

WIGMORE HALL

Wednesday 8 June 2022 7.30pm Monteverdi Madrigals

La Nuova Musica

Julia Doyle soprano

Eleanor Minney mezzo-soprano

Joseph Wicks high tenor

Guy Cutting tenor

Benjamin Durrant tenor

William Gaunt bass

Thomas Gould violin I

Andrej Kapor violin II

Jane Rogers viola

Jim O'Toole viola

Joanna Patrick viola

Jonathan Rees cello

Judith Evans double bass

Sergio Bucheli theorbo

Toby Carr theorbo

Joy Smith harp

David Bates harpsichord, director

Luke Green organ, harpsichord

CLASSIC *f*M

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Claudio Monteverdi (1567-1643)

Hor che'l ciel e la terra e'l vento tace (1638)

Con che soavità, labbra odorate (1619)

Zefiro torna e'l bel tempo rimena (1614)

Cruda Amarilli (1605)

Sfoga con le stelle (1603)

'Rimanti in pace' a la dolente e bella (1592)

Dolcissimi legami (1590)

Filli cara et amata (1587)

Interval

Poi che del mio dolore (1587)

Crudel, perché mi fuggi (1590)

Perfidissimo volto (1592)

Quell'augellin che canta (1603)

E cosí a poco a poco (1605)

Sestina: Lagrime d'amante al sepolcro dell'amata (1614)

*Incenerite spoglie, avara tomba • Ditelo, o fiumi, e voi ch'udiste Glauco •
Darà la notte il sol lume alla terra • Ma te raccoglie, o ninfa, in grembo 'l
cielo • O chiome d'or, neve gentil del seno • Dunque, amate reliquie, un
mar di pianto*

Tempro la cetra, e per cantar gli onori (1619)

Altri canti d'Amor, tenero arciero (1638)

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Claudio Monteverdi (1567–1643) was the most significant composer working in late Renaissance and early Baroque Italy. Born in Cremona, he studied with Marc'Antonio Ingegneri, director of music at the cathedral there. In 1590 or 1591, he gained a position as a player of string instruments at the court of Duke Vincenzo Gonzaga of Mantua, where he moved up the ranks to be placed in charge of the duke's household musicians (*maestro della musica*), writing music for the chamber, the theatre (including his first two operas, *Orfeo* of 1607 and *Arianna* of 1608), and the church (with his 1610 'Vespers'). He was released from Mantuan service in 1612, and in 1613 he gained the highly prestigious position of director of music at St Mark's Basilica in Venice, where he stayed for the rest of his very long life.

The repertory of music for the chamber largely concerned the madrigal, a genre with a long history in Italian secular music. Poetic madrigals consisted of relatively short lyric texts in a free combination of eleven- and seven-syllable lines, although the musical genre could also include settings of poetry more formal in structure, such as sonnets or the eight-line *ottava rima* stanzas typical of Renaissance epic. The poets could range from Italian classics such as Petrarch, through the more modern Torquato Tasso, Battista Guarini, and Giambattista Marino, to a host of 'lesser' figures writing verses specifically intended for musical setting.

Monteverdi published eight books of madrigals (a ninth appeared posthumously). The first two (1587, 1590) reflect the fruits of his studies with Ingegneri. The Third (1592), Fourth (1603), and Fifth (1605) contain works he wrote for Mantua, as largely does his Sixth (1614) even though he had left by then. The Seventh (1619) and Eighth (1638) books come from Monteverdi's time in Venice, although the former was written for Mantua (it was dedicated to the new duchess there, Caterina de' Medici), and the latter contains a great deal of music that Monteverdi had sent to the Habsburg court in Vienna earlier in the 1630s. The madrigals in tonight's programme span his entire output, meaning that they provide a unique opportunity to see him first coming to grips with the genre, then taking it in new directions to match the drastic changes taking place in music in general around 1600, and then, toward the end of his life, looking back on a long and distinguished musical career.

