

WIGMORE HALL

Tuesday 8 October 2024
7.30pm

Vilde Frang violin
Julia Doyle soprano

Arcangelo

Louis Creac'h violin I, leader

James Toll violin I

Sophia Prodanova violin I

Leo Appel* violin I

Michael Gurevich violin II

Agata Daraskaite violin II

Carmen Lavada Johnson-Pájaro* violin II

* Arcangelo New Ensemblists 2024-26

John Crockatt viola

Thomas Kettle viola

Jonathan Manson cello

Martin Egidi* cello

Giuseppe Ciraso-Cali double bass

Sergio Bucheli lute

Jonathan Cohen harpsichord, director

Henry Purcell (1659-1695)

Suite from *The Fairy Queen* Z629 (1692)

First music: Prelude • First music: Hornpipe • Prelude • Thrice happy lovers • Hornpipe • Symphony while the swans come forward • O let me weep • If Love's a sweet passion • Chaconne

George Frideric Handel (1685-1759)

Concerto grosso in G minor Op. 6 No. 6 HWV324 (1739)

I. Largo affettuoso • II. A tempo giusto • III. Musette. Larghetto • IV. Allegro • V. Allegro

Johann Christoph Bach (1642-1703)

Mein Freund ist mein, und ich bin sein from *Meine Freundin, du bist schön* (?1679)

Interval

Georg Philipp Telemann (1681-1767)

Ouverture-Suite 'Les nations anciens et modernes' TWV55:G4

I. Ouverture • II. Menuet I and II • III. Les Allemands anciens • IV. Les Allemands modernes • V. Les Suédois anciens • VI. Les Suédois modernes • VII. Les Danois anciens • VIII. Les Danois modernes • IX. Les vieilles femmes

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Concerto in E for violin, strings and continuo BWV1042 (by 1730)

I. Allegro • II. Adagio • III. Allegro assai

George Frideric Handel

Tu del ciel ministro eletto from *Il trionfo del Tempo e del Disinganno* HWV46a (1707)

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First performed in 1692, **Henry Purcell's** semi-opera *The Fairy Queen* Z629 was loosely based on Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Purcell did not, however, set any of Shakespeare's text; instead, his music features choruses, solos and dances for allegorical masques to be performed alongside the spoken play. *The Fairy Queen* is widely considered to contain some of Purcell's finest theatre music, and its instrumental movements - concluding with a final *Chaconne* - reflect the popularity of dances such as the hornpipe and the rondeau at this time, as well as Purcell's assimilation of Italian and French styles into the English Baroque.

English-language entertainment, in the new form of the oratorio, experienced a revival in London in 1739, following a disastrous run of Italian opera performances. It was for the 1739-40 season at the Lincoln's Inn Fields Theatre that Handel composed his 'Twelve Grand Concertos', Op. 6 (HWV319-330). They were designed to attract audiences to the theatre as an exciting feature, to be performed in the intervals between the oratorios and masques. No. 6 in G minor HWV324 opens with a tragic movement worthy of any of Handel's operas, followed by a chromatic fugue. The pastoral-like *Musette* is centred around a dark theme, in which low-register strings play over a characteristic drone bass, that alternates with livelier passages. Handel follows this with a movement reminiscent of Vivaldi, featuring a virtuosic solo violin, before ending with a dancing *Allegro*.

Johann Christoph Bach was the most important member of the Bach family before Johann Sebastian, who described him as 'a profound composer'. The text of his dialogue cantata *Meine Freundin, du bist schön* ('My love, you are beautiful') is drawn largely from the *Song of Songs*, and was probably written for the 1679 wedding of Christoph's cousin (confusingly also called Christoph), the brother of Sebastian's father Ambrosius. 'Mein Freund ist mein' portrays a young woman as she walks to a garden for a private romantic encounter. It is cast as a *ciaccona*, featuring a repeated harmonic bass, above which sits a touching vocal line, depicting the woman lost in her thoughts. The extraordinarily florid writing for solo violin represents the idyllic natural scenes she encounters along the way.

Theatricality of a different sort abounds in **Georg Philipp Telemann's** *Ouverture-Suite 'Les nations anciens et modernes'* TWV55:G4. Following an introductory French *Ouverture* - featuring a fast contrapuntal section framed by stately outer sections - and a pair of elegant *Menuets*, Telemann presents three pairs of movements, each devoted to a different nationality from Northern Europe: the Germans, the Swedes, and the Danes. Importantly, the first of each pair is always marked 'anciens', has a strong dance-like character, and is in the French style, with archaic dotted rhythms and slower tempos. The second represents the 'modernes', featuring faster tempos and lively rhythms - hallmarks of the Italian style. Telemann therefore seems to be representing the then-current debates over the relative merits of these two

great musical styles, rather than attempting to literally portray different nationalities. The final movement is a strange gavotte depicting two confused old women, represented by descending chromatic lines; this may suggest a theatrical performance context for this piece, with the women providing a burlesque conclusion.

National styles also feature prominently in the music of **Johann Sebastian Bach**. Although he wrote many violin concertos, most have not survived in their original form: instead, they are largely transmitted as arrangements for other instruments. The original sources for the Concerto in E BWV1042 are lost, and although the music is found in Bach's hand in a later version for keyboard (BWV1054), it only survives as a violin concerto thanks to a copy made after his death.

