

Boston Early Music Festival
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present

Stile Antico

Josquin: Father of the Renaissance

Ave Maria...virgo serena	<i>Josquin des Prez (ca. 1450–1521)</i>
Kyrie from <i>Missa Pange lingua</i>	<i>Josquin</i>
Vivrai je tousjours	<i>Josquin</i>
El grillo	<i>Josquin</i>
Inviolata, integra et casta es Maria	<i>Josquin</i>
Gloria from <i>Missa Pange lingua</i>	<i>Josquin</i>
Mille regretz	<i>Josquin</i>
Salve regina a5	<i>Josquin</i>
O mors inevitabilis	<i>Hieronymus Vinders (fl. ca. 1525)</i>
Agnus Dei I and III from <i>Missa Pange lingua</i>	<i>Josquin</i>
Dum vastos Adriae fluctus	<i>Jacquet de Mantua (1483–1559)</i>

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BEMF.org

Stile Antico

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This concert is organized with the cooperation of Knudsen Productions, LLC,
exclusive North American artist representative of Stile Antico.

Stile Antico records for Decca.

PROGRAM NOTES

Our program tonight is devoted to the wonderful music of Josquin des Prez, marking 500 years since his death in 1521. Josquin was unquestionably a star in his own time: no lesser figure than Martin Luther praised him as “the master of the notes,” while for the theorist Glarean, “no one has more effectively expressed the passions of the soul in music...his talent is beyond description.” So what is it about Josquin that exerted such a spell on the generations that followed—and which still speaks so eloquently to us today?

Much about Josquin’s biography and career remains shadowy: it isn’t always possible to pin down where he was working, and—with a few exceptions—the chronology of his works can only be attempted on stylistic grounds. Even his full name (Josquin Lebloitte, dit “des Prez”) and birthdate (ca. 1450) were until recently the subject of some doubt. Born in what is now the far north of France, he sang as a boy (alongside the composer Jean Mouton) at Saint-Quentin. In 1477 he is listed as a singer at the court of Duke René of Anjou at Avignon; it’s possible that he was transferred from there to Paris in 1481, in which case he would have sung at the Sainte Chapelle. After that he seems to have been in the service of the Sforza family in Milan, and in 1489 he joined the choir of the Papal Chapel in Rome, singing in the Sistine Chapel until 1494 or 1495. His next move is again unclear—he may have returned to Sforza service, or worked at the French court—and we find him next briefly in the service of Duke Ercole I d’Este at Ferrara in 1503 and 1504. He then returned to his native northern France, becoming Provost of the church of Notre Dame at Condé-sur-L’Escaut, where he remained until his death on August 27, 1521.

Much clearer is that Josquin’s music was held in the highest esteem by his contemporaries. In 1502, Duke Ercole’s talent scouts wrote letters arguing both for and against his appointment in Ferrara: on the one hand, Girolamo de Sestola writes “I believe that there is neither lord nor king who will now have a better chapel than yours if Your Lordship sends for Josquin... I want to place a crown upon this chapel of ours.” On the other, Gian de Artiganova recommends the appointment of Heinrich Isaac instead: “It is true that Josquin composes better, but he composes when he wants to, and not when one wants him to, and he is asking 200 ducats in salary while Isaac will come for 120—but Your Lordship will decide.” That His Lordship decided in favor of Josquin, exorbitant salary notwithstanding, attests to his renown.

The development of music printing, just then taking wing, did much to cement Josquin's reputation. The Venetian printer Ottaviano Petrucci placed a work by Josquin at the head of each of his first four motet anthologies; his initial volume (*Motetti A*, 1502) gives pride of place to *Ave Maria...virgo serena*, which also opens tonight's program. Petrucci also issued Josquin's masses in three volumes, the first of which has the distinction of being the first-ever music publication devoted to a single composer. Manuscripts and prints from Germany to Italy to Spain attest to how widely his music was distributed during the middle years of the sixteenth century. Glarean, writing in 1543, holds him the equal of Virgil; Cosimo Bartoli, in 1567, places him on a par with Michelangelo. In the years after Josquin's death, hundreds of works were hopefully—or unscrupulously—attributed to his pen, presumably because the association would help sell copies; the German editor Georg Forster, writing in 1540, reports “an eminent man” (quite possibly Luther again) commenting archly that “now that Josquin is dead, he is putting out more works than when he was alive!”

