

FORGOTTEN CLEFS

Leonora d'Este's Ferrara

RICHMOND, VA & BLOOMINGTON, IN

VIRTUAL CONCERT

PREMIERE: **MONDAY, MAY 23 | 5pm**

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

The granddaughter of a pope and child of one of the wealthiest families in Renaissance Italy, Suor Leonora (Eleonora) d'Este wrote music from the quiet of a Ferrara convent. In Leonora's Ferrara, women and girls performed in ensembles, wrote music, and studied composition and liturgy. Leonora's mother, Lucrezia Borgia (d'Este), and her aunt, Isabella famously feuded over many things: political influence, court composers, fashion, and Isabella's husband, Francesco II Gonzaga. This concert centers music composed by Leonora d'Este and Raffaella Aleotti as well as works commissioned by Lucrezia Borgia (d'Este) and Isabella d'Este (Gonzaga) and their families.

Musica quinque vocum

Suor Leonora d'Este (1515-1575) entered Corpus Domini convent at the age of 4. Daughter of prominent Ferrarese nobles, Leonora received a substantial education at the convent and enjoyed comforts and regular communication with her family. Recent scholarship connects *Musica quinque vocum* to Ferrara in general and to Suor Leonora (Eleonora) d'Este in particular (Laure Stras, *Women and Music in Sixteenth-Century Ferrara*). Several works in *Musica quinque vocum* (Venice, 1543) include three upper voices and two supportive voices. Typically, the upper voices are in a similar range and the same clef, perhaps suggesting a practice of three similar voices or instruments. The fourth voice is a cantus firmus tune and the lowest voice provides harmonic foundation. In convent performance practice, the three florid upper voices may have been performed by three women and the lower voices could have been played on instruments. We'll perform *Salve Sponsa Dei* from *Musica quinque vocum* in two ways: on equal-voiced instruments (mid-range recorders) and on a more standard consort: alto, tenor, and bass dulcians with sackbut.

The program is framed with instrumental music composed by sixteenth-century Italian composers. We open with music from *Canzoni per Sonare* (1608), which

comprises works by Giovanni Gabrieli and his contemporaries, including Gioseffo Guami (1542-1611), Luzzascho Luzzaschi (c.1545-1607), and Claudio Merulo (1533-1604). Dulcians and sackbut are featured as well as recorder consort. Throughout the program, short pieces by Johannes Martini (1440-1498) are included. They are all from the *Casanatense Chansonnier* (1490), which was copied in Ferrara and prepared as a gift for Isabella d'Este on the occasion of her marriage in 1490. Martini, along with Cipriano de Rore (c. 1515-1565) and Luzzascho Luzzaschi, are all male composers who at one point in their careers contributed to the soundscape of the Ferranese court which Isabella, Lucrezia, and Leonora may have been familiar with.

Prayer and Devotion

Prominent Ferrareze women partonized convents, which became centers for the arts as well as sacred duties. Several prominent d'Este women supported convents that housed disenfranchised women. Lucrezia Borgia (d'Este) financially supported convents for daughters of upper-class families. Vittoria [Suor Raffaella] Aleotti (1570-1646) studied music at San Vito convent and later entered, becoming a nun as well as a composer. *Angelus ad pastores ait* and *Facta est cum angelo* are from Aleotti's *Sacrae cantiones* (1593). The tome is the first published book of sacred music by a woman. At San Vito, music would have been regularly sung and played on harp, lute, viol, and keyboard. On feast days, some wind instruments—cornetti and sackbuts—were used.

Feast and Fanfare

Beyond the walls of the convent, we turn to a rambunctious feast. Here, we welcome the civic, ceremonial instruments of the Renaissance Wind Band: shawm (Pass'e mezzo moderno), dulcian, sackbut, crumhorn (Galante and Speranza), and especially recorder. In sixteenth-century Ferrara, most wind instruments were the purview of men and masculine pursuits: war, drink, and hunting. Isabella d'Este and her sister-in-law, Lucrezia

Borgia both preferred sounds of feminine instruments: viols, lira da braccio, keyboards, and harp. Isabella did, however, enjoy the sound of pipe and tabor (La Parma). Both Isabella and Lucrezia employed a pipe and tabor player, who would have worked both as a court entertainer and companion—a clown—as well as a musician. Isabella was especially spiteful of the recorder; in correspondence with her instrument maker Lorenzo da Pavia, Isabella wrote, “Concerning that bone, don’t drive us mad with talk about recorders; we don’t want it.”

