

No. 17 in D Minor, <i>Gara di Due Violini in Uno</i> (9:42)	26	II	Allemanda	1:46
5 I Adagio	5:20	27	III Sarabanda	1:21
6 II Largo	4:23	28	IV Giga	1:03
		29	V Finale	0:56
DISC 3				
No. 12 in F Major (9:47)				
7 I Preludio	3:50			
8 II Aria	1:34			
9 III Corrente	2:07			
10 IV Sarabanda	1:17			
11 V Giga	1:00			
No. 21 in D Minor (7:25)				
12 I Preludio	2:09			
13 II Aria	1:43			
14 III Sarabanda	1:12			
15 IV Giga	1:24			
16 V Finale	0:58			
No. 8 in E Major (8:08)				
17 I Preludio	2:20			
18 II Aria	0:59			
19 III Sarabanda	3:27			
20 IV Giga	1:23			
No. 25 in B Minor (7:29)				
21 I Preludio	3:50			
22 II Aria	0:52			
23 III Sarabanda	1:13			
24 IV Giga	1:35			
No. 4 in D Major (7:25)				
25 I Preludio	2:20			
No. 2 in A Major (9:34)				
1 I Preludio	3:49			
2 II Allemanda	2:04			
3 III Sarabanda	1:16			
4 IV Giga	1:14			
5 V Finale	1:11			
No. 27 in C Major, <i>Capricci</i> [Capricci]	11:20			
No. 6 in B Minor (13:01)				
7 I Preludio	3:52			
8 II Allemanda	2:30			
9 III Corrente	1:49			
10 IV Sarabanda	1:36			
11 V Giga	1:44			
12 VI Finale	1:30			
No. 23 in C Minor (6:22)				
13 I Preludio	1:07			
14 II Allemanda	2:18			
15 III Sarabanda	1:26			
16 IV Giga	1:31			

No. 10 in D Major (10:12)				
17 I Preludio	5:52			
18 II Aria	1:39			
19 III Sarabanda	1:15			
20 IV Giga	1:27			
No. 19 in Bb Major (7:58)				
21 I Preludio	3:21			
22 II Aria	4:38			
No. 14 in G Minor, <i>Aria</i> [Aria]	6:54			
No. 7 in D Minor, <i>Passagagli</i> [Passagagli]	10:49			
No. 26 in F Major (7:30)				
16 I Preludio	5:08			
17 II Aria	2:22			
No. 3 in C Major, <i>Aria Variata</i> [Aria]	10:53			
No. 15 in C Major, <i>Scherzo d'Augelli con il Cuccu</i> [Scherzo]	6:45			
No. 18 in A Major (9:27)				
2 I Preludio	2:48			
3 II Allemanda	1:46			
4 III Sarabanda	1:19			
5 IV Giga	1:28			
6 V Finale	2:06			
No. 11 in A Major, <i>Galli e Galline</i> [Galli]	7:53			
No. 22 in A Major, <i>Leuto Harpeggiante e Rossignolo</i> (8:02)				
8 I Preludio	1:10			
9 II Allemanda	1:10			
10 III Rossignolo	1:13			
11 IV Sarabanda	0:57			
12 V Giga	1:09			
13 VI Rossignolo	1:12			
14 VII Finale	1:11			
DISC 4				
No. 15 in C Major, <i>Scherzo d'Augelli con il Cuccu</i> [Scherzo]	6:45			
No. 3 in C Major, <i>Aria Variata</i> [Aria]	10:53			
Total Time:				
Disc One:	69:48			
Disc Two:	58:17			
Disc Three:	65:23			
Disc Four:	61:21			
Total Time:	254:49			

JOHANN JAKOB WALTHER (1650-1717)

HORTULUS CHELICUS

Sean Yung-Hsiang Wang, Baroque violin

Matthew Dirst, harpsichord and organ

Barrett Sills, Baroque cello

CRC 3493/94/95/96
4 CDS

DISC 1

No. 1 in D Minor	
No. 28 in D Major, <i>Serenata a un Coro di Violini, Organo Tremolante, Chitarrino, Piva, Due Trombe e Timpani, Lira Todesca, et Harpa Smorzata, Per un Violin Solo</i>	
No. 5 in F Major	
No. 24 in D Major	
No. 9 in C Minor	
No. 20 in E Minor	
No. 13 in D Major	

DISC 2

No. 16 in E Minor	
No. 17 in D Minor, <i>Gara di Due Violini in Uno</i>	
No. 12 in F Major	
No. 21 in D Minor	
No. 8 in E Major	
No. 25 in B Minor	
No. 4 in D Major	

Recorded January and June 2012; May 2013 at Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church, Houston, Texas (2012) and Moores Opera House, University of Houston (2013). Produced by Keith Weber. Engineered by Ryan Edwards. Cover photography and design: © Gabrielle Keller Photography.

