# Tuesday 28 October 2025 7.30pm

# WIGMORE HALL 125

Valeria La Grotta soprano Arianna Vendittelli soprano Valentino Buzza tenor Modo Antiquo

Federico Maria Sardelli conductor Gregorio Carraro oboe Giuseppe Falciglia oboe Alessandro Nasello bassoon Umberto Jiron horn Gianni Calonaci horn

Federico Guglielmo violin Raffaele Tiseo violin Paolo Cantamessa violin Stefano Bruni violin Matteo Saccà violin Rossella Pugliano violin Alessandro Lanaro viola Bettina Hoffmann cello Daniele Rosi double bass Lorenzo Feder organ

Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741)

Serenata a tre 'Mio cor, povero cor' RV690

The interval will be after Part One



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Among Antonio Vivaldi's longer secular vocal works are eight serenatas, the name commonly given in the 18th Century to dramatic cantatas for upwards of two solo voices and orchestra. Most serenatas were given on private premises before an invited audience, were not staged (although singers sometimes wore costume and/or performed against a scenic background), were performed in the late evening – the word is derived from Italian sereno, a clear sky at night - and celebrated an event, as when an important visitor was present, a wedding took place or a peace treaty was signed. The singers always assume named roles, which can be those of historical or mythological persons or else personifications of attributes. The musical idiom and the forms used (for instance, recitative and da capo aria) are recognisably operatic, but the dimensions are smaller: whereas operas of the time usually had at least three acts, serenatas were usually divided into two parts, the interval separating them providing a suitable opportunity for serving refreshments to the guests.

Vivaldi's three-voice serenata identified in the standard catalogue of his works as RV690 is untitled except for its generic description as a serenata a tre in its sole extant source, an autograph score preserved in what was originally the composer's working collection today housed in the National Library in Turin. No separate printed or even manuscript libretto survives. The three Arcadian characters are the shepherd Alcindo (tenor), the shepherdess Eurilla (soprano) and her confidant Nice (also soprano). The plot boils down to a simple incompatibility of intentions. Nice wants Alcindo to love her exclusively, but he prefers to remain in a state of untrammelled bachelorhood: the keyword here is liberty (libertà), which in 18th-century eyes has overtones of libertinage. Alcindo is willing to feign love for the sake of social conformity but not to feel it genuinely. By the end of the serenata Eurilla is so exasperated that she calls on her fellow nymphs and shepherds to rain down blows on Alcindo as punishment for his obduracy.

The serenata's title page identifies the commissioner of the work - or is it instead the subject? - as 'Monsieur le Marquis du Toureil'. In 1982 l concluded that this person was Jean de Tourreil, a French propagandist for the heresy of Jansenism (the doctrine favouring predestination over free will) on the basis of some seemingly allegorical elements present in the plot, such as Alcindo's travels into foreign parts, his imprisonment and his willingness to pay lip-service to orthodoxy but refusal to alter his fundamental belief. This view was widely accepted until 2019, when the musicologist Aurelia Ambrosiano dropped bombshell by identifying the mysterious marquis as the commissioner rather than the subject of the work. He was Anne-Marc Goislard du Toureil, a music-loving French nobleman (but not quite a marquis) who visited Italy in 1714-5 in the company of the French composer JB Senaillé and settled in Italy in 1716, initially in Venice

but later on the mainland. He became close enough to Vivaldi to act as godfather to the latter's nephew Daniele Mauro in 1717.

Ambrosiano also identified the librettist of the serenata convincingly as Antonio Maria Luchini, who was a member of an operatic company led by Antonio Lotti that briefly worked in Dresden. The tell-tale clue was the paraphrase of an aria text in the serenata that saw use in Lotti's opera Giove in Argo (Dresden, 1717). It was probably Lucchini, too, who, after completion of the libretto in its original form, also wrote the texts for one replacement aria and two additional ones for Eurilla, perhaps at the behest of the soprano herself or her patron, thereby infringing a convention in serenatas that the singers should receive an equal share of the arias. Aureliano's cautious identification of 1718 as the year when the serenata was performed, which takes account of the fact that Vivaldi adapted two of its arias for his Mantuan operas of the 1719 carnival season, is probably correct. What is less certain, however, is the occasion for which it was written. Her suggestion that it is connected to Toureil's wedding in December 1718 seems improbable, if only because the serenata's text makes no allusion to that event. There is much still to find out about this work's context.

