



TRIBACH
ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE

Mr Bach Takes His Hat Off
featuring
Linda Perillo, soprano
Walter Reiter, violin
Doreen Oke, harpsichord
Ronda Metszies, cello

Wednesday, September 24, 1997
at 8:00 pm

Convocation Hall, Arts Building
University of Alberta

Program



Department of Music
University of Alberta

Program

- "Deus, canticum novum" (publ. 1621) Alessandro Grandi
(d. 1630)
- Sonata seconda, for Violin and Continuo (publ. 1629) Dario Castello
(fl. 1621-1644)
- "Gaudete et Exultate" Giovanni Antonio Rigatti
(1615-1649)
- Passacaglia in G Minor
for Solo Violin (ca. 1676) Heinrich Ignaz Franz von Biber
(1644-1704)
- "Lungi del Vago Volto", cantata for Soprano,
Violin and Basso Continuo, RV 680 (ca. 1719) Antonio Vivaldi
(1678-1741)

Interval

- Ground for Harpsichord Solo Henry Purcell
(1659-1695)
- "Come all ye Songsters" from *The Fairy Queen* (1692)
- "Sweeter than Roses" (1695)
- "I attempt Love's Sickness to Fly"
from *The Indian Queen* (ca. 1695)
- "Paratum cor meum, Deus" Jean-Joseph Cassanea de Mondonville
for Soprano, Violin, and (1711-1772)
Harpsichord Obligato (publ. 1748)
- Sonata No. 1 in B Minor for Violin
and Harpsichord, BWV 1014 (ca. 1720) Johann Sebastian Bach
[Adagio-Allegro-Andante-Allegro] (1685-1750)
- "Un'alma innamorata", cantata for Soprano,
Violin, and Basso Continuo (1707) George Frederick Handel
(1685-1759)

Co-sponsored with the
Edmonton Chamber Music
Society.



Program Notes

"Mr Bach Takes his Hat Off" is a homage to Bach's musical ancestors from the great man himself. He appears only in the role of host at a house party, as he welcomes composers he never had a chance to meet, but without whom he might not have become the greatest genius of the baroque era.

His first guests are three men who helped to write the very first chapter of the baroque saga, and with arrival of his last, Handel, we put right one of the great social absurdities of the period: the fact that Bach and Handel, despite being compatriots and exact contemporaries, never actually met. Many of the other guests he might have liked to welcome don't show up, while others who do might leave him blinking on the threshold, wondering why or if he had invited them at all! No matter. Such is the nature of parties.

Our recital opens with a Psalm setting by Grandi, "I shall sing unto the Lord a new song". Indeed, Grandi was at the forefront of the "new song" movement, as we might call it. A pupil of Gabrieli, whose contribution to the new baroque idiom was central, he was a pioneer in the forms of the monodic motet and the sacred solo cantata. In this song, elements of recitative are mixed with florid ornamentation, and contrasted with a dancelike section in which the instrumental bass is as active as the voice, reflecting the text "I shall praise thee with a psaltery of ten strings".

It is easy to hear the similarities between Grandi and the sonata by Castello, one of the earliest masterpieces of the violin repertoire. Castello was Monteverdi's concertmaster in St Mark's in Venice from 1629, and we can spot typical elements of Venetian vocal style throughout: listen for the repeated-note trills at the end of some sections, for example. The sonata radiates the exuberance of the new instrumental idiom, freshly liberated from the vocal structures of the late Renaissance: the polarisation of melody and bass having permitted both the solo voice and the instrumental sonata to come into its own, the violin was quickly discovering its own virtuoso and expressive qualities. Moods and tempo change quickly from section to section, passing from dance to vocal idioms, but in the end we are left suspended in thought, reeling from the emotional buffeting we have experienced in the course of this short but intense work.

Rigatti was a contemporary of Castello in Venice, and both a singer and a priest at St. Mark's. He taught singing at, among other places, the

Conservatory of the Incurables (!), and was Maestro di Cappella to the Patriarch of Venice. "Gaudete et Exultate" is a song of rejoicing with a decidedly Venetian flavour: "Sound the trumpet in honour of the festival of St. Mark: in this festival the angels rejoice and together praise the son of God."

The Passacaglia for solo violin of Biber (c1676) is arguably the greatest piece for solo violin before Bach. The four descending notes on which the work is based are played 30 times, then 15 times one octave higher, and then 20 more times in the original octave, making 65 times in all. Biber was born in Bohemia, though most of his working life was spent in Salzburg, and the influence of the early Italian, Castello among them, on his writing, is very clear. His greatest achievements were in his innovative violin sonatas, which combine technical experiment, particularly in the field of tuning, with a rich palette of emotional colours. The Passacaglia comes as the summing-up of the Mystery Sonatas, 15 devotional sonatas depicting different episodes in the life of the Virgin Mary. In the manuscript, each episode is illustrated by an engraving: before the Passacaglia, we see an angel leading a young child by the hand, while gesturing ahead with his other hand. Perhaps the four notes repeated over and over symbolise the eternal and inevitable nature of things.

Meanwhile, back in Venice...

