

Gotham Early Music Scene (GEMS) presents



Thursday September 28, 2023 1:15 pm  
St Malachy's Church – The Actors' Chapel in New York City  
Live Streamed to [midtownconcerts.org](http://midtownconcerts.org) and [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com)

## American Classical Orchestra

### *La Musica Notturna di Madrid*

*Adam Cockerham ~ Romantic guitar Jessica Park & Edson Scheid ~ violins David Cerutti ~ viola*  
*Myron Lutzke & David Bakamjian ~ violoncellos Thomas Crawford ~ harpsichord*

#### Quintet for Guitar and Strings in D Major, G.448

Luigi Boccherini (1743–1805)

Pastorale ~ Allegro maestoso ~ Grave assai ~ Fandango

#### Concerto in G minor, RV 157

Antonio Vivaldi (1678–1741)

Allegro ~ Largo ~ Allegro

#### String Quintet in C Major, G.324, *La Musica Notturna di Madrid*

Luigi Boccherini

Minuetto de Ciechi ~ Largo assai – Allegro ~

Passacalle – Allegro vivo ~ Ritirata – Maestoso, G. deest

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## ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Romantic guitarist Adam Cockerham joins ACO strings in a performance of the well-known Boccherini *String Quintet in C*, with its famous Passacaille movement. Also performed is a lively Vivaldi string concerto.

## ABOUT THE ENSEMBLE AND ARTISTS

Described as “simply splendid” and a “mainstay of the New York Scene” by *The New York Times*, the **American Classical Orchestra (ACO)** is a leader in the field of historical performance. A period instrument ensemble devoted to preserving and performing the repertoire of 17th, 18th, and 19th century composers, ACO is composed of the world’s top instrumentalists performing on historic instruments and replicas, using era-specific techniques, inviting listeners to enter the sound world of the great masters. Highlights of its history include a concert at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in collaboration with the exhibition “Art and the Empire City: New York, 1825 – 1861”, a debut concert on the Lincoln Center Great Performers Series, a sold-out 25th anniversary performance of Beethoven’s *Ninth Symphony* at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, and a staged performance of Handel’s opera *Alceste* in 2014. The ACO’s numerous recordings include the complete wind concerti by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, featuring ACO’s principal players as soloists, and a recording of Mozart’s early piano concerti with Malcolm Bilson. In 2010, the ACO released a recording of Baroque oboe concertos on the Centaur label, with principal oboist Marc Schachman. Founded by Artistic Director Thomas Crawford in 1984 as The Orchestra of the Old Fairfield Academy in Fairfield, Connecticut, the American Classical Orchestra moved to New York City in 2006. Since that time, the orchestra has made its name as the city’s premier period instrument ensemble. For more information, visit [aconyc.org](http://aconyc.org). The American Classical Orchestra’s programs and performances are made possible by The Howard Gilman Foundation, the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature, and Mizuho Americas.

**Adam Cockerham**, Romantic guitar, is an Early Music artist who specializes in theorbo, lute and baroque guitar. Beginning his performance career as a classical guitarist, Adam then gravitated toward historical plucked strings, preferring the collaborative opportunities of chamber music from the 16th through 18th centuries. As an accompanist and continuo player, he has performed with numerous ensembles in New York and San Francisco. Beyond chamber music, Adam concentrates on 17th-century Italian opera and has been involved in numerous modern world premiere performances with companies such as Innsbrucker Festwochen der Alten Musik and Ars Minerva. Adam received his doctorate from The Juilliard School where he was awarded the Richard F. French Prize for best dissertation.

The American Classical Orchestra’s Artistic Director and Founder **Thomas Crawford**, harpsichord, is a champion of historically accurate performance styles in Baroque, Classical, and Early Romantic music. He founded two Connecticut orchestras: the Fairfield Orchestra and the Orchestra of the Old Fairfield Academy, which was the period instrument offshoot of the Fairfield Orchestra. With the Fairfield Orchestra, Crawford commissioned numerous works by composers, including John Corigliano and William Thomas McKinley, and he collaborated with artists including Joshua Bell, Vladimir Feltsman, Richard Goode, Yo-Yo Ma, Itzhak Perlman, André Watts, and Dawn Upshaw. He also conducted the world premiere of Keith Jarrett’s *Bridge of Light* at Alice Tully Hall, subsequently recorded on the ECM label. Tom is an accomplished composer, organist, and choirmaster. He won the prestigious BMI composition award for his organ work *Ashes of Rose*, which premiered at the American Guild of Organists. A passionate activist determined to bring the beauty of period music to a wider audience, Tom renamed the Old Fairfield Academy as the American Classical Orchestra in 1999, and brought the Orchestra’s performance and operational home to Manhattan. In addition, his educational activities with the Orchestra received a Learning in the Arts for Children and Youth award from the National Endowment for the Arts, recognizing the ACO’s dynamic music outreach to New York City schoolchildren. Tom is a Pennsylvania native, holding degrees in organ performance and composition from the Eastman School of Music and Columbia University.

