



LES
DÉLICÉS

DEBRA NAGY, DIRECTOR

THE HIGHLAND LASSIE

Program

James Oswald: The Highland Lassie
Oswald: Steer her up and had her gaun
Oswald: The bottom of the punch bowl

Arr. Nagy after 18th C. Sources: The bonny boatman

William McGibbon: I love my love in secret
Caledonian Country Dances: Bonny Lass Reel

Francesco Geminiani: Trio Sonata "The last time I came o'er the moor"

Rudolf Straube: The Lass of Peaty's Mill
Robert Burns: A red, red rose
Oswald: Love is the cause of my mourning

McGibbon: Lochaber
Arr. Nagy after 18th C. Sources: When she came ben she bobed

Arr. Nagy after 18th C. Sources: William & Margaret
Caledonian Country Dances: Buttered pease – Blowzabella – Stewards Rant

Barbara Allen (to the tune of Niel Gow's Major Graham)
James Oswald: Fy gar rub her o'er with straw

Arr. Nagy after 18th C. Sources: The Broom of Cowdenknows
James Oswald: Scots Measure
Caledonian Country Dances: Border Reel

Performers

Elena Mullins, soprano
Debra Nagy, baroque oboe & recorders
Julie Andrijeski & Allison Monroe, violins
Rebecca Reed, cello
Daniel Swenberg, English guittar, baroque guitar, and archlute
Mark Edwards, harpsichord

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Notes on the Program

"Pleasant are the words of the song...and lovely are the tales of other times. They are like the calm dew of the morning on the hill of roes, when the sun is faint on its side, and the lake is settled and blue in the vale." - James Macpherson, The Fingal of Ossian (1762)

The Highland Lassie celebrates the permeable borders between folk song and art song, between country dance and cotillion. Truly, the tunes crossed social boundaries - being sung and played by folks from every walk of life from the fields to the tavern to the well-heeled salon. With their haunting melodies, budding romanticism, and nostalgic sentimentality, these traditional Scots songs speak powerfully to us today.

The thing about traditional tunes is that the repertoire stays relatively constant over a long period of time. Passed on first by oral transmission, tunes were copied into manuscript miscellanies in the 17th century. Over the course of the 18th Century, collections of Scots songs hit the commercial market such that publications reflected swelling national pride and codified what was a long-existing repertoire. In fact, many of the tunes on this program can be dated to at least the 17th century.

This performance brings together a variety of mid-18th Century sources including the 1725 song collection *Orpheus Caledonius*, various publications from the 1740s-1760s by Scottish fiddlers James Oswald and William McGibbon, and undated Caledonian Country Dances as we explore the sounds of an Edinburgh dance band (that would have included violins, oboes, and cello) and relish the gentle strains of an original 18th C. English guittar.

We're extremely pleased that Daniel Swenberg shared his original English guittar with us for these sessions (no, that's not misspelled). Made in the 1760s by Broaderip & Longman and recently restored by luthier Andy Rutherford, the instrument has a pear-shaped body and is strung with wire. It has a very soft and sweet sound and is tuned in a C major triad; an original bone capo can be screwed into the fingerboard at different positions to facilitate playing in additional keys. Related to the cittern (hence the two t's), the English guittar was an incredibly popular instrument in Scotland during the second half of the 18th century, where it could be heard in drawing rooms playing and accompanying songs like you'll hear in this program.

In addition to popular songs like *The Bonny Boatman* and *The Broom of Cowdenknows*, our program includes tunes with toe-tapping variation sets like *Steer her up and had her gaun*, *I love my love in Secret*, and *Lochaber*, which Scottish fiddlers such as James Oswald and William McGibbon published in large collections in the



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1760s. But fashioning Baroque-inspired 21st century performances from these 18th century materials is not such a simple task. The tunes are just that - tunes - and their frequently modal, gapped scales don't necessarily lend themselves to common-practice harmony. In the case of some of Oswald and McGibbon's publications, the tunes were often published without bass lines. As a result, we've sometimes drawn from three or four different sources to create our editions and performances. That is, we've frequently brought together a melody and variations from one source, fit it to a bass line from one or more other sources and composed or improvised additional parts. In some cases, we've incorporated multiple melodic or ornamental variants that appear in different sources.

The idea of adapting Scottish folk songs to a Classical idiom became a fascinating pursuit for a foreign musician like violinist Francesco Geminani. Francesco Geminani was an Italian-born and trained violinist who came to London in 1714 to make his fortune. A student of the internationally-famous Arcangelo Corelli, Geminani met with success particularly in teaching and publishing music. Following 10 years in London, Geminani found himself moving between Dublin, London, Paris, and even Amsterdam, where he increasingly focused on publishing, writing theoretical treatises, and making ends meet by selling paintings.

As we'll hear in *The last time I came o'er the moor*, Geminani adapted tunes to current fashions by adding Italian bass lines and Baroque harmonies. Geminani's arrangements of Scots tunes are found appended to his 1749 *Treatise of Good Taste in the Art of Musick*. Geminani himself admits that the Scottish-Italian fusion is somewhat experimental. It's neither truly Scottish nor Italian, but rather unusual and different. In his words, the results are "so much the more entertaining."

