

CONCERTS

AT THE UNIVERSITY

AUTUMN—WINTER 2014

Tuesday 28 October 2014

1.10pm

Reid Concert Hall

Oliver Webber · violin

Christopher Suckling · cello and viol

Jan Waterfield · harpsichord

**Programme of works by CORELLI, J.S. BACH, R. ROGNONI,
MERULO, F. ROGNONI and GEMINIANI.**



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh College of Art

Sonata Op.5 No.7 in D minor

Arcangelo Corelli (1653-1713)

from *The Art of Fugue*

Canon alla Ottava

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Canon alla Duodecima in Contrapunto alla Quinta

Divisions on Anchor che col partire

Riccardo Rognoni (c.1550-c.1620)

Toccata Quinta from Primo Libro (1598)

Claudio Merulo (1533-1604)

Divisions on lo son ferito

Francesco Rognoni (2nd half of 16th C – c.1626)

from *The Art of Fugue*

Canon per Augmentationem in contrario Motu

Johann Sebastian Bach

A selection of Scottish Airs

Francesco Geminiani (1687-1762)

This lunchtime's programme explores relationships between instruments and musical lines. The concert is bookended by Arcangelo Corelli and his presumed pupil, Francesco Geminiani. Much has been written of word "o" in the title page to Corelli's "Sonata a Violino e Violone o Cimbalo". The seventh sonata, the first of the "da camera" sonatas --- those with dance movements --- displays the recently developed confidence of the "cello" as an equal to the violin. Today we perform it with violin and cello, each instruments' ornamentation completely the harmonies implied by Corelli.

Francesco Geminiani left his native Italy to enjoy the artistic and economic freedom promised by England and France. By the middle of the century, however, the irregular and angular style that distinguished his music from his contemporaries had fallen out of fashion. Geminiani turned to the burgeoning market for instruction methods to support him in his later years and was never one to miss a passing fashion. The simplicity of the Scottish airs that conclude his "Treatise of Good Taste in the Art of Musick" appealed to his public, yet gave Geminiani the scope to indulge in arrangements of surprising complexity.

Johann Sebastian Bach's "The Art of Fugue" is one of those works in the Western Musical Canon that has acquired mythological status, not least because C.P.E. Bach attached a note to the manuscript to the effect that

"NB: While working on this fugue, in which the name BACH appears in the countersubject, the author died." The three canons performed today are, of course, masterful compositions, however playing and listening to the relationships between the lines evolve is a simple pleasure.

The Milanese Rognoni family, father Riccardo and son Francesco, were key figures in the development of string technique in the transformative decades either side of 1600, and both experts in the long-established tradition of diminution: taking a well-known song or madrigal and transforming it into a virtuoso showpiece. Cipriano de Rore's "Ancor che col partire", a poignant and exquisitely composed reflection on parting's sweet sorrow, was a particularly popular subject for this treatment, and Riccardo's version is in the "bastarda" style, which means that rather than ornamenting one voice only, the viola da gamba roams freely from bass to treble and back, testing the player's ingenuity and technical facility or "disposizione". In Francesco's take on Palestrina's "lo son ferito" for violin (another lover's lament, this time complaining that only she who was responsible for the wound of Cupid's arrow can cure it), we see new, modern techniques on display: repeated notes, dotted rhythms, fancy slurring and echoes, truly living up to Francesco's claim of a way of ornamentation "con arte e maestria".

Claudio Merulo devoted the greater part of his output to the keyboard toccata. His published collections of 1598 and 1604 are among the most well-constructed examples of this genre from the 16thC. The music shows a clear separation of 'free' and imitative (quasi-fugal) sections; these toccatas are clear precursors of the later appearance of this style in Germany, in the hands of Froberger, Buxtehude and J.S. Bach.

O.W., C.S., J.W.

Oliver Webber's education took him to Wells, Cambridge, London and The Hague, and laid the foundations for an eclectic and adventurous approach to historical performance. He is the artistic director of the Monteverdi String Band, internationally acclaimed for their innovative programming and engaging performances, and has directed programmes ranging from 17th-century chamber music to Hasse operas with ensembles throughout Europe. He is the leader of Ludus Baroque (Edinburgh), and principal and guest leader with the Gabrieli Players, the Early Opera Company, the London Handel Orchestra, and the Hanover Band; in 2012 he led the string band for the Taverner Consort's ground-breaking recording of Monteverdi's *Orfeo*.

As a soloist Oliver performs regularly at major London venues, as well as European festivals such as the 'Festival Paganiniano di Carro', Italy and the 'Vrijdag van Vredenburg' series, Utrecht. He is also a member of the Parley of Instruments, Passacaglia and the London Handel Players, and his violin and (speaking!) voice are often heard on Radio 3.

Oliver makes his own gut strings, and bringing the fruits of scholarly research to life on the concert platform is a driving force behind his work. He is a professor at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, and lectures throughout Europe on historical performance.

Christopher Suckling is a continuo cellist noted for his 'captivating expressivity'. He is a principal player with the Gabrieli Consort and Players and has performed and recorded with artists such as Plácido Domingo and Rolando Villazón; his work as a director has been described as 'scintillating', 'dynamic' and 'containing moments of real beauty'. Christopher has broadcast live as a soloist and chamber musician on BBC Radio 3 and Classic FM; recent recordings have been critically praised for the quality of his tone, the Independent citing the 'warmth of the cello sonorities', whilst a five star review in the BBC Music Magazine noted 'particular highlights in Christopher Suckling's resonant cello'. He has finally written up his doctoral thesis which goes on at length about the cello and recitative, and looks forward to spending the remaining crisp, autumnal afternoons with his daughter rather than editing a manuscript.

Jan Waterfield studied music at Cambridge University and the RAM in London. She is currently principal harpsichordist for the Gabrieli Consort as well as a regular player with the Academy of Ancient Music and many other ensembles, both in London and Scotland. She recently enjoyed playing Gorecki's concerto for amplified harpsichord in a live BBC broadcast from Wigmore Hall.

'Jan Waterfield's harpsichord concerto sets the tone for an exalted yet humane celebration' (Independent on Sunday)

FORTHCOMING CONCERT:

Friday 31 October, 1.10pm, Reid Concert Hall

Emma Lloyd (violin) and John Kitchen (harpsichord) present a programme of baroque music including sonatas by Leclair and Corelli. ADMISSION FREE