PERCIVAL'S LAMENT

Medieval Music and the Holy Grail

Capilla Antigua de Chinchilla • José Ferrero

Percival's Lament

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1	**Tannhäuser** (fl. mid-13th century): Staeter dienest, der ist guot	**5:25**
2	**Wolfram von Eschenbach** (fl. c. 1170-1220): Wolframs goldener Ton (Instrumental)	**2:30**
3	**Chrétien de Troyes** (fl. c. 1160-1190): D'amors, qui m'a tolu a moi	**5:01**
4	**Rigaut de Berbezilh** (fl. 1140-1162): Atressi com Persavaus el temps que vivia (Instrumental)	**5:57**
5	**Wolfram von Eschenbach?**: Was sol ein keyser ône recht?	**4:03**
6	**Anonymous English** (c. 1270): Fowles in the frith	**1:50**
7	**Chrétien de Troyes**: Percival's Lament (D'amors, qui m'a tolu) (Instrumental)	**3:49**
8	**Walther von der Vogelweide** (c. 1200): Under der linden (Instrumental)	**2:46**
9	**Hildegard von Bingen** (1098-1179): Karitas habundat	**3:12**
10	**Walther von der Vogelweide**: Palästinalied	**5:27**
11	**Hildegard von Bingen**: Laus Trinitati	**2:32**
12	**Anonymous French** (13th century): La Ultime Estampie Royale (Instrumental)	**3:43**
13	**Wolfram von Eschenbach?**: Do man dem edelen sîn gezelt	**5:33**
14	**Walther von der Vogelweide**: Ich saz ûf eime steine	**2:36**

Capilla Antigua de Chinchilla

Luisa Maesso, Triangle 1, Tambourin à Cordes 2 5 6 8 10 12, Bendir 3, Voice 6 11 13 14, Bells, 7
Juan Francisco Sanz, Voice 1 3 6 9 14, Tambour 1 10, Darbuke 2 12 14, Bendir 5 7 13, Bells 8
José Ferrero, Voice 1 5 10 14, Harp 1, Simphonie 2 4-6 10 12,
Psaltery 3 7 8, Tenor Psaltery 9 11, Anglo-Saxon Lyre 13
Ana María López-Pintor, Fiddle 1 6 10 13 14, Rabel 2-5 7 8 12, Rebec 9
Sergio Alonso, Tenor Rabel 1 6 7 13, Viol 2-5 8 10-12, Tromba Marina 14
Alfonso Sáez, Glastonbury Pipe 1 2 5, Gemshorn 2, Medieval Flute 3 6 8 10 12 14,
Tenor Medieval Flute 4 7 9 11, Chalumeaux 13, Organetto 14

José Ferrero, Director

Sources: Heidelberg (track 1); Bayerische Staatsbibliothek (tracks 2, 5); Trouvères et Troubadours (Pierre Aubry, Paris; Félix Alcan, Editeur, 1909) (tracks 3, 4, 7); Bodleian Library, Oxford (track 6); Lieder der Minnesänger (Ed. Emmy Eschering and Bernhard Wenig; Fischer and Franck, 1900) (tracks 8, 10, 13, 14); Dendermonde, St Pieters, St Paulusabdij (track 9, 11); Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris (track 12)

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"Munsalvaesche ... opposite the church there stands a high mountain."

Wolfram von Eschenbach

The Holy Grail, and the idea of some kind of spiritual quest, has been a key motif in Western history for many centuries now, one which has left its mark on all aspects of our culture, including music. Many believe the Grail to have been the cup used by Jesus at the Last Supper, in which Joseph of Arimathea then collected the blood of the dying Christ. It was then thought to have been brought to Europe – to this day some believe the chalice housed in Valencia Cathedral to be the true Grail. Some see the quest as a search for one's inner self, others as a journey to find "lost wisdom", such is the Grail's symbolic value.

Its first literary mention comes in the trouvère Chrétien de Troyes' *Le Conte du Graal Perceval* (c. 1182). One of Chrétien's patrons was Philip of Flanders who, between 1177 and 1178 had travelled to the Holy Land to help his ailing cousin Baldwin IV of Jerusalem (known as Baldwin the Leper), who offered him the regency of Palestine, on condition that he launch an attack on Egypt. Philip refused, and made his way home after a devastating defeat at Antioch. In his take on the Arthurian legend, Chrétien created a similarly close family relationship between Percival and the wounded Fisher King. His work, unlike the slightly later version of the tale told by the German poet Wolfram von Eschenbach (*Parzival*, first decade of the thirteenth century), shows the influence of Celtic traditions, specifically that of the cauldron of plenty – a symbol of fertility – echoed in Chrétien's description of the Grail as a shallow serving dish (rather than a cup).

