



LES Plaisirs  
DE  
VERSAILLES



**Friday, September 9 at 7:30pm**

Zilkha Hall

*Hobby Center for the Performing Arts*

MATTHEW DIRST  
*Artistic Director*

Welcome to *Les Plaisirs de Versailles*, the opening event on Ars Lyrica's 2016/17 season of *Fables & Follies*. We're delighted to have you with us this evening for an all-French Baroque program featuring one of Marc-Antoine Charpentier's most entertaining chamber operas. The subject matter of this little gem—music, wine, even chocolate—makes for an excellent toast to you, our patrons, as we jointly celebrate the beginning of a new season.

Our next program is devoted to a single masterwork: George Frederic Handel's mighty oratorio *Jephtha*, featuring the award-winning Moores School Concert Chorale from the University of Houston and a spectacular cast. Exceptionally, we will have two performances of *Jephtha* here in Zilkha Hall, on Saturday, October 15 at 7:30 pm and Sunday, October 16 at 2:30 pm. For the best seats, subscribe now and enjoy subscriber benefits for the entire season.

2016/17 *Fables & Follies* brochures are available this evening in the Zilkha Hall Lobby. Additional information on all Ars Lyrica activities can be found on our website: [www.arslyricahouston.org](http://www.arslyricahouston.org).

With many thanks for your support and patronage. Enjoy the show!



MATTHEW DIRST  
Artistic Director

DESIGN: SPINDLETOP DESIGN

## PROGRAM

Sonata (Quartet) in G Minor, Op. 34/1 Joseph Bodin de Boismortier  
(1689–1755)

Excerpts from the *Airs à boire et sérieux* Boismortier  
with dance movements from

*La Grotte de Versailles & Trios pour le coucher du Roy* Jean-Baptiste Lully  
(1632–1687)

Ritornelle

*Pleurez mes tristes yeux*

*Amis je ne veux plus boire*

Ritornelle

*Laissons là dormir Gregoire*

*Quand je vois ma chere bouteille*

Gavotte

*Dieux des Raisins*

Menuet

*Profitons des bien faits*

*See texts & translations on pages 6-9.*

Allemande François Couperin (1668–1733)

*Superbo amore* Marc-Antoine Charpentier (1634–1704)

Gavotte Couperin

*Beate mie pene* Charpentier

Menuet en trio Couperin

Excerpts from Incidental Music to Molière Comedies Charpentier

Gavotte

*Beauté, dont la rigueur*

*Voulez-vous, beauté bizarre*

*Heureux, heureux matous*

## INTERMISSION

*Les Plaisirs de Versailles* Charpentier

*Charpentier's chamber opera is performed with English surtitles.*

## ARTISTIC PERSONNEL

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Megan Stapleton, *soprano* (*La Musique*)  
Stacey Franklin, *soprano*  
Ellie Jarrett Shattles, *mezzo-soprano* (*La Conversation*)  
Sarah Brindley, *mezzo-soprano*  
Alexander Scheuermann, *tenor* (*Le Jeu*)  
Tony Boutté, *tenor* (*Un des Plaisirs*)  
Mark Diamond, *baritone* (*Comus*)  
Brian Shircliffe, *baritone*  
Wendy Bergin, *recorder*  
Colin St Martin, *traverso*  
Kathryn Montoya, *recorder & Baroque oboe*  
Barrett Sills, *tenor viol*  
Deborah Dunham, *violone*  
Michael Leopold, *theorbo*  
Matthew Dirst, *harpsichord and artistic director*  
Tara Faircloth, *stage director*

*Special thanks to John S. Powell for his edition of and notes on Les Plaisirs de Versailles, to St Philip Presbyterian Church for rehearsal space and use of its Flemish single-manual harpsichord (by John Phillips, Berkeley, 2012) for this program, and to Joyce & David Fox and Bettie Cartwright for providing accommodations to Ars Lyrica artists.*

*Thank you to our Les Plaisirs de Versailles Reception Sponsor:*

*Maria Mues, Schokolad Chocolate Factory—Katy*



## PROGRAM NOTES

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Tonight's program, devoted to lighthearted repertoire from the *ancien régime*, explores familiar pleasures—wine, music, conversation, and complaint—that come together most amusingly in our main feature, Marc-Antoine Charpentier's cutting little comedy *Les Plaisirs de Versailles*. Our cast of composers includes two giants of the French Baroque—Jean-Baptiste Lully and François Couperin—plus two of Paris' most enterprising musical entrepreneurs.

