### Wednesday 21 September 2022 7.30pm

# WIGMORE HALL

A due voci

lestyn Davies countertenor Hugh Cutting countertenor Ensemble Guadagni

> Tom Foster organ, harpsichord Thomas Dunford archlute Jonathan Byers cello Siobhán Armstrong harp

Claudio Monteverdi (1567-1643) Interrotte speranze SV132 (1619)

Vorrei baciarti SV123 (1619)

Antonio Lotti (1666-1740) Crudeltà rimproverata Op. 1 No. 6 (pub. 1705)

Giovanni Girolamo Kapsberger (c.1580-1651) Toccata No. 6 (pub. 1611)

Alessandro Grandi (c.1575-1630) O quam tu pulchra es (1625)

Claudio Monteverdi Ego flos campi SV301 (1624)

Sì dolce è'l tormento SV332 (pub. 1624) Girolamo Frescobaldi (1583-1643) Se l'aura spira tutta vezzosa (pub. 1630)

Giovanni Bononcini (1670-1747) Pietoso nume arcier (1721)
Giovanni Felice Sances (c.1600-1679) Lagrimosa beltà (pub. 1633)

Interval

Benedetto Marcello (1686-1739) Felice chi vi mira

**George Frideric Handel** (1685-1759) Saraband from Suite in D minor HWV437 (1733)

Caro autor di mia doglia HWV182b (c.1707)

Giovanni Girolamo Kapsberger Toccata No. 1 (pub. 1611)

Giovanni Bononcini Sempre piango e dir non so (1691)

George Frideric Handel Coronata di gigli e di rose from *Tamerlano* HWV18 (1724)



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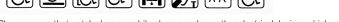












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The vocal duet was popular entertainment in 17th-century Italy. In opera it was dialogue; in the chamber, duettists sang the same words - one voice, in a sense, giving double power to a single lyric. Both are represented in this programme, though all but the last are *duetti per camera*.

The chamber duet was, broadly speaking, a madrigal. **Monteverdi**'s 'Interrotte Speranze' is from his Seventh Book of Madrigals published in 1619, when the composer complained of migraines brought on by his workload. The dark hushed intensity of this opener suggests one moving gingerly. The lyric is a sonnet in four verses. In the first two, the singers have not only the same words, but also the same music, diverging only latterly. The sensuous 'Vorrei baciarti' comes from the same volume. The lyric is addressed to Phyllis, who is absent: where should be kissed, eyes or mouth? The melody descends with the weeping eyes and broadens with the smiling lips.

Antonio Lotti's 'Crudeltà rimproverata' comes from *Duetti Terzetti e Madrigali* published in 1705 Venice. Staccato octave leaps illustrate dripping water which erodes even marble and which the singers imitate with melismatic (syllabically prolonged) dotted rhythms. Bronze ignites in extreme heat, but Mirtilla remains impervious to the duettists' tears and ardour. The accompaniment is the *basso continuo*, which typically consists of several instruments, one playing the bass line, others improvising appropriate chords. The theorbo, a lute with added bass strings, was ideal as it covered both functions. Its solo potential was exploited by the Venetian Giovanni Girolamo Kapsberger who published four books of *Intavolatura*, voluntaries or solos for theorbo. Toccata No. 6 from Book I, published in 1611, is a ruminative meandering around chords and scales.

The chamber duet was secular, though the Bible's erotic Song of Solomon qualified. The two settings here are for solo voice. **Alessandro Grandi**'s 'O quam tu pulchra es' extols the beauty in rustic imagery: eyes of a dove, mane of mohair, teeth white as shorn lambs. The opening words are passionate sighs, repeated between urgent pleas. It appeared in *Ghirlanda Sacri*, published in Venice in 1625, when the composer was assistant to Monteverdi whose 1624 setting 'Ego flos campi' follows. The lover is comparable with fruit and sweet-scented flowers.

