

Early Music Foundation presents

EARLY MUSIC NEW YORK
FREDERICK RENZ – DIRECTOR

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~ The New Yorker

MONTEVERDI
ECHOES

First Church of Christ, Scientist
Central Park West at 68th Street, NYC

Saturday, 5 May 2018, 7:30 PM

VENICE TO VIENNA

Canzon per sonar duodecimi toni à 10, Ch.178 Giovanni Gabrieli, ca.1556–1612
(*Sacrae symphoniae*, Venice 1597)

Ritornelli, Sinfonie & Moresca à 5 & 7 Claudio Monteverdi, 1567–1643
(*L'orfeo: favola in musica*, Venice 1607)

Capriccio stravagante à 4 Carlo Farina, ca.1600-1639
(*Libro delle pavane*, 1627, Dresden)

[Intrada]

La lira [*The hurdy-gurdy*]

Il piferino [*The small shawm*]

Lira variata [*Hurdy-gurdy variation*]

Qui si bate con il legno del archetto sopra le corde

[*Here one strikes the bow on the strings*]

Adagio, Presto, Adagio

La trombetta [*The trumpet*]

La clarino [*The clarion trumpet*]

Adagio

La gallina [*The hen*], Il gallo [*The rooster*]

Presto

Il flautino pian piano [*The small flute very softly*]

Forte, Presto, Adagio

Il tremulanto [*The 'tremulant' organ stop*]

Fiferino della soldatesca [*Soldier's fife*]

Il gatto [*The cat*], Il cane [*The dog*]

Presto

La chitarra spagniola [*The Spanish guitar*]

Adagio - Sempre più adagio

Il fine

interval

Sonata à 6 Johann Schmelzer von Ehrenruef, ca.1623-1680
(Sacro-profanus concertus musicus, Nuremberg, 1662)

Sonata à 4 [violin, viola, gamba, basso continuo] Antonio Bertali, 1605-1669
(Prothimia suavissima, 1672)

Sonata à 4 [2 violins, dulcian, basso continuo]

Sonata à 8, due cori

Battalia: Heinrich Ignaz Franz Biber von Bibern, 1644-1704

Das liederliche Schwirren der Musquetier, Mars, die Schlacht und Lamento
der Verwundeten, mit Arien imitirt und Baccho dedicirt à 10

*[The dismal swarm of musketeers, Mars, the battle and lament
of the wounded, imitated with arias and dedicated to Bacchus]*

Autograph, Salzburg/Kroměříž, 1673

Sonata

Allegro – Die liederliche Gesellschaft von allerley Humor

[The dissolute soul creates all sorts of humor]

Presto

Der Mars *[The god of war]*

Presto

Aria

Die Schlacht *[The battle]*

Adagio: Lamento

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FREDERICK RENZ - DIRECTOR

violin

Daniel Lee

Nicholas DiEugenio

Jeremy Rhizor

viola

Rachel Evans

Chloe Fedor

Sarah Darling

bass

Ezra Seltzer - violoncello

Sarah Stone - viola da gamba

Benjamin Matus - dulcian

David Chapman - violone

continuo

Arash Noori - theorbo & guitar

Dongsok Shin - organ

Frederick Renz - harpsichord

Special thanks to Leanne Mahoney - First Church of Christ, Scientist
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ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Throughout history, musicians would never allow something as insignificant as a mountain to interfere with the dissemination of their works. Even the mighty Alps could not prevent musical developments in Italy from crossing to northern countries such as Austria, Germany and Bohemia, where they changed the way music was written.

The titular composer of **Monteverdi Echoes** never left Italy himself, but within his own country his music, and its impact on his compatriot composers, made Monteverdi a wellspring from which much of baroque music's expressiveness would derive.

The other Italians on the program did make it across the Alps: a young Gabrieli to Munich, to study with Lassus before returning to Venice; Bertali to Vienna; Farina to Dresden, Bonn and Vienna. The program's two northern composers – the Austrian-born Schmelzer in Vienna (where he worked with Bertali) and the Bohemian Biber in Salzburg – found their footing in the compositional principles of their Italian colleagues.

Born in Venice, **Giovanni Gabrieli** likely was raised and educated by his uncle Andrea Gabrieli, himself a renowned composer, who worked at St. Mark's Basilica. With its two choir lofts facing each other, St. Mark's was a springboard for polychoral spatial effects and antiphony – the alternation of divided musical forces, an early version of “call-and-response” which ultimately would develop into the concerto grosso, and eventually the solo concerto. Giovanni eventually took up his uncle's responsibilities at St. Mark's.

