

WELF

BEGINNINGS

PROGRAMME

!f London
Handel
Festival

MARCH 23RD – APRIL 18TH

!f

WELCOME FROM THE DIRECTOR



Gregory Batsleer, Festival Director

Dame Emma Kirkby Patron
Ian Partridge CBE Patron

Laurence Cummings Musical Director
Adrian Butterfield Associate Director

Richard Hopkin Chairman London Handel Society

*Promoted by the London Handel Society Ltd
Charity number 269184*

On behalf of everyone at the London Handel Festival, welcome to the 2022 London Handel Festival: 'New Beginnings'

Across a jam-packed three and a half weeks in the early spring, we are excited to present a dazzling array of world-class artists and Handel-inspired performances and events for you to enjoy.

All London Handel Festival events are crafted to offer you a unique opportunity to explore the musical wonders of this great composer in iconic venues throughout one of the world's great cities. At the London Handel Festival our core mission is to share the inspiration of Handel and the wonders of his music as widely as possible. It is our profound belief that Handel's music has just as much power to impact in 2022 as when it was first performed.

In the spirit of Handel, I am thrilled that young talent is at the heart of our 2022 festival. On April 9th we launch a new long-term partnership with the Coram Foundation, the organisation formerly known as the Foundling Hospital where Handel was a governor, whose mission is to develop, deliver and promote best practice in the support of vulnerable children and young people.

Handel's entrepreneurial interest in championing all things new inspires the Festival's commitment to showcasing new commissions, and this year we present notable world premieres of works by Anna Clyne and Joss Campbell.

The London Handel Festival continues to be the home of the very best performances of Handel's own music. We are excited to welcome debut festival performances from world-renowned artists including Rachel Podger, Danielle De Niese, 12 Ensemble and many more. We continue to embrace the virtual space with special live online preview events. These events will offer our audiences the opportunity to meet our performers, hear from experts and become further immersed in the wonders of Handel.

As ever there are opportunities for people to get involved through our popular participation events. In particular we are delighted to see the return of our 'Come and Sing' days. Singing Handel's music in the company of a leading Handel expert is an opportunity not to be missed.

After a period of relative hibernation the London Handel Festival is well and truly back with a bang! Along with our amazing supporters and on behalf of all our artists we looking forward to welcoming you to our festival of New Beginnings, a journey of exploration and inspiration.

WELCOME

!f

March 23rd

March 27th

March 31st | April 1st | April 2nd

April 3rd

April 6th

April 10th

April 13th

April 18th

OPENING NIGHT CELEBRATION

A CELEBRITY RECITAL: LAURENCE CUMMINGS & DANIELLE DE NIESE

ACIS AND GALATEA

A CELEBRITY RECITAL: RACHEL PODGER & FRIENDS

FERNANDO, RE DI CASTIGLIA: A HANDEL PREMIERE

TO PLAY BEFORE THE KING

MUSIC FOR HOLY WEEK

LA RESURREZIONE

EVENTS

!f

BIOGRAPHY

LAURENCE CUMMINGS

MUSICAL DIRECTOR



"His orchestra is superb. This is both musical discovery and pure joy; this is how Handel should be."
Shirley Apthorp, *Financial Times*

Laurence Cummings is one of Britain's most exciting and versatile exponents of historical performance both as a conductor and a harpsichord player. He is currently Music Director of the Academy of Ancient Music, Musical Director of the London Handel Festival and Music Director of Orquestra Barroca Casa da Música in Porto. A noted authority on Handel, the Guardian has

written of him "he now ranks as one of the composer's best advocates in the world. Self-effacing on the podium, faithful above all to the score, he matches Handel's energy and invention with unmistakable lyricism, generosity and dignity."

Frequently praised for his stylish and compelling performances in the opera house, his career has taken him across Europe where he has conducted productions at houses including Opernhaus Zurich (Belshazzar, King Arthur), Theater an der Wien (Saul), Gothenburg Opera (Orfeo ed Euridice, Giulio Cesare, Alcina and Idomeneo). Théâtre du Châtelet (Saul) and Opera de Lyon (Messiah). In the UK he has been a regular at English National Opera (Radamisto, L'Incoronazione di Poppea, Semele, Messiah, Orfeo and The Indian Queen), Glyndebourne Festival Opera (Saul, Giulio Cesare and The Fairy Queen) and Garsington Opera (Vivaldi cycle: L'Incoronazione di Dario, L'Olympiade and La Verita in Cimento), as well as conducting at the Royal Opera House's Linbury Theatre (Berenice and Alceste), Opera North (L'Incoronazione di Poppea), Buxton International Festival (Tamerlano and Mozart's Lucio Silla) and for Opera GlassWorks (The Rake's Progress). The 2020/21 season saw his last edition of the Internationale Händel-Festspiele Göttingen, where he was Artistic Director for nine years.

Equally at home on the concert platform, he is regularly invited to conduct both period and modern instrument orchestras worldwide, including Academy of Ancient Music, Orchestra of the Age of

Enlightenment, The English Concert, Handel and Haydn Society Boston, Croatian Baroque Orchestra, La Scintilla Zurich, Juilliard 415, Zurich Chamber Orchestra, Musikcollegium Winterthur, St Paul Chamber Orchestra, Basel Chamber Orchestra, Wroclaw Baroque Orchestra, Moscow Chamber Orchestra, Scottish Chamber Orchestra, Washington National Symphony Orchestra, Kansas City Symphony,

Frankfurt Radio Symphony, Jerusalem Symphony and in the UK with Royal Northern Sinfonia, Hallé Orchestra, Bournemouth Symphony, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, Ulster Orchestra and Royal Scottish National Orchestra. His recordings include discs with Emma Kirkby and Royal Academy of Music on BIS, Angelika Kirschlager and the Basel Chamber Orchestra for Sony BMG, Maurice Steger and The English Concert for Harmonia Mundi and Ruby Hughes and the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment on Chandos, as well as a series of live opera and concert performances recorded at the Göttingen International Handel Festival and released on Accent. He has also released numerous solo harpsichord recital and chamber music recordings for Naxos. He was an organ scholar at Christ Church Oxford where he graduated with first class honours. Until 2012 he was Head of Historical Performance at the Royal Academy of Music which led to both baroque and classical orchestras forming part of the established curriculum. He is now the William Crotch Professor of Historical Performance.

A PERFORMER'S PERSPECTIVE BY TATTY THEO

Tatty Theo

Director of The Brook Street Band

“Viva il caro Sassone!” – as the Venetians showered Handel with praise in 1709, they set the scene for a lifelong appreciation of Handel’s music.

The love of music is a deeply personal thing, and, in my experience, few people admit to having a ‘favourite’ composer. But, as you’re reading this in the London Handel Festival programme, I know I’m amongst kindred spirits, in a ‘safe’ space to talk about my love of Handel’s music.

I grew up surrounded with music, concerts featuring my baroque cellist uncle Anthony Pleeth shaping my childhood. Handel featured, alongside music by Bach, Vivaldi, and the usual suspects, but I don’t recall

liking Handel’s music above that of other baroque composers, until one experience, which was to shape and define the direction of my musical life. It was August 5th, 1986, and I was at a performance of Solomon at the Proms; I was absolutely riveted as the piece unfolded, probably the first time I’d heard Handel’s music performed live on such a large scale before. My standing gallery ticket provided the perfect place to dance around, centring myself in the sound, becoming a part of it. I remember not wanting it to end – my mind was suddenly opened to the genius of Handel, expressed not just through music, but with incredibly powerful texts too.

That was my lightbulb moment, when I knew that Handel was going to shape my musical life. I’ve spent the intervening years and majority of my career looking at the world through Handelian lenses, drawn to European locations connected with him, delving into psychogeography to diminish the centuries between us, trying to bring Handel within ‘touching’ distance. There have been wonderful, privileged moments, such as visiting 25 Brook Street before its development as a museum. The power was off, layers of paint were stripped back, floorboards lifted, all to see what eighteenth-century colours might remain under the subsequent decorative schemes. Fanciful perhaps, but I could imagine Handel had not long left the shadows of the building.

But, if I really want to understand Handel better, there’s no greater source of joy

than performing his music. As a bass line player, I sit in a privileged place within the musical texture, supporting and shaping the harmonic direction of the music, providing the framework on which the melodies rely. I’m never alone, always part of the continuo team, as Handel himself was when he directed from the harpsichord, experiencing the music from his perspective. There’s something about a Handelian bass line, perfectly crafted, so stimulating and satisfying to play. I’ve rarely experienced one that fails to deliver. Of all the instruments Handel played, cello certainly wasn’t one of them, but as a performer he composes instinctively for the instrument, also demonstrated so well in the many solos (obligati) composed for the instrument that you’ll hear throughout his larger-scaled works, often partnering the soaring cello line with the voice.

What is it though about performing Handel that connects so deeply for me? Of course, it’s a huge privilege to play and experience music by a wide variety of composers, and Bach and so many others are high up my wish-list. But there is something about Handel’s music that often takes me to a different dimension. After all this time perhaps it’s the familiar language, his quirks, and re-heated musical lines akin to hearing a favourite story told by a loved one for the umpteenth time, related slightly differently each time but providing continuity and stability in our lives.

I’ve been lucky enough to perform with The Brook Street Band in some amazing

places and festivals, often with personal resonances such as Wigmore Hall, Snape Maltings and Dartington, all places connected with my musician grandparents. But there have also been stand-out moments when I really feel a connection with Handel in an unexpected place, such as the private performance at home for Stanley and Julie Sadie, their friends sitting on the stairs to hear us, Stanley the great Handel scholar sharing his personal insights about the music. It's often these small intimate performances where you can really connect with your audience that produce these spine-tingling moments. It's also a huge privilege to share my love for Handel's music through BSB's love: Handel festival (established in 2017), and working with young people, online and now again thankfully in-person, seeing the powerful effect his music has on a new generation of music lovers.

I'm lucky that Handel provided rich raw material to work with; there's so much about his music and life to find interesting and thought-provoking. I find him a deeply compelling character with drive and determination shown throughout his life. Handel managed to avoid so many of the constrictions of church or state, that so often shaped the musical lives of his contemporaries, a musical problem-solver adept at finding a creative solution to whatever challenges he encountered. Take his time in Italy for example. Thwarted by a papal decree banning opera, Handel produced both religious and secular music, dramatic and operatic in all but name. Likewise, when Italian opera

proved financially draining for Handel in London, he turned his energies to his own genre of English oratorio, dramatic, compelling, 'operatic', AND with familiar, understandable texts...to huge critical acclaim. I love the fact that Handel, a boy from a small German town, managed to change the course of British musical history, showing creative flair and entrepreneurship by combining his rich musical experiences in Europe, evolving his own unique voice in England, and earning his deserved place in our collective musical hearts. Every choral society around the country has Handel to thank for mainstays of their repertoire including Solomon, Samson, Messiah, and Israel in Egypt.

7PM - WEDNESDAY, MARCH 23RD

ONLINE PREVIEW EVENT: MARCH 22ND

OPENING NIGHT CELEBRATION

Academy of Ancient Music
Performers

Laurence Cummings
Musical Director

National Youth Choir
of Great Britain

Chamber Choir
Performers

PROGRAMME

G.F. Handel	Zadok the Priest HWV 258
G.F. Handel	Music for the Royal Fireworks HWV 351
G.F. Handel	As Pants the Heart HWV 251
G.F. Handel	The Cuckoo Concerto HWV 295
G.F. Handel	Concerto Grosso Op.6 No. 11 HWV 329
Anna Clyne	'In Thy Beauty' (world premiere)
G.F. Handel	The King Shall Rejoice HWV 260

ABOUT

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The massed forces of the Academy of Ancient Music and the National Youth Choir of Great Britain come together to perform some of Handel's most magisterial and triumphant music, conducted by one of the world's pre-eminent Handelian conductors, LHF Musical Director Laurence Cummings.

The programme includes some of Handel's most popular works as well as the world premiere of Anna Clyne's 'In thy beauty'. Clyne's interpretation of a psalm text often associated with Handel's Coronation Anthems keeps the inspiration of Handel alive today.



VENUE - ST GEORGE'S, HANOVER SQUARE
LENGTH - 1 HR 50 MINS (INCL. ONE INTERVAL)

TICKETS - £75* £55 £45 £30 £15
*(*ticket includes invitation to the opening night reception in Mayfair)*

PROGRAMME NOTE

ZADOK THE PRIEST HWV 258

MUSIC FOR THE ROYAL FIREWORKS HWV 351

Overture (Adagio – Allegro – Lentement – Allegro)

Bourrée

La Paix (Largo alla siciliana)

La Réjouissance (Allegro)

Menuets I and II

ST GEORGE'S, HANOVER SQUARE

Musical Director and acclaimed Handalian Laurence Cummings directs the amassed forces of the Academy of Ancient Music and the National Youth Choir of Great Britain in our opening night celebration. London Handel Festival 2022 opens with a bang. The massed forces will perform some of Handel's most magisterial and triumphant music. As well as some well known Handel favourite the programme also features the world premiere of Anna Clyne's 'in thy beauty'. Anna's interpretation of a text often associated with Handel's Coronation Anthems keeps the inspiration of Handel alive today.

AS PANTS THE HART HWV 251

ORGAN CONCERTO IN F MAJOR 'THE CUCKOO AND THE NIGHTINGALE', HWV295

Larghetto

Allegro

Larghetto

Allegro

CONCERTO GROSSO CONCERTO GROSSO OP 6 NO 11 HWV 296

Andante larghetto e staccato

Allegro

Largo, e staccato

Andante

Allegro

THE KING SHALL REJOICE HWV 260

In 1710, George von Braunschweig-Lüneburg and his wife Caroline von Ansbach found a friend in his father's new Kappellmeister, also called George. A decade or so later, the couple were such faithful patrons that they even entrusted their daughters' musical education to this man. It is little surprise, therefore, that when George succeeded his father as king in 1727, he should want Handel to write his coronation music. Handel himself had just become a British subject, and there was no better way for him to show his patriotism to his adopted homeland. One or two noses might have been put out of joint, however: by rights, the composition should have fallen to Maurice Greene as the new head of the Chapel Royal; and Handel rejected

the words sent him by the body of bishops, remarking, 'I have read my Bible very well, and shall chuse for myself.'

The coronation service was not a slick affair. In the first place, it had to be postponed for a week because of fears that exceptionally high tides might flood Westminster Hall. The printed order of service differed from the actual service, and Handel's anthems probably did not appear where they might have been expected. The Archbishop of Canterbury noted, in his service booklet, that the choir missed out an anthem at one point, and that Handel's first anthem was 'all in confusion: All irregular in the Music.' The Chapel Royal had been left with the less experienced choirboys, since half of the choristers had left over the summer because their voices had broken. They were on either side of the altar, which must have been a conducting nightmare. However, the music itself was stunning, and Handel's anthems have been performed at every coronation since.

The first anthem, Zadok the Priest, is richly scored, for choir, three trumpets, kettle drums, two oboes, two bassoons, three violin parts, violas, cellos, basses and organ. It has one of the most magical openings of all, and, as one Handel scholar put it, 'the best C natural in music' (you will hear it in the bass line). The first 22 bars gradually build up to an enormous choir-burst to announce Zadok and Nathan's anointing of Solomon, a figure who represented ideal kingship. This is followed by a courtly minuet, to suggest rejoicing, but also majesty. The second

section, 'And all the People,' is a dance in three-time, to suggest rejoicing. The third and final section has choral shouts of 'God save the King', accompanied by trumpets and drums, which are interspersed with more florid sections for the 'Alleluja, Amen', accompanied by the strings.

The muddle that the Archbishop of Canterbury noted affected not just Zadok, but also The King shall Rejoice: the change in order meant that some musicians started this, while others played Let thy Hand be Strengthened. The King shall Rejoice, like Zadok in the triumphantly joyful key of D, opens with a lively orchestral prelude to the choir's rejoicing. There follows a graceful minuet with two themes that represent gladness and salvation. The choir then sings of glory, assisted by violins whose semiquaver motif they would pick up as the angels in Messiah some years later; this perhaps emphasises the divine origin of the king's glory. 'Thou hast prevented' is the first of two fugues, the other being an intricate 'Alleluja' with a splendidly grand finish.

