

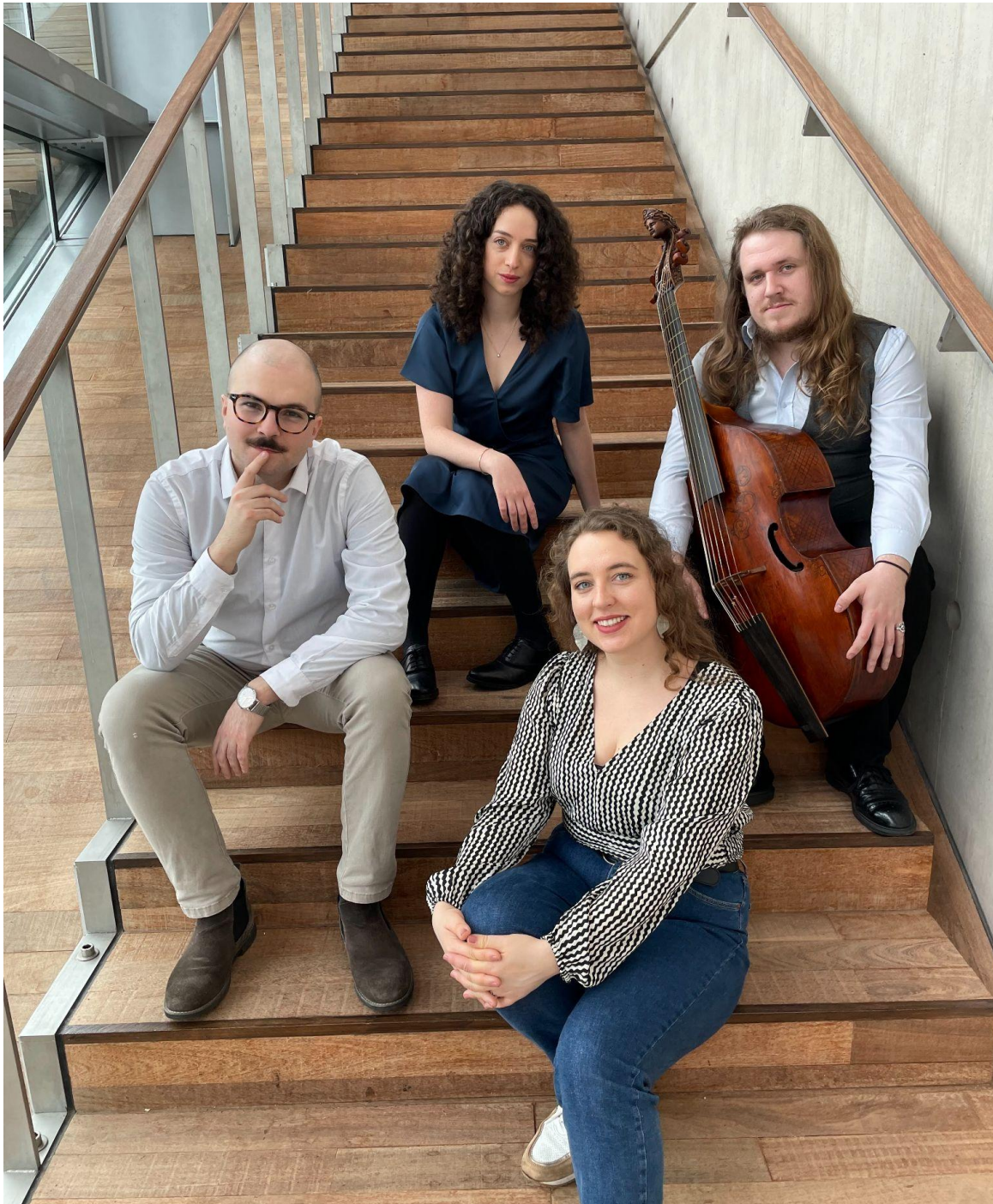
Ensemble aquilo et auster

Shira Miriam Cohen - Soprano

Anna Bachleitner - Mezzo Soprano

Xander Baker - Baroque Cello /Viola da gamba

Riccardo Casamichiela - Cembalo /organ



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ABOUT

Ensemble Aquilo et Auster is an Amsterdam-based ensemble specializing in historically informed performance practice of 17th and 18th-century music. The musicians base their interpretation on the latest musical research while aiming to express the emotions and stories of "early music," making these ancient expressions accessible to today's audiences. The members of the ensemble have studied in renowned institutions such as the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis, the Conservatorium van Amsterdam, and the Buchmann-Mehta School of Music. The ensemble members also collaborate with leading early music ensembles in Europe, including the Nederlandse Bachvereniging, La Cetra Basel, Coro e Orchestra Ghislieri, and Il Gusto Barocco Stuttgart.



