

Notes on the Program (Continued)

Ludwig Senfl (c.1486-1542/3) was court composer to Emperor Maximilian I, succeeding (and probably student of) Heinrich Isaac (c.1445-1517) and following closely in his musical footsteps. Senfl's instrumental music, composed for viol consort, is characterized by open fifths that provide a bleak harmonic texture. Senfl is also unusual for his counterpoint, which is not imitative and combines dissimilar melodic lines. The title of "**Carmen in re**" indicates a song composed in the Dorian mode.

In 1616, **Johann Hermann Schein** (1586-1630) was appointed to the post of *Thomaskantor*, the head of music for the major churches in Leipzig, the same post that J.S. Bach was to hold over 100 years later. Like Bach, Schein composed many Lutheran cantatas, including "**Erschienen ist der herrliche Tag**." Also like Bach, Schein's counterpoint is characterized by a tight, almost fugal structure that is logical rather than lyrical. While there is no direct evidence that Bach was aware of his distant predecessor's work, Schein was one of the three most important composers of the early German baroque (along with Scheidt and Heinrich Schütz [1585-1672]), and a study of his influence on Bach is yet to be made.

Heinrich Isaac was part of the Franco-Flemish school of composers, which included Guillaume Dufay (c.1400-1474), Johannes Ockegem (c.1425-1497), and Josquin des Pres (c.1440-1521). The Franco-Flemish composers invented the powerful imitative counterpoint that launched Renaissance music out of the droning textures of Medieval organa, and they dominated European art music for four generations, with a member at most major and minor courts around Europe. One of the last of the Franco-Flemish composers was Adrian Willaert (1490-1562), who was appointed *Maestro di Capella* at St. Mark's in Venice and made that city into the next musical center of Europe. Isaac preceded Senfl as court composer to Emperor Maximilian I, holding the post from 1497 until his death in 1517. Isaac was the first important Renaissance composer to write songs in German with traditional German forms, including the *tenorlied*. "**Zwischen Perg und tieffem Tal**" has its melody in the soprano, and so is not quite a *tenorlied*, but displays the same characteristic contrapuntal style.

Not much is known of the French 13th-Century secular motet "**Toutes voies/Trop ai grieté/Je la truis**." Its three melodic lines, each with separate lyrics, may have been performed separately according to some sequence, then performed together to show a harmonic relationship (similar to multipart arias in Classical and Romantic opera). The final "chord," E-C-F, may have been intended as a witty, pungent exclamation point. It seems certain that the bottom line was intended to be played by an instrument, as the composer did not bother to notate its lyrics beyond the first three words, "Je la truis."

Don Carlo Gesualdo (c.1560-1613) was a nobleman born in Naples, and became Prince of Venosa. His madrigals exhibit sliding chromatic harmony and pungent dissonances, and "**Moro Lasso**" ("I die, wretched") is no exception. Gesualdo did not really have any imitators, and his eerie, intensely expressionistic style was not seen again until works like Arnold Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire* and Albert Berg's *Wozzeck* in the early 20th Century.

It seems that every musical age has a figure that is credited with changing the status of musicians from servants to masters through his powerful individuality. Wagner, Liszt, Beethoven, and Handel could be named. The first such international superstar in European art music was **Josquin des Pres**. Josquin did not invent imitative counterpoint, but he was the first to use the expressiveness of the new style to enhance the meaning of the lyrics. He became the most sought-after composer in Europe, and could name his own price. *Missa Pange Lingua* was published posthumously and was probably his last setting of the mass.



COLLEGE OF VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

Department of Music

Student Recital
Mila Naoumova, Keyboard

"Renaissance and Early Baroque"

Assisted by *Musica Pulchra*:

Maria Franzini, Mezzo-soprano

Derek Wilcox, Recorders

Dannice Crespo, Violin and Viola

Steven Roushakes, Turkish Lute

With special guest:

Ina Mirtcheva, Keyboard

Friday, March 11, 2005

8:00 p.m.