If the coronation could have gone down in Handel's imaginary Book of Fiascos I Have Composed For, then so too could the firework display for which he composed music in 1749: it rained; the pavilion containing the fireworks itself caught fire, and one of the designers, Giovanni Servandoni (who had worked with Handel as a set painter), drew his sword in a tantrum. However, the other nine hours of spectacle were a success. The public might not have been particularly interested in the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle,

the cause of the celebrations, but they did like an entertainment. The rehearsal for the occasion, in the Vauxhall Pleasure Gardens, attracted such a crowd that traffic came to a standstill even on London Bridge. The fireworks were heralded by over 100 canon, and a new suite by Handel accompanied the visual delights. Handel wrote the Fireworks for a massive wind band, including 24 oboes, 12 bassoons, 9 horns and a serpent. He used various other pieces for inspiration – Telemann's *Musique de Table*, and his own *Occasional Oratorio*, for example – but, as usual, he turned his borrowings into something rather special. Handel repeated the Fireworks later that year in a performance for the Foundling Hospital, rescoring it for the more usual mix of strings and wind.

The Cannons (or Chandos) Anthems were written for James Brydges, Earl of Carnarvon, and subsequently Duke of Chandos. Brydges used the wealth he amassed from his activities as the army's Paymaster General to build a grand house (designed by Gibbs) at Little Stanmore in Middlesex, and to rebuild the church of St Lawrence, next door. Brydges, perhaps aspiring to imitate the Italian nobility, filled his house with magnificent artwork and employed musicians to provide music for religious services and for entertainment. He took up Handel as composer-in-residence at Cannons, 1717-8; as well as producing *Esther* and *Acis and Galatea* (which you can hear on 31 March), Handel wrote a number of anthems, including *As pants the hart*.

As pants the hart is taken from Psalm 42,

although the first line departs a little from the King James Version, being re-worded by John Arbuthnot. It starts in E minor, which represents hope after suffering: this Psalm is in the Easter liturgy, a time when Christ's suffering turns into hope for mankind. The opening chorus is fugal, with lots of suspensions; another subject is introduced with 'so longs my soul'. The oboe is joined by a bassoon for extra richness and plaintiveness, and this is particularly so in the soprano air 'Tears are my daily food', with its dotted-quaver/ semiquaver droplets and insistent questions of 'where is now thy God?' This ends on an imperfect cadence, ready to lead into 'Now when I think upon'. This *accompagnato* could be plucked straight out of Venice, its violin arpeggios being something Vivaldi might have written – but the tenor takes us into a more positive place, for he has led the multitude to God, and this is rewarded with a joyful G major chorus. The soul is still doubting, which it does in a sombre sarabande in the unsettling key of B minor. The tenor dismisses this disquiet with an exhortation to trust in God: the running bass line is not dissimilar to Bach's 'Ich folge dir gleichfalls' from the John Passion, and is a good reminder that both Bach and Handel were from the same musical and liturgical tradition. The tenor is joined by the other singers, and the work ends with hope, although it has not been able yet to shake off the minor key. Cannons proved to be unsustainable to keep up, and it was pulled down soon after Brydges' death: although St Lawrence still stands, its music is the only thing of the house that survives.

Both concerti in tonight's performance were for originally for organ, and rescored as concerti grossi for his set of Twelve Grand Concertos of 1739. The organ concerti themselves evolved from Handel's improvisations during the intervals to his oratorios in the 1730s. The concerto in A major was first performed at Alexander's Feast in March 1739, and the one in F major at the premier of Israel in Egypt in April. The concerti proved immensely popular: as well as becoming two of his twelve concerti grossi by autumn, Handel arranged them for keyboard to be published by John Walsh the following year. The concerto in F major, in the Corellian slow-fast-slow-fast format, gets its name from the second movement, for reasons that will be obvious. The A major concerto begins with a French overture which alternates with thoughtful musings from the solo instruments. The following movements contrast in tempo and mood, ending with an allegro that can lift any mood.

ZADOK THE PRIEST

Zadok the Priest and Nathan the Prophet anointed Solomon King.
And all the People rejoiced and said,
'God save the King! Long live the King! May the King live forever! Alleluja, Amen.'

Cannons Anthem no.6, HWV251b:

As pants the hart

Sonata: [Larghetto]—Allegro

Chorus: As pants the hart for cooling streams, so longs my soul for thee, O God.

Soprano: Tears are my daily food, while thus they say:
where is now thy God?

Tenor: Now when I think thereupon, I pour out my heart
by myself, for I went with the multitude and brought them
out into the house of God.

Chorus: In the voice of praise and thanksgiving among
such as keep holy day.

Soprano and tenor: Why so full of grief, O my soul?
Why so disquieted within me?

Tenor and Chorus: Put thy trust in God, for I will
praise him.

After Psalm 42

Handel – The King Shall Rejoice HWV 260

The King shall rejoice in thy strength, oh Lord!
Exceeding glad shall he be of thy salvation.
Glory and great worship hast thou laid upon him.
Thou hast prevented him with the blessings of goodness,
and hast set a crown of pure gold upon his head.
Alleluja.

PERFORMER'S NOTE - ANNA CLYNE

I'm delighted and honoured to have the opportunity to write a new work for the London Handel Festival and to re-imagine Purcell's text for Haydn's Coronation Anthem, My Heart is Inditing, created for the 1685 coronation of King James II. It's been a new experience to write for a Baroque orchestra - keeping the idiosyncrasies of the individual instruments in mind during the compositional process. I've also enjoyed further exploring writing

for the voice since writing two new vocal works for the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, and as I begin work on a new opera that explores the inner world of the great American poet, Emily Dickinson.

SINGERS:

Tianrun Xu

SOPRANO

Susanna Alsey

Freya Barker

Rachael Best-Babayaju

Elizabeth Kallumpuram

Letty Mader

Clara Phelps

Nadia Traynor-Herenda

BASS

Ben Buckner

Kevin John

John Scholey

Edward Walters

ALTO

Anna Disley-Simpson

Carys Barnes

Eve Doyle

Izzy Jackson

Olivia Shotton

Kit Thickett

TENOR

James Botcher

James Micklethwaite

Mylan Richmond

PERFORMER BIOGRAPHIES

ACADEMY OF ANCIENT MUSIC

The Academy of Ancient Music is an orchestra with a worldwide reputation for excellence in baroque and classical music. Using historically-informed techniques, period-specific instruments and original sources, we bring music vividly to life in committed, vibrant performances.

Established nearly 50 years ago to make the first British recordings of orchestral works using original instruments, AAM has released more than 300 albums to date, collecting countless accolades including Classic BRIT, Gramophone and Edison awards. We now record on our own-label AAM Records and are proud to be the most listened-to period-instrument orchestra online, with over one million monthly listeners on Spotify.

Beyond the concert hall, AAM is committed to nurturing the audiences, artists and arts managers of the future through our innovative education initiative AAMplify. Working in collaboration with tertiary institutions across the UK, we engage the next generation of period-instrumentalists with side-by-side sessions, masterclasses and other opportunities designed to bridge the gap from the conservatoire to the profession, safeguarding the future of historical performance.

AAM is Associate Ensemble at the Barbican Centre, London and the Teatro San Cassiano, Venice; Orchestra-in-Residence at the University of Cambridge, Milton Abbey International Summer Music Festival and The Apex, Bury St Edmunds; and Research Partner to the University of Oxford.

The 2021–22 season sees Laurence Cummings join the orchestra as Music Director.

Visit www.aam.co.uk to find out more.

NATIONAL YOUTH CHAMBER CHOIR OF GREAT BRITAIN

The National Youth Chamber Choir is made up of outstanding young singers from the National Youth Choir of Great Britain and the current NYCGB Fellowship. The members, aged 18-25, are typically

enrolled in music further education or at the outset of their singing careers. They meet throughout the year for performances, broadcasts, recording sessions and education events, both across the UK and abroad.

Recent performance highlights include Mozart's

Requiem with David Bates and Britten Sinfonia at BBC Proms, performance of Lillie Harris'

Christmas Silence during the VOCES8 Live from London Festival as part of The King's Singers broadcast, and a concert at Snape Maltings. Earlier performances have included a televised appearance from Amiens Cathedral in the presence of HRH Prince William

and other dignitaries to mark the end of World War 1, a performance with the Tallis Scholars at Saffron Hall, performances of Jessica Curry's

She Who as part of the New Music Biennial 2019 (PRS Foundation initiative) at the Southbank Centre, and subsequent recording and release on NMC Recordings. Other recording projects include works with DCINY at Abbey Roads Studios and Benji Merrison at Air Recording studio London, a broadcast on Heart Radio and an appearance on BBC Radio 3's 'In-tune'.

ANNA CLYNE

London-born Anna Clyne is a GRAMMY-nominated composer of acoustic and electro-acoustic music. Described as a “composer of uncommon gifts and unusual methods” in a New York Times profile and as “fearless” by NPR, Clyne is one of the most acclaimed and in-demand composers of her generation, often embarking on collaborations with innovative choreographers, visual artists, filmmakers, and musicians.

Several upcoming projects explore Clyne’s fascination with visual arts, including *Color Field* for the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, inspired by the artwork of Mark Rothko, and *Between the Rooms*, a film with choreographer Kim Brandstrup and LA Opera. Her elegy *Within Her Arms* opens the New York Philharmonic’s 2021-2022 season, the orchestra’s first full New York program since the pandemic began. Other recent and upcoming premieres include *PIVOT*, which opened the 2021 Edinburgh International Festival; *A Thousand Mornings* for the Fidelio Trio; a saxophone concerto for Jess Gilliam; *Strange Loops* for the Orchestra of St. Luke’s; *Fractured Time*-- for the Kaleidoscope Ensemble; *Overflow* for wind ensemble, inspired by the poetry of Emily Dickinson, composed for the Scottish Chamber Orchestra; *Woman Holding a Balance*, a film collaboration with Orchestra of St. Luke’s and artist Jyll Bradley; and *In the Gale* for cello and bird song, created with and performed by Yo-Yo Ma.

In October 2020, AVIE Records released *Mythologies*, a portrait album featuring Clyne’s works *Masquerade*, *This Midnight Hour*, *The Seamstress*, *Night Ferry*, and *<<rewind<<*, recorded live by the BBC Symphony Orchestra with soloists Jennifer Koh and Irene Buckley and conductors Marin Alsop, Sakari Oramo, Andrew Litton, and Andre’ de Ridder. Clyne composed a trilogy of Beethoven-inspired works that premiered in 2020 for Beethoven’s 250th anniversary: *Stride* for string orchestra, inspired by Beethoven’s *Sonata Pathe´ tique*, premiered by the Australian Composers Orchestra; *Breathing Statues*, premiered by the Calidore String Quartet; and *Shorthand* for solo cello and string quintet premiered by The Knights at Caramoor and in a version for cello and string orchestra by the Orlando Philharmonic Orchestra. Other recent premieres include *Sound and Fury*, first performed by the Scottish Chamber Orchestra and Pekka Kuusisto in Edinburgh; and her Rumi-inspired cello concerto, *DANCE*, premiered with Inbal Segev at the Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music, led by Cristian Ma?celaru. *DANCE* was recorded for AVIE Records by Segev and the London Philharmonic Orchestra, led by Marin Alsop, and has garnered more than six million plays on Spotify.

In July 2019, Clyne wrote and arranged music from Nico’s *Marble Index* for The Nico Project, a theatrical work presented by the Manchester International Festival. Clyne has been commissioned by such renowned organizations as Carnegie Hall, Houston Ballet, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and the Southbank Centre.

From 2010–2015, Clyne served as a Mead Composer-in-Residence for the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Music Director Riccardo Muti lauded Clyne as “an artist who writes from the heart, who defies categorization, and who reaches across all barriers and boundaries. Her compositions are meant to be played by great musicians and heard by enthusiastic audiences no matter what their background.” She has also been in residence with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, L’Orchestre national d’I^le-de- France, Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music, and Berkeley Symphony. Clyne serves as the mentor composer for the Orchestra of St Luke’s DeGaetano Composer Institute. Clyne is currently serving as Associate Composer with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, a three-year residency lasting through the 2021-2022 season. The residency includes plans for a series of new works commissioned over three years.

Clyne’s music is represented on AVIE Records, Cantaloupe Music, Cedille, MajorWho Media, New Amsterdam, Resound, Tzadik, and VIA labels. Her *Prince of Clouds* was nominated for a 2015 GRAMMY Award for Best Classical Composition and *Night Ferry* was nominated the same year for Best Engineered Album (Classical). Clyne’s music is published exclusively by Boosey & Hawkes.

5PM - SUNDAY, MARCH 27TH

A CELEBRITY RECITAL WITH LAURENCE CUMMINGS & DANIELLE DE NIESE

Danielle de Niese
Soprano

Laurence Cummings
Harpsichord & Organ



ABOUT

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As a master songwriter, Handel's ability to conjure gorgeous melody from seeming simplicity is part of his great genius. In this recital, internationally acclaimed soprano Danielle de Niese joins London Handel Festival's Musical Director Laurence Cummings for this must-see event. Together they will perform a selection of arias from across Handel's vast operatic repertoire plus some lesser-known gems and maybe a surprise or two. The programme promises to inspire and delight.



OPERA'S COOLEST SOPRANO

- NEW YORK TIMES

VENUE - ST GEORGE'S, HANOVER SQUARE
LENGTH - 1 HR 45 MIN (INCL. ONE INTERVAL)

TICKETS - £45 £35 £25 £15

REPERTOIRE

Rinaldo

Lascia ch'io pianga
Vo' fa guerra

Suite No.7 in G minor HWV432

Ouverture
Andante
Allegro
Sarabande
Gigue
Passacaille: Chaconne

Teseo

Dolce Riposo
Morirò, ma vendicata

Semele

O Sleep why dost thou leave me? Myself I shall adore

Suite No.5 in E major HWV 430

Prelude
Allemande
Courante
Air and Doubles

Giulio Cesare

Piangerò
Da Tempeste

PROGRAMME NOTE

This recital features some of Handel's most memorable female characters, two of them from his very first London opera, *Rinaldo*. Although named after an eponymous hero, the drama is – if not actually then nearly – stolen by the heroine Almirena and the anti-heroine Armida. In *Rinaldo*, the Saracen

king Argantes and his lover, the sorceress Armida, plan to kidnap the Christian hero

Rinaldo by kidnapping his lover, Almirena, the daughter of the Christian commander. Inevitably, Argantes rather falls for Almirena, and Armida (despite herself developing a soft spot for *Rinaldo*) is outraged. In 'Vo'fa guerra', from Act II, she threatens vengeance upon him. The excitement of this aria was increased at certain points by unleashing the harpsichord – in the original performance, Mr Handel himself.

'Lascia ch'io pianga' is (I wonder) one of Handel's most famous arias. Sung by Almirena, who bewails her fate having been captured by Armida, Handel took it pretty well wholesale from his first oratorio, *Il Trionfo del Tempo e del Disinganno* (1707). The aria is a series of succinct phrases punctuated by pauses: these have great pathetic effect, and highlight Almirena's poise.

Handel's second witch-opera was *Teseo*, composed a year after *Rinaldo*. This was based on a French libretto, and retained the five-act structure of French opera. Like *Rinaldo*, it was a spectacular – in this case, however, the spectacle stretched a little too far and the manager of the Queen's Theatre, Haymarket, Owen Swiney, absconded during its run in early 1713, leaving singers and scenery unpaid. Like *Rinaldo*, too, the music was no less spectacular than the staging. With *Medea*, Handel had the opportunity to break – or at least to bend – baroque formulae. *Medea's*

first entrance is a fine example. 'Dolce riposo' is a da capo aria, but its B section is recitative, not aria, and the returning A section breaks off mid-way. *Medea's* troubles are with her from the start.

Various of Handel's opera arias contrast overwhelming despair with feisty displays of indomitability, but they are usually within the da capo format, with an A section of despond and a B section of vengeance, and we will hear Cleopatra's version later this concert. But in 'Morirò', *Medea* swings between despair and vengeance within the A section, and this is significant, for *Medea* was controlled by her passions – she, a witch, was an extreme version of Woman. The B section, she does not wait for the orchestra but immediately starts spitting out threats with such fierceness that her return to despair comes as a surprise, even though we know that the A section must return.

