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# Chatham Baroque



Gibson Theatre

Monday, February 13, 2006

## Program Notes

Ciacona explores dance music of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries from Italy, the British Isles, France, Austria, Spain, and Latin America. Each of these regions had its own style of dancing and dance music. But nationality is not the only source of variety in baroque dance music. Some of the music in our program was intended as dance music, while other pieces were purely instrumental works modeled on dance types. Dance music was present at all levels of the socio-economic spectrum: from the chambers of the nobility to homes of the middle classes; from the theater to pubs, and as an ingredient in all kinds of street celebrations.

Some dance types, such as the ciacona, existed in many different countries, and shared certain characteristics. The Spanish chaconas, the French chaconne, and the Italian ciacona (or chiacona) all share the same basic structure—they are built on a repeated bass note pattern, or ground bass, which remains constant throughout the piece. On top of this ground bass are melodic variations, or divisions. But here the similarities end. Each of the various types of ciacona maintains a unique national character, whether it is Italian, Spanish, or French.

Other dance types, such as the sarabande, share the same title (the French sarabande, the English saraband, the Italian and Spanish sarabanda), and are written in triple meter. But again, there is a huge difference in the character of the dance depending on its national origin. The English saraband is usually swift, the French sarabande is slow and tender, and the Italian sarabanda may be either fast or slow.

### Italian Dance Music

**Johann Hieronymus Kapsberger**, who was raised in Venice and was the son of a German colonel, was one of the earliest seventeenth-century composers who experimented with the new baroque style. The theorbo, also known as *chitarrone* or *tiorba* is a long-necked bass lute that was first developed to accompany singers. Its very existence was a result of this new spirit of experimentation. The Italians were attempting to recreate a new style of music that imitated the ancient Greek music, where the words took precedence over the music. In recreating this ancient, yet new, music, the Italians needed an instrument like the Greek lyre, or *kithara*. The result was the *chitarrone* (literally “large *kithara*”), which could accompany singers and instruments, such as the violin, recorder, or viola da gamba. Kapsberger was one of the first composers to write for the solo theorbo. He spent most of his career in Rome and was recognized as a virtuosic, if slightly eccentric, lutenist, as well as composer of vocal music. His “Sonata arpeggiata” makes use of unusual and bold harmonic changes, zigging where you would expect it to zag, in search of new ideas. The “Piva” that follows (Italian for “bagpipe”) is an earthy folk tune and is followed by a spirited “Canario,” a popular dance imported to Italy from the Canary Islands via the trade route.

(continued)

## Spanish and Latin American Dance Music

Much of the surviving instrumental music from seventeenth-century Spain and Latin America can be categorized as dance music. Over a period of several years, Chatham Baroque has created unique ensemble arrangements of these dances, the majority of which were originally written for solo guitar, harp, or keyboard.

**Gaspar Sanz**, a virtuoso guitarist-composer, published his music and theoretical writings in *Instrucción de música sobre la guitarra española* in 1674. This publication contains 90 pieces for solo guitar. A generation later, **Santiago de Murcia** continued to write dance music for the guitar. Although he lived in Spain, it is thought that Murcia traveled to Mexico in the 1730s, where two of his three surviving publications were discovered. Some of his pieces have roots in traditional European dance music.

### Ireland and Scotland

Scottish composer **James Oswald's** career touched on nearly every part of the eighteenth century music business. He was a composer, a presenter of concerts, a publisher, a teacher and a dancing master. Oswald produced chamber music, instrumental pieces and many songs, always with the intent of appealing to the market of amateur musicians. Oswald deserves tremendous credit for his promotion and circulation of Scottish music. Oswald's suite of three movements called *Marvel of Peru* was published in 1755 as part of his collection *Airs for the Seasons*.

- J. Andrijeski, P. Halverson, and S. Pauley

## CHATHAM BAROQUE

Chatham Baroque has been hailed throughout the United States and beyond for its “untamable virtuosity” (*Washington Post*) and “high energy performances” (*Charleston Post & Courier*). The Pittsburgh-based ensemble was named as *Best New Classical Artist of 1999* by National Public Radio and in 1999 received the *Early Music Brings History Alive Award* from Early Music America and the Logan Award from Penn State Erie, both in recognition of its innovative educational programming. Chatham Baroque has released six critically acclaimed CDs for Dorian Recordings.

