

For the convenience of concertgoers
the Garden Café remains open until 6:00 pm.

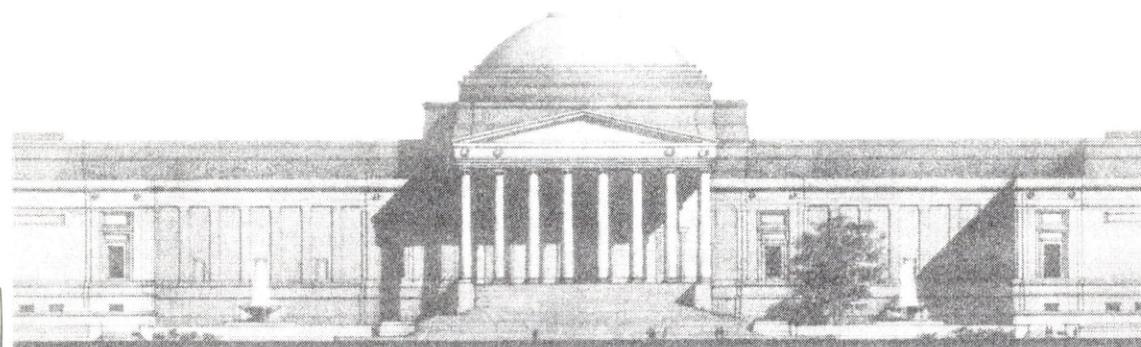
The use of cameras or recording equipment during the
performance is not allowed. Please be sure that cell phones,
pagers, and other electronic devices are turned off.

Please note that late entry or reentry of
the West Building after 6:30 pm is not permitted.

Music Department
National Gallery of Art
Sixth Street and Constitution Avenue NW
Washington, DC

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The Sixty-seventh Season of
The William Nelson Cromwell and F. Lamot Belin
Concerts

National Gallery of Art
2,729th Concert

Foundling Baroque Orchestra

Presented in honor of
Luis Meléndez: Master of the Spanish Still Life

May 17, 2009
Sunday Evening, 6:30 pm
West Building, West Garden Court

Admission free

Foundling Baroque Orchestra

Pamela Murray, *soprano*

Dana Maiben, *violin and music director*

Lisa Brooke, *violin*

Martha Perry and Anna Griffis, *violin and viola*

Elisabeth Le Guin, *principal cello and music advisor*

Margaret Cushing, *cello and artistic director*

Motomi Igarashi, *double bass*

Meg Owens and Sarah Weiner, *oboe*

Linda Dempf and Paul Hopkins, *natural horn*

Anna Marsh, *bassoon*

David Walker, *guitar*

Program

Luigi Boccherini (1743–1805)

Sinfonia 1 in D, G 490 (1765)

Allegro

Andante grazioso

Allegro assai

Gaetano Brunetti (1744–1798)

Andante “de fagotto obbligato”

Blas de Laserna (1751–1816)

Tonadilla: “Las musicas”

Comienzo: Allegro; Allegro; Boleras; Allegretto

Coplas: Allegro no mucho

Marcha – Cojea – Musica funeraria – Boleras – Allegro –

Cencerros – Fandango – Salida del toro – Zorongo

Final: Allegro

INTERMISSION

Boccherini

Notturmo no. 4 in G for Octet, Opus 38, G 470 (1787)

Andantino amoroso ma non largo

Minuetto

Finale: Allegro vivo

Boccherini

Aria Accademica: Care luci, che regnate, G 549

The Musicians

The Foundling Baroque Orchestra and Women's Advocacy Project combines virtuosity, scholarship, and a collaborative working process with a commitment to advancing public awareness of women and children in need. Having this dual mission, Foundling is proud to be affiliated this season with the Rhode Island Coalition against Domestic Violence. Foundling brings the magic and excitement of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century music to life for twenty-first-century audiences. Tonight's performance marks the orchestra's Washington, DC, debut.

