

**GAMBA
MUSIC CLUB**

**BENEDETTO
PALLAVICINO**

FOUR MADRIGALS

**Ben l'alme si partiro
Se si poca mercede
Or che soave
Cara e dolce mia vita**

Tr T T T/B B

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Benedetto Pallavicino, 1551-1601

Pallavicino was appointed to the ducal court of Mantua in 1581. Giaches de Wert, *maestro di capella* to the Duke of Mantua, died in 1596 and Pallavicino was appointed in his place. He uses the title for the first time in the 1596 edition of his fourth book of madrigals. He died in 1601 and Monteverdi, his successor, mentions his death in a letter.

A great many books of madrigals composed by Pallavicino were published in Venice and Antwerp. The popularity of the madrigals is shown by the way that they appear in many collections of the time.

Ben l'alme si partiro has been transposed down a fourth and *Se si poca mercede* transposed down a tone.

Translations

Ben l'alme si partiro

Although the souls departed, departed in the same moment and breathed their last together, the heart went too and the lovers were happily consoled in a joyous death.

Se si poca mercede

So little am I requited as deserved that thou findest no pity while I am dying. Oh cruel maid, I say, that there is no belief in my fatal grief. Come back, oh sinner, oh return into my heart. If thou hast no heart, weep for thy fault. If thy heart is moved by my pious blood, weep for thy fault.

Or che soave

Now what a gentle breeze fills every song. It moves flowers in the earth, roses and lilies in the bosom and little birds chirp sweetly. I too am laughing and singing, singing among nymphs and shepherds of my happy loves.

Cara e dolce mia vita

How precious and sweet will be my life if ever thou grantest me the pleasure of love and the rare and infinite beauty which in you resides. Deserting all other treasures, in you, Phyllida, will I adorn your heart with all your desires.