The manuscript of the serenata does not preface it in the usual manner by an overture (sinfonia) occupying a separate bibliographic unit (to make it easily transferable from one work to another, a common practice of Vivaldi among others). There is a good possibility, however, that it was originally performed with one, and for tonight's performance a Vivaldi sinfonia in C major from the same period, RV112, has been chosen to serve as an introduction. The serenata's first part contains eight arias partnered by six recitatives; the second part, seven arias partnered by seven recitatives plus a final ensemble where the characters sing the identical melodic line in the appropriate octave. Vivaldi's soloistic use of wind instruments in certain arias is masterly not only in terms of the delicious tone colour it produces but also for the way in which it expresses the content of the words. Most notably, the penultimate aria in Part I, 'Alla caccia d'un core spietato' ('To hunt a pitiless heart'), which employs a timeless metaphor to describe amorous pursuit, is made more evocative by its whooping horns. Similarly, in Alcindo's earlier aria 'Mi sento in petto l'allegro core parlarmi solo di libertà' ('I feel the happy heart in my breast speak to me only of liberty') the perkiness of the oboes in unison matches well this character's self-assurance bordering on insolence. And there are several other instances of felicitous word-painting in this exquisitely wrought

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# Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741)

# Serenata a tre 'Mio cor, povero cor' RV690 *Anonymous*

PRIMA PARTE

Aria

Eurilla
Mio cor, povero cor,
Sí, sí, t'intendo,
Tu senti un non so
che,
Non distingui cos'è,
Ma ti dà pena.
La libertà, cor mio,
Non ti contendo;
Ma sei, credilo à me,

Recitativo Ben, che ti sembra, ò Nice,

Di tua catena.

Tu stesso il fabro à

te

Di quel gentil Pastore, Che dà gl'occhi vivaci

Ad ogni Ninfa in sen getta le faci?

Nice

È bello, è vago, io tel confesso Eurilla, Ma un gran difetto egl'hà.

Eurilla

L'attento sguardo Che ben l'esaminò no 'I vede ancora.

Nice

Pur troppo lo vedrai: non s'inamora.

Eurilla

Tu m'uccidesti, o Nice! È apena nato il fior di mie speranze, Con man troppo crudel tu schianti, e svelli.

Nice

Così sente il mio cor. Prova, e vedrai.

Eurilla

Sì bello, e sì crudel nol credo mai.

**PART ONE** 

Aria **Eurilla** 

My heart, my poor heart!
Yes, yes, I hear you:
You feel a certain
something,
you do not know what it is,
but it causes you pain.
Your freedom, my heart,
I do not challenge;
but, believe you me,
it is you yourself who
have forged
your own chain.

Recitative
Well, what do you think,
Nice,
of that charming shepherd
who with his blazing eyes
lights a torch
in every nymph's
chest?

Nice

He is handsome, he is graceful, I admit it Eurilla but he has one great fault.

Eurilla

My attentive gaze, which has examined him carefully, does not see it yet.

Nice

Alas, you will see it: he does not fall in love.

Eurilla

You have slain me, Nice! No sooner is the flower of my hopes born than with too cruel a hand you crush and uproot it!

Nice

That is how my heart feels: try, and you will see.

Eurilla

I cannot believe him so handsome, yet so cruel.

Aria

Con i vezzi lusinghieri Mi consola la speranza, E mi dice al cor che speri L'amorosa mia costanza.

Recitativo

Nice

Eccolo, che con passo Sciolto cosi come hà disciolto il core Verso noi s'incamina.

Eurilla

Osserva, o Nice, La maestà che le balena in volto.

Nice

Bene, mà vedo ancora La libertà, che le difende il core.

