



SONOMA Bach

ROBERT WORTH, MUSIC DIRECTOR

PRESENTS

LIVE OAK BAROQUE ORCHESTRA

Clifton Massey, countertenor
Elizabeth Blumenstock, director

FRIDAY, JANUARY 9, 8 PM
Schroeder Hall, Green Music Center



MIDWINTER CONCERT:

IL RAGAZZO





Giuseppe Arcimboldo - "Summer" (1572)



Anton Maria Zanetti - Caricature of Farinelli (18th c)

Philip Mercier - Frederic, Prince of Wales (to whom Porpora dedicated a book of compositions) with his younger sisters (1733)



Sonoma Bach Presents

Midwinter Concert:

Il Ragazzo

featuring

Live Oak Baroque Orchestra
Elizabeth Blumenstock, director

with

Clifton Massey, countertenor

Friday, January 9, 2015
Schroeder Hall
Green Music Center



Midwinter Concert: Il Ragazzo

This concert is presented in conjunction with our fifth annual Baroque Performance Workshop.

Concerto no. 5 in E minor for strings
from *Sinfonie da Camera a Tre Istromenti*, Op. 2

Nicola Porpora (1686-1768)

- I. Affettuoso
- II. Allegro
- III. Adagio
- IV. Giga. Allegro

Sonata for violin and harpsichord no. 2 in G major, Op. 12

Porpora

- I. Sostenuto
- II. Fuga
- III. Aria Cantabile
- IV. Allegro

"L'estate" RV 315, *Le Quattro Stagioni*

Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741)

from *Il cimento dell'armonia e dell'inventione*

- I. Allegro non molto
- II. Adagio ~ Presto
- III. Presto

~Intermission~

Sinfonia

Carlo Broschi ("Farinelli") (1705-1782)

from the aria "Al dolor che vo sfogando"

Concerto no. 3 for strings in G minor
from *Sinfonie da Camera a Tre Istromenti*, Op. 2

Porpora

- I. Adagio sostenuto
- II. Allegro
- III. Adagio
- IV. Allegro

Concerto for violin and strings in E major, "L'amoroso" RV 271

Vivaldi

from *La Cetra*

- I. Allegro
- II. Cantabile
- III. Allegro

Cantata for alto and strings, "Cessate, omai cessate" RV 684

Vivaldi

Notes

Love and love lost are now and forever the inspiration and subject matter for some of our most inspired art. This was no different in 18th-century Italy during the time that Antonio Vivaldi and Nicola Porpora, one of Vivaldi's successors at the Ospedale della Pietà (an orphanage with a famous music conservatory) in Venice, flourished. Unlike Vivaldi, Porpora may not be a household name these days, but during his day in the mid-18th century he was a hugely influential composer and vocal teacher. Porpora is often closely associated with the opera star known as "Farinelli." Porpora was Farinelli's teacher, and the two worked together for decades on creating operatic roles. Later in his career, Porpora also taught composition to and took on as a valet and accompanist the most influential composer of the following generation: Joseph Haydn. Porpora's success as a composer of operas, and frequent collaborations with the top singers and librettists (such as Metastasio) in Europe, put him in a prime position to compete with the operatic genius Handel in London as well as the wildly successful Hasse in Dresden. Brief stints in both cities proved unsustainable, but Porpora's fame should not be diminished by these failures. His instrumental music, which we explore tonight, is fresh and creative, dramatic, and fully steeped in his Italian operatic roots. We can think of this as music for the people, not so much intellectual or ethereal like Bach or Biber, but down to earth, fun, and with a huge palette of emotions, following in the tradition of Corelli and Vivaldi, and perhaps spiritually somewhat in line with Handel.

The legendary Carlo Broschi—better known by his nicknames "Farinelli" and "Il ragazzo" (the boy)—was not only the most famous castrato of all time, but also is a giant among all opera singers in the history of the form. Farinelli was (illegally) castrated at age twelve, following the premature death of his father, and as a result he maintained "a penetrating, full, rich, bright and well-modulated" voice in the soprano register into adulthood, whereas most boys' voices drop in puberty. We have very little of Farinelli's own music, but many arias written by Porpora and others for Farinelli's unique voice. We will play for you tonight a very short *sinfonia* from one of his own arias, "Al dolor che vo sfogando." The writing is virtuosic, evocative, and more galant in style than his teacher's writing.

