

Orpheus in Italy: Galileo and His Revolutions

Galileo's Daughters

Sarah Pillow, soprano **Mary Anne Ballard**, viola da gamba

With guest artists:

Ronn McFarlane, lute **Marc Wagnon**, video artist

Christa Patton, harp

Daniel Swenberg, theorbo

Program

Apollo: God of the Sun, Father of Orpheus

Ricercar No. 4 from *Intabolutura di liuto* 1536

Francesco da Milano (1497 – 1543)

Power of the Gods: the Naming of the Planets

Aria: *Dalle gelose mie* from *La Calisto* 1652

Francesco Cavalli (1602-1676)

(Juno at the Plain of the Erymanthus River)

Harmony between the Heavens and the Earth

Catena d'Amor from *Le Grazie d'amore* 1602

Cesare Negri (1535 - 1605)

Il Romeo

Barbara Strozzi (1619 - 1677)

A Renaissance Man: Vincenzo Galilei, Lute Player and Humanist

Vestiva i colli

Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (1525 – 1594)

from Vincenzo Galilei, *Il Fronimo*, 1568

Ostinato vo' seguire

Bartolomeo Tromboncino (c.1470 – 1535)

from Franciscus Bossinensis, *Tenori e contrabassi intabulati*, 1509

O Felice Occhi miei

Jacques Arcadelt (1507 - 1568)

from Diego Ortiz, *Trattado de glosas*, 1553

Return to Nature: The Birth of Opera and Scientific Discovery

Tutto'l di piango

Giulio Caccini (1551-1618)

From *Le Nuove Musiche* 1602

Canzona sesta detta l'altera

Girolamo Frescobaldi (1583-1643)

from *Primo Libro delle Canzone* 1628

Lasciatemi morire (Lamento d'Arianna)

Claudio Monteverdi (1567-1643)

from the lost opera *Arianna* 1608

Celestial Sirens: Musical Art of the 17th-Century Convent

Sonet vox tua in auribus cordis mei

Lucrezia Orsina Vizzana (1590-1662)

from *Componimenti musicali* 1623

Perpetual Motion: the Setting of the Sun

Laudate dominum (Ps. 150)

Claudio Monteverdi

An Evening Hymn

Henry Purcell (1659-1695)

Commentary

Our program (and, indeed, our ensemble) is inspired by Dava Sobel's book, *Galileo's Daughter*, which is based on the letters of Galileo's eldest daughter, Virginia, who assumed the name Suor Maria Celeste (whose convent name is a reference to *Mary Queen of Heaven*). The fact that Galileo's father, Vincenzo, was a composer, theorist and lute player inspired us further to create a program, with narration from Dava's written work as well as other sources, on the complementary relationship of science and music. The addition of beautiful images of nature, the heavens, animation and film rounds out the program, creating a visual accompaniment to the narration and music from Galileo's day.

The scientific revolution in the early modern era was one marker of the transformation in society and culture to an evidence-based belief system. Copernicus' revolutionary book of 1543 moved the Earth from the center of the universe and set it spinning, but it wasn't until Newton's Laws of Motion almost 150 years later that the notion of a fixed Earth was rendered completely obsolete (in contrast to the view of the universe depicted in the Psalms).

Visions of Copernicus's 'ballet of the planets' are accompanied by the aria *Dalle gelose mie* from Francesco Cavalli's *La Calisto* describing Juno, the wife of Jupiter, complaining of her husband's passion for disguising himself to seduce pretty maidens. Barbara Strozzi's *Il Romeo* (the Pilgrim) is a musical companion to Galileo's comment that 'one wanders about in a dark labyrinth' if hoping to understand the Universe without the help of mathematics.

Bartolomeo Tromboncino's *Ostinato vo' seguire*, (as are all the songs on this program) is an example of monody (solo song) which foreshadows the expounding of principles of dramatic musical expression put forth by the Florentine Camerata, a humanistic academy of which Vincenzo Galilei was an important member. The Camerata embraced classical antiquity as a model, thus the application of the term "Renaissance" to the art, music, and literature of this period.

