Yardley	Voices
Stacy Schumacher	Citole, Oud, Percussion
Andrew Casson	Recorders

Scotland in the 13th century was a complex mix, both politically and socially. It was a period of europeanisation of the culture, particularly among the ruling, Scoto-Norman elite, but also a time of continuing internal rebellion. The stable succession, from the long reign of William the Lion (1165-1214), to his son Alexander II (1214-1249) and grandson Alexander III (1249-1286) ended disastrously when Alexander III died leaving only his infant grand-daughter, Margaret, Maid of Norway as direct heir. Her death in 1290 (before ever reaching Scotland) gave rise to the Wars of Independence, when John Balliol (1290-1296) revolted against and was deposed by the English king, Edward I. The crowning of Robert the Bruce in 1306 and the decisive defeat of the English at Bannockburn in 1314 ushered in a new era.

Only a few sources of Scottish music remain from this period, but by combining these with literary sources describing music and instruments, and information from other countries with which Scotland had close cultural relations (particularly France), we have created the current program to reflect the music that might have been heard.

The Notre Dame style, emanating from Paris, was the international language of music in the 13th century. One of the major sources for this music is the St Andrews Music Book, mostly written in Paris for St Andrews Abbey, but with a later addition of music written in St Andrews (the 11th Fascicle). **Ave celi imperatrix** (1), **Virgini marie laudes** (5) and **Virgo mitis vere mitis** (11), two-part sequences in which each section repeats, and **Mortis dira** (6) are from this Scottish section, with the conductus **Pange melos lacrimosum** (10) taken from the Parisian main body of the manuscript. Although this is originally vocal music, the style is very similar to the surviving instrumental pieces of the 13th century (estampies and ductias) so we have performed them instrumentally, using both the popular 'loud' combination of bagpipe and shawm, and the 'quiet' grouping of fiddle, harp, citole and recorder.

Ex te lux oritur (2) is in the style of an extended monophonic sequence, but in this case the text is linked to a specific historical event: the marriage of the Scottish princess Margaret to Norwegian King Erik II – parents of the ill-fated Maid of Norway. The tune, recorded in the Uppsala manuscript, was written as a celebratory song for their wedding feast.

As well as Parisian music in Scotland, we have indications of the Scots in Paris. Their presence has a musical record in the multi-part motet (the secular equivalent of the Notre Dame style) **Hare, hare, hye!/Balaam** (3). This seems to be a drinking song that, apart from being testimony to the to the singing abilities of inebriated Parisian clerics, shows us that the heavy drinking reputation of the Scots was developed quite early. It is followed by an instrumental **Estampie** (4) based on the motet. Estampies are the major form of medieval dance music and have a distinctive structure, related to the sequence.

The other major style of secular music from this period is the 'art' song of the troubadours and trouvéres. Originating in France, it spread throughout Europe, and it is reasonable to suppose the nobility of Scotland (said by Walter of Coventry (fl. 1290) to "count themselves as Frenchman in race, manners, language and culture") were also familiar with it. In **Pax in nomine Domini** (8), the Occitan troubadour, Marcabru, provides a scathing denunciation of the complex mix of war and religion that so characterised this period, in Scotland as elsewhere.

Another source of music directly from medieval Scotland is the fourteenth century Inchcolm Antiphoner from the Benedictine monastery on the island of Inchcolm in the Firth of Forth. Its music is that of the Celtic church, and particularly reveres St Columba, Scotland's 'other' patron saint, whose relics were carried into battle at Bannockburn. We perform three pieces from this manuscript, again arranged for instruments: O mira regis (7), **Salve splendor** (9) and **Salvator miserere** (12). The last has also been used as a basis of another instrumental **Estampie** (13).

The last three tracks are taken from an early 14th century French manuscript, the 'Roman de Fauvel'. This is a satirical romance about a horse, Fauvel, who is elected as Pope, and is highly critical of the decadence of the Papacy. It would not be hard to imagine Robert the Bruce appreciating the sentiments, as the Pope had excommunicated him in 1306, and refused to recognize him as King till 1323. The three tunes show how the major 13th century styles of music described above were reshaped to a new purpose. **Fauvel cogita** (14) is reminiscent of Ex te lux oritur. **Douce dame debonaire** (15) adopts a troubadour style for a conversation in which the horse Fauvel woos Dame Fortune, but she rudely dismisses him. **Veritas arpie** (16) is in the classic Notre Dame style of the conductus, but now turned into a burlesque. Vertas arpie - "The truths of the harpy.".