Unlike Handel's Op. 6, this piece is based on the three-movement concerto model cultivated by Vivaldi, although it displays a number of un-Italian characteristics. The first movement, for example, has a *da capo* structure, where the first section is repeated with embellishments after a contrasting middle section. Despite a written cadenza, Bach resists the temptation to let the violin show off too much; instead, both violin and orchestra are engaged in a partnership for much of the movement, with the former sometimes even accompanying the latter. The slow movement is based around a long basso ostinato line, above which the violin weaves an intimate, poignant melody, while the finale features a swinging, passepied-like refrain, interspersed with couplets in which the figuration for the solo violin becomes ever more virtuosic.

Composed in Spring 1707, *Il trionfo del Tempo e del Disinganno* ('The Triumph of Time and Disillusion') HWV 46a was Handel's first oratorio, one of only two he set in Italian. It was a work that followed Handel throughout his life, being revised and expanded first in 1737 (as 'The Triumph of Time and Truth' HWV 46b) and then again in 1757 (as HWV 71). The original version of *Trionfo del Tempo* was written in Rome, and it bursts with the youthful vigour that characterises Handel's Italian period. At a time when opera was banned in the Papal States, it functioned as a kind of moralistic drama, telling the story of a debate between Beauty, Pleasure, Time and Disillusion, as Pleasure seeks to entice Beauty away from wise guidance.

In the final aria, 'Tu del ciel ministro eletto', Beauty sings directly to the angels, turning away from Pleasure and promising her heart to God. The recitative that precedes it, 'Pure del Cielo', already creates an ethereal atmosphere, with long notes in the strings; in the aria itself, these morph into a slow, steady heartbeat, above which a solo violin and the soprano float in a duet of exquisite transcendence. The character of Time may have indeed triumphed in encouraging Beauty to follow him, but it is the beauty of Handel's music that here seems to bring time to a standstill.

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Henry Purcell (1659-1695)

Suite from *The Fairy Queen* Z629 (1692)

Anonymous, after William Shakespeare

First music: Prelude

First music: Hornpipe

Prelude

Thrice happy lovers

Thrice happy lovers, may you be
For ever, ever free
From that tormenting devil, jealousy.
From all the anxious care and strife,
That attends a married life.

Be to one another true,
Kind to her as she's to you.
And since the errors of the night are past,
May he be ever constant, she be ever chaste.

Hornpipe

Symphony while the swans come forward

O let me weep

O, let me weep, for ever weep!
My eyes no more shall welcome sleep.
I'll hide me from the sight of day,
And sigh, sigh, sigh my soul away.
He's gone, he's gone, his loss deplore
And I shall never see him more.

If Love's a sweet passion

If love's a sweet passion, why does it torment?
If a bitter, oh tell me, whence comes my content?
Since I suffer with pleasure, why should I complain,
Or grieve at my fate, when I know 'tis in vain?
Yet so pleasing the pain is, so soft is the dart,
That at once it both wounds me, and tickles my
heart.

I press her hand gently, look languishing down,
And by passionate silence I make my love known.
But oh! how I'm blest when so kind she does prove,

By some willing mistake to discover her love.
When in striving to hide, she reveals all her flame,
And our eyes tell each other, what neither dares
name.

Chaconne

George Frideric Handel (1685-1759)

Concerto grosso in G minor Op. 6 No. 6

HWV324 (1739)

I. Largo affettuoso

II. A tempo giusto

III. Musette. Larghetto

IV. Allegro

V. Allegro

Johann Christoph Bach (1642-1703)

Mein Freund ist mein,
und ich bin sein from

*Meine Freundin, du bist
schön* (?1679)

Liturgical text

Mein Freund ist mein, und
ich bin sein,

Der unter den Rosen
weidet,

Und er hält sich auch zu
mir.

Seine Linke lieget unter
meinem Haupt,

Und seine Rechte
herzet mich.

Er erquickt mich mit
Blumen

Und labet mich mit
Äpfeln.

Mein Freund ist mein, und
ich bin sein,

Denn ich bin krank vor Liebe.

My beloved is mine,
and I am his

My beloved is mine, and I
am his,

he feedeth among the
roses

and his desire is toward
me.

His left hand is under my
head,

and his right hand doth
embrace me.

He revives me with
flowers

and comforts me with
apples.

My beloved is mine, and I
am his,

for I am sick with love.

Interval

Georg Phillip Telemann (1681-1767)
Overture-Suite 'Les nations anciens et
modernes' TWV55:G4

I. Overture

II. Menuet I and II

III. Les Allemands anciens

IV. Les Allemands modernes

V. Les Suédois anciens

VI. Les Suédois modernes

VII. Les Danois anciens

VIII. Les Danois modernes

IX. Les vieilles femmes

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

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continuo BWV1042 (by 1730)

I. Allegro

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III. Allegro assai

George Frideric Handel (1685-1759)

Tu del ciel ministro You, chosen
eletto (1707) from minister of Heaven

Il trionfo del Tempo e
del Disinganno

HWV46a (1707)

Benedetto Pamphili

Tu del ciel ministro
eletto,

Non vedrai più nel mio
petto

Voglia infida, o vano
ardor.

E se vissi ingrata
a Dio,

Tu custode del
cor mio

A lui porta il
nuovo cor.

You, chosen minister of
Heaven,

shall no more see in my
body

a faithless wish or vain
desire.

And though I lived
ungrateful to God,

may you, the guardian of
my heart,

bring to him a heart made
new.

*Translation of 'Tu del ciel ministro eletto' by James Halliday, kindly
provided by the artists.*