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AKADEMIE FÜR ALTE MUSIK BERLIN PERFORMS
"THE BEST OF GERMAN BAROQUE" ON FRIDAY, MARCH 4
AT 8:00 P.M. AT BERKELEY'S FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

SIGHTLINES: PRE-CONCERT TALK BY UC BERKELEY MUSICOLOGIST
VICTOR GAVENDA ON FRIDAY, MARCH 4 AT 7:00 P.M.

BERKELEY, January 25, 2011—Acclaimed for playing with “precision, energy, and a sense of purpose” (*Classics Today*) the German early music group **Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin** returns to Cal Performances on **Friday, March 4, at 8:00 p.m.** at the **First Congregational Church of Berkeley**. “The Best of German Baroque” concert features a survey of German masterpieces from some of the most popular Baroque artists including **George Phillip Telemann, J. S. Bach, and George Frideric Handel**. The Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin (its friends and fans sometimes shorten its name to “Akamus”) began as a rebellious group of young East German musicians and has risen to the heights of traditional-instrument fame through their dynamic playing and thoughtful interpretation. “This...is a group in which every member is prepared to live the music to the fill, and the rest is a joy from start to finish” (*Gramophone UK*). The ensemble will feature 15 members led by concertmaster **Georg Kallweit**, though the leadership can shift depending on the work being performed.

A *Sightlines* pre-performance talk will be given by UC Berkeley musicologist **Victor Gavenda**, on Friday, March 4 at 7:00 p.m. at First Congregational Church of Berkeley. This event is free to all ticket holders.

PROGRAM

The evening will begin with George Phillip Telemann's **Overture in C major** for flute, recorder, and orchestra. Written by one of the most prolific composers in history, this overture is subtitled "Water Music," or "Hamburg's Tides" and it was written to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Hamburg Admiralty. It consists of an overture in the French

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style followed by several short, delightful dance movements which allude to water-oriented figures from Greek mythology. Next on the program is J. S. Bach's **Brandenburg Concerto No. 5**. Bach's *Brandenburg* Concertos are a collection of six works that he arranged for Christian Ludwig, the Margrave of Brandenburg. The concertos are among the supreme musical compositions of the Baroque era. All six works utilize a variety of instrumental combinations and encompass an impressive range of style that combines different elements of the French suite, the Italian solo concerto, and the German counterpoint. The Concerto No. 5 features the harpsichord, violin, flute, viola, cello, and violone.

After intermission, the ensemble will begin with Bach's **Violin Concerto in E major**. Bach wrote several masterpieces for the violin and this concerto utilizes the *ritornello* style that was employed by many contemporary Italian composers. George Frideric Handel's **Concerto Grosso in B-flat major, Op. 3 No. 2** follows. This concerto has its origins from a mixture of previous scores and is a hybrid of a concerto grosso and a Baroque dance suite. The final piece on the program returns to Telemann for **Concerto in E minor** for recorder and flute, a work that makes the high demands on the performers' technique.

AKADEMIE FÜR ALTE MUSIK BERLIN

In 1982 in the East German Republic, artistic creativity in classical music was a timid, top-down affair dominated by national orchestras and conservative thinking. In this stifling environment, a bold group of young musicians gathered to explore the world of historically informed performance on period instruments, and in 1984 the **Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin** (literally, the "Berlin Academy for Old [or Ancient] Music") began presenting independent concerts in the Berlin Schauspielhaus. The group quickly garnered the attention of the German and international music communities, and in 1987, the Akademie released its first recording simultaneously in the East (on the Eterna label) and the West (on Capriccio). With the reunification of Germany in 1990, the group's renown spread even more quickly. Akademie now appears in the major concert halls of Europe and has toured Asia, the Middle East and the Americas. Its first tour to the United States was in 2005; Cal Performances presented the group's West Coast debut in April.

