To remember with this concert the distinguished historians Ruth and Nicolai Rubinstein, beloved friends and colleagues of Villa I Tatti: the Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies, Florence, we searched for music which had specific connections with Florence, and especially with the Florence of Lorenzo de’ Medici (1449-1492) whose civilization they both knew and loved so well. The framework was provided by the *Missa ‘De plus en plus’* by Johannes Ockeghem (c.1410-1497), one of the most beautiful Franco-Flemish polyphonic masses of the early Renaissance, which is preserved in Ms Cappella Sistina 14. This manuscript is thought by some scholars to have been copied in Florence and to represent to some extent the Florentine sacred repertoire of the late 1480’s and early 1490’s. Within this framework we also offered ceremonial and occasional music by by the Franco-Flemish composers Heinrich Isaac (c.1450/55-1517), who according to a near-contemporary tradition had been called to Florence by Lorenzo himself, and Guillaume Du Fay (1397-1474), who although of an older generation was a composer much respected by Lorenzo and his contemporaries. Isaac was represented by his deeply moving lament composed for Lorenzo on a text by the humanist Poliziano, *Quis dabit capiti meo acquam?* If the lament, as John Sparrow has said, is “the last tribute by the greatest scholar to the greatest ruler of the day”, this evening it served to express the grief of our community for the deaths of two such dedicated scholars of the Italian Renaissance. Guillaume Du Fay was represented by his monophonic sequence *Nuper almos rose flores*, written for the dedication of the cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore in 143, and his four-part isorythmic motet *Salve flos tusce gentis*, the personal and valedictory nature of whose *triplum* text celebrates Florence and its learned citizens: “so many great in council and trust-worthiness … all that there is of liberal art, all that there is of intellect, all that there is of eloquence … extended by fame over the whole world”. Through these musical masterpieces the concert celebrated the high humanist learning and values which Ruth and Nicolai Rubinstein embodied in their scholarly works and their lives.

Bill Kent and Kathryn Bosi

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**RUTH AND NICOLAI RUBINSTEIN**  
In memoriam

**JOHANNES OCKEGHEM**

*Missa ‘De plus en plus’*

– Kyrie –

**HEINRICH ISAAC,** *Quis dabit capiti meo acquam?*

– Gloria –

**GUILLAUME DU FAY** (attrib.), *Nuper almos rose flores*

– Sanctus –

**GUILLAUME DU FAY,** *Salve flos Tusce gentis / Vos nunc Etrusce*

– Agnus Dei –

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ORLANDO CONSORT

ROBERT HARRE JONES, countertenor
ANGUS SMITH, tenor
MARK DOBELL, tenor
DONALD GRIEG, baritone