Wolfram, by contrast, saw the Grail as a precious stone, rather than any kind of vessel, and talked of it as having fallen from the crown of Lucifer on his expulsion from Heaven. This may reflect the wideheld belief in the powers, healing and otherwise, of gemstones, as expressed in the writings of the mystic Hildegard of Bingen, among others. Wolfram, who must have known Chrétien's (unfinished) *Perceval*, created a new vision of the Grail in his *Parzival*. He tells us therein that a certain (probably fictional) Provençal poet named Kyot discovered in Toledo an Arabic manuscript, signed by an astrologer called Flegatanis. Wolfram was fascinated by the Orient, and incorporated various "eastern" details into his narrative: the hero's half-brother (not mentioned in Chrétien's version), for example, is the son of a Moorish queen.

He names the Grail castle as Monsalvaesche (which might mean "wild mountain" or "mountain of salvation"…) – some have taken this to be a reference to the Monastery of San Juan de la Peña in Huesca, in north-eastern Spain, which for many years was home to the Valencia chalice (originally supposed to have been sent to Huesca from Rome by St Laurence). It is certainly true that the monastery's proximity to the Camino de Santiago pilgrim route helped the legend of the Grail spread throughout Europe. Similarly, just as knightly orders guarded the Camino, so Wolfram has a knightly brotherhood protect the Grail.

Lamento de Perceval arose from our interest in music dating from the same period as the medieval Grail literature and in finding the common threads between them. These fascinating works are rarely performed or recorded, so the aim of this album is to bring the works of Chrétien, Wolfram and others to a wider audience.

There are instrumental links to our theme too – one of the wind instruments we play is based on a pipe to be found in a stone carving discovered at Glastonbury Abbey (said to be the site of both a Christian community founded by Joseph of Arimathea and the tomb of King Arthur). Our *tambourin à cordes*, or "string drum", meanwhile, is a replica of a thirteenth-century instrument at Jaca Cathedral (not far from the San Juan de la Peña monastery), and brings rhythm and precision to the music we perform, especially the dances.

The song *Was sol ein keyser* (What good is an emperor without legitimacy?) 5 is based on a melody by Wolfram that was very well known in medieval times – *Wolframs goldener Ton* (Wolfram's golden melody) 2 –

which we also perform in an instrumental version and in which eastern influences are discernible. The Orient appears again in the text *Do man dem edelen sîn getzelt* (When the Landgrave of Thuringia's tent) 13, with reference to the wondrous merchandise that could be acquired there, including "strange beasts"…

Wolfram, Tannhäuser and Walther von der Vogelweide were all linked to the court of Thuringia, whose ruler, the Landgrave, is mentioned in *Do man dem edelen sîn getzelt*. Tannhäuser's *Staeter dienest, der ist guot* (It is good to render unfaltering service) 1 refers overtly to Percival/Parsifal and the Grail quest. We have included three songs by Walther, perhaps the best-known Minnesänger of medieval Germany. He would almost certainly have known *Parzifal*, given that he and Wolfram moved in the same courtly circles. *Under der linden* (Under the linden tree) 8, here performed as an instrumental piece, is a young woman's pastoral tale of a tryst beneath a tree with her lover. *Palästinalied* (Song of Palestine) 10 is a crusade song whose text deals with both the beauty of the Holy Land and the miracle of Christ's sacrifice, while *Ich saz ûf eime steine* (I sat on a stone) 14 is a philosophical song about the false nature of worldliness and the incompatibility of wealth and prestige with God's favour, in the absence of peace and justice.

The text of *Fowles in the frith* 6 is ambiguously metaphorical – it talks about the birds in the wood and fish in the water, but may also have an underlying religious meaning related to Christ's Passion.

No album about the Holy Grail would be complete without something by Chrétien de Troyes. His *D'amors, qui m'a tolu a moi* (With love, who has stolen me from myself) 3 is all about courtly love, the aesthetic that dominated the medieval love lyric. In it, the writer compares himself favourably to Tristan, saying that he loves his lady of his own free will, not because he is under the effects of a magic potion. Our title work, *Percival's Lament* 7, is an instrumental version of this same song and conjures up the hero's trudging steps as he nears the end of his lifelong pilgrimage in search of the Grail.

