

BROADSIDE

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**AEMA MISSION**

It is the mission of the Atlanta Early Music Alliance to foster enjoyment and awareness of the historically informed performance of music, with special emphasis on music written before 1800. Its mission will be accomplished through dissemination and coordination of information, education and financial support.

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Midwinter Workshop Draws 67 Participants from Seven States

With the theme "In Early Music, Nature, Human and beyond...", the AEMA Mid-Winter Workshop scored big again. Sixty-seven participants gathered January 20-21, 2006, at the Music Education Building at Clayton State University in Morrow, GA. It was almost an all-Southeast workshop with Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, North and South Carolina, and Tennessee represented.

Faculty included Martha Bishop, Stewart Carter, Jody Miller, Susan Patterson, Pat Petersen, Ann Stierli and Charles Tucker. They led a total of 18 sessions: 13 sessions with recorders only; violas da gamba only, 1; voices and viols, 4 sessions. A finale session brought all participants together in the Atrium of the Music Education Building. Not only the instruments mentioned above, but also several others were heard: cornetti, racketts, sackbut, crumhorns, flutes, shawm, Celtic harp, chalumeau, and percussion.

Music selections were by composers J. Arañes, Castellanos, B. Donato, M. East, A. Gabrieli, G. Gabrieli, C. Gesualdo, A. Holborne, H. Isaak, C. Jannequin, J. Jeep, F. Landini, O. di Lasso, J. Mouton, K. Othmayr, M. Pedersen, J. des Pres, H. Purcell, C. de Rore, F. de Santiago, L. Senfl, C. de Sermisy, J. H. Schein, G. Taeggio, T.L. de Victoria.

Lunchtime was enlivened with special sessions: a lecture on "Early Opera", presented by Kurt-Alexander Zeller; Baroque Flute, led by Joyce Mortison; and Early Reeds, led by John Mortison.

The Planning Committee for the Workshop included Mickey Gillmor, Gisela McClellan, Jane McLendon, Susan Patterson, Jorg Voss, Patsy Woods, and Kurt-Alexander Zeller.

Participants' Comments on the Workshop:

Wow, what a great workshop. From warming up in the break room Friday evening to listening to the other recorderists counting measures under their breaths for "Tota Pulchra Es" in the big hall, I had a great time. Highlights included actually seeing a rackett being played at the Early Reeds gathering Mid-Saturday, and discovering that my practice reading and playing middle lines had actually paid off, so I could keep up much better this year than last. Now I'm going back to try to actually learn to play my (kit built) rackett, and I'm adding parts of the Odhecaton 500th Edition to my recorder repertory.

A fabulous time. I wish it were longer.

—Charles Shapiro

I so enjoyed the workshop that I have to join ARS. It's been a long time since I played in on adult level and didn't know how much I missed it. The workshop was very well organized, and I learned some things I hadn't heard before. A great weekend!

—Beverly Rowe

This year the Mid-Winter Recorder Workshop was a marvelous experience for me compared with my experience two years ago. I was more prepared, or the music was easier. The finale in the foyer was a transcendent experience for me. Oh my, to be a part of that was wonderful.....The book of music was very nicely done. Thanks for that. Clayton College is a lovely setting for the workshop, and I enjoyed the opera lecture.

Mid-Winter Workshop certainly brightened January for me; I will eagerly look forward to it again and again.

—Myra Kibler

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Please see the picture section beginning on page 4. All pictures are by Jorg Voss (except the one of him)

Report: Music in the Convents of Mexico

by *Calvert Johnson*

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Editor's Note:

AEMA member Cal Johnson is a noted editor of early music for the organ. This article concerns a conference in Oaxaca, Mexico, centering around his recent publication of a compilation of 18th century music left to us by Sister María Clara del Santísimo Sacramento from Oaxaca. The conference, held November 10-13, 2005, was sponsored by Instituto de Órganos Históricos de Oaxaca. For more information and to order, see http://www.wayneleupold.com/new_releases.html and look for Calvert Johnson.

In the mid 1980s a manuscript of organ music with a nun's name on the cover was discovered in the archives of the Cathedral of Oaxaca, Mexico. This was the catalyst for a modern critical edition of what appears to be the earliest known Mexican organ music as well as a conference surrounding its publication by Wayne Leupold Editions. The manuscript, Cuaderno de Tonos de Maitines de Sor María Clara del Santísimo Sacramento, was found during the first comprehensive catalogue of all music manuscripts in the Cathedral Archive. The Institute of Historic Organs of Oaxaca took special interest in the manuscript because of its work documenting all known organs in the southern Mexican state of Oaxaca, and invited me to prepare the edition for publication, and I asked musicologist Aurelio Tello to write an article as part of the preface based on his research on the role of music in Mexican colonial convents.

