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March 15, 2015 Meeting: Early 17th Century Italy

DATE: Sunday, March 15, 2015
TIME: 2:00 to 4:30 p.m.
PLACE: Unity Church of Denver,
3021 South University Blvd., Denver
CONDUCTOR: Peter Schimpf

Dr. Peter Schimpf must be the busiest musician in Denver. Besides his activities as a performer, scholar and teacher, he is chairman of the very large and diverse Music Department at Metropolitan State University.

Nevertheless he has agreed not only to lead our March meeting, but also to accompany our playing on his theorbo (a kind of lute inflated to orchestral proportions). It will be memorable.

The program he has prepared for us focuses on a time & place in which music was, in a sense, being reinvented from the ground up. Here's how he describes it:

The early 17th Century witnessed a substantial growth in both quality and quantity of purely instrumental music. In Italy in particular, the development of basso continuo stimulated a new kind of creativity. The improvised, harmonically elaborated bass line freed the upper voices from their harmonic obligations, and composers experimented with a variety of textures (quartets, trios, duos, solos) above the bass. Collections of instrumental music from Giovanni Gabrieli, Salamone Rossi, Giovanni Girolamo Kapsberger, and others exemplify a variety of new approaches to instrumental composition over a continuous bass. For this session, I'll provide the basso continuo on the theorbo (or chitarrone as it was called at the time) while we read through selections from these early collections.

Our Leader for This Meeting

Peter Schimpf is an Associate Professor and Chair of the Department of Music at Metropolitan State University of Denver. He teaches courses in music history, world music, and the history of Rock and Roll. In addition, Peter is the founder and director of the Metro State Early Music Ensemble. He earned a Ph.D. in musicology from Indiana University, and has a BM in performance from California State University of Sacramento where he studied guitar and lute with Dr. Richard Savino. He actively performs on the lute and theorbo, performing with

the Baroque Chamber Orchestra of Colorado, Seicento Baroque Ensemble, and the Denver Early Music Consort.

President's Message

As I write this, it seems like winter has finally come to the Front Range. Hopefully with March we will start to see some of our beautiful sunny days and a return of warmer days. March is Play the Recorder Month. Will you be doing anything special? Thanks to Elaine Granata, local groups will once again be performing for our annual Recorder Faire at the Tattered Cover bookstore on Colfax on March 22. The Renaissance Band will open the program as usual and any and all are invited to be a part of the Band. Rehearsal is Saturday, March 21st at 12:30. Ensembles are invited to reserve their 15 minute slot by contacting, Elaine Granata elainegrinata@msn.com or (303) 321-2735 to sign up and for information. This is a wonderful Denver Chapter tradition. I hope you will be able to make it.

Don't forget to register for Rocky XI, our biennial workshop in Estes Park. Rocky will be held May 15-17 this year. We have a great faculty lineup, with Anne Timberlake, Mark Davenport, and Jennifer Carpenter. If you haven't been to Rocky before, it is a great opportunity to play, play, play! the recorder; to learn about technique and performance from experts; to make friends or get reacquainted with old friends; and to enjoy the beauty of Estes Park. Denver Chapter members get a discount on their registration fee. Registration materials are available :

<http://www.denverrecordersociety.org/rockyxinew.htm>.

Jon Casbon
...so much music, so little time!

Group Corner

News of the activities and postings from area musical groups having recorder players. Check the chapter website for a listing of all groups that we know of, including contact information.

StopTime (Denver Chapter recorder Jazz band) activities in February were focused on rehearsals for our Feb. 21 concert at the Merc., but if you followed our frantic emails, you know that came to naught because of a driving snow storm. We had seven new arrangements this time, and we put the finishing touches on them that very morning. Oh, well. We will reschedule and let you know when.

Dick Munz, Janet Handmaker, Erin Bell, Philip Belefski, Steve Caminer and Gary Gregor

Scoop from Fort Collins: The 2nd Friday Gathering March 13, 2015 will be at Serain and Johannes Gessler's home, 3205 Shore Road, Fort Collins, CO 80524 at 7:30 p.m. Please let Seraina know if you plan to come. seraina38@hotmail.com or 970-484-0647

Our monthly gathering for ARS falls on Monday, March 23, at the usual place and time—7:30 PM at the Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church on Taft Hill Road. Do let Jim Martin know if you plan to be there: jtmartin@yahoo.com or 377-4293.

