

## PROGRAM NOTES

**Girolamo Frescobaldi** Père Marin Mersenne in his *Harmonie Universelle* of 1637 mentions "Fresco Baldi" among some of the "excellent composers" not known to him personally. Indeed, when Frescobaldi took up his appointment as the organist of St. Peter's in Rome at age 25, his inaugural recital drew an audience of 30,000!, according to critical chronicles. His published music continued to be popular for almost a century after his death. His second book of *Toccate e Partite d'Intavolatura di Cembalo e Organo*, first published in 1627 and revised in 1637, includes both works here presented. The *Toccata II*, has more clearly defined subsections with motivic consistency and textural contrast compared to those toccatas of the first book of 1615. Tonality is defined and reinterpreted through arpeggiated chords enlivened by imitation and gestures of expansive sweep. It is full of "effetti" as well as "affetti", as Frescobaldi himself reveals in his famous Preface. The *Aria detto Balletto* is one of only two sets of dance variations found in this book. The tune is the student song "More Palatino", known in England as the "Italian Ground" and used by composers like Sweelinck under its original title. These variations or "partite" are not as stylized as those from Libro I and propose a more lyrical and less showy approach in the dancelike sections.

**Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck** Sweelinck's variations on *More Palatino* are one of seven secular song variations found in his output. The theme, marked Allemand in the original manuscript, has a two-part structure, each part being repeated, indicating perhaps Sweelinck's fondness for the "alternating variation" where each part of the theme is differently treated. This gives considerable color and liveliness to the set of four. The song variations are undoubtedly Sweelinck's most significant contribution to the variation technique. Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck enjoyed a prosperous life as organist at the Oude Kerk in Amsterdam, a post he inherited from his father at age 15 and where he remained until his death. Among his famous German pupils are Samuel Scheidt, Jacob Praetorius and Heinrich Scheidemann.

**Johann Jakob Froberger** Frescobaldi's celebrity in Germany was such that in 1637 a young court organist by the name of Johann Jakob Froberger arrived in Rome to become his pupil for the next four years (coinciding with the best documented years of Frescobaldi's activity as performer). It is Froberger who introduces Frescobaldi's style to Denis Gaultier, Chambonnières and Louis Couperin through his own playing and, upon returning to Germany, assimilates the high Baroque dance suite and "style brisé" into his own works. Froberger is credited with being the first composer to formalize the outline of the baroque suite into four core movements: allemand, gigue, courant and saraband. Although the order was later changed, Froberger's suites follow the above sequence. In the *Suite in C Major* (1656), the Lamento is actually the Allemand, reflecting on the death of King Ferdinand IV (notice the Italian title). The Gigue follows with its imitative, almost fugal movement answering each other in sequence according to range. The Courant has its melody dominated by the top voice; I have chosen to ornament the reprise in a "spezzato" or "style brisé" fashion. Both the Courant and the Sarabande contain a "petite reprise" at the end of the movement, which most certainly indicates different closing dance steps from the rest of the dance. The Sarabande is the least imitative of the four suite movements but Froberger's treatment of dissonances in this strong and calm finale shows off various "affetti" through a subjective ornamentation of the basic outline.