



BROADSIDE

Volume VIII #6

April 2003

AEMA Series Welcomes Ritornello

On Sunday, April 27, 2003 at 4:00 pm, Ritornello Baroque Ensemble will perform the last event of the 2003-2004 Early Music Concert Series sponsored by AEMA and Decatur Presbyterian Church. Recorderists Jonathan DeLoach and Jody Miller will play a transcription of J.S. Bach's delightful trio sonata for 2 flutes and continuo, BWV 1039. Gambist Susan Patterson will be one the soloists in Telemann's trio sonata in C Major for alto recorder and dessus de viole (treble viol) and continuo; Telemann wrote several sonatas for this instrumental combination, which is seldom heard today.

Harpsichordist Christopher Harrell will perform "L'Italienne" by Armand-Louis Couperin, a much younger cousin of François "le grand."

The ensemble will be joined by two guest artists for this concert. Shawn Charton, a bass staff singer at Decatur Presbyterian, will sing a poignant aria from J.S. Bach's Canata 13, "Meine Seufzer, meine Tränen," and a lively number from Telemann's Singspiel "Die Last-tragende Liebe." Gambist Paul Miller will help out with continuo and will join Susan for some duets for



Regular Ritornello members (clockwise from top) DeLoach, Harrell, Miller, and Patterson.

unaccompanied bass viols, a popular 17th-century genre.

Two brand new instruments will make their debuts: Jody's 17th-century-style alto recorder in G at a=466 by Peter van der Poel of the Netherlands (in an unaccompanied work by blind Dutch carillonneur Jacob van Eyck), and Susan's bass viol by Dominik Zuchowicz of Ottawa.

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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Review: AEMA Concert Series 3: Farallon Recorder Quartet

by John Nelson

It is always a pleasure to welcome Tish Berlin and Frances Blaker back to Atlanta. It is doubly pleasurable when they bring the other half of the Farallon Quartet with them. Thus it was as the group presented the third program of the AEMA concert series on Sunday, March 23 at Decatur Presbyterian Church.

The varied program ranged from Guillaume Dufay to the Duke with many interesting stops along the way. Dufay's Lamentatio sancte matris ecclesie Constantinopolitane opened the program. It was an interesting choice (probably unplanned), given the situation in the Middle East. I wonder if twenty years from now someone might feel called upon to write a lament on the fall of Baghdad. I will say here

at once, so I don't have to keep repeating myself: the group plays with impeccable taste, wonderful balance, almost perfect intonation and a feel for the music that adds immeasurably to the enjoyment of anything they play. In addition, especially in the Bach pieces, they demonstrated a dynamic control I did not think possible for recorders.

In a nice bit of programming balance, the group opened the second half of their program with a pair of pieces again by Dufay, this time the ballade Se la face ay pale and the Kyrie from the mass based on the song. I will confess that early Renaissance music is not as much to my taste as that of later portions of the period. Yet, even I had to admit that the performance was compelling and true to the spirit of the period.

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EARLY MUSIC ALLIANCE

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PUBLICATION SCHEDULE

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SUBMISSIONS

We gladly welcome articles and letters but reserve the right to edit all submissions. *E-mail submission is preferred.* Each must include the author's name, address and phone number. Letters must be signed.

MAIL submissions to Patricia DeWitt, patdewitt@shorter.edu, grocheio@hotmail.com, or 19 Rosewood Road, Rome, GA 30165.

[Include your submission as part of your email message or as an attachment. Do not use file compression.]

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AEMA also maintains a website at www.atlema.org

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Farallon Review *continued*

Part one of the program continued with superb renditions of two instrumental works by Ludwig Senfl, a motet setting by Heinrich Isaac and a setting of a song by Heinrich Finck. The four works were paired: a slow piece followed by one more lively. These works were balanced in the second part by Canzon prima by Giovanni Gabrieli (a work dear to the hearts of all brass players) and a set of three madrigals by Phillippe Verdelot. Members of the quartet recited the text of the madrigals before each number—something that greatly enhanced the enjoyment of the performance.

