Orchestra Seattle and the Seattle Chamber Singers
George Shangrow, music director
present

Music from the High Baroque Courts

Vivaldi: Chamber Concerto, RV 107
Bach: Violin Sontata, BWV 1017
Telemann: Suite in Bb from Tafelmusik
Handel: Sinfonia from Belshazzar
Bach: Violin Concerto, BWV 1041
Handel: Concerto Grosso, Op. 6, No. 11

featuring
Fritz Klein and Deb Kirkland, violins
Orchestra Seattle
George Shangrow, conductor and harpsichord

Sunday, March 8, 1998 3:00 PM
Shorecrest Performing Arts Center

Orchestra Seattle
Harpischord
George Shangrow
Viola
Beatrice Dolf
Saundra Humphrey
principal
Jim Lurie
Cello
Julie Reed
principal
Matthew Wyant
Bass
Jo Hansen
Flute
Kirsten James-McNamara
Oboe
Sarah Balian
principal
Jeff Churchill
Bassoon
Jeff Eldridge

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Upcoming Performances
Handel: Brockes Passion
April 10, 7:30 PM, University Christian Church

Orchestra Winds: Grainger & Hindemith
Date, time and location to be announced

Seattle Young Artists Music Festival
May 3, 3:00 PM, Nathan Eckstein Middle School

Handel: Theodora
June 7, 7:00 PM, University Christian Church

OS * SCS
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Acknowledgements

O S ✧ S C S gratefully acknowledges the support of the Washington State Arts Commission, the King County Arts Commission, the Seattle Arts Commission, Corporate Council for the Arts, Seafirst Bank, The Boeing Company, Microsoft Corporation, Davis Wright Tremaine LLP, and Classic KING-FM. Special thanks to: David Calhoun, for loan of the harpsichord; Jeff Cohon for tuning it; Rick Lyman for recording the concert; and all of our wonderful volunteers.

Program Notes

The sheer number of concertos Vivaldi produced during his lifetime is staggering: well over 500, including 230 for the violin! The majority of these were roughly 350 were cast for a solo instrument and orchestra, but Vivaldi also composed nearly 60 string concertos (without soloist), about 40 double concertos, and at least 30 ensemble concertos employing three or more soloists. Nearly all of these works are arranged in a fast-slow-fast pattern. The outer movements were typically in ritornello form — in which a refrain for full orchestra is alternated with virtuoso passages featuring the solo instrument(s) — while the slow movement was often a repeated binary form. In addition to the hundreds of concertos with orchestral accompaniment, Vivaldi also wrote about two dozen “chamber concertos” in which the soloists unite to play the tutti ritornello passages. Among these, at least three were composed for the combination of flute, oboe, violin and bassoon.

Bach’s compositions for solo violin are at the core of the instrument’s repertoire. Most familiar are the unaccompanied sonatas and partitas, as well as the two solo concertos (in a minor and B major) and the double concerto in D minor, but Bach also wrote a series of six sonatas for violin and keyboard. Composed between 1728 and 1722, they are in typical Baroque sonata form, with four movements in a slow-fast-slow-fast pattern: the siciliano of the c minor sonata foreshadows the famous violin solo in the St. Matthew Passion.

While the a minor violin concerto follows the same general pattern as those of Vivaldi, Bach was less interested in virtuoso passagework for the solo instrument than in making a sublime musical statement. Composed around the same time as the sonatas (while Bach was employed at Anhalt-Cöthen) the piece was later reworked as a keyboard concerto. Most striking is the somber (despite its major key) slow movement, with a semi-ostinato bass figure centered around a single repeated note.

Between 1725 and 1740, Telemann published 43 volumes of his music under his own imprint; an entire cycle of 72 sacred cantatas constituted a single publication in this series, as did the three-part Tafelmusik, consisting of 18 separate compositions. A term in use since the 16th century, Tafelmusik denoted music specially written for performances at feasts; in the 18th century the form gave way to the divertimento and the serenade. Telemann composed three “productions” of Tafelmusik, each consisting of an overture and suite, a quartet, a concerto, a trio sonata, a solo sonata and a “conclusion”.

