

MUSICA PACIFICA

Baroque
Ensemble

Musica Pacifica has, since its founding in 1990, become widely recognized as one of America's premier baroque ensembles, lauded for both the dazzling virtuosity and the warm expressiveness of its performances. Called "the crème de la crème of the West Coast early music scene" by *Alte Musik Aktuell* (Regensburg, Germany), these four highly accomplished musicians – Judith Linsenberg (recorder), Elizabeth Blumenstock (baroque violin), Shirley Hunt (baroque 'cello and viola da gamba), and Charles Sherman (harpsichord) – are genuine friends, who clearly relish the music and the time they spend together with their audiences. At home in the San Francisco Bay Area, these artists are masters of their repertoire who regularly perform with Philharmonia Baroque, American Bach Soloists, and other prominent early music ensembles across the country and around the world. Musica Pacifica combines this world-class musicianship with imaginative programming and a spirited performing style, bringing electricity, brilliance, and exuberant vitality to its performances of the intimate chamber music of the Baroque. The *San Diego Reader* described it this way: "Musica Pacifica communicated the outer and inner life of this music with such panache that their playing produced an irresistible feeling of joy."

Such enthusiasm – from both the press and the public – has marked two decades of Musica Pacifica performances, and has won the ensemble an international reputation as early music specialists. Its programs are carefully crafted to showcase the charm, elegance, and diversity of 17th- and 18th-century music, with the core group frequently joined by world renowned guest artists in varying combinations of recorder, oboe, violins, 'cello/gamba, lute/guitar, harpsichord, and percussion. Over the years, Musica Pacifica has brought one inventive, beautifully performed program after another to some of the most prestigious concert series in the U.S., including Music Before 1800 and the Frick Collection (NY), the Getty Museum (Los Angeles), the Cleveland Art Museum, the Pittsburgh Renaissance and Baroque Society, the Seattle Early Music Guild, Early Music Now in Milwaukee, the Houston Early Music Society, the Los Angeles County Museum, the San Diego Early Music Society, and the Cambridge Early Music Society, among many others. The ensemble has been featured at the Berkeley Early Music Festival three times, and their first appearance there was cited in *Early Music* (UK) as "perhaps the standout of the entire festival." Musica Pacifica has also received international acclaim for its performances in Austria and Germany. Broadcast audiences have heard the ensemble on German National Radio, as well as on National Public Radio's "Performance Today" and "Harmonia," and Minnesota Public Radio.

Musica Pacifica's eight recordings – including repertoire by J.S. Bach, Vivaldi, Alessandro Scarlatti, Marin Marais, Telemann, Francesco Mancini, as well as Baroque and traditional music from the British Isles – have been lauded in the classical music press, garnering the highest ratings in classical CD magazines and repeatedly being chosen as "CD of the Month" by the early music journal *Alte Musik Aktuell*. The prestigious Gramophone Magazine (UK) called their most recent release, *Dancing in the Isles*, "one of the zestiest recordings of recent vintage." *Fire Beneath My Fingers*, was a featured recording on Minnesota Public Radio, and called "one of the most exciting Baroque recordings I've heard" by the online *Audiophile Audition*. Their Telemann CD was described by *Early Music America Magazine* as "superbly elegant...exemplifying the finest in historical performance today;" this disc went on to win the 2003 Chamber Music America/WQXR Record Award. Internationally, their Mancini recording was cited in 2000 as a "Noteworthy Disc" at the Antonio Vivaldi Awards for Italian Early Music in Venice. To have earned such honors, truly, in the words of Fanfare Magazine, "this is playing to ravish the senses."

Online, Musica Pacifica may be heard on radio stations 1.fm, Last.fm, Celtic Radio, and Recorder-radio.com; and seen on youtube.com/MusicaPacificaSF. Their recordings are also available on iTunes and other online sites. Please visit their website: www.musicapacifica.org.