

**Diderot String Quartet  
Early Music Hawaii Virtual Concert**

**Journey through Baroque Europe**

**March 12-21, 2021**

Sonata Decima Sesta    Dario Castello (15??-16??)

Sonata No. 6 in A minor  
from *Fidicinium sacro-profanum*

Heinrich Ignaz Franz Biber  
(1644-1704)

Sonata for Cello and Continuo in G Major  
Grave – Presto – Adagio  
Allegro  
Largo  
Prestissimo

Domenico Gabrielli  
(1651-1690)

Passacaglia: Grave in G Major  
from *Armonico Tributo*

Georg Muffat  
(1654-1704)

Sonata a 4 in F major

Johann Philipp Krieger  
(1649-1725)

Concerto No. 2 in g minor  
Affettuoso – Presto  
Largo affettuoso  
Allegro

Francesco Durante  
(1684-1755)

*Johanna Novom and Adriane Post, violin  
Kyle Miller, viola  
Paul Dwyer, cello  
Harry Bicket, harpsichord and organ*

**Program**

Diderot String Quartet joined by Harry Bicket on a journey through Baroque Europe. Full of unexpected surprises, the Baroque period, which spanned the entire 150 years from 1600 until 1750, was much more than Corelli sonatas, Vivaldi concerti, Handel's oratorios and the brilliance of Bach. The fertile soil from which the lasting and known masters burst forth was being vigorously and frantically cultivated by burgeoning musicians from all corners. It was a time of wild experimentation. Much of Baroque music remains shocking to this day – and stunningly beautiful.

## Notes on the Program

**Diderot String Quartet** is honored to be joined by **Harry Bicket**, and we are delighted to journey through Baroque Europe. Yes, Baroque music is the beautifully crafted sonatas by Corelli and the energetic concerti by Vivaldi; it is the grandeur of Handel's oratorios and it is the pinnacle of art represented in the work of Bach. But the Baroque period, spanning the entire 150 years from 1600 until 1750, was much more. The fertile soil from which the lasting and known masters burst forth was being vigorously and frantically cultivated by burgeoning musicians from all corners. It was a time of wild experimentation: much of Baroque music remains shocking to this day – and stunningly beautiful.

As evidenced by his loosely calculated birth- and death-dates, little is known about the life of **Dario Castello** (15??-16??). It's likely that he spent most or all of his life in Venice. Few of Castello's musical works survive, among them two books of 'sonate concertate in stil moderno'. Today's selection is the sixteenth sonata, for four parts (plus continuo). We trace this sonata to 1629, by far the earliest date represented in today's program. The middle of the piece boasts passages of 'stile concitato' writing, an at-the-time-cutting-edge warlike musical effect. Now most strongly associated with and likely invented by Monteverdi, this is generated through rapid repetition of notes.

**Heinrich Ignaz Franz Biber** (1644-1704) is, by most accounts, the most illustrious and enduring violinist-composer of the 17th century. His renown stems in part from his virtuosity as a violinist, from the manner in which his music pushed the technical capabilities of the violin, and from his penchant for alternative violin tunings. Biber enjoyed the favor of the long-ruling Holy Roman Emperor Leopold I, and he was showered with social-status upgrades and honorifics throughout his lifetime. Our selection from Biber's output is Sonata No. 6 from *Fidicinium sacro-profanum*, a set of twelve pieces for strings and basso continuo composed in 1682/3.

**Domenico Gabrielli** (1651-1690) is considered one of the earliest known virtuoso cello players. Born in Bologna, he worked in the orchestra of the church of San Petronio and soon became a leading member of the *Accademia Filarmonica* of Bologna. During the 1680s he also worked at the court of Duke Francesco II d'Este of Modena. In a time where violin virtuosity was exploding but the cello was still treated primarily as an accompanimental instrument, Gabrielli's virtuosic playing earned him the nickname *Mingain (or Minghino) dal viulunzeel*, a dialect form meaning "Dominic of the cello." Writing presumably for himself, he composed some of the earliest attested works for solo cello. What you'll hear tonight might today be considered a collection of little vignettes – the *sonata* didn't yet have the formal structure or scale we associate with it today, and this entire work is shorter than many a single movement from a 19th- or 20th-century sonata.

