

Musicians of the Old Post Road

Into the Light: Unearthed Treasures by Christoph Graupner

Program notes

This program focuses on extraordinary chamber music works by the German Baroque composer Christoph Graupner, along with selections by his close associates Johann Friedrich Fasch, Georg Philipp Telemann, and his Darmstadt patron Count Ernest Louis. After his early musical training at the Thomasschule in Leipzig and an appointment at the Hamburg Opera where he collaborated with Reinhard Keiser, Graupner spent the majority of his long career as *Kapellmeister* at the Darmstadt court. There, he wrote over 2,000 compositions. Although in his time he was as respected as his German contemporaries Bach, Telemann, and Handel, his music was largely forgotten after his death and has only in the past two decades begun to see a revival. Musicians of the Old Post Road has taken great delight in exploring his oeuvre and bringing these rediscovered works to today's audiences.

Although the majority of his surviving works consist of church cantatas, Graupner was a very active composer of instrumental music, as evidenced by hundreds of extant sinfonias, overture-suites, concertos, sonatas, and chamber works. His musical style is quite individualistic and not easily compared to his more well-known contemporaries. While his language of thematic development can rely on sequences of repeated phrases and motifs, his harmonic language can be less sequential, often taking unexpected turns. Another of his characteristic compositional devices is his use of rests which create transparency in the texture, helping guide the listener to follow the primary material.

An example of this use of rests is found in his Quartet in G Minor, composed in 1721/22. The first movement's solemn theme is presented in long notes, accompanied by short, articulated notes, allowing the listener to follow this theme as it passes from instrument to instrument. The second movement is a fugal tour de force that shows Graupner's prowess in counterpoint, while the final movement is a scampering gigue of slightly malevolent character.

During his early years in Leipzig, Graupner met Georg Philipp Telemann who was then the director of the Collegium Musicum. They formed a friendship that was renewed sometime after 1712 after Graupner's appointment to the Darmstadt court. His admiration for Telemann's music is evident from the many Telemann works he notated for performance at Darmstadt. Among them is the Quartet in D Minor heard on this program. Our performance of this work uses a version published in Paris in 1742 as Telemann's "Fourth Book of Quartets" where the flute is substituted for the first violin.

Graupner's strong reputation as a composer attracted many aspiring students to Darmstadt to study with him. Among them was Johann Friedrich Fasch, another of Graupner's schoolmates at the Leipzig Thomasschule, who received complimentary lessons from Graupner in 1714. Fasch's career closely parallels that of Graupner; he found long-term employment at the court of Anhalt-Zerbst where he composed copious amounts of sacred and secular works. Fasch's Sonata à Quattro in G Major survives in a manuscript from Darmstadt dated around 1740, with a cover page in Graupner's hand. This lively work is scored for flauto traverso and two violettas (violas) or flutes a bec (recorders) with continuo, where in the source the words "flutes a bec" have been crossed out.

Graupner's patron, Ernest Louis, the Landgrave (Count) of Hesse-Darmstadt, received an extensive musical education, studying with W.C. Briegel (Graupner's immediate predecessor) and

receiving lute lessons from J.V. Stobel. His extensive travels to European courts exposed him to the music of Lully, Keiser, Handel, and Graupner, whom he appointed as his *Kapellmeister* in 1709. Ernest Louis's major surviving work is a collection of twelve suites and symphonies published in 1718. The Chaconne on this program is taken from the first suite and shows the influence of the French style.

The remaining Graupner works on this program each possess marks of his unique creativity. His Sonata in G Major (c. 1741) is for the somewhat unusual combination of obbligato harpsichord, flute, and basso continuo. Although Telemann also wrote works for obbligato harpsichord, treble instrument, and continuo, Graupner's trio makes much fuller use of the harpsichord texture, with rich arpeggios in the first and third movements covering nearly the entire range of the instrument. All three movements possess quick changes of affect and mood that seem to foreshadow the *Empfindsamer Stil* ("sensitive style"), a concept that would only arise years later. The second movement is particularly striking with its melodic motifs and harmonic textures that create a somewhat angst-filled tension, moving later into a suspense-filled, dreamy episode.

In both the Trio in B Minor (c. 1744) and the Flute Concerto in D Major (c. 1732), Graupner's very specific ideas for the use of the flute are apparent: although the flute participates very little in the main thematic material in the first movement of the trio and last movement of the concerto, the instrument's role in conversational banter seems to lead the discussion among the instruments. In the trio, this is accomplished by a pervasive two-note, almost "cuckoo-like" gesture, while in the concerto finale, the flute is continually given new and teasing material to "change the subject." Graupner also has a penchant for assigning a throbbing motif of repeated notes to the instrument, using that device to build tension or excitement.

