

## ACRONYM to play Baroque battle music on inaugural Pipino Series at YSU

by Daniel Hathaway  
and Kivie Cahn-Lipman



Youngstown State University is inaugurating a new cycle of [concerts](#) this season: the Donald P. Pipino Performing Arts Series, which continues through April 2019, includes seven events in diverse genres. Commenting on the new offerings in a press release, Phyllis M. Paul, Dean of the Cliffe College of Creative Arts

& Communication, said, “The Series brings to Youngstown the types of cultural opportunities usually found only in large metropolitan areas.”

The second event on Friday, October 5 at 7:30 pm in Ford Family Recital Hall at the DeYor Center on Youngstown’s Federal Plaza will feature the celebrated Baroque string band ACRONYM in a program commemorating the 1683 Battle of Vienna. That standoff was a turning point in the long conflict between the Ottoman and Holy Roman Empires and inspired a programmatic work by Heinrich Ignaz Franz Biber.

“Dedicated to giving modern premieres of the wild instrumental music of the seventeenth century,” ACRONYM is itself an acronym for its fanciful moniker, “*Altmusik* Collective Resurrecting Obscure Nuanced Yesteryear’s Masterpieces.” The ensemble is largely made up of musicians who have passed through the Oberlin Conservatory’s Historical Performance Program. Its members can also be heard performing in such period and modern instrument groups as Cleveland’s Apollo’s Fire, Toronto’s Tafelmusik, Boston’s Handel and Haydn Society, the Boston Early Music Festival, the English Concert, the International Contemporary Ensemble, and Chicago Lyric Opera.

Formed in 2012 for the project of recording Johann Pezel's *Alphabet Sonatas*, ACRONYM has released other critically acclaimed recordings including *Samuel Capricornus: The Jubilus Bernhardi Collection*; *Johann Rosenmüller in Exile* (with baritone Jesse Blumberg); *Oddities and Trifles: the Very Peculiar Instrumental Music of Giovanni Valentini*; *Wunderkammer* (Cabinet of Curiosities, music by Capricornus, Adam Drese, Johann Philipp Krieger, and others); *Paradise* (sonatas by Antonio Bertali); and *Valentini: Secondo Libro de Madrigali*, with Les Canards Chantants (the quirky vocal ensemble whose name means "The Singing Ducks").

Those recording projects reveal both the scholarly and the winsomely humorous sides of ACRONYM, characteristics that are embodied in cellist and gambist Kivie Cahn-Lipman, a founding member of the period band as well as of the International Contemporary Ensemble. Lipman also serves as assistant professor of cello at Youngstown State University, and has provided us with his program notes for ACRONYM's October 5 concert.

### ACRONYM presents **The Battle of Vienna**

Adriane Post, Edwin Huizinga, and Johanna Novom, violins  
Karina Schmitz, violin and viola  
Kyle Miller, viola  
Loren Ludwig, viola da gamba  
Kivie Cahn-Lipman, violoncello and viola da gamba  
Nate Chase, violone  
Simon Martyn-Ellis, theorbo and guitar  
Elliot Figg, harpsichord and organ

Sonatina in D Minor  
*The 1683 Turkish Battle of Vienna*  
Sonata *Jucunda* a5 in D Minor

Heinrich Ignaz Franz Biber (1644-1704)  
Biber, arr. Andreas Anton Schmelzer (1653-1701)  
Johann Heinrich Schmelzer? (d.1680)

Sonata a8 in A Minor  
Sonata a8 in C Major

Alessandro Poglietti (d.1683)  
Antonio Bertali (1605-1669)

*Ciacona* a6 in B-flat Major

Johann Christoph Pezel (1639-1694)

### INTERMISSION

Sonata a8 in A Minor  
Sonata a5 in G Minor

Samuel Friedrich Capricornus (1628-1665)  
Giovanni Valentini (c.1582-1649)

Sonata *a6* in C Major

Adam Drese (c.1620-1701)

*Battalia a9* in D Major

Biber

### Notes by Kivie Cahn-Lipman



Programmatic battle music has long been popular, from Renaissance polyphony in which singers imitate gunfire and cries, to Romantic-era orchestral works which feature actual cannon in the percussion section. Many seventeenth-century pieces of German battle music referred to military conflicts between the Holy Roman Empire and the Ottoman Empire, which by then had been taking place periodically for more than three hundred years.

