



AMERICAN
BACH
SOLOISTS

FESTIVAL

JEFFREY THOMAS
MUSIC DIRECTOR

THE GARDEN OF HARMONY

August 1 – 7 2021

Herbst Theatre • San Francisco

THE GARDEN OF HARMONY

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Sunday August 1 • 4:00 p.m.

Triples Alley

*Concertos for three violins by Bach,
Telemann, and Vivaldi*

VIVALDI • Concerto in F Major for 3 Violins
HANDEL • Concerto Grosso in G Minor
TELEMANN • Concerto in F Major for 3 Violins
BUONAMENTE • Sonata a tre violini
UCCELLINI • Sinfonia Nona a tre violini
PACHELBEL • Canon & Gigue in D Major
VIVALDI • Concerto in B Minor for 4 Violins
BACH • Concerto in D Major for 3 Violins

Tuesday August 3 • 7:00 p.m.

Transformation

*Signature works by Bach and their
transformations by Rachmaninoff,
Ysaÿe, Schumann, and Liszt*

BACH • Partita in E Major for Solo Violin (Prelude, Gavotte, Gigue)
RACHMANINOFF • Suite from Bach's Partita in E Major for Solo Violin
YSAÿE • "Obsession" from Sonata in A Minor for Solo Violin "Jacques Thibaud"
BACH • Suite in G Major for Solo Violoncello, arr. Stade after Schumann
BACH • Movements from Cantata 12 "Weinen, Klagen, Sorgen, Zagen"
LISZT • Variations on the Motif "Weinen, Klagen, Sorgen, Zagen"

Thursday August 5 • 7:00 p.m.

The Devil's Trill

Bravura works for violin virtuosi

HANDEL • Trio Sonata in G Major
TARTINI • Pastorale in A Major
C.P.E. BACH • Trio Sonata in C Minor "Sanguineus & Melancholicus"
TARTINI • Sonata in G Minor "Il trillo del Diavolo"
BACH • Concerto in D Minor for 2 Violins

Friday August 6 • 7:00 p.m.

Bach & His World

*Captivating music by Bach and the
composers who inspired his genius*

BIBER • Violin Sonata in E Minor
SCHMELZER • Sonata a tre violini
TELEMANN • Trio Sonata in E-flat Major from "Musique de Table"
BUXTEHUDE • Sonata & Gigue in B-flat Major
BACH • Sonata in G Minor for Viola da gamba and Harpsichord
BACH • Sonata in G Major for Violin and Basso continuo
BACH • Concerto in F Minor for Harpsichord

Saturday August 7 • 7:00 p.m.

The Garden of Harmony

*A sensational program of music
about birds, animals, and the
harmony of nature*

WILLIAMS • Sonata "In Imitation of Birds"
UCCELLINI • Aria Nona, "The hen & cuckoo make a fine concert"
JOHNSON • "Hark! hark! the Lark!" & "Have you seen the bright lily grow?"
ARNE • "When daisies pied"
ANONYMOUS • "This merry pleasant spring"
SCHMELZER • Violin Sonata "Cuckoo"
HANDEL • Organ Concerto "The Cuckoo & the Nightingale"
AVISON • Concerto Grosso in D Minor after Scarlatti "The Garden of Harmony"
HERRANDO • Sonata "The Garden of Aranjuez in Spring"
VIVALDI • Concerto in A Major for Violin and Harpsichord ("The Nightingale")

San Francisco's Summer Bach Festival

americanbach.org/festival • americanbach.org/tickets

A Message from the Artistic Director



JEFFREY THOMAS
Artistic Director



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American Bach Soloists
are Artists-in-Residence at
St. Stephen's Church, Belvedere.

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If you will be attending more than
one ABS Festival concert, please
consider keeping this program
booklet and bringing it with you
when you return. Please recycle.
Thank you.

Welcome Back!

Let me say that again with more gusto: *Welcome Back!!!*

Our ABS musicians are absolutely overjoyed to be reuniting with our audiences and with each other, and we hope that just being together again in one place to enjoy the music that we all love so much will be as joyful for you as it is for us!

We've put together a week of programs that celebrate being "Back to Bach" and back to the things that we've missed and can return to now.

One of the first things on my personal list is getting back to Oracle Park to watch the Giants who certainly had a sensational start to their season. So, the first program, named after the ballpark's famous "Triples Alley," features three concertos for three violins by three of the greatest Baroque composers: Bach, Telemann, and Vivaldi. It's a concert that's all about collaboration and teamwork, the kind of *musical* teamwork that we can now relish again. The program includes a grand slam in Vivaldi's Concerto for Four Violins.

"Transformation" offers music by Bach and arrangements of the same works by Liszt, Rachmaninoff, Schumann, and Ysaÿe; and "The Devil's Trill" brings virtuoso violin works by Tartini, Bach, and Handel front and center.

We also missed the music of our beloved namesake over the past year, so we will present "Bach & His World," featuring great music by Johann Sebastian along with works by his greatest inspirations whom he held in high esteem.

The Festival closer is all about Nature: While we were protecting each other by staying home, Nature thrived in ways that it hasn't for a very long time. We'll celebrate the beautiful sounds of birds and animals in a program called "The Garden of Harmony." At ABS we are truly elated to share music together again with each other and most especially with you, with our audiences.

And there's plenty more to come: September will bring our annual Sparkle Gala, in December we will be thrilled to bring our performances of Handel's *Messiah* to Grace Cathedral and the Green Music Center. From January through May 2022 our Connoisseur Series will again provide opportunities for our audiences to delve deeper into the amazing repertoire of the Baroque era, offering the anticipation and excitement of works that may be less well known than some, but that are spellbinding, enchanting, and powerfully evocative. The Connoisseur Series begins with Bach and Handel, moves on to a gripping Saint Matthew Passion by one of Bach's forebears, and concludes with a program that truly celebrates the human voice.

We hope that you enjoyed our "ABS at Home" productions over the past year including the international streaming release of our beautiful film of "Handel's *Messiah* in Grace Cathedral" that was watched by nearly a half million viewers. It gave us tremendous joy to reach so many music lovers around the world during a time of such great need.

But now, we're back where we belong, *in a concert hall with you*. Hallelujah!

Enjoy,

Our Values

We believe that...

- the experience of Art is a human right.
- music is essential to our quality of life.
- Bach's creativity and life epitomized ideals of artistic virtuosity, the primacy of education, and humanitarianism within changing worlds.

Every Arts Organization must...

- educate present and future generations.
- uphold the highest aesthetic standards.
- enlighten its own and greater audiences.
- relate to the community and culture in which it thrives.
- inspire the intellects of its patrons.
- serve as a compelling model for other cultural organizations.

Arts Patrons want...

- to have meaningful, memorable, and valuable experiences.
- to be empowered, knowledgeable, and informed consumers.
- to be involved as integral participants, not just observers.

The American Bach Soloists...

- promote artistic excellence.
- value and respect the diversity of our patrons and sponsors.
- sustain the musical heritage of historical cultures.
- treasure the gifted instrumentalists and singers that we present.
- support young and emerging talent.
- believe in the efforts of all who endeavor to preserve history, celebrate culture, and ensure the accessibility of the Arts.



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About American Bach Soloists



The American Bach Soloists are leading performers in the field of Baroque music, dedicated to historically informed performances of Bach and his contemporaries. The ensemble's mission of providing meaningful, memorable, and valuable musical experiences for our audiences through inspiring performances and recordings, and of supporting the preservation of Early Music through educational programs for students and emerging professionals, has been realized under the leadership of co-founder Jeffrey Thomas, who for more than three decades has brought thoughtful perspectives to his performances as Artistic and Music Director of the American Bach Soloists. Recognized worldwide as one of the foremost interpreters of the music of Bach and the Baroque, he continues to inspire audiences and performers alike through his keen insights into the passions behind musical expression. *Fanfare Magazine* proclaimed that "Thomas' direction seems just right, capturing the humanity of the music ... there is no higher praise for Bach performance."

Together with "the best American specialists in early music" (*The Washington Post*), the ensemble has achieved its vision of assembling the world's finest vocalists and period-instrument performers to bring this brilliant music to life. Critical acclaim has been extensive: *The Washington Post* called ABS "a flawless ensemble ... a level of musical finesse one rarely encounters." *San Francisco Classical Voice* declared "there is nothing routine or settled about their work. Jeffrey Thomas is still pushing the musical Baroque envelope." And the *San Francisco Chronicle* has extolled the ensemble's "divinely inspired singing."

The first public concerts were given in February 1990 at St. Stephen's Church in Belvedere, where the ensemble serves as Artists-in-Residence. The debut of ABS's first annual summer festival in Tiburon/Belvedere took place in 1993. By the fifth season, regular performances had been inaugurated in San Francisco and Berkeley, and as a result of highly successful collaborations with the Robert and Margrit Mondavi Center for the Performing Arts, ABS's full concert seasons expanded to the Davis/Sacramento region in 2005. As the audience increased, so the artistic direction of the ensemble expanded to include Bach's purely instrumental and larger choral masterpieces, as well as music of his contemporaries and that of the early Classical era.

ABS established the American Bach Soloists & Henry I. Goldberg International Young Artist Competition in 1998 to foster emerging musicians who wish to pursue a career in Early Music. In July 2010, ABS inaugurated the American Bach Soloists Academy, offering unique opportunities to advanced conservatory-level students and emerging professionals to study and perform Baroque music in a multi-disciplinary learning environment, with ABS musicians serving as faculty/mentors. And in 2013, to commemorate ABS music director Jeffrey Thomas's 25-year tenure of inspired leadership, the American Bach Soloists created the Jeffrey Thomas Award to honor, recognize, and encourage exceptionally gifted emerging professionals in the field of Early Music.

The American Bach Soloists have a diverse and prolific discography of more than two dozen titles including Bach's Mass in B Minor,

Orchestral Suites, Saint Matthew Passion, Motets for Double Chorus, Brandenburg Concertos, and six volumes of Bach cantatas. Other titles include Bach's transcriptions of Italian music, Haydn Masses, choral and vocal works by Schütz, the re-release of the premiere recording of Corelli's Concerti Grossi in arrangements for recorders (including the celebrated "Christmas Concerto"), and a landmark recording of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, all with period instruments. All titles are available on iTunes and Spotify. One of their most popular offerings is a historically significant version of Handel's *Messiah*, recorded at the Robert and Margrit Mondavi Center for the Performing Arts at UC Davis. ABS "Artist Series" recordings feature harpsichordist Michael Sponseller on a disc of Bach concertos; *1685 & The Art of Ian Howell* featuring the remarkable countertenor in works by Bach, Handel, and Domenico Scarlatti; soprano Mary Wilson singing a collection of virtuoso vocal works by Handel, and an album of acclaimed countertenor Aryeh Nussbaum Cohen singing Gluck, Handel, and Vivaldi. ABS's feature film *Handel's Messiah in Grace Cathedral*, recorded in 5.1 DTS-HD™ Surround Sound and 2.0 DTS-HD™ Stereo, is available on High-Definition Blu-ray™ and DVD, and was made available worldwide for streaming at the organization's ever-growing YouTube channel: americanbach.org/youtube.

READ MORE:



Artist Biographies

American Bach Soloists were founded to bring together the best specialists in Baroque music from far and wide, to focus on the music of Bach, and to promote the enjoyment of the music that each and every member of ABS loves so deeply. The ABS Academy has led to an expanded roster that now includes some of the brightest and most engaging new talent in the field of Early Music. As we embark on our fourth decade of brilliant and insightful performances, we are as proud as ever of each individual musician who is a part of American Bach Soloists.



JEFFREY THOMAS (conductor) has brought thoughtful, meaningful, and informed perspectives to his performances as Artistic and Music Director of the American Bach Soloists for more than 30 years. Recognized worldwide as one of the foremost interpreters of the music of Bach and the Baroque, he continues to inspire audiences and performers alike through his keen insights into the passions behind musical expression. He has directed and conducted recordings of more than 20 Bach cantatas, the Mass in B Minor, *Brandenburg Concertos*, *Saint Matthew Passion*, Orchestral Suites, various concertos, motets for double chorus, and works by Beethoven, Corelli, Handel, Haydn, Pergolesi, Schütz, and Vivaldi. *Fanfare Magazine* has praised his series of Bach recordings, stating that “Thomas’ direction seems just right, capturing the humanity of the music ... there is no higher praise for Bach performance.” Educated at the Oberlin Conservatory of Music, Manhattan School of Music, and the Juilliard School of Music, with further studies in English literature at Cambridge University, he has taught at the Amherst Early Music Workshop, Oberlin College Conservatory Baroque Performance Institute, San Francisco Early Music Society, and Southern Utah Early Music Workshops; presented master classes at the Eastman School of Music, the New England Conservatory of Music, San Francisco Conservatory of Music, SUNY at Buffalo, Swarthmore College, and Washington University; and served on the faculties of Lehigh University in Pennsylvania and the University of California, where he was artist-in-residence and is now professor emeritus of music (Barbara K. Jackson Chair in Choral Conducting) in the Department of Music at UC Davis, having been named a UC Davis Chancellor’s Fellow from 2001 to 2006. The Rockefeller Foundation awarded him a prestigious Residency at the Bellagio Study and Conference Center at Villa Serbelloni. In 2019, he was a guest conductor at the Historical Performance Institute of Indiana University in Bloomington. Additionally, for more than ten years Mr. Thomas hosted two internationally loved public radio programs: “Sacred Concert” and “Baroque by the Bay.” Before devoting all of his time to conducting, he was one of the first recipients of the San Francisco Opera Company’s prestigious Adler Fellowships. Cited by *The Wall Street Journal* as “a superstar among oratorio tenors,” Mr. Thomas’ extensive discography of vocal music includes dozens of recordings of major works for Decca, EMI, Erato, Koch International Classics, Denon, Harmonia Mundi, Smithsonian, Newport Classics, and Arabesque. Mr. Thomas has appeared with the Baltimore, Berkeley, Boston, Detroit, Houston, National, Rochester, Minnesota, and San Francisco symphony orchestras; with the Vienna Symphony and the New Japan Philharmonic; with many American Baroque orchestras; and in Austria, England, Germany, Italy, Japan, and Mexico. He has performed at the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival, Spoleto USA Festival, Ravinia Festival, Saratoga Performing Arts Center, Berkeley Festival and Exhibition, Boston Early Music Festival, Bethlehem Bach Festival, Göttingen Festival, Tage Alte Musik Festival in Regensburg, E. Nakamichi Baroque Festival in Los Angeles, the Smithsonian Institution, and at the Brooklyn Academy of Music’s “Next Wave Festival,” and he has collaborated on several occasions as conductor with the Mark Morris Dance Group.



