

WIGMORE HALL

Friday 15 April 2022 6.00pm

Sonia Prina contralto

Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin

Bernhard Forck leader, violin

Kerstin Erben violin I

Emmanuelle Bernard violin I

Dörte Wetzel violin II

Thomas Graewe violin II

Uta Peters violin II

Corina Golomoz viola

Annette Geiger viola

Luise Buchberger cello

Walter Rumer double bass

Xenia Löffler oboe

Michael Bosch oboe

Michele Pasotti lute

Raphael Alpermann harpsichord, organ

CLASSIC *f*M

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Alessandro Scarlatti (1660-1725)

Concerto grosso No. 3 in F (pub. 1740)

I. Allegro • II. Largo • III. Allegro • IV. Largo • V. Allegro

Anon

Concerto in G minor for 2 oboes, strings and continuo

I. Allegro moderato • II. Adagio • III. Allegro un poco

Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741)

Stabat mater in F minor RV621 (?1712)

Interval

Antonio Caldara (1671-1736)

Sinfonia No. 9 in B flat 'Gesù presentato nel tempio'

I. Largo - Allegro • II. Adagio • III. Allegro

Johann Adolf Hasse (1699-1783)

Agitata sine pace (c.1760)

Alessandro Scarlatti

Concerto grosso No. 5 in D minor (pub. 1740)

I. Allegro • II. Grave • III. Allegro • IV. Minuet. Molto veloce

Antonio Vivaldi

In furore giustissimae irae RV626 (1723)

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The Sicilian composer **Alessandro Scarlatti** made his career in Naples where he dominated musical life for decades either side of 1700. He composed more than 600 cantatas, 100 operas, dozens of oratorios and a collection of six concerti grossi, which are rare instrumental works in his predominantly vocal output. The *6 Concerti in 7 parti* ('6 concertos in 7 parts') are personal and intimate, and remained unpublished until fifteen years after the composer's death when they were printed in London. The seven parts are actually four, as the three soloists play what the ensemble plays. The keyboard is the 'continuo' improvising the harmonies suggested by 'guitar chord' figures written above the cellist's bassline – a so-called 'figured bass'. Two concerti from the collection are played here, one in each half. The concert begins with No. 3 in F which has five short movements: an *Allegro* (quick) and *Largo* (slow) combination twice, plus a conclusion in jig time. The two *Allegros* are in four beats to the bar, the *Largos* in three. The second *Allegro* is a fugue begun by the first violin and chased by the other instruments in descending order. The finale is a so-called *tarantella*, a frenzied dance from southern Italy, at various times considered either the result of, or a cure for, the tarantula's bite.

The **Anonymous** or 'Schrank II' Concerto in G minor was one of a number of scores locked in a cupboard ('*Schrank*' in German) at the Dresden Hofkapelle (court chapel) of the Elector of Saxony and neglected for 200 years, from the end of the Seven Years War in 1793 until just recently. The music dates from the 18th-century union of Saxony and Poland when the music director was Johann Pisendel, and it may be that the concerto is his work. It is scored for oboes and strings and has three movements. The first, a moderate *Allegro* in four-time, is founded on a triplet-rich theme with a chromatic descent and burning long notes. The oboes become soloists echoing each other, billing and cooing like lovers. In the *Adagio*, the oboes come more to the fore, duetting in thirds and sixths, with the strings a discreet accompaniment. The finale is a three-time *Allegro* with dainty strings and the oboes resuming their delirious love-match, with triplets borrowed from the opening.

The singer takes the stage to sing the *Stabat mater* by **Antonio Vivaldi**, premièred in Brescia in 1712. The composer set ten of the twenty Latin verses of this 13th-century poem, possibly by Jacopone da Todi who otherwise wrote satirical verse in the Umbrian dialect. The rhythmic four-beat metre and regular rhymes give the *Stabat Mater* the appeal of folk poetry. Its value in Christian iconography is its portrayal not of the young mother cradling a new-born, but of the grief-laden fifty-year-old present at the execution of her son. Baroque settings of the poem such as Vivaldi's are mostly solo versions, reflecting the fashion for

opera singers to sing Passion music during Lent as they were otherwise out of work, the opera houses having closed.

