



BRIARBIRD

presents

Three Baroque B's (and Friends)

Lisa May & Kaneez Munjee, sopranos
Peter Fisher, flute
Carol Braves, violin
Cathy Allen, violoncello
Mardi Sicular, harpsichord

Monday, June 6, 4:00 p.m.
Berkeley City Club

Jauchzet dem Herrn	Christoph Bernhard (1628-1692)
Sonata for two flutes, Op. 47, no. 1 (selections) Largo ~ Presto ~ Giga	Joseph Bodin de Boismortier (1691-1755)
Quando parli e quando ridi	Giovanni Bononcini (1670-1747)
Trio Sonata in G Major, BWV 1038	Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)
Amor Jesu, amantissime dulcissima	Dietrich Becker (c.1623-1679)
Sonata for flute and harpsichord, Op. 2, No. 5 (selections) Largo ~ Allegro ~ Allegro Moderato	Michel Blavet (1700-1776)
Liebster, meine Seele saget, BuxWV 70	Dietrich Buxtehude (1637-1707)

About the Program

Most of us have heard of the “three B’s” of Classical music: Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms. But what of the hundreds of other composers whose names begin with B? Are there not more of them whose music is compelling and inviting?

In this concert, Briarbird explores “three Baroque B’s” and friends – offering a program featuring gems from Baroque composers less frequently performed, as well as a charming work by Johann Sebastian. While there are many, many worthy options for whom to include in this list of Baroque B’s, we had to choose just a handful for today’s performance.

Christoph Bernhard was a German singer and composer, who traveled widely, studying in Poland, Denmark and Italy, in addition to in Germany (Dresden) with Heinrich Schütz. He held positions as Kantor and a civic director of church music in Hamburg, and as assistant Kapellmeister in Dresden, ultimately becoming the only Kapellmeister at the Elector of Saxony’s court. His extant compositions include mostly sacred vocal works, alongside a handful of secular pieces; he is also known for three important music treatises. This setting of Psalm 100 comes from Bernhard’s only published collection: 20 sacred concerti for 2-4 voices, many with instruments, printed in Dresden in 1665.

Jauchzet dem Herrn

Jauchzet dem Herrn, alle Welt!
Dienet dem Herrn mit Freuden;
kommt vor sein Angesicht mit Frohlocken!
Erkennet, daß der Herr Gott ist!
Er hat uns gemacht, und nicht wir selbst
zu seinem Volk und zu Schafen seiner Weide.
Gehet zu seinen Toren ein mit Danken,
zu seinen Vorhöfen mit Loben;
danket ihm, lobet seinen Namen!
Denn der Herr ist freundlich,
und seine Gnade währet ewig
und seine Wahrheit für und für.

Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands.
Serve the Lord with gladness:
come before his presence with singing.
Know ye that the Lord he is God:
it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves;
we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.
Enter into his gates with thanksgiving,
and into his courts with praise:
be thankful unto him, and bless his name.
For the Lord is good;
his mercy is everlasting;
and his truth endureth to all generations.
(Psalm 100)

Joseph Bodin de Boismortier was known in his day as an extremely prolific composer – it is thought in fact that he was the most prolific composer for the flute specifically in the first half of the 18th century, though he did of course compose for many instruments and voices, in varying combinations. Unusually, he wrote some pieces for 3 flutes alone, for 5 flutes alone, or for the same number of flutes with basso continuo. His Opus 91 sonatas (dedicated to Michel Blavet, whose music appears later on this program) were unusual in that they are the only pieces from the time period written for flute with an obbligato keyboard part. Today we offer movements from one of his sonatas for two flutes without continuo, performed on the transverse flute and the voice flute.

Giovanni Bononcini was the oldest son in a musical family. He was born in Modena, studied in Bologna, and then by age 16, joined Bologna’s Accademia Filarmonica. Bononcini was peripatetic – he worked in Bologna, Milan, Rome (under patronage of Lorenzo Colonna), and then Vienna (in the service of Leopold I and then his heir Joseph). While in the employ of Leopold and Joseph, he is

known to have spent time performing in Berlin and Venice. After Joseph's death, Bononcini moved to Rome, then London, then Paris, and finally back to Vienna. Bononcini's fame as a composer was as widespread as his positions, and his output was vast – over 60 operas, nearly 300 cantatas, a handful of sacred works, and about 100 instrumental chamber works. "Quando parli" comes from a collection including works by various composers, printed in the early eighteenth century.

