

# WIGMORE HALL

Wednesday 15 November 2023  
7.30pm

Anthony Roth Costanzo countertenor

La Nuova Musica

David Bates artistic director, harpsichord

Matthew Truscott leader

Agata Daraškaitė violin I

Kirra Thomas violin I

George Clifford violin I

Jane Gordon violin II

Sijie Chen violin II

Magdalena Loth-Hill violin II

Will McGahon violin II

Elitsa Bogdanova viola

Jim O'Toole viola

Alexander Rolton cello

Kinga Gáborjáni cello

Judith Evans bass

Georgia Browne flute

Leo Duarte oboe I

Nicola Barbagli oboe II

Catriona McDermid bassoon

Richard Bayliss horn I

Joseph Walters horn II

Joseph Bologne, Chevalier de  
Saint-Georges (1745-1799)

Symphony in D Op. 11 No. 2 (pub. 1779)  
*I. Allegro Presto • II. Andante • III. Presto*

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart  
(1756-1791)

Vadasi ... Già dagli occhi from *Mitridate, re di Ponto* K87  
(1770)

Ombra felice ... Io ti lascio K255 (1776)

Jean-Philippe Rameau (1683-1764)

Entrée de Polymnie from *Les Boréades* (1763)

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Dans un bois solitaire K308 (1777-8) *arranged by Iain Farrington*

Abendempfindung K523 (1787) *arranged by Iain Farrington*

*Interval*

Jean-Philippe Rameau

Suite from *Platée* (1745)  
*Overture • Air Pantomime • Rigaudons • Orage*

Christoph Willibald Gluck (1714-1787)

From *Orfeo ed Euridice* (1762)  
Che puro ciel • Che farò senza Euridice?

Suite from *Don Juan* (1761)  
*Sinfonia • Andante grazioso •  
Andante • Allegro non troppo*

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Al mio ben mi veggio avanti from *Ascanio in Alba* K111 (1771)

Venga pur minacci from *Mitridate, re di Ponto* K87



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This evening's performance features disparate works, some vocal and some instrumental, from several renowned 18th-century composers. Yet each work is connected to opera, either as an individual aria or instrumental piece excerpted from a larger operatic work.

Born in 1745 in the archipelago of Guadeloupe, **Joseph Bologne, Chevalier de Saint-Georges** was the son of a French plantation owner, George Bologne, and Nanon, an enslaved African woman. An accomplished fencer and later military officer, Bologne was primarily known as a violin virtuoso. His early works are mostly instrumental, but in 1776, he was proposed as the new music director of the Paris Opéra. This caused a scandal as the *prime donne* of the Opéra protested that this would 'degrad[e] their honour and delicate conscience by having them submit to the orders of a mulatto'. While Bologne did not become director, he did compose a number of operas in the ensuing years.

The work in this evening's concert is Bologne's Symphony in D Op. 11 No. 2. Published in 1779, Op. 11 No. 2 also serves as the overture to his only surviving opera, *L'amant anonyme*. It is organised into three movements in the French fashion with energetic outer movements encircling a delicately lyrical slow movement.

*Opera seria* became an important part of **Mozart's** life and career from a very young age. While his juvenile efforts in this genre are sometimes dismissed as the formulaic products of an immature composer, they still demonstrate the careful attention that Mozart paid to the text and its meaning, resulting in works which are evocative and dramatic. All of the arias here were composed for *castrati*, that is, male operatic singers who sang in a soprano or alto register.

Two arias on this programme are taken from *Mitridate, re di Ponto*, which Mozart composed in Milan in 1770. Both arias were sung by castrato Giuseppe Cicognani who portrayed Farnace, the eldest son of King Mithridates. In typical complicated *opera seria* fashion, Farnace is involved in a love triangle as well as a plot to overthrow his father, yet is forgiven in the end. Another aria is taken from *Ascanio in Alba*, which Mozart composed for the Austrian empress Maria Theresa, celebrating her son's wedding in 1771. Castrato Giovanni Manzuoli portrayed Ascanio, the son of Venus and Aeneas who is betrothed to the nymph Silvia and sent by his mother in disguise to test Silvia's virtue.

The remaining aria 'Ombra felice...Io ti lascio' is an example of a concert aria, an operatic work composed individually for an unstaged performance on a text taken from a pre-existing opera libretto. It was composed in Salzburg in 1776 for Francesco Fortini, a castrato who was part of a traveling Italian theater troupe. 'Ombra felice' is an example of an 'ombra aria' in which the character typically addresses the shade of a departed loved one, expressing a desire to be reunited in death.

