



JUXTAPOSITIONS

Old and New Music for Baroque Instruments

Digital World Premiere | December 19, 2020

ELLIOT FIGG, harpsichord

MONICA HUGGETT, violin

BYRON SCHENKMAN, harpsichord

MANAMI MIZUMOTO, violin

MICHAEL UNTERMAN, cello

Presented in partnership with Portland Baroque Orchestra and Great Arts. Period.



**PORTLAND
BAROQUE
ORCHESTRA**
GREAT MUSIC. PERIOD.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Click to navigate:

[PROGRAM - Part I: Through the Warping Lens](#)

[PROGRAM - Part II: Bach Sonatas](#)

[NOTES ON THE PROGRAMS](#)

[ABOUT THE ARTISTS](#)

[ABOUT THE PRESENTERS](#)

Special thanks to Abigail McKee, Rachael Smith, and Portland Baroque Orchestra



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PROGRAM: PART I

Through the Warping Lens

Elliot Figg: Just Intonation Music for Baroque Instruments

ELLIOT FIGG, harpsichord
MANAMI MIZUMOTO, violin
MICHAEL UNTERMAN, cello

“The Annunciation” from *Rosenkranzsonaten* (1676)

Præludium
Aria
Finale

HEINRICH IGNAZ FRANZ BIBER (1644–1704)

Sonate für Violine und Generalbaß (2005)

Præludium
Aria

ELLIOT FIGG (b. 1979)

Canzon prima à basso solo (1634)

GIROLAMO FRESCOBALDI (1583–1643)

Canzona per basso solo (2007)

ELLIOT FIGG

Prelude in Bb Major and Fugue in D# minor from *The Well-Tempered Clavier, Book I* (1722)

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH (1685–1750)

Prelude and Fugue in 21 Tones (2006)

ELLIOT FIGG

Recorded November 23-24, 2020 at Christ Church Riverdale, Bronx, NY

Producers: Oliver Weston and Elliot Figg

Director of Photography: Elisa Sutherland

Audio Engineer: Spiff Wiegand

PROGRAM – PART II

Bach Sonatas: Part II

Presented by Portland Baroque Orchestra and Great Arts. Period.

MONICA HUGGETT, violin

BYRON SCHENKMAN, harpsichord

Sonata No. 1 in B Minor, BWV 1014

J. S. BACH

- I. Adagio
- II. Allegro
- III. Andante
- IV. Allegro

Sonata No. 2 in A Major, BWV 1015

J. S. BACH

- I. Dolce
- II. Allegro assai
- III. Andante un poco
- IV. Presto

Recorded September 1 & 3, 2020 at First Baptist Church, Portland, OR

Producer: Abigail McKee

Director of Photography: Adam Lansky

Audio Engineer: Rod Evenson

NOTES ON THE PROGRAMS

Off The Grid By Elliot Figg

It has been an immense pleasure to join violinist Manami Mizumoto and cellist Michael Unterman in revisiting three of my baroque-instrument just-intonation works, which I wrote as long as fifteen years ago. I was confronted with the strange sense that this music was written by someone else, and that that someone else is me. The juxtaposition of past and present essences, which is the theme of our concert, was also the principle on which I wrote these pieces in the first place. My fellow performers join me in presenting, as well, the very works that served as models for my own pieces, in three distinct genres of baroque instrumental music. One finds direct thematic and formal ties between each of the juxtaposed pairs of old and new(er) compositions.

Biber's *Annunciation*, the first in his cycle of fifteen *Rosary Sonatas* (1676), is the only one that calls for the violin to be tuned normally. Each successive sonata employs a different *scordatura*, tuning the strings of the violin in an unusual way. For my own *Sonate für Violine und Generalbaß*, I have extended and warped this principle of *scordatura* to encompass the tuning of the music as a whole. The harpsichord is tuned to a grid of pure intervals that allows for a carefully chosen, limited array of perfectly in-tune harmonies, a window into a cosmic sonic truth, a music of the spheres. My flawed humanity prevents me from remaining in the realm of cosmic perfection, however, so I cannot help but pull the grid of sonic truth in upon itself, warping the relationship of true intervals, turning consonance into dissonance.

