

# Guts Baroque Duo presents: The Weimar Club: Bach, Pisendel and Telemann

Sunday, July 26, 2020, 3:00 P.M. PDT/6:00 P.M. EDT  
YouTube Live



*featuring:*

Sylvia Schwartz, baroque violin  
John Ott, baroque cello

# Program

Sonata in E Minor, BWV 1023.....Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)

Introduction - Adagio ma non tanto  
Allemande  
Gigue

Sonata in C Minor, “BWV 1024”.....Johann Georg Pisendel  
(1688–1755)

Adagio  
Presto  
Affetuoso  
Vivace

## Intermission

Sonata in A Major, TWV 41:A4.....Georg Philipp Telemann (1681–1767)

Andante  
Vivace  
Cantabile  
Allegro

Fin

# Program Notes

**Johann Sebastian Bach** (1685-1750) was one of the most influential composers in Germany in the early 18th century. Born to a family of famous musicians, Bach accepted a number of appointments as organist until his first court appointment at Weimar in 1708. Over time he took over duties as konzertmeister and court composer in addition to playing organ. From 1717-1723 he worked in Cöthen for the great patron of music Prince Leopold, playing organ and composing for a variety of instruments and ensembles. In 1723 he gained a position in Leipzig as Kantor at the Thomasschule and civic director of music in Leipzig. Among his responsibilities were teaching the young musicians at the school, and composing and performing music in the churches of Leipzig every Sunday. By this point in his life he was celebrated as a composer and teacher, and many of his students became successful composers as well, notably his sons Wilhelm Friedrich, Carl Philipp Emanuel, and Johann Christian. Bach is credited with being the master of counterpoint and imitation, and his music has been studied and imitated by composers for centuries.

Bach's Sonata in E minor, BWV 1023 survives from a manuscript copied around 1714 by Johann Gottfried Grundig, the copyist for the Dresden court. This sonata is very dark and uncharacteristically chromatic for Bach, and features a very flashy improvisatory introduction for the violin. It is very likely that this sonata was written by Bach for the illustrious first violinist of the Dresden court, Johann Georg Pisendel.

**Johann Georg Pisendel** (1687-1755) was born in Cadolzburg, Bavaria. After studying violin in Ansbach with the famous Giuseppe Torelli, he journeyed to Leipzig to attend the University. On his way to Leipzig, he visited and made acquaintance with both Bach and Telemann, who he would remain friends with for his whole life. After his studies at Leipzig, Pisendel was hired in 1712 by the Dresden court as a violinist, a position he would keep until his death. Pisendel was recognized as a performer and as a composer. Many of his works were not published, but were retained in libraries in Dresden.

The Sonata in C minor survives in an undated manuscript in Pisendel's hand. It is stylistically very similar to Bach's works, and was originally catalogued as one of Bach's violin sonatas, BWV 1024. There are some stylistic differences, though, primarily in the use of dissonance. The debate continues through the present time, was this written by Pisendel in the style of Bach? Was this written by Bach for Pisendel to play? Was this a collaboration between the two masters?

**Georg Philipp Telemann** (1681-1767) bridged the gap between the Baroque and Classical eras of composition. Though he was an avid musician and composer even at an early age, Telemann's musical interests were suppressed by his family, who sent him off to study law. However, his compositional talent was quickly discovered, and he was hired to write music for the two principal churches in Leipzig, and soon was directing an opera company and a collegium of students in public performances. Subsequent positions in Sorau (now Poland) and Eisenach exposed him to many famous musicians and styles of compositions, but he tired quickly of court life and settled in Frankfurt in 1712. In 1721, Telemann got the job as the sacred music director for the city of Hamburg, a post he held until his death. Though he composed in a variety of styles, by 1730 he stated that he preferred composing in the "Italian" style, now associated with stile galant. Another of Telemann's contributions to the changing world of music was his idea that he owned the rights to all of his compositions, and starting in 1725,

ensured their publication himself. Telemann was a close friend to the Bach family, and served as godfather to Carl Philipp Emanuel.