A colleague of ours is fond of giving the following anecdote in reference to Vivaldi, which I will recycle here (like any good baroque composer would do), as I am confident that it will resonate here in wine country. Once, at a party, our friend and a second guest were each drinking a glass of red wine. The second person said, "You know, all wine basically tastes the same—I don't understand why anyone would want to spend more than \$10 on a bottle." This made our colleague rather angry, partly because the comment was ignorant and flip, but also because it is true... *if you don't like wine!* A similar thing is often said of Vivaldi's concerti. The line usually goes, "Vivaldi wrote the same concerto 500 times." Yes, he really did write more than 500 concerti (we know of 512!), and admittedly, there is a distinctive style, and many familiar sounding motifs that recur. But, if you love Vivaldi, the similarities provide a familiar home for the differences to reside and shine. In other words, to love Vivaldi means that you

groove to the similarities and brighten at the differences, and hopefully you will be inspired to listen deeper to explore the emotional complexity that it moves inside your own beating heart. You'll have the opportunity to experience an extreme version of that on the concluding piece of the program, "Cessate, omai cessate," a penetrating, full, rich, bright and well-modulated painful look into a broken heart.

- Aaron Westman

Come sing the Saint John Passion with the Sonoma Bach Choir!

If you are interested in auditioning for the choir,
please contact Cheryl Moore, Program Administrator,
for more information.

Rehearsals begin on January 21st.

Performances will take place the first weekend in June.

cheryl@sonomabach.org



Text & Translations

“L’Estate”

Allegro non molto

Sotto dura Staggion dal Sole accesa
Langue l' huom, langue 'l gregge, ed arde il Pino;
Scioglie il Cucco la Voce, e tosto intesa
Canta la Tortorella e 'l gardelino.
Zeffiro dolce Spira, mà contesa
Muove Borea improvviso al Suo vicino;
E piange il Pastorel, perche sospesa
Teme fiera borasca, e 'l suo destino;

Adagio e piano - Presto e forte

Toglie alle membra lasse il Suo riposo
Il timore de' Lampi, e tuoni fieri
E de mosche, e mosconi il Stuol furioso!

Presto

Ah, che pur troppo i Suo timor Son veri
Tuona e fulmina il Ciel e grandinoso
Tronca il capo alle Spiche e a' grani alteri.

Under a hard season of blazing sun,
man and flock languish and the pine tree burns.
The cuckoo frees his voice, and at once
understanding the turtledove and finch sing.
Soft breezes blow, but the quarrelsome
North wind sweeps them suddenly aside.
And the shepherd weeps because overhead
hangs the wild squall, and his destiny.

His tired limbs are robbed of their rest,
he is afraid of the lightning and fierce thunder,
and flies and gnats swarm furiously!

Alas, his fears were well-founded.
Thunder and lightning in the heavens, and hail
cuts the head off the corn and tall grains.

“Cessate, omai cessate”

Cessate, omai cessate
Rimembranze crudeli
D'un affetto tiranno;
Già barbare e spietate
Mi cangiaste i contenti
In un immenso affanno.
Cessate, omai cessate
Di lacerarmi il petto,
Di trafiggermi l'alma,
Di toglier al mio cor riposo e calma.
Povero core afflitto e abbandonato,
Se ti toglie la pace
Un affetto tiranno,
Perché un volto spietato, un'alma infida
La sola crudeltà pasce ed annida.
Ah, ch'infelice sempre
Mi vuol Dorilla ingrata,
Ah, sempre più spietata
M'astringe a lagrimar.

Per me non v'è ristoro,
Per me non v'è più speme.
E il fier martoro e le mie pene solo
La morte può consolar.

À voi dunque, ricorro orridi specchi,
Taciturni orrori,
Solitari ritiri,
Ed, ombre amiche, trà voi
Porto il mio duolo,
Perchè spero dà voi quella pietade,
Che Dorilla inhumana non annida.
Vengo, spelonche amate,
Vengo specchi graditi,
Affine meco involto
Il mio tormento in voi resti sepolto.

Nell'orrido albergo, ricetto di pene,
Potrò il mio tormento sfogare contento,
Potrò ad alta voce chiamare spietata
Dorilla l'ingrata, morire potrò.

Andrò d'Acheronte sù la nera sponda,
Tingendo quest'onda di sangue innocente
Gridando vendetta,
Ed ombra baccante vendetta farò.

