

Early Music

The Age of Indulgence

Les Délices

Saturday, April 6, 8:00 p.m.



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The Age of Indulgence

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Debra Nagy, *baroque oboe and direction*

Julie Andrijeski, *violin and viola*

Scott Metcalfe, *violin*

Emily Walhout, *viola da gamba*

Michael Sponseller, *harpsichord*

Saturday, April 6, 8:00 p.m.



Sinfonia 6
from *l'Art de la modulation* (1755)

François-André Philidor (1726-1795)

Adagio

Allegro ma non troppo

Aria tempo di minuetto

Concert no. 3
from *Pièces de clavecin en concert*

Jean-Philippe Rameau (1683-1764)

La Lapoplinière

La Timide

Tambourins

Sonata Prima
from *Sonates en symphonie*

Jean-Joseph Cassanea de Mondonville (1711-1772)

Overtura

Aria

Gigha

INTERMISSION

Sinfonia 1
from *l'Art de la modulation*

Philidor

Con spirito

L'arte della fuga

Pastorella

Gavotta

Les Graces

Jacques Duphly (1715-1789)

Michael Sponseller, *harpsichord*

2eme Concert de Simphonies (Op. 3, no. 2) Antoine Dauvergne (1713-1797)

Ouverture

Minuetto

Rondo

Chaconne



This performance runs approximately one and a half hours, including intermission.

Please note that photography and the use of recording devices are not permitted. Remember to turn off all cellular phones and pagers before the performance begins. Large print programs are available upon request. For more information or to arrange accommodations, please call 212-854-7799.

About the Program

Among the most famous images from the French Rococo, Jean-Honoré Fragonard's *The Swing* perfectly captures the spirit of this in-between era. Set in a lush, overgrown, private garden, a beautiful young woman is pushed in a swing by an older clergyman while her lover hides in the bushes in the foreground, getting an excellent view up her gorgeous, pink, ruffled skirts. She kicks off her delicate shoe, delighting in the pleasure of a shared secret.

Such playful, highly-ornamented scenes privileging informality, frivolity, pleasure, and gallantry were a mirror on to the lives of the French aristocracy. With enormous wealth at their disposal and wielding significant political power, French aristocrats could pursue leisure as an occupation or lose themselves in romantic intrigues. They could decorate extravagant houses following the latest trends in art, architecture, and interior design, or establish their reputations as patrons of the arts. In fact, only a very small percentage of the population in France controlled 90% of the wealth, and the 1750s saw multiple attempts at tax reform (such that the wealthy would not be exempted from the taxes levied against the poor) ultimately defeated. (Is this sounding familiar?)

By mid-century, murmurs of the coming Revolution could already be heard in the writing of the *philosophes*—Voltaire, Rousseau, and others. Besides arguing in favor of free thought and social reform, enlightenment thinkers decried the degenerate excesses, erotic subtexts, and superficiality of Rococo aesthetics, calling instead for art that was heroic and virtuous, ordered yet refined.

The music you hear tonight makes no apologies for its origins. Despite its genesis in an age of indulgence, it is so much more than merely pleasing or even titillating; I hope you'll also hear its daring, experimental side—that which locates it on the eve of an aesthetic revolution. These works from the 1740s and 1750s do not conform to our expectations about Baroque music, but they are not quite Classical either. Rather, they mix the humor and wit of early Haydn and Gluck, a little of C. P. E. Bach's *sturm und drang*, and characteristically lush French harmonies together to create a truly unique sound. The result is a fusion of Baroque gestures and classical forms that combine with harmonic and technical virtuosity to yield expressive extremes.

The two quartets we perform tonight from François André Philidor's *l'Art de la Modulation* (1755) achieve their sense of surprise and play through fast and unexpected harmonic modulations using the melodic and harmonic language of the nascent Classical period. François-André was the youngest member of the Philidor dynasty of musicians and wind players who worked at the French court from the 1660s onward. His fame, ultimately, rested more on his accomplishments as the first professional chess player than as a composer (Philidor's treatise on chess has seen at least 100 editions in at least ten languages since its initial publication in 1749). Philidor's music was the product of the same incredible intellect and imagination that could simultaneously play (and win) three games of chess blindfolded during exhibition games late in his career. In the 1750s and 60s, he earned a reputation as the leading comic-opera composer in France. His successor, André Grétry, perfectly described the fusion of concentration and creativity in his eulogy for Philidor: "How easily the vigorous intellect of this justly famous and sorely missed artist could grasp difficult combinations is well known. He would arrange a succession of sounds with the same facility that he followed a game of chess. None could vanquish him at this game of combinations; no musician will ever put more power and clarity into his compositions than Philidor put into his."

