

The 47th annual production

DIRECTED BY PATRICK SWANSON / MEGAN HENDERSON, MUSIC DIRECTOR

A Venetian Celebration of the Winter Solstice

DECEMBER 8-27, 2017

18 performances: matinees and evenings

| *Harvard University, Cambridge, MA* |

*Sanders
Theatre*

The Christmas Revels

Infrared listening devices and large print programs are available at the Sanders Theatre Box Office.

Please visit our lobby table for Revels recordings, books, cards and more. Our new CD, *Tutta Bella! A Venetian Christmas Revels*, features much of the music from today's performance.

with

David Coffin
Coro San Marco
The Revels Ragazzi
Concerto Incognito
Commedia Buffo
Serenissima Dancers
The Pinewoods Morris Men
Cambridge Symphonic Brass Ensemble

Lynda A. Johnson, *Production Manager*
Jeremy Barnett, *Set Design*
Jeff Adelberg, *Lighting Design*
Heidi Hermiller, *Costume Design*
Bill Winn, *Sound Design*
Kelli Edwards, *Choreography*

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PAPER



Introduction

Welcome to the 47th annual *Christmas Revels*!

At the height of the Renaissance, Venice is at the crossroads of the world. In its bustling piazzas, merchants from the East are rubbing shoulders with artists from the West. Traders and bankers do business under the watchful eye of the Doge, the shrewd elder of the city-state. Fine art and coarse entertainment compete for attention and in this whirlpool of activity, Venice is giving birth to some of the most beautiful music the old world has ever heard.

But pressure is mounting. Right now, as the seasonal Feast of the Seven Fishes approaches, the Doge is being asked to decide everything from urgent matters of state to the best poem, from legal opinions to his preferred spaghetti sauce. His magistrate is ambitious. Politicians and lobbyists are jostling for influence. The Doge urgently needs a little personal time for reflection. If only there were a Renaissance superpower that would allow him to broaden his horizons and get a different perspective on his beloved city!

And lo! Unbeknownst to the Doge, Fate is slyly introducing a troupe of down-at-the-heel actors fresh from their unsuccessful tour of Europe. Will all these destinies entwine? Stranger things have happened in the serene republic of Venice!



Paddy Swanson,
Artistic Director



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Stars in the sky announce a new birth,
This shortest day of the year.
Let shepherds sound their joy so that all the world may hear.



1. CANZONA PER SONARE TWO Giovanni Gabrieli (1557–1612)

Cambridge Symphonic Brass Ensemble

One of the most famous composers of his time, Gabrieli is best known for the multi-choir ceremonial brass and sacred choral works that continue to fill the great Cathedral of San Marco and churches around the world. After traveling in Europe, he returned to his birthplace of Venice in 1584 and held the post of organist at San Marco until his death.

2. LA ME NÒNA L'È VECCHIERÈLLA Trentino Folk Song

The Revels Ragazzi

The playful words of this song can be translated as: “My granny is a little old lady. She sends me to the fountain to get water for supper. She says goodbye!”

3. CAPONA/CANARIO Giovanni Girolamo Kapsberger (1580–1651)

Nathaniel Cox, *theorbo* • Simon Martyn-Ellis, *Baroque guitar* • Fabio Pirozzolo, *djembe*

Prolific composer of Baroque pieces for lute and theorbo, Kapsberger was of Italian/Austrian heritage. He helped popularize plucked instruments in Europe and composed music for instrumental dance ensembles and the stage.

4. QUANNO NASCETTE NINNO Sant'Alfonso Maria De Liguori (1696–1787)

Daniel Meyers, *zampogna* • Fabio Pirozzolo, *frame drum* • The Revels Chorus
Megan Henderson, *choral arrangement*

“The Christmas mass in the Campania region almost always starts with a group of *zampogna* and *ciaramella* players, dressed as shepherds, entering the church playing this carol,” Daniel Meyers remarks.

All Sing Third Verse!

Out on a hill so dark, the shepherd's pipe so clear,
proclaiming joy that swells to the stars as they appear.
Stars in the heavens so far from the earth,

5. TOCCATA Claudio Monteverdi (1567–1643)

Cambridge Symphonic Brass Ensemble

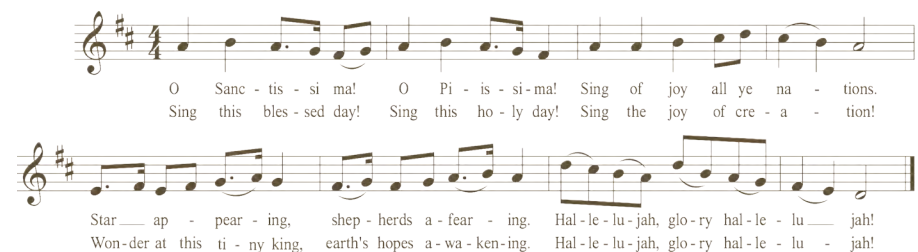
This is the opening toccata from the beloved and still widely performed opera, *L'Orfeo* (1607), which is based on a Greek myth in which Orpheus valiantly attempts to rescue his wife from the dead.

6. O SANCTISSIMA Traditional Sicilian Hymn

Cambridge Symphonic Brass Ensemble • The Revels Ragazzi
Coro San Marco • Patrick Swanson, *text* • George Emlen, *choral arrangement*
Megan Henderson, *brass arrangement*

This prayer for protection is also known as the “Sicilian Mariners Hymn.”

All Sing!



7. DAMIGELLA TUTTA BELLA Claudio Monteverdi (1567–1643)

Sophie Michaux, *mezzo soprano* • Gideon Crevoshay, *tenor* • Lysander Jaffe, *violin*
Daniel Meyers, *recorder* • Simon Martyn-Ellis, *baroque guitar* • Nathaniel Cox, *theorbo*
Fabio Pirozzolo, *bodhran & tambourine* • Coro San Marco

The soprano sings: “Beautiful damsel, pour that sweet wine, make fall the dew distilled from the rubies.”

8. PIRU PIRU Italian Folk Song

David Coffin, *tenor gemshorn* • The Revels Ragazzi

A pastoral song about a shepherd playing his pipes and a farm girl from the mountain who carries a basket full of chestnuts.

9. RÍU RÍU CHÍU Mateo Flecha (1481–1553)

David Coffin, Daniel Meyers, Mae Fuchs, Benjamin Horsburgh, *soloists*
Concerto Incognito • Coro San Marco

The Catalan composer Flecha is best known for his musical *ensalada* (salads): works for four or five voices written in multiple languages to entertain palace courtiers. The nonsense syllables *ríu ríu chíu* may represent the song of a nightingale or a predatory kingfisher.

10. CHJAMA À GABRIELLU G. Gistucci/Tavagna & Malcolm Bothwell

Lysander Jaffe, Gideon Crevoshay, Sophie Michaux, *voice*

This unique Corsican style of polyphony has been passed on through generations of oral tradition. The words translate as: “If God is called upon, may he send the messenger Gabriel....”

11. ÜSKÜDAR’A GIDER IKEN Traditional Turkish Song

Lysander Jaffe, *violin & voice* • Sophie Michaux & Gideon Crevoshay, *voice*
Simon Martyn-Ellis, *plectra lute* • Nathaniel Cox, *cornetto* • Daniel Meyers, *riqq*
Fabio Pirozzolo, *doumbek* • Coro San Marco

This melody has been adopted by so many cultures that the origin is nearly impossible to trace. Here we cover three versions with wildly different meanings. Verse one (Turkish) speaks of taking a trip with a beloved scribe. Verse two (Ladino), the traditional Sephardic variation, includes a mishmash of languages and tells of a beautiful girl with dark eyes. “Like the moon was her face, illuminating the boulevard...” Verse three (Arabic) sings of spiritual ecstasy.

12. GIRO GIRO TONDO Italian Children’s Song

The Revels Ragazzi

A playful circle game, this version of a popular children’s song and dance resembles the American *Ring Around the Rosy*.

13. LA BEFANA/MADAMA DORÈ

The Revels Ragazzi

La Befana, a female Santa Claus figure, is beautifully powdered and shod in shoes of chocolate. *Madama Dorè* is an Italian circle game that tells the story of the royal esquire’s request that Madama Dorè give up one of her many beautiful daughters for marriage to the King of Spain.