A prolific composer and shrewd businessman, Joseph Bodin de Boismortier had no need of a royal patron; he married well and made a sizable fortune cultivating the *beau monde* with fashionable chamber works. His forward-looking Opus 34 Sonatas (1731) add to the traditional trio sonata disposition a third melody line, yielding a quartet sonority but premised on the decorative language of the French Baroque: Mozartian in texture but with Gallic curlicues. The lyrics to Boismortier's 1727 collection of *Airs à boire et sérieux* (*Drinking and Serious Songs*) range from over-the-top laments to drunken odes and are imbued with a feigned indifference to fate, a venerable French predilection. Surrounding these gems are short instrumental dances from various Lully sources, including his charming 1668 pastorale *La Grotte de Versailles* and a collection of *Trios pour le coucher du Roy* (for the King's Bedtime).

Though we don't know the precise circumstances of the composition of *Superbo amore* and *Beate mie pene* (H. 476 and 475, respectively), both testify to Charpentier's mastery of the Italian style, the *cantata a due* in particular, and may be direct products of his studies in Rome with Giacomo Carissimi. François Couperin, who also indulged this French notion of a "mixed" national style of composition, worked exclusively in the field of chamber music. His 1722 *Concert Royaux* begin with a limpid suite in G major/G minor, from which come the three short dances surrounding the Italian duets.

Charpentier composed his *Sérénade pour le Sicilien*, H. 497, for a 1679 revival of Molière's comedy *The Sicilian*, for which Lully had

provided incidental music at its 1667 première. Charpentier's modest contributions to this revival included an overture, a few brief vocal movements for an internal scene, and a "slave dance" towards the end of this delightful farce. Tonight's excerpts include the texted music for Scene 3, consisting of a pair of short airs and a mordant little duet, which are introduced with a sprightly gavotte from Charpentier's incidental music for Molière's *Le Mariage forcé*.

© MATTHEW DIRST *Artistic Director*

In November of 1682, Louis XIV initiated a series of court events at the Palace of Versailles, the "Fête of the Apartments," that continued into January. Three times a week, from 6 until 10 in the evening, a variety of entertainments were held in the principal rooms of the Great Apartments. In the throne room various kinds of music were offered, including small chamber operas. Charpentier probably composed *Les Plaisirs de Versailles* for one of these performances.

As was common in French Baroque operas, the main characters of *Les Plaisirs de Versailles* are allegorical—La Musique, La Conversation, Le Jeu, a "Choeur des Plaisirs"—plus one mythological figure, Comus, the god of festivities. The most striking thing about this lightweight piece, besides its witty and sparkling text, is Charpentier's sharp musical portrayal of each character. Music's song is repeatedly interrupted by Conversation's prattling. Conversation attempts to flatter Music, saying that she only means to draw attention to Music's eloquence and charm, and, in slapstick fashion, she repeatedly vows to remain silent. Exasperated, Music exhorts her to shut up so that she may sing "to please you." Conversation cannot help but interrupt Music's song by commenting on the performance, and afterwards she showers Music with praise. But Music responds with a curse that attempts to tie up Conversation's tongue forever. The instruments then take up a minuet, after which Conversation exclaims "Pray, let us hear this courante again." Music sets her straight in no uncertain terms, and breaks off the conversation; Conversation encourages her not to harbor any ill will, and bids the "sociable siren" farewell. Fearful that they will leave in anger, the Chorus of Pleasures stops them and begs them to remain: "Would you deprive Louis, this glorious hero, of the pleasure that music

affords?" Music agrees to remain if Conversation will be silent, but Conversation replies that talent of speech was a gift given to her by the gods—and she wishes to make use of it. They prepare to leave together, but the chorus again stops them.

