

# THE ITALIAN DRAMATIC LAMENT

**Lamento d'Arianna • Uccidimi dolore  
Amarilli • Si dolce è il tormento**

**The Catacoustic Consort**

**Winners of the Early Music America Competition, 2003**



## The Italian Dramatic Lament

Seventeenth-century Italians reflected upon the extravagances of their day and were shamed and humbled. They reacted to this by focusing on the dark and depressing. Italian art of the seventeenth century often dwelt on the excessively grotesque, such as the blood of saints, and dark colours abounded. Music aimed at the dramatic representation of powerful and wide-ranging emotions, not only the beauty of the rose of love, but also its thorns.

The lament was a popular genre in Italian poetry and song. It was thought to have originated in ancient Greece and later ancient Rome. It was Aristotle's theory of *catharsis* (the purification of the emotions through art, suggesting that the emotions could be purified through the excitement of pity and fear) that inspired seventeenth-century composers. This idea of *catharsis* pricked the curiosity of musical revolutionaries. The lament would move a listener to pity, and would affect the humour of melancholy, one of the four psychological states of ancient and later medical theory. The subject matter was usually about a woman bemoaning her situation and ill-fated love. It was popular to portray a madwoman in song, where experimental harmonies could highlight the meaning and passion of the poetry. The popular *Lament of Arianna* by Claudio Monteverdi moved its original audience to tears. One witness to its original performance commented that the lament "was acted with much emotion and in so piteous a way that no one hearing it was left unmoved, nor among the ladies was there one who did not shed a few tears at her plainte."

The rôle of the woman in seventeenth-century Italy changed somewhat. Whereas in the sixteenth century it was expected that a noblewoman know how to play an instrument fitting for a lady and be able to sing, she was

not to do this in front of others, either professionally or as entertainment. In the sixteenth century it was common for nuns or women born into professional musical families to perform music. In the next century it was more acceptable for women to perform music professionally and even compose, although it was unusual for this music to be published. Barbara Strozzi (1619-1664) was one such woman. She was born in Venice, the illegitimate daughter of Giulio Strozzi, who was a dramatist, librettist, and poet, working with great composers such as Monteverdi and Cavalli. He had forward-thinking attitudes toward women and their rôle in society. It was probably under his influence that Barbara Strozzi bravely pursued her love of music. It is said that her song *Lagrima mie* (My Tears) was written as a result of a discussion in which she took part in the Accademia degli Unisoni, a group of intellectual thinkers of which she was a member. In this discussion, a question was put as to whether tears or song could better express emotion. After performing her song in a meeting, she said: *I do not question your decision, gentlemen, in favour of song; for I know very well that I would not have received the honour of your presence tonight had I invited you to see me cry and not hear me sing.*

The composer and singer Jacopo Peri (1561-1633) was referred to as "il zazzarino" for his long reddish-blond hair. He was a famous singer in his day, known for moving his audience through his powerfully emotive musical performances, and he enjoyed the status of being something of a sex symbol. Peri wrote the music to what is now thought of as the first opera, *La Dafne*. He was born in Rome but grew up in Florence and worked for the Medici family. Peri is thought to have been involved in several intellectual societies (especially

the Florentine Camerata) that espoused the ideals of a new type of music purporting to recreate a dramatic style of music from ancient Greece. The Florentine Camerata felt that the music common in their time had so much counterpoint (simultaneous melodic lines) that the text was obscured. Whereas the old music was ensemble music (such as the madrigal) with four or five voices, the new music favoured the solo voice with accompaniment. This new style (*recitativo*), a combination of speech and song, was thought of as begotten from the rhetorical tradition of ancient Greece. Composers and publishers made profit by selling to large numbers of male and female amateur musicians this new music for solo voice. As with every age, musical change was not embraced by all. The music critic Artusi, who felt that this style of music was effeminate and inferior, compared it to a painted whore.

Claudio Monteverdi (1567-1643) was widely considered the best musician in Italy in the early seventeenth century. He worked for the Gonzaga family in Mantua and eventually left for employment in Venice. According to his brother, Giulio Cesare Monteverdi, Claudio made the words of his music the mistress (“*padrona*”) of harmony and not the servant (“*serva*”). Today he is one of the most popular composers of the early Baroque era and is fondly remembered for his contributions to the opera repertory, especially *Orfeo* and *L’incoronazione di Poppea*.