14. SÌ DOLCE È’L TORMENTO Claudio Monteverdi (1567–1643)

Gideon Crevoshay, *tenor* • Fabio Pirozzolo, *frame drum*
Simon Martyn-Ellis, *theorbo* • Nathaniel Cox, *cornetto* • Coro San Marco

The timeless story of unrequited love is told in this simple, melodic madrigal with a rich harmony supporting the tune and text.

15. SONATA SOPRA LA BERGAMASCA Salamone Rossi (1570–1630)

Daniel Meyers, *recorder* • Nathaniel Cox, *cornetto* • Simon Martyn-Ellis, *theorbo*

Rossi was a Jewish composer whose talent was so highly regarded that he was not required to wear the yellow badge that identified other Jews in the Mantua ghetto. Our stately dance reflects the spatial patterning of Renaissance styles.

16. QUEL SGUARDO SDEGNOSETTO Claudio Monteverdi/text Anonymous

Sophie Michaux, *mezzo soprano* • Simon Martyn-Ellis, *baroque guitar*
Nathaniel Cox, *theorbo*

This 17th century virtuosic madrigal features some very modern-sounding twists and turns and includes these lyrics: “That haughty little glance, bright and menacing....”

17. SEMPRE ME RIDE STA Adrian Willaert (1490–1562)

Coro San Marco

Founder of the Venetian School and *maestro di cappella* at San Marco, Willaert brought northern polyphonic styles from his native Netherlands. Here the chorus sings: “This lady always makes fun of me when we pass in the street.... Ha ha ha!”

18. CAPRICCIATA E CONTRAPUNTO BESTIALE ALLA MENTE Adriano Banchieri (1568–1634)

Coro San Marco

A Benedictine monk, Banchieri was a true Renaissance man whose interests ranged from music theory, literature, linguistics and architecture. He composed both sacred hymns and witty Madrigal Comedies like this one for the secular masses.

19. AVE MARIA Jacob Arcadelt (1507–1568)/Arr. Russell Robinson

Coro San Marco Donne

As a young man, Arcadelt moved to Florence from his Franco-Flemish birthplace (now Belgium) to study with Philippe Verdelot, a master of the Renaissance madrigal form. Decades later, Arcadelt's admirer Albert Einstein wrote: "Here is attained the ideal of what the time expected of the *dolcezza* (sweetness) and the *suavità* (suaveness) of music."

20. MORRIS DANCE

The Pinewoods Morris Men • Daniel Meyers, *pipe & tabor*

This stick dance hails from the village of Upton on Severn in the Cotswold area of England.

21. LORD OF THE DANCE

David Coffin, *solo* • The Pinewoods Morris Men • The Company

"Simple Gifts" is the Shaker tune that Sydney Carter used to set these modern lyrics. It has been translated into dance using a compilation of traditional English Morris steps by Carol Langstaff, Martin Graetz and Jonathan Morse.

All Sing!

Dance, then, wherever you may be;
I am the Lord of the dance, said he,
And I'll lead you all wherever you may be,
And I'll lead you all in the dance said he.

Win a Glorious
Trip to Rome, Florence
and Venice!

Return your raffle ticket with
payment to our volunteers in
red aprons. **Thank you for
supporting Revels!**

Intervallo

There will be no teaching before Part 2, so please
return to your seats promptly.



part two

22. LIBERA ME DOMINE Traditional Sardinian

Gideon Crevoshay, *soloist* • Coro San Marco

Gideon learned this song from the singing of the *Concordu e Tenore de Orosei* and taught it to us. The timbre of Sardinian singing is characterized by a very forward and "buzzy" sound. This is sung in a Sardinian dialect: "Deliver me, O Lord, from death on that fearful day..."

23. ABBOTS BROMLEY HORN DANCE

The Pinewood Morris Men • Matthew Salgado, Jack Williams, *Boy Archers*

This ancient ritual dance for good luck in hunting the stag is still danced every year in the village of Abbots Bromley in England. Its supernumerary characters—the folk fool, the man-woman, the hobby horse and the boy archer—tie it to the mumming traditions of Christmas.

24. CINGARI SIMO Adrian Willaert (1490–1562)

Jamie Jaffe, *soloist* • Lakshmi Nayak, Gemma Smith Vondras, Milva McDonald, Corinne Boet-Whitaker, Haris Papamichael, *semi chorus* • Simon Martyn-Ellis, *plectra lute* Daniel Meyers, *ciaramella* • Fabio Pirozzolo, *bodhran & frame drum*

The lyrics, "We are gypsies come to play.... If we lose, we will pay a carlino. If you lose, you will pay for the wine" capture the essence of this piece.

25. ARIA DI FIRENZE Emilio de' Cavalieri (1550–1602)

Nathaniel Cox, *cornetto* • Simon Martyn-Ellis, *Baroque guitar*

Nathaniel Cox comments that this simple tune was well known in the first half of the 17th century. There is no surviving version for solo cornetto, so Nathaniel imagined what a virtuoso of the times might have improvised. Kelli Edwards' choreography builds through a series of four different dances with changing time signatures.

26. HO PERSO IL CAVALLINO A Choosing Game from Vicenza

The Revels Ragazzi

The words of this game translate as: "I have lost the little foal! What color clothes did it have? It had pink clothes. What color hair did it have? It had brown hair. What color eyes did it have? It had green eyes. What color shoes did it have? It had white shoes. What was its name? Its name was Tomi. I have found my little foal!"

27. LA BELLA FRANCESCHINA Anonymous

The Revels Ragazzi

Chorus sings: "There's the pretty Franceschina, that wanted a husband, and her father at the window, that hears what she says. Be silent Franceschina, said the father, I will give you a husband!"

28. MARIA Barbara Furtuna

Gideon Crevoshay, *lead vocal* • Lysander Jaffe & Jamie Jaffe, *vocals* • Daniel Meyers, *ocarina*
Simon Martyn-Ellis, *Baroque guitar* • Nathaniel Cox, *theorbo* • Fabio Pirozzolo, *frame drum*

The Corsican ensemble Barbara Furtuna created this beautiful piece that is based upon a traditional shepherd's song called *La Carpinese*. We thank them for generously sharing the arrangement with us. This poignant piece is about Mary realizing her son's tragic fate.

29. IL COPRIFUOCO Italian Curfew Song

The Revels Ragazzi

Translation from Italian: "Cover the fire. Good night!"

All Sing!



30. DONA NOBIS PACEM

The Company

Our traditional round for peace.

All Sing!



31. IL BALLERINO Giovanni Giacomo Gastoldi (1554–1609)

Concerto Incognito • Coro San Marco

"Play a dance for me. I want to dance with my love," sings the chorus.

32. TONNAROTI Calabrian Sea Chantey

David Coffin, *lead vocal* • Coro San Marco Uomini

An Alan Lomax Calabrian field recording was the source for this traditional tuna fishing song: "Heave, heave! Raise the net...."

All Sing!

U leva leva leva!

33. NEVIJSKA KOLEDA Croatian Christmas Blessing

Lysander Jaffe, *soloist* • Coro San Marco • Vido Bagur, *collector* • Josko Caleta, *arrangement*

"Three little birds flew out from a fine olive tree; the first carried grain and wheat to our fields, the second carried grapevines and olives to our vineyards, and the third carried health and joy to our village."

34. JÁCARAS Antonio de Santa Cruz (17th century)

Simon Martyn-Ellis, *Baroque guitar*

Jácaras are Spanish instrumental pieces, often used as an entr'acte of a theatrical performance or as a dance accompaniment.

35. MUMMERS' PLAY

Billy Meleady, *Arlecchino* • Mark Jaster, *Pantalone* • Noni Lewis, *Isabella*
Sabrina Selma Mandel, *Columbina* • Richard Snee, *Il Dottore* • Orion Longsword
The Pinewoods Morris Men • David Torrey, *drum* • Lauren Curtis, *Fool*
Sam North, Ewan Swanson, *hoop holders*

Our Mummers' ragù was cooked up by Patrick Swanson with *Commedia Del'Arte* characters in a traditional English Mummers' play structure. The sword dance *Il Bal do Sabre* (here danced by members by Orion Longsword and The Pinewoods Morris Men) comes from the Piedmont area of northwestern Italy. The linked-sword dance was not mentioned in print until the early 19th century although oral tradition places its origin several centuries earlier. Our presentation draws heavily on the version that is still performed in Bagnasco.

