

THE SEBASTIANS *a2*



virtuoso music
of the holy roman empire

Daniel S. Lee
violin

Jeffrey Grossman
harpsichord

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Virtuoso Music of the Holy Roman Empire

This recording explores the rich baroque repertoire of music for violin and harpsichord written by composers from modern-day Germany, Austria, and the Czech Republic. Most of these composers spent their entire lives in this region; Froberger was born here, studied in Italy, and returned; while Handel and Baltzar left their native lands permanently, becoming phenoms in England. Our recording takes its name from the Italian “a 2,” used by these German speakers as well, which indicates two musicians playing together.

We do not often think of the Holy Roman Empire influencing this diverse list of composers, which includes the famously Lutheran Bach. After the 1648 Treaty of Westphalia, the individual territories of the Holy Roman Empire were granted much more autonomy than in the previous centuries. And despite the century of wars that followed the treaty—wars called more “civilized” than the Thirty Years’ War— the arts flourished in the provinces of the Holy Roman Empire. Some have argued that this was because the empire protected the various member states from each other, allowing many centers of culture to develop all over Germany and Austria, as opposed to singular artistic hubs like Paris or London. The relative religious and artistic freedom that the empire allowed after 1648 created conditions ripe for artistic patronage from local nobility, government, and churches. This collection of virtuoso works by Biber, Froberger, Baltzar, Telemann, Handel, J.S. and C.P.E. Bach represents some of the finest chamber music writing from that fertile period.

This recording was made possible through the generous support of an anonymous donor.

George Frideric Handel (1685–1759)

Sonata in A major, HWV 361 for violin and continuo
from *Sonatas for an Accompanied Solo Instrument* (London, c. 1730)

[1] Larghetto	2:11
[2] Allegro	1:50
[3] Adagio	0:43
[4] Allegro	2:39

Heinrich Ignaz Franz von Biber (1644–1704)

Sonata no. 5 in E minor, C. 142 for violin and continuo
from *Sonatae* (Nuremberg, 1681)

[5] ()	2:14
[6] Variatio – Presto	2:36
[7] Aria e Variatio	5:45

Johann Jakob Froberger (1616–67)

[8] Toccata no. 2 in D for harpsichord
from *Libro secondo di toccate, fantasie, canzone, allemande, courante, sarabande, gigue et altre partite* (1649)

3:04

Heinrich Ignaz Franz von Biber

[9] Passaglia for violin, C. 105
from *Mystery (Rosary) Sonatas* (?1674)

10:34

Thomas Baltzar (?1631–1663)

[10] A Prelude for the Violin
from *The Division Violin* (London, 1684)

2:26

attrib. Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach (1714–1788)

Sonata in G minor, BWV 1020, H. 542.5
for violin and harpsichord (1734)

[11] ()	3:24
[12] Adagio	2:18
[13] Allegro	4:34

Georg Philipp Telemann (1681–1767)

[14] Fantasia no. 4 in E minor for harpsichord, TWV 33:4
from *Fantaisies pour le clavessin* (Hamburg, 1732–3)

3:14

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)

Sonata no. 1 in B minor, BWV 1014
for violin and harpsichord (before 1725, rev. before 1740)

[15] Adagio	3:12
[16] Allegro	2:56
[17] Andante	2:29
[18] Allegro	3:22

Total Time: 59:22

THE SEBASTIANS

The Sebastians are a dynamic and vital musical ensemble specializing in music of the baroque and classical eras. Lauded as “everywhere sharp-edged and engaging” (*The New York Times*), the Sebastians have also been praised for their “well-thought-out articulation and phrasing” (*Early Music Review*) and “elegant string playing... immaculate in tuning and balance” (*Early Music Today*).