The composer Giulio Caccini (1551-1618) was trained in the church, as were most musicians of his day, and he worked for the Medici family. Caccini is credited

with developing the new *stile recitativo* and was instrumental in the development of opera.

Giovanni Girolamo Kapsberger (c.1580-1651) was known as “*il Tedesco della Tiorba*” (the German of the Theorbo). Although his parents were of German descent, he was born in Venice and later moved to Rome. In 1626 the theorist Doni said that Kapsberger was the “finest master of the theorbo in Rome”, although Doni later fell out with Kapsberger and wrote ill of him. Kapsberger wrote demanding music and was a pioneer in developing new musical devices for the theorbo, including *strascini* (long slurred passages), *campanellas* (little bells), cross-strung harp effects, and more. Kircher wrote of Kapsberger: “*The noble musician Hieronymus Kapsberger Germanus, author of innumerable writings and distinguished musical publications, with his superb genius and other scientific skills in which he was expert, successfully penetrated the secrets of music*”.

The music in the present programme is played in a creative and improvisatory manner that is surprisingly similar to jazz. The composer provides the material for the solo voices, and only a skeletal bass line for the accompanying instruments. The accompanists, playing instruments such as the theorbo, harp, lirone, and organ, are expected to know how to play the correct chords according to certain theoretical rules of harmony. This practice, called *basso continuo* or simply *continuo*, was a very common way of playing music in the Baroque period.

**Annalisa Pappano**

*Sung texts for this release are available as PDF files online at [www.naxos.com/libretti/italianlament.htm](http://www.naxos.com/libretti/italianlament.htm)  
This measure is designed to help keep our releases at an affordable price and maintain Naxos' position as leader in the budget-priced market.*

## The Instruments

The *lirone* was played throughout Italy in the late sixteenth through the seventeenth centuries. It is a bowed string instrument that is played between the legs, similar to a cello, but it has anywhere from nine to fourteen strings with three or four strings being played at a time. The *lirone* was used to highlight emotional peaks in music and was considered ideal for laments.

The new harmonic language of the Baroque period called for a fuller chromatic range of notes. Whereas early harps only played diatonic notes (white keys on the piano), chromatic notes were now necessary (black notes on the piano). The *Italian Baroque triple harp* has two identical diatonic rows of strings on the outside with an inside row of chromatic notes.

The *theorbo* is a bass lute that has a neck extending outward several feet from the instrument's body to accommodate its long, deep bass strings. The purpose of the *theorbo* is to reinforce the bass, whereas the purpose of the *lirone* is to enrich the harmonies. The composer Giulio Caccini said that the *theorbo* was the perfect instrument to accompany the voice.

The *viola da gamba* was one of the predominant instruments of the Renaissance and Baroque periods in Western Europe. “*Viola da gamba*” literally means viola of the leg. The *viola da gamba* (or viol) is a fretted instrument with from five to seven strings and is played with an underhand bow grip, as compared to the overhand bow grip of the violin family. The *viola da gamba* is a family of instruments with ranges corresponding to the human voice. The treble *viola da gamba* is the soprano member of the *viola da gamba* family.

### About the Instruments

- 1995, Michael Heale (Surrey, England): treble *viola da gamba*, after an anonymous French instrument in the Catharina Meints collection in Oberlin, Ohio.
- 1998, John Pringle (Efland, North Carolina): *lirone*.
- 2000, Klaus Jacobsen (London, England): *theorbo*, after various early seventeenth-century Italian instruments.
- Late twentieth century, Simon Capp (England): Italian triple harp, based on Barberini.

*Amarilli mia bella* by Giulio Caccini is published in *Giulio Caccini: Le Nuove Musiche*, edited by H. Wiley Hitchcock, Recent Researches in the Music of the Baroque Era, Vol. 9 (Madison, WI: A-R Editions, Inc., 1970), including text and translation. Used with permission.

*Lungi dal vostro, Al fonte al prato, Se tu parti da me*, and *Uccidimi dolore* by Giulio Caccini are published in *Jacopo Peri: Le Varie Musiche*, edited by Tim Carter, Recent Researches in the Music of the Baroque Era, Vol. 50 (Madison, WI: A-R Editions, Inc., 1985), including texts and translations. Used with permission.

