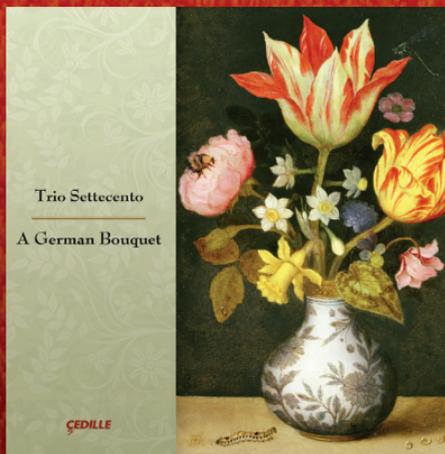


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TRIO SETTECENTO
A GERMAN BOUQUET

The virtuosity and spirit are stunning here, going from one set of interesting musical challenges to the next, and carrying us along for the ride in a state of emotional bliss. For those who think all Baroque music sounds alike, listen carefully to this disc, as it will prove quite the eye-opener. Barton Pine and associates have done it again, and further trips to England and France are promised. Enthusiastically recommended!

—Audiophile Audition

HEINRICH IGNAZ FRANZ VON

BIBER

MENSA SONORA BATTALIA



BAROQUE BAND GARRY CLARKE, DIRECTOR

CEDILLE

Producer: Jim Ginsburg

Engineer: Bill Maylone

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(*Battalia*) in Nichols Hall at the Music Institute of Chicago, Evanston, Illinois

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HEINRICH IGNAZ FRANZ VON BIBER (1644 –1704)

MENSA SONORA

Pars I in D major (8:42)

- 11 I Sonata *Grave–Allegro* (1:15)
- 12 II Allamanda (1:53)
- 13 III Courante (0:54)
- 14 IV Sarabanda (1:18)
- 15 V Gavotte (0:56)
- 16 VI Gigue (1:42)
- 17 VII Sonatina *Allegro* (0:41)

Pars II in F major (6:10)

- 18 I Intrada *Alla breve* (0:58)
- 19 II Balletto *Alla breve* (1:26)
- 20 III Sarabanda (1:06)
- 21 IV Balletto *Alla breve* (0:44)
- 22 V Sarabanda (1:03)
- 23 VI Balletto *Alla breve* (0:49)

Pars III in A minor (7:53)

- 24 I Gagliarda *Allegro* (1:27)
- 25 II Sarabanda (1:23)
- 26 III Aria (1:01)
- 27 IV Ciacona (3:08)
- 28 V Sonatina *Adagio–Presto* (0:51)

Pars IV in B-flat major (8:57)

- 29 I Sonata *Grave–Allegro–Adagio* (1:58)
- 30 II Allamanda (1:48)
- 31 III Courante (0:52)
- 32 IV Balletto (0:35)
- 33 V Sarabanda (1:12)
- 34 VI Gigue *Presto* (1:22)
- 35 VII Sonatina *Adagio* (1:07)

Pars V in E major (6:16)

- 36 I Intrada *Allegro* (1:08)
- 37 II Balletto (0:45)
- 38 III Trezza (0:41)
- 39 IV Gigue (0:48)
- 40 V Gavotte *Alla breve* (0:58)
- 41 VI Gigue (0:58)
- 42 VII Retirada (0:55)

Pars VI in G minor (9:22)

- 43 I Sonata *Adagio–Presto* (1:07)
- 44 II Aria (1:32)
- 45 III Canario *Presto* (0:49)
- 46 IV Amener (0:52)
- 47 V Trezza (1:10)
- 48 VI Ciacona (3:12)
- 49 VII Sonatina *Adagio–Presto* (0:34)

BATTALIA for Violin, Strings, and Basso Continuo in D major (8:49)

- 40 I Sonata *Allegro* (1:54)
- 41 II Die liederliche Gesellschaft
von allerley Humor (0:48)
- 42 III Presto (0:27)
- 43 IV Der Mars (1:08)
- 44 V Presto (1:04)
- 45 VI Aria (1:35)
- 46 VII Die Schlacht (0:45)
- 47 VIII Lamento der Verwundten Musquetirer (1:06)

Baroque Band, Garry Clarke director

Total Time (56:50)

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

by Garry Clarke

The German composer Paul Hindemith (1895–1963) described Heinrich Ignaz Franz von Biber as “the most important Baroque composer before Bach,” and Biber certainly was one of the most innovative and influential composers of the second half of the seventeenth century.

Born in Wartenburg, north Bohemia, in 1644, the son of a gamekeeper or forester, Biber was to ascend through the ranks of the aristocracy of Salzburg to become Kapellmeister to the archiepiscopal court in 1684 and collect a knighthood from Emperor Leopold in 1690, before his death at age 60 in 1704.