The universal reknown of Antonio Vivaldi during his lifetime was comparable to his fame today, the difference being that today he is too often known as the composer of the Four Seasons and not much else. His output was enormous, however, including mountains of concertos, 94 operas, and huge amounts of church music, too rarely performed today. Bach was a huge Vivaldi fan, and transcribed 10 of his string concertos as concertos for harpsichord or organ. This cantata is the only one extant for violin and soprano, and is based on an anonymous text. The opening Recitative describes the hopeless torments of the lover, while in the Aria which follows, he appeals to the little birds to help him win her over. This appeal (one can but try!) seems to work, and in the Recitative and Aria which follow, he is united with her and vows he will never leave her and will love her forever. (The birds don't get one seed of thanks).

We start the second part of our concert with a group of songs by Purcell, whose music Bach almost certainly never knew. "Come all ye Songsters" comes from the masque "The Fairy Queen", and should be preceded by an orchestral fanfare: we have substituted this with a "ground", in which, as in the Biber Passacaglia, the bass is repeated over and over. "Sweeter

than *Roses*" comes from Pausanias, and finally a song from the collection "*Orpheus Britannicus*", "*I Attempt from Love's Sickness*".

Purcell incorporated elements of the French style, very popular in Restoration London, into his music, and it is to France that we turn next. Bach, writing at the very end of the Baroque period, was able to fuse together the two musical languages which had hitherto seemed so irreconcilable: the Italian and the French. Whereas Corelli, in the famous story, had had to admit that he simply could not understand French music, Bach was absolutely at home with both French and Italian styles and could weave both into the intricate fabric of his music. Mondonville was the first composer successfully to write sonatas for the harpsichord with the accompaniment of a violin. This formula provided an alternative to the sonata for violin and continuo which, by the third decade of the eighteenth century, had so saturated the market as to be written off as all but obsolete. In his *Opus 5*, (1748), he went a step further, writing an obligato harpsichord part which could be accompanied by a voice, or a violin, or both. These settings of Psalms were written for his wife, an accomplished pupil of Rameau, to play and sing at the same time. This one is from Psalm 57, "*My heart is fixed, O God.. I will sing and give praise*".

And so to Bach. The sonata for violin and harpsichord is written as a trio sonata with the violin and each hand of the harpsichord playing fully independent parts. In the opening bars, it is the harpsichord which provides the body of the music, while the violin hovers above. Later, the violin becomes fully involved, and the music intensifies towards a cadenza for the violin which draws the movement to a close. The second movement is basically fugal, restless in character, while in the following *Andante*, Bach brilliantly calms us with a glorious duet in the upper parts accompanied by a walking bass in the left hand. The sonata ends with an exuberant fugal allegro.

Bach tried twice to meet Handel. In 1719 he travelled from Leipzig to Halle but missed him by a matter of hours, and 10 years later he wrote to him, asking him to come to Leipzig for a visit. But no meeting ever took place. Artistically too, they remained far apart, despite their almost identical origins, Bach the devoted Lutheran church musician, and Handel the internationally renowned composer of great Italian opera. "*Un'alma innamorata*" is one of many solo cantatas. The text is once more of the cruel torments suffered by the lover, but, as in the Vivaldi work earlier on, it finishes in optimistic mood.

Program notes by Walter Reiter. 1997

Walter Reiter's love for the music of the 17th and 18th centuries brought him to the study of "authentic" performance practice on period instruments. He has been actively involved in the early music scene in London and in Europe for the past 12 years, working with all the major period instrument groups in London and Europe, under Trevor Pinnock, Gustav Leonhardt, Ton Koopman, John Eliot Gardner, Christopher Hogwood, and others. Since 1989, Walter Reiter has led the second violins in the English Concert under the direction of Trevor Pinnock. He has made numerous recordings, toured throughout Europe, North America and the Far East. He has led, directed and appeared as soloist with the Orchestra Barocca Italiana in Rome, the Ensemble Baroque de Limoges in France, and the Keshet Baroque Orchestra in Israel. He has worked with and led many well-known groups through Europe including the King's Consort.

Walter has played many solo recitals in France, Israel and England and has been recorded by Radio France and Israel Radio. His repertoire extends from the 17th century Italian and German Sonatas, including the "Mystery Sonatas" of Biber, to the Sonatas and Partitas of Bach, as well as much French music. He teaches regularly in Israel and has given master classes in France, Rome and Canada. He conducts the Kashtaniot Chamber Orchestra in Tel Aviv. More recently, he has been in demand as a conductor, working on baroque programs with modern ensembles in France and Israel, and as Music Director of the Linden Baroque Orchestra and Choir in London.

Linda Perillo's musical training began in Edmonton. Her interest in historical performance practice led to further studies in England and France. Her voice has been described as "shimmering, shining, fresh, and guileless". Ideally suited to the baroque style, her voice has resonant purity, depth and unique tonal quality. Linda's voice and mastery of baroque technique have captured the attention of renowned baroque specialists such as Albert Fuller, Trevor Pinnock, Phillippe Herreweghe, Jean-Claude Malgoire, Christopher Hogwood and others.