Eurilla

Deh che dar non si può cor senza amore.

Nice

Ti lascio dunque in braccio à pensier tuoi.

Eurilla

Và Nice amata, ci riverdremo poi.

Aria

Nice

Digli, che miri almeno
Il tuo bel volto, e 'I
seno,
E al tuo bel seno, al
volto,
Resister non potrà.
Forse vedrai men
fiero
Quel cor cotanto altero
D'amor tra lacci colto

Perder la libertà.

Aria

With her flattering charms hope consoles me. And tells my heart that my loving constancy may still hope.

Recitative

Nice

Here he comes, with footsteps as free and easy as his heart is; he is coming towards us.

Eurilla

Observe, Nice, the majesty that flashes in his eyes.

Nice

Indeed so; but I also see the freedom that defends his heart.

Eurilla

Ah, but a heart cannot give itself without love.

Nice

So, I leave you in the arms of your fancies.

Eurilla

Go, beloved Nice, we will meet again later.

Aria

Nice

Tell him at least to look upon your lovely face and your bosom, and your lovely bosom and your face will prove irresistible to him. Perhaps you will see that haughty heart become less proud, caught in the snares of love, and lose its freedom.

Work continues overleaf. Please turn the page as quietly as possible.

Aria

#### Alcindo

Mi sento in petto L'allegro core Parlarmi solo Di libertà. Non hò diletto D'un vano amore. Ch'uguale al duolo Gioia non hà.

Recitativo Bella Ninfa, ti serbi sempre propitio il Cielo Oro al Crin, latte al Seno, e rose al Volto.

#### Eurilla

Addio Pastor gentile, Del tuo florido Aprile La vezzosa stagion mai si consumi, E in te le grazie tutte. Che ben degno ne sei, piovano i numi.

#### Alcindo

Non può negar il Cielo L'onor delle sue gratie a sì bei voti; Lo prego ben ch'imprima Gratitudine equale alla mia stima.

## Eurilla

Alcindo, or che disciolto Dal custode rigor, che pria tenea Fermo il tuo piè nella natia capanna, Dimmi, come ti piace Il libero goder di questa vita?

#### Alcindo

Assai mi piace, e piacerebbe più, Se non sentissi un rimorso crudele. D'aver con troppa fretta Posti al publico sguardo i miei difetti.

# Aria

#### Alcindo

I feel in my breast my blithe heart speaking to me only of freedom. I take no delight in a vain love, for it brings no joys compared to its sorrows.

Recitative Beautiful nymph, may propitious heaven for ever preserve your golden hair, your milk white breast, your rosy cheeks.

#### Eurilla

Fare you well, gentle shepherd; of your flowering April, may the lovely season never come to an end, and may the gods shower every favour upon you, for you are indeed worthy of them.

#### Alcindo

Heaven cannot denv the honour of its favours to such fair vows; I pray that it may impart to you gratitude equal to my esteem.

## Eurilla

Alcindo, now that you are freed from the strict gaoler who hitherto held you captive in your native hut, tell me, how does it please you you to enjoy this life as you will?

#### Alcindo

It pleases me very much, and would please me still more, did I not feel cruel remorse at having all too hastily exposed my faults to the public gaze.

#### Eurilla

saettil Qual delle nostre Ninfe e poi distinta Dal sospirato onor de' tuoi riflessi?

Ah modestia crudel tu mi

#### Alcindo

Con osseguio devoto Venero in fronte a tutte Fra quelle treccie d'oro Quell'eccelsa beltà, che splende in loro.

#### Eurilla

Venerar nò, non basta Ma adorar, ed amar, indi in tributo Offrirle il cuor.

#### Alcindo

Sdegna cotesta offerta La libertà, ch'all'alme il cielo impresse.

#### Eurilla

Che ridonda in piacer. Provalo, e poi, condanna se potrai, cotanti eroi.

Non è viltà un tributo

## Aria

No. che non è viltà A'rai d'una beltà, Offrir ogn'or fedele L'alma e il cuore. È troppo il bel piacer Sperar e poi goder La soave mercè D'un vero amore.

