

PARTHENIA

Rosamund Morley, treble viol

Caroline Nicolas, treble viol

Lawrence Lipnik, tenor viol

Beverly Au, bass viol

Lisa Terry, bass viol

with

Sherezade Panthaki, soprano

Christopher Morrongiello, lute & guitar

LES AMOURS DE MAI

Love Songs in the Age of Ronsard

Revey venir du Printans

Villageoise de Gascogne

Claude Le Jeune (c.1530-1600)

Le Jeune

Mignonne, allons voir si la rose

Ah! Je meurs

Phantasie 24

Je suis un demi-dieu

Prelude ~ Fortune Laisse [chanson] ~ Galliard ~ Saltarello

Petite nymfe folâtre ~ Où fuis tu mon amelette

Guillaume Costeley (c.1530-1606)

Jean de Castro (c.1540-c.1600)

Gabriel Coste (fl.1538-1543)

Antoine de Bertrand (c.1540-c.1581)

Pierre Attaignant (publ, Paris, 1529)

François Regnard (fl.c.1573-1579)

Basse dance: *Ta bonne grace* ~ Tourdion

Fantasia à 4

Anon. (16th c.)

Le Jeune

Ces deux yeux bruns ~ De ces deux yeux

Quand je voy tout le monde rire

Oncques amour ne fut sans grand' langueur

André Pevernage (1543-1591)

Pevernage

Pevernage

INTERMISSION

Selections from Terpsichore, Musarum Aoniarum

Passamezze

Gaillarde

Courante

Pavane de Spaigne

Three Voltas

Michael Praetorius (1571-1621)

Prelude ~ Pimontoysse

Bransle de Haulbaroys ~ Bransles de Poictou

Conte Clare

Adrian Le Roy (c.1520-1598)

Le Roy

Guillaume Morlaye (fl. 1550s)

Ma belle si ton ame

Five Fantasies on *Une jeune fillette*

Traditional

Eustache du Caurroy (1549-1600)

Mon père et ma mère

Voulez vous donc toujours, madame

Françon vint l'autre jour

Pierre Bonnet (fl.1585-1600)

Bonnet

Bonnet

April 27, 2025, 5 pm

The Church of Saint Luke in the Fields, NYC

Parthenia thanks Kenneth and LuGene Bé and Douglas Vogt for the loan of the set of Renaissance-era viols.

France in the sixteenth and early seventeenth century was not perhaps the calmest place to make music.

Throughout this time, the country was riven by dynastic struggles and wars of religion; assassinations, violent riots, and massacres were not uncommon events. But amidst all this horror, there were songs and dances being made that are marked by a graciousness, a balance, and a wonderful sense of lightness characteristic of the French Renaissance. One can see the same effect in the Louvre that was being built at this time: Italian Renaissance ideas of symmetry, order, and harmonious proportions are realized in a particularly French way to produce an effect of exceptional grace and elegance.

The texts that the composers of the French Renaissance chose to set are those from the new generation of poets that were coming of age around them, in particular the poets known as the *Pléiade*. Most prominent among this constellation was Pierre de Ronsard, who deftly combined a sumptuous vocabulary with graceful imitations of classical metrical patterns to make some of the most memorable lyric poetry of the Renaissance. His works, especially those composed in the decade between 1550 and 1560, caught the ear of composers throughout Europe. The poetic achievements of Ronsard and his contemporaries were matched by an exceptionally talented generation of French composers. Like the architects, the painters, and the poets of France, these composers created their own distinctive styles out of various international elements. Combining the great tradition of well-wrought Flemish counterpoint with newer developments in Italian madrigals, they found a uniquely French Renaissance musical language, one that at times consciously emulated the classical verse forms of the poets they set.

