



season
@HOME

LB
20|21

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The 2020 *season@HOME* performances are a



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Episode 2: Valentini Sinfonia

season@HOME

La Grande Bande

Miriam Scholz-Carlson & Ginna Watson, violins

Maryne Mossey, violoncello

Michael Thomas Asmus, harpsichord

Friday 18 September 2020

Program

Sinfonia in d, Op. 1, No. 4 (1701)

Giuseppe Valentini (1681–1753)

- I. Vivace
- II. Allegro assai
- III. Grave
- IV. Presto—Adagio—Presto

Program Notes

Part of La Grande Bande’s mission is to revive music which has been neglected by time. And for our second *season@HOME* episode, we’ve done just that. The music of Giuseppe Valentini was unknown to me until I stumbled upon a recording of one of the Opus 1 sinfonias earlier this year. The more I dug into the Opus 1 collection published in 1701, the more and more I knew we needed to perform them.

The relatively short pieces in the Opus 1 collection are quite remarkable in their inventiveness and individuality. We hope that you

see—or more appropriately, hear—why I had to include a selection in LGB’s *season@HOME* series.

Giuseppe Valentini

Born in Florence in 1681, Valentini moved to Rome sometime before 1692 around the age of 11. In that year, Valentini became a member of the Congregation of St Cecilia, of which membership was crucial for being an active musician in the city.

Valentini then went on to study with Giovanni Bononcini (1670–1747) from 1692 until 1697.

After two years of study, in 1694, Valentini's name begins to appear in records showing that he was active as a violinist. It's not until 1708 that his name begins to appear regularly in lists of performers for the musical establishments of important Roman patrons: Prince Ruspoli, Cardinal Ottoboni, and Cardinal Pamphili.

Publication of one's compositions was one way an eighteenth-century performer/composer could get noticed. Valentini published four of his seven collections between 1701 and 1708. Perhaps it was these first four collections (Opus 1-4) that provided him with the recognition he needed. In 1710 Valentini achieved a permanent position at the church of San Luigi dei Francesi. There, Valentini took over as the director of the concertino—aka, the solo group—which had been held by Arcangelo Corelli.

Sinfonia in d

Valentini's Opus 1 includes 12 sinfonias for two violins and continuo. Although the title of the collection might suggest they're connected with the late Baroque sinfonias, those that led to the symphony, that's actually a misnomer. Here, the term *sinfonia* refers to the original Latin root of the Italian word "an agreement of sounds."

In fact, these pieces much more similar to the quintessential Italian, four-movement sonata which alternate between slow-fast-slow-fast movements.

Our interpretation of the *sinfonia* is influenced in part by the French style and the Italian style. I see the first two movements (*Vivace* and *Allegro assai*) as a quasi-French overture. In this format, the

Vivace, which we don't take too fast, becomes the slow, double-dotted section of the overture (aka the A Section). The *Allegro assai* then becomes the imitative section (aka the B Section).

What is most curious about Valentini's notation in the first movement (*Vivace*) is the overarching indication double dotting—with extra rests and sixteenth notes to accentuate the space between notes. You can take a look at the original engraving from 1701 below.

The third and fourth movements (*Grave* and *Presto*) are much more Italian in style. The third movement is a stunningly beautiful few measures of harmonic change after harmonic change. It also creates a nice contrast with the prior movements.

The fourth movement is built in two sections which are quite similar in melodic material and in compositional approach. The thematic material gets passed between the violins and the continuo throughout the movement. Valentini is also very adventurous in the harmonic material that he uses. At the end of the first half, we've taken the *adagio* section to signify a place for a bit of artistic license. Miriam has added a little *cadenza*—a section to show off technical skill—in this part.

We so hope that you enjoy the short and quirky Valentini selection for Episode 2 of our *season@HOME*. We had a lot of fun exploring this Valentini piece and there's sure to be more in store for future concerts.

Program notes by MTA.



The first page of the Violin I part from Valentini's Sinfonia in d, Op. 1, No. 4.

About La Grande Bande

With performances called “warm and sensitive” by the Minneapolis Star Tribune, La Grande Bande strives to present innovative, unique, and inspiring musical programs played on the instruments that 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.

We aim to present “masterworks” alongside lesser-known compositions, illustrating the extensive musical production during the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries. Education is crucial to our mission, be it through program notes, through directed-educational events, open rehearsal sessions, or another method. 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/about.

About the Musicians



Miriam Scholz-Carlson lives in Minneapolis, MN where she plays regularly with Lyra Baroque Orchestra, The Bach Society of Minnesota, Flying Forms, Oratory Bach, Consortium Carissimi, and other local groups, as well as The Newberry Consort in Chicago. She was a founding member of Glorious Revolution Baroque.

As a music director, Miriam selected, arranged and performed Elizabethan music for Great River Shakespeare Festival's regional premier of Shakespeare in Love in the summer of 2018. She teaches both privately and at St. Olaf College and has trained as a teacher of the Alexander Technique and Learning Methods in order to help musicians perform with greater ease and efficiency.

Ginna Watson is a Minneapolis-based violinist who specializes in historically informed performance. She plays baroque violin and viola with the Lyra Baroque Orchestra and medieval bowed strings and harp with The Rose Ensemble for Early Music. Ginna also performs with Consortium Carissimi and Sprezzatura, ensembles dedicated to performing 17th-century music on historic instruments.

