

Boston Early Music Festival  
in partnership with  
The Morgan Library & Museum

present

**Nevermind**

Anna Besson, *flute*  
Louis Creac'h, *violin*  
Robin Pharo, *viola da gamba*  
Jean Rondeau, *harpsichord*

**The Art of Fugue**

From *The Art of Fugue*, BWV 1080  
*Contrapunctus 1*  
*Contrapunctus 4*

*Johann Sebastian Bach*  
(1685–1750)

From *Twenty Little Fugues* (1731)  
Fuga 14, TWV 30:14

*Georg Philipp Telemann*  
(1681–1767)

New Paris Quartet No. 4 in B minor (Paris, 1738), TWV 43:h2  
*Prélude — Coulant — Gay — Vite — Triste — Menuet (Modérément)*

*Telemann*

From *Suites for the King's sleep* (1692)  
Suite IV in B-flat Major  
*Prélude — La Marianne — Plainte*

*Marin Marais*  
(1656–1728)

Friday, October 16, 2020 at 8pm  
Livestream broadcast  
Filmed concert from Rosario, Bever, Belgium  
BEMF.org

## Program Notes

If Bach's aim in writing *The Art of Fugue* was to explore the limits of a compositional technique, or encompass and systematically record his life's achievement as a contrapuntist, or something along those lines, then it seems not unfitting that he should have left the choice of instruments unspecified. Perhaps he wasn't thinking of performance at all, but in more abstract or universal terms. Or perhaps he knew that, by leaving the choice and combination of instruments open, his work would reveal new aspects of itself each time it was heard in a different combination of sounds, *ad infinitum*.

Fugue involves a main theme, called the subject, presented among the various parts in such a way that it becomes familiar before it is then developed into a hopefully interesting and affecting musical work. The whole of *The Art of Fugue* uses a single subject for a series of eighteen explorations of fugal and canonic techniques, exploited systematically yet virtuosically as only Bach could do. In the first four sections—he called them “contrapunctus” or “counterpoint,” suggesting both an abstract technical element and a nod to *stile antico*—the subject is presented first in its basic form (#1), then inverted (the intervals moving in the opposite directions from the original, #4). While letting the ear follow the subject and its derivatives through the weave of counterpoint, and relishing both the beauty and ingenuity of its ever-shifting musical context, note the arresting silences in Contrapunctus 1 just before the final statement, and the expansion of the musical ideas in Contrapunctus 4.

Georg Philipp Telemann's *Twenty Little Fugues*, TWV 30 (1731), were pedagogical in intent and their connection to an earlier set of chorale harmonization as well as their incorporation of ancient church modes suggest liturgical use. They harken back to the older “learned” polyphony, while incorporating the lighter textures of the new *galant* style. The choice here to perform the brief Fuga 14 on four different instruments, each with its distinctive timbre, allows the listener to identify each fugal voice by instrument while simultaneously producing a sort of sonic swirl of all four.

One of the most prolific and successful European art music composers of all time, Telemann is said to have been especially attracted to French musical styles, so when the opportunity came to visit, and eventually live and work for a time, in Paris, both the artist and the shrewd businessperson in him no doubt leapt at the opportunity. The New Paris Quartets are a set of six chamber works for flute, violin, viola da gamba, and continuo (keyboard) originally published in Paris in 1738 in conjunction with his Paris sojourn (though not originally given the designation of place, which was added in the twentieth century). These works are said to culminate the “Sonate auf Concertenart” form, in which features of the concerto are incorporated into the sonata, a hybrid Telemann himself may have originated. (He frequently made a point of blurring the boundaries between instrumental genres such as the suite, the overture, the sonata, and the concerto.)