JACOB ASHWORTH (violin) began playing the violin when he was four, after years of singing the “Queen of the Night” aria at the top of his lungs in the house, and, to the humiliation of his parents, in every large public space in New York. A few years later his talent and fame would reach its apex during a brief but glorious career at New York City Opera, singing all the best roles written for boy soprano. Today, Jacob spends his life pursuing a paradoxical dream: to specialize ... in everything. He is the “impressive Artistic Director” (*The New York Times*) of Cantata Profana, a Baroque/Modern ensemble, where he has won awards and acclaim for his vision of crafting theatrical, genre-bending chamber music shows. He is Co-Music Director of Heartbeat Opera, which is fast becoming one of the most influential companies making opera today. With Heartbeat he reimagines classic operas, curates annual Halloween Drag Extravaganzas that you really must see, and has made a specialty of leading entire operas, from Purcell to Mozart to Verdi, from the violin, “doing powerful work from the music stand” (*Opernwelt*). In his freelance work, Jacob performs equally on modern violin, Baroque violin, and as a conductor. He performs with a long list of wonderful Early Music groups like ABS and an even longer list of wonderful Early Music human beings. On the modern fiddle he has premiered and recorded numerous works with composers he loves, and performed with many of New York’s leading new music organizations. He conducts with equal aplomb the craziest New Music and the most passionate Puccini. Jacob has been called a “lithe and nimble” (*The New York Times*) Baroque violinist, an “exacting and sensitive” (*Boston Globe*) New Music player, a “richly detailed” (*The New York Times*) conductor, and “a flat-out triumph” (*Opera News*) onstage.

Artist Biographies

STEVEN BAILEY (piano) is a musician of wide-ranging versatility. He grew up in a musical home in Minneapolis and began piano lessons at the age of five. He has performed extensively throughout the United States as soloist and collaborative musician in repertoire from the Baroque era through the present. He regularly performs with American Bach Soloists as guest soloist on piano, fortepiano, and harpsichord, and as continuo organist. He has appeared as concerto soloist with Symphony Parnassus, Diablo Valley Symphony, UC Davis Symphony, San Francisco Concerto Orchestra, and Magnificat Baroque Orchestra, and given solo performances for the Wagner and Liszt Societies. He has performed in recitals with singers such as Deborah Voigt, Suzanne Mentzer, Frederica von Stade, Elsa van den Heever, Christine Brewer, and Thomas Moser. Recent engagements have found him in Abu Dhabi, New York City, Boston, and Philadelphia. He often collaborates with contemporary composers, including Jake Heggie, David Conte, Elinor Armer, John Corigliano, and Mark Adamo, in premieres and performances of their music. He has taught at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music for the past 28 years. Having developed a great appreciation for '60s and '70s rock and roll at a young age, Steven taught himself to play the guitar in high school. Since then, he has been spotted performing as a Bob Dylan impersonator, in both solo and electric incarnations. Besides his musical pursuits, he is passionate about travel, photography, and bicycling. He collects, repairs and uses vintage film cameras, and particularly enjoys taking 3-D photos when sightseeing abroad. He also enjoys solving puzzles and has played the NPR Sunday Puzzle on air with Will Shortz.



CYNTHIA KEIKO BLACK (violin) enjoys performing at home in the Bay Area and across the United States as a violinist and violist playing music from several centuries. Born in Dallas, Texas, she grew up listening to her mother practicing piano and began her musical education as a toddler learning piano from her mother's lap. Cynthia performs regularly with the American Bach Soloists and can be found on stage in California with other ensembles including Voices of Music, Valley of the Moon, Ars Minerva, Musica Angelica, and the Carmel Bach Festival Orchestra. Across the country, she makes guest appearances with ensembles including the Atlanta Baroque Orchestra, Pacific MusicWorks, Les Délices, and Quicksilver. She enjoys playing chamber music as a member of the Costanoan Trio, a period-instrument piano trio, and Incantare, an ensemble of violins and sackbuts. Cynthia holds modern viola degrees from the Cleveland Institute of Music, and after becoming entrenched in the world of Early Music, she stayed in Cleveland to complete a doctorate in Historical Performance Practice at Case Western Reserve University. She also teaches young people at the Crowden School's Community Program and in her free time enjoys being in the kitchen and her backyard vegetable garden.



ELIZABETH BLUMENSTOCK (violin) started playing the violin at age eight when her mother developed a crush on a fine local violinist. Their relationship did not pan out, but Elizabeth is still with the violin, despite brief affairs with some violas. She grew up listening to Baroque music at home: "It was the background music to my childhood. In college, I heard the Harnoncourt and Leonhardt Bach cantata recordings, and was blown away by the expressiveness and instrumental timbres. The music came alive." Now widely admired as a Baroque violinist of expressive eloquence and technical sparkle, she is a long-time concertmaster, soloist, and leader with the Bay Area's American Bach Soloists and Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra, and is concertmaster of the International Handel Festival in Göttingen, Germany. In Southern California, Elizabeth is Artistic Director of the Corona del Mar Baroque Music Festival. Her love of chamber music has involved her in several accomplished and interesting smaller ensembles including Galax Quartet, Ensemble Mirable, Live Oak Baroque, and Severall Friends. She has appeared with period orchestras and chamber ensembles throughout the United States and abroad, and has performed at the Boston and Berkeley Early Music Festivals, Los Angeles Opera, the Carmel Bach Festival, the Oulunsalo Soi festival in Finland, and the San Luis Obispo Mozart Festival, among many others. With more than 100 titles in her discography, she has recorded for Harmonia Mundi, Deutsche Grammophon, Virgin Classics, Dorian, BMG, American Bach Soloists, Reference Recordings, Koch International, Music & Arts, and Sono Luminus. An enthusiastic educator and mentor, Elizabeth teaches at Juilliard Historical Performance, the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, Valley of the Moon Music Festival, and the American Bach Soloists Academy. When not concertizing or teaching, she plays *Scrabble* obsessively, tries to garden, and pieces quilt tops. She has ten of them now, none of which has been quilted.



TATIANA CHULOCHNIKOVA (violin) was born in Kharkiv, Ukraine, and began playing violin at the age of seven. She made her professional debut at fourteen performing Bruch's violin concerto with the Kharkiv Philharmonic. She received her professional training at the Tchaikovsky Conservatory in Moscow as well as Oberlin Conservatory and the Juilliard School where Tatiana was a Kovner Fellowship recipient. In 2016, having been a participant in the American Bach Soloists Academy, she was named recipient of The Jeffrey Thomas Award, which is granted annually at the Artistic Director's discretion to honor, recognize, and encourage exceptionally gifted emerging professionals in the field of early music who show extraordinary promise and accomplishment. Tatiana has been praised by the press for her "fiercely pointed" (*San Francisco Chronicle*) and "fine performances" (*The Washington Post*), "dark plush romantic violin sound" (*New York Concert Review*)



Artist Biographies

and ‘thrilling technique and bravura style’ (*San Francisco Classical Voice*). In 2016, Tatiana’s debut solo album was released worldwide on Toccata Classics (London, UK). A world premiere of violin music by composer Theodore Akimenko, the album earned very enthusiastic reviews including *Fanfare Magazine* (US) which called it “a fascinating release” and *Classica Magazine* (France) which described the interpretation as demonstrating a “total commitment and a free lyricism that goes straight to the heart”. Her second album “Meditations and Reflections” was recorded at the Steppenwolf Studio in the Netherlands in November 2018 and was released worldwide by Steinway & Sons label on October 18, 2019. Tatiana’s live performances and interviews have been broadcast by classical radio stations nationwide including WETA, KALV and WFMT.



GRETCHEN CLAASSEN (violoncello) spent her early childhood singing and listening to American roots music and bewitched by the dusty gravel roads, cornfields and tornadoes of Iowa. Weekends were filled watching her family’s band rehearsals and performances at churches, meeting halls, and occasionally bluegrass festivals or the state fair. Finding herself exiled to the suburban Arizona desert at 8 years old, and in search of a new musical community, she soon discovered the cello and all the richness and history of western classical music. After many years of musical education, and completing an undergraduate degree at Juilliard, Gretchen’s love of chamber music and opera found their ultimate expression when she joined the Baroque ensemble at San Francisco Conservatory of Music in a production of Handel’s *Giulio Cesare*. Several summers at the ABS Academy followed and eventually led to joining ABS and the opportunity to play with many other professional ensembles on the West Coast. Gretchen was awarded The Jeffrey Thomas Award in 2015, and she is a founding member of several ensembles including the collective MUSA, which seeks to give opportunities for young Bay Area Early Music specialists to perform a wide range of Baroque and pre-Classical repertoire. She is the ‘cellist of The Sylvestris Quartet, a group committed to unique programming that presents the shifting styles, influences, and sounds across three centuries of quartet repertoire. With the cello pop cover band “Cello Street Quartet,” whose motto was “bringing classical music to audiences who don’t know they like classical music”, she recorded and toured with Matt Alber. Some of her most cherished musical memories include her first performances of Handel’s *Messiah* and *Saint Matthew Passion* with ABS, performing and rehearsing chamber music with Menachem Pressler, Robert Mann, and Bonnie Hampton, and concerts for school children in Kosovo, Hungary, and Russia. In her spare time, Gretchen enjoys reading and ranting to friends about politics and pop culture, and is always hoping to travel more.



TEKLA CUNNINGHAM (violin) lives in Seattle with her husband David, a video game designer, and her sons Sebastian and Henry, and the family quarantine puppy Zilphie. Tekla grew up in a musical family: Her father plays the bagpipes and her parents both sang in choirs. Records in the family LP collection included many of the early Harnoncourt recordings as well as the Hungarian Quartet’s Bartok recordings and formative childhood experiences included dancing in the kitchen to Bach’s “*Jauchzet, Frohlocket*” from the “Christmas Oratorio” as well as singing along to the great folk singers of her parent’s generation. Born in Seattle to a German mother and a father of American of German-Scottish ancestry, she is equally at home with her Northwest patois and her German dialects. During the quarantine, she has been tending to her sourdough starter, spending a lot of time on zoom, teaching baking classes, playing concerts for video cameras and doing a yoga teacher training. For over a year, Tekla has been playing all of the Brahms violin sonatas weekly with pianist Sheila Weidendorf, and their project “Between Heaven and Earth: A Year with Brahms” is now emerging as a concert program with a focus on 19th century performance practices. She is the founder and director of the Whidbey Island Music Festival, co-artistic director of Pacific MusicWorks (with Stephen Stubbs and Henry Lebedinsky) and artist in-residence at UW Seattle where her students are a source of inspiration and joy. Her greatest musical love is music of the Baroque and chamber music of all stripes, though she can’t seem to quit Johannes Brahms. Tekla plays on a Sanctus Seraphim made in Venice in 1746 which was played in the Philadelphia Orchestra for many years. She studied at Peabody Conservatory, Johns Hopkins University, the Hochschule für Musik und Darstellende Kunst in Vienna, Austria, and the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. Tekla serves on the board of director of Early Music America and the Whidbey Island Arts Council.



TOMÀ ILIEV (violin) is a musician who is focused on historically informed performance. He is the winner of the Leipzig International Bach Competition’s 2014 Christa Bach-Marschall Foundation Prize, and is the winner of the 2013 Indianapolis Baroque Orchestra Concerto Competition. Holder of the Portland Baroque Orchestra’s Charles and Ruth Poindexter Chair, Toma regularly performs with ensembles across the United States including American Bach Soloists, Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra, Valley of the Moon, Trinity Baroque Orchestra, and Clarion Music Society. An avid chamber musician, he is a core member of Sonnambula, the first and only period instrument ensemble to hold the position of Ensemble in Residence at the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art. Tomà first joined ABS as a part of the 2016 Academy and has since appeared with the ensemble in numerous performances. He can be heard with ABS on recent recordings including J. S. Bach’s *Orchestral Suites*

Artist Biographies

and “Aryeh Nussbaum Cohen sings Gluck, Handel & Vivaldi”. He was a part of the 2020 virtual gala, the “Fridays with Friends” series, and appeared as a soloist with ABS with a memorable performance of Georg Philipp Telemann’s Violin Concerto in A major, “The Frogs,” during the 2019 ABS Festival. A native of Sofia, Bulgaria, Tomà discovered his passion for music at an early age. Beginning his studies at the National Music School in Sofia, he is a graduate of Indiana University and of the Juilliard School’s Historical Performance program. In addition to Baroque and Classical violin, he can be seen performing on Baroque and Classical viola, viola d’amore, bass and tenor viols, and harpsichord.