Monteverdi's solo song 'Si dolce è'I tormento' has a wide ranging bass line but a simple melody of a downward scale coupled with pleading repeated notes. It was published in a 1624 collection by fellow composer Carlo Milanuzzi. The anonymous words are a tease, the poet exaggerating his pain and calling his lover cruel.

**Girolamo Frescobaldi**'s solo song 'Se l'aura spira tutta vezzosa' comes from his *Primo libro d'arie musicali* published in Florence in 1630 when he was working for the Medici family. The text is pastoral, while the music dances in joyful quick three-time with laughing melismas on *ridente*.

In 1720s London, composer **Giovanni Bononcini** was a celebrity; his portrait hangs in the Royal College of Music, though he's all but forgotten now. It was here he published *Cantate e Duetti*, which includes 'Pietoso numi arcier', a duet for Dorinda and Aldimira, who with identical words bemoan their unfaithful lovers in interweaving vocal lines. *Momento* is ironically lengthened by melisma. The

music has the *da capo* ('from the top') form which became ubiquitous: a first section is repeated with embellishments after a contrasting middle, which here pleads in repeated notes, entries rising stepwise, lyrics differing only in the names of the respective lovers, Tyrsis and Aminta.

The Italian style spread round Europe. **Giovanni Sances** learned his trade in Italy but made his career mainly in Austria. His 'Lagrimosa beltà' is a duet on an eight-note ground in swinging three-time, published in 1633. It is a lover's musing on tearful beauty with a shivering parallel melisma on *schermir* ('avoid'). There is no let-up until the concluding short recitative - 'if someone wants long-lasting beauty, let her practise pity'.

Benedetto Marcello's 'Felice chi vi mira' is based on a rhetorical conceit: happy, happier, happiest. The composer/lawyer was famously anti-opera and the chamber duet had obvious appeal. An exclamatory *felice!* leads to repeated sighing (*sospirar*) mirrored in the music. *Felicissimo* breaks into spirited three-eight time.

Back In London, Handel was ingratiating himself with the nobility, writing Italian opera and giving the king's grandchildren keyboard lessons, composing suites of dances as teaching material and publishing them in 1733. The Sarabande from the D minor suite is familiar as the Follia ground bass. Handel adds two variations but probably improvised more in the lessons. He also composed chamber duets throughout his career: 'Caro autor di mia doglia' dates from his Italian period but was revised for two altos in London in 1740. It begins with a three-time larghetto, the voices separate and in imitation, colouring the pain of the words with dissonance. There follows a quick, insistent refusal to be another's lover which breaks dramatically for a slow recollection of the beloved's anatomy. An allegro concludes, illustrating fuggirà ('flees') in running melismatic thirds, flagellata with whiplash, masochistic semiguavers and discordia with a series of suspensions.

The lutenist resumes the limelight with Kapsberger's Toccata No. 1, with a simple dotted downward scale disguised within his improvisatory touch.

Some chamber duets were extended cantatas comprising arias and recitatives, like Bononcini's 'Sempre piango e dir non so' from his *Duetti da camera* Op. 8, published in Bologna in 1691. Duets at the beginning and end enclose a sequence of solos. In the opening duet, the voices imitate each other's music but not their words – laughing in one, weeping in the other, running hither in one, thither, the other. A tormented recitative, an aria from a lover alleging infidelity, a recitative suggesting suicide, and a catchy dance aria follow in sequence. The concluding duet dwells on the long clashes of languishing and ends on the rhyming words *core* ('heart') and *more* ('dies') in the different voices.

The programme closes with an opera duet. Handel staged *Tamerlano* at the King's Theatre in 1724 and the castrato duet 'Coronata di gigli e di rose' is its finale. After argument comes peace, the singers pronounce, at first separately, then together and finally in parallel thirds with a melisma on *pace*. The middle section is minor as the duettists recall the people's hatred, but the opening repeats with its resolution on peace.

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### Claudio Monteverdi (1567-1643)

### Interrotte speranze SV132 (1619)

Giovanni Battista Guarini

### Hopes cut short

Interrotte speranze, eterna fede.

