

# BELSIZE BAROQUE

Director: Adrian Butterfield

## Revolutionaries at the Concert Spirituel

Sunday 29 November 2015, 6.30 p.m.  
St Peter's, Belsize Square, Belsize Park, London NW3 4HY



## Programme

**Christophe Willibald Gluck (1714–1787)** *Iphigénie en Aulide*: Suite

**Johann Christian Bach (1735–1782)** Symphonie Concertante in G  
WC30

### *Interval*

**Joseph Haydn (1732–1809)** Symphony 83 ‘*La Poule*’ (Hob.I:83)

**Christophe Willibald Gluck (1714–1787)** *Iphigénie en Aulide*: Suite  
*Ouverture – Act 3 Air – Air pour les Esclaves/Air Gai – Passacaille*

The great cities of Paris and London acted as the hubs for transforming European concert life in the second half of the 18th century. Aristocratic and courtly patronage was having to make way for metropolitan opera houses; concert promoters were keen to sell tickets to all who could afford them. New elites and a burgeoning middle class were avid to hear the works of composers who were revolutionising the musical language of the age. A clear sign of the times was that in 1779 Haydn's employer, Prince Nicolas Esterházy, agreed to a new contract with the composer which surrendered the exclusive rights the Prince had previously enjoyed over Haydn's musical output, thereby freeing Haydn up to accept the commission to write his ‘Paris’ Symphonies. And Haydn, along with Gluck and Johann Christian Bach, was high on the list of composers whose works were regularly performed at the concerts mounted by the Concert Spirituel in Paris, the major sponsor of public performances in the city.

In the early 1770s Gluck, with a solid reputation behind him in Vienna, signed a contract to write several operas for the Paris Opéra, the first of which was *Iphigénie en Aulide*. Gluck had a strong agenