

MATTHEW
DIRST
ARTISTIC
DIRECTOR

ars Lyrica
MUSIC OF THE BAROQUE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Photographs by Amitava Sarkar unless otherwise noted

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ARS LYRICA LIFTS THE SPIRIT WITH ITS 2014/15 SEASON OPENER
Flying High premieres on September 7 at 6pm at the Hobby Center's Zilkha Hall



HOUSTON, TX (June 24, 2014) – Grammy nominated Ars Lyrica Houston is pleased to announce its 2014/15 season opener: *Flying High* on September 7th at 6 pm at the Hobby Center's Zilkha Hall. This program soars and lifts the spirit, with music ranging from nimble Baroque dances to a memorable setting of the legend Icarus, who flew too close to the sun. French and Italian Baroque chamber works animate this program, featuring French-Italian soprano Céline Ricci and viola da gambist Mary Springfels in G. F. Handel's evocative *Tra le fiamme*.

Flying High begins Ars Lyrica's 11th season, which is devoted to Baroque music that inspires diverse moods, emotions, even actions — from drama to romance, enchantment to celebration. During 2014/15, Ars Lyrica explores this variety of expression in a season called (with thanks to G. F. Handel) ***The Power of Music***. “*This is the biggest season yet for Ars Lyrica,*” says Artistic Director Matthew Dirst, “*and the individual programs present a wonderful opportunity for us to share some amazing music with our Houston friends and patrons.*”

Ars Lyrica performed *Flying High* earlier this summer at the world-renowned Berkeley Early Music Festival & Exhibition on June 3rd. This performance marked Ars Lyrica's debut at the Berkeley Festival, and ensemble looks forward to future appearances at this festival and others around the world. “*Ars Lyrica,*” notes Robert Cole (Artistic Director, Berkeley Festival & Exhibition) *is one of the finest ensembles of its kind...[it] greatly enriches the musical life of the City of Houston.*”

PROGRAM:

Jean-Féry Rebel, *Les Caractères de la Danse*

J. – J Cassanéa de Mondonville, Excerpts from the *Pièces de clavecin avec voix ou violon*, Op. 5

Alessandro Scarlatti, Cello Sonata in D Minor

Anon, *Sonata sopra la Folia*

Jean-Philippe Rameau, Suite from *Les Indes galantes*

G. F. Handel, *Tra le fiamme*

For more information or to purchase tickets, visit www.arslyricahouston.org or call the Hobby Center box office at 713.315.2525

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For high resolution images and individual artist bios, please contact Lauren Gilmore at 713-622-7445 or lgilmore@arslyricahouston.org. *Photography by Amitava Sarkar.*

About [Ars Lyrica Houston](#)

Founded in 1998 by harpsichordist and conductor Matthew Dirst, Ars Lyrica Houston is a Texas-based ensemble that performs world-class Baroque music on period instruments. Ars Lyrica's world premiere recording of *J.A. Hasse's Marc Antonio e Cleopatra* brought the ensemble its first Grammy nomination for "a thrilling performance that glows in its quieter moments and sparkles with vitality" (*Early Music America*). Ars Lyrica's distinctive programming, drawn from the rich chamber and dramatic repertoires of the 17th and 18th centuries, "sets the agenda for imaginative period instrument programming in Houston," according to the *Houston Chronicle*. The ensemble's first commercial release, on Naxos International, features the world premiere recordings of Alessandro Scarlatti's *La Concettione della Beata Vergine and Euridice dall'Inferno*. This disc brought international recognition to the ensemble: *Gramophone*, the leading journal of the classical recording industry, praised this CD for its "exemplary skill and taste," and Ars Lyrica's musicians for their "impassioned performance" of never-before recorded works. Ars Lyrica's latest Sono Luminus recording of Domenico Scarlatti's comic intermezzo *La Dirindina* and his chamber cantata *Pur nel sonno* was released in August 2012. For more information visit www.arslyricahouston.org.

About the Soloists

Céline Ricci

Céline Ricci graduated at the prestigious Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London. Selected by renowned conductor William Christie for his first elite academy, Le Jardin des Voix, this gifted artist was named one of operas promising new talents in 2005 by Opernwelt. She has made numerous appearances for the prestigious Les Arts Florissants. Céline collaborates with some of the most prestigious conductors in Baroque music including Nicholas McGegan, Martin Hasselbock, Jean Christophe Spinosi, choreographer Sasha Waltz, director Deborah Warner and actor John Malkovich. She has performed over the world from the Mariinsky Theater in Saint Petersburg, Musikverein in Vienna, to the Disney Hall in Los Angeles. Céline has recorded numerous CDs and DVDs and has recently art-directed 2 CDs of French song for American label Sono Luminus. The originality and the innovation of the programs have been greatly recognized by the press.

Mary Springfels

Viola da gambist Mary Springfels is the founder and former director of the Newberry Consort and musician-in-residence at the Newberry Library in Chicago, a position she held for 25 years. Since relocating to New Mexico, she has been very active as a teacher and performer with Indiana University, the Texas Toot, the San Francisco Early Music Society's Medieval/Renaissance and Baroque Workshops, the Amherst Early Music Festival, the Conclave of the Viola da Gamba Society of America, the Pinewoods Festival, and the Sonoma Bach Festival. She has been a guest artist recently with Parthenia, The Folger Consort, the medieval ensemble Estampita, and Ars Lyrica Houston. She has appeared in recitals and has made numerous recordings with Dutch recorder virtuoso Marion Verbruggen, and has been featured by Philharmonia Baroque and the Seattle Baroque orchestras.

Adam LaMotte

Adam LaMotte, violinist and violist, is becoming well known to audiences throughout the country as a leader of both period and modern ensembles. He has appeared as soloist, concertmaster, and conductor of numerous orchestras, including the Northwest Sinfonietta in Seattle, String Orchestra of the Rockies, Astoria Festival Orchestra, Portland Baroque Orchestra, and the Maggini String Orchestra in Houston. Critics have hailed Adam as an "especially compelling" and "superb violinist" with "exceptional talent," whose performances are "energetic and exquisite." As Artistic Director of the Montana Baroque Festival, he brings first-class period instrument performances to the rural Montana community. He has co-founded two critically acclaimed ensembles, in Portland and in Houston, and continues to produce many chamber music and chamber orchestra performances. In collaboration with ensembles such as American Bach Soloists, Portland Baroque Orchestra, Ars Lyrica, and Chanticleer, Mr. LaMotte performs on period instruments, using a fine Italian instrument made in 1730 by Bernardo Calcagni, for which he is indebted to his generous patrons who made the purchase possible.