Fiamme e strali possenti in debil core;

Nutrir sol di sospir un fero ardore

E celar il suo mal quand'altri il vede:

Seguir di vago e fuggitivo piede

L'orme rivolte a volontario errore:

Perder del seme sparso e'l frutto e'l fiore

E la sperata al gran languir mercede:

Far d'uno sguardo sol legge ai pensieri

E d'un casto voler freno al desìo.

E spender lacrimando i lustri interi:

Questi ch'a voi, quasi gran fasci invio,

Donna crudel, d'aspri tormenti e fieri.

Saranno i trofei vostri e'l rogo mio.

Hopes cut short, faith eternal. potent arrows and flames in a weak heart, to nourish a burning ardour with sighs alone and hide its pain from

To follow with uncertain, wandering steps the tracks that lead to wilful error, to lose both fruit and flower

others' eyes.

and the longed-for reward for so much distress.

of scattered seed

To impose laws on thought with just one look, and smother desire with chaste resolve. and to spend year after year weeping.

This great bundle of harsh and bitter torments that I send you, cruel woman. will be your trophy and the

pyre on which I burn.

## Vorrei baciarti SV123

(1619)

Giambattista Marino

Vorrei baciarti, o Filli, Ma non so come, ove il mio bacio scocchi. Ne la bocca o negli occhi. Cedan le labra a voi, lumi divini,

Fidi specchi del core Vive stelle d'amore!

Ah, pur mi volgo a voi, perle e rubini.

Tesoro di bellezza, Fontana di dolcezza. Bocca, onor del bel viso:

Nasce il pianto da lor, tu m'apri il riso.

### I want to kiss you

I want to kiss you, O Phyllis, but I know not how, where to place my kiss, on your lips or on your eyes. The lips must yield to you, divine eyes, faithful mirrors of the heart, gleaming stars of love! Ah, and yet I turn to you, pearls and rubies, beauty's treasures, source of sweetness, dear mouth, the pride of a lovely face: tears flow from them. but

laughter spills from you.

### Antonio Lotti (1666-1740)

### Crudeltà rimproverata **Op. 1 No. 6** (pub. 1705)

Anonymous

Se con stille frequenti Cade l'onda sul marmo, il marmo frange. Se con faville ardenti Entra il foco nel bronzo, il

Solo il cor di Mirtilla Al mio ardor non s'arrende E più s'indura all'amor mio

bronzo accende.

che piange.

Poi che fiera e crudel sempre egualmente,

Non crede al lagrimar. fiamma non sente.

Cruelty reproached

It water falls drop after drop onto marble, the marble shatters.

If with burning sparks fire pierces bronze, the bronze ignites.

Only the heart of Mirtilla does not surrender to my passion and hardens ever more against my plaintive love.

For since she is always proud and cruel in equal measure, she has no time for tears. and feels no fire.

## Giovanni Girolamo Kapsberger

(c.1580-1651)

Toccata No. 6 (pub. 1611)

### Alessandro Grandi (c.1575-1630)

### O quam tu pulchra es (1625)

Liturgical text

O how beautiful you are

O quam tu pulchra es, Amica mea, columba mea, Formosa mea Oculi tui columbarum Capilli tui sicut greges caprarum

Et dentes tui sicut greges tonsarum.

Veni de Libano, veni coronaberis.

Surge dilecta mea,

Surge propera, surge sponsa mea,

immaculata mea,

Surge, veni, quia amore langueo.

O how beautiful you are, my beloved, my dove, my beautiful one, your eyes are those of doves, your hair is like flocks of goats,

and your teeth like flocks of sheep.

Come from Lebanon, come and I will crown you.

Arise quickly, arise, my bride,

arise, my beloved, my flawless one, arise, come, how I

languish in love.

### Claudio Monteverdi

# Ego flos campi SV301 (1624)

Liturgical text

Ego flos campi et lilium convallium.

Sicut lilium inter spinas sic amica mea inter filias.