The manuscript consists of sets of versets for each of the eight Psalm tones, and there are multiple sets for the first and second tones. In addition, each Psalm tone is set to a figured bass so that the organist can accompany a singer or choir intoning the Psalm verses. Apparently the versets were intended to replace the antiphon after each group of Psalm verses. Because Matins requires as many as nine Psalms, each with its antiphon, these versets would have been played frequently at the daily office of Matins. Stylistically the versets reflect late eighteenth-century styles, including Alberti bass, balanced phrases, and thin texture typical of gallant and early Classic music. Due to the variety

of handwritings found in the manuscript, it is certainly a compilation of manuscripts rather than the work of a single composer or copyist, and the nun's name on the cover merely indicates that it belonged to her. Some of the versets may have been composed by her and other nuns, but probably most of the versets were provided by male composers, whether Mexican or Spanish. The modern edition faithfully follows the manuscript with its legible and modern notational practices. My own prefatory article discusses performance practice issues (use of the versets at Matins, organ specifications and registrations, ornamentation, tempo).

Cecily Winter, founder and director of the Oaxacan institute, organized a splendid conference that featured the publication, and set the manuscript in its historic and cultural context. Of particular interest were a number of papers devoted to the subject of the role of music in late colonial Mexican convents. Appropriately, most of the papers were given in the buildings of former convents in Oaxaca (almost all of which are public buildings today). These included the ex-convents of La Soledad (now the municipal government offices), San José (currently an art school), and Santa Catarina de Siena (now the luxury hotel El Camino Real). Other papers were given in the local cultural center, located in the ex-monastery of Santo Domingo, where a superb exhibit "Music and Feminine Spirituality" was on display in the Biblioteca Burgoa, including the manuscript of organ music of Sor María Clara as well as other well-chosen colonial documents. The exhibit was organized by María Isabel Grañen Porrúa, Director of this library. In addition, I led the group in a mini-Matins service (only two Psalms, one entirely sung with its antiphon and the other with organ in *alternatim* style) at the church of La Soledad, using the versets from the seventh tone from the Sor María Clara manuscript.

Peruvian musicologist Aurelio Tello spoke on "Nun composers and keyboard music in colonial New Spain

More Comments from the Workshop

When you get about 46 recorder players together, they light up the rooms of the Music Building with smiles and happiness, even when it's raining outside. Our group, "Gabrieli", had so much fun! We played through a piece of music, then heard interpretive comments from our coaches, Pat Petersen and Jody Miller, and then played the piece again much more musically. In this way we read many selections of the wonderful book put together by Jorg Voss, without spending a lot of time on technique and tuning. The heavenly moment of the workshop was

the final double-choir. With vocalists on the staircase in the atrium, viols below, and recorderists circled opposite them we made inspiring music. This feeling of bliss will carry us on until next January.

Next year I'd like to play some modern and contemporary music. Recorderists don't need to be limited to early music.

Thanks again to you, Jorg, and all your helpers for a superb workshop. It gets better every year.

—**Brigitte B. Nahmias, MD**

Concert Announcements



Joshua Lee of Ostraka

Soprano Wanda Yang-Temko and harpsichordist Benjamin Carlisle will present a program of solo cantatas in the Oglethorpe Museum on March 7, at 7:30 PM. For more details, please refer to the Museum's website <http://museum.oglethorpe.edu/>.

Ostraka, featuring Miriam Dubrow, soprano, presents *Love Songs: Music of 18th Century Germany and France*. Atlanta's newest early music ensemble returns with soprano Miriam Dubrow in a performance of music of Handel, Telemann, Wiess, Kuhnle, Marais and Rameau. Highpoints of the program include Handel's melancholy "Ah che pur troppo è vero" and Rameau's fiery "L'impatience." Sunday, February 19, 2006, 3 o'clock p.m. at St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church, 1790 LaVista Road, Atlanta. For more information write to OstrakaMusic@aol.com, or call 404-313-6203.