Among the most striking of these composers was Claude Le Jeune, a Protestant composer who provided music for the French court and served as *maître des enfants de musique* for the Duc d'Anjou, the brother of Henri III. During the siege of Paris in 1590, Le Jeune tried to flee town after a *confession de foi* made it clear that he was not in sympathy with the increasingly powerful Catholic League. According to Mersenne, Le Jeune's musical manuscripts were saved from burning by the guards at the city gate only through the intervention of his Catholic colleague Jacques Mauduit. After seeking refuge in the Protestant city of La Rochelle, Le Jeune finally returned to court once Henri de Navarre, the Huguenot successor to Henri III, became the new king; he appointed Le Jeune as *maître compositeur ordinaire de la musique de nostre chambre*.

Along with his compositions for the court and his settings of psalms for the Protestant church, Le Jeune also collaborated on some interesting humanist developments in music. During the 1570's and 80's, he worked closely with Ronsard's colleague Jean-Antoine de Baïf to re-discover the power of ancient metrical declamation. The fact that Baïf, a staunch Catholic, had written an enthusiastic sonnet in praise of the massacre of Protestants on St. Bartholomew's Day in 1572 seems not to have come between them — perhaps a testament to the potential of art and music to overcome doctrinal conflicts.

As an offshoot of the *Pléiade* and his own humanist interests, Baïf created an *Académie de musique et de poésie* in 1570. In a way, his project was one of the first attempts at reviving “early music;” a conscious attempt to restore the

power of long-dead music. This secret society met every Sunday afternoon in Baïf's townhouse, a beautiful mansion decorated with humanistic inscriptions in Greek, to create a transformative laboratory in which music and verse would come together in perfect harmony. The goal was to reawaken the ethical force of music and, through the proper setting of music and verse, to transform society. The *Académie* was divided between professional musicians, who were to compose and to perform these works, and *auditeurs*, noble listeners who would subsidize the endeavor and, in return, be ethically transformed by the experience. Among the enthusiastic listeners at Baïf's weekly concerts were both Charles IX and his brother Henri III. The musicians involved were, at first, forbidden to disseminate this potentially revolutionary new science beyond the meetings of the *Académie*, lest this powerful tool fall into the wrong hands. In fact, Baïf's founding composer, Joachim Thibault de Courville, adhered so strictly to these guidelines that none of his compositions survive. Baïf was lucky to find an especially talented collaborator in Claude le Jeune, who published much of his *musique mesurée à l'antique* around the turn of the century. His settings of Baïf's *Le Printems*, a long poem celebrating the season, was published posthumously in 1603. A preface to this volume discusses the art of *musique mesurée*, and celebrates Le Jeune's achievement in being the first to re-create the subtle rhythmic skill of the ancients and to combine it with the harmonic perfection achieved in modern times.

Our first work, *Revey venir du Printans*, is taken from this collection, and demonstrates well the subtlety and flexibility that *musique mesurée* can offer. Essentially, Baïf's idea was that music would replicate, in a series of longs and shorts, the subtle variation of poetic feet that marked classical verse-forms. The effect, in the hands of a great composer like Le Jeune, is a wonderfully supple musical line, full of elegant syncopations and hesitations; whether or not it makes one an inherently better person, it certainly is deeply enjoyable to play, and to hear. Le Jeune sets off the verses, or *chants*, from the refrain, or *rechant*, by a nice interplay of forces: where the refrain is always all five voices, the verses build up gradually, first two voices, then three, then four, and finally five.

A rustic *Villageoise* follows, here heard in an instrumental version; note Le Jeune's ingenuity in finding rhythmic surprises in putting this simple tune in canon with itself. We then turn to a delicate four-part setting of Ronsard by Jean de Castro, an immensely popular Flemish composer of the late sixteenth century. Although he spent much of his career in Germany, publications of his music spread far and wide; they sold better than nearly any composer besides Lassus.