# Recitativo

# Alcindo

Sì folle non son io, Da tanti ogn'or intesi Che a sospirar condanna La superba beltà sempre tiranna.

#### Eurilla

Ah, cruel modesty, you strike me with your darts! Which of our nymphs, then, have you distinguished with the coveted honour of your thoughts?

#### Alcindo

With devoted reverence I venerate in them all, amid those tresses of gold, the lofty beauty which glows in them.

#### Eurilla

To venerate does not suffice but to adore and to love, and then in tribute to offer them your heart.

#### Alcindo

Such an offering is disdained by the freedom heaven has engraved upon our souls.

#### Eurilla

But a tribute is no base act that brings abundant pleasures.

Try it, and then condemn, if you can, the heroes who have done likewise.

## Aria

No. it is not cowardice to you, of such beauty, to offer your faithful soul and heart. It is too great a pleasure to hope for and then enjoy the sweet mercy of true love.

# Recitative

#### Alcindo

I am not so foolish: I have always heard so many say that a proud beauty, ever tyrannical, condemns us to sigh.

Aria

Ne'l suo carcere ristretto, Non d'affetto L'usignuol cantando và. Col soave dolce canto Piange intanto La perduta libertà.

### Recitativo

#### Eurilla

O quanto folle egl'è, se andar si crede Della sua libertà, sempre fastoso. Ma già cauta l'attendo Sul vicin colle ove si porge amica

La cristallina fonte,

e suol ridursi

Delle belve la caccia.
Così del cuor d'Alcindo,
Esperta cacciatrice io vado in traccia.

#### Aria

Alla caccia d'un cuore spietato Teso ho l'arco nel riso, nel vezzo. Quando poi sarà preda l'ingrato Vuò punirlo con odio, con sprezzo.

## Recitativo

#### Nice

Amica Eurilla, dimmi: Come Alcindo rispose Agl'inviti d'amor?

#### Eurilla

Nice diletta, Nel mio d'uopo maggior giugni opportuna.

# Nice

E che?

Di vaga Ninfa stancar forse pretende i prieghi ancora?

#### Eurilla

Anzi ostenta con fasto Un seno impenetrabile ai possenti Dardi d'Amor.

#### Aria

Confined in his prison, It is not of love that the nightingale sings. With his sweet and gentle song he weeps the while over his lost freedom.

# Recitative

Eurilla
Ah, how foolish he is if believes
he can always boast of his freedom!
But already I lie in wait for him on the nearby hill whence springs the kindly crystalline fountain, and where the hunt assembles
assembles to chase the wild beasts.
I will go in pursuit of Alcindo's heart,

#### Aria

there, a skilled

huntress.

To hunt an obdurate heart,
my tautened bow is my face, my charms.
When the ingrate is at my mercy.
I will punish him with hatred and scorn.

## Recitative

#### Nice

Eurilla, my friend, tell me: how did Alcindo reply to the invitations of love?

#### Eurilla

Dearest Nice, you come here just when I need you most.

#### Nice

What?

Does he still dare weary a charming nymph with his pleas?

#### Eurilla

On the contrary; he arrogantly flaunts a breast impenetrable to the mighty darts of love.

#### Nice

Ah non temer amica
Egli s'arrenderà.
Pur l'Opra mia tutta per
consolarti dar vorrei,
Che le perdite tue son danni
miei.

#### Aria

Ad infiammar quel seno, Vedrai, che in un baleno Amore porgerà L'accesa face. Cosi resa amorosa Quel Palma ora ritrosa Il tuo core goderà la cara pace.

#### Nice

Fear not, friend,
he will yield.
I will make every effort to
console you,
for your sorrows are mine
too.

#### Aria

To inflame that breast you will see that, in a flash, Love will bring his burning torch.
Thus, when it has been induced to love you, that now reluctant soul, your heart will enjoy the peace so dear to you to inflame that breast.

# Interval

#### **SECONDA PARTE**

#### Aria

## Alcindo

Aque placide che correte
Dolce Imago a me
porgete
Di soave libertà.
E da voi ben solo apprendo
Girne sciolto ogn'or
fugendo
Quel dolor ch'amor ne

# Recitativo

Eurilla.

dà

Tenta lo sò ma pur lo tenta in vano, D'incatenarmi il cuor la ninfa

#### Eurilla

Or vedi Alcindo In questo fiorito ameno colle Tutto spirar amore.

#### Nice

Deh osserva, sì, ten priego, Come quel Zefiretto Fido bacciar quel fior, indi quell'onda Lambe costante ogn'or la verde sponda

## PART TWO

# Aria **Alcindo**

Calmly flowing waters, you present me with a sweet image of delightful liberty.
And from you alone I learn to free myself and constantly to flee from the pain that Love inflicts on us.

### Recitative

The nymph Eurilla tries, I know, but tries in vain to enchain my heart.

#### Eurilla

Now behold, Alcindo: on this pleasant flowery hill everything breathes of love.

#### Nice

Observe, I pray you, how that faithful little zephyr kisses that flower, and how that wave constantly laps the green bank.

Work continues overleaf. Please turn the page as quietly as possible.

Aria

Come l'erba in vago prato Se languisce o un mesto fiore Dal ruscello vita prende,

Si d'Alcindo il volto amato Della vaga Eurilla al core Fiamma degna e spirto accende.

# Recitativo

## Alcindo

A suo grado scherzar può ben Eurilla,

Ma sò ben io, che à voli più sublimi

Spiega l'ali amorose il suo Cupido.

#### Furilla

Ma timido nocchier non giunge al lido.

#### Aria

#### Alcindo

Dell'alma superba La fiamma riserba Per chi può inalzarti D'un soglio al fulgor. Nè perder l'amore Del grande tuo core Con vile Pastor.

# Recitativo

#### Eurilla

Alcindo, Alcindo, io t'apro il sen, m'ascolta: Ah, ch'importuno giunge

A chiudermi nel labro il più che bramo.

Per altro io ti direi: Alcindo, io t'amo.

#### Aria

La dolce auretta. Che vezzosetta Spirando, scherzando, Tu vedi col fior Ti dice ch'amor Dovresti al mio sen. Diletti affetti Promette vezzosa La fiamma amorosa, Stringendo il suo ben.

#### Aria

Just as the grass that languishes in the pretty meadow, or a sad flower, is restored to life by the stream, so Alcindo's beloved face kindles a worthy flame and spirit in fair Eurilla's heart.

#### Recitative

#### Alcindo

Eurilla may trifle as she but well I know that for more sublime flights, her Cupid spreads his

amorous wings.

#### **Furilla**

But a timid helmsman does not reach the shore.

#### Aria

#### Alcindo

Reserve the flame of your proud soul for one who can raise you up to the splendour of a throne. And do not waste the love of your great heart on a base shepherd.

# Recitative

#### Eurilla

Alcindo, Alcindo! I open my heart to you; listen to me: Ah! what importunate feeling comes to imprison within my lips that which I most long for? Yet I would say to you:

Alcindo, I love you.

#### Aria

The gentle, gracious breeze that you see bowing, playing with the flowers, tells you that you owe love to my heart. The amorous flame enticingly promises tender pleasures in your beloved's arms.

#### Recitativo

#### Alcindo

Non dileggiarmi più. Già so ben io, che à vasti amori avvezza Ad amar un pastor chinar

non puoi.

Lascia in pace il mio cuor, ama gl'eroi.

#### Aria

#### Alcindo

L'altero bianco giglio Non degna la viola, Perché selvaggia, e sola, Superbo di baciar. Bensi tal'or si sposa Con la purpurea Rosa,

Perché il vago vermiglio

Sol può così formar.

#### Recitativo

#### Nice

Dove, dimmi, o' indiscreto Apprendesti il rigor, che fai tuo fasto? Non regna tal fierezza Nella placida pace de' Pastori, Ov'hanno il nido i più soavi amori.

#### Aria

Di Cocito nell'orrido Regno Ha ricetto fierezza, e rigor, Ma ove spiega il piacer i suoi vanti Entro il sen degl'amanti Sol pietade v'alberga,

# Recitativo

ed amor.

#### Eurilla

Almen fingi d'amarmi, e si lusinghi La mia povera fiamma.

# Recitative

#### Alcindo

Mock me no more. I know full well that, accustomed to exalted loves.

you cannot lower yourself to love a shepherd:

Leave my heart in peace, love heroes instead.

# Aria

#### Alcindo

The haughty white lily does not deign to kiss the humble violet. too wild and solitary for its pride. But rather it sometimes unites with the crimson rose for only thus can it produce a noble vermilion.

# Recitative

#### Nice

Tell me, impertinent man, where did you learn the obduracy you boastfully display? Such arrogance does not hold sway amid the tranquil calm of shepherds, where the gentlest cupids have built their nest.

#### Aria

In the dread kingdom of Cocytus Pride and hard-heartedness have their refuge but where pleasure deploys her glories in the tender breast of lovers. only kindness and love reside in the dread kingdom of Cocytus.

# Recitative Eurilla

At least pretend that you love me and flatter my poor flame.

#### Alcindo

E d'amar vuoi ch'io finga?
Eccomi pronto per compiacerti.
Incivile così poi non son io.

# Eurilla

Mio tesoro.

Mio diletto.

# A due Idolo mio!

Idolo IIIIc

#### Alcindo

Eurilla, oh Dio, da questi, Benche mentiti affetti,

Mi sceseun tal piacer furtivo in seno, Che mi costringe al fin ora ad amarti.

#### Eurilla

Deh mi dileggi Alcindo, Se potesse il cuor prestarti fede Pronta n'avresti ancor la gran mercede.

#### Aria

Vorresti lusingarmi Lo veggo, sì, per farmi Trofeo di crudeltà. Sì folle la speranza In me già non s'avanza Che in te sii fedeltà.

# Recitativo **Alcindo**

No non fingo; di tua belta sù l'ara Giuro d'amarti, ed a quest'ora io sento Pietà chieder il cuor al suo tormento.

#### Eurilla

Or senti qual mercede
Si prepara al tuo amor.
Lunge, ò Superbo, vanne da
gl'occhi miei.
Preda d'amor io ti bramai al
fine
Di punir nel tuo sen tanta
alterigia.
Olà, ninfe,
pastori,
Nell'amorosa caccia

#### Alcindo

Would you have me feign love?
I am ready to gratify your wishes, and not so discourteous as to refuse my treasure.

#### Eurilla

My beloved ...

# Both My idol!

#### Alcindo

Eurilla – O Heavens!
Feigned though these protestations of affection were,
they brought my heart such secret pleasure that now it compels me to love you.

#### Eurilla

Ah, you mock me, Alcindo.
If my heart were to trust you,
You would gain at once another great reward.

#### Aria

You would flatter me, I see that, to make me me a trophy of your cruelty, but my hope is not so foolish as to make me believe that you would be faithful.

# Recitative

#### Alcindo

No, I am not pretending on the altar of your beauty I swear to love you, and now I feel my heart imploring pity for its torment.

#### Eurilla

Now hear the reward that awaits your love:
Begone, O proud one, far from my eyes!
I wished to make you a prey to love, in order to punish such arrogance in your breast.
Ho there, nymphs and shepherds!
In the hunt of love

Colsi la Fiera, onde co' schermi vostri Ad isbranarle il cuor pronti vi chiamo. Contro un altero un gran rigor io bramo.

#### Coro

Si punisca, si sbrani, s'uccida Il superbo spietato suo cuor. Delle Ninfe nel sen non s'annida

Delle Ninfe nel sen non s'annio Mai pietà con chi vanta rigor. I have caught the wild beast, and I call on you to rend his heart asunder with your taunts: against one so arrogant, I crave the greatest severity.

#### Chorus

Let us punish, tear apart, slay this proud and obstinate heart in the breast of nymphs, let there never lurk pity for those who boast of their obduracy.