Please visit these websites for the latest information on concerts by the Atlanta Baroque Orchestra and New Trinity Baroque:

ABO: (next concert March 12: *Celebration of the 250th Anniversary of the Birth of Mozart* with Andrew Willis, fortepiano soloist, and Artistic Director & Conductor *John Hsu*) <http://www.atlantabaroque.org/season.htm>

NTB (next concert: April 8: "**Baroque Passiontide**" Vocal and instrumental music for alto soloist (Magdalena Wór), strings and b.c. by Antonio Vivaldi and J.S. Bach) <http://www.newtrinitybaroque.org/diary/concerts/index.html>

Music in the Convents of Mexico, *continued*

[i.e. Mexico],” giving the names of numerous Mexican nun musicians who sang, directed convent music, or played instruments during worship services at their convents. He drew our attention to the fact that accomplished musicians were frequently admitted to an order without paying the usual dowry because of they had an important skill that was needed by the convent, such as the ability to play the organ. Spanish harpsichordist Luisa Morales discussed “Secular keyboard music from the archives of the Convent of San Pedro de las Dueñas, Castillo, Spain” noting that virtually none of this keyboard music was specified for use in worship, representing instead the typical stylistic types of Spanish sonata known in the eighteenth century, and noting the importance of secular music making in Spanish convents that she has studied.

American historian Anne Staples, who has lived and worked in Mexico City for many years, gave a very well written paper, “Daily life of nuns in Colonial Mexico.” She described the daily routine followed in cloistered convents, and discussed the differences among convents in Mexico City, particularly due to the social status of the women that each convent tended to attract. Some primarily admitted women from the wealthiest class (ethnically pure Spanish) who entered the order bringing her servants and living in well-appointed suites within the walls of the convent. She too noted that it was not uncommon for a woman from a lower social class, but who had a special skill such as playing the organ, to be admitted to these convents. Mexican musicologist Nuria Salazar then spoke on “Music and choir in the Jesús María convent” of Mexico City, and Mexican musicologist Luis Lledías discussed “Organ and harpsichord music in the schools for girls in New Spain: a study of teaching methods and repertoire.” Rubén Vasconcelos Beltán gave a paper on the daily life of nuns in Oaxaca and their music. Finally,

Polish organist Ricardo Rodys shared his recent findings in the two weeks preceding the conference in searching the newly digitized municipal archives of births, marriages, and deaths. Thanks to this digitization, he seems to have identified María Clara, who—if his findings are correct—was the daughter of the second organist at Oaxaca Cathedral and sister of several local organ builders. She entered the Conceptionist convent (which took over the former Jesuit monastery after the Jesuits were expelled from all Spanish territories in the early eighteenth century) as a grown woman in her thirties because of her skill as an organist. While it is unfortunate that the municipal archives digitization on CD-Rom was not available when the publication of the manuscript was in preparation, Mr. Rodys is in the process of writing an article on this biographical data for the IOHIO newsletter.

A number of concerts brought to life music from the conference, including selections from the newly published manuscript itself. The opening concert featured myself on Oaxaca Cathedral's historic organ that was restored by American organbuilder Susan Tattershall. My program included three sets of versets from the manuscript (all three intended for the first Psalm tone), works by women composers (a hymn setting by Spanish nun Gracia Baptista from the mid-sixteenth century; a motet by Italian nun Catarina Assandra transcribed for organ from around 1600; a funeral dirge by English parish organist Miss Steemson from the late eighteenth century; an organ chorale prelude by Anna Amalia, Princess of Prussia, from the late eighteenth century; and a prelude and fugue, op. 16/3, by Clara Schumann from the mid nineteenth century—apparently contemporary with the actual María Clara!). Other works on the program were by late eighteenth-century

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Music in the Convents of Mexico, *concluded*

Spanish composers José Larrañaga and José Lidón to demonstrate music contemporary with the versets in the manuscript, as well as the diverse styles found therein, including dance-like material. Several contemporary Mexican composers were on the program as well: José Bernal Jimenez and Ramón Noble (a setting of the popular dance La Bamba), and the encore was American jazz organist Shirley Scott's *Samba Felicidad* with its quotation of the opening of "The Girl from Ipanema" melody.

Luisa Morales played a brilliant harpsichord recital of sonatas by Antonio Soler and Domenico Scarlatti in the cloister of Santo Domingo Cultural Center. During several sonatas written as boleros, she was joined by Spanish historic dancer Cristóbal Salvador, who garnered an enthusiastic fan base in Oaxaca during his brief visit to the city. Just as my recital underlined the importance of contemporary dances (the bamba and the samba) in contemporary music for organ, Ms. Morales' program demonstrated that Scarlatti knew the bolero intimately, and his sonatas in bolero style precisely match the requisite dance steps without altering either harpsichord piece or dance.

