

ARS MUSICA CHICAGO  
BAROQUE OUTREACH CONCERT

“Stylus Phantasticus”  
Baroque Fantasy and Invention

PROGRAM

**Heinrich Ignaz Franz Biber** (1644-1704)  
Sonata “Representativa” in A Major

**Francesco Rognoni** (1570-1626)  
Variations on “Vestiva i colli”

**Johann Heinrich Schmelzer** (c. 1620/23-1680)  
Sonata No. 4 from *Sonatae unarum fidium*

**Girolamo Frescobaldi** (1583-1643)  
Capriccio sopra “La Bassa Fiamenga”

**François Le Cocq** (fl. 1685-1729)  
Chaconne for solo guitar

**Dieterich Buxtehude** (1637-1707)  
Trio Sonata in B-flat Major, Op. 1 Nr. 4  
Vivace – Lento – Allegro/Vivace

**Tarquinio Merula** (1595-1665)  
Ciaccona Op. 12, Nr. 20

**Kiyoe Matsuura**, baroque violin  
**Laura Osterlund**, recorder  
**Anna Steinhoff**, viola da gamba  
**Brandon Acker**, baroque guitar & theorbo  
**Jason Moy**, harpsichord

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## Stylus Phantasticus: Baroque Fantasy and Invention

"The *stylus phantasticus* is especially suited to instruments. It is the most free and unrestrained method of composing, it is bound to nothing, neither to any words nor to a melodic subject, it was instituted to display genius and to teach the hidden design of harmony and the ingenious composition of harmonic phrases and fugues."

- Athanasius Kircher in *Musurgia Universalis* (1650)

### Heinrich Ignaz Franz Biber (1644-1704)

- Born in Wartenberg, Bohemia (what is now Stráž pod Ralskem, Czech Republic), Biber was one of the first violin rockstars, and had a prestigious position as Kapellmeister to the Archbishop of Salzburg.
- His virtuoso technique pushed the instrument's capabilities to new limits, using multiple stops and "scordatura" – alternative tunings – to create effects and colors not normally associated with the violin.
- His most famous works today are a set of 8 violin sonatas published in 1681, the 15 "Mystery Sonatas" for scordatura violin, and the Sonata Representativa for violin.



#### ❖ Sonata "Representativa" in A Major (1669)

Instrumentation: violin, basso continuo (viola da gamba, theorbo, harpsichord)

Duration: 9 minutes

Biber's **Sonata "Representativa"** uses the various rhythms and effects described in Athanasius Kircher's *Musurgia Universalis* to represent the sounds of animals. Listen for the chirping of the **Nightingale**, the trademark call of the **Cuckoo**, the croaking of a **Frog**, the clucking of a **Hen**, the 'cock-a-doodle-doo' of the **Rooster**, the pensive warble of a **Quail**, the meowing of a **Cat**, and finally the viola da gamba imitating the rhythms of a snare drum in the **Musketeer's March**.

### Francesco Rognoni (1570-1626)

- Rognoni was born into a musical family in Milan, and became an important composer of the late Renaissance/early Baroque period.
- He is most well known for his *Selva de varii passaggi* (1620), which gave instructions on how to sing and play expressively, and examples of how to ornament simple musical lines in fanciful ways.

#### ❖ Variations on 'Vestiva i colli' (1620)

Instrumentation: recorder, viola da gamba/cello, harpsichord

Duration: 4 minutes

Rognoni's variations are based on 'Vestiva i colli', a madrigal by the 16<sup>th</sup> century Italian composer **Giovanni da Palestrina**. Listen for the tune (Fig. 1) first in the harpsichord, then in the viola da gamba, as the recorder spins increasingly complicated ornaments over the accompaniment.

Fig. 1:



Opening tune of Palestrina's madrigal 'Vestiva i colli e le campagne intorno'

## Johann Heinrich Schmelzer (c. 1620/23-1680)

- Schmelzer was an Austrian violinist and composer; with the support of the Hapsburg monarchs, he became the first non-Italian to hold the post of *Hofkapellmeister* in the Viennese court.
- In a field dominated by Italians, Schmelzer's **Sonatae unarum fidium** were the first violin sonatas ever published by a German-speaking composer, and came to influence an entire generation of violinists, including his student **Heinrich Ignaz Franz Biber**.



