



JESUS COLLEGE MUSIC SOCIETY

&

PICCOLA ACCADEMIA MONTISI

present

KARI OLAMAA

VIOLIN

JOHANNA KILPIJÄRVI

VIOLA DA GAMBA

ANNA-RIIKKA SANTAPUKKI

HARPSICHORD

**IN THE THIRD OF THREE RECITALS BY INTERNATIONAL
ARTISTS ON THE BRUCE KENNEDY HARPSICHORD AT
JESUS COLLEGE CAMBRIDGE**

Saturday 10th May 2014

8.00pm

BY KIND PERMISSION OF THE MASTER AND FELLOWS

PICCOLA ACCADEMIA MONTISI
&
JESUS COLLEGE CAMBRIDGE

The Piccola Accademia di Montisi is located in a medieval village in southern Tuscany. It was founded by Bruce Kennedy as an international centre for the study and practice of the harpsichord. One of the Accademia's most important activities is that of providing students and recent graduates from all over the world with master classes in harpsichord performance given by such leading harpsichordists as Christophe Rousset and Skip Sempé.

Jesus College Cambridge was founded out of the ancient nunnery of St Radegund in 1496 and has a long tradition of music, which has been considerably enhanced by the acquisition of the Hudleston Organ (Orgelbau Kuhn, 2007), the Rawlinson Organ (Tickell Organ Builders, 2010), the Kennedy harpsichord (2012), the new Steinway concert grand piano (2013), and the restored Sutton Organ (1849 original, restored William Drake 2012). The collaboration between the Accademia and Jesus College allows the best of recent Montisi students to perform in Cambridge on the Kennedy harpsichord and share with the students here their knowledge and skills.

THE INSTRUMENT

In the initial discussions about the commissioning of a harpsichord for Jesus College, Mark Williams and I considered details of the Chapel's acoustic, the interests of the donor and, in particular, the requirements of the instrument for accompanying concerts, and acting as a continuo, solo and teaching instrument. I soon reached the conclusion that a double-manual version of an original instrument I had seen some 25 years ago in Hamburg – the 1728 Christian Zell which had then been recently restored – was the instrument needed for these circumstances.

When I made my first “copy” of the instrument in 1986 for the current harpsichordist of the music ensemble Musica Antiqua Köln I attempted to be as faithful to the original as I could – an essential approach when first getting to know another maker's work (sometimes repeating the process several times to be more certain of his ‘acoustic world’). But today, after the experience of thirty years of building more than 160 harpsichords of various historic models, I have started to shape those

diverse ideas into my own vision of what any given musical situation demands. It was clear that Jesus College needed the clarity and speech-like quality of a continuo instrument to accompany the choir and other musical ensembles that perform in the Chapel, while still enjoying the power, depth and diversity of a double-manual harpsichord for concertos and solo performance suitable for various composers. The original Zell was an excellent starting point but its keyboard key lengths were excessively long – not designed for fast ornamentation in the bass as is sometimes required in French music – so they were modified.

The original soundboard produces a very refined sound, better heard at a distance than close to the instrument. To create a more focused sound that could project clearly to all listeners, I have made modifications to the soundboard design, while never altering the original scaling and pluck points of this the northern German “sound ideal” that works so well for Bach’s polyphony. As to its décor, while I chose elements such as the leg design or the gold motifs on the case that are typical of the first half of the 18th century, the colours were specifically chosen to fit the chapel. The soundboard painting features the 1575 version of the College Arms.

BRUCE KENNEDY

The double-manual harpsichord bearing the name of Christian Zell (dated 1728) and now housed in Hamburg's *Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe* is one of the finest surviving examples of harpsichord building from a tradition historically very little understood by scholars. Pioneering writers such as Frank Hubbard (in his celebrated *Three Centuries of Harpsichord Building*, 1965) tended to see German instruments as imperfect in comparison to instruments of the French and Flemish traditions. Wrote Hubbard, “the commanding position of German composers in the history of Baroque music forces us to take German harpsichords seriously. If it were not for this fact we should dismiss them as well made but not well thought out.” Even later writers such as Peter Williams write of the “neutral tone” of instruments contemporary to J.S. Bach, and reserve most of their praise for Germany's organs or clavichords rather than for their harpsichords. Generations of harpsichordists have been trained on a Franco-Flemish sound model by which they judge other instruments, and as a result the various types of German instruments are generally not well-represented in the discography of Baroque music.

With the historically-informed restoration of harpsichords in a finer state than it has ever been, we are in a much better position to judge the German school (or schools) of building. Certainly, the builders of a cosmopolitan port such as Hamburg were making instruments for a wealthy and discerning clientele, and the superb tone quality of the instruments attests to the high regard in which Zell was held by his contemporaries. I have little doubt that Johann Sebastian Bach would have come into contact with instruments if not by Zell himself than at least of this general style (by Fleischer, for instance) on his many visits to Hamburg.