An all-day excursion to rural areas in Oaxaca state provided the conference goers with the opportunity of seeing and hearing a number of historic

organs, some restored and some not. Mexico City organist Roberto Oropeza played a recital at the ex-convent of Santo Domingo, Yanhuitlán (now a local cultural center and church), featuring early Spanish organ music and one set of versets from the Sor María Clara manuscript. Mexican brother and sister organist Laura Carrasco and Baroque violinist Ludwig Carrasco provided the day's closing concert at the beautifully maintained church of San Andrés, Zautla, featuring music from a manuscript found in the archives of Mexico City Cathedral as well as a set of versets on the second tone from the Sor María Clara manuscript. The final concert of the festival presented sacred solo vocal music of the Renaissance and Baroque performed by Mexico City Conservatory organist José Suarez and Spanish baritone Josep Cabré using the beautifully restored historic organ at San Jerónimo, Tlacoahuaya. Their expressive music making resulted in an instantaneous standing ovation at the conclusion of the concert.

All in all, Cicely Winter must be congratulated for organizing a superb conference that brought together a number of scholars and musicians working in the area of colonial Mexican convents and early Spanish keyboard music. There was great camaraderie among the presenters and conference attendees, a relaxed pace, and wonderful local food. And no doubt there will be followup work as a result of this conference.

Midwinter Workshop: Faculty and Organizers



Clockwise from top left: Jody Miller, Martha Bishop, Pat Peterson, Jorg Voss

Midwinter Workshop: Finale Mass Ensemble



Small Ensemble Work: Voices and Viols



Review: Netherlands Chamber Choir

by Kurt-Alexander Zeller

The Netherlands Chamber Choir, one of Europe's most venerable small vocal ensembles (founded in 1937), began its 2005-2006 American concert tour in Spivey Hall on Saturday evening, 5 November. While Spivey Hall was their first official stop, the group had accepted an invitation to visit the Von Trapp family's lodge in Stowe, Vermont before beginning their concert tour—and it was announced that the luggage of three members of the bass section apparently had taken a wrong turn in the Newark Airport on the way to Atlanta, thus explaining why the dress of the ensemble was considerably more varied and casual than might otherwise have been the case.

The program also was varied, but there was nothing casual about its preparation and presentation. The repertoire stretched from the dawn of the 16th century to the middle of the 20th, and the members of the ensemble demonstrated mastery of all of it, suggesting that while the artistry of brilliant musical specialists has greatly enriched our experience, there is something to be said for the benefits of a broad generalist's approach to music-making as well. Indeed, one of the charms of the program was the conversation that emerged between works of different centuries that shared particular ideas or themes.

On paper, it might have seemed odd to begin the program with one of the most recent works on it, Francis Poulenc's *Salve regina* (written in 1941 for the wedding of his friend Georges Salles); however, the motet was the most austere and ethereal work of the evening, reminiscent in all ways, except for its mildly dissonant vertical sonorities, of a penitential motet by Josquin or Obrecht. After such timelessly transparent transcendence, with the choir's 24 voices purely floating like disembodied souls, the famous "La guerre" chanson by Clément Janequin (c. 1484-c. 1558) seemed completely contemporary by contrast. (War reportage seems never to go out of date, unfortunately.) Its over-the-top depiction of battle sounds in nonsensical onomatopoeia (as well as some perfectly sensible French) was sung one on a part by an ensemble extracted from the larger choir and proved one of the audience favorites of the evening, not only because it was one of the very few selections that featured any humor, but also because it was one of the few that was easily comprehensible to all audience members in the highly regrettable absence of any printed texts or translations in the program.

The lack of translations was particularly detrimental to full appreciation of the work that was the centerpiece of the concert's first half, the choral cycle *Le vrai visage de la paix* by the Dutch composer Rudolf Escher (1912-1980). Escher's style of writing struck this hearer as an odd but compelling synthesis of dense counterpoint and post-Impressionistic textures—a sort of Ravellian Reger—but the relationship of the music to the somewhat abstruse French text, despite the excellent diction of the choir, was difficult to follow without recourse to any printed text.

Much of the audience appeared lost during the two Gesualdo madrigals ("Tu piangi, o Filli mia" and "Moro, lasso") that followed (performed one on a part by another small ensemble), but for Italophones in the audience, the text was crystal clear—aided in part by the composer's dramatic musical conceits illustrating the words. The singers achieved an excellent ensemble, practically more instrumental (one was reminded

of a viol consort that could somehow execute text) in nature than vocal in timbre and sonority; indeed, while the composite of the five voices together was an exquisite sound, the brief solo passages Gesualdo included demonstrated that this was an instance of the whole being somewhat greater than the sum of its parts. Intonation was perfect, making the jarring harmonic juxtapositions of "Moro, lasso" that Charles Burney in the 18th century had called "extremely shocking and disgusting" seem all the more shocking (and far more advanced than the harmony in the Poulenc or the Escher), but in a way that was more delicious than disgusting.

