



staff photo by Octavio Garcia

I Musici, an Italian Baroque group composed of 11 string instruments and a harpsichord, delighted its audience Thursday night with a program of chamber music.

## I Musici gives taste of Baroque

by David Stevens  
Guest Reviewer

It was a delight for Texas A&M and the local community to have hosted 12 of Italy's most famous musicians in Rudder Auditorium Thursday night. I Musici, sponsored by MSC Opera and Performing Arts Society, played a fine program of chamber music. The group has long been a champion of Baroque chamber music and presented the delights of the Baroque period to its Texas A&M audience.

I Musici — Italian for "the musicians" — played their first public concert at the Academy of Saint Cecilia in 1952. The group was formed because students of the Academy wanted to

play chamber repertoire for their own pleasure. But soon after their first performance, the group already had toured most of Europe and within years had attracted listeners in Asia and the Americas.

The group still contains some of its original members. The ensemble contains six violinists, two violists, two cellists, one bassist and a harpsichordist. The group plays without a conductor, but does as well as most groups which have one.

Thursday night's concert included concertos by van Wassenaer, Tartini, Vivaldi and Bach. The first concerto by Count van Wassenaer was a special treat. The hypnotic and undulating textures were marvelous, and the two solo violinists spun sweetly above the concertino.

Tartini's "Concerto in A Major" was one of the most delightful pieces of the evening. Soloist Francesco Strano led the ensemble in the dancing, heroic music of the first and third movements. His ornaments and control of dynamics kept the music vital and interesting. Strano's passionate and full tone at the beginning of the second movement perfectly melted into the cadence of the movement. Throughout the evening, Strano's musicality was evident in his ensemble playing, especially when the full consort gave way to a thinner texture.

The next two concertos were equally well-played. Vivaldi's "Concerto in A Minor" offers solo parts for two violinists. These parts were executed by the concertmistress of the group, Pina Carmirelli, and Anna Maria Cotogni. In Bach's "Concerto in D Major" for three violins, Walter Gallozzi joined the two in a well-played piece.

The last listed selection — and the only classical piece in the program — was Mozart's "Divertimento in D Major," K.136. I Musici so entertained with their impeccable tone, buoyant tempos and apparent effortlessness that Mozart surely would have been pleased. The group returned to an appreciative audience and offered a rousing encore.

David Stevens is a lecturer in Humanities 201, Music Appreciation, at Texas A&M University.

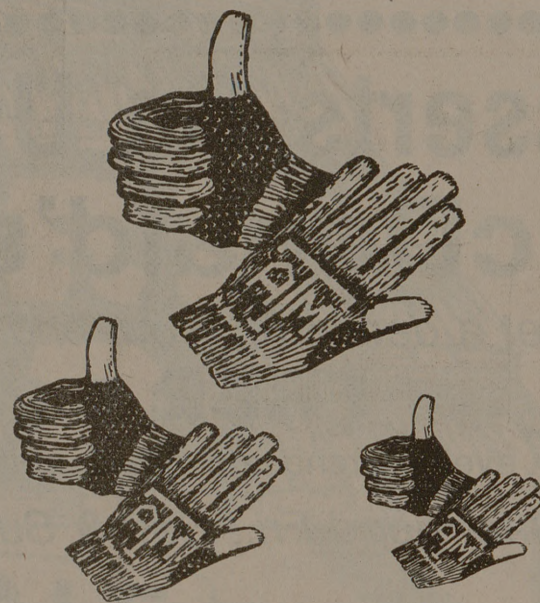


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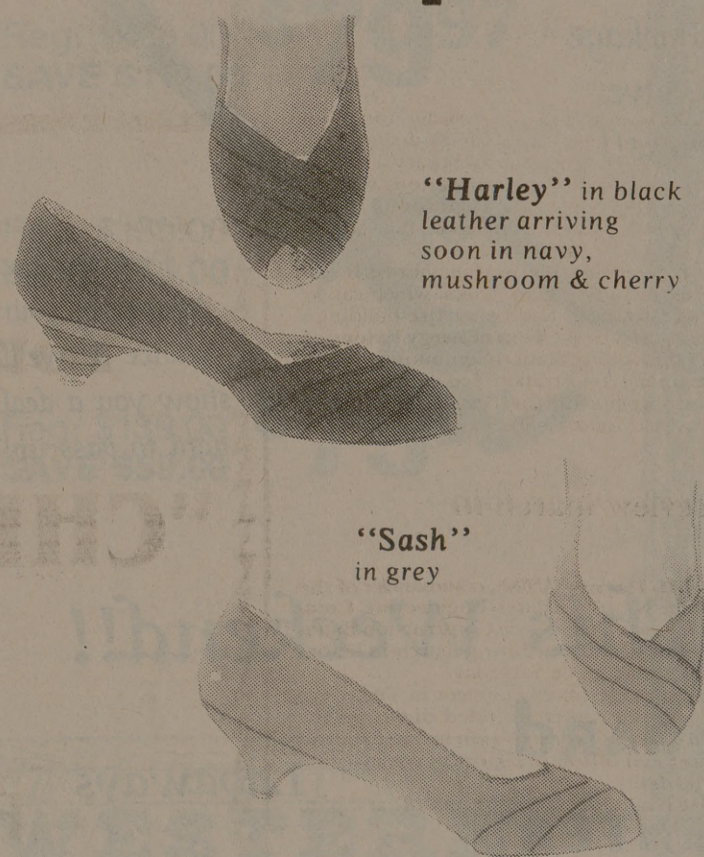


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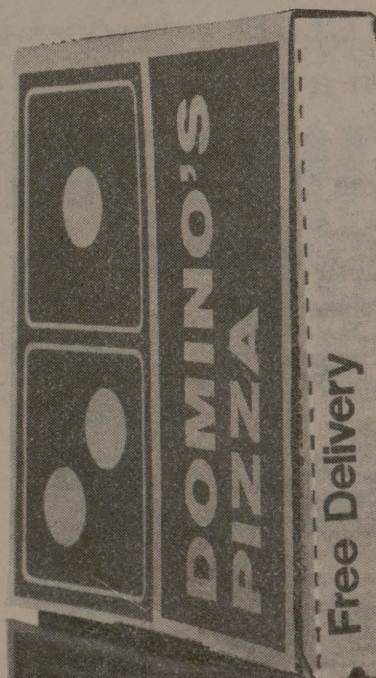
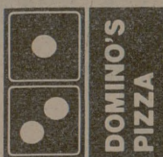
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