

This concert is dedicated to Nikolaus Harnoncourt

*Thanks to our guest coaches and lecturers Fajo Jansen, Florencia
Gómez, Valentina Villaseñor and Petr Jurášek
for making this week inspiring, rich and rewarding,*

and to the Nieuwe Badkapel



The Biber Immersion Project

Tonight's presentation is the culmination of an innovative pedagogical project at The Royal Conservatory in Den Haag. During the five-day preparation period, the musicians took part in dance and movement sessions designed to explore rhetorical gesture, emotion and affect in baroque music. Lectures on affect and on the baroque court of Kroměříž were also included, as well as improvisation sessions. The concept behind this approach is that music-making needs to be developed in a holistic way, involving body, mind and emotion. This approach is one that has been used and taught by the two coaches of this project – Susan Williams and Rachael Beesley over the last decade. Motion, emotion, movement and moving an audience are concepts that were familiar to the 17th century musician.

In today's technical age, there is a tendency for musicians to focus their attention on the (intricate) movements needed for playing or on the technical details of the music, as well as on avoiding errors/wrong notes. There is increasing evidence from scientific research that challenges this approach, suggesting that both learning and performing music is best facilitated by a musical rather than a technical focus. The workshop sessions for this project used information and concepts from both the 17th and 21st centuries to explore the rhetoric, gesture and expression in and through Biber's sonatas.

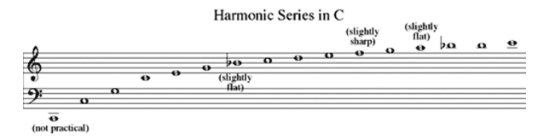
'... New methods – or methods similar to those used over two hundred years ago – must be used to train musicians. Rather than teaching music as a language, our academies drill only techniques of performance. This focus is, however, merely the lifeless skeleton of technocracy.' (Nicholas Harnoncourt)

The Biber Immersion Project is a synthesis of a 17th century approach to music-making, knowledge from modern science and innovative pedagogy.

Biber and the *Sonatae tam aris quam aulis servientes*

Paul Hindemith described Biber as 'the most remarkable composer before Bach' and Leopold Mozart instructed his son Wolfgang Amadeus to study Biber's works. Like Bach, Biber wrote idiomatic and virtuosic trumpet music. These two composers had access to virtuosic trumpet players and wrote some of the most technically and musically challenging trumpet music of the time. Pavel Vejvanovsky, trumpeter at the Moravian town of Kroměříž where Biber worked and later himself Kapelmeister, was well known for his brilliant playing and ability to play enharmonic notes. Sonata X is a beautiful example of how Biber takes advantage of this by including several tones not in the harmonic series of the instrument. The sonata is in G minor – a very unusual key for trumpet music.

The natural trumpet can only play the natural harmonic series. Each note is produced by an exact form and speed of air. The 'vent holes' on trumpets used by many players today help compensate for the intonation problems of the 11th and 13th harmonics.



Biber was himself a virtuoso on the violin and this is evident in his compositions. The string parts although idiomatic, require technical and musical virtuosity. Biber's compositions are often inspired from traditional folk music and invite a spontaneous, evocative and energetic approach. During Biber's time at Kroměříž, this wealthy palace held a superb collection of art, an extensive library including many musical manuscripts and housed an impressive band of 36 musicians.

The *Sonatae tam aris quam aulis servientes* (ca. 1676) – 'instrumental movements that can be used for the altar as well as at court' – are a set of pieces written to be played either in a sacred or secular context. In this way, Biber tried to bypass the ban on the sonata da camera in the church at the time in order to make his music accessible and commercial.

Susan Williams

Susan Williams is one of the world's most well known specialists in baroque trumpet and has been performing and recording with many of Europe's finest early music ensembles since the 1990s, as soloist, chamber musician and in orchestras.

She teaches at The Royal Conservatorium of The Hague (since 1989) and the University of the Arts in Bremen (since 2004), as well as giving yearly workshops in various other institutions. In addition to teaching natural trumpet and leading ensemble projects and workshops, Susan is involved in research in the field of performance science. She is giving courses in practicing and performance preparation in both institutions.

Susan is currently undergoing a doctoral study at Leiden University and in the docARTES program. Her research is inquiring into what kind of attentional focus (both in the practice room and on stage) enhances skill acquisition and optimal performance.



Rachael Beesley

Rachael Beesley - Internationally renowned violinist, university lecturer & teacher at the The Royal Conservatoire, The Hague, NL, Melbourne and Sydney Conservatories, Monash University and distinguished Artist-in-Resident at ANU School of Music, Australia. Graduate from the VCA University of Melbourne - BA in Music (1989), Grad Dip of Arts in Music (1991) and from The Royal Conservatoire, The Hague, NL - Master of Music (1999).

Rachael is a versatile violinist and musician who has devoted her life to performing, teaching, and researching in the fields of Historically Informed Performance Practice and Practising in Flow. Rachael is guest concertmaster & director with the crème of European and Australian orchestras with numerous festival, radio and television appearances, is recording artist on over 50 CD recordings and is listed in the Who's Who of Australian Women.



Program

Sonatae tam aris quam aulis servientes

Sonata a otto in C

Sonata a sei in G minor

Duet

Sonata a cinque in C

Duet

Sonata a cinque in F

Duet

Sonata a cinque in C

Duet

Sonata a cinque in B \flat

Duet

Sonata a cinque in G minor

Duet

Sonata a cinque in A

Sonata a otto in C

Musicians

Trumpet: Nadine Baer, Patrice Boleau, Sóley Björk Einarsdóttir, Danny Teong, Susan Williams

Violin: Rachael Beesley, Caitriona O'Mahony, Paula Perez Romero, May Robertson, Christine Verdon, Nathalie Verdon

Viola da Gamba: Evan Buttar, Garance Boizot, Alon Portal, Alessia Travaglini

Organ: Valentina Villaseñor **Harpichord:** Talia Franco,

Archlute: Punto Bawono **Violone:** Zhou Feng