The highlight of the evening was *Komm, Jesu, komm*, one of J. S. Bach's funeral motets for double chorus, in a three-voices-per-part performance that probably was far more opulent and polished than anything Bach ever coaxed out of the boys of St. Thomas. From the importunate opening pleas of "Komm," tossed back and forth between the two choirs to the sweet chorale-like homophonic closing aria in which the weary soul finds release in death, the choir sang as one with commitment and understanding in matters of style, but also of theology. Few performances of this familiar motet achieve this level of musicality, and fewer yet are as deeply emotionally communicative. Bach's many madrigalian turns of phrase (some of which had been foreshadowed in the Gesualdo) in response to the text were more than mere musical affects; they were truly affecting. And the choir was as attentive to the music of the text as to its meaning—the German was more than clear and well enunciated; each plosive sparkled and each fricative was lovingly caressed, subtly reminding the listeners that text provides vocal music not only with its semantic meaning but also with its astonishing variety of articulation.

Nothing on the program after the intermission reached quite the same level, although the impressively beautiful German remained. One of Schubert's most lovely social part-songs, the *Gebet*, D. 815 (written in response to a breakfast-time request by the Countess Esterhazy in time for after-dinner singing that evening), seemed slightly bloated and over-fed in even a well-schooled performance by 24 voices, while the short sections the conductor (at the piano for the 19th-century selections) allotted to soloists drawn from the choir gave (with the exception of the cavernously oracular voice of the bass) rather the opposite impression. Performances of other Schubert and Schumann part-songs were quite enjoyable but did not equal the transcendence of the Bach, in part because of the material. Richard Strauss's "Der Abend," however, does aim for transcendence and almost reaches it; the choir's performance was most impressive, but Strauss did miss having his usual orchestra at his disposal. Maestro Ed Spanjaard and the choir responded to the enthusiastic ovation with a light dessert of bonbons by Rossini and Bacharach.

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**More Winter Workshop
Portraits**



The Atlanta Early Music Alliance
P. O. Box 663
Decatur, Georgia 30030



**The Atlanta Early
Music Alliance**

The Alliance: News of AEMA People and Communities

The Southeastern Historical Keyboard Society (SEHKS, pronounced “seeks”) will convene March 9-11 at Shorter College, with an excursion to Reinhardt College, for a full program of non-concurrent sessions and concerts centering on Mozart. Featured concerts are by Don Angle, jazz harpsichordist, at Reinhardt on Friday night, and the Atlanta Baroque Orchestra with Andrew Willis, fortepiano, Saturday night. Anyone may join SEHKS for \$25 and attend the conclave for \$150, which covers transportation from Rome to Waleska. For further information see <http://www.sehks.org/> and click on “Conclave”, or contact one of our former SEHKS presidents: George Lucktenberg (AEMA board member) at (770) 720-2748, or Peter DeWitt (pdewitt@shorter.edu, 706-233-7320).

The **Emory Baroque Orchestra** presented a concert January 20 celebrating Emory's roots. The editor regrets not being able to announce this concert in a timely manner. According to the announcement: “Recorder players Jonathan DeLoach ('94), Sean Sullivan ('04), Maria Rosensweig ('07), along with bassoonist Steve Acklin and director Jody Miller, will perform four concertos by Telemann, Baston and Heinichen in this celebration of Emory's roots. Scarcely written a century before the founding of the college in the mid-1830s, music by these composers would have undoubtedly still been in circulation in Germany, England

and other parts of Europe when the first degrees were awarded.”

“The Emory Baroque Orchestra is dedicated to re-creating music written before 1750 in what is generally referred to as an ‘historically informed style.’ In addition to using gut strings on the orchestral instruments, specially shaped bows and wind instruments copied from surviving historical originals, the group utilizes playing techniques that contribute to a lighter and clearer sound than is possible with modern instruments. Coupled with the unique acoustics of Cannon Chapel, the historical treatment of these major works will give the audience an experience that cannot be rivaled by modern symphony orchestras.”

Your editor, her husband Peter DeWitt and Shorter musicologist Fred Tarrant can be found at Emory University on Tuesday evenings, studying the playing and singing of Javanese gamelan music. This too is a form of historical preservation, even though new music for gamelan is being written. Gamelan is an orchestra mainly composed of metallophones: gongs and instruments with metal keys that one strikes with mallets. It also includes a flute, stringed instrument and voice. We have purchased a small gamelan for our college and hope it can be used locally to increase international understanding. Your editor has not abandoned Western early music: she is working on an article, of which more later.