



News @ Notes

Upcoming Events

Old & New/Bold & Blue:

Art of the Harpsichord

See and hear art at the same time!

Three North Carolina art museums host harpsichordists Beverly Biggs and Elaine Funaro. Each concert interweaves Aliénor winning preludes with Francois Couperin's L'art de Toucher le Clavecin and will be followed by a panel discussion with builder Richard Kingston and painter Lisa Creed.

Concert:

September 23, 7pm

Nasher Art Museum, Durham, NC

September 25, 7pm

Gerrard Hall, Chapel Hill, NC

September 26, 2pm

NC Museum of Art, Raleigh, NC

Lecture: "Harpichord Decoration through History" by Edward Kottick
September 24

Ackland Art Museum, Chapel Hill, NC

Find us on **YouTube!**

Search for "Aliénor Showcase 2009"

Contact Us ...

For more information about how to become a donor and support the efforts of Aliénor, please call:

Elaine Funaro Love

Artistic Director

Phone: 919.493.4706

E-mail: e.funaro@gmail.com

Another Aliénor Extravaganza

Three Harpsichords, Two Composers, One Unveiling

Anyone who's ever moved a harpsichord knows that it can be quite a production. So imagine having three concerts on successive nights in three different venues with three large French double-manual harpsichords, one of them brand new and splendidly painted. (And, yes, five string players as well to fit on the stage.) Sound like a gargantuan undertaking? It did to me, but that didn't deter Elaine Funaro and Beverly Biggs from putting on this latest Aliénor extravaganza:



The builder:
Richard Kingston,
the artist:
Lisa Creed,
the musician:
Elaine Funaro,
and the instrument:
Opus #333, all on
view for a series of
delightful fall 2009
concerts.

Bach concertos interspersed with Edwin McLean's sparkling modern works for two and three harpsichords performed at the Durham School of Science & Math; the University United Methodist Church in Chapel Hill; and Meredith College in Raleigh (November 12-14, 2009).

At the center of last November's production was the unveiling of Elaine's new harpsichord, built by Richard Kingston and painted by Lisa Creed. Richard described his instrument to me as a "North-European Kingston," his own design, which was a departure from the French double manuals he had built in the past. Knowing that it would be painted in Lisa's original style and often used for the modern repertoire that is Elaine and Aliénor's specialty, he sought to free the instrument "from all pre-conceived boundaries of what a harpsichord should or should not be" and had the hinges and stand specially designed for it by local artists. An unveiling ceremony took place before each concert: the instrument was draped in a gold cloth, which Richard then removed with a flourish, resulting in gasps of appreciation from the audience. Of course they were reacting to Lisa's stunning painting as much as to the instrument itself. After each concert, Lisa and Richard took questions from the audience, and Lisa described how the lithe, colorful shapes of her painting were intended to convey Elaine's performances,

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3 Sylvan Road
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About Aliénor...

Aliénor was named in honor of Eleanor of Aquitaine, a famed 12th century patron of the arts. Eleanor was the richest woman in Europe, and was married successively to King Louis VII of France and King Henry II of England. Eleanor was mother to the English Kings Richard the Lionhearted and John Lackland, who was forced to sign the Magna Carta in 1215. She is one of the most notable women in European history.



Elaine Funaro Interviews Master Builder Richard Kingston

EF: Where did you grow up?

RK: My father was in the military and was stationed in Pompéjac, a town in the Aquitaine region of France.

Elaine Funaro (EF): What was your first encounter with the harpsichord?

Richard Kingston (RK): I grew up listening to the recording “Said the Piano to the Harpsichord.”

EF: How long have you been involved in building harpsichords?

RK: 40 years!

EF: Who were your mentors along the way?

RK: My dear friend, noted harpsichordist and Southern Methodist University professor, Larry Palmer, colleague builder and friend Willard Martin, and master harpsichord builder William Dowd.

EF: What was different about building Opus #333?

RK: First challenge was to free the instrument from all preconceived boundaries of what a harpsichord should or should not be visually. I believe that though modern harpsichord makers have the responsibility to remain honest to the design and materials of the historic instruments, they must extend the instrument’s limits to the farthest horizons that modern composers dare to take them.

EF: What woods did you use in building this instrument?

RK: The soundboard is made of spruce, the ribs of sugar pine, the bridges and hitch pin rails are made from Pennsylvania black walnut, the pin block is Appalachian white oak, the case is basswood and the interior frames and liners are made from yellow poplar.



EF: Tell us about some of the unique features of this instrument.