Towards the end of the 18th century, Scotland's national bard Robert Burns did major work collecting and revising tunes and lyrics as a primary contributor to the six-volume *Scots Musical Museum* (1787-1803). Contributing over 350 songs, Burns drew on a vast store of Scots songs that he knew already and collected others on journeys through the countryside – not so unlike ethnomusicologists making field recordings to preserve traditional music. Burns also used fragments of existing lyrics as the basis for his own poems while selected existing tunes on which to compose new lyrics.

Burns claimed that one of his most famous love songs, *A red, red rose*, was a 'simple old Scots song which I had picked up in the country'. Though *A red, red rose* is best known today set to the tune *Low down in the broom*, Burns himself indicated that 'The tune of this song is in [violinist] Niel Gow's first Collection and is called there, "*Major Graham*," which is the tune that we present in this performance.



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The Famous tune *Lochaber no more* - which references the Scottish highlands - was published in the 1720s. Also popular in Ireland (where it was known as Limerick's Lament), the tune travelled far and wide: it was even copied out by Thomas Jefferson to be heard at his home in Monticello.

When she cam ben she bobed owes its infectious energy to the fact that it reflects the harmonies of the ground bass pattern Passamezzo Antico (in this way, it's closely related to the English folk tune *Greensleeves*, which can be traced as far back as the 1580s). Taking James Oswald's variations for solo violin as a framework, we set it to the Passamezzo Antico bass line, and improvised and composed additional parts to reimagine this tune as an ensemble jam session for an Edinburgh dance band.

Though echoes of the ballad of *William & Margaret* can be traced back to the early 17th century, we've based our performance on the surviving text (reworked by 18th century Scottish poet David Mallet and also sometimes known as *Margaret's Ghost*) from the 1725 Scots song collection Orpheus Caledonius (the tune is related to *Never love thee more* and Oswald's *Cheevy Chase*). Here, Margaret's ghost visits William in the night and berates him for breaking his oath of love. With the fear of God struck into him, William rushes from his bed to Margaret's grave. Crying for forgiveness at her graveside, he lies down and joins her in death.

The famous song *Barbara Allen* goes back at least as far as the 1660s when diarist Samuel Pepys tells us that he sang it alongside friends on New Year's Eve back in 1665. Published as a broadside ballad in the 1690s, this folk tune travelled far and wide to become the most widely collected song in the English language. It was popular not only in England, Scotland and Ireland, but hundreds of versions were collected over the years across North America.

While *Barbara Allen* has been sung to many different tunes, this minor-mode melody drawn from James Oswald's *Curious Collection of Scots Tunes* seems to be among the oldest. There are many variants for the text as well. The lyrics (drawn from the *Scots Musical Museum*) relate a simple yet heartbreaking story in which a servant implores Barbara to visit John Graham, who professes his love for her as he lies dying in bed. She rebuffs him, explaining that he slighted her at the tavern. Barbara walks out on him and he dies soon after. Barbara finds herself struck with pain and regret as she hears the funeral bells that toll John's death. Arriving home, Barbara implores her mother to prepare her own death bed "soft and narrow."

ABOUT THE VENUE

We're thrilled to have filmed this project on location at Cleveland's Dunham Tavern Museum. Once a stagecoach stop on Buffalo-Cleveland-Detroit post road, the 1824



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home of Rufus and Jane Pratt Dunham is the oldest building still standing on its original site in the city of Cleveland. We perform in the warm acoustics of Dunham Barn. The original Dunham Barn was built in the 1840s with hand-hewn timbers, cut nails, and simple stone-on-ground foundations. The barn was painstakingly reconstructed using original construction methods in 2000 after a fire.

– Debra Nagy

ABOUT THE PERFORMERS

Julie Andrijeski is celebrated as a performer, scholar, and teacher of early music and dance. She has been recognized for her “invigorating verve and imagination” (*Washington Post*), “fiery and poetic depth” (*Cleveland Plain Dealer*), and “velvety, consistently attractive sound” (*New York Times*). Julie is Artistic Director of the Atlanta Baroque Orchestra, founding member of Apollo’s Fire, Creator and Director of the Wonder Chamber Project, and a frequent guest with various ensembles nationwide. Julie joined the Music faculty at CWRU in 2007, where she teaches historical performance and directs the baroque music and dance ensembles. Julie is frequently invited to present workshops in historical dance and music throughout the U.S. She won EMA’s Thomas Binkley Award for outstanding achievement in performance and scholarship in 2015, was named a 2016 Creative Workforce Fellow by Cuyahoga Arts & Culture, and was awarded a Grammy for “Songs of Orpheus” with Apollo’s Fire in 2018.

