**Orlando Consort**

*La Passion de Jeanne d’Arc* (1928) – scene breakdown (English)

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| **Scene breakdown** | **Music** | **Comments** |
| Introduction. Rolling intertitles explain the context of the film while we see the original transcript of the trial on which all the dialogue is based. | *Je me complains* - Guillaume Dufay (1397-1474): contrafacta lyrics by Christine de Pizan from *La Ditié de Jeanne’d’Arc* | Christine de Pizan wrote her poem in 1429, shortly after the Dauphin had been crowned Charles VII at Reims. This particular stanza compares Joan to other heroines - Esther, Judith and Deborah. |
| The trial begins and Joan is sworn in. | *Salve Regina* - Hymbert Salinis ((b 1378–84; fl 1403–9) | In all her letters, Joan wrote the words ‘Jesus Maria’ separated by the sign of the cross to indicate the sources of her divine inspiration. The Salve Regina is one of the standard Marian texts, here set by Hymbert Salinis, a French composer who hailed from south of Besancon. |
| Pierre Cauchon, the Burgundian chief prosecutor, begins the interrogation. They ask if Joan knows her ‘Our Father’. | *Salve Sancta parens* – Gilles Binchois (b.c.1400-1460) | Gilles Binchois was one of the most famous composers of the era and was employed by Phillip the Good, Duke of Burgundy. The setting is in a style known as fauxbourdon, essentially a succession of parallel second-inversion chords, a simple design that shows its improvised origins. |
| Further questioning, led by the examining judge. When Joan insists that the English will be driven out of France, the English soldiers react with anger. | *Sanctus* - Gilles Binchois | Binchois set some 28 mass movements though no complete mass setting. Like many of his works, this uses note-against-note harmonization of an original chant part. |
| Cauchon quizzes Joan about her visions of angels. | Plainchant antiphon for the Feast of St Michael and All Angels and the Offertory, Stetit Angelus. | It’s likely that Joan would have heard this. She was travelling with Charles VII in September and the Feast day falls on 29th of that month. |
| The questioning turns to the issue of Joan’s dress. According to Deuteronomy, it is a sin for women to wear men’s clothing. | *Imera dat hodierno* - Estienne Grossin (fl. 1418–1421) | Grossin was a French composer working in Paris, which was by this time occupied by the English. *Imera dat hodierno*appears in several important sources. |
| Increasingly agitated, the Promoter, Jean d'Estivet accuses Joan of blasphemy and spits in Joan’s face. | Section from *Gloria* - Johannes Le Grant (fl c1420–40). | This excerpt from a Gloria by Johannes Le Grant expresses the self-righteousness of Joan’s accusers. Johannes Le Grant was born in what is now part of Belgium, though he was indisputably French by nationality. |
| Shocked by the violence of Joan’s interrogation, Nicolas de Houppeville, one of the judges, expresses his support for Joan, calling her a saint. Cauchon and the other priests turn on him, and he is marched away by the English soldiers. An older priest, Martin L’Advenu, challenges Cauchon, but to no avail. | *O Redemptor sume carmen* - Anonymous | This anonymous English setting of the plainchant hymn alternates polyphonic verses with a plainchant refrain. |
| The questioning begins again. | *Salve sancta parens* – Gilles Binchois | The Binchois setting of the Salve Sancta parens returns, though this time scored for lower voices. |
| Once again Cauchon is unable to faze Joan. The camera lingers long on her face, inviting the spectator to ponder her innocence. | *O Regina clementissima* – Richard Loqueville (d. 1418) | Loqueville’s setting of another Marian text is set in chanson style, with two untexted voices providing the harmonic foundations for a beautiful and simple melody. Richard Loqueville was almost certainly Dufay’s teacher. He also taught the harp to the son of the Duke of Bar, the region from which Joan hailed. |
| The interrogation scene comes to a close as Joan is led back to her cell. Cauchon and Warwick discuss the next phase of their plan, which requires Loyseleur to forge a letter in the hand of Charles VII. Joan discovers the image of the cross in the shadow of the window frame cast on the chapel floor. | *Vexilla Regis* – Guillaume Dufay | Guillaume Dufay, the leading composer of his generation, like many of his compatriots travelled from war-torn Northern France to work in Italy. This hymn is a simple alternation of plainchant and a simply decorated polyphony. |
| One of the English soldiers steals Joan’s ring, giving Loyseleur the opportunity to assure Joan of his protection. | *Te Deum* - Anonymous | This English Te Deum is a typically robust example of discant. The Te Deum, although a sacred hymn of praise, had a more secular function. It was sung, for example, by the Orleanais when the siege was lifted, and by people of Beauvais in August 1429 to celebrate Joan’s successes (apparently much to the annoyance of Cauchon who, at the time, was Bishop of Beauvais) |
| Loyseleur returns the ring to Joan, watched through a spy hole by Cauchon. Loyseleur presents Joan with the letter, ostensibly signed by the King himself, but Joan cannot read. | *Kyrie* - Estienne Grossin | Taking its place in both the mass and the requiem mass, the Kyrie eleison is part of the ordinary of the mass, set to music by composers since the medieval era. Grossin came from the diocese of Sens, some 100 miles from Orleans. |
| Loyseleur reads the letter, which assures Joan that her King is on the way to rescue her. | Reading from Epistle | Etymologically speaking, an epistle is simply a letter, and in this case we sing St Paul’s letter to the Galatians. |
| The priests gather in Joan’s cell and begin interrogating Joan again | Fauxbourdon | A setting of the text for the Feast of the Assumption: Audi filia et vide - (Listen, my daughter, and consider my words attentively; thou art to forget, henceforward, thy own nation), which is essentially the duplicitous subtext of the priests’ advice to Joan. |
| The priests invite Joan to say her ‘Our Father’ (Pater noster). | Praeceptibus salutaribus...audemus dicerePater noster...Amen | It is known that Joan knew both her ‘Ave Maria’ and her ‘Pater noster’, both fundamental texts for the dutiful Catholic. |
| The questioning continues, including the setting of a trap by the priest, Lemaître: all questions lead Joan to assert that she is in a state of grace, something that can only be granted to her by the priests themselves. Joan looks to Loyseleur for advice. | *Gloria* – Johannes Le Grant | The hymn of praise to God is a different setting of the ordinary of the mass by the same composer. |
| Massieu warns Joan of the dangerous implications of her answer. He is shouted down by Cauchon, who senses that Joan is about to damn herself. | *Gaude, tu baptista* - Benoit (fl 1436–55) | This isorhythmic motet is by Benoit, a French singer and composer originally from Sens, is typical of the urgent Italian style adopted by the composer and many others of the period. Above long, drawn-out notes in the two lower parts, the two texted upper parts duel, exchanging musical ideas and phrases. |
| Joan finally answers the question: “If I am not, may God put me there! And if I am, may God so keep me!” Like many of her documented answers, it’s a brilliant response and offers the priests no traction. Joan requests to attend mass and is initially refused. Realising that he has leverage, Cauchon says she can if she changes into women’s clothes. | *Salve Regina* – Johannes Reson (fl *c*1425–35) | Whilst the film suggests a parallel between the passion of Christ and that of Joan, the parallels between Mary and Joan are never far away... Alain Chartier, a contemporary commentator, poet and notary to Charles VII, wrote these words about Joan in 1429: ‘O singular virgin, worthy of all glory, worthy of all praise, worthy of divine honours! You are the honour of the reign, you are the light of the lily, you are the beauty the glory, not only of France, but of all Christendom’. Reson’s setting of this Marian text underlines that comparison. |
| Cauchon is angry, describing Joan’s stubbornness as a disgrace and saying that she is part of Satan’s gang. Loyseleur orders the torture room to be prepared. | ‘Qui tollis’ from *Gloria* – Johannes Le Grant | The righteous anger of the clerics is further pursued in the lively rhythms of Le Grant’s Gloria. |
| Returned to her cell, Joan is taunted by the English soldiers. They mock her, dressing her with a crown made of reeds and give her an arrow as her sceptre | *Agincourt Carol* - Anonymous | The battle of Agincourt in 1415 is probably the most famous English triumph of the Hundred Years War, celebrated in this (narrative) carol. |
| The young priest, Massieu, dismisses the soldiers and comforts Joan | *Pour la douleur* - Johannes Cesaris (fl 1406–17) | Cesaris was a clerc (singer) at Bourges and later worked for the Duke of Burgundy. This double-texted chanson speaks of pain and grief, and compares the lover’s plight to martyrdom. |
| The priests gather again, this time in the torture chamber. | Ad te levavi | The plainchant setting is of the words to Psalm 123, the tract and versus for the third week in Lent. |
| The priests suggest that Jeanne’s visions come from a devil and that she has been tricked by Satan. They try to trap her, mercilessly expressing their outrage, trying to get her to sign her abjuration (an admission of heresy) | Epistle- plainchant | The Epistle tells the story of Jesus casting out the demon from the stricken woman. |
