

Bennington Baroque presents

Such Stuff as Dreams

Bennington Museum, Bennington, Vermont

May 27, 2018 – 2:30 pm

The Light Fantastic

So ben mi ch'ha bon tempo
Sinfonia
Sinfonia
Gagliarda, La Norsina
Gagliarda, Narciso

Orazio Vecchi (1550-1605)
Salamone Rossi (c.1570-1630)
Salamone Rossi
Salamone Rossi
Salamone Rossi

Dreams

Come senza costei viver
Hic est beatissimus
Dormendo un giorno
Fantasia
Vestiva i colli

Sebastiano Festa (c.1490-1524)
Giovanni Maria Nanino (1543/4-1607)
Jacques Arcadelt (c. 1507-1568)
Orazio Vecchi
Bartolomé de Selma y Salaverde (c.1595 – after 1638)

Scherzi Musicali

Lidia spina del mio cuore
O Rosetta

Claudio Monteverdi (1567-1643)

Over the Ground

Partite sopra l'Aria di Ruggiero
Ruggiero
Chiacona

Girolamo Frescobaldi (1583-1643)
Tarquinio Merula (1595-1665)
Tarquinio Merula

Intermission

Fantasies

Leave now mine eyes lamenting
In Nomine
See mine own sweet jewel
Bonnie Sweet Robin
Rlccar: Bonnie Sweet Robin

Thomas Morley (1557/8-1602)
John Taverner (c.1490-1545)
Thomas Morley
Giles Farnaby (c.1563-1640)
Thomas Simpson (fl. 1620)

All the world's a stage

Pavan
Full Fathom Five
The Bear's Dance
The Satyr's Masque
A Round of Three Country Dances
Strike it up tabor

John Dowland (1563-1626)
Robert Johnson (c. 1583-1633)
from *Augurs* (1622), anonymous
from *Oberon* (1611), Robert Johnson
Thomas Ravenscroft (c. 1588 – 1635)
Thomas Weelkes (1576-1623)



John Tyson - recorders, crumhorns, pipe & tabor

Laura Gulley - violin, viola

Daniel Rowe - cello

Miyuki Tsurutani - harpsichord, recorders

with

Maris Wolff and Mark Mindek, dancers

About the performers. (Please see fuller bios on the Renaissonics website www.renaissonics.com)

John Tyson is a winner of the Bodky International Competition, the Noah Greenberg Award, and a former student of Frans Bruggen. He has appeared as soloist in Europe and the U.K., Chile, Canada, Japan, Taiwan, and Australia and throughout the United States. Tyson has recorded for many labels, and with Boston's Handel & Haydn Society under Christopher Hogwood. His solo CD, "Something Old, Something New" features Baroque and contemporary music for recorder and strings. A recognized expert in Renaissance music and improvisation, Tyson is director of Renaissonics and of the Corso di Flauto Dolce in Tuscany, Italy; he is on the faculty of the New England Conservatory of Music.

Violinist **Laura Gulley** performs and records regularly on Baroque violin with Boston Baroque, Renaissonics, and other period ensembles. On modern violin she performs with the Rhode Island Philharmonic and numerous other groups in Providence and Boston. Gulley collaborates with composers Steven Jobe and Alec K. Redfearn on music for theater, dance and films. She currently directs the Suzuki string program and teaches thirty young violinists at the Music School of the Rhode Island Philharmonic, where she has taught since 1990.

Daniel Rowe (a Bennington native) studied cello with David Finckel and Jerry Grossman at S.U.N.Y. Purchase, where he studied Baroque cello with the late Fortunato Arico, and with George Neikrug at Boston University. He has performed as principal cellist with The Arcadia Players and Millennial Artists, as guest artist with Triomphe de L'Amour, and is a founding member of the Baroque ensemble, Tres. He holds a master's degree in Computer Science from U Mass, Boston.

Miyuki Tsurutani received her Master of Music degree from Osaka College of Music where she studied harpsichord with Hiroko Motooka, recorder with Toru Kamiya, and piano with Toshiko Tamura. She has performed in Japan, Taiwan, Australia, Europe, Canada and across the United States. Tsurutani's teaching credentials include: faculty of the Boston Symphony Orchestra's Project Step Program (recorder, keyboard and music theory), the New England Conservatory of Music Preparatory School, the Cambridge, Massachusetts Public Schools and the Corso di Flauto Dolce in Tuscany, Italy.