And so to the music. Josquin's style emerges out of what we might provocatively call a pre-Renaissance tradition: one which does not generally seek to appeal directly to our emotions via rhetoric or overt word-painting, but rather makes its effect through dazzling contrapuntal technique, and more abstract forms of structural device and symbolism. (This may be why some people find they connect more readily with the more straightforwardly rhetorical music of Victoria, Lassus, or Byrd: it seems to speak a language more familiar to the modern ear, and hence can more easily push our emotional buttons.) Josquin's achievement was to fuse the technical and structural rigor which he inherited from the Franco-Flemish tradition (including his teacher Ockeghem) with the directness and simplicity of the music he encountered in Italy, achieving an amazing clarity and lucidity of style, of which *Ave Maria...virgo serena* is the quintessential example.

Josquin's preference for short points of imitation (snatches of melody, repeated by each voice part in turn) as a means of structuring longer spans of music was hugely influential, becoming the single most important organizing principle in the music of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. No longer was it necessary to structure a work around a pre-composed *cantus firmus* voice, as had been the fashion for centuries (though Josquin himself often still did so); instead, each new line of text could have its own point of imitation. This innovation allowed composers to respond far more nimbly to their texts, crafting each new point to capture its expressive nuance: a hallmark of the high Renaissance style, whose power is founded above all on contrast, color, and constant sensitivity to the possibilities of word-painting, rather than on abstract structural techniques.

Josquin himself often combined both approaches, employing a large-scale structural device as well as smaller-scale imitation and contrast. The remarkable *Salve regina* a5 is an excellent example: one of the inner parts is entirely pre-composed, consisting exclusively of ostinato repetitions of the “Salve” motto at two different pitch levels, while the highest part is a close paraphrase of the well-known plainchant antiphon. Despite these twin constraints, Josquin manages to create a motet full of variety and color, by turns muscularly rhythmic and tenderly reflective.

If the technical ingenuity of the *Salve regina* is relatively clear to the listener, then the inner workings of *Inviolata, integra et casta es Maria* are far less obvious. This meltingly lovely motet conceals a canon at the fifth between the second and fourth voices. In the first part, the two voices sing three breves apart; in the second part the gap reduces to two breves, and in the third part, it is just one breve. The ear, however, is not drawn to this structural trickery, but rather to the gently affectionate lines of the polyphony, and in particular to the beautiful falling melismas at the opening, seeming to clothe the figure of the Virgin in sumptuous musical robes.

Running as a thread through our program are excerpts from the celebrated *Missa Pange lingua*. Believed to be Josquin's last setting of the Mass Ordinary—it is the only one not to appear in Petrucci's volumes, placing it after 1514—it finds Josquin at his most fluent and sophisticated. The mass is based on the well-known plainsong hymn *Pange lingua gloriosi* with words by Thomas Aquinas (better known in English as 'Sing, my tongue, the Savior's glory'). Rather than treating the melody as a *cantus firmus* in the old-fashioned manner, Josquin mines it as an endless source of melodic inspiration. Only in the final Agnus Dei III do we hear the entire melody, placed ostentatiously in long notes at the top of the texture. The effect is curiously cathartic, as though the listener, having been "teased" throughout, is finally allowed to enjoy the hymn fully unfurled.

In addition to his music for the church, Josquin was prolific in the secular forms, and our program includes three such works. The famous *El grillo* ('The Cricket'), is a light-hearted *frottola*—an Italian form characterized by simple textures and clarity of declamation; it probably dates from Josquin's Milanese years. Similarly well-known is the plangent *Mille regretz*, a French-language *chanson* which became a favorite of the Holy Roman Emperor, Charles V. Despite the fame of these works, their attribution to Josquin has been questioned; still less secure is that of *Vivrai je tousjours*, which appears only in one source from the 1540s. Authentic or not, this expressive *chanson* about frustrated love is well deserving of an audience.