Semele was written (in a month) for the 1744 Lent oratorio season. The eponymous role was taken by Elisabeth Duparc, 'La Francesina', Handel's leading soprano in the late 1730s and early 1740s. She was noted for her vocal agility rather than the beauty of her voice, and *Semele* would have shown off her strengths admirably. In the drama, *Semele* wants more and more from her lover Jupiter, until an inevitable disaster strikes. The first of our two arias sees *Semele* awaking in the love-nest created for her by Jupiter. Everything about this aria suggests sleep – the soporific prelude, *Semele's* yawning entrance, the downward direction of the lines. In the third Act, Juno appears to *Semele* as her sister and persuades her

to get Jupiter to appear to her as himself (murder most horrid). 'Myself I shall adore', one of the most coquettish of all Handel's arias, is a result of Juno's playing on Semele's vanity.

We return to the opera's heyday of the 1720s for our final arias, from *Giulio Cesare* (1724).

Cleopatra's game of diplomatic chess has been checked by Tolomeo's apparent assassination of Cesare and his capture of Cleopatra. Crowing, he leaves her locked in a cell. Cleopatra's response shows Handel's genius. Its basis on the simplest of musical phrases belies its rhetorical detail and structure which give it both its dramatic tightness and pathos. Handel chose E major perhaps because this key represents (as his erstwhile friend Mason wrote) 'severing of the body from the soul'. The terrific B section is Cleopatra's vow of vengeance, and shows her regal backbone. Fortunately, Cesare has not been murdered, and Tolomeo has been killed in battle. In being released and reunited with Cesare, Cleopatra's heart bursts – in E major, again. The furious semiquavers in 'Da tempeste' show the buffeting of the winds and show off the immense vocal dexterity of the prima donna, who, in 1724, was the great Francesca Cuzzoni.

Handel's first set of harpsichord suites were published in 1720, partly to prevent pirate editions (or 'surreptitious and incorrect copies' as Handel called them), such as that prepared by his own publisher, John Walsh. This collection was hugely popular, but,

apart from a second volume – rather has already published in 1732 – Handel did not fulfil his promise to 'publish more' harpsichord music; a shame, for the 1720 set is full of wonderful music. The prelude to the Suite in G minor is an opera's overture, with a grave opening contrasted with a dramatic allegro. The Andante carries on in opera's vein, with a carefully-wrought duet between treble and bass lines. A brisk and muscular courante follows; this leads to a Sarabande whose opening rhythmic pattern will put you in mind immediately of 'Lascia ch'io pianga'. The Sarabande's Stoicism is dismissed by a cantering Gigue, the usual dance to end a suite. But it does not finish here, for Handel adds an extra movement, a grand Passacaille. This is a set of variations on a ground (two of which are themselves giges), and it points to the improvisatory beginnings of Handel's keyboard music, and hints at what an incredible improviser Handel must have been. The Passacaille is a thrilling end to this glorious suite. The grandeur of the E major suite's opening calls to mind the first prelude in Bach's second set of the 48: like Handel, Bach was a great keyboard improviser. The Courante has a shimmering bass line and the most remarkable chromaticism, such as the occasional cheeky D natural blue note. The final movement, an Air and Doubles (variations) is the famous 'Harmonious Blacksmith' – although it is doubtful that any blacksmith, harmonious or otherwise, was involved.

PERFORMER BIOGRAPHY

DANIELLE DE NIESE

Soprano

Danielle de Niese has been hailed as “opera’s coolest soprano” by New York Times

Magazine. A multi-faceted artist, de Niese has gained wide recognition for her superb stagecraft, assured singing, and her ability to communicate on every level. She regularly appears on the world’s most prestigious opera and concert stages and is a prolific recording artist, TV personality and philanthropist.

Engagements in the 2021/22 season include global appearances on the concert stage, with the National Philharmonic Orchestra of Russia at Moscow International Performing Arts Centre and ‘A Musical Celebration’ Gala with Sir Bryn Terfel at Glyndebourne Opera House. This Spring, she will debut at the Bolshoi Opera, Moscow in a Gala concert with Placido Domingo and also give a recital alongside Laurence Cummings at London’s Handel Festival. De Niese has made and presented multiple films for the BBC, and most recently completed filming a feature film of Poulenc’s one-woman opera, *La Voix Humaine* alongside Sir Antonio Pappano and the Royal Opera House Orchestra, which will premiere in Spring 2022 on BBC Two along with an international cinematic release.

Recent highlights include her critically acclaimed debut at the Edinburgh International Festival with the highly anticipated Rodgers and Hammerstein musical *A Grand Night of Singing*, return to The Royal Opera House as Musetta *La bohème*, Ciboulette in Offenbach’s *In the Market for Love* with Glyndebourne as part of the ‘outdoor opera’ series, a triumphant return to Los Angeles Opera to sing the title role in the world premiere of Matthew Aucoin’s new opera *Eurydice*, and a hugely acclaimed debut on the stage of Teatro alla Scala in Milan, with her signature role of Cleopatra in Robert Carsen’s new production of *Giulio Cesare*. De Niese was also invited in 2020 to return to Teatro alla Scala as Poppea Agrippina and to debut as Blanche in Barrie Kosky’s new production of *Dialogues des Carmélites* at the Glyndebourne Festival. De Niese as also returned to Lyric Opera of Chicago as Musetta *La bohème* in Richard Jones’ acclaimed production, starred as Norina in Laurent Pelly’s production of *Don Pasquale* at La Monnaie - which was broadcast worldwide on Mezzo - and made her role debut as Cendrillon at Glyndebourne in a new production by Fiona Shaw, which was globally streamed and released on DVD by OPUS Arte. De Niese also made a hugely successful West End debut as Aldonza and Dulcinea in *Man of La Mancha* alongside Kelsey Grammar at the London Coliseum - the first London production in 50 years.

Other recent engagements include a sensational debut as Hanna Glawari with Opera Australia in a new production of *The Merry Widow* - first presented

in Melbourne, and reopening in Sydney with a gala performance on New Year’s Eve; a return to Royal Opera House where she sang her first Musetta to huge public and critical acclaim; Norina *Don Pasquale* at Wiener Staatsoper; and the hugely successful *Wonderful Town* with Sir Simon Rattle and the London Symphony Orchestra, which was subsequently released on CD and for which she was nominated for the Opus Klassik Female Artist of the Year. Concert appearances include successful solo tours in the Middle East and Asia; an opera gala with the RTE National Symphony Orchestra; headlining the BBC Biggest Weekend at Scone Palace in Perth; and a chamber music evening curated by De Niese - part of the reopening of the Queen Elisabeth Hall at the Southbank Centre where, together with her guests Menahem Pressler, Sir James Galway, Mark Simpson, and the Navarra String Quartet she performed music by Roussel, Schubert and Chausson. On the recital platform she appeared at the Cheltenham Festival in their 75th anniversary season.

Further successes include a double header for the BBC Proms, singing at the Royal Albert Hall’s Last Night of the Proms opposite Jonas Kaufmann - broadcast worldwide - and at Proms in the Park in Hyde Park, as well as appearances at the Ravinia Festival in Chicago, gala concerts with the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra, and in St Petersburg at ‘Classics at the Palace Square’. Audiences in the UK have heard her in recital with Julius Drake at the Barbican, the Snape Proms and at

the Birmingham Conservatoire as part of the Celebrity Recital Series. Her operatic engagements included creating the lead role of Roxanne Coss for the world premiere of Jimmy López's *Bel Canto* at Lyric Opera of Chicago conducted by Sir Andrew Davis, her role debut as Donna Elvira *Don Giovanni* with Semperoper Dresden, Norina *Don Pasquale* in her company debut with Wiener Staatsoper, Adina *L'elisir d'amore* at the Opera National du Rhin, Rodelinda and *Poppea Agrippina* at Theater an der Wien, and the new production of *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* as Rosina at the Glyndebourne Festival and BBC Proms. Further appearances include *Concepción L'heure espagnole* and *L'Enfant L'Enfant et les Sortilèges*, Norina *Don Pasquale*, Adina *L'elisir d'amore* at Glyndebourne Festival Opera; Susanna *Le nozze di Figaro*, Ariel *The Enchanted Island*, and Despina *Così fan tutte*, Euridice *Orfeo ed Euridice* - all at the Metropolitan Opera New York; the title role *L'incoronazione di Poppea* at Teatro Real Madrid; the title role of *Partenope* and Susanna *Le Nozze di Figaro* at San Francisco Opera; the title role of *Semele* at Théâtre des Champs-Élysées; the title role of *La Calisto* at Bayerische Staatsoper; and *Poppea Agrippina* at Gran Teatre del Liceu Barcelona. Born in Australia to parents of Sri Lankan and Dutch heritage, de Niese became, at the age of eighteen, the youngest ever singer to enter the Metropolitan Opera's prestigious Lindemann Young Artist Development Program. One year later she made her Metropolitan Opera debut, under James Levine, as Barbarina in Jonathan Miller's acclaimed new production of Mozart's

Le nozze di Figaro. On the strength of her performance, de Niese went on to make major debuts at the Opéra National de Paris, Saito Kinen Festival, Opera National de Lyon and Netherlands Opera. In 2005 de Niese made her Glyndebourne Festival debut as Cleopatra in Sir David McVicar's production of Handel's *Giulio Cesare* and was catapulted to international fame. She has since reprised the role in the 2009 Glyndebourne revival, and in 2013 at the Metropolitan Opera, always to critical praise.

A prolific recording artist, her debut recording for Decca, Handel Arias, was awarded the prestigious Orphée d'Or from and the much-coveted ECHO Klassik award, as well as earning her a Classical Brit Award nomination for Female Artist of the Year. The Mozart Album, *Diva*, and *Beauty of the Baroque* followed.

A TV and media personality, De Niese won an Emmy at the age of 16, as host of a weekly art showcase for teenagers at a Los Angeles local television studio. Her many TV appearances received widespread attention, whilst her BBC documentaries such as *Diva Diaries*, *The Birth of an Opera* and the most recent and highly praised *Unsung Heroines* attest to her extraordinary passion for the art form she represents, and her tireless commitment to bringing new audiences to it.

Offstage, de Niese is passionate about music education, an advocate for children's rights and has been named by Marie Claire magazine on its influential list of "Women

on Top". She is an Ambassador for HRH The Prince of Wales' Foundation for Children and the Arts, a patron of Future Talent - which assists young musicians and singers with financial support and guidance, and is an Artist Member of the Mannes Board of Governors. For the past six years, de Niese has also been serving as an official Ambassador of Voice for the International Rescue Committee.

7PM - THURSDAY, MARCH 31ST
7PM - FRIDAY, APRIL 1ST
7PM - SATURDAY, APRIL 2ND

ONLINE PREVIEW EVENT: MARCH 30TH

ACIS & GALATEA

HWV 49

The production of Acis and Galatea is supported by Stone Nest

David Bates

Music Director

Andrew Staples

Director

La Nuova Musica

Performers

Anthony Gregory

Acis

Madison Nonoa

Galatea

Will Thomas

Polyphemus

James Way

Damon

David Webb

Coridon

ABOUT

No Joy will last.

Love, beauty and innocence are corrupted by lust, darkness and death. Handel's seemingly simple drama offers us a chilling warning about the transience of human happiness and the inevitable reality that faces us all.

The story is simple: girl loves boy, a rival appears who wants the girl, she refuses and in a rage, the rival kills the boy. Within this fairytale, we find evidence of the darkness that underlies the principles by which we lead our modern lives. We can glimpse the implicit structures to which we owe our existence. "Survival of the fittest" the great principle of evolution, implies death for those not so strong. It implies that the desires and wishes of the strong outweigh the innocence and ideals of the weak.

We may imagine that we live in an evolved society where everyone is equal and all work together for the greater good. But here we see

that we are animals who respond to our basic needs. We have evolved to where we are now, by killing our rivals, dominating those beneath us and exercising our desires without concern for their consequences on others.

In this production we focus on this stark reality and set our story within the context of these themes. Our world is suffering thanks to our evolved practices, which on the face of it seem to be for the benefit of the many, but are in fact for the good of the few and carry with them the consequences of deep harm and ultimately death.

VENUE

Stone Nest is an arts organisation and performance venue in the heart of London's West End, bringing experimental art to a wide audience. A hidden gem nestled amidst the bright lights of theatre land, offering a platform for bold, visionary artists and a space where audiences can encounter an eclectic programme of contemporary performance.

Hidden under the chapel you will find Below Stone Nest, a beautiful, atmospheric bar welcoming audiences from 6pm until late.



VENUE - STONE NEST (WWW.STONENEST.ORG)

LENGTH - 2 HR (INCL. ONE INTERVAL)

TICKETS - £60 £50 £35 £15

(Limited tickets available, early booking highly recommended)

PROGRAMME NOTE

Handel – Acis & Galatea HWV 49

Handel set the story of Acis and Galatea several times. The first, *Acis, Galatea e Polifemo*, was written in Naples in 1708 for private performance; the final setting, *Acis & Galatea*, was the choral work which has become staple fodder for choral societies. This itself was a rescoring of arguably the most perfect version, written in 1718 for James Brydges, Earl of Carnarvon. Brydges amassed a fortune as Paymaster General of the army and used this to build 'Cannons', a stately home in Middlesex, where he kept a collection of musicians for his chapel and entertainments. Brydges also employed a circle of poets, notably John Gay, John Arbuthnot, John Hughes and Alexander Pope, and they wrote the libretto for *Acis & Galatea*. The work was a chamber affair, with five singers – soprano, three tenors, and a bass – and an orchestra of one instrument per part – oboes/ recorders, violins and basso continuo.

The plot focuses on the idyllic love of a nymph and a shepherd. Galatea the water nymph and Acis the shepherd boy are deeply in love with each other, and they spend most of the first half sighing for each other's presence. Another shepherd, Damon, attempts to give hot-headed Acis some wise counsel, but he is ignored. The lovers find each other and rejoice in 'Happy we'. The second half, however, ushers in tragedy in the form of the grotesque cyclops Polyphemus. He too is in love with

Galatea, but she rebuffs his rough wooing. Like Damon, the shepherd Corydon tries to counsel Polyphemus; like Acis, the giant ignores Corydon's wise words to seek calm from the tempests of love. Acis and Galatea continue their passion, but are happened upon by the furiously jealous giant, who picks up a massive rock and hurls it at Acis, squashing him flat. A distraught Galatea transforms the shepherd into a river, so that they may be, after all, together for eternity. The chorus exhorts Galatea to dry her tears, for 'Acis now a god appears'.

The libretto of *Acis & Galatea* was based on Dryden's translation of an episode from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, but these learned poets also referred to Ovid's own source for the story, Theocritus' *Idyll XI*. As a literary character, Polyphemus goes back to Homer's *Odyssey*, where he is a horrifying man-eater who consumes Odysseus' shipmates. He also has the brains that go with so much brawn and is tricked by Odysseus. By the time of Euripides and the poet Philoxenus (5th/4th centuries BC) Polyphemus lived in Sicily, on the side of Mount Etna. Philoxenus introduced Galatea into Polyphemus' life and gave the cyclops a more human side, including musicianship. This was taken up by Theocritus a century later. His character was the young Polyphemus, yearning with unrequited love for the beautiful sea-nymph Galatea. Ovid kept Theocritus' characterisation of Polyphemus as an unsophisticated rustic, who promises all sorts of rural delights in his love-song (accompanied, in Ovid, by a pipe

of 'a hundred reeds of prodigious growth'), but he also reintroduced the Homeric horror of the cyclops by having Galatea as the narrator, and by introducing a rival for Galatea's love, the shepherd Acis, whom Polyphemus kills.

In *Acis & Galatea*, Polyphemus represented unbridled passion; nature in the raw. Handel conveys this masterfully in the opening of the second part. This opens with the chorus foretelling the lovers' fate and introducing the cyclops. The immensity of the cyclops is suggested by the spaces in between the words 'see what ample strides'. The semiquavers which represented soft water in the first part now become earthquakes and avalanches, and Polyphemus erupts on to the stage with his first recitative, 'I rage, I melt, I burn'. Again, his sheer size is hinted at when he calls for 'a Pipe for my capacious mouth': the singer goes from d' to F (nearly two octaves apart) within six notes. Corydon's aria 'Would you gain the tender creature' reminds us of the potential physical violence of such a passion – do not, Corydon counsels, use force. Polyphemus is a rude, ungainly, ugly, monstrous rustic, but he is never a comic buffoon. Theocritus gave him a side that we can empathise with, and this survives in both Ovid and Handel's depictions. Although 'O ruddier than the Cherry' is accompanied by a sopranino recorder, giving a slightly comic rendition of the hundred reeds, Handel originally envisaged it as a larger recorder, an instrument signifying love. The aria itself is full of octave leaps, perhaps suggesting an ungainliness as this giant finds himself in a new situation, but also suggesting his size.

