

Music *in the* Pavilion



Tempesta di Mare Chamber Players

A Tale of Two Italian Cities
Chamber Music from Venice and Naples

Friday, April 5, 2019

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A Tale of Two Italian Cities
Chamber Music from Venice and Naples

TEMPESTA DI MARE CHAMBER PLAYERS
Gwyn Roberts, recorder
Emlyn Ngai & Rebecca Harris, violin
Richard Stone, theorbo
Lisa Terry, cello

VENICE

Two Sonatas (early 17th century) Giovanni Valentini
(1582–1649)

Sonata in D minor for three treble instruments • Sonata in C for two violins

Sonata No. 4 from *Sonate concertante in stil moderno*
(Venice, 1629) Dario Castello
(1602–1631)

Two Sonatas from *La Cetra, Op 10*
(Venice, 1673) Giovanni Legrenzi
(1626–1690)

Sonata à 3 No. 1 in C • Sonata à 3 No 5 in D

Concerto in A minor, RV 108
(Venice, 1720s) Antonio Vivaldi
(1678–1741)

Allegro • Largo • Allegro



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INTERMISSION

NAPLES

Sonata a quattro no. 2 in F
(Naples, ca. 1710)Pietro Marchitelli
(1643–1729)

Adagio • Presto • Adagio • [Allegro]

Concerto in A minor (Naples, by 1725)Francesco Mancini
(1672–1737)

Allegro • Andante • Spiritoso • Largo • Allegro

from ***Canzone... con il basso continuo***
(Naples, 1650)Andrea Falconieri
(1585–1656)

L'Eroica • Fantasia • Folias • L'Arcibizzarra



Program Notes

by Richard Stone and Gwyn Roberts

Venice and Naples were Italy's two main musical hubs in the 17th and 18th centuries. Opera figured large in both places, with Naples training many of Europe's finest singers in its four conservatories and Venice employing them in its six—or more, depending on the year—opera companies. Both boasted accomplished instrumentalists, who worked at sacred and secular institutions.

And yet the contrasting political, economic and social circumstances in the two cities led to distinctly different musical aesthetics. Venice, an island off of the Apennine Peninsula's northeast corner, was then an independent republic, while Naples to the south was ruled by Spain. Venice's status as a center for international trade gave it authority to ignore the restrictions on public musical spectacle—such as opera—imposed by the Pope in Rome, while Naples toed the papal line much more closely.

In short, Venice was a party town, while Naples took itself more seriously. The music that emerged from these two hotbeds of creativity reflects those realities.

Giovanni Valentini (1582–1649) was born in Venice, but he took his pedigree and musical sensibilities as a Venetian composer into Eastern and Central Europe early in his career. By the time he published his first book of canzoni in 1609, he had already been working as an organist for King Zygmunt III of Poland for several years. Through his association in Graz at the court of the future Holy Roman Emperor Ferdinand III, he eventually settled in Vienna with the post of Imperial Music Director. His contemporaries appreciated his cutting-edge approach to composition and noted his distinct treatments for voices and instruments. The two sonatas in this program come from unpublished manuscripts in Kremsmünster, Austria, and demonstrate a distinctly non-vocal approach, particularly in its use of large melodic leaps that created an angularity speed, and the use of repeated notes well suited to instruments.

In his 1629 *Sonate concertante in stil moderno* (ensemble sonatas in the modern style), **Dario Castello** (1602–1631) transformed the expressive power of recitative—the intoned speeches that emerged in opera at this time and persisted through Rossini—into a distinctly instrumental idiom. Castello, a wind player at San Marco in Venice, shaped his melodies in deliberately non-vocal ways, with changes of register that singers can't execute, for instance. His analogue of recitative takes the form of freer, cadenza-like sections within the sonatas, frequently marked by long-sustaining bass notes within the texture. Sonata 4 stands out among all his sonatas through the persistence of a steady, walking bass line that opens the piece and then recurs throughout as a unifying idea. It's a modernism borrowed from the madrigalists who would set lyrical melodies over such a steady bass-beat. The ending, with its snapped rhythms in the two treble instruments, is one of Castello's signatures.

Giovanni Legrenzi (1626–1690) inhabited the middle baroque years, when Valentini’s angularity no longer held interest. Instead, Legrenzi’s 1673 collection of string sonatas, *La Cetra* (“the lyre”), came to market when public taste favored flowing lyricism, such as written by a generation of Venetian opera composers that included Francesco Cavalli (1602–1676) and Antonio Cesti (1623–1669) and Legrenzi himself. Legrenzi’s sonatas tip their hat to the structural procedures Valentini followed, especially to the short, single-movement sonata of contrasting sections. But they also deliver a message of “mission accomplished” where Valentini’s deliberate differentiation of instrumental from vocal idioms goes. Legrenzi continued to develop a specifically instrumental idiom while restoring at least the impression of vocalism.