Praised as an “exceptional talent” by the *Frankfurter Neue Presse*, **Jessica Park**, violin, captivates audiences from New York to Seoul with a diverse and compelling array of solo and chamber music performances. A versatile and imaginative artist, Jessica is in high demand as an interpreter of Baroque and Classical repertoire. She can be heard frequently with the country’s premier period instrument ensembles, including the American Classical Orchestra, Handel & Haydn Society, Boston Baroque, Trinity Baroque Orchestra, and New York Baroque Incorporated. A native of Cincinnati, Jessica moved to New York City to attend The Juilliard School. She holds Bachelor and Master of Music degrees from The Juilliard School, as well as a Professional Studies Diploma from the Mannes School of Music. Jessica was also a Fellow at the Yale School of Music, where she was a member of the Yale Baroque Ensemble.

**Edson Scheid** has been praised for being a "virtuoso violinist" (*The Boston Globe*). His many performances of Paganini’s *Twenty-four Caprices*, on both period and modern violins, have been received with enthusiasm around the world. He has been featured live in-studio on In Tune from BBC Radio 3, and his recording of the Caprices on the Baroque violin for the Naxos label has been critically acclaimed. A native of Brazil, Edson is based in New York City, where he plays with the city’s leading period orchestras, including the American Classical Orchestra. He holds degrees from the Universität Mozarteum Salzburg, the Yale School of Music, and The Juilliard School, where he was the recipient of a Kovner Fellowship.

**David Cerutti** performs internationally as violist and violist d’amore. A resident of New York, he is co-principal violist with the Orchestra of St. Luke's and member of the St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble. He appears regularly with the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, Orpheus, and he was a former member of the Smithsonian String Quartet, David is a founding member of the Serenade Orchestra, Trigon, and has been a guest artist with numerous orchestras and string quartets around the globe, including the American Classical Orchestra. His unedited performance of Bach’s *Sixth Brandenburg Concerto* was chosen by National Public Radio as one of the seven best live recordings of Bach from “Performance Today,” and was subsequently released as a CD. David earned his Master of Music Degree from Mannes College of Music.

**Myron Lutzke** is well known to audiences as a violoncellist on both modern and period instruments. He attended Brandeis University and is a graduate of The Juilliard School. He serves as principal violoncellist for the Orchestra of St. Luke’s and the American Classical Orchestra. He has appeared as soloist at the Caramoor, Ravinia, and Mostly Mozart festivals, and is a regular participant at the Ottawa Chamber Music Festival, Santa Fe *Pro Musica*, and the Smithsonian Chamber Players. Myron has recorded for Decca, Sony, Harmonia Mundi, EMI, Nonesuch, Musical Heritage Society, Deutsche Grammophon, Dorian, Denon, and Arabesque labels. He teaches regularly at the Indiana University Early Music Institute and is on the faculty of Mannes College of Music, where he teaches period violoncello and baroque performance practice.

**David Bakamjian** performs regularly as a recitalist, ensemble player, and recording artist on both modern and Baroque violoncello. In addition to appearances in New York's premiere concert halls, he has appeared several times on National Public Radio and WQXR and was a winner or finalist in four international chamber music competitions. He is a founding member of the New York Classical Quartet and of Brooklyn Baroque, whose CDs were deemed a “must buy” by the American Record Guide. David was featured at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in *Evocations of Armenia*, a specially conceived program that he co-wrote with actress Nora Armani for solo violoncello and spoken word. By special invitation, they subsequently took the program to Armenia. Mr. Bakamjian earned his B.A. at Yale, and his Master and Doctorate degrees at SUNY Stony Brook, and he was a faculty member of Lehigh University for eight years.

**NEXT WEEK: Vox Fidelis**  
*Byrd 400 ~ Mass for Five Voices*

## PROGRAM NOTES

Notes on the program, by Carly McIlvaine-York

**Antonio Vivaldi** (1678–1741) was a Baroque virtuoso violinist who began his musical career under the tutelage of his father, Giovanni Battista, a professional violinist in the orchestra of the Basilica of San Marco in Venice. At the age of 18, Antonio made his musical debut as a supernumerary violinist for the orchestra alongside his father. However, the young Vivaldi was also training to be a priest, and in 1703 he was ordained. Unfortunately, Vivaldi was forced to give up his priestly duties shortly after ordination due to chronic respiratory illness. Consequently, he began his relationship as a musician with the Ospedale della Pietà in Venice, which would play a key role in Vivaldi's musical career throughout most of his life. The Pietà was an orphanage which trained boys for jobs in the “trades”, and girls in music and the arts.