It's quite a shame that *L'Art de la modulation* was Philidor's only published collection of instrumental music. Philidor's Sinfonia 6 begins with a somewhat disconcerting adagio that repeatedly establishes the home key of D Major only to obfuscate it with meandering chromatic sighs. The allegro that follows is a true *conversation galant* that pits strings in sunny major tonality against the oboe who repeatedly responds in minor. This conversational quality and constant shifts in character lend this movement an operatic quality; one can practically imagine the climax of a comic opera in which pairs of would-be lovers sing simultaneously of their hopes, dreams, frustrations, and inevitable misunderstandings. Just as lovers are reunited and order established at the close of an opera, the final minuetto (so seemingly galant, simple, and charming) hints at a pleasure-filled pastoral bliss, only to be knocked off kilter by strange, unexpected chords and unprepared dissonances.

The opening quartet of Philidor's collection, Sinfonia 1, uses similar harmonic and textural techniques to establish a sense of fun, exploration, and surprise. The opening section finds the oboe and violin playing in thirds, while pungent chromatic inflections and plangent melodic intervals abound. The fugue that follows is again rife with chromatic inflections and interruptions, as well as disquieting melodic augmented seconds. The Pastorella allows for some relief and peace; full of sonorous drones in G Major, it's part-siciliano, part-musette, but, as usual, there's trouble in paradise as wistful departures and chromatic shocks arrest the listener. The spirited Gavotta pops and crackles with excitement as it closes the work.

Jean-Philippe Rameau's *Pièces de Clavecin en concert* (1741) take Jean-Joseph Casanea de Mondonville's 1734 edition as their inspiration. Set for obbligato harpsichord with violin and viola da gamba (or optional second violin or flute), the harpsichord part demands a unique virtuosity and flair that's supported and enriched by the bowed strings. Rameau's *3eme Concert* betrays a particular debt not only to his personal patron, Alexandre Jean Joseph Le Riche de La Pouplinière, but also to Rameau's own operatic output. The opening movement is either a direct tribute to La Pouplinière or a dedication to his wife, who was an accomplished keyboardist and student of Rameau. The wonderful *rondeau* theme of La Timide is borrowed from a charming *air gracieux* that had recently been heard in Rameau's opera *Dardanus* (1739), while the visceral, fun Tambourins were heard first in Rameau's *Castor et Pollux* (1737).

Though hardly a household name today, Mondonville was a violin virtuoso, conductor, and composer who stood on par with Rameau. The ensemble Sonata (suite, really) that we perform tonight derives from his 1734 collection of keyboard sonatas with violin accompaniment (a precursor to Rameau's *Pièces de Clavecin en concert*). Mondonville later arranged these works for strings, oboe, and continuo for use by the orchestra of the Concert Spirituel. Following the mercurial overture, a graceful air *en rondeau* complete with droning figures in the second violin. The concluding *gigha* (gigue) is relatively simple harmonically but it gains excitement and vigor from rhythmic drive, undulating textures, and a display of virtuosity that must hint at Mondonville's own prodigious technique.

Like Rameau, harpsichordist Jacques Duphly never successfully adapted to the new Viennese classical style that came into vogue in Paris in the 1760s and 70s. Instead, he continued the tradition of the great *clavecinistes*, composing character pieces and rondeaux such as *Les Graces*, which is infused with complex harmonic language and dripping with ornaments. Known for his especially light and sensitive touch, Duphly's oeuvre owes a great debt to Rameau's keyboard works.