Finally, this programme features two of Mozart's songs for voice and piano which have been arranged here for orchestra. These smaller, more intimate pieces were often composed for Mozart's close friends. 'Dans un bois solitaire' is a French *ariette* composed in Mannheim in 1778 for Elisabeth Wendling, a soprano who originated the role of Elettra in Mozart's *Idomeneo*. 'Abendempfindung' is a German Lied composed in Vienna in 1787. It has since appeared in many publications of Masonic songbooks. Given Mozart's association with the Freemasons in Vienna, it is possible this was intended for that purpose.

**Christoph Willibald Gluck** is often credited with reforming *opera seria* in the 1760s by streamlining the typically lengthy *da capo* arias and incorporating the orchestra more into the plot-driven recitative. These reforms placed more focus on dramatic continuity over flashy vocal virtuosity. His operas served as models for many later composers, especially Mozart. The two arias on this programme come from his best-known opera, *Orfeo ed Euridice*, which premièred in Vienna in 1762. The story is based on the myth of Orpheus which has been connected to opera from its earliest beginnings in the 17th Century. Orpheus was sung originally by castrato Gaetano Guadagni. The first aria here 'Che puro il ciel' is Orpheus's response to the pure air of the Elysian Fields which he encounters as he travels through the underworld. Later, in 'Che faro senza Euridice', he mourns the second loss of Euridice after he fails to resist turning to look at her, despite the condition of her release.

Following these two arias from *Orfeo*, tonight's performance includes music from Gluck's ballet, *Don Juan*, performed just a year before *Orfeo*. The ballet tells the legend of Don Juan, a serial womanizer and murderer who is dragged to hell as punishment for his crimes. The legend also served as the basis for Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, and in fact Mozart also quoted a portion of Gluck's *Don Juan* in the Act 3 finale of *Le nozze di Figaro*.

As an opera composer, **Rameau** was fairly late to the game; his first staged work was not produced until the composer was 50. Still, his operas were exceedingly popular in France. In the tradition of French opera which stretches back to Lully's works in the 17th Century, Rameau's operas typically featured extended instrumental sections, often to accompany dancing such as ballet. These instrumental sections were frequently the most popular parts of his operas, as Rameau remarked in the preface to a publication of suites from his 1735 *Les Indes galantes*. This evening's programme features selections from two of Rameau's operas, *Les Boréades* (1763) and *Platée* (1745). From the former is the *Entrée de Polymnie*, which accompanied the stage entrance of the muse Polyhymnia, while the latter stitches together multiple instrumental sections from the opera.

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**Joseph Bologne, Chevalier de Saint-Georges** (1745-1799)

Symphony in D Op. 11 No. 2 (pub. 1779)

*I. Allegro Presto*

*II. Andante*

*III. Presto*

**Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart** (1756-1791)

**Vadasi ... Già dagli occhi from *Mitridate, re di Ponto* K87 (1770)**

*Vittorio Amedeo Cigna-Santi*

**I must go... Already the veil is lifted**

*Recitativo accompagnato*

Vadasi... Oh ciel,  
Ma dove spingo l'ardito piè?  
Ah vi risento, o sacre di natura voci possenti,  
O fieri rimorsi del mio cor.  
Empio a tal segno, no, ch'io non son,  
E a questo prezzo, a questo Trono, Aspasia, Romani, io vi detesto.

*Aria*

Già dagli occhi il velo è tolto,  
Vili affetti io v'abbandono:  
Son pentito, e non ascolto,  
Che i latrati del mio cor.

Tempo è omai, che al primo impero

La ragione in me ritorni;  
Già ricalco il bel sentiero  
Della gloria, e dell'onor.

*Accompanied recitative*

I must go... Oh Heaven,  
but where shall I direct my bold steps?  
Ah, I hear you again, O sacred, powerful voices of nature, O proud remorse of my heart.  
No, I am not wicked to such a degree,  
and at this price, for this, throne, Aspasia, Romans, I detest you.

*Aria*

Already the veil is lifted from my eyes;  
vile affections, I abandon you.  
I am repentant, and listen only to the howlings of my heart.

It is high time that reason returns to rule in me;  
now I retrace the fair path of glory and honour.

**Ombra felice ... Io ti lascio K255 (1776)**

*Giovanni de Gamerra*

*Recitativo*

Ombra felice! tornerò a rivederti.  
Apri i bei lumi, e consola,  
Deh, almeno in questo istante  
Con un pietoso sguardo  
Il fido amante.  
Porgimi la tua destra,  
Un pegno estremo del tuo affetto  
Mi dona.  
Ah, che la mia costanza  
Or m'abbandona.  
Io ti lascio...

