On 24 May 1594, just three weeks before his death, the elderly Orlando di Lasso signed the dedication of his Lagrime di San Pietro (‘Tears of Saint Peter’) to Pope Clement VIII, as a statement of personal religious sentiment: “I send and dedicate to Your Holiness with the greatest reverence these ‘Tears of St. Peter’, which were written some time ago by Luigi Tansillo and have been clothed in harmony by me as a token of my personal devotion in my burdensome old age”. This dedication clearly reflects the troubled physical and mental state of the composer in his final decade, as he suffered from melancholy and mental instability. The Lagrime cycle of twenty spiritual madrigals and a closing motet, written for an unusual setting of seven voices, is therefore one of the most remarkable artistic testaments in the history of music.

Orlando di Lasso was the ultimate representative of the mature polyphonic style of the Franco-Flemish School and the greatest musical authority of his time. He was born in 1530 in Mons and died in Munich in 1594, after an impressive musical career at the most prestigious European courts. For more than half his career he served as maestro di Capella at the Catholic Bavarian Court in Munich.

There is little doubt that the advance of the Catholic Reformation during Lasso’s lifetime dramatically affected his career as a musician as well as his personal beliefs. In this light, it is tempting to regard this Lagrime cycle, Lasso’s opus ultimum, not only as an individualistic expression of the aged composer’s penitence, but also as an examination of conscience, strongly resembling currents in post-Tridentine Catholic meditation practices (Exercitia Spiritualia).

“\textbf{The Lord’s eyes pierced his soul as a thousand arrows}”

Lagrime is not just a concert, but a total concept in which Lasso’s delicate music is visualised in striking choreography by the Leuven-based dance company ‘Het Danshuis’ and a multimedia projection including real-time text translation.
The vocal and instrumental ensemble Capella Nova was founded in 1999 and consists of musically educated singers and instrumentalists (viola da gamba – sackbut – harpsichord) of a pre-professional level. Depending on the musical requirements of the projects, Capella Nova’s core musicians are complemented with national and international professionals. The ensemble focuses on historic performances of rare or unknown music of the Renaissance and early-Baroque period. To attain the highest degree of historic authenticity in both performances and interpretations, almost all music-scores are based on self-made transcriptions of facsimiles and prints.

Since Capella Nova’s founding, Marleen Reynders has been the ensemble’s conductor, inspiration, and driving force. She obtained her Master of Arts in Musicology at the University of Leuven with a specialisation in early music. She has worked with leading early music musicians and followed masterclasses with Erik Van Nevel, Wim Becu, Dirk Snellings, Marnix De Cat and Rebecca Stewart.

Most members of the ‘ensemble Capella Nova’ are KU Leuven alumni or personnel and some of the ‘Het Danshuis’ dancers study at the KU Leuven and LUCA, School of Arts.

**Concert information**
Thursday 7 May 2015 at 20:00h
Sint-Michielskerk, Naamsestraat, 3000 Leuven

**Organisation**

KU Leuven alumni
Naamsestraat 63 | BE-3000 Leuven
Tel. + 32 (0)16 37 92 11 | www.kuleuven.be/alumni

International Conference RefoRC 2015 ‘Crossing Borders: Transregional Reformations’