His Violin Sonata in A major, TWV 41:A4, was first published in Telemann's 1733 collection *Tafelmusik* (Musique de Table), Part 2. Telemann published this collection by subscriptions, which he sold to wealthy, often amateur, musicians to play together "around a table." This is the only solo violin sonata in this collection, which features many combinations of instruments. It is composed to be interesting, cheerful and fun to play.

*—John Ott*

# About Us

Cellist and gambist **John Ott**, a native of Los Angeles, received his Bachelor of Music degree in cello performance from UC Irvine in 2004, studying with Dr. Margaret Parkins, and in 2016 completed his Master of Music degree in Early Music, viola da gamba at the Longy School of Music in Cambridge, Massachusetts, where he studied with Jane Hershey. In between, he performed with Symphony Irvine, Dana Point Symphony, Montage Civic Orchestra, and South Orange County Chamber Orchestra, played in the string quartet Elegie Quartet, and played chamber music all over Los Angeles and Orange County. During his two years in Massachusetts, aside from his Longy ensembles, he performed with Boston Camerata and Boston Opera Collaborative. He has played with the Orange County-based early music group L'Esprit Baroque since 2014. He maintains a large teaching studio, primarily at Vienna Music Institute in Irvine, CA, and is the cello coach for three high schools in Irvine Unified School District.

Fascinated and deeply inspired by the relationship between music, movement, and dance, violinist and Dalcrozian-in-training **Sylvia Schwartz** is a passionate chamber musician in both modern and historical performance practices. A native of Boston, Sylvia has performed with Guts, L'Esprit Baroque, Musica Angelica Baroque Orchestra, LA Chamber Chorale, The Meistersingers, Eudaimonia—A Purposeful Period Band, Harvard Baroque Chamber Orchestra, Harvard Early Music Society, New Bedford Symphony, New England Classical Singers, and Lizzie and the Flakjackets throughout the United States and Canada, in Estonia, Latvia, and at Shostakovich Hall in St. Petersburg, Russia. Sylvia earned a M.M. in Violin Performance from the Longy School of Music, where she studied violin with Laura Bossert and early music with Dana Maiben, Na'ama Lion, Vivian Montgomery, and Ryan Turner. She also holds a B.S. in Engineering from Olin College. Sylvia teaches privately in person and online, for the Irvine Unified School District, and at Vienna Music Institute in Irvine, California, and concertizes frequently with Guts and L'Esprit Baroque.

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## About Historically-Informed Performance Practice

The mission of Guts is to bring the music of the Baroque era to vivid life, recreating the distinct sound of the time in which it was composed. In tonight's program, Sylvia will be playing a baroque violin, constructed in 2016 by Douglas Cox to replicate a Guarneri violin of the early 1700's, with a long baroque bow made by Louis Bégin. John will play a (modern)

French cello of unknown origin, constructed around 1915, with a bow also made by Louis Bégin. Both instruments are strung with pure-gut strings, the way they would have been in the 18th century. Gut strings sound warmer, though quieter, than their modern metal equivalents, and baroque instruments are under less tension, so they sound more open, though not as projecting. Like most Baroque music, all of the music on tonight's program has a basso continuo line forming the foundation of the ensemble, typically shared by the cello or gamba and the keyboard, usually a harpsichord or organ. We are presenting these works without a keyboard instrument for this concert.

As performers, we will be adding ornaments such as trills and turns to the music as we play. The practice of decorating music was unique to the performer and to the circumstances of performance, and helped each musician put their own stamp on a piece of music. Decorating this way both adds to the expressiveness of the music and allows us to share our personalities as performers with our audience. Also, since the music of this time is generally imitating sung text, even though the music we are playing has no specific text we will be shaping our phrases and melodies as if they were sung with words.

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# Acknowledgements

Sylvia is currently raising funds to purchase the instrument you hear on our recorded concert, and is deeply grateful to the following people who have contributed more than \$12,000 since November 2017, matching her own payments of more than \$8,000, and totaling 92% of funding needed by November of this year:

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