Maris Wolff is Professor of Dance at Johnson State College, and Artistic Director of the Vermont Dance Collective. She has performed and taught throughout North America, Europe, England and Africa in venues including the Library of Congress, Jacob's Pillow, the Lincoln Center, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art. She has performed ballet, modern, jazz, folk, tap as well as historical dance; in collaboration with historical dance and music companies in New York, Philadelphia, and Boston. Her teaching credits include Hunter College and Clark Center for the Performing Arts in New York City, University of Vermont, and the International Early Dance Institute.

Mark Mindek, a graduate of the Hartford Conservatory, is a dancer and choreographer in New York City. He works in dance styles ranging from modern to jazz, Renaissance and Baroque and has toured both nationally and Internationally thanks to his work with I Giullari di Piazza, Alice Farley Dance Theater, New York Historical Dance Company, Court Dance Company of New York and others. With Coralie Romanyshyn, he co-directs Friends in High Places, a touring company that performs ballroom dance and classical ballet in a very unusual way—on stilts.



Bennington Baroque was founded by harpsichordist Sandra Mangsen in 2012 in order to present historically informed performances of baroque music and to justify giving her two harpsichords house space. Since then the group has presented concerts each season (there have been five since last fall, including two by visiting ensembles) and we look forward to planning four concerts over the next year. See our website, www.benningtonbaroque.org, for up-to-date information. Donations in support of our expanding season are not only welcome—they are critical. We are a registered 501(c)3 non profit organization. Thank you for your continuing support. We are grateful to the Museum for making the concert space available to us.

SUCH STUFF AS DREAMS

Believe that nothing is impossible for you, think yourself immortal and capable of understanding all, all arts, all sciences, the nature of every living being. Mount higher than the highest height; descend lower than the lowest depth. Draw into yourself all sensations of everything created, fire and water, dry and moist, imagining that you are everywhere, on earth, in the sea, in the sky, that you are not yet born, in the maternal womb, adolescent, old, dead, beyond death.
~Giordano Bruno

We are such stuff

As dreams are made on

~Shakespeare, *The Tempest*, Act IV, scene 1

When the world was flat it was also smaller. The pioneering discoveries of Columbus, Copernicus, Magellan and Galileo revealed a huge new universe and fostered dreams unimagined, allowing Western civilization to make some of its greatest cultural achievements. In Rome's charming Campo de' Fiori stands a grand statue of the humanist philosopher Giordano Bruno, a revolutionary thinker who imagined an unbounded universe. His and other humanists' belief in our possibilities, our better nature, led Bruno, Leonardo da Vinci and others to a heroic belief in human genius and a sense of harmony between man and his surroundings. This idealism included a sense of compassion that extended even to our fellow creatures. Leonardo, who, like Bruno, was vegetarian, bought caged birds only to set them free. Unfortunately this enlightenment was not universal and Bruno was burned at the stake by the Inquisition on the spot where his monument now stands.

Renaissance humanists took their inspiration from the literary and artistic richness of ancient Greece and Rome and saw within these not only brilliant technique but a profound belief in the human condition. It would be difficult to overestimate the Renaissance's faith in the limitlessness of our capabilities.

To you is given most sharp and delicate senses, to you wit, reason, memory like an immortal god.

~Leon Battista Alberti, architect (1404-1472)

Especially valued was the power of art, and particularly music, to inform and shape who we are.

Music among the ancients was the most splendid of the fine arts...With the power of song it was easy for them to drive a wise mind from the use of reason and bring it to a state of madness and willfulness. ~Bishop Bernardino Cirillo Franco (c.1500-1575), from a letter about sacred music

Renaissance music is a rebirth of the ideal of "heightened speech" so valued in ancient poetry and oratory. This faith in the potential of eloquent speech shaped all Renaissance music. The 16th century cultivated an appreciation of the power of language that has never been equaled. It is no accident that Shakespeare emerges in such a climate. The key to understanding Renaissance music is simply that it is vocal music in the fullest sense. It is polyphonic (many-voiced), speaking in independent voices; its structure is horizontal, not vertical; it sings in flowing, astonishingly rhythmically complex phrases which typically flow forward, often speeding up; there is no regular accent or meter. Free of the tyranny of the bar line, Renaissance music functions stunningly like spoken language and touches the listener with all the personality, variety, nuance and rhythmic intricacy of an eloquent speaker. In a Renaissance composition, not only does each individual have their own melody telling their own individual story, they also converse with one another, being mutually influenced by the dialogue. The result plays with and challenges our perceptions—we hear a statement, then we hear it immediately again spoken by another voice with a different take on the same idea. We may hear the idea bounced around, mulled over many times, faster or slower, higher or lower, paraphrased, or returning later amid different melodies in endless intricacy. The effect on us is that we are not only touched by the beauty and expressivity of each individual voice, we are also encouraged to think about and experience the ideas in multiple ways, given endless new perspectives and are enriched by this beautiful affirmation of our cognitive abilities.

It was understood that the human voice had powers of flexibility and expression beyond that of any other musical instrument. Instrumentalists strove to communicate with their instruments all the sounds and expression of the voice, going so far as to create the actual sound of the words in their playing. This gives Renaissance instrumental music a unique flexibility—the ability to communicate with an instrument as

directly and intimately as with a voice.

I have heard with some players that one perceives words to their music.

~ Sylvestro Ganassi, *Opera Intitulata Fontegara*, Venice (1535)

Realizing this, we understand that there was no real separation between vocal and instrumental music. All music came in vocal melodies and was suitable for voices or vocally oriented instruments. Therefore, the enormous repertoire of Renaissance vocal music is also instrumental music, making it the largest repertoire of instrumental chamber music in the Western World. In addition, improvisation was a fundamental part of all Renaissance music making. This multi-faceted world seems to us an intriguing blend of high art and popular culture, which in fact it is.

In 1602 famed dancer and choreographer Cesare Negri published a monumental treatise on dance *Le Gratie d'Amore* (The Graces of Love) which provides us with unique insight into the resplendent world of the Italian Renaissance. Negri gives dance instruction and also provides the music for each of his dances but only in the simplest of arrangements: either in tablature for a lute or in notation for one melody instrument. As often in jazz, the sparseness of the written music belies a rich and important repertoire. Here disarmingly elegant melodies not only complement the changing rhythms of the dance suites, the music is designed to quite literally illuminate the characters of the dance—which change dramatically from noble to boisterous, athletic to seductive (a stimulating expressive challenge for the musicians!) The result is a marvelous intercommunication between musician and dancer—a kind of chamber music between the aural and visual. **So ben m'ha cha bon tempo** (I know who's having a good time) is Negri's arrangement of a popular song by the composer Orazio Vecchi. As many Italian dances of this time, it is a multi-sectional dance consisting of an opening pavan-like section followed by a vigorous, leaping galliard. Salamone Rossi was an esteemed Italian Jewish violinist and composer. His compositions show him as one of the leading transitional figures between the late Italian Renaissance period and early Baroque. Rossi was so admired that he was excused from wearing the yellow badge that was required of other Jews in Mantua, but he probably died when an Austrian invasion destroyed the Jewish ghetto in Mantua, or in the subsequent plague which ravaged the area.

The Italian Madrigal is one of the great achievements of Western Music. Here the humanist dream of a perfect union of words and music is fulfilled. Sebastiano Festa's **Come senza costei** viver (How can I live without her) is one of the earliest madrigals but it reveals an already fully developed style. Its dramatic rhetoric, full of longing sighs, is a model of clear speech enriched with lush harmonies. **Dormendo un giorno** is a three voice madrigal by Jacques Arcadelt set to a poem by Petrarca. The story tells of the God of Love sleeping by a murmuring fountain, attended by passionate Nymphs and awakened by magical fire kindling the flame of love. The polyphonic voices create a fast-changing texture which illuminates the dramatic characters of text. Orazio Vecchi was known for his Madrigal Comedies, a popular, dramatic entertainment that influenced early opera. His **Fantasia** demonstrates his considerable contrapuntal skill. It is based on a single, ascending melodic motive appearing in varied rhythms with different countersubjects expressing a wide variety of moods and characters. Bartolomé de Selma y Salaverde's **Vestiva i colli** is actually an arrangement of a popular madrigal by Palestrina. In his setting he writes rhapsodic elaborations of the highest and lowest voices, in effect turning a Renaissance madrigal into an early Baroque trio sonata. The great Claudio Monteverdi, renowned for his madrigals and operas, excelled in many musical genres. The lightheartedness of his *Scherzi Musicali* (Musical Jests) belies their elegant craft. **Lidia spina del mio cuore** seems like a dramatic scene from an opera while **O Rosetta** is a sparkling dance song with alternating 6/8 and 3/4 rhythms (think of Leonard Bernstein's song, *America*).

In the improvisatory world of Renaissance music, there is often no fine line between composed music and improvisation. As jazz musicians improvise on the Blues, Renaissance musicians too had a repertoire of structures, or grounds, for jammin'. One of the most popular of these was **Ruggiero** which comes from reciting formulas used for singing the extraordinarily popular *Orlando Furioso*, an epic poem by Ludovico Ariosto. Ruggiero is the name of one of the main characters. Composers also felt it natural to write their own versions of popular improvisation structures, a practice which remained popular well into the 17th century (and has actually never completely ceased). The great keyboard virtuoso and composer Girolamo Frescobaldi,

who was renowned for his improvisations, used **Ruggiero** as a framework for virtuosic variations, as did Tarquinio Merula. Another ground was the **Chiacona** (aka Chaconne), originally a risqué dance-song probably introduced from the New World. Merula's ebullient setting with jivey rhythms and flashy melodies has a surprisingly modern feeling.

Writing on Elizabethan music, W. H. Hadow, Dean of Worcester College Oxford and esteemed 20th-century musicologist, noted, "Here is an achievement which may without exaggeration be set in comparison with that of the Elizabethan drama." After the horrors of decades of religiously inflamed turmoil, England emerged at the end of the 16th century as a fertile ground for the last great flowering of Renaissance polyphony. Thomas Morley was a singer, composer, theorist, editor, organist, Gentleman at the court of Elizabeth I, and perhaps the foremost member of the English Madrigal School. As if that were not enough, he evidently also served as a spy. His numerous collections of songs, madrigals and *balletti* (dance songs) range in character from the tragic **Leave now mine eyes lamenting**, to the sparkling, playful **See mine own Sweet Jewel**. Many Elizabethan compositions were entitled Fantasies. They offer a unique window into the Renaissance psyche. Here, through the magic of art, hopes and fears are explored and brave new worlds discovered. The intertwining dialogues of voices explore different ways of considering each theme and invite us, as does Shakespeare, to consider different points of view in each character and each situation. One kind of fantasia was the **In nomine**, a unique English form of instrumental chamber music which developed from a setting of the Latin phrase "in nomine Domini" in a mass by John Taverner. Some two hundred *In nomines* survive. The song **Bonnie Sweet Robin** was so well known in Elizabethan England that two of Shakespeare's distracted heroines cite it (notably Ophelia in her mad scene in Hamlet). Part of the song says "My Robin is to the greenwood gone", the 'greenwood' having reference to a variety of joys and sorrows to be found in the forest or natural world. It survives in many settings, notably by Giles Farnaby as a keyboard solo and by Thomas Simpson in his collection, printed in Germany, entitled *Tafel Consort* (Table/Dining Music), in which its lyric melody is passed in increasingly dramatic dialogue through all voices. Also from Simpson's *Tafel Consort*, John Dowland's **Pavan**, with its rhapsodic embellishments, has a distinctly theatrical quality.

The English Masque was a lavish courtly entertainment combining opulent stage design, wildly varied costumes, singing, instrumental music and above all dancing. Sharply contrasting the elegant reflection of cosmic order of the masque proper was the Antimasque, comic or grotesque dances presented before or between the acts of a Masque. The Antimasque was a spectacle of disorder and was played by professional performers, while members of the court performed the roles in the Masque. It is characterized by impropriety, transformed by the Masque into goodness and order, often by the King's presence alone. It was also contrasted with the Masque by the use of the 'lower' class as characters (humans and animals, mythological beings, etc.) In later years, the Antimasque developed into a farce or pantomime. Shakespeare wrote a masque-like interlude in *The Tempest* and there are also a masque sequences in *Romeo and Juliet* and *Henry VIII*. **Full Fathom Five** is sung by the spirit Ariel in Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. Though Shakespeare makes more than five hundred references to music in his plays and poems, this is one of the few surviving songs for which we have an original setting from the period. The Antimasque dances **The Bear's Dance** and **The Satyr's Masque** are from Masques by Ben Johnson.

In addition to being a composer, theorist and editor, Thomas Ravenscroft collected, arranged and published three books of popular music from the cities, court and countryside of Elizabethan England. **A Round of Three Country Dances in One** is a wonderful Renaissance mix of three country dance tunes over a bass voice. Enjoying, as did Simpson, the polyphonic potential of popular melodies, noted composers such as Thomas Weelkes drew on popular styles and sentiments. His song **Strike it up tabor** calls the pipe and tabor player to play a Maypole dance. Even in popular dance music the complex tapestry of intertwining voices and characters allows us to experience on many levels simultaneously, stimulates our imagination and perhaps helps us better appreciate the fortune of being such stuff as dreams are made on.

John Tyson