



Camerata
Milwaukee



An Evening With
Bach, Telemann & Vivaldi

02 Mar 2024

Antonio Vivaldi (1678 – 1741)

- * Sinfonia "Al Santo Sepolcro" in B minor, RV 169 — Adagio molto - Allegro ma poco
- * Sonata "Al Santo Sepolcro" in E flat Major, RV 130 — Largo molto - Allegro ma poco

Jean-Marie Leclair (1697 – 1764)

- * Sonata for 2 Violins in E minor Op. 3, No. 5 — Allegro ma poco - Andante - Presto

Georg Philipp Telemann (1681 – 1767)

- * Concerto à 4 in G Major, TWV 43:G1

Grave - Allegro - Grave - Allegro - Largo - Presto - Largo - Allegro

~~ *Short Intermission* ~~

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685 – 1750)

- * Aria "Meine Seele, sei vergnügt", from BWV 204

Antonio Vivaldi (1678 – 1741)

- * Concerto for Strings in F minor, RV 143 — Allegro - Adagio - Allegro assai
- * Concerto for Strings in D minor, RV 128 — Allegro non molto - Largo - Allegro non troppo

Program Notes

Appropriate for the Season of Lent in which we find ourselves, and in anticipation of Easter Sunday, our concert this evening opens with two works by Italian composer Antonio Vivaldi based on the theme of "At the sacred tomb of Christ". In the story of the crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth found in Luke 23 and 24, Christ is laid in a tomb carved from rock at the end of Friday evening, but the onset of the Sabbath prevented the women who had prepared burial spices and ointments from administering them to his body. On Sunday morning, they returned to the tomb to pay their respects, only to find the tomb empty. The Christian faith maintains that Jesus was resurrected, and that this is cause for joy and hope. The emotional elements of this story can be heard portrayed in both of Vivaldi's pieces.

The Sinfonia "Al Santo Sepolcro" opens with slow, dissonant and downward melodic lines than can be interpreted as sad and longing. This first movement is in the key of B minor, which in the Baroque concept of the Doctrine of the Affections signified patience, the calm awaiting of one's fate, or of submission to divine dispensation.

The score also uses double sharps, which look like an “x” or cross. The second movement, a fugue in the same key, uses two subjects—one descending and one ascending—that “cross” each other and also allude to the Apostle’s Creed which states that Jesus “descended into hell; on the third day He arose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven, sits at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty”.

Similar imagery and musical devices are employed for the Sonata “Al Santo Sepolcro”, written in the key of Eb Major, which was associated with feelings of love, devotion, or intimate conversations with God. A slow opening movement is followed by a faster, more vigorous fugue filled with trilling birdsong and uplifting forward motion, likely in celebration of the Resurrection.

Jean-Marie Leclair (confusingly, the older of two musician brothers with the same name), is often viewed as one of the founders of the French school of violin playing. We will hear the fifth sonata for two violins from his Op. 3, which was engraved and published by his wife, Louise Roussel.

In 1737, German composer Georg Philipp Telemann made good on a long-standing invitation from four respected French musicians to travel to Paris. He stayed there for eight months, and wrote two sets of quartets for flexible instrumentation for the group of them to play together. We will hear a “concerto” in G Major from the first set.

Taken from one of J.S. Bach’s few cantatas for solo soprano, the aria “Meine Seele sei vergnügt“ reflects on the joys of being content within oneself: at peace with God and man. Listen for simple, tuneful melodies and understated, calm accompaniment in a pastoral, almost lullaby, meter of 12/8.

We conclude with two concertos for strings by Vivaldi, known by their work index numbers RV 143 and RV 128. These were most probably written for the highly trained female musicians of the *Ospedale della Pietà* orphanage and school for girls. Here Vivaldi was first master of violin studies, then choir master and impresario, and finally director of music – a role that required composing several new concertos a month in addition to his administrative, conducting, and teaching duties.

Marianne Kordas is the Director of the Music Materials Center for the James White Library at Andrews University in Berrien Springs, MI. She holds a Bachelor of Music in violin from that institution, as well as masters degrees in library science and musicology from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. When she isn't listening to as eclectic a range of music as possible, she enjoys gardening, reading random blogs online, and watching enigmatic French movies. This is her tenth year happily writing program notes for Camerata Milwaukee.

Special thanks to St. Robert Parish
for providing us with a wonderful venue
for tonight's concert



Camerata Milwaukee's crew tonight:

Soprano: Ruth Brown

Violins: Tony Perez, Paul Sekulski

Viola: JoAnn Haasler

Cellos: Kristian Ring, Erik Haasler

Harpsichord: Floralba Vivas



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