Sicut malus inter ligna silvarum, sic dilectus meus inter filios.

Sub umbra illius quem desideraveram sedi, et fructus ejus dulcis gutturi meo.

### Sì dolce è'l tormento SV332 (pub. 1624)

**Anonymous** 

Sì dolce è'l tormento
Ch'in seno mi sta
Ch'io vivo contento
Per cruda
beltà.
Nel ciel di bellezza
S'accreschi fierezza
Et manchi pietà,
Che sempre qual scoglio
All'onda d'orgoglio
Mia fede sarà.

La speme fallace
Rivolgam' il piè,
Diletto ne pace
Non scendano a me,
E l'empia
ch'adoro
Mi nieghi ristoro
Di buona mercè:
Tra doglia infinita
Tra speme tradita
Vivrà la mia fè.

# I am the flower of the field

I am the flower of the field and the lily of the valleys. As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters.

As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons.

I sat down under his shadow, whom I desired: and his fruit was sweet to my taste.

### So sweet is the pain

So sweet is the pain
I feel in my heart
that I am happy to live for
one who is heartless but
lovely.
In the heaven of beauty
let cruelty flourish
and mercy fail,
for my loyalty will,
like a rock, withstand
a torrent of pride.

Let illusory hope
turn its back on me,
let me be filled with
neither joy nor peace.
And let the pitiless object
of my love
refuse me the solace
of gentle mercy:
amid endless sorrow,
amid hope betrayed,
my fidelity will live on.

(Per foco e per gelo Riposo non ho Nel porto del Cielo Riposo haverò... Se colpo mortale Con rigido strale Il cor m'impiagò Cangiando mia sorte Col dardo di morte Il cor sanerò...)

Se fiamma d'amore Già mai non sentì Quel rigido core Ch'il cor mi rapì, Se nega pietate La cruda beltate Che l'alma invaghì: Ben fia che dolente Pentita e languente Sospirami un dì. (From fire and ice I will find no repose; only at the gate of Heaven shall I find repose... should the deadly strike of an arrow injure my heart, my heart shall heal by changing my lot with that arrow of death...)

If the flame of love
has never warmed
the unfeeling heart
that has stolen mine from
me,
if the cruel beauty
who has bewitched my soul
denies me any pity,
then let her one day,
repentant and languishing,
suffer and yearn for me.

### Girolamo Frescobaldi (1583-1643)

### Se l'aura spira tutta vezzosa (pub. 1630)

Anonymous

Se l'aura spira tutta vezzosa

La fresca rosa ridente sta,

La siepe ombrosa di bei smeraldi

D'estivi caldi timor non ha.

A'balli, a'balli liete venite,
Ninfe gradite, fior di
beltà,
Or che si chiaro il vago fonte
Dall'alto monte al mar sen

Suoi dolci versi spiega l'augello,

E l'arboscello fiorito sta.

va.

Un volto bello all'ombra accanto

Sol si dia vanto d'aver pietà.

Al canto, ninfe ridenti, Scacciate i venti di crudeltà.

# When the graceful breeze blows

When the graceful breeze blows, the fresh rose stands laughing and the shady hedge of emerald green has no fear of the summer heat.

Come delight in the dance, nature's fair maidens, flowers of beauty, while the clear stream flows from the mountain to the sea.

Such sweet verses spread from bird to bird bringing the sapling to flower.

A beautiful face in the nearby shade alone exalts in displaying

With your song, sweet maidens, drive away the winds of cruelty.

compassion.

### Giovanni Bononcini (1670-1747)

## Pietoso nume arcier

(1721)**Anonymous** 

### Kindly archer-god

Pietoso nume arcier Ascolta i voti miei un sol momento.

Fa che di Tirsi/Aminta il cor Senta l'istesso ardor che al cor io sento.

#### Dorinda

Consolati Aldimira, Che un mio pensier mi dice Che tu sarai contenta ed io felice.