Pattie Cowell

A New Project:

Greetings from **North Denver:** Michael Corette (1707-1795) was an important person in the development of the concerto form. He wrote six keyboard concertos which officially appeared in 1756. These concertos were influenced by Handel's concertos which Corette heard in England around 1739.

The first complete edition of these Six Concertos was published in 2002 by Sarabande Music.

We have just acquired the first concerto and will begin working on it this week. If all goes well, we will learn all six of the concertos for Chamber Orchestra and harpsichord (organ).

This is one more step in the goal to play all the music currently published that was written between 1000 and 1800.

The Saturday group is jam packed. There is room for one or two musicians in the Monday group. We use recorders, gambas, violin family, keyboard, mandolin family, lute family, historical guitar, wooden flute.

Bill Conklin 303-455-0837

Newbies report from February. The Newbies group had 5 participants at the February meeting. They played Renaissance Songs and Dances working on ensemble playing skills as a group by counting carefully and listening to each other for tuning. They enjoyed the lovely Renaissance selections that they played.

Rosemary Glista

Newbie Corner

March Newbies: Jon Casbon will host the Newbie March session. Jon showed his first musical tendencies while still in the womb, when he was noted to kick out show tunes while his mother was trying to sleep. Soon he was plunking out melodies on a toy piano (like Schroeder in 'Peanuts'). He first played the recorder in the 8th grade when studying Shakespeare and the Elizabethan era. For that occasion, he played Elizabethan Love Songs on soprano recorder with piano accompaniment. When he started college, recorder replaced the clarinet as his instrument of choice and he has been playing ever since. After serving in the Air Force for 28 years as a physician and military commander, he retired and settled in Colorado Springs. His quartet, the Four Winds Recorder Ensemble, performs at a variety of settings in the Colorado Springs area, and he participates in other local ensembles. He is also an active member of the Colorado Recorder Orchestra. In 2013, he was elected President of the Denver Chapter of the American Recorder Society. He still hasn't figured out how that happened, or how he can get out of it! Since his retirement, he fends off dissolution by arranging music for recorders, especially pop tunes. He volunteers regularly at the Cadet Clinic at the U.S. Air Force Academy, and also tinkers with handbells as a member of the Tri-Lakes Community Handbell Choir in Monument."

Topic: "Peaceful Pentatonics" Pentatonic scales form the basis of traditional music from many cultures. We will focus on beautiful arrangements of traditional melodies from China, Japan, and Korea. Bring your recorders and your meditation mats!

Newbies meet:

Sunday, March 15, 2015
12:45 to 1:45
Unity Church
3021 S. University Blvd. Denver
Enter South door

Do you know of anyone who might enjoy playing with the Newbies? Please spread the word. There is no charge for the session. For more information, contact

Janet Handmaker at 303-221-6066

Drop-ins are welcome.

Denver Chapter Members/Friends in Good Standing as of February 2015:

Karen Anderson, Rebecca Beshore, Roberta Blanc, Sharon Bolles, Jeannine Bramwell, Paul Brunson, Marlys Butler, Jon Casbon, Sally Collins, Bill Conklin, Virginia Cortes, Lynda Coy, Doug Dana, Barbara Fahey, Nancy Fey, Judy Fritz, Joice Gibson, RoseMary Glista, Elaine Granata, Pamela Grotegut, Janet Handmaker, Diana Hinton, Lynn and Diana Hoepfinger, John M. LeVett, Maureen Liegl, Lisa McInnis, Judy Miller, Lori Murphy, Dick Munz, Jennifer Myers, Bruce Nelson, Gerrie Olthof, Susan, Osborn, Margaret Peterson, Karyn Pocernich, Justine Romero, Miriam Rosenblum, Virginia Schlieker, Mary Scott, Pat Selby, Mary Sloan, Victoria Taylor, Rose Marie Terada, Mary Treska, Bill Urban, Gerrie Vendegna, Diane Wagner, Trudy Wayne, Joe Wilcox and Richard Wood.

We are collecting dues for the September 2014 to May 2015 season. Dues for the Denver Chapter are \$20 and are due by November 15, 2014. We also accept payment for ARS National Dues if you would like us to process the national dues for you. Please complete the Dues Form under "Join" on the website and submit the form with the dues.

Evaluating Your Recorder General Questions

I have recently received a number of questions regarding general 'voicing' problems. As I have had the opportunity to answer these questions with individuals the big problem I see is still a general difficulty of assessing problems on the part of the player. While you may not undertake the maintenance of your own instrument it is imperative that you have an understanding of the nature of the problems or at least the proper questions to ask regarding care of that instrument.