*Aria:*

Io ti lascio, e questo addio  
Se sia l'ultimo non so.  
Ah, chi sa, bell'idol mio,  
Se mai più ti rivedrò.  
Vengo, oh ciel!  
Vengo, deh lascia, oh ciel!  
Deh lascia, oh pene!  
Per te sol, mio ben, pavento,  
Il più barbaro tormento,  
Giusti dei, chi mai provò,  
Vengo, oh ciel!  
Deh lascia, oh pene!  
Il più barbaro tormento,  
Giusti dei, chi mai provò.

**Blessed shade ... I must leave you**

*Recitative*

Blessed shade! I shall see you again.  
Open your lovely eyes and, for this moment at least, comfort your faithful lover by looking upon him with pity.  
Give me your hand, offer me one last pledge of your affection.  
Ah, my fortitude now forsakes me.  
I must leave you...

*Aria*

I must leave you, and I know not whether this farewell will be the last.  
Who knows, my fair beloved, whether I shall ever see you again.  
I am coming, oh heaven!  
I am coming, ah let me be, oh heaven!  
Let me be, oh suffering!  
For you alone, my love, do I fear the most brutal torment, righteous gods, any man ever endured.  
I am coming, oh heaven!  
Let me be, oh suffering!  
The most brutal torment, righteous gods, any man ever endured.

**Jean-Philippe Rameau** (1683-1764)

**Entrée de Polymnie from *Les Boréades* (1763)**

## Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

### Dans un bois solitaire      In a lonely wood

K308 (1777-8)

arranged by Iain Farrington

*Antoine Houdar de La*

*Motte*

Dans un bois solitaire et sombre      In a dark and lonely wood  
Je me promenais l'autr' jour,      I walked a while ago,  
Un enfant y dormait à      a child was sleeping in its  
l'ombre,      shade –  
C'était le redoutable      it was fearsome Cupid  
Amour.      himself.

J'approche, sa beauté me      I drew near, his beauty  
flatte,      charmed me,  
Mais je devais m'en défier;      but I had to be on my guard;  
J'y vis tous les traits d'une      I saw all the looks of a  
ingrate,      faithless maid  
Que j'avais juré d'oublier.      whom I had sworn to forget.

Il avait la bouche vermeille,      His lips were bright red,  
Le teint aussi beau que le      his complexion as  
sien,      beautiful as hers,  
Un soupir m'échappe, il      a sigh escapes me, he  
s'éveille;      awakes  
L'Amour se réveille de rien.      Cupid wakes at anything.

Aussitôt déployant ses ailes      Spreading at once his  
et saisissant      wings and seizing  
Son arc vengeur,      his vengeful bow,  
D'une de ses fleches      unleashing one of his  
cruelles, en partant,      cruel shafts  
Il me blesse au cœur.      he wounds me to the heart.

Va! va, dit-il, aux pieds de      'Go!' he said, 'at Sylvie's  
Sylvie,      feet  
De nouveau languir et      to languish and to burn  
brûler!      anew!  
Tu l'aimeras toute ta vie,      You shall love her all your life  
Pour avoir osé      for having dared to wake  
m'éveiller.      me.'

## Abendempfindung

K523 (1787)

arranged by Iain Farrington

*Joachim Heinrich Campe*

Abend ist's, die Sonne ist      It is evening, the sun has  
verschwunden,      vanished,  
Und der Mond strahlt      and the moon sheds its  
Silberglanz;      silver light;  
So entflieh'n des Lebens      so life's sweetest hours  
schönste Stunden      speed by,  
Flieh'n vorüber wie im Tanz!      flit by as in a dance!

Bald entflieht des Lebens      Soon life's bright pageant  
bunte Szene,      will be over,  
Und der Vorhang rollt herab.      and the curtain will fall.  
Aus ist unser Spiel! Des      Our play is ended! Tears  
Freundes Träne      wept by a friend  
Fließet schon auf unser Grab.      flow already on our grave.

Bald vielleicht mir weht, wie      Soon perhaps, like a  
Westwind leise,      gentle zephyr,  
Eine stille Ahnung      a silent presentiment will  
zu –      reach me,  
Schliess' ich dieses Lebens      and I shall end this earthly  
Pilgerreise,      pilgrimage,  
Fliege in das Land der Ruh'.      fly to the land of rest.

Werdet ihr dann an meinem      If you then weep by my  
Grabe weinen,      grave  
Trauernd meine Asche seh'n,      and gaze mourning on  
and gaze mourning on      my ashes,  
Dann, o Freunde, will ich      then, dear friends, I shall  
euch erscheinen      appear to you  
Und will Himmel auf euch      bringing a breath of  
weh'n.      heaven.

