

LA GRANDE BANDE
2022/2023
Concert Season



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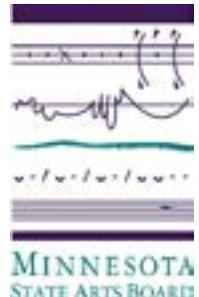
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Splendors of Baroque Italy

22/23 Concert Season

La Grande Bande

Michael Thomas Asmus, Music & Artistic Director

Alyssa Anderson, mezzo-soprano
Maryne Mossey, viola da gamba & 'cello
Michael Thomas Asmus, harpsichord

Thursday 9 February 2023 AT 7:30PM

Immanuel Lutheran Church
Gaylord, MN

Friday 10 February 2023 AT 7:30PM

Olivet Congregational Church
St Paul, MN

Program

| | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| Io parto, amati lumi from <i>Le nuove musiche</i> (1602) | Giulio Caccini (1551 – 1618) |
| Io mi distruggo from <i>Il primo libro</i> (1618) | Francesca Caccini (1587–1637) |
| Deh chi d'alloro from <i>Nuove musiche e nuova maniera di scriverle</i> (1614)*† | G. Caccini |
| Lasciatemi qui solo from <i>Il primo libro</i> | F. Caccini |
| Ricercare secondo from <i>Ricercari a 4 voci, canzoni francesi...</i> (1641)† | Giovanni Salvatore (c. 1620–1688) |
| Cantan gl'augelli from <i>Raccolta di arie a voce sola...</i> (c. 1620) | Settimia Caccini (1591–1660) |
| Movetevi à pietà from <i>Le nuove musiche</i> | G. Caccini |
| Non se so quel sorriso from <i>Il primo libro</i> | F. Caccini |
| Ricercar No. 3 in D from <i>Ricercari, canone e sonata per violoncello</i> (1689)† | Domenico Gabrielli (1651–1659) |

15-minute Intermission

| | |
|--|--------------|
| Chi desia di saper from <i>Il libro primo</i> | F. Caccini |
| Amarilli mia bella from <i>Le nuove musiche</i> | G. Caccini |
| Core di questo core from <i>Raccolta di arie a voce sola, e madrigali a più voci</i> | S. Caccini |
| Ricercar No. 1 in g from <i>Ricercari, canone e sonata per violoncello</i> † | D. Gabrielli |
| Alme, luci beate from <i>Nuove musiche e nuova maniera di scriverle</i> | G. Caccini |
| Due luci ridenti from <i>Raccolta di arie a voce sola, e madrigali a più voci</i> | S. Caccini |

* *The original sung text for this selection, which will be played on viola da gamba, can be found on page 8.*

† *These selections are played by the instruments alone*

English translations of the sung Italian texts will be projected for tonight's concert.

Program Notes

Nothing screams “Baroque” to me more than the early forms of Baroque Italian song. This entire program is an exploration of exactly that: early Italian baroque vocal music written by its first composers. Our program has an even more special significance because it features three composers from the same family.

Working in the Medici Court for a good share of their lives, the Caccini family is one of music history’s most important and most forgotten contributors. While Giulio Caccini and his collection *Le nuove musiche* are remembered well, his daughters, Francesca and Settimia are not.

Tonight’s program aims to illustrate their importance, not only in Florence, but throughout Europe in the seventeenth century. Giulio, along with other influential Florentines, would help create the beginnings of the Baroque style of music.

Giulio Caccini

Giulio, sometimes called “Giulio Romano” was born in Rome in 1551. He was trained as a singer in the choir at St. Peter’s Basilica—not to be confused with the choir in the Sistine Chapel (the Pope’s personal choir). On a visit to Rome, the Florentine Ambassador took notice of Giulio’s talents and took him to Florence.

While in Florence, Giulio continued his musical training for voice, learning how to do vocal ornamentations, as well as composition. He most likely made his solo debut in 1565 for the wedding entertainments of Prince Francesco de’ Medici and Joanna of Austria.

In the mid-1570s, Count Giovanni de Bardi, a Florentine aristocrat, began what was to be called the Florentine Camerata. The goal of the Camerata was to move away from polyphony—music with

multiple, independent voices or parts—toward a style which emphasized the sung text.

