

Ar Parla



The ARPARLA ensemble, Davide Monti on violin and Maria Christina Cleary on harp, takes inspiration from a desire to speak through music - *parla* in Italian means 'speak'. Using the soft and refined sonorities of the harp and the expressive range of colours of the violin, both Davide and Maria stay true to historical ways of playing.

The Monti and Cleary duo give concerts with energy and enthusiasm, receiving excellent reviews from all over the world, bringing a musical message that goes beyond language, culture, and social class.

Their repertoire focuses on two specific musical periods in which their instruments perfectly express the synthesis of the Baroque period (17th century), and the transition period between Classicism and Romanticism (end of the 18th, beginning of the 19th century).

Formed in 2005, Arparla has performed many concerts - not only in Italy, their inspiration and home, but around the world. The duo's first tour was in Japan, where they also gave master classes in Early Music and Historical Performance Practice.

Arparla has performed all over Europe including festivals like Aqua Music Amsterdam, Itinéraire Baroque Perigord, the Early Music Festival in Brugges, Rethymno Renaissance Festival, the International Mozart Festival Rovereto, Mazowiec Goes Baroque Warsaw and Muzyka w Raju Paradyz. They have also performed at the Montreal Early Music Festival. They toured Australia and Singapore in 2011, including a performance at the launch of the Woodend Winter Arts Festival in Victoria.

In 2009 they premiered Spohr's Double Concerto on original instruments.

Arparla has also given series of concerts and lessons in Kampala, Uganda, to sustain the NGO COOPI, performing for the Italian and Irish Embassies, Makerere University, The International University of Kampala, and the Africa Institute of Music.

Besides performing, Arparla has taught at the Royal Conservatory in The Hague, the Guildhall School of Music in London, the Conservatories of Padova and Vicenza, NUS Singapore, RMIT and Monash UNI in Melbourne, the Griffith Conservatory in Brisbane, the Kraków Music Academy, the Conservatory in Vienna, and also collaborated with the Menuhin Foundation MUS-E project.

Arparla has recorded two duos CDs under the Stradivarius label. The first, *So mach' die Augen zu* is of the Chamber works and harp solos of Louis Spohr, the premiere recording of this composer using original instruments. Their second CD, *Le Grazie del Violino*, is a collection of Italian instrumental music of the 17th century including Marini, Pandolfi-Mealli, Selma, Uccellini, Frescobaldi, Merula and Fontana. This recording culminates many years of research into performance expressiveness, effects and musical rhetoric. These CDs has received rave reviews from international music journals.

Reviews

CD "Le grazie del violino"

"These are fine performances, and highly recommended. [...] and in this recording Davide Monti produces a luxuriant and luminous sound to match Maria Christina Cleary's harp, which in turn has a very extensive range of dynamics. It has been instructive to hear such a range of interpretations, with so many different forms and sizes of continuo sections."

David R. M. Irving, Early Music, May 2012

"These performers' easy dialogue, elasticity of phrasing, and capacity to shape lines with interest and musical sense repeatedly captivate in this clear, reverberant recording, and many works are transformed essentially into mini dramas without words."

Robin Stowell, the Strad June 2011

"Their music is intensely expressive, emotionally volatile in a way that, in the right hands, always seems freewheelingly improvisatory."

Michael Dervan, Irish Times, 1 April 2011

"All the tiniest details of the CD achieve their aim and the interpretation is at the highest level, particularly with regard to the graceful... and creative improvisations: a necessary imperative for a dignified interpretation."

Amadeus, February 2011

*"A jewel... demonstration of extreme stylistic flexibility notwithstanding perfect historical awareness of Arparla... Davide Monti and Maria Christina Cleary take us by the hand through this fascinating repertoire, made up of sublime sounds, unexpected modulations, genial improvisations and happiness found in performance... *****"*

www.cdclassico.com, December 2010

Concert for the festival "Primavera in Musica" in Verona

"Monti and companion, the Irish harpist Maria Christina Cleary, came to the music with rare enthusiasm, in which the listeners were told a stimulating and brilliant story, where time passed by in few seconds".

L'Arena, 14 April 2010

Recording of the CD "So mach' die Augen zu, Allora chiudi gli occhi" by L. Spohr

"Von einem Duo aus Violine und Harfe, das sich einen so raffinierten Namen wie „Arparla“ ausdenkt (der sowohl das Wort „arpa“, also Harfe, beinhaltet als auch „parla“, also im weitesten Sinne Kommunikation heraufbeschwört), sollte man eine CD erwarten können, die mit einem ebenso raffinierten Programm aufwartet. Und genau das ist hier der Fall. Diese CD ist ein Anti-Stress-Programm pur. Sie beinhaltet Musik, die von Beginn an ganz plakativ vor allem eines sein sollte: Schön! ...Und das ist sie in der Tat.

Diese CD ist nichts für „Analytiker“, sondern für all jene, die einfach nur qualitätvolle, gut gespielte und schlicht schöne Musik genießen wollen. Und das sind ja (zum Glück!) immer noch die Meisten."

Rainer Aschemeier, The Listener 10. November 2011

"It comes then, as a real joy to hear this recording. Not only is the instrumentation well balanced and completely appropriate, but both players have developed a unified 'accent', that rare musical unity bordering on telepathy, that one feels must have existed between the original performers. On the technical side, the recording is both sensitive and naturalistic. The sound is that of the instruments in a room, not the instruments under a thick varnish of post production and reverb."

"The power and control of Monti's violin is more than equalled by Cleary's elegant, precise and poised command of the harp. Her virtuosic performance couples navigation of some fiendishly difficult pedalling with finger work of enviable tone and power, never sacrificing musical line to technical demand or velocity."

"Here, both instruments show lightness, crispness, sweetness and power in equal measure. Lines are separate, yet intertwined, subtle and flexible as living vines twisting around each other without losing their own identity, but making much more than the sum of the parts. For those put off by the prospect of the auditory pink marshmallow recording that is so much of modern harp playing, relax... there is none of that here."

Musicalpointers, 16 April 2009

"...Adventurous are Maria Cleary and Davide Monti, who in Spohr ...allora chiudi gli occhi attempt genuine tempo rubato in their performances of Spohr's music for harp, with and without violin."

"Cleary and Monti undoubtedly took the trouble to consult Spohr's Violinschule as well as his autobiography."

"The lingering and hurrying in Monty's and Cleary's recordings is sometimes very convincing. [...] the duo are certainly to be thanked for making a genuine attempt to experiment on the basis of the available evidence."

Clive Brown, Early Music 2010

"...These interpretations will be found excellent and convincing, the music being treated with the respect it deserves...This is a valuable addition to the Spohr discography..."

Newsletter 145 (09/4) The Spohr Society of Great Britain, December 2009

Tour in Uganda

"Davide and Maria have created strong connections on a cultural, personal, emotional and even academical level, [...] with their passion for Baroque music, they have played and explained technical and historical elements, of a period in which Italy was radiating beauty to all parts of the world."

www.monzalacitta.it, 2007

"... but it has been really surprising the explosive effect created by the concerts that Maria Cleary and Davide Monti gave during these days in Kampala"

www.coopi.org, 29.03.2007