She has performed in Israel, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Holland, Belgium, Finland, Argentina, the Phillipines, and in Germany, where the Leipziger Volkszeitung called her "baroque singer par excellence". Before moving to London, Linda taught voice and piano at the Alberta College. She teaches workshops in Israel. A solo recording of music by JJ Mondonville on the Meridian label was released in March 1996, and Linda was subsequently invited to participate in the "Mondonville Week" in Versailles. With the English Concert, she has recorded Purcell's King

Arthur, and **Linda Perillo** performs frequently with the Gabrieli Consort. Her operatic career includes the role of Galatea in Handel's "Acis and Galatea" with Opera Atelier in Toronto, Cupid in Purcell's King Arthur with the Sixteen in Lisbon, and the role of Seleuce in Handel's Tolomeo in Halle. She has performed Bach Cantatas with Trevor Pinnock and recently recorded a cantata newly discovered at the University of Leipzig. We welcome Linda back to Edmonton!

Doreen Oke teaches harpsichord and harpsichord accompanying in the School of Music at the University of British Columbia, and at Douglas College in New Westminster and Capilano College in North Vancouver. A founding member of Early Music Vancouver, she is one of a handful of musicians responsible for bringing the performance and teaching of Baroque music to its present prominence on the west coast.

After initial training on harpsichord and organ at U.B.C. and at the Conservatoire de Musique de Montréal, Ms Oke participated in master classes and extended workshops in North America and in Europe with virtually all of today's leading early-music keyboardists. In 1983 she was an artist-in-residence in Holland, a guest of the Dutch government; she has also been awarded residencies at Dalhousie University in Halifax and at the Banff Centre for the Arts. Ms Oke has given recitals, lectures and master classes throughout Canada and the western U.S., and is heard regularly on the CBC as soloist, chamber musician and orchestral continuo player. Her discography includes recordings with the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, the Vancouver Cantata Singers, the CBC Vancouver Orchestra, and the Pacific Baroque Orchestra.

Cellist **Ronda Metszies** was born and raised in Edmonton, Alberta. Having received her Bachelor of Music degree in Performance with honours from the University of Victoria in 1988, she travelled throughout Northern Europe pursuing her studies, and then spent two years working and studying in Germany.

Since 1992 Ronda has lived in Edmonton, where she works as a freelance musician, specializing in chamber music. She gives regular recitals in Edmonton, and has performed throughout Europe and North America. She has also been recorded by the CBC for local and national broadcast. In the Fall of 1995, Ronda released a CD of cello and piano music entitled "Tales & Reflections", now into its second pressing. She recently filmed a music video for BRAVO television, and will be releasing another CD for Arktos Recordings in November, 1997.

Upcoming Events:

Sunday, September 28 at 8:00 pm
Convocation Hall, Arts Building
Admission: \$10/adult, \$5/senior/student

Monday, September 29 at 12:00 pm
Convocation Hall, Arts Building
Free admission

Sat., October 4 at 12:30 pm
Business Building 1-05
Free admission

Sunday, October 5 at 10:00 am
Robertson-Wesley United Church
Free admission

Monday, October 6 at 12:10 pm
Convocation Hall, Arts Building
Free admission

Wednesday, October 8 at 8:00 pm
Convocation Hall, Arts Building
Admission: \$7/adult, \$5/student/senior

Thursday, October 16 at 3:30 pm
Fine Arts Building 2-32
Free admission

Friday, October 17 at 4:00 pm
Fine Arts Building 2-32
Free admission

Monday October 20 at 7:30 pm
Fine Arts Building 1-29
Free admission

Monday, October 20 at 8:00 pm
Convocation Hall, Arts Building
Admission: \$7/adult, \$5/student/senior

Last night of "A Passion for Bach". **Walter Reiter, conductor and soloist**, with the **University of Alberta Madrigal Singers and Academy Strings** performing works by Handel. Festival hotline: 492-2949.

Noon-Hour Organ Recital. Featuring faculty member **Marnie Giesbrecht**. Program to be announced.

The Great Northern Fiddler: Documenting Social and Musical Life in Alberta. Super Saturday will feature Rod Olstad and Brenda Dalen showcasing the Northern Alberta Fiddle Project, with video, audio and live fiddling.

"Passion for Bach" Church Service

Music at Noon, **Convocation Hall Student Recital Series** featuring students from the Department of Music.

The University of Alberta Symphonic Wind Ensemble Concert. **Fordyce Pier, director.** Program to be announced.

Open symposium, "From chant to gospel: a symposium on Canadian hymnody," sponsored by the Centre for Ethnomusicology.

Informal lecture and discussion, "A Life in Canadian Music: Memories of the Canadian League of Composers, the Canadian Music Centre, the Encyclopedia of Music, and More."

Composition masterclass co-sponsored by the Edmonton Composers Concert Society, reception to follow.

The Grant MacEwan Community College and the University of Alberta Jazz Bands I & II Concert. **Ray Baril and Tom Dust, directors.** *An Evening of Big Band Jazz.*



Please Note: All concerts and events are subject to change without notice. Please call 492-0601 to confirm concerts (after office hours a recorded message will inform you of any changes to our schedule).