MAHAN ESFAHANI



*We are very grateful to Dr Daniel Tidhar for preparing the instrument
for this evening's concert*



www.piccolaaccademia.org

www.kennedyharpsichords.com

www.jesus.cam.ac.uk

jcms.jesus.cam.ac.uk

www.jesuscollegechoir.com



PIÈCES DE CLAVECIN EN CONCERTS

Jean-Philippe Rameau (1683 – 1764)

Premier concert

La Coulicam (Rondement)

La Livri (Rondeau gracieux)

Le Vézinet (Gaiement, sans vitesse)

Deuxième concert

La Laborde (Rondement)

La Boucon (Air, gracieux)

L'Agaçante (Rondement)

1er Menuet

2e Menuet en rondeau

1er Menuet

Gavotte and six variations

Les Triolets

(from collection: *Les Nouvelles pièces de clavecin*)

Cinquième concert

La Forqueray (Fugue)

La Cupis (Rondement)

La Marais (Rondement)

KARI OLAMAA

Violinist Kari Olamaa (born 1986) is currently finishing his Master's degree at the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki under professor Kaija Saarikettu. He graduated from the Metropolia University of Applied Sciences in 2009, where he also began studying the baroque violin, the viola, and conducting. Along with his studies Olamaa is an active chamber and orchestral musician, soloist, conductor, and teacher covering most genres of Western art music. He is a founding member of Varjo Ensemble, which has premiered several contemporary works in Helsinki, Tokyo and Berlin. As a baroque violinist and violist he has performed with Orfeo55, the Helsinki Baroque Orchestra, Ensemble Nylandia and the Finnish Baroque Orchestra, among others.

JOHANNA KILPIJÄRVI

Johanna Kilpijärvi studies viola da gamba at the Sibelius Academy under Markku Luolajan-Mikkola. She is also a cellist and studied at the Metropolia University of Applied Sciences, graduating in 2010. During her studies in Metropolia, she had the opportunity to explore the world of early music and became immediately enchanted with the viola da gamba. Kilpijärvi is part of the baroque orchestra Ensemble Nylandia, as well as playing in many other ensembles, such as the Unikko Quartet and the 2nd floor Consort. Along with her studies, she teaches cello for students of different ages.

ANNA-RIIKKA SANTAPUKKI

Anna-Riikka Santapukki is a Finnish harpsichordist living in Italy. She holds a Master's degree from the Sibelius Academy, where she majored in music education and piano. She studied harpsichord at the Metropolia University of Applied Sciences in Helsinki under the guidance of Assi Karttunen and Annamari Pölhö. Since graduating in 2012, she has continued to study the harpsichord privately with Elisabeth Joyé in Paris and Ketil Haugsand in Cologne. She performs both in Finland and in Italy as a soloist and as an accompanist for ensembles and singers. She is an experienced teacher of both piano and harpsichord, and also conducts children's choirs. Since 2010, Santapukki has organized the Montisi Piccola Accademia harpsichord master classes and summer concerts.



By the time Rameau published the *Pièces de clavecin en concert* collection in 1741 he was a mature composer dedicating his time to composing his famous operas. His collections for the solo harpsichord had been published a few decades earlier. With the *Pièces de clavecin en concerts* he returned to writing for the harpsichord, experimenting with a new genre. In chamber music until then, the harpsichord was mostly used as an accompanying instrument in the role of the basso continuo, as for example in Italian style trio sonatas, but in these works Rameau wrote for the solo harpsichord accompanied by two other instruments, or for three equal instruments, anticipating later developments in chamber music. Rameau was inspired by the success of the harpsichord sonatas with violin accompaniment by another French composer, Jean-Joseph de Mondonville: “The success of recently published sonatas which have appeared as harpsichord pieces with a violin part has given me the idea of following much the same plan in the new harpsichord pieces which I am venturing to bring out today. I have given them the form of little suites for harpsichord, violin or flute, and viol or second violin.”

The *Pièces de clavecin en concerts* consists of five suites that Rameau called ‘concerts’, with three to four movements each, and it remained the only chamber music work of this kind he ever wrote. He indicated that the violin part could also be played with the flute and the viol part substituted with a second violin. He also noted that “the pieces lose nothing when played on the harpsichord alone”, encouraging them to be played as solo harpsichord pieces. He himself included transcriptions of several movements for solo harpsichord as models.

Rameau was a master in expressing the kaleidoscope of human experiences and emotions. In these pieces he depicts the human interior world, its joys and sorrows, with great refinement, while also creating witty and playful portraits of everyday life. The texture in the concerts is especially varied and imaginative, moving between the expressive gestures and melodies and lush harmonic landscapes.

The harpsichord and the violin constantly compete in risky virtuosic runs and leaps, while the acrobatic viol part shifts rapidly from the low notes of the accompanying base line to join the soprano melodies. Rameau's writing blends the three instruments with each other to create a sonority that often sounds as if there were far more than three players woven together.

The naming of the movements is typical of the period, yet gives insight into the affects of the pieces. Some of the movements have abstract character names, such as 'L'Agaçante', but many are named after Rameau's musical acquaintances and colleagues. In the three concerts in tonight's programme we hear portraits of two famous composers for the viol, Marin Marais and Antoine Forqueray, of Jean-Benjamin Laborde, Rameau's pupil and fellow theoretician, and the famous harpsichordist Anne-Jeanne La Boucon, who was later to marry the composer Mondonville. In 'La Cupis' we can imagine the gracious movements of Anne-Marie Cupis, a famous dancer also known as Madame Camargo. Whether 'La Livri' was named before or after the death of Count of Livry, only few weeks before the collection was published, remains unknown but it might well be a memorial piece for this patron of the arts. The funny first movement of the first concert 'La Coulicam' is a reference to "Kouli Khan", the epic heroic King of Persia. A few dances are included as well as one reference to a place, "Vezinet", now a Paris suburb which in Rameau's time was part of the surrounding countryside and a popular destination for those wishing to escap from the bustle of the city. However the pieces were not always written with a particular person or image in mind; Rameau himself notes that some of them received their names only after they were composed, thanks to "several persons of taste and skill...whom have done me the honour of naming some of them."

ANNA-RIIKKA SANTAPUKKI