Rigaut de Berbezilh is one of the best-known troubadours of the medieval world. His wonderful love song *Atressi com Persavaus el temps que vivia* (Just as Percival, in his day) 4 (of which an instrumental version is given here) tells of Percival's failure to ask about the lance and the Grail when he first sees them (at the Fisher King's castle) and compares his fatal reluctance to speak with the narrator's own inability to tell his lady of his love, so stupefied is he by her beauty.

Our final composer is the above-mentioned Hildegard of Bingen: we perform two of her beautiful works with a simple instrumental accompaniment: *Laus Trinitati* 11 and *Karitas habundat* (Divine love abounds) 9.

José Ferrero

English version: Naxos

Capilla Antigua de Chinchilla

Founded in 2002 for the study and revival of early music, the Capilla Antigua de Chinchilla is directed by its founder, the tenor José Ferrero. The ensemble has participated in festivals and concerts throughout Spain, including the Hellín Early Music Festival, the 2005 Liétor Organ Festival, the 2006 and 2007 Festivals of the Early Music of Chinchilla, and the 2008 Musical October of Carthage in Tunisia in 2008. Recordings include music from the Cancionero of Alfonso X and the *Sung Passion of Chinchilla*, works by Ginés de Boluda, who served at the cathedrals of Cuenca and Toledo in the sixteenth century, with a third recording devoted to works by Rogier, Victoria, Morales and Guerrero, among others, performed with the historic organ of Liétor. In 2007 another recording was devoted to the medieval music of pilgrims and sephardim. Their most recent recording of sephardic music, *Endechar: Lament for Spain*, was released on Naxos 8.572443 in 2010: the music has been performed at major festivals throughout the world.

Luisa Maesso

The mezzo-soprano Luisa Maesso Martínez was born in Úbeda (Jaén) and studied at the Conservatorio de Madrid. She made her début at the Teatro de la Zarzuela in Madrid in 1994. She appears regularly with the Capilla Antigua de Chinchilla and in 2006 collaborated with the Capilla and the Banchetto Musicale in the revival of Johann Sebastiani's *St Matthew Passion* under Pere Ros. She participated in the Naxos recording of Cavalli's *Gli amori di Apollo e Daphne* under Alberto Zedda (8.660187-88).

Juan Francisco Sanz

The countertenor Juan Francisco Sanz was born in Albacete, where he began his musical studies, and from childhood he participated in choral singing. His technical training was with the tenor José Ferrero and he received help from the countertenor José Hernández Pastor. He had further vocal training with Robert Expert, Ana Luisa Chova, Lola Bosson and Carmen Subrido, among others. He directs the Concentus Torrejón y Velasco de Albacete choir and the choir of the Escuela Universitaria de Magisterio of Albacete.

Ana María López-Pintor

Born in Campo de Criptana (Ciudad Real), where she started her musical training, the violinist Ana María López-Pintor continued her studies in Ciudad Real and Alicante, where she obtained her Título Superior de Violín. She has a degree in music education from the University of Castilla-La Mancha. Since 2007 she has collaborated with the Capilla Antigua de Chinchilla, with which she recorded *Io son un pellegrin*. She is a member of the Albacete Orquesta Sinfónica, and professor of violin and chamber music at the Albacete Conservatorio Profesional de Música Tomás de Torrejón y Velasco.

Sergio Alonso

A native of Sigüenza (Guadalajara), Sergio Alonso studied at the conservatories of Guadalajara and Madrid, qualifying in harmony and violin. He also graduated in mathematics at the Madrid Universidad Complutense and in musicology at the Universidad de la Rioja. He is professor of harmony at the Albacete Conservatorio Tomás de Torrejón y Velasco and has been associate professor at the Albacete Faculty of Education. As a violinist he appears with the Orquesta de Albacete and also with the Capilla Antigua de Chinchilla, with which he plays various instruments.

Alfonso Sáez Docón

Born in Liétor (Albacete), Alfonso Sáez Docón began his musical studies at the Albacete Conservatorio, with courses in piano and saxophone. He went on to study the organ at the Valencia Conservatorio Superior de Música under Vicente Ros, continuing at the Salamanca Conservatorio with Luis Dalda and finally with Javier Artigas in Murcia. He serves as organist at the Church of St James the Apostle and is a member of the Capilla Antigua de Chinchilla, with which he has made various recordings. He is professor of organ at the Murcia Conservatorio Profesional de Música.

José Ferrero

Born in Albacete, the tenor José Ferrero studied singing in Valencia with Ana Luisa Chova and has appeared as a soloist with distinguished conductors and colleagues, performing in Europe's principal theatres and festivals. His interest in early music led to the foundation in 2002 of the ensemble Capilla Antigua de Chinchilla, recorded on *Endechar* (Naxos 8.572443). He participated in the Naxos recording of Cavalli's opera *Gli amori d'Apollo e di Dafne* under the direction of Alberto Zedda (8.660187-88).

