

Carolina Counterpoint

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Charlotte's early music source for over 35 years



Karen Hite Jacob, editor

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Fall 2013

Thirty-Sixth Season: *Dialogues with Italy*

Every year Carolina Pro Musica members bring ideas for the forthcoming season. This year's requests included rarely heard baroque works, more 17th century pieces like

"Benedicta sit" by Arrigoni performed in 2005, and a look at late 18th-century Russia. Christmas would include medieval and Renaissance music. A French Renaissance program seemed a good fit for our remaining concert. Three of the programs are associated with imperial or royal courts. All have a high-degree of Italian influence. Perhaps with most of our concerts the Italian element is present, but this year it is especially evident.

The season opener features Handel who went to Italy to learn the musical style. He probably understood it before his travels. In his early compositions we hear him on the way toward his larger, later vocal works with which most are familiar. He has a great sense of melody which can be decorated in the baroque fashion.

The second concert features music from the court of Holy Roman Emperor Ferdinand II who ruled during the 30 Years War. His chapel maintained a strong Catholic presence with a men and boys choir singing music of now forgotten Italian composers Arrigoni and Priuli. We'll revive some selections for this concert.

The February concert features Catherine de Medici's court. Related to French royalty through her mother's family, she married the future king of France, Henry II. After his untimely death she ruled as regent for two of her sons. Her life was a time of constant stress with warring factions. Her support of the arts was an attempt to glorify the fragile monarchy but perhaps was a good diversion for her.

The season closes in the Russia of Catherine the Great where Italian chapel masters and composers provided all types of music. Catherine had the Hermitage Theatre built which provided a place for many premieres.

Join us as we dialogue with Italy.



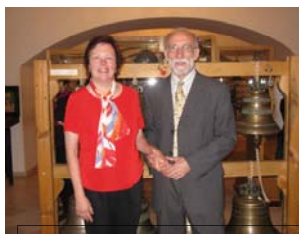
Inspired concert concept took time to flower

In 2011, CPM founder-director and husband John traveled to St. Petersburg, Russia to visit friends they had hosted in the Carolinas in years past. A trip to this historic city proved to be much more than imagined. Everyone was willing to show us their favorite places and yet give us time to be on our own. This wasn't our first trip to Russia but this city kept offering connections we had not dreamed of.

Everyone knows the great 19th century Russian composers and writers, but earlier history seems dim. A visit to the Hermitage Museum connected us to the theater built by Catherine the Great in 1787. A planned tour of the Museum of Music at Shermetev Palace hosted by curator V.V. Koshelev, an acquaintance through the American Musical Instrument Society, gave us insights into Russian musical instruments we had never heard or seen before.



Hermitage Theater with arched passageway on the banks of the Neva by Pietro Gonzaga. Permission of State Hermitage Museum.

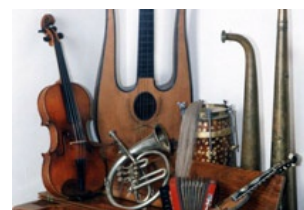


Karen & Vladimir Koshelev

Meeting an American pianist turned harpsichord builder who wants to see these earlier instruments in use once again in the city was another joy. There were connections to a world beyond Russia itself and Russia in those days had embraced much from other cultures. We knew French was one of the languages spoken in the Russian court even into the 19th century. Slowly things started falling into place making the view of late 18th c. Russia more easily understood.

Two years of thinking, research, the internet, IMSLP.com and interlibrary loan (thanks to Belmont Abbey College) have given us more than enough music to showcase the Italian connections in 18th c. Russia.

A few instruments in St. Petersburg Music Museum. Second from right: a Russian 'horn' (curved end) which can play only one pitch per instrument.



Carolina Pro Musica 2013- 2014 Season



Knowing the Styles:

Music by Handel, Bach, Telemann

September 28, 2013 8:00 PM

The Italian style of composition dominated music from early times. Good composers knew how to make use of such elements to enhance works and delight listeners.

Vienna Court of Ferdinand II of Hapsburg

October 26, 2013 8:00 PM

The imperial court of Holy Roman Emperor Ferdinand II (r. 1619-37) looked to Italy for their composers, performers, and innovations in musical composition. Experience the drama of this new-old virtuosic music.

Christmas at St. Mary's

December 14, 2013 7:00 & 8:30 PM

Carolina Pro Musica presents a program for the entire family - medieval and Renaissance music with readings of the season and carols for all to sing.

Bob Sweeten returns to narrate. *Two performances.*



The French Court of Catherine de Medici

February 15, 2014 8:00 PM

Catherine, who married Henri II King of France, was inclined to express her creativity through festivals. She enjoyed dancing and showcased dance-dramas, with vocal music as part of these productions. Enjoy Renaissance dances and chansons.

Music in St. Petersburg during the reign of Catherine the Great

April 5, 2014 8:00 PM

From the 1750s on, the Imperial Court looked to Italy for inspiration in cultural matters. It is no surprise that St. Petersburg chapel masters also wrote "opera". Experience old St. Petersburg.



Concert venues:

St. Martin's Episcopal: 1510 E. 7th St. Charlotte 28204

St. Mary's Chapel: 1129 E. 3rd St. Charlotte 28204

The Artists

Karen Hite Jacob, *director, harpsichord, organ*

Rebecca Miller Saunders, *soprano, percussion*

Holly Wright Maurer, *viola da gamba, flauto traverso, recorder*

Edward Ferrell, *recorders, flauto traverso*

with Bob Sweeten, *narrator (December)*



See www.carolinapromusica.org for concert details and other concerts not part of our series. Purchase CDs or make donations to the Ann T. Hite Fund for Education.

Opera connections since 2006



For a number of years Carolina Pro Musica has provided early music to special dinners cooked by James Meena, General Director and principal conductor of Opera Carolina. The dinners, part of the opera's fundraising, are held in the homes of the 'buyer' who invites others to the dinner party. During appetizers, while 'the chef' is working in the kitchen, CPM offers operas arias and instrumental works by baroque composers. Handel and Telemann are featured as both were involved in opera: Handel in London with an Italian opera company; Telemann with Hamburg's Oper am Gänsemarkt, the first public opera house outside of Venice. (above: Maestro Meena pauses for a photo before CPM slips out and the dining continues)

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