

EARLY MUSIC
ENSEMBLE

David Nutter, director

UCD BAROQUE
CHAMBER ENSEMBLE

Phebe Craig, director

Orpheus/L'Orfeo

TALES OF SINNERS AND SINGERS IN 17TH-CENTURY ITALY



Claudio Monteverdi
Girolamo Frescobaldi
Barbara Strozzi
Luigi Rossi
Dario Castello
Johann Rosenmüller

8:00 p.m.

Friday, 18 February 2000

St. Martin's Episcopal Church

640 Hawthorn Lane, Davis

UCDavis Department of Music presents the

Early Music Ensemble

David Nutter, *director*

Baroque Chamber Ensemble

Phebe Craig, *director*

Orpheus / L'Orfeo

TALES OF SINNERS AND SINGERS IN 17TH-CENTURY ITALY

Program

Un peccator pentito: Spargete sospiri

Luigi Rossi
(1598-1653)

Donna, siam rei di morte (Richard Mix, bass)
Primo libro d'Arie musicali (Florence 1630)

Girolamo Frescobaldi
(1583-1643)

Sonata prima (Angelo Moreno, violin; Justine Eckersley, cello)
Sonate concertate in stil moderno (Venice 1629)

Dario Castello
(fl Venice, early 17th century)

Ardo e scoprir, ah! lasso, io non ardisco (Mark Grote & Siwa Msangi, tenors)
Madrigali guerrieri et amorosi (Venice 1638)

Claudio Monteverdi
(1567-1643)

Sonata IV à 3 in C major (Michael Sand & Damian Ting, violins; Richard Webb, cello)
12 Sonate a 2, 3, 4, 5 stromenti da arco (Nuremberg 1682)

Johann Rosenmüller
(1619-1684)

Cantata: Lagrime mie (Cecilia Seufert, soprano)
Diporti di Euterpe overo Cantate & ariette a voce sola (Venice 1659)

Barbara Strozzi
(1619 - after 1664)

Con che soavità (Suzanne Elder Wallace, mezzo soprano)
Concerto. Settimo libro de madrigali (Venice 1619)

Monteverdi

intermission

L'Orfeo - Favola in musica: Prologo e Atto primo (1607)
Orpheus - a fable in music: Prologue and Act I

Monteverdi

La Musica and Euridice: Cecilia Seufert; Orfeo: Mark Grote; Ninfa: Carole Hom
Pastori: Jeremy Borum, Grayson Braxton, Siwa Msangi, Neil Willits



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UCD Early Music Ensemble

Soprano

Jeannie Fishback, Carole Hom, Elise Keddie, Jocelyn Olander, Cecilia Seufert, Mary Seufert

Alto

Jacki Amos, Grayson Braxton, Nicky Costanzo, Susanne Elder Wallace, Mary Ann Long, Amanda Parson

Tenor

Jeremy Borum, Mark Grote, Siwa Msangi, Stephen Young

Bass

Luciano Chessa, Richard Mix, Neil Willits

UCD Baroque Chamber Ensemble

special guest artist: Michael Sand, violin

violin: Andrew Lentz, Fawzi Haimor, Angelo Moreno, Damian Ting

viola: Marianne Batchelder, Devin Hough (and *viola da gamba*)

cello: Justine Eckersley, Richard Webb

bass: Greg Brucker

recorder: Robin Houston

organ: Luciano Chessa, Phebe Craig

harpsichord: Phebe Craig

chitarrone: David Nutter

Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo* is not the first opera (Jacopo Peri's *Euridice*, Florence 1600) but it is rightly regarded as the first masterpiece of the genre. The story of Orpheus, the mythic singer of classical antiquity, is about the power of music: "I am Music who through sweet sounds, knows how to calm every troubled heart, and can kindle the most icy souls - now to anger, now to love." What will transpire in the opera is foretold in the prologue, sung by music's personification, *La musica*, to a series of varied strophes punctuated by an instrumental interlude, or *ritornello*. What does transpire (from Act II onwards) is that Orpheus's bride Euridice tragically dies of a snake bite; vowing to bring her back to life by journeying to the underworld, he convinces Pluto to release her. Warned not to look back to see that she is following him, he does - and loses her forever. In the end, Apollo takes pity on Orpheus, transporting him to an everlasting peace in the heavens. Act I, which we hear tonight, sets the action for what will follow. After a long period of arduous courtship, Orpheus has finally won the hand of Euridice and their wedding is being celebrated by a devoted company of nymphs and shepherds. A shepherd begs Orpheus to entertain them with his famous lyre and he obliges, apostrophising the sun as witness of his joy and Euridice as the cause of it. Euridice replies affectionately and the shepherds remind the pair that joy is a gift from heaven.