One of the Pleasures then calls upon Comus, the God of Feasts, to mediate. He offers to settle their differences by giving them some hot chocolate, which was then all the rage, a rare delicacy. Music is outraged, saying that it would only heat up Conversation's chatter. Conversation, however, is a chocoholic, and tells Comus to ignore Music. Comus then offers some wine, which he has in abundance: it will dispel their sadness, and stimulate reason. To put an end to their dispute, Comus then offers some liquid jams and a pyramid built of tarts and marzipan. When that doesn't satisfy them, he suggests various distractions: Le Jeu appears on the scene to offer *trou-madame*



(a French card game), billiards, checkers, backgammon, chess, pair-royals, and twelve-face dice. But to no avail; Music wants only silence, and Conversation wants hot chocolate. Meanwhile, the Chorus of Pleasures has had enough of their constant bickering!

Finally, Comus gives Conversation a cup of chocolate with Music's blessings, and Music takes up her lute to praise a great King who is loved by his subjects and feared by his enemies. Conversation praises the hot chocolate, which is sweetened just right, and Music points out that it is no hotter than her sharp tongue. Conversation then reproaches Music for insisting on silence, and suggests that she go sing in convents where silence reigns at all times—for at Court one must adapt to others. "What a fine state of affairs! Would not France fall into decadence without its *do re mi fa sol la*," says Conversation, and is seconded by the Chorus of Pleasures. Music then reveals that she only affected her pretensions so as to give Conversation material for her mockery, and Conversation apologizes for having made sport of her. "If Louis has laughed, I shall count myself happy enough," says Music, and the Chorus of Pleasures join to their collective wish that the "Sun King" has been diverted by their instruments and voices from his warlike pursuits.

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## TEXT AND TRANSLATIONS

**Pleurez, pleurez mes tristes yeux;**  
*vous meritez la peine  
dont Philis a payé  
vos indiscrets plaisirs.*

Weep, oh weep my sad eyes;  
you deserve the pain  
that Phyllis repaid  
your indiscreet advances.

*Hélas tout vous disoit  
d'éviter l'inhumaine,  
ses charmes, sa rigueur,  
ma raison, mes soupirs.*

Alas, you knew all too well  
to avoid such a heartless love,  
her charms, her demands,  
my reason, my sighs.

*Malgré moi vos regards  
m'ont attiré sa haine;  
ils ont parlé d'amour,  
et de tendres desirs.*

Despite myself, your glances  
have brought forth her hatred;  
yet they spoke only of love,  
and of tender desires.

**Amis je ne veux plus boire,**  
*j'entens l'heure du Berger;  
l'amour m'offre une victoire,  
pourrois je la négliger!  
Ne retardez pas ma gloire,  
un moment peut tout changer.*

Friends, I want no more drink,  
I hear the huntsman's call;  
love offers me victory,  
and I can scarcely resist!  
Let me indulge my pride;  
all can change in a moment.

*Il n'est qu'un tems pres de belles,  
On doit bien le menager,  
si l'on n'est ardent pour elles,  
elles scavent s'en venger.  
Souvent chez les plus fidelles  
un moment peut tout changer.*

We live among such fine beauties;  
one must be quite careful  
about a too ardent love,  
since they will take their revenge.  
Even among the most devoted  
all can change in a moment.

*Amant d'un objet severe,  
gardez vous d'être leger;  
empressez vous a luy plaire  
vos soins pourront l'engager.  
Dans le tems qu'on desespere,  
un moment peut tout changer.*

Lover of a pitiless companion,  
try to remain lighthearted;  
hasten to please her,  
your attention to engage her.  
In the time it takes to despair,  
all can change in a moment.

