

November Concert: The French Connection

The pre-eminent Belgian baroque flautist Barthold Kuijken once proposed, at the grave risk of oversimplification, that one could identify the quintessence of musical style and sonority of a particular nation during the baroque period in just one or two instruments. Thus, for France they were the baroque flute and the viola da gamba (as featured in our “The French Connection” concert), for Italy the violin and for Germany the pipe organ.

With the lengthy combat that raged over the acceptance of either the French or the Italian style as the one that should or would ultimately reign supreme, it is interesting to note that even in the life and times of the baroque period – in France, Italy and Germany – the French assumed superiority, as they did in matters of state and war. There were, however, some cracks that started to appear. For example, François Couperin – to avoid censure – took a nom de plume (by rearranging the letters of his name to become Pernucio!) in



order to write in the Italian style. While Italian music might have been admired, no French prophet of it would have been accepted in his own country. And although Hubert le Blanc in his «Defense de la Basse de Viole contre les Entréprises du Violon et les Prétensions du Violoncel» (Paris 1740) appeared to be an advocate for the retention of the French style, by book’s end it becomes clear that he is actually hedging his bets and wouldn’t be surprised if the Italians won out in the end.

Thus Prussian Frederick the Great, by mid-century was able to affirm, “La France pour literature; L’Italie pour la musique”. This, though, not before his compatriot, Telemann, had sojourned in Paris for a time, assumed and promoted the French style in his compositions (he gives the option of either viola da gamba or violoncello in his scoring) and triumphed as a local hero – “A Saxon in Paris”.

NEWS Salut!

November 2010

2011 Concert Series Preview

Thank you for your support in 2010. We look forward to welcoming you again in 2011 as we celebrate 16 years of Salut! subscription series concerts. Our 2011 series is entitled “The Musical Compass”. Join us as we reach into the far-flung corners of the European continent and discover wonderful music from Slovakia, Spain, Sweden and Scotland – important peripheral regions from where much innovation emerged.

Salut!

2011 CONCERT SERIES



THE BEST OF BAROQUE

Concert 1: Gypsy Pearls

Enjoy music by Telemann, Vivaldi, Zelenka, Schmelzer and Merula

Concert 2: Música Barroca

Enjoy music by Sanz, del Encina, de Araujo, Falconieri and de Victoria

Concert 3: Northern Discoveries

Enjoy music by Roman, Schickhardt, Agrell, Buxtehude and Baltazar

Concert 4: Caledonian Baroque

Enjoy music by Geminiani, Matteis, Oswald, Barsanti and Veracini

November Concert The French Connection

One of Louis XIV’s favourite instruments was the viola da gamba. For our November concert we welcome back gamba player Jennifer Eriksson, who is well known as director of The Marais Project and her educational work for Musica Viva with the group Sounds Baroque.



Meet Our Musicians: Monika Kornel

Our final concert for 2010 features non-French composers who were influenced by the unique French baroque style. Composers such as Telemann, Muffat, Schultze, Fischer and Quantz were all keen to cash in on the big business of “French style”, emulating the brand as decreed by Louis XIV’s right-hand man, the Italian-born Jean-Baptiste Lully.

Another Italian-born composer who found great favour (was held in high esteem) in France was Joseph Nicholas Pancrace Royer (c1705-1755). He was responsible for the musical education of Louis XV’s children, and was later appointed as music director of the chambre du roi (the King’s chamber) and director of the Royal Opera orchestra.

Salut!’s harpsichordist Monika

Kornel will perform one of Royer’s fantastic harpsichord solos, Premier Livre de pièces pour clavecin, Le Vertigo (1746), in our November concert. Monika has recently been performing in Europe, along with Hans-Dieter Michatz, as part of the Sydney Consort. [photo of MK from February 2010]

We asked Monika to tell us about her most recent tour:

It may seem quite a difficult task for Australian musicians (although there are many fantastic Aussie musicians over

there) to venture into the heart of Europe and demonstrate musically what originated from there.

The Sydney Consort is an ensemble consisting of three musicians – Hans-Dieter Michatz, Stan Kornel and Monika Kornel – who have worked



Monika Kornel’s recent overseas tour

and performed together in Australia over the last ten years. This year they went for their fourth European concert tour. Since 2005, the group has performed over forty concerts in countries such as Italy, Germany, Luxembourg, Denmark and Poland. The musicians occasionally work with students at masterclasses and also collaborate with local musicians, ensembles and period instrument builders. Three of those in particular were in 2007 in Poland (Olsztyn) – a concert with a Polish soprano; and in 2009 (Inowroclaw) with a string ensemble. This year in Gdansk the Sydney Consort performed concerti by Vivaldi and Sammartini with the famous Cappella Gedanensis, as well as their own program.

With the lack of her own beautiful instrument in Europe, Monika has the most difficult task by playing on whatever harpsichord is available. She has had two magnificent occasions where she was able to perform on original 18th Century instruments (belonging to the museum) in Hamburg. With the Sydney Consort members, she performed on a harpsichord

by Pascal Taskin made in Paris in 1787, and later on a Flemish single manual harpsichord made by Johannes Daniel Dulcken in Antwerp in 1755.

Monika also performed with the Sydney Consort in Johann Sebastian Bach’s house in Eisenach, on a copy of an instrument made by Juergen Ammer. This year she was lucky to meet the builder and perform on another harpsichord “Anonymous Thuringian” from his collection in Kassel. Meeting the outstanding German harpsichord makers has had a tremendous impact on Monika, with an abundance of firsthand knowledge and history lessons that will stay with her forever.



Two other cities in Germany made the ensemble’s stay this year very welcome – Springe near Hanover in Hunting Castle and Darmstadt, where all our CDs sold like hot cakes. Before the group returned home, they were invited to a few festivals and organised concerts for the European summer next year.

