

Simple Gifts

a community concert series

Chicago Early Music Consort

presents

Music for a While: English Song from Dowland to Purcell

Sunday, May 20, 2007 4:00 pm
Glenview Community Church

Music for a while shall all your cares beguile

17th century English song writers produced a prodigious body of work, no doubt inspired by the great English poets of the age. Most of the song writers were composer-performers. John Dowland, for example, was a fine singer, a lute virtuoso of international repute, and the greatest of the English lute-song composers. Henry Purcell was a singer and organist and the greatest of all native-born English composers. Henry Lawes was highly regarded by the poet, John Milton, and left us over 430 songs.

The greatest of the song writers were sensitive to the feeling and diction of the poems they set. The subjects of these songs represented the gamut of the human condition, with love and death the most represented. The songs were usually performed in intimate chamber settings, but many were also performed as part of musical entertainments (masques, semi-operas, etc.).

Thank you for joining us today and we hope you enjoy our music for a while . . .

Chicago Early Music Consort

Stephanie Sheffield *soprano*

Gary Berkenstock *recorders*

Joel Spears *lute and theorbo*

Phillip Serna *viola da gamba*

Acclaimed as an "imaginative" ensemble presenting "delicate, flawlessly played music," the **Chicago Early Music Consort** recreates the rich and diverse sounds of the late Renaissance and early Baroque chamber repertoire in a historically informed manner. Founded by Gary Berkenstock, the consort performs throughout the Chicagoland and Wisconsin areas. The core ensemble consists of a "broken" consort of voice (Stephanie Sheffield), recorders (Gary Berkenstock), lute/theorbo (Joel Spears), and viola da gamba (Phillip Serna), but the ensemble is supplemented as needed by the dictates of the music. Programs are built around historical themes in order to provide modern audiences with a meaningful social context that will enrich their musical experience.

For more information, contact Gary Berkenstock at cemconsort@comcast.net

ABOUT THE INSTRUMENTS

RECORDER - No woodwind instrument other than the recorder could lay claim to a regular partnership with the most aristocratic and refined instruments of the day. From the 15th to the mid-18th century, the recorder was regarded as *the* flute, and throughout this period, any references to flute without adjectival qualification always mean recorder. The recorder was extremely popular in England. An inventory following Henry VIII's death in 1547 revealed he owned 78 recorders! By the end of the Renaissance period, the recorder family consisted of eight sizes, from the tiny "garklein" down to the great bass in F. Recorder instruction manuals demonstrating a high degree of technical accomplishment date to the mid-sixteenth century. During the Baroque period, the soprano, and then the alto recorder, was favored as a solo instrument.

LUTE - From the 15th to the late 17th century, the lute unquestionably occupied a special place of honor, second only to the human voice. A plucked string instrument, it was the courtly instrument *par excellence* and its repertoire was enormous. The importance of the lute is reflected by the other arts. Philosophers discussed it, poets praised it, and painters depicted it in a variety of roles. The most salient characteristics of the lute are the flat table with a carved circular sound-hole or "rose", the pear-shaped back and the bent-back pegbox.

THEORBO - The largest member of the lute family, the theorbo (from the Italian *tiórba*) was originally developed in the 1580s to accompany singers. It quickly proved useful not only for accompaniment, but for playing basso continuo (the art of harmonizing over a bass line) in ensemble music. It remained popular throughout the baroque period. There is a significant body of high quality solo music written for this instrument. Although other kinds of 17th and 18th century lutes have extended bass strings attached to a second pegbox, the theorbo is distinguished by its size and re-entrant tuning, limiting the upper range of the instrument.

VIOLA DA GAMBA - The viola da gamba is a bowed string instrument that probably developed in Spain during the fifteenth century. Its Italian name is descriptive of the between-the-legs playing position. The viola da gamba made its earliest appearance in England about 1540, where it was called the "viol." The viola da gamba shared the aristocratic attributes of the lute and was cultivated among courtly society. Three sizes became standardized during the Renaissance: treble, tenor and bass. Violas da gamba were played together in consorts and the bass instrument was often used in lute songs to reinforce the lowest part.

Glenview Community Church

1000 Elm Street, Glenview, Illinois 60025
847-724-2210 www.gccucc.org

Music for a While:
English Song from Dowland to Purcell

JOHN DOWLAND (1563-1626)

Come away, come sweet love
Dear, if you change
Go, nightly cares

First Booke of Songes or Ayres... (1597)
First Booke of Songes or Ayres... (1597)
A Pilgrimes Solace (1612)

FRANCIS PILKINGTON (c.1565-1638)

Music, dear solace to my thoughts

The First Booke of Songs or Ayres (1605)

ALFONSO FERRABOSCO II (c.1572 -1628)

If all these cupids now were blind

Booke of Ayres (1609)

ROBERT JOHNSON (c.1582-1633)

Oh, let us howl some heavy note

The Duchess of Malfi (John Webster, 1613)

RICHARD COBB (fl.1630-1643)

Suite in C

Court Ayres... (John Playford, 1655)

ANONYMOUS

This merry, pleasant spring

Egerton 2971, British Library (c.1630)

JOHN WILSON (1595-1674)

In the merry month of May

Cheerfull Ayres or ballads... (1660)

HENRY LAWES (1596-1662)

Read in these roses the sad story

London, British Library, Add Ms 53723 (1626-1652)

CHARLES COLEMAN (1605-1664)

Wake my Adonis

Select Ayres and Dialogues (John Playford, 1659)

CHRISTOPHER SIMPSON (c.1605-1669)

Suite in A

Court Ayres... (John Playford, 1655)

HENRY PURCELL (1659-1695)

If music be the food of love
O, let me weep!
Cupid, the slyest rogue alive
Music for a while

(1695)
The Fairy Queen (1692)
(1685)
Oedipus (1692)

The series is funded by freewill offerings.