**Laissons la dormir Gregoire,**  
*il est sou / il et fou!  
Ce faquin ne sçait pas boire  
ce vin doux comme nous.*

Let's leave Gregory dozing,  
he's drunk/he's crazy!  
This rascal doesn't know to drink  
mild wine, as we do.

*Il se croit dans la nuit noire,  
il est sou / il et fou!  
Chers amis laissons luy croire,  
et faisons tous de longs glous-glous.*

He thinks it's always nighttime,  
he's drunk/he's crazy!  
dear friends, let him be  
while together we raise a glass.

**Quand je vois ma chere bouteille,**  
*je sens les transports les plus doux.  
Quel ascendant! Qu'elle merveille!  
Rien ne resiste a ses glous-glous.*

Whenever I see my favorite bottle,  
I feel the sweetest ecstasy.  
What lineage! What a marvel!  
A swig is quite irresistible.

*L'amour doit être jalous d'elle,  
jamais il n'eut tant d'agremens;  
elle feroit un infidelle  
du plus sincere des amans.*

Love must be jealous of her  
on account of her infinite charms;  
she would make an adulterer  
into the most sincere of lovers.

*Ah si Venus avec ses charmes  
vouloit luy disputer mon coeur,  
je ne voudrois pour toutes armes  
qu'un doit de sa vive liqueur.*

Ah, if Venus with all her charms  
wanted to capture my heart,  
I would want at all costs  
only a taste of this lively liquor.

*Fier amour je brave ta flamme,  
renonce a ton pouvoir divin;  
ou si tu veux blesser mon ame,  
trempe tes traits dan le bon vin.*

Proud love I defy your flame  
and renounce your divine power;  
but if you must pierce my heart,  
soak your arrows in some nice wine.



**Dieu des Raisins,**  
*pere de l'allegresse,  
chasse d'icy le noir soucy,  
les embarras et la sombre tristesse.*

*Repands sur ta liqueur,  
cette agreable humeur,  
ce delire flateur,  
et la vive douceur  
qui font des immortels la  
delicate yvresse.*

**Profitons des bien faits**  
*du grand Dieu de la table,  
savourons a longs traits  
ce nectar delectable.*

*Et du soir au matin,  
la bouteille a la main,  
attendons sans chagrin  
les arrêts du destin.*

**Superbo amore,** *al mondo imperi,  
ma nel mio core regnar non spero:  
un nume infante d'alma regnante  
non trionferà. Libertà!*

**Beate mie pene**  
*felice catene, legami del cor.  
Deh, non mi lasciate,  
a me diventate  
più crudeli ogn'hor;  
chi non v'ha provate,  
non gode in amor.*

God of the grape,  
father of liveliness,  
chase from here all bleak thoughts,  
embarrassments, and sadness.

Imbue your liquor  
with such pleasant disposition,  
delirious flattery,  
and lively sweetness  
that gently intoxicates the gods.

Let's enjoy the benefits  
of the great cuisine god,  
and savor with big draughts  
this delectable nectar.

And from morning 'til night,  
bottle in hand,  
we fearlessly await  
destiny's decrees.

Proud love, you rule the world,  
but in my heart you shall not reign;  
a child god with a haughty soul  
will not triumph. Liberty!

Blessed is my suffering,  
the glad chains binding my heart.  
Ah, do not abandon me  
and inflict upon me  
even more cruelty;  
those who have never experienced it  
take no pleasure in love.

### Excerpts from *Le Sicilien*

*Beauté, dont la rigueur  
s'acharne sur mon coeur amoureux,  
montrés nous vos beaux yeux  
par le trou de votre lucarne.*

*Mais elle dort, hélas!  
On voit bien que l'Amour  
ne la talonne pas.*

*Voulez-vous, beauté bizarre,  
que votre triste rossignol  
chante toujours sur le bémol,  
et jamais sur le bécarre?*

*Quoy tandis que dan la rüe  
vos amant chantent leurs tourments;  
vous dormez, et vos ronflements  
font la basse continüe.*