Critical praise follows the group wherever it goes. The *Los Angeles Times* raved that “everything was played with fire, flair, a hard percussive ferocity and daredevil virtuosity.” Those qualities may be attributable to the Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin’s unusual democratic organizational structure in which all members participate in the artistic decisions of the whole group. In some performances, the role of concertmaster moves from one violinist to another depending on the piece. This structure not only affects the group’s operations, but can be noticed in its sound. “Democracy makes for truly exciting performances, with players as likely to challenge one another as to accompany meekly or collaborate politely,” noted the *New York Times* in a 2005 review. “Individual performers step forward in surprising ways, as with string players adding percussion by banging bow on wood or strings.”

Since 1987, the Akademie has appeared on dozens of recordings. Its discs have won several *Diapason d’Or* awards from French critics, The Cannes Festival Award, the Gramophone Award (UK), the Edison Award (the Netherlands), The Telemann Prize, and the Deutscher Schallplatten-Preis (Germany), and the group has been nominated for an American Grammy. The band now records exclusively for the Harmonia Mundi France label. It has appeared in concert or recordings with a diverse array of celebrated artists including Cecilia Bartoli, René Jacobs, Reinhard Goebel, Ton Koopman, Andreas Staier, Marion Verbruggen, Catherine Mackintosh, Monica Huggett, Ivan Monighetti and the RIAS-Kammerchor under Marcus Creed.

The roster of musicians expands and contracts to suit the needs of the works it presents. For its 2011 North American tour, the ensemble will include **Georg Kallweit**, violin and concertmaster; **Kerstin Erben**, **Thomas Graewe**, **Elfa Kristinsdottir**, **Stephan Mai** and **Uta Peters**, violins; **Clemens-Maria Nuszbaumer** and **Stephan Sieban**, violas; **Jan Freiheit**, cello; **Walter Rumer**, bass; **Christoph Huntgeburth** and **Anna Fusek**, flutes; **Christian Beuse**, bassoon; **Michael Freimuth**, lute; and **Raphael Alpermann**, harpsichord.

TICKET INFORMATION

Tickets for Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin’s “The Best of German Baroque” concert on **Friday, March 4, 2011**, at **8:00 p.m.** at **First Congregational Church** are priced at **\$52.00**. Tickets are available through the Cal Performances Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall; at

(510) 642-9988 to charge by phone; at www.calperformances.org; and at the door. Half-price tickets are available for purchase by UC Berkeley students. UC faculty and staff, senior citizens, other students and UC Alumni Association members receive a \$5 discount (Special Events excluded). For more information, call Cal Performances at (510) 642-9988 or visit the Cal Performances web site at www.calperformances.org.

For select performances, Cal Performances offers UCB student, faculty and staff, senior and community rush tickets. Rush tickets are announced two hours prior to a performance and are available in person only at the Ticket Office beginning one hour before the performance; quantities may be limited. Rush ticket sales are limited to one ticket per person; all sales are cash only. Rush ticket prices are \$10.00 for UCB students; \$15.00 for UCB faculty and staff (UCB ID required) and seniors age 65 or older; and \$20 for all other community members. Information is available at (510) 642-9988, press 2 for the rush hotline, two hours prior to a performance only.

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CALENDAR EDITORS PLEASE NOTE:

CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS

Friday, March 4 at 8:00 p.m.

First Congregational Church
2345 Channing Way, Berkeley

Chamber Orchestra

“The Best of German Baroque”

Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin

Georg Kallweit, concertmaster and violin

Program:

Telemann/Overture (Suite) in C major

Bach/*Brandenburg* Concerto No. 5 in D major and Violin Concerto in E major

Handel/Concerto Grosso in B-flat major, Op. 3 No. 2

Telemann/Concerto in E minor for Recorder and Flute

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Tickets: \$52.00, available through the Cal Performances Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall; at (510) 642-9988 to charge by phone; at www.calperformances.org; and at the door.

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