

# WIGMORE HALL

Thursday 30 January 2025  
7.30pm

The English Concert performs this concert in honour of the legacy of Caroline Erskine, who was Chair of The English Concert from 1981 to 1993, following her husband Antony Chandos, the founding Chair.

## The English Concert

Trevor Pinnock director & harpsichord

Lucy Crowe soprano

Nadja Zwiener leader, violin I	Guy Button violin II	Ismael Campanero Nieto double bass, violone
Davina Clarke violin I	Henry Tong violin II	Clara Espinosa Encinas oboe
Elizabeth MacCarthy violin I	Alfonso Leal del Ojo viola	Sarah Humphrys oboe
Miki Takahashi violin I	Louise Hogan viola	Fergus Butt bassoon
Manami Mizumoto violin II	Joseph Crouch cello	Sergio Bucheli theorbo
Annie Gard violin II	Jonathan Byers cello	Stephen Farr organ

Arcangelo Corelli (1653-1713)

Concerto grosso in C minor Op. 6 No. 3  
*I. Largo • II. Allegro - Adagio •  
III. Grave • IV. Vivace • V. Allegro*

George Frideric Handel (1685-1759)

Oboe Concerto in G minor HWV287 (c.1704-5)  
*I. Grave • II. Allegro • III. Sarabande • IV. Allegro*  
Salve Regina HWV241  
*Salve, Regina, Mater misericordiae •  
Ad te clamamus exsules filii Evae • Eia, ergo,  
advocata nostra • O clemens, O pie*

*Interval*

George Frideric Handel

Concerto Grosso in D Op. 6 No. 5 HWV323 (1739)  
*I. Larghetto e staccato • II. Allegro • III. Presto •  
IV. Largo • V. Allegro • VI. Menuet. Un poco  
larghetto*  
Silete venti HWV242 (c.1723-5)  
*1. Symphonia - Silete venti • 2. Dulcis amor • 3. O  
fortunata anima • 4. Date sarta • 5. Alleluia*

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In his 1702 book *Letters From the Dead to the Living*, the satirist Thomas Brown describes the hairpiece of the Duke of Ormond as 'large enough to have loaded a camel, and... bestowed upon it at least a bushel of powder, I warrant you'. French fashion was all the rage in 18th-century London and nothing, as Brown noted, could be understated. But while its streets were crowded with towering French wigs and ever-expanding panier crinolines, its concert halls were embracing fashion of more refined and understated elegance.

By the beginning of the 1700s, Italian music had already begun to cause a stir in London, and of its group of influential musicians, arguably the most important was the violinist **Arcangelo Corelli**. His compositions had been refining the tastes of musicians and audiences in London and beyond for some time when he arrived in England in person in 1700, and so when he finally landed in the capital he was already something of a celebrity. Furthermore, this 'Italian style' – lyrical, rangy melodies, crystal-clear harmonies and dramatic contrasts – had already made a significant impact on the city's audiences.

Corelli's Concerto Grosso in C minor Op. 6 No. 3 is one of the most famous examples of the genre with which his contemporary London admirers most closely associated him, and which remains his most significant contribution to the instrumental repertoire. As with the rest of the set of 12 that was first published in 1714, it is composed for two groups: a small group of soloists known as the *concertino*, usually two violins and cello, and a larger ensemble that made up the rest of the orchestra (the *ripieno*). Corelli was a master of melody, and the third concerto of Op. 6 offers a particularly concentrated collection of the long flowing lines that made his music so immediately recognisable as 'Italian', appearing with gravitas and breadth in the opening Adagio e staccato, fleet-footed in the first Allegro, as an expansive and lyrical Adagio, and with joyful energy in the final Allegro.

Combined with the harmonies and textures that made Corelli's Op. 6 the *concerto grosso* prototype, No. 3 was possibly most of all the haute couture of the Italian musical style which set the stage on which other composers could build. Of those, the most important was undoubtedly **Handel**, who arrived in London in 1710 at the age of 25 – only a short time after Corelli. He had come via Italy – a country he revisited several times over the course of his life – and by the time he settled for good in London he was already skilfully accomplished in Corelli's Italianate style of composition.

Although his early training was firmly rooted in Germany, Handel had been drawn to opera since he was a very young man, and the influence of Italian opera on his writing for solo instruments was unmissable. The Oboe Concerto in G minor HWV287 of 1704 (for a long time considered as of spurious attribution) is characterised by long, sweeping melodic phrases that

serve the oboe in the same way as the singers of the long, ornamented lines in his later arias. The contrast between the slow and fast of the movements, too, mirrors the contrast between the speech-like, dramatic recitatives and lyrical, virtuosic arias of the operas he was already starting to write.

Happily, Handel's move to London exposed him to its rapidly growing operatic scene, and he was soon writing vocal music deeply influenced by the Italian style that Corelli had so firmly inculcated in the concert culture of the city. This was where Handel was most at home: in the melodies designed to showcase the lyricism and virtuosity of the human voice. The *Salve Regina* was one such work he had written in Italy, in 1707, on his way to London. It was a commission from the Colonna family in Rome for their Trinity Sunday celebrations at Vignanello, where Cardinal Colonna had been one of Handel's most enthusiastic and influential patrons and, like the oboe concerto, shows Handel's unique mix of Italian influence and individual style in their early stages, in a form that already betrays his debt to Corelli. But while he was undoubtedly influenced by the older composer's style, he did not follow it as slavishly as his contemporaries: his interest lay more in creating music rich in contrast and drama that would catch the heart as well as the mind. And even though Corelli's direct influence can be seen in Handel's Concerto Grosso in D Major HWV323, while Corelli's version would have showcased his elegantly straightforward harmonic language and textural clarity, Handel's version introduces more complex harmonies and dramatic shifts in mood.