Luigi Rossi spent most of his life in Rome, where he was organist at the church of San Luigi dei Francesi. His output of cantatas is extensive (some 300); two operas produced in Rome (*Il palazzo incantato*, 1642) and Paris (*Orfeo*, 1647) survive as well as several oratorios. *Un peccator pentito* resembles a chorus from an oratorio, and was perhaps intended for Holy Week. We are grateful to Les Arts Florissants, Paris, director William Christie, for providing us with the edition used in tonight's performance.

Un peccator pentito

Spargete sospiri,

Ergete lamenti,

Memorie dolenti

Di tanti deliri!

Il core s'adiri

Incontro a se stesso

Di quanto ha commesso,

E l'anima pianga

Che scarsa rimanga

Di pene e martiri.

Io voglio morire

In braccio al dolore

Se nato all'errore

Nutrimmi il gioire.

A repentant sinner

Shed your sighs,

Raise your cries,

Woeful memories

Of so much raving!

Let the heart grow enraged

Against itself

For so many sins committed.

And let the soul weep

And waste away

With suffering and torments.

I wish to die

In the arms of pain,

If, born in sin,

Pleasure has nourished me.

Penare, languire
Sian cibo, sian vita
Dell'alma pentita.
Con questi conforti
Risorgon quei morti
Ch'uccise il fallire.
- Giovanni Lotti

Let suffering and languor
Be the food and the life
Of a repentant soul.
By these comforts
The dead are raised
Whom sin has killed.

Girolamo Frescobaldi was the most influential keyboard composer of the 17th century. Born in Ferrara, he spent most of his career in Rome where he was organist at St. Peter's. Between 1629-34 he was court organist in Florence to Ferdinand II de' Medici, Grand Duke of Tuscany. While in Florence, Frescobaldi published in 1630 two books of songs (*Arie musicali*), from which the following sonnet setting is taken.

Donna, siamo rei di morte

Donna, siamo rei di morte: errasti, errai.
Di perdon non son degni i nostri errori:
Tu ch'avventasti in me sì fieri ardori,
Io ch'a sì caro sol gli occhi levai,

Io che una fera rigida adorai,
Tu che fusti sord' aspe a' miei dolori,
Tu nell'ire ostinata, io negli amori,
Tu purtroppo sdegnasti, io troppo amai.

Or la pena laggiù nel fiero averno
Pari al fallo n'aspetta, arderà poi,
Chi visse in foco, in vivo foco eterno:

Quivi, s'Amor fia giusto, ambedue noi
tra le fiamme dannati avrem l'inferno:
Tu nel mio cor, ed io negli occhi tuoi.

Lady, we deserve to die; we have each erred,
And our errors merit no pardoning:
You, who aroused in me such fierce ardor,
I who raised my eyes to such a dazzling sun;

I, who worshiped an unyielding beast,
You, who played the deaf snake to my woes,
You, obstinate in hating; I in loving,
You, far too disdainful; I too fond.

Now below in proud hell there
awaits us a sentence to fit the crime:
we shall burn, yet live in truly undying fires,

For there, if Love be just, amidst
the flames let us be damned:
You to the inferno of my heart, and I, that of your eyes.

Ardo e scoprir, from the *Madrigals of Love and War* (1638), effectively exploits a variety of musical devices to portray the shifting emotional states of the poet.

Ardo e scoprir

Ardo e scoprir, ah! lasso, io non ardisco
quel che porto nel sen rinchiuso ardore,
e tanto più dolente ogni hor languisco
quanto più sta celato il mio dolore.
Fra me tal'hor mille disegni ordisco
con la lingua discior anco il timore,
e all'hor fatto ardito io non pavento
gridar soccorso al micidial tormento.

Ma s'avvien ch'io m'appressi a lei davante
per trovar al mio mal pace e diletto,
divento tosto pallido in sembiante
e chinare gl'occhi a terra son costretto.
Dir vorrei ma non oso, indi tremante
comincio e mi ritengo. Alfin l'affetto
s'aprir, nuntia del cor, la lingua vole,
si troncan su le labbra le parole.

I burn, alas, I do not have the courage to reveal
that burning which I bear hidden in my breast,
and constantly languish, all the more sorrowful
because my sorrow is concealed.
Sometimes in my mind I make a thousand plans
to dispel my fear by loosening my tongue,
and then, turning bold, I am not afraid
to call for help for the killing torture.