Aldimira Dorinda, il tuo pensiero Con fallace lusinga Temo che finga, e non dica il vero.

Dorinda Aldmira, la speme

Fa ch'oppressa non sia dal tuo timore,

Che un amante che teme

Gran sorte aver non può col Dio d'amore.

#### Aldimira

Dunque sperar degg'io Che il bell'idolo mio cangiando tempre Mi sarà fido e mi amerà per sempre?

Dorinda Sì.

Aldimira

Già sento che l'alma tutta lieta respira E nel mio sen resta la doglia estinta.

Dorinda Tirsi per

Aldmira Vivrà fedele, e per Dorinda Aminta.

Se l'idolo che adoro Fedel con me sarà Che più bramar non sa

quest'alma amante.

Kindly archer-god, listen to my pleas for a moment.

Let Tirsi's/Aminta's heart feel as great a passion as my own heart feels.

#### Dorinda

Be comforted, Aldimira, for an inner voice tells me that you will be contented and I happy.

Aldimira Dorinda, I fear your inner deceives you with false hopes

and does not speak the truth.

#### Dorinda

Aldimira, hope prevents my being overwhelmed by your timidity, for a timid lover cannot expect great success with the god of love.

Aldimira So I may live in hope that my beloved's character will change and he be true to me and

always love me?

Dorinda Yes.

Aldimira

Now filled with joy I breathe again and sorrow is banished from my breast.

Dorinda

Tirsi will live only for Aldimira. and Aminta for Dorinda.

If my darling, my adored one will stay true to me, my loving heart can desire nothing more.

Già sento che ristoro Prendendo va il mio sen Sperando che il suo ben le sia costante.

Now I can feel solace begin to fill my breast with the hope that its beloved will be true.

### Giovanni Felice Sances (c.1600-1679)

### Lagrimosa beltà (pub. 1633)

Anonymous

Lagrimosa beltà Per cui già notte e

Cotanto sospirai, come sei tu

Divenuta così? Il barbaro che fù.

Qual cor pien d'impietà Potuto ha incrudelir contro di te?

Misero, ben lo so, Ne poi negarlo a fè! Il tempo fù, l'etá Che tanto vale e può.

Inlanguidito ha'l sen,

Ha scolorito l'or Del tuo bel crin: mirate al fin

Mirate che vien men Ogni cosa mortal: Col tempo arte non val, Questo è colpo comun, Schermir nol puote alcun:

La pioggia vien talhor, Dopo il seren, e dopo il

lampo, il tuon. Chi si mostrò crudel

Non merita perdon, E l'esser infedel

A gl'amanti è di Turca empio rigor.

A spettacolo simil, Rendete donn'il cor, Tutto pietoso e umil, Imparate a lasciar quel fast'altier, Raddolcite il pensier.

Il bello non risplende in costei più.

Nè si può dir qui fù.

Dunque, chi bram'aver lunga beltà,

Usi, usi pietà!

### Tearful beauty

Tearful beauty for whom my past nights and days were so filled with sighs, how have you become like this? What was such a barbarous thing. your heart, so void of pity, could have grown cruel towards you? Unhappily, I know it well, nor can you deny it! It was Time, and Age so strong and powerful that made your breast so weak and took the golden colour from your lovely hair; look at last, see how faint and fading

is every mortal thing; art has no power over time; that is a common blow to all. no one can avoid it. Rain comes after calm weather

and after lightning comes the thunder.

Whoever displayed cruelty deserves no forgiveness, and to be unfaithful to lovers is the cruelty of

ruthless Turks. When you see such a sight, ladies, turn your heart

to kind humility; learn to leave that haughty behaviour, sweeten your thoughts; beauty no longer shines

in such a woman and what was there cannot be spoken of.

So. if someone wants long-lasting beauty

let her practise pity!

#### Interval

### Benedetto Marcello (1686-1739)

Felice chi vi mira Giovanni Battista Guarini Happy he who beholds you

Felice chi vi mira;
Ma più felice chi per voi
sospira;
Felicissimo poi
Chi sospirando fa sospirar
voi.