Published in Ortiz's 1553 treatise on playing the viol (*Trattado de Glosas*), *O Felici Occhi miei* demonstrates a style of improvisation in which one line of a piece originally for four equal voices is singled out by a solo instrumentalist who improvises ornaments, while the remaining voices are played by an accompanying chordal instrument.

Another member of the Florentine Camerata, Giulio Caccini, used ancient Greek ideas of melody and declamation in his composition of songs for the solo voice. His books, *Le Nuove Musiche*, (1604) and its sequel, *Nuove Musiche e Nuova Maniera di Scriverele* (1614), the latter of which includes *Tutto'l di piango*, a tour-de-force of expressive vocal ornamentation over a bass line to be supplied with harmony by the instrumentalist according to numbers written above the notes. This way of accompanying allows freedom of dramatic expression to support the text. The various 'new' ways of declaiming poetry to musical accompaniment became quite popular and led to the formulation of 'spectacles' theoretically mirroring ancient Greek practice, and eventually leading to the birth opera.

The *Canzona sesta detta l'altera* by Giralomo Frescobaldi seems as if it were written as an opera 'aria,' but without words, for a bass stringed instrument, with rapidly changing tempi and affects.

Following is the famous *Lamento d'Arianna*, which is the only remaining music from the opera *Arianna* by Claudio Monteverdi. It was first performed at a wedding celebration in Mantua in 1608. The intensity of the *Lamento's* secular amorous texts are countered by a religious monody, *Sonet vox tua*, which evokes the language of the psalms in a nun's prayer for the forgiveness of sins.

We conclude the program with the joyous *Laudate Dominum*, a sacred aria by Monteverdi, based on the language of Psalm 150, which calls all of the musical instruments to praise God, followed by a postlude of sorts - Henry Purcell's *Evening Hymn*, a gentle welcome of the heavenly rest expected upon one's death. The latter was written in 1688, one year after the publication of Sir Isaac Newton's *Principia*, which fused the work of his scientific forefathers and bound the entire universe.

- Sarah Pillow and Mary Anne Ballard

Text Translations

La Calisto: Giunone

Juno:

Harrowed and agitated by my
incessant jealous worries,
on this patch of Earth I'll make my
noble birds descend- these
wandering companions of my rage.

I hear rumors of new seductions.
Having abandoned the court
of heaven, my husband
is living here in disguise,
concealed by strange
and indecent clothing.

To deceive pretty maidens, this new Proteus
always changes himself into
new shapes.

I expect one day that my
great Jupiter will bring
his paramours up to me in the stars.

Il Romeo

The Pilgrim

My heart goes begging
through the dominions of love,
asking for kindness, seeking help
in its wretched, unhappy life.

Not even for good payment with
faithfulness
could it find mercy,
so perversely cruel is the one that it
loves,
fleeing , betraying, wishing it dead.

My pilgrim heart returned
to its home,
never having found the least favor of
kindness
in its miserable beggardly condition.
Feminine goodwill is so wearied
that no woman rich with beauty would
hear
my heart or look at it,
and they sent it away in peace.

Ostinato vo' seguire

Steadfastly I will pursue

my noble enterprise.
Since Love, like you, does me injury,
I might as well die.

Do with me, O Heaven, O Fortune,
as well or badly as you choose.

Grant me neither pleasure nor injury
to discourage me or make me bold,
for I can neither enjoy the one,
nor any longer flee the other.

Tutto' di piango

All the day I weep, and then at night,
when the wretched mortals take rest,
I find myself in tears
and redoubled are my ills;
then I spend all of my time weeping.

In a sad state I go, weeping my eyes
out, my heart in grief, and I am the
last of all beings: thus do love's
arrows keep me continually from
peace.

Alas! From one day to the next
from one night to the next,
I have already run the course
of most of this death called life.

The fault of another grieves me
more than my own woe:
that pity should live and my
faithful ally
sees me burn and helps me not.

Lament of Arianna

O let me die
and what can soften my comfort
in this harsh fate
this great suffering
let me die.

O my Theseus
yes, I call you mine
for you are mine
though you have vanished, cruel one
before my eyes.