Large he may be, but love has nonetheless knocked him off balance: in his 'Cease to beauty', an off-beat entry becomes a hemiola, where duple time fights triple to give a syncopated, stammering effect. In the trio denouement, 'The flocks shall leave the mountains', his outbursts show his uncontrollable pain.

Polyphemus' raw nature is in contrast to the delicate Capability Brown landscape of Acis and Galatea's world. Here we have the semiquavers of purling streams; birds twitter in the trees, and everything is in the warm pastoral keys of B flat and F majors. The only minor-key piece in the first part is Acis' 'Where shall I seek': once he finds Galatea, he settles into a loving E flat major – the relative major of his previous, minor-key, aria. This key is C minor. In baroque music, C minor symbolised death – in the first part, Acis feels that he will die if he cannot find Galatea; in the second part, his love for Galatea causes his death. Acis dies in an incredible piece of accompanied recitative, which starts on a diminished seventh (a keyless chord), and ends with a moving depiction of his fight for breath.

This scene is capped by the chorus' 'Mourn all ye muses', a Purcellian plaint whose solemn sarabande reminds us that this drama is no shallow soap opera, but a deep exploration of emotions and psychology. From F minor chorus leads Galatea into the more hopeful F major and counsels her to turn Acis into a stream, which she does with one of the most gorgeous arias in the music of Handel, 'Heart, the seat of soft delight,' two recorders representing the 'crystal flood.' Acis is an actual Sicilian stream – the river Jaci, which springs from a rock of lava

at the foot of Mount Etna. After the eruption of Etna, personified by Polyphemus, the rest of nature has grown once more, healing itself.

PERFORMER BIOGRAPHIES

ANTHONY GREGORY

Hailed by Hugh Canning as the “Mozart tenor to watch”, Anthony Gregory is revered for his unique timbre, stage presence and musicality. Named by esteemed critic Rupert Christiansen as one of the future operatic stars, he was the 2015 winner of the Breakthrough Artists category by What’s On Stage following his appearance as Peter Quint & Prologue The Turn of the Screw for Glyndebourne on Tour.

His successes include appearances with Glyndebourne Festival, Royal Opera House, English National Opera, Festival de Aix-en-Provence, Teatro Real in Madrid, Bergen Opera, Scottish Opera and Norwegian National Opera in Oslo.

In the 2021/22 season, Gregory makes his debut at Opernhaus Zürich in the world premiere of Christian Spuck’s ballet Monteverdi under the baton of Riccardo Minasi, and makes a number of exciting concert appearances including Mercurio in Caldara La concordia de’ pianeti with La Cetra Barockorchester Basel in Bucharest at the Enescu Festival and the Theater an der Wien conducted by Andrea Marcon; Bach St Matthew Passion with BBC National Orchestra of Wales conducted by Harry Bicket; Handel Messiah with the Glyndebourne Chorus; concerts featuring works by Lully, Campra, Delalande and Rameau with the Academy of Ancient Music under the baton of Peter Whelan; Damon

Acis and Galatea with the Dunedin Consort and Acis at Stone Nest with La Nuova Musica and the London Handel Festival; Satyavan in Holst’s Savitri with the Britten Sinfonia under Sir Mark Elder; Jonathan Saul at the Moscow Handel Festival and a recording with Irish Baroque Orchestra and Linn Records of Cousser The Applause of Mount Parnassus and Purcell Great Parent, Hail! Looking ahead to future seasons, Gregory makes his debut at the Opéra de Rouen Normandie and Bayerische Staatsoper, and makes anticipated returns to English National Opera and to Glyndebourne Festival Opera.

Gregory’s success in the 2020/21 season include Bach St John Passion with Antwerp Symphony Orchestra; Damon Acis and Galatea with Trevor Pinnock in Nida; Handel Messiah with the Dunedin Consort conducted by John Butt; Purcell Devotional Songs with The English Concert under the baton of Kristian Bezuidenhout; and a recording of Messiah with English National Opera.

Further recent engagements include Cégeste in Netia Jones’ production of Philip Glass’s Orphée with English National Opera; the title role of Candide with Bergen Opera; Vafrino Hipermestra, and Flute A Midsummer Night’s Dream for Glyndebourne Festival Opera; his debut with Den Norske Opera as Don Ottavio in a new production of Don Giovanni; Oronte Alcina at the Teatro Real, Madrid and Festival de Aix-en-Provence; Ouardo Ariodante for Les Arts Florissants; the title role in Rameau Dardanus for English

Touring Opera; Florizel in the world premiere of The Winter’s Tale for English National Opera; Don Ottavio Don Giovanni, and Peter Quint and Prologue The Turn of the Screw for Glyndebourne on Tour; Shepherd L’Orfeo for the Royal Opera House Covent Garden, Ferrando Così fan tutte for Opéra de Limoges and English Touring Opera; the world premiere of Stuart MacRae’s Anthropocene at Scottish Opera; Agenore Il Re Pastore at the Verbier Festival; the title role Lucio Silla for the Classical Opera Company; and Grimoaldo Rodelinda at the London Handel Festival conducted by Laurence Cummings. Gregory was also invited to make an anticipated role and house debut in Bayerische Staatsoper’s new production of Castor et Pollux; as Oronte Alcina with Opera North; and as Lysander A Midsummer Night’s Dream with Scottish Opera.

On the concert platform, Gregory has performed Bach’s Mass in B Minor at the Edinburgh International Festival; Mozart Requiem with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra; a European tour of St John Passion with Les Arts Florissants and William Christie; Britten’s Serenade for

Tenor, Horn and Strings and Dr Maxwell / Staff Officer in Mark-Anthony Turnage’s The Silver Tassie - both with the BBC Symphony Orchestra; Carmina Burana at the Royal Festival Hall and Oslo Philharmonic; a concert appearance for the London Handel Festival; St John Passion with the Oxford Bach Choir; Hugh Wood’s Scenes from Comus with BBC Symphony

Orchestra at the BBC Proms; Handel Messiah at Cadogan Hall, Wells Cathedral, with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra and Irish Baroque; Schubert Rosamunde with the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra; Haydn St Nicholas Mass and Britten St Nicholas for the St Luke's Music Society; Monteverdi Vespers with the Armonico Consort; and a solo recital at the Lufthansa Baroque Festival.

A former Harewood Artist at English National Opera, his roles for the company included Nanki-poo The Mikado, Young Sailor Julietta, 1st Armed Man Die Zauberflöte, Borsa Rigoletto and Haemon Thebans. Gregory was previously a Jerwood Young Artist at Glyndebourne, and an alumnus of the National Opera Studio. He was a member of the Verbier Festival Academy, performing the roles of Almaviva Il barbiere di Siviglia and Roderigo Otello - alongside Anna Netrebko, and under the baton of Valery Gergiev - and appeared as a soloist in Beethoven Choral Fantasy under Charles Dutoit.

MADISON NONOA

New Zealand soprano Madison Nonoa holds a Masters in Music degree (Distinction) from the Guildhall School of Music and Drama where she studied under the tutelage of Yvonne Kenny on the prestigious Opera Course. Since graduating in 2019, Madison has made her debut at the Glyndebourne Festival Opera as First Siren/Rinaldo and was selected as

a 2020/2021 Jerwood Young Artist for the Festival. Madison was named a Samling Artist in 2020 and is a current Britten-Pears Young Artist, as well as a former Dame Malvina Major Emerging Young Artist with New Zealand Opera, where she made her debut as Papagena/Die Zauberflöte.

Operatic roles include Susanna/Le Nozze di Figaro, Despina/Così fan tutte, Tytania/A Midsummer Night's Dream, Lauretta/Gianni Schicchi, Giulietta/I Capuleti ed I Montecchi, Almirena and First Siren/Rinaldo, Ciboulette/Mesdames de la Halle, First Spirit/Cendrillon, Papagena/Die Zauberflöte, Ifigenia/Oreste and Leonora/The Long Christmas Dinner.

Madison has performed nationally and internationally with the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra, the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra as a concert soloist resulting in a CD recording "Noel! Noel!" and with the London Philharmonia at the Royal Festival Hall. Competition highlights include being the first prize winner of the Dame Malvina Major Arias in Christchurch and Wellington, as well as being awarded the first prize in the Napier Aria, Tauranga competitions and receiving 2nd prize in the New Zealand Aria Competition. She was a semi-finalist in the London Bach Singing competition and the International Handel Singing Competition and a finalist in the 2016 Lexus Song Quest, where she was selected as the Dame Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation "Most Promising Singer".

Recent engagements include Papagena/Die Zauberflöte at Glyndebourne, a

participation at Snape Maltings with Simon Keenlyside and Malcolm Martineau as part of the Momentum Scheme, Despina/Così fan tutte and Tytania/A Midsummer Night's Dream at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. The 21-22 season includes the role of Maria/Westside Story for Opera du Rhin, the title role in Acis and Galatea for the London Handel Festival, a Britten Pears Young Artist Program concert with Bryn Terfel as well as a performance of Couperin's Trois Leçons de Ténèbres for the King's Consort.

She acknowledges the ongoing support of the Dame Kiri Te Kanawa and Dame Malvina Major Foundations.

WILLIAM THOMAS

A recent graduate of the Opera Course at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama and recipient of a number of major awards, British bass William Thomas is fast making a name for himself as one of today's most promising young singers.

His engagements in the 2021/22 season include Parsi Rustomji Satyagraha, Sciarra Tosca and Colline La bohème for the English National Opera and his debut for the Opéra national de Paris as Galsritter Parsifal. In concert he sings Priest/Badger/Harašta in performances of The Cunning Little Vixen with the CBSO/Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla, Herod L'enfance du Christ with the Tonhalle-Orchester Zürich/Sir John Eliot Gardiner and he makes appearances at the Edinburgh Festival and

BBC Proms.

As a Jerwood Young Artist he sang the role of Nicholas in the British premiere of Samuel Barber's *Vanessa* at the Glyndebourne Festival, he has sung *Shepherd Pelléas et Mélisande* for Garsington Opera and he made his debut at the Vienna State Opera as Snug A Midsummer Night's Dream. Other recent engagements have included *Zweiter Priester/Zweiter Geharnischter Die Zauberflöte* for Glyndebourne and *Colline La bohème* at Alexandra Palace for the English National Opera.

Future seasons see him return to Glyndebourne and the ENO and make debuts at the Théâtre des Champs Elysées, the Opéra de Rouen Normandie and Teatro alla Scala, Milan.

JAMES WAY

(The New York Times), tenor, James Way is fast gaining international recognition for the versatility of his voice and commanding stage presence. His recording of Purcell King Arthur with the Gabrieli Consort was named recording of the year by BBC Music Magazine as well as winning the Opera category. James was winner of the 2nd Prize in the 62nd Kathleen Ferrier Awards at Wigmore Hall. James studied music and was a choral scholar at King's College London before continuing his studies at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama where he learnt with Susan Waters. He is a former Britten-Pears Young Artist, a

laureate of both the Les Arts Florissants 'Jardin des Voix' and the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment's Rising Stars young artist programmes and was awarded an Independent Opera Voice Fellowship. James was selected to participate in Barbara Hannigan's inaugural Equilibrium Young Artists Programme.

A highly versatile performer, James is increasingly in demand on the concert platform in appearances spanning the breadth of the repertoire from the baroque to the present day with orchestras including the BBC Symphony Orchestra, BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, the Philharmonia, Munich Philharmonic, Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra, RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra, Copenhagen Philharmonic and L'Orchestre de Chambre de Paris. His regular appearances with the BBC Symphony Orchestra have included the European premiere of Ross Harris *FACE*, Berlioz *Les nuits d'été*, works by Lili Boulanger, and Vaughan Williams *Serenade to Music* at the Last Night of the Proms.

James' love of baroque music has seen him appear with many of the finest early music ensembles across Europe, with highlights including Handel *Il Trionfo del Tempo e del Disinganno* (Tempo) with the Freiburger Barockorchester under René Jacobs; Handel *Samson* (title role) with John Butt and the Dunedin Consort; Monteverdi *Vespers* with Laurence Cummings and the English Concert for Garsington Opera; and *Acis & Galatea* (Acis) with Les

Arts Florissants; as well as *Messiah* tours with Trevor Pinnock and the FBO, and with William Christie and Les Arts Florissants.

Opera credits include his debuts with Staatsoper Berlin in Purcell King Arthur (AKAMUS and René Jacobs) and with the Philharmonia Orchestra and Jakub Hrůša as the Holy Fool Boris Godunov at the Royal Festival Hall; Lechmere Owen Wingrave for Grange Park Opera, Sellem in a worldwide tour of *The Rake's Progress* under the baton of Barbara Hannigan; *Il Trionfo del Tempo e del Disinganno* (Tempo) for Opéra national de Montpellier under Thibault Noally; the Young King in George Benjamin's *Lessons in Love and Violence* at St Petersburg's Mariinsky Theatre; the Ballad Singer Owen Wingrave for the Aldeburgh and Edinburgh International Festivals c. Mark Wigglesworth and Davy in Roxanna Panufnik's new opera *Silver Birch* for Garsington Opera. Future engagements include a return to Berlin Staatsoper and his house debut for Zurich Opera.

His recent performances include *Academy of St Martin in the Fields* (*Messiah*), Copenhagen Philharmonic Orchestra and BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra (*Stravinsky Pulcinella*), and Grange Park Opera (Lechmere Owen Wingrave); Handel's *Solomon* (excerpts), *Foundling Anthem* with the English Concert and Harry Bicket, Handel and Hayden Society Boston (*Messiah*) and the Fondazione Orchestra

Sinfonica di Milano (*Stravinsky Pulcinella*).

2021/2022 dates include a recording

and European tour of Handel L'Allegro, il Penseroso ed il Moderato with Les Arts Florissants and William Christie. James will also be appearing as First witch & sailor Dido & Aeneas at Berlin Staatsoper and Ludwigsburder Schlossfestspiele and as Damon Acis & Galatea with London Handel Festival. Next season James makes his debut at Opernhaus Zurich as Zotico in Cavalli's Eliogabalo.

James' enjoys programming and collaborating on song projects and recently performed Wolf Italian Songbook with pianist Christopher Glynn and soloists including Rowan Pierce and Roderick Williams, appearing at the Lammermuir Festival, St George's Hall Liverpool, St George's Bristol and Wigmore Hall. Other recital engagements include Oxford Lieder, London Song Festival, Marylebone Festival and Newbury Festival (with the Schubert Ensemble) as well as curating projects for the Devon Song Festival and SongSpiel.

PATRICIA LANGA

Patricia Langa originally from Barcelona trained at Rambert School of Ballet and Contemporary Dance in London. As a dancer Patricia has worked internationally with choreographers and companies such as Lea Anderson, Aletta Collins, Rambert Company, Thomas Noone Dance, Dantzaz Konpainia, Thick & Tight, Blind Summit, Nicole Bachmann, Corali Dance Company, Gary Clarke Company and many more.

As a queer artist, choreographer and collaborator her work has been presented at venues which include major art galleries in London and Switzerland, the Royal Opera House Covent Garden, The Vaults Festival, major European music festivals and a variety of infamous queer/LGBTQI venues.

Her latest film QUEEROLÉ! (a journey through Flamenco's Queer History) will be released on 2022. Keep an eye out, if you want to discover the most unknown and fascinating untold part of Spanish History!

As well as a dance artist, Patricia is currently a certified Gyrotonic teacher as well as a guest lecturer at the Drama Department of St Mary's Twickenham University, London.