Photographs by Juan Rodríguez

Lamento de Perceval

Música medieval en torno al Grial

"Monsalvat ... frente a la iglesia hay una gran montaña."
Wolfram von Eschenbach

El Grial y su búsqueda han supuesto una motivación dentro de la historia occidental y no podía quedar al margen la cultura y por supuesto la música de esta influencia. La copa en la que, según cuenta la leyenda, José de Arimatea recogió la sangre de Cristo, fue llevada a través de un peregrinar por tierras europeas, si esa es la que hoy está expuesta en la Catedral de Valencia, que parece ser la que más cerca está de la posible creencia de los estudiosos en cuanto a la posible verosimilitud con ser la autentica copa de la Última cena. Esa motivación que unos ven como la búsqueda del "yo interior" y otros la búsqueda de la "sabiduría que se ha perdido" es lo que simboliza el grial.

Es en la corte de Felipe de Flandes donde encontramos un significativo paralelismo entre la historia que le contó al poeta y trovero Chrétien de Troyes, sobre su primo Balduino IV de Jerusalén, conocido como el leproso, y la historia de Perceval. Curiosamente, Felipe de Flandes acudió a Tierra Santa en peregrinación entre 1177 y 1178 en ayuda de su primo enfermo y este le ofreció la regencia del reino de Palestina con la condición de atacar Egipto. Felipe de Flandes abandonó la Tierra Santa después de la devastadora derrota de Antioquía. Chrétien de Troyes hace que en la obra literaria sean primos igualmente Perceval y el Rey Pescador, que al igual que Balduino IV está enfermo y vive en un castillo. Pero no debemos obviar todas las influencias que de la cultura celta tiene el *Perceval* de Chrétien a diferencia del *Parzival* de Wolfram. Entre los que pueden destacar el caldero de la abundancia que para los celtas suponía la fertilidad y la abundancia para el futuro y que tiene una continuidad y un paralelismo con el grial de Chrétien que más que una copa era una piedra con forma de cuenco.

Esta piedra Wolfram von Eschenbach y también Hildegard von Bingen creían que había caído de la corona de Lucifer. Wolfram, que parece que sí pudo conocer el inacabado *Perceval* de Chrétien, crea en su *Parzival* una nueva visión de la idea griálica. Para él, el origen de la historia está en la Iglesia de San Miguel el Alto de Toledo donde "Kyot o Kuot el provenzal" encontró un manuscrito en una lengua de origen arábigo firmado por un tal Flegetanis. La influencia oriental en el *Parzival* de Wolfram es patente en varios detalles de la narración. Empezando por el hermanastro de Parzival que es negro y que en el *Perceval* de Chrétien no existía, o como Parzival va terminar sus días en oriente.

"...frente a la iglesia hay una gran montaña..." es una frase que aparece en *Parzival* que se podría referir al Monasterio de San Juan de la Peña (Huesca) donde el cáliz valenciano estuvo siglos después de llegar a España en la Edad Media proveniente de Roma. ¿Es San Juan de la Peña el Monsalvat del que habla Wolfram? El cáliz también pasó por Barcelona, Huesca y Zaragoza antes de recalar en la Catedral de Valencia, pero lo que sí que es cierto es que la cercanía al Camino de Santiago de San Juan de la Peña hizo que la leyenda del Grial creciera por toda Europa, siendo los templarios los guardianes del Camino y también los elegidos por Wolfram para custodiar el Grial.

Lamento de Perceval nace de la necesidad de encontrar en la música contemporánea a los escritos griálicos el camino que siguieron mediante el arte los mismos escritores y músicos relacionados con el Grial.

En este programa aparecen instrumentos relacionados con la historia misma del Grial: es el caso de la Cornamusa de Glastonbury, instrumento medieval de viento aparecido en la abadía de Glastonbury que es donde se dice que estaba la tumba del Rey Arturo y que José de Arimatea erigió la primera iglesia dedicada a la Virgen. Hay otro instrumento con el que contamos y que aparece en las cercanías del lugar más importante de este programa, San Juan de la Peña. Nosotros utilizamos un tambor de cuerdas, replica del de la Catedral de Jaca del S. XIII y que dada su cercanía está muy ligado a San Juan de la Peña. Es un instrumento que aporta ritmo y

precisión a la música que interpretamos, sobre todo a las danzas. Es el antecesor del chicotén.