One of the subscribers to Telemann’s Tafelmusik was none other than Handel, who busied himself during the summer of 1774 writing the oratorio Hercules (given its Seattle premiere by O S ✧ S C S last month), completing it on August 21. He rested but a single day before beginning another oratorio, Belshazzar, completing that on October 23. Writing at such a quick pace often compelled Handel to recycle material, not only his own (as did Vivaldi and Bach), but also the music of other composers. While the overture to Hercules shows stylistic similarities to the first movement of Telemann’s Bb Tafelmusik suite, the second-act sinfonia from Belshazzar (depicting messengers scurrying off to summon the wise men) bears more than a passing resemblance to the fourth movement.

Together with Bach’s Brandenburg Concerti, the Concerti Grossi, Op. 6, of Handel represent the peak of the Baroque concerto form. Written in a single burst of energy during October of 1739, the twelve concertos — each featuring two solo violins and cello contrasted against the full ensemble — were often performed between acts of the composer’s oratorios. One of the largest in scope of the twelve, the A major concerto is yet another example of Handel’s penchant for recycling his own music, as it is based in part on earlier organ concertos.

Program

Chamber Concerto in g minor, RV 107

Antonio Vivaldi

(1678-1741)

Allegro

Largo

Allegro

Sarah Baian, oboe

Kirsten James-McNamara, flute

Fritz Klein, violin

Jeff Eldridge, bassoon

Julie Reed, cello

George Shangrow, harpsichord

Sonata No. 4 for Violin in c minor, BWV 1017

Johann Sebastian Bach

(1685-1750)

Siciliano (Largo)

Adagio

Allegro

Fritz Klein, violin

George Shangrow, harpsichord

Suites in Bb from Tafelmusik III

Georg Philipp Telemann

(1681-1767)

Ouverture

Flaterie

Bergierie

Allegresse

Postillions

Leif-Ivar Pedersen and Deb Kirkland, violins

Julie Reed, cello

INTERMISSION

Sinfonia from Belshazzar

Georg Frideric Handel

(1685-1759)

Concerto for Violin in a minor, BWV 1041

Johann Sebastian Bach

(1685-1750)

[Allegro]

Andante

Allegro Assai

Deb Kirkland, violin

Concerto Grosso in A major, Op. 6, No. 11

Georg Frideric Handel

(1685-1759)

Andante larghetto, e staccato

Allegro - Largo, e staccato

Andante

Allegro

Deb Kirkland and Leif-Ivar Pedersen, violins

Matthew Wyant, cello
OS/SCS
Orchestra Seattle ∙ Seattle Chamber Singers
George Shangrow, Conductor and Music Director
29th Season

PROGRAM

Chamber Concerto in g minor, RV 107
   Allegro
   Largo
   Allegro
   Sarah Balan, oboe
   Frits Klein, violin
   Julie Reed, cello
   Kirsten James-McNamara, flute
   Jeff Eldridge, bassoon
   George Shangrow, harpsichord

Sonata No. 4 for Violin in c minor, BWV 1017
   Siciliano (Largo)
   Allegro
   Adagio
   Allegro
   Fritz Klein, violin
   George Shangrow, harpsichord

Suite in Bb from Tafelmusik III
   Ouverture
   Fraterie
   Bergere
   Allegreasse
   Postillon
   Compleet
   Leif-Ivar Pedersen and Deb Kirkland, violins
   Julie Reed, cello

INTERMISSION

Sinfonia from Belshazzar

Concerto for Violin in a minor, BWV 1041
   [Allegro]
   Andante
   Allegro Assai
   Deb Kirkland, violin

Concerto Grosso in A major, Op. 6, No. 11
   Andante larghetto, e staccato
   Allegro – Largo, e staccato
   Andante
   Allegro
   Deb Kirkland and Leif-Ivar Pedersen, violins
   Matthew Wyant, cello

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George Shangrow

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Deb Kirkland
Fritz Klein
Gregor Nitsche
Susan Dunn Ovens
Leif-Ivar Pedersen
Janet Showalter

Viola
Beatrice Dolf
Saundra Humphrey
principal

Cello
Julie Reed
principal
Matthew Wyant

Bass
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