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Arts Early Music New York by David Katz May 5, 2013 Noted for their fine choral and instrumental programs of mediaeval, renaissance and baroque music, Early Music New York provided an evening of late baroque/early classical instrumental music at their May 4th concert. None of the pieces played were old warhorses, and several of the composers are little known in the New York concert scene.

Friedrich Wilhelm Herschel, who is better known as Sir Frederick William Herschel, astronomer and discoverer of the planet Uranus, two of its moons, and two of the moons of Saturn, as well as being the first person to prove the existence of infrared radiation, came from a musical family, and was the composer of twenty-four symphonies, as well as concertos and church music. His Symphonia, a cheerful composition in three movements, allegro, adagio ma non molto and allegro, showed off the skills of the small EMNY orchestra. The four first violins, three seconds, and two violas were enriched by the mellow sounds of the continuo: two cellos, a bass violon and guitar.

A soprano, flute, theorbo and harpsichord were added for Thomas Arne's cantata, "the Morning", in which the soprano's words are often illustrated by the sounds of the flute. Laura Heims, soprano, has a powerful and melodious voice that occasionally becomes shrill when reaching for the highest notes. Immanuel Davis played a one-key ebony Classical flute, whose mellow sound blended well with Ms. Heim's singing. Arne's compositions are not often played here, with the exception of his best known songs: "Rule Britannia", "A-hunting We Will Go", and a version of "God Save the King".

Carl Friedrich Abel, a student of Bach's, met success in London, where he became a friend and collaborator with Johann Christian Bach. Immanuel Davis was soloist in Abel's Flauto Traverso Concerto, Opus 6:5. His tone and phrasing were superb in the three movements, Allegro, Adagio and Presto. He performed a short cadenza in each movement. After the intermission, Abel's Overture, Opus 1:5 from Six Overtures was performed by the orchestra. Both pieces were charming early classical works.

A Haydn composition rounded out the first half of the program: Quintuor arrange d'une grand sinfonie (Hob.I:103).

Capel Bond (1730-1790), considered an English provincial composer of note, contributed a Bassoon Concerto to the evening. Bassoonist Stephanie Corwin was soloist, using a classical (not modern) bassoon, and played this lovely, three movement piece with a mellow, lilting tone. The Allegro section, in 3, was particularly exciting. The orchestra was enriched by harpsichord and theorbo.

The evening was rounded out by the return of the soprano, Ms. Heims, doing J.C. Bach's Vauxhall Song "Cease Awhile", and the most familiar work of the concert, William Boyce's Symphony I, which features, in the second movement, a lyrical duet between flute and cello. The entire piece is joyous and fun.

One thing common to all Early Music New York concerts is the program arrangement, ensuring that by variety, each work stands out. There is no "concert meditation" in EMNY audiences.

The orchestra: Violins – Heidi Powell, concertmaster; Dongmyung Ahn; Aaron Brown; Richard Hsu; March Levine, Principal II; Beth Wenstrom; Margaret Ziemnicka. Violas – Rachel Evens, Principal; Christopher Nunn. Bass and Continuo – David Bakamjian, Principal Cello; Benjamin Wolff, cello; David Chapman, Bass Violon; Jason Priset, theorbo and guitar. Bassoon – Stephanie Corwin. Transverse Flute – Immanuel David. Soprano – Laura Heims. The orchestra was conducted from the harpsichord by Frederic Renz, founder and director of EMNY.

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