COREY JAMASON (harpsichord & organ) was born in New York City and developed a fascination with Baroque music as a young piano student growing up in Puerto Rico and Florida. He was introduced to the harpsichord by Anthony Newman while an undergraduate student at SUNY Purchase and then pursued further studies in early music at Yale University and at the Early Music Institute at Indiana University. His fascination with historically informed performance and a love of American musical theater and vaudeville led him and his colleague Eric Davis to create Theatre Comique, an ensemble specializing in reviving late 19th- and early 20th-century American musical theater in historically informed performances. He has performed the “Goldberg Variations” and the *Well-Tempered Clavier* throughout the United States and his playing of Bach was described in the *Los Angeles Times* as displaying “the careful, due balance of objective detachment and lofty passion.” From 2007 to 2014 he was artistic director of the San Francisco Bach Choir. Nominated for a GRAMMY® award, his recent recordings include performances with American Bach Soloists, violinist Gilles Apap, recorder player Astrid Andersson, and El Mundo. He is a contributing author to *History of Performance*, published by Cambridge University Press. He joined the faculty of the San Francisco Conservatory in 2001 where he is director of the school’s historical performance program and professor of harpsichord. Corey has also enjoyed working with a variety of ensembles such as the San Francisco Symphony, Los Angeles Opera, Philharmonia Baroque, Musica Angelica, Camerata Pacifica, Yale Spectrum, and El Mundo.



YUEUN GEMMA KIM (violin) is originally from South Korea where she started playing piano at age 5 and violin at 7, although she enjoyed singing Korean and American pop songs from the 80s with her father the most. She also played organ every Wednesday at 6am at church services. YuEun moved to the US about seven years ago to study with violinist Midori Goto at University of Southern California where she also grew her passion for Baroque music while playing with the USC Thornton Baroque Sinfonia. Since then, she’s been exploring the early music repertoire which brought her to attend the American Bach Soloists Academy in 2019. This year, she is invited to play with various baroque ensembles including Musica Angelica Baroque Orchestra, American Bach Soloists, Boulder Bach Festival, and Blue Hill Bach. Although YuEun is not a big fan of competitions, she has been participating in quite a few of them and has won first place in USC’s Solo Bach Competition and the Strings Concerto Competition, and was a semi-finalist at the Qingdao International Violin Competition (China) and the Michael Hill International Violin Competition (New Zealand). The most memorable competition was the Boulder International Competition: Art of Duo where she has won second prize in 2018. YuEun is a core member of Delirium Musicum, a self-conducted chamber orchestra based in Los Angeles. During the pandemic, Delirium Musicum created MusiKaravan that took YuEun and Artistic Director Etienne Gara to the road in a vintage Volkswagen bus to perform socially-distanced concerts for farm workers, winemakers, random passerby, and even the occasional ostrich. The video episodes of this musical journey will start streaming in late spring 2021. Her Chopin’s *Nocturne* video on YouTube has over 8 million views, and the funniest moment in her performing career was when she noticed Itzhak Perlman was in the audience; she couldn’t turn the pages and she ended up playing the whole Haydn string quartet by heart.



STEVEN LEHNING (violone) was attending Pacific Lutheran University as an undergraduate when he stumbled upon a used book store that had a nearly complete collection of the Bach-Gesellschaft edition of Bach Cantatas in mini-score; each for only a nickel! Finding these while taking a class in Lutheran theology set him on a trajectory that prepared him to eventually become one of the founding members of the American Bach Soloists. A remarkable and versatile musician who is equally at home with violas da gamba, violones, contrabass, and historical keyboards, he has worked with many of the luminaries of the early music world including Jeffrey Thomas, John Butt, Andrew Parrott, and Ton Koopman. He has performed at the acclaimed Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival, as well as the Early Music Festivals in Boston and Berkeley. After finishing his undergraduate degree and while waiting to see what performances might come his way, he worked as an apprentice learning the art of French bread and pastry. Always curious about the entirety of the world from which the music he plays originated, he dove into many aspects of early music. In addition to performing with ABS, he is their librarian, and tunes harpsichords and organs for rehearsals and performances. On the scholarship side, he has pursued graduate studies in musicology at the University of California (Davis). Steve has recorded on the American Bach Soloists, Delos, EMI, Harmonia Mundi, and Koch Labels.



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RAMÓN NEGRÓN-PÉREZ (viola) began his musical career at the age of nine in his native Puerto Rico. Two years before completing his degree from the Puerto Rico Conservatory of Music, at 18 years old, he auditioned and was accepted as a member of the Puerto Rico Symphony Orchestra. Over the next 16 years Ramón's orchestral experience was rigorous, varied and full of opportunities. Ramón developed an affinity for historically informed practice when he moved to southern California in 2012 and immersed himself in everything baroque. Ramón has had the pleasure of performing regularly with American Bach Soloists since 2014. Former conductor of the Overture Strings by the San Diego Youth Symphony and Conservatory, he collaborated as a community artist teacher of the Opus Project, inspired by the success of the El Sistema movement in Venezuela. Ramón has also had the pleasure of performing at the Casals Festival in Puerto Rico and Prades, France; Reina Sofia Music Academy in Santander, Spain, Angelus Sacred Early Music, Corona del Mar Baroque Festival, Tafelmusik Baroque Summer Institute in Toronto and American Bach Soloists Festival. Performances have carried him to the stages and audiences around the world including Carnegie Hall, The Kennedy Center, Radio City Music Hall, Teatro Nacional in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, Palacio de la Opera in Coruña, Spain. Ramón is currently an adjunct faculty member of viola, violin and chamber music at the University of San Diego. He is the co-founder, music director and conductor of San Diego's community early music ensemble, Kensington Baroque Orchestra. Ramón and his wife are kept occupied by their 11-year-old son, 7-year-old daughter, and their dog Luna, a half-white/half-brindle American pit bull terrier who recently joined the family from a local shelter.



NOLA RICHARDSON (soprano) was born in Sydney, Australia but sadly lost her Australian accent after her family emigrated to Colorado when she was six. She began her musical studies on the violin at age seven, and dabbled additionally in percussion and clarinet throughout high school. However, her love for singing won out, and she completed studies as a vocal performance major at Illinois Wesleyan and the Peabody Conservatory. She fell in love with early music during her time in Baltimore which led her to apply to the ABS academy in 2012 and 2013. She has enjoyed returning several times to perform with the wonderful musicians of ABS in Handel's *Acis and Galatea* and *La Resurrezione*, "A Weekend in Paris," and "Favorite Bach Cantatas" among other performances. A glutton for punishment, she decided to return to school and recently completed a DMA in Early Music Vocal Performance at Yale. Performing the works of J. S. Bach has become the cornerstone of her career and she has been grateful to receive first prize in three vocal competitions focusing on his works as well as performing them with many prominent baroque ensembles, choral societies, and symphonies around the country. Recently she has made appearances in Handel's Messiah with the Seattle, Pittsburgh, and Colorado Symphonies, and performed works of Bach with the Atlanta and Grand Rapids Symphonies, Philharmonia Baroque, Musica Angelica, and the American Classical Orchestra. She made her Kennedy Center debut performing the role of Fraarte in Handel's *Radamisto* with Opera Lafayette, and she hopes to perform more Baroque opera in the future. When not singing, she enjoys taking far too many pictures of her cat, reading, and knitting everything that can possibly be knit.



WILLIAM SKEEN (violoncello) had little incentive to practice 'cello as a young man growing up in tropical South Florida. He overcame the acute lack of arts culture in his surroundings when he found chamber music partners among a community of retired 1930s orchestra musicians in Miami Beach. Today, he is Principal Violoncellist with American Bach Soloists, Musica Angelica, and Co-Principal 'Cellist with Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra. He has also appeared as solo 'cellist with the Los Angeles, Portland, and Seattle Baroque orchestras and is a frequent continuo 'cellist for opera companies including Chicago Opera and San Diego Opera. He is Co-Founder of the New Esterházy Quartet, whose repertoire includes over 150 string quartets performed exclusively on gut strings. Bill performs with several leading early music ensembles including Aeris, El Mundo, Galanterie, Agave Baroque, Philharmonia Chamber Players, Pacific MusicWorks in Seattle, Portland Baroque Orchestra, and Bach Collegium San Diego. In addition to his busy schedule as a period-instrument specialist, he also serves as associate principal 'cellist of the Stockton Symphony and was, for seven seasons, a member of the Carmel Bach Festival orchestra. He has appeared on over eighty recordings for Koch, Delos, BIS, Hannsler, Sono Luminus, and Pandore records. Since 2000, Bill has been a faculty member of the University of Southern California where he teaches Baroque 'cello and viola da gamba.



KENNETH SLOWIK (viola da gamba & piano) is Artistic Director of the Smithsonian Chamber Music Society. He first established his reputation primarily as a 'cellist and viola da gamba player through his work with the Smithsonian Chamber Players, Castle Trio, Smithsonian String Quartet, Axelrod Quartet, and Anner Bylisma's *L'Archibudelli*. Conductor of the Smithsonian Chamber Orchestra since 1988, he became conductor of the Santa Fe Bach Festival in 1998, and led the Santa Fe Pro Musica Chamber Orchestra from 1999-2004. He has been a featured instrumental soloist and/or conductor with numerous other orchestras, among them the National Symphony, the Baltimore Symphony, *l'Orchestre Symphonique de Québec*, the Vancouver Symphony, and the Cleveland Orchestra. Slowik's discography comprises over eighty recordings featuring him as conductor, cellist, gambist, barytonist, and keyboard player. Many have won prestigious international awards,

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including France's *Diapason d'Or* and *Choc*, the "British Music Retailers' Award for Excellence," Italy's *Premio Internazionale del Disco Antonio Vivaldi*, two GRAMMY® nominations, and numerous "Record of the Month" and "Record of the Year" prizes. As an educator, he has presented lectures at colleges and universities throughout the United States and has contributed to a number of symposia and colloquia at museums throughout the United States and Europe. A recipient of the Smithsonian Secretary's Distinguished Scholar Award, he serves on the faculty of the University of Maryland and has been artistic director of the Oberlin Baroque Performance Institute since 1993. In his first performance before a live audience in well over a year, Kenneth recently conducted the National Orchestral Institute orchestra in works of Stravinsky, Baciewicz, and Mendelssohn.

NOAH STRICK (violin) has appeared in performances throughout the United States, Canada, Europe, China, and South America, and can be seen regularly in a variety of performance venues throughout the San Francisco Bay area. He has had the privilege to be involved with performances at numerous summer festivals, including the Mostly Mozart Festival at Lincoln Center, Tanglewood, the Norfolk Chamber Music Festival, Caramoor, and the American Bach Soloists' Festival & Academy. As a baroque violinist, Noah most frequently performs with Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra and the American Bach Soloists, and has appeared as a soloist with both ensembles. In addition, he is a regular member of the California Symphony, where he has served as Principal 2nd Violin, and is Associate Concertmaster for Berkeley Symphony. When he's not working, he likes spending mornings cycling in the Marin Headlands. Noah holds degrees from Oberlin Conservatory and the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. His principal teachers include Kyung Sun Lee, Marilyn McDonald, and Bettina Mussumeli.

DAVID WILSON (violin) is a founding member of Archetti, the Galax Quartet, and other ensembles. He has taught baroque violin at Indiana University, where he earned the Doctor of Music degree in Early Music, and he holds degrees in violin from Bowling Green State University in Ohio and The Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. He teaches violin and chamber music and directs the orchestra at the San Francisco Early Music Society's annual Baroque Workshop. His interests outside of music include cosmology, zymurgy, and science fiction (and he wants to discover a science fiction novel about a homebrewing cosmologist). In the last ten years he has performed and recorded classical music of India and the Ottoman Empire with Lux Musica (East Meets West Music and Golden Horn Records), contemporary music with the Galax Quartet (Innova Recordings and Music & Arts), and 18th-century concerti with Archetti (Centaur Records). He is the author of *Georg Muffat on Performance Practice*, published by Indiana University Press, and of the article on Georg Muffat in *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Historical Performance in Music*.

RACHELL ELLEN WONG (violin) was enjoined by her parents to start playing the violin when she was six years old. Now that she is older and wiser, she is grateful to them for not letting her quit. Recipient of a prestigious 2020 Avery Fisher Career Grant—the first baroque artist in the respected program's history—and Grand Prize winner of the inaugural Lillian and Maurice Barbash J. S. Bach Competition, Rachell is a rising star on both the historical performance and modern violin stages. Her growing reputation has resulted in solo appearances performing Bach concertos all the way to Shostakovich. Rachell made her first public appearance at age 11 and has since performed as a soloist with such orchestras as the Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional de Panamá, Seattle Symphony, American Bach Soloists and has toured with The Academy of Ancient Music, Bach Collegium Japan, Les Arts Florissants, among others. Last fall, Rachell made her conductorial debut with the Seattle Symphony when she directed Vivaldi's "Four Seasons" from the violin. Along with keyboardist David Belkovski, she founded Dioscuri, a new versatile ensemble named after the mythic twins Castor and Pollux. A recent graduate, among her awards and honors are a 2019 Benzaquen Career Advancement Grant and a 2017 Kovner Fellowship from The Juilliard School and grand prizes in multiple international competitions. She performs on a baroque violin from the school of Joachim Tielke, and on a modern violin by Carlo de March. Originally from the Pacific Northwest, Rachell enjoys hiking all over Washington state, improving her snowboarding technique, and playing a multitude of sports with her friends. She also lives with her two bunnies, Shoozie and Bobe, who love eating veggies, listening to Bach on gut strings, and trying to shred Rachell's sheet music.