**Georg Muffat** (1654-1704) was a quintessential traveling Baroque musician, composer and organist. While many of his compositions – such as tonight's well-known *Passacaglia* – are lovely, he made himself indispensable for generations to come through a different kind of writing: in the preface to his *Florilegium Primum* and *Florilegium Secundum* (first and second musical bouquets, if you will) of 1695 and 1698, he published very articulate and detailed performance instructions for his music. His observations on performance practices among musicians in the court orchestra under Lully serve to this day as one of the most informative primary sources for baroque music-making. After his time in Paris and several years in Italy (where he met Corelli, among others), he spent the final 14 years of his life as *Kapellmeister* to the bishop of Passau.

**Johann Philipp Krieger** (1649-1725) studied composition in Venice and, like Biber, earned the favor and delight of Holy Roman Emperor Leopold I in Vienna. Virtually all of Krieger's musical gems have disappeared over the intervening centuries. Krieger's sonata in F begins normally (and delightfully) enough, but the ensemble texture soon gives way to a series of bizarre instrumental spotlights that could best be compared to jazz solos. Particularly striking are the mercurial solos for the second violin and viola.

We conclude with a wild and weird creation from **Francesco Durante** (1684-1755). The *Presto* movement of this piece validates any comparison that has ever been made between Baroque music and rock 'n' roll (and hard rock, at that). Durante himself was a critical link in the pedagogical tradition in Naples: he studied with Alessandro Scarlatti and taught a handful of now-B-list but then-A-list musical celebrities.

*Paul Dwyer & Kyle Miller*

## Biographies

**Diderot String Quartet**—named after the eighteenth-century French philosopher and Boccherini enthusiast Denis Diderot—brings a fresh approach to works of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Called “emotional, riveting, and ultimately cathartic” (*The Wall Street Journal*), Diderot came together in 2012 after having first met at Oberlin Conservatory and The Juilliard School. The four musicians share a background in historical performance and a passion for the string quartet genre; they found the thrill of exploring the quartet repertoire on period instruments to be irresistible.

Recent and upcoming engagements for Diderot String Quartet include Chamber Music Pittsburgh, Santa Fe Pro Musica, Lincoln Friends of Chamber Music (NE), Chamber Music Corvallis (Corvallis, OR), Connecticut Early Music Festival, Friends of Chamber Music Vancouver and Early Music Vancouver, Early Music Society of the Islands (Victoria, BC), Music in the Somerset Hills (Bernardsville, NJ), Rockefeller University's Tri-I Noon Recital Series (NYC), Carmel Bach Festival (CA), Electric Earth Concerts (Peterborough, NH), The Crypt Sessions (NYC), and Music Before 1800 in New York. Diderot has also been featured in performance at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Toledo Museum of Art, and the Morgan Library in New York.

Diderot String Quartet served as Quartet-in-Residence at Washington National Cathedral for five seasons, and served as guest faculty for Oberlin's Baroque Performance Institute. The quartet commissioned and premiered *Small Infinities*, a new work for gut strings from composer Lembit Beecher, and collaborates frequently with internationally acclaimed artists, including Jesse Blumberg, Dashon Burton, David Breitman, Avi Stein, and Harry Bicket.

Cellist **Paul Dwyer** was born in Munster, Indiana, but spent the most formative years of his life (according to Freud) in Vienna, where he decided to play the double bass, but was told he's too small. At age eight his family moved to Munich, where Paul spent most of his time playing soccer, running subversive school newspapers and transcribing Metallica songs for a heavy metal cello quartet

he formed with his best friends. Dwyer followed his roots back to the American Midwest for college, studying at the Oberlin Conservatory (B.M. '07) and the University of Michigan (M.M. '08; D.M.A. '12), where he was the recipient of a Javits Fellowship and Presser Award, before spending a year in Amsterdam as a Fulbright Fellow studying new music with Frances-Marie Uitti and baroque cello with Anner Bylsma. In 2013, he completed additional graduate studies in the Historical Performance department of The Juilliard School. Paul is fortunate to have a rich musical life playing both historical and modern cello. He is a founding member of the Diderot String Quartet and ACRONYM, and loves to play chamber music and collaborate with young composers. He is Assistant Principal cello of Lyric Opera of Chicago and teaches at Notre Dame University.