Hay canciones de compositores realmente interesantes y que anteriormente rara vez se han podido escuchar tanto en un concierto como en grabación. No es fácil escuchar música de Tannhäuser, o de Wolfram von Eschenbach o del mismo Chrétien de Troyes, pero por ello hemos creado *Lamento de Perceval.*

Nos encontramos con canciones como *Was sol ein keyser* 5 basada en una melodía de Wolfram muy conocida en la Edad Media, el *Wolframs goldener Ton* 2, que también podremos escuchar de forma instrumental en este disco y que muestra su inspiración oriental. Y la que quizá pueda sorprender más de Wolfram sea *Do man dem edelen sîn gezelt* 13, que habla de las mercancías traídas de oriente a su protector el Landgrave de Turingia, entre ellas incluso monstruos.

Otra canción relacionada con Wolfram von Eschenbach por la cercanía del tema que trata es la de Tannhäuser (que estuvo también al servicio del Landgrave de Turingia), *Staeter dienest, der ist guot* 1, que habla del Grial y de su búsqueda.

Caso parecido es el de Walther von der Vogelweide, quizá el más conocido Minnesänger de la Edad Media alemana. Walther estuvo también en la corte del Landgrave de Turingia y seguramente conoció de primera mano la escritura del *Parzival* de Wolfram. Hemos incluido tres canciones de Walther. La primera, *Under der linden* 8, narra una escena de amor en el campo de una joven y un noble caballero, rompiendo así la reglas del Amor Cortés. Es probable que la música sea anterior al texto de Walther, como sucede en casi todas las canciones de origen medieval alemán. La música antecede casi siempre a los textos, que pertenecen a cancioneros posteriores y que muchas veces se adaptan a las melodías ya existentes. *Palästinalied* 10 de Walther von der Vogelweide es una canción de cruzada donde el texto habla del sacrificio de Cristo y de la belleza del oriente. *Ich saz ûf eime steine* 14 es un canto filosófico contra la falsedad de la vida mundana y contra el ser humano en general, pero visto positivamente y a favor del camino correcto que es la Gracia de Dios. Según Walther en esta canción piensa como se debe vivir en el mundo y cree que sólo le hacen falta tres cosas: el honor y la propiedad las dos primeras, pero se hacen daño el uno al otro, y la tercera y la más necesaria la "Gracia de Dios".

Fowles in the frith 6 es una canción metafórica que parece hablar de los pájaros y los peces en primavera, pero que según otros puede tener un trasfondo religioso cristiano relacionado con la Última cena, ya que habla también de la sangre.

Chrétien de Troyes no podía faltar en un disco dedicado al tema griálico. Su canción *D'amors, qui m'a tolu a moi* 3 es un canto al "Amor Cortés" donde aparece el nombre de Tristán sirviendo de comparación a su sufrimiento por amor.

Esta misma canción de Chrétien de Troyes en forma instrumental es para nosotros el *Lamento de Perceval* 7, pieza que da título al disco, que nos recuerda el lento caminar en sus últimos momentos antes de culminar su peregrinar por la vida buscando el Grial.

Rigaut de Berbezilh es uno de los trovadores más conocidos del mundo medieval. En su canción *Atressi com Persavaus el temps que vivia* 4, que aquí será instrumental, Perceval está de nuevo presente en una maravillosa canción de amor, donde compara las dudas de Perceval para preguntar por la lanza y el Grial a las suyas con el amor.

A Hildegard von Bingen ya le hemos nombrado y unido en pensamiento con Wolfram von Eschenbach por la creencia de que el Grial venía de la corona de Lucifer. De esta magistral compositora del medievo escucharemos dos canciones, *Laus Trinitati* 11 y *Karitas habundat* 9, con un ligero diálogo y acompañamiento instrumental.

José Ferrero

The Holy Grail has occupied a central place in Western life. It was believed by many to have been used by Christ at the Last Supper, and in the Middle Ages writers saw the Grail as a dish, or a chalice, or a precious stone. Songs and instrumental music celebrated its mystical power and were composed by some of the greatest troubadours, mystics and singer-poets of the age: Chrétien de Troyes, Walther von der Vogelweide, Wolfram von Eschenbach, and Hildegard of Bingen. This disc uniquely focuses on the common threads between Grail literature and music.

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A detailed list of tracks and artists can be found on page 2 of the booklet

The sung texts and English translations can be accessed at www.naxos.com/libretti/572800.htm

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Editors: Pascual Lorenzo González and José Ferrero • Booklet notes: José Ferrero

Cover: Illuminations from *Percival, Titurel and Tagelieder* by Wolfram von Eschenbach (c.1170-1220)
(Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich / akg-images)