Traditionally, madrigals were set for five unaccompanied voices in the soprano, alto, tenor, and bass ranges (Monteverdi tended to prefer SSATB) in the typical style of Renaissance polyphony. The upper parts could be taken by male voices (castrati and falsettists), although in Mantua, the duke also had a group of female singers that he reserved for private performances: we can detect their presence in some of Monteverdi's settings. In the last six madrigals of the Fifth Book, however, he incorporated a relatively recent musical development, the use of an independent instrumental

accompaniment provided by a keyboard instrument (harpsichord) or a plucked string one (theorbo or chitarrone), with the player(s) providing harmonic support above a notated bass line (a so-called *basso continuo*). In his Seventh and Eighth books, Monteverdi also brought in upper instruments as well (often, two violins). This changed the genre significantly in favor of ensembles mixing voices and instruments in various ways, and with fewer or more singers. Thus, the Seventh Book had a new kind of title - 'Concerto' - and it contains not just 'madrigals' but also 'other types of songs'. The Eighth Book, on the hand, presents 'madrigals of war and love' (*Madrigali guerrieri, et amorosi*), a clear reference to the Habsburg involvement in the Thirty Years' War (1618-48).

In terms of amorous entanglements, 'love' and 'war' were always two sides of the same coin. One problem of the traditional polyphonic madrigal was that its poetry generally 'spoke' in a single voice usually gendered male. The poetic 'I' was an unrequited lover suffering from, or complaining about, the beloved's refusal to respond to his affections. Having five voices deliver such verse was hardly lifelike. However, we find Monteverdi taking, or creating, gender-neutral texts, allowing him to turn a poetic monologue in effect into a dialogue between different elements of the ensemble so that the singers 'speak' to each other, and hence to us. Then the introduction of the continuo freed things up considerably. Given that the accompanying instrument(s) supported the musical structure - and maintained its harmonic momentum - Monteverdi could allow individual singers to stand out, often using the virtuosic vocal ornamentation that now was all the rage. Each voice now speaks for itself in a dynamic interaction that makes sense only in performance.

Monteverdi rarely succumbed to mere fashion: everything he does was carefully calculated, and often very witty. Nor was he afraid to court controversy. In 1600, the Bolognese music theorist Giovanni Maria Artusi launched an attack on him for breaking all the rules of good contrapuntal writing. Monteverdi's 'Cruda Amarilli', later published in the Fifth Book, was a particular target because of its outrageous dissonances (and they are). He came up with a neat response: Artusi was judging this music according to a 'first practice' in the old style, but Monteverdi was adopting, instead, a 'second' one (*seconda pratica*), where music was wholly subservient to any text and therefore could break any rule in order to express it. That argument served a purpose, but we might want to be careful about believing it. Monteverdi was always a musician at heart, and whatever poetry he set, it is what he managed to do with it that mattered.

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Claudio Monteverdi (1567-1643)

Hor che'l ciel e la terra e'l vento tace (1638)

Petrarch

Hor che 'l ciel e la terra e 'l vento tace, E le fere e gli augelli il sonno affrena, Notte il carro stellato in giro mena, E nel suo letto il mar senz'onda giace; Veglio, penso, ardo, piango; e chi mi sface, Sempre m'è innanzi per mia dolce pena: Guerra è il mio stato, d'ira e di duol piena, E sol di lei pensando ho qualche pace. Così sol d'una chiara fonte viva Move il dolce e l'amaro ond'io mi pasco: Una man sola mi risana, e punge. E perché il mio martir non giunga a riva, Mille volte il dì moro e mille nasco; Tanto dalla salute mia son lunge.	Now that sky and earth and wind are stilled, and animals and birds are lulled in sleep, while night's starry chariot wheels around and in its bed the ocean waveless lies; wakeful, I think, burn, weep, and my tormentor see ever before me, source of such sweet pain: my soul is embattled, filled with grief and anger, and only thoughts of her bring some relief. Thus from a single clear and vital source flow both the honey and the gall that feed me; a single hand both binds my wounds and stabs me. And because my anguish has no end, I die and am born a thousand times a day: so far from my usual well-being am I.
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Con che soavità, labbra odorate (1619)