36. FRA GIOVANNI

Richard Snee

This is an excerpt from a letter written by Fra Giovanni Giocondo to his friend, Countess Allagia Aldobrandeschi on Christmas Eve, 1513.

37. AGNUS DEI Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (1525–1594)

Coro San Marco

“O Lamb of God....” Palestrina is one of the most beloved, prolific and innovative composers of the Renaissance. He is credited with the invention of fluid and consonant polyphony, which became the standard style of the late Renaissance and beyond.

38. THE SHORTEST DAY

David Coffin

This poem, written by Susan Cooper in 1977, has become a traditional part of *The Christmas Revels* performances in each of the nine Revels cities around the country.

All Shout!

WELCOME YULE!

39. THE SUSSEX MUMMERS' CAROL

The Company • Cambridge Symphonic Brass Ensemble

In all American cities where *The Christmas Revels* is performed annually, audiences join in at the conclusion of each performance. The brass arrangement is by Brian Holmes, with descant and third-verse harmonization by Ralph Vaughn Williams.

All Sing!

God bless the mas - ter of this house with
God bless the mis - tress of this house with
God bless your house, your chil - dren too, your

hap - pi - ness be - side; Where -
gold - chain 'round her breast; Where -
cat - tle and your store; The

e'er his bo - dy rides or walks, his God must be his
e'er her bo - dy sleeps or wakes, Lord send her soul to
Lord in - crease you day by day, and send you more and

guide, his God must be his guide.
rest, Lord send her soul to rest.
more, and send you more and more!



Master of Ceremonies
David Coffin

The Players
Michael Chase
Mark Jaster
Conor Latimer-Ireland
Noni Lewis
Sabrina Selma Mandell
Billy Meleady
John Recroft
Richard Snee

Coro San Marco
Nicolas Adami-Sampson
Mirena Bagur*
Corinne Boet-Whitaker*
Katherine Bryant
Michael Chase
Sam Colton
Mary Cunningham*
Kip Ferguson
Haley Fisher
Mae Fuchs*
James Gerke
Alexander Hall*
James Henderson*
Amy Horsburgh
Ben Horsburgh*
Jamie Jaffe
Heather Koerber Nunes*
Amelia Kikue Linsky
James Mailhot
Milva McDonald
Venice Mountain-Zona*
Lakshmi Nayak*
Jake Nunes*
Jennie O'Brien*
Margy O'Donnell
Haris Papamichael*
Jessica Raine
Melissa Robie*
Mayhew Seavey*
Daniel Sheldon
Gemma Smith Vondras*
David Story

Victoria Thatcher
David W Torrey*
Gerard Vogt

*Serenissima Dancers

The Revels Ragazzi

Aidan Buck
Carly Buck
Nora Dalton
Colette Helen Dasse
Cole Davis
Hannah Erickson
Anneliese Goldsmith
Lilah D. London
Gryffin Emrys Marks
Margot McLaughlin
Tomi Efan North
June Reddy
Matthew Salgado
Sharada Sundaram-Senders
Ruby Tricca
Jack Williamson

Concerto Incognito

David Coffin, *voice, recorder, gemshorn*
Nathaniel Cox, *cornetto, theorbo*
Gideon Crevoshay, *voice*
Lysander Jaffe, *voice, violin*
Simon Martyn-Ellis, *Baroque guitar, lute, theorbo*
Daniel Meyers, *voice, recorder, ciaramella, zampogna, ocarina, castanets*
Sophie Michaux, *voice*
Fabio Pirozzolo, *percussion*

Cambridge Symphonic Brass Ensemble

Abe Finch, *timpani & percussion*
Greg Hopkins, *trumpet*
Ken Pullig, *trumpet*
Kenneth Amis, *tuba*
Michael Weinstein, *horn*
Philip Swanson, *trombone*
Richard Hudson, *horn*
Tom Duprey, *trumpet*

The Pinewoods Morris Men

Jerry Carey
David Conant
Stephen Dyer
Michael Friedman
Fred Gerhard
Dan Groher
Peter Kruskal
Joe Kynoch
Chris O'Brien
Dave Overbeck
Sam Overbeck
Steve Roderick
Dan Rosen
Nathaniel Smith
Hamish Swanson

Orion Longsword

Emily Breck
Aidin Carey
Jan Elliot
Kristin Fleischman-Rose
Sue Jick
Erika Roderick
Gillian Stewart

Artistic Staff

Stage Director: Patrick Swanson
Music Director: Megan Henderson
Set Design: Jeremy C. Barnett
Costume Design: Heidi Hermiller
Lighting Design: Jeff Adelberg
Sound Design: Bill Winn
Choreographer: Kelli Edwards
Assistant to Stage Director:
Lydia Barnett-Mulligan
Assistant to Music Director:
Lakshmi Nayak
Program Notes: Patrick Swanson
and Megan Henderson
Script: Patrick Swanson and
David Parr

Production Team

Production Manager: Lynda A.
Johnson
Production Stage Manager:
L. Arkansas Light
Stage Manager and Props Coordinator:
Elizabeth Locke
Assistant Stage Manager:
Gillian Stewart
Technical Director/Master/Carpenter:
Andrew Barnett

Crew Chief: Andrew Hebert-Johnson
Master Electrician/Light Board
Operator: Nathaniel Jewett
Children's Stage Manager:
Lynda A. Johnson
Children's Dress Room Manager:
Mari Young
Backstage Manager: Susan Only
Assistant to the Production Manager:
Linda M Martin
Assistant Children's Stage Managers:
Grace Curtis, Hayden Latimer-Ireland
Assistant Children's Dressing Room
Manager: Brigid Horrigan
Dance Captain: Gillian Stewart
Production Assistants: Lauren Curtis,
Brigid Horrigan, Sarah Morrisette
Production Crew: Theo Bester,
Lauren Curtis, Alice Jacob, Skyler
Marks, Isabel Ros, Lola Williamson,
Kira Young, Emilia Van Dussen
Company Meals Manager:
Linda M. Martin
Revels Apprentice Program Wrangler:
Sarah Morrisette
Costume Production: Costume Works
Makeup: Lillian Gomes
Costume Manager: Lynn Jeffery
Wardrobe Manager: Michaela Beckman
Set Crew Members: Andrew Dorr,
Mike Ford, James Sills, Maxwell
Davenport, Joshua Robinson, Shawn
Scarlett
Scenic Charge Artist: Gina Smothers
Scenic Artist: Emily Rosenkrantz
Carpenter: Louis Scheonthal
ASL Interpreters: Katy Burns,
Joan Wattman
Raffle Manager: Cerredwyn Horrigan
Revels Volunteer Manager:
Jeanne Kelly
Revels Records Sales Coordinators:
John B. Newhall, Jennifer Sur
Design: Carol Lasky, Anya Vedmid,
Cahoots Design
Illustrator: Carmine Bellucci

Revels Apprentice Program (RAP)

Jasper Knabe
Maggie MacPhail
Sam North
Max Sheldon
Ewan Swanson

Volunteers

Rich Baker, Robin Baker, Pauline Barkalow, Tom Barkalow, Ann Barnes, Sue Barry, Jennifer Bester, Julia Bloom, Cassandra Boell, Nick Browse, Elizabeth Burke, Karen Burke, Harvey Cohen, Joanne Crowell, Karen Daniels, Amy Davis, Elena Davis, Lance Davis, Lynne Dichter, Will Erickson, Janet Erlick, Sheila Fair, Cathie Ghorbani, Emy Goldsmith, Greg Goldsmith, James Greaney, Carol Anne Grotrian, David Grotrian, Bonnie Hall, Corinna Hall, Ross Hall, Arthur Hardigg, Ruth Heespelink, Diane Holman, Brian Horrigan, Cerredwyn Horrigan, Ryan Jackson, Susan Jenkins, Jim Karg, Ed Keith, Glenn Ketterle, Karen Kosko, Carol Lasky, Diana Lees, Robert Lewando, Kelsey London, Diana Lopez, Leslie Lowe, Katharine MacPhail, Erik Marks, Susan Maycock, Jennifer McSweeney, Harper Mills, Yoshiko Mizukami, Laura Olivier, Linda Kilner Olivier, Luke Olivier, Tom Olivier, Sumeet Pareek, Beth Pendery, Jan Pope, Jim Pope, Bonnie Power, Julia Reedy, Christine Reynolds, Susie Rioff, Chris Ripman, Bettie Rose, Paula Rosenstock, Raymond Rosenstock, Karen Russo, Eileen Ryan, Meg Salgado, Michael Schuttenberg, Warren Senders, Larissa Snorek-Yates, Mia Snorek-Yates, Ishmael Stefanov-Wagner, Phyllis Stefanov-Wagner, Emma Stickgold, Meryl Stowbridge, Joyce Sullivan, Vijaya Sundaram, Laura Swanson, Mark Tricca, Simone Tricca, Nancy Twomey, Julia Vail, Emilia Van Dussen, Kiliana Van Dussen, Monika Van Dussen, Dawn Van Patten, Anya Vedmid, Natasha Vogt, David Walsh, Peter Weiler, Tom Yelton, Sally Zimmerman and all the volunteers who make *The Christmas Revels* happen!

