

Review**Michael Lynn and Friends in “Baroque Conversations”
benefit at Cleveland Museum of Art (May 11)**

by Daniel Hathaway



Only six months after receiving a liver transplant at Cleveland Clinic, Michael Lynn gathered a group of friends to present a benefit concert for the program that gave him a new life and restored his career as a performer on the recorder and baroque flute. “A Baroque Musical Conversation” drew a good-sized audience to Gartner Auditorium at the Cleveland Museum of Art on Saturday evening, May 11 for masterful performances of concerted music by Telemann and Handel as well as cameo solo performances of works by Louis Couperin, Handel and Marais.

Lynn, who is professor of baroque flute and recorder and curator of musical instruments at the Oberlin Conservatory of Music, was forced to give up performing four years ago due to his illness. His near-miraculous recovery was immediately evident in the opening selection, the *Vivace* from Telemann's *Concerto in D for two flutes, violin and cello*, where he was joined by flutist Kathie Stewart, violinist Julie Andrijeski and cellist René Schiffer, with Jeannette Sorrell at the harpsichord and a backup orchestra of Miho Hashizumi and Rachel Iba, violins, Cynthia Black, viola, and Sue Yelanjian, contrabass. All the performers, who donated their services, have been longtime colleagues in professional period instrument ensembles in the region.

More Telemann brought Lynn back on recorder with talented Oberlin senior Kate Shuldiner on viola da gamba for the *Concerto in a minor*, and to end the evening, Lynn and Stewart were featured on recorder and baroque flute in the *Concerto in e minor*, a striking work with dazzling special effects that brought guitarist Daniel Shoskes into play in the final movement.

Solo performances of a harpsichord *Chaconne* by Louis Couperin played by Sorrell and the first performance of Ronn McFarlane's expressive *Passacaglia* for lute by Daniel Shoskes, who commissioned the work, were bright solo spots in the evening (Shoskes describes himself as “a Cleveland lutenist” who “in order to afford new instruments” has a day job as Urologist and Transplant Surgeon and Professor of Surgery at the Clinic). A third solo slot brought Shoskes and gambist René Schiffer together for Marin Marais's *The Kidney Stone Operation*, dramatically narrated in French (and played from memory) by Schiffer and hilariously updated in translations read by Shoskes.

A particularly fine moment in the evening gave Lynn the opportunity to perform with his daughter Sarah, an excellent soprano (among her other musical accomplishments) who will enter the Oberlin Conservatory next fall. Handel's cantata *Pensieri notturni de Filli* was a fine intergenerational vehicle for the two Lynns to display their respective musical prowess (Michael on recorder this time).

The audience, which included a large contingent from the medical community, was thrilled by the occasion, which is only the first in a series of benefit concerts Michael Lynn is contemplating. Stay tuned, and welcome back, Michael!

Photo by Menglin Gao.

Click [here](#) to watch a video of Daniel Shoskes playing the McFarlane Passacaglia.

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