5PM - SUNDAY, APRIL 3RD

A CELEBRITY RECITAL: RACHEL PODGER AND FRIENDS

Rachel Podger
Violin

Matthew Truscott
Violin

Alex Rolton
Cello

Eligio Quinteiro
Theorbo
Roger Hamilton
Harpsichord

PROGRAMME

G.F. Handel	Trio Sonata in F major Op. 5 No. 6 HWV 401
H. Purcell	Trio Sonata in B flat Major Z791 from 'Sonatas in Three Parts'
J.M. Leclair	Duo for 2 violins Op. 3 No. 5 in E minor
G.F. Handel	Trio Sonata in E minor HWV 398 Op. 5 No. 3
G.F. Handel	F Major Suite, HWV 427
J.M. Leclair	Duo for 2 violins Op. 12 No. 6 in B flat major
H. Purcell	Trio Sonata from 'Sonatas in 4 parts' No 6 in G minor Z807
G.F. Handel	Trio Sonata in G minor HWV 391 Op. 2 No. 6



ABOUT

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Handel's music has captivated and inspired the greatest instrumentalists from the 18th century to the current day. Rachel Podger is one of the world's most-revered Baroque violinists. She makes her London Handel Festival debut alongside a team of internationally-renowned instrumentalists, in a programme that features some of Handel's finest chamber music, as well as gems from composers known and loved by Handel.



...THE UNSURPASSED BRITISH GLORY OF THE BAROQUE VIOLIN.

- THE TIMES

VENUE - ST GEORGE'S, HANOVER SQUARE
LENGTH - 1HR 45 MINS (INCL. INTERVAL)

TICKETS - £45 £35 £25 £15

PROGRAMME NOTE

Richard Egarr once wrote that the Opus 5 set of trio sonatas 'are huge fun to play'; fortunately, they are also huge fun to listen to. Published in 1739 for 'two Violins, or German Flutes', they are a rich source for the borrowings-spotter, most of the music being recycled from elsewhere – although No.6 was itself actually recycled for the famous organ concerto performed at Israel in Egypt that Lent ('the Cuckoo and the Nightingale'): you will, no doubt, find the Largo and second Allegro familiar. The opening Largo has all the F-major lushness of, for example, Cleopatra's 'V'adoro pupille'; it is followed by a busy fugue, whose subject is based on a repeated note (a motif Handel used elsewhere, for example, in Cannons Anthem No.4). After running helter-skelter, this movement suddenly stops and becomes a serious Adagio (analogous to the overture from Acis and Galatea). The trio is taken into the minor for a beautiful, tragic duet between the melody instruments, but the sun comes out again for the next Allegro, another fugue, and this is followed by a charming minuet.

By the time of the Opus 5 set, the trio sonata was well established in amateur music-making circles. In 1683, the year when Henry Purcell published his Sonatas of III Parts, they were a novelty; his collection was a response to the newly-imported sonatas of Corelli which were all the rage. His preface explained:

for its Author, he has faithfully endeavour'd a just imitation of the most fam'd Italian Masters; principally, to bring the Seriousness and gravity of that sort of Musick into vogue, and reputation among our Country-men, whose humour, 'tis time now, should begin to loath the levity and balladry of our neighbours... He is not ashamed to own his unskilfulness in Italian Language ; but that's the unhappiness of his Education, which cannot justly be accounted his fault, however he thinks he may warrantably affirm, that he is not mistaken in the power of the Italian Notes, or elegancy of their Compositions, which he would recommend to the English Artists... It remains only that the English Practitioner be inform'd, that he will find a few terms of Art perhaps unusual to him, the chief of which are these following: Adagio and Grave which imports nothing but a very slow movement : Presto, Largo, and Vivace, a very brisk, swift, or fast movement: Piano, soft. The Author has no more to add, but his hearty wishes, that his Book may fall into no other hands but theirs who carry Musical Souls about them... Vale.

Jean-Marie Leclair learned the Italian style at closer range, studying first dance and then, on another occasion, violin in Turin. He joined the Concert Spirituel in 1728 and was appointed musician to Louis XV. In 1737 he fell out finally with his court job-sharer, Jean-Pierre Guignon, and resigned, taking himself off to the Netherlands. There he worked in some sort of capacity for Anne, Princess of Orange and formerly Handel's favourite pupil. He went to Spain in 1743 and spent a year in the employ of the

Infante Don Felipe, but returned to Paris in 1744. Having published several collections of music, he spent the final decade of his life 'decomposing' – destroying music that he thought unworthy, and not really writing much else. In 1748 he was appointed director of the Duke of Gramont's orchestra. Ten years later, his wife left him and he went to live in a seedy part of Paris, where, on 23rd October 1764, he was murdered by persons unknown. Leclair published two volumes of sonatas for two violins (Opus 3 and Opus 12) in the 1740s, and they should be much better known – they are both charming and ingenious, and you will quickly forget that there are but two violins. The E minor sonata's first movement could have come from Couperin's keyboard; it is followed by a gentle gavotte, and reminds us that the violin was the dancing-master's instrument. The fast final movement makes full use of imitation, with either instrument throwing to and catching from the other. The B flat major sonata opens with an elegantly Italianate Allegro, which is followed by a splendid fugue. An Andante brings a more pensive mood; it is courteous, but its chromaticism is slightly unsettling. Any melancholy is, however, quickly brushed off by a foot-tapping gigue.

Handel's E minor trio sonata begins like an opera, with a French overture-like statement, in contrasting loud-soft phrases, by the ensemble. From this a semiquaver solo emerges, in the first violin and then the other instruments. The second movement is a fugue with a most Purcellian theme and treatment. The Sarabande returns to pure Handel, and could be from one of his

operas. Like the first movement, he makes great use of loud and soft contrasts. Despite being a German dance, the Allemande sends us back to Purcell. The Rondeau carries on the general air of yearning wistfulness (it is reminiscent of Lurcanio's lovely 'Del mio sol' from *Ariodante*); its theme is almost inverted by the Gavotte, which leaves us very much in the shadow of Purcell.

Handel's first book of keyboard suites was published on the back foot. John Walsh acquired various keyboard pieces and published them with Jeanne Roger – but without Handel's permission – in 1720. Handel, aggrieved, obtained a royal licence to protect his work and he himself published eight suites. The F major suite follows the sonata da chiesa form of four movements, slow-fast-slow-fast. A gentle stroll through a pleasant F major landscape takes us to a toccata-like Allegro. This is contrasted with a solemn and stately sarabande before the appearance of a cheeky fugal Allegro to finish.

Purcell's 'Sonatas for 4 parts' were published posthumously by his wife Frances in 1697. Keen to maximise her sales (she had 6 children to feed), Frances dedicated the volume to Lady Rhoda Cavendish, writing

The following Collection having already found many Friends among the Judicious part of Mankind, I was desirous that it might not want the Patronage of our Sex, for whose Honour, as well as for the Credit of this Work, I have presum'd to place Your Ladyship's Name before these Sheets.

Before she married Henry Cavendish (younger brother of the Duke of Devonshire), Rhoda Cartwright had, in the early 1690s, been one of Purcell's pupils. We know little more of her than that – we presume that she was a keyboard player, and presumably also that she was proficient, but of her actual music-making, and why Frances Purcell chose her in particular, we have no evidence. In any case, the dedication did little to increase sales. No.6 of the set is a single movement Chaconne. This is a triple-time dance on a ground bass, and ground basses were a speciality of Purcell's. Although the three- and four- part sonatas might have been Italian in inspiration, this chaconne has all the quirky chromaticism so characteristic of Purcell and inherited, perhaps, from older English composers such as Byrd.

Handel's Opus 2 set of trio sonatas were published in or around 1733, but the music was probably all composed by 1720 – the music of No. 6 feels as if it was written perhaps ten years before, while Handel was in Italy. The first movement is a duet between the two violins; the following Allegro is a three-part fugue which is reminiscent the string writing in *Il Trionfo del Tempo* or *La Resurrezione* or *Dixit Dominus*. The Arioso is another duet whose lines wrap around each other much like they were to do later in *Giulio Cesare's* 'Piangerò', and the sonata is finished with a gigue, again in very much the vein of *Dixit Dominus*.

PERFORMER BIOGRAPHY

RACHEL PODGER

Baroque Violin/Director

“Rachel Podger, the unsurpassed British glory of the baroque violin,” (The Times) has established herself as a leading interpreter of the Baroque and Classical. She was the first woman to be awarded the prestigious Royal Academy of Music/Kohn Foundation Bach Prize in October 2015, Gramophone Artist of the Year 2018, and the Ambassador for REMA's Early Music Day 2020. A creative programmer, Rachel is the founder and Artistic Director of Brecon Baroque Festival and her ensemble Brecon Baroque. Rachel is Patron for The Continuo Foundation.

Following an exciting and innovative collaboration, A Guardian Angel, with the ‘impeccable’ (Gramophone) vocal ensemble VOCES8, Rachel was thrilled to be one of the Artists in Residence at the renowned Wigmore Hall in 2019/2020. Alongside this, Rachel and Christopher Glynn released the world premiere of three previously unfinished Mozart sonatas which were completed by Royal Academy of Music Professor Timothy Jones in March 2021. Their second disc together of three Beethoven Sonatas will be released in Spring 2022. Rachel featured in The VOCES8 Foundation's LIVE From London festival in a new advent version of A

Guardian Angel, “a sensitive accompanist when called for and displayed nimble fingers in her virtuosic solos” (Wall Street Journal). She performed solo Bach for Gramophone Magazine's Winners' Digital Gala, appeared in Bitesize Proms, BOZAR at Home, Living Room Live, Baroque at the Edge, and a collaborative disc by Musicians For Musicians Many Voices on a Theme of Isolation. Rachel presented BBC Radio 3's Inside Music and directed a new arrangement by Chad Kelly, The Goldberg Variations Reimagined. Upcoming engagements include a return to Royal Northern Sinfonia, Philharmonia Baroque and San Francisco Early Music, and further performances of Beethoven and Mozart with Christopher Glynn, Bach Cello Suites, The Goldberg Variations Reimagined, and A Guardian Angel.

As a director and soloist, Rachel has enjoyed countless collaborations including with Robert Levin, Jordi Savall, Masaaki Suzuki, Kristian Bezuidenhout, VOCES8, Robert Hollingworth & I Fagiolini, Christopher Glynn, European Union Baroque Orchestra, English Concert, Armonico Consort, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, Academy of Ancient Music, Holland Baroque Society, Tafelmusik (Toronto), the Handel and Haydn Society, San Francisco Early Music, Philharmonia Baroque, and Oregon Bach Festival.

Rachel has won numerous awards including two Baroque Instrumental Gramophone Awards for La Stravaganza (2003) and Biber Rosary Sonatas (2016), the Diapason d'Or de l'année in the Baroque Ensemble

category for her recording of the La Cetra Vivaldi concertos (2012), two BBC Music Magazine awards in the instrumental category for Guardian Angel (2014) and the concerto category for the complete Vivaldi L'Estro Armonico concertos (2016). Rachel and Brecon Baroque released the highly anticipated album, Vivaldi Le Quattro Stagioni, on Channel Classics in 2018. “It's colourful, vivid and dramatic ... with a fluidity of phrasing and ease of spontaneity and ornamentation” (Record Review). Bach Cello Suites transposed for the violin was released in April 2019. According to BBC Music Magazine, the five-star album is “a spellbinding set that is arguably Podger's finest recorded achievement to date...one would naturally assume the suites were violin originals after experiencing her life-enhancing playing.” Upcoming recordings include a second disc of Beethoven sonatas with Christopher Glynn, a disc of solo repertoire, and a recording of CPE Bach sonatas with Kristian Bezuidenhout.

A dedicated educator, she holds the Micaela Comberti Chair for Baroque Violin (founded in 2008) at the Royal Academy of Music and the Jane Hodge Foundation International Chair in Baroque Violin at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama. Rachel has a relationship with The Juilliard School in New York where she visits regularly. Rachel Podger is managed worldwide by Percius. www.percius.co.uk

7PM - WEDNESDAY, APRIL 6TH

ONLINE PREVIEW EVENT: APRIL 4TH

FERNANDO, RE DI CASTIGLIA: A HANDEL PREMIERE

PROGRAMME

Opera Settecento

Performers

Leo Duarte

Musical Director

Owen Willets

Fernando

Susanna Fairbairn

Elvida

Ciara Hendrick

Isabella

Frederick Long

Altomaro

Jess Dandy

Sancio

Nick Scott

Dionisio

Charlie Morris

Alfonso



ABOUT

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Fernando, re di Castiglia does not appear in the traditional lists of Handel's operas. This is because it was never completed, at least not under that name. Originally a political thriller set in medieval Portugal, Handel went on to rewrite the work as Sosarme, changing the setting and names of characters, and reworking some of the music. This performance will be a world premiere of Bärenreiter's new critical edition of Fernando. Following Handel's interval tradition, his Oboe Concerto in G minor will be performed by Opera Settecento's Artistic Director, Leo Duarte.



**I SHOULD BE SORRY
IF I ONLY ENTERTAINED
THEM. I WISH TO MAKE
THEM BETTER.**

- G. F. HANDEL

VENUE - ST GEORGE'S, HANOVER SQUARE
LENGTH - 2HRS (INCL. INTERVAL)

TICKETS - £45 £35 £25 £15

PROGRAMME NOTES

FERNANDO, RE DI CASTIGLIA HWV 30

Those familiar with the canon of Handel's operas may be surprised to encounter a performance of Fernando, Re di Castiglia, since it does not appear in the lists of Handel's works. However, those who know his operas well may recognise much of the music. Handel had probably just finished composing Ezio - his first opera for the 1731/32 London season - when he began work on Fernando, a libretto which he presumably came across during his early career in Italy. Unfortunately Ezio proved unpopular, receiving only five performances, which forced Handel to speed up work on his next opera in order to avoid a gap in the season's performances.

Handel had already completed nearly two acts in the autograph before it became apparent that Fernando presented him with a problem. Set in Portugal c.1300, and thus historically close to contemporary sensibilities, it portrays a virtuous Spanish king intervening to resolve dynastic tensions within the Portuguese royal family, themselves not portrayed in a particularly flattering light. In the 1720s, Britain and Spain were engaged in a bitter dispute over Gibraltar, and the public mood was such that it would have been risky to praise a Spanish monarch on the London stage, particularly so soon after the Anglo-Spanish War of 1727-29. Furthermore

Portugal was Britain's oldest traditional ally, so a drama highlighting a difficult period in its recent history would hardly have been politic.

Against this political backdrop, and following the failure of Ezio, rather than taking risks with public opinion Handel radically altered the libretto, moving the setting from recent Portugal to Middle Eastern antiquity and changing the title to Sosarme, Re di Media. Handel's composing score graphically documents the changes. All the original character names were struck out and exchanged for new ones - apart from the non-historical character, Altomaro - and all Iberian references expunged. However, Handel also made other radical changes at this point, restructuring arias and brutally eliminating many hundreds of lines of poetry, which effectively shortened the opera, but in the process weakened the dramatic coherence of the plot.

Using the most recent scholarship, Michael Pacholke's new edition for Bärenreiter enables tonight's performance to be the first to restore all Handel's original intentions for this work. It should be noted that the commercially available recording of Fernando restores less than five percent of Handel's original music and was made almost a decade before Pacholke's groundbreaking research. Tonight's performance will finish at the point in the autograph where Handel decided he must change the setting, just before the end of Act II.

Leo Duarte, London, 2020

Presented here is the original 1732 synopsis of Sosarme with the original Iberian characters and settings restored:

Dramatis Personae - with the original cast list - and tonight's cast

Fernando King of Castile, contracted in Marriage to Elvida - Signor Senesino

Elvida, Daughter of King Dionysius - Signora Strada

Dionysius King of Portugal - Signor Pinacci

Isabella, his Queen - Signora Bagnolesi

Alfonso, their Son - Signor Campioli

Sancio, the natural Son of Dionysius - Signora Durastanti

Altomarus, Counsellor and Favourite of Dionysius - Signor Montagnana

Fernando King of Castile falling in Love with Elvida, Daughter of Dionysius King of Portugal, at the report he heard of her Beauty, demanded her in Marriage of her Father, who readily assented: But about the Time that Elvida was preparing for her Departure to her Husband, a cruel Rebellion broke out in Portugal, which obliged the Princess to defer her Journey. The Author of this Rebellion was Alfonso, the eldest Son and Successor of Dionysius, prompted to it by a Jealousy he entertained, that his Father intended to advance his natural Son Sancio, whom he lov'd, to the Throne. When Alfonso had openly declared himself a Rebel against his Father, the latter was obliged to take up Arms, and besiege the City of Coimbra, where his Son and the Rebels had shut themselves up, and by Treachery made themselves Masters of the Palace itself. Both the Besiegers, and those they besieged were equally obstinate, and the Animosity between them rose to such Extremity, that the Father and Son

(deceived by a treacherous Counsellor)
challenged each other to decide their
Differences in a single Combat. Fernando,
who sometime before had left Castile with
an Army to receive his Spouse Elvida, and
to accommodate the Disagreement in her
Family, interposed as an impartial Mediator
between the contending Parties; but his
good Offices being defeated by the Iniquity
of Altomarus, Dionysius and Alfonso at last
came to a Duel, but Isabella, Sancio, Elvida,
and Fernando, interposing, prevented the
Act of Parricide, and undeceiving the Father
and Son, re-established them in a perfect
Harmony. From all these Incidents the
Drama takes its Original.

