



The German Society of Pennsylvania

presents

Muse Camerata



Sunday, December 17, 2017 at 3:00pm

The German Society of Pennsylvania
www.germansociety.org

611 Spring Garden Street
Philadelphia, PA 19123

Calendar of Events

January 2018

- Sat. Jan. 6 Women's Auxiliary Monthly Meeting, 10:00am
Sat. Jan. 13 Buchclub, 1:30pm
Fri. Jan. 19 Friday Film Fest: *Der Besuch*, 6:30pm

February 2018

- Sat. Feb. 3 Women's Auxiliary Monthly Meeting, 10:00am
Sat. Feb. 10 Buchclub, 1:30pm
Wed. Feb. 13 Konversationsabend: Feuerzangenbowle. 6:00pm
Fri. Feb. 16 Friday Film Fest: *Kundschafter des Friedens*, 6:30pm
Sat. Feb. 24 7th Annual Bierfest, 2:30pm

March 2018

- Sat. Mar. 3 Women's Auxiliary Monthly Meeting, 10:00am
Sat. Mar. 10 Buchclub, 1:30pm
Wed. Mar. 14 Konversationsabend: Reconstruction of the Imperial Castle, 6:00pm
Fri. Mar. 16 Friday Film Fest: *Wilkommen bei den Hartmanns*, 6:30pm

...Save the date for our next “Wister and More!” concerts:

- Sat. Jan. 6 Claire Huangci, piano
Chopin's Polonaise Fantasie Op. 61, Mussorgsky's Pictures at an Exhibition, Beethoven's Moonlight Sonata, and more...
- Sun. Feb. 18 Soprano Leslie Johnson with Chuck Holdeman and Michael Djupstrom
Featuring original compositions, plus works by J.S. Bach and Edvard Grieg
- Sun. Mar. 18 The Casimir Trio
Program will include works by Mozart, Dvořák, Farago, and Beethoven
- Sun. Apr. 22 The Delius Society presents Choral Arts Philadelphia
Delius's Songs of Sunset with an orchestral score by Lloyd Smith presented by the Wister Quartet under the direction of Matthew Glandorf

All of our events are open to the public.

We welcome members and non-members alike.

Most events require tickets. Please call or email the office to inquire about purchasing:

215.627.2332 info@germansociety.org

Muse Camerata PROGRAM

<i>“Zion hört die Wächter singen”</i> from BWV 140	J.S. Bach (1685-1750)
Sonata for violin, cello, and continuo, RV 83 <i>Allegro</i> <i>Largo</i> <i>Allegro</i>	Antonio Vivaldi (1678 – 1747)
Sonata for violin and harpsichord in G major, BWV 1028 <i>Allegro</i> <i>Largo—Allegro (Harpsichord Solo)</i> <i>Adagio—Allegro</i>	J.S. Bach
<i>“Allegro”</i> in D minor, WKO 208 From <i>27 Pieces for Unaccompanied Viola da Gamba</i> (1770)	C.F. Abel (1723 – 1787)
Trio Sonata in D minor <i>Andante—Largo</i> <i>Presto—Largo</i> <i>Aria Inventione</i>	J.P. Krieger (1649 – 1725)
<i>Cento partite sopra passacagli</i> (1643)	Girolamo Frescobaldi (1583 – 1643)
Trio Sonata in D minor	Alessandro Stradella (1639 – 1682)

There will be one 15-minute intermission. We offer refreshments from our bar during that time. Your ticket to our concert also invites you to a complimentary reception with the artists in the

Program Notes

Today's program features chamber and solo works from the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries. We have chosen pieces for the Advent and Christmas seasons in terms of key, compositional context, and overall affect. We begin with an arrangement of *Zion hört die Wächtersingen* (Zion hears the watchmen sing) from **J.S. Bach's** cantata, *Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme* (Sleepers, wake! A voice astounds us). This is considered Bach's most mature sacred cantata and was composed during his Leipzig period at the Thomaskirche. Though the original performance occurred on the 27th Sunday after Trinity (which only happens if Easter falls early), *Wachet auf* is traditionally performed during the Advent season due to its fitting text from the Gospel of Matthew.



J.S. Bach's contemporary rival in Italy was **Antonio Vivaldi**, who had an international reputation as a prolific composer who experimented with Italian styles under the influence of Corelli, and who used the newly established tonal system. Like many of his other instrumental works, this undated sonata was perhaps written for Vivaldi's pupils at the Ospedale della Pietà, a music school for female orphans. This trio sonata follows the typical fast – slow – fast movement structure and includes a dialogue-like feature between the violin, cello, and the basso continuo.



Returning to the work of **J.S. Bach**, the sonatas for violin and obbligato harpsichord were written when Bach worked for Prince Leopold's court at Köthen. These sonatas are compositionally unique. In other contemporary violin sonatas, the harpsichord generally had an accompanimental role which did not include a distinct melodic line. In contrast, Bach put equal, soloistic weight on the right hand of the harpsichord, which replicates the ensemble structure of a trio sonata: solo violin line, solo right hand of the harpsichord, and basso continuo in the left hand of the harpsichord. This G major sonata has a symmetrical structure with fast – slow outer movements and a solo harpsichord middle movement.