Mignonne, allons voir has become one of Ronsard's most famous poems. Here it is heard in the setting by his contemporary Guillaume Costeley, a charter member of Baïf's *Académie* and court composer to Charles IX. Costeley creates a fascinating formal counterpoint to the regularity of Ronsard's six-line stanzas, with a complex pattern of interlocking musical phrases. The poems of Ronsard were not only known in Parisian salons and academies: François Regnard, a member of the choir of Tournai Cathedral who later became the choirmaster for the Archduke Matthias of

Austria, set many of Ronsard's texts, including the charming *Petite Nymfe folatre*.

Next we hear a *basse dance* and *tourdion* from Jacques Moderne's anthology of *Musicque de Joye* from around 1550, and from other Attaignant dance publications.

These simple but memorable dances are excellent vehicles for improvisation and variation, an inevitable result of repeating a dance as often as the choreography calls for. Another setting of Ronsard, this one an excerpt of one of Ronsard's lighter sonnets, introduces a different compositional voice from the second half of the sixteenth century. André Pevernage was a Flemish composer who published four books of chansons between 1589 and 1591 with the Antwerp printer Christoph Plantin, towards the end of the composer's relatively short life. We follow these songs with another set of dance music, this one taken from the French repertoire that Michael Praetorius documented in his *Terpsichore*. Much of this music was probably known to players by rote; Praetorius was lucky enough to run into Pierre Francisque Caroubel, a violinist who had worked at the court of both Henri III and Henri IV. How he found himself in Wolfenbüttel around 1610 is a mystery, but Praetorius used the opportunity to make a large anthology out of what Caroubel knew of the French dance-band

repertoire, with rather more artfully composed inner parts than were probably the norm for this largely improvised repertoire.

Our next set is a series of ingenious treatments of a very simple folk song, all by Guillaume du Caurroy. He was composer to several kings of France, and his work was highly regarded; the *Missa pro defunctis* he composed for Henri IV remained the official requiem to be sung for the kings of France. Mersenne echoed many of his contemporaries when he said that 'du Caurroy reigns supreme for the great harmoniousness of his composition and his rich counterpoint ... all the composers of France hold him to be their master.' His interest in artful, almost mathematical counterpoint is evident in these searching investigations into the potential of what seems at first to be an utterly straightforward tune.

Our portrait of Renaissance France ends with three songs by Pierre Bonnet, who (according to the title-page of one of his collections) was *Chantré de la Roynne mère du Roy* — that is, court singer for the woman who controlled the destiny of France throughout most of this turbulent century, Catherine de' Medici.

~ Robert Mealy

TEXTS & TRANSLATIONS

Reveyc venir du Printans

Rechant:

Reveyc venir du Printans,
L'amoureuze et belle saison.

Chant:

Le courant des eaus recherchant,
Le canal d'été s'éclaircît:
Et la mer calme de ces flots,
Amolit le triste courroux:
Le Canard s'égay' se plonjant,
Et se lave coint dedans l'eau
Et la gru' qui fourche son voi,
Retraverse l'air et s'en va.
Reveyc...

De Venus le filz cupidon,
L'univers semant de ses traits,
De sa flamme va réchaufér.
Animaus, qui volet en l'air,
Animaus, qui rampet au chams
Animaus, qui naget auz eaus.
Ce qui mesmement ne sent pas,
Amoureux se fond de plaizir.
Reveyc...

Jean-Antoine de Baïf (1532-1589)

Le Soleil éclaire luizant,
D'une plus sereine clairté:
Du nuage l'ombre s'enfuit,
Qui se iou' et court et noircît
Et foretz et champs et coutaus,
Le labour humain reverdît,
Et la pre' decouvre ses fleurs.
Reveyc...

Rion aussi nous: et cherchon
Les ébas et ieus du Printans
Toute chose rit de plaizir:
Sélebron la gaye saison,
Reveyc...