Learn more about our musicians by watching American Bach Soloists Artist Profiles. Every engaging and high-quality video segment features a wonderful ABS musician who performs one of their favorite solo works and gives us captivating insights into their inspirations, motivations, and devotion to performing music. We're sure you're going to love them!

americanbach.org/youtube

Sunday August 1st 2021

Triples Alley

AMERICAN BACH SOLOISTS
Jeffrey Thomas, conductor

Concerto in F Major for 3 Violins, RV 551

Antonio Vivaldi
(1678-1741)

Allegro—Andante—Allegro

YuEun Gemma Kim • Tatiana Chulochnikova • Tomà Iliev

Concerto grosso in G Minor, Op. 6, No. 6, HWV 324 (1739)

George Frideric Handel
(1685-1759)

Largo affettuoso—A tempo giusto—Musette—Allegro—Allegro

David Wilson • Cynthia Keiko Black • William Skeen • Corey Jamason

Concerto in F Major for 3 Violins, TWV 53:F1
from *Musique de table, Seconde Production* (1733)

Georg Philipp Telemann
(1681-1767)

Allegro—Largo—Vivace

Cynthia Keiko Black • Tomà Iliev • Elizabeth Blumenstock

~Interval~

Sonata seconda à tre violini
from *Sonate, et canzoni a due, tre, quattro, cinque, et a sei voci, libro sesto* (1636)

Giovanni Battista Buonamente
(ca. 1595-1642)

Cynthia Keiko Black • Elizabeth Blumenstock • YuEun Gemma Kim • Corey Jamason

Sinfonia Nona à tre violini from *Sinfonici concerti brevi e facili*, Op. 9 (1667)

Marco Uccellini
(ca. 1603-1680)

YuEun Gemma Kim • Cynthia Keiko Black • Elizabeth Blumenstock • Corey Jamason

Canon & Gigue in D Major P.37 (ca. 1838-42)

Johann Pachelbel
(1653-1706)

Elizabeth Blumenstock • YuEun Gemma Kim • Cynthia Keiko Black • Steven Lehning • Corey Jamason

Concerto in B Minor for 4 Violins, Op. 3 No. 10, RV 580

Antonio Vivaldi
(1678-1741)

Allegro—Largo—Largetto-Adagio-Largo—Allegro

Elizabeth Blumenstock • Tatiana Chulochnikova • YuEun Gemma Kim • Jacob Ashworth

Concerto in D Major for 3 Violins, BWV 1064r

Johann Sebastian Bach
(1685-1750)

Allegro—Adagio—Allegro

Tomà Iliev • Jacob Ashworth • David Wilson

Program Notes: Triples Alley

Vivaldi: Concerto in F Major for 3 Violins

Vivaldi's first musical instruction was on the violin, and the existence of some 230 concertos composed by him is sure evidence of his love for the instrument. Accordingly, it is easy to sense the joy that he must have felt while composing the Concerto for 3 violins, strings, and continuo in F major. It brought opportunities for creating unusual and colorful interaction of the three solo instruments that seem to have inspired Vivaldi greatly. At the outset of the first movement, each soloist takes a turn in the spotlight, but the interplay is always collaborative with all three parts frequently playing very similar passagework. The occasional differences usually amount to distinct but complimentary figurations assigned to the third violinist. Those moments tend to meld together the first and second violinist in high-energy accompaniments to the third player's forays. The middle movement treats the listener to a wonderful effect: one violinist plays a singing cantabile melody, another plays pizzicato notes across the entire range of the violin, and the other plays bowed arpeggios with the composer's instruction "*con piomba*" (with a heavy mute). Overall, it creates a very engaging and lustrous sound. The final movement, in a triple meter, distributes the workload quite equally among the soloists who toss the ball around but combine near the end for a barrage of figurations and descending scales in the minor mode until a final and condensed restatement of thematic material from the movement's opening brings this ingenious concerto to its close.

Handel: Concerto Grosso No. 6 in G Minor

The Concerto Grosso was one of the primary and most often employed musical formats during the Baroque era, much the same as the symphony format identified the Classical era. While there was a great variety among the concertos in terms of the number of sections, the tempos of those various movements, and the inclusion (or not) of dances or even a suite of dances, almost all *concerti grossi* featured a small contingent of soloists usually comprised of two violins, and one violoncello—called the "*concertino*" group—accompanied by harpsichord. Those players were given the spotlight due to the usually more demanding parts that were written for them, and those calls upon their virtuosity were usually very evenly distributed. In the case of the standard group of soloists, the two violinists would often play together in duet. By contrast, a larger group of instrumentalists would be heard at the beginnings, ends, and either intermittently or almost continuously throughout each movement and would fill out the sound when they joined in. The Italian word for that larger contingent is *ripieno*, which in modern usage means "stuffing" or "filling" and is often used in descriptions of foods, such as the *ripieno alla crema* that one finds inside a delicious pastry. Only occasionally would the ripienists remain silent for an entire movement. The contrast of soloists vs. ripienists provided both contrasts of sonority and emphasis on the solo group. In terms of function, *concerti grossi* could be played before or after larger works, such as an opera or oratorio, or even as an *entr'acte* or *intermezzo* between the acts. Handel is among the group of composers who most famously utilized the concerto grosso format. Some of the others were Corelli, Scarlatti, and Geminiani, and if you notice a predominance of Italian names, that is because the format is clearly of Italian origin. Handel became familiar with it during his first sojourn in Italy when he was 21–24 years old, and despite his non-Italian (German) nationality, or perhaps because of his German-style approach to harmony

and melody, Handel brought a richness of color to his *concerti grossi* that embellished the more uniform sound of the Italian models. The work performed on this program is one of Handel's most imaginative examples of the genre. The contrasts between movements are quite pronounced, and the variety of sonorities is especially satisfying. A brooding opening movement followed by a fugue-like section (with an interestingly chromatic descending "subject") is followed by an exquisite central movement in the warm key of E-flat major. Given the title of "*Musette*"—which refers to a bagpipe-like instrument that had a much more elegant tone than its rustic predecessors and was quite fashionable in the French courts—the middle movement is characterized at the start by a sustained "pedal tone" in the bass over which the melody begins its lovely wanderings. But its middle section, animated and having a tone of contrast and briskness, and in conjunction with the outer and more serene sections, reminds some of the great aria from *Messiah*, "He was despised," which shares the same key of E-flat, the same structure, the same contrast of tempi, and the same breadth of scale. To close, Handel composed a pair of *Allegro* movements, the second of which is an elegant minuet.

Telemann: Concerto in F Major for 3 Violins

The solo concerto was one of the most significant musical developments of the Baroque era. Certainly, Vivaldi is remembered for his gargantuan contribution to the genre, having composed about 350 solo concertos (230 for violin) and some 45 double concertos, half of which are for two violins. Although Telemann probably wrote more compositions—most recently numbered at over 3,000—he wrote fewer solo concertos than Vivaldi. Fifty or so are known, along with 15 double concertos, 7 triple concertos, and 4 using four or more solo instruments. Bach, too, was captivated by the idea of double and triple concertos and extended his interest to a concerto for four harpsichords which is a more-or-less direct transcription of a concerto by Vivaldi for four violins. The question of equal versus unequal distribution of technical demands comes to mind quickly, as it would have been considered carefully by the composer. In Telemann's Concerto for 3 Violins in F Major, the calls for virtuosity are quite evenly shared among all three soloists. In fact, an impression of musical egalitarianism is one of the first things that one notices about this particular composition. Collaboration seems to be the theme, and it is always noticeable. Solo passages are never more than a few measures long, and the central movement brings the three soloists together in a most collaborative way. Moving further toward shared responsibilities (and shared riches), the final movement seems to be hardly a concerto at all, rather more like a grand *sinfonia* for all the participants. That final *Allegro* has a particularly palpable *joie de vivre* and melds the full ensemble together into an especially enthusiastic sense of unity.

Buonamente: Sonata seconda a tre violini

Uccellini: Sinfonia Nona à tre violini

A captivating, imaginative, and evocative style of compositions for violin (or multiple violins) and continuo, developed at the beginning of the seventeenth century in Italy, brings to the foreground the topic of florid passagework in vocal and instrumental compositions. For centuries, voices and instruments passed between themselves various compositional and expressive traits, almost always reflecting the evolution of increasing virtuosity. By 1600, the capabilities of instruments and their performers'

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abilities to incorporate elaborate ornamentation had equaled if not superseded the technical prowess of vocalists. In fact, the first decades of the Baroque era are essentially defined by the *floritura*, or florid embellishment that was either notated by composers or improvised in performance. But the truly essential characteristic of that floridity is that it was highly expressive of a particular mood or affect, and not intended to be heard as showy or gymnastic.

Giovanni Battista Buonamente began his professional career in service to the House of Gonzaga in Mantua, followed by serving the Holy Roman Emperor Ferdinand II in Vienna. He performed at the coronation of Ferdinand III in Prague in 1627, before relocating to Parma where he was the violinist at the Madonna della Steccata church. Then moving on to Assisi in 1633, he served as *maestro di cappella*. The *Sonata seconda a tre violini* is hauntingly beautiful and alternates between a sweet conversation of sorts among the violins that gives way to energetic passages. Dance-like interpolations, almost joyful in nature, eventually return to the opening ascending and descending melodic exchange before another lively section concludes with just one note in the last bar, played only by continuo.

Marco Uccellini, like Buonamente, was also a violinist as well as a composer. It is likely that he studied under Buonamente in Assisi at the Basilica of Saint Francis. Following in his teacher's footsteps, he enjoyed a series of appointments, first in Modena where he was well rewarded for his talents, receiving almost eight times the salary of other violinists at the Este court. And it was through the support of the Este family that he found his subsequent position in Parma, where he composed opera and ballet, none of which has survived. Uccellini's *Sinfonia Nona a tre violini*, like his other sonatas for violin(s) and continuo, represents the style that would become an idiomatic standard of the early Italian Baroque. This particular sonata is unusually highly structured. In fact, it is in the "binary" form of A-A-B-B wherein the first half is repeated in its entirety, before the second half follows suit, and each of those halves are themselves composed in two contrasting sections.

Pachelbel: Canon & Gigue in D Major

Johann Pachelbel, one of the most eminent German organist-composers of the generation before J. S. Bach, held important positions in Vienna, in several German cities, and in his native Nuremberg. He helped establish in Roman Catholic south Germany both the virtuosic keyboard style of Austria and the Protestant chorale and chorale-based forms of north Germany. His works include suites, chorale variations, and chorale cantatas. Pachelbel is also one of the most noted German composers for the organ. His works exhibit the dramatic, aggressive style of the Baroque era, albeit in a formal, almost disciplined manner. However, as exemplified in his six organ arias titled *Hexachordum Apollinis*, the approach is improvisatory in nature, with sharp contrasts between irregular and free rhythm. Yet these works are well ordered and designed to focus on the virtuosity of the player. In his preface, Pachelbel wrote, "And many believe that music originates from the angels who sing to the honor of the Highest with their threefold 'Holy!'. Also that the heavenly bodies attend with their wondrous movements, to exhort a beautiful Harmony or Euphony of sounds, of the kind that the worldly-wise Pythagoras and Plato attest to have heard." Well-known as a teacher, his pupils included Johann Christoph Bach, who passed the teachings along to his younger brother Johann Sebastian. Pachelbel's influence reached even further: He had a son, Carl Theodor, who became an important musical personality in the early history of the American colonies.

The well-known Canon (and Gigue) in D Major has become one of the most popular of all Baroque works. It has received quite possibly as much radio air-time as any other composition from the Baroque period. And its rise in popularity was due to the arrangement recorded by Jean-François Paillard in 1968. As Bach did in his transcription of Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater*, Maestro Paillard added a viola part not found in the original. Also, on occasion, the violins (many more than Pachelbel had intended) engaged for each part double the original notes at an octave above. Certainly it was the romantic treatment of Paillard's arrangement that initially captured the ears and hearts of millions of listeners, but the release



The image shows a handwritten manuscript titled "Canon a 3 Violini con Basso c. di Joh. Pachelbel." It features six staves of music. The top three staves are for Violino 1, Violino 2, and Violino 3, each in D major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. The bottom three staves are for the Continuo, with a key signature change to D minor (two flats) and a 3/4 time signature. The music is written in a clear, elegant hand, showing the characteristic canon structure where the first violin part is repeated by the other two.

Manuscript copy of the Canon in D Major by Pachelbel.
Note the condensed bass line, written out only once, to be repeated until the movement's close.

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of the recording would soon be followed by the Early Music revival that led to thousands of newly produced and newly conceived performances of Baroque music, rendered—according to the best intentions of their performers—as it was conceived: in the case at hand, a brilliant and sublime tour-de-force for three solo violins, played above a constant but very harmonically satisfying bass line. The Canon was later paired with a sprightly Gigue.

Vivaldi: Concerto in B Minor for 4 Violins

A set of twelve string concertos titled *L'Estro Armonico*, which translates not at all perfectly to “The Harmonic Fancy”, were published by Estienne Roger of Amsterdam in 1711. They quickly catapulted Vivaldi to international celebrity and enjoyed success as at least the second most popular works of the entire 18th century, trumped only by Arcangelo Corelli’s famous Opus 6 Concerti Grossi. They were subsequently reprinted by the London publisher John Walsh and by Le Clerc Cadet in Paris.