ALL HANDS ON DECK!

IT TAKES A VILLAGE (OF VOLUNTEERS)
TO RAISE A REVELS. WE'RE LOOKING
FOR NEW VILLAGERS!

REVELS[®]

Contact Jeanne at
JKelly@Revels.org or visit
Revels.org/Volunteer

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GRAND PRIZE: Feel the pulse of Italy's vibrant culture on a trip for two through Venice, Florence, and Rome. The people, the food, the way of life—you'll discover what Italy is all about as you make your way from one iconic city to the next with an expert Tour Director in the lead. This nine-day vacation includes round-trip airfare, seven nights in handpicked hotels, private motor coach transportation, your choice of tour dates, and more.*

HOW TO ENTER: Fill out the enclosed ticket stub with your full name and email address. Return the stub with your payment to one of our Red Apron Volunteers or to a staff member at the table in the lobby. Each raffle ticket is \$10, and you can enter as many times as you wish! All proceeds benefit Revels, a 501c3 charitable organization.

Drawing will be held January 8, 2018 and the winner will be notified via email. The prize package's retail value is estimated at \$7,258.

*The prize includes the base tour and airfare from Boston only, valued at \$7,258. Insurance, extensions, and excursions are not included but are available for purchase. Tour must depart before December 31, 2018. Must reserve by March 31, 2018.

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Featured artists



PATRICK SWANSON **Artistic Director** began his career in London as an actor at the Arts Theatre in the West End. In 1969, he toured Europe with La MaMa Plexus and subsequently got his world theater education from Ellen Stewart at La MaMa E.T.C. in New York. His numerous directing projects include opera, ensemble, music theater and circus. He was a founding stage director of Circus Flora. Paddy taught acting and improvisation at the London Academy of Dramatic Art (LAMDA), the London Drama Centre and New York University. He served as artistic director of the Castle Hill Festival at Castle Hill in Ipswich, MA, directing and co-producing opera and theater works, including the premiere of Julie Taymor's *Liberty's Taken* and Peter Sellars' *Così fan Tutte*. Amongst numerous directing projects in Europe and the U.S., his production of Shakespeare's *King Lear* with Alvin Epstein for Actors' Shakespeare Project was nominated for three 2006 Elliot Norton awards. His most recent A.S.P. production was *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with Paula Plum and Steve Barkhimer. For Revels, Paddy has directed a contemporary version of the medieval mystery plays and *The Mysteries* by Tony Harrison, co-produced by Revels and Shakespeare & Company, and Britten's opera *Noye's Fludde*. He writes and directs all Cambridge Revels scripts and serves as consultant to the nine Revels production companies around the country.



MEGAN HENDERSON **Music Director** has lived in the Boston area since coming to the Walnut Hill School in 1976 from Altoona, PA. She graduated from the New England Conservatory with a degree in Piano Performance and is an active collaborative pianist and piano teacher. As a pianist, she has appeared on the Winsor Music Chamber Series and Music on Norway Pond. She has sung with the Early Music ensemble *Schola Cantorum* of Boston since its founding in 1982 and has appeared on many recordings with the Boston Camerata as a singer and keyboard player. Megan's passion for shape note and world folk music was ignited in her first session as a co-leader with Village Harmony Summer Camp over 25 years ago. She recently toured the UK and Europe as a singer with Northern Harmony, a semi-professional ensemble made up of Village Harmony alumni and leaders. She first performed with Revels as a pianist in the production of *Noye's Fludde* and was the pianist in the 2014 Victorian *Christmas Revels* production. She is currently the organist and choir director at Payson Park Church in Belmont.



DAVID COFFIN **Songleader & Musician** has performed every year with Revels since 1980. Widely known for his rich baritone voice, David performs on an impressive array of musical instruments, including concertinas, recorders, penny-whistles, bombards, gemshorns, cornamuse, shawm, rauschpfeife—or, as he explains, “generally anything that requires a lot of hot air.” At the heart of David's work is his extensive collection of songs from the maritime tradition. During the school year, David performs his highly acclaimed School Enrichment Programs throughout New England as a Revels Artist-in-Residence. In the summer months he can be found on a boat taking over 8,000 underserved children to George's and Spectacle Islands in Boston Harbor. He is also the Director of Narration for Boston Harbor Cruises, leading tours and hiring/training all the narrators.



NATHANIEL COX **Cornettist & Lutenist** began his music career as a trumpet player, earning degrees in trumpet performance and Russian literature from Oberlin College and Conservatory in 2008. After a brief period of Baroque trumpet playing (winning the historical category at the National Trumpet Competition in 2007), Nathaniel was awarded a Fulbright Scholarship to study cornetto with Bruce Dickey at the *Schola Cantorum* in Basel, Switzerland, earning a Masters' Degree in 2014. He started playing theorbo in 2011, and after six months had his first performance playing Monteverdi's “L'incoronazione di Poppea” with the Kammeroper Schloss Rheinsberg. In 2012 he and soprano Agnes Coakley founded the ensemble *In Stile Moderno*, a group dedicated to performing rarely heard works from the 17th century. Since moving back to the US in 2014, Nathaniel has performed with some of North America's leading Early Music ensembles, including Apollo's Fire, The Toronto Consort, Ensemble Caprice and the Dark Horse Consort. Now based in Boston, he is a regular member of several groups, including Rumbarroco, a Latin-Baroque fusion ensemble.



GIDEON CREVOSHAY **Singer** hails from the hills of the Northeast Kingdom of Vermont. He uses the human voice to explore the countless dimensions of sound, language and improvisation. Gideon studies traditional and ancient forms of singing from around the world, including the US, Caucasus and Mediterranean, finding inspiration in the wisdom contained within these traditions and how they can inform present ideas of music-making and community. He performs, records and tours extensively with many projects including Tenores de Aterúe, Trident Ensemble, Resonanda, OKAPIS, Starry Mountain Singers and Trio and Briars of North America. Music has taken him to many parts of the world and to many stages. Gideon has also worked with Found Sound Nation's project, OneBeat, since its inception in 2012, having co-led projects in the US, Turkey and Russia. He also teaches polyphonic singing with the World Music organization, Village Harmony. Gideon is thrilled to be joining the Revels for this year's production.



LYSANDER JAFFE Violinist, Violist & Vocalist has enjoyed an eclectic freelance career, performing in such venues as the Kennedy Center, Boston Center for the Arts, Queen's College Chapel (Cambridge), and the Museum of Jurassic Technology in Los Angeles. A 2014 graduate of Williams College, he is a passionate student of traditional music who has studied with master musicians in Bulgaria, Kosovo, Greece, Corsica and the Republic of Georgia. Lysander has been on faculty for Village Harmony since 2013 and has toured Europe several times with its professional touring ensemble Northern Harmony. His current projects include Balkan Mind Meld, the vocal trio Culomba and Palaver Strings, a musician-led string ensemble

and nonprofit. A Boston native, he is thrilled to be joining Revels for the first time this year.



