

Tonight's program takes inspiration from two Italian words that can be used to characterize emotional effects found in Italian Baroque music, *terreno* and *vago*. *Terreno* represents the earth, that which is profane, secular, regular, and defined. The contrasting *vago* is music of reflection: it is irregular, spiritual, sacred, elusive, and vague. The program explores these binaries through seventeenth-century Italian repertoire for the violin, cello, and basso continuo, especially sonatas with three interdependent parts.

Such interweaving of treble and bass lines is immediately apparent in the 1629 sonatas by Dario **Castello**. The Italians relished adventurous nuance, extreme dynamics, and the chance to demonstrate skillful playing. These qualities are evidenced by Castello's dazzling sonatas in *stile moderno*, a style emanating from Italy that utilized expressive harmonies and theatrical effects, often linked to a specific instrument.

Francesco **Rognoni** and Giovanni **Cima** were each members of influential families of Milanese musicians. Rognoni's divisions on Palestrina's madrigal "Vestiva i colli" is an excerpt from his instructional book on singing and instrumental playing, *Selva de varii passaggi*. Our version uses Palestrina's original vocal composition to support the violin line.

The Polish composer and violinist Adam **Jarzębski** also wrote transcriptions of vocal works in his *Canzoni e concerti*. His use of passagework and dramatic contrast, present in tonight's Concerto Terzo, reveals the influence of his travels to Italy in 1615.

Two other string players writing for their own instrument were **Nicola Francesco Haym** and **Angelo Maria Fioré**, important figures in the development of the violoncello in Rome and Torino, respectively. Haym was also among the very first Italians to travel and perform in London. His talent as a librettist caught the attention of Handel who collaborated with Haym on many operas. Fioré son, Andrea Stefano, is better known today (he was maestro of the Savoy chapel in Turin for many years), but the works of the elder Fioré have an important place in the story of the early cello.

Giovanni **Legrenzi** became Maestro at San Marco and one of the most prominent composers working in the Veneto. Many of his instrumental works were named after families in the region. The sonata "La Foscari" caught our attention as it bears the same family name as a remarkable villa near Vicenza designed the celebrated architect Andrea **Palladio**.

The Neapolitan composer Domenico **Scarlatti** emigrated to Portugal, and then to Spain. Scarlatti is primarily known for his harpsichords sonatas (about 555) which explored all the possibilities of virtuosity on the harpsichord. K.141 uses repeating notes and the crossing of hands.

Johann **Rosenmüller** escaped jail in his native Germany and fled to Venice where he was employed at San Marco and became known as a very important composer of instrumental music. In the *Sonata terza* here, Rosenmüller beautifully explores the colors of string instruments.

Tarquinio **Merula**'s *canzoni* from 1651 (op. 17) will be featured on Pallade Musica's upcoming CD. Merula was not a resident of Venice--he was maestro in Cremona, at the time a part of the Veneto--but it is clear that he felt the influence of Venetian styles and musical commerce. In these *canzoni* he is able to paint for us brief but vivid scenes, each one feels surprisingly fresh and current.