Oral counterpoint, currently known as cantare super librum, was widely taught and practiced within the choirs and chapels of many European churches along the 15th and 16th centuries. But what did the singer’s improvisations look like, when compared with the written-out compositions we have preserved from the same period? And how did the techniques evolve, from the recommendations and examples found in Johannes Tinctoris’ counterpoint treatise (1477) to those left more than one century later by theorists like Montanos, Cerone or Zacconi? To answer these questions, I will try to define various categories of improvised polyphonic repertoire, that vary according either to the techniques or to the liturgical context.