Schenk' auch du ein      May you too shed a tear  
Tränchen mir      for me  
Und pflücke mir ein Veilchen      and pluck a violet for my  
auf mein Grab;      grave;  
Und mit deinem seelenvollen      and let your  
Blicke      compassionate gaze  
Sieh' dann sanft auf mich      look tenderly down on  
herab.      me.

Weih' mir eine Träne und      Consecrate a tear to me  
ach!      and ah!  
Schäme dich nur nicht, sie      Be not ashamed to do  
mir zu weih'n,      so;  
O sie wird in meinem      in my diadem it shall  
Diademe      become  
Dann die schönste Perle sein.      the fairest pearl of all.

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Interval

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## Jean-Philippe Rameau

### Suite from *Platée* (1745)

Overture

*Air Pantomime*

*Rigaudons*

*Orage*

## Christoph Willibald Gluck (1714-1787)

### From *Orfeo ed Euridice* (1762)

*Ranieri de' Calzabigi*

#### Che puro ciel

Che puro ciel! Che chiaro  
sol!

Che nuova serena luce è  
questa mai!

Che dolce, lusinghiera  
armonia

Formano insieme

Il cantar degli augelli,

Il correr de' ruscelli,

Dell'aure il  
susurrar!

Questo è il soggiorno

De' fortunati Eroi.

Qui tutto spira un tranquillo  
contento,

Ma non per me.

Se l'idol mio non trovo,

Sperar nol posso!

I suoi soave  
accenti,

Gli amorosi suoi sguardi, il  
suo bel riso,

Sono il mio solo, il mio diletto  
Eliso!

Ma in qual parte sarà?

Chiedasi a questo,

Che mi viene a incontrar,  
stuolo felice.

Euridice dov'è?

#### How pure the sky

How pure the sky! How  
clear the sun!

How unclouded is this  
new light!

How sweet and  
ingratiating the music  
made together

by the songs of the birds,  
the rippling of the streams  
and the whispering of the  
breezes!

This is the realm  
of the fortunate Heroes.

Everything here exudes  
peace and tranquillity,  
but not for me.

If I do not find my idol  
there is no hope of it for me!

The gentle sound of her  
voice,

her loving looks, her  
beautiful smile,

these alone are heavenly  
delights for me!

But where shall I find her?

Let me ask this  
happy band which comes  
towards me.

Where is Eurydice?

## Che farò senza Euridice? (1762)

Che farò senza  
Euridice?

Dove andrò senza il mio  
ben?

Euridice! Oh dio!  
Rispondi!

Io son pure il tuo fedel.

Euridice! Ah non m'avanza  
Più soccorso, più  
speranza  
Nè dal mondo, nè dal  
ciel.

Che farò senza  
Euridice?

Dove andrò senza il mio  
ben?

## What shall I do without Euridice?

What shall I do without  
Euridice?

Where shall I turn without  
my love?

Euridice! O heaven!  
Respond!

I am your true lover still.

Euridice! Alas, there is  
no help for me, no hope  
to come  
either from the world or  
from the gods.

What shall I do without  
Euridice?

Where shall I turn without  
my love?

## Suite from *Don Juan* (1761)

*Sinfonia*

*Andante grazioso*

*Andante*

*Allegro non troppo*

## Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

### Al mio ben mi veggio avanti from *Ascanio in Alba* K111 (1771)

*Giuseppe Parini*

Al mio ben mi veggio  
avanti,

Del suo cor sento la pena,  
E la legge ancor mi frena.

Ah si rompa il crudo  
laccio:

Abbastanza il cor  
soffrì.

Se pietà dell'alme amanti,  
Bella diva, il sen ti  
move,

Non voler fra tante prove  
Agitarle ognor  
così.

### I see myself in front of my beloved

I see myself in front of my  
beloved,

I feel the pain of her love,  
yet the law stops me.

Alas, may the cruel bound  
break off:

enough suffering to this  
heart.

If pity toward loving souls,  
a fair deity, moves your  
heart,

stop troubling them,  
already troubled by many  
fates.

Venga pur Minacci  
from *Mitridate, re di*  
*Ponto* K87

Let him come and  
threaten

Venga pur, minacci e  
freme  
L'implacabil genitore,  
Al suo sdegno, al suo furore  
Questo cor non cederà.

Let my unappeasable  
father come then,  
let him threaten and fume,  
but my heart will not yield  
to his scorn and fury.

Roma in me rispetti e  
tema  
Men feroce e men severo,  
O più barbaro, o più  
fiero  
L'ira sua mi renderà.

Let him respect and fear  
Rome in me,  
less fierce and less severe,  
or else his anger will  
make me  
more cruel and more proud.

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