But if I happen to approach her directly
to find delight and peace for my woe,
my face quickly turns pale
and I am compelled to cast my eyes downward.
I would like to speak but dare not; therefore I begin
tremblingly and hold back. Finally, if my tongue,
messenger of my heart, wishes to disclose my feelings,
my words are cut short on my lips.

Barbara Strozzi lived from childhood with Giulio Strozzi, of a Florentine noble family but residing in Venice. Strozzi was a poet, and Barbara (perhaps his daughter) set many of his verses. He founded an academy, the Unisoni, partly to give her an outlet for her performances and compositions. *Lagrimie mie* is representative of the mid 17th-century cantata in its form, a succession of sections of recitative, arioso and aria.

Lagrimie mie

Lagrimie mie, a che vi trattenete,
Perchè non isfogate il fier dolore,
Chi mi toglie'l respiro e opprime il core?

Lidia, che tant'adoro,
Perchè un guardo pietoso, ahimè, mi donò,
Il paterno rigor l'imprigionò.
Tra due mura rinchiusa
Stà la bella innocente,
Dove giunger non può raggio di sole,
E quel che più mi duole
Ed accresc' il mio mal, tormenti e pene,
È che per mia cagione
Prova male il mio bene.
E voi lumi dolenti, non piangete!
Lagrimie mie, a che vi trattenete?

Lidia, ahimè, veggo mancarmi.
L'idol mio, che tanto adoro,
Stà colei tra duri marmi
Per cui spiro e pur non moro.

Se la morte m'è gradita,
Or che son privo di spene,
Dhè, toglietemi la vita
(Ve ne prego) aspre mie pene.

Ma ben m'accorgo, che per tormentarmi
Maggiormente, la sorte
Mi niega anco la morte.
Se dunqu'è vero, o Dio,
Che sol del pianto mio,
Il rio destino ha sete.
- ?Giulio Strozzi

Con che soavità is scored for solo singer accompanied by three contrasting groups of instruments: continuo alone; continuo, two violins and viola; continuo and three bass string instruments. The conceit - if words could kiss and kisses speak - is playfully clever and, in Monteverdi's lush setting, compellingly illustrated.

Con che soavità

Con che soavità, labbre odorate,
E vi bacio, e v'ascolto;
Ma se godo un piacer, l'altro m'è tolto.
Come i vostri diletti
S'ancidono fra lor, se dolcemente
Vive per ambedue l'anima mia?
Che soave armonia
Fareste, o cari baci, o dolci detti,
Se foste unitamente
D'ambedue le dolcezze ambo capaci:
Baciando, i detti, e ragionando, i baci.

My tears, what holds you back,
why don't you give vent to the fierce pain that
takes away my breath and weighs on my heart?

Lidia, whom I adore so much,
because of the pitying glance, alas, that she gave me,
paternal severity has imprisoned her.
Locked up between two walls,
remains the innocent beauty,
where no ray of sun can reach,
and what pains me most
and increases my discomfort, torments and anguish,
is that because of me
my beloved suffers.
And you, pained eyes, weep not!
Tears, what holds you back?

Lidia, alas, I feel myself failing.
My idol, whom I adore so much
remains between hard marble walls.
For her I sigh, yet I don't die.

If death suits me,
now that I am deprived of hope,
O, take away my life
(I beg you) my bitter suffering.

Still I realize that to torment me
the more, destiny
even denies me death.
It is true then, O God,
that only for my tears
does cruel fate thirst.

With what delight, o fragrant lips
I kiss you and I harken to you;
but if one pleasure I enjoy, the other is denied me.
How can it be that these charms strive
with one another, when my spirit
Longs so tenderly for both?
How sweet would be your concord,
o dearest kisses, o honeyed words,
If you were able to unite
your separate sweetnesses:
Were the words to kiss, the kisses to speak.

L'Orfeo

*Favola in Musica da Claudio Monteverdi
rappresentata in Mantova l'anno 1607 e nuovamente data in luce*

*al Serenissimo Signor
D. Francesco Gonzaga
Principe di Mantova, & di Monferrato, &c.*

Libretto di Alessandro Striggio

Toccata

PROLOGO

Ritornello

La musica

Dal mio Parnasso amato a voi ne vegno,
incliti eroi, sangue gentil de' regi,
di cui narra la fama eccelsi pregi,
né giunge al ver, perch'è tropp'alto il segno.

Ritornello

Io la Musica son, ch'ai dolci accenti
so far tranquillo ogni turbato core,
ed or di nobil ira ed or d'amore
posso infiammar le più gelate menti.

Ritornello

Io, su cetera d'or, cantando soglio
mortal orecchio lusingar talora,
e in questa guisa a l'armonia sonora
de la lira del ciel più l'alma invoglio.