Happy he who beholds you, but happier he who sighs for you; happiest of all is he who in sighing makes you sigh.

### George Frideric Handel (1685-1759)

### Saraband from Suite in D minor HWV437 (1733)

## Caro autor di mia doglia HWV182b

(c.1707) Anonymous Dear author of my grief

Caro autor di mia doglia Dolce pena del core Mio respiro, mia pace!

Dear author of my grief, sweet pain of my heart, my breath, my peace!

Nò, nò che d'altrui che di te mai non sarò.

mai non saró.
O volto, o lumi, o luci, o labbra!

Nò, nò che d'altrui che di te

mai non sarò.

Dagli amori flagellata

La discordia fuggirà.

No, I will never be for anyone other than you. O face, O eyes, O lights, O lips!

No, I will never be for anyone other than you.

Scourged by love Discord flees.

## Giovanni Girolamo Kapsberger

Toccata No. 1 (pub. 1611)

### Giovanni Bononcini

### Sempre piango e dir non so (1691)

Pazzini

Sempre piango/rido e dir non so

Quando mai io riderò/piangerò.

Parti, vola, fuggi da me -

Vengo, corro, e torno a

Che il tuo amore più non vuò/solo io vuò.

No, no, restane in pace Ed a quel volto porgi incensi e sospiri,

Ch'è la sola cagion de tuoi martiri.

Non sei più l'idolo mio

Perché ad altro dasti il

Reso fiero il mio pensiero

Vuol placarti col furor.

Cinzia, ingrata e crudele, Negli aspri affanni miei sola costante,

Ti mostri troppo fiera, io

troppo amante.

Davanti al tuo sembiante Mirami supplicante:

Ma se il tuo cor altra bellezza adora.

Se ti piace così, fa pur ch'io mora.

Al bel dardo di un tuo sguardo Più resistere non so. Morirò, sì morirò; Che volete di più luci

crudeli? Ma prima di morire

Vi prego a rendermi disciolto

in lacrime, L'avanzo misero di questo

cor,

Che già mai non v'oltraggiò.

# Endlessly I weep and cannot tell

Endlessly I weep/laugh and cannot tell when I shall ever laugh/weep again.

Leave me, fly, run away from me -

I come, I run, and return to you -

for I no longer want your love/all I want is your love.

No, no, stay here in peace and offer incense and sighs to that face, the sole cause of your

torment.

You are no longer my goddess

because you gave your heart to others. My mind has now become proud,

it would appease you with

anger.

Cynthia, cold and cruel, sole author of my bitter woes.

you appear too proud, I too much in love. Before your countenance

behold me, a supplicant: but if in your heart you love another,

if this is what you want, then let me die.

I can no longer resist
the dart of your glance.
I shall die, yes, die;
what more do you want,
cruel eyes?
But before I die
I beg you to give me,
dissolved in tears,
the miserable remains of

the miserable remains of this heart,

which has never offended you.

Sono questi del cor gl'ultimi fiati Che languendo si more, Già che a morir l'ultimo è sempre il core; Che ingannando non more

Perché a tradir hai pronto

sempre il core.

These are the last gasps of my heart as it languishes and dies, for the heart is always the last to die; which, deceiving, dies not because your heart is ever ready to betray.

### George Frideric Handel

### Coronata di gigli e di rose from *Tamerlano* HWV18 (1724)

Nicola Francesco Haym, after Agostin Piovene and Nicolas Pradon Crowned with lilies and roses

Coronata di gigli e di

rose

Con gl'amori ritorni la pace.

Crowned with lilies and

roses

may peace return with love.

E fra mille facelle amorose

Perda i lampi dell'odio la face.

And may the lightningflash of hate

be lost among a thousand

amorous flames.

Translations of all Monteverdi except 'Ego flos campi' by Susannah Howe. Lotti by Jean du Monde. Bononcini and 'Coronata di gigli e di rose' by Avril Bardoni.