

Goals, Rationale, Collaboration

The ambitious aim of this pilot project is to exhibit and explore a multisensory work of the past using multimedia technologies of the present. Opening the Geese Book provides a critical model for both re-integrating the arts and recontextualizing them historically. The web-based presentation opens the book to scholars while it makes the work accessible to broader audiences.

The endeavor focuses on one single work: the lavishly and whimsically illuminated, two-volume liturgical manuscript known as the Geese Book. Produced in Nuremberg, Germany between 1503 and 1510, this gradual preserves the complete mass liturgy compiled for the parish of St. Lorenz, as it was sung by the choir of school boys and young men before the Reformation was introduced in the city in 1525. In 1962 the Samuel H. Kress Foundation gave this work to the Pierpont Morgan Library in New York, where it remains today. Measuring 65 by 44 cm, the volumes are the largest in the collection. Today they are particularly valued for their high quality illuminations, several of which employ fanciful and provocative satirical imagery. The book takes its name from an enigmatic, self-referential, bas-de-page illustration that shows a choir of geese and a fox singing from a large chant manuscript with a wolf as their choirmaster.

The project is composed of several products and events that are being released or taking place at various times. The centerpiece is this web-site about the manuscript, which contains a complete digital facsimile, sound recordings, high resolution images of the illuminations and video commentary. The videos provide information about the many hands and many minds that were responsible for the Geese Book. Studies about the making, using and meanings of the Geese Book are planned. Political, social, and economic issues are crucial to the study. Further scholarship will be added as it becomes available. Earlier project components include an audio CD with 70 minutes of recorded chants and organ music, a concert on location in Nuremberg, and a radio broadcast.

The present undertaking is designed as an international interdisciplinary pilot project. To this end, a musicologist and an art historian are heading a team of experts that include design specialists, musicians and musicologists, art historians and conservators, as well as scholars of medieval Latin and history. It is hoped that the end result will demonstrate how new electronic media can be employed for scholarly exploration of the multisensory art experiences of the past.

Corine Schleif and Volker Schier undertook the research in the libraries and archives of Nuremberg and wrote the texts. Volker Schier located historic images and took new high resolution photographs for the project. Jan de Rode and Geeske Bakker designed the site and wove the multisensory narratives together. Ingeborg Neske and Elisabeth Remak-Honnef analyzed the manuscript at the Pierpont Morgan Library and compiled a codicological description.

Audio CD

Das Gänsebuch (The Geese Book). German Medieval Chant. Schola Hungarica, directed by László Dobszay and Janka Szendrei. Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, Bayerischer Rundfunk Studio Franken, and HNH International (Naxos), Hong Kong, released June 2005 (Naxos

8.557412). The CD is also available as Das Gänsebuch. Mittelalterliche Messliturgie in Nürnberg (Naxos 8.557412D)

Radio Feature

Ein Multimediuum des Mittelalters: Das Gänsebuch von St. Lorenz, Bayerischer Rundfunk Studio Nürnberg (Bavarian Radio Corporation) /Germany, organized by Klaus Meyer, Volker Schier and Corine Schleif, aired on November 1, 2004 on Bavarian Radio's classical music station Bayern 4 Klassik.

Concert

Music from the Geese Book, performed by the Schola Hungarica, directed by László Dobszay and Janka Szendrei, Nuremberg, St. Lorenz, 2002

Publications

Volker Schier, "The Late Arrival of an Early Saint. Sixtus Tucher's Feast for St. Monica," in: *Cantus Planus: Papers Read at the 13th Meeting of the IMS Study Group, Niederaltaich, Germany, 2006 Aug. 29 - Sept. 4*, ed. Barbara Haggh-Huglo and László Dobszay, Budapest 2009, 547-570.

Volker Schier and Corine Schleif, "Das Gänsebuch: Stimmen vom Rand und aus der Mitte, in: *St. Lorenz: Der Hallenchor und das Gänsebuch (Verein zur Erhaltung der St. Lorenzkirche in Nürnberg)*, NS (48), 2002, 64-75.

Volker Schier, "Tropi in ecclesia sancti laurentii in nuremberg. Nürnberger Quellen für die Bamberger Tropenpraxis", in: *Neues Musikwissenschaftliches Jahrbuch 7* (1998), 9-44

Presentations

Volker Schier and Corine Schleif, "The Geese Book as Multimedia Object," University of Poznan, Poland, 2011

Arizona State University, round table discussion: Virtual (Re)Constructions of the Past, which included participants from the Geese Book Project, DeRode, Bakker, Schier and Schleif, Tempe, 2010

Volker Schier, "Musicological Research and Popular Outreach in the Digital Age: Opening the Geese Book," University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, 2007

Volker Schier and Corine Schleif, "Opening the Geese Book," Phoenix Art Museum, 2006

Volker Schier and Corine Schleif, "The Geese Book: An Interdisciplinary Project," master class, Utrecht Center for Medieval Studies, University of Utrecht /Netherlands, 2006

Volker Schier and Corine Schleif, keynote lecture and workshop for faculty and students from the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex on the project Opening the Geese Book, North Texas Medieval Graduate Student Symposium, University of North Texas, Denton, 2005

Volker Schier and Corine Schleif, "The Sounds of the Geese Book," presentation of the Audio CD Das Gänsebuch (The Geese Book), Consulate General of the Federal Republic of Germany, New York, 2005

Volker Schier and Corine Schleif, "Nuremberg, Art and Music ca. 1500," Colloquium for faculty and students, Trinity University, San Antonio, 2003

Volker Schier and Corine Schleif, "Das Gänsebuch: Stimmen vom Rand und aus der Mitte," invited keynote presentation for the festivities commemorating the rededication of the church of St. Lorenz in Nuremberg in 1952, Nuremberg /Germany, 2002

Volker Schier and Corine Schleif, "Die Lorenzer Gänsebücher," introduction for a concert by the Schola Hungarica in St. Lorenz in Nuremberg, 2002

Volker Schier and Corine Schleif, "Geese and a Wolf, Liturgy and Autonomy: Diocesan Politics in a Nuremberg Gradual" (Morgan M. 905), in the session "Medieval Liturgy as Interdisciplinary Enterprise," International Congress on Medieval Studies, Kalamazoo, 1999

Volker Schier, "Liturgical Manuscripts as Subversion of Printed Authority," Medieval Culture and Cultural Materialisms, Conference of the Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, Tempe /Arizona, 1999.

Seminars

Opening the Geese Book, team-taught by Corine Schleif and Volker Schier, School of Art, Spring Semester 2005

Opening the Geese Book II, team-taught by Corine Schleif and Volker Schier, School of Art, Spring Semester 2006