

Gotham Early Music Scene (GEMS) presents



Thursday, September 17, 2020

1:15 pm

Streamed to YouTube, Facebook, and www.gemsny.org

Filament

Evan Few – violin Elena Smith – viola da gamba

John Walthausen – harpsichord

Harmony of Nations

Suonata II

Elisabeth Jacquet de la Guerre (1665–1729)

(unpublished sonatas for violin with obligato viola da gamba and organ)

Sonata à Due

Johann Heinrich Schmelzter (1623–1680)

Sonata Violino Solo

Georg Muffat (1653–1704)

Sonata Terza à 2

Johann Rosenmüller (1619–1684)

Sonata VI in E major, Opus 2

Dietrich Buxtehude (1637–1707)

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Gene Murrow, Executive Director



About the Program

This program, Harmony of Nations, celebrates the free-flowing exchange of musical ideas and identities and the distinctive, newly inflected voices developed through the merger of seemingly disparate national styles at the end of the 17th century and beginning of the 18th.

Composing under the reign of Louis XIV, Elisabeth Jacquet de la Guerre was one of the most distinctive voices of her time. Though she likely never travelled outside France during her lifetime, her compositions betray an affinity for the exuberant sound world of sunny Italy just at the moment when the more restrained and dance-driven French style was coming into full flower. Extroversion and shocking contrasts fill this Sonata in A minor, taken from an unpublished manuscript.

Schmeltzer and Rosenmüller also took inspiration from the music of Italy, here combining the freedom of Italian music's German taste for polyphonic invention. Schmeltzer spent his whole life in Austria, where he became one of the first violinists from outside Italy to gain fame as a composer for the violin. Rosenmüller began his career in Leipzig before fleeing to Venice after a brush with the law. In Venice, he had remarkable success as a composer of sacred vocal and secular instrumental music.

Georg Muffat is by far the most travelled composer featured on this program, and perhaps of the whole baroque period. Born in Savoy, he spent the early years of his career in Rome and Paris, studying with Corelli and Lully before embarking on a career full of travel through cities and courts in Austria, Alsace, Southern Germany, and Eastern Europe. This violin sonata was composed while Muffat lived in Prague, and pushes baroque harmony to its very limits.

Born in Denmark, Dietrich Buxtehude, more than any other composer, would come to embody the sound of the cosmopolitan port city of Hamburg, the "Venice of the North". Like the music of Bach, his compositions show influences from a myriad of sources, while inhabiting a stylistic universe all their own, perhaps the truest expression of cosmopolitanism.

About the Artists

Filament is a chamber ensemble, formed in 2019, of Philadelphia-based period-instrument soloists. Comprising a core trio of violin, viola da gamba, and keyboards, its respective founding members are **Evan Few, Elena Smith, and John Walthausen**. As constituents of the global early music community, they regularly join the ranks of such ensembles as Apollo's Fire, Bach Collegium Japan, Chatham Baroque, New York City Opera, Philadelphia Bach Collegium, Tempesta di Mare, Venice Baroque Orchestra, and the Washington Bach Consort. As an ensemble, they share their collective passion for the rich trio repertoire of the 17th and 18th centuries with audiences in Philadelphia, the Delaware River Valley, and beyond. Recent preoccupations include music of Northern Germany and Scandinavia, and cross-cultural music-making in Northern Europe.

Time away from performing has given the members of Filament time to reconnect with yoga, baking, jigsaw puzzles, and pacing the floors of their respective apartments.

NEXT WEEK: Joseph Jones & Friends
The pioneering musical style of J. E. Galliard