Quando parli e quando ridi

Quando parli e quando ridi
bella bocca tu m'uccidi
ma con l'armi del piacer.
Allettato, ingannato,
su quel labbro di cinabro
more il core e pur pensa di goder.

When you speak and when you laugh,
beautiful mouth, you kill me,
but with the weapons of pleasure!
Flattered, deceived,
my heart dies on your ruby lips
and yet it thinks it is enjoying!

translation adapted from Flavio Ferri-Benedetti

Johann Sebastian Bach needs no introduction to this audience. The trio sonata BWV 1038 is found in a handwritten manuscript source, and dates from about 1732, when Bach was in Leipzig. It was likely written for the Collegium musicum there, and likely performed at Zimmerman's coffeehouse. The manuscript is unusual in that the violin part is in scordatura – though many modern performances (including ours) use a transcription to the normal violin tuning. This piece has similarities to two other Bach works: its bass part is nearly identical to that of the violin sonata BWV 1021; and the F major sonata BWV 1022, scored for violin and obbligato harpsichord, gives the flute's melody from BWV 1038 to the harpsichord's right hand.

Dietrich Becker, born in Hamburg, started his musical career as an organist. While employed as organist in Ahrensberg, he began to focus on the violin, and a decade later he moved to Celle as a violinist in the court chapel of Duke Christian Ludwig. He moved back to Hamburg in 1662, and remained there for the rest of his life, ultimately holding the position of Kapellmeister at the Hamburg Cathedral, where he was held in very high regard. Though most of his musical compositions were instrumental, he also wrote a handful of vocal works, both in German and in Latin. This setting of a sensual (though non-liturgical) Latin text offers many similarities to the Italian style that was in favor with many of Becker's contemporaries such as Heinrich Schütz.

Amor Jesu, amantissime dulcissima

Amor, o amor Jesu, amantissime Jesu,
dulcissima dulcedo, igne tuo dulci.
Ure me, dilecte me Jesu.
O beatam incendium, o ardens desiderium,
O dulce refrigerium amare Dei filium.
Accende ardentissima flamma tuae
immensae charitatis, o bone Jesu,
ut semper laudem nomen sanctum tuum.
Dignare me diligere te.
Mori pro te
vera salus animae meae
mi bone Jesu.

Love, o most loving Jesus,
Sweetest sweetness, your fire is sweet.
Make me burn, my beloved Jesus.
o blessed fire, o ardent desire,
o sweet refreshment, to love the son of God.
Come o you most ardent flame
boundless charity, o good Jesus,
and always praise your sacred name.
Vouchsafe that I love you,
die for you,
true salvation of my soul
my good Jesus.

Michel Blavet was a self-taught musician, who nonetheless became one of the star performers – perhaps even the best known and loved flautist – in early 18th-century Paris. His father was a wood-turner in eastern France, and it is believed that the young Michel learned much about the flute in his father's workshop. After moving to Paris at age 23, Blavet soon established himself as a sought-after performer: he played principal flute at the Opéra in Paris, and later, performed with astonishing frequency at the Concert Spirituel. He premiered many works by other prominent French composers, and joined Georg Philip Telemann in the premiere of Telemann's *Nouveaux Quatuors Parisiens* in 1738. Blavet was also the dedicatee (as aforementioned) of Boismortier's Op. 91 sonata collection. Blavet himself published three collections of flute sonatas (two with continuo and one without), one flute concerto, and four stage works.

We close our program with a joyful duet by **Dietrich Buxtehude**. Though Buxtehude's reputation in his day was as an organist, he wrote an extensive number of vocal works, most of which include obbligato instruments along with basso continuo. The vast majority of these have sacred texts, though not all are strictly liturgical. "Liebster, meine Seele saget" is one which draws heavily from the Song of Solomon, yet the Biblical phrases are re-ordered and augmented with other poetry of unknown authorship – even possibly by Buxtehude himself, as he is known to have written some poetry. Buxtehude's scoring is for two violins, however, we feel this piece lends itself well to a flute-violin duet.