Thus, my attempt at something philosophically new in these works: To approach the basic dichotomy of tonal music, consonance vs. dissonance, and examine whether that dichotomy may be reinterpreted as a relationship of simple rational pure intervals (consonance), and "warped" intervals that result from combining those pure

intervals obliquely, pulling together far-flung corners of the pure-tuned grid.

Frescobaldi's *Canzon prima à basso solo* (1643) provides the direct model for my own *Canzona per basso solo*, especially in the use of episodic form, which became such a paradigm of modernist composition in the 20th century (I think of Stravinsky's *Symphonies of Wind Instruments*). One might say that Michael and I interpret Frescobaldi in a somewhat modernist mode for this program, as we allow silences and open spaces to suspend in the air, or as we exaggerate the character of a given episode in a way that is not exactly Historically Informed, but in which way we hope to create a tie with certain aesthetic notions in my own *Canzona*, where "open space" ultimately engulfs any elements of baroque dance.

We end our program with two Prelude and Fugue pairs for solo harpsichord. J.S. Bach's Prelude in Bb Major from The Well-Tempered Clavier Book I (1722) is paired incongruously with the Fugue in D# Minor from the same book. Each of these provides some material for my own *Prelude and Fugue in 21 Tones*. For instance, I have simply lifted the essential theme of Bach's fugue for my own. The listener will notice immediately, however, that the melody is warped, as though the turntable has a wobble. Here, the harpsichord is tuned to such an extreme of just-intonation that 21 tones result, distributed between the two keyboards. This result is unique, both vertically and horizontally. In the Prelude, I explore how the vast number of pure chords now available to me may be combined in various instances of Polytonality, different corners of the sonic universe colliding in their individual manifestations of pure resonance. In the Fugue, the 21 tones become a template for the horizontal and melodic, at the same time probing implications for the continued existence of tonality in this weird universe.

Bach Sonatas: Part II

By John K. Cox

Excerpts reprinted with permission by Portland Baroque Orchestra

J. S. Bach's Sonatas for violin and keyboard (BWV 1014-1019) were most likely written in his final years in Cöthen, between 1720 and 1723, although there is some evidence that they were not completed until Bach moved to Leipzig. An early copy of the works refers to them as *Sonate à Cembalo concertato è Violino Solo, col Basso per Viola da Gamba accompagnato se piace* [sonatas for obbligato harpsichord and solo violin, with viola da gamba on the bass line if you like]. Several manuscripts which date from Bach's time in Leipzig show a continuous revision of the sonatas up to the end of his life. These revisions range from small changes to the notes and rhythms up to the deletion and addition of movements.

Although they are not as famous as the six solo violin sonatas and partitas (BWV 1001-1006) they, more than almost any other work, were responsible for keeping Bach's memory alive during the period between his death and the revival of his works in the mid-nineteenth century. Many copies survive in Germany, France, and England from the last half of the eighteenth century, perhaps the most important was that in the library of Baron von Swieten (1733-1803). Swieten was a diplomat, court librarian, and amateur musician who organized weekly salons dedicated to Bach's works. Those salons were attended by some of the most talented composers and performers of the day including Mozart, Haydn, and Beethoven.

The sonatas were first published in 1802 by Swiss musicologist Hans Georg Nägeli. In 1841, when C. F. Peters attempted to make a complete edition of the works of Bach, he consulted with pianist Carl Czerny to correct mistakes made by Nägeli's edition. In 1864, Felix Mendelssohn and violinist Ferdinand David, who had performed the works on several occasions, worked together on the third publication by Breitkopf & Härtel.

