

17th-Century Music

The Newsletter of the Society for Seventeenth-Century Music

Vol. 18, No. 1, Fall 2008

Idyllic Springtime in the City of Roses: Sixteenth Annual SSCM Conference

By Amanda Eubanks Winkler

Ah, springtime in sunny southern California! When local arrangements chair Giulio Ongaro suggested holding the annual meeting of the Society for Seventeenth-Century Music at the Huntington in San Marino, California, many of us from more northern climes eagerly anticipated making the trip. And Giulio delivered “the goods”: the meeting, which took place April 17–19, co-sponsored by the University of Southern California and the USC-Huntington Early Modern Studies Institute, was a resounding success. The Huntington, which includes a world-class research library with significant holdings in seventeenth-century music, an art museum, and a botanical garden, proved to be an idyllic location for our annual gathering.

The archives were open and the flowers were in full bloom: many SSCM’ers arrived early or used the breaks between papers to stroll the grounds or to avail themselves of the ample store of seventeenth-century printed and manuscript sources held by the Library. Our conference hotel, the Courtyard Marriott, was ideally located in quaint Old Town Pasadena: conference participants had a plethora of excellent dining options and were also within walking distance of the marvelous art collection at the Norton Simon Museum.

Beyond the pleasurable surroundings, participants enjoyed the particularly strong slate of papers chosen by the program committee (chair, Claire Fontijn; Jeffery Kite-Powell; Kathryn Lowerre; Nina Treadwell). The meeting began on Thursday afternoon at the

Courtyard Marriott with a tightly integrated session on musical rhetoric and expression in France. Jonathan Gibson described the “splintered” nature of French rhetorical thought in late seventeenth-century France, framing music-oriented writings by Bacilly, Le Cerf and others within this context. Margot Martin applied the notion of *mouvement* to her analysis of French harpsichord music, demonstrating how this concept might help us to understand the role of *agrément*s within this repertory. Catherine Gordon-Seifert examined a very different repertory: the spiritual airs of Bénigne de Bacilly, arguing that the composer’s reuse of profane musical conventions served a didactic function, allowing musically illiterate women to learn and sing these devotional songs with ease. Finally, Don Fader showed how Cicero’s concept of propriety affected French contrapuntal theory and aesthetics.

Indeed, this year’s conference proved particularly rich for those studying the music of France. Michael Klaper, through a close reading of the letters written by Gaspare Vigarani and his sons, reconstructed the

Continued on page 8

SSCM Members Honored at Nashville AMS



Four members of the Society received awards and honors at the annual business meeting of the American Musicological Society, held November 8, 2008. The Kinkeldey Award went to Ellen Rosand for her book *Monteverdi’s Last Operas: A Venetian Trilogy*, while Jennifer Williams Brown garnered the Palisca Award for her edition of Francesco Cavalli’s *La Calisto*. Jessie Ann Owens was elected to honorary membership

Alvaro Torres with SSCM members Ellen Rosand and Jennifer Williams Brown (photo courtesy of Jennifer Brown)

in the AMS. Esther Criscuola de Laix was the recipient of an Alvin H. Johnson AMS 50 Dissertation Fellowship Award for “Cultures of Music Print in Hamburg, ca. 1550–1630.” A full report on the conference will appear in the next issue of the SSCM newsletter.

In This Issue . . .

Reports and Reviews

SSCM 2008	1
Letter from Europe	5
Baroque Biennial	6

News of the Society

President’s Message	2
Invitation to Rochester	3
Special Business Meeting Agenda	4
Secretary’s Report	4
Treasurer’s Report	5
New Members	6
Graduate Student Caucus	9
Governing Board Election Results	10
Conference Announcements	11
Irene Alm Prize	15
JSCM 13	16

