

Handwritten and printed musical compositions

The Reggio Emilia Record Office has a small number of music manuscripts, some of which are noteworthy due to their age or content.

The most significant material – both handwritten and printed – can be found in three collections: the Reggio Emilia historical municipal archive, the archive of the monastery of Santi Pietro & Prospero, and the Bolognesi private archive.

For the sake of comprehensiveness, it should also be noted that there are numerous fragments of church music parchments from the 14th to 18th centuries included in the volumes and registers of the Curiae of the town in the judicial archives.

A special mention should go to the **“Mischiati fragment”** (in AC RE, Appendice), which is probably the oldest Italian polyphonic music document and dates back to some time around the mid 14th century. It was named after Oscar Mischiati, the musicologist that came across it and reported the extraordinary discovery in 1990.

The fragment contains three unknown canons for three voices: *Mirando i pesci nella chiara fonte, Nella foresta al cervo cacciatore* and *Chiama il bel pappagallo*. While it is not easy to read the words and notation due to the acidity of the ink and wear over time, it has been possible to reveal almost all of the content thanks to very high resolution photography carried out as part of the DIAMM project by Royal Holloway, University of London and the University of Oxford.

A detailed description of the document was given in GOZZI MARCO – ZIINO AGOSTINO: *The Mischiati Fragment: A New Source of Italian Trecento Music at Reggio Emilia*, in: *Kontinuität und Transformation in der italienischen Vokalmusik zwischen Due- und Quattrocento* (Musica Mensurabilis, Band 3), pages 281-314.