See, Spring comes again, the season of beauty and love / The channel of summer becomes clear, seeking the water's current: / / The sea, with calm waves, softens its sad rage: / The duck enjoys diving and preens in the water / the crane with his forked trail / crosses the sky and departs / The sun shines and illuminates with a more serene brightness: / the cloud's shadow flees, which plays and runs and darkens, / And forests, fields, hills are made green again by human work / And the meadow displays its flowers. / Venus' son Cupid, sowing the world with his arrows, will beat up with his flame animals that fly in the air, animals that crawl in the fields, animals who swim in the waters. / Even things with no senses are in love and melt with pleasure. / Let us laugh as well: and let us seek the revels and games of Springtime. Everything laughs with pleasure, let us celebrate the gay season.

Mignonne, allons voir si la rose

Mignonne, allons voir si la rose,
 Qui ce matin avait déclose
 Sa robe de pourpre au soleil,
 A point perdu cette veprée,
 Les plis de sa robe pourprée
 Et son teint au votre pareil.

Pierre de Ronsard (1524-1585)

Las! voyez comme en peu d'espace,
 Mignonne elle a dessus la place,
 Las! ses beautés laissé choir.
 O vraiment maratre nature,
 Puisqu'une telle fleur ne dure
 Que du matin jusques au soir;

Donques si me croyez, mignonne
 Tandis que votre age fleuronne
 En sa plus verte nouveauté,
 Cueillez, cueillez votre jeunesse:
 Comme à cette fleur la vieillesse
 Fera ternir votre beauté.

Dear, let us go see if the rose / which opened its purple robe to the sun this morning / hasn't by this evening lost / the folds of its purple dress / and its color, just like yours. / Alas! See how in such a short time, dear, she has let her beauties fall onto the floor / Oh truly evil Nature! Since such a flower lasts only from morning until evening; / So believe me, dear, while your age is flowering in its greenest freshness, / Pluck, pluck your youth; / As it does for this flower, old age will put an end to your beauty.

Ah! Je meurs**Ronsard**

Ah! je meurs, Ah! baise moi,
 Ah! maitresse approche toi.
 Tu fuis comme une faune qui tremble.
 Au moins, soufre que ma main
 S'ébat' un peu dedans ton sein,
 Ou plus bas si bon te semble.

Oh! I die; kiss me, my mistress, come close! You flee like a trembling fawn. At least let my hand play around with your breast a little, or even lower, if you like that.

Je suis un demi-dieu**Ronsard**

Je suis un demi-dieu, quand assis vis-à-vis
 De toi, mon cher souci, j'écoute les devis, Devis
 interrompus d'un gracieux sourire, Souris qui me détient
 le cœur emprisonné,
 Car en voyant les yeux je me pâme étonné,
 Et de mes pauvres flancs un seul mot je ne tire.

Ma langue s'engourdit, un petit feu me court, Honteux
 dessous la peau je suis muet et sourd,
 Et une obscure nuit dessus mes yeux demeure; Mon sang
 devient glace, l'esprit fuit de mon corps, Mon cœur
 tremble de crainte, et peu s'en faut alors Qu'à tes pieds
 étendu sans âme je ne meure.

I am a demi god when seated face to face with you, my dear love, I hear you gossip, gossip mingled with that gracious smile, a smile which holds me with heart imprisoned for in looking into your eyes, I faint away astonished and cannot find a single word in my poor breast. My tongue is numbed, a little fire runs frisking under my skin, I am dumb and deaf, a veil rests sleeping over my eyes, my blood runs cold, courage fails me, my spirit dissolves, and I am oh so close to lying senseless, stretched out at your feet, and dying.

Petite nymfe folâtre**Ronsard**

Petite nymfe folâtre
 Nymfette que j'idolatre,
 Ma mignonne dont les yeux Logent mon pis et mon
 mieux Ma doucette, ma sucrée
 Ma grace, ma Cytherée,
 Tu me dois pour m'apaiser Mille fois le jour baiser.

Response:
 Où fuis tu mon amelette,
 Mon diamant, ma perlette, Las! revien mon sucredoux
 Sur mon sein, sur mes genoux Et de cent baiser appaise
 De mon coeur la chaude braise.