In terms of structure, these sonatas, with the exception of No. 6, stick to the template of the traditional church sonata, with a four-movement fast-slow-fast-slow design. Only a small fraction of Bach's total output follows this model, notably the organ sonatas (BWV 525-30) and the sonatas for harpsichord and viola da gamba (BWV 1027-29). A standard trio sonata involves two melody instruments and continuo, typically keyboard, accompaniment. What is novel about these works is that Bach uses the harpsichord in two roles, that of accompanist and soloist. Generally, the left hand provides the traditional role of a continuo instrument by playing the bass line, while the right hand of the harpsichord serves as the second melodic instrument, hence the *Cembalo concertato* from the title. C. P. E. Bach referred to the works as "harpsichord trios." While the harpsichord was a solo instrument in its own right during Bach's life, its role in chamber and ensemble music was typically regulated to a continuo instrument, responsible for the bass line and providing harmony. Bach's choice to provide a fully written out harpsichord part which serves as continuo and second melody instrument was unprecedented and served as a model for the future of the genre.

One might assume that having two, rather than three, instruments would limit a composer's possibilities for musical texture, but as you will hear, these works contain an impressive variety of compositional design. The simplest texture is that of an aria, where the violin is a soloist and the harpsichord is an accompanist. This treatment was common in Italian sonata composition during the eighteenth century; the standard trio sonata texture is essentially a duet with accompaniment, wherein the violin and right hand of the keyboard are in contrapuntal dialogue.

The opening *adagio* of **Sonata No. 1 in B Minor BWV 1014** is meditative and serene, resembling a traditional *fantaisie*. This is followed by an *allegro*

which may sound familiar to fans of the famous concerto for two violins in D Minor BWV 1043. The last two movements form a stark juxtaposition of calm and agitation.

While there are many fugues in the collection, the third movement of **Sonata No. 2 in A Major BWV 1015** is the only movement which features a canon. This canon, at the unison, between violin and the right hand of the harpsichord, is accompanied by arpeggios in the left hand. Bach then follows this with a movement in three intertwining contrapuntal voices, putting the left hand of the keyboard on equal footing with the right hand and violin, in the closing presto.

Bach's sons, especially C. P. E. and Wilhelm Friedemann, believed these sonatas to be among their father's greatest achievements and promoted the collection throughout their lives. In Christoph Wolff's exhaustive biography of J. S. Bach, he quotes a letter by C. P. E. Bach from 1774:

"The 6 Clavier Trios are among the best works of my dear departed father. They still sound excellent and give me much joy, although they date back more than fifty years. They contain some Adagii that could not be written in a more singable manner today."

These words are as true today as when C. P. E. first penned them. The idea that Bach's slow movements stand the test of time due to their 'singability' is interesting for several reasons. They remind us that Bach's genius as a composer is not necessarily his skill as a contrapuntist, a keyboard player, or a composer of chamber music, but for the way in which he imbues his skill as a master of melody and vocalism throughout his works. Bach's combined skills as vocal and instrumental composer are key to understanding his genius and legacy.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS



ELLIOT FIGG is a keyboardist, conductor and composer from Dallas, Texas. He is a graduate of the Historical Performance Program at The Juilliard School where he studied harpsichord with Kenneth Weiss. He also studied with Arthur Haas at the Yale School of Music. Elliot is an active member of several New York-based early music and contemporary ensembles, including ACRONYM, Ruckus, and New Vintage Baroque. Recent engagements include: Conductor and harpsichordist for Death of Classical's production of *Dido and Aeneas* in the catacombs of Green-Wood Cemetery; Conductor and harpsichordist for *Piramo e Tisbe* and *L'Amant Anonyme*, both with Little Opera Theatre of New York; Deputy Music Director and harpsichordist for *Farinelli and the King* on Broadway; Assistant Conductor and harpsichordist for *Il Farnace* and *Veremonda*, both with Spoleto Festival USA; assistant conductor and harpsichordist for *Dido and Aeneas* with L.A. Opera.