Johann Sebastian Bach made very few mistakes in his illustrious career. He did, however, occasionally leave things unsaid that would cause untold problems for the future. Not getting around to specifying any performance medium for his monumental Art of Fugue was one of those oversights.. As a consequence, the 19 fugues have been played by every conceivable ensemble from strings (bowed and plucked [you really need to experience one of the fugues played by a mandolin quartet]) to winds, brass, percussion, and—of course—keyboards. The quartet's performance of Contrapunctus I was the only work on the program that I felt betrayed a momentary lack of focus during the long working-out section. Everything came back together in the end. During the second portion of the program, the group performed Contrapunctus XVIII in a much more confident manner. In each case, the Art of Fugue Contrapuncti were followed by renditions of sprightly Bach organ works, first the Fuga alla breve e staccato and later a Canzona. These latter works are especially well-suited to recorders since this is a straight translation from wind to wind.

Both halves of the program ended with more modern works. We were first treated to an arrangement by Hanneke van Proosdij of In a Sentimental Mood by Duke Ellington. Much of the Duke's music was written especially to display the talents of his amazing group of players; as a consequence, attempting to make the transition from big band to small recorder ensemble is tricky. I know; I've tried. In general, I felt that this was the one truly weak spot of the program. The arrangement did not, to my taste, truly convey the spirit of the original. This was also the only number on the program where I detected some intonation problems. The Duke was followed by what could too

easily have degenerated into a "what's he doing now?" kind of thing. The work—The Jogger— began with some preliminary puffs from the recorders, then they were off and running. Members of the audience had some interesting thoughts about what might have been being represented. I just enjoyed the interplay.

Before performing the final two numbers of the program, the quartet inserted a Ricercare Pace Domine (Peace, Lord) by Hieronymus (Girolamo?) Parabosco who lived from 1524-1557. The symbolism in the choice of this work as an extra was obvious and appreciated by this reviewer at least.

Part two, then, ended with more modern pieces. The first of these was particularly interesting, in that it was composed by a 13-year old especially for the Farallon Quartet. Last year, I had the pleasure of recommending the composer, Andrew Levy, for the American Recorder Society President's Scholarship and later had a chance to meet the young man at the Berkeley Festival. He is impressive all around and if he continues to produce pieces of the quality of The Abacus, the work we heard, his future looks bright. What he created was a well-written essay, taking full advantage of the capabilities of the instruments. We can only wish him continued success.

The program ended with a bit of tongue-in-cheek humor: a recorder version of the classic violin virtuoso piece Csardas by Vittorio Monti. The work started out pretty much as a tour de force for the soprano, but then the two altos took over for extended arpeggio passages. A couple of false starts were written in and the piece and the concert as a whole ended with a flourish, complete with a dash of the Hallelujah Chorus thrown in for good measure.

If I had one complaint, it was not the performance, it was the lack of an audience. Fewer than 30 people came out to hear this fine group. I won't try to pin any blame, but if the AEMA concert series is to continue, something needs to be done to get the word out to more of the public. I am ashamed to say that even members of the ARS chapter who are not AEMA members didn't show up and that is not a good sign. Let's hope that things are better for the last program of the series which will again feature recorders: The Ritornello Baroque Ensemble with Jody Miller and Jonathan DeLoach.

Your reviewer:

John Nelson recently retired as professor of music theory at Georgia State University. He is a recent national president of the American Recorder Society and a past AEMA board member.

