The Community Presbyterian Church Concert Series presents

Heart Strings
Gail Gillispie
Renaissance Lute

Sunday, February 14, 2021 • 3:00 PM

Community Presbyterian Church
39 North Prospect Avenue • Clarendon Hills, Illinois 60514

The CPC Concert Series
Enriching our community through music
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Rogero .......................... John Johnson
Pepper Is Black (anon.)
Tandernacken (anon.)
Chi passa ......................... [Clement?] Cotton
Fantasia ........................... Francesco da Milano
*Belle qui tiens ma vie ........ from Orchésographie, 1589
Thoinot Arbeau
*Spagnoletta ..................... from Terpsichore, 1611
Michael Praetorius
Quadro Pavan .................... [Clement?] Cotton
Galliard (anon.)
Fantasia, p. 235 (anon.)
To Westminster (anon.)
Newman’s Fancy ................. [Anthony?] Newman
*All in a Garden Green ......... from The English Dancing Master, 1651
John Playford
Philip's Dump (anon.)
*Tant que vivray .................. Claudin de Sermisy

*Indicates an arrangement by Gail Gillispie.
All other pieces are from the Marsh Lute Book.
Notes

The title for this concert comes from a sonnet by the English poet Samuel Daniel, a contemporary of Shakespeare:

Like as the lute that joys or else dislikes
As in his art that plays upon the same,
So sounds my Muse according as she strikes
On my heart strings high tun'd unto her fame.
Her touch doth cause the warble of the sound
Which here I yield in lamentable wise,
A wailing descant on the sweetest ground,
Whose due reports give honor to her eyes.
Else harsh my style, untunable my Muse,
Hoarse sounds the voice that praiseth not her name;
If any pleasing relish here I use,
Then judge the world her beauty gives the same.
O happy ground that makes the music such,
And blessed hand that gives so sweet a touch.

Daniel uses many musical terms to develop a comparison between the lute, which produces music in response to the player, and the writer's inspiration, which produces poetry in response to his beloved.

The lute's importance in the Renaissance may be compared to that of the piano in the nineteenth century, or the guitar in the twentieth: it was widely played by professionals and amateurs alike; it was used as a solo instrument, to accompany singing, or in combination with other instruments; its repertoire encompassed popular tunes and dances as well as highly virtuosic and sophisticated art music. Lute music was published in large quantities by the printing houses of Europe and copied by hand by individual players.

Most of the music on this program comes from an English manuscript now in Archbishop Marsh's Library at Trinity College, Dublin. It was compiled by a single player, starting in the 1580s, but some of the music dates from much earlier. It includes versions of English ballad and dance tunes; fantasias and song arrangements by some of the great Continental masters, among them Francesco da Milano; transcriptions of keyboard music, and the curiously hypnotic pieces called "dumps," composed over alternating chords. Few pieces have titles or composers listed; many pieces are unique to this manuscript, and their origin is unknown, as is the identity of the compiler.

The other pieces are my attempt at what professional musicians of the time would have been able and expected to do: make their own versions of popular songs and dance pieces, with ornaments, called "divisions," added to the melody and weaving around the harmonic progression, much as jazz musicians add their own riffs to standard pieces, or organists improvise preludes based on hymns.

— Gail Gillispie

GAIL GILLESPIE is a graduate of Oberlin College and the London Early Music Centre. She has performed in Europe, the US, and Canada, including appearances with the Newberry Consort, the Milwaukee Medieval Players, and the New York Ensemble for Early Music. As a member of the Venere Lute Quartet, she has appeared at the Utrecht Festival and recorded four CDs. Her first solo recording, A Cabinet of Curiosities, features music from the Marsh Lute Book and will be released in the spring of 2021. She has served on the faculty at the Amherst Early Music Workshops and the Lute Society of America Summer Seminars. Gail is also a professional music engraver and a composer, editor, and arranger.
Sponsor Acknowledgements

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