

Echoing Air

VOCAL ENSEMBLE with BAROQUE INSTRUMENTS



Website: www.echoingair.org

Contents

Representative Programs	p. 3
Performer Biographies	p. 4
Booking Information	p. 6
Testimonials	p. 7

Echoing Air, Inc. is a chamber ensemble dedicated to exploring and presenting music featuring singers with Baroque instruments, with an emphasis on music of the English Baroque. Most concerts feature two countertenors, two recorders, and basso continuo. The name "Echoing Air" is inspired by "Hark, the Echoing Air," a well-known song by Henry Purcell. The ensemble's repertoire encompasses music of many European countries spanning from Medieval times to the present. Echoing Air tours frequently, appearing on civic, church, and university concert series. Masterclasses at the collegiate level and age-appropriate presentations for students grades K-12 are also available.



EA Concert: Music's Dwelling
Christ Church, Bradenton, FL
March 12, 2016



Side-by-Side Concert, Marian University
Indianapolis, IN
February 19, 2020

Representative Programs

CONCERTS FOR THE CHURCH YEAR:

-**Advent: “My Heart is Ready”** includes settings of that text in Latin by English composer John Blow, German composer Heinrich Schütz, and French composer André Campra. The program also features Gregorian Chant and music of Legrenzi, Charpentier and Buxtehude.

-**Christmas: “Out of the Orient Crystal Skies”** spans from Medieval Gregorian Chant to Baroque chamber music. The concert highlights music of European and English composers including Philipp Böhdecker, Dieterich Buxtehude, William Byrd, Marc-Antoine Charpentier, Tarquinio Merula, Claudio Monteverdi, Johann Hermann Schein, and Heinrich Schütz.

-**Epiphany: “Walk in Light”** includes Buxtehude’s popular “In Dulci Jubilo” and two of Telemann’s solo cantatas with instruments written for the season, “Muntre Gedanken” and “Ihr Völker Hört”.

-**Lent and Passiontide: “Meditations on the Passion”** is dedicated to penitential compositions appropriate to Holy Week and the Lenten Season from composers of France and Italy. The program features works by Charpentier, Campra, Couperin, Carissimi, Monteverdi, Merula, and Viadana.

OTHER SACRED CONCERTS:

-**“Ein feste Burg is unser Gott”** focuses on the marvelous and expressive German sacred music of Lutheran composers prior to J. S. Bach. Featured composers include Heinrich Schütz, Johann Hermann Schein, Dieterich Buxtehude, Vincent Lübeck, Johann Rosenmüller, Johann Fischer, and Dietrich Becker.

-**“Psalms of Praise and Penitence”** includes many varied settings of these well-known texts. Central to both the Jewish and Christian tradition of worship, these are pieces that are intended to be sung, and we hear settings by Monteverdi, Merula, Schütz, Schein, and Capricornus, among others. The program features Buxtehude’s beautiful “Jubilato Domino”.

SECULAR or COMBINED SACRED and SECULAR

-**“Baroque and Beyond”** juxtaposes early English repertoire of the 16th and 17th Centuries with compositions for countertenor and early instruments from the 20th and 21st Centuries. In addition to works by Henry Purcell and John Blow, this vibrant and accessible program includes works by modern composers such as John Gardner, Gregory Rose, Geoffrey Burgon, Peter Racine Fricker, Walter Bergman, Peter Dickinson, and Sir Michael Tippett.

-**“Celebrations and Remembrances”** is made up of musical selections from the Odes of Henry Purcell written to commemorate special occasions surrounding the Royal Courts of Restoration Britain. The concert concludes with the beautiful “Ode on the Death of Henry Purcell” by John Blow with text by John Dryden.

-**“Cupid’s Dart”** explores and presents timeless and universal aspects of love through poetry and song of the Renaissance and Baroque. The listener will experience the power of love’s mystery, pain, and fulfillment.

-**“An Evening with Mr. Henry Purcell”** is a scripted program that creates a historical perspective of England’s most illustrious 17th Century composer through readings and song. The concert presents examples of Purcell’s varied musical output including music for the court, the theatre, the church, and the concert hall. This program is often performed in collaboration with a local choir or choirs performing choral works by Purcell and his contemporaries.

-**“Hark How the Songsters”** features duets and solo songs as well as chamber works by Henry Purcell and his contemporaries from Restoration England.

-**“Music’s Dwelling”** guides listeners through liturgical, chamber, courtly, and operatic literature of the Baroque through intertwining countertenor melodies and fiery period instrumental performances.

-**“The Harmonious Vagabond”** is inspired by the life and travels of Scottish countertenor and composer John Abell. Echoing Air presents vocal and instrumental music of Baroque Scotland, England, and Ireland as well as some ventures into France and Italy.