Giovanni Battista Guarini

Con che soavità, labia odorate E vi bacio, e v'ascolto; Ma se godo un piacer, l'altro m'è tolto. Perché i vostri diletta S'ancidono tra lor, se dolcemente Vive per ambedue l'anima mia? Che soave armonia Fareste, o cari baci, o dolci detti, Se foste unitamente D'ambedue le dolcezze ambo capaci: Baciando i detti, e ragionando i baci.	With such tenderness, O fragrant lips, do I both kiss you and listen when you speak; but when I taste one pleasure, the other is denied me. Why do your delights cancel each other out, although my heart loves both so tenderly? What blissful harmony would you create, dear kisses, honeyed words, if you were capable of combining both delights: the words kissing and the kisses speaking!
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Zefiro torna e'l bel tempo rimena (1614)

Petrarch

Zefiro torna e 'l bel tempo rimena E i fiori e l'erbe, sua dolce famiglia, E garrir Progne e pianger Filomena, E primavera candida e vermiglia. Ridono i prati e 'l ciel si rasserena, Giove s'allegra di mirar sua figlia, L'aria, e l'acqua e la terra è d'amor piena, Ogni animal d'amar si racconsiglia. Ma per me, lasso, tornano i più gravi Sospiri che dal cor profondo tragge Quella ch'al Ciel se ne portò le chiavi; E cantar augelletti, e fiorir piaggie, E 'n belle donne onesti atti e soavi Sono un deserto, e fere aspre e selvagge.	Zephyr returns and brings the sun again, and flowers and grass, his sweet companions, and warbling swallows, mourning nightingales, and spring in white and scarlet livery. The meadows smile, the sky is blue again, Jove regards his daughter with delight, earth, air and water are imbued with love, and every beast concedes to love's demands. But for me, alas, the heaviest sighs return, drawn from the bottom of my heart by one who took its keys with her to heaven; and birdsong, and the flowers of the field, and kindly deeds of virtuous, lovely women are as a desert and cruel, savage beasts.
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Cruda Amarilli (1605)

Giovanni Battista Guarini

Cruda Amarilli che col nome ancora D'amar, ahì lasso, amaramente insegni; Amarilli, del candido ligustro Più candida e più bella, Ma de l'aspido sordo E più sorda e più fera e più fugace, Poi che col dir t'offendo l' mi morrò tacendo.	Cruel Amaryllis, your very name, alas, betokens the bitterness of love; Amaryllis, paler and more beautiful than the pale privet flower, yet wilder, more elusive and unhearing than the deaf serpent, since by speaking I offend you, in silence shall I die.
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Sfoga con le stelle (1603)

Anonymous

Sfoga con le stelle Un infermo d'amore Sotto notturno cielo il suo dolore. E dicea fisso in loro: 'O imagini belle de l'idol mio ch'adoro,	A lovesick man was venting to the stars his grief, under the night sky. And staring at them he said: 'O beautiful images of my idol whom I adore,
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Sì com'a me mostrate
Mentre così splendete
La sua rara beltate,
Così mostraste a lei
I vivi ardori miei:
La fareste col vostr'aureo
sembiante
Pietosa sì come me fate
amante'.

just as you are showing me
her rare beauty
while you sparkle so well,
so also demonstrate to her
my living ardour:
by your golden appearance
you'd make her
compassionate, just as you
make me loving'.

'Rimanti in pace' a la dolente e bella (1592)

Livio Celiano

'Rimanti in pace' a la dolente e
bella
Fillida Tirsi sospirando disse.
'Rimanti, io me ne vo'tal mi
prescrisse
Legge empio fato aspra sort'e
rubella.'

'Remain in peace,' said Thyrsis,
sighing,
to the sorrowing and fair Phyllis;
'remain - I shall go: that was
prescribed to me
by law, cruel fate and bitter,
perverse destiny!'

Ed ella, hora da l'una e l'altra
stella
Stillando amaro humore, i lumi
affisse
Nei lumi del suo Tirsi e gli
trafisse
Il cor di pietosissime
quadrella.

And she, now from one and the
other eye
dripping bitter tears, fixed her
eyes
on the eyes of her Thyrsis, and
pierced
his heart with the most pitying
arrows.

Ond'ei di morte la sua faccia
impressa
Disse: 'Ahi come n'andrò senz'il
mio sole,
Di martir in martir, di doglie in
doglie?'