| Joan accepts that her fate is to be alone – alone with God. The torture instruments are prepared. | *Sanctus* - Richard Loqueville (d 1418) | Harking back to the fourteenth century, this rhythmically vital song of praise is full of hocketing and virtuosic triplet runs. |
| Having fainted, Joan is led back to her cell. Cauchon and Warwick consult on how to proceed. Warwick is insistent that Joan should not die of natural causes or she will have won the battle. | *Sanctus* - Fauxbourdon | This setting of the Sanctus text accords with the principles of fauxbourdon, one of the standard improvisatory forms of the time |
| The Doctor counsels that Joan should be bled. Warwick agrees, but counsels them not to let her kill herself. While the procedure is carried out, Loyseleur and Cauchon plot. | *Ave verum* - Johannes Reson | As the French title of the film suggests, Dreyer equates Joan's suffering with the passion of Christ, and in this scene the concentration on her body and the blood that flows from it remind us of Christ's side being pierced by the soldier. The test of *Ave verum corpus* - Hail, true body - addresses the corporeal form and we coincide the reference to blood (sanguinis) with the moment when Joan's arm is lanced.Reson was primarily active in Italy, and this two-part setting of a standard text is a hymn of praise and a request for clemency, addressed to Christ, through whose blood redemption is assured. |
| Cauchon sits by Joan’s bed. Joan fears that she will die and asks to be buried on consecrated ground. Cauchon assures her that the church is merciful and tells her that he has sent for the sacrament. | *Benedicta es Virgo* - Reginaldus Libert fl c1425–35) | This is the Gradual text from Libert’s Marian mass, the *Missa de Beata Virgine*. Reginaldus Libert is a French composer, who was master of the choristers in Cambrai in 1424. |
| The priests process into Joan’s cell and set up a temporary altar where mass is celebrated. | Introit: Benedicite Dominum omnes angeli | The text is the Introit for the Feast of St Michael |
| The host is held up, but it is only a ruse to get Joan to sign. Once more she refuses. | *Agnus Dei* - Estienne Grossin | This is a 4-part setting of the Agnus Dei from Grossin’s mass, the music sung while communion is offered to the congregation. |
| Mass is abruptly terminated and the altar dismantled. | *Deo Gracias* – Gilles Binchois | The Deo Gracias is the signal for the end of the mass. |
| Joan is distressed not to receive mass. She denounces the accusing priests, saying that *they*are devils who have been sent to torment her. Cauchon instructs the execution and leaves the cell, followed by the other priests. | *Salve Sancta Parens*-Ronaldus Libert; Amen - Bosquet(fl late 14th century; d before 30 Nov 1406) | This setting of the Salve sancta parens text has the plainchant tune in the top part, with two lower untexted parts. We have added a more florid Amen, taken from Bosquet’s 4-part Gloria. Bosquet was a French composer who worked in Tournai, Avignon, and Bourges (for the Duc de Berry). |
| The priests leave the castle. The people are gathered outside and watch Joan carried out on a stretcher. Erard accuses Joan’s King of heresy and describes her as arrogant. Meanwhile, a gravedigger prepares. | *Francorum nobilitati*- Beltrame Ferragut (fl 1415–49) | Ferragut’s composition comes from a tradition where a composer names himself within the work and dedicates his services to a potential patron. This piece makes specific reference to Charles VII, King of France. |
| In the graveyard maggots crawl through a human skull, while Erard reads out the litany of charges against Joan. The three good priests urge her one last time to sign the abjuration or she will be burned at the stake. Even the treacherous Loyseleur seems genuinely moved. The priest utters a line we have heard before: ‘We have great sympathy for you’. | *Descendi in hortum meum* - Johannes de Lymburgia (fl 1431) | This text from the Song of Songs, set by many medieval composers, tells of a garden far more luscious than the scene that confronts Joan. Lymburgia was of Franco-Flemish origin and worked primarily in Padua. |
| Finally Joan concedes defeat and carefully signs the abjuration, watched by her accusers. | *Kyrie* – Reginaldus Libert | This Kyrie is from the same mass as the earlier gradual, the *Missa de Beata Virgine.* |
| Cauchon reads out the abjuration while Joan listens. | In nomine patris and Psalm 127 | The words here are from Psalm 127, which reminds the crowd that everything must be done in the name of the Lord. |
| Warwick is dissatisfied and tells Cauchon that Joan has made fools of them. The crowd begins to riot and one of them is thrown in the river by the soldiers. | Amen from *Gloria*- Johannes Franchois de Gemblaco (fl c1415–30). | Franchois was almost certainly the succentor of the collegiate church of St Martin in Liege. |