In 1703, Vivaldi was appointed as master violin teacher, and in 1716, director of music. Antonio Vivaldi began his prolific composition career during the early days of teaching at the Pietà. His first sonatas for violin, as well as sets of concerti for a variety of instruments and string orchestra, were published by the Estienne Roger firm in Amsterdam from 1705 until 1719. Vivaldi began to make a name for himself as a vocal music composer through the medium of sacred choral and solo vocal works, including the famous *Gloria*, RV 589. While teaching and composing for the Ospedale della Pietà, he was free to pursue other musical patrons. From 1718–1720, Vivaldi was employed as the composer for the city of Mantua, where he predominantly wrote operas. By the 1720s, Vivaldi had made a name for himself as a composer and had brought the musical achievements of the Pietà students to international acclaim.

Between 1720 and 1730, he composed a great number of his more than 500 concertos, including the famed *Four Seasons*, which was published in 1725 as part of a collection with several other concertos. Also written during this prolific decade was the *Concerto in G Major*, RV 151, *alla Rustica*, featured this afternoon. This work is a “ripieno concerto,” meaning that there are no clear solo instrumental parts in the work, but rather the full group is featured as a unit. This is quite different from the *Four Seasons*, and other Vivaldi concertos, which feature the interplay between the full orchestra and soloist. Similarly, the *Concerto in G minor*, RV 157, does not feature one virtuoso soloist, but begins with the interplay of melodic ideas between the two violins. Sadly, in the 1730's, Vivaldi's music began to fall out of fashion, and by 1740 he traveled to Vienna, possibly to seek employment in the court of the Holy Roman Emperor, Charles VI. Not much is known of Vivaldi's final days, only that in 1741, he was given a modest funeral and buried in a common grave in Vienna.

**Luigi Boccherini** (1743–1805) was an Italian virtuoso violoncellist and composer of the Classical Era. Luigi was the son of the professional bass-violinist, Leopoldo Boccherini, and he was trained in music at a very young age in Italy's Cathedral of Lucca. At the age of 13, he began his early professional studies at St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, under the tutelage of Giovanni Battista Costanzi. At age 17, Boccherini made his debut as a composer, performing his *Six Trios for Two Violins and Violoncello*, G. 77–82, in Vienna (1760). In 1766, at the age of 23, Luigi moved to Paris to work as a violoncellist and composer.

Many of his chamber music pieces for strings, and his *Symphony in D Major*, G. 500, of 1766, were published by the esteemed French publishing houses of Grangé, Venier, and Chevardière during his years in Paris. Legend recounts that it was the Spanish Ambassador to Paris who convinced Boccherini to move to Madrid and work as the Court composer for King Charles III, under the direct patronage of the king's brother, Don Luis. It was during this period of his career that Boccherini began writing his particular style of string quintets, which uniquely featured two violoncellos, rather than the traditional single.

While in Spain, he also composed vocal music, including his *Stabat Mater*, a Spanish musical theater work, or *zarzuela*, entitled *La Clementina*; and a number of concert arias for singers. In 1785, his wife died while giving birth to their sixth child, and the Spanish royal court granted him a pension and the freedom to take other patronage positions. It is rumored that from 1787 to 1797 he served as composer and cellist for the King of Prussia, Frederick William II, who was an amateur violoncellist and fan of Boccherini's music. After Frederick's death in 1797, Boccherini lost that funding source, and at the same time another important Spanish patroness moved to Paris in 1798, leaving him in financial difficulty.

In 1802, his second wife died and a few of his children also died around the same time. The loss of family members and financial difficulties weighed heavily on Boccherini's health in his last years, and he died in poverty in 1805 in Madrid, Spain. Boccherini's *Guitar Quintet No. 4 in D Major*, G.448, *Fandango*, was created by re-arranging movements of his earlier string quintets, G. 270, and G. 341, which had originally been written for two violins, viola, and two violoncellos. It was commissioned in 1798 by the amateur Spanish guitarist, the Marquis de Benavente. The title piece of this afternoon's concert, *String Quintet in C Major*, G.453, *La Musica Notturna di Madrid*, was written one year later in 1799, and was also composed from a re-working of Boccherini's earlier *Piano Quintet*, G.408, and his *String Quintet*, G. 324, which included the "Ritirata" movement. Recordings of this work have been used in popular culture over the course of the last several decades, including at the opening ceremony of the 1992 Olympics in Barcelona, and in the 2003 Russell Crowe movie *Master and Commander*, among other uses in film and television. While this piece was popular during his lifetime, Boccherini did not actually publish it. In a letter to his publisher, he described the piece as "absolutely useless, even ridiculous, outside Spain, because the audience cannot hope to understand its significance, nor can the performers play it as it should be played."