Cease, henceforth, cease
cruel memories
of a tyrannical love;
barbarous and pitiless,
you have turned my happiness
into an immense anguish.
Cease, henceforth cease
tearing my breast,
piercing my soul,
robbing my heart of peace and calm.
Poor afflicted and abandoned heart,
your peace was taken by
a tyrannical love
because of a pitiless countenance, a faithless soul in
which only cruelty is harbored and nurtured.
Ah, always unhappiness
ungrateful Dorillas wishes me
ah, ever more pitilessly
she forces out my tears.

For me there is no remedy,
for me no more hope.
My bitter pain and sorrow alone
death can assuage.

So it is to you, gloomy places,
silent horrors,
lonely caves,
and friendly shades, that I come
and bring my grief,
because I hope to obtain from you a pity
that is not to be found in ungrateful Dorilla.
I come, beloved caves,
I come, welcoming places,
until finally,
my torment remains buried in you.

In this horrible refuge, shelter of pains,
I may give vent to my torment,
I may loudly call heartless
Dorilla, ungrateful, and I may die.

I'll go to the gloomy banks of Acheron,
staining that stream with my innocent blood,
crying for vengeance,
as a wailing shade, I will take vengeance.

Exploratorium:

Giovanni Battista Guarini and the Madrigal

Join us for a choral workshop exploring poems from Guarini's *Il Pastor Fido*
set to music by Marenzio ~ d'India ~ Monteverdi and others!



Nicolas Poussin: Inspiration of the Poet

Saturday, 28 February 2015, 9AM to 3PM

Led by Bob Worth

\$25 ~ Penngrove Clubhouse (corner of Woodward and Oak)

For more info go to www.sonomabach.org

Performers

Clifton Massey, countertenor

Live Oak Baroque Orchestra

Elizabeth Blumenstock, violin and director

Aaron Westman, violin and associate director

Tyler Lewis, violin

Maria Caswell, viola

Josh Lee, bass viola da gamba

Phebe Craig, harpsichord

Live Oak Baroque Orchestra is Sonoma Bach's period-instrument ensemble, dedicated as much to the rich repertoire of the 17th century as to the spirit of beautiful Sonoma County. LOBO brings to the stage sumptuous tone and breathtaking flair, and features a roster of some of the finest and most charismatic period-instrument players in the nation.

The violin played by Ms. Blumenstock is a 1660 Andrea Guarneri built in Cremona, and is made available to her through the generosity of the Philharmonia Baroque Period Instrument Trust.



Biographies

Widely admired as a Baroque violinist of expressive eloquence and technical sparkle, **Elizabeth Blumenstock** is a long-time concertmaster, soloist, and leader with the Bay Area's American Bach Soloists and Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra, and is concertmaster of the International Handel Festival in Goettingen, Germany. In Southern California, Ms. Blumenstock is Music Director of the Corona del Mar Baroque Music Festival. Her love of chamber music has involved her in several accomplished and interesting smaller ensembles including Musica Pacifica, Galax Quartet, Ensemble Mirable, Live Oak Baroque, the Arcadian Academy, and Trio Galanterie. An enthusiastic teacher, Ms. Blumenstock teaches at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, the American Bach Soloists' summer Festival and Academy, and the International Baroque Institute at Longy. Ms. Blumenstock plays a 1660 Andrea Guarneri violin built in Cremona, Italy, on generous loan to her from the Philharmonia Baroque Period Instrument Trust.

Maria Caswell studied violin and Historically Informed Performance at New England Conservatory in Boston, Massachusetts. She is a founding member of Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra. In addition to Philharmonia, Maria has performed with American Bach Soloists, Jubilate, Santa Rosa Symphony, and Magnificat, among others. She is a member of VOT (Very Old Time) Music, a quintet based in Sebastopol, California. In addition she is an active violin and viola teacher. She lives near the tiny hamlet of Occidental in Sonoma County with her family and her beloved teapot.

Harpichordist **Phebe Craig** spent her student years in Berlin, Brussels, and San Francisco. She has earned a reputation as a versatile chamber musician and recitalist and has performed and recorded with many early music ensembles and soloists. She has appeared at the Carmel Bach Festival, the Regensburg Tage Alter Musik, and early music festivals and events throughout the United States. She has performed with the New York State Baroque, American Bach Soloists, Arcangeli Baroque Strings, and Concerto Amabile. Phebe has produced a series of early music play-along CDs and is co-author of a guide to Baroque dance for musicians (*Dance at a Glance*). She is on the faculty at the University of California at Davis where she teaches harpichord and co-directs the UCD Baroque Ensemble, in addition to keyboard proficiency, theory, and ear-training. She has also been director of the Baroque Music and Dance Workshop that is sponsored by the San Francisco Early Music Society.

