

Press Release 1/9 /08 (12/13 revised)

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Echo Early Music Festival

Announces 2008 Lineup

1/26: Benjamin Bagby, Beowulf

1/27: Harmonia Baroque

1/28: Lebedinsky and Brass

1/30: Echo Camerata Opera: L'Orfeo, Favola in Musica

1/31: Rossignol Duo

1/31 Medieval Feast with harp and madrigals, and Renaissance Revels (+ Raffle!)

2/1: Ensemble Vermillian: Hidden Treasures

Asheville, NC:

1000 years of music is about to come to life for one midwinter week as the exciting new Echo Early Music Festival takes flight in Asheville, NC. This year's festival, running from January 26th through February 1, 2008, will consist of a week of exceptional Medieval, Renaissance, and Baroque music presented by ensembles and performers from throughout the region, and acclaimed guest artists from across the continent and the around the globe. The opportunity to hear this spectacular music doesn't come around every day, at least during the last few hundred years. Especially in the Southern mountains.

The festival is one of the few events of its kind in the Southeast, and, to our knowledge the only one in the Southern mountains, despite the rapidly growing popularity and success of early music events and ensembles worldwide over the past several decades. Four evening concerts will be held in the historical Cathedral of All Souls in Biltmore Village (1/26, 1/28, 1/30, 2/1). An afternoon concert will be held at the Porter Center in Brevard (1/27). The Rossignol Duo will play a pre-dinner family concert at the Jubilee! Community Church in downtown Asheville, followed by a musical, medieval, vegetarian feast next door at the Laughing Seed Café in Downtown Asheville (1/31).

Additional press materials are available, including photos, a DVD sample of Benjamin Bagby's Beowulf, CDs of Ensemble Sequentia, L'Orfeo, and Ensemble Vermillian, and additional press photos and biographical info on the artists. Reference materials for feature stories (about the festival or any of the performances), complementary tickets for media representatives, and a contact list for artist and organizer interviews are available upon request.

Opportunities for sponsorship and advertising are available. Also available is information about our novel benefit event, a Winner's Choice Raffle of a 1938 Carlo Carletti Violin, offered through Williams Gengakki Violins in Atlanta, or a new Toyota Prius, with the

winner chosen by a drawing during the festival.

2008 Festival Events:

1/26, 7:30 p.m., Cathedral of All Souls, at Biltmore Village

Benjamin Bagby, world-renowned medieval music specialist, acclaimed co-founder of the Grammy nominated medieval ensemble Sequentia (known for their interpretations of the music of Hildegard von Bingen), and Professor at the Sorbonne University in Paris, presents the medieval epic **Beowulf** (basis for the recent feature film), in the original bardic style, accompanying himself on a medieval lyre. See www.bagbybeowulf.com for more info. “*Mr. Bagby comes as close to holding hundreds of people in a spell as ever a man has... That is much too rare an experience in theater.* — *The New York Times*

1/27, 3:00, Porter Center, Brevard College

Boone, NC, based period instrument ensemble **Harmonia Baroque** will be performing music of Janitsch, Monteverdi, Bach, Handel, Lully and Jacques Morel as part of the “Brevard College Presents” series. Artists: **Michael Bell: harpsichords, Alicia Chapman: baroque oboe, Barbara Blaker Krumdieck: baroque cello, Priscilla Porterfield: mezzo-soprano, Nancy Schneeloch-Bingham: flute**

1/28, 7:30, Cathedral of All Souls

Acclaimed historical **keyboardist Henry Lebedinsky** will be joined by the Asheville based quintet, **the Biltmore Brass**, for an exciting night of French and German music at the Cathedral of All Souls. Mr. Lebedinsky and the Biltmore Brass will perform independently, and then join forces for the exciting finale. The Biltmore Brass: **Bill Ross – Trumpet, Casey Coppenbarger – Trumpet, Judy Roper - French horn, Linda Davis – Trombone, Kermit Solesby – Tuba**

1/30, 7:30 p.m., Cathedral of All Souls

Claudio Monteverdi’s “L’Orfeo, Favola in Musica” with libretto by Alessandro Striggio, in semi-concert version, performed by the **Echo Camerata Opera**, with **Aaron Schnurbusch**, an Asheville based lyric tenor, in the title role, and **Dr. Michael Porter**, director of choral activities at Brevard College and associate conductor with the Asheville Lyric Opera, conducting. Orfeo is the first great opera, currently in its 400th year.

1/31, 3:00 Workshop, 4:15 Performance, Jubilee! Community Church

In concert, the acclaimed **Rossignol Duo** will perform music of Elizabethan England. Beforehand, they will give a free presentation entitled: “Everything You Wanted to Know About the Lute, but Didn't Know How to Ask”. **Hazel Ketchum** and **Christopher Berg** formed the The Rossignol Duo in 1997 to explore the vast and beautiful Renaissance, Baroque,

and 19th-Century literature for lutes, voice, and guitars in varying combination. As a duo, they have become known for their technical command, scholarly insight, and innovative programming. They have performed to capacity crowds throughout the Southeast and New England. *The State* newspaper wrote of a recent performance, “packed with pleasure... expertly played guitars and lutes, wondrously nimble passage work.” See <http://www.christopherberg.com/rossignol.aspx> for more info.

1/31, seatings at 5:30 and 6:30 p.m., music throughout the evening, the Laughing Seed Café and Jack of the Wood Pub, Asheville, NC

The Laughing Seed Café, and gourmet vegetarian chef Jason Sellers, will be hosting a **Medieval Feast** to balance the humours and benefit the festival, joined by **harpist Lelia Lattimore** and **Soundings Choral Group**, directed by **Timothy Wilds**. After dinner, **Musicke Antigua** will be performing dances and courtly musick of the olde world downstairs at the Jack of the Wood Pub. The “**Car or the Carletti?**” raffle will take place at 9:15 during the revels at the Jack of the Wood.

2/1, 7:30 p.m., Cathedral of All Souls

Ensemble Vermillian (note spelling!) brings to audiences exciting and moving compositions from the Baroque period played in historically informed style on recorder, Baroque cello, viola da gamba and harpsichord. Their program, **Hidden Treasures: Italian Baroque Chamber Music 1650-1700**, presents instrumental works by composers including Merula, Uccellini, Isabella Leonarda, Stradella, G. B. Vitali and his son Tomaso Vitali, from the relatively unexplored later period of the 17th century. Performers: **Frances Blaker, recorders, Barbara Krumdieck, baroque cello, Gail Ann Schroeder, viola da gamba, and Alissa Duryee, keyboards** “*In all of the pieces, the outstanding quality was the engagement that the players had with the music and with each other — coupled with the interesting choice of, and approach to, the repertoire.*” —*San Francisco Classical Voice*

Attached photos: 1) Benjamin Bagby 2) Harmonia Baroque 3) Henry Lebedinsky 4) The Biltmore Brass 5) Aaron Schnurbusch-Orfeo 6) Rossignol Duo 7) Soundings Choral Group 8) Ensemble Vermillian