Chicago Early Music Consort



STEPHANIE SHEFFIELD recently completed her musical studies in Vocal Performance at North Park University in Chicago. While at North Park she performed several operatic roles including Blanche (Dialogues des Carmelites), Susanna (Le Nozze di Figaro), and several operatic scenes. Ms. Sheffield was also the soprano soloist in Brahms' Requiem and Mozart's Sparrow Mass (K.220). Since her graduation, she has performed in various operas for children with Stage One Productions, namely the title role in Barab's Little Red Riding Hood, Pamina in Mozart's Die Zauberflöte and Gretel in Hänsel & Gretel. She enjoys singing in several Chicago area ensembles, including the professional choirs at St John Cantius Church, Cantate, and Anshe Emet synagogue. Ms. Sheffield has performed the soprano solo in Schubert's Mass in G with Cantate and has been a featured soloist in services at St. John Cantius Church. She has also won several awards, including Second Place in the 2005 Society of American Musicians competition and Honorable Mention in the 2002 Chicago area NATS competition.

GARY BERKENSTOCK has a Bachelor of Music degree in clarinet from George Peabody College and was a member of the Nashville Symphony and Chicago Civic Orchestras. He also has a Master of Music degree in music history and literature from Northwestern University, where he specialized in early music and directed the Northwestern Collegium Musicum. During that time, he also performed with the University of Chicago Collegium Musicum and did extensive graduate research in early music performance under the renowned scholar, Howard Mayer Brown. Mr. Berkenstock twice received scholarships for the study and performance of early music at Yale University, and has a performance diploma in early music from Penn State University. He has studied recorder with David Hart and viola da gamba with Grace Feldman. Mr. Berkenstock is founder and director of the Chicago Early Music Consort, an ensemble that has performed extensively throughout the Chicago area.

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JOEL SPEARS is an active lutenist and guitarist based in the Chicago area. He is a founding member of two ensembles: Sweet Fretting, a quartet dedicated to playing 17th and 18th century trio sonatas, and Weissduo, featuring baroque duos for flute and lute. Mr. Spears has performed extensively with Chicago-area musical organizations, including Lyric Opera of Chicago, Chicago Opera Theater, Music of the Baroque, Ars Antigua, Scholars of Cambrai, Heroic Bard, and Harwood Early Music Ensemble. In addition to playing for numerous radio broadcasts on 98.7 - WFMT, he has appeared at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, the Chicago Cultural Center's Preston Bradley Hall, the Bach Week in Evanston Festival, and the Handel Week Festival. As a lecturer and performer, he has appeared at the Art Institute of Chicago, the Madison Early Music Festival, and as Guest Artist and Lecturer at Grand Valley State University. Mr. Spears is Artistic Director of the Early Music series at Byron Colby Barn in Grayslake, Illinois.

PHILLIP W. SERNA has a Bachelor of Music degree in double bass performance from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music where he studied with Stephen Tramontozzi. He also has a Master of Music degree from Northwestern University and is currently pursuing his Doctorate in performance there, studying double bass with Michael Hovnanian and viola da gamba with Mary Springfels. Mr. Serna is principal double bass with the Northbrook Symphony and has performed with Chicago Symphony's Civic Orchestra of Chicago, Elmhurst Symphony, Fort Wayne Philharmonic, Illinois Philharmonic, Kenosha Symphony, New Philharmonic, Racine Symphony, Rockford Symphony, Southwest Michigan Symphony and the Memphis Symphony. As an avid early music enthusiast, Mr. Serna has performed on the viola da gamba and period double bass/ violone with the Apollo Chorus of Chicago, Ars Antigua, Period Opera Cosi fan Tutte with Chicago Opera Theater, Classical Arts Orchestra, Comic Intermezzo, Early Music Chicago, Ensemble Reverie Viol Consort, the Janus Ensemble, the Newberry Consort, the Evelyn Dunbar Memorial Early Music Festival at Northwestern University, the Oriana Singers, the Second City Musick, the Viola da Gamba Society of America Conclave Consort Cooperative, as well as the Concert for Compassion Viol Consort & Forces of Virtue Ensemble and Choir, dedicated to raising money for disaster relief and other charities. In addition to his busy performance schedule, he is a dedicated instructor of double bass, viola da gamba, guitar and bass guitar at numerous Chicago area institutions. Phillip lives in Plainfield, IL with his best friend and wife, Magdalena.