PROGRAM I

O quam suavis es! - 17th Century sacred music from Rome & Venice

(concert duration ca. 60 minutes)

The program forms itself around the compositional expressions of sweetness in sacred vocal music from Rome and Venice in the first half of the 17th century. Two female voices, intertwined with a Basso Continuo, explore different aspects of devotion to Jesus and Maria. We delve into music where the lines between sacred admiration and a physical expression of love are almost fluid. The compositions of that time speak the language of devotion that reflects both aspects and take the listener on a journey of an almost sensational longing. The newly developed style of a "concerto" for voices is explored together with instrumental music from the same period.

O quam suavis es Canto & B.C. Venice 1645	Francesco Cavalli (1602-1676)
O bone Jesu for 2 Cant & B.C. From:: Promptuarii musici [...] SV 313 Straßburg, 1622	Claudio Monteverdi (1567-1643)
Veni electa mea Antifona 4, a per la Vergine a à 2.Sopra. Rom, Biblioteca Apostoilca Vaticana Capp. Giuliana XIII 28, flo 55-57 Rom, 1665	Giovanni Giacomo Branco (?-c.ca 1665)
Toccata Cromatica from: Fiori musicali, op. 12 Venice, 1635	Girolamo Frescobaldi (1583-1643)
Laudate Dominum for Cantus & B.C. From: Selva morale et spirituale,SV 287 Venedig, 1641	Claudio Monteverdi (1567-1643)
O stella caeli for Cantus & B.C. From: Motetti a voce sola Venedig, 1643	Giovanni Antonio Rigatti (1613-1648)
Toccata quarta from: Toccate e Correnti d'intavolatura d'Organo e Cembalo	Michelangelo Rossi (1601/02-1656)
Venite, sitientes, ad aquas Domini for 2 Canti & B.C. SV 335 1624	Claudio Monteverdi (1567-1643)
Canzon Terza à Basso Solo from: Canzoni da sonare a una, due, tre et quattro Venice, 1634	Girolamo Frescobaldi (1583-1643)
O quam suavis est mensa quam preeparavit Deus diligentibus se for 2 Canti & B.C. from: Sagri Concerti [...] Libro Secondo, Opera Terza Rom, 1675	Domenico Palpane (1630-1649)



PROGRAM II

Music of Many Worlds - 18th-c. Vocal Works from Amsterdam's Sephardic Synagogue

(concert duration ca. 50 minutes)

The program "Music of Many Worlds" explores the almost forgotten music that was composed for the flourishing community of the Portuguese synagogue in Amsterdam around the 1730s. The members of the community commissioned several compositions from leading composers of their time and also wrote music themselves, which was performed during services in the synagogue. Particularly, the cantata for two sopranos, "Le-el elim," is a beautiful example of this easily overlooked galant musical gem. The program revolves around the holiday Simchat Torah, which occurs in autumn and marks the end of the annual reading cycle of the Torah and the beginning of a new one. The music composed for this occasion in 1738 is a joyfully flowing and jubilant composition by Austrian composer Cristiano Giuseppe Lidarti. Together with instrumental pieces from the same period and traditional Sephardic melodies, the program immerses itself in the diverse and colorful world of the Jewish community of Amsterdam in the 18th century.

Kaddish a voce sola (Melody from 4th aria of Le-el Elim)	Aramaic prayer
Fugue on a theme by Lidarti	improvised
“Le-el elim” Cantata for 2 Sopranos and B.C. From: Ets Haim library, Amsterdam ms. EH 49 B 22	Abraham de Caçeres (c. 1718–1738)
Cello Sonata in D-Minor From: 6 Cello Sonatas, Op.5 (No.2) Paris 1746 I. Andante II. Presto	Francesco Geminiani (1687 - 1762)
Amesiah di Casares a due voci accompagnante da due Violini unisono & Basso From: Ets Haim library, Amsterdam ms EH 49 B 22	Abraham de Caçeres
Kol HaNeshamah Cantus and B.C. From: Ets Haim library Amsteden ms EH 49 B 22	Anonymus (reconstruction by Jonathan Salamon)
Cello Sonata in D-Minor III. Adagio IV. Allegro	Francesco Geminiani
Azamer Sir for Soprano and B.C. From Ets Haim library Amsteden ms EH 49 B 22	M. Mani (18th Century)
Amesiah a due voci, violini unisono & basso From: Ets Haim library Amsterdam ms EH 49 B 22	Cristiano Giuseppe Lidarti (1730 -after 1739?)