Antonio Caldara was born in Venice and was a chorister at St Mark's Basilica. The Sinfonia No. 9 dates from the last part of his life when he was vice-Kapellmeister to the Holy Roman Emperor Charles VI in Vienna. His employer so admired him that he paid him more than the senior kapellmeister. He composed cantatas for the royal family, operas for court weddings and city carnivals and a regular supply of oratorios for the chapel including *Gesù presentato nel tempio* written for Candlemas in 1735. The sinfonia is an instrumental version in three movements, the first an *Allegro* with a slow introduction, the second a slow movement and the third a spirited *Allegro* where an alleluia would have been.

It was said of **Johann Adolf Hasse** that few composers were so celebrated or so quickly forgotten. He dominated the opera stage in the decades after Alessandro Scarlatti. In 1730 he married the mezzo-soprano Faustina Bordoni, fresh from alleged punch-ups with her rival prima donna Francesca Cuzzoni on Handel's London stage. Faustina continued to sing throughout her marriage, taking time off only to have three daughters who became singers too. Her voice lowered in later life and it is possible she sang her husband's motet *Agitata sine pace*, written around 1760 at the end of their employment in Dresden by the Elector of Saxony. It has four movements and is scored for oboe, strings and continuo. The first and third movements are *da capo* ('from the top') arias which repeat after a central quicker section in three-time. A lengthy recitative separates them. The finale is an 'Alleluia' with long melismas on the four vowels.

The second of the **Scarlatti** concerti grossi is No. 5 in D minor which has four short movements – quick, slow, quick and a concluding *Minuet* marked *Molto veloce* or 'very fast'. It is a respite for singer and audience before the finale, *In furore giustissimae irae*, a motet by the Venetian composer **Antonio Vivaldi**, written during Carnival in Rome in 1723. It opens with a 'rage' aria over thundering strings, mirroring the terrifying storm and earthquake following the crucifixion. A middle section provides a merciful lull before the *da capo* return of the cyclone. A short prayerful recitative is marked by a repeated 'oh Jesu' plea before a gently sobbing slow *da capo* aria in three-time extends the sorrow with an exquisitely chromatic melisma on 'languescit' and a middle section with a brief mention of 'laetum' ('joy') at the end of suffering. As if in confirmation, the final 'Alleluia' begins with a belting three cheers stutter which rejoices thrillingly in the good of Good Friday.

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Alessandro Scarlatti (1660-1725)

Concerto grosso No. 3 in F (pub. 1740)

I. Allegro

II. Largo

III. Allegro

IV. Largo

V. Allegro

Anon

Concerto in G minor for 2 oboes, strings and continuo

I. Allegro moderato

II. Adagio

III. Allegro un poco

Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741)

Stabat mater in F minor The mother stood

RV621 (?1712)

Anonymous

Stabat mater dolorosa
luxta crucem lacrimosa
Dum pendebat Filius.

The mother stood, in sorrow
and in tears, by the cross
as her son hung from it.

Cuius animam gementem,
Contristatam et dolentem,
Pertransivit gladius.

Her weeping heart,
full of anguish and sorrow,
was pierced by a sword.

O quam tristis et afflicta
Fuit illa benedicta
Mater unigeniti!

Oh how sad and desolate
was that blessed mother
of the only-begotten son!

Quae moerebat et dolebat
Pia Mater dum videbat
Nati poenas inclyti.

She grieved and suffered,
the holy mother, as she witnessed
the pains of her glorious son.

Quis est homo qui non fleret
Matrem Christi si videret
In tanto supplicio?

Who would not weep
to see the mother of Christ
in such torment?