Liebster, meine Seele saget

Liebster, meine Seele saget mit durchaus verliebtem Sinn
und mit vollem Sehnen fraget: Liebster, ach wo bist du hin?
Komm, mein Heiland, komm vom Libanon gegangen!
Laß dich finden, o dein Jammer, dann so will ich führen dich
hin zu meiner Mutter Kammer, ja ich will bemühen mich,
meine Lust, dich nicht zu lassen auf die Gassen, auf die Strassen.
Sage mir doch, bitt' ich, sage, o du Saransblume du,
wo zugegen in Mittage nimmst du deine süsse Ruh?
Ach wo pflegst du samt den Schafen aus zuruhen, aus zuschlafen?
Komm, ach komm, laß dein Liebe dein Panier sein über mir,
mich dein Absein nicht betrübe, sondern laß mich für und für
unter deinen Armen sitzen deine Liebes flamm erhitzen. Alleluja.

"My love," my enamoured soul says,
and, full of longing, asks: "My love, where have you gone?
Come, my Saviour, come to me from Lebanon!
What's keeping you, pitiable one!
I wish to lead you to my mother's chamber,
yes, I will take care not to leave you, my joy,
on the streets, in the alleyways.
Tell me, o tell me, my flower of Saran,
where do you go at noon to take your sweet rest?
Ah, where do you go and rest and sleep with your flock?
Come, ah come, my sweet love, let your banner cover me,
don't let me be troubled by your absence,
but let me for ever be enfolded in your arms,
warmed by the flame of your love. Alleluia."

translation adapted from James Chater, printed in Challenge Classics CC72244

About the Performers

Cathy Allen, violoncello, earned a degree from UC Berkeley, where she won the UC Symphony concerto contest as a senior and received a Hertz Fellowship for study in London with William Pleeth. She performs with the Sacramento Philharmonic Orchestra, the contemporary music ensemble New Sounds, the Carol Trio and the Hillside Trio. She is a cello teacher at the Crowden School, has a private studio of students in El Cerrito, and coaches in the Oakland Middle Schools for the HOUSE chamber music project.

An Oakland native, **Carol Braves** began violin studies at the age of 10. She earned a B.A. in Music History and Art History from Holy Names University. Carol has performed with a variety of orchestras and chamber groups throughout the Bay Area, including Vallejo, Napa Valley, Stockton and Holy Names symphonies, the Briarbird Consort, and several piano trios and quartets. She also crosses over into Argentine Tango, Cuban, Mexican Folkloric, Scottish, Polish and other nonclassical genres. She has performed as a musician, music director and actor with Inferno Theatre, receiving a nomination for a Theatre Bay Area Award for best original music for "Dracula." Carol loves to dance and tours internationally with Jubilee American Dance Theatre.

Peter Fisher, flute, was taught by John Krell, a student and colleague of William Kincaid in the Philadelphia Orchestra and the Curtis Institute. He led a semi-pro baroque quartet in the 70s and 80s, the Berkeley Street Ensemble, where he first played with Cathy Allen. Introduced to the baroque flute by Franz Brügggen and Kathleen Kraft, he's been coached by another of Mr. Krell's students, Sandra Miller. He's retired from the UC Berkeley School of Public Health.

Lisa May, soprano, has sung with choral and theatre groups throughout the San Francisco Bay Area including Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra and Chorale, San Francisco Renaissance Voices, Lamplighters Music Theatre, San Francisco Opera Chorus, and American Bach Soloists Choir. Currently, she serves as the music director and soprano soloist for the vocal quartet at St. Thomas' Anglican Church in San Francisco. Lisa works as a classroom music instructor for pre-school through elementary grades, a voice coach as part of the Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir training program, and maintains a private music studio.

Soprano **Kaneez Munjee** specializes in music of the Renaissance and Baroque periods. She is an active choral singer in the Bay Area, having sung with the American Bach Choir, San Francisco Symphony Chorus, Marin Symphony Chorus, California Bach Society, San Francisco Renaissance Voices, and many other groups. She founded Briarbird (with Peter Fisher) to focus on non-operatic music from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries for one, two, or three voices with instruments. She holds a joint Ph.D. in music and humanities from Stanford University, with a dissertation on the figure of Orpheus in the French Baroque cantata.

Mardi Sicular, harpsichord, studied piano with Julian White privately as a teenager, and again at Mills College, earning a B.A. in piano performance and an M.A. in Music History. She was a recorder student of Tom Haynes, and played bass viol for over 50 years with the Berkeley Community Orchestra and Chorus. A passionate cultivator of California native plants, she is a docent at the Tilden Regional Parks Botanic Garden and the UC Botanical Garden. She's retired from Berkeley High School, where she taught AP Environmental Science and AP Chemistry.