

WIGMORE HALL

Wednesday 29 January 2025
7.30pm

Olivier Stankiewicz oboe
Thomas Dunford archlute

Pierre Danican Philidor (1681-1731)

Suite in E minor Op. 1 No. 5

*I. Très lentement • II. Allemande • III. Sarabande •
IV. Gigue*

Marin Marais (1656-1728)

Les Voix Humaines (pub. 1701)

François Couperin (1668-1733)

Troisième Concert royal

*I. Prélude • II. Allemande • III. Courante •
IV. Sarabande • V. Gavotte • VI. Muzette •
VII. Chaconne*

Interval

Giuseppe Sammartini (1695-1750)

Sonata in G Op. 13 No. 4

I. Andante • II. Allegro • III. Adagio • IV. Menuet

Benedetto Marcello (1686-1739)

Se morto mi brami Op. 4

Giovanni Girolamo Kapsberger
(c.1580-1651)

Toccatà No. 6 (pub. 1611)

Juan Bautista Pla

Oboe Sonata in C minor

I. Allegretto • II. Andante • III. Allegro assai

Joan Ambrosio Dalza

Calata

Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741)

Oboe Sonata in C minor RV53

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



UNDER 35S

Supported by the AKO Foundation
Media partner Classic FM



This concert is part of the CAVATINA Chamber Music Trust ticket scheme, offering free tickets to those aged 8-25

Wigmore Hall is a no smoking venue. No recording or photographic equipment may be taken into the auditorium nor used in any other part of the Hall without the prior written permission of the management. In accordance with the requirements of City of Westminster persons shall not be permitted to stand or sit in any of the gangways intersecting the seating, or to sit in any other gangways. If standing is permitted in the gangways at the sides and rear of the seating, it shall be limited to the number indicated in the notices exhibited in those positions. Disabled Access and Facilities - full details from 020 7935 2141. Wigmore Hall is equipped with a loop to help hearing aid users receive clear sound without background noise. Patrons can use this facility by switching hearing aids to 'T'.



Please ensure that watch alarms, mobile phones and any other electrical devices which can become audible are switched off. Phones on a vibrate setting can still be heard, please switch off.

The Wigmore Hall Trust Registered Charity No. 1024838
36 Wigmore Street, London W1U 2BP • Wigmore-hall.org.uk • John Gilhooly Director

Wigmore Hall Royal Patron HRH The Duke of Kent, KG
Honorary Patrons Aubrey Adams OBE; André and Rosalie Hoffmann; Louise Kaye; Kohn Foundation; Mr and Mrs Paul Morgan



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**



It is strange to think that the oboe was newer to the Baroque than the saxophone was to Jazz. In the 1690s, James Talbot, professor of Hebrew and keen amateur musician, wrote that 'the present Hautbois not 40 years old and an improvement of the great French hautbois which is like our Weights'. Those 'weights' were *shawms*, a family of double-reed instruments that had long existed in Europe, providing useful members of outdoor bands such as the French king's *grande écurie*. In the first half of the 17th Century, two of its *shawm* players, **Michel Danican Philidor** and Jean Hottetere, re-designed the *shawm* to create an instrument with a softer sound and greater range – the *hautbois* ('loud wood'). The new instrument quickly caught on, used by French composers in the 1650s and spreading to Britain within 20 years. The oboe was not the only wind instrument to receive the attention of French ingenuity – this period also saw innovations to the flute, and music was often written interchangeably for flute and oboe. Michel's grandson Pierre (1681–1731) was both an oboist and a flautist at the royal court, and his Suite in E minor (1717) was written 'pour les Hautbois, Flûtes, Violons, &c.' The suite was another aspect of music moulded by the French, comprising contrasting dance movements all in the same key.

Alongside dance movements, French composers wrote more descriptive pieces about creatures, machines and, in this case, human voices. **Marin Marais** (1656–1728), himself a viol virtuoso, wrote *Les Voix Humaines* for the bass viol; the archlute's extra strings (see below) give a similar richness and depth, making it a worthy borrower of viol music.