| Joan’s head is shaved, while outside, against a carnival scene, preparations for her execution are made. | *Jesu Salvator/Quo vulneratus est*Hymbert de Psalinis | Psalinis’s double-texted motet is notable for its use of sequences. |
| Joan weeps. | *De tristesse* – Gautier Libert (fl 1423–8) | The striking opening of this chanson is heard in isolation. (See below for more information) |
| Suddenly Joan realises what has happened. She tells her warder to summon the judges once more so that she can recant her abjuration; she has lied. | Domine Deus from Gloria – Johannes Le Grant | A slightly extended cue from the Gloria used earlier. |
| Cauchon and the other priests hear from Joan why she wants to recant: she denied God to save her life and she still believes she was sent by God. Her fatal answer is committed to the record. | *Agnus Dei* – Reginaldus Libert | This Agnus is from the same Marian mass used earlier. |
| Joan weeps, moving even the most hard-hearted priests. She has nothing more to say. Massieu remains to comfort her and prepare her for death at the stake. | *De tristesse* – Gautier Libert | Gautier Libert is not to be confused with Reginaldus Libert. This chanson is dated 1423 in the manuscript source. It’s a secular chanson in rondeau form that talks of grief and welcomes death as the solution to suffering. |
| While another priest goes to fetch the sacrament, Massieu asks her privately about her beliefs. Joan explains that she is God’s child and that his ways remain mysterious to her. Her great victory will be her martyrdom and her release death. | *O mortalis homo* – Franchois Lebertoul (fl 1409–?1428). | Lebertoul’s piece has three sacred texts sung by three voices but is in a secular form, that of a ballade. It is commentary on the vanity of human ambition, a sentiment with which the devout Joan would have agreed. |
| The ceremony of mass begins and Massieu hears Joan’s confession. Outside, the crowd congregate and the soldiers assemble. | Loquebantur variis linguis - chant | Joan’s execution fell on the Feast of Pentecost, for which this chant is assigned. |
| Joan finally receives the sacrament while Loyseleur watches. | *Agnus Dei* – Gilles Binchois | This setting of the Agnus Dei recalls the earlier setting of the Sanctus, though it is not related. |
| The soldiers watch from the ramparts as the crowd flocks to the scene of execution. Joan is led outside, her feet still chained. | *Eya dulcis* – Johannes Tapissier (b c1370; d before Aug 1410) | Born in Noyers, France, Tapissier was associated primarily with the court of Burgundy, though he worked as a master of the choristers at Notre Dame in Paris. This rhythmically complex isorhythmic motet was justly celebrated. |
| Joan is led to the scaffold. An old woman offers her a drink of water. A flock of white doves settle on the roof. Joan clutches a cross and accepts her death. A mother suckles her child while Joan prays that her suffering will be short.. | Veni Creator spiritus | On the march to raise the siege of Orléans in 1429, priests accompanied Joan and her army, singing the plainchant hymn ‘Veni creator spiritus’. Now, at the moment of her imminent sacrifice, it becomes a haunting memory. |
| Joan is tied to the stake and the flock of doves fly away. The crowd and the clergy watch as the fire is set. Massieu holds up a cross towards Joan. | *Gaude Dei genitrix* - Anon | This 4-part motet is from a well known manuscript, Trent 92. It is a rhythmically exciting hymn of praise to the Virgin. |
| Joan’s distress awakens sympathy in the crowd. The soldiers sense the growing unrest and prepare themselves. Joan utters her final word: ‘Jesus’. | *Regina saeculi/Reparatrix* - Anon | This French isorhythmic motet, being in 5-parts, is rare indeed. It is a setting of two Marian texts in four parts, the final, lowest part being an unidentified plainchant tune. |
| The crowd accuse the authorities of burning a saint and a riot ensues. The soldiers brutally attack the people, while Joan’s body continues to burn. A child cries for his murdered mother. The soldiers withdraw across the drawbridge and into the safety of the castle. | *Salve virgo virginum/Vita, via, veritas* – Billart (fl ?c1400) | The true identity of Billart is difficult to establish, but he may well be the same person as Aubert Billard, who was a clerk and chaplain in Notre Dame in Paris. This is his only known work, a Marian motet with complex rhythmic alternations between duple- and triple-time. |
| The final intertitles. | *Je me complains* by Guillaume Dufay, with contrafacta lyrics by Christine de Pizan from *La Ditié de Jeanne’d’Arc* | Writing in 1429, Pizan’s lyrics are eerily prescient: ‘You, who bares your flesh..to such harsh pain..will win renown in heaven.’ |