



London Handel Players

A World of Musical Inspiration

Toll Gavel United Church

Sunday 26 May 3.00pm

London Handel Players

Rachel Brown *flutes, recorders*

Adrian Butterfield, Oliver Webber *violins*

Rachel Byrt *viola*

Katherine Sharman *cello*

Silas Wollston *harpsichord*

A World of Musical Inspiration

France and the fascination for lands afar

Jean-Baptiste Lully 1632-87

Marche pour la Cérémonie des Turcs
(from *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*)

Michel Corrette 1707-95

Les Sauvages
(from *Concerto Comique* no. 25 in G minor)
Contredanse en Rondeau
(from *Les Boréades*)

Jean-Philippe Rameau 1683-1764

Telemann and Polish bagpipes

Paris Quartet no. 3 in G major
Modéré

Georg Philipp Telemann 1681-1767

Trio Sonata *Der Polnische Sackpfeifer*

Johann Heinrich Schmelzer
c.1620/23-1680

Hanasky from Suite in E major, TWV 55:E1

Telemann

India and Venice, Spanish folly and curiosities from the Canaries

Flute Concerto in D minor, 'Il Gran Mogol'
Larghetto

Antonio Vivaldi 1678-1741

Violin Sonata in D minor, op. 5 no.12,
'La Folia'

Arcangelo Corelli 1653-1713

Keyboard Sonata in A major, K.24
Presto

Domenico Scarlatti 1685-1757

Canarios

Santiago de Murcia 1673-1739
& **Gaspar Sanz** 1640-1710

***From the far-flung corners of the Earth
– the British Isles***

Ground after the Scotch Humour

Nicola Matteis c.1650-*after* 1713

Hornpipes from *Ayres for the Theatre*
'*The Married Beau*'

Henry Purcell 1659-95

Scottish tunes:

My Time! O ye muses

Miss Mary Gordon of Braid

Lochail's away to France

Hon'ble Mrs Maules Reel

Many composers of the Baroque period were fascinated by music and culture from further afield and this programme brings together examples that demonstrate the huge variety of styles and influences available to them.

This eclectic programme begins in France with a grand yet satirical show of pomp and ceremony in which Lully conjures up the allure of Turkish royalty for Molière's upwardly aspirational *Bourgeois Gentilhomme*. There follows Corrette's arrangement of Rameau's *Danse des Sauvages* from *Les Indes Galantes* which was inspired by the spectacle of six Native American chiefs in Paris in 1725. We leave France with the *Contredanse* from Rameau's *Les Boréades* – a bizarre and almost hypnotic country dance that exploits grotesque intervals.

To Poland next, where the proud spirit of a nation long under foreign rule found freedom of expression in its rich musical heritage. The drones of bagpipes, and the beauty of the music of the local musicians provided Telemann with 'enough ideas for a lifetime of composition'.

Vivaldi's recently discovered flute concerto *Il Gran Mogol*, thought to have been written for the visit of an Indian delegation to Venice, kindles the sultry heat of India, whilst Corelli's intensely passionate depiction of frenzied madness seizes on a captivating Spanish traditional melody over the famous *Folia* ground.

This wild and flamboyant Hispanic character was captured by another Italian, Domenico Scarlatti, in his virtuosic harpsichord sonata in A major, composed for Maria Bárbara de Bragança, a Portuguese princess who became queen of Spain.

The vibrant and rhythmically complex music of the Canary Islands, replete with striking syncopations and *sesquialtera* (changes of time signature), held a magnetic appeal for guitarists such as Gaspar Sanz and Santiago de Murcia.

Finally we round off our folk-inspired programme with music which to European ears sounded as if it had emanated from alien territory – the British Isles! Johann Mattheson considered the English hornpipes so untamed and unpredictable, they ‘might have been composed by the court composers of the North or South Pole’. Musicians, such as Nicola Matteis, who settled in Britain embraced this earthy musical heritage, of which Henry Purcell embodied the pinnacle of achievement.

With the advent of widespread publishing, many Scottish tunes, which had hitherto always been passed on by aural tradition, became widely available to the general public. Composers such as Barsanti, Geminiani and even Haydn and Beethoven cultivated the fashion of composing variations on these hauntingly beautiful and invigorating melodies.

London Handel Players

Established in 2000, the London Handel Players appear regularly at leading venues and festivals in the UK, Europe and North America, performing Baroque chamber music and concertos and collaborating with the world’s leading singers.

The London Handel Players have performed across North America, making their New York debut at the Frick Museum in 2012 and returning to perform at Carnegie Hall in 2014. Concerts have also included performances at Wigmore Hall, Internationale Händel-Festspiele Göttingen, Halle International Handel Festival, East Cork Early Music Festival and in Spain, Ireland, Italy, Germany, Serbia and Croatia. Committed educators at every level and holding professorships in historical performance at London’s conservatoires, members of the London Handel Players give numerous masterclasses and workshops.

Recent tours have taken them to Northern Ireland, Spain, Turkey, Canada and the USA. In the 2023-24 season they return to Wigmore Hall with Bach Cantatas, multi-instrument concertos by Bach, Vivaldi and Telemann, and a Handel-Vivaldi programme with the exciting young countertenor, Alexander Chance. Two new recordings, one of Bach Sonatas for keyboard and violin and one of arrangements of arias by Handel called *Total Eclipse*, were released by Somm Recordings in 2023.

Their highly acclaimed discography also includes four discs of Handel chamber music; his two sets of trio sonatas op. 2 and op. 5, his complete works for solo violin and a disc entitled *Handel at Home* all on the Somm label. They have recorded Geminiani's complete op. 1 sonatas and a two-disc set of J.S. Bach's flute sonatas interspersed with some flute arias from his cantatas sung by Elizabeth Cragg, Charles Daniels and Peter Harvey. Future releases include recordings of Vivaldi flute and recorder concertos, Telemann Paris Quartets and Leclair Violin Concertos.

BEVERLEY & EAST RIDING EARLY MUSIC FESTIVAL is directed by Delma Tomlin MBE and administered by the National Centre for Early Music through the York Early Music Foundation (registered charity number 1068331)

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