--Sarah Schilling and Adam Dillon

ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

Christopher Armijo is an instrumentalist specializing in the Baroque and Renaissance recorder. He is a member of Forgotten Clefs (Bloomington, Indiana’s Renaissance chamber wind ensemble), Las Aves (a project-based chamber ensemble



that produces historically informed programs of early Baroque music), and Echoing Air (a baroque chamber ensemble based in Indianapolis, IN). Christopher can be heard regularly as a chorister and instrumental soloist at Trinity Episcopal Church, Bloomington. Chris is also a member of the faculty for Mountain

Collegium, an annual early music workshop in Cullowhee, NC. A versatile musician, Christopher has performed on the organ, cornetto, shawm, and percussion in various period ensembles. By day, Christopher is a video editor for Arts Laureate, a DC-based videography team that provides high-quality audio and video recordings for choral and instrumental ensembles. BA in Music: Columbus State University, Columbus, GA; MM in Early Music Performance, Recorder: Historical Performance Institute, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN.

C. Keith Collins is a multi-instrumentalist whose musical tastes range from Medieval Welsh harp music to Baroque



repertoire to traditional music of his ancestral Appalachian homeland. Praised for his “mastery...and most perfect intonation possibly imaginable” on period bassoons, Keith has worked with many of today’s leading period instrument ensembles, including Tafelmusik, Apollo’s Fire, Washington Bach Consort, and San Diego Bach Collegium. He is a founding member of Heartland Baroque, which performs seventeenth-century European chamber music. Keith can be heard playing recorder, curtal, harp and shawm with Forgotten Clefs. He is interested in the harping traditions of Ireland, Scotland, and Wales. The music of the southern Appalachians holds a special place in his heart; he explores that music with fretless banjo and Appalachian dulcimer, and through shape-note and unaccompanied ballad traditions. He is faculty at the Historical Performance Institute at Indiana University and at The University of North Texas in Denton.

Adam Dillon is a specialist in historical trombones, recorders, performance practice, and chamber music. Recent performances include concerts with the Ottawa Baroque Consort, ¡Sacabuche!, Washington Cornett and Sackbutt ensemble, Forgotten Clefs, Bloomington Bach Cantata Project, and Las Aves at events such as Festival Internacional de Música Sacra de Quito, North Carolina HIP Festival, the Sackville, and Bloomington Early Music Festivals. This summer Adam will present research on Vincente Lusitano’s use of improvisatory techniques within his own compositions at the MedRen Conference in Uppsala, Sweden. Adam has been featured as an emerging professional in Early Music America’s EMagazine’s Early to Rise series (2018). Adam works as an arts administrator for Schulich School of Music of McGill University. Passionate about children’s outreach and education programs, Adam has taught Renaissance dance, music, and history through Shakespeare’s Ear and Shawms and Stories to elementary school students in south/central Indiana and North Carolina.



Kelsey Andrew Schilling, bassoon, completed his studies in Early Music at Indiana University. He has performed with ensembles such as the Atlanta Baroque Orchestra, Bach Collegium—Fort Wayne, Bourbon Baroque, Clarion Music Society, Handel Choir of Baltimore, Indianapolis Baroque Orchestra, Mallarmé Chamber Players, Mercury Baroque, Music City Baroque, Musica Angelica, North Carolina Baroque Orchestra, Opera Lafayette, Pacific MusicWorks, Seattle Baroque, Washington Bach Consort, Washington



National Cathedral Baroque Orchestra, as well as other period orchestras throughout the country. He has appeared in the Magnolia Baroque Festival (North Carolina), Staunton Music Festival (Virginia), International Double Reed Society Conference (Ithaca, New York), Boston Early Music

Festival Fringe, Oregon Bach Festival, International Young Artist's Presentation—Historical Winds (Antwerp, Belgium), Berkeley Festival and Exhibition (California) with ¡Sacabuche! and in music festivals throughout Brazil and in Ecuador with Ensemble Lipzodes. Additionally, he has recorded for IU Press and Dorian Sono Luminus.

Sarah Schilling, DM, is in demand as a period oboist, recorder player, and performance practice specialist. Performances this season include Washington Bach Consort, Bourbon Baroque, Raleigh Camerata, Spire, Atlanta Baroque Orchestra, Staunton Music Festival, American Baroque Opera, Three Notch'd Road, and Forgotten Clefs (Renaissance Wind Ensemble). She is the director of the Early Music Workshop at the Interlochen College of Creative Arts. Sarah writes for *Harmonia Early Music* (WFIU Bloomington, an NPR affiliate) and serves as Music Administrator for VPM (Richmond, Virginia's NPR station).