Whence he, with death
imprinted on his face,
said: 'Alas, how can I go without
my sun,
from torment to torment, from
pain to pain?'

Ed ella, da singhiozzi e
pian't'oppressa
Fievolmente formò queste parole:
'Deh, cara anima mia, chi mi ti
toglie?'

And she, oppressed with sighs
and tears,
faintly uttered these words:
'Ah, my dear soul, who takes
you from me?'

Dolcissimi legami (1590)

Torquato Tasso

Dolcissimi legami
Di parole amorose,
Che mi legò da scherz'e non mi
scioglie.
Così egli dunque scherz'e così
coglie?
Così l'alme legate
Sono ne le catene insidiose?

Gentlest bonds
of loving words
that bound me in play, yet
release me not,
is this how he plays, and how he
captures?
Is this how souls are bound,
by deceitful chains?

Almen chi sì m'allaccia
Mi leg'ancor fra quelle dolci
braccia.

If only he who binds me so
would bind me again by those
sweet arms.

Filli cara et amata (1587)

Alberto Parma

Filli cara e amata
Dimmi per cortesia
Questa tua bella bocca non è
mia?
Ahi, non rispondi ingrata,
E col silenzio nieghi
D'ascoltar i miei prieghi.
Piacciati almen, se
taci
D'usar invece di risposta i baci.

Phyllis, my dear beloved,
tell me out of courtesy,
is your beautiful mouth not
mine?
Ah, cruel one, you do not reply,
and by your silence you deny
to hear my prayers.
May it please you, if you will
keep silent,
to use your kisses as your answer.

Interval

Poi che del mio dolore (1587)

Anonymous

Poi che del mio
dolore
Tanto ti nutri Amore
Libera mai quest'alma non vedrai
Fin che per gl'occhi fore
Lasso non venga il core.

Since you enjoy feeding on my
sufferings,
o love, you will never see
this soul of mine free of its pain
until, alas, my heart finally
issues through my eyes in weeping.

Crudel, perché mi fuggi (1590)

Giovanni Battista Guarini

Crudel, perché mi
fuggi
S'hai della morte mia tanto
desio?
Tu sei pur il cor mio.
Credi tu per fuggire,
Crudel, farmi
morire?
Ah! non si può morir senza
dolore
E doler non si può chi non ha
core.

Heartless woman, why do you
avoid me
if so strongly you desire my
death?
Aren't you, after all, my heart?
Do you think, cruel one,
that by avoiding me you'll make
me die?
Ha! One cannot die without
pain,
and he who has no heart, can
feel no pain.

Perfidissimo volto (1592)

Giovanni Battista Guarini

Perfidissimo volto,
Ben l'usata bellezza in te si
vede
Ma non l'usata fede.

Most faithless of faces,
as clearly as ever do I see the
beauty in you,
but no longer the fidelity.

Già mi parevi dir:
«Quest'amorose
Luci che dolcemente
Rivolgo à te, sì bell'e sì pietose
Prima vedrai tu spente,
Che sia spento il desio ch'à te le
gira.»
Ahì, che spento è'l desio,
Ma non è spento quel per cui
sospira
L'abbandonato core!
O volto troppo vago e troppo
rio,
Perchè se perdi amore
Non perdi ancor' vaghezza
O non hai pari alla beltà
fermezza?

Once you seemed to say, 'The
light
in these loving eyes which I sweetly
turn to you, so beautiful and caring,
will you see grow dark
before my desire for you
expires.'
Alas, that desire has died,
but not that for
which
the abandoned heart sighs.
O face, you are too lovely and
too cruel,
why if you no longer love
are you still so fair,
why is your beauty not matched
by constancy?

Quell'augellin che canta (1603)

Giovanni Battista Guarini

Quell'augellin che canta
Sì dolcemente e lascivetto vola
Ora dall'abete al faggio,
Ed or dal faggio al
mirto,
S'avesse umano spirto,
Direbbe: 'Ardo d'amore, ardo
d'amore.'
Ma ben arde nel core
E parla in sua favella,
Sì che l'intende il suo dolce desio.
Ed odi a punto, Silvio,
Il suo dolce desio
Che gli risponde: 'Ardo d'amore
anch'io.'