We close our program with selections from Antoine Dauvergne's *2eme Concert de Symphonies* (1751). Dauvergne may have studied composition with Rameau in the 1730s, and began an appointment as a violinist in the Chambre du roi by 1739. He succeeded Jean-Féry Rebel as composer for the King's Chamber Music in 1755, and took over direction of the Concert Spirituel following Mondonville's tenure there. Our suite opens with a sparkling overture followed by an intimate, expressive pair of minuets. A rollicking, witty rondo is capped off by an extended, sublime chaconne.

Program notes by Debra Nagy

About the Artists

Les Délices' polished, expressive, and dynamic performances of masterpieces and little-known works from the French Baroque have been garnering critical acclaim. Their debut CD *The Tastes Reunited* was named one of the "Top Ten Early Music Discoveries of 2009" (NPR's *Harmonia*), and their performances have been called "a beguiling experience" (*The Plain Dealer*), "astonishing" (ClevelandClassical.com), and "first class" (*Early Music America Magazine*). Their recent recording *Myths & Allegories*, featuring soprano Clara Rottsoik, was called a "triumph" by *the Plain Dealer*. Founded by Debra Nagy in Cleveland in 2006, Les Délices brings together artists with national reputations who share a passion for this exquisite yet seldom heard repertoire. In recent seasons, Les Délices has been invited to perform at the Frick Collection, Music Before 1800, Yale University, Early Music in Columbus, Ann Arbor's Academy of Early Music, and the San Francisco Early Music Society. Les Délices has been featured on WCPN's *Around Noon* and WKSU's *In Performance*, NPR's syndicated *Harmonia* and *Sunday Baroque*, and had their debut CD included as part of the audio guide for a special exhibit at New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art (*Watteau, Music,*

and Theater). Tonight marks their Miller Theatre debut. Visit www.lesdelices.org for more information.

Debra Nagy, director, has been praised for her "dazzling technique and soulful expressiveness," (*Rocky Mountain News*) and deemed "a baroque oboist of uncommon elegance" by *the Plain Dealer*. One of the nation's most sought after early double reed specialists, Debra performs frequently with Baroque ensembles and orchestras in San Francisco, Los Angeles, Portland, Seattle, Vancouver, Denver, Philadelphia, and New York, in addition to Cleveland's Apollo's Fire. She has also been heard at the international Early Music Festivals of Boston, Berkeley, Regensburg, and Antwerp. A graduate of the Oberlin Conservatory, Debra was the first-prize winner in the 2002 American Bach Soloists Young Artist Competition, spent 2002-2003 in Brussels and Amsterdam as the recipient of a Belgian American Educational Foundation Grant, received a 2009 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, and was awarded a 2010 Creative Workforce Fellowship from Cleveland's Community Partnership for Arts & Culture. She received her doctorate in early music at Case Western Reserve University, where she currently directs the Col-



legium Musicum. Debra can be heard on the Capstone, Bright Angel, Naxos, Avie, Delos, CPO, and ATMA labels and has had live performances featured on CBC Radio Canada, Klara (Belgium), NPR's *Performance Today*, WQXR (New York City), WCLV (Cleveland), WKSU (Kent), and WGBH Boston.

Recently lauded for her “invigorating verve and imagination” by the *Washington Post*, **Julie Andrijeski** is among the leading baroque violinists in the U.S. Her unique musical performance style is greatly influenced by her knowledge and skilled performance of Baroque dance, and she often combines these two mediums in the classroom, on stage, and at workshops. Ms. Andrijeski is a full-time lecturer in the music department at Case Western Reserve University where she teaches early music performance practice, Baroque dance, and directs the Case/CIM Baroque Orchestra and chamber ensembles. Before joining the Case faculty, Ms. Andrijeski was a full-time member of the early-music trio Chatham Baroque. Now, in addition to her teaching, Ms. Andrijeski regularly appears with many baroque groups including, among others, Quicksilver, Cleveland's Apollo's Fire, the New York State Baroque Orchestra, the Boston Early Music Festival Orchestra, Cecilia's Circle, Spiritus Collective, and the King's Noyse. She has been on the faculties of the Baroque Performance Institute at the Oberlin Conservatory and the Madison Early Music Festival for over a decade, and joined the faculty of the Van-

couver Early Music summer festival this year. Ms. Andrijeski received her Doctorate of Musical Arts in Early Music from Case Western Reserve University in May 2006. Previous degrees include a B.M. in Violin Performance from the University of Denver (1985) and an M.M. in Violin Performance from Northwestern University (1986).