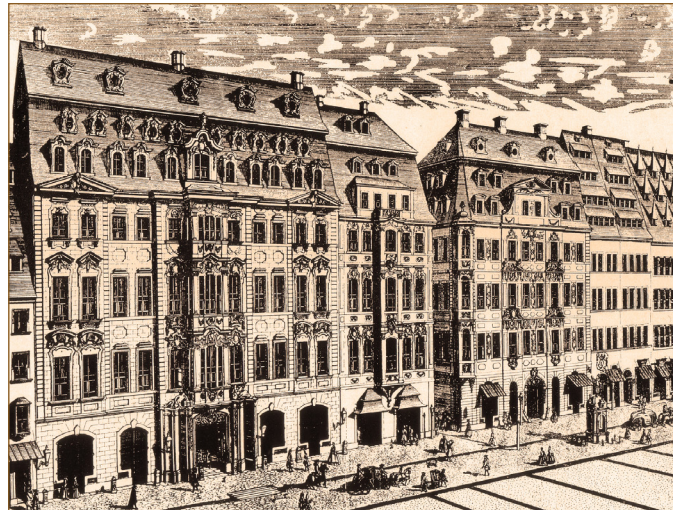
Assembled as four groups of three concertos—each group comprised of a concerto for four violins, one for two violins, and one for solo violin—Vivaldi alternated minor and major tonalities in a way that indicates that the entire set could very appropriately be performed as a whole. Tomaso Albinoni’s Opus 7 and 9, and Giuseppe Torelli’s Opus 5 and 8 employed the same paired arrangement of keys. Variety seems to have been the primary goal, and Vivaldi achieved this with stunning perfection. In the Concerto in B Minor for Four Violins, especially notable is the marvelous effect in the middle Larghetto movement of four violins simultaneously playing arpeggiated figures, but each in a different metrical frame. Most intriguing, though, is the way in which the four soloists provide “orchestral” support for each other in all three movements, obviating the need for ripieno violins that usually participate in the fuller ritornello sections that delineate the traditional interplay between soloists and tutti.

Bach transcribed a dozen Vivaldi concertos. Of the resulting works for keyboard, six are from this opus, including his brilliant resetting of this work for four harpsichords. Clearly the excitement Bach must have felt when he studied this work inspired him to extend his usual practice of condensing full concertos into a version for one keyboard. Realizing that the intricacies of Vivaldi’s scoring for a quartet of soloists could not be condensed in such a way as to make them performable on one instrument, his decision to create a fuller sonority by employing four harpsichords resulted in a sensational transcription.

Bach: Concerto in D Major for 3 Violins

Many of Bach’s concertos for solo violin, though now lost in their original forms, were transcribed or “recycled” as harpsichord concertos when Bach would assume the directorship of Leipzig’s Collegium Musicum in 1729. The Collegium Musicum, a semi-professional musical performance society that Telemann had founded in 1702, was one of two such societies in Leipzig: the other had been founded in 1708 and was directed during Bach’s time in Leipzig by J.G. Görner, the University Church music director and Thomaskirche organist with whom Bach was not on the best of terms. Bach’s Collegium Musicum was supported by university students and some professional musicians, almost certainly including his older sons. This ensemble could be adapted to the

performance of anything secular from chamber music to small orchestral/choral works, and was a fixture of the lively middle-class musical life in Leipzig.



Zimmermann’s Café in Leipzig, circa 1720

Meetings of the ensemble were held on Friday evenings at Gottfried Zimmermann’s coffee house (or sometimes *al fresco* in summer). In addition to these regular concerts, which were open to the public, the Collegium also performed from time to time for royal or academic occasions. We know that Bach composed several pieces for such events, but unfortunately there is no known record of the music played at the Collegium’s ordinary concerts. Nevertheless, we believe that Bach arranged his many harpsichord concertos for these evenings from pre-existing concertos for other solo instruments, most often violins.

We believe further that, sometime around 1735, Bach and his sons performed a concerto for three harpsichords in C major (BWV 1064) at Zimmermann’s Coffee House. This concerto, like so many others that were performed in Leipzig around that time, was probably the result of another successful transcription by Bach of a pre-existing work for violins. Accordingly, the lost and likely original concerto has been reconstructed, or reverse-engineered, into the form we present tonight.

Transposed to D major, a more likely and more idiomatic key for a triple violin concerto, the work opens with a clearly intelligible ritornello. The accompanying orchestral musicians play nearly all the time (in all three movements), and “teamwork” seems to be the subtext. The soloists enter always in order, either first-second-third, or third-second-first. The central movement presents a fuller spectrum of sound than the first, especially when the ripienists occasionally play in the lower parts of their instruments’ ranges. The third movement gives the chance for all the soloists, in succession from third to second to first, to demonstrate their prowess, in a commendably polite contest. Only the first violinist is given the opportunity to play in a more or less improvisational style in a pseudo-cadenza that brings us to the final ritornello and the concerto’s close.

Tuesday August 3rd 2021

Bach Explorations: Transformation

Partita in E Major for Solo Violin, BWV 1006 (1720)

Johann Sebastian Bach
(1685-1750)

Preludio—Gavotte en Rondeau—Gigue

Rachell Ellen Wong

Suite from the Partita in E Major for Violin by J. S. Bach (1933)

Sergei Rachmaninoff
(1873-1943)

Preludio, non allegro—Gavotte—Gigue

Steven Bailey

Prélude. Poco vivace "Obsession"

from Sonata for Solo Violin in A Minor, "A Jacques Thibaud," Op. 27, No. 2 (1923)

Eugène Ysaÿe
(1858-1931)

Noah Strick

Suite in G Major for Solo Violoncello, BWV 1007

in an 1864 arrangement for 'cello and piano by Friedrich Wilhelm Stade (1817-1902);
after an arrangement for 'cello and piano by Robert Schumann (1810-1856)

Johann Sebastian Bach
(1685-1750)

*Prelude. Allegro moderato—Allemande. Allegro moderato—Courante. Allegro—
Sarabande. Largo—Menuetto I & II—Gigue. Allegro*

Gretchen Claassen • Kenneth Slowik

Weinen, Klagen, Sorgen, Zagen ("Weeping, Lamenting, Worrying, Fearing") BWV 12 (1714)
Chorus & Chorale (Instrumental)

Johann Sebastian Bach
(1685-1750)

Rachell Ellen Wong • Noah Strick • Ramón Negrón-Pérez • Gretchen Claassen • Kenneth Slowik • Corey Jamason

Variations on the Motif "*Weinen, Klagen, Sorgen, Zagen*" S.180 (1862)

Franz Liszt
(1811-1886)

Steven Bailey

We can all take solace in knowing that, in most cases, the greatest art—the most timeless mementos of painting, sculpture, music, and literature from past cultures—survives. Sometimes it is carefully and thoughtfully curated, sometimes masterworks are fortuitously discovered or even uncovered among "buried treasures," and sometimes, although transformed, great works of art are propagated through the process of a kind of acculturation when subsequent societies adapt, modify, and rebalance the aesthetics of the original art to assimilate it more adeptly into the prevailing culture. The proverb, "Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery," comes to mind especially when considering the surprisingly common

practice during the Baroque era whereby composers would freely incorporate melodies—fragments or even complete passages—written by others into their own compositions. This particular form of flattery was quite prevalent, and certainly was applied to composers who often flattered themselves by using, over and over again, their own melodies in several pieces. Bach was quite accomplished at this process, but his self-borrowings almost always came with significant programmatic revisions. For example, he would take a pre-existing aria from one of his secular cantatas and repurpose it for use in a sacred cantata. But even though much of the copied music would remain unchanged, its meaning, its intention would have been dramatically

Program Notes: Transformation

transformed. Probably no composer flaunted his auto-appropriations more than Handel. But he executed that because the melodies were simply so good that they deserved subsequent hearings.

Tonight's program, "Transformation," presents three of Bach's most flawless works along with their complimentary reworkings by three composers who are easily singled out for their stylistic independence, along with another reworking by a violinist and mentor whose understanding of a multi-generational span of artists led him to influentially champion dozens of composers and performers including Chausson, D'Indy, Debussy, Elgar, Enescu, Faure, Franck, Reger, Saint-Saëns, and Strauss.

Two of the original Bach compositions on this program are solo sonatas for an unaccompanied string instrument. **Bach's Sonatas and Partitas for Solo Violin** and the similar suites for solo violoncello are most remarkable for the way in which they manage to convey many voices in a single line. The manner in which this implied polyphony is evoked in these unaccompanied works is astonishingly concise. Contrapuntal lines are sketched with a trajectory and tonal logic so clear that their continuations need not be explicitly stated. The imagination provides this continuation, while the actual sounding voice jumps to sketch another line. There are only one or two short ideas per movement, but each is rich with possibilities for elaboration, and so the primary interest lies in the way Bach muses over them, plays with them, and explores their potential. A magical world—half heard, half imagined—is created, and the listener is drawn into this world as an active participant. To understand this better, think of a hymn or part-song for four voices: soprano, alto, tenor, and bass. At the outset, we hear a few notes of the primary melody, then perhaps a bass note or two followed by a few notes from the alto part, even though the hymn's or song's melody continues in our minds. Then, maybe a few more notes from the melody are heard, then part of the tenor part, moving up to the alto part, jumping down to the bass line, and finally concluding with the end of the phrase in the soprano melody. Even though we hear rarely more than one part at a time, we are left with the impression of having "heard" all four parts blended together.

Bach composed his six sonatas and partitas for solo violin around 1720, while employed at Cöthen. Although the identity of the first performer of these sonatas and partitas remains unknown, a number of prominent violinists in Bach's circle have been suggested, including two violinists at the Dresden court, Johann Georg Pisendel and Jean-Baptiste Volumier, as well as the leader of the orchestra at Cöthen, Joseph Spiess. But it is equally assumed that Bach may have composed these works for his own enjoyment and performance, and were therefore less likely to have had pedagogical intentions than the solo sonatas for violoncello.

Rachmaninoff's Suite from the Partita in E Major for Violin by J. S. Bach, a transformation of three movements from Bach's violin partita, indisputably retains the "feeling" of their Baroque origins, but quickly we are enraptured by Rachmaninoff's trademark sonorities of indulgent harmonies and waterfalls of pianistic figurations. Within seconds of hearing the first samplings of those, we want more, and yearn to be overcome in the way that his piano concertos overwhelm the listener. But Rachmaninoff gives us just a taste, as if he might have considered his ornamentations to be foolhardy, humbled by Bach's original music. But who wouldn't be thus humbled?

Born in the Belgian city of Liège, Eugène-Auguste Ysaÿe was part of a family of artisans and musicians, violinists in particular, and by the end of his career he became known as one of the world's greatest violinists. Widely respected by a multitude of colleagues,

composers including Chausson, Debussy, and Franck dedicated works to him. Ysaÿe composed six solo violin sonatas in honor of six famous violinists, and it is the second sonata (dedicated to the French virtuoso, Jacques Thibaud) that includes a highly imaginative movement titled "**Obsession**," which repeatedly (obsessively) quotes the opening and subsequent figurations from Bach's E Major partita. Intertwined, through a series of melodic warps of Bach's original figurations, are eerie interjections of the "*Dies Irae*," a plainchant from the Catholic Mass for the Dead.

Although the exact details are a bit incomplete, it is known that Robert Schumann set his pen to the task of bringing **Bach's Suites for Solo Violoncello** into the realm of that golden age of music for piano by the German Romantic composers beginning with Schubert, ending with Brahms, and including his own sweetly lyrical style. But Schumann's accompaniments to Bach's original cello music (left unchanged) were met with less than enthusiasm. Taking it upon himself to improve upon Schumann's intentions, Friedrich Wilhelm Städe issued a publication based on Schumann's arrangements but with some significant enhancements. The result is a lovely example of the acculturation mentioned earlier: the original doesn't suffer at all, yet it is brought forward into a later "understanding" by presenting the music within the norms of the subsequent stylistic expectations and appreciations of the Romantic era.

When Bach took a position as organist at the court of Weimar, he was initially not engaged to compose cantatas, which was however his *raison d'être* for becoming a church musician. Only after being offered a position elsewhere did the court promote him to "Concertmaster," which offered him the opportunity to write cantatas at the rate of one every four weeks or so. One of the first products of that advancement was the cantata *Weinen, Klagen, Sorgen, Zagen* ("Weeping, Lamenting, Worrying, Fearing"), written for the third Sunday after Easter. The texts for that day focus on the necessity of suffering to achieve ultimate joy: The Gospel reading tells of Jesus predicting his death but also prophesizing his resurrection; sorrow will be turned to joy. The librettist at Weimar, Salomo Franck, provided the evocative text, and Bach set it masterfully and with emotional precision. Indeed the idea of transformation from sorrow to joy is evident even in the opening mournful chorus, so perfectly set to music that the listener finds joy in its superb execution. The acceptance of the terms to acquire ultimate joy is expressed in the cantata's final, glorious chorale, "*Was Gott tut, das ist wohlgetan*": "What God does, is well done, I will cling to this. Along the harsh path trouble, death and misery may drive me. Yet God will, just like a father, hold me in His arms: therefore I let Him alone rule."

