Fretwork
Presents “Music from the Age of Michelangelo”

Wednesday, October 23, 2019
Welcome to the Cleveland Museum of Art

The 2019–20 concert series comprises a stunning array of artists from around the world and close to home, ranging from traditions far and wide to ideas old and new. In addition to performances by the Zohn Collective with La Coperacha puppet company from Mexico and by Fretwork, we present traditional Iraqi maqams by Hamid Al-Saadi, contemporary African music by Fatoumata Diawara, and classical Indian music by Zakir Hussain. The museum’s commissioning series continues our partnership with the Cleveland Foundation’s Creative Fusion program, this year presenting world premieres by Aleksandra Vrebalov (Serbia) and Luciano Chessa (Sardinia). Organists Pierre Queval and Nicole Keller perform on the McMyler Memorial Organ in Gartner Auditorium, Sarah Davachi and FretX (duo Mak Grgic and Dan Lippel) perform at Transformer Station, and the spotlight turns to local artists in our monthly series featuring young artists from the Cleveland Institute of Music and the joint program with Case Western Reserve University’s early and baroque music programs.

In the Galleries

Michelangelo: Mind of the Master
Through January 5
Ámà: The Gathering Place
Through December 1
Tiffany in Bloom: Stained Glass Lamps of Louis Comfort Tiffany
Through June 14

Please turn off all electronic devices before entering the performance hall.

Photography and audio/video recording in the performance hall are prohibited.

Fretwork

Asako Morikawa, Sam Stadlen, Emily Ashton, Joanna Levine, and Richard Boothby, viols

Wednesday, October 23, 2019, 7:30 p.m.
Gartner Auditorium, the Cleveland Museum of Art

PROGRAM

Music from the Age of Michelangelo

Marbriano de Orto Ave Maria
Anon Numquam fue pena major
Anon Fortuna desperata
Anon Fortuna desperata
Johannes de Piñarol Fortuna desperata
Firminus Caron Helas que poura devenir
Anon La Spagna
Alexander Agricola Tandernaken
Erasmus Lapicida Tandernaken
Josquin des Prez Mille regrets
La Bernadina
Baises Moy
Ave Maria

— Intermission —

Hayne van Ghizeghem De tous bien playne
Agricola De tous bien playne
Josquin De tous bien playne
Agricola Fors seulement
Jacob Obrecht Fors seulement
Johannes Ghiselin Fors seulement
Ghiselin Favus distillans
Heinrich Isaac
Jay pris amours
Tartara
La mi la sol
La Morra
O decus ecclesiae

PROGRAM NOTES

Music from the Age of Michelangelo

Michelangelo lived at a time and place where music was developing at a pace similar to that of the visual arts. He was a truly renaissance man, excelling in the arts of painting, sculpture, architecture, and poetry; yet music was curiously lacking from his artistic makeup, unlike his great contemporary, Leonardo da Vinci, who played the lira da braccio, sang, and composed music.

However, Michelangelo would have been very aware of the massive changes in musician his lifetime, and nothing was more new and astonishing than the printing of music. Though there had been some attempts at this in Germany in the wake of Gutenberg’s technological breakthrough, it was one man in Venice who mastered the art. Ottaviano Petrucci published the *Harmonice Musices Odhecaton*, or One Hundred Harmonic Pieces of Music (in fact, there are only 97) in 1501 and achieved results that were ahead of their time by over a century.

This outstanding book contained works that were by all the major composers of the time, mostly vocal pieces, but without text. They were in anything from three to six parts and offered a smorgasbord of contemporary music.

Central to this concept was the emerging trend for homogeneous ensembles, and there was nothing more fashionable in 1501 than the newly-developed violas da gamba. They had arrived in Rome barely a decade earlier with the newly installed Valencian Pope Alexander VI, otherwise known as Rodrigo Borgia. The Spanish had developed a style of playing the *vihuela*, an ancestor of the guitar, with a bow and the Italians had improved the concept by adding a bridge, so that single strings could be played, and made what they could of this strange name, turning *vihuela* into *viola*. This name became synonymous with all string instruments: so the instrument descended from the medieval *Lyra* became known as the little viola, or, in Italian *violino* and the whole family as the *violas da braccio* or viols of the arm (even the big ones, played between the legs) and the ones you see before you now were the *violas da gamba* or viols of the leg, and indeed all sizes were and are played between the legs.

The first piece in the Odhecaton is the first piece we play tonight—de Orto’s *Ave Maria*. He was, like almost all the composers then working in Italy, and represented in the Odhecaton, Franco-Flemish in origin. De Orto is Latin for Dujardin, and although born in Tournai around the same time that Michelangelo was born, he spent the most important part of his life singing in the papal chapel, the same chapel that Michelangelo was to decorate some decades later. He worked there with the most famous musician of the day, Josquin des Prez, another Franco-Flemish composer drawn south by the wealth and musical possibilities in Italy.

