



Capella Corelli

Duos

18th century duets by Blavet, Boismortier, Patoni and Telemann

Cynthia O'Brien baroque violin

Ruth Wilkinson recorders and bass viola da gamba

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Joseph Bodin Boismortier (1689-1755)

Sonata Op. No 5 in A major

Pour un flute (flûte de voix) e un violon par accords

- 1 Larghetto 2'33
- 2 Presto 2'02
- 3 Sarabanda 1'15
- 4 Allegro 2'04

Georg Philipp Telemann (1681-1767)

Duetto for alto recorder and violin

- 5 Vivace 4'25
- 6 Allegretto 2'40
- 7 Spirituoso 2'46

Joseph Bodin Boismortier

Sonate Op. 51 No. 3 in D major

Pour un flûte (flûte de voix et un violon par accords)

- 8 Largo 1'53
- 9 Allegro, ma non presto 4'21
- 10 Adagio 1'05
- 11 Allegro 4'04

Michel Blavet (1700-1768)

A compilation from Recueil, de Pieces, petits Airs, Brunettes, Minuets

- 12 Prelude de M Blavet (flûte de voix and violin) 2'59
- 13 Minuet de M. Geminiani, gracieusement (violin and bass de viole) 2'58
- 14 Gavotte de Corelli (violin and bass de viole) 2'59
- 15 Gavotte de M Handel, gracieusement (soprano recorder and violin) 3'24

Giuseppe Battista Patoni (1713-c.1772)

Sonate No. 3 a Due

- cioè un Flauto e Violino: Opera Seconda – Paris [c. 1750]

- 16 Andantino 4'54
- 17 Allegro 6'20
- 18 Minuetto I & 2 3'25

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This is a recording of duets by Capella Corelli in the extraordinary acoustic of Santa Maria Nuova, the 16th century church by Giorgio Vasari which stands proudly on a hill just outside the walls of Cortona in the Italian Tuscan Hills. The high ceilings capped by a dome, the thick impenetrable walls and stone floor create a living memory of the sound of the past. In this acoustic with its long delay, Capella Corelli again explores a delightful repertoire of two-part music from the late 17th and early 18th centuries: music that rings with joy in this special place. The acoustic challenges the performers to choose suitable tempi and articulation which lets the music speak with authority in this reverberant ambience. In turn the recording encourages its audience to allow themselves to be enveloped by the warmth and resonance of a sound brought through their speakers from an earlier time and not from a modern recording studio.

The music is intimate, charming and exquisite which creates the experience of listening into a private conversation between two old and close friends. These are shared stories spun into beautiful melodies with each instrument revealing a little more of these musical tales as phrases are

imitated and tossed around between them. There is great beauty in these duets, humour and disagreement, respect, melancholy, dancing and sheer joy. Each composer featured knows the skills required for two-part writing and the music is always full of variety and surprises. Collections of duets from which our selection has been made were very popular as they gave access to a public hungry for music to play in their salons.

Composers

Joseph Bodin de Boismortier was such a prolific composer that he was principally able to earn his living from the publishing of his own works, which total over 100 opus numbers. Mirroring the popularity of the flute and wind instruments in France during the 18th century, his compositions are mainly for the flute alone or in combination with other instruments. There is even an opus for 5 flutes without bass. Op.51, from which both works here are taken, is especially interesting in that the violin is used 'par accords' i.e., not only as a melodic partner to the upper part but, with chords, provides a bass element as well.

Georg Philipp Telemann, a child prodigy whose mother did her utmost to prevent his becoming a musician, was, in his lifetime, the most celebrated composer of his day. He was friend to both Bach (he was godfather to Carl-Phillip) and Handel. Telemann became a keen gardener in his 60s and Handel's gifts of rare bulbs and tubers was a symbol of their long-standing friendship. He composed prolifically in all genres with great success. When looking for perfection in duet writing one is always lead to G.P. Telemann.

Michel Blavet, renowned as one of the finest flute virtuosi in France, performed the flute part of the Telemann's Paris Quartets when Telemann spent his year and a half in France. He was a frequent performer at the famous 'Concert Spirituell'. His compositions are mainly for wind instruments, but he also composed stage works. The group of pieces we have recorded come from a collection of **Recueil**, a three-volume work of duets by Blavet himself and other composers popular in his sphere. These volumes are filled with pieces arranged and newly composed for two instruments. Blavet designates flutes or violins or Pardessus which gives plenty of freedom to mix the instrumentation.