MONICA HUGGETT was born in London in 1953, the fifth of seven children. She took up the violin at age six and at age sixteen entered the Royal Academy of Music as a student of Manoug Parikian.

From age seventeen, beginning as a freelance violinist in London, Monica has earned her living solely as a violinist and artistic director and, in 2008, was appointed inaugural artistic director of The Juilliard School's Historical Performance Program, where she continues as artistic advisor. Monica's expertise in the musical and social history of the Baroque era is unparalleled among performing musicians today. This huge body of knowledge and understanding, coupled with her unforced and expressive musicality, has made her an invaluable resource to students of baroque violin and period performance practice through the nineteenth century.

In the intervening five decades, Monica co-founded, with Ton Koopman, the Amsterdam Baroque Orchestra; founded her own London-based ensemble, Sonnerie; worked with Christopher Hogwood at the Academy of Ancient Music and Trevor Pinnock with the English Concert; toured the United States in concert with James Galway; co-founded, in 2004, the Montana Baroque Festival; and since 1994 has served as artistic director of Portland Baroque Orchestra (PBO), where she made her first appearance in 1992 playing Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons*. From 2006 to 2017 she was also the artistic director for Irish Baroque Orchestra, where she recorded "Flights of Fantasy," named by Alex Ross in *The New Yorker* as Classical Recording of the Year for 2010.

Monica's recordings, numbering well over 100, have won numerous prizes and acclaim throughout her career. In addition to her baroque violin recordings, she recorded "Angie" with The Rolling Stones in 1972. She received the Gramophone Award for her recording of Biber's violin sonatas (2002) and her recording of J. S. Bach's "Orchestra Suites for a Young Prince" with Gonzalo X. Ruiz and Ensemble Sonnerie was nominated for a Grammy™ Award and won the Diapason d'or in 2009. Recordings with PBO include a 2011

recording of Bach's *St. John Passion* (Avie), a 2014 release of "J. S. Bach Concertos for Oboe and Oboe d'amore" (Avie) featuring Gonzalo X. Ruiz, and a 2015 release of "J. S. Bach Concertos for One, Two and Three Violins." In 2015, Juilliard Baroque, led by Monica, released its inaugural recording, "Couperin, Les Nations: Sonades, et Suites de Simphonies en Trio."

Her gardens in Cumbria, England, and Portland, her primary residence, are a constant source of pleasure to her as is her super powerful electric bicycle.



New York City native **MANAMI MIZUMOTO** started her lifelong relationship with music at age 3 on the violin. Early exposure to chamber music sparked in her a devoted love of collaboration. This led to a fascination with performing contemporary music and working with living composers. Most recently, this has manifested in a songwriting project co-created with Uhuru Quartet and composer Sato Matsui to benefit women's shelters in NYC. In addition, Manami is passionate about exploring different approaches to music making in history and how that can transform the way modern audiences relate to music of the past. Her driving curiosity is in exploring the dialogue between ancient and contemporary thoughts, and she is equally at home on the baroque violin, modern violin, and electro-acoustic setups with Ableton Live. Manami is a recent graduate of the Juilliard School, where she earned her Master's in Historical Performance and graduated with the Norman Benzaquen Career Advancement Grant.



BYRON SCHENKMAN believes in the power of music to bring people together for healing and joy. By the time Byron went to their first music camp at the age of eleven, they knew that playing chamber music would be a focus of their life's work. They have since been a founding member of several ensembles, including the Seattle Baroque Orchestra which they codirected until 2013. They currently direct the chamber music series "Byron Schenkman & Friends" at Benaroya Hall in Seattle. In addition to performing live on piano, harpsichord, and fortepiano, Byron can be heard on more than forty CDs, including recordings on historical instruments from the National Music Museum, Vermillion, and the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. A recipient of the Erwin Bodky Award from the Cambridge Society for Early Music "for outstanding achievement in the field of early music," Byron was voted "Best Classical Instrumentalist" by the readers of *Seattle Weekly*, and their playing has been described in *The New York Times* as "sparkling," "elegant," and

"insightful." Byron is a graduate of the New England Conservatory and received the Master of Music degree with honors in performance from the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music.



