

Boston Early Music Festival

INTERNATIONAL BAROQUE OPERA • CELEBRATED CONCERTS • WORLD-FAMOUS EXHIBITION

Boston Early Music Festival
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Boston Early Music Festival announces the establishment of the BEMF Instrument Collection following the acquisition of four harpsichords

Cambridge, MA—The **Boston Early Music Festival** is thrilled to announce the establishment of the **BEMF Instrument Collection** with the donation of four (4) superb harpsichords – from three generous donors – as the foundation of this new Collection. These instruments represent the output of three of America’s most important 20th-century harpsichord builders – Eric Herz, Richard Kingston, and Allan Winkler – each of whom have maintained decades-long relationships with BEMF dating back to the first Boston Early Music Festival & Exhibition in 1981. Representing a wide range of aural textures across traditions of both French and German craftsmanship, the BEMF Instrument Collection promises to be an invaluable resource for BEMF in presenting its myriad public concerts and opera productions for years to come.

“Even a single instrument donation would have been a transformative resource for BEMF, but to be the recipient of such generosity by three esteemed colleagues is simply overwhelming,” says BEMF Executive Director Kathleen Fay. “Each contribution was spontaneous, but arriving so closely together represents a striking bit of serendipity. All four harpsichords have been cherished possessions of their previous owners for decades, and we take the responsibility of the stewardship and their ongoing health and well-being very seriously. We are both honored and excited to have already incorporated these keyboards into our regular rehearsal and public concert presenting work, thereby underscoring their intended use: making music.”

Allan Winkler German double manual harpsichord after Fleischer, Serial Number 121

Allan Winkler French double manual harpsichord after Donzelague, Serial Number 126

Two harpsichords by Boston builder, Allan Winkler, have been donated by Dr. Joseph P. S. Kung of Dallas, TX: a 1989 German double manual designed after a single manual 1716 harpsichord by Carl Conrad Fleischer, and a 1991 French double manual designed after a 1711 harpsichord by Pierre Donzelague. Allan Winkler—who apprenticed with Eric Herz—is one of America’s most esteemed instrument builders, and has been a mainstay of the BEMF Exhibition since the inaugural tradeshow in 1981. Still active at his Medford, MA workshop, Winkler instruments are prized around the world for their impeccable sound and exacting craftsmanship.

Dr. Kung is a distinguished mathematician and professor at the University of North Texas with a long-standing passion for Baroque music. He has amassed an outstanding collection of instruments, many of which – including both instruments in his donation – were commissioned by Dr. Kung himself. These two instruments are in excellent performing condition and are expected to be featured regularly in BEMF concerts and opera productions. The Fleischer harpsichord was featured this past June 2017, in BEMF’s North American premiere of André Campra’s *Le Carnaval de Venise*, while the Donzelague instrument made its début on the BEMF concert stage in April 2018, in a recital of Bach’s *Goldberg Variations* featuring the captivating young harpsichordist Jean Rondeau.

Richard Kingston French double-manual harpsichord, Serial Number 39

A 1977 double manual harpsichord in the French style and built by Richard Kingston has been donated by Susan L. Robinson of Sarasota, FL in the memory of Malcolm Robinson, M.D. Based out of North Carolina, Richard Kingston is held in the highest regard among American harpsichord builders for his exacting standards and finely honed craftsmanship and has been a partner and exhibitor with BEMF since 1981. His instruments may be found in homes, churches, and music schools across not just North America, but throughout Europe as well.

Ms. Robinson has been a keyboard performer and teacher for decades, holding degrees from the Juilliard School of Music and Skidmore College. A longtime supporter of the arts, she has served on the Boards of numerous classical music organizations in Oklahoma City and Sarasota, and is presently Vice President of the BEMF Board of Directors. BEMF was proud to dedicate her harpsichord in a private recital in October, 2016 featuring Early Music superstar Kristian Bezuidenhout. The instrument has since been featured in a wide array of Festival and Concert Season performances, including the November 2016 Chamber Opera Series production, *VERSAILLES: Portrait of a Royal Domain*.

Eric Herz French single-manual harpsichord, Serial Number 2

Donated by Christine Kodis of Newton, MA, the 1957 single-manual harpsichord in the French style by Eric Herz of Harvard, MA is only serial number 2 of his extensive output of nearly 500 instruments in his 40 year career. A pioneering figure in both the Boston School of harpsichord making and the revival of Early Music in North America, Eric Herz (1919-2002) was among the founders of the Boston Early Music Festival and for four years served as this organization's President. His instruments are especially prized for both their beauty and the consistency of their construction.

A member of the BEMF Corporation for over two decades, Ms. Kodis served for many years as Program Coordinator for Music at the Goethe-Institut Boston. A long-standing participant in the Boston arts community, she has sung with the Handel and Haydn Society, the Boston Cecilia, Commonwealth Choral, and Chorus Pro Musica. Her donation has already provided BEMF with an instrument perfectly suited for the rigorous and demanding rehearsal schedule for our June Festivals and was the primary rehearsal instrument for our June 2017 production of Campra's *Le Carnaval de Venise*.

ABOUT THE BOSTON EARLY MUSIC FESTIVAL:

Recognized as the preeminent early music presenter and Baroque opera producer in North America, the **Boston Early Music Festival (BEMF)** has been credited with securing Boston's reputation as "America's early music capital" (*The Boston Globe*). Founded in 1981, BEMF offers diverse programs and activities, including one GRAMMY Award-winning and four GRAMMY Award-nominated opera recordings, an annual concert series that brings early music's brightest stars to the Boston and New York concert stages, and a biennial week-long Festival and Exhibition recognized as the "world's leading festival of early music" (*The Times*, London). The 20th Boston Early Music Festival will take place from June 9–16, 2019, and feature the fully staged North American premiere of Agostino Steffani's *Orlando* as the Centerpiece Opera. BEMF's Artistic Leadership includes Artistic Directors **Paul O'Dette** and **Stephen Stubbs**, Opera Director **Gilbert Blin**, Orchestra Director **Robert Mealy**, and Dance Director **Melinda Sullivan**.

For more information, images, or to schedule an interview, please contact Kathleen Fay at 617-661-1812 or email kathy@bemf.org.

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