The ensemble takes its name and inspiration from the girls and women of eighteenth-century Venice's Ospedale della Pietà, home to the city's orphaned and abandoned girl children, who were given an honored place in civic life through an arts program that was unrivaled in its time. Antonio Vivaldi, who taught and composed at the Pietà, wrote many of his most beloved compositions for this orchestra, which became the premier musical ensemble in a supremely musical city, supported itself and the orphanage with its music, and attracted acclaim throughout Europe.

Foundling has presented five seasons of concerts in Providence, Rhode Island, and numerous summer concerts on Cape Cod, featuring members of the ensemble and distinguished guests as soloists. Artists-in-residence include recorder virtuoso Marion Verbruggen, natural trumpeter Kris Kwapis, and soprano Pamela Murray, who join the ensemble regularly and participate in the group's artistic leadership. A *Live in Concert* compilation recording will be released later this year.

Program Notes

Musical life in Madrid during the time of Luis Meléndez (1715–1780) was a rich and varied affair. The Italian style was all the rage at court and in the opera house, and Italian and Viennese chamber music was fashionable. The public theaters offered a little bit of everything, from the occasional opera to traditional Spanish regional songs and dances. Tonight's program reflects this mixed culture with music by two Italians and one Spaniard: Luigi Boccherini, Gaetano Brunetti, and Blas de Laserna, three of Meléndez's contemporaries who made their careers in Spain and contributed to the musical life of mid-to-late eighteenth-century Madrid.

The most widely known of the three is Boccherini. Like Meléndez, Boccherini worked for much of his career without consistent royal commissions for his compositions. Many artists and composers of this generation relied on sporadic patronage and often sold their work by the piece to earn a living. Both Meléndez and Boccherini specialized in "small works": Meléndez in the still life, Boccherini in chamber music. Both essayed works in the larger, more prestigious forms, but commissions were elusive. Meléndez had painted at least forty-four still-lives for the Prince of the Asturias, (later Carlos IV) but was never granted a court position. Carlos, who was a violinist, engaged Boccherini occasionally at court, but the king's own ensembles were dominated by the Brunetti family and had no permanent place for Boccherini.

Luigi Boccherini was born into a family of musicians in Lucca, Italy, in 1743. By age fifteen he was well on the way to making a name for himself as a composer and a cellist. A Florentine diarist noted in 1761 that the young "celebre suonatore di Violoncello" (celebrated violoncellist) was greeted with well-earned applause for a concert "of a completely new kind of music." Boccherini composed in virtually every Italian genre of his day, and pioneered in a new one—the string quintet. In 1767, the year in which his first

published works appeared, he began a concert tour that took him, via Paris, to Spain, where he stayed for the rest of his life. In Spain he found work in an Italian opera company that prospered under royal patronage. When Boccherini arrived in Madrid in 1768, he certainly brought with him his *Sinfonia 1*, composed three years earlier. A version of it was used as the overture for an opera by Nicolo Piccinini, *La buona figliuola maritata*, introducing Boccherini as a composer to the Spanish audience. Like contemporary symphonies by Haydn, it is scored for strings, oboes and horns, and is full of youthful exuberance and good humor.

Born in Italy, Gaetano Brunetti moved to Madrid in 1762 at age eighteen; in 1767 he was employed as a violinist in the royal chapel in the service of Carlos III and remained in royal service for the rest of his life, becoming *Maestro de música de cámara* for Carlos IV. Working on an exclusive contract to a royal family often precluded publication; most of Brunetti's music was never published in his lifetime and still remains unpublished. The *Andante "de fagotto obbligato"* is taken from a quintet for bassoon and strings by Brunetti. This movement is a songful, even operatic, aria for solo bassoon, accompanied by and in alternation with the strings. Perhaps one can hear in this opera-seria-style work a not-so-distant musical ancestor of the tango.