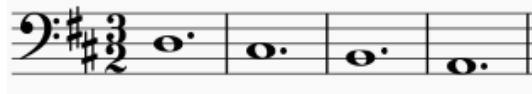
### ❖ Sonata No. 4 from *Sonatae unarum fidium* (1664)

Instrumentation: violin, basso continuo

Duration: 10 minutes

Schmelzer bases this entire sonata on a **ground bass** - a pattern in the bass line that continually repeats. Ground basses can be several measures long, like Pachelbel's Canon in D, or as with this sonata, four simple notes: D, C#, B, A (Fig. 2) played over and over again by the basso continuo:

Fig. 2



## Girolamo Frescobaldi (1583-1643)

- Frescobaldi was another important late Renaissance/early Baroque composer, and one of the famous keyboard players in his lifetime.
- He wrote many volumes of solo keyboard pieces for organ and harpsichord, including works in an improvisatory (fantasies, toccatas, capriccios) and strict style (canzonas, ricercars).

### ❖ Capriccio sopra "La Bassa Fiamenga" (1624)

Instrumentation: harpsichord

Duration: 5 minutes

Frescobaldi's capriccio is inspired by the 'Tedesca', a popular Renaissance dance tune sometimes called "La Bassa Fiamenga", or "The Flemish Bass" (Fig. 3). He takes this melody and transforms it into a masterpiece of keyboard polyphony, thus elevating a 'pop tune' to 'High Art' music.

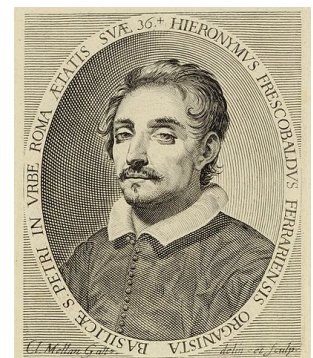


Fig. 3



Opening bars of the 'Tedescha' from Giorgio Mainerio's "Il Primo Libro de Balli" (1578)

### François Le Cocq (fl. 1685-1729)

- We know almost nothing about this Flemish guitarist and composer, except that he was a member of the Chapel Royal in Brussels who retired in 1729.

#### ❖ Chaconne from “Recueil des pieces de guitarre” (1729)

Instrumentation: baroque guitar

Duration: 3 minutes

Like Schmelzer’s Violin Sonata, the **Chaconne** is a type of **ground bass** or **ostinato**. Instead of the same notes, this chaconne repeats a pattern of harmonies or chords throughout the piece while showcasing common techniques of virtuoso baroque guitar playing, including **rasgueado** (strumming chords) and **punteado** (plucking melodies).

### Dieterich Buxtehude (1637-1707)

- Buxtehude was one of the most important and influential North German composers and keyboard players, and a champion of the “Stylus Phantasticus” in Germany.
- He held one of the most prestigious positions as organist of St. Mary’s Church in Lübeck, and J.S Bach and Handel were among the young musicians that made pilgrimages to hear and study with him.



#### ❖ Trio Sonata in B-flat Major, Op. 1 Nr. 4

Instrumentation: violin, viola da gamba, basso continuo

Duration: 8 minutes

A **trio sonata** was a popular Baroque genre featuring two melody instruments accompanied by the basso continuo, which could be one or more instruments. Buxtehude opens this trio sonata with a **chaconne, which features the same fifteen notes** (Fig. 4) in the basso continuo the whole time.

Fig 4.



### Tarquinio Merula (1595-1665)

- Merula was a prolific composer of both sacred and secular instrumental and vocal works in the early Italian Baroque period.
- He was born in Busseto and studied the organ in Cremona before taking a job in Warsaw at the court of Sigismund III Vasa, making him more widely-traveled than many musicians of his time.

#### ❖ Ciaccona, Op. 12 Nr. 20 (1637)

Instrumentation: recorder, violin, basso continuo

Duration: 4 minutes

Like Buxtehude’s trio sonata, Merula’s catchy Ciaccona is based on a repeating cycle of eight notes (Fig. 5) taken from a raucous 16<sup>th</sup> century folk dance with origins in South America.

Fig. 5