## The Catacoustic Consort

Founded in 2001, the Catacoustic Consort presents a variety of vocal and instrumental music from Renaissance chamber music to Baroque Opera, with the intent of recreating the sound of the music when it was originally performed. The music is performed on period instruments such as the viola da gamba, theorbo, lirone, harp, harpsichord, and lute. Artistic director Annalisa Pappano is a highly sought after performer of the viola da gamba, lirone, and pardessus de viole. Pappano has been recognized for bringing together the best early music talent to present groundbreaking programs and landmark performances, hand selecting performers for each program. In addition to their subscription season in Cincinnati, Ohio, Catacoustic has performed in the San Francisco Early Music Society concert series and was ensemble-in-residence at the Madison Early Music Festival. The Grand Prize Winners of the Naxos / Early Music America recording competition in 2003, Catacoustic's debut recording features the award-winning program of 17th-century Italian dramatic laments, *Passion & Pain*.

For more details please see: [www.catacoustic.com](http://www.catacoustic.com)

### Annalisa Pappano



Viol and lirone player Annalisa Pappano is the director of the Catacoustic Consort. She studied at Indiana University's Early Music Institute with Wendy Gillespie and at Oberlin Conservatory of Music with Catharina Meints. She has performed throughout Belgium and the U.S. and has appeared on nationally syndicated radio. Annalisa is a member of Baroque Northwest (Seattle) and Les Plaisirs Durables (Brussels, Belgium) and has performed with numerous other ensembles including the Houston Grand Opera, the Cleveland Opera, Cappella Artemisia with Bruce Dickey, the Oberlin Consort of Viols, Saints and Sinners, and Bella Voce. Annalisa has taught at Viola da Gamba Society of America national conclaves, the Viola da Gamba Society Pacific Northwest and Northeast chapters, the San Diego Early Music Workshop, ViolsWest, the Madison Early Music Festival, and has been a guest lecturer on early music performance at numerous universities.



## Michael Leopold



The theorbo player Michael Leopold is a native of San Francisco. He graduated from Cal Poly University, studying with Craig Russell and was awarded the Ron Radcliff Outstanding Music Student award. He then studied under Richard Savino at Sacramento State University, where he received a Master of Music Degree in historical plucked instruments. In 1998 he moved to Milan in Italy to study lute and theorbo at L'Istituto di Musica Antica of the Accademia Internazionale della Musica in Milan with Paul Beier, where he completed his degree in 2004. Mr. Leopold also studied with Mara Galassi, Lorenzo Ghielmi and Eguardo Egüez. He participated in courses with Hopkinson Smith, Paul O'Dette and Jacob Lindberg. He has performed in Italy, France, Switzerland, Norway, Japan, and the United States with La Pietà de' Turchini (Naples), Madrigalisti Ambrosiani (Vigevano), La Galeascha (Milan), and Galatea (Milan). He has also performed with Orchestra Verdi di Milano, Houston Grand Opera, Glimmerglass Opera, LA Baroque Orchestra and Santa Rosa Symphony. In 2004 he was an artist-in-residence with Catacoustic at the Madison Early Music Festival where he taught and performed. Recording projects include *Historia di Jephthe* by Carissimi with Centro Italiano di Musica Antica (Roma) and a recording of the music of Buonamente.

## Becky Baxter



The baroque harp player Becky Baxter began her studies with Bea Rose at the University of Houston. She continued her studies in historical harp performance in Milan under Mara Galassi. Additional early harp specialists Cheryl Ann Fulton, Egberto Bermudez, and Andrew Lawrence-King have helped to shape her approach to the wide variety of harps she uses in concert. Her continuo work is primarily played on the Italian triple harp and the Iberian cross-strung harp. Her continuo activities include serving as triple harp soloist in The Houston Grand Opera's presentations of Monteverdi's *Orfeo* and *Poppea* and in the Houston Chamber Choir's performance of Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*. In Texas she has performed with the early music ensembles Ars Lyrica Houston, Canzonetta, Schola Pastoris Antiquae Musicae, La Folia, Texas Early Music Project, and the University of Texas Collegium in Austin. She recorded as a soloist on "O Lux Beata" and as guest soloist with Chatham Baroque on their CD entitled "*Espanoleta*." Copies of both CDs were taken on the space shuttle by astronaut Colonel Bill McArthur, who in the past had preferred the music of Garth Brooks. He finds harp music especially relaxing prior to an EVA (spacewalk).