Johann Jakob Walther

Hortulus Chelicus

DISC 3

No. 2 in A Major	
No. 27 in C Major, <i>Capricci</i>	
No. 6 in B Minor	
No. 23 in C Minor	
No. 10 in D Major	
No. 19 in Bb Major	
No. 14 in G Minor, <i>Aria</i>	

DISC 4

No. 15 in C Major, <i>Scherzo d'Augelli con il Cuccu</i>	
No. 18 in A Major	
No. 11 in A Major, <i>Galli e Galline</i>	
No. 22 in A Major, <i>Leuto Harpeggiante e Rossignolo</i>	
No. 7 in D Minor, <i>Passagagli</i>	
No. 26 in F Major	
No. 3 in C Major, <i>Aria Variata</i>	

Complete listings begin on page 5

Sean Yung-Hsiang Wang *Baroque Violin*
Matthew Dirst *Harpsichord and Organ*
Barrett Sills *Baroque Cello*



The German Baroque violinist-composer Johann Jakob Walther (1650-1717), whose name is sometimes confused with that of the famous lexicographer Johann Gottfried Walther, was an accomplished musician now remembered for bringing the technical level of violin playing in seventeenth-century Germany to a new height. He published two collections of compositions during his lifetime, *Scherzi da violino solo* (1676) and *Hortulus Chelicus* ("Little Garden of the Violin" – 1688), both for violin and basso continuo. The collections contain some of the most difficult pieces written for the violin up to that point in time, employing almost all of the known techniques and effects (with the exception of *scordatura*, which involves tuning the open strings in intervals other than the usual perfect fifths, a practice that Walther disliked). As such, even without considering their musical beauty, both collections qualify as landmark compositions in the development of violin music in the Baroque era. The *Scherzi* comprises twelve virtuosic pieces intended for professional violinists, while the later *Hortulus Chelicus* includes twenty-eight pieces of different levels of difficulty and characters, making it the more significant of the two.

Walther has been called the "Paganini of the seventeenth century," but ironically he spent most his adult life as an amateur musician, working instead as a highly esteemed public servant in Mainz. Born in Witterda in the Erfurt district around 1650, Walther probably traveled to Italy in 1670, and was employed as a violinist in Florence at the court of Cosimo III of Tuscany. His sojourn in Italy lasted about three years, and by late 1673 he was present in Dresden at the court of Johann Georg II, a keen admirer of music and art. Walther then became concertmaster at the Dresden court, where he was respected and well-compensated until the death of his employer in 1680, which prompted him to leave Dresden for Mainz and marked the end of his career as a professional musician. As the Italian secretary to the Elector Anselm Franz von Ingelheim, Prince and Archbishop of Mainz, Walther apparently lived a very comfortable life, so it is probable that he made the career switch by choice. In 1683 the Elector named him a Canon in the Monastery of St. Victor, and at one point he was even promoted to the position of Scholastic (which he, as a layman, was pressured to give up eventually). Later in life he owned a house, a mill, and an estate, a considerable wealth that would

have been difficult for a working musician to amass. Walther died on November 2, 1717 and was buried at the cemetery of St. Emmeran in Mainz.

Hortulus Chelicus comprises twenty-eight pieces of wide-ranging characters. Eighteen of the twenty-eight can be categorized as partitas in some kind of Preludio-Allemanda-Corrente-Sarabanda-Giga-Finale structure, and those in general have more serious expressions. The four pieces in variation forms, numbers 3, 7, 14, and 27, are essentially showpieces for the violin with simple repeated bass lines, with number 14 being the most expressive and musically interesting of the group. Numbers 19 and 26, which begin with an elaborate prelude followed by a straightforward set of variations, are generally contemplative in character. In contrast, the three pieces in less restrictive formal structures are especially creative: numbers 11 and 15 mimic the sounds of the chicken and the cuckoo, respectively, while number 17 is a "contest for two violins" performed on just one violin. The most imaginative and spirited music in *Hortulus Chelicus* is found in number 28, *Serenata a un coro di violini, organo tremolante, chitarrino, piva, due trombe e tim-*

pani, lira todesca, et harpa smorzata, per un violin solo, in which the violin imitates a choir of violins, pipe organ with vibrato effect, small guitar, pipe, two trumpets and timpani, German bagpipe, and hurdy-gurdy. Serving as the collection's grand finale, the *Serenata* ranks among the most flamboyant pieces from the Baroque era.