Sacrae symphoniae is a collection of 61 distinct compositions – 45 motets for voices, and 16 canzonas and sonatas for instruments numbering from eight to 15. Nowadays, works like the **Canzon duodecima** for 10 players are often played by brass instruments, but they prove equally effective with the forces assembled for today's program.

Like Gabrieli, **Claudio Monteverdi** bridged the late Renaissance and early baroque eras. Born in Cremona, Monteverdi achieved renown in Mantua, where his first operas were produced (*L'Orfeo* is the only one of these to survive). Shortly after Gabrieli's death, Monteverdi moved to Venice in 1613, and like Gabrieli worked for his last three decades at St. Mark's Basilica.

Most of Monteverdi's surviving music is for voices – three operas, madrigals, motets, the Vespers of 1610; there is little in the way of works for instruments alone. But there are many instrumental sections in *L'Orfeo*, including **Sinfonie**, **Ritornelli** and the closing dance, a **Moresca** (so-called because dancers would wear Moorish costumes). For this program, Frederick Renz has assembled an instrumental suite from these interludes.

Carlo Farina essentially embodies this program's "trans-Alpine" concept. Born in Mantua only a few years before Monteverdi made a splash with *L'Orfeo*, Farina made his way to Dresden, where his surviving music was published. He traversed the Alps twice more, ending up in Vienna, where his life was cut short, probably by the plague.

His works all feature the violin, on which he was a virtuoso. But the one piece for which he is best known is the *Capriccio stravagante*, described by Farina as "a humorous Quodlibet of all manner of curious inventions, such as have never before been seen in print." (A "quodlibet" is usually a work that combines several popular tunes, but in this case it has a looser definition, related to the word's Latin origin - "whatever you wish.")

Capriccio stravagante is a veritable musical "cabinet of curiosities," with pages of traditional writing alternating with sections depicting a range of non-stringed musical instruments and animals. Centuries before serial composers arrived at atonality, Farina felt free to celebrate its natural occurrence in the animal kingdom.

"A composer of great imagination and influence" according to scholar Charles E. Brewer, **Johann Heinrich Schmelzer** was a virtuoso violinist, like many prominent composers of his time. From the lower Austrian town of Scheibbs, Schmelzer joined the court of Emperor Ferdinand III in Vienna in 1649, early in the tenure of Kapellmeister Antonio Bertali. After 30 years, Schmelzer was appointed Hofkapellmeister, just months before succumbing to the plague.

Schmelzer's second published collection, the **Sacro-Profanus Conventus Musicus** (Sacred-Profane Musical Concord), contains thirteen sonatas for varying numbers of instruments, ranging from two to eight, plus an organ. Four of these are for the rich combination of two violins and four violas, one of which is on today's program.

Originally from Verona, composer/violinist **Antonio Bertali** came to the court in Vienna around 1624. They must have liked him because, after 25 years, he was promoted to court Kapellmeister, a post he held for the last two decades of his life.

Bertali's reputation suffered a fate fairly common in his time: not long after he died, his music was relegated to obscurity. Unlike with some of his colleagues, it's still there, except for a few instrumental and vocal works gradually being restored to the repertory. Perhaps half of his output has been lost. Maestro Renz has programmed three **Sonatas** - two for four instruments, and one for eight subtitled "a due cori" (two groups of four) - that together make one wish that more had been saved.

To say Bohemian composer **Heinrich Ignaz von Biber** was ahead of his time would be an understatement. In the 19th century, Hector Berlioz, in his *Symphonie fantastique*, had

string players use the wood of their bows (“**col legno**”) to strike the strings. In the 20th, Charles Ives, inspired by competing marching bands playing in different keys, composed music that did the same; Henry Cowell inserted paper between piano strings to add a buzz; and Béla Bartók called for string players to snap their strings against the fingerboards (“**snap pizzicato**”).

But well before any of those musical “**special effects**” pioneers, **Biber** had beat them to it. His *Battalia*, for a mere ten players, contained all these effects, in a portrayal of the world of warfare that holds up well against such later efforts as Beethoven’s *Wellington’s Victory* and Tchaikovsky’s *1812 Overture*.

In the space of about 10 minutes, Biber includes an Ives-ian passage wherein drunken soldiers of numerous nationalities sing their native folk songs in multiple keys and rhythms; a march for violin and bass violone “col legno” (the violin representing a fife, the violone – with paper inserted between strings – a snare drum); and an intense battle where the lower strings deploy the “snap pizzicato” to represent cannon fire. A mournful closing passage reminds us that war exacts a terrible cost. DANIEL GUSS

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First Church of Christ, Scientist

ITALY ~ Corelli to Vivaldi ~ baroque chamber orchestra

Saturday, May 4 at 7:30 pm

First Church of Christ, Scientist

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