Look at me, Theseus,
O God! Turn back to see she who left
her homeland and kingdom for you,
and who, on these deserted shores
food for cruel and merciless beasts
will leave her bare bones.

O Theseus, if you knew- O God!
how troubled is your poor Ariadne
perhaps repentant, you would turn
Your prow towards these shores.

But with gentle breezes,

you happily go
And I, who weep;
for you prepare Athens
or happy festivities in splendor,
while I remain here
on these deserted shores, the prey of wild
beasts.

You shall happily clasp to your breast
both your aged parents
and I shall never see again
My mother, or my father.

Where is the faith
that you swore to me repeatedly?
Thus from your lofty throne
you praise me?
Are these the garlands
With which you would adorn my tresses?
These are the scepters I should wield,
And these the precious stones and jewels?
For me to be abandoned
Where wild beasts will tear apart and devour
me?

Ah Theseus, thus would you leave me to
die. In vain weeping and crying out
for help, your miserable Ariadne,
Who trusted you,
Brought honor to you,
and saved your life?
Ah, he still does not answer! Ah,
more deaf than an asp is he to my lament
O storms, o tempests, o winds,
drown him beneath your waves
hasten whales and monsters of the sea
and with his foul limbs, fill your deep
abysses.

Ah! What do I say? Am I delirious?
Alas, how miserable I am
What to ask? O Theseus
I am not, no, I am not she
Who unleashed those fierce words
Speaks the distress of me,
And my pain;
Yes, my tongue did speak,
But not my heart.

Miserable! Yet do I hope
In spite of betrayal, and not even
Such great derision
Puts out love's fire
Now you, Death, you shall
Extinguish my wronged ardour.
O Mother, O Father, O splendid
Palace of that ancient kingdom

Where my cradle was gold.
O servants, trusted friends
(Ah! Cruel fate!)
Look, where pitiless fate
has led me! Observe
the pain inflicted by my love
my faith, and the deceit of others.
thus is the destiny
of one who loves too much
and trusts too deeply.

Sonet vox tua

Let your voice sound
in the ears of my heart,
most beloved Jesus,
and may the abundance
of your grace
overcome the abundance
of my sins.
Then truly I will sing,
I will exult, I will rejoice,
I will recite a psalm
of jubilation and rejoicing.

And my voice will be like
the striking of the kithara
And my speech sweeter
than honey and the honeycomb.

Laudate Dominum (Psalm 150)

Praise the Lord in His sanctuary
Praise Him in the firmament
of his power.
Praise Him with the sound
of the trumpet.
Praise Him with the psaltery and harp.
Praise Him with the drum and dancing.
Praise Him with sweet-sounding cymbals.
Praise Him with the jubilant cymbals.
Let all that hath breath praise the Lord.
Alleluia.

Evening Hymn

Now, now that the sun hath veil'd his light, and
bid the world goodnight,
To the soft bed my body I dispose; But where,
where shall my soul repose?
Dear, dear God, even in thy arms, ev'n in thy
arms:
And can there be any so sweet security?
Then to thy rest, O my soul!
And singing, praise the mercy that prolongs thy
days. Hallelujah.

About the Performers:

Praised with having “a *genuinely genre-busting voice, full and vivid*” (The Washington Post), soprano **Sarah Pillow** enjoys a unique career, drawing on her equal expertise in jazz, classical, and early music repertoire. Beginning her career as a jazz singer, Sarah won best vocal solo in a performance at the Montreux Jazz Festival. She went on to study classical singing at Oberlin Conservatory, earning a Bachelor of Music degree. Since moving to New York City from her native California, Sarah has toured the United States and Canada with her jazz quartet, her crossover project, *Nuove Musiche*, and *Galileo's Daughters*, her early music ensemble which is shaped by her variety of talents in early music, opera, jazz, drama, and scholarship. Sarah spent the coronavirus pandemic making weekly ‘Anthems’ with percussionist husband, Marc Wagnon, which can be found, as well as their ‘Fireside Chats’, on the Buckyball Music YouTube channel.