Performer Biographies

Steven Rickards, (*countertenor*) is the founder and Artistic Director of Echoing Air, Inc. He has received international acclaim as one of the finest American countertenors of his generation. Since his Carnegie Hall debut in Handel's *Messiah* with the Oratorio Society of New York, Rickards has performed internationally as a soloist with leading ensembles including Joshua Rifkin's Bach Ensemble, the American Bach Soloists, Apollo's Fire, Chicago's Music of the Baroque, the Folger Consort, the Gabrieli Consort, the New London Consort, the Smithsonian Chamber Players, and the Baroque orchestras of Indianapolis, Seattle, and Portland. Ensemble singing has played an important part in Rickards' musical life, especially his work with Chanticleer and Paul Hillier's Theatre of Voices. Rickards can be heard on numerous labels including Chanticleer, Decca, Dorian, Four Winds, Gothic, Harmonia Mundi, Koch, Newport Classics, Smithsonian, and Teldec. His recordings of lute songs of John Dowland and Thomas Campion may be found on the Naxos label.



Rickards is also a published composer and an advocate for new music. In his book *Twentieth Century Countertenor Repertoire* (Scarecrow Press), he championed the creation and collection of contemporary works for the countertenor. It is the only published resource on the subject. Rickards was featured in the premiere of John Adams's oratorio *El Niño* at the Châtelet Opera in Paris in 2000, and he has since performed the piece in numerous venues throughout the world. Additional operatic premieres include John Eaton's operas *Danton* and *Robespierre* at Indiana University and *The Tempest* at the Santa Fe Opera. He also premiered Bruno Moretti's *Vespro*, with the New York City Ballet.

Dr. Rickards received his undergraduate and Master of Music degrees from Indiana University. A Fulbright-Hays Scholarship and Rotary Grant provided funds for additional study in London at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. His doctorate was conferred by Florida State University. He has served on the faculty of the Historical Performance Institute at the IU Jacobs School of Music and currently teaches at Butler University, Marian University, and the University of Indianapolis.

William Sauerland (*countertenor*) Praised by the San Francisco Chronicle for his "limpid tone and astonishing eloquence," countertenor William Sauerland is an Assistant Professor of Music and Director of Choral Studies for the School of Music at Purdue University – Fort Wayne, conducting the choral ensembles, teaching classes in music education, and supervising student teachers. As a soloist, his recent appearances include the American Bach Soloists, Festival Opera Company, Folger Consort, Handel Opera Project, Musica Angelica Baroque Orchestra, Oakland Symphony Orchestra, and Pacific Chorale. A former member of the Grammy Award-winning vocal ensemble Chanticleer, Dr. Sauerland has sung throughout the world, and recorded multiple albums for Warner Classics. He received the Doctorate of Education in College Teaching of Music and Music Education from Teachers College, Columbia University. As a Marshall Scholarship recipient, he earned a Master of Music (MMus) and Post-Graduate Diploma (PGDip) in Advanced Vocal Performance from the Royal College of Music in London. Born in Indiana and raised on a small dairy farm in Ohio, he received a Bachelor of Music (B.M.) in Music Education and Vocal Performance from Miami University in Oxford, Ohio.



Jeffrey Collier (*recorder and Baroque flute*) is a founding member of Echoing Air and enjoys transcribing and arranging music of the Baroque period for the ensemble. He earned his Bachelor of Arts degree in music from Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia, where he studied singing with Mac Morgan and performed on recorder and other early instruments with the Emory Early Music Consort. Following his completion of medical school, he has remained an avid musical performer specializing in Early Music. He studied Baroque flute with Barbara Kallaur, and he has participated in many intensive workshops and masterclasses with such artists as Christopher Krueger, Michael Lynn, Max van Egmond, Eva Legene, Janet See, and Stephen Preston. He currently calls Indianapolis home, and has performed on both Baroque flute and recorder with the Indianapolis Baroque Orchestra and Ensemble Voltaire as well as ensembles throughout the Southeast and Midwest. Reviews have praised his “pure and focused” playing (Classical Voice of North Carolina, March 2005). Dr. Collier is also a physician with a private solo practice in Family Medicine in Carmel, IN and is Clinical Assistant Professor for the Marian University College of Osteopathic Medicine.



