



Donne del Seicento

CONCERT PROGRAMME

Sacred and secular vocal works by 17th century Italian composers for soprano and continuo, including theorbo and violoncello.



 thaleia.ensemble@gmail.com

 www.thaleiaensemble.com

 [@thaleia.ensemble](https://www.instagram.com/thaleia.ensemble)

Thaleia is a historically informed music ensemble focusing on the figure of women in the Baroque period.

The artistic directors are cellist Ángela Lobato del Castillo and soprano Laura Martínez Boj.



**"Autoritratto
come suonatrice
di liuto"
Artemisia
Gentileschi
(1593-1653)**

PROGRAMME

LUCIA QUINCIANI
(1565-publ.1611)

Udite lagrimosi spirti
Soprano & BC

FRANCESCA NASCIMBENI
(1658-1680)

Lo sposo vezzoso
Soprano & BC

CLAUDIA SESSA
(1570-1617)

*Sopra gli occhi
Sopra le orecchie*
Soprano & BC

CLAUDIA RUSCA
(1593-1676)

Exultate Caeli, plaudite gentes
Soprano & BC

ISABELLA LEONARDA
(1620-1704)

Salve Regina.
Basso (arr. cello) & BC

BARBARA STROZZI
(1619 - 1677)

Mi fa rider la speranza
Soprano & BC

ANTONIA BEMBO
(1643-1715)

Son sciolti i miei lacci
Soprano & BC

MARIETA PRIULI
(publ. 1665-67)

Corrente I.
Viole (Arr. cello) & BC

GIACINTA BADALLA
(1660-1715)

Pane angelico
Soprano & BC

THE COMPOSERS

It's a shame that a program featuring nine women can be so surprising; however, we're used to seeing one, or at most two, appear incidentally. Playing music composed by women isn't a fad: it's a necessity to do justice to their work and give them the space in musical history they deserve.

The nine women were born in different cities in what is now Italy: some lived and developed their musical careers within convents, while others sought their musical place in society.

Of **Claudia Sessa**, very famous in her lifetime for her public concerts at her convent, Santa Maria Annunciata (Milan), only two pieces survive, preserved in the collection "Canoro Pianto di Maria Vergine sopra la faccia di Christo Estinto", from 1613. **Claudia Rusca**, on the other hand, was trained in music from a young age, and her talent as a soprano and composer opened the doors to the convent of Santa Caterina a Brera (Milan) without the need for a dowry. She published her book of motets, "Sacri concerti a 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, e 8 voci" in 1630.



"Portrait of a nun"
Sofonisba Anguissola
(1530-1626)

Another Lombard nun composer was **Giacinta Badalla**, from the Benedictine convent of Santa Radegonda, whose "Motetti a voce sola", published in 1684, is included here. The Ursuline **Isabella Leonarda** lived in the city of Novara, Piedmont, where she composed and published prolifically. The solo motet we include is for bass, and we have chosen to perform it with a small violone, the *violoncello*, thus exploring the development of instrumental language in the wake of vocal music and the practice in convents of the time of playing male voices on bass instruments, since men were not allowed to participate in musical activities following the Council of Trent.

Francesca Nascimbeni published her works, also of a religious nature, before becoming a nun: in her collection "Canzoni e madrigali spirituali e morali", she sets the spirituality and sufferings of the Christian soul to music with great expressiveness.

Secular music is brought through the other four composers we present: the first woman to publish a monody was **Lucia Quinciani**, whose expressive "Udite Lagrimosi Spirti" appears in the collection "Affetti Amorosi," published in 1611 by her teacher Marcantonio Negri.

The best-known Baroque composer, an extraordinary singer, and a fascinating figure for understanding the musical Venice of the 17th century, was **Barbara Strozzi**, who published eight volumes of her works, the largest production of secular music of the period. Her cantatas and songs reveal the enormous influence of the literary and intellectual circles to which her natural and later adoptive father, Giulio Strozzi, introduced her from a young age. A virtually unknown woman was **Marieta Morosina Priuli**, whose only known publication is her two instrumental works centered on dance: "Correnti da sonarsi col violino e spinetta" (1665), and "Balletti e correnti" (1667) for two violins, violone, and spinet; unfortunately, these are not preserved in their entirety. As an experiment, we chose a corrente played on the violoncello, an instrument that in those decades was still finding its own language.

Antonia Padoani Bembo, also Venetian, had a complicated married life, which forced her to reinvent herself abroad: she left for France, where she tried to curry favor with the court of Louis XIV at Versailles. She dedicated her work, "Produzioni Armoniche" to the Sun King, a collection of vocal works of diverse pitch in Italian, Latin, and French. We include the peculiar "Son sciolti i miei lacci".

All of these composers created works that demonstrate a profound understanding of the current styles, using extraordinarily expressive harmonies and writing for the voice and its possibilities.

Thaleia thus aims to illuminate the work of these exceptional women, whose passionate lives and creative drive developed during a unique historical moment, showcasing a female perspective on the musical world that is so lacking in our history books and concert programming.



The musicians



Laura Martínez Boj - soprano, direction
Ángela Lobato del Castillo - cello, direction
Belisana Ruiz Molina - theorbo

Duration:
50 minutes of music,
with oral presentation of the programme, 1 hour.