Mary Anne Ballard, viola da gamba, has, as a performer and programmer, explored a wide variety of early music from the Middle Ages through the Baroque periods. She has toured 47 states, The Netherlands, Germany, and Austria, and appeared on numerous radio programs (e.g. *St. Paul Sunday*, *Performance Today*) with *The Baltimore Consort*, an ensemble whose recordings of repertory from Renaissance England, Scotland, France, and Spain, as well as early traditional music have ranked in the top 10 on the Billboard “classical crossover” charts. Ms. Ballard has taught viola da gamba and directed early music ensembles at the University of Pennsylvania, Princeton University, and the Peabody Conservatory, and she is currently teaching viola da gamba at Notre Dame and, in the summer, at Oberlin Baroque Performance Institute. In New York City, she is Music Director for the GEMS production of the 12th-century *Play of Daniel*, with performances at The Cloisters and Trinity Wall Street Church.

GRAMMY-nominated lutenist, **Ronn McFarlane** strives to bring the lute - the most popular instrument of the Renaissance - into today’s musical mainstream and make it accessible to a wider audience. He graduated with honors from Shenandoah Conservatory, later receiving an honorary Doctorate of Music. Ronn has been performing in solo recitals and with the Baltimore Consort, touring throughout the United States, Canada and Europe. His solo CD of original compositions, *Indigo Road*, received a GRAMMY Award Nomination for Best Classical Crossover Album of 2009. Ronn’s group Ayreheart has released two CDs: *One Morning*, consisting of all-original music by Ronn, and *Barley Moon*, which blends folk music and art music from Renaissance and Medieval England, Scotland, and Wales. His latest releases, *Fermi’s Paradox*, 2020 and *A Star in the East*, 2021, are performed with Carolyn Surrick, viola da gamba.

Composer, percussionist, teacher and visual artist **Marc Wagnon** has been creating videos for *Galileo’s Daughters* since 2005. He now performs with the group, mixing in real time video clips, animation, iconic images, and high-definition photographs of Earth and the heavens that accompany the group’s performances. He also creates video accompaniment to his own and other’s compositions. Originally from Switzerland, Marc studied music at the Geneva Conservatory of Music and the Berklee School in Boston, and has recorded over 20 albums, including 4 solo albums, of jazz and jazz-rock music. He is the author of *Drum Talk*, a teaching method for group percussion that uses a unique approach to polyrhythms and various drumming styles to teach a level of complexity that would normally demand longer preparation. For more information, visit: www.marcwagnon.com.

Christa Patton, historical harpist and early wind specialist, has performed throughout the Americas, Europe, and Japan with many of today’s premier early music ensembles including Piffaro, Early Music New York, Boston Camerata, The King’s Noyse, Folger Consort, Newberry Consort, Apollo’s Fire, Parthenia, ARTEK and Chatham Baroque. As a Baroque harpist specializing in 17th century opera, she has performed with New York City Opera, Wolf Trap Opera, Opera Atelier and the Opera Theater of Saint Louis. As an educator and scholar, Christa has served on the faculty of Rutgers University and the Graduate Center at CUNY. She is also the director of the Baroque Opera Workshop at Queens College, a workshop specializing in period-specific performance practice of 17th century musical drama.

Daniel Swenberg specializes in historical plucked strings: Renaissance and Baroque lutes, theorbos, and baroque and 19th-century guitars. He performs regularly throughout North America with ensembles: ARTEK, REBEL, The Metropolitan Opera, Mr. Jones & the Engines of Destruction, Ensemble Viscera, New York City Opera, Opera Atelier/Tafelmusik, Catacoustic Ensemble, Orchestra of St Luke’s, Apollo’s Fire, and The Green Mountain Project. He has accompanied Renee Fleming and Kathleen Battle at Carnegie Hall. Daniel received awards from the Belgian American Educational Foundation (2000) for a study of 18th century chamber music for the lute, and a Fulbright Scholarship (1997) to study in Bremen, Germany at the Hochschule für Künste. He studied previously with Pat O’Brien at Mannes College of Music, receiving a Masters degree in Historical Performance (Lute).

The images of space are used with the courtesy of the following entities:

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