

Masterworks for Flute Alone

In memory of John Krell

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| Giulio Caccini | Amarilli mia bella (1601) |
| Jacob Van Eyck | Three Variations on "Amarilli mia bella" (1646) |
| Joseph Bodin de Boismortier | Deuxième Suite in G (1731) |
| Johann Sebastian Bach | Solo pour la flute traversière (Partita, BWV 1013) |
| Georg Philipp Telemann | Fantasie 8 für Querflöte ohne Bass, e-moll (1732) |
| Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach | Sonata per il Flauto traverso solo senza Basso (1747) |
| Claude Debussy | La Flûte de Pan (Syrinx) (1913) |

Introduction

Played on original instruments at pitches the composers used, this history of flute sounds is presented in a charming room for chamber music, the Member's Lounge of Julia Morgan's faux-medieval architectural treasure, the Berkeley City Club. Designed in the 1920s, just as she completed San Simeon (Hearst's castle on the Pacific coast), she used techniques and craftspeople she had developed and trained to build this must-see gem, headquarters of Early Music America at BFX.

Instrumental music developed along with song and poetry. "Amarilli mia bella," a poem by Giovanni Guarini, was set to music by Giulio Caccini in 1601, and was a big hit in 17th C. Europe. The blind flutist of Utrecht, Jacob Van Eyck, published three variations on it in 1646 as part *Der Fluyten Lust-hof* (The Flutist's Garden of Delights), one of the early collections specifically for the simple instrument we call a Renaissance flute.

By 1690, Parisian makers like the Hotteterre brothers had developed the one-keyed "baroque" flute. Joseph Bodin de Boismortier's suite for flute alone admirably introduces the French flute sound that swept Europe in the 18th C. Moving from decoration to architecture, J.S. Bach's *Solo* (known since 1963 as The Partita) is, like Boismortier's suite, a collection of French dance forms, and both were intended to sound at A = 392, so Bach's A minor sounds at modern G minor, not a small difference.

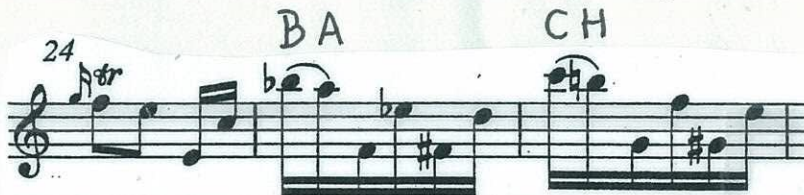
J.S. Bach admired Telemann, the most successful composer of his time, and prevailed upon Telemann to be godfather to his second son, Carl Philipp Emanuel. Telemann, a master of both French and Italian styles and a leading advocate of the mixed style, was Director of Music in Hamburg for 50 years, a job inherited by C.P.E. Bach. In C.P.E. Bach's long career, one highlight was employment at age 24 as accompanist to King Frederick the Great of Prussia and Frederick's flute teacher, J. J. Quantz. Telemann's *Fantasie* and C.P.E.'s *Sonata* are appropriately played at A = 415.

Pairing the solo sonatas of father and son reveals strong connections, despite how they differ musically. C.P.E.'s *Sonata* was published in 1763 but composed in 1747, the year his father visited him in Potsdam and had his famous encounter with King Frederick that led to "The Musical Offering," with its ravishing trio sonata for flute, violin and continuo. Bart Kuijken suggests it is only coincidental

that the highest notes in J. S. Bach's *Bourrée Anglaise* (bars 12–15) form the word B-A-C-H, as do the highest notes in the *Poco Adagio* (bars 25–26) of C.P.E. Bach's *Sonata* (in German orthography the letter B represents B flat and the letter H represents B natural; other Bach family composers also used this signature).



J. S. Bach, bars 12–15 of the *Bourrée Anglaise*, *Solo pour la flute traversiere*



C. P. E. Bach, bars 25–26 of the *Poco Adagio*, *Sonata per il Flauto traverso solo*.

The idea for this concert grew out of the surprising comment by flutist Anders Ljungar-Chapelon that Claude Debussy's *Syrinx* is the first masterpiece for solo flute since the *Sonata* of CPE Bach. The context of Debussy's solo seems essential to an appreciation of it, and this performance reconstructs it.

The playwright Gabriel Mourey asked him to write "The last melody Pan plays before his death," for Act III of his play *Psyché*. Debussy called it "La Flûte de Pan" (it was named "Syrinx" after he died), and he worked on it in the fall of 1913. On November 17th he wrote to the playwright: "So far I have not found what I need, because a flute singing on the horizon must *at once* contain its emotion! After several attempts I think one has to stick to the Pan flute alone without accompaniment. This is more difficult but more in the nature of things."

About the Artist

A Senior Recital: Peter Fisher has performed music and theatre in the Bay Area for 45 years. He was trained by John Krell, a disciple and colleague of William Kincaid in the Philadelphia Orchestra and the Curtis Institute (Krell describes Kincaid's technique in *Kincaidiana*, 2d ed., National Flute Assoc., 1997), studied baroque flute with Kathleen Kraft, renaissance flute with Nancy Hadden, and renaissance woodwind technique with Marilyn Boenau. He earned the M.A. in Creative Arts from San Francisco State University. He leads *Coro Ciconia*, a chamber choir specializing in music of the late middle ages and early Renaissance (see *Coro Ciconia's* June 4 Fringe listing).

He began acting in Shakespeare's plays as an undergraduate, later trained in musical theatre production at Musicarnival in Cleveland, and took Jasper Deeter's acting classes at the Hedgerow Theatre in Philadelphia. In 1974 he was a cofounder of the Berkeley Shakespeare Festival, where he acted and directed in 11 seasons; and during 27 years on the Board of Directors helped design and build a new Shakespearean stage that opened in 1991 as the California Shakespeare Theatre. He is retired from the staff of the UC Berkeley School of Public Health, and will turn 75 in August.