That little bird which sings
so sweetly and gaily flies
now from the fir to the beech tree
and now from the beech to the
myrtle,
if he had a human mind,
would say: I burn with love, I
burn with love!
But in his heart he burns indeed
and calls to his beloved
who replies to him:
I too am burning with love!
How fortunate you are,
sweet little loving
bird!

E cosí a poco a poco (1605)

Giovanni Battista Guarini

E cosí a poco a poco
Torno farfalla semplicetta al
foco,
E nel fallace sguardo
Un'altra volta mi consum'e
ardo:
Ah, che piaga d'amore
Quanto si cura piú tanto men sana.
Ch'ogni fatica è vana,
Quando fu punto un giovinetto core
Dal primo, e dolce strale;
Chi spegne antico incendio il fa
immortale.

And thus, little by little
like a foolish moth to the flame I
flutter,
and in her traitorous gaze
am burned and consumed once
again.
Ah, the more Love's wounds heal,
the more painful they become;
all efforts are vain
when a young man's heart
has been struck by love's first dart.
He who quenches an old flame
makes it immortal.

Sestina: Lagrime d'amante al sepolcro dell'amata

(1614)

Scipione Agnelli

Incenerite spoglie, avara
tomba
Fatta del mio bel sol terreno
Cielo.
Ahì, lasso, i' vegno ad inchinarvi
in terra,
Con voi chius' è il mio cor'
amarmi in seno,
E notte e giorno vive in foco, in
pianto,
In duol', in ira il tormentato
Glauco.

Remains turned to ashes, mean
tomb,
for my beautiful sun you have
become the earthly Heaven.
Alas! I come to lower you in the
earth,
my heart is sealed with you in
this marble bosom;
and night and day I live in fire,
in tears,
in sorrow, in anger, wretched
Glauco.

Ditelo, o fiumi, e voi ch'udiste
Glauco
L'aria ferir di grida in su la
tomba,
Erme campagne, e'l san le Ninfe
e'l Cielo;
A me fu cibo il duol, bevanda il
pianto,
Poi ch'il mio ben copri gelida
terra,
Letto, o sasso felice, il tuo bel
seno.

O say it, you rivers, and you
who heard Glauco
tear the air with his cries upon
this tomb,
you lonely fields, and you know
it Nymphs and Heaven:
my food is sorrow, my drink is
tears,
since my beloved is covered by
cold earth,
my bed, blessed stone, your
beautiful bosom.

Darà la notte il sol lume alla
terra,
Splenderà Cintia il dì prima che
Glauco
Di baciàr, d'onorar lasci quel
seno
Che nido fu d'amor, che dura
tomba
Preme; nè sol d'alti sospir, di
pianto
Prodighe a lui saran le fere e'l
Cielo.

By night the sun will give light
to the earth,
by day the moon will shine,
before Glauco
ceases to kiss and honour that
bosom,
once love's nest, now by a
harsh tomb
weighted down; and deep sighs
and tears
will prodigiously be made for him
not only by beasts and Heaven.

Ma te raccoglie, o Ninfa, in
grembo il Cielo.
Io per te miro vedova la terra,
Deserti i boschi, e correr fiumi il
pianto.
E Driade e Napee del mesto
Glauco
Ridicono i lamenti, e su la tomba
Cantano i pregi de l'amato
seno.

But you, o Nymph, are received
in Heaven.
For you I see now a widowed earth,
deserted woods, and rivers of
running tears.
The Dryads and Napaeae
nymphs, of sorrowful Glauco
repeating the laments, on this tomb
sing the praises of his beloved's
bosom.

O chiome d'or, neve gentil del
seno,
O gigli de la man, ch'invido il
Cielo

O golden hair, delicate snowy
bosom,
O hand white as lilies, that
envious Heaven

Ne rapì, quando chiuse in cieca
tomba,
Chi vi nasconde? Ohimè, povera
terra
Il fior d'ogni bellezza, il sol di
Glauco
Nasconde? Ah, Muse, qui
sgorgate il pianto.

has stolen from me and sealed
in a blind tomb,
who can hide you? Alas, can
wretched earth
hide the flower of all beauty, the
sun of Glauco?
Ye Muses, shed here your
tears.