Arguably the greatest pianist the world has known, Franz Liszt applied the parameters of his astonishing technique to transcriptions of works by nearly 100 other composers, focusing significantly on Bach, Beethoven, Berlioz, Donizetti, Mendelssohn, Meyerbeer, Mozart, Rossini, Schubert, Verdi, Wagner, and Weber. But his *Variations on the Motif "Weinen, Klagen, Sorgen, Zagen,"* dedicated to Anton Rubenstein, are far more than a transcription of music by Bach. With the exception of musical fragments taken from the cantata, it is full of originality. The Australian pianist and Liszt musicologist, Leslie Howard, concisely describes its heritage and structure: "The work dates from 1862 and was motivated by the death of Liszt's elder daughter, Blandine. A fierce introduction leads to the theme and 43 variations, followed by a chromatic development in the shape of a recitative, and then a group of freer, faster variations, culminating with the choral '*Was Gott tut, das ist wohlgetan*' (which also ends Bach's cantata) and a brief coda in which the two themes are juxtaposed before F minor finally gives way to an unequivocally optimistic F major:"

Thursday August 5th 2021

The Devil's Trill

Trio Sonata in G Major, Op. 5, No. 4, HWV 399 (1739)

George Frideric Handel
(1685-1759)

*Allegro—A tempo ordinario—Allegro, non presto—Passacaille
Gigue. Presto—Menuet. Allegro moderato*

Elizabeth Blumenstock • YuEun Gemma Kim • Gretchen Claassen • Corey Jamason

Pastorale in A Major, Op. 1, No. 13, B.A16 (ca. 1731)

Giuseppe Tartini
(1692-1770)

Grave—Allegro—Largo—Presto—Largo—Presto—Andante

Jacob Ashworth • Gretchen Claassen • Corey Jamason

Trio Sonata in C Minor "Gespräch zwischen einem Sanguineus und Melancholicus"
("Conversation between a Sanguine and a Melancholy"), Wq 161/1 (1749)

Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach
(1714-1788)

Allegretto—Presto—Allegretto—Presto . . . (etc.)—Adagio—Allegro

Rachell Ellen Wong • Tomà Iliev • Gretchen Claassen • Corey Jamason

Sonata in G Minor "Il trillo del Diavolo" ("The Devil's Trill"), B.g5

Giuseppe Tartini
(1692-1770)

*Larghetto affettuoso—Tempo giusto della Scuola Tartinista—
Sogni dell'autore: Andante—Allegro assai "Il trillo del Diavolo"*

Tatiana Chulochnikova • Gretchen Claassen • Corey Jamason

Concerto in D Minor for 2 Violins, BWV 1043 (ca. 1720)

Johann Sebastian Bach
(1685-1750)

Tekla Cunningham • Tomà Iliev
Jeffrey Thomas, conductor

"One night, in the year 1713 I dreamed I had made a pact with the devil for my soul. Everything went as I wished: my new servant anticipated my every desire. Among other things, I gave him my violin to see if he could play. How great was my astonishment on hearing a sonata so wonderful and so beautiful, played with such great art and intelligence, as I had never even conceived in my boldest flights of fantasy. I felt enraptured, transported, enchanted: my breath failed me, and I awoke. I immediately grasped my violin in order to retain, in part at least, the impression of my dream. In vain! The music which I at this time composed is indeed the best that I ever wrote, and I still call it the Devil's Trill, but the difference between it and that which so moved me is so great that I would have destroyed my instrument and have said farewell to music forever if it had been possible for me to live without the enjoyment it affords me."

According to the French astronomer, Joseph Jérôme Lefrançois de Lalande (1732–1807), Giuseppe Tartini recounted the story of his terrifying but inspiring encounter with the Devil that led to one of the most widely told legends in classical music. Tartini was an extremely earnest musician whose background included the parental intention that he would become a Franciscan friar. Law studies at the University of Padua further contributed to his values, and even his virtuous love for and marriage to a woman from a lower social class (which was a formidable issue at the time) was pure, despite the interference from

the powerful Cardinal Giorgio Cornaro of Padua who claimed Tartini had abducted the woman, Elisabetta Premazore, who was a "favorite" of the Cardinal. Tartini had to flee prosecution and took refuge in the monastery of St. Francis in Assisi. His musical conscientiousness was impressive, too, according to another Tartini legend that describes his humility when hearing the famous violinist and composer, Francesco Maria Veracini, whose bowing technique was so impressive that Tartini, quite discouraged, took a sojourn in the city of Ancona "in order to study the use of the bow in more tranquility," according

Program Notes: The Devil's Trill

to the English music historian, Charles Burney. Those intense and self-guided studies paid off, because within just a few more years his career was launched as one of the most talented, successful, and highly esteemed violinists of the Baroque era. He began to travel, in demand as a composer, became the first known performer to acquire an instrument made by Antonio Stradivari, and established a violin school that attracted musicians from throughout Europe. In his later years, his interests turned to harmonic theory, acoustics, and an approach to musical theory that was based on mathematical solutions.

So, one could hardly imagine the wild, fantastic dream of diabolical collaboration to have come from such a sober and diligent musician. Yet, that nightmarish hallucination resulted in one of the most notoriously difficult violin compositions to have come from any period of music history. Its challenges, which are many, are summed up by the composer's title, "**The Devil's Trill**," which refers to a series of demanding double stop trills in the final movement, seen here indicated by the words, "Trill of the devil at the foot of the bed."



The Baroque era was an age of virtuosity. Dozens of celebrated violinists, known for their technical prowess, were the toasts of the towns throughout Europe and England. But, unlike some of our modern-day concert paradigms, virtuosity was not *shown* as much as it was heard and delivered with charm, suavité, and grace. When a musician can perform unimaginably difficult music but "makes it look easy" through the appearance of effortlessness, therein lies phenomenal talent.

Even though the rest of this program presents works that are as equally demanding as "The Devil's Trill" sonata, the focus of three of them is on collaboration, if not enhanced by a touch of friendly competition: three are composed for a pair of violinists with Basso continuo or full orchestral accompaniment. In the case of Handel's **Trio Sonata in G Major**, it is exactly that refined stylishness, so much a characteristic of the Baroque, that defines the work. Handel's music provides an eternal font of elegance, and it is in plentiful supply in this five-movement pastiche of movements from his operas. The collection published in 1738 by Walsh of Handel's Op. 5 trio sonatas was probably the result of a real opportunity to capitalize on Handel's well-known operatic tunes as well as lesser-known gems from the anthems that had been composed for the court of the Duke of Chandos nearly twenty years before, and a few melodies from oratorios. This particular sonata draws upon the overture to *Athalia* (1733) for the first movement, and the "French overture" from *Il Parnasso in Festa* (1734) for the second. The third movement, a Passacaille, is taken from *Radamisto* (1720), and is followed by an animated Gigue from *Terpsichore* (1734). The final movement is a minuet from the first act of *Alcina* (1735). Altogether, greatly varied, the five movements present a panoply of opportunities for good-humored interactions among the instrumentalists.

Historians now view Frederick the Great, King of Prussia, as one of the most enlightened monarchs of his age, and his court was one



Tartini's Dream by Louis-Léopold Boilly (1761-1845)

that upheld the importance of freedom of the press and literature, as well as the arts and philosophy. Intellectualism was greatly valued, and so the tongue-in-cheek aspect of C.P.E. Bach's extraordinary **Trio Sonata in C Minor**, composed for Frederick's court, would have been appreciated for its lightly comedic tone and charming function as a kind of musical bonbon. It portrays a conversation—a friendly "duel"—between a "sanguine man" and a "melancholic," but positive optimism wins out!

In contrast to the turbulence of the "Devil's Trill" sonata, Tartini's **Pastorale in A Major** seems to project a kind of rustic innocence that is immediately endearing and captivating. Tartini asks the violinist to retune the strings from the normal G-D-A-E intervals to A-E-A-E, a process known as *scordatura*, so that the instrument will truly shine in the key of A Major, since more strings are thereby consonant with the key, and more strings can be easily incorporated into the overall sonority. We hear this harmonic sheen in the sweet opening movement, and the function of *scordatura* is even more pronounced in the next two movements which progress from a jaunty country dance to a finale inspired by the grounding tones of a hurdy-gurdy.

Bach's **Concerto in D Minor for Two Violins**, like his other violin concertos, the *Brandenburg Concertos*, and many other instrumental works, dates from his years as Kapellmeister to the Prince of Anhalt-Cöthen, the period in Bach's early thirties which he later recalled as the happiest time of his life. But, if the stormy and occasionally chromatic D minor of its outer movements might seem to belie that happiness, the serene lyricism of the second movement accords perfectly with Bach's recollection. The outer movements are based on almost mirror-image musical figures: an upward-sweeping theme dominates the *Vivace*, and a downward gesture permeates the *Allegro*. The first movement has especially interesting architectural and programmatic qualities, including the appearance of a fugue right from the start. The opening *ritornello*, with its fugal entrances, generates an expectation that there will be some sort of imitative elements further down the road, perfect for a double concerto. Indeed, within the movement we find a decidedly equilibrated swapping of material between the two soloists, providing both a complete independence of the parts as well as the feeling that the two are absolutely equally matched. Also noteworthy is the fact that the opening *ritornello* contains at least five clearly defined entrances of the main subject, lasting about one fourth of the length of the entire movement. In both outer movements, the two soloists are pitted against the orchestral strings, which alternately support and overwhelm them. In the *Largo*, the solo violins are the uncontested focus of attention, the orchestra providing gentle accompaniment to their arabesques.

Friday August 6th 2021

Bach & His World

Sonata V in E Minor, C. 142 (1681) from *Sonatae per violino solo* Heinrich Ignaz Franz Biber
(1644-1704)

*Adagio—Variatio. Allegro-Adagio-Presto-Adagio-Presto—
Aria [Allegro]—Variatio. Presto-Adagio*

Elizabeth Blumenstock • Kenneth Slowik • Corey Jamason

Sonata con tribus violinis (ca. 1677) Johann Heinrich Schmelzer
(ca. 1623-1680)

Elizabeth Blumenstock • Tekla Cunningham • Jacob Ashworth • Steven Lehning • Corey Jamason

Trio Sonata in E-flat Major, TWV 42:Es1 from *Musique de table, Premiere Production* (1733) Georg Philipp Telemann
(1681-1767)

Affettuoso-Adagio-Vivace—Grave—Allegro

Elizabeth Blumenstock • YuEun Gemma Kim • Gretchen Claassen • Corey Jamason

Sonata in B-flat Major, Op. 1, No. 4, BwvWV 225 (1694) Dietrich Buxtehude
(1637-1707)

*Vivace—Allegro—Lento—Allegro
Gigue (from BuxWV 273, an earlier manuscript version of this sonata)*

Tekla Cunningham • Kenneth Slowik • Corey Jamason

~Interval~

Sonata in G Minor for Viola da gamba and Harpsichord, BWV 1029 (ca. 1730-40) Johann Sebastian Bach
(1685-1750)

Vivace—Adagio—Allegro

Kenneth Slowik • Corey Jamason

Sonata in G Major for Violin and Basso continuo, BWV 1021 (1730-34) Johann Sebastian Bach
(1685-1750)

Adagio—Vivace—Largo—Presto

Tekla Cunningham • Gretchen Claassen • Corey Jamason

Concerto in F Minor for Harpsichord, BWV 1056 (1738) Johann Sebastian Bach
(1685-1750)

[Allegro]—Largo—Presto

Corey Jamason

Program Notes: Bach & His World

Biber: Sonata V in E Minor

The Sonata in E Minor by Heinrich Biber is from a collection of solo sonatas published in 1681 and dedicated to Prince-Archbishop of Salzburg, Maximilian Gandolf von Kuenburg. After a private performance for the prince, a copy of the print was donated to the Monastery of Kremsmünster, where it is still housed today. Each of the eight sonatas has a noticeably different mood or affect (we are performing the fifth of the collection). For example, the first is fiery and brilliant, the third is extremely intimate, and the final sonata of the set is actually a “trio” sonata with two parts played by one violin over the bass. This sonata has the lightest mood and includes both pastoral and gigue-like sections. It also makes generous use of variations. The advanced technical challenges required by Biber in order to play these works form the basis of much of his reputation as a virtuoso violinist-composer.

Schmelzer: Sonata con tribus violinis

Nearly all of Johann Schmelzer’s published compositions are from early in his career. Almost nothing appeared in print after his collection of solo violin sonatas, *Sonatae unarum fidum*, from 1664. Although these earlier sonatas are among his best known works today, and are technically and musically exceptional works, his style continued to develop, and we find in his later works—56 sonatas, all surviving as manuscript copies only—a much more profoundly matured artist. One of the hallmarks of these later works is an avoidance of compositions that follow any pre-established patterns. As the rest of the “mainstream” composers gravitated to multi-movement works like those developing in Italy, Schmelzer, not unlike J. S. Bach later, continued to push the older, established forms to their extremes. In 1671 Schmelzer was named Vize-Hofkapellmeister, and in 1673 was raised to the nobility adding the title “von Ehrenruef” to his name. This rise in rank allowed him close contact to others in the nobility, in particular, the Prince-Bishop of Olomouc, Carl Leichtenstein-Castelcorn. Until his death in 1680, Schmelzer maintained close written contact with the Prince-Bishop, frequently keeping him informed about the musical life in Vienna, and often including manuscript copies of his most recent works to add to the Prince’s library at his private palace in Kroměříž, (Moravia) where, luckily for us, they remain today. One of the gems of this collection is the sonata for three violins performed tonight. Except for two short homophonic sections, it is a very polyphonic work filled with textures much like those found in the works of the early seventeenth century Italians: Giovanni Gabrieli, Giovanni Battista Fontana, Marco Uccellini, and Biagio Marini.