Little playful nymph, / Nymphette that I worship / my dear, in whose eyes reside my worst and my best. / My sweet one, my sugar, my grace, my Cytherea / To make calm me down, / kiss me a thousand times a day. / Where do you flee my little soul, my diamond / my little pearl? / Alas! return, my sweet, to my breast, to my lap, and with a hundred kisses clam my heart's hot embers.

Ces deux yeux bruns**Ronsard**

Ces deux yeux bruns, deux flambeaux de ma vie, Dessus
 les miens respandans leur clarté,
 Ont arresté ma jeune liberté,
 Pour la damner, en prison asservie.

De ces yeux ma raison fut ravie,
 Si qu'esbloui de leur grande beauté, Opiniastre à garder
 loyauté,
 Autres yeux voir depuis je n'eus envie.

These two brown eyes, the two torches of my life, / Spreading out their brightness onto mine. / Have arrested my young freedom / in order to sentence it to the slavery of prison. / / These eyes have robbed me of my reason, / / so that, blinded by their great beauty / and stubborn in my loyalty, / I have not wanted to see any other eyes ever since.

Quand je voy tout le monde rire**Philippe Desportes (1546-1606)**

Quand je voy tout le monde rire
 C'est lors que seul je me retire
 A part en quelque lieu cache Comme la chaste
 Tourterelle, Perdant sa compagne fidelle
 Se branche sur ung tronc seiché.

*Never was there love without great languor / Never was there languor without hope / Here is the point that causes all the misfortune: /
 One often sees hope without pleasure.*

Oncques amour ne fut sans grand' languer**From La Fleur de poesie francoyse (1542/3)**

Oncques amour ne fut sans grand' languer,
 Langueur ne fut jamais sans esperence,
 Voilà le point, où gist tout le malheur,
 Qu'on voit souvent espoir sans jouissance.

*Never was there love without great languor / Never was there languor without hope / Here is the point that causes all the misfortune: /
 One often sees hope without pleasure.*

Ma belle si ton ame**Gilles Durant de la Bergerie (1554-1605)**

Ma belle si ton ame
 Se sent or' allumer
 De ceste douce flamme
 Qui nous force d'aymer,
 Allons contans,
 Allons sur la verdure,
 Allons tandis que dure
 Nostre jeune printemps.

Avant que la journée
 De nostre age qui fuit
 Se sente environné
 Des ombres de la nuit
 Prenons loysir
 De vivre nostre vie
 Et sans craindre l'envie
 Baisons nous à plaisir.

Ça, finette affinée,
 Ça rompons le destin
 Qui clot nostre journée
 Souvent des le matin.
 Allons...

*My beauty, if your soul / ever feels itself set on fire / by the sweet flame / that compels us to love, / / Let us go right away / let us go to the
 meadow / Let us go while / our young spring remains to us. / / Before the daytime / of our youth, which flees / feels itself surrounded / by
 the shadows of night / / let us take the time / to live our life / and kiss as much as we want / with no regard to envy. / / There, dearest
 dear one, / let us resist fate / which often ends our day / when it is still morning.*

Mon père et ma mère**Anon, pub. (1602)**

Mon père et ma mère Leur foy ont juré
 Que dans six sepmaines Je my marieray,
 Au joly bois m'en voy, au joli bois j'iray.

Que dans six sepmaines Je me marieray
 A un vieux bon homme Que je tromperay
 Au joly bois...

Si le viellard gronde Je le draperay
 Et en Cornouaille Je l'envoyéray
 Au joly bois...

*My father and my mother / have sworn / that in six weeks / I will get married. / / I will go to the pretty woods, I will go to
 the pretty woods. / / That in six weeks / I will get married / to an old man / whom I will deceive. / / I will go... / If the old man scolds, / I
 will make fun of him / and tell him / to go to hell [lit. to Cornwall]. / / I will go*

Voulez vous donc, toujours madame**Anon.**

Faire resistance à l'Amour? N'esteindrez vous jamais la
 flamme Qui me consomme nuit et jour?