Performance News and Reviews

Harp Music in Val di Vara	12
Convent Music Edition in WLSCM	12

Members’ News	14
-------------------------	----

Roman Music for Harp and Voice Enchants Audience at Apennine Music Festival

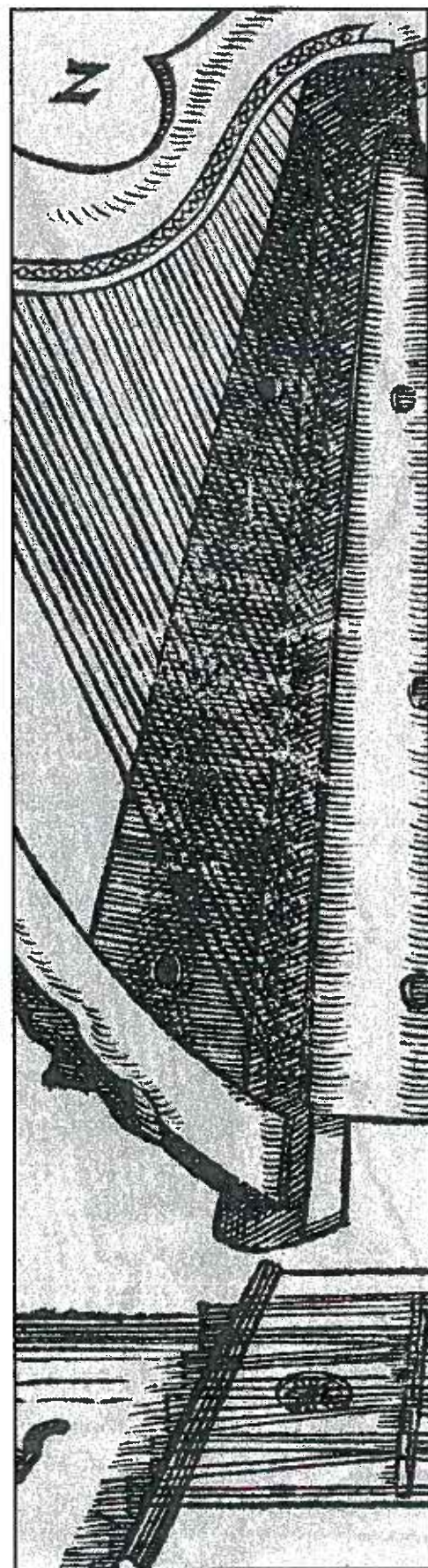
Reviewed by Margaret Murata

In the summer Europeans abandon their sweltering cities for the sea or the mountains where choice festivals and smart restaurants entice them to find the unexpected. In the Apennines along the lower Vara River, which runs parallel to the Ligurian coast, harpsichordist Marco Montanelli has established a two-week summer series of early music, with each concert in a different church or castle, most of them medieval foundations. In 2008 the offerings ran from sacred music from Norman Sicily, performed by the Sicilian ensemble Al Qantarrah in a twelfth-century cathedral, to a Mozart piano trio and quartet interspersed with readings from his letters, in a castle restored after 1550. Seventeenth-century Italian music, however, prevailed in half of the eight concerts.

Orazio Michi and Marco Marazzoli, both known as “dell’Arpa,” anchored a concert of largely unpublished Roman music on September 6 in a seventeenth-century church in the mountain town of Polverara, performed by soprano Lia Serafini and harpist Marina Bonetti, who plays a Baroque double harp made by Enzo Laurenti. Of the two pieces by Michi, “Dicano i monti” displayed Serafini’s limpid *passaggi*, which made of a strophic canzonetta an impressive virtuoso canvas. Marazzoli’s vigorous rhythms and dark harmonies of “Speranze, e che farete” marked the mid-century shift in style of the Roman cantata. A third harpist in the (historical) background was Costanza da Ponte, the wife of Luigi Rossi. Bonetti played the familiar Rossi Passacaglia; the duo performed his luminous solo motet *O amantissime Jesu*. As a continuo player, Bonetti has developed a repertory of figures (e.g., ways of repeating tones) that exploit the hard and soft attacks possible on the harp, figures that would sound utterly crude on the harpsichord.

Harp solos included transcriptions of Lambardo, Kapsberger, Frescobaldi, Domenico Mazzocchi, and Froberger. Given its resonance, a harp executes these at somewhat slower tempos than would a small spinet or a lute, but in the fairly dry acoustic of the small church of S. Nicola and with Bonetti’s rhetorical articulation, her harp spoke clearly and deeply. The concert fully lived up to the inscription by G. B. Doni that headed the program, “Una soave e sonora voce farebbe mirabile sentire, massime accompagnata dal suono dolcissimo dell’arpa”—a lovely, resonant voice is marvelous to hear, especially when accompanied by the utterly sweet sound of the harp.

Musica Antica in Val di Vara, IV edizione, August 28 to September 14, 2008; artistic director Marco Montanelli. Lia Serafini has recorded on the Brilliant, Chandos, Naxos, Symphonia, Stradivarius, Tactus, Astrée, and Opus 111 labels. In 2005 Bonetti released La cetra d’Orfeo with Diego Cantalupi, chitarrone (www.mvcremona.it).



Two Siense Convent Motets Added to WLSCM

Alexander Silbiger, General Editor of the Web Library of Seventeenth-Century Music (WLSCM), announces the newest addition to the web library, available at <http://www.sscm-wlscm.org>: two motets for soprano and basso continuo by Alessandro Della Ciaia, edited by SSCM member Colleen Reardon. The works—“Ecce venio ad te, Domine” and “Gaudens gaudebo”—are among nine motets intended for Siense nuns and included in Della Ciaia’s *Lamentationi sagre, e motetti ad una voce col basso continuo* (Venice, 1650).