

Westfield Center & Christ Church Cathedral
present

Colin Tilney

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Tocatta in E minor (BWV 914)

Johann Caspar Ferdinand Fischer (1670-1746)

Suite in D minor (from *Musicalisches Blumen-Büschlein*, 1695)

Prelude, Allemande, Courante, Sarabande, Passacaille

Girolamo Frescobaldi (1583-1643)

Ancidetemi pur d'Arcadelt passaggiato (1627)

Johann Jakob Froberger (1616-1667)

Tocatta in C major (FbWV 109)

Johann Pachelbel (1653-1706)

Aria Sebaldina (from *Hexachordum Apollinis*, 1699)

J.S.Bach

English Suite 6 in D minor, BWV 811

Prelude

Allemande

Courante

Sarabande & Double

Gavottes 1 & 2

Gigue

Mr. Tilney plays a harpsichord built by an anonymous builder in Florence, c.1740

“Besides Froberger, Kerll and Pachelbel, he heard and studied the works of Frescobaldi, the Baden Capellmeister Fischer, Strunck, some old and good Frenchmen, Buxtehude, Reincken, Bruhns and the Lüneburg organist Böhm.” J.S. Bach’s first biographer, J.N. Forkel, later slightly revised C.P.E. Bach’s list of early influences on his father, but the names of Pachelbel, Fischer and Böhm reappear among “the most celebrated writers for the clavier in those days”, and Bach is known to have possessed music by Frescobaldi and Froberger. With the exception of Georg Böhm, all four composers – born respectively in Nuremberg, Baden, Ferrara and Stuttgart – lived and worked chiefly either in South Germany or in Italy, considerably further south than Bach’s main centres of Weimar, Cöthen, Dresden and Leipzig.

Fischer is conventionally linked to Bach by his 1713 publication, *Ariadne Musica*, a primer of short organ preludes and fugues intended to explore twenty of the twenty-four major and minor keys in the Well Tempered Clavier, but Fischer's eight suites of 1695 (the Blumen-Büschlein) are surely also one of the models for Bach's first complete set of dances, the English Suites, as the two D minor preludes suggest.

Ancidetemi pur, a keyboard arrangement of one of the madrigals by the sixteenth-century Jacob Arcadelt, is Frescobaldi's only surviving example of this common practice; it takes the place of the twelfth toccata in the second book of 1627, but follows the fantastic, semi-improvised style of the preceding "real" toccatas, a world away from the note-per-syllable setting of the original. Froberger studied with Frescobaldi in Rome between 1637 and 1641. From his teacher he absorbed the *stilus fantasticus* we have just heard in the intabulation of *Ancidetemi* but added, for variety, short contrapuntal sections, more akin to Frescobaldi's canzone and ricercari. The toccata opens with a grand double trill, the kind that Caccini prescribed for singers and called *ribattuta di gola* (literally "restriking with the throat").

Pachelbel named the last set of variations in his *Hexachordum Apollinis* (the six strings of Apollo) after the patron saint of his Nuremberg church, St. Sebaldus. Each "string" is represented by a variation set and a tonality, the key of these last eight variations being the normally harshly tuned F minor.

Bach's D minor English Suite is also the last of a set of six. As a finale, it could hardly be surpassed for length, virtuosity and sheer splendour, especially the opening and closing movements – a nine-minute prelude in the form of an Italian concerto and a diabolical final fugue, in the fastest time-signature and bristling with internal trills. The effect of the whole piece is greatly enhanced by the colours and vibrancy of the brass-strung, single-manual Italian harpsichord that may perhaps have been built in the workshop of the inventor of the piano, Bartolommeo Cristofori.



Colin Tilney is a well known interpreter of music for harpsichord, clavichord and fortepiano, with solo recordings on Decca, Deutsche Grammophon (Archive), EMI Electrola, Hyperion, Dorian and CBC SM 5000. With Elissa Poole, he is the founder of Les Coucous Bénévoles, a chamber group specializing in both the Early Music repertoire (Baroque and Classical) and commissions from today's composers. He has edited the keyboard suites of Antoine Forqueray for Heugel (Paris); supplied a performance practice guide to the Bach English Suites for Universal Edition (Vienna); and is the author of *The Art of the*

Unmeasured Prelude: France 1660-1720, published by Schott and Co. in London. Recently he has made a series of Mozart recordings on fortepiano for the Toronto label doremi, as well as a clavichord CD of late works by C.P.E. Bach engineered and produced by Christopher Butterfield.

Colin Tilney lives in Victoria, British Columbia where he teaches at the University of Victoria.