

Gotham Early Music Scene (GEMS) presents



Thursday January 5, 2023 1:15 pm
St Malachy's Church – The Actors' Chapel in New York City
Live Streamed to midtownconcerts.org and [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/)

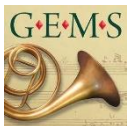
Bethlehem Baroque

Curios from Castrucci to (Armand-Louis) Couperin

Elizabeth Field ~ violin Loretta O'Sullivan ~ violoncello
Charlotte Mattax Moersch ~ harpsichord

- Sonata No. 12 from Book 1** Francois Francoeur (1698–1787)
Adagio ~ Courante ~ Sicilienne
- Pièces de Clavecin (Bauyn MS, compiled c. 1690)** Louis Couperin (c. 1626–1661)
Prélude in G
- Pièces de Clavecin (1751)** Armand-Louis Couperin (1727–1789)
L'Arlequine, ou la Adam ~ La Chéron ~ La Blanchet
- Sonata Op. 50, No. 2** Joseph-Bodin de Boismortier (1689–1755)
Largo ~ Allemande:Allegro ~ Largo ~ Giga:Staccato
- Sonata Op. 1, No. 7 for Violin and Continuo (1718)** Pierre Castrucci (1679–1752)
Adagio ~ Allegro ~ Adagio ~ Allegro

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Harpsichord provided by Rebecca Pechefsky Live stream video crew: Gene Murrow, Murat Eyuboglu, Dennis Cembalo
Christina Britton Conroy, Announcer and Make-up Artist
John Thiessen, Executive Director



www.gemsny.org

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Bethlehem Baroque presents three lesser-known works from the mid-eighteenth century. Violinist Elizabeth Field will perform a sonata by Pietro Castrucci featuring virtuosity reminiscent of his teacher Arcangelo Corelli. Harpsichordist Charlotte Mattax Moersch offers Armand-Louis Couperin's brilliant and expressive *Pièces de clavecin*. Cellist Loretta O'Sullivan brings us a ravishing sonata by Joseph Boismortier which melds French elegance with Italian flair.

ABOUT THE ENSEMBLE AND THE ARTISTS

Bethlehem Baroque is a newly formed period instrument ensemble comprising core players from The Bethlehem Bach Orchestra. Elizabeth, Loretta, and Charlotte have been playing Bach together for over 20 years, and this New York GEMS performance is their debut under this new moniker.

Elizabeth Field, violinist, soloist and chamber musician on period and modern violin, is concertmaster for The Bethlehem Bach Orchestra and has served as guest concertmaster for leading ensembles including the Washington Bach Consort, Opera Philadelphia, National Philharmonic, and Opera Lafayette. Co-director of The Vivaldi Project, heralded as "period instrument playing at its best" (*Fanfare Magazine*), Elizabeth holds a Doctorate from Cornell University.

Loretta O'Sullivan, solo violoncellist, continuo violoncellist and chamber musician, has played with many of this country's leading ensembles. On period instruments, these include the Four Nations Ensemble, Opera Lafayette, Aston Magna, Capriccio Baroque, the American Classical Orchestra, and Helicon. Her work specializing in Baroque music on modern instruments includes the Bach Choir of Bethlehem and the Orchestra of St. Luke's.

Charlotte Mattax Moersch, harpsichordist, has appeared at major international venues and festivals, including the Associazione Musicale Romana and Tage alter Musik Regensburg. She has recorded the complete harpsichord pieces of Noblet, Février, D'Anglebert, and Armand-Louis Couperin, and over 100 videos online for The Vernissage Project. Professor of Music at University of Illinois, she has degrees from Yale, Juilliard, and Stanford.

NEXT WEEK: Concordian Dawn
Order in Fours

BETHLEHEM BAROQUE

PROGRAM NOTES

Francois Francoeur's trio sonata in E Major features an obbligato viola da gamba part played today on violoncello. The opening Adagio is awash in seductive lyricism and is followed by a playful Italianate Corrente with plaintive French-styled interjections. A charming Sicilienne with expressive dissonances concludes the sonata.

Armand-Louis Couperin's brilliant and expressive *Pièces de clavecin* represent his only known collection of solo keyboard works. Combining stylistic elements of both Baroque and Classical styles, Couperin pays tribute to his predecessors, but also experiments with the new. Armand-Louis Couperin was known for his improvisational and keyboard prowess. His modern, often virtuosic program pieces, honoring friends and patrons, give us a glimpse into Parisian musical society in the mid-18th century. In *l'Arlequine, ou la Adam*, the playful scales and arpeggios evoke the image of a somersaulting commedia dell'arte character. In *La Chéron*, Couperin paints an affectionate portrait of the Parisian organist André Chéron. *La Blanchet* honors Elisabeth-Antoinette Blanchet, the daughter of the most famous harpsichord builder in Paris and a virtuoso harpsichordist in her own right.

The ravishing violoncello sonata in G Major by Joseph Boismortier melds French elegance with Italian flair showcasing many of his distinctive compositional techniques. The intricate embellishments in the first movement are followed by a French-styled Allemande and a delicate Largo. The last movement is a traditional and joyful Italianate Giga, straight-forward harmonies with a predictable phrase structure.

Pietro Castrucci's violin sonata Op. 1, No. 7, purports to be in D minor, but its adventurous harmonies challenge harmonic expectations. This sonata in particular, inspired Charles Burney to declare all Castrucci's music insane. Featuring virtuosity reminiscent of his teacher Arcangelo Corelli, it showcases Italian styled passagework in the Allegro movements, with the last Allegro being a thinly disguised giga. The opening Adagio invokes his teacher's love of melody decorated with unusual ornaments, while the middle movement Adagio invokes Vivaldi.