We see Josquin in Italy first in Milan, at the court of the Dukes of Sforza in the 1480s, but in 1489 he joined the papal chapel, already one of the most highly paid and famous musicians. Recently the Sistine Chapel has been restored and it has revealed a carving in the wall “Josquinj.” His reputation was such that when Ercole d’Este was looking for a composer for his court in Ferrara, one of his agents wrote:

*My Lord, I believe that there is neither lord nor king who will now have a better chapel than yours if Your Lordship sends for Josquin … and by having Josquin in our chapel I want to place a crown upon this chapel of ours.*

Some two weeks later, on September 2, an opposing view arrived from another of Ercole’s agents, Gian de Artiganova, who recommended Henricus Isaac:

*To me [Isaac] seems well suited to serve Your Lordship, more so than Josquin, because he is more good-natured and...*
ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Fretwork

This year Fretwork celebrates 30 years of performing music old and new, and will look forward to a challenging and exciting future as the world’s leading consort of viols.

In these last two and a half decades, they have explored the core repertory of great English consort music, from Taverner to Purcell, and made classic recordings against which others are judged. Their series of discs for Virgin Classics included CDs devoted to William Lawes, Henry Purcell, William Byrd, Matthew Locke, John Dowland and Orlando Gibbons; while their more recent work for Harmonia Mundi USA has produced two discs of J. S. Bach—Art of Fugue and Alio Modo—which have been exuberantly praised; and discs of the earliest instrumental music (Petrucci); Sir John Tavener’s The Hidden Face; Thomas Tomkins; Alexander Agricola and Fabrice Fitch; Ludwig Senfl with Charles Daniels and two collaborations with the choir of Magdalen College, Oxford. Their recording of concert songs by William Byrd with Emma Kirkby has received particular praise.

In addition to this, Fretwork has become known as a pioneer of contemporary music for viols, having commissioned over 40 new works. The list of composers is like the roll call of the most prominent writers of our time: George Benjamin, Michael Nyman, Sir John Tavener, Gavin Bryars, Elvis Costello, Alexander Goehr, John Woolrich, Orlando Gough, Fabrice Fitch, Peter Sculthorpe, Sally Beamish, Tan Dun, Barry Guy, Andrew Keeling, Thea Musgrave, Simon Bainbridge, Poul Ruders, John Joubert and Duncan Druce.

The group now frequently presents programs consisting entirely of contemporary music, though most audiences find that the creative tension of juxtaposing old and new leads to a thrilling experience.

Isaac was broadly contemporary with both Josquin and Michelangelo, and was also born in northern Europe, more towards the Netherlands than France. His journey down to Italy took him in 1485 to Florence, birthplace of Michelangelo, to work for the Medici and Lorenzo “il Magnifico” in particular. He was employed, unusually, to compose secular music for Lorenzo, setting texts by his patron himself and his favorite poet, Angelo Poliziano. He may also have taught members of the family; but by the middle of the 1490s the Medici were banished from a Florence under the influence of the arch religious extremist, Savonarola.

While the Medici were out of Florence, Isaac worked for the Emperor Maximillian, and traveled widely in Germanic lands, but with the restoration of Medici power in Florence in 1512, he was back and stayed there until his death in 1517.

One notable feature of the Odhecaton, is the preponderance of well-known songs: De tous bien playne, Fors seulement, Jay iris amours, Fortuna desperata were all immensely popular at the time, and various composers tried their hand at weaving something new and interesting around it. Josquin stands out—of course—with his brilliant setting of De tous bien playne, in which the two lower parts play an exact canon half a beat apart—it’s hard to credit his compositional virtuosity.

We end with another compositional marvel—Isaac’s O decus ecclesiae, in which the tenor part plays a cantus firmus, or a fixed tune. In this case it’s called a hexachord, or a scale of six notes. But it’s not a straightforward scale: it goes like this—one note, one note rest; two notes, two notes rest, etc. and so on, up and down the scale. And they do it again, but this time twice as fast!

Richard Boothby
June 2019
Asako Morikawa

Asako was born in Takamatsu, Japan. She started playing viola da gamba when she was 13 years old, but studied violin initially in the Toho Gakuen Music High School in Tokyo. She then continued her studies at the Toho Gakuen School of Music as a student of viola da gamba with Tetsuya Nakano.

In 1988 she moved to Holland to further her studies with Wieland Kuijken at the Royal Conservatorium in The Hague where she received her Soloists Diploma in 1993 and then studied baroque violin with Thomas Albert at the Hochschule für Künste Bremen. As a baroque violinist she has played with Bremen Baroque Orchestra, Musicalische Campagney, and Musica Fiata.