Telemann: Trio Sonata in E-flat Major

One of the most prolific and justifiably famous composers of the High Baroque, indeed, of all time, was Georg Philipp Telemann. Having composed over 3000 individual works—more than half of which have not survived to the present—he was well regarded equally by colleagues and critics throughout his life. He composed and published works for every type of musical genre known in his day: opera and oratorio, orchestral suites and concertos, chamber music for from one to seven parts (solos, trios, quartets, quintets, etc.), and incidental music for specific public celebrations. These are compositions of the highest quality. Numerous theorists cited his works as examples of ideal composition. His instrumental magnum opus is titled: *Musique de table* or *Tafelmusik* and is among the largest and most extraordinary collections of instrumental

music from the late Baroque. While this title translates to “Table Music,” or music to be played at a formal feast, that was likely not why Telemann used this label. It is more likely that he thought of this collection as a smorgasbord of music choices—analogue to the varied selections at a banquet. It is a very cosmopolitan compendium, containing works in many national styles, not just the prevalent French and Italian ones. The collection consists of seven part-books, each divided into three sub-divisions (which Telemann called “Productions”), each of which is further divided into six “courses.” They all begin with an Overture-suite, followed by a Concerto (with multiple soloists), a Quartet, Trio, and Solo sonata, closing with a “Conclusion” (scored for the same instruments as the opening Overture). This Trio Sonata in E-flat Major for two violins and basso continuo from the first Production is in the four-movement, *sonata da chiesa* (“church sonata”) form, with alternating slow and fast movements.

Buxtehude: Sonata & Gigue in B-flat Major

Buxtehude was certainly Bach’s greatest inspiration. It was in 1705 that Bach, then only 20 years old, traveled over 250 miles on foot to hear the famous North German composer perform. Buxtehude was nearly 50 years older than Johann Sebastian, and so Bach’s already robust respect for his musical forebears found an influential subject in the Danish-born organist and composer who had founded a highly successful and greatly admired series of evening musical performances called “*Abendmusik*” (“Evening Music”). Indeed, Bach’s esteem for Buxtehude was so great that the elder’s musical influence can be seen and heard even in the latest works of Bach.

The Sonata in B-flat Major begins with a 14-note theme played 32 times by the basso continuo (harpsichord), while a solo violin and solo viola da gamba perform variations above the repeated bass line, all of this amounting to a kind of chaconne. The tempo is marked *Vivace*, and the recurring bass line serves as the background to several types of interaction between the violin and viola da gamba, sometimes handing back and forth short (or long) melodic gestures, and sometimes engaging in quite tricky, rapid banter. A short but very cohesive *Lento* follows that soon gives way to a final *Allegro*. This particular work exists in two formats: the published version from 1694, and an undated manuscript from the same decade that includes a suite of dances to follow the sonata. We’ve programmed the suite’s final movement, a sprightly *Gigue*, to serve as a kind of coda. Listen carefully to the second half of the *Gigue*: It begins with a 2-bar motif that Bach would later utilize in the final movement of his fifth *Brandenburg Concerto*, certainly as an homage to the composer that he so greatly revered.

Bach: Sonata in G Minor for Viola da gamba and Harpsichord

Standard among nearly all Baroque sonatas—whether for solo or for multiple instruments—was that the keyboardist’s participation was to realize a figured bass, rarely departing from the role as an accompanying part. But Bach left us a dozen or so sonatas for solo instrument with *obbligato* keyboard. These are, in reality, trio sonatas with one voice played by a violin, flute, or other instrument and the other two voices performed on the keyboard, with separate voices or parts for each hand. Although very different, they anticipate the sonatas for violin or cello and piano of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven. Bach composed three of these for viola da gamba and harpsichord. The third sonata, in G

Program Notes: Bach & His World

Minor, is structured rather like a concerto in three movements. Two outer fast movements flank a slow, central *Adagio*. It isn't completely out of the question to believe that this could have actually been a concerto, or perhaps when Bach began composing it, he had initially intended on it being one. The two outer movements both make use of the compositional device called *ritornello* (material that, once presented at the beginning, continues to return throughout the course of the movement), a structure he would have learned from studying the violin concertos of Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741). The middle *Adagio* is really two different solo sonata movements played at the same time (they share the same bass line however). It is a binary movement—in two halves with each half repeated ("A-A-B-B")—in which the viola da gamba plays a freely ornamented melody in the style of an Italian *arioso*, while the right hand of the harpsichordist plays a French *Sarabande*, a slow dance movement in triple time with a strong pulse on the 2nd beat. The roles then reverse at the beginning of the second section, with the viola da gamba finishing the *Sarabande* (a fitting move for an instrument that was so closely associated with French music).

Bach: Sonata in G Major for Violin and Basso continuo

In addition to the six Sonatas & Partitas for Unaccompanied Violin and the six Sonatas for Violin and Obligato Harpsichord, we have from Bach's pen two sonatas for solo violin with basso continuo, probably composed in the years between the two more famous sets. Both of these works survive in single copies only. The clean source of the Sonata in G Major performed this evening was carefully written out by Bach's second wife, Anna Magdalena, with additional markings and figures for the bass by Bach himself. It is a small work of four movements in the *sonata da chiesa* tradition, but extremely well written. The bass line of the first movement—an elegant melodic *Adagio*—is found in two additional but spurious works: a violin sonata in F Major, BWV 1022, and a trio sonata in G Major for flute, violin, and bass. Both of these pieces may have

been didactic works given by Bach to his son Carl Philipp Emanuel to flesh out a complete sonata using the assigned bass line. The following *Vivace* is a dance called the *Courante*, although not titled as such. The third movement shares a bass line with one of the sections of Bach's motet *Jesu, meine Freude*. The violin part in this *Largo* sounds like a freely ornamented flight of fancy in the manner that a performer might have improvised similar embellishments in a slow movement by another composer, yet every note was carefully thought out and written down by Bach. To close, the violin and basso continuo play more equally active parts in the *Presto*.

Bach: Concerto in F Minor for Harpsichord

Bach undoubtedly wrote many more instrumental works than those that have survived to the present. Although many remain lost, there are a handful that we can re-construct from later works: notably, from his concertos for harpsichord. While in Leipzig, Bach created a number of concertos for one to as many as four harpsichord soloists to be performed at Zimmermann's Coffeehouse, outdoors when weather permitted. These were probably written to be played specifically by Bach himself and/or his sons and best students. Since keyboards were not yet commonly used instruments in concertos, Bach chose to re-purpose some of his existing concertos for violin, oboe, or other instruments that he had composed earlier, perhaps during his tenure in Cöthen. One sign that these were re-workings of a composition for a solo treble instrument is that the left hand of the harpsichord part in the new concerto has little independence from the orchestral bass part. The Concerto in F Minor was likely originally composed for violin or perhaps oboe, but originally in G Minor. But, the borrowings in this particular harpsichord concerto are at least two layers deep. The middle movement of the original concerto (for violin or oboe) was borrowed from the *sinfonia* that opens Cantata 156, although filled out with ornamental figures in the Italian *arioso* style.

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Saturday August 7th 2021

The Garden of Harmony

AMERICAN BACH SOLOISTS
Jeffrey Thomas, conductor

"Sonata In Imitation of Birds" from 6 Sonatas in Three Parts (1700)

William Williams
(fl. 1675-1701)

Adagio—Allegro—Grave—Allegro

Aria Nona à 3, Maritati Insieme la Gallina e Il Cucco Fanno un Bel Concerto

("Married Together, the Hen and the Cuckoo Make a Fine Concert")

from *Sonate, Arie e Correnti à due e à tre* (1642)

Marco Uccellini
(ca. 1603-1680)

Elizabeth Blumenstock • YuEun Gemma Kim • Gretchen Claassen • Corey Jamason

"Hark! hark! the Lark!" Words by William Shakespeare (1564-1616) from *Cymbeline* (1611)

Robert Johnson
(1583-1633)

"When daisies pied" Words by William Shakespeare from *Love's Labours Lost* (mid-1590s)

Thomas Arne
(1710-1778)

"This merry pleasant spring" from *The Turpyn Book of Lute Songs* (ca. 1610-1615)

Anonymous
(16th Century)

"Have you seen the bright lily grow?" Words by Ben Jonson (1573-1637)

Robert Johnson
(1583-1633)

Nola Richardson • Corey Jamason • Elizabeth Blumenstock

Sonata "Il Cucù" ("The Cuckoo")

Johann Heinrich Schmelzer
(ca. 1623-1680)

Tekla Cunningham • William Skeen • Corey Jamason

Concerto in F Major for Organ, "Cuckoo and the Nightingale" HWV 295 (1739)

George Frideric Handel
(1685-1759)

Larghetto—Allegro—Larghetto—Allegro

Corey Jamason

~Interval~

Concerto Grosso No. 3 in D Minor "The Garden of Harmony"

from 12 Concerti grossi after Harpsichord Sonatas by Domenico Scarlatti, Op. 6 (1744)

Charles Avison
(1709-1770)

Largo andante—Allegro spiritoso—Vivace—Più Allegro

Tatiana Chulochnikova • Jacob Ashworth • Gretchen Claassen • Corey Jamason

Sonata in A Major, "El Jardín de Aranjuez en Tiempo de Primavera Con Diversos Cantos de Pájaros y Otros Animales" ("The Garden of Aranjuez in Springtime, with various songs of birds and other animals")

José de Herrando
(ca. 1720-1763)

Allegro—Andante—Allegro moderato

YuEun Gemma Kim • William Skeen • Corey Jamason

Concerto in A Major for Violin and Harpsichord "Il rosignuolo" ("The Nightingale")

Antonio Vivaldi
(1678-1741)

Allegro—Largo—Allegro

Rachell Ellen Wong • Corey Jamason

Program Notes and Texts: The Garden of Harmony

Composing music that imitates nature has been a pursuit of performers and composers alike across all cultural spectra. In Western art music there are examples ranging from Clément Janequin's 1592, *Le chant des oiseaux* ("Song of the birds"); to an 1825, *Duetto buffo di due gatti* ("Humorous duet for two cats") attributed to Gioachino Rossini; to George Crumb's "Night of the Electric Insects" (from *Black Angels*, 1971). In addition to imitating the voices of animals, there are numerous representations of storms, babbling brooks, wind in the trees, and even earthquakes in operas as well as programmatic music. The earliest published, purely instrumental work evoking nature's sounds is *Capriccio stravagante* (1627) by Carlo Farina (ca. 1600–1639), which includes not only dogs and cats, but hens, roosters, and even soldiers and various musical instruments (not actually being played).

William Williams (a somewhat obscure Welsh composer from the end of the seventeenth century) incorporated bird-songs in the sixth sonata, "In Imitation of Birds," of his 1700 collection. These were composed for either violins or recorders. The recorder was simply called *flute* (common flute or block-flute) in the rest of Europe. It is only in English that it is referred to as the recorder. This name comes from the verb: to record, which means "to sing like a bird," and in fact, the instrument was often played to birds to teach them to sing in captivity. Marco Uccellini's birds are not as delicate as Williams'; but they are equally charming. His programmatic sonata bears the title *L'Emenphrodita: Maritati insieme la Gallina e il Cucco fanno un bel concerto* ("Hymen-Aphrodite: Married together, the Hen and Cuckoo make beautiful music"). In it, his "little hen" (*gallina*) sings exactly the same notes that Farina had given to his chicken in *Capriccio stravagante*. The sound of the cuckoo is unmistakable and has been used by all composers in imitating this particular bird. This interval of a falling third is actually a very common call made by animals (including human infants!), often when in distress.

Poets throughout the ages have beautifully expressed the way nature can uplift our spirits and open our hearts. Shakespeare used images of birds, especially larks, to represent sweetness and freshness. Such verses can be entreaties to love, can be scoldings of lovers, and can be meditations on beauty. The English lute song as a genre happily married those texts to melodies and produced probably thousands of works that were elegantly and stylishly conceived, yet popularly enjoyed. Generations of singing lutenists propagated the form, and to this day they are still cherished by singers of a wide range of distinction. Robert Johnson, the son of the lutenist to Elizabeth I, probably met the great lute-song composer, John Dowland, around 1596 when Johnson would have been about 13 years old, and Dowland about 20 years his senior. So Johnson's exposure to the very best examples of the craft is certain. His own talents as a composer were recognized by playwrights Ben Jonson and William Shakespeare who together placed dozens of songs and instrumental interludes within their plays, including "Hark, hark, the lark" and the almost unbearably ravishing "Have you seen the bright lily grow?" Well more than a century later, *Thomas Arne* also set texts by Shakespeare. Arne was born in Covent Garden some 80 years after land adjacent to Westminster Abbey was granted to the 4th Earl of Bedford by Henry VIII. Known first as the "Convent Garden," it became the site of an experiment in town planning through the creation of England's first public square. Food and flower vendors, entertainers, and theaters flourished and served a widening sampling of social classes. Eventually, it became too much of a melting pot for the tastes of the wealthier residents who then deserted Covent Garden. Decorum in the theaters, although now falling by the wayside, led to theatrical audiences who would shout their approval as easily as they were known to throw food and drink at performers to demonstrate their disappointments. But by the time Arne was born on King Street, Covent Garden had fully realized its identity as the center of English Theater. Despite his father's wishes to dissuade Arne from becoming a musician, it must have been his early exposure to the theater that won out. He is still remembered as the composer of "Rule, Britannia" and "A-Hunting We Will Go," and the charming if cloyingly quaint "When Daisies Pied" exemplifies the lighter side of his output, which also included hundreds of full operas, sacred works, instrumental works, odes, cantatas, and songs. Probably the earliest work in this group, "This merry pleasant spring," is found in a manuscript in the Rowe Library at King's College, Cambridge. The song's curiously represented bird sounds of "jug-jug-jug-jug" and "it-it-it-it" make it all the more charming.

