

Luca Marenzio (1553-1599) was one of the most renowned composers (and singers) of madrigals during the late Italian Renaissance. His output encompasses some 500 madrigals, ranging in style from the lightest to the most serious treatments. His work achieved fame at the time as far away as England, where it was influential in initiating a fascination with madrigal writing in that country. Marenzio's work is characteristically full of chromaticism and word painting, both used to "illustrate" his texts in symbolic fashion. In her book, *Mystical Love in the German Baroque: Theology, Poetry, Music*, Isabella Van writes, "In *Per duo coralli ardenti*, no. 3 from Marenzio's first book of madrigals (1580), the slow motion, descending melodies, and dissonances used to express death (*morir*) contrast sharply with the faster notes, rising melodies, and harmonic consonances at the word *rinascere* (to be born again)."

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