

MUSICA **nuova**

A NEW LOOK AT EARLY MUSIC

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Musica Nuova creates new expectations for early music in its 2011-12, inaugural season in New York

Season features four new visions of Renaissance, Baroque, and Classical masterworks: “The Lute in Love,” a duet program of German and English drinking and love songs; “The Arianna Project,” a staged production of Monteverdi, Haydn, and Scarlatti solo works based on the legend of Ariadne; “Between Heaven and Earth,” sacred Monteverdi and Cima works with rarely-heard folk-inspired songs by Thomas Selle, enlivened with Baroque gesture and dance; and Monteverdi’s operatic masterpiece *Il Ballo delle Ingrate* in a modern treatment with new English dialogue and additional Monteverdi songs.

(New York, NY, November 8, 2011) Musica Nuova Artistic Director Amanda Keil today announced the ensemble’s 2011-12 season – its first full season in New York – featuring four performances that present early music in new, unexpected ways. Founded in Boston in 2008, Musica Nuova brings together today’s finest Baroque specialists for creative performances that reinterpret early songs and instrumental works for modern audiences. From an intimate evening of sensual lute songs, a unique collaboration with dancers, to a rarely-heard Monteverdi opera, the season highlights the unusual programs that Musica Nuova is known for.

Among the featured artists are soprano **Marcy Richardson**, singing Scarlatti’s Baroque monodrama in “**The Arianna Project**” alongside **Silvie Jensen**, who will sing Monteverdi’s famous *Lamento d’Arianna*. The production is directed by **R. B. Schlather**, with **Daniel Swenberg** and **Gwendolyn Toth** among the instrumentalists. Tenor **James Kennerley** joins mezzo-soprano **Amanda Keil** and lutenist **John Armato** for “**The Lute in Love**,” and **Kris Kwapis** plays cornetto on “**Between Heaven and Earth**.” That program also features the choreography of renowned Baroque dancer **Dorothy Olsson**. Musica Nuova’s will present its first full-length opera *Il Ballo delle Ingrate* directed and staged by lutenist Grant Herreid.

“Musica Nuova is excited to present its unusual repertoire and adventuresome interpretations of Baroque music during its first full season in New York,” stated **Amanda Keil**. “I’m thrilled to present four brand new programs, spanning 200 years of dramatic works for voices. I’m especially excited about the range of styles we’ll explore: from sensual Renaissance lute songs to the proto-operas of Haydn and Scarlatti, this season marks our widest range of programming yet.”

The fall season features two strikingly different performances: an intimate evening of lute songs and a staged interpretation of the myth of Ariadne. **“The Lute in Love”** presents a courtship in song, exploring the rarely-heard world of German lute songs with the music of Heinrich Albert and Hans Neusidler, and playful tunes by Thomas Campian and John Eccles. **“The Arianna Project”** is an emotional retelling of the Greek myth of Ariadne, who confronts her fate after she is abandoned by Theseus. A solo cantata by Scarlatti, a mini scene by Haydn, and the famous Monteverdi lament offer three contrasting visions.

The spring brings two firsts: Musica Nuova’s first collaboration with dancers and our first full-length opera production. **Dorothy Olsson** brings Baroque styles to both **“Between Heaven and Earth”** – with little-known works by Cima and German Baroque composer Thomas Selle – and ***II Ballo delle Ingrate***, Monteverdi’s rarely performed masterwork that urges women to submit to their lovers or be condemned to hell. Musica Nuova updates this message with newly-written dialogue and additional Monteverdi songs.

As part of the *Ballo* production, Musica Nuova will conduct an **educational outreach** workshop and performance to elementary school children in partnership with the New York Foundling. This effort makes Musica Nuova one of the very few New York early music groups to include this as part of their season programming.

About the Productions

“The Lute in Love”

A courtship in song: passionate German and bawdy English songs with lute

Artistic Director Amanda Keil, mezzo-soprano, and tenor James Kennerley will join lutenist John Armato for a sensual and humorous program of English and German lute songs. Works include what is likely the New York premiere of songs by Hans Neusidler, and little-known duets by Heinrich Albert. Through flirtatious and racy songs by Thomas Campian and John Eccles, program portrays a courtship in song. Who knew the English could be so racy, or Germans so emotive?