Little is known about Biber’s early musical training except that by the mid 1660’s he was already a master on both violin and viola da gamba. Some scholars believe he was likely trained by the Jesuit musicians at the Gymnasium at Opava in Silesia. The theory behind this speculation comes from Biber’s two middle names, neither of which appear

on his birth certificate and which he didn’t start using until about 1676; they are taken from two of the most important founding members of the Jesuit order: Ignatius of Loyola and Franz Xavier. This was an important period in the formation of Biber’s musical style, and much of the innovation of his later compositions, including the use of folk music, programmatic elements, virtuosity, and scordatura (alternative tuning of the violin strings) comes from these early influences.

In 1670, Biber moved to Salzburg, entering the service, as a court musician, of Prince-Archbishop Maximilian Gandolph von Khüenburg. Two years later, in 1672, he married Maria Weiss, the daughter of a wealthy Salzburg merchant. In 1679, Biber was appointed deputy Kapellmeister for the Archbishop.

Both works on this disc date from Biber’s time in Salzburg: *Battalia* from 1673 and *Mensa Sonora*, published in 1680 and dedicated to the Archbishop of Salzburg (as was much of Biber’s work after 1670).

Mensa Sonora, or “sounding table,” a set of six instrumental suites or “Pars,” subtitled “instrumental table-music with fresh-sounding violin sonorities,” was music for dining — i.e., background music. But it is much more than that. The music may be less technically innovative than much of his violin music and certainly less virtuosic, but Biber employs a range of unexpected melody, harmony, and rhythm, much of which must have been lost for those original diners above the clattering of their knives and forks. Typical of late seventeenth century suites, the *Mensa Sonora* include many of the dance movements usual in a French suite: allemande, courante, sarabande, gavotte, and gigue. To these Biber adds dances such as gagliarda, balletto, trezza, canario, amener, and ciacona. Pars I, IV, and VI all begin with a sonata and conclude with a sonatina. In Pars I, Biber uses the seven bars of the opening sonata as the conclusion, while in Pars VI the concluding sonatina opens with a motive similar to the opening sonata but then Biber adds an eight-bar presto which leaves us hanging in the air — or

mid-mouthful, so to speak.

On most, if not all, currently-available recordings, the *Mensa Sonora* are performed one to a part. While this is a justifiable solution, I have elected to use a larger ensemble. I have done this for several reasons. First, I believe the relative simplicity of the individual parts indicates that Biber was anticipating more than one player per part. Indeed, Biber himself suggests that *Mensa Sonora* contains no “eccentric dishes,” a reference to both the sumptuous meal the diners might have been eating and to the relative lack of technical virtuosity or special effects such as scordatura needed to execute the individual parts. If, as I suspect, the intention had been to use a large ensemble, this would have made ensemble playing more straightforward, especially for music that, due to its “background” purpose, may not have received prior rehearsal. Second, we know that many court banquets were extravagant affairs. While it is possible that the music-loving Archbishop had *Mensa Sonora* played for his private dining, it is at least as likely

that it was used for larger gatherings. In this case, larger instrumental forces might have been employed to facilitate the Archbishop hearing at least some of the music over the din of the meal. Third, the Archbishop had a large body of musicians on his payroll — for the visit of the future Emperor Joseph I in 1697, over 100 musicians performed in a costumed entertainment — surely they didn't all get the night off? And finally, the added depth of sonority produced by a larger-than-one-on-a-part ensemble gives extra weight to the music, reflecting the rich nature of the food being consumed while still allowing crispness and lightness of punctuation and articulation.

In *Battalia*, or “Battle,” we see Biber at his programmatic best. Here folk songs mix with special effects for a rollicking good time. Biber lets us know what we are in for early on: “Where the strokes are written, one must knock on the violin with the bow. You have to try this” he suggests over a passage in which little daggers are placed over the notes to represent rifle shots. He follows this with

“the dissolute horde of musketeers” in which 8 well-known folk songs, all in different keys, are played together representing the drunken revels of the soldiers before battle (prefiguring Charles Ives!). “Der Mars” (The March) brings together fife and drum with the solo violin playing the part of the fife and the violone (bass) acting as drum. Here “[the bassist] must hold a piece of paper against the strings so that it rattles,” suggests Biber. After the call to order and an aria to Bacchus, the god of wine, comes the battle itself, with cannon shots resounding from the bass. “The Battle must not be played with the bow, but rather pluck the string with the right hand. Strongly!” says Biber, anticipating the “Bartok pizzicato” by more than 200 years! After the battle comes the concluding Lament for the Wounded Musketeers.

