

Lecture-Recital: Women in Early Music

Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music

25 January 2023, 5pm

Steven Baxter Recital Studio

Dr. Anastasia Chin, harpsichord and fortepiano

Programme

Harpsichord

Prélude *non mesuré* in D minor from *Pièces de clavecin* (1687) and *Élisabeth-Claude Jacquet de la Guerre* (1665–1729)

Suite in D minor from *Pièces de clavecin qui peuvent se jouer sur le violon* (1707) (selected movements)

Allemande *La Flamande* and Double

Courante

Sarabande

Rigaudon I and II

From *Pièces de clavecin* (1689):

Les Sourdines d'Armide (after Jean-Baptiste Lully)

Passacaille d'Armide (after Jean-Baptiste Lully)

Jean-Henri d'Anglebert
(1629–1691)

Fortepiano

Keyboard Sonata in A major (c. 1765)

Allegro

Adagio

Tempo di Minuetto

Marianna Martines
(1744–1812)

Fantasia in F-sharp minor, Wq. 67

Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach
(1714–1788)

Six Variations on a Theme from Mozart's *The Magic Flute* ("Der Vogelfänger bin ich ja")

Josepha Auernhammer
(1758–1820)

Synopsis

This lecture-recital explores the role of women as composers, patrons, muses, dedicatees and performers in pre-1820 keyboard music. Élisabeth-Claude Jacquet de la Guerre, Princess Anna Amalia of Prussia, Marianna Martines and Josepha Auernhammer all played significant roles in the musical culture of their times. Torquato Tasso's Armida, a sorceress in the epic poem *Gerusalemme liberata* (1581), is perhaps one of the most famous of all literary muses throughout western music history. From the dance-inspired French Baroque clavecin music of the 17th century to the limpid elegance of 18th century Viennese fortepiano music, these female trailblazers (and a supernatural muse) left their mark.

Élisabeth-Claude Jacquet de la Guerre is perhaps the most iconic female keyboard composer of the 17th century. A child prodigy, court musician, composer and performer, she was a contemporary of François Couperin. Her style combined the elegance of the French clavecin school with an Italian flair. Sorceress Armida was the title character of several operas and ballets composed throughout western music history. Jean-Henri d'Anglebert made solo keyboard transcriptions of two pieces from Jean-Baptiste Lully's opera *Armide*. Characterised by rich, intricate and complex ornamentation (*graces* in French) and a pervasive sense of noble nonchalance and poise, these *Pièces de clavecin* were written to showcase the lush sound of the French harpsichord and the opulence of the French court where Lully worked.

Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach was court composer to Princess Anna Amalia of Prussia, who was an avid musician and music collector. Referring to the free fantasia as being "exceptionally well-suited [to] stir [and] still the passions," C.P.E. Bach often used his keyboard fantasias to express his most private feelings. Unlike W.A. Mozart's neatly composed fantasias, C.P.E. Bach's solo keyboard fantasias largely lack meter, with episodic, improvisatory passagework frequently alternating with lyrical sections and recitative-like declamations. Marianna Martines, neighbour of Pietro Metastasio, Nicola Porpora, and Joseph Haydn, was a talented keyboardist, singer, and composer. In later life, Marianna and her sister hosted musical soirées at their home, where Mozart and Haydn were frequent guests. Martines's *galant* keyboard sonatas bear the influences of C.P.E. Bach's and Haydn's early sonatas. Finally, Josepha Auernhammer was Mozart's student who became a concert pianist and teacher in Vienna. She performed frequently with Mozart, and was the dedicatee of several of Mozart's violin sonatas. Auernhammer's witty variations on Papageno's aria from *The Magic Flute*, K. 620 are virtuosic, proving her reputation as an admired performer of her time.

I would like to dedicate this recital to the YST Conservatory (my alma mater), as well as to Elisabeth Wright, my mentor and dear friend for the past 11 years, who is currently recording several new CDs of Latin American Baroque music in Colombia. I am eternally grateful to both for their indelible roles in making me the person and artist that I am today.

Bio

Top prize winner (*ex aequo*) of the 2021 Mae and Irving Jurow International Harpsichord Competition, and one of three finalists in the 2018 Berkeley Festival International Early Piano Competition, harpsichordist and fortepianist Anastasia Chin holds a Doctor of Music in Early Music (Keyboard) from the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music, where she studied with eminent harpsichordist and fortepianist Elisabeth Wright. Her playing has been described as naturally musical, sensitive, nuanced, elegant and eloquent, and she is in frequent demand as soloist and collaborator on harpsichord, fortepiano and continuo organ. She was a recipient of the Artistic Excellence Award at Indiana University, and was also an Associate Instructor in the Historical Performance Institute.

Anastasia is a regular performer in the Bloomington Early Music Festival (2018–present) and Bloomington Bach Cantata Project (2015–present), as well as a member of Las Aves, an ensemble specialising in early Baroque chamber music. She has also performed at venues such as Newfields (Indianapolis Museum of Art) and the Catskill Mountain Foundation Piano Performance Museum at the Doctorow Center for the Arts in Hunter, NY. The Bloomington Herald Times wrote of her Mozart concerto debut with the Indiana University Classical Orchestra, “Her Mozart honored Mozart. Technically, she offered the listener pristine clarity and precision in execution... Her interpretation featured stylistic elegance but also, in welcome abundance, the lyricism and caprice that pervade the score.” (Peter Jacobi, February 7, 2012)

Anastasia earned her Bachelor of Music in Piano Performance (Honours) from the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music, where she studied with renowned pianist Albert Tiu. Her full scholarship for undergraduate studies was sponsored by the Singapore National Arts Council.

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