MARK JASTER Actor performed with *The Christmas Revels* as the Ghost of the Duke of Rutland (2010), *The Moon Fool* (2011) and the saw-playing Bertie and ugly stepsister (2014). He has also appeared in numerous productions of the Washington Revels in Christmas and Mayday shows. Performances elsewhere include over 30 years at The Maryland Renaissance Festival as "A Fool Named 'O'" and 20 years as "Dr. Baldy" with The Big Apple Circus' Clown Care Unit. Since 2006, Mark has co-directed Happenstance Theater with Sabrina Mandell, devising and appearing in critically acclaimed, collaborative and original works of "Visual, Poetic Theater." The company has garnered five Helen Hayes Awards,

including Mark's 2016 Robert Prosky Award for Outstanding Lead Actor. Mark studied with 20th-century masters Marcel Marceau and Etienne Decroux and frequently teaches mime and physical comedy and advises theatre companies on movement. happenstancetheater.com



NONI LEWIS Actor has spent many years as a stage and screen performer and more recently has enjoyed voice acting from her home studio. Since relocating from Wales to Boston, she has appeared in *Molly Sweeney*, *Al in The Timing* and *God of Carnage* for Newton Nomadic Theater and, in 2015 and 2016, *The Christmas Revels*. She is delighted to be back once again, appearing with her youngest son in the children's chorus! Noni's previous credits include *Wallace and Gromit: Curse of the Were-Rabbit* (Aardman Animations/Dreamworks), poetry readings, plays and audiobooks for BBC Radio Four, *Macbeth* and *Twelfth Night* (Orange Tree Theatre, London) and *Odysseus's Journey* (Bristol Old Vic). Noni has also

appeared as Tessa in the Welsh language soap opera *Pobol y Cwm* and can be heard on radio and television commercials across the U.K. and internationally on websites, phone messages, apps, video games, audio trails, in museums and even lifts (elevators to you!) through her work at welshvoiceover.co.uk.



SABRINA SELMA MANDELL Actor first performed in the 40th anniversary show in 2010. She returned to play Étoile, the Star Fool in 2011, and then appeared as an English vaudevillian and ugly stepsister in 2014. Sabrina is the founder and Artistic Co-director of Happenstance Theater (happenstancetheater.com), for whom she has written, produced and performed prolifically since the company's founding in 2006. Recent productions include *BrouHaHa*, *Bon Voyage! A Happenstance Escapade*, *Moxie: A Happenstance Vaudeville*, *Cabaret Noir*, and *Impossible! A Happenstance Circus*. Sabrina has won two Helen Hayes Awards for Outstanding Costume Design. She performed for 10 years with

the Big Apple Circus' Clown Care Unit in DC and Baltimore, and as LaLa, partner to *A Fool Named "O"* at the Maryland Renaissance Festival. She is also a visual artist, teaching artist and poet. She proudly hails from Nova Scotia.



SIMON MARTYN-ELLIS Lutenist is particularly interested in vocal collaborations in opera, intimate recitals, Baroque guitar repertoire and (the groove of) Early Music. He has a great time making music with people. After undergraduate studies in his Australian homeland, Simon moved to Germany in 2002 to complete post-graduate study with Rolf Lislevand at the *Trossingen Hochschule für Musik*. Simon has played frequently throughout Europe and the U.S. in leading performance venues and theaters with the *Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin*, *Concerto Köln*, *Salzburger Landestheater*, *Neue Düsseldorfer Hofkapelle*, *Freiburger Barockorchester* and other chamber music performances. Now based in the US, Simon is a

founding member with ACRONYM and *Duo Corbetta* and has appeared as soloist and continuo with Apollo's Fire and Clarion Society NYC, at the Oregon Bach Festival and with Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, Handel & Haydn Society, Bach Collegium of San Diego, Opera Columbus and Helicon in New York City. He is teacher of lute and related instruments at the Cleveland Institute of Music.



BILLY MELEADY Actor is delighted to be returning to Revels once again. Most recently he appeared in *God Of Carnage* with Newton Nomadic Theatre. Other recent productions with Newton Nomadic include *All in the Timing* (actor/co-director), *Doubt* (director), *Someone Who'll Watch Over Me* (director). He has been a regular performer in Boston theatre for 30 years and has been honored to receive Elliot Norton and IRNE awards/nominations for his work with The Sùgàn Theatre Co, New Repertory Theatre, Boston Playwrights Theatre and TirNa Theatre. He is married to novelist Nicole Galland.



DANIEL MEYERS **Musician (Zampogna, Ocarina, Recorder, Shawm, Castanets) & Vocalist** has performed in four prior Revels productions and met his wife on the Revels stage. A versatile multi-instrumentalist, his credits range from premieres of avant-garde chamber music, to headlining a concert series in honor of Pete Seeger at the Newport Folk Festival, to playing Renaissance instruments on Broadway for the Globe Shakespeare Company. Locally, he is a founding member of the Early Music/folk crossover group Seven Times Salt as well as the Seven Hills Renaissance Wind Band; he performs frequently with both ensembles in the Boston area. In recent seasons he has been a guest artist with The Folger Consort (Washington DC), The Newberry Consort (Chicago), Early Music New York, La Follia Baroque (Austin TX) and the Chautauqua Institution. He is the director of early wind and brass studies for the Five Colleges Early Music Program and has taught recorder and Renaissance winds for the Early Music Week at Pinewoods and at Tufts University. He also performs southern Italian folk music with the IMA-Award-winning band Newpoli and traditional Irish music with the trio Ulster Landing.



SOPHIE MICHAUX **Vocalist** was born in London and raised in the French Alps. She is recognized as a particularly versatile singer, performing as a soloist in a wide variety of genres from opera to Early Music, French cabaret to other world traditional music. Critics have lauded her “warm and colorful mezzo” (*Opera News*) and her voice as “a study in color...Michaux’s expressive quality and variety is remarkable” (*Arts Impulse*). Recent engagements include her Boston Early Music Festival debut in *Versailles: Portrait of a Royal Domain* and her Carnegie Hall Debut with the *Lorelei Ensemble*, Boston’s groundbreaking 9-voice women’s vocal ensemble. Sophie was nominated as *Best Female Performer in an Opera* for the 2015

Arts Impulse Theatre Awards for her interpretation of the title role in Handel’s *Rinaldo* (Boston Opera Collaborative). She is thrilled to be joining Revels for the first time this year. sophiemichaux.com



FABIO PIROZZOLO **Percussionist** is a drummer and multi-percussionist from Terracina, Italy. He began his career as a folk percussionist, playing the Italian frame drums *tamburello* and *tammorra* with a famed folk group that toured Europe, playing concerts and giving lectures on regional Italian frame drum techniques. A *summa cum laude* graduate of Berklee College of Music, Fabio performs in virtually any genre of music from jazz to World Music to rock. He is the co-founder of the World Music ensemble Grand Fatilla and Italian folk music ensemble Newpoli. He has played with Herb Reed’s Platters, Mario Frangoulis, George Perris, Jon Butcher and Petroloukas Halkias, among other world-class

performers. He has taught master classes at Berklee, Harvard and Tufts University and has accompanied dance performances at Emerson College and Boston Conservatory. Fabio is the author of the drum transcriptions for

Skip Hadden’s *Profiles in Jazz Drumming* and *Broken Eight’s Time Feel*. In 2014 he completed his master’s degree in ethnomusicology at Tufts University with a thesis titled “Central and Southern Italian Tambourines: Between Tradition and Innovation,” the first-ever scholarly work in the English language entirely focused on *tamburello* and *tammorra*. In 2015, Fabio won the highly competitive Iguana Music Fund Award and will be involved with the production of a DVD entirely dedicated to the art of playing central and southern Italian tambourines.



