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CALIFORNIA BACH SOCIETY, UNDER THE DIRECTION OF PAUL FLIGHT,  
PRESENTS  
“**LOVE, LOSS, AND LAMENTATION**”  
THE MADRIGALS OF CLAUDIO MONTEVERDI

An all-Monteverdi program including madrigals from Books Four, Six and Seven, the ballo  
*Tirsi e Clori*, and solo arias **featuring tenor soloist Brian Thorsett**

Friday, March 12, 2010, 8pm at St. Mark’s Lutheran Church,  
1111 O’ Farrell Street (at Franklin), San Francisco

Saturday, March 13, 2010, 8pm at All Saints Episcopal Church,  
555 Waverley Street (at Hamilton), Palo Alto

Sunday, March 14, 2010, 4pm at First Congregational Church,  
2345 Channing Way (enter on Dana, near Durant), Berkeley  
**please note different Berkeley venue**

Doors open 30 minutes prior to each performance  
Advance purchase tickets until 5pm, March 11: General \$25 / Senior \$18 / Student \$10  
Tickets at the door: General \$30 / Senior \$22 / Student \$10

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**Palo Alto, February 12, 2010 – “I remain food for wild beasts on a deserted shore; one by one you will happily embrace your relatives, while I shall never see my mother and father again.”** Thus Ariadne laments her fate, having been abandoned without explanation by Theseus on the shores of Naxos. Ariadne’s lament became famous as a solo-aria – a part of Monteverdi’s otherwise lost opera, *L’Arianna*, of 1608. But in his Sixth Book of Madrigals, he included an incredible arrangement for five voices of the piece.

California Bach Society's March concert program highlights this wrenching *Lamento d'Arianna*, along with the equally heartrending *Lagrime d'amante al sepolcro dell'amata* (A lover's tears at the tomb of his beloved), Monteverdi's tribute to his wife who died in 1607. Tenor Brian Thorsett sings two solo arias, a duet with choir soloist John Gale, and joins the choir and choir soloist Nicole Schuetz in the delightful ballo *Tirsi e Clori* from 1616. Farley Pearce (cello) and Gwen Adams (organ and harpsichord) accompany the 30-voice chamber choir. For the complete program, please see page 4 of this press release.

**Artistic Director Paul Flight's view on the program:**

"This year, when many groups around the country are turning their attention to Monteverdi's justly famous Vespers of 1610, I thought it would be nice to explore a different side of the composer's oeuvre. Monteverdi's madrigals are far less ceremonial in character, and more intimate and direct in their portrayal of the emotions found within the texts. I've always thought that a cross-section of them would make for a very satisfying concert program. Written over a twenty-five year span, the madrigals we are performing reflect the various innovations that Monteverdi brought to the form. The madrigals of his earlier books may bear a loose relation to the Renaissance motet, but already they are replete with bold gestures in which the meaning of a specific word is brought out strongly. And Monteverdi was constantly experimenting: in *Sfogava con le stelle* he introduces a *parlando* style in which the initial words of the poetic line are delivered very rapidly on a single chord, a gesture one would more likely find in a sacred *falsobordone* of the period (such as Gregorio Allegri's *Miserere*). At the beginning of the seventeenth century the strictly imitative vocal texture gave way to one in which a continuo accompaniment provided the harmonic foundation. The vocal lines were thus liberated from the burden of strict imitation and well-regulated contrapuntal relationships, and more angular lines with wide leaps were suddenly possible. These 'seconda prattica' madrigals are found in Monteverdi's later books. Their portrayal, not of brief pictorialisms but of entire emotional states or "affects," was an important musical development. Grief, longing, infatuation, and the sheer excitement and pleasure of dancing together in a celebration of life and love are all features of this exciting and deeply expressive music."

For the complete program, please see page 4 of this press release.