The Atlanta Early Music Calendar

April 2003

24 **Atlanta Symphony Orchestra & Chamber Chorus.** Nicholas McGegan, *guest conductor*. Beethoven's Symphony No. 2 & *Christ on the Mount of Olives*. Jessica Jones, *soprano*, William Burden, *tenor*, Philip Cutlip, *bass*. [Editor's Note: McGegan is music director of the Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra and always coaxes stylish sounds out of the ASO.] 8:00 pm, Symphony Hall, Woodruff Arts Center, 1280 Peachtree Rd. 404-733-4800. www.atlantasympphony.org

26 **New Trinity Baroque**, Atlanta, Episcopal Church of the Epiphany, 8:15 PM. Orchestral Suites by Bach & Telemann. Program will feature Suite in A Minor for recorder, strings and b.c. by G.Ph. Telemann, Suite for String Orchestra "Don Quixotte" by Telemann, and Bach's famous Suite No. 2 for transverse flute, strings and b.c. New Trinity Baroque, with Kathleen Duguet, transverse flute & recorder (New York). The tickets for all concerts are \$20 regular, \$15 Friends of NTB, Members of Early Music Network and ArtsCard members, and only \$5 for students (with Student ID). More information can be obtained by visiting the ensemble's website at www.newtrinitybaroque.com, by emailing newtrinitybaroque@earlymusic.net, or by calling toll-free 1-866-EARLYMUSIC.

27 **New Trinity Baroque**, Lilburn, All Saints Lutheran Church, 7:30 PM Orchestral Suites by Bach & Telemann (program as above).

27 **Ritornello Baroque Ensemble** (Elizabeth Packard Arnold, *soprano*, Jonathan DeLoach & Jody Miller, *recorders*, Christopher

Harrell, *harpsichord*, Susan Patterson, *viola da gamba*). AEMA Early Music Concert Series. 4:00 pm, Decatur Presbyterian Church, 205 Sycamore St., Decatur. \$15 general; \$10 AEMA members, students & seniors. www.atlema.org

May 2003

- 1 **Emory Early Music Ensemble.** Jody Miller, *director*. "Listen to the Angels Sing": Multichoir Music of the Venetian Tradition. 8:00 pm, Emerson Concert Hall, Schwartz Center, Emory University. Free. 404-727-5050. www.emory.edu/ARTS
- 4 **Atlanta Sacred Chorale with Gwinnett Young Singers.** Dr. Eric Nelson, *director*. (Formerly known as the Gwinnett Festival Singers, the Atlanta Sacred Chorale is the only nondenominational chorus in the Southeast dedicated to the performance of sacred *a cappella* literature.) 3:00 pm, Spivey Hall, Clayton College & State University, Morrow. \$15. 770-961-3683. www.spiveyhall.org
- 6 **David Buice, harpsichord.** "Finally! A Bach Recital." 7:30 pm, Oglethorpe University Museum of Art, 4484 Peachtree Rd. \$15 general; \$10 AEMA members & seniors; students free. 404-364-8555. <http://museum.oglethorpe.edu/programs.htm>
- 18 **Atlanta Recorder Society.** Spring concert. 3:00 pm, St. Mark United Methodist Church, 781 Peachtree St. Free. 404-633-2108.

Review: New Trinity Baroque Surveys Concerti Grossi

by Pat DeWitt

New Trinity Baroque's The Art of Concerto Grosso, presented on March 1, 2003 at St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church, provided a fascinating overview of the varied approaches to this Baroque form. The string ensemble, conducted by Predrag Gosta, in general performed quite stylishly, energetically, and cleanly. It was interesting to see the solo honors widely passed around among the musicians, rather than assumed by a single invited guest. However, the program told us virtually nothing about these soloists, but much about the conductor. One may read about several of these artists on the website: <http://www.earlymusic.net/newtrinity/artists/>. Comments made throughout the concert by Mr. Gosta were well composed and delivered, and added to the audience's appreciation of the music.

The concert began with an early example by Georg Muffat, Concerto Grosso II in g minor ('Armonico Tributo'). For this work, the concertino consisted of James Gallagher, Martha Perry and Mirna Ogrizovic, violins; Sinisa Ciric, viola; Martha Bishop, cello, Michael Fields, chitarrone. This was the most sectional of the concertos, very interesting in its contrasting moods, which were competently if not brilliantly interpreted. Dramatic pauses before last notes, for example, did not come off quite as effortlessly as one would have hoped.