Biber was known in his lifetime as one of the greatest violin virtuosos of the day. Even 80 years after his death, the eminent 18th century musicologist Charles Burney wrote, “of all the violin players of the last century, Biber seems

to have been the best, and his solos are the most difficult and fanciful of any Music I have seen of the same period.” Nonetheless, Biber's music became largely forgotten through the 19th century. In the last forty years, however, new scholarship and the interest in historical performance practice have revived much of this great and virtuosic music. Biber's true legacy binds the music of the 17th century to that of the 18th and, alongside such musicians as Corelli and Lully, pushed the limits of violin technique to new horizons, opening the way for Bach, Mozart, and many others to follow.

BAROQUE BAND

Founded in 2007 by British baroque violinist Garry Clarke, Baroque Band has rapidly established itself as an important member of Chicago's musical community with regular performances in several Chicago venues, including downtown at Symphony Center (home of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra). As Chicago's period-instrument orchestra, it has been hailed by critics and audiences and has gained a reputation as one of the most exciting period-instrument ensembles in the United States.



Photo by Jean Bernstein

In summer 2008, Baroque Band was named Resident Ensemble of WFMT Radio, giving audiences throughout the world the opportunity to hear the orchestra's performances through live and recorded radio and internet broadcasts. Baroque Band is also Ensemble-in-Residence at the Music Institute of Chicago, where it offers educational programming as well as concerts, and from 2007–2009 was Artistic Partner of The University of Chicago's Rockefeller Memorial Chapel.

During its first two seasons, Baroque Band gave more than 80 performances.

In addition to its own subscription concerts, Baroque Band performed on both the Sunday Salon Series and the Dame Myra Hess Memorial Concert Series at Chicago's Cultural Center, at Illinois College in Jacksonville, at Purdue University, as part of the Byron Colby Barn Series in Grayslake, and at the 2008 Madison Early Music Festival in Wisconsin. The orchestra also performed concerts as part of the 2008 and 2009 Chicago Latino Music Festival

To commemorate the 250th year since Handel's death, Baroque Band added to its regular 2008–2009 concert series performances of Handel's rarely heard "Dublin" Messiah — the original version of his masterpiece, given at the premiere performance in Dublin in 1742.

Baroque Band continues to offer educational programs at the Music Institute of Chicago, including a series of free master classes by renowned experts in baroque performance practice.

In 2009 they were invited to perform at

the Ravinia Festival to which they will return in 2010 along with a return to Madison to perform for the American Bach Society.

Violin

Garry Clarke, director
Jeri Lou Zike**
Dan Golleher
Matthew Cataldi
Lori Ashikawa
Martin Davids
David Douglass*
Isabelle Rozendaal*
Richard Vikstrom*

Viola

Melissa Trier Kirk*
Susan Rozendaal
Vannia Philips***

Cello

Craig Trompeter
Anna Steinhoff

Bass

Jerry Fuller

Harpsichord

David Schrader

*Mensa Sonora only
**viola in Battalia
***Battalia only

GARRY CLARKE

Artistic Director

British violinist and conductor Garry Clarke has been recognized as one of the finest of the new generation of interpreters of baroque music. *Time Out Chicago* magazine called him “an outstanding violinist... [who] plays with real style and panache,” the *Washington Post* praised his “riveting, cut-to-the-bone performance, every note crackling with purpose and electricity,” and the *Chicago Tribune* hailed him as “a young dynamo.”

As director of Baroque Band, Clarke has assembled a “stylish and exciting period-instrument group,” with “an abundance of style, a crisp esprit de corps, and a palpable affection for its repertoire.” (*Chicago Tribune*)

In the United Kingdom, Clarke was praised by the *Oxford Times* as “one of the finest exponents of baroque music in the country.” Clarke has performed, recorded, and broadcast with the Academy of Ancient Music, The Sixteen, the Orchestra of the Age

of Enlightenment, The King’s Consort, The Hanover Band, and the Scholars, working with musicians including Christopher Hogwood, John Elliot Gardener, Harry Christophers, Andrew Manze, Sir Charles Mackerras, René Jacobs, Anthony Halstead, and Robert King. Clarke was also a member of the European Baroque Orchestra under Ton Koopman, and has performed, recorded, and toured with William Christie and Les Arts Florissants.

Since moving to the United States in 2004, Clarke has concentrated on conducting, chamber music, and solo engagements. He is a member of the early music faculty of the Music Institute of Chicago where he directs the school’s new baroque orchestra and coaches individuals and ensembles. In 2005 and 2006, he served as principal conductor of the Garth Newel Music Festival in Virginia. Other American ensembles with which Clarke has performed include the Washington Bach Consort, Opera Lafayette, The National Cathedral Baroque Orchestra, and The Orchestra of the 17th Century

in Washington, D.C.; Ars Antigua and the Callipygian Players in Chicago; and New Trinity Baroque in Atlanta. Clarke came to the U.S. as an international recipient of the prestigious Arts Management Fellowship Award from the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C.



Photo by Carol Pratt