Violinist and conductor **Scott Metcalfe** is the music director of Blue Heron, a vocal ensemble based in Boston which specialises in music between 1400 and 1600 and has been acclaimed by the *Boston Globe* as “one of the Boston music community's indispensables.” Metcalfe has been invited to serve as guest director by Emmanuel Music (Boston), Monadnock Music (New Hampshire), the Tudor Choir and Seattle Baroque (Seattle, WA), Pacific Baroque Orchestra (Vancouver, BC), and the Dryden Ensemble (Princeton, NJ), in works by Monteverdi, Biber, Buxtehude, Handel, Bach, and others. In January 2010 he led the Green Mountain Project in an all-star 400th-anniversary performance of Monteverdi's 1610 Vespers in New York City, which the *New York Times* called “quite simply terrific.” He recently served as Music Director of Early Music America's first Young Performers Festival, held in conjunction with the Boston Early Music Festival in June 2011. Besides playing in Les Délices, Metcalfe is an active freelancer and a regular participant in Montreal's early music scene, working with Arion, Montreal Baroque, Les Voix Baroques, and other groups.



Emily Walhout grew up playing the cello, but discovered her love for Baroque bass lines at Oberlin Conservatory, where she took up the Baroque cello and the viola da gamba, thus launching an active career in early music. Ms. Walhout was a founding member of La Luna, and was a member of The King’s Noyse from 1987 through 2004. Ms. Walhout has played viola da gamba or principal cello for the Boston Early Music Festival Orchestra, Seattle Baroque, Portland Baroque, Les Boreades, Les Violons Du Roy, New York Collegium, and Trinity Consort (Portland, OR). She has toured as a chamber musician throughout North America and Europe, and she has recorded extensively with the Boston Camerata, La Luna, and The King’s Noyse. A resident of Waterown, MA, Ms. Walhout maintains a small studio of private students and coaches several devoted viol consorts.

Michael Sponseller has appeared throughout Europe and North America with critical acclaim as a soloist, conductor, and chamber musician. Winner of the American Bach Soloists Competition (1998) and the Jurow International Harpsichord Competition (2002), he holds the distinction of being a two-time prizewinner at the Festival of Flanders International Harpsichord Competition (Bruges), as well as taking prizes in Montréal and Kalamazoo. Mr. Sponseller has performed and recorded frequently with the Handel and Haydn Society, Smithsonian Chamber Players, American Bach Soloists, New York Collegium, Apollo’s Fire and

recently, the Carmel Bach Festival. In addition to holding degrees from the Oberlin Conservatory of Music and the Royal Conservatory of Music in The Hague, Mr. Sponseller was a teacher of harpsichord at the Baldwin Wallace Conservatory of Music. To continue to explore his interest in vocal and chamber music on period instruments, he founded Ensemble Florilege in 2007. Mr. Sponseller can be heard on several recordings from Electra, Vanguard Classics, Naxos, Delos, and Centaur.

About Miller Theatre

Miller Theatre at Columbia University is the leading presenter of new music in New York City and one of the most vital forces nationwide for innovative programming. In partnership with Columbia University School of the Arts, Miller is dedicated to producing and presenting unique events in dance, contemporary and early music, jazz, opera, and performance. Founded in 1988 with funding from John Goelet, Brooke Astor, and the Kathryn Bache Miller Fund, Miller Theatre has built a reputation for attracting new and diverse audiences to the performing arts and expanding public knowledge of contemporary music.

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Ensemble Signal

Brad Lubman, *conductor*

Rachel Calloway, *mezzo-soprano*

Jamie Jordan, *soprano*

Courtney Orlando, *violin*

Tuesday, April 23, 6:00 p.m.

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New Music by Laura Kaminsky

Ensemble II

Cassatt String Quartet

Saturday, April 27, 8:00 p.m.

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The Baroque Vanguard

Ensemble Signal

Kristian Bezuidenhout, *harpsichord*

Brad Lubman, *conductor*

Tuesday, May 7, 6:00 p.m.

POP-UP CONCERTS

Picker Pops Up

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