Sources:

1, 5, 6, 10, 11	St Andrews Music Book, Wolfenbüttel 677, (W1)	13th c. France/Scotland
2	Uppsala Manuscript C233	13th c. Orkney/Norway
3	Wolfenbüttel 1203, (W2)	13th c. France
7, 9, 12	Inchcolm antiphoner, Edinburgh University Library MS 211/IV	14th c. Scotland
8	Manuscrit du Roi, Troubadour ms W, BN. fr 8441	13th c. France
14-16	Roman de Fauvel, BN. fr. 146	14th c. France

Hare Hare hye! / Balaam

Triplum

Hare, hare, hye!
Goudalier ont fet ouan d'Arras Escoterie.
Saint Andrie! Hare, hare
goudeman et hare druerie!
Caritate crie por Sainte Marie!
Faitez moi demie de poumon et de fye.
Honie soit tel vie!
Mais bon vin sor lie ne mespris jemie.
Or bevons, ha, hye, de ce bon vin d'ouan!

Hark, hear it now –
those ale brewers are turning Arras into Scotland!
By St Andrew, hear it!
Good men and good times,
cry charity to Holy Mary!
Would you have me be half the man I am in
   lungs and liver? Shame on such alife!
But good clear wine has never done me any harm,
so let us drink the good wine of the new season!

Duplum

Balaam! Goudalier ont bien (Ou! An!)
leurs tens por la goudale que chascuns enbale,
que en sont Englissemen quant il l'ont bien estale,
demi lot a maille por ce il font leur taille.
Si dient: 'Bien le vaille!' Passions l'assaille!
Ele m'est trop male quen mes genous m'avale:
Merveille ai que cil Norman n'en perdent la coraille
qui tant boivent 'a goud man.'

Balaam! Those ale brewers have plenty of time for
   their own good ale now that everyone is piling it up.
And when the English have had their fill
they tax it at a farthing a quart
declaring, "It's worth it! Enjoy! Go to it!"
But it's too bad for me - my knees are giving way.
It's a wonder these Normans don't wreck their innards,
   drinking so much "to good men"!

Douce dame debonaire

"Douce dame debonaire"	Sweet, gracious lady
"Fauvel, quete fault?"	Fauvel, what do you need?
"Mon cuer vous doins sanz retraire"	My heart I give you without restraint.
"Sen en toi defaut."	You are lacking sense.
"Ne vous en chant il?"	Does it not please you?
"Fi, mauv's outil"	Away, worthless fool!
"Puis qu'ensi est, que ferai?"	If that's so, what am I to do?
"Ja m'amour ne te lerai"	Never my love shall I give you.
"J'ai grant desir devous plaire"	I have a great desire to please you
"De ce ne me chaut"	I'm not too keen on that
"Ne soiez a moi contraire"	Do not oppose me
"Diva qui t'asaut?"	(tell me) who's attacking you?
"Prendez m'a mari"	Take me for your husband
"Jo! Jo! sus! hari!"	Shooh!, Enough! Go away!
"Douce dame, que ferai?"	Sweet lady, what am I to do?
"Ja m'amour ne te lerai"	Never my love shall I give you.
"Ne sai que je puisse faire"	I don't know what I can do.
"Fai donques un saut"	Why don't you do a jump?
"Volentiers vers vo vaire"	Gladly, towards you I come
"Ne saut pas si haut."	Don't jump so high!
"Las! je vous ainz si."	Alas! I love you so.
"Ne me plest ainsil"	I don't like that.
"Las! et, que ferai?"	Alas! What am I to do?
"Ja m'amour ne te lerai"	Never my love shall I give you.

Instruments:

Bagpipes in D	Julian Goodacre
Bagpipes in G	Jon Swayne
Shawm in D	Robert Cronin
Shawm in C	John Hanchet
Medieval fiddles	Chris Elmes
Citole	Chris Elmes
Lap harp	EMS/Chris Elmes
Gothic harp	Winfried Goerge

Notes by Cait Webb and Chris Elmes