MICHAEL UNTERMAN enjoys an active performing career on both modern and baroque cellos. He is a core member of the self-directed string chamber orchestra A Far Cry and serves as principal cellist of Boston Baroque, earning Grammy nominations with both groups in 2019. In September 2019, Michael began in his role as Artistic Director of Five Boroughs Music Festival, having cut his teeth in concert programming and production through his work with A Far Cry, whose members act as co-artistic directors. As a frequent curator and production lead, his projects have been praised as “just the kind of imaginative artistic agenda that more groups should be prodded to try” (*The Boston Globe*), “the way good programming should proceed” (*Arts Fuse*), and “gorgeous and remarkably unified” (*Washington Post*). Underpinning this support work is a motivation to create nurturing environments for music and musicians, something instilled by many of his early mentors, including his cello teacher Judy

Fraser, quartet coach Heilwig von Koenigslow, his mother and pianist-collaborator Kathy Bjorseth, and Tom and Isobel Rolston, former directors of the Banff Centre where Michael spent many a formative week.

Michael has also performed recently with Boston Lyric Opera, Portland Baroque Orchestra, Quodlibet Ensemble, at the Washington National Cathedral, and at the Birdfoot Chamber Music Festival in New Orleans and Staunton Music Festival in Virginia. As a cellist who enjoys a wide variety of musical roles, Michael has received critical praise for his “soulful and sultry solos,” “nuanced, sensitive, and wholly gorgeous collaboration” (*Classical Scene*), and “heroic continuo” accompaniment (*Parterre Box*). He has earned degrees from the New England Conservatory and The Juilliard School, studying with Laurence Lesser, Natasha Brofsky, and Phoebe Carrai, and was also a Fulbright Scholar to Barcelona in 2008-09, where he studied with Lluís Claret and the Quartetto Casals.

ABOUT THE PRESENTERS

Since 2007, [FIVE BOROUGHES MUSIC FESTIVAL \(5BMF\)](#) has brought virtuosic chamber music performances of the highest caliber to every borough of NYC, cultivating new audiences for the genre and encouraging music lovers to look beyond Manhattan for outstanding performances. Lauded as “imaginative” by *The New York Times*, “enterprising” by *The New Yorker*, and “vital” by WQXR’s *Operavore* blog, 5BMF’s commitment to musical outreach and diverse programming has distinguished it as a standout presence in the New York City arts community from its earliest days.

5BMF’s artist roster of over 300 individual performers and ensembles is comprised of talented emerging artists and distinguished musicians alike, representing an incredibly diverse range of musical genres and styles. Its venues are just as eclectic, and have included performing arts spaces, cultural centers, and historic New York City landmarks such as Federal Hall, Pregones Theater, Flushing Town Hall, King Manor Museum, Brooklyn Historical Society, the Alice Austen House, and the Staten Island Museum, to name merely a few.

As champions of new music, 5BMF has commissioned over 50 composers and presented world premieres of their works all across New York City, most notably the two borough-wide tours of its *Five Borough Songbook* Volumes I and II. 5BMF’s outreach initiatives continue to expand every year, and have included program-related interactive lectures and discussions, public masterclasses with world renowned performing artists, and free public programming.

Founded in 1984, [PORTLAND BAROQUE ORCHESTRA](#) is the third-largest period performance orchestra in the United States. PBO specializes in works of the Baroque and Classical eras, but also explores the musical world outside of those time constraints, performing with period instruments or replicas of instruments that were available when the music was composed. Led by Artistic Director Monica Huggett, the orchestra thrives on spontaneity, playfulness, and extraordinary artistry.

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