

Gotham Early Music Scene (GEMS) presents



Thursday, April 29, 2021 1:15 pm

Live Streamed from The Church of the Transfiguration in New York City
to midtownconcerts.org, [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com), and [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com)

Ensemble BREVE

Deborah Booth ~ recorder & traverso

Arnie Tanimoto ~ viola da gamba, Stephen Rapp ~ harpsichord

Sparkle & Elegance ~ Germany & France

Dix-Septième Ordre: [for solo harpsichord]

Francois Couperin (1668–1733)

La Superbe, ou la Forqueray (Fièrement, sans lenteur)
Les Petit Moulins à vent (Très légèrement)

Suite 2 in G, Suite 3 in G, & Suite 4 in E minor (Book 1) for flute & basso continuo (1715)

Jacques-Martin Hotteterre (1674–1763)

Petit Air tendre
Allemande (L'Atalante)
Gavotte en Rondeau (La Maillebois)
Sarabande (Le départ)
Gigue (L'Italienne)

Trio Sonata in D major

Jean-Marie LeClair (1697–1764)

for flute, viola da gamba, & basso continuo (op. 2, No. 8)
Adagio ~ Allegro ~ Sarabanda ~ Allegro assai

Vivace from Sonata in D major [for solo viola da gamba] from *Der Getreue Musikmeister*

Georg Philipp Telemann (1681–1767)

Sonata in G major

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)

for recorder & basso continuo (BWV 1035 – originally in E major for flute)
Adagio ma non tanto ~ Allegro ~ Siciliano ~ Allegro assai

Trio Sonata in F major from *Essercizi musici*

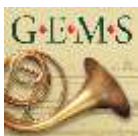
G. P. Telemann

Vivace ~ Mesto ~ Allegro

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Gotham Early Music Scene, 340 Riverside Drive, Suite 1A, New York, NY 10025 (212) 866-0468

Joanne Floyd, Midtown Concerts Manager Paul Arents, House Manager Toby Tadman-Little, Program Editor
Live stream staff: Paul Ross, Dennis Cembalo, Adolfo Mena Cejas, Howard Heller Christina Britton Conroy, Make-up Artist
Gene Murrow, Executive Director



About the Artists

Ensemble BREVE was inaugurated in 1985 in New York City, as a group offering unique programs of music from many eras on original instruments, in historically informed style. BREVE, the name of the ensemble, refers to the essence of great music making – its heartbeat. A breve symbol originally defined the tactus (pulse), a single beat. Ensemble BREVE has toured the United States, Mexico, and Europe. One of our founding members, Maxine Neuman (cellist), is sadly unable to join us for this concert; we gratefully welcome Arnie Tanimoto (viola da gamba) for the first time.

About the Program

Our program today is designed to showcase and compare elegant French suites and sonatas with sparkling musical gems of the German baroque.

From an illustrious family of musicians, **François Couperin** (1668–1733) was the pre-eminent court harpsichordist and organist under Louis XIV and Louis XV. He was also a pedagogue and a widely published composer of keyboard, chamber, and vocal music.

Many movements in his twenty-seven “*Ordres*” (Suites) have descriptive titles with names of contemporary or historic figures, emotions, places, or objects in nature. The first movement of *Ordre 17, La Superbe ou la Forqueray* (The Haughty One or Forqueray) is a dynamic Allemande in the French manner that unflatteringly reflects on Antoine Forqueray, a viol player and composer contemporary to Couperin. The following movement, *Les Petits Moulins à vent* (The Little Windmill) is a two-voice Gavotte in the Italian style that darts from high to low as though two feathers are riding an air current.

The Hotteterre family was a celebrated musical dynasty in Paris for several generations. Several members of the Hotteterre family were instrument makers; they left a legacy in a generation of baroque flutes known as Hotteterre Flutes, highly respected for their unique timbre and pitch. **Jacques-Martin Hotteterre** (1674–1763) was the most prominent member of the family, and had a brilliant career as a performer, teacher, and composer. His music and theoretical works, including “Principles of the Flute, Recorder, and Oboe,” “Art of the Prelude,” and a treatise for the Musette (small chamber bagpipe), have all been pivotal in providing a portrait of the way music was made and taught in 18th-century France.