In terms of technical difficulty, *Hortulus Chelicus* as a whole is exceptionally challenging, although Walther did deliberately mix in simpler pieces in order to "help the less capable [violinists], without many frustrations, to reach higher levels." That said, even the simplest numbers here are more difficult to execute than most violin pieces from the period. Walther was particularly fond of multiple stopping (playing two, three, or even four strings at the same time), and also liked to use advanced bow techniques such as fast spiccato (bouncing the bow lightly on the string) and "flying staccato" (successive fast notes in one bowstroke). He also did not hesitate to write uncommonly high notes, and used effects such as left-hand vibrato, pizzicato, and wavering of the bow that produces a kind of right-hand vibrato (uncommon after the Baroque era). In that regard, the collection fittingly serves as a

compendium of advanced seventeenth-century violin techniques.

Hortulus Chelicus has not yet become part of the mainstream repertoire, especially when compared to Arcangelo Corelli's influential 12 Violin Sonatas, Op. 5 (1700) or Heinrich Ignaz Franz von Biber's celebrated *Rosary Sonatas* (c. 1676). However, the collection doubtlessly contains a wealth of contemporary sensibilities worth exploring for present-day audiences. A few scholars have focused on the ways in which Walther's output helped pave the way for Johann Sebastian Bach's *Sonatas and Partitas for Solo Violin* (1720), but with the present album we hope to demonstrate that his music is beautiful, and that it deserves more attention than it has historically received.

—Sean Yung-Hsiang Wang

Sean Yung-Hsiang Wang is Founder and Director of the New York Intercultural Music Society, and is on the violin and conducting faculty at the Longy School of Music of Bard College. He holds degrees from the Curtis Institute of Music (violin),



Juilliard School (conducting), and Stanford University (musicology).

Matthew Dirst is Founder and Artistic Director of Grammy-nominated Ars Lyrica Houston. He also serves as Professor of Music at the Moores School of Music, University of Houston, where he teaches music history and performance practice.

Barrett Sills is Principal Cellist with the Houston Grand Opera and Houston Ballet, and is Co-Founder and Artistic Director of Camerata Ventapane.

DISC 1		No. 9 in C Minor	(10:28)
		18 I Preludio	3:12
No. 1 in D Minor	(9:11)	19 II Allemanda	2:09
1 I Preludio	2:40	20 III Corrente	1:56
2 II Aria	1:10	21 IV Sarabanda	1:23
3 III Corrente	1:13	22 V Giga	0:54
4 IV Sarabanda	1:12	23 VI Finale	0:56
5 V Giga	0:56		
6 VI Finale	2:00	No. 20 in E Minor	(10:52)
		24 I Preludio	2:02
No. 28 in D Major, <i>Serenata a un Coro di Violini, Organo Tremolante, Chitarrino, Piva, Due Trombe e Timpani, Lira Todesca, et Harpa Smorzata, Per un Violin Solo</i>		25 II Allemanda	2:51
		26 III Corrente	2:04
		27 IV Sarabanda	2:36
7 [Serenata]	11:30	28 V Giga	1:20
		No. 13 in D Major	(8:17)
No. 5 in F Major	(8:36)	29 I Preludio	2:14
8 I Preludio	2:31	30 II Allemanda	1:33
9 II Aria	1:04	31 III Corrente	1:45
10 III Sarabanda	1:57	32 IV Sarabanda	1:25
11 IV Giga	1:17	33 V Giga	1:21
12 V Finale	1:46		
		DISC 2	
No. 24 in D Major	(10:51)	No. 16 in E Minor	(8:15)
13 I Preludio	4:30	1 I Preludio	1:21
14 II Allemanda	1:26	2 II Aria	3:11
15 III Sarabanda	1:05	3 III Sarabanda	2:48
16 IV Giga	1:24	4 IV Giga	0:56
17 V Finale	2:27		