Our program is completed by two works written in memory of Josquin. The first—*O mors inevitabilis*, by the Flemish composer Hieronymus Vinders—sets a lament for Josquin, believed to have been displayed alongside a portrait of the composer in a church in Brussels. The portrait is lost, but the famous woodcut of the composer was almost certainly derived from it. Vinders employs a wonderfully rich texture of seven low voices, two of which intone the plainsong "Requiem aeternam."

The second memorial work is altogether more unusual: an elaborate motet by Jacquet de Mantua called *Dum vastos Adriae fluctus*, published in 1544. Shoe-horned into the text are references to the titles of five of Josquin's most famous five- and six-part motets, two of which—*Salve regina* and *Inviolata*—appear in our program. Jacquet's music quotes the most immediately recognizable features of each of these pieces at the appropriate moment, thereby producing a "medley" of some of Josquin's most characteristic works. The implication is that these pieces would have been familiar to any self-respecting musician of the mid-sixteenth-century—in itself an indication of the stature of this fascinating composer.

—Andrew Griffiths

TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS

*Ave Maria, gratia plena,
Dominus tecum, virgo serena.
Ave cuius conceptio, solemni plena gaudio
Caelestia, terrestria, nova replet laetitia.
Ave, cuius nativitas nostra fuit solemnitas,
Ut lucifer lux oriens verum solem praeveniens.
Ave pia humilitas, sine viro fecunditas,
Cuius annunciatio nostra fuit salvatio.
Ave vera virginitas, immaculata castitas,
Cuius purificatio nostra fuit purgatio.
Ave, praeclara omnibus angelicis virtutibus,
Cuius fuit assumptio nostra glorificatio.
O Mater Dei, memento mei. Amen.*

Anonymous

Hail Mary, full of grace,
the Lord is with you, fair virgin.
Hail to you, whose conception, full of holy joy,
fills heaven and earth with new rejoicing.
Hail to you, whose birth we celebrated,
like the day-star rising, foretelling the true sun.
Hail, holy and humble one, fruitful without a man,
you whose annunciation was our salvation.
Hail, true virginity, spotless chastity,
whose purification cleansed us also.
Hail to you who excel in all the angelic virtues,
you whose assumption glorified us also.
O Mother of God, remember me. Amen.

*Kyrie eleison,
Christe eleison,
Kyrie eleison.*

Mass Ordinary

Lord, have mercy;
Christ, have mercy;
Lord, have mercy.

*Vivrai je tousjours en telle paine
Et de misere ester rempi?
Si vous considerés ceste paine
Mes desir sera accompli.
En humilité je vous supplie:
Chantés vostre bon Plaisir.*

Anonymous

Shall I always live in such pain
and be filled with misery?
If you acknowledge this pain
my desire will be satisfied.
Humbly I beg you:
sing your pleasure.

*El grillo è buon cantore
Che tiene longo verso.
Dalle beve grillo canta.
Ma non fa come gli altri uccelli
Come li han cantato un poco,
Van de fatto in altro loco
Sempre el grillo sta pur saldo,
Quando la maggior el caldo
Alhor canta sol per amore.*

Anonymous

The cricket is a good singer
He can sing very long.
He sings all the time.
But he isn't like the other birds.
If they've sung a little bit
They go somewhere else
The cricket remains where he is
When the heat is very fierce
Then he sings only for love.

*Inviolata, integra et casta es Maria:
Quae es effecta fulgida caeli porta.
O Mater alma Christi carissima:
Suscipe pia laudum praeconia.
Nostra ut pura pectora sint et corpora.
Quae nunc flagitant devota corda et ora:*

Inviolata, whole and chaste are you, Mary:
you are the shining gate of heaven.
O kind mother, dearest to Christ,
accept our faithful hymns of praise.
May our souls and bodies be pure.
To you our hearts and lips cry out:

*Tua per precata dulcisona:
Nobis concedas veniam per saecula.
O benigna! O Regina! O Maria!
Quae sola inviolata permansisti.*