BIOGRAPHY

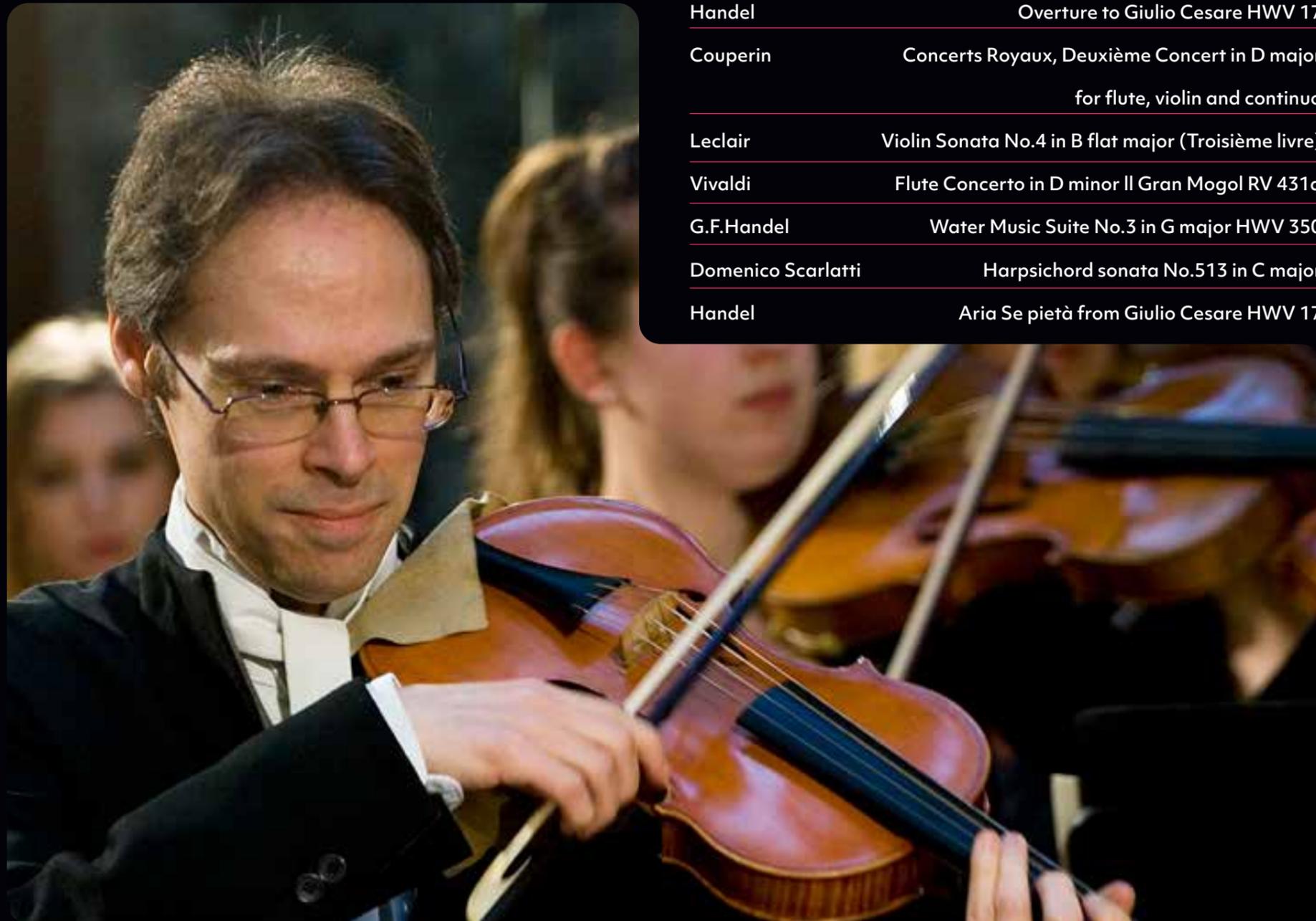
OPERA SETTECENTO

Founded in 2014, Opera Settecento have established a reputation for strikingly characterful and emotional performances of eighteenth century repertoire. Focusing primarily on the music of Handel and his contemporaries, they have given many UK and world premieres of works by Hasse, Pergolesi, and Handel. Through the scholarship of the ensemble's Artistic Director, Leo Duarte, Opera Settecento have undertaken a groundbreaking series of Handel's pasticcio operas which they have presented to critical acclaim at the London and Halle Handel Festivals and have broadcast live on German radio. Through this series they have shed important new light on the broader context of Baroque opera and on the music of composers Handel himself deemed worthy of performance.

As well as championing the work of unsung composers, Opera Settecento are proud to engage talented singers at the start of their careers alongside more established artists, including many prizewinners from the Handel Singing Competition. 2022 will see world premiere performances of Bärenreiter's new critical edition of Handel's fragmentary opera *Fernando, Re di Castiglia*, at the London and Halle Handel Festivals.

4PM - SUNDAY, APRIL 10TH
6PM - SUNDAY, APRIL 10TH

TO PLAY BEFORE THE KING



The London Handel

Players

Orchestra / Performers

Rachel Brown

Flute

Adrian Butterfield

Violin

Oliver Webber

Violin

Rachel Byrt

Viola

Gavin Kibble

Cello

Silas Wollston

Harpsichord

PROGRAMME

Handel	Overture to Giulio Cesare HWV 17
Couperin	Concerts Royaux, Deuxième Concert in D major for flute, violin and continuo
Leclair	Violin Sonata No.4 in B flat major (Troisième livre)
Vivaldi	Flute Concerto in D minor Il Gran Mogol RV 431a
G.F.Handel	Water Music Suite No.3 in G major HWV 350
Domenico Scarlatti	Harpsichord sonata No.513 in C major
Handel	Aria Se pietà from Giulio Cesare HWV 17

ABOUT

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In the Baroque era, members of European royal families were great patrons of the arts and many composers were dependent upon them for their livelihood. In this programme the London Handel Players explore some of the music that was written by Handel and his contemporaries for and about royalty, and investigate the ways in which this relationship influenced the music they composed. In the historic setting of the Foundling Museum, a place with deep meaning for Handel, this promises to be one of the most intimate and ravishing performances in the Festival.

Please note there will be two performances of this concert at 4pm and 6pm.

VENUE - FOUNDLING MUSEUM
LENGTH - 1HR 10 MINS (INCL. INTERVAL)

TICKETS - £25

PROGRAMME NOTES

In the Baroque period members of European royal and noble families were great patrons of the arts and many composers were highly dependent upon them for their livelihood.

François Couperin, for example, wrote his four Concerts Royaux as entertainment for Louis XIV of France in 1714-15, shortly before the elderly king passed away. They were performed on Sunday afternoons in the privacy of the Court. A few years later the composer added ten further 'Nouveaux concerts' to the collection. In his 1722 publication of all fourteen pieces Couperin explains that they weren't designed to be played only as solos on the harpsichord but also possibly with a violin, flute, oboe, viol and bassoon so this gives us the opportunity to choose to perform the second one in D major with a combination of flute, violin and continuo. There are five movements, the second and fourth of which are lively fugal constructions and the third is a tender sarabande. The finale is an unusual and very beautiful 'echo' movement written as a trio between the upper line and a middle-register part originally for 'viole'.

Jean-Marie Leclair was born a generation after Couperin and he was both a violinist and a trained dancer. He established himself as France's leading violinist in the 1720s with the publication of his first two books of sonatas, in 1723 and 1728, and with his dazzling performances at the Concert Spirituel. Formal recognition of his

talents as both performer and composer came in 1733 when he was appointed Director of the Music of the Chapel and the Apartments by Louis XV and he displayed his gratitude to the King by dedicating his third book of sonatas Op.5 to him in 1734.

The first movement of this B flat major sonata recalls the lyricism and ornamental style of Arcangelo Corelli whilst the second movement has the character of an allemanda and is busy and energetic. The final two movements are two glorious French dances. The Sarabanda is incredibly tender and heartfelt, full of the typical smouldering passion of that dance, and the Chaconna is joyous and exhilarating. In this latter movement the cello is freed from its role as part of the continuo team with the harpsichord and is given the chance to duet with the violin. The middle section moves to the exotic key of Bb minor giving the listener a wonderful contrast and making the mood at the return to the tonic major even more joyful than it was at the start.

Born in Naples in 1685, Domenico Scarlatti spent most of his working life in the service of the Portuguese and Spanish royal families. Between 1719 and 1727 he taught the Portuguese princess Maria Magdalena Barbara in Lisbon, and when she married into the Spanish royal family in 1733 he moved to Madrid to serve as her music master, a post he held until his death in 1757.

Very few of the 555 sonatas Scarlatti composed can be dated with any certainty. No. 513 has two movements in C major

and it has the title of Pastorale. The first movement starts at a moderate tempo and contains the typical dotted rhythms of the siciliana but then later it suddenly switches to a much quicker tempo at a *molto allegro* indication. The sonata is completed with a *Presto* movement in 3/8.

Vivaldi's recently discovered flute concerto, *Il Gran Mogol*, is thought to have been written for the visit of an Indian delegation to Venice. It is thought to have been one of a set of four concertos depicting different nationalities but the other three have yet to be found. *Il Gran Mogol* is written in three movements and the whole work beautifully evokes the sultry heat of the Indian subcontinent.

Handel was a master networker. Wherever he went his talent and personality inspired so many wealthy and well-connected people to support him in his musical endeavours. Once he had settled in London he enjoyed the patronage of the British Royal Family who attended and supported his operas and oratorios and who invited him to write important works specially for them.

One of these works was the famous 'Water Music' which was written in 1717 for King George I. This evening we will hear the movements sometimes described as the 'third suite', a collection of dances which are written for just strings and either flute or recorder.

Giulio Cesare was written by Handel in 1724 for the Royal Academy of Music, the opera

company which was set up in London in 1719, and it was one of his most successful works. Cleopatra decides to seduce Cesare early on in the opera and having done so falls in love with him. He too is smitten and falls for her.

In Act 2 Cesare is in grave danger of death and in her aria *Se pietà* Cleopatra pleads with the gods to protect him. This is one of the most moving and emotional arias in Handel's output and demonstrates so perfectly his ability to connect the audience with the intense feelings of the characters on stage.

Handel wrote *Giulio Cesare* for the 1724 opera season and it proved deservedly popular, with packed houses and several revivals in later years. The overture is in the usual format of a slow, grave introduction followed by an allegro fugue; in this case, its sparkling A major will lead straight into a choir celebrating Cesare's triumphant arrival. This opera is about kings and queens; it was written for the Royal Academy of Music, a joint-stock company formed to promote opera, but one which appealed very much to George I, who became a major contributor.

While we should not play down the importance of the English, and then British, monarch as artistic patron, patronage in Britain was more decentralised than it was in France. With a grand palace at Versailles, Louis XIV (1638-1715) had set himself up as the principal patron, founding the Academies of Opera and Dance and keeping composers such as

François Couperin in gainful employment. The *Concerts Royaux* were published avec privilège du Roy in 1722, and were for flexible scoring – the harpsichord, if one were alone, or any combination of violin, flute, oboe, viol and bassoon. The five movements are a dance suite – the *Prélude* a graceful minuet; a fugal *Allemande*; a tender *sarabande*; another fugue, this time a *gavotte*; finally, a *chaconne* with contrasts between fort and doux giving the effect of the echoes of its title.

Jean-Marie Leclair published his *Troisième Livre de Sonates* in 1734, while he was working at the court of Louis XV. Leclair's sonatas are tribute to his technical skill as a violinist, and as a dancer, but also his unquenchable invention. This sonata starts with a leisurely stroll before breaking into a fast dance, and finishing with a courtly *Sarabande* and quintessentially French *Ciaccona* (*chaconne*). Incidentally, one of Leclair's other royal employers was Anne, Princess of Orange. Before her marriage, Anne had been a favourite pupil of Handel's.

Vivaldi's flute concerto *Il Gran Mogol* was written as part of a set of four concerti, like the *Four Seasons*. This set was four nations – *La Francia*, *La Spagna* and *L'Inghilterro* [sic], and *India*, or the *Moghul Empire* (*Il Gran Mogol*). Somewhere in the mists of history, the set was lost. *Il Gran Mogol* survived in another – incomplete – version, but in 2010 a copy of the original concerto came to light, when musicologist Andrew Woolley was rootling around in the papers of Lord Robert Kerr, amateur flautist, grand

tourist and son of the Marquis of Lothian. Using both versions, a complete concerto has been crafted – one whose quality makes us hope that copies of the other concerti might be lurking in other aristocrats' papers! Vivaldi's concerto touches on the orientalism of baroque Europe, although it is not obviously 'oriental' in the way that, for example, 'Turkish' music was; it is, however, highly virtuosic, perhaps a reference to the skill of Indian musicians. The 'Gran Mogol' was the emperor Akbar (1542-1605), who expanded the Mughal Empire and introduced a liberal rule sufficient to sustain the empire – although his grandson Shah Jehan (1592-1666) could also have been described as such, for under him Mughal art and architecture reached a peak (he commissioned the Taj Mahal, for example). Vivaldi's four nations make for an interesting combination, and one that reflects, perhaps, Venice's mercantile interests.

On 17 July 1717, George I entertained guests at a party on the Thames. Leaving from Whitehall Stairs, the royal barge went to Ranelegh Gardens in Chelsea to deliver the guests for supper, before picking them up again in the small hours. Another barge accompanied them – this was full of musicians, who, having played music specially composed by Handel for an hour solid, cannot have been particularly pleased with George's enthusiasm, which meant their having to repeat the performance thrice more. Like the Vivaldi concerto, the earliest manuscript of the *Water Music* was only rediscovered in 2004 at the Royal Society of Musicians. Today's normal

format of three suites seems to have been settled after the original performance; the third has music centred around G – major or minor. After an opening sarabande, the suite continues in pairs of movements – two rigaudons, two minuets and a pair of what are remarkably like gigue, although they are written in common time (gigues usually being compound time).

1685 was a bumper year. As well as Handel and Bach, it gave birth to Domenico Scarlatti. Son of Alessandro (himself member of a major Neapolitan musical clan), Domenico's career was fixed from birth. At the tender age of 15 (with his father's guiding influence), he was appointed organist and composer at the Cappella Reale in Naples. Alessandro had greater ambitions for his son, and took him to Venice, home of opera. There, Domenico met Handel and had a famous keyboard duel with him, which left a lasting mutual respect. Alessandro failed to keep his son in Venice – indeed he failed to keep himself there – and Domenico started to assert his independence by first finding fruitful work in Rome and then in Portugal. In 1729 he moved to Spain, where he began to publish harpsichord works in earnest (he wrote some, apparently, in lieu of gambling debts). Some of these sonatas would surely have originated in his music lessons to students such as the Portuguese princess Maria Magdalena Barbara and the Spanish princess Maria Barbara. The first movement of sonata 513 is ingenious – Scarlatti starts with a lilting siciliana and then turns it into a brisk gigue – both pastoral dances of the title. The movement

ends with one lone musician left outside the tavern. The Presto continues the gigue's liveliness; once you have heard it on the harpsichord, it is impossible to imagine it transferred to a piano.

Although Giulio Cesare bears only one name, he as a character is matched – perhaps even upstaged – by the Egyptian queen, Cleopatra. She has decided to use her feminine wiles to secure Cesare as an ally against her brother and co-ruler: things do not quite go to plan, however, for she falls in love with Cesare. After he exits pursued by assassins, she breaks down in despairing F sharp minor for the show-stopping aria 'Se pietà'. Tonight the mournful flute will take the place of the equally mournful queen.