Performance date: Thursday, November 17, 6 PM
Downstairs at Cornelia Street Café

Tickets are \$10 with a \$10 food/drink minimum, available at the door (29 Cornelia Street between Bleecker and West 4th). Reservations recommended: 212-989-9319.

Program/Players

Amanda Keil, mezzo-soprano
James Kennerley, tenor
John Armato, lute

Thomas Campian (*First, Second, and Fourth Books of Ayres, 1613/1617*)

*When to her lute Corinna sings
So many loves have I neglected
Fain would I my love disclose
Fain would I wed a fair young man*

*There is none, O none but you
What harvest half so sweet is
It fell on a summer's day*

John Eccles

*The Foolish maid (1694)
I Gently Touched Her Hand*

Heinrich Albert (from *Arien oder Melodeyen, 1638-50*)

*Treue und Freundschaft
Myrtillus und Phyllis
Im Spaetjahr
Weisheit und Tugend
Trinklied*

Hans Neusiedler (*Selected Lute Songs, 1544*)

*Mein einigs A
Ach Got wem soll ich's klagen
Ach Elslein liebes Elselein mein
Sie ist mein glueck
Nach willen dein
Zart schoene Frau
Ach lieb mit leid
So wuensch ich im ein gute nacht
Selected lute solos*

Anonymous

*The Town Gallant
Selected cittern solos*

“The Arianna Project”

Three visions of the original tale of a woman scorned

From Mozart's Donna Elvira to Jennifer Aniston, the story of a woman abandoned by her lover has entertained us for millennia. In the Greek myth that started it all, Theseus abandons his lover Ariadne on the island of Naxos as she sleeps. The story is most famously told in Strauss's *Ariadne auf Naxos*, but the first significant musical settings of the story come from Monteverdi, Scarlatti, and Haydn. These three works offer varied visions of the tale, from epic lament, to comic relief, to other-worldly happy ending. With stage direction from R.B. Schlather (Glimmerglass, New York City Opera) acclaimed singers Marcy Richardson, Silvie Jensen, and Amanda Keil join some of New York's finest Baroque instrumentalists, including Daniel Swenberg, theorbo, and Gwendolyn Toth, harpsichord.

Performance Date: Thursday, December 1, 8 PM
Theater 54 at Shetler Studios

Tickets are \$15 in advance, \$20 at the door (Theater 54 at Shetler Studios, 244 W. 54th Street, 12th Floor, at 8th Ave). Call 917-412-6472 or visit musicanuova.org

Program/Players

Silvie Jensen, Amanda Keil, Marcy Richardson, singers
Gwendolyn Toth, harpsichord and fortepiano
Daniel Swenberg, theorbo
Motomi Iragashi, viola da gamba, lirone
Vita Wallace, Abigail Karr, violins
R. B. Schlather, director

Monteverdi

Il Lamento d'Arianna (1608)

Haydn

Arianna a Naxos, Cantata a Voce Sola (1789)

Arcangelo Corelli

Trio Sonata, Op. 4. No 11

Alessandro Scarlatti

Arianna, Cantata for soprano, Two Violins and Basso Continuo

“Between Heaven and Earth”

Sacred Italian vocal works contrast and complement sensual German duets, enlivened with Baroque dance and gesture

Musica Nuova is joined by acclaimed historical dancer Dorothy Olsson on a program of German and Italian vocal music filled with dance motifs. The florid coloratura of Monteverdi's sacred vocal solos is a lively contrast to Cima's stately *Concerti Ecclesiastici*, performed here with Kris Kwapis playing the voice-like cornetto. German Baroque music is usually deeply spiritual, but the charming duets of *Deliciarum Juvenilium* by Thomas Selle evoke country dances and love affairs. The folksy German tunes contrast the expository Italian style, yet the earthy love songs mirror the ecstatic yearning of the sacred music.