*Silete venti* is a short, Italian-language motet that Handel wrote in London in the 1720s. It is a plea for calm with a lyrical opening interrupted by a solo soprano, soaring over the orchestra to demand silence. As it progresses, it becomes more and more dramatic, and combines those soaring vocal melodies and instrumental colour of which he was such a pioneer to great dramatic effect. It may not be as well-known as some of his larger choral works – it shares some material with his dramatic oratorio *Esther*, which is much more famous – but it is nevertheless a perfect Handelian vocal vignette.

Although different in many ways, Corelli and Handel shared a deep connection by way of their work's Italian roots, prizing above all the value of melody and the dialogue between small and larger groups that was so much the hallmark of the *concerto grosso*. Corelli's *concerti* may have been foundational, but it was Handel who infused them with drama and lyricism to crystallise a tradition, combine it with another, and create something entirely new that endured long after the periwigs and paniers had disappeared from the streets of London.

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**Arcangelo Corelli** (1653-1713)

**Concerto grosso in C minor Op. 6 No. 3**

**I. Largo**

**II. Allegro - Adagio**

**III. Grave**

**IV. Vivace**

**V. Allegro**

**George Frideric Handel** (1685-1759)

**Oboe Concerto in G minor HWV287**

(c.1704-5)

**I. Grave**

**II. Allegro**

**III. Sarabande**

**IV. Allegro**

**Salve Regina HWV241**

**Salve, Regina, Mater  
misericordiae**

Salve, Regina, Mater  
misericordiae,  
Vita, ducedo, et  
spes nostra,  
salve.

**O, holy Queen,  
Mother of Mercy**

O, holy Queen, Mother of  
Mercy,  
hail our life, our  
sweetness and our  
hope.

**Ad te clamamus  
exsules filii  
Evae**

**To thee do we cry,  
poor banished  
children of Eve**

Ad te clamamus  
exsules filii  
Evae,

To thee do we cry, poor  
banished children of  
Eve;

Ad te suspiramus,  
gementes et  
flentes,  
In hac lacrimarum valle.

To thee do we send up  
our sighs, mourning  
and weeping  
in this valley of tears.

**Eia, ergo, advocata  
nostra**

Eia, ergo, advocata nostra,  
illos tuos  
Misericordes oculos ad nos  
converte  
Et Jesum, benedictum  
fructum ventris tui,  
Nobis, post hoc exilium  
ostende.

**Turn then, most  
gracious advocate**

Turn then, most gracious  
advocate,  
thine eyes of mercy  
toward us;  
And after this our exile,  
show unto us  
the blessed fruit of thy  
womb, Jesus.

**O clemens, O pie**

O clemens, O pie, O dulcis  
Virgo Maria.

**O clement, O loving**

O clement, O loving, O  
sweet Virgin Mary.

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**Interval**

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**George Frideric Handel** (1685-1759)

**Concerto Grosso in D Op. 6 No. 5 HWV323**

(1739)

**I. Larghetto e staccato**

**II. Allegro**

**III. Presto**

**IV. Largo**

**V. Allegro**

**VI. Menuet. Un poco larghetto**

*Please do not turn the page until the song and its accompaniment have ended*

## Silete venti HWV242

(c.1723-5)

*Anonymous*

### 1. Symphonia- Silete Venti

*Sinfonia*

*Recitativo*

Silete venti,  
Nolite murmurare  
frondes,  
Quia anima mea  
dulcedine  
Requiescit.

### 2. Dulcis amor

*Aria*

Dulcis amor, Jesu care,  
Quis non cupit  
te amare;  
Veni, transfige me.  
Si tu feris non  
sunt clades:  
Tuae plagae sunt suaves,  
quia totus  
Vivo in te.

### 3. O fortunata anima

*Accompagnato*

O fortunata anima,  
O iucundissimus triumphus,  
O felicissima Laetitia

### 4. Date sarta

*Aria*

Date sarta, date  
flores;  
Me coronent vestri  
honores;  
Date palmas nobiles.  
Surgent venti et  
beatae spirent  
Almae  
Fortunate auras caeli  
fulgidas.

### 5. Alleluia

*Presto*

Alleluia.

## Be silent, you winds

### Sinfonia - Be silent, you winds

*Sinfonia*

*Recitative*

Be silent, you winds,  
and do not murmur, you  
branches,  
because my soul is  
resting in  
sweetness.

### Sweet love

*Aria*

Sweet love, dear Jesus,  
who does not desire to  
love Thee;  
Come, transfix me.  
If you strike me, there are  
no injuries:  
your strokes are sweet,  
because I totally  
live in you.

### O blessed soul

*Accompagnato*

O blessed soul,  
O happiest triumph,  
O most fortunate joy!

### Give garlands

*Aria*

Give garlands, give  
flowers;  
may your honours crown  
me;  
give noble palms.  
Let the winds arise and  
the blessed,  
fortunate spirits  
breathe the resplendent  
breezes of Heaven.

### Alleluia

*Presto*

Alleluia.