BIOGRAPHIES

Xander Baker is a historical cello and viola da gamba player, based between the Netherlands and the UK. Growing up in Wiltshire, Xander studied cello with Elizabeth Anderson and Vladimir Waltham, the latter of whom planted the seed of historically informed performance. Xander went on to the **University of Manchester** (2013-16), studying cello with Simon Turner and historical performance with Amanda Babington. After a few years working as a freelance cellist, singer and teacher, Xander decided to take the plunge and move to Amsterdam, where he now studies at the **Conservatorium van Amsterdam with Viola de Hoog** (historical cello), **Mieneke van der Velden** (viola da gamba) and **Margaret Urquhart** (violone, double bass). Due to a propensity for a good bass line and a love of chamber music, Xander is much in demand as a basso continuo player on a variety of historical bass instruments in the Netherlands and the UK.

Riccardo Casamichiela was born in Ragusa in 1997. He began studying music at the "G. Verga" music high school in Modica at the age of 14 where he studied piano and cello. After obtaining his diploma, he moved to Milan to study harpsichord and basso continuo at the **Conservatory "G. Verdi" Milan** under the guidance of Giorgio Cerasoli and Anna Fontana. During the same period he studies composition under the guidance of Carlo Ballarini. He graduated in both disciplines in 2020 with highest honors. In September 2020 he moved to Amsterdam to obtain his Master degree in **harpsichord and basso continuo** at the **Conservatorium van Amsterdam** where he had the opportunity to study with **Menno van Delft and Kris Verhelst**. He obtained his master's degree in May 2022. He participated in masterclasses conducted by Olivier Baumont, Salvatore Carchiolo, Giulio Prandi. He has performed as a continuo player in Italy, France, Germany, Holland, playing in important concert halls such as: Tivolvredenburg Groote Zaal Utrecht; Muziekgebouw Amsterdam; Stadsgehoorzaal Leiden; Liederhalle Stuttgart; Royamount Foundation Paris. He collaborated with ensemble **Cantoria, Coro e Orchestra Ghislieri, Il gusto barocco Stuttgart**.

Israeli-Dutch soprano **Shira Miriam Cohen** is specializing in Early Music and Opera. Based in Amsterdam, Shira is researching the music of the Portuguese synagogue of the 18th century, focusing on the oratorio "Esther" by C.G. Lidarti. In 2022, has performed the leading part of the oratorio, as well as Mozart's Great Mass in C minor and Bach's Johannespassion and various cantatas.

Her operatic repertoire includes the role of Pamina ("Die Zauberflöte"), Mrs. Gobineau ("The Medium"), Cleopatra ("Giulio Cesare") and more. Shira performed with leading Israeli orchestras, including Tel Aviv Soloists, **Jerusalem Baroque Orchestra, The Barocadde Ensemble**, and Phoenix Ensemble, under conductors including Barak Tal, David Shemer, and Yi-An Xu. Shira is also a frequent guest in the recital concert series of pianist and conductor Gil Shohat.

Shira studied in Tel Aviv University and recently graduated from **Conservatorium van Amsterdam with Masters cum Laude** in early music voice. She has participated in masterclasses of Margreet Honig, Chen Reiss, Damme Emma Kirkby, Sir John Eliot Gardiner, Anders J. Dahlin, **Claron McFadden, Jed Wenz, Brita Schwarz**, Antonella Ginaze, and Jill Feldman. Shira is a scholarship recipient of the Buchmann-Mehta Excellence Scholarship (2018-2020), and the America-Israel Cultural Foundation scholarship (2020-2022) and was the second prize winner of the BMSM competition in 2019.

Bavarian Mezzo-Soprano **Anna Bachleitner** is specialized in Early Music and, as Südbadische Zeitung writes: “a highly flexible voice artist and richly equipped with nuanced colors of sound and expression.” Anna is currently part of the “**Young Bach Fellow**” **program of the Nederlandse Bachvereniging**. In summer 2021 she performed as “Melissa” in ‘La liberazione di Ruggiero’ by F.Caccini during the **Brighton Early Music Festival** (UK) and was selected for the Confidencen Opera & Music Festival Academy (SE), where she was part of the new production ‘Hail! Bright Cecilia!’ and Charpentier’s opera “Les Arts Florissant”. Anna is currently a member of the LaCetra Barockorchester & Vokalensemble in Basel (CH). In 2022 she performed as “Donau” in BWV 206 under the direction of Guy van Waas with the Sweelinck Baroque Orchestra at venues such as the Muziekgebouw aan 't IJ. Anna studied with Evelyn Tubb and Gerd Türk at the **Schola Cantorum Basiliensis in Basel** (CH) and the **Conservatorium van Amsterdam** with Xenia Meijer. She worked with Anthony Rooley, Vaclav Luks, Andrea Marcon, Leonardo Garcia Alarcon, Bruce Dickey, Frithjof Smith, Jörg-Andreas Bötticher, and others. She regularly performs in Germany, Switzerland, Austria, Italy, and The Netherlands.

