



March 10, 2020

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Zen Edwards, Interim Executive Director/Marketing Consultant • cell (310) 227-0539 • press@bmf-cdm.org

Baroque Music Festival Celebrates its 40th Year – June 21-28, 2020

In commemoration of its 40th year, the Baroque Music Festival will present a special artistic journey—a **“Grand Tour of Europe and Beyond”**—celebrating music of the 17th and 18th centuries. Specialist professional musicians will embark on a global itinerary of **five concerts over eight days**, at intimate venues in **Corona del Mar and Newport Beach, CA**.

World-renowned Baroque violinist Elizabeth Blumenstock celebrates the Festival’s landmark year with her own milestone, as Artistic Director for 10 years. Blumenstock performs regularly around the world with her 17th-century Guarneri violin. In addition to her musical leadership of the Baroque Music Festival, she serves as concertmaster with California’s finest period ensembles and teaches at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music as well as the Juilliard School.

Blumenstock’s selection of **Baroque masterpieces** for the 2020 Baroque Music Festival includes choral works, music for the stage, solo concertos, and orchestral music by J.S. Bach and Telemann. To introduce this year’s special offerings, Blumenstock explains:

In pursuit of our Festival mission to perform specifically Baroque music, we have traditionally (and happily!) tended to focus on the European masters of the period. For our 40th season celebration we honor this tradition, but also include composers from the New World, feature a dancer, and choose some works that reflect Baroque Europe’s awareness of, and fascination with, the exotic world far beyond its own borders.

The 40th Festival is anchored by two Sunday afternoon performances, featuring the **Festival Orchestra**. For the opening concert, the ensemble performs Telemann’s *Les Nations* suite followed by Blumenstock as soloist in Vivaldi’s **violin concerto *Il Grosso Mogul***. After intermission there will be rousing instrumental music from operas on **global themes** by Purcell and Rameau.

Three evening concerts positioned between the large-scale Sunday events showcase **chamber ensembles and soloists** in an array of musical gems from around the globe. Particular highlights in the Monday program this year are scenes from **Spanish Baroque zarzuelas** (operas) and **early music from the Americas**, guest-directed by GRAMMY® award-winner **Stephen Stubbs** (conductor, lutenist and Baroque guitarist) and Seattle-based musical storyteller **Henry Lebedinsky** (harpsichordist) who make their debuts at the Baroque Music Festival. When asked about this collaboration, Stubbs stated:

I’m delighted to be making my first appearance at the Festival as the guest director of “Fiesta! Music from Spain and the New World.” It is wonderful to work again with one of my most admired colleagues, Elizabeth Blumenstock, along with some of my most trusted fellow musicians. This unique program introduces scenes from two important Baroque *zarzuelas*: the earliest surviving “Fiesta Cantade”—as the composer Juan Hidalgo and librettist Pedro Calderón de la Barca called it—and the charming *Acis y Galatea* by Antonio Literes. The performance will feature singers, a Baroque dancer and a band with strings, Baroque guitar, Baroque harp, harpsichord and percussion. Thanks to my co-director Henry Lebedinsky, the program also includes music by composers from the Americas, which is some of the most lively and accessible I have had the pleasure to perform. This concert promises to be a true fiesta!

Continued

Since the first Festival in 1981, weeknight concerts have been held within the hidden oasis of **Sherman Library & Gardens** in Corona del Mar. This year we gather there for Baroque-era folk ballads, as well as traditional fiddle and hurdy-gurdy dance music, in our Wednesday program. Later in the week our “Friday Gardens” artists are in the spotlight for a **grand tour of solo and chamber concertos** by luminaries such as J.S. Bach, Vivaldi and Telemann, and their contemporaries from across Europe.

The Festival season will close with a **grand finale** reviving three showpieces: Bach’s *Orchestral Suite No. 3 in D Major*, including the “Air on a G String” and glittering music for trumpets, strings and oboes; Purcell’s beautiful choral work *Welcome to All the Pleasures*; and Handel’s *Ode for St. Cecilia’s Day*, ending the fourth decade of the Baroque Music Festival by honoring music itself. Early-music superstars **Sherezade Panthaki** (soprano) and **Kyle Stegall** (tenor) join us for Handel’s sumptuous musical tribute.

In addition to the ticketed concerts, audiences are invited to enjoy Baroque music performed *al fresco*, by South Coast Brass, beginning 45 minutes prior to each concert. Before the performances, and during intermission, attendees may explore our special **40th-season display of Festival memorabilia**. Following all performances, audience members and musicians enjoy mingling for conversation and refreshment at a wine and waters reception.