Quartet No. 4 opens with a triple-time Prelude divided into three clear sections, fast-slow-fast, not unlike a mini-overture in the Italian style. Note the alternation of the opening musical material with brief sections highlighting the different instruments, reminiscent of concerto ritornello technique. A slow middle section provides all-important contrast, complete with a cadenza-like moment just before the opening musical material returns. In the second movement,

“Coulant” (flowing), changes of texture and instrument combinations provide variety, while triple meter suggests the measured elegance of a fashionable dance in the *galant* style. The third movement, “Gay,” is indeed gay and skipping, even gigue-like, while the fourth, “Vite,” takes ebullience to the limits of propriety, with contrasts of timbre and texture that feed the energy in an almost comic fashion. It is no surprise that the following movement should take us somewhere completely different, emotionally speaking: “Triste” is permeated with a staid sadness of gentle sobs and quiet dissonance created through suspensions and trills. The work ends with an overt nod to the dance suite, a stately French “Menuet.”

Marin Marias studied viol with the renowned virtuoso Sainte-Colombe and composition with Lully. From 1679, he was employed at the French court as *ordinaire* of the *musique de la chambre du roi*. His Suite No. 4 in B-flat major “for the King’s sleep” is, formally speaking, a fairly typical French Baroque suite, consisting of eight dances of varying character in between a more expansive opening Prelude and closing movement, here called “Plainte.” If the aim of this music was to help the King (Louis XIV) sleep, then the opening Prelude seems perfectly suited to its aim, with gently rocking *inégal*, ambling bass line, sweetly warbling melody, and rich, warm sonorities. Though the intervening dances might not have served this purpose quite so well—none are especially languorous—the eighth, a sarabande “La Marianne,” is even more restful than the opening, with less rhythmic movement, more sense of stasis and repose only occasionally intensified by sensuous dissonance. The suite ends in dreamland, so to speak, with the closing “Plainte”: if a complaint is being made here, it is without conviction. It is, however, made with beautiful music that shimmers as it gently sinks into slumber.

—Gabe Alfieri

## About the Artists

**Nevermind** is a group composed of four musicians (flute, violin, viola da gamba, and harpsichord) who all share a common passion for early music, jazz, and traditional music. The quartet was founded while the musicians were studying at the Conservatoire Supérieur National de Paris (CNSM) and ardently advocates for the music of the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries.

In 2014, Nevermind won the Special Prize of the Van Wassenaer Competition in Utrecht. The ensemble performs mainly in France, Europe, and United States at festivals and in halls such as the Boston Early Music Festival, Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in Paris, Warsaw Philharmonie, Festival d’Auvers sur Oise, the Muziekgebouw in Amsterdam, and the Concertgebouw in Brugge. They have also performed in Russia in St. Petersburg and Yekaterinburg.

In recent years, the quartet has played at the Auditorium du Louvre in Paris and BOZAR in Brussels, among other prestigious venues. Now frequently invited to Germany, they have performed at the Alte Oper in Frankfurt and the Thuringer Bachwochen Festival, as well as Hamburg’s Elbphilharmonie.

Their first album, *Conversations*, was released in 2016 on the Alpha/Outhere label with music from the French composers Jean-Baptiste Quentin and Louis-Gabriel Guillemain. Their second recording, *Quatuors Parisiens*, dedicated to Telemann’s music, was released the following year.

Nevermind made their first tour of Australia in the fall of 2019, and have been exploring contemporary music for the first time with the piece *La Harpe de David* composed by Philippe Hersant for violin, flute, viola da gamba, and harpsichord. This piece was created in June 2019 in Froville, before being played in other Festivals, including Festival de Saintes, Festival de La Chaise-Dieu, and Festival Sinfonia en Périgord.

In 2020, the group will play for the first time in Bayreuth in Germany and will record their third disc on Alpha/Outhere, dedicated to Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach's quartets.

## **Boston Early Music Festival**

The Boston Early Music Festival (BEMF) is universally recognized as a leader in the field of early music. Since its founding in 1980 by leading practitioners of historical performance in the United States and abroad, BEMF has promoted early music through a variety of diverse programs and activities, including an annual concert series that brings early music's brightest stars to the Boston and New York concert stages, and the biennial weeklong Festival and Exhibition, recognized as "the world's leading festival of early music" (*The Times*, London). Through its programs BEMF has earned its place as North America's premier presenting organization for music of the Medieval, Renaissance, and Baroque periods and has secured Boston's reputation as "America's early music capital" (*Boston Globe*).