Sequence hymn for Candlemas

Gloria in excelsis Deo,
*et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis.
Laudamus te, benedicimus te,
adoramus te, glorificamus te.
Gratias agimus tibi propter magnam gloriam tuam.
Domine Deus, Rex caelestis,
Deus Pater omnipotens.
Domine Fili unigenite, Iesu Christe.
Domine Deus, Agnus Dei, Filius Patris.
Qui tollis peccata mundi,
miserere nobis.
Qui tollis peccata mundi,
suscipe deprecationem nostram.
Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris,
miserere nobis.
Quoniam tu solus Sanctus.
Tu solus Dominus.
Tu solus altissimus, Iesu Christe.
Cum Sancto Spiritu, in gloria Dei Patris.
Amen.*

Mass Ordinary

Mille regretz de vous abandoner,
*et d'eslonger vostre fache amoureuse.
J'ay si grand dueil et peine douloureuse,
qu'on me verra brief mes jours definer.*

attributed to Jean Lemaire de Belges

Salve regina, misericordiae,
*Vita, dulcedo, et spes nostra, Salve!
Ad te clamamus, exsules filii Hevae,
Ad te suspiramus, gementes et flentes,
In hac lacrimarum valle.
Eja ergo, Advocata nostra,
Illos tuos misericordes oculos ad nos converte
Et Jesum, benedictum fructum ventris tui,
Nobis, post hoc exilium, ostende,
O clemens, O pia, O dulcis Maria.*

Compline antiphon

Through your prayers' sweet sounds
grant us forgiveness for ever.
O kindly one! O Queen! O Mary!
you alone remain inviolate.

Glory be to God on high,
and on earth peace, good will towards men.
We praise thee, we bless thee,
we worship thee, we glorify thee,
we give thanks to thee for thy great glory.
O Lord God, heavenly King,
God the Father Almighty.
O Lord, the only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ;
O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
that takest away the sins of the world,
have mercy upon us.
Thou that takest away the sins of the world,
receive our prayer.
Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father,
have mercy upon us.
For thou only art holy;
thou only art the Lord;
thou only, O Christ, with the Holy Ghost,
art most high in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.

A thousand regrets at leaving you
and being parted from your loving face.
I have such great sadness and painful sorrow
that it seems to me my days will shortly come to
an end.

Hail, queen of mercy,
Our life, our sweetness, and our hope!
To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve,
to thee do we send up our sighs,
mourning and weeping in this valley of tears.
Turn, then, most gracious advocate,
thine eyes of mercy toward us,
and after this, our exile,
show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus.
O clement, O loving, O sweet Mary.

*O mors inevitabilis, mors amara, mors crudelis,
Josquin des Prez dum necasti, illum nobis abstulisti
qui suam per harmoniam illustravit ecclesiam.
Propterea tu musice, dic, requiescat in pace.*

Anonymous

Cantus firmus:
*Requiem aeternam dona ei Domine,
et lux perpetua luceat ei.*

*Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,
miserere nobis.
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,
dona nobis pacem.*

Mass Ordinary

*Dum vastos Adriae fluctus rabiemque furentis
gurgitis atque imis stagna agitata vadis Scyllamque
et rapidas Syrtes miratur Iacchus monstraque non
ullis cognita temporibus, candida pampinea
redemitus tempora frande, haec cecinit prisco
carmina docta sono:*

*Josquini antiquos, Musae, memoremus amores,
quorum iussa facit magni regnator Olympi aeternam
praeter seriem et moderamina rerum, dum stabat
mater miserans natumque decoris inviolata manens
lacrimis plorabat iniquo iudicio extinctum. Salve, o
sanctissima, salve Regina et tu summe Deus miserere
quotannis cui vitulo et certis cumulabo altaria donis.*

*Dixerat. Argutae referebant omnia cannae Mincius et
liquidis annuit amnis aquis.*

Jacquet de Mantua

O ineluctable death, bitter death, cruel death,
when you killed Josquin des Prez, you took from us
a man who, through his music, adorned the church.
And therefore, O musician, say: May he rest in peace.

Translation by Mick Swithinbank

Cantus firmus:
Eternal rest grant him, O Lord,
and let perpetual light shine upon him.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,
have mercy upon us.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,
grant us peace.