The new style emphasized the use of rhetorical gestures to highlight the importance of sung text, a concept called the Doctrine of Affections. While the Doctrine itself doesn’t solely focus on sung music, its aim in all genres was to move the soul of the listener. In the Camerata’s view, the new style would do just that.

The first operas to use this new style (Italian, “seconda pratica”) were by Jacopo Peri, *Dafne* (1597) and by Peri and Caccini, *Euridice* (1600). A collection of solo vocal works with accompaniment by Caccini followed in 1602 (*Le nuove musiche*).

Le Nuove Musiche

Caccini’s collection has held a prominent place in musicological and pedagogical texts for centuries. Although Caccini was not the first to publish such a collection—Domenico Melli published a similar collection in Venice in 1601—his collection has long been the touchstone of Baroque era’s naissance.

The prominence of Caccini’s collection is two-fold: first, Caccini was a servant of the Medici court who had great influence in cultural pursuits of the era. Their influence and power would have allowed them to promote their servants work over another’s.

Second, Caccini’s collection includes an important preface where he talks about how one sings. This preface gives great insight into the ways Caccini approached the mechanics of the voice. The preface also helps us understand his tastes in regard to ornamentation and expressing the text.

The selections by Giulio Caccini we’re performing this evening are all shining examples of the new style the Camerata developed over 30

years of research and debate.

Caccini's division between the "madrigal" and "aria" in *Le nuove musiche* illustrates which pieces are through-composed—think "without form"—and which are strophic—that is, those with the same music for multiple verses. Only one aria by Giulio, "Io parto amati lumi," is performed in the episode.

Francesca Caccini

From that very first performance, Francesca was a member of the Medici's musical establishment. She made her probable debut in 1600 as a chorus singer in *Euridice*, singing amongst her father's students. All sources discussing Francesca's early life mention her wit, intelligence, and grasp of the poetic art—characteristics that come across through her music as well. Francesca was also known as an exceptional singer, taking after her father in that regard.

The Caccini family's trip to Paris in 1604 almost provided her with a permanent position in the French court's musical establishment. Henry IV and Marie de' Medici, king and queen of France, were so taken by Francesca's talents that they offered her a position at court. Her father had different plans for her, and Francesca was destined to return to Italy.

In 1607, Francesca married fellow singer Giovanni Battista Signorini. Her marriage then opened the door for her to become a paid, permanent member of the Medici's musical establishment.

According to scholar Suzanne Cusick, Francesca most often performed for and with the women of the Medici court, what Cusick refers to as the "women's court." This court consisted of the women under Christine de Loraine's control and supervision—including, for example, the butlers, laundresses, stable boys, and the lady's maids for the four princesses. It is certain that this group of the

Medici court heard and participated in Francesca's performances.

Like her father, Francesca also taught singing. Her students included children of the Medici family, other aristocratic children in Florence, and nuns in Florence's convents.

Primo libro

Francesca's 1618 publication *Il Primo Libro delle musiche* ("the first book of musics") is probably one of the most important collections of the era. The collection attests to her pedagogical activities, her deft skills as a singer and composer, and her through understanding of the second pratica.

Francesca's collection is divided into two parts in the table of contents. One part for secular pieces and the other for sacred pieces. In the book itself, the pieces are mixed together. The increasing level of complexity and technical demands leads Cusick to believe the book was used as a teaching aid. I agree with this assumption.

The four selections for this episode illustrate not only Francesca's virtuosity but also her complete understanding of the poetry that she sets. Two texts are by anonymous poets (perhaps they were written by Francesca herself) and two were written by Michelangelo Buonarroti. Only one, "Chi desia di saper" comes from a dramatic work (*Il passatempo*).

One piece, "Io mi disgruggo," is written for two voices: one soprano and one bass. In the absence of another singer, Maryne plays the bass voice's part. It's my belief that Francesca wrote this piece for her and her husband to sing.

Settimia Caccini

Frustratingly little is known about Settimia's life, likely overshadowed by her father and older sister. What we do know is that Settimia most likely made her debut with her sister in *Euridice*.

In 1604, she traveled to Paris with the rest of the family where her talents also impressed the French court. She was offered positions at various aristocratic households in France, but Giulio had different plans for her.