7PM - WEDNESDAY, APRIL 13TH

MUSIC FOR HOLY WEEK

Hilary Cronin
Soprano

London Handel Orchestra
Performers

PROGRAMME

G. F. Handel	Saeviat tellus for soprano, 2 oboes, bassoon & strings HWV 240
A. Vivaldi	Stabat Mater for alto & strings
A. Vivaldi	Concerto for violin and cello in F major RV 544 Il Proteo ò sia il mondo al rovescio Allegro; Largo; Allegro
G. F. Handel	Silete venti for soprano, 2 oboes, bassoon & strings HWV 242

ABOUT

Associate Musical Director Adrian Butterfield directs the much acclaimed London Handel Orchestra in this spiritual and moving programme of Music for Holy Week. The concert also features rising star soprano Hilary Cronin, who was the winner of the 2021 international Handel Singing Completion. Hilary will sing two two stunning and rarely heard Handel motets for solo singer and orchestra.

!f



VENUE - ST JOHN'S SMITH SQUARE
LENGTH - 1HR 45MINS

TICKETS - £45 £35 £25 £15

PROGRAMME NOTES

Saevia tellus was one of number of pieces (including Dixit Dominus) commissioned by the Colonna family for the Carmelite friars of S Maria di Monte Santo in Rome. It was probably performed as part of the Feast of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel on 16 July, 1707. As it was a liturgical piece, it would have been sung by a castrato (women being barred from the liturgy outside female convents), and it certainly has all the traits of the virtuosic castrato showpieces that we are familiar with from Handel's operas. Indeed, several of the work's movements and motifs found their way into his first London operas (Rinaldo, Il Pastor Fido, Teseo). The opening, in thunderous D major, is full of furious semiquavers suggesting storms and earth tremors (Rome is on a fault line). These are broken by a more interrogative phrase, 'impete, turbinae', before a melismatic 'pavete', which, thrillingly, reaches a top D. The next movement, 'O nox clara' is a siciliana in A major, a key Handel used for shimmering brightness, such as his German aria, 'Flammende Rose'. He would use similar motifs for Gismonda's 'Vieni, o figlio' from Ottone. The music of the third movement, 'Stellae fidae', is better known as Argantes' lovely 'Vieni o cara' (Rinaldo); the strings play in octaves, which gives a feeling of the spaciousness of the heavens which contain the stars. A presto Alleluia brings us back to triumphant D major. This is a capering gigue, a mad duet between singer and strings.

Antonio Vivaldi is the textbook composer of the Italian high baroque. That is not to damn him with faint praise, but if you are a student of the techniques and tropes of Italian baroque composers, you will not have a clearer teacher. Vivaldi was in person a highly successful teacher, based at the Ospedale della Pietà in Venice for over thirty years. The Stabat Mater was not, however, written for the Ospedale, but was composed during a brief trip to Brescia during Lent of 1712. It is a setting of the first ten verses of the famous thirteenth-century liturgical poem describing Mary's mourning at the Cross. The first six movements are repeated musically, so the first movement becomes the fourth, and so on, almost like we are looking at the same painting. A new idea is introduced at 'Eja Mater', an extraordinary piece of word-painting making us indeed 'feel the force of your sorrow'. A yearning siciliana for 'Fac ut ardeat' leads to a final amen, whose opening subject echoes the first movement.

If the Stabat Mater shows Vivaldi's careful crafting, the concerto for violin and cello in F major shows his ingenuity to the extreme. This concerto was the first in an edition he prepared in the 1720s for Cardinal Ottoboni, well-known to Handelians as a patron of Handel during his sojourn in Rome. Ottoboni was from Venice and was a musical connoisseur, and this may explain why Vivaldi chose this particular concerto to head the list. Its subtitle is *Il Proteo o sia il mondo al rovescio*, which means 'Proteus, or, the world turned upside-down', and Vivaldi wrote it so that the solo violin and cello lines could be played by

either instrument at any time. Proteus was a shape-shifting Classical deity, and the shape of the concerto is, with this muddling of clefs and pitches, always shifting. In the outer two movements, Vivaldi gives a series of long held notes to the viola and the bass line, as if they are Menelaus figures, holding on to the shape-shifter so that he cannot metamorphose too much. The world turned upside-down, or *mundus inversus*, is a theme behind the carnival, for which Venice was famous. The solo lines make great use of imitation – but we do not necessarily know who is imitating whom!

Why Handel wrote *Silete venti* is unknown. Its autograph score dates from 1724, and various passages in the motet suggest that it was composed around then – 'Date certa', for example, bears strong resemblance to the German aria 'Meine Seele hört im Sehen', but this seems to be similarity, not borrowing. The motet could have been composed for one of the Catholic chapels in London which belonged to the Venetian or Neapolitan embassies (London had quite a sizeable Catholic population, around half a million natives and visitors); on the other hand, it could have been commissioned for a private soirée, perhaps sung by one of his virtuosi such as Margherita Durastanti.

Silete venti begins with a French overture – a slow opening leading to an allegro, which represents here an excited rustle of wind in the strings. The soprano interrupts this overture, commanding silence, which she gets: after becoming her throbbing heart, the orchestra leaves as quietly as possible. The following aria, 'Dulcis amor', is in G

minor, which for Handel had connotations of piety and purity. The soprano, violins and obbligato oboe wind imitatively around each other, giving a real feeling of sweetness. An expansive accompanied recitative leads into a gorgeous aria in E flat (the reminiscence of the aforementioned German aria, 'Meine Seele'). In the B section, the soprano asks the breezes to rise up once more, and a beautiful oboe soars above the whispering winds. The motet ends with a virtuosic Alleluia which you might recognise: you will have heard its original incarnation earlier this evening.

PERFORMER BIOGRAPHIES

HILARY CRONIN

Soprano

Winner of both First Prize and the Audience Prize at the 2021 London Handel International Singing Competition, Hilary Cronin studied at Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance and was a Robinson Hearn, Trinity College London, and Dame Susan Morden Scholar. Prior to this, Hilary read Music and was a choral scholar at Royal Holloway University of London, where she was awarded The Driver Prize and the Dame Felicity Lott Bursary. She also studied on British Youth Opera's 2020/2021 Serena Fenwick Programme.

Operatic engagements have included Grilletta Lo Speciale for Baroquestock Opera, Mother Hansel and Gretel for Silent Opera at Opera Holland Park, Second Woman Dido and Aeneas for the New Generation Festival, Céphise Pygmalion for the Dunedin Consort and Mrs Waters The Boatswain's Mate for Grimeborne Festival.

Hilary Cronin's current engagements include Téliteire Castor et Pollux with The Opera Company, J. S. Bach B Minor Mass with VOCES8, the Christmas Oratorio at London's Wigmore Hall, the St Matthew Passion with Bournemouth Symphony Chorus, Messiah with the English Chamber Orchestra, Ode to Purcell on tour with Freiburg Baroque Orchestra, a further Purcell programme with The English Concert and Telemann Cantatas on tour

with Solomon's Knot. She will make her principal debut with English Touring Opera as Poppea Agrippina in Autumn 2022.

Hilary Cronin was selected by BBC Music Magazine as a Rising Star for 2022.

HUGH CUTTING

Countertenor

A former choral scholar at St John's College, Cambridge, where he graduated with a first-class honours degree in Music, and a Vocal Masters graduate of the Royal College of Music where he was a Leverhulme Arts Scholar, Hugh Cutting is currently a member of the RCM International Opera Studio. In the autumn of 2021 Hugh won the Kathleen Ferrier Award, the first countertenor to do so. His concert engagements include the English Concert and Kristian Bezuidenhout (Purcell Odes for a Queen), Collegium Vocale Gent and Philippe Herreweghe on tour in Europe (Bach B Minor Mass), Polyphony and Stephen Layton (Bach St John Passion), la Nuova Muisca and David Bates (Monteverdi Vespers and Motets), the Oxford Bach Soloists (Bach Passions and Cantatas), the RCM Baroque Orchestra and Ashley Solomon (Bach Ascension Oratorio), and A Sephardic Journey in Music at Kettle's Yard New Music Concert Series, Cambridge.

On the operatic stage, his roles include Arsace/'Partenope' for Le Jardin des Voix Academy with Les Arts Florissants and William Christie, Bertarido/'Rodelinda' for the RCM International Opera Studio,

Handel's Tolomeno and The Boy/Angel 1 in George Benjamin's 'Written on Skin' for the RCM Spring Opera Scenes, and Ottone/Monteverdi's L'Incoronazione di Poppea and Daemon/Watt's 'Kepler's Trial' at the V&A Theatre, London.

He has recorded Purcell 'Royal Odes' with The King's Consort and Robert King, alongside Iestyn Davies and Carolyn Sampson, and German Baroque arias with Iestyn Davies and Fretwork for Signum Classics.

7PM - MONDAY, APRIL 18TH

ONLINE PREVIEW EVENT: APRIL 16TH

LA RESURREZIONE

Kindly supported by the Maria Bjornson Memorial Fund

Laurence Cummings

Musical Director

Rachel Redmond

Angel

Nardus Williams

Mary Magdalane

Helen Charlston

Mary Cleophas

Ed Lyon

John the Evangelist

Callum Thorpe

Lucifer

London Handel Orchestra

Performers



ABOUT

Written especially for performance on Easter Monday, Handel's great masterpiece *La Resurrezione* closes the 2022 London Handel Festival. This rarely-heard oratorio features some of Handel's most remarkable music. Musical Director Laurence Cummings is joined by an array of star soloists, accompanied by the London Handel Orchestra in the iconic St Martin-in-the-Fields.

!f



VENUE - ST MARTIN-IN-THE-FIELDS
LENGTH - 2HRS (INCLUDING INTERVAL)

TICKETS - £65 £55 £45 £16 £10

PROGRAMME NOTES

La Resurrezione di Nostro Signor Gesù Cristo

Handel's tour of Italy between 1706 and 1710 took him to three very different artistic centres. The heart of Florence was still the Medici family, and they were cultural patrons in the manner of their Renaissance forebears. Venice was, at least nominally, a republic; because of this and because Venice was a thriving mercantile centre, innovation and conspicuous consumption were dear to the Venetians. And so opera thrived – opera which was to leave a lasting impression on Handel. Rome was different again: being a holy city, the ruling elites here were largely churchmen, led by the Pope and his cardinals. Two of these were great patrons of Handel, Cardinals Pietro Ottoboni and Benedetto Pamphili. Handel's third great Roman patron was not a churchman, but a local secular noble, the Marchese Ruspoli. Ruspoli hosted the Arcadian Academy, a club of musicians and patrons (including the two cardinals), in the beautiful – Arcadian – setting of his gardens on the Esquiline Hill. He also held concerts in his grand Bonelli palace, and for his 1708 season of Lenten concerts he commissioned from Handel *La Resurrezione di Nostro Signor Gesù Cristo*.

Opera was outlawed from Rome by papal decree. Instead, the Roman elite enjoyed dramatic oratorios on religious and moral themes. Handel's first two oratorios, *Il Trionfo del Tempo e del Disinganno* (whose

libretto was written by Cardinal Pamphili) and *La Resurrezione*, were about as close as a Roman could get to opera. There was no acting, but there was elaborately painted backcloth scenery, and, as you will hear, the music and the libretto provided all the drama necessary. The first performance even had as Maria Maddalena the well-known opera singer Margherita Durastanti – but she was withdrawn after Ruspoli was reprimanded for letting a woman perform (The female characters were all thereafter taken by castrati.) The work was of an operatic scale, too: two parts of about an hour each; and a big orchestra, which included twenty-one violins, five double basses, two trumpets and a trombone. In fact, the orchestra was too big for Ruspoli's usual concert room, and the whole thing was shifted mid-rehearsal upstairs to a larger salon.

The libretto was by Carlo Sigismondo Capece, a member of the Arcadian Academy. Capece provided the source for the libretto of Handel's *Orlando*, and there are one or two presages of *Orlando's* music in the score. *La Resurrezione* follows the Catholic tradition of the Harrowing of Hell, a fight between Heaven (an angel) and Hell (Lucifer), with a lament by the two Marias and St John, favourite subjects of plays and altarpieces. The work originally opened with an accompanied recitative for Lucifer, triumphing over Christ's death. But Handel, showing excellent dramatic judgement, scrapped this: instead the Angel swoops in and hammers down the gates of Hell, aided by trumpets. Lucifer's first recitative therefore became a response, not

only changing the drama, but the theology too: the uncertainty about Christ's fate was altered to the inevitability that Christ would ascend to Heaven. Lucifer, however, has other ideas, and the rest of the opening scene is a battle of words and wills between him and the Angel.

Meanwhile on Earth, Maddalena (Mary Magdalen) and Cleofe (Mary Cleophas) lament the dead Christ. Giovanni (John the Evangelist) joins them and encourages them to hope, before leaving again to comfort Mary the mother of Jesus. At the end of Part I the Angel emerges from Hell with a triumphant chorus. Part II begins with John hoping that the glorious rising sun might signify the rising of the Son. The Angel and Lucifer have more sparring, but are interrupted by the arrival of the two Marias. Mary Magdalen affirms her love for Christ; at His name, Lucifer retreats back to Hell. The Marias find the empty tomb, and the Angel announces Christ's ascent to Heaven. John arrives and all three celebrate the triumph of Christ.

Like the earlier *Trionfo*, *Resurrezione* is brimming with amazing and original music. Actually, some of the music was not quite original, but in fact borrowed from *Trionfo*: the introductory sonata and the start of Part II was *Trionfo's* overture; the Angel's 'Disseratevi' took inspiration from *Piacere's* 'Come nembo', Cleophas' 'Naufragando' from *Tempo's* 'É ben folle', and 'Per me già di morire' from 'Io sperai'. Handel also recycled music from several chamber cantatas written for Ruspoli, sometimes inventively combining them with

the Trionfo borrowings. He clearly felt that he had written some excellent music, for he returned to Resurrezione throughout his career to harvest its tunes: material from Resurrezione can be found in, amongst other works, Agrippina, Rinaldo, Rodelinda, Atalanta, Alexander Balus and the Water Music.

Handel's pace and contrasts are brilliant: in the first scene, he steps out of the martial sparring with a beautiful aria about redemptive love ('D'amor fu consiglio'). Lucifer's aria closing the first scene ('O voi dell'Erebo') is fierce and contains hellish music, to which Handel would return for Medea in Teseo. This is immediately contrasted with the luscious accompanied recitative and aria of Mary Magdalen ('Notte' – 'Ferma l'ali'). As usual, Handel paints lots of subtextual colour. In this aria, for example, he uses a gamba and recorders, instruments associated with time and death. Mary Cleophas' 'Piangete, si piangete' has heart-rending downward sweeps: under a great composer, we forget that such motifs are actually only humble arpeggios. John's first aria is simply scored – just for basso continuo – as if to remind us of John's simple attachment to the Word of God. His 'Caro figlio' in Part II is utterly touching and shows the close relationship between Mary, her real son and John, her adopted son – and also how good Handel was at getting to the heart of parent-child relationships. Following Christ's resurrection, Cleophas sings the triumphant aria 'Vedo il ciel', but chromaticism and shifts to the minor suggest that the victory

has been at great cost. These are only a few things to listen out for in this treasure of a work; it is no wonder that Handel kept the score on his library shelves.

PERFORMER BIOGRAPHIES

NARDUS WILLIAMS

Soprano

Hailed as 'one to listen out for' (The Guardian), Soprano Nardus Williams is establishing herself as one of the most exciting British singers of her generation. A current English National Opera Harewood Artist, upcoming highlights of the 2021/22 season include her much anticipated return to the Glyndebourne tour as Anne Trulove *The Rake's Progress*, her house debut as Mimi *La Bohème* for Opera Vlaanderen, *Fiordiligi Così fan tutte* for English National Opera and Countess *Le Nozze di Figaro* for the Glyndebourne Festival.

