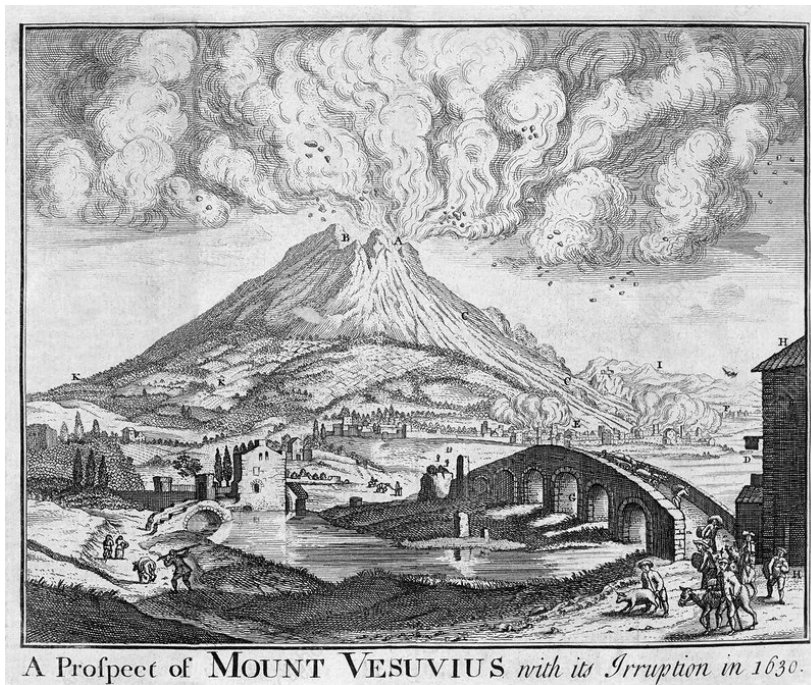


Silentwoods Collective Presents:

Concerto Napoletano: Music for Change



A Prospect of MOUNT VESUVIUS with its Irruption in 1630.

*Friday, February 17, 7:30 p.m.
Church of the Good Shepherd*

About Silentwoods Collective

Silentwoods Collective INC. is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization with a vision to make inspiring live performance experiences commonplace. We strive for our vision every day by going through with our mission: To build community using music, creativity, and collaboration, to provide educational opportunities, and by supporting emerging artists.

Silentwoods offers a variety of ensembles and concert experiences, a scholarship fund for children and educational outreach, and support for up-and-coming musicians.

Want to give a gift, play with us, or browse our other community offerings? Please visit us at silentwoodscollective.com! Or follow us on Facebook at facebook.com/silentwoodscollective.

Thank you from Silentwoods!

Silentwoods would like to thank the Church of the Good Shepherd and Father Tom for hosting us, Peter Sykes for loaning us his harpsichord, John Stajduhar for writing our excellent program notes, Cristina Prats-Costa for providing our Spanish translations, Allen Maracle for volunteering as an usher, the musicians for sharing their artistry, and everyone who came out tonight (in-person or virtually!) to support us. Thank you!

Concerto Napoletano: Music for Change

Friday, February 17, 2023, 7:30p.m.

Church of the Good Shepherd

- Ciaccona & La Folia.....Andrea Falconieri (1585 - 1656)
- Sinfonia for violin and cello in d minor.....Alessandro Stradella
(1643-1682)
- Concerto for strings in g minor...Francesco Durante (1684-1755)
- Concerto for flute and two violins.....Giovanni-Battista Pergolesi
(1710-1736)
- Sinfonia from “Il giardino di rose”.....Alessandro Scarlatti
(1660-1725)
- Or che d’orrido verno.....Nicola Porpora (1686-1768)

About the Program

Ah, the 17th century! What a time to be alive in Naples, Italy. Cultures were clashing and blending, the Catholic church was entrenching itself against the rise of Protestantism, famine and plague abounded, and all the while war and strife raged about Europe. It was a fascinating time for us to study, nearly 400 years later, but for the people who endured and survived it all, it was a time of upheaval and struggle, when that which once seemed so steady and reliable in life was now dangerously unstable. Yet despite the hardships and crises, the people of Naples defiantly endured, and even thrived in spite of the tumult around them. There is no greater record of that proud, stubborn Neapolitan spirit than the music they wrote, which the musicians of *Concerto Napolitano* proudly present tonight.

Even before the 17th century, the Kingdom of Naples (which spanned the southern half of Italy from Rome down to Sicily) was a place of change and novel development; in the late 1400s, the rising Kingdom of Spain had added the crown of Naples to its collection through war and marriage. As Spanish officials and commoners began moving into their new domain, Spanish culture followed. Nowhere is that Spanish flair more evident than in the *Ciacconia & Folias* of **Andrea Falconieri (1585-1656)**, a lute player who worked up and down Italy during the turn of the 17th century. Falconieri’s lively dances marry Spanish harmonies and forms to vibrant Italian melodies, our invitation into the world of Neapolitan music.

From the early Falconieri, we visit the much later music of **Francesco Durante (1684-1755)**, who serves as something of a nexus between many of the composers on our program; as a pupil of **Alessandro Scarlatti (1660-1725)**, he would eventually succeed his maestro and even **Nicola Porpora (1686-1768)** in various posts, while also teaching **Giovanni Battista Pergolesi (1710-1736)** in later years. Durante’s *Concerto for Strings in G Minor* is one of the more emblematic pieces of southern Italian style on the program: beginning with a somber, shadowy *Affettuoso* movement, it then launches into an aggressive and fiery *Presto*, then switching to one of the sunniest *Largo*’s

ever written, ending with an impetuous *Allegro* finale. The sudden shifts and contrasts are one of the hallmarks of the baroque era, though no one captures the baroque “twist” quite like the Italians.

