



TAFELMUSIK BAROQUE ORCHESTRA

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Canada Tour 2011 PROGRAMME NOTES

Lully Suite from *Phaëton*

Louis XIV was known as the Sun King because of his association with Apollo, the god who set out at dawn each day in his horse-drawn chariot of fire to bring light to the world. Jean-Baptiste Lully's opera *Phaëton* recounts the story from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* of the fatal chariot ride of Apollo's young son, who wanted to take over his father's duties for one day. The first performance of the opera took place in 1683 at the riding school of the Versailles stables – the opera theatre at the palace had not yet been built. It was a lavish production, famous for the dramatic fall of the horses and chariot from the ceiling of the theatre at the end of the opera. It came to be called the "people's opera," and continued to be performed in France long after Lully's death.

C.P.E. Bach Symphony for strings

Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach wrote 19 symphonies, eight of them scored for string orchestra. Six of the latter were commissioned by Baron Gottfried van Swieten, Austrian ambassador to the Prussian court, in 1773. Van Swieten was very active and influential in Viennese musical circles, presenting concerts at his Viennese Academies and Aristocratic Concerts: Haydn, Mozart and eventually Beethoven were frequent participants. Bach was employed in Hamburg as Director of Music, and van Swieten travelled to Hamburg expressly to see Bach. Before the symphonies were handed over to van Swieten they were played through at the house of Professor Büsch in Hamburg. The violinist J.F. Reichardt led the ensemble on this occasion and wrote: "the original, bold concepts, the wide variety of forms and modulations as well as their novel treatment were received with enthusiasm." These works bridge the baroque concerto and classical symphony, and as such directly influenced the works of Mozart.

J.S. Bach Concerto for oboe and violin

Among Bach's instrumental works are several that attest to his tendency to re-use entire works in different settings, adapting them to the circumstances. Violin concertos were turned into harpsichord concertos and cantata sinfonias were re-worked as instrumental concertos. The clues he left in his own transcriptions and borrowings has fortunately enabled later generations of musicians to reconstruct lost works and to increase, at least on a small scale, the frustratingly small orchestral output of J.S. Bach. One of the most popular reconstructions is the Concerto for Oboe and Violin, which is in fact a modern transcription of Bach's Concerto for Two Harpsichords in C Minor, BWV 1060. The latter is one of three extant double-harpsichord concertos, one of which also survives in a version for two violins (the famous Concerto for Two Violins in D Minor, BWV 1049), presumed to precede the two-harpsichord version. Basing their work on this model, musicologists and musicians set about restoring the presumably lost predecessor to the Concerto in C Minor, BWV 1060. After studying the contrasting nature of the two solo parts, it was determined that a concerto for oboe and violin may have been the lost original from which the two-harpsichord concerto was transcribed.

Fasch Orchestral suite

Johann Friedrich Fasch was descended from a long line of Lutheran cantors and theologians. He studied at the Thomasschule and the University in Leipzig, followed by composition studies with Graupner in Darmstadt. In 1722 he accepted the position of court Kapellmeister at the Anhalt court in Zerbst and remained there until his death in 1758. His reputation as a composer was widespread, and his works were performed by Telemann in Hamburg, Bach in Leipzig, Pisendel in Dresden, and C.P.E. Bach in Berlin. He continued to send copies of his compositions to his former teacher Graupner in Darmstadt, and the library there includes a wealth of his instrumental works, among them the Orchestral Suite in D Minor.

Dauvergne Concert de Simphonies

Antoine Dauvergne was born in 1713 in Moulins, the son of a violinist in the Concert de Moulins. He probably joined his father in the orchestra as a violinist before leaving for Clermont-Ferrand and finally Paris. He had settled in the capital by 1739 and held a string of royal and municipal appointments there, among them violinist, composer and finally *maître de musique* for the *Chambre du roi*, director of the opera orchestra, and director of the Concert Spirituel. He retired in 1790, moving to Lyons during the French Revolution and dying there in 1797. The bulk of his output comprises vocal music, sacred music and opera, but early in his career he published four volumes of instrumental music, including four *Concerts de symphonies* that appeared in 1751. These works owe as much to the tradition of the French ballet as to that of the Italian symphony, each starting with a French *ouverture* and ending with a grand *chaconne* or *passacaille*.

Vivaldi Concerto for 2 oboes

For almost 40 years, Vivaldi was violin teacher and orchestra director at the Ospedale della Pietà in Venice, a female orphanage at which the pupils received extensive musical training. One of Vivaldi's principal duties was to provide several concertos each month for performances by the Pietà's renowned orchestra. The orchestra was one of the leading ensembles in Europe, and the regular concerts performed by the young women were among the tourist attractions of the city at that time. Although most of Vivaldi's over 400 extant concertos feature the violin, the constant demand for new and novel concertos inspired Vivaldi to turn to instruments not often given solo roles in the orchestra, including wind and brass instruments. He wrote some 20 solo concertos and three double concertos for oboe, an instrument also favoured by fellow Venetians Albinoni and Marcello.