Recent highlights for Williams include Countess *Le Nozze di Figaro* for Opera Holland Park, Mimi *La Bohème* for English National Opera's Drive & Live series, *Ciboulette In The Market for Love* for the Glyndebourne Tour, the world premiere of *Dido's Ghost* a co-commission with the Dunedin Consort, *Mahogany Opera & The Barbican*, *Micaëla Carmen* at English National Opera, Mimi *La Bohème* and *Donna Anna Don Giovanni* for Houston Grand Opera, *Armida Rinaldo* (cover) and *Adina L'elisir d'amore* (cover) at Glyndebourne Festival Opera, *Governess The Turn of the Screw* for Garsington Opera (cover), the role of Martha in a new commission *Wake* by Giorgio Battistelli for Birmingham Opera Company directed by

Graham Vick, and Countess (cover) *The Marriage of Figaro* for English National Opera. Further roles have included Maggie/Marjana in the world premiere of Lewis Murphy *Belongings* for Glyndebourne Festival Opera, *Donna Elvira Don Giovanni* for Opera Holland Park, Mimi *La Bohème* and *Donna Anna Don Giovanni* for Houston Grand Opera and Fox in Janáček *The Cunning Little Vixen* at the Royal College of Music. Williams was also invited to perform with Welsh National Opera and Nevill Holt Opera.

Williams was a member of the Houston Opera Studio for the 2018/19 season and is a former Jerwood Young Artist at Glyndebourne. Williams trained at the International Opera School at the Royal College of Music where she was the sole recipient of the prestigious Kiri Te Kanawa Scholarship. Other awards and prizes include the Maureen Lehane Vocal Awards First Prize and Audience Prize (2016); Williams was also a finalist in the 2018 Kathleen Ferrier Competition.

RACHEL REDMOND

Soprano

Described as an "impressively silken soprano" (The Times) and "resplendent" (The New York Times) Rachel Redmond began her career with the prestigious *Jardin des Voix*, performing with Les Arts Florissants under the direction of William Christie and Paul Agnew in France, Spain and New York. At William Christie's invitation she made her début

at the Opera Comique as Iris in Lully's *Atys*, and performed Irene, Léontine and Flore in Robert Carsen's production of *Les Fêtes Venetiennes* at the Opera Comique, The Théâtre du Capitole de Toulouse and Brooklyn Academy of Music. She subsequently made her début at the Théâtre du Châtelet as Loena in *La belle Hélène*.

With William Christie and Les Arts Florissants Rachel Redmond has also performed Angel Jephtha, Captif in Charpentier's *David et Jonathas*, Belinda Dido and Aeneas, and performances as Damon Acis and Galatea, First Witch Dido and Aeneas, Caecilia in Charpentier's *Caecilia, Virgin and Martyr*, *Artebuse* in Charpentier's *Actéon*, Monteverdi Madrigals, Bach St John Passion and Cantatas, Grands Motets by Rameau and Mondonville, Couperin's *Leçons de ténèbres* and works by Purcell and Boismortier.

Rachel Redmond's concert performances have included *Messiah*, Purcell's *Fairy Queen* and *Vagabond Juditha triumphans* with Jordi Savall and the Centre International de Música Antiga, works by Handel, Jomelli, Galuppi, Vivaldi and Pergolesi with Collegio Ghislieri, *L'Amour, Une Bergère*, *Climène* and *Une Nymphé* in Mondonville's *Isbé* for the Centre de Musique Baroque de Versailles, Charpentier's *La Descente d'Orphée aux Enfers* with Ensemble Correspondences, Bach's St John Passion with Ensemble Aedes, and *Angel Israel in Egypt* with Les Cris de Paris at the Beaune, Lessay and La Chaise-Dieu Festivals.

Her concert repertoire also includes Bach St Matthew Passion, and Cantata 199, Beethoven Mass in C, Bernstein Chichester Psalms, Brahms Requiem, Graupner Diese Zeit ist ein Spiel der Eitelkeit, Handel Esther, Saul and Deutsche Arien, Karl Jenkins Gloria, Orff Carmina Burana and Rameau Pygmalion. She has performed as a soloist with the European Union Baroque Orchestra, Norwegian Chamber Orchestra, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, Glasgow Chamber Orchestra, and in Aldeburgh, at the 'Se' in Lisbon, London's Wigmore Hall and the Auditorio Manuel de Falla in Granada.

For her début in the role of Susanna The Marriage of Figaro for English Touring Opera Rachel Redmond was nominated for The Times Breakthrough Award at last year's South Bank Sky Arts Awards. Other recent opera engagements include her return to the Aix-en-Provence Festival as Second Woman Dido and Aeneas.

Recent engagements include Couperin's Leçons de ténèbres with Les Arts Florissants and with Ensemble Caravanserail, Bach Mass in B minor, Christmas Oratorio and Messiah with the Dunedin Consort, Scarlatti Cantatas with Ensemble Caravanserail, Bellezza Il trionfo del tempo e del disinganno with Barokkanerne (Norwegian Baroque Orchestra) and Les Accents under Thibault Noally, Bononcini Te Deum with Collegio Ghislieri under Giulio Prandi, Bach Cantatas with the English Concert and Odes by Purcell and Handel with the Freiburg Baroque Orchestra - both under

Kristian Bezuidenhout, Acqua Il diluvio universal with Cappella Mediterranea under Leonardo Garcia Alarcón, and Jomelli Beatus Vir with Collegio Ghislieri at the Göttingen International Handel Festival.

At Trevor Pinnock's invitation she jumped in at short notice, to perform Messiah in London's Barbican Hall, in Bern and in Geneva with Freiburg Baroque Orchestra resulting in an invitation to perform Messiah with the English Concert in Summer 2021. Other recent engagements include performances at Saintes Festival with Ensemble Caravansérail and at the Lessay Festival with the Dunedin Consort, Brocke's Passion by Reinhard Keiser in the Amsterdam Concertgebouw with Netherlands Bach Society/NTR Radio, and Bach Magnificat, and Couperin Leçons de Ténèbres and Handel L'Allegro il penseroso ed il moderato with Les Arts Florissants.

Engagements in 2021/2 include Dalinda Ariodante at the Göttingen International Handel Festival, her débuts with the Academy of Ancient Music at London's Barbican (Haydn's Creation), with Helsinki Baroque Orchestra (Clorinda in Monteverdi's Il combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda and Belinda Dido and Aeneas), with the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra (Bach's St John Passion), and Samson and St John Passion with The English Concert, St John Passion and L'allegro, il penseroso ed il moderato with Les Arts Florissants, The Fairy Queen (staged) with Atelier Lyrique de Tourcoign, Carl Heinrich Graun's oratorio Der Tod Jesu with Netherlands Bach Society/NTR Radio, Dixit Dominus

with Il Gardellino and Flemish Radio Choir, a concert in Leipzig Bachfest with Les Talens Lyriques and St Matthew Passion and Acis and Galatea with Dunedin Consort.

Rachel Redmond was due to sing Beethoven Choral Fantasy at the 2020 BBC Promenade Concerts, and Galatea Acis and Galatea with Irish Baroque Orchestra at London's Wigmore Hall in March 2021, but these performances were cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Rachel Redmond was born in Glasgow and sang in the Junior Chorus of the Royal Scottish National Orchestra before studying at the Music School of Douglas Academy, the Royal Scottish Conservatoire (RCS), and the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. She was awarded the Florence Veitch Ibler prize at the RCS for oratorio performance.

HELEN CHARLSTON

Mezzo-soprano

Helen Charlston is quickly cementing herself as a key performer in the next generation of British singers. She won first prize in the 2018 Handel Singing Competition and was a finalist in the Hurn Court Opera Competition, and the Grange Festival International Singing Competition. She was a 'Rising Star' of the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment 2017-2019 and a 2018 City Music Foundation Artist. In 2021, she joined Le Jardin des Voix academy with Les Arts Florissants, and the BBC Radio 3 New Generation Artists scheme, and also became winner of the Ferrier Loveday Song

Prize in 2021 Kathleen Ferrier Awards.

In 2020, Helen premiered *The Isolation Songbook* with Michael Craddock and Alexander Soares, which is a set of 15 newly commissioned songs and duets written during lockdown as a musical response to the changing world in which we found ourselves.

Recent and upcoming concert highlights include Handel's *Messiah* with BBC NOW and the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, Bach's *Weihnachtatorium* with Casa da Musica, Judas Maccabaeus with the RIAS Kammerchor, Mendelssohn's *Lobgesang* with the Royal Northern Sinfonia and Paul McCreech, Bach's *St Matthew Passion* on a tour in The Netherlands, Mendelssohn's *Elijah* with Orquesta Sinfónica de Galicia, a worldwide tour of Handel's *Messiah* with the Seattle Symphony, the Western Australian Symphony Orchestra and Adelaide Symphony Orchestra, and solo recitals at Wigmore Hall, Leeds Lieder, Cheltenham Festival, York Early Music Festival, London Handel Festival, Händel-festspiele Halle, and Korčula Baroque Festival.

ED LYON

Tenor

Ed Lyon studied at St John's College Cambridge, the Royal Academy and the National Opera Studio. He enjoys an international career in a wide repertoire ranging from the baroque to contemporary music and has appeared in many of the

world's leading opera and concert venues including the Royal Opera House Covent Garden, Glyndebourne Festival Opera, the Bayerische Staatsoper Munich, the Netherlands Opera, the Teatro Real Madrid, the Aix, Edinburgh, Holland and Aldeburgh Festivals, Théâtre du Châtelet Paris, BAM New York, the Theater an der Wien and the BBC Proms, with conductors including Antonio Pappano, William Christie, Valery Gerghiev, René Jacobs, Ivor Bolton, Emmanuelle Haïm, Teodor Currentzis and Christian Curnyn.

Recent and future operatic projects include the central role of Colin/ Denisov's *Lécume des jours* for Stuttgart Opera, Steva/ Jenufa for Opera North, the world premiere of Nicolas Lens' *Shell Shock*, Tamino, *Spoleta / Tosca* and *Don Gomez / Henry VIII* for La Monnaie, Brussels, *L'Ormino* for the ROH at the Globe, *Don Ottavio/ Don Giovanni* and *Lurcanio/Ariodante* for Scottish Opera, the title role in *La Clemenza di Tito* for Opera de Rouen, *Freddy/My Fair Lady* for the Châtelet in Paris, *Lurcanio* and *Septimius / Theodora* as well as roles in *Ariadne auf Naxos*, *Tristan und Isolde*, *Der fliegende Holländer*, and *Tannhäuser* for Royal Opera House, *Jaquino/Fidelio* and *Pane / La Calisto* in Madrid, *Don Alonze/L'amant Jaloux* and *Septimus* for Pinchgut Opera in Sydney, *Eduardo* in *Ades' Exterminating Angel* at the Salzburg Festival and the Royal Opera House, *Peter Quint / The Turn of the Screw* and the title role in *Orfeo* for Garsington Opera, *Jupiter/Semele* in Karlsruhe, *Belmonte / Die Entführung aus dem Serail* for The Grange Festival, *King Arthur* with Capella

Mediterranea at the Grand Théâtre de Genève, *Ferdinand / Miranda* for Oper Köln, a concert performance of *Dido and Acteon* with Early Opera Company and acclaimed staged performances of *The Diary of One who Disappeared in Brussels*, London, Brno, Rome and at the Beijing Festival.

Other highlights have included extensive tours with Les Arts Florissants and William Christie including Paris, London, Amsterdam and New York in repertoire including the title roles in Lully's *Atys*, Rameau's *Pygmalion* and *Hippolyte* and Charpentier's *Actéon*, the title role in Monteverdi's *Orfeo* at the Aix Festival with René Jacobs, the title role in Rameau's *Hippolyte et Aricie* and Purcell's *Fairy Queen* for Glyndebourne and *Pane/La Calisto* and *Lysander/A Midsummer Night's Dream* for the Royal Opera, and Haydn's *L'anima de filosofo* with Currentzis.

Ed Lyon's many concert engagements have included performances at the BBC Proms (including Bach with The English Concert and Maxwell-Davies with the BBC Singers), with the Bach Choir, City of Birmingham SO (Tom Rakewell in a concert performance of *The Rake's Progress*), London Symphony Orchestra, Mozarteum Orchester Salzburg, New London Concert, Musikkollegium Winterthur, The King's Consort, Easter at King's, Ludus Baroque, Die Kölner Akademie, Israel Camerata and the English Chamber Orchestra. His repertoire includes the baroque and nineteenth century oratorios as well as major tenor concert works such as *The*

Dream of Gerontius, Elijah and the Britten tenor repertoire. Recent and forthcoming concerts include performances of Messiah, St John Passion (arias), Elijah, B minor mass at the Royal Festival Hall, Seven Deadly Sins by Macmillan, performances of the War Requiem with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic and NDR Hannover as well as with the Cambridge University Music Society, a concert performance of Solomon with the Early Opera Company on stage at Covent Garden, St Matthew Passion (Evangelist) for the Bach Choir at the Royal Festival Hall, The Masque of the Red Death with the SWR Sinfonieorchester, The Dream of Gerontius with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, St John Passion (Evangelist) with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, performances of Beethoven Symphony No 9 in Europe and the US with the Monteverdi Choir and Orchestra / Sir John Eliot Gardiner and a recital with the Theatre of the Ayre at the Wigmore Hall.

He enjoys a close collaboration with Ludus Baroque in Edinburgh with whom he has recorded Handel's Alexander's Feast and Ode for St Cecilia's Day to great critical acclaim. Their most recent release is The Triumph of Time and Truth. Other recordings include Les Troyens (DVD) with the ROH Covent Garden and Antonio Pappano and L'enfance du Christ with the Mozarteum Orchester Salzburg and Ivor Bolton and in October 2019 he released his first solo album, The 17th Century Playlist on Delphian records.

CALLUM THORPE

Bass

British bass Callum Thorpe initially obtained a PhD in Immunology before focussing on his vocal studies at the Royal Academy of Music. From 2017 to 2021 he was a member of the solo ensemble at the Bayerische Staatsoper Munich where roles included Banco Macbeth, Pistola Falstaff, Il Re d'Egitto Aida, Colline La Bohème, Zuniga Carmen, Farfallo Die Schweigsame Frau, Truffaldin Ariadne auf Naxos and Masetto Don Giovanni and this season's highlights include Rocco Fidelio for Glyndebourne on Tour; Sparafucile Rigoletto for Opera North and Talbot Maria Stuarda for Irish National. This season's concerts include Bach Mass in B Minor conducted by Giedre Slekyte at the Erl Tiroler Festival, Handel La Ressuerzione at the London Handel Festival with Laurence Cummings and returning to the 2022 Edinburgh International Festival.

Operatic engagements have included Sarastro Die Zauberflöte and Banco Macbeth at Theater Basel, Commendatore and Masetto Don Giovanni for Opéra royale de Versailles with Marc Minkowski, Antinoo and Il Tempo Ulisse at the Théâtre des Champs Elysées under Emmanuelle Haïm, Masetto Don Giovanni for Glyndebourne on Tour and Garsington Opera, Lieutenant Radcliffe Billy Budd for Opera North and Plutone Orfeo in for the Royal Opera House. Callum has also performed, in concert, Hunding in Wagner's Die Walküre with the Bilbao Symphony Orchestra and Eric Nielson.

In addition, Callum created the role of Gibarian in the world premiere of Fujikura's Solaris at the Théâtre des Champs Elysées, Opéra de Lille and Opéra de Lausanne and regularly sings twentieth century opera including appearances as Arthur/Officer 2 The Lighthouse by Peter Maxwell Davies and Loudspeaker Der Kaiser von Atlantis by Viktor Ullmann.

On the concert platform his wide-ranging repertoire includes Bach St John Passion and St Matthew Passion, Jupiter Platée, Handel Messiah. title role Apollo e Dafne. Lucifer La Resurrezione. Mozart and Verdi Requiems working with conductors including Marc Minkowski, Sir Mark Elder, Ivor Bolton, Jonathan Cohen, Masato Suzuki and Christian Curnyn.

Callum has also performed extensively with William Christie and Les Arts Florissants at Glyndebourne Festival, Théâtre des Champs Elysées, Lincoln Center New York, Amsterdam Concertgebouw and at the BBC Proms as Valens in Handel's Theodora, Polyphemus in Acis and Galatea, Adonis Venus and Adonis, Israel in Egypt as well as Purcell The Fairy Queen and The Indian Queen, Rameau Hippolyte et Aricie, as Phobetor in Lully's Atys and Pluto in Charpentier La descente d'Orphée aux enfers.

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