Ritornello

Quinci a dirvi d'Orfeo desio mi sprona,
d'Orfeo che trasse al suo cantar le fere
e servo fe' l'inferno a sue preghiere,
gloria immortal di Pindo e d'Elicona.

Ritornello

Or mentre i canti alterno, or lieti or mesti,
non si mova augellin fra queste piante,
né s'oda in queste rive onda sonante,
ed ogni aurette in suo cammin s'arresti.

Ritornello

ATTO PRIMO

Pastore secondo

In questo lieto e fortunato giorno
ch'ha posto fine a gli amorosi affanni
del nostro semideo, cantiam, pastori,
in sí soavi accenti
che sian degni d'Orfeo nostri concenti.

Oggi fatta è pietosa
l'alma già sí sdegnosa
della bella Euridice.

Oggi fatto è felice
Orfeo nel sen di lei, per cui già tanto
per queste selve ha sospirato e pianto.

Dunque in sí lieto e fortunato giorno...

Coro di ninfe e pastori

Vieni, Imeneo, deh, vieni,
e la tua face ardente
sia quasi un sol nascente
ch'apporti a questi amanti i dí sereni;
e lunge omai disgombrare
de gli affanni e del duol gli orrori e l'ombre.

Ninfa

Muse, onor di Parnasso, amor del cielo,
gentil conforto a sconsolato core,
vostre cetre sonore
squarcino d'ogni nube il fosco velo;
e mentre oggi propizio al nostro Orfeo
invochiam Imeneo
su ben temprate corde,
sia il vostro canto al nostro suon concorde.

Coro di ninfe e pastori

Lasciate i monti, lasciate i fonti,
ninfe vezzose a liete,
e in questi prati ai balli usati

L'Orfeo

*A Musical Tale by Claudio Monteverdi
first performed in Mantua in 1607 and newly published*

*To His Grace
Don Francesco Gonzaga
Duke of Mantua, Monferrato, etc.*

Text by Alessandro Striggio

Toccata

PROLOGUE

Ritornello

Music

From my beloved Parnassus I come to you,
famous heroes of noble royal blood,
whose high virtues are proclaimed by fame
only incomplete, for they are too many in number.

Ritornello

I am Music who, through sweet sounds,
knows how to calm every troubled heart,
and can kindle the most icy souls —
now to noble anger, now to love.

Ritornello

Singing to the golden lyre I am wont
sometimes to delight mortal ears,
and I thus awaken joy in the soul
at the sonorous harmony of the lyre of Heaven.

Ritornello

My desire now is to tell you of Orpheus,
of Orpheus who held the wild beasts spellbound with his song,
who even overcame Hell with his pleading,
and won the immortal fame of Pindos and Helicon.

Ritornello

Now while I am singing my songs, now gay, now sad,
may the birds be silent on the trees,
no waves break on the shores,
and every breeze cease to blow.

Ritornello

ACT ONE

Second Shepherd

On this gay, happy day
which has put an end to the lovesickness
of our demi-god, let us sing, shepherds,
in such gentle accents
as will make our strains worthy of Orpheus.

Today pity has stirred
the soul, till now so disdainful,
of the lovely Eurydice.
Today Orpheus has been made happy
on her bosom, for whose sake he has already
sighed and wept so much in these woods.

Therefore on such a gay, happy day...

Chorus of Nymphs and Shepherds

Come, Hymen, o come,
and let thy glowing torch
be like a rising sun
that brings days of serenity to these lovers;
and may the horrors and the shadows
of suffering and grief be dispelled afar.

Nymph

Ye Muses, the honour of Parnassus, the love of Heaven,
the gentle comfort of disconsolate souls,
let your sonorous lyres
tear aside the gloomy veil of all the mists;
and while we today implore on behalf of Orpheus
the favour of Hymen
on well-tuned strings,
may your song harmonize with our strains.

Chorus of Nymphs and Shepherds

Leave the mountains, leave the fountains,
ye fair, happy nymphs,
and in these meadows have, in your usual dances,

vago il bel piè rendete.
Qui miri il sole vostre carole
più vaghe assai di quelle
ond'a la luna la notte bruna
danzan in ciel le stelle.

Ritornello

Poi di bei fiori per voi s'honori
di questi amanti il crine,
ch'or dei martiri dei lor desiri
godon beati al fine.

Ritornello

Pastore primo

Ma tu, gentil cantor, s'a tuoi lamenti
già festi lagrimar queste campagne,
perch'ora al suon de la famosa cetra
non fai teco gioir le valli e i poggi?
Sia testimon del core
qualche lieta canzon che detti Amore.