Hark, hark! the lark at heaven's gate sings,
And Phoebus 'gins arise,
His steeds to water at those springs
On chaliced flowers that lies;
And winking Mary-buds begin
To ope' their golden eyes:
With everything that pretty is,
My lady sweet, arise:
Arise, arise.

William Shakespeare (1564-1616)
from *Cymbeline* (1611)

When daisies pied and violets blue
And lady-smocks all silver-white
And cuckoo-buds of yellow hue
Do paint the meadows with delight,
The cuckoo then, on every tree,
Mocks married men; for thus sings he, Cuckoo;
Cuckoo, cuckoo: O word of fear,
Unpleasing to a married ear!

When shepherds pipe on oaten straws
And merry larks are ploughmen's clocks,
When turtles tread, and rooks, and daws,
And maidens bleach their summer smocks
The cuckoo then, on every tree,
Mocks married men; for thus sings he, Cuckoo;
Cuckoo, cuckoo: O word of fear,
Unpleasing to a married ear!

William Shakespeare
from *Love's Labours Lost* (mid-1590s)

This merry pleasant spring,
Hark, hark how the sweet bird sings
And carol in the copse and on the briar.
"Jug jug jug jug," the nightingale delivers.
"It it it it," the sparrow sings his hot desire;
The robin he records;
The lark he quivers.
O sweet, as sweet as ever!
From strains so sweet,
Sweet birds deprive us never.

Anonymous

Have you seen the bright lily grow,
Before rude hands have touch'd it?
Have you mark'd but the fall of the snow
Before the earth hath smutch'd it?
Have you felt the wool of beaver?
Or swan's down ever?
Or have smelt of the bud of the briar?
Or the nard in the fire?
Or have tasted the bag of the bee?
Oh, so white,
Oh, so soft,
Oh, so sweet is she!

Ben Jonson (1572-1637)

Program Notes and Texts: The Garden of Harmony

The German polymath, Athanasius Kircher's 1650, *Musurgia Universalis, sive Ars Magna Consoni et Dissoni* ("The Universal Musical Art, of the Great Art of Consonance and Dissonance") contains observations about sound (including music) and its physiological effects on people. It begins describing the structure of the human ear and vocal apparatus, and then moves on to the noises made by animals, birds, and insects. One illustration incorporates both "text" and musical notations of songs of various birds including wrens, nightingales, hens, and cuckoos. His writings were very influential and could be found in most serious library collections. The seventeenth-century Prince-Bishop of Olomouc, who knew of this treatise, was very fond of music that uses onomatopoeia for its rhetorical effects. He commissioned programmatic sonatas from both Heinrich Biber and Johann Heinrich Schmelzer. Biber produced his *Sonata violino solo rappresentativa* in about 1669. It includes numerous examples taken directly from Kircher's illustration. Schmelzer, who regularly corresponded with the Prince-Bishop, wrote that he was a bit uneasy about "competing with nature," and so confined himself to only representing the cuckoo. Surviving in a single manuscript in the Prince-Bishop's library in Kroměříž, his charming *Sonata II Cucù* might be considered rather somber—at least when compared to Biber's overtly boisterous commissioned work.

Handel's organ concerto, "**The Cuckoo and the Nightingale**," was first played during an interval in the first performance of *Israel in Egypt* in April 1739. The name points to the imitations of birdsong that occur in the Allegro of the first movement. Handel himself played the solo organ part and made good use of an opportunity in the middle of the work to improvise an extended fugue. Handel's organ concertos were frequently played at London's summer evening concerts held in the Spring Gardens in Vauxhall. London's finest citizens flocked to Vauxhall to hear the programs, which took place outdoors among the trees. In inclement weather they would be presented in a rotunda. Eventually an organ was erected there specifically for the purpose of playing concertos. This playful work must have found unanimous appeal among all of Handel's audiences.

During the first decades of the eighteenth century, English culture was enjoying an infatuation with Italy, especially Italian music. This was the period when Handel moved to London and developed a spectacular career composing Italian opera. Francesco Geminiani (1687-1762) performed his violin concertos (with Handel at the keyboard) at audiences with George I, and Domenico Scarlatti's (1685-1757) keyboard sonatas were very much in fashion. Born in Newcastle, about 160 miles northeast of London, Charles Avison was born into a family of musicians. Later travels to London resulted in his studies with Geminiani, who would eventually publish his Concerto Grosso transcriptions based on Trio Sonatas by Arcangelo Corelli (1653-1713). In fact, the production of transcriptions was a very popular and remunerative activity for composers. Probably taking the baton from Geminiani, Avison made arrangements of Scarlatti's harpsichord sonatas in the form of twelve *concerti grossi*, having written that Scarlatti's originals were "extremely difficult, either with capricious Divisions, or an unnecessary Repetition in many Places," and explained that his process of transcription by "forming them into Parts, and taking off the Mask which concealed their natural Beauty and Excellency, will ... more effectually express that pleasing Air, and sweet Succession of Harmony, so peculiar to the Compositions of this Author". At some point, the third concerto in the collection of twelve became known as "**The Garden of Harmony**." Since Scarlatti, although prolific, never composed any concertos, Avison's efforts to widen the audience for Scarlatti's extraordinary keyboard music was a valuable public service.



Illustration of bird songs from Kircher's *Musurgia Universalis*

Any walk in a forest or mountain meadow allows for the opportunity to listen to sounds of nature, but to bring that home many royal palaces constructed large gardens to lure birds in. The Renaissance garden in Aranjuez, now an UNESCO World Heritage site, was the private retreat for the royal families in Madrid. The Duke of Arcos was the patron of José de Herrando, one of the principal violinists and composers for the duke's theater, and for the Chapel Royal of the Convent of the Encarnación. His solo violin sonata, *El Jardín de Aranjuez en Tiempo de Primavera Con Diversos Cantos de Pajaros y Otros Animales* ("The Aranjuez garden in springtime with the diverse songs of birds and other animals") incorporates the calls of a canary, cuckoo, quail, and dove, along with other natural sounds including a murmuring brook and a storm. It is stylistically very much like the sonatas produced in Italy at end of the eighteenth century, but is more robust and contains daring, and sometimes startling, novel melodic inventions.

Antonio Vivaldi's *Concerto in A Major for Violin and Harpsichord "Il rosignuolo"* ("The Nightingale") is another work on this summer's festival programs that began life as a different composition. A published version of a single concerto for violin appeared in London in 1717 and rapidly became a favorite "show-piece." The solo part is evocative of birdsong with a very high tessitura, even past the very end of the fingerboard. Somehow it acquired the nickname "*The Cuckow*," although that was not a moniker given by Vivaldi himself. He did use bird names and bird sounds in other concertos, including the flute concerto, *Il gardellino* ("the Goldfinch") and in several movements in his "Four Seasons" (the beginning of "Spring" for example). This A Major violin concerto continued to be performed in England well into the end of the 19th century, but in heavily edited arrangements for violin and piano. *Il rosignuolo* is a re-working of this "cuckoo" concerto. It contains little to no changes from the original solo violin part, but adds a keyboard as a second soloist. The new material the keyboardist plays often doubles the violin soloist in thirds, but occasionally interjects commentary into spaces that in the original composition were measures of dramatic silence. Several handwritten sets of parts survive; however, none seem to be complete. But by consulting all of them, a finished work can be re-constructed. Within the various sources survive at least three different slow movements, including one identified to be by Francesco Maria Veracini (1690-1768). This has led some to conjecture that the entire re-working was done by Veracini, without Vivaldi's knowledge. Whether by Vivaldi, Veracini, or someone else, it is a showstopper and a justifiably welcome addition to the list of wonderful concertos by Vivaldi and other late Baroque Italian composers.

The Instruments



Several decades ago, a movement began in the classical music industry to perform music on the instruments that were used during a composer's lifetime. Unquestionably advanced by the advent of CD recordings in the early 1980s, this marriage of scholarship and style became known as "historically informed performance practice," or "HIP" for short. But it encompasses more than just the proper choice of instruments for the performance of music from the Renaissance, Baroque, and Classical eras. Fine points of expression, articulation, and even the way instruments are tuned play a large role in what you are hearing tonight.

Probably for most of us it is the use of these beautiful and, in most cases, truly antique and priceless instruments that brings the most special quality to these performances. Rather than cataloging all the well-founded and essential reasons to use period instruments for this music, it is even more compelling to consider why the use of modern instruments would cheat us of part of the experience a composer like Handel meant to give to us.

Instruments have evolved and grown over the centuries, mostly because composers would present new challenges to instrumentalists, and therefore to those who built their instruments. When a composer like Bach or Beethoven would write the most difficult passages that would tax the limits of an instrument's responsiveness, within a decade or so instrument builders found a way to accommodate the challenges.

In the Baroque period, musical phrases were made up of strong and weak notes, falling on strong and weak beats within a bar. When a violinist would move the bow in a downward stroke across a string, the sound was stronger than when the bow would be moved in an upward direction. But eventually the lengths of musical phrases grew, and more notes were meant to be played in a connected way, leading much further down the musical line to a phrase's focal point. Accordingly, the bows for stringed instruments were then made to create the same amount of sound whether the bow was moving up or down. And, of course, concert halls grew in size, so instruments were made to play louder. In the 20th century, some composers required sounds that acoustic instruments simply could not produce; hence the genre of electronic music.

A short note about antiques versus reproductions: While it is not uncommon to find violins and violoncellos (or 'cellos, as they are known today) that are more than 300 years old being played in orchestras like ours, very few surviving antique wind or keyboard instruments are still playable. Consequently, period wind instruments, harpsichords, and organs are almost always copies of originals.

VIOLIN

- Elizabeth Blumenstock (leader) *
Andrea Guarneri, Cremona, 1660.
- Jacob Ashworth **
Jason Viseltear, New York, NY, 2018; after Nicolò Amati, Cremona, 17th century.
- Cynthia Black **
Anonymous, German provenance, circa 1820.
- Tatiana Chulochnikova ** ***
Joseph Hollmayr, Freiburg, Germany, circa 1760.
- Tekla Cunningham *
Sanctus Seraphin, Venice, 1746.
- Toma Iliev ** ***
Anonymous, Germany, 18th century.
- YuEun Gemma Kim ** ***
Desiderio Quercetani, Parma, 1995, after Stradivari, Cremona, 17th century.
- Noah Strick **
Celia Bridges, Cologne, 1988; after Nicolò Amati, Cremona, circa 1640.
- David Wilson
Timothy Johnson, Hewitt, Texas, 2007; after Stradivari, Cremona, 18th century.
- Rachell Ellen Wong ** ***
Anonymous, School of Joachim Tielke, Hamburg, circa 1700.

VIOLA

- Ramón Negrón Pérez **
Jay Haide, El Cerrito, California, 2016; after Giovanni Paolo Maggini, Brescia, circa 1580.
- Cynthia Black **
Jason Viseltear, New York, New York, 2010; after Brecian School, Gasparo da Salò & Giovanni Paolo Maggini, 17th century.

VIOLA DA GAMBA

- Gretchen Claassen ** ***
Marcelo Ardizzone, Paris, 1992; after Edward Lewis, England, circa 1700.
- Kenneth Slowik *
Matthias Hummel, Nürnberg, 1708.

VIOLONCELLO

- William Skeen *
Anonymous, Northern Italian, circa 1680.
- Gretchen Claassen ** ***
Anonymous, German, 18th century.

VIOLONE

- Steven Lehning *
John Pringle, Efland, North Carolina, 1992; after Ernst Busch, Nuremberg, circa 1640.

VIOLONE GROSSO

- Steven Lehning *
Hammond Ashley Luthiers, Issaquah, Washington, 1977; after 17th-century models.

HARPSICHORD

- Corey Jamason *
John Phillips, Berkeley, California, Opus 40, 1997 after; Andreas Ruckers, 1646, enlarged by François Blanchet in 1756, and reworked by Pascal Taskin in 1780.

ORGAN

- Corey Jamason *
John Brombaugh & Associates, Eugene, Oregon, 1980.

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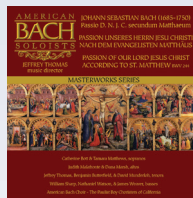
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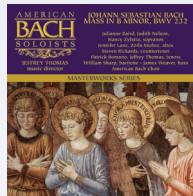
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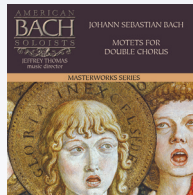
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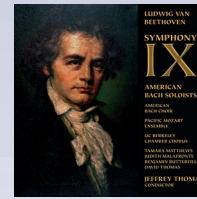
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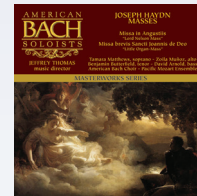
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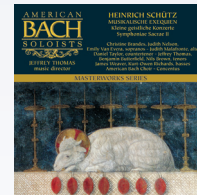
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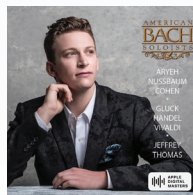


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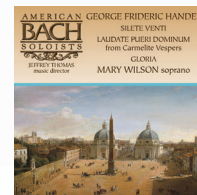
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