While Iacchus wondered at the vast waves of the
Adriatic and the rage of the furious whirlpool and the
waters churned up from the sea-bed, and Scylla, and
the swift-moving sandbanks and monsters unknown to
any age, he sang this learned song, in an antique style,
his white temples bound with a vine frond.

Muses, let us recount Josquin's ancient loves, whose
commands the ruler of great Olympus executed,
beyond the eternal course and governance of the world,
while the mother stood pitying and, remaining
inviolated, wept with graceful tears for her son, slain by
an unjust judgment. Hail, O most holy Queen, and you,
highest God, have pity, to whom each year I shall heap
up the altars with a calf and regular gifts.
He had spoken. The clear-voiced reeds related
everything and the river Mincius with his clear waters
nodded approval.

Translation by Luke Pitcher

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Stile Antico is firmly established as one of the world's most accomplished and innovative vocal ensembles. Working without a conductor, its twelve members have thrilled audiences on four continents with their fresh, vibrant and moving performances of Renaissance polyphony. Its bestselling recordings have earned accolades including the Gramophone Award for Early Music, Diapason d'Or de l'Année, Edison Klassiek Award, and Preis der deutschen Schallplattenkritik. The group has received three Grammy nominations, and performed live at the 60th Grammy Awards at Madison Square Garden.

Based in London, Stile Antico has appeared at many of the world's most prestigious venues and festivals. The group enjoys a particularly close association with Wigmore Hall, and has performed at the BBC Proms, Buckingham Palace, Amsterdam Concertgebouw, the Palais des Beaux-Arts, Cité de la Musique, Luxembourg Philharmonie, and Leipzig Gewandhaus. Stile Antico is frequently invited to appear at Europe's leading festivals: highlights include the Antwerp, Bruges, Utrecht, and York Early Music Festivals, the Lucerne Easter Festival, and the Schleswig-Holstein Music Festival.

Since its 2009 North American début at the Boston Early Music Festival, Stile Antico has enjoyed frequent tours to the U.S. and Canada. The group performs regularly in Boston and New York, and has appeared at the Ravinia Festival, Washington's National Cathedral and Library of Congress, Vancouver's Chan Centre, and in concert series spanning twenty-five U.S. states. Stile Antico has also appeared in Mexico and Colombia, and in 2018 visited East Asia for the first time, performing in Korea, Macau, and Hong Kong.

Stile Antico's performances are often praised for their immediacy, expressive commitment, and their sensitive and imaginative response to text. These qualities arise from the group's collaborative working style: members rehearse and perform as chamber musicians, each contributing artistically to the musical results. The group is also noted for its compelling programming, which often draws out thematic connections between works to shine new light on Renaissance music. In addition to its core repertoire, Stile Antico has premiered works by Joanna Marsh, John McCabe, Nico Muhly, Giles Swayne, and Huw Watkins. The group's diverse range of collaborators includes Fretwork, Folger Consort, Marino Formenti, B'Rock, Rihab Azar, and Sting.

Alongside its concert and recording work, Stile Antico is passionate about sharing its repertoire and working style with the widest possible audience, and its masterclasses and workshops are much in demand. As well as leading regular courses at the Dartington International Summer School, the group has been resident at Zenobia Música, and is often invited to work alongside ensembles at universities, festivals, and early music forums. The support of the charitable Stile Antico Foundation has enabled Stile Antico to expand its work with younger people, and to offer bursaries to talented young professional singers and ensembles.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Stile Antico has thrown its energy into digital projects, producing a "virtual choir" recording of Tallis's *Spem in Alium*, a music film to mark the 400th anniversary of the Mayflower voyage, and a series of lecture-recitals, *Sundays with Stile*, as well

as giving live-streamed concerts from Wigmore Hall and the York Early Music Festival. In early 2021 the group gives further streamed concerts for Boston Early Music Festival, Live From London, and St. Martin-in-the-Fields, and releases its first recording on the Decca Classics label, marking 500 years since the death of Josquin.

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, which will take place from June 6 to 13, 2021, is being redesigned due to the global pandemic. 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 (17th/18th 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* was 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.

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