**Arcangelo Corelli** was highly influential despite his small output of purely instrumental works. Musicians from all over Europe flocked to Rome to study with this master violinist and composer. Thanks to these musicians and, more importantly, the explosive growth in the music publishing industry *ca.* 1700 Corelli's sonatas and concertos proliferated throughout Europe and abroad, known in its day as far away as Dublin and Mexico City. Their popularity lasted well into the nineteenth century. The *Sonata in E minor* is an elegant example of Corelli's role in establishing the dance suite that soon became prominent in chamber sonatas throughout Europe. The Germans, including Bach himself, had a special predilection for the dance suite. Their works frequently alternate slow and fast dances such as the allemande, sarabande, and gigue, much like Corelli's sonata does here. In Corelli's day the performer, including composers of the work being played, would have elaborately ornamented the slow movements to demonstrate their technical and theoretical skills and to personalize each performance. Luckily for us today some of these ornamented versions were written out by Corelli's contemporaries as examples to emulate.

Although not Italian by birth, Austrian **Johann Heinrich Schmelzer** traveled to Italy early in his career and was familiar with popular Italian genres. He did return to Vienna, however, and was the first Austrian to be awarded the position of *Kapellmeister* at the Hapsburg court. His *Sonata quarta* is built on a chaconne-like ground bass. Using the same bass line, it touches on various French dance movements, including a sarabande and a gigue, and also uses the Italian movement designations *tranquillo*, *adagio*, *allegro* and *presto*, showing familiarity with both the French and Italian styles.

### French Dance and Music

French baroque dance, or dance in the "noble style," flourished at the court of Louis XIV (reigned 1643-1715). Unlike dances of previous centuries, many dances from the late-seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were meticulously notated and set to specific tunes. Raoul-Auger Feuillet first explained and published in 1700 a system of dance notation, tracing intricate spatial patterns accompanied by sophisticated figures prescribing leg movements. Thanks in large part to this new system of dance notation, the French baroque dance style spread throughout numerous countries in Europe and abroad.

**Marin Marais** was a virtuoso bass viol player and composer who served as an apprentice and conductor under Jean-Baptiste Lully. Marais composed more than 500 pieces for one, two and three viols and continuo, distributed in five published volumes. Each book contains approximately 100 titled dances and descriptive pieces, all arranged into suites according to key. Marais' contribution is significant, not only because of the quantity and superb quality of the music he wrote but because he included detailed instruction on ornaments and bowing in his music. The *Chaconne en rondeau* is typical of the many elegant French style dance movements, with a recurring theme that returns over the course of the piece.

## Chatham Baroque

Julie Andrijeski, *baroque violin*  
 Patricia Halverson, *viola da gamba*  
 Scott Pauley, *theorbo and baroque guitar*

### *Ciacona!* *Music for the Dance*

|                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| La Vienne or le Pantheon    | circa 1700, Dublin                             |
| Sonata VIII in E minor      | Arcangelo Corelli<br>(1653-1713)               |
| Preludio                    |  |
| Allemanda                   |  |
| Sarabanda                   |  |
| Giga                        |  |
| Chaconne en Rondeau (1701)  | Marin Marais<br>(1656-1728)                    |
| The Marvel of Peru (Autumn) | James Oswald<br>(1710-1769)                    |
| Scortese                    |  |
| Comic                       |  |
| Musette                     |  |
| Sonata arpeggiata           | Johann Hieronymus Kapsberger<br>(c. 1580-1651) |
| Piva                        |  |
| Canario                     |  |
| Sonata quarta               | Johann Heinrich Schmelzer<br>(1623-1680)       |
| Espanoleta                  | Gaspar Sanz<br>(c.1669-1704)                   |
| Zarabanda                   | Gaspar Sanz                                    |
| Jota                        | Santiago de Murcia<br>(c.1739)                 |

Chatham Baroque is represented by Jonathan Wentworth Associates, Ltd., NY  
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