

WIGMORE HALL

Tuesday 29 April 2025
7.30pm

La Rossa: Music from Bologna in the settecento

La Serenissima

Adrian Chandler director, violin
Simon Munday trumpet
Matthew Wells trumpet
Oliver Cave violin I
Guy Button violin I
Abel Balazs violin I

Camilla Scarlett violin II
Jim O'Toole violin II
Ellen Bundy violin II
Charlotte Amherst violin II
Elitsa Bogdanova viola
Tom Kirby viola

Sam Kennedy viola
Vladimir Waltham cello
Carina Drury cello
Jan Zahourek double bass
Lynda Sayce theorbo
Robin Bigwood harpsichord, organ

Giuseppe Torelli (1658-1709)

Concerto in D for 2 trumpets, strings and continuo G18

I. Largo assai • II. Allegro •

III. Adagio e staccato – Adagio • IV. Allegro

Francesco Gasparini (1661-1727)

Concerto in A minor for 4 violins, 2 violas, cello & continuo

I. Grave • II. Allegro • III. Allegro

Evaristo Felice Dall'Abaco

(1675-1742)

Concerto da chiesa in G minor for strings and continuo

Op. 2 No. 5 (1712)

I. Largo • II. Allegro e spiritoso • III. Grave • IV. Allegro

Giovanni Bononcini (1670-1747)

Sinfonia in D for 2 trumpets, 2 violins, 2 violas and continuo

Op. 3 No. 10 (pub. 1685)

I. Adagio • II. Allegro • III. Grave • IV. Allegro •

V. Adagio • VI. Largo. Allegro

Interval

Giuseppe Torelli

Sinfonia in D for 2 trumpets, strings and continuo G23

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

Lorenzo Gaetano Zavateri

(1690-1764)

Concerto in G for violin, strings and continuo 'La Tempesta di

Mare' Op. 1 No. 12 (c.1735)

*I. Allegro e con spirito: Principio di cattivo tempo – Voti
al cielo • III. Adagio e piano: Navicella in calma •*

III. Allegro ma aperto: Tempesta – Pioggia

Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741)

Concerto in C for 2 trumpets, strings and continuo RV537

(c.1720)

I. Allegro • II. Largo • III. Allegro



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La Rossa: Music from Bologna in the settecento

The unification of Italy in 1871 brought to a close the medieval system of states and family dynasties. Historically, these factions had indulged in waging war against one another, but as European powerbases shifted gradually northwards, such martial contests were replaced by artistic rivalries with huge sums being spent on employing the best artists, architects, musicians and playwrights.

By 1700, Bologna was a largely autonomous city with a population of around 80,000. Music played an important role in public life and was given special prominence on major feast days of the church year. By far the largest of these was the festival of S. Petronio, the city's patron saint, which was celebrated in the patronal Basilica with the utmost pomp and splendour. The orchestra of S. Petronio had developed steadily since the 16th Century when instrumentalists had been added to the *Capella*. From Cazzati's time as *Maestro di Coro* (from 1657), it was normal for extra musicians – sometimes as many as 150 – to be hired to supplement the body of regular performers for important occasions. The orchestral rolls list strings, trumpets, cornetts, trombones, serpents, bassoons, theorboes, four organs, oboes and timpani. Composers such as Torelli, Franceschini, (Domenico) Gabrielli, Jacchini and Alberti all contributed concertos or sinfonias for one, two or four trumpets, sometimes with oboes and timpani for performance either at the beginning or at the end of church services. Today, **Giuseppe Torelli** is particularly remembered for his contribution to the trumpet repertory of Bologna; the concerto and sinfonia presented here (with their slow rate of harmonic change on account of the 12-second reverberation of the basilica) are typical of this *œuvre*.

S. Petronio was not the only thriving musical institution in Bologna at this time. In 1666, Count Vincenzo Carrati founded the Accademia Filarmonica, a society which promoted musical discourse and performance amongst the leading musicians of the day. Its members included Torelli, Perti, Zavateri and **Francesco Gasparini** who was admitted in 1684. The Concerto a6 probably dates from this early period of Gasparini's career and foreshadows the works for four violins by Vivaldi, upon whom Gasparini would later bestow the post of *Maestro di violino* at the Ospedale della Pietà in Venice.

Between 1662 and 1695, S. Petronio's *Maestro di Capella* was Giovanni Paolo Colonna, a composer, organist, teacher and organ builder. His pupils included **Giovanni Battista Bononcini** (not to be confused with his father Giovanni Maria Bononcini) who was born in Modena in 1670. In 1678 he was orphaned but was taken under Colonna's wing with whom he studied at the Basilica. When he published his Opus 3 in 1685 at the age of 15, the young pupil dedicated the set by way of thanks to Colonna.

Bononcini's first six collections were published in Bologna, a city that, largely due to the presence of

Europe's oldest university, had become one of the great centres of printing in the 17th Century. The sole surviving copy of the Opus 3 lacks the first violin part but fortunately, the Bibliotheque Nationale in Paris possesses a contemporary manuscript, copied from the original print. The 12 sinfonias, composed in the manner of the repertory of S. Petronio, were conceived for a variety of ensembles, some of which include one or two trumpets.

Due to the sparsity of documentary evidence, the issue of **Antonio Vivaldi's** musical education has long raised more questions than answers. Although it is assumed that his early studies took place under the tutelage of his father in Venice, it is likely that Vivaldi also studied with Torelli in Bologna. This hypothesis is underpinned by the fact that Torelli appears to have given a very early sonata for violin and cello by Vivaldi (RV820) to Johann Georg Pisendel whilst teaching the young Saxon in Ansbach (1698-99); other than through direct contact with Vivaldi, it is hard to imagine how Torelli could have procured such a manuscript at this early stage of Antonio's career. In addition, Vivaldi appears to have assimilated various traits of Torelli's compositional style including important aspects of the concerto form and the use of highly irregular phrase-structures. It is unsurprising therefore that Vivaldi's two concertos for two trumpets were influenced by the Bolognese school of trumpet playing.

Another probable pupil of Torelli – a fellow Veronese – was **Evaristo Felice Dall'Abaco**. Like Corelli, Dall'Abaco appears to have had a predilection for tinkering with and perfecting his works before bringing his labours to print. Apart from a manuscript collection of violin sonatas in Vienna and one or two other works, the rest of his surviving output, just 66 works, was published in six publications. The Opus 2, his first set of concertos, consists of works specifically written for the church; most are 'orchestral' (i.e. without soloists), though the eleventh concerto, for solo cello, is possibly the first such work ever to have been published.

Our third and final pupil of Torelli is **Lorenzo Gaetano Zavateri**, the only composer in this programme to hail from Bologna itself. His surviving *œuvre* suggests that he was first and foremost a violinist, and a composer second. That said, his two published sets – one of sonatas and one of concertos – show considerable skill; his Opus 1 concertos (c.1735) received praise from Padre Martini for their 'well refined intelligence'. The set alternates orchestral works with solo concertos, the last of which bears the title *La Tempesta di Mare*. This choice of title was probably influenced by the similarly titled concertos published as part of Vivaldi's Opus 8 (1725) and Opus 10 (1729). It also pays homage to Vivaldi's *Le quattro Stagioni* on account of the descriptive captions detailing elements of the storm, including the plight of a ship battling nature's fury.

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