## Biographies

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During 2009-2010, tenor **Brian Thorsett** sings Ferrando in *Così fan tutte*, Ernesto in *Don Pasquale*, Jupiter Semele, Oronte in *Alcina*, Faust in *Faust*, as well as the Spirit and sailor in *Dido and Aeneas* with Philharmonia Baroque. On the concert stage, highlights include Evangelist in both Bach's *St. John* and *St. Matthew Passion*, Rossini's *Petite Messe*, Haydn's *Creation*, Handel's *Messiah*, Monteverdi's *Tirsi e Clori*, Beethoven's *Christus am Ölberge*, *Choral Fantasy* and *Mass in C*, Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, and Britten's *Serenade for Tenor, Horn & Strings* with the New Century Chamber Orchestra. This past summer he studied and performed the *St. Matthew Passion* with Masaaki Suzuki (Bach Collegium Japan) at the Aldeburgh Festival in England. He is a graduate of San Francisco Opera's Merola Program, Glimmerglass Opera's Young American Artist program and the Music Academy of the West.

The **California Bach Society**, a 30-voice chamber chorus, has established a reputation for its interpretations of Renaissance and Baroque choral music. Specializing in historically informed performances since 1998, the choir has shared the stage with such Early Music luminaries as Magnificat and members of the Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra, and was a featured concert presenter at the 2000 Berkeley Early Music Festival.

The appointment of artistic Director Dr. Paul Flight in 2006 has resulted in three highly successful concert seasons. A fine voice coach, Dr. Flight has attracted talented new singers, and his sensitive direction has brought new definition to the choir. A recent reviewer from San Francisco Classical Voice wrote "Flight has made of the choral group a professional ensemble capable of every expressive nuance and glorious ensemble sound."

For the past three seasons, Dr. Flight has enthralled audiences and critics with his thoughtful and refreshing programming, eliciting reviews such as "one of the most delightful programs of Christmas music in my memory."

Artistic Director **Dr. Paul Flight**, a noted choral conductor, teacher and singer, is in his fourth season with the California Bach Society. A former member of such distinguished ensembles as The Waverly Consort, Theatre of Voices, Pomerium Musices, and the New York Collegium, he brings a wealth of expertise to CBS. In addition, he is Artistic Director of Schola Cantorum San Francisco, and the Founding Director of Chora Nova.

Dr. Flight is also in his tenth season as Principal Conductor of the Madison Early Music Festival, where he has directed masterworks by Bach, Handel, Telemann, Vivaldi, Purcell, Dufay and Guerrero. He has twice been a Visiting Professor of Music at UC Berkeley, directing the Music Department's top choral ensembles. He conducted an operatic double-bill production of Gustav Holst's *Savitri* and Darius Milhaud's *Les malheurs d'Orphée* for Mills College and, in 2003, sang the title role in Philip Glass's *Akhnaten* for Oakland Opera-Theater. A renowned counter-tenor, he has performed works by John Adams, Leonard Bernstein and Unsuk Chin with The Los Angeles Philharmonic, The Cleveland Orchestra, The Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, The Berkeley Symphony, and the Norwegian State Opera, and recently made his debut at the Kennedy Center singing the first counter-tenor role in *El Niño*. He received his doctorate from Indiana University, where he studied conducting with Robert Porco. His research focused on the Venetian composer Giovanni Croce (1557-1609), and he has recorded a program featuring the music of Croce for *Harmonia*, a nationally syndicated radio show. Dr. Flight appeared as a guest on KALW radio's performing arts program, *My Favorite Things*, and has lectured on opera, music history and form as a Visiting Professor at Mills College.

## Program

From *Madrigals*, books 3 and 4

O primavera gioventù dell'anno  
Sfoga con le stelle  
Ah, dolente partita  
A un giro sol de' begl' occhi lucenti  
Quel augellin che canta

From *Madrigals*, book 6

Sestina: Lagrime d'amante al sepolcro dell'amata

1. Incenerite spoglie
2. Ditelo voi
3. Darà la notte il sol
4. Ma te raccoglie o ninfa
5. O chiome d'or
6. Dunque amate reliquie

## Interval

From *Madrigals*, book 6

Lamento d'Arianna

1. Lasciatemi morire
2. O Teseo, Teseo mio
3. Dove, dov'è la fede
4. Ahi, ch'ei non pur risponde

From *Scherzi Musicali*

Solo arias:  
Eri già tutta mia  
Si dolce il tormento

Brian Thorsett, tenor

From *Madrigals*, book 7

Duet:  
Interrotte speranze

Brian Thorsett and John Gale, tenors

Ballo: Tirsi e Clori

Nicole Schuetz, soprano; Brian Thorsett, tenor

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