Indeed, few composers could ever match the Italians for melodrama, whether in their music or their own lives. Take **Alessandro Stradella (1643-1682)** for example: born to a wealthy family, he was hailed as a distinguished composer of sacred and secular song, marked for a bright career. Yet he was just as notorious for his love of women and looseness with money, inviting several attempts on his life, which was ended on the orders of a Genoese aristocrat. One can perhaps hear echoes of his turbulent life in the stormy dialogue of his *Sinfonia for Violin and Cello in D minor* (featuring our concertmaster and cellist).

But enough doom and gloom! Following Stradella is Pergolesi’s *Concerto for flute and two violins in D major*, featuring Eva Skanse on the baroque *traverso*, a softer wooden flute than we’re used to. While Pergolesi is most famous for his *Stabat Mater* (and for also dying tragically before his time), his gorgeous and loving flute concerto shows a sweeter side of the Italian baroque (not for nothing is the first movement of his concerto marked *Amoroso*).

We conclude tonight’s program with two crowning composers of Neapolitan music: first, Alessandro Scarlatti’s *Sinfonia from “Il giardino di rose.”* Alessandro Scarlatti (father of the more famous Domenico), who worked in Florence, Rome and later his hometown Naples (after the Spanish had been supplanted by Austrian rule), was one of the great vocal composers of his era. His chamber operas and cantatas are considered some of the highest perfections of the Neapolitan vocal style, and are a particular favorite of *Concerto Napoletano*’s founder, Andrew Koutroubas. While he can write thrilling fast movements as well as anyone, the soul of Scarlatti’s music is in his slow movements, graced as they are with a nostalgic, autumnal dignity.

Following Scarlatti is Nicola Porpora’s chamber cantata “*Or che d’orrido verno,*” featuring soprano Shelén Hughes. In his time, Porpora was most famous for his work with superstar *castrato* singers like Caffarelli and Farinelli, but he was also well regarded as a composer of cantatas and operas. Though he worked as far afield as Dresden, Vienna

and London, Porpora’s music captured the explosive vivacity of Naples, with florid and challenging arias that let the singers go wild, showing the extent of their skill and creativity in virtuoso runs and highly ornamented cadences.

In their contrast, one can hardly find a better summation of that southern Italian character than in the music of Scarlatti and Porpora. It is as the French musicologist Francois Ragueneau wrote in 1709 :

“The *Italians* are more bold and hard in their Airs, they carry their Point farther, both in their tender Songs, and those that are more sprightly... the *Italians* venture at ev’ry thing that is harsh, and out of the way, but then they do it like People that have a right to venture, and are sure of Success... they insult the niceness of the Ear, which others court, they defy and compel it; they master and Conquer it with Charms.”

-John Stajduhar

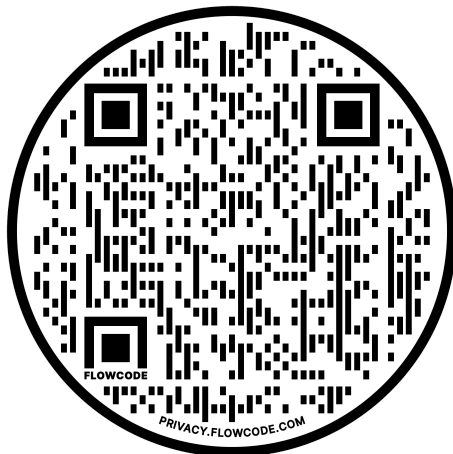
About *Concerto Napoletano*

While we love all kinds of baroque and classical music here at *Concerto Napoletano*, our focus is on the music of southern Italy in the 16th and 17th centuries, and the vivacious sound of Naples. Even though many of the composers of Naples worked all over Italy, Germany and France (and even further away) at various times in their lives, they always brought the fiery zest of their hometown with them. Combining period-accurate instruments (such as gut-string violins and Renaissance-era lutes) with our study of the practice and style of baroque musicians, we hope to bring music of Naples back to life for a modern audience. Our mission (and the mission of Silentwoods Collective as a whole) is to break through the stuffy conventions of classical music and make the arts more accessible to more people, and to serve communities that are left behind by traditional ensembles.

Artists of Concerto Napoletano

Shelen Hughes, soprano
Eva Skanse, flute
Cristina Prats Costa, violin, concertmaster
Ryan Cheng, violin
Lindsie Katz, violin
Nadia Witherspoon violin
William Copeland, viola
Andrew Koutroubas, violoncello, artistic director
John Stajduhar, bass
Jason Priset, lute
Suren Barry, harpsichord

Meet each artist [here](#):



Thank you to our supporters!

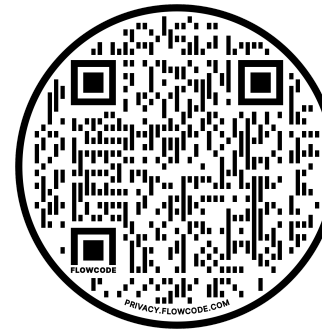
*Brian Moll
Robert Mealy
Church of the Good Shepherd
Peter Sykes
Phoebe Carrai
David Kalivas
Danilo Bonina
Tom Field
Cristina Prats-Costa
Andrew Koutroubas
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Silentwoods Collective is a fully accredited 501(c)(3) non-profit organization (EIN 86-3021888) and all donations are tax-deductible under the full extent of the law.