## Catherine Webster



The soprano Catherine Webster is engaged regularly with many leading early music and chamber ensembles in North America. Deemed one of the finest rising young singers of baroque repertoire, she has appeared as a soloist with Tragicomedia, Theatre of Voices, American Baroque Orchestra, Magnificat, Musica Angelica, Camerata Pacifica, The San Antonio Symphony, Four Nations Ensemble, Les Voix Baroques, Early Music Vancouver, in the Berkeley and Boston Early Music Festivals, and in ensemble with American Bach Soloists and La Chapelle de Quebec with Les Violons du Roy. Active also in contemporary music, Webster appeared with The Kronos Quartet in Terry Riley's *Sun Rings* and with Theatre of Voices and the Los Angeles Philharmonic in John Adam's *Grand Pianola Music*. Webster is a frequent collaborator with baroque opera directors Stephen Stubbs and Paul O'Dette, appearing under their direction in Festival Vancouver's production of Monteverdi's *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* and the premiere

of Mattheson's *Boris Goudenov* for the Boston Early Music Festival. Webster has toured the U.S. and Holland with Theatre of Voices and recorded with the group; other recording releases include projects as varied as the music of 17th-century composer Chiara Margarita Cozzolani with Magnificat, and songs of Anton von Webern with American Baroque Orchestra for radio broadcast. She holds a Master's in Music from the Early Music Institute at Indiana University and has been a guest faculty member and artist for The San Francisco Early Music Society's summer workshops and the Madison Early Music Festival.

[www.catacoustic.com](http://www.catacoustic.com)

Artistic Director, Annalisa Pappano  
pictured with a Lirone  
photograph by: Oliver Debikey, 2004





Written for courts and patrons whose pleasure it was to surround themselves with the finest artists of the time, the lament was a popular genre in 17th century Italian poetry and song. Monteverdi's *Lamento d'Arianna* (from a lost opera on the subject of Ariadne, deserted by Theseus on the island of Naxos), moved its original audience to tears. Caccini's *Amarilli bella mia*, is a sensuous declaration of love.

"The music in this program is played in a creative and improvisatory manner that is surprisingly similar to jazz. The composer provides the material for the solo voices, and only a skeletal bass line for the accompanying instruments. The accompanists are expected to know how to play the correct chords according to certain theoretical rules of harmony". [Annalisa Pappano]

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|----|---|-------|
| 1  | Claudio MONTEVERDI (1567–1643): <i>Lamento d'Arianna</i>    | 10:47 |
| 2  | Jacopo PERI (1561–1633): <i>Al fonte al prato</i>           | 1:44  |
|    | Giovanni Girolamo KAPSBERGER (c.1575–c.1661):               |       |
| 3  | <i>Sferraina</i> (from <i>Libro Quarto</i> )                | 3:37  |
| 4  | <i>Capona</i> (from <i>Libro Quarto</i> )                   | 3:21  |
| 5  | PERI: <i>Lungi dal vostro lume</i>                          | 2:54  |
| 6  | Giulio CACCINI (1545–1618): <i>Vedrò 'l mio sol</i>         | 4:01  |
| 7  | PERI: <i>Se tu parti da me</i>                              | 4:14  |
| 8  | MONTEVERDI: <i>Si dolce è il tormento</i>                   | 4:25  |
| 9  | KAPSBERGER: <i>Passacaglia</i> (from <i>Libro Quarto</i> )  | 9:13  |
| 10 | CACCINI: <i>Amarilli</i>                                    | 3:16  |
| 11 | Richardo ROGNIONO († c. 1620): <i>Ancor che col partire</i> | 2:56  |
| 12 | PERI: <i>Uccidimi dolore</i>                                | 9:38  |
| 13 | CACCINI: <i>Amor ch'attendi</i>                             | 1:56  |

**The Catacoustic Consort (Winners of EMA competition, 2003)**  
**Annalisa Pappano, Artistic Director, Lirone and Treble Viola da Gamba**  
**Catherine Webster, Soprano • Michael Leopold, Theorbo**  
**Becky Baxter, Baroque Triple Harp**

Recorded in St John Chrysostom Church, Newmarket, Ontario, Canada from 29th April to 2nd May, 2004

Producers: Norbert Kraft and Bonnie Silver • Engineer and Editor: Norbert Kraft

Booklet Notes: Annalisa Pappano

Cover Photograph: *The Catacoustic Consort* by Oliver Debikey, 2003



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Playing Time  
62:03



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