Arcangelo Corelli's Concerto Grosso IV, in D major (Op. 6) was the most typical textbook example of the form, with its three-movement fast-slow-fast succession. The soloists were Judson Griffin and James Gallagher, violins; Martha Bishop, cello, Michael Fields, chitarrone and Mark Husey, harpsichord. The second movement, in which Corelli leaves room for individual expression,

is sometimes graced with more keyboard improvisation than the conservative interpretation of New Trinity provided. The especially effective leadership in this concerto of Judson Griffin, from New York, made it clear that internal leadership can make an important difference with the same person on the podium.

The Concerto Grosso X, in d minor (Op. 6) of Handel was unusual in the intense fugal nature of its movements. Martha Perry and Judson Griffin, violins; Martha Bishop, cello, Michael Fields, chitarrone and Mark Husey, harpsichord, were the concertino players. In fugues such as these, the articulation and shaping of the theme is of prime importance. The fugue themes were correctly articulated and lively, but failed to reach the level of total commitment to the shaping of the phrase: we heard the rat-a-tat-tat but not the swoop or lunge of the motif toward its goal.

Finally, Francesco Geminiani's Concerto Grosso XII, 'Follia,' in d minor (after Corelli, Op. 5) provided occasion for the most virtuosity of the afternoon. The concertino consisted of James Gallagher and Martha Perry, violins, Sinisa Ciric, viola, Martha Bishop, cello, Michael fields, chitarrone and Mark Husey, harpsichord. The soloists had serious passagework to negotiate, and they carried it off very well.

Consistent in quality, well-chosen in selections, and both enjoyable and edifying, this concert was a worthy addition to the Atlanta scene. However, in order to take this ensemble seriously, it must be noted that although elegant and stylish, this performance was not breathtaking. Too many opportunities to make a phrase really bloom, to have musical ideas soar above the steady Baroque dance-rhythms, were missed.

The Alliance: President's Message

Preparations for our upcoming potluck musicale-lunch cum annual membership meeting are proceeding apace. The event will be held at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Atlanta at Cliff Valley Way NE. on Saturday, May 3rd, starting at 11:00 AM and running to about 2:00 PM. AEMA will provide two main dishes for vegans and carnivores respectively. You are encouraged to bring a side dish. Jorg Voss is in charge of preparing suitable music for the sight-reading session. So lend your voice and/or bring your instrument.

We are pushing for a large attendance—the more the merrier! Some hours of cheerful togetherness among AEMA members will be a welcome tonic for our organization. We all need to encourage each other and avail ourselves of opportunities to forge new friendships. Your presence will be highly valued in furthering that aim as well as for getting your input regarding the direction in which you would like AEMA to be heading. SO PLEASE COME! Mark the event in your calendar!

To help us plan ahead please let us know of your intention to attend by April 19th. You can either e-mail me at <eckrose@mindspring.com>, also indicating how you plan to participate vocally and/or instrumentally or fill out the brief questionnaire below and send it to me via snail mail.

In regard to getting membership input concerning activities AEMA ought to be pursuing, our recently formed Education Committee has made up a questionnaire that we urge you to fill out and return. We want you to benefit from your membership in AEMA as much as possible. To that end we need you to make your wishes known to us.

Eckhart Richter, President

POTLUCK MUSICALE-LUNCH CUM ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING ATTENDANCE CONFIRMATION.

Name: (Please print) _____

Voice: S,A,T,B (if applicable) _____

Instrument: (if applicable) _____

Do you need driving directions? (Yes/No) _____

Please mail to: Eckhart Richter

1830 Ravenwood Way NE.

ATLANTA, GA. 30329-2723

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



The Atlanta Early Music Alliance
www.atlema.org
info@atlema.org