



## Michael Maniaci performs with Baroque & Beyond

January 27, 2013 – Chapel Hill, NC:

On January 27, the acclaimed countertenor Michael Maniaci will be the featured guest artist on the *Baroque & Beyond* concert series, in a program of baroque-period arias and instrumental music by Italian and German composers.

The *Toronto Globe and Mail* has called Maniaci, "One of the greatest singers of his generation." The *New York Times* concurred, "Michael Maniaci ... is headed for a major career".

The performance takes place at Chapel of the Cross, 304 E. Franklin Street in Chapel Hill. Typically *Baroque & Beyond* performs in the historic chapel, but in anticipation of a larger audience, this concert will be in the sanctuary. Concert time is 3:00 pm and tickets (\$20) are available at the door.

Maniaci will be featured in four arias, with instrumental selections intertwining. The instrumental ensemble is comprised of Peter Lekx, baroque violin (Cleveland); Stephanie Vial, baroque cello (Durham); Williams Simms, theorbo (Baltimore); and harpsichordist Beverly Biggs, Artistic Director of Baroque & Beyond.

The concert opens with Vivaldi's *Non ti lusinghi la crudeltade*, from *Tito Manlio*. This opera was composed during a three-year period when Vivaldi was *Maestro di Cappella* at the court in Mantua. The prince had announced his upcoming marriage so Vivaldi quickly composed this opera for the occasion. However, the wedding did not take place. Instead, *Tito Manlio* was premiered during the carnival season in 1719.

Vivaldi is considered one of the most famous composers of the Italian baroque. Another is the violinist Arcangelo Corelli. Peter Lekx will treat the audience to Corelli's dazzling virtuoso piece for violin and basso continuo, *Sonata in D minor, Op. 5 no. 12*, titled 'La Folia'. Over the course of three centuries, more than 150 composers have used the popular Folia theme in their works.

Maniaci brings the first half of the program to a close with Barbara Strozzi's *Lagrima mie*, an unusual and hauntingly beautiful piece. Strozzi (1619-1677) was an exceptionally fine singer and gifted composer working in Venice in the mid-seventeenth century. Her output is nearly all secular vocal music, which she published in single-composer volumes. She was an accomplished and unusual woman for her time, and would be considered so today. Details about Strozzi's life and work can be found at [http://barbarastrozzi.blogspot.com/2008\\_06\\_01\\_archive.html](http://barbarastrozzi.blogspot.com/2008_06_01_archive.html).

Music of J.S. Bach opens the second half, with two of Maniaci's favorites: *Erbarme dich, mein Gott* from the Matthew Passion, BWV 244; and *Laudamus Te* from the B-minor Mass, BWV 232.

Baroque cellist Stephanie Vial will be featured in a sonata by Andrea Caporale (Sonata #3 in D major). Caporale was the most popular cellist in London for about ten years during the time that Handel lived and worked there. Caporale's most notable performances were, in fact, under the auspices of Handel, in his operas and benefit concerts. He was one of several Italian cellists credited with popularizing the cello in England.

The concert concludes with a bravura aria from Maniaci, Handel's *Agitato da fiere tempeste* from *Oreste*, which premiered at Covent Garden Theatre in 1734. The aria depicts a fierce tempest at sea, alternating with serene calm.

Additional information about *Baroque & Beyond* is found at [www.baroqueandbeyond.org](http://www.baroqueandbeyond.org). The website offers musician biographies, photographs, and information about period instruments and performance practices.

This program is the inaugural concert of the new **HIP Early Music Festival**, a collaboration among five musical organizations: Baroque & Beyond, Aliénor, Mallarmé, Ensemble Vermillion, and The Vivaldi Project. Concerts, workshops, master classes and related events will take place in Chapel Hill and Durham from Jan. 27 – Feb. 3.

HIP = Historically Informed Performance. For additional information about festival activities, including a link for HIPSTER tickets: <http://baroqueandbeyond.org/hip-festival/>



**Michael Maniaci**