Settimia and Francesca were supposed to be employed in two Roman households after their 1604 trip. However, those appointments fell through after deaths in both Roman households.

By 1609, Settimia married fellow singer Alessandro Ghivizzani. In arrangement of the marriage, the Medici were supposed to pay her dowry on behalf of Giulio. However, after not paying, the Ghivizzani family kidnapped and ransomed Settimia for the dowry. The stunt likely resulted in Alessandro's banishment from Tuscany in 1611.

After her husband's banishment, Settimia and Alessandro moved to Lucca, the family's city. Settimia returned only occasionally for guest performances until her husband's death in 1636. In that year she became a member of the Medici's permanent musical establishment.

Raccolta di arie

The three selections by Settimia come from a manuscript dated to the 1620s. Now held in the music library at Bologna's Conservatory, the manuscript contains the four extant pieces by Settimia. The manuscript is dedicated to a Florentine aristocrat, Filippo del Nero, which provides evidence the manuscript possibly originated in Florence.

The character of the Settimia's three pieces are in contrast to those of her sister and father. For me, Settimia's pieces bring a sense of joy and levity that Francesca's—and most certainly Giulio's—do not. I'm incredibly fond of these three selections, and I'm thankful to Alyssa for bring them to my

attention.

Domenico Gabrielli

Born in Gologna in 1659, Domenico Gabrielli is known today for his virtuosity on the violoncello. Gabrielli composed some of the earliest music for the cello which was just becoming popular in the late seventeenth century.

The cello, like the one Maryne is playing on this episode, developed over some 100 years. The “real” bass violin, of which the cello is a descendant, were slightly larger and tuned slightly differently. By the end of the seventeenth century, the cello overtook the viola da gamba in popularity.

The pieces by Gabrielli on this program come from a 1689 manuscript held in the Biblioteca Estense in Modena. It is rare for us to be able to hear some of the first pieces written for an instrument. I'm grateful to Maryne for agreeing to play these two selections for us.

Giovanni Salvatore

Born in the small southern-Italian town of Castelvenere, near Naples, in the early-1600s, Salvatore's musical education was undertaken at the Conservatorio della Pietà dei Turchini in Naples where he would later become a teacher.

Salvatore was lauded by his contemporaries as one of the best composers of his day. For some, like Antimo Liberati (1617–1692), a contemporary composer and writer, Salvatore's skill even surpassed that famous Italian keyboardist Girolamo Frescobaldi (1583–1643).

The piece that I am playing tonight comes from Salvatore's 1641 collection *Ricercari a 4 voci, canzoni francesi, toccate e versi per rispondere nelle messe con l'organo al choro, libro I*. As the title might suggest, Salvatore must have intended to publish another similar collection, but a libro II was never printed.

The entire collection is intended for the organ, but it's equally applicable to the harpsichord as well. The collection includes eight ricercars, one for each of the eight chant tones, in addition to canzonas, toccatas, and other pieces. On tonight's program, the Ricercar Secondo is written in the second mode (dorian), hovering in the G Major/g minor tonal area.

Like most ricercars, Salvatore's piece introduces the subject in the first few measures of the piece. Then, slowly, he begins to introduce it in the remaining three voices. The subject weaves in and out of each voice often in a slightly modified form from the original. When not sounding the subject, each voice is either silent or providing contrapuntal supportive material.

Uniquely, Salvatore's complete title for this specific ricercar, *Ricercare Secondo, del Secondo Tuono*

alla quarta alta, con 2 fughe, e suoi Riversi ("Second ricercar, in the second mode transposed a fourth above with two fugues and their reverses"), indicates that there are, in fact, two subjects present in the ricercar. Salvatore masterfully weaves both subjects, and the initial countersubject, together as the piece progresses.

Tonight's program will be preformed in 1/6 synoptic comma meantone temperament with $a=440\text{Hz}$, a common pitch center for northern Italy in the 17th century.

Program notes by MTA.

Texts & Translations

(The remaining translations will be projected)

Giulio Caccini

Deh chi d'alloro

Deh chi d'alloro

Mi fa ghirland' al crine,

Pur mi god'io vittorioso al fine

Il mio tesoro

La mia nemic' altera

È pur mia prigioniera.