Tyler Lewis received his B.A. from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music while under the instruction of Bettina Mussumeli. Specializing in baroque music, Tyler has appeared in groups such as Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra, American Bach Soloists, LOBO, Santa Rosa Symphony, Marin Symphony, San Francisco Chamber Orchestra, and has performed at Festival Del Sole in the Napa Valley and St. Paul International Chamber Music Festival. Tyler Lewis has

appeared in master classes with Robert Mann, James Greening-Valenzuela, Zaven Melikian and has had solo appearances with Contra Costa Wind Symphony. During the spring, Tyler is an evaluator for the Music Teachers Association of California's merit program and runs a year round private violin studio located in Santa Rosa, California. With his spare time he enjoys nights under the stars with a telescope, practicing the art of Lapidary, cooking, and racing motorcycles.

Clifton Massey, countertenor, is known to audiences in the San Francisco Bay Area and beyond for stylish interpretations of a wide range of musical styles. Praised by San Francisco Classical Voice for "gloriously rounded tone and a measure of heft often missing in proponents of his voice type" and the "standout soloist of the evening" on multiple occasions, his singing has taken him to many festivals and venues including the Concertgebou in Amsterdam, Musikverein in Vienna, Tanglewood Music Festival, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Carnegie Hall, Tokyo Opera City, Oregon Bach Festival, and the Early Music festivals of Toronto, Berkeley, and Boston. A proponent of high level ensemble singing, Clifton was a member of the Grammy award winning group Chanticleer and performs frequently with Clerestory, American Bach Soloists, Magnificat Baroque and the Spire Ensemble. This season marks his solo debut at Lincoln Center with the Trinity Wall Street choir, as well as appearances with Bach Collegium San Diego, Voices of Music and the Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra with Nic McGegan. Mr. Massey is a native of Dallas, Texas and holds degrees from TCU and the Indiana University Historical Performance Institute.

"[B]rilliant virtuoso violinist" (*-Early Music America*) **Aaron Westman** has performed as a soloist, principal player, or chamber musician with Agave Baroque, American Bach Soloists, Berkeley West Edge Opera, Bach Collegium San Diego, El Mundo, Ensemble Mirable, Live Oak Baroque Orchestra, Los Angeles Master Chorale, Magnificat, Musica Angelica, Musica Pacifica, New Hampshire Music Festival, Pacific Bach Project, Seraphic Fire, and The Vivaldi Project, and he also performs regularly with Orchester Wiener Akademie and Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra. Aaron co-directs the "energized, free-spirited" (*-Early Music America*) chamber ensemble Agave Baroque, 2014-15 Ensemble in Residence for Presidio Sessions, as well as Sonoma Bach's own Live Oak Baroque Orchestra. Aaron has recorded for Hollywood, and on the Dorian/Sono Luminus, VGo Recordings, NCA, and Philharmonia Baroque Productions labels, as well as live on KPFK (Los Angeles), WDAV (North Carolina), BBC, ORF (Austria), and as a soloist on NPR's Harmonia and Performance Today radio programs. Aaron tours extensively worldwide, including with two projects starring the actor John Malkovich. Aaron holds a Master of Music from the Indiana University School of Music. His principal teachers were Stanley Ritchie, Alan de Veritch, Geraldine Walther, and Theodore Arm. For three years, Aaron taught baroque strings at CalArts, near Los Angeles. He is currently Music Director of the Santa Rosa Symphony's Young People's Chamber Orchestra.

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Jacopo Amigoni – The singer Farinelli with friends
(L-R: Metastasio, Castellini, Farinelli, Amigoni, Farinelli's dog, Farinelli's page) (c1750)

Anonymous – Porpora (18th c)



Pier Leone Ghezzi – Caricature of Vivaldi (1723)
“The Red Priest, composer of music,
who made the opera at Capranica in 1723”



Upcoming Events



February 28

Explorachorium: Giovanni Battista Guarini & the Madrigal
Robert Worth, director

March 13

Food of Love: Music for Shakespeare
The Baltimore Consort

March 14

Come My Children: Baltimore Consort Family Show
The Baltimore Consort

May 15 & 17

The Italian Madrigal: Petrarca, Tasso, & Guarini
Circa 1600

June 5 & 6

JS Bach: St John Passion
Sonoma Bach Choir & Live Oak Baroque Orchestra

www.sonomabach.org

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