For those of you who know me or who have read any of my previous work already know I do not care very much for the term 'voicing'. Its vague and generally meaningless use offers nothing towards elucidating a specific problem. However, it is a term neither you nor I can avoid so we should at least be clear as to what it could possibly mean, or not. My general understanding of the term, as most use it when speaking to me about their instruments, is that there is a problem, somewhere, regardless of how simple or mysterious the actual problem might be. While it is understandable to use 'voicing' this way, I mentioned in a previous article that general

terminology like this can get you in trouble, or cost you money you don't need to spend. I work with many of you regularly, and you have allowed me, very generously, to work on your instruments. I would like to make things easier for you at every step in the process. The first step is understanding, at least in general terms, where a specific problem might exist. The second step is evaluating in more detail the nature of the problem. So here is a simple checklist with a few, brief, explanations and more detailed information:

Start by asking yourself very general questions. Is the tonal problem specific to one area or note, or is the problem found throughout its entire range? When the entire range of the recorder is affected it is most commonly a general maintenance issue. When was the last time your recorder was oiled? Most players are completely surprised what a thorough cleaning and oiling will accomplish. Carefully inspect the tone holes for dirt and or wax build up. Wax and oil will deposit on the insides of the tone holes as small bubbles and will often look like a salty crust. As the oil seeps from the wood it does so through the pores running longitudinally through the instrument, so it builds up along the upper and lower surfaces the hole first. This is precisely where it is going to affect the tuning of the instrument the most by altering the size of the hole. For general tonal problems always check the bore and the windway for debris, because anything, often particles as small as dust, can drastically affect the tone of any recorder.

If the problem appears specific to a single note or part of the instrument you must look a little deeper. Are the keys closing properly for that note? Or if there are no keys see if there anything unusual about the tone hole? I am often handed problems where the only notes affected are found in or related to the foot joint. If you have already inspected the keys, check the cork for an airtight fit. Any air leaking around the joint can drastically affect the tonal quality.

Is the block protruding at all from the beak? I am surprised how many players fail to notice this simple problem. The cedar block should sit flush with the surface of the beak and it did when the

instrument was new, so any deviation from that means there is a problem. If it is out do not force it back in, there is probably a reason it popped that needs to be addressed.

Check the instrument for surface cracks. although this is not a common problem a crack running along the grain can be difficult to see but could have major consequences if not repaired.

Is the the thumbhole distorted, worn, or have a loose bushing? The thumb hole is responsible for aiding in the production of more than half of all the tones on a recorder. It needs to be perfect. A slight indentation from the thumb nail is acceptable if it fits your thumb, but anything more than slight and every note could be negatively impacted.

Is the labium cracked or warped? Not an obvious thing to see, but it is easily noticeable if you look through the windway. The cutting edge of the labium should appear to sit just above the upper surface of the block if you cannot see under the labium by looking through the windway then there is a good chance air is having a difficult time cutting underneath it. This could also be a block swelling issue. This is also the problem when your instrument is 'wet' after extended play and the block has swollen enough to distort the shape of the windway.

If you are thinking that the instrument is no longer playing in tune, which notes specifically are out of tune? It would be highly unusual for every note to go out. Evaluating tuning issues is accomplished by playing long tones, along with your tuner, and play interval jumps. The low G on a C instrument or C on an F instrument is the easiest place to start because this is normally a very stable note and not likely to be drastically out of tune. From that G, play intervals up or down one note at a time, always returning to the G and compare breath pressure across the range while comparing that tone against a tuner. If you have to seriously adjust your breath pressure to get a note to match the same breath pressure as the G then there might be tuning problems that need to be addressed.

There are many issues each of us face every time

we pick up our recorders, and asking these questions will get us closer to a potential problem. The good news is 'voicing' is probably not the problem and most problems are simple, even if sometimes extensive, fixes. I will be seeing many of you at the upcoming Estes Park Workshop. Feel free to contact me prior to meeting so we can both be prepared to address any specific issues you might find with your recorders.

My name is John. I am an instrument builder, obsessive recorder player, and a lover of history. I would be happy to answer any questions regarding the care and maintenance of your instruments. Please submit any repair and general recorder questions to Orthwest@gmail.com or contact me directly by phone 772-321-1498. I await your call.

John Orth
Orthwest Studios, LLC
Golden, Colorado



Rocky XI - May 15 to 17