—Suzanne Stumpf and Daniel Rya

DANIEL RYAN, Co-Artistic Director and cellist, has played with Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra, Il Complesso Barocco (Venice and Innsbruck), the Camerata Academica of Salzburg, and many ensembles in the Greater Boston area such as Boston Cecilia, Handel & Haydn, Boston Baroque, and Favella Lyrica, with whom he appeared on the Bank of Boston Emerging Artists Celebrity Series. With the Boston-based group Renaissonics, he was featured on NPR's Sound and Spirit program in 2005 and released a CD for WGBH radio. While attending Boston University, he studied cello with George Neikrug and pursued historical performance through course work at the Longy School of Music. He later studied with Christophe Coin at the Sommerakademie in Innsbruck. Also an accomplished player of keyboard instruments, Daniel has been awarded the Associate Certificate of the American Guild of Organists and is Music Director at First Religious Society in Carlisle. He has coached chamber music at Harvard University and Wellesley College, where he held the position of Instructor of Early Keyboard for many years. He has also given carillon recitals across New England. He has recorded for Centaur, Titanic, Meridian, and Koch.

Suzanne Stumpf, co-Artistic Director and flutist, has performed widely in North America and in Europe on Baroque, Classical, Romantic and modern flutes, including at festivals and on concert series in Germany, Austria, Mexico, and across the U.S. She has performed with the New York Bach Ensemble, Handel and Haydn Society, Boston Baroque, and the Montreal Baroque Orchestra, with whom she served as guest principal flutist. Ms. Stumpf studied historical performance in Vienna with

Nikolaus Harnoncourt and in Zurich with Johann Sonnleitner. She holds the title of Senior Music Performance Faculty Emerita in Flute, Baroque Flute, and Chamber Music at Wellesley College, where she taught for over three decades. She has presented masterclasses, lectures, and workshops in historical performance for the National Flute Association, Amherst Early Music Festival, Clark University, Dartmouth College, University of Utah at Salt Lake City, and New England Conservatory, among others. She may be heard on the Centaur, Titanic, Telarc, and Meridian labels.

SARAH DARLING, violin and viola, enjoys a varied musical career that spans many centuries and styles. She holds a variety of leading roles in *A Far Cry*, Boston Baroque, Les Bostonades, Gut Reaction, and Antico Moderno, also performing with the Boston Early Music Festival, Emmanuel Music, Newton Baroque, Sarasa, the Boston Ballet Orchestra, and the Carmel Bach Festival. Sarah studied at Harvard, Juilliard, and at the Amsterdam, Freiburg, and New England conservatories, working with James Dunham, Karen Tuttle, Wolfram Christ, Nobuko Imai, and Kim Kashkashian. She has recorded old and new music for Linn, Paladino, Azica, MSR, and Centaur, plus a solo album on Naxos and two Grammy-nominated CDs on Crier Records. Sarah is active as a teacher and coach, enjoying the opportunity to “translate” between musical worlds while serving on the faculty of the Longy School of Music, teaching Baroque viola at New England Conservatory, and co-directing the Harvard Baroque Chamber Orchestra.

MARCIA CASSIDY, viola, is an active chamber music recitalist, teacher, and freelance violist. As a member of the faculty of Dartmouth College, she teaches violin and viola, directs the chamber music program, and is the assistant to the Dartmouth Symphony. Marcia is principal violist of Opera North (NH) and a member of the Juno Orchestra (VT). As the violist of the Franciscan String Quartet, she performed extensively in the United States, Europe, Canada, and Japan to critical acclaim. The quartet received many awards and honors, including first prize in the Banff International String Quartet Competition. Raised near San Antonio, Marcia pursued her musical training at the University of Texas, University of New Mexico, New England Conservatory, San Francisco Conservatory, and with the Tokyo String Quartet at the Yale School of Music. She has participated in numerous summer music festivals including Aspen, Banff, Blossom, Norfolk, and Tanglewood.

JESSE IRONS, violin, enjoys a busy and excitingly diverse musical life in and around his home city of Boston. He is the Assistant Concertmaster of Boston Baroque and appears regularly with Handel & Haydn Society, the Boston Early Music Festival, and with numerous small ensembles including Gut Reaction and Anachronism. He has appeared as soloist with Newton Baroque, Sarasa, Chicago’s Baroque Band, and the City Orchestra of Hong Kong. A member and Co-Artistic Director of the Grammy-nominated ensemble *A Far Cry*, he has appeared in concert across North America, Europe, and Central and Southeast Asia. As an educator, Jesse has mentored students on entrepreneurship and chamber music at MIT, Yale, Stanford, Eastman, Peabody, and New England Conservatory. He has performed with Musicians of the Old Post Road since the 2008-09 season.

MICHAEL SPONSELLER, harpsichord, enjoys a highly diversified career that brings him to festivals and concert venues internationally as a recitalist, concerto soloist, and continuo performer on both harpsichord and organ. He studied at the Oberlin Conservatory of Music with Lisa Goode Crawford with additional studies at the Royal Conservatory of Music, The Hague. He has garnered prizes at the International Harpsichord Competitions of Montréal, the International Harpsichord Competition at Bruges, as well as First Prizes at both the American Bach Soloists and Jurow International Harpsichord Competition. Michael appears regularly with the Bach Collegium San Diego, Les

Délices, Aston Magna, Tragicomedia, and Boston Early Music Festival Orchestra, and can be heard on over twenty recordings from such labels as Delos, Centaur, Eclترا, and Naxos, among others. He is a regular presence at Boston's Emmanuel Music and is Associate Music Director of Bach Collegium San Diego. This is his third season performing with Old Post Road.