Je souffre un si cruel martyre, Pour acquerir vostre amitié:
 Mais tant plus pour vous je soupire Moins vous avez de moy pitié.

Craignez vous que la renommée Vous face un jour rougir le front?
 Vous ne sçauriez estre blasmée Faisant comme les autres font.

*Madam, do you intend to always / resist love? / Will you never put out the flame / which burns me up night and day? / / I am suffering such a cruel
 martyrdom / to obtain your good will: / but the more I sigh, / the less pity you have on me. / / Do you think your reputation / will make you blush one
 day? / You will never be blamed / for doing what others do.*

Francjon vint l'autre jour

Anon.

Francjon vint l'autre jour,
Me trouva toute seulette,
Lors il me parla d'amour
D'une façon si discrète,
Que jamais d'affection
Je n'aurai qu'à Francjon.

Il me dit tout doucement
"Rebaise moi ma mignonne:
Refuse tu ton amant
De [ce] qu'à chacun tu donne
Qui non point l'affection
Qu'à ton gentil Francjon?"

"Non je n'en ferai rien"
Dis-je alors toute fâchée:
"Si je vous faisais du bien,
Je sais que votre pensée
Changerait d'affection
Et perdrais mon Francjon."

Francjon came the other day / and found me alone / Then he spoke to me of love / so discreetly / that I will never love / any other than Francjon / / He said sweetly, / "Kiss me my darling, / do you refuse me / what you give to all the others / who do not love you / as much as your Francjon? / "No, I'll do no such thing," / I said, all angry; / "If I were nice to you / I know that your mind / would soon change its love, / and I would lose my Francjon."

ABOUT THE PERFORMERS

The viola da gamba quartet **PARTHENIA** brings early music into the present with a ravishing sound and a remarkable sense of ensemble, animating both ancient and fresh-commissioned repertoire to critical acclaim. These "local early-music stars," hailed by *The New Yorker* and music critics throughout the world, are "one of the brightest lights in New York's early-music scene." Parthenia is Beverly Au, Lawrence Lipnik, Rosamund Morley and Lisa Terry. The ensemble appears regularly in concerts across America and produces its own series in New York City, collaborating with the world's foremost early music specialists. The quartet has been featured in prestigious festivals and series as wide-ranging as Music Before 1800, Berkeley Early Music Festival, Early Music Now Concert Series, Arizona Early Music Society, Chamber Music Tulsa, National Gallery of Art, Harriman-Jewell Series, Maverick Concerts, Regensburg Tage Alter Musik, Rockport Chamber Music Festival, Pierpont Morgan Library, Metropolitan Museum of Art, and at the Venice Biennale. Parthenia's performances range from Venetian Renaissance masterpieces performed on rare reproductions of the earliest viols, to the complete viol fantasies of Henry Purcell, to a musical journey through the Habsburg empire. Parthenia also commissions and premieres new works annually, especially engaging women composers such as Calliope Tsoupaki, Frances White, Kristin Norderval, Tawnie Olson, and librettist Wendy Steiner. Parthenia's discography includes *As it Fell on a Holie Eve* – Music for an Elizabethan Christmas, *Les Amours de Mai*, *The Flaming Fire* – Mary Queen of Scots and Her World, *A Reliquary for William Blake*, *Within the Labyrinth and Nothing Proved* – New Works for Viols, Voice, and Electronics. Parthenia is represented by Summerell Arts and records for MSR Classics.