A colleague of Philidor and Marais at the royal court was **François Couperin** (1668–1733). He published a set of *concerts royaux* in 1722, of, he wrote, 'a different kind from those I have composed up to now.' Rather than being only for his own instrument, the harpsichord, they were duets for a bass and a melody instrument (the violin, flute or oboe). Composed originally for Louis XIV's weekly series of chamber concerts, they were performed by, among others, Philidor – but which Philidor, Couperin did not specify: Pierre had several relatives who also played wind instruments for the king. Couperin's concerts are suites: the A major concert includes not only a sarabande, the stately heart of any suite, but a quintessentially French *musette* and a captivating Chaconne.

One of the oboists credited with bringing the new instrument to Italy was Alexis Saint-Martin, who left France in the late 17th Century and settled in Milan. He married an Italian, and their eight children bore an Italian version of his surname, **Sammartini**. Giuseppe (1695–1750) was the eldest son, and was brought up on the oboe. In 1728 he left for London, where work was to be found not just at court but in the opera pit, and where a healthy music publishing trade promised some outlet for creativity. Sammartini found fixed employment in the household of the Princess of Wales, but he supplemented this with work at the King's Theatre, numerous London concerts and by publishing sonatas, concertos and

overtures. His music remained popular after his death: his Six Solos Op.13, of which this sonata is one, were published in the 1760s.

Benedetto Marcello (1686–1739) was a Venetian musician and civil servant whose life was cut short by tuberculosis, which he picked up while governor of Pola in Istria (now in Croatia). Nevertheless, his output was substantial, with several operas, serenatas and large sacred works to his name, as well as a treasury of vocal and instrumental music. 'Se morto mi brami', from his *Canzoni madrigalesche et arie per camera* (1717), is a lament about unrequited love. A lilting *siciliana*, it is full of delicious chromaticism.

While French musicians were experimenting with wind instruments, in Italy plucked strings were undergoing a revolution. With the invention of opera and the fashion for solo song came the demand for accompanying instruments. The lute sounded beautiful – as the charming Calata by the Renaissance Milanese lutenist **Joan Ambrosio Dalza** shows – but it was limited in volume and range. And so Italian luthiers increased the number of strings and put an extra peg box on the neck, in effect creating two instruments in one: the upper strings could be fingered like a lute; the lower strings plucked as open strings to give bass notes, or simply left to resonate as 'sympathetic strings' for a fuller sound. This new instrument took a couple of forms, the theorbo and the archlute, suitable for providing colourful accompaniment to a melody or meeting the challenges of solo music. A pioneer of the archlute was **Giovanni Girolamo Kapsberger** (c.1580–1651). Born in Venice to an Austrian father and Italian mother, Kapsberger settled in Rome where he built a reputation as a virtuoso player, a reputation to which his published music attests. This included a number of toccatas, loosely organised pieces showing off the 'touch' of the performer.

Like Sammartini, **Juan Bautista Pla** (1720–1773) found work abroad. Part of a musical dynasty from Catalonia, he accompanied his brother Josep all over Europe, settling in Lisbon after Josep's death, where he was employed as an oboist and bassoonist. The Sonata in C minor was one of many sonatas composed by him and Josep. It not only suggests the calibre of his playing, but it has many of the galant features that pushed the Baroque into the Classical.

We return to Marcello's Venice for the last piece in tonight's concert, the Sonata in C minor by **Antonio Vivaldi** (1678–1741). As master of the violin for nearly 40 years at the Ospedale della Pietà, a girls' orphanage, Vivaldi composed hundreds of *concerti* as well as sacred music. However, he still found time to write around fifty operas and publish dozens of instrumental sonatas. This sonata is a reminder of Vivaldi the dramatist, with a brooding introductory movement and plaintive aria-like *andante* surrounded by two headlong *allegros*.

© Katie Hawks 2025

Reproduction and distribution is strictly prohibited.