RICHARD SNEE **Actor** has been a staple of the Boston theater scene for decades. He is a founding member of Actors’ Shakespeare Project, performing in *As You Like It*, *The Cherry Orchard*, *Macbeth*, *Richard III*, *The Winter’s Tale*, *The Tempest*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Antony & Cleopatra*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor* and more. He was in American Repertory Theatre’s *Othello* and Commonwealth Shakespeare Company’s *Taming of the Shrew*. He has also performed at The Merrimack Repertory Theatre (*Something in the Air*; *Boy Gets Girl*; *Uncle Vanya*), The Huntington Theatre (*Present Laughter*; *The Sisters Rosensweig*). Recent work includes *Blithe Spirit* at Lyric Stage Company, *Hysteria* at The Nora Theatre,

Body Awareness at Speakeasy Stage Company and *Round and Round the Garden*, *Table Manners* and *Living Together* at Gloucester Stage Company. Richard was in GSC’s production of *Auld Lang Syne* this summer. Film credits include *Gone, Baby, Gone*, *The Company Men* and *Treading Water*. He has voiced characters for several animated television series including *Science Court*, *Hey, Monie!*, *Home Movies* and *Dr. Katz*. He and his wife, Paula Plum, starred in the animated FX series, *The Dick and Paula Celebrity Special*. She was “Paula.” He was “The Dick.”



JEFF ADELBERG **Lighting Designer** has designed over 250 productions, including eight *Christmas Revels* at Sanders Theatre. Recent work: *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, *Hand to God*, *Dogfight* (Speakeasy Stage Co.), *Man of La Mancha* (New Repertory Theatre), *Edward II* (Elliot Norton Award for Outstanding Design), *God’s Ear* (Actors’ Shakespeare Project), *She Loves Me*, *Altar Boyz*, *Mame* (Stoneham Theatre), *Constellations*, *When January Feels Like Summer* and *mr G* (Underground Railway Theatre), *Finish Line* (Boston Theatre Co.), *Rhinoceros* (Playwrights’ Theatre), *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *Arcadia* and *The Children’s Hour* (The Gamm Theatre), *Beckett Women: Ceremonies of Departure* (Poets’

Theatre at Farkas Hall and MAC Belfast, Northern Ireland). Jeff attended the University of Connecticut and teaches at Boston College, MIT and Brandeis University. He is a member of United Scenic Artists 829. jeffadelberg.com



JEREMY BARNETT **Set Designer** is a Detroit-based scenic designer and professor of theatre at Oakland University in Southeast Michigan. Boston credits include work for Opera Boston, Boston Midsummer Opera, The Opera Institute at Boston University, Mssng Lnks Inc., Gloucester Stage Company and the Stoneham Theatre Company. Jeremy has assisted designers on productions at The Lyric Opera of Chicago, The New York Philharmonic, The Pasadena Playhouse, Pittsburgh Public Theatre, Arena Stage, The Shakespeare Theatre in Washington DC, Philadelphia Theatre Company and Huntington Theatre Company. He holds an MFA in Scenic Design from Boston University and a BFA from Carnegie Mellon University and he has studied fine art in Ukraine, Italy and Zimbabwe. Jeremy co-founded Amarant Design Collective, an installation art organization that produces site-specific work in re-purposed spaces in and around Detroit.



KELLI EDWARDS **Choreographer** is a Boston-area dancer, choreographer and teacher of adult and teen dancers. Professional theatre credits as choreographer or movement consultant include *A Confederacy of Dunces*, *Come Back, Little Sheba*, *The Second Girl*, *Becoming Cuba*, *The Cherry Orchard* and *How Shakespeare Won the West* (Huntington Theatre Company); *Fiddler on the Roof*, *The Hot Mikado* (IRNE Award for Best Choreography), *The Snow Queen*, *The Wild Party*, *Cabaret*, *Ragtime*, *The Threepenny Opera*, *Passing Strange*, and *RENT* (The New Repertory Theatre). Other Boston area theatre credits in choreography are with the American Repertory Theatre, Actor's Shakespeare Project, Stoneham Theatre

(*The Secret Garden*, *Gypsy*, *Lumberjacks in Love*), *Whistler in the Dark*, and Brandeis Theatre Company (*Cabaret*). Kelli is the co-director of and performs with *Dances by Isadora Boston*, a company dedicated to the work of one of the founders of American modern dance, Isadora Duncan. Kelli is on the performing arts faculty of Milton Academy, where she heads the dance program and has choreographed countless dances and directed productions, including *Spelling Bee*, *City of Angels* and *Hairspray*.



HEIDI HERMILLER **Costume Designer** has designed the costumes for *The Christmas Revels* for the past 22 years. She says it's always exciting to be a creative part of the journey envisioned by director Paddy Swanson. Be it 20th-century shipboard Christmas revelers leaving Ireland or a 1000-year span of ghosts emerging from the woodwork of an English castle, she outfits the cast with costumes, crowns, capes, feathers, hobnail boots, duck heads and dancing frogs. She loves to find out just what kind of dragon we will have in Renaissance Venice—and what kind of secret inside pocket David Coffin will need for his curious instruments. Heidi is particularly grateful to producer Lynda Johnson for making the process as smooth as possible despite the average of 113 costumes in a show. Just across Harvard Yard, Heidi

also designs the Harvard Hasty Pudding Show and finds that there is a surprising amount of crossover with Revels. A man/woman character appears in both productions but for the Pudding, Heidi just makes the skirts much, much shorter.



BILL WINN **Sound Engineer** has toured all over the world working with many of music's top acts such as Whitney Houston, Herbie Hancock and Joni Mitchell. He has designed and implemented sound for the *DC Jazz Festival*, 2004–2014; *Barbara Streisand Live at Shrine Auditorium*, 2000 DNC and *Thelonious Monk Jazz Competition*, 1987 to the present. His television-broadcast sound and mixing work has included the 2017 Emmy Award-nominated *Front Row Boston* (WGBH featuring Sean Lennon and Les Claypool), *The United Nation's International Jazz Day at the White House* (ABC, 2016) and *White House Tribute to Thelonious Monk* (2008).

Bill has been working with Revels since the 1995. He met Revels founder Jack Langstaff and former music director George Emlen while working on several Revels recordings with John Newton of Soundmirror. In 1999 Revels sound designer Berred Ouellette passed on the task of creating the Revels sound to Bill, who has been sitting at the board in orchestra row V every December since.



CARMINE BELLUCCI **Illustrator** is an Italian artist working and living in Padua. He attended the Istituto Europeo di Design (IED) in Milan and continued his studies in Type Design at Politecnico in Milan. In addition to his commissioned work a range of international clients, Carmine is involved in the underground visual subculture, founding the Interplay Art group and taking part in many local and national street art events. About his illustration for Revels, Carmine writes, "Working with the designers at Cahoots, I wanted to create a sparkling and festive atmosphere, an artwork where all the magic and beguiling attractions of Venice could merge in a harmonious celebration. The water sustains the whole composition as the Doge welcomes us to enter the most beautiful city in the world. There is history, masks, luxury, elegance and culture—but most of all there is togetherness, as everything and everyone celebrates life and parades along the bridges and *calli* of Venice, filling the air with laughter and carols."

There is history, masks, luxury, elegance and culture—but most of all there is togetherness, as everything and everyone celebrates life and parades along the bridges and *calli* of Venice, filling the air with laughter and carols."

THANK YOU! We extend a heartfelt thanks to many folks. The Dante Alighieri Society of Massachusetts generously hosted our November Salon. Mirena Bagur alerted us to the Croatian/Venetian connection and provided help with music, pronunciation and translations. We thank our Revels colleagues David Parr and Bruce Hostetler for previous iterations of this Venetian-themed script and George Emlen for his ongoing support and adept musical ear. Thanks to Russell Robinson and Barbara Furtuna for their gorgeous arrangements. Thanks to Ruth Heespelink for donating prop materials and Chris Ripman for his help with the props, to Fabio Pirozzolo and Amelia Linsky for Italian coaching and translations, Judy Erickson for restaging the Bal do Sabre, David Torrey for his percussion. Nilah McDonald and Clark Topper always prepare the perfect ornament to match each show. Thanks to James Gerke for introducing us to Fabio and to Jim Henderson for providing beautifully legible scores. Last but not least, Susie Rioff has been a warm and gracious host to many of our out-of-town performers, as has Rachael Solem of Harding House and The Irving House at Harvard.

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AL GOWAN had a long and distinguished career in the arts. A biographer, novelist and arts administrator, Al championed great design in the service of community. A regular at pub sings and Revels events, he wore his heart on his sleeve when it came to singing with friends. Joining the Revels Singers gave him great pleasure and gave us an articulate champion for the values that Revels seeks to foster.