Soprano **SHEREZADE PANTHAKI** enjoys ongoing international collaborations with many of the world's leading conductors including Nicholas McGegan, Masaaki Suzuki, Martin Haselböck, Stephen Stubbs, Nicholas Kraemer, Matthew Halls, and Gary Wedow. Celebrated for her "full, luxuriously toned upper range" (*The Los Angeles Times*), and "astonishing coloratura with radiant top notes" (*Calgary Herald*) particularly in the music of Bach and Handel, recent seasons have included performances with the New York Philharmonic, Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra, Philadelphia Orchestra, Bach Collegium Japan, Wiener Akademie (Austria), NDR Hannover Radiophilharmonie (Germany), the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Boston Early Music Festival, Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra (Canada), Minnesota Orchestra, St. Louis Symphony, Calgary Philharmonic, Houston Symphony, Seattle Symphony, Mark Morris Dance Group, St. Thomas Church Fifth Avenue New York, The Choir and Orchestra of Trinity Wall Street, and Voices of Music. Ms. Panthaki is no stranger to classical and modern concert repertoire; she is in high demand for her interpretations of Mozart, Haydn, Mendelssohn, Brahms, and Poulenc, as well as numerous new music premieres. Her discography includes the recently released recording of Handel's *Joseph and his Brethren* with Nicholas McGegan and Philharmonia Baroque, solo Bach cantatas with the Cantata Collective, and Graupner's opera *Antiochus und Stratonica* with the Boston Early Music Festival.

Born and raised in India, Ms. Panthaki holds graduate degrees with top honors from the Yale School of Music and the University of Illinois, and a Bachelor's from West Virginia Wesleyan College. She is a founding member and artistic advisor of the newly-debuted Kaleidoscope Vocal Ensemble - a vocal octet celebrating racial and ethnic

diversity in performances and educational programs of early and new music. Ms. Panthaki is a frequent guest clinician and masterclass leader across the United States. She has taught voice to graduate music students at Yale University, and currently heads the Vocal program at Mount Holyoke College. www.sherezadepanthaki.com. Lutenist **CHRISTOPHER MORRONGIELLO**, a former British Marshall Scholar, is a graduate of the Mannes College of Music, Royal College of Music, and University of Oxford, where he earned a doctorate in historical musicology. As a recitalist, he has performed to critical acclaim throughout Europe and the United States. He was a prizewinner in the BBC Radio Two Young Musician of the Year Competition and a recipient of a Marco Fodella Foundation Scholarship for studies and research in Milan, Italy. In recognition of his excellence as a scholar, teacher, and performer, the Lute Society of America conferred upon him its first Patrick O'Brien ISA Seminar Lectureship. Morrongiello was a longtime student of Patrick O'Brien (1947–2014), widely considered one of the greatest pedagogues in the history of the guitar and lute. Heralded as an innovative director of large-scale dramatic works, Dr. Morrongiello has a gift for bringing the music of the Renaissance and Baroque periods to life in its literary and social context. Dr. Morrongiello is a professor in music history at Hofstra University and directs the Hofstra Collegium Musicum. He is a founding member of the Venere Lute Quartet, directs the New York-based Bachelor Consort, and is a frequent guest artist of many leading early music groups. Morrongiello has recorded for EMI, Avie Records, Gamut Music, the Lute Society of America, Visionaire, and the BBC. The Metropolitan Museum of Art produced several beautiful music videos of his playing on lutes in its renowned musical instrument collection.

ABOUT THE VIOL

The viol, or viola da gamba, is a family of stringed instruments celebrated in European music from the Renaissance to the Enlightenment. Today on both sides of the Atlantic, soloists as well as viol groups—known as “consorts”—have rediscovered the lost repertoire and ethereal beauty of this early instrument. The viol was first known as the “bowed guitar” (vihuela da arco), a joint descendent of the medieval fiddle and the 15th-century Spanish guitar. Unlike its cousin, the arm-supported violin (viola da braccio), the viol is held upright on the leg (gamba) or between the legs; its bow is gripped underhand; and its body is made of bent or molded wood. These characteristics lend a distinctive lightness and resonance to viol sound that have inspired a wave of new works by 21st-century composers and a growing enthusiasm on the part of international audiences.

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