Winners of the Audience Prize at the 2012 Early Music America Baroque Performance Competitions, the Sebastians were also finalists in the 2011 York International Early Music Competition and the 2011 Early Music America/Naxos Recording Competition. They have participated in the Carnegie Hall Professional Training Workshop with L'Arpeggiata, and have performed for Houston Early Music (Texas), Early Music in Columbus (Ohio), Juilliard in Aiken (South Carolina), Music Matters at La Grua Center (Stonington, CT), Friends of Music at Pequot Library (Southport, CT), and the Twelfth Night Festival at Trinity Wall Street (New York, NY).

The Sebastians perform regularly as artists-in-residence at All Angels' Church and appear in dozens of concerts each season in the New York metropolitan area. They have supplied bands for numerous staged opera productions and collaborations with acclaimed vocal ensembles Seraphic Fire, TENET, the Bach Choir of Holy Trinity, and the Antioch Chamber Ensemble. www.sebastians.org

DANIEL S. LEE violin

Period violinist Daniel S. Lee enjoys a varied career as a soloist, leader, chamber musician, and teacher. Praised for his “ravishing vehemence” and “soulful performance” (*The New York Times*), he has appeared as a soloist and concertmaster with Early Music New York, New York Baroque Incorporated, Quodlibet Ensemble, San Francisco Bach Choir, Trinity Baroque Orchestra, and Yale Schola Cantorum. He has also performed for the 4x4 Baroque Music Festival, Connecticut Early Music Festival, Internationale Bachakademie Stuttgart, NYS Baroque, Pegasus Early Music, and York Early Music Festival. He founded and co-directs the award-winning ensemble the Sebastians. As a violino piccolo specialist, he frequently appears as a soloist in Bach's first Brandenburg Concerto and cantata 140, and has given the modern-day premiere of his own transcription of Johann Pfeiffer's concerto. He has studied at the Juilliard School, Yale University, and University of Connecticut, and has taught at Connecticut College, University of Bridgeport, and Purchase College, SUNY. He is also the music director of the Albano Ballet.

www.danielslee.com

JEFFREY GROSSMAN harpsichord

Jeffrey Grossman's extensive musical activities include frequent performances as a harpsichordist, pianist, and conductor. Acclaimed for his musicality, he has been praised as a “sensitive and fluent accompanist” of “flair and conviction” in *Fanfare* magazine. As co-leader of the acclaimed baroque ensemble the Sebastians, Jeffrey has music directed operas including Monteverdi's *L'incoronazione di Poppea* and Purcell's *Fairy Queen* in collaboration with dell'Arte Opera Ensemble, and Purcell's



Dido and Aeneas with the Connecticut Early Music Festival. In addition to frequent performances with the Sebastians, Jeffrey performs with numerous ensembles including TENET, PHOENIXtail, the Bach Players of Holy Trinity, Juilliard Baroque, the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, and Spire Chamber Ensemble. He also tours parts of the rural United States with artists of the Piatigorsky Foundation. Jeffrey can be heard on the Gothic, Naxos, Albany, Métier, and MSR Classics record labels. A native of Detroit, Michigan, he holds degrees from Harvard College, the Juilliard School, and Carnegie Mellon University. He currently resides in New York City.

www.jeffreygrossman.com

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Soundspells
CD 140 **roductions**

www.sebastians.org

Engineer: John Weston,
Futura Productions

Producer: Carson Cooman

Editing & Mastering:
Overtone Audio

Recorded August 13–14, 2014
at Futura Productions,
Roslindale, MA

Violin: Karl Dennis, 2009,
after Nicolò Amati, c. 1650

Harpsichord: Allan Winkler, 2004,
German double manual after
Carl Conrad Fleischer, 1716

Harpsichord Tuner: Beth Harris

Pitch: A=415 Hz

Temperament: $\frac{1}{4}$ -Comma
Meantone (Biber, Froberger);
Neidhardt 1724 “Dorf”/
1732 “Kleine Stadt”
(Handel, Telemann, Bach)

Photography: Gregory Shuttters

Line Drawing: “Sommerhaus,”
Johann Jacob Schübler (1730)

Graphic Design: Karl Hinze