Since 1996 she has lived in London and is in demand as a viola da gamba soloist and continuo player throughout the United States, Canada, Europe, Japan and Australia, having played with Charivari Agréable, the English Concert, the King’s Consort, Ton Koopman, and Phantasm. She has taught at summer courses in Poland, Australia, Japan, and Austria. In 2004 she has become a member of Fretwork and has since performed worldwide, broadcasting and making recordings.

Joanna Levine

Joanna Levine studied cello and viola da gamba at the Guildhall School of Music, studying with Raphael Wallfisch, Anthony Pleeth, and Sarah Cunningham. She has many years of experience giving concerts in Britain and Europe and making recordings, on the cello, baroque cello, and viol. Highlights include playing at the Proms, playing at international Early Music festivals, and playing on pop and television soundtracks. She is a founder member of Concordia, with whom she has made recordings for Hyperion, Chandos, Metronome, Signum, and Real World Records, as well as for BBC. She has played in many productions at the Globe Theatre, including Farinelli and the King, which transferred to the West End, and All the Angels, a play about Handel’s Messiah. She enjoys the creative processes involved and the chance to work with composers, directors, and actors such as Mark Rylance and Gemma Arterton. She also enjoys playing the gamba solos in the Bach Passions, prompting the Times critic to write “For the power of sheer non-verbal expression Joanna Levine’s viola da gamba solo took some beating.”

Sam Stadlen

Originally a baroque cellist, Sam took up the viola da gamba under the tutelage of Susanna Pell while reading for his Master’s degree in music at the University of York. He has also benefited from master classes and tuition from players such as Ibrahim Aziz, Richard Boothby, Christophe Coin, Alison Crum, Wieland Kuijken, Jonathan Manson, and Alison McGillivray. Sam has been a member of Fretwork since 2015 and appears regularly as a continuo player and soloist on viol and cello with a number of early music ensembles with whom he performs both early repertoire and modern compositions.

In addition to his performing work, Sam is an associate lecturer at the University of York and has lectured at the Royal Academy of Music in London. He has a PhD on the influences of poetry and declamation on the composition and performance of the pièces de viole in late-seventeenth- and early-eighteenth-century France. He is currently based in London and York.

Emily Ashton

Emily Ashton studied music at Clare College, Cambridge, and baroque cello and viola da gamba with Jonathan Manson at the Royal Academy of Music. Since then she has played with many of the country’s leading period instrument ensembles, including the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, Academy of Ancient Music, Dunedin Consort, Orchestra of the Sixteen, and Gabrieli Consort.

Emily is a member of the viol consort Chelys, who recently released their debut recording of Ayres and Divisions by Christopher Simpson. She has also performed around Europe and recorded discs of Lawes, Tomkins, and Ward with Phantasm. Emily has given solo recitals at the Spitalfields Festival and Cotswolds Early Music Festival, and with various chamber groups has performed at venues including the Wigmore Hall, Handel House, and St Martin-in-the-Fields.
Richard Boothby
After studying with Nikolaus Harnoncourt in Salzburg, he founded the Purcell Quartet in 1984 and was a founder member of Fretwork in 1985. Since then his career has been bound up with these two groups with whom he records and tours; and through whom he plays the broadest range of repertory for the instrument from the earliest music to the latest contemporary music commissioned for viols.

With the Purcell Quartet he has recorded nearly 50 albums with them for Hyperion and Chandos. He tours Europe, Japan, and the United States regularly with both ensembles. In 1998 he directed performances of Monteverdi’s L’Incoronazione di Poppea with the Purcell Quartet; and in 2001 directed them in a fully-staged production of L’Orfeo, with Mark Padmore in the title role.

As a soloist, he has given many recitals of the rich solo repertory, and in 1994 he recorded the three Bach sonatas for viola da gamba and harpsichord with Shalev Ad-EI for Chandos Records, to critical acclaim. He has given many recitals of the great suites by Antoine Forqueray, with whose music he feels a special affinity. He is professor of viola da gamba at the Royal College in London.

UPCOMING PERFORMANCE

Pierre Queval
Sun/Nov 3, 2:00, Gartner Auditorium. Organist

Pierre Queval (b. 1988, France) studied at the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique et de Danse de Paris under Olivier Latry, and was awarded degrees in organ-performance and improvisation. He has performed in many of the great churches of France, and is the head organist of the great Cavaillé-Coll / Haerpfer-Ermann organ of the Saint-Ignace Church in Paris since November 2014. He offers a solo organ recital on the McMyler Memorial Organ featuring works by Franck, Widor, Alain, Duruflé, and Vierne, as well as an improvisation. Free, no ticket required.
DEPARTMENT OF
PERFORMING ARTS, MUSIC,
AND FILM
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We invite you to join the Musart Society, the museum's affiliate group for music, and engage more deeply with programs like this one. For more information, visit cma.org/musart.

TICKETS 1–888–CMA–0033 cma.org/performingarts