Violist **Kyle Miller** made his concerto debut in 2005 with the Reading (Pennsylvania) Symphony Orchestra as 'the dog' in P.D.Q. Bach's Canine Cantata, *Wachet Arf!* After that watershed performance, Kyle went on to study at the New England Conservatory, the Eastman School of Music, and The Juilliard School, the last at which he earned master's degrees in both viola performance and historical performance. A member of ACRONYM, Diderot String Quartet, Four Nations Ensemble, and New York Baroque Incorporated, Kyle also has appeared onstage with A Far Cry, Apollo's Fire, Clarion Orchestra, the English Concert, House of Time, the Knights, Mercury, Opera Lafayette, Quodlibet Ensemble, the Sebastians, Seraphic Fire, Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra, and Trinity Baroque Orchestra. Kyle has performed regularly at the Carmel Bach Festival and the Staunton Music Festival; and as a member of Diderot String Quartet, he has served as a guest artist and coach at Oberlin College's Baroque Performance Institute. In 2015, Kyle was selected to be an English Concert American Fellow. In 2017 and 2018, Kyle wore a wig and frock coat on Broadway, where he performed in a run of Claire van Kampen's play *Farinelli and the King*.

Violinist **Johanna Novom** appears with ensembles internationally as a soloist, principal, chamber and orchestral musician. A member of Diderot String Quartet and ACRONYM, Johanna also performs with ensembles such as Tafelmusik, Trinity Wall Street Baroque Orchestra, Boston Early Music Festival Orchestra, Handel and Haydn Society, Clarion, TENET, and New York Baroque Incorporated. She held the position of Associate Concertmaster of Apollo's Fire for 10 years, and recently that of Principal at Washington National Cathedral Baroque Orchestra. A first prize winner of the ABS' International Young Artists Competition, Johanna received her Master's degree in Historical Performance from Oberlin Conservatory, and was a 2010-11 fellowship member of the Yale Baroque Ensemble. Her discography includes recordings on Old Focus, Deutsche Grammophon, and AVIE labels, including the Grammy-Award-Winning album "Songs of Orpheus" with Apollo's Fire. Recent and upcoming festival engagements include the Carmel Bach Festival, Tanglewood, and the BBC Proms Festival.

**Adriane Post's** baroque violin playing has been described as "exquisite" by *The New York Times*. Sought after as leader, collaborator and soloist in ensembles across the US, she is a founding member of ACRONYM Ensemble and Diderot String Quartet, associate principal of Apollo's Fire, soloist and collaborator with Four Nations Ensemble, and guest concertmaster with groups such as Seraphic Fire and NY Baroque Inc. A tenured member of Handel + Haydn Society, Adriane performs regularly with Trinity Wall Street Baroque Orchestra, has appeared with The English Concert and Harry Bicket and as guest with Les Délices, Chatham Baroque and Tenet. Recent and upcoming Festival and tour appearances include Carnegie Hall, Caramoor, Tanglewood, Ravinia and Carmel Bach Festival. Invested particularly in 17th Century and Classical through Early Romantic performance practice, Adriane received her BM from Oberlin Conservatory, where she first fell in love with the baroque violin. She received her MM from The Juilliard School's Historical Performance program. Based in New York and Chicago, she was born and raised in Vermont.

Internationally renowned as an opera and concert conductor of distinction, as well as an accomplished harpsichordist, **Harry Bicket** is especially noted for his interpretation of baroque and classical repertoire and since 2007 has been Artistic Director of The English Concert, one of Europe's finest period orchestras. In 2013, following regular guest appearances for Santa Fe Opera, he became their Chief Conductor and in 2018 assumed the Music Directorship. Since taking up his position, he has conducted *Così fan tutte*, *Fidelio*, *La Finta Giardiniera*, *Romeo et Juliette*, *Alcina* and *Candide*. In the 2019 season, he also performed Strauss' *Four Last Songs* with Renée Fleming. Born in Liverpool, Harry studied at the Royal College of Music and the University of Oxford.