Information and Tickets

The Baroque Music Festival offers a subscription for all five concerts at \$290 that includes priority seating at each event and a private post-concert dinner following the Festival Finale on Sunday, June 28th. Additional information about the 2020 Baroque Music Festival, as well as ticket sales for this year’s series or single concerts (ranging from \$40 to \$55), may be found on the Festival website <https://bmf-cdm.org> or by calling (949) 760-7887.

The Baroque Music Festival was founded in 1981 by Dr. Burton Karson, Professor of Music at CSU Fullerton. The annual season of five June concerts is frequently focused on significant musical themes or events. Over the past four decades, the Festival has evolved as both an esteemed and popular cultural institution in Orange County. Performing primarily on period instruments in intimate settings, acclaimed instrumentalists and vocal soloists assemble each June in Corona del Mar for the annual Festival.

Concertgoers have described the performances as “rapturous” and “riveting”; reviews from the *Los Angeles Times*, *Orange County Register* and other local publications have praised the Festival throughout its long and illustrious history. The organization’s all-volunteer Board of Directors remains committed to bringing high-quality Baroque music to Corona del Mar every summer.

Elizabeth Blumenstock is available for in-person, phone and email interviews on request, schedule permitting.

Visit bmf-cdm.org for:

- **Press Kit** <https://bmf-cdm.org/press-kit/> for Press Kit password, email: press@bmf-cdm.org
- **40th Season Overview** <https://bmf-cdm.org/40th-season/>
- **Artist Biographies** <https://bmf-cdm.org/performers/>
- **Gallery** <http://bmf-cdm.org/gallery/>
- **Artist Interviews** <https://bmf-cdm.org/artist-interviews/>
- **Video Clip** <https://bmf-cdm.org/videos/>
- **Past Programs** <https://bmf-cdm.org/past-programs/>
- **Festival History** <https://bmf-cdm.org/festival-history/>

Continued (concert listings)

Program information

40th annual season: *Grand Tour of Europe and Beyond* – June 21-28, 2020

Sunday, June 21, 4 p.m. – St. Mark Presbyterian Church, Newport Beach

Music of the Hemispheres

Elizabeth Blumenstock leads the Festival Orchestra in music evoking cultures beyond Europe: Vivaldi's violin concerto *Il Grosso Mogul*, Telemann's suite *Les Nations*, and lively dance music from Purcell's *The Indian Queen* and Rameau's *Les Indes Galantes*. Among the players are orchestra principals Stephen Schultz (Baroque flute), Stephen Hammer (Baroque oboe) and Ian Pritchard (harpsichord).

Monday, June 22, 8 p.m. – Saint Michael & All Angels Episcopal Church, Corona del Mar

Fiesta! Festive Music from Spain and the New World

Guests Stephen Stubbs (Baroque guitar) and Henry Lebedinsky (harpsichord) direct Spanish Baroque *zarzuela* scenes, music from the Americas, Iberian Baroque dances and more. With Baroque-specialist dancer Justin Coates, sopranos Danielle Sampson and Amanda Achen, mezzo-soprano Gabriela Flores, violinists Elizabeth Blumenstock and Tekla Cunningham, cellist David Morris, Baroque harpist Maxine Eilander and percussionist Peter Maund.

Wednesday, June 24, 8 p.m. – Sherman Library & Gardens, Corona del Mar

Baroque Folk: Dancing in the Gardens

A lighthearted tour of early folk music from the British Isles, continental Europe and North America, including popular songs, ballads, and dance music, directed by Elizabeth Blumenstock on fiddle. With Karen R. Clark (contralto), Alexandra Opsahl (cornetto and recorders), Curtis Berak (hurdy-gurdy), Maxine Eilander (Baroque harp), Stephen Stubbs (Baroque guitar), Jolianne Einem (violin), Rob Diggins (viola) and Heather Vorwerck (cello).

Friday, June 26, 8 p.m. – Sherman Library & Gardens, Corona del Mar

Concertos All Around

This season our favored Friday Gardens players combine with a chamber ensemble of additional strings in a special program of solo concertos by Benda, Platti, Umstatt, Vivaldi and Bach; plus, Telemann's *Triple Concerto in E Major* for flute, oboe d'amore and viola d'amore. With concerto soloists Elizabeth Blumenstock (violin), David Shostac (flute), Lara Wickes (oboe), Michael Kaufman (cello) and Gabriel Arregui (harpsichord).

Sunday, June 28, 4 p.m. – St. Mark Presbyterian Church, Newport Beach

Festival Finale: Ode to Music

Bach's *Orchestral Suite No. 3 in D Major* and celebratory choral works: Purcell's *Welcome to All the Pleasures* and Handel's *Ode for St. Cecilia's Day*. Featuring soprano Sherezade Panthaki and tenor Kyle Stegall, with the 2020 Festival Orchestra and Chorus.

-end-