First prize winner in the 2012 Musica Antiqua Bruges International Harpsichord Competition, Canadian **harpsichordist and organist Mark Edwards** is recognized for his captivating performances, bringing the listener “to new and unpredictable regions, using all of the resources of his instrument, [...] of his virtuosity, and of his imagination” (*La Libre Belgique*). An active chamber musician, he is the artistic director of Poiesis, collaborates regularly with Les Boréades de Montréal, and has performed with Il Pomo d’Oro, Pallade Musica, and Flûtes Alors!. He has also given solo recitals at the Utrecht Early Music Festival and Brussels’ Bozar and performed concertos with a number of award-winning ensembles, including Il Gardellino (Belgium), Neobarock (Germany), and Ensemble Caprice (Canada). He is currently a PhD student at Leiden University and the Orpheus Instituut, Ghent, where his research examines the intersection of memory, improvisation, and the musical work in seventeenth-century France. Since 2016, he is Assistant Professor of Harpsichord at Oberlin Conservatory.

A multi-instrumentalist, **Allison Monroe** has appeared with the Boston Camerata, Newberry Consort, Les Délices, Apollo’s Fire, Atlanta Baroque Orchestra, and Indianapolis Baroque Orchestra, playing violin, viola, vielle, rebec, and singing. Since earning her DMA in Historical Performance Practice from Case Western Reserve University (CWRU), Allison



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particularly enjoys creating her own musical opportunities: as Artistic Director and performer for *Fair and Princely Branches*, an album of English Renaissance music, released in 2020; as violinist and violist on an album of classical and early romantic duos with multi-instrumentalist Cynthia Black, recorded in July 2021; and as a founding member and co-director of Cleveland-based medieval ensemble Trobár. In the 2021-22 season, Allison looks forward to resuming live performances as a freelancer, presenting Trobár's Cleveland series and a residency at Purdue University, Fort Wayne, teaching courses for the Siegal Lifelong Learning Center at CWRU, and directing CWRU's Collegium Musicum and Baroque Orchestra.

Praised for her "alluring" performances and "easy virtuosity," soprano **Elena Mullins** has wide-ranging interests in the field of early music. As a performer of period chamber music she has appeared with The Newberry Consort, Three Notch'd Road, Les Délices, and Apollo's Fire. She takes a scholarly interest in the performance practices of early repertoires, and co-founded the medieval music ensembles Alkemie and Trobár. She holds a DMA in Historical Performance Practice and a BA in Musical Arts from The Eastman School of Music. She returned to CWRU in 2016, where she directs the Early Music Singers and the Baroque Dance Ensemble, and teaches medieval music history and notation.

"A baroque oboist of consummate taste and expressivity" (Cleveland Plain Dealer) with a musical approach that's "distinctly sensual...pliant, warm, and sweet," (New York Times), **Debra Nagy, director**, is one of North America's leading performers on the baroque oboe. She plays principal oboe with the American Bach Soloists, Seattle Baroque Orchestra, and Apollo's Fire, and is a regular guest with the Handel & Haydn Society, Boston Early Music Festival, and Portland Baroque Orchestra, among other ensembles. Following studies at the Oberlin Conservatory, Conservatory of Amsterdam, and Case Western Reserve University, Debra has received many awards for her creative and scholarly pursuits including first-prize in the American Bach Soloists Young Artists Competition, a 2009 Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Humanities, and a 2010 Creative Workforce Fellowship from Cuyahoga Arts & Culture. She has recorded over 30 CDs with repertoire ranging from 1300-1800 on the Chandos, Avie, CPO, Capstone, Bright Angel, Naxos, and ATMA labels, and has had live performances featured on CBC Radio Canada, Klara (Belgium), NPR's Performance Today, WQXR (New York City) and WGBH Boston.

Cellist and gambist Rebecca Landell Reed's "luminous" (Cleveland.com) and "notable" (The New York Times) sound elicits a range of expression "from classically evocative to Hitchcock horrifying" (Washingtonian). Her solo appearances include performances with Apollo's Fire, Atlanta Baroque Orchestra, Les Delices, Three Notch'd Road, and Batzdorfer Hofkapelle. Rebecca pursues a diverse professional career, such as performing and acting in Studio Theatre's *An Iliad*, working with composer Eric Shimelonis on NPR children's show *Circle Round*, and developing



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educational programs with the Crumhorn Collective. She is currently on faculty at Oberlin Conservatory, where she teaches baroque cello and viola da gamba.

Daniel Swenberg plays a wide variety of lutes and guitars: baroque, renaissance, classical/romantic—small, medium, and large. Chief among these is the theorbo— the long lute that you are either wondering about or overhearing your neighbor discuss. In the before-times, Daniel schlepped instruments throughout North America and Europe to play with myriad ensembles. These days, he attempts maintain a reserve of sanity with quarantine projects that delve into rarely performed repertoires such Les Accords Nouveaux and other commercially dubious areas. He is on faculty at Juilliard's Historical Performance program. Daniel received awards from the Belgian American Educational Foundation (2000) for a study of 18th century chamber music for the lute, and a Fulbright Scholarship (1997) to study in Bremen, Germany. His programming integrates and emphasizes music with the history, sciences, economics, politics, and broader culture of its time.