*Heureux, heureux matous,  
que votre sort est doux.*

*Jamais dans les gouttieres  
vos chattes les plus fieres  
ne meslent de bémol  
a vox guays miaoux.  
Heureux, heureux matous...*

*C'est trop nous outrager,  
dormons pour nous vanger;  
mais si par sa fenestre  
cette tigresse en traître.  
Heureux, heureux matous...*

*D'un malhonneste pot  
nous versoit le jasmain...  
quel dépit, quel chagrin!  
Faisons n'argue à l'Amour:  
c'est un dieu trope mutin!  
Heureux, heureux matous...*

Fair one, whose severity  
enchains my smitten heart,  
let your lovely eyes shine forth  
through your window.

But alas, she's asleep!  
It's clear that Cupid  
has no power over her.

Do you desire, my mad mistress,  
that your sad nightingale  
should always sing in a minor key,  
never in the major mode?

Meanwhile down the street  
your lovers lament loudly;  
yet you sleep, your snores  
rendering a basso continuo.

Oh fortunate felines,  
how lucky you are.

Ne'er would, in dark alleys,  
your fiercest tomcats  
stoop to minor modes  
for their gay miaous.  
Oh fortunate felines...

We're completely fed up  
and we dream about revenge;  
and yet from her windowledge  
the deceitful tigress taunts.  
Oh fortunate felines...

From her full chamber pot  
perfume poured upon us...  
what pique, what nerve!  
To hell with Love:  
this young god is a brat!  
Oh fortunate felines...

## ABOUT THE ARTISTS



Soprano and Texas native **Megan Stapleton** has been described as “sublime” (*The Hub Review*) and “enchanting” (*The Boston Phoenix*), with “stunning lyricism” (*The Boston Musical Intelligencer*). Megan has performed recently with Galveston Symphony Orchestra, Mercury Orchestra, Houston Grand Opera Co., Houston Baroque, Ensemble Correnti, Houston’s Bach Society, Houston’s Gilbert and Sullivan Society, and the Paul English Jazz Trio. While

living in Boston, she sang with groups including Boston Early Music Festival, Boston Opera Collaborative and Boston Metro Opera. Megan holds degrees with honors from New England Conservatory and Sam Houston State University.



American soprano **Stacey Franklin** delights audiences with her shimmering tone and expressive artistry. As a featured soloist on the Houston Chamber Choir’s 2015 album *soft blink of amber light* (MSR Classics), Franklin is hailed by *Fanfare* magazine for “crystal-clear diction, dead-on intonation, and fearless fluency in the numerous treacherous turns of her lines.” The native Houstonian has been presented on stage and in concert by Grace Song,

Inc., Greenbriar Consortium, Imperial Arts, Lone Star Lyric Theater, Mercury: The Orchestra Redefined, The Nova Arts Project, Opera in the Heights, Opera Vista, and Zephyr Ensemble. Operatic highlights include Gretel (*Hänsel und Gretel*), Madame Goldentrill (*The Impresario*), Zerbina (*La Serva Padrona*), and Angelica (*Handel’s Orlando*). Having earned a Bachelor of Music degree in Vocal Performance from Baylor University, Franklin refined her skills at apprenticeship programs in Los Angeles and San Francisco. Also a sixth season member of the Houston Chamber Choir and a sought-after professional harpist, she maintains an active musical presence in the greater Houston area.



**Ellie Jarrett Shattles**, mezzo-soprano, is thrilled to re-join Ars Lyrica during their 2016 season and recently completed the second year of her D.M.A. in opera performance from the University of Texas Austin where she had the opportunity to sing Der Komponist (*Ariadne auf Naxos*), The Baker’s Wife (*Into the Woods*), Cherubino (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Hansel (*Hansel und Gretel*), Madeline Mitchell (*Three Decembers*) and Madame de la Croissy (*Dialogues of the Carmelites*). For

UT’s upcoming season, Ellie is singing La Principessa in *Suor Angelica* as well as Zita in *Gianni Schicchi*. She has also sung with many prestigious young artist programs, including Marcellina and Mercédès for Nashville Opera, Rosina for Aspen Opera Theatre, and Dorabella for the Merola Opera Program. In 2011 and 2012, Ellie covered Marthe in *Faust* and The Fortune Teller in *Arabella* as an Apprentice Artist for the Santa Fe Opera, and returned in 2013 as part of their Education Development Program to sing Mrs. Noye in Britten’s *Noye’s Fludde*. Ms. Jarrett has also had the pleasure of singing during her DMA with the UT Symphony Orchestra as well as the UT New Music Ensemble.