Quis non posset contristari
Christi Matrem contemplari
Dolentem cum Filio?

Who could fail to be moved
watching Christ's mother
grieving with her son?

Pro peccatis suae gentis
Vidit Jesum in tormentis
Et flagellis subditum.

For the sins of his people
she saw Jesus tortured
and subjected to scourging!

Vidit suum dulcem natum
Moriendo desolatum
Dum emisit spiritum.

She watched her own beloved son,
dying in desolation,
as he expired.

Eia Mater, fons amoris,
Me sentire vim
doloris
Fac, ut tecum lugeam.

O mother, source of love,
let me feel the strength of your
sorrow
so that I may mourn with you.

Fac ut ardeat cor meum
In amando Christum Deum,
Ut sibi complaceam.

Make my heart blaze
with love for Christ the Lord
so that I may please him!

Amen.

Amen.

Interval

Antonio Caldara (1671-1736)

Sinfonia No. 9 in B flat 'Gesù presentato nel tempio'

I. Largo - Allegro

II. Adagio

III. Allegro

Johann Adolf Hasse (1699-1783)

Agitata sine pace (c.1760) Restlessly driven

Agitata sine pace,
In te sola pacem quaero,
Salus mundi,
Spes amata.

Restlessly driven
I seek peace in you alone,
salvation of the world
beloved hope.

In hac orbis via
fallace

On this treacherous path of the
world

Sine lumine sincero

without clear light

Ah tu splende,

ah, shine thou

O fax beata!

blessed torch!

O tu solatium itinerantis animae,
Sponse, dilecte veni!
Per devios hosce horrores
Hostem minantem audio
Et nulla pergo lege.

O consolation of the travelling soul,
bridegroom, chosen one, come!
Through these remote terrors
I hear the enemy threaten
and go on at no bidding.

Tu pavidae succurre,
Errantem rege!

Assist the fearful one,
guide the erring!

Non fallor?

Am I not deceived?

Ades votis: nox exulat,
et timor.

Thou hearest the prayers: night
and fear are banished.

En nova jam te duce clarescit
dies luce.

Behold, already the day shines in
new light under your guidance.

Et inhiantis hostis undique silet
clamor.

And everywhere the cry of the
lurking enemy is silent.

O praesidium suave,
O dulcis amor!

O welcome protection!
O sweet love!

Tecum sub umbra
Placida laeta respirat
anima,
Ne derelinquas
Domine in te, sperantem!
Tu vita es mea,
Jam tu pro me contende
Inermem tu defende
Firma labantem!

With thee the soul breathes
in the gentle shade serenely
breathes again:
forsake not, O Lord, the
the one who hopes in you!
You are my life,
fight now for me
defend the defenceless,
strengthen the wavering!

Alleluia.

Alleluia.

Alessandro Scarlatti

Concerto grosso No. 5 in D minor (pub. 1740)

I. Allegro

II. Grave

III. Allegro

IV. Minuet. Molto veloce

Antonio Vivaldi

In furore giustissimae irae RV626 (1723)

Anonymous

In furore iustissimae irae
Tu divinitus facis potentem.
Quando potes me reum punier
Ipsum crimen te gerit
clementem.

Miserationum Pater piissime,
Parce mihi dolente
Peccatori languenti,
O Jesu dulcissime.

Tunc meus fletus
Evadet laetus
Dum pro te meum
Languescit cor.

Fac me plorare,
Mi Jesu care,
Et fletus laetus
Fovebit cor.

Alleluia. Alleluia.

In wrath and most just anger

In wrath and most just anger
you divinely exercise power.
When you punish me in my guilt
the crime itself bears your
mercy.

Most loyal Father of mercies
spare me, a sorrowful,
weak sinner,
most sweet Jesus.

Then shall my weeping
turn to joy
as my heart is softened
towards you.

Make me cry,
my dear Jesus,
and joyful weeping
will warm my heart.

Alleluia. Alleluia.