Ginna has performed in concert series and festivals around the country, including the Boston Early Music Festival, the Getty Museum in Los Angeles, the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., the Musical Instrument Museum in Phoenix, and Princeton University.

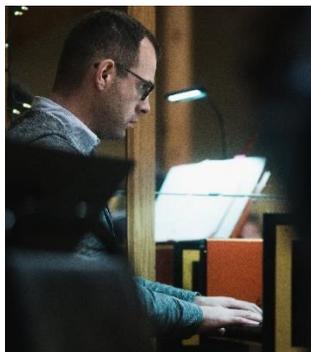
She is concertmaster of the annual Early Music Montana festival. Internationally, she has performed throughout France, Germany, Spain, Italy, and Bolivia. Ginna frequently gives masterclasses on medieval and baroque performance practice, including Houston Baptist University, Colorado State University, Luther College in Decorah, Iowa, and the Center for Jewish Culture and Creativity in Los Angeles. Ginna is the violin instructor at Hamline University in Saint Paul, Minnesota.



Hailed by the Minneapolis Star Tribune as “nimble expressive” and possessing “warmth and sensitivity”, Baroque cellist and violist da gamba, **Maryne Mossey**, is an active performer and teacher based in the Twin Cities. She has performed regularly at venues ranging from Carnegie Hall and Merkin Concert Hall in New York, to the Baroque Room and Sundin Music Hall in Minnesota, with such ensembles as Ensemble 212, the New York Youth Symphony, and the South Dakota Symphony Orchestra. On Baroque cello and viola da gamba, she currently plays with La Grande Bande, and Lyra Baroque Orchestra, as well as other collaborative early music projects around the upper midwest.



Maryne was selected as violist da gamba for the 2019 American Bach Soloists Academy. She has also performed at workshops for the Amherst Early Music Festival and International Baroque Institute at Longy. Maryne’s teachers have included cellists Jerome Carrington (Juilliard Pre-College), Clive Greensmith (Tokyo String Quartet), and Marcy Rosen (Queens College). Her studies in early music have been with Julie Elhard, Sarah Cunningham (Juilliard), and Phoebe Carrai (Juilliard). She holds a Bachelor of Music degree from Queens College and a Masters from the University of Minnesota. Maryne plays on an 1806 Thomas Dodd cello and a 1991 François Bodart viola da gamba. Maryne resides in St. Paul with her two Italian greyhounds.



Harpichordist & Conductor, **Michael Thomas Asmus**, is currently studying at Stony Brook University for a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Harpsichord Performance with Arthur Haas. As a conductor, he has been praised as a “conscientious [conductor]” with “a natural talent” and “a bright future” by audiences and ensembles alike. He has been lauded as a “versatile” continuo player (CNVC.org) with “judicious, rhythmically supple harpsichord playing” (Star Tribune). He is consistently lauded by his colleagues as a great musical collaborator.

In 2019 he made his Opera NEO (San Diego) debut as the Assistant Conductor and Vocal Coach for their production of Francesco Cavalli’s *La Calisto*. He was scheduled to return in 2020 as the Assistant Conductor and Vocal Coach for Opera NEO’s production of Jean-Philippe Rameau’s *Platée*. Opera NEO will resume their 2020 production calendar in 2021.

Since June 2011, Michael has acted as the Music and Artistic Director of La Grande Bande, a non-profit, period instrument orchestra and chorus he founded in the same year. La Grande Bande will produce its first full concert series for the 2019–2020 season.

Acknowledgements

The *season@HOME* would not be possible without the help and support of our volunteers, including Brian & Diana Asmus, Adam Asmus, and the musicians who helped with venue set-up and clean-up as we made these recordings. We also need to thank Big A Productions for graciously donating your time for preparing, recording, and editing all of the videos in this series. If you want to become a volunteer, fill out the questionnaire at www.lagrandebande.org/volunteer.

Lastly, we want to thank all of you for tuning in! Producing a series like this has not been without challenges. Regardless, we passionately believe that our programming is something which our communities should have access to for years to come. Tell your friends! Tell your family! Tell your neighbors! We cannot thank you all enough for the support that you have shown us. We hope you will continue to support us in the years to come.

We look forward to seeing you, once again in-person whenever it is safe enough to do so.

Warmest wishes,

La Grande Bande

2020 – 2021 Concert Season Contributors

Current as of 14 August 2020

We need *your* support to offer you and the community all that we have planned for our 2020 – 2021 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/supportus today!

The *season@HOME* would not be possible without generous financial support from the Carl and Verna Schmidt Foundation and the following individuals and businesses.

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We just added the Sustaining Contributor program on 1 January 2020. The program allows you to make recurring monthly contributions to support La Grande Bande's programming. There are even some really cool and *exclusive* perks for Sustainers! Learn more and sign up at sustainers.lagrandebande.org.

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Episode 1: Recorder Sonatas

Friday | 4 September 2020

Episode 2: Valentini's *Sinfonia for Violins and continuo*

Friday | 18 September

Episode 3: Handel's *Violin Trio Sonata*

Friday | 2 October 2020

Episode 4: William Boyce *Concerto Grosso*

Friday | 16 October 2020

Episode 5: Michel Lambert's *Airs de cour*

Friday | 30 October 2020

Episode 6: Rare French Cantatas

Friday | 13 November 2020

Episode 7: Locatelli *Concerto Grosso*

Friday | 27 November 2020

Episode 8: Bach's Circle

Friday | 11 December 2020