**Sarah Brindley**, mezzo-soprano, is honored to be making her debut performance with Ars Lyrica. Since arriving in Houston in 2007, she has been a soloist and core member of the Houston Bach Society, and performs frequently in Lone Star Lyric’s summer festival and Lyric Cabaret series. Sarah has also sung with the Houston Symphony and Mercury Orchestra. Some of her most notable roles have been the Wicked Step-Mother in *What Your Parents Don’t Want You*

*to Know* with Lone Star Lyric Festival, the Wife in *The Women* with Lone Star Lyric Festival, Dorabella in *Così fan tutte* with Opera in the Ozarks, Katisha in *The Mikado* with Opera in the Ozarks, and Molly Sinclair in *The sojourner and Molly Sinclair* with the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill.



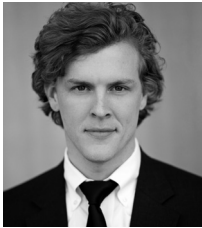
Leggiero tenor **Alexander Scheuermann** is a native of Merritt Island, Florida who now lives and works in Houston. Recent operatic roles include Alfredo in *The Puffed Up Prima Donna*, and The Boy in *The Velveteen Rabbit* with HGO’s *Opera to Go!* The Barber in *Man of La Mancha* with Central City Opera, and Nemorino in *L’elisir d’amore* at the Moores Opera House. Concert work includes regular performances as a soloist with the Houston Bach Society, the Three

Texan Tenors and the Lone Star Lyric cabaret series. Alex holds a BM in voice performance from Florida State University and an MM in voice performance from The University of Houston. Alex studies under Cynthia Clayton.



**Tony Boutté** is described in the current issue of *Opera News* as “possessed of a radiant, communicative tenor.” A native of Louisiana, Tony has traveled extensively, here and abroad, including New York, London, Paris and Los Angeles. Tony has sung with such established ensembles as Les Arts Florissants, Les Talens Lyriques, Tafelmusik, Musica Angelica and Ars Lyrica Houston. His extensive recording catalog includes works by Lully, Handel and Bach, as well

as world premier recordings by Philip Glass, Douglas Cuomo and Michael Gordon. Upcoming releases include Fauré songs (Edition Peters Sounds) and music of Boismortier (Centaur) with Arcanum Ensemble. Tony recently joined the faculty of Sam Houston State University, and is excited to be joining the thriving cultural life of Houston. For more info, visit [www.tonyboutte.com](http://www.tonyboutte.com).



Baritone **Mark Diamond** debuted with Ars Lyrica last season in Bach’s Coffee Cantata. Mr. Diamond is a graduate of the Houston Grand Opera Studio where performances included Figaro in *Il barbiere di Siviglia* and Marcello in *La bohème*, and has since returned to sing Count Carl-Magnus in *A Little Night Music*. Last season Mr. Diamond debuted with the French opera theaters of Limoges, Caen, and Reims. He is the first prize Winner of the 2010 Eleanor

McCullum Competition as well as the recipient of the Richard F. Gold Career Grant from Glimmerglass Festival and the Sarah Tucker Study Grant.