Orfeo

Rosa del ciel, vita del mondo e degna
prole di lui che l'universo affrena,
Sol, che 'l tutto circondi e 'l tutto miri,
da gli stellanti giri,
dimmi, vedesti mai
di me più lieto e fortunato amante?
Fu ben felice il giorno,
mio ben, che pria ti vidi,
e più felice l'ora
che per te sospirai,
poichè al mio sospirar tu sospirasti;
felicissimo il punto
che la candida mano,
pegno di pura fede, a me porgesti.
Se tanti cori avessi
quanti occhi ha il ciel eterno e quante chiome
han questi colli ameni il verde maggio,
tutti colmi sariano e traboccanti
di quel piacer ch'oggi mi fa contento.

Euridice

Io non dirò qual sia
nel tuo gioir, Orfeo, la gioia mia,
chè non ho meco il core,
ma teco stassi in compagnia d'amore;
chiedilo dunque a lui s'intender brami
quanto lieto gioisca e quanto t'ami.

Coro di ninfe e pastori

Lasciate i monti, lasciate i fonti ...

Ritornello

Vieni, Imeneo, deh, vieni ...

Pastore secondo

Ma se il nostro gioir dal ciel deriva,
com'è dal ciel ciò che quaggiù s'incontra,
giusto è ben che devoti
gli offriamo incensi e voti.
Dunque al tempio ciascun rivolga i passi
a pregar lui ne la cui destra è il mondo,
che lungamente il nostro ben conservi.

Ritornello

Pastore secondo e terzo

Alcun non sia che disperato in preda
si doni al duol, benchè talor n'assaglia
possente sí che nostra vita inforza.

Ritornello

Ninfa, pastore primo e quarto

Chè, poi che nembo rio, gravido il seno
d'atra tempesta, inorridito ha il mondo,
dispiega il sol più chiaro i rai lucenti.

Ritornello

Pastore primo e secondo

E dopo l'aspro gel del verno ignudo
veste di fior la primavera i campi.

Coro di ninfe e pastori

Ecco Orfeo, cui pur dianzi
furon cibo i sospir, bevanda il pianto.
Oggi felice è tanto
che nulla è più che da bramar gli avanzi.

your beautiful feet.
Here the sun will watch your dances
that are much lovelier than those
which the stars in the sky
perform in the dark night around the moon.

Ritornello

Then with beautiful flowers adorn
the hair of these lovers,
who after the torments of longing
at last enjoy perfect bliss.

Ritornello

First Shepherd

But thou, gentle singer, whose laments of love
made this countryside weep with thee,
why dost thou not now delight the vales and the hills
with the sound of the famous lyre?
May the testimony of thy heart be
some happy song that speaks of love.

Orpheus

Rose of the heavens, life of the earth and worthy
creation of him who guides the universe,
Sun, who surroundest and seest all
from thy circles between the stars,
tell me, didst thou ever see
a merrier, happier lover than me?
Blessed was the day,
my beloved, on which I first saw thee,
and happier still the hour
when I sighed for thee,
since thou didst return my sighs;
happy the moment
when thou gavest me thy white hand
as a pledge of pure faithfulness.
Had I as many hearts
as the eternal heavens eyes and these pleasant hills
leaves in green May,
all would be full and overflowing
with such joy as has made me happy today.

Eurydice

I cannot say how great
my bliss is, Orpheus, at thy bliss;
I do not bear my heart within me,
it remains with thee together with my love;
ask it if thou wouldst hear
how happy it is and how much it loves thee.

Chorus of Nymphs and Shepherds

Leave the mountains, leave the fountains ...

Ritornello

Come, Hymen, o come ...

Second Shepherd

But if our rejoicing comes from Heaven,
like everything else we encounter on earth,
it is seemly that we reverently
offer it incense and sacrifices.
Let each therefore turn his steps to the temple
to pray to him who holds the world in his right hand,
that he may long preserve for us this happiness.

Ritornello

Second and Third Shepherd

Nobody should fall prey to despair,
surrender to grief, even though it assail us
so powerfully that it endangers our very life.

Ritornello

Nymph, First and Second Shepherd

For after the dark clouds, laden
with terrible storms have frightened the world,
the sun shines all the more brightly.

Ritornello

First and Second Shepherd

And after the bitter frost of bare winter
the spring clothes the fields with flowers.

Chorus of Nymphs and Shepherds

Here is Orpheus, for whom sighs were food
and weeping was drink.
Today he is so happy
that nothing more remains for him to desire.