### **International Baroque Opera**

One of BEMF's main goals is to unearth and present lesser-known Baroque operas performed by the world's leading musicians armed with the latest information on period singing, orchestral performance, scenic design, costuming, dance, and staging. BEMF operas reproduce the Baroque's stunning palette of sound by bringing together today's leading operatic superstars and a wealth of instrumental talent from across the globe to one stage for historic presentations, all zestfully led from the pit by the BEMF Artistic Directors Paul O'Dette and Stephen Stubbs, and creatively reimaged for the stage by BEMF Opera Director Gilbert Blin.

The twentieth biennial Boston Early Music Festival in June 2019 featured Agostino Steffani's mesmerizing 1691 opera *Orlando generoso*, which saw the return of the Boston Early Music Festival Dance Company, a troupe of dancers under the guidance of BEMF Dance Director Melinda Sullivan. The twenty-first Festival, in June 2021, will feature Georg Philipp Telemann's *Pimpinone* and Johann Adolf Hasse's *La finta tedescha*, and the twenty-second Festival, in June 2023, will feature Henry Desmarest's 1694 opera *Circé* from a libretto by Louise-Geneviève Gillot de Saintonge.

BEMF introduced its Chamber Opera Series during its annual concert season in November 2008, with a performance of John Blow's *Venus and Adonis* and Marc-Antoine Charpentier's *Actéon*. The series focuses on the wealth of chamber operas composed during the Baroque period, while providing an increasing number of local opera aficionados the opportunity to attend one of BEMF's superb offerings. Subsequent annual productions include George Frideric Handel's *Acis and Galatea*, Henry Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*, combined performances of Charpentier's *La*

*Descente d'Orphée aux Enfers* and *La Couronne de Fleurs*, Monteverdi's *Orfeo*, a double bill of Pergolesi's *La serva padrona* and *Livietta e Tracollo*, a production titled "Versailles" featuring *Les Plaisirs de Versailles* by Charpentier, *Les Fontaines de Versailles* by Michel-Richard de Lalande, and divertissements from *Atys* by Lully, and most recently Francesca Caccini's *Alcina*, the first opera written by a woman. *Acis and Galatea* was revived and presented on a four-city North American Tour in early 2011, which included a performance at the American Handel Festival in Seattle, and in 2014, BEMF's second North American Tour featured the Charpentier double bill from 2011.

BEMF has a well-established and highly successful project to record some of its groundbreaking work in the field of Baroque opera. The first three recordings in this series were all nominated for the Grammy Award for Best Opera Recording, in 2005, 2007, and 2008: the 2003 Festival centerpiece *Ariadne*, by Johann Georg Conradi; Jean-Baptiste Lully's *Thésée*; and the 2007 Festival opera, Lully's *Psyché*, which was hailed by *BBC Music Magazine* as "superbly realized...magnificent." In addition, the BEMF recordings of Lully's *Thésée* and *Psyché* received Gramophone Award Nominations in the Baroque Vocal category in 2008 and 2009, respectively. BEMF's next three recordings on the German CPO label were drawn from its Chamber Opera Series: Charpentier's *Actéon*, Blow's *Venus and Adonis*, and a release of Charpentier's *La Descente d'Orphée aux Enfers* and *La Couronne de Fleurs*, which won the 2015 Grammy Award for Best Opera Recording and the 2015 Echo Klassik Opera Recording of the Year (17<sup>th</sup>/18<sup>th</sup> Century Opera). Agostino Steffani's *Niobe, Regina di Tebe*, featuring Philippe Jaroussky and Karina Gauvin, which was released in January 2015 on the Erato/Warner Classics label in conjunction with a seven-city, four-country European concert tour of the opera, has been nominated for a Grammy Award, was named *Gramophone's* Recording of the Month for March 2015, is the 2015 Echo Klassik World Premiere Recording of the Year, and has received a 2015 Diapason d'Or de l'Année and a 2015 Preis der Deutschen Schallplattenkritik. Handel's *Acis and Galatea* was released in November 2015. In 2017, while maintaining the focus on Baroque opera, BEMF expanded the recording project to include other select Baroque vocal works: a new Steffani disc, *Duets of Love and Passion*, was released in September 2017 in conjunction with a six-city North American tour, and a recording of Johann Sebastiani's *St. Matthew Passion* was released in March 2018. Four Baroque opera releases followed in 2019 and 2020: a disc of Charpentier's chamber operas *Les Plaisirs de Versailles* and *Les Arts Florissants* was released at the June 2019 Festival, and has been nominated for a Grammy Award; the 2013 Festival opera, Handel's *Almira*, was released in late 2019, and received a Diapason d'Or. Lalande's chamber opera *Les Fontaines de Versailles* was featured on a September 2020 release of the composer's works; Christoph Graupner's opera *Antiochus und Stratonica*, is being released in December 2020.