Lyric baritone **Brian Shircliffe** is excited to be performing with Ars Lyrica again. The San Antonio native has sung with Dayton Opera, Lake George Opera, Utah Festival Opera, Opera in the Heights, Opera Vista, and has performed with numerous opera companies including: Houston Grand Opera, most recently seen in the world’s first Mariachi opera, *Cruzar la Cara de la Luna*. Brian holds a Master’s of Music from The University of Houston’s Moores School of Music, and teaches

voice at San Jacinto College in Houston where he currently resides. Following his performance as Dancaïro in *Carmen*, with Houston’s Opera in the Heights, the Houston Chronicle said: “The best individual singing of the evening came from Brian Shircliffe as Dancaïro, one of Carmen’s fellow smugglers... He had a sure vocal presence, a natural, unblemished sound and an easy delivery.”



Stage director **Tara Faircloth**’s work has been seen in opera houses around the nation. She has directed two world premieres with the Houston Grand Opera’s East+West series and has a thriving career in regional houses such as Utah Opera, Wolf Trap Opera, Arizona Opera, Atlanta Opera, Tulsa Opera and Opera Colorado (*Eugene Onegin*, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, *Rigoletto*, *Die Zauberflöte*, *Hänsel & Gretel*, etc.).

The baroque repertoire is of special interest to Ms. Faircloth, who made her directorial debut with Ars Lyrica Houston’s production of *Cain: Il primo omicidio* in 2003, and has since designed and directed a number of shows for the company, including several Charpentier works, and *Dido & Aeneas* for tour in Mexico. This season includes new productions of *Madama Butterfly*, *Don Giovanni*, *L’enfant et les sortilèges*, and Britten’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*. Ms. Faircloth has a private coaching studio in Houston, Texas, and regularly works with the talented singers of the Houston Grand Opera Studio and Rice University.



Ars Lyrica Founder & Artistic Director **Matthew Dirst** is the first American musician to win major international prizes in both organ and harpsichord, including the American Guild of Organists National Young Artist Competition (1990) and the Warsaw International Harpsichord Competition (1993). Widely admired for his stylish playing and conducting, the *Dallas Morning News* recently praised his “clear and evocative conducting” of Handel’s *Alexander’s Feast*, which

“yielded a performance as irresistibly lively as it was stylish.” Dirst’s recordings with Ars Lyrica have earned a Grammy nomination and widespread critical acclaim. His degrees include a PhD in musicology from Stanford University and the prix de virtuosité in both organ and harpsichord from the Conservatoire National de Reuil-Malmaison, France, where he spent two years as a Fulbright scholar. Equally active as a scholar and as an organist, Dirst is Professor of Music at the Moores School of Music, University of Houston, and Organist at St Philip Presbyterian Church in Houston. He is the author of *Engaging Bach: The Keyboard Legacy from Marpurg to Mendelssohn* (Cambridge University Press, 2012) and the editor of *Bach and the Organ* (University of Illinois Press, 2016).



## ARS LYRICA HOUSTON

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### ABOUT ARS LYRICA

Founded in 1998 by harpsichordist and conductor Matthew Dirst, **Ars Lyrica Houston** presents a diverse array of music from the 17th and 18th centuries on period instruments. Its local subscription series, according to the Houston Chronicle, “sets the agenda” for early music in Houston and it also appears regularly at major festivals and conferences, including the 2014 Berkeley Early Music Festival & Exhibition. Ars Lyrica’s distinctive programming favors Baroque dramatic and chamber works, and its pioneering efforts have won international acclaim: the ensemble’s world première recording of Johann Adolf Hasse’s *Marc’Antonio e Cleopatra*, hailed by Early Music America as “a thrilling performance that glows in its quieter moments and sparkles with vitality,” was nominated for a Grammy Award® for Best Opera 2011.

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*Ars Lyrica Houston gratefully acknowledges its donors for their generous support.*

*\* Denotes members of the Continuo Circle, a three-year pledge towards Ars Lyrica’s artistic planning.*

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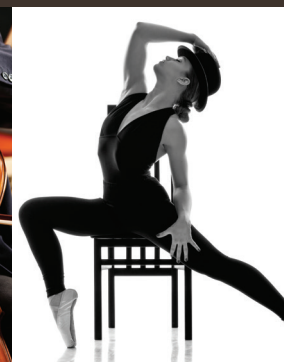
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