The first edition (1704) of Hotteterre’s works for flute and basso continuo contained suites with as many as 11 or 12 movements each. In a revised edition (1715) the longer suites are broken into smaller suites of 6 to 8 movements and many ornaments are added. Rather than performing an entire suite by Hotteterre, Deborah chose to play selected movements from three separate suites from *Premier Livre de pièces pour la Flute traversière* published in 1715. These little pieces represent the essence of the composer’s elaborate and courtly style.

Jean-Marie LeClair (1697–1764) grew up in Lyon studying dancing and music as well as his father’s lacemaking trade. He studied violin and composition in Italy, and in 1723 moved to Paris. Here he started publishing his books of sonatas for violin and continued to travel and learn from the great violin virtuosi of the day; the influence of Somis and Locatelli show up in his later works. His compositions embody a mixture of Italian melodic style and French decorative writing. His life was filled with a great deal of drama, including celebrated violin playing competitions & unfortunately, his own unsolved murder (!).

The Trio Sonata in D major (1728) heard on today’s program is from the second book, and is titled *Sonata à Trois, avec un Violon ou Flute Allemande, un Viele et clavecin* and is the only trio sonata in LeClair’s collected works.

Georg Philipp Telemann (1681–1767) is considered the most prolific composer in history with over three thousand known compositions. After close to a century spent in near obscurity, his popularity with modern audiences has steadily increased as the diversity and quality of his works becomes more known. Officially, Telemann worked in a series of churches in Leipzig, Sorau (now Poland), Eisenach (where he very probably knew J. S. Bach), Frankfurt, and Hamburg. But his musical interests refused to remain in the sacred sphere: he presented secular concerts, organized student Collegia, and juxtaposed his cantatas and oratorios with theatrical compositions, even opera. This repeatedly got him into trouble with church officials, who complained that such performances incited "lasciviousness." His usual response was a threat to resign his post and go where he, and his musical activities, would be more welcome. This made him a trailblazer, helping to break down the barriers between sacred and secular music. Telemann also helped to redefine the role of the professional musician by self-publishing many of his own collections, setting an important precedent regarding music as the intellectual property of its creator.

Der Getreue Musikmeister (The Faithful Music Master) has a special place in the history of musical publications, as it was the first music periodical to be published. Today's gamba solo is from this collection.

The solo Telemann sonata is one of his more unusual compositions for the viola da gamba, in that it demonstrates his idiomatic understanding of the instrument. Whereas most of his chamber music compositions (trios and quartets) and continuo sonatas for the viol take advantage of its tenor/alto register, this solo sonata uses the entire range of the instrument, with rich chords, double stops, and *bariolage* effects, very reminiscent of the German viol virtuosi such as Schenck and Kühnel.

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750) composed no solo sonatas for the recorder, but wrote a significant number of beautifully inspired recorder parts in his cantatas & chamber music. For these reasons, most all recorder players choose to enjoy Bach's sonatas for flute and continuo also on recorders.

Deborah has enjoyed playing all of the Bach flute sonatas on both modern flute and traverso. As another way into these fascinating works, she now chooses to render them on the recorder in various transposed keys. It brings a fresh perspective that we find fascinating, and we hope you enjoy today's selection. The Flute Sonata BWV 1035, originally in E major for flute, is often played in F major for recorder, but performed today in G major for a slightly brighter affect. This sonata is one of the "authentic" Bach flute sonatas, and was likely written for the Royal Court in Potsdam, visited by Bach in 1741 and 1747; it is thus an essentially later composition.

Telemann's *Essercizii Musici*, is a collection of twelve solos and twelve trios for a variety of instrumental combinations, published in 1740. Our last piece today is a trio sonata from this work, scored for recorder, viola da gamba, and basso continuo, and is composed in a style that became known as the German "mixed taste," blending German counterpoint with Italian, French, and Polish styles.

Deborah Booth, Stephen Rapp, Arnie Tanimoto

NEXT WEEK: Members of the American Classical Orchestra
Beethoven Trios for Clarinet, Cello & Fortepiano