Harris Theatre

Program

- Ancor Che col Partire Cipriano de Rore (1516-1565)
diminutions by Giovanni Battista Bovicelli (c.1550-c.1597)
- Sonata for 2 violins Op. 1 No. 12 RV 63, *La Follia* Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741)
- Canzon Quarta à due bassi e canto Girolamo Frescobaldi (1583-1643)
- Canzon super “O Nachbar Roland” Samuel Scheidt (1587-1654)
- ☞ *Intermission* ☞
- Sonata per violino e violone Giovanni Paolo Cima (c.1570-p.1622)
- Carmen in re Ludwig Senfl (c.1486-1542/3)
- Sonata à tre Giovanni Paolo Cima
- Cantata, “Erschienen ist der herrliche Tag” Johann Hermann Schein (1586-1630)
- Lied, “Zwischen Perg und tieffem Tal” Heinrich Isaac (c.1445-1517)
- Motet, “Toutes voies/Trop ai grieté/Je la truis” Anonymous (13th C.)
- Madrigal, “Moro Lasso” Don Carlo Gesualdo (c.1560-1613)
- Gloria from *Missa Pange Lingua* Josquin des Pres (c.1440-1521)

Notes on the Program

Giovanni Battista Bovicelli (c.1550-c.1597), an obscure Milanese composer, is known today only through his treatise on vocal improvisation, *Regole, Passaggi di Musica, Madrigali et Motetti Passegiati*, published in Venice in 1594. Like similar treatises by prominent Venetian instrumentalists of the late 16th-century, Bovicelli's treatise provided examples of “diminutions” of well-known works by earlier composers. Diminution in the 16th and early 17th centuries went far beyond the trills and mordents of later ornamentation. Simple melodic lines were divided into florid passages of rapid scales and syncopated rhythms. In “**Ancor Che col Partire**,” a secular four-part song by the Venetian composer Cipriano de Rore (1516-1565), Bovicelli demonstrates diminutions for the cantus (soprano) line intended to be performed by a soprano vocalist.

La Follia began as a fast Portuguese dance, but was probably given its most popular form, with a characteristic emphasis on the second beat and an appealing melodic symmetry, by Jean-Baptiste Lully's (1632-1687) version dating from 1672. The theme went on to be used by Arcangelo Corelli (1653-1713), Alessandro Scarlatti (1660-1725), J.S. Bach (*Peasant Cantata*), C.P.E. Bach (1714-1788), Beethoven (slow movement of the 5th symphony), Liszt (*Rapsodie Espagnol*), and Rachmaninoff (“Variations on a Theme of Corelli”), among many others. The sonata based on *La Follia* for two violins and basso by **Antonio Vivaldi** (1678-1741) takes its contrasting fast-slow variations and breathless conclusion directly from Corelli's version for solo violin and basso.

Girolamo Frescobaldi (1583-1643) is best-known today as the first important composer of solo keyboard music, but he also published a large set of *canzoni da sonare* (“songs to be played”) for various combinations of high (*canto*) and low (*basso*) instruments with basso continuo. Frescobaldi often asks the performers of his canzonas to play them *come stà*, that is, without the customary diminutions (though probably still with some ornamentation). It may be that Frescobaldi was giving an early voice to a frustration with excessive liberties taken by performers, later echoed by Rossini, who once congratulated a singer of one of his arias on her performance and asked her who the composer was. By the end of the 17th century, thorough improvisation was no longer a part of European instrumental art music, though it survived in opera until the end of the *bel canto* period in the mid-19th Century.

Samuel Scheidt (1587-1654), based in the city of Halle, was an important German organist and composer of the early 17th Century and friends with Michael Praetorius and Johann Hermann Schein (1586-1630). His instrumental canzona on “**O Nachbar Roland**” is a set of variations on a theme called “Rowland, or Lord Willoughby's Welcome Home” by the English composer William Byrd (c.1540-1623). Also showing an English influence is the consort of like instruments (probably viols) for which the canzona was composed. However, the inventive variations, closing with rapid-fire repeated notes, are remarkable in early baroque German instrumental music and precede by almost a century similar passages typical in works by Corelli and Vivaldi.

A Sonata for Violin and Violone (similar to a cello) in G minor, a Trio Sonata in A minor, and four other sonatas were published by **Giovanni Paolo Cima** (c.1570-p.1622) in 1610 as part of his *Concerti Ecclesiastici*, a large body of choral works to be performed during church services, but not as offices in a Mass. Cima, a native of Milan, was part of the vibrant music scene in Venice around the turn of the 16th century, which included Giovanni Gabrieli (1556-1612) and, later, Claudio Monteverdi (1567-1643). The six sonatas represent the earliest known for solo instruments with basso continuo. Apart from their historical interest, they are musically astonishing in the effortless way they combine the mesmerizing imitative counterpoint of the Renaissance (called the *prima prattica* by Cima and his contemporaries) with the lyricism, dash, and personality of the Baroque (the *secunda prattica*).