Tonada and *tonadilla* are terms that have been in continuous use in Hispanic music since the sixteenth century; the terms have always referred to many different genres and practices, varying with time, context and place. In the later eighteenth century in Madrid, a *tonadilla* was a comic musical interlude for singer(s) and small orchestra, presented between acts of a play or opera. Over time, the genre became a formal repository for disappearing elements of Spanish folk music. Some *tonadillas* feature attitudes, melodies, and rhythms borrowed from traditional styles, particularly those of the boleros, fandango, folía, jota, seguidilla, tirana, zorongo, and other Spanish dances.

Blas de Laserna specialized in *tonadillas*; he wrote at least 700, as well as music to plays, melodramas, and imported opera libretti, making him one of the most prolific composers of the eighteenth century. Born in Navarra, Spain, by 1774 he had found his way to Madrid in his early twenties and was writing music for the theater. He served as music director for the Teatro de la Cruz for nearly twenty years beginning in 1790, but by the end of that period he had also taken on various teaching and music copying jobs. Most of his work was never published and survives in manuscript copies in the municipal library in Madrid. Foundling's principal cellist and musical advisor Elisabeth Le Guin has made the *tonadillas* of Blas de Laserna a focus of study and has provided this edition of "Las Musicas."

The *tonadilla* "Las Musicas" is in three main sections. In the first the singer plays with the audience to get its attention, complains about having to perform at all, and summarizes the novel devices she will use to entertain her listeners and to keep herself from being bored. In the second part, the *coplas*, she carries out her promise; Laserna has written a series of clever, short instrumental character sketches that refer to common middle-class vices of the day. Each sketch is introduced by a brief sung description of the vice involved. This patchwork is further varied by two interludes in which the singer breaks off to address the audience directly, saying, in effect, "If you don't like what you're hearing, then change your ways!" The *Final* unleashes all of the composer's (and singer's) virtuoso capabilities in a fabulous display of coloratura and bravura.

Though just as amiable in nature as his early symphony, Boccherini's *Notturmo* is of an entirely different character. It is a much more sophisticated, dynamic, and expressive work, full of textural detail and rich tonal coloring. For this work, Boccherini has added three winds to his "signature" ensemble, the string quintet with two cellos. This is Boccherini at his lyrical best—intimate, generous, conversational, suave.

The *aria accademica* features a text by Metastasio, set by Francesco Bartolomeo Conti in his opera *Issipile* (1732). In the opera, the aria is given to Jason, who bids a wistful farewell to his sweetheart as he sets sail with the Argonauts. Composers in Boccherini's time often rewrote a single aria from an opera by another composer, and included it in the performances of that opera when they were conducting. Boccherini's setting was likely written for his wife, who was an opera singer, and intended for performance at a Spanish salon or academy modeled after the famous Arcadian Academy in Rome.

In 1770 Boccherini received an appointment to the service of the Infante Don Luis in Aranjuez. This gave him a steady income and encouragement for his creative work until the Infante's death in 1785, the same year his wife died. Shortly thereafter, King Carlos III granted him a pension considerably smaller than his earnings had been. For most of the rest of his life, Boccherini's income came largely from the sale of his compositions to his Paris publishers and a patchwork of private patronage. The European popular market for chamber music welcomed Boccherini's sonorous, sensuous music. Like Meléndez, Boccherini's artistry lay in capturing the intricacy of a moment in lustrous and intimate detail, in music that is at once deceptively direct and technically accomplished.

Program notes by Dana Maiben and Elisabeth Le Guin

Upcoming Concerts at the National Gallery of Art
No Concert on Sunday, May 24, 2009



National Gallery Chamber Orchestra

Vladimir Lande, guest conductor

Stephen Ackert, harpsichord

Music by J. S. Bach, Schnittke, and Tchaikovsky

May 31, 2009

Sunday Evening, 6:30 pm

West Building, West Garden Court