In our version the violin is combined with various recorders and the bass viol. Popular melodies of celebrity composers (violinist Corelli and Handel) are made accessible to performers and enthusiasts through this collection.

Giovanni Battista Patoni was appointed deputy organist of Santa Barbara Chapel in Mantua in 1731 and was elevated as a composer to the Accademico Filarmonico in Bologna in 1761. His known output includes eight sets of duos, an opera and a cantata written for a nobleman's wedding. This sonata, from his opus no 2 which was dedicated to the Prince of Thurn and Taxis in Regensburg, may indicate a sojourn there. Again, as in the duets of Boismortier the violin part is specifically for that instrument, with double stops, chords and arpeggiandi 'filling out' the harmony. His music is part of the transition seen in the middle of the 18th century to the new Roccoco style and the beginnings of classicism in music.

Performers

Since their first collaboration as the trio Capella Corelli in 1977, Ruth Wilkinson and Cynthia O'Brien have been at the forefront of the emergence and popular acceptance of Early Music in Australia. They first performed together in that year in Adelaide with harpsichordist Anne Whelan and later for a number of years, with Paul Thom. Their harpsichordist is now, and has been for many years, John O'Donnell. Cynthia won the National Critic's Circle Award ACT for their first performance with Paul Thom. Capella Corelli toured extensively for Musica Viva in Australia as one of the first Early Music groups to do so, bringing a fresh approach to early music performance practice to enthusiastic audiences.

As a duo, Cynthia and Ruth are exploring 17th and 18th century duo repertoire for their instruments the baroque violin, recorder and viola da gamba. The two of them now also combine with the Australian composer, and long-time colleague, Ros Bandt, as Trio Avium expanding their repertoire into the 21st century.

Ruth Wilkinson is very active as a recorder, viol and violone player and over her varied career has toured extensively throughout Australia, New Zealand, Asia and Europe. She has a diverse discography of some 20 CD recordings which document Ruth's musical life from the 12th to the 21st century including two solo recordings of suites by Charles Dieupart and sonatas of G. F. Handel. As well as her collaboration with Cynthia in Capella Corelli, Ruth is member of the pioneering ensemble La Romanesca which specialises in researching and performing medieval and renaissance music. In more recent years Ruth has contributed to many of Australia's fine early music ensembles notably Ludovico's' Band, the viol ensemble Consortium, Genesis Baroque, The Recorder Co-op and with Cynthia O'Brien and Ros Bandt, Trio Avium. She is in demand for workshops and baroque orchestral playing. As a teacher, Ruth has nurtured many young recorder players, many of whom have become professional players. She has taught early music for many years at the University of Melbourne. Ruth studied at the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis in Switzerland with Hans-Martin Linde and Jordi Savall.

Cynthia O'Brien, an Australian violinist and baroque violinist, is known as one of the 'pioneers' of the Early Music movement in Australia. Cynthia has lived for many years in Vienna but travels yearly to Australia for concerts and teaching. Born in Australia, she studied in Sydney and then in Vienna with Ricardo Odnopsoff and Eduard Melkus. In Siena she studied with Salvatore Accardo and later baroque violin with Lucy van Dael in Holland. She has a musicology degree with distinction from the University of Vienna and was tutor there in the Vanecek Musical Moto-cognition Method. She has wide experience, founding the Australian Baroque Orchestra and as a member of the early music ensembles in Vienna, Capella Accademica, Eduard Melkus Ensemble and Wiener Akademie. On classical violin she played with Richard Fuller as Duo Amadeo and with Geoffrey Lancaster and Catherine Finnis as the Australian Fortepiano Trio. On modern violin, she was a member of the Australian Contemporary Music Ensemble and also gives recitals on the modern violin. A special joy is to perform on the baroque violin in Duo with Ruth Wilkinson.

Every recording has a sound engineer to thank. There is always a team effort involved in bringing such a project as this to the world. **Alex Stinson** our master sound engineer, met the challenge of setting up a workable place in a 16th century church built before electricity was thought of and where soundproofing cannot be guaranteed even in the peace of the Tuscan hills. All of this was met with good cheer and a spirit of adventure to help us make the sound of the church come to life through the microphone.





We are very grateful to **Don Ottorino Cosimi Capannini** for generously allowing us to use the church of Santa Maria Nuova (Cortona, Italy) for our recording.



Producer and engineer: Alex Stinson
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Cover (Santa Maria Nuova): Andrea Migliorati
Other photography: Alex Stinson

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