Christopher Armijo (*recorder*) is an instrumentalist specializing in the Baroque and Renaissance recorder. He is a performing member of Forgotten Clefs, Inc. (Bloomington, Indiana’s Renaissance wind band) for which he also serves as corresponding secretary. Christopher can be heard regularly as a soloist at Trinity Episcopal Church, Bloomington, as well as several other venues in Monroe and Brown Counties. He has performed in early music workshops across the country including the San Francisco Early Music Society Baroque Workshop, the Mountain Collegium Early Music Workshop, and the Amherst Early Music Festival, where he has worked with Bruce Dickey, and members of ¡Sacabuche!, the Flanders Recorder Quartet, and Tempesta di Mare. A diverse musician, Christopher has also recently begun performing on the cornetto and shawm in period ensembles. He is also a member of the Bloomington Symphony Orchestra’s horn section. His academic history includes a BA in Music from Columbus State University and an MM in Recorder, Indiana University – Historical Performance Institute.



Thomas Gerber (*harpsichord and organ*) is a founding member of the Indianapolis Baroque Orchestra and Ensemble Voltaire as well as Echoing Air. A graduate of Hillsdale College and Ball State University, Gerber received a Master of Music degree in harpsichord and early music performance practice from Indiana University. Mr. Gerber served as assistant professor of music and humanities at Marian University, Indianapolis, and has held positions at the University of Indianapolis, where he has taught music history and coached the student Baroque ensemble, and Butler University, where he teaches harpsichord. His continuo keyboard skills are highly sought after by period instrument groups and modern orchestras alike. He has performed with the Ann Arbor-based 17th-century-music chamber quintet Anaphantasia, the liturgical early music ensemble Musik Ekklesia, and other period-instrument early-music groups including Alchymy, Catacoustic Consort, the Callipygian Players, Pills to Purge Melancholy, Ars Antigua Chicago, and Haydn-by-the-Lake. He also performs regularly with the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra and the Indianapolis Chamber Orchestra. He has appeared at the Early Music Festival of St. Louis, the Bloomington Early Music Festival, and the Tropical Baroque Festival. He can be heard on the Dorian, Concordia, Indie Barock, and Catalpa Classics labels.



Erica Rubis (*viola da gamba and Baroque cello*) is a versatile performer on both viols and Baroque cello.



Performances range from renaissance viol consort music to improvising and co-creating new music. Erica holds a B.A. in Music from St. Olaf College, a Performer's Certificate from The Royal Conservatory in The Hague, Netherlands, and an MM in Early Music Performance at Indiana University. She is a member of Alchymy Viols and Les Ordinaires Trio. She also plays with Indianapolis Baroque Orchestra, Bourbon Baroque, Catacoustic Consort, and Generation Harmonique. Recordings include Les Ordinaires, *Inner Chambers* and contemporary music of Tomas Lozano, *Eternal Juan Ramón Jiménez*. Active in music education, Erica holds regular workshops on the viola da gamba for string students and has pioneered a multi-media program, *Shakespeare's Ear*, with regular tours since 2009.



Bookings and Additional Information

John Gingrich Management, Inc.

P.O. Box 1515, New York, NY 10023
T: (212) 799-5080 Fax: (212) 874-7652
E-mail: john@gingarts.com

Steven Rickards:

123 E. Westfield Blvd, Indianapolis, IN 46220
T: (317) 252-4311 C: (317) 414-8374
E-mail: steven@echoingair.org

Testimonials

"Many, many thanks for a truly night. The multiple standing demonstration of how was!"

John Gingrich
Management, Inc.



wonderful program Saturday ovations were the clearest appreciative the entire audience

—Richard Benedum, Organist-Choirmaster, Christ Church, Bradenton, FL

“They immediately proceeded to “wow” the audience with their incredible talent and musical authenticity. Their personalities shined through as they entertained and educated us all.”

—Dianna Campbell, Director of Choral Activities Seminole State College, Sanford, FL

“Many bravos to [Steven Rickards] and Nathan Medley for presenting yourselves with great expressiveness both facially and musically. [Their] voices also are a great complement to the countertenor revival—voices so very pleasant and “natural”– not “hooty” and forced, as I have so often heard in others.”

—Dr. Daniel Reuning, Artistic Director, Bach Collegium, Fort Wayne, IN

“Hark, How the Songsters” was full of life and joy, and your entire ensemble sparkled with exuberance. [Steven Rickards] and Nathan Medley were superb both separately and together. The recorders and continuo players complemented the voices and one another so well....”

—Dr. John Jost, Professor of Music Bradley University, Peoria, IL

“[Echoing Air’s] two hours with our students was, without question, the most positive and productive master class I have experienced in my 28 years at UF.”

—Ronald Burcher, Professor of Music, University of Florida, Gainesville

“The singers of the University of Miami Collegium Musicum loved the collaboration. Countertenors are not commonplace; [Steven Rickards] and Nathan Medley are a wonderful pair of artists who inspired our young singers with [their] skill, musicianship, and style. This was an ideal educational experience for these collegiate and high school students.”

—Donald Oglesby, Professor Emeritus, University of Miami Frost School of Music

Echoing Air, Inc. is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization.

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