### **Celebrated Concerts**

Some of the most thrilling musical moments at the biennial Festival occur during one of the dozen or more concerts presented around the clock, which always include the acclaimed Boston Early Music Festival Orchestra led by Orchestra Director Robert Mealy, and which often feature unique, once-in-a-lifetime collaborations and programs by the spectacular array of talent assembled for the Festival week's events. In 1989, BEMF established an annual concert series bringing early music's leading soloists and ensembles to the Boston concert stage to meet the growing demand for regular world-class performances of early music's beloved classics and newly discovered works. BEMF then expanded its concert series in 2006, when it extended its

performances to New York City's Gilder Lehrman Hall at the Morgan Library & Museum, providing "a shot in the arm for New York's relatively modest early-music scene" (*New York Times*).

### **World-famous Exhibition**

The nerve center of the biennial Festival, the Exhibition is the largest event of its kind in the United States, showcasing nearly one hundred early instrument makers, music publishers, service organizations, schools and universities, and associated colleagues. In 2013, Mozart's own violin and viola were displayed at the Exhibition, in their first-ever visit to the United States. Every other June, hundreds of professional musicians, students, and enthusiasts come from around the world to purchase instruments, restock their libraries, learn about recent musicological developments, and renew old friendships. For four days, they visit the Exhibition booths to browse, discover, and purchase, and attend the dozens of symposia, masterclasses, and demonstration recitals, all of which encourage a deeper appreciation of early music, and strengthen relationships between musicians, participants, and audiences.

## **Boston Early Music Festival, Inc.**

### **Management**

Kathleen Fay, *Executive Director*

Carla Chrisfield, *General Manager*

Maria van Kalken, *Assistant to the Executive Director*

Brian Stuart, *Director of Marketing and Publicity*

Elizabeth Hardy, *Marketing and Development Associate & Exhibition Manager*

Perry Emerson, *Operations Manager*

Corinne King, *Box Office and Patron Services Manager*

Shannon Canavin, *Development Associate & Visa Specialist*

Andrew Sigel, *Publications Editor*

Sue Pundt, *Bookkeeper*

### **Artistic Leadership**

Paul O'Dette and Stephen Stubbs, *Artistic Directors*

Gilbert Blin, *Opera Director*

Robert Mealy, *Orchestra Director*

Melinda Sullivan, *Lucy Graham Dance Director*

### **Board of Directors**

Bernice K. Chen, *Chairman*

David Halstead, *President*

Brit d'Arbeloff, *Vice President*

Lois A. Lampson, *Vice President*

Susan L. Robinson, *Vice President*

Adrian C. Touw, *Treasurer*

Peter L. Faber, *Clerk*

George L. Hardman

Glenn A. KnickKrehm  
Miles Morgan  
Bettina A. Norton  
Lee S. Ridgway

**Board of Overseers**

Diane Britton  
Gregory E. Bulger  
Robert E. Kulp, Jr.  
James S. Nicolson  
Amanda Pond  
Robert Strassler  
Donald E. Vaughan