Perhaps the most famous work of Baroque battle music is the concluding piece on our program, composed by **H. I. F. von Biber**, an Austrian composer who worked in Graz and Kroměříž before settling in Salzburg. Biber's *Battalia* (1673) is in eight continuous movements and dedicated to the god Bacchus. A brief untitled

introduction is followed by *Die liederliche gesellschaft von allerley Humor* (the dissolute company of all sorts of humor), in which eight contemporaneous folk songs are heard simultaneously in different keys, and a note in the manuscript reads: “*hic dissonat ubique nam ebrii sic diversis Cantilenis clamare solent*” (here is dissonance everywhere as drunks shout out various songs).

This cacophony is followed by two untitled *presto* movements, with *Der Mars* (the god of war) between them. A gentle *aria* is a respite but segues directly into *Die Schlacht* (the battle). *Der Mars* and *Die Schlacht* each explicitly call for extended string techniques rarely heard until the twentieth century: striking the strings with the wood of the bow, threading paper between the strings to produce a rattle, and snap *pizzicato*. *Battalia* ends with an *Adagio: Lamento der verwundten Musquetir* (lament of the wounded musketeer).

Not all battle music was labeled as such. Sonata *Jucunda* (“delightful sonata”), written by an unknown composer, prominently features a Turkish-sounding melody and battle motifs. Like *Battalia*, Sonata *Jucunda* survives in manuscript at the library of the Czech castle at Kroměříž, the source for most of Biber's extant output. Although it is often attributed to Biber, some scholars have suggested that the likelier composer was **Johann**

**Heinrich Schmelzer**, Biber's fellow Austrian who rose through the musical ranks of Vienna before succumbing to the plague. This program opens with another anonymous Kroměříž work which we have speculatively ascribed to Biber: a Sonatina which begins a suite for viola da gamba and continuo, previously attributed to Augustinus Kertzing.

A major turning point in the lengthy conflict between the Ottoman and Holy Roman Empires took place at the Battle of Vienna on September 12, 1683, and it was a decisive victory for the Habsburg dynasty. Turkish forces had besieged the city for several months before being routed with tremendous losses, thanks to Polish imperial reinforcements. Court organist **Alessandro Poglietti**, renowned for his counterpoint and programmatic keyboard music, was killed during the siege.

The battle was commemorated by Schmelzer's son, **Andreas Anton Schmelzer**, who arranged a violin sonata by Biber (the tenth *Rosenkranz* Sonata, known as *The Crucifixion*) and retitled it as *Die Türkenschlacht bei Wien 1683*. ACRONYM has further adapted the variation movement of the sonata for today's performance. Its six sections are titled: *The Turkish Siege — March of the Imperial Reinforcements — The Turkish Advance — The Prayers of the Viennese — The Turkish Assault — The Imperial Victory*.

We include on this program some favorite works from seventeenth-century Vienna, and in keeping with our Battle theme, several of these are written for “dueling choirs” of instruments.

**Giovanni Valentini** was serving in a minor post as an organist at Graz when his employer was elected Holy Roman Emperor Ferdinand II. Only a few years after arriving in Vienna, Valentini was appointed imperial *Hofkapellmeister*, the highest musical rank in German-speaking lands. He was one of a series of Italians who would hold this position over the next several centuries, and he was succeeded by violinist **Antonio Bertali**.

Both Valentini and Bertali were teachers as well as composers, and one of their most prominent pupils was **Samuel Friedrich Capricornus**, a Czech composer who studied in Vienna before winning a post in Stuttgart. **Adam Drese** held positions in a large number of cities; through his extensive travels, he is credited with spreading the Italian style of composition throughout German-speaking lands. **Johann Christoph Pezel** was a municipal trumpeter in Leipzig and the only composer on this program unconnected to Vienna. His *Ciacona* (a type of dance which repeats the same bass line with variations) is the piece which first brought ACRONYM together.

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