Of all the composers on this program, **Antonio Vivaldi** (1678–1741) is more than a recognizable name; he’s outright famous. His fame today rests mainly on his programmatic and now-ubiquitous violin concertos called *The Four Seasons*, though they represent a drop in the bucket of the 500 or so pieces he called “concerto.” The Recorder Concerto in A Minor combines Venetian structure with a Neapolitan soundscape. He employs the trademark Venetian form based on a recurring, segmentable theme—called the *ritornello*—as its first movement. But he scored it to include an accompanying string ensemble of just two violins and cello. While this was a very normal combination in Naples and Rome, Vivaldi used it just this once for his wind concertos. All the others with strings use a full complement of two violins, viola and cello.

Pietro Marchitelli (1643–1729) was principal violinist of the orchestra of the royal chapel in Naples for more than fifty years. According to the eighteenth-century English music historian Charles Burney, the great Roman violinist and composer Arcangelo Corelli visited Naples in 1702 and expressed his astonishment at the quality of string playing under Marchitelli’s leadership. “Si suona a Napoli!” (they can really play in Naples), he exclaimed. Marchitelli modeled the form of his compositions after Corelli’s influential style. This sonata follows Corelli’s pattern of a complex, slow opening movement, followed by a fast, imitative second movement, a lyrical third, and a dance-like finale. Marchitelli’s signature touches include surprising, asymmetrical phrasing, and conversationality among the parts.

Francesco Mancini (1672–1737) was employed alongside his more famous colleague Alessandro Scarlatti at the Royal Chapel of Naples and at the Naples Conservatory. While he was foremost a composer of vocal music, he had a fondness for the recorder and featured it frequently. His 12 recorder sonatas, published in 1727 for the English market, enjoyed wide circulation, and a 1725 manuscript from Naples of 24 concertos for recorder and strings by various composers includes 11 by Mancini. The Mancini on this program comes from that Naples manuscript and displays its composer’s fascination with counterpoint, especially in its fugal fast movement, marked *Spiritoso*. The sudden chromatic shifts in the slow movements are another of Mancini’s signature moves.

The first half of the seventeenth century retained earlier modes of composing from the late Renaissance just as newer ones like Valentini’s were gaining currency. In 1650 **Andrea Falconieri** (1585–1656), lutenist at the Royal Chapel in Naples, published his *Primo libro di canzone...* “for one, two or three violins, ... or other instruments, with basso continuo.” Though deliciously old-fashioned and likely composed well before its publication, *Il Primo libro* marks itself as a product of its time by including a baroque innovation: a quasi-improvised accompaniment in which one or more chordal instruments (keyboard, lute, harp) follows improvises counterpoint called *basso continuo*. The Spanish-titled works acknowledge the time Falconieri worked in Spain. The set concludes with variations on the *folia*, based upon a repeating chord progression that English composers called a “ground bass.”

Tempesta di Mare

PHILADELPHIA
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ORCHESTRA

Fanfare magazine recently hailed Tempesta di Mare for its “abundant energy, immaculate ensemble, and undeniable sense of purpose.” Led by directors Gwyn Roberts and Richard Stone with concertmaster Emlyn Ngai, Tempesta performs baroque music on baroque instruments with a repertoire that ranges from staged opera to chamber music. The group performs all orchestral repertoire without a conductor, as was the practice when this music was new.

Tempesta’s Philadelphia Concert Series, noted by the *Philadelphia Inquirer* for its “off-the-grid chic factor,” emphasizes creating a sense of discovery for artists and audience alike. Launched in 2002, the series has included over 35 modern “world premieres” of lost or forgotten baroque masterpieces, leading the *Inquirer* to describe it as “an old-music group that acts like a new-music group, by pushing the cutting edge back rather than forward.” Its supporters include the Pew Charitable Trusts, the William Penn Foundation, the Presser Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts.

In a marketplace dominated by European ensembles, Tempesta is the only American baroque music group to record for the prestigious British label Chandos. Current releases are *Weiss: Lute Concerti* (2004), *Handel: Flaming Rose* (2007), *Scarlatti: Cantatas and Chamber Music* (2010), *Fasch: Orchestral Music, vol. 1* (2008), *vol. 2* (2011) and *vol. 3* (2012), *Bach: Trio Sonatas, BWV 525–530* (2014), *Mancini: Sonatas for a Flute*, (2014), and *Comédie et Tragédie: French baroque orchestral music for the theater, vol. 1* (2015), *vol. 2* (2016). 2018 saw two additional discs: *Janitsch: Rediscoveries from the Sara Levy Collection*, and the first complete recording of Georg Philipp Telemann’s *Concerti-en-Suite*.

National broadcasts of live performances include *SymphonyCast*, *Performance Today*, *Sunday Baroque* and *Harmonia*. Live concert recordings are distributed worldwide via the European Broadcasting Union, a global alliance of public service media organizations, with members in 56 countries in Europe and beyond.

International appearances have included the Prague Spring Festival, the Göttingen Handel Festival, the Mendelssohn-Remise Berlin and the International Fasch Festival in Zerbst. Recent North American appearances have included a return engagement at the Frick Collection and the National Gallery of Art. Other notable presenters have included the Miami Bach Festival, the Oregon Bach Festival, Abbey Bach Festival, Whitman College, Cornell Concerts, the Yale Collection, the Flagler Museum and the Garmany Series, Hartford. In March 2020 Tempesta will be the first non-European ensemble to perform at the renowned International Telemann Festival in Magdeburg, Germany.

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