A little before Bach's generation, **Johann Philipp Krieger**—though not a typical household composer name—was highly regarded by his contemporaries, including George Frideric Handel and theorist Johann Mattheson. He wrote a great deal of instrumental music (especially keyboard music), but not many of his compositions are still played today. Like many other Germanic composers of the time, Krieger absorbed both French and Italian stylistic features. This trio sonata begins with a contrapuntal texture with solemn affect and quickly moves into a more pompous section. A similar approach is used in the *Presto* movement, as its accented motivic figures are contrasted by the sweet, airy *Largo* section that follows. The sonata ends with a variation set based on an eight-bar aria.

Born to a musical family, **Carl Friedrich Abel** studied with J.S. Bach at the Thomasschule in Leipzig. In 1759, Abel moved to England and became roommates with Johann Christian Bach, the “London Bach”. Together, they established England’s first subscription concert series: The Bach—Abel concerts, where they performed their own works as well as works of their contemporaries, such as Haydn. A versatile composer, Abel wrote symphonies, orchestral works, chamber music and other solo works. Abel’s solo viola da gamba music comes from two extant manuscript sources. Although *Allegro in D minor* comes from a collection published in 1770, it displays features from the high Baroque period, including abundant chromaticism and dissonances.



The earliest composition on this program is the solo keyboard piece *Cento partite sopra passacagli* by **Girolamo Frescobaldi**, who spent the majority of his career as the cantor at Cappella Giulia at St. Peter’s in Rome. Today, Frescobaldi is most noted for his contribution to keyboard music because he was the first composer to write original music for that instrument. Before then, most compositions that keyboardists played were either transcriptions, intabulations, or dance pieces not specifically written for keyboard. *Cento partite sopra passacaglia* means one hundred variations based on a *passacaglia* —a common harmonic progression based on the descending tetrachord (four descending consecutive notes). This piece not only represents an idealized improvisational version by Frescobaldi, but it also invites the performer to improvise and ornament in similar fashions.



A little after Frescobaldi’s time, **Alessandro Stradella** marks a generation of Italian composers of the middle Baroque period. We do not know much about Stradella’s early life except that he came from an aristocratic family in Tuscany. Stradella had worked extensively with opera composers, including Antonio Cesti and Francesco Cavalli; however, he ended up living a dissolute life and was eventually murdered by assassins. Despite his short-lived career, Stradella wrote more than three hundred works of various genres. Unfortunately, his fame was quickly overshadowed by the emerging Vivaldi and Corelli at the turn of eighteenth century. This trio sonata is a great representation of synthetic features of Italian instrumental music from the transitional period in the late seventeenth century. It also contains much dramatic tension, possibly inspired by Stradella’s personal life.

Program Notes by Joyce Chen

About the Artists

Muse Camerata is a new chamber ensemble specializing in music of the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries. Playing period instruments in historically informed style, their dramatic and fiery performances have won them fans up and down the East Coast.



A native of Taiwan, **Dr. Joyce Chen** is Music Director at Gwynedd Square Presbyterian Church, where she directs a 25-voice adult choir and a 20-member wind ensemble. In addition, Dr. Chen is Artist-in-Residence at St. Stephen's Lutheran Church, where she also curates an early music concert series and performs monthly at the Art Loop events. Recent performances include: finalist at the International Jurow Harpsichord Competition at Oberlin College (2016); harpsichord soloist at the world premiere of Joseph Vella' concerto with the University of Delaware Symphony Orchestra (2016); Music Direc-

tor of the 2017 Spring Opera Workshop at the University of Delaware. Dr. Chen holds a Master of Arts in Music History/Theory and a Doctor of Musical Arts in Harpsichord Performance from Stony Brook University.

Praised by the New York Times for her "splendid playing", 27-year-old **Natalie Kress** has already begun a successful career as a violinist; highlights of which include performing at the Kennedy Center Honors with Yo Yo Ma in 2016; winning the 2012 Jules C. Reiner Violin Prize from the Tanglewood Music Center; as well as performances at Carnegie Hall. Natalie received her Bachelor's of Arts in Music and Psychology and Master's in Music from Stony Brook University and is co-Artistic Director of Three Village Chamber Players which performs free chamber music and outreach concerts throughout Long Island and New York State (3vcp.org). As a baroque violinist Natalie studies with Beth Wenstrom and performs with Boston's Handel and Haydn Society and Grand Harmonie.





Elena Smith received her B.Mus in Cello Performance from Temple University, where she studied with Jeffrey Solow. She is an active performer on modern cello, baroque cello, and viola da gamba. Ms. Smith studies with Kathryn Picht-Read, Phoebe Carrai, and Sarah Cunningham. Ms. Smith has appeared with Venice Baroque Orchestra, New York City Opera, Elysium String Quartet, Fairmount Chamber Ensemble, Wayne Oratorio Society, Chiaroscuro Consort of Viols, Ex Umbris, and many other ensembles on the East Coast, including as a soloist with the Olney Symphony Orchestra. She can be heard on Killiam Shakespeare's upcoming album, "Killiam Season 2." She has participated in several music festivals in the United States and Europe. Ms. Smith resides in Haverford, PA, and teaches cello privately throughout the Philadelphia area.



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We also wish to acknowledge with thanks the generous support received from
The Philadelphia Cultural Fund for this season of our music program.

