

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 2009

THE SEASON OF MAGIC SIX
Tempesta di Mare Performs All Six Bach Brandenburg Concertos in 2009-2010

PHILADELPHIA, PA: Philadelphia Baroque Orchestra Tempesta di Mare opens its eighth season and presents J.S. Bach's complete **Brandenburg Concertos**. The first program of this exciting four-part series will be performed **Friday, October 23 at 8 pm**, at The Presbyterian Church of Chestnut Hill and **Saturday, October 24 at 8 pm**, at St. Mark's Church in Philadelphia. The program is introduced by a pre-concert talk by musicologist Michael Marissen, starting at 7 pm.

Tickets and Information: Preferred \$35, General \$25, Senior \$20, Student \$10, Children (grades 3-12) free. Pre-concert talk \$5. Order tickets at www.tempestadimare.org, call 215-755-8776 or at the door.

As Baroque specialists, Tempesta di Mare's musicians are in constant demand to play in other groups' performances of the Brandenburgs. They know the works inside and out. Still, Tempesta di Mare has never played the Brandenburgs as a group until now, making this season's performances an important musical event in Philadelphia.

Tempesta's founders and Artistic Co-Directors Gwyn Roberts and Richard Stone take this even further: they will examine the Brandenburgs in detail, using them as an entry point to present other music which is related to, inspired or influenced by the Brandenburgs, some of it rarely or never yet heard in modern times. "We are focusing on a baroque period made up of a broad spectrum of tastes—fascinating times, with many other brilliant composers' voices," Stone says.

Bach assembled the six concertos (BWV 1046–1051) as a collection of instrumental works and presented them, by way of a job application, to the Margrave Christian Ludwig of Brandenburg in 1721. He never got the job.

"Brandenburgs will present a certain challenge, because everyone has heard them so many times," comments Stone. "However, the way we make music is so engaging—both for musicians and audience—that I think we'll strike the right chord with a fresh musical point of view."

Indeed, since its conception, Tempesta has claimed its own unique niche in the Philadelphia music landscape: performing without a conductor, applying a chamber music collaborative work process even with the full orchestra and, thus, making it a very immediate and intimate experience for all.

"Our work process is more akin to an ensemble *theater*, so we regard the music we play more as a script than a doctrine," explains Stone. "Bach's music can be very dramatic if you regard it as a dramatic, rhetorical form and not just as the notes you have to play. We find the most dramatic interpretation of the music and make it feel conversational."

The October concert pairs Brandenburg #1, a “concerto-suite,” with another concerto-suite by G. P. Telemann, a little-known piece for the same set of instruments. Also, a modern premiere of a concerto for orchestra by Johann Friedrich Fasch and an orchestral suite by Georg Muffat, a big influence on Bach who brought French style ballet music to Germany.

The December program features harpsichordist Adam Pearl in Brandenburg #5, Richard Stone in Fasch’s Lute Concerto, and Gwyn Roberts in a Graupner suite for recorder and strings, all set against ensemble pieces by Pachelbel and Telemann in which virtuosos play off each other as “firsts among equals,” in Roberts’ words.

January brings Brandenburgs #2 and #3 along with some of the tempestuous repertoire by Antonio Vivaldi, including Tempesta di Mare’s namesake concerto *La Tempesta di Mare*. **Pro Musica Rara**, Baltimore’s premier early music ensemble, joins forces with Tempesta for these and other Vivaldi-inspired works by J. D. Heinichen and J. G. Pisendel.

In May, Brandenburg #6 and #4 couple with an American premiere of Telemann’s Suite in G Minor and his Double Concerto for flute and violin. “This concert offers work that shows without question just why Telemann and Bach are famous,” says Roberts. It also includes Evaristo Felice Dall’Abaco’s double flute concerto.

The 2009-2010 season expands Tempesta’s popular pre-concert talks and turns them into series of their own, not to be missed.

The speaker for the October concerts is musicologist **Michael Marissen**, a renowned Bach scholar, author of *The Social and Religious Designs of J. S. Bach’s Brandenburg Concertos*. Using musical excerpts from Bach and other composers, Marissen will demonstrate the unusual use of the instruments in the Brandenburgs, like making the least significant instruments the most important in the orchestra, and vice versa. “These are not just beautiful sounds but *interesting* beautiful sounds because of the way the instruments are treated,” comments Marissen.

Social historian **Tanya Kevorkian**, author of *Music in German Towns during the Baroque Era*, will be the speaker for the March concerts. Audiences will learn about Bach’s listeners, people who attended his church, why they came and what they got out of it.

The May concerts will be introduced by musicologist **Steven Zohn**, the author of *Music for a Mixed Taste: Style, Genre, and Meaning in Telemann’s Instrumental Works*. Although Bach is popularly regarded as preeminent baroque composer, in his day of high baroque Telemann was the composer to listen to.

Bach wrote music of incredible beauty and complexity, in a style that shines through regardless of what instrument plays it. According to Roberts, “this music reaches a whole different level of fascination when it’s played by a group of musicians who speak Bach’s language—the language of baroque music—and who speak that language together as an ensemble all the time. That’s what will make Tempesta di Mare’s Brandenburg Concerti so magical this year.”

Full Brandenburg series schedule is attached.

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Bach Brandenburg Concerto Series 2009-2010

Brandenburg I, plus Telemann, Fasch and Muffat

Friday, October 23 at 8 pm, The Presbyterian Church of Chestnut Hill

Saturday, October 24 at 8 pm, St. Mark's Church, Philadelphia

With pre-concert talk by Michael Marissen at 7 pm.

Modern Premiere: Concerto in G, BWV L:G13 by Johann Friedrich Fasch.

Brandenburg V, plus Telemann, Fasch and Pachelbel

Saturday, December 19 at 8 pm, St Martin-in-the-Fields Church, Chestnut Hill

Sunday, December 20 at 3:30 pm, Old St Joseph's Church, Philadelphia

"Open Doors" Free Admission – donations welcome, registration required.

Harpichord solo: Adam Pearl; Recorder solo: Gwyn Roberts; Lute solo: Richard Stone

Brandenburg II & III, plus Vivaldi, Pisendel and Heinichen

Friday, January 22 at 8 pm, The Presbyterian Church of Chestnut Hill

Saturday, January 23 at 8 pm, Old St Joseph's Church, Philadelphia

In collaboration with **Pro Musica Rara**, Baltimore.

Trumpet solo: John Thiessen

Brandenburg IV & VI, plus Telemann and Dall'Abaco

Friday, May 21 at 8 pm, The Presbyterian Church of Chestnut Hill

Saturday, May 22 at 8 pm, St Mark's Church, Philadelphia

With pre-concert talk by Steven Zohn at 7 pm

American Premiere: Suite in G Minor, BWV 55:g1 by Georg Philipp Telemann.

Concert Venues:

St Mark's Church, 1625 Locust Street, Philadelphia, PA

The Presbyterian Church of Chestnut Hill, 8855 Germantown Avenue, Chestnut Hill, PA

St Martin-in-the-Fields, 8000 St. Martin's Lane, Chestnut Hill, PA

Old St Joseph's Church, 321 Willings Alley, Philadelphia, PA

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