Dunque, amate reliquie, un mar
di pianto
Non daran questi lumi al nobil
seno
D'un freddo sasso? Ecco,
l'afflito Glauco
Fa risonar Corinna il mar e'l
Cielo;
Dicano i venti ogn'hor, dica la
terra:
'Ahi Corinna! Ahi morte! Ahi
tomba!'

Therefore, beloved relics,
should not a sea of tears
from these eyes flow to the
noble bosom
of this cold stone? Here the
distraught Glauco
makes Corinna's name resound
in sea and Heaven;
and let such sounds be always
repeated by winds and earth:
'O Corinna! O death! O
tomb!'

Cedano al pianto i detti: amato
seno,
A te dia pace il Ciel, pace a te
Glauco
Prega honorata tomba e sacra
terra.

Let words yield to tears: beloved
bosom, may Heaven give
you peace, peace for you
Glauco
prays an honoured tomb and
sacred earth.

Tempro la cetra, e per cantar gli onori (1619)

Giambattista Marino

Tempro la cetra, e per cantar gli
onori
Di Marte alzo talor lo stil e i
carmi.
Ma invan la tento e impossibil
parmi
Ch'ella già mai risoni altro
ch'amore.

I temper my lyre and to pay
tribute to Mars would I
raise my voice in fine, well-
crafted rhymes.
Yet in vain I try, and it seems to
me the lyre can play
naught but songs of
love.

Così pur tra l'arene e pur tra'
fiori
Note amorose Amor torna a
dettarmi,
Né vuol ch'io prend' ancora a
cantar d'armi,
Se non di quelle, ond'egli
impiaga i cori.

Thus, whether on the strand or
in flowery meadow,
Cupid ever dictates to me notes
of love,
nor will he consent that I sing
again of weapons,
save those with which he
wounds men's hearts.

Or umil plettro a i rozzi accenti
indegni,
Musa, qual dianzi, accorda, in
fin ch'al canto
De la tromba sublime il Ciel ti
degni.

Now, Muse, tune as you have
before, my humble
plectrum, my rough and
wretched voice, that Heaven
may deem you worthy of the
song of the sublime trumpet.

Riedi a i teneri scherzi, e dolce
intanto
Lo Dio guerrier, temprando i feri
sdegni,
In grembo a Citerea dorma al
tuo canto.

Return to gentle playing, and
meanwhile may the
warrior god, tempering his
fierce anger, sleep sweetly
to your song in Venus'
lap.

Altri canti d'Amor, tenero arciero (1638)

Anonymous

Altri canti d'Amor, tenero
arciero,
I dolci vezzi, e i sospirati
baci;
Narri gli sdegni e le bramate
paci
Quand'unisce due alme un sol
pensiero.

May others sing of Love, tender
archer,
of sweet caresses and yearned
kisses,
and let them narrate disputes
and desired
reconciliations, when two souls
unite in one mind.

Di Marte io canto, furibondo e
fiero,
I duri incontri, e le battaglie
audaci;
Strider le spade, e bombeggiar
le faci,
Fo nel mio canto bellicoso e fiero.

I sing of Mars, enraged and
furious
the hard confrontations and
audacious battles.
I make swords clash and fires
crackle,
in my fierce and proud chant.

Tu cui tessuta han di cesareo
alloro
La corona immortal Marte e
Bellona,
Gradisci il verde ancor novo
lavoro,

You, for whom [Mars and]
Bellona
weaved with Caesarean laurels
the immortal
crown you delight in the task,
still new,

Che mentre guerre canta e
guerre sona,
Oh gran Fernando, l'orgoglioso
choro,
Del tuo sommo valor canta e
ragiona.

For whilst wars are sung and
wars are played
oh Great Ferdinand, the proud
choir
sings the praises of your great
bravery.

All texts and translations kindly provided by the ensemble. 'Hor che'l ciel e la terra e'l vento tace', 'Con che soavità, labbra odorate' and 'Zefiro torna e'l bel tempo rimena' by Avril Bardoni © 2014. 'Rimanti in pace' a la dolente e bella' and 'Incenerite spoglie, avara tomba' by Silvia Reseghetti and Robert Hollingworth.