Over her who now

Has garlanded my locks with laurel

I am finally victorious:

My treasure,

My proud enemy

Is now my prisoner.

Quell'alma dura

Ch'a miei sospiri ardenti

Rassemblerò giel che 'n rigid'Alpe ai venti

S'innaspra, e 'ndura

All'amoroso ardore.

That harsh soul,

which, to my ardent sighs,

like alpine ice in the winds,

stiffens and hardens,

now melts with love.

About La Grande Bande

La Grande Bande strives to present innovative, unique, and inspiring musical programs right in the heart of southern-Minnesota farm country. With performances called “warm and sensitive” by the Star Tribune, we seek to reintroduce classical music to our communities using the instruments and techniques premiere audiences might have heard. LGB is composed of musicians from across the United States and from around the world who are specialists in the field of Early Music—music written between c. 1600-1800—and who play on historical instruments and sing in an historical manner.

Our goals are to present “masterworks” alongside lesser-known compositions, illustrating the extensive musical production during the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries; to foster musical growth in the younger generations through directed-educational events, open rehearsal sessions, or masterclasses; to reinvigorate the older generations with outreach concerts, pre-concert talks, open rehearsals, and beyond. We see incredible value in resurrecting the music written by the great masters of our past; it’s a historical, cultural, and musical lesson rolled into one.

To learn more about our musicians, or about our programming, visit www.lagrandebande.org.

Acknowledgments

The 22/23 Season would not be possible without the help and support of our volunteers, including Board members Madeline Cacciatore-Warta and Joe Thomas, Brian & Diana Asmus, Adam Asmus, Alyssa Anderson, and the musicians who helped with venue set-up and clean-up. Thank you to the staff and congregations at the Immanuel Lutheran Church and Olivet Congregational Church for their assistance in the planning and hosting of our rehearsals and concerts this week. We appreciate your hospitality and welcome.

Texts and translations for the songs on this program are credited to the following authors and translators. All translations have had further revisions by Michael Thomas Asmus in preparation for this performance:

- *Giulio Caccini*: “Alme, luci beate” anonymous author & translator; “Amarilli mia bella” Alessandro Guarini, author & H.W. Hitchcock, translator; “Deh chi d’alloro” Ottavio Rinuccini, author & H.W. Hitchcock ; “Io parto, amati lumi” Ottavio Rinuccini, author & H.W. Hitchcock translator; “Movetevi à pietà” Giovan Battista Strozzi, author & H.W. Hitchcock, translator.
- *Francesca Caccini*: “Chi desia di saper” from Il passatempo Michelangelo Buonarotti, author & Ars Lyric Houston, translator; “Io mi distruggo” anonymous author & Nancy Dersoff, translator; “Lasciatemi qui solo” anonymous author & Michael Thomas Asmus, translator; “Non so se quel sorriso” Michelangelo Buonarotti, author, Jordyn Elizabeth Beranek, translator.
- *Settimia Caccini*: all songs with anonymous authors & translations by Michael Thomas Asmus.

22/23 Concert Season Contributors

Current as of 4 February 2023

We need your support to offer you and the community all that we have planned for our 22/23 Season. We cannot do it without your support. (We also offer really great contributor benefits!) Join your friends, family, and neighbors as a contributor by visiting www.lagrandebande.org/give today!

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LA GRANDE BANDE

22/23 Concert Season Spring Events

Splendors of Baroque Italy

Immanuel Lutheran Church, Gaylord

Wednesday 8 February 2023

Free Open Rehearsal | 4:30PM

Thursday 9 February 2023

Pre-concert talk | 6:45PM

Concert Performance | 7:30PM

Olivet Congregational Church, St Paul

Friday, 10 February 2023

Pre-concert talk | 6:45PM

Concert Performance | 7:30PM

Handel's Messiah

*All performances and activities for this event
have been postponed to April 2024.*

Check our website for updates throughout the coming year.

Supper & Songs

Arlington Haus Too

Wednesday 24 May 2023

Free Open Rehearsal | 4:30PM

Thursday 25 May 2023

Pre-concert talk | 6:45PM

Concert Performance | 7:30PM

Black Forest Inn, Minneapolis

Friday 26 May 2023

Pre-concert talk | 6:15PM

Concert Performance | 7:00PM