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***Bar La Barca* at Bargemusic 2 MADRIGAL COMEDIES 400 Years Apart**



***LA BARCA DI VENEZIA PER PADOVA* (1605)**

By Adriano Banchieri

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***JUKEBOX IN THE TAVERN OF LOVE* (2008)**

Libretto by Valeria Vasilevski and score by Eric Salzman

WEDNESDAY, JULY 8 AND FRIDAY, JULY 10 AT 8:00PM

Jukebox in the Tavern of Love is a melding of a modern life confessional scene and the form and manner of a Renaissance madrigal comedy, intricate and reflecting both contemporary sounds and the style's distant origins. Salzman has succeeded in creating a smooth amalgam of virtuoso counterpoint and avant-garde effects that is fresh and provocative.... Ms Vasilevski's text, ranging from the personal to the very comic, is always the equal partner of the music with a flow that is natural and genuine... "Jukebox" is a brilliant entertainment in both the deepest and lightest sense of the word.

--Randy Woolf for *New Music Connoisseur*

New York, New York- On Wednesday, July 8 and Friday, July 10 at 8pm BAR LA BARCA, a unique double bill of "madrigal comedies" written 400 years apart will be performed by the **Western Wind Vocal Ensemble** at Brooklyn's BARGEMUSIC at Fulton Ferry Landing.

La Barca by Adriano Banchieri is one of the key works of early music theater that preceded opera, a raucous, rollicking work that takes place on the ferryboat connecting the island republic of Venice with Padova on the mainland. During the voyage a motley cast of characters –the boat captain, fishermen, courtesans, a music master, *davening* Jews and five singers representing Naples, Florence, Venice, and Bologna along with a drunken German – pass the time by flirting, drinking and singing songs by their favorite composers. It is all in the witty, bawdy and elegant spirit of late Renaissance Venice.

Commissioned as a companion piece by the Western Wind, *Jukebox* has a libretto by Valeria Vasilevski who also directs; the character-filled a capella score is by Eric Salzman. The work takes place in a New York bar during a huge storm and blackout. Six strangers – a bartender, a dancer, a rabbi, a nun, a poet and a utility worker -- have gathered to seek refuge, each with a story to tell about life and love. As the lights go out, the bartender lights candles and, in a manner that is both contemporary New York and yet harks back to the Renaissance, he evokes singular and touching tales from each of his unexpected visitors. In the end, when the lights are restored and the strangers depart, their voices blend just one last time in an evocation of the intoxication of wine and love,

Eric Salzman, one of the pioneers of the new music theater, has been working in the field since the 1960s. His *True Last Words of Dutch Schultz*, also with Vasilevski, was premiered and toured in the Netherlands and had its New York premiere at Symphony Space's Wall-to-Wall Opera in 2007. Salzman has worked in France, Québec, The Netherlands, Germany, Austria, Norway and elsewhere. He is Artistic Director of The Center for Contemporary Opera and his book on *The New Music Theater: Hearing the Body, Seeing the Voice* – with Thomas Desi – was recently published by Oxford University Press. His web site is <www.ericSalzman.com>. He is currently working on a program of Brecht songs and other music for voice, accordion and violins with singer Laila Salins and accordionist Bill Schimmel.

Valeria Vasilevski's theatrical roots date back to her original work with Jerzy Grotowski. She is well-known for her performance art, dance-theater, music theater and concert theater work. For 20 years she has collaborated with numerous new-music composers, creating new and original texts and extending the relationship between text and music. Like Mr. Salzman, she has written for the Yale Theater Review and is collaborating with him on *The System of the World*, based on 18th century scientific experiments, the world vision of Isaac Newton and the love affair of Voltaire and Mme de Chatelet.

The Western Wind, currently celebrating its 40th anniversary, embraces a repertory that includes a huge range of music from Renaissance motets to rock 'n' roll, from medieval carols to early American music to the avant garde. They have been extensively seen and heard on various media and a complete discography is available on their website <www.westernwind.org>. A CD of *Jukebox in the Tavern of Love* will be available shortly.

Bargemusic

BAR LA BARCA -- 2 Madrigal Comedies, 400 Years Apart

July 8 • Wednesday, 8 pm

July 10 • Friday, 8 pm

Western Wind Vocal Ensemble

Michele Kennedy, soprano

Laura Christian, soprano

Todd Frizzell, tenor

Richard Slade, tenor

Elliot Z. Levine, baritone

William Zukof, countertenor

Valeria Vasilevski, stage direction/librettist

Bargemusic
Fulton Ferry Landing
Brooklyn, NY 11201
Tickets: \$40, \$35, \$20
Reservations: 718.624.2083
<info@Bargemusic.org>

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