At the heart of all theatrical experiences is the intersection of the past, present and future. In Susan Cooper's poem *The Shortest Day*, which has been included in every Revels performance around the country for the past 47 years, time is intentionally collapsed to help us experience the significance of the present moment: "Here, now, this year and every year. Welcome Yule!"

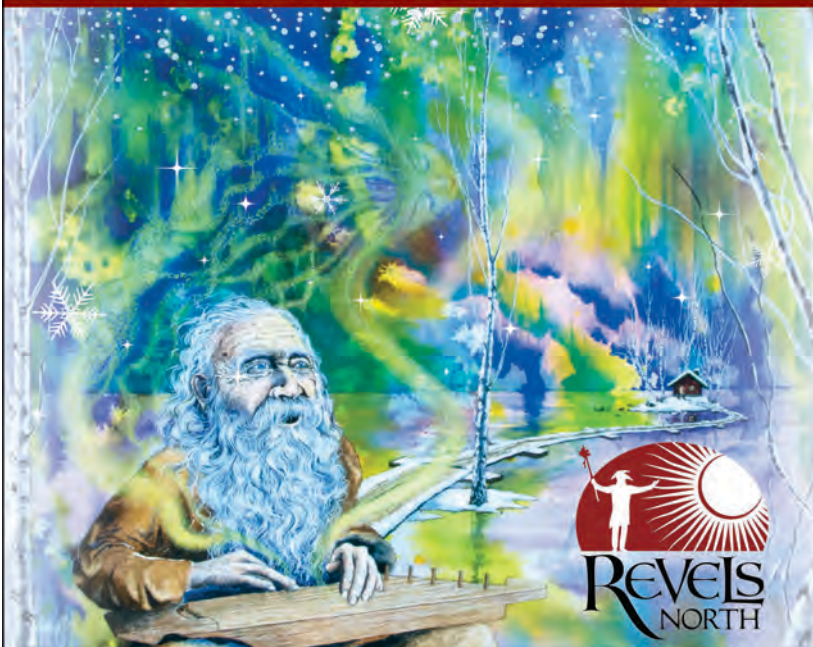
Needless to say, the moment is both deepened and illuminated by inviting all of our absent friends into the room.

Paddy Swanson

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The Christmas Revels is also presented in Tacoma, WA; Portland, OR; Oakland and Santa Barbara, CA; Boulder, CO; Houston, TX; Hanover, NH; and Washington, DC.

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Venice to Venice Beach

THE CURIOUS APPEAL OF SLAPSTICK



In 1968 I was an eager novice in the resident actor company of a small theatre in the West End of London. It was there that I first came across a peculiar stage direction embedded in the script handed out at the first reading of the seasonal Christmas Panto. The “Panto” is a popular annual event in Britain; the whole family goes to cheer the heroes and hiss the villains and have a jolly good time of it. I was looking forward to the experience. The script was straightforward for a while—dialogue, song, dialogue, dance number, scene change—and then came the laconic direction: “*Frontcloth Trad.*” It took a couple more rehearsals before I had to secretly confess to the stage manager that I didn’t know what “*Frontcloth Trad*” was. “Ah,” he said, “That would be ‘traditional business.’ The actors will be doing their ‘bits’ in front of the downstage traverse curtain (Frontcloth) to fill in while the upstage scenery is being changed for the big transformation scene. There’s no end of bits: the ladder bit, the plank bit, the sausage bit, *lazzi*—you know—slapstick.” And so they did. Remarkably, the older actors routined their

One move begat another, their timing was mysteriously synchronized and most important, they knew when the audience would laugh. It was as if they were speaking a secret language.

“bits” fluently. One move begat another, their timing was mysteriously synchronized and most important, they knew when the audience would laugh. It was as if they were speaking a secret language. (In fact some of them did speak a coded language used by actors and gays known as *Polari*, a mix of London rhyming slang, Romany, Backslang, Thieves’ Cant and Italian. This was a way of talking so people around you didn’t have a clue what you were talking about.)

If the laugh wasn't big enough, these old pros would fine tune the gesture or the timing. I remember one of them pulling me aside after a tepid audience response to one of my routines that I thought

They did not work from scripts but rather from scenarios that were rudimentary plots that they pinned to the back of their crude stage to guide the action.

was pretty funny. "Don't move after the slap," he said, "and don't change your expression. Count to three and then look at the audience." I followed his direction the following night and amazingly the laugh came just as he said it

would. This was "Trad," a traditional technique reaching all the way back to the piazzas of Venice and the 17th century *Commedia del'Arte*.

The name "slapstick" originates from the Italian word *bataccio*, meaning a cricket-bat-like object made of two wooden slats. When struck, the *bataccio* produces a loud smacking noise even though it transfers very little force to the person being struck. Actors may thus hit each other comically and noisily without causing any actual pain. The *Commedia del'Arte* was performed mostly in outside spaces in markets and town squares and by actors who used a very broad physical comedy style to appeal to a very wide audience. They did not work from scripts but rather from scenarios that were rudimentary plots that they pinned to the back of their crude stage to guide the action. Each actor specialized in a particular stock character: the miser, the young lover, the mischievous prankster, the moon-faced fool. One class of madcap characters, the *zanni*, gives us our word "zany." Molière was one of many subsequent playwrights who recognized the value of the *Commedia* and adapted the characters for the legitimate stage. He recognized that *lazzi* were little studies of observational comedy—human tics and traits exaggerated for comic effect.

The themes in *Commedia* are primitive. Hunger plays a large part, as do lust, greed, boastfulness and trickery. Exaggeration creates surreal situations. Arlecchino's insatiable hunger leads him to make an elaborate and delicious meal of a fly. Physical slaps and feints turn into all-out battles with flying props and wild chases that can be interrupted by people becoming invisible by turning into statues. Characters get into trouble, bullies get their righteous comeuppance and the trickster escapes just one more time. And

amazingly, as these old actors were proving, if you got the gesture and the timing just right, the old gags made people laugh. "Watch the silent movies, love!" was the advice handed down to me.

The birth of the silent movie industry owed a great deal to *Commedia* and to the Canadian impresario Mack Sennett of Keystone Cops fame. Custard pies and bathing beauties were symbols of his movies. In 1912 he founded the Keystone Studios in Edendale, California. The original main building, the first enclosed film stage and studio ever constructed, is still there today. The list of film actors whose careers were cemented with Sennett is impressive and includes Harry Langdon, Charlie Chaplin, Fatty Arbuckle, Harold Lloyd, Gloria Swanson, Chester Conklin, Bing Crosby and W.C. Fields. Sennett's signature Keystone Cops used every trick in the *Commedia* book as actors skidded around corners and jumped over each other in an endless chase scene that involved ladders and planks, hoses and other paraphernalia. A great promoter, Sennett created the Venice Beach

The birth of the silent movie industry owed a great deal to *Commedia* and to the Canadian impresario Mack Sennett of Keystone Cops fame. Custard pies and bathing beauties were symbols of his movies.

beauty contests that launched the careers of several starlets of the silver screen, including the screwball beauty Carole Lombard (the highest-paid screen actress in the 1930s).

Sometimes a *Commedia* routine shows its origins very clearly. In "The Goldrush," Charlie Chaplin is so hungry that he boils his shoe and eats it, rolling the laces on his fork like spaghetti and delicately nibbling around the bony tacks on the leather sole. It is an exquisite redux version of "Arlecchino and the Fly" that neatly and poetically dissolves the years and the miles between Renaissance Venice and Venice Beach, CA in the 1920s.

Paddy Swanson

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The characteristic twinkle in Paddy Swanson's eye could have lit up a moonless night when he suggested the theme of this year's show. As artistic director of Revels he knew full well this was a slam dunk idea to present to an Early Music-loving music director. Having spent the last 30 something years singing Renaissance music with the *Schola Cantorum* of Boston, I jumped at the chance to bring some of this wonderful music to a Revels production. Motets, madrigals, masses, operas, Monteverdi, the Gabriellis, Palestrina, polychoral music and choirs of antiphonal brass filling the grand San Marco Basilica...all come to mind when the Venetian Renaissance is mentioned to musicians. Thus, the luxury problem presented itself: how to pare down so much magnificent music from this time and place so people could make it home from the show in time to celebrate New Year's Eve?

...how to pare down so much magnificent music from this time and place so people could make it home from the show in time to celebrate New Year's Eve?

Fortunately, some of the pieces that did not find a home in the show made it to our new *Tutta Bella!* CD. There, for example, you will find the wonderful "Lamento Della Ninfa," which is likely to convert any skeptical listener into a fan of Monteverdi.

Basilica San Marco di Venezia in the 15th and 16th centuries was more than a place of worship. The cathedral also housed two music schools. One school attracted composers of the Flemish tradition of counterpoint, including Adrian Willaert, an innovative secular musician. Willaert composed large-scale, sacred works expressly for the enormous cathedral with its multiple balconies. The second school was founded to train young clergymen to sing chant and polyphony. Tensions mounted

between the two schools and a fight eventually broke out...on a feast day, no less! The sacred and secular, light and dark, the poignant and comic, the mysterious rhythm of the seasons: all find a place in our Revels show this year.

Many beautiful and weird instruments will be played! The theorbo is an impossibly large lute with a minimum of 14 strings that was invented in Florence in the 16th century. The cornetto is a leather-wrapped wooden instrument with a small, trumpet-like mouthpiece and fingerholes like those of the recorder.

Many beautiful and weird instruments will be played!

Don't be fooled by how easy Nathaniel Cox makes it sound; this is a devilishly hard instrument to play. The *ciaramella* and shawms are predecessors of the oboe and come fully equipped with the gift of volume. Finally, the *zampogna* is a traditional Italian bagpipe. All are played by gifted hands.

Lysander Jaffe and Gideon Crevoshay are two wonderful musicians I met in my work and travels with Village Harmony. They have each spent time studying and performing music with local specialists in various countries, including Corsica, Sardinia and Turkey. The idea of expanding the musical landscape for the show beyond some jolly madrigals and lovely motets was irresistible with Lysander and Gideon on board, especially knowing that Renaissance Venice was such a multicultural destination for artists, musicians and merchants. Sophie Michaux is well known in the Early Music circles of Boston and is well versed in many World Music traditions. She is the perfect bridge between these two musical worlds. Nathaniel Cox and I met when he was playing theorbo for a *Schola Cantorum* concert. It was the icing on the Venetian cake to find out he is also a virtuosic cornetto player. The rest of our top-shelf band came by word-of-mouth recommendation and we are quite lucky to have Fabio Pirozzolo as our tradition bearer. (Thank you, James Gerke!) All of the musicians made terrific suggestions regarding repertoire. Magic happens when we bring different musical practices and areas of expertise to the party. It is a privilege to be in the midst of such alchemy.

No matter where your musical affinities lie, we hope to open your eyes, ears and spirits to something new and intriguing. Perhaps the music will move you to add Corsica, Croatia, Turkey and Sardinia to your itinerary when you book your trip to Venice!

Megan Henderson

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Dear Friends,

Welcome to the 47th annual **Christmas Revels, A Venetian Celebration of the Winter Solstice**. I have been looking forward to this production all year. As executive director of Revels, I am fortunate to be an audience member for all 18 shows!

If you have as good a time as I do participating as an audience member, you might want to extend the Revels experience after the performance. **Our new CD, *Tutta Bella! A Venetian Christmas Revels***, contains favorite selections from the show plus a few additional Venetian Renaissance works. It is available in the lobby of Sanders Theatre and online at **Revels.org/Store**. This is a beautiful recording, produced and directed by our music director Megan Henderson.

Maybe you'd rather just go to Venice! **Go Ahead Tours** has generously donated a **trip for two to Italy**, including a visit to Venice that we are raffling off as a fundraiser for Revels. All proceeds support Revels' educational activities, including our in-school programs with David Coffin. Please look for members of our raffle volunteer team in the Sanders' lobby to purchase your tickets for just \$10 each.

Finally, at Revels we do everything possible to keep you in the holiday spirit for as long as possible. We have a special treat this year. For the first time since 1999 we have reprinted ***The Christmas Revels Songbook***, containing great holiday music compiled by John and Nancy Langstaff. See Jennifer Sur, our crack merchandising manager in the lobby of Sanders Theatre to purchase a copy. It's a must-have book for the Revels enthusiast!

On behalf of everyone at Revels, have a wonderful holiday season! Thank you for your continued support.

Welcome Yule!

Howard W. Grant,
Executive Director

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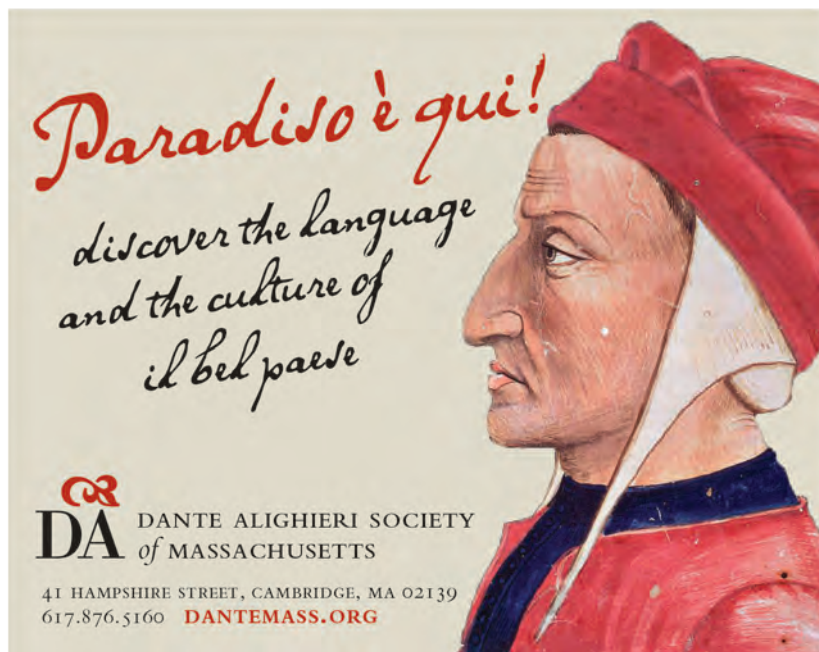
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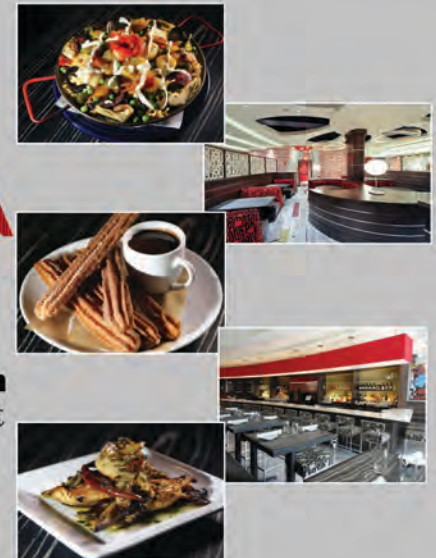
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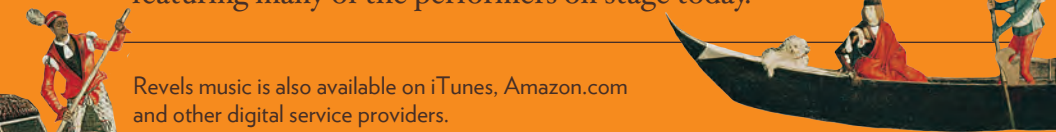
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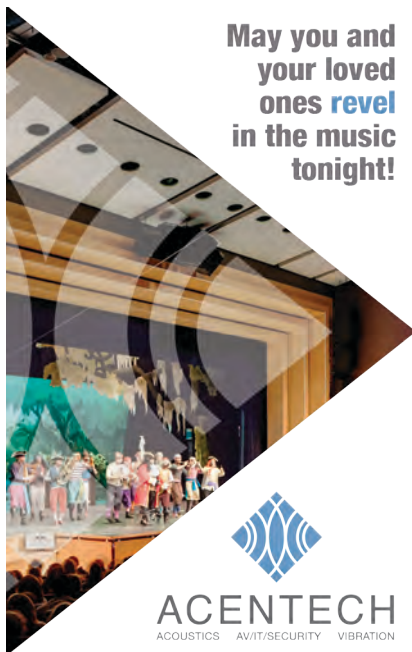
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History of the Building: Visit fas.harvard.edu/memhall.

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