RK: Early on in the design of this instrument I felt that it was to be a “work of art” that needed to be cradled as if held in the palms of the hands to be presented to the viewer. I worked with master furniture builder Douglas Carlisle who is an expert in working with unusual woods and shapes. He used Pennsylvanian black walnut for this ‘cradle’. The legs curve in two planes, simultaneously angling out and curving forward and the sides of the stretchers and crossbeam are both convex.

EF: What about the hinges, they look like tree branches, tell us about that.

RK: Blacksmith Ben Frisby hand forged them from my design. I was playing with the concept of ‘sets of three’ along with the illusion of the freedom of movement in every direction.

EF: Glass handstops?

RK: Well, yes. I started working in glass this

year and had my teacher, glass artist Alex Greenwood, from the Asheville (NC) Center for Glass create three, nontraditional glass ends for the handstops.

EF: Tell us about some of your favorite hobbies.

RK: I have been very involved with civil war re-enactors for almost 15 years. I have had a life long interest in toy trains and English sports cars and currently my passion is shag dancing

EF: One last question, tell us something about you that we probably don’t know.

RK: Well, I was going to become be an accountant before I got involved in making harpsichords!

EF: Wow! I’m so glad that didn’t happen. We are all so blessed to be able to play and enjoy your beautiful instruments.

Huge Thanks to Our 2009 Donors!

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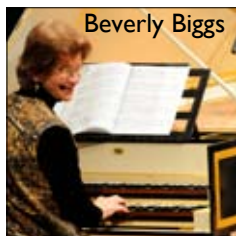
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3 octaves, \$ 500-\$999
2 octaves, \$100-\$499
1 octave, up to \$99

Thank you to these individuals who made significant in-kind contributions in 2009:

Patsy & Bob Brooks for hosting an Aliénor Soirée in their home in Dallas
Amy Love for all of her beautiful handmade cards
Candace Magner & Rebecca Pechesky for their writing expertise
Kemer Thomson for helping with the Aliénor website

The Time is Now

The call for scores for the 2012 competition will be going out this fall. In the last competition, we awarded over \$10,000 in prize monies, encouraging numerous composers from around the world to write for the harpsichord. Tax-deductible donations of any size will directly support the upcoming competition and we deeply appreciate it. Donations can be sent to: Aliénor, 3 Sylvan Road, Durham, NC 27701-2849.

Opus #333 Unveiling

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the sending of the notes on the page off into the air, on flights of imagination.

Needless to say, the audience enjoyed hearing the music, too. Richard's instrument was as impressive to hear as it was to look at—full bodied, rich, and nuanced. And delightful to play, as I discovered when I was privileged to play it in the Bach D Minor Triple Concerto. Listeners appreciated the contrast between the familiar Bach concertos and Ed's pieces, well known to our circle of explorers in the world of newly composed music for harpsichord but unfamiliar to many who attended these concerts. I think some people were caught by surprise at the swinging rhythms and tuneful melodies in Ed's music, not expecting new music for harpsichord to be that much fun. In fact my personal favorite part of the week was rehearsing and performing Ed's Sonata for Three Harpsichords with Elaine and Bev. The three harpsichord parts trade phrases with an ease that might make you unaware of the sonata's sophisticated counterpoint; it is like no other piece in our repertoire, and playing it with my two good friends made it all the more special.

Quite a production. And I should also add that it would not have been possible without the stalwart harpsichord transportation team of Randall Love and several friends.

— Rebecca Pechesky

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SPRING 2010: New decade, new harpsichord!

The masterpieces of tomorrow are waiting to be written.

Congratulations and Notations



Harpichordist **Christopher Lewis** was admitted as a MM candidate at the Conservatory in San Francisco. Lewis has just released a new CD, "The New-Fangled Clavier," available at:
www.newmixmusic.com/newfangled.html
www.edbaby.com/cd/ChristopherDLewis



Aliénor winning composer **Janine Johnson** has released an album of her own compositions titled "Suites - Op 22 24 and 29." To listen, visit:
http://magnatune.com/artists/janine_johnson

Composer **John Mayrose** starts a tenure-track position at Indiana University South Bend in the fall. Mayrose is a former Aliénor winner and a member of the new music ensemble *pulsoptional*, a composer's collective based in Durham, NC. His website is: www.johnmayrose.com



Jane Chapman returned to California to perform on March 28, 2010 at MusicSources in Berkeley. Her performance included masterworks of Bach, Ligeti, Takemitsu as well as new works of Bay Area composers Cynthia Cox and Sheli Nan. Chapman was featured in the Fall 2009 *News&Notes* and can be found online at:
www.janechapman.com

The Italian organization **Procembalo** promotes the modern harpsichord's repertoire by making it free and accessible to the public worldwide. Explore their recording catalogue at:
www.procembalo.org

In This Issue:

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Master Builder Richard Kingston
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