**Board of Trustees**

Marty Gottron & John Felton, *Co-Chairs*  
Mary Briggs  
Deborah Ferro Burke  
Mary Deissler  
James A. Glazier  
Edward B. Kellogg  
John Krzywicki  
Douglas M. Robbe  
Jacob Skowronek

**Boston Early Music Festival**

43 Thorndike Street, Suite 302, Cambridge, MA 02141-1764  
Telephone: 617-661-1812 • Email: [bemf@bemf.org](mailto:bemf@bemf.org) • [BEMF.org](http://BEMF.org)

**The Morgan Library & Museum**

**Board of Trustees**

Lawrence R. Ricciardi, *President*  
Richard L. Menschel, *Vice President*  
Clement C. Moore II, *Vice President*  
George L. K. Frelinghuysen, *Treasurer*  
Thomas J. Reid, *Secretary*

Susanna Borghese  
T. Kimball Brooker  
Karen B. Cohen  
Frederick J. Iseman

Jerker M. Johansson  
Martha McGarry Miller  
John A. Morgan  
Patricia Morton  
Eric L. Motley  
Diane A. Nixon  
Gary W. Parr  
Peter Pennoyer  
Katharine J. Rayner  
Annette de la Renta  
Joshua W. Sommer  
Robert King Steel  
Beatrice Stern  
Alyce Williams Toonk

### **Life Trustees**

William R. Acquavella  
Rodney B. Berens  
Geoffrey K. Elliott  
Marina Kellen French  
Agnes Gund  
James R. Houghton  
Lawrence Hughes  
Herbert L. Lucas  
Janine Luke  
Charles F. Morgan  
Robert M. Pennoyer  
Cynthia Hazen Polsky  
Hamilton Robinson, Jr.  
James A. Runde  
James Baker Sitrick

### **Administration**

Colin B. Bailey, *Director*  
Jessica Ludwig, *Deputy Director*  
Kristina W. Stillman, *Director of Finance and Administration*  
Lauren Stakias, *Director of Institutional Advancement*  
Linden Chubin, *Director of Education and Public Programs*  
Noreen Khalid Ahmad, *Director of Communications and Marketing*

# Current and Upcoming Exhibitions

**Betye Saar: *Call and Response***

Through January 31, 2021

**David Hockney: *Drawing from Life***

Through May 30, 2021

**Poetry and Patronage: *The Laubespine-Villeroy Library Rediscovered***

October 16, 2020 through May 16, 2021

The concert program is generously supported by Cynthia Hazen Polsky and Leon B. Polsky Fund for Concerts and Lectures and the Celia Ascher Endowment Fund, with assistance from the Joan and Alan Ades-Taub Family Foundation, the Witherspoon Fund of the New York Community Trust, Miles Morgan, and the Theodore H. Barth Foundation.

The Morgan's education programs are generously supported by Marina Kellen French and the Anna-Maria and Stephen Kellen Foundation, the Great Circle Foundation, the May and Samuel Rudin Family Foundation, Inc., Con Edison, MetLife Foundation, the C. Jay Moorhead Foundation, the Filomen M. D'Agostino Foundation, The Milton and Sally Avery Arts Foundation and by the following endowed funds: The Alice Tully Fund for Art and Music; the William Randolph Hearst Fund for Educational Programs; the Stavros Niarchos Foundation Fund for Education and Technology; and the Herbert and Ann Lucas Fund.

The programs of the Morgan Library & Museum are made possible with public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council, and by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature.



**The Morgan Library and Museum**

225 Madison Avenue

New York, NY 10016

212-685-0008

[www.themorgan.org](http://www.themorgan.org)