Performance Date: Tuesday, March 20, 8pm
Church of St. Mary the Virgin

Tickets are \$15 in advance, \$20 at the door (Church of St. Mary the Virgin, 145 W. 46th St, between 6th and 7th Avenues). Call 917-412-6472 or visit musicanuova.org

Program/Players

Dorothy Olsson, dance and gesture
Amanda Keil, mezzo-soprano
James Kennerley, tenor
Kelly Savage, harpsichord
Kris Kwapis, cornetto
Elizabeth Weinfeld, viola da gamba

Monteverdi

Exulta filia sion

Laudate Dominum (from *Selva Morale e Spirituale*, 1640)

Giovanni Cima

Selections from *Concerti Ecclesiastici* (1610)

Thomas Selle

Selections from *Deliciarum Juvenilium* (1632)

Hans Neusiedler (*Selected Lute Songs*, 1544)

“Monteverdi's *Il Ballo delle Ingrate*”

"The Ballet of the Ungrateful Women" with additional Monteverdi songs and dialogue

This stunning 17th-century masque from the early days of opera recounts Cupid's woes when women no longer heed their lovers' desires. Cupid asks Pluto to bring the spirits of women who rejected love up from the underworld to show what fate awaits today's unyielding women in the afterlife. This very non-feminist message is turned on its head with the addition of other Monteverdi songs and original dialogue that create new characters and a play within a play. Filled with humor (a real three-headed dog!), action, and thrilling music, this production of "Ballo" originated at the Amherst Early Music Festival to a rave response.

Performance Date: Sunday, June 3, 6:30 PM
(Le) Poisson Rouge

Tickets are \$20 and can be purchased in advanced through (Le) Poisson Rouge at <http://lepoissonrouge.com/events/view/2790> or at the box office, 158 Bleecker Street between Thompson and Sullivan Streets.

Program/Players

Amanda Keil, Artistic Director and Producer

Grant Herreid, Music Director

Dorothy Olsson, Choreography and Dance

Lawrence Rosenwald, Narrator and Original Dialogue

Monteverdi

Il Ballo delle Ingrate (1608)

Tempro la cetra (Book VII)

Sinfonia

Introduzione al Ballo (Book VIII)

Ballo

Tirsi e Clori

Pass' e mezzo

Canario

Con che soavita (Book VII)
from *Il Ritorno d'Ulisse*
Lamento della ninfa (Book VIII)
Si tra sdegnosi pianti
Et e pur dunque vero (Scherzi musicali 1632)
Sinfonia
Chiome d'oro (Book VII)

For further information, press tickets, photos, and interviews, please contact Amanda Keil at 917-412-6472 or info@musicanuova.org

About Musica Nuova

Musica Nuova brings new perspectives to Baroque music by heightening the dramatic qualities intrinsic to the repertoire. Through staging and storytelling, we weave a storyline based on the meaning of the songs. Our goal is to create performances that transcend the standard concert experience of early music, providing a framework to engage newcomers and offer a new level of understanding to experienced listeners.

Musica Nuova takes its name from the revolutionary book of songs *Le Nuove Musiche*, published in 1602 by Florentine composer Giulio Caccini. The book marked a new way of singing that brings out the meaning of the words through ornamentation, varied rhythmic textures, and expressive harmonies. These dramatic songs heralded the beginnings of opera, and marked a turning point in the development of solo song. Taking these songs as a starting point, Musica Nuova expands their stories into timeless narratives.

During its initial years in Boston, Musica Nuova was presented on concert series with the Society for Historically Informed Performance (SoHIP), Bates College, MIT Chapel, Boston Early Music Festival Fringe Concerts, and Newton Library. Musica Nuova was the ensemble in residence at the Amherst Early Music Festival in 2010. 2011-12 marks Musica Nuova's full debut season in New York, including its first full length opera.

Audience members have praised Musica Nuova for the "seamlessness" of the program, calling it "fun and engaging," and describing one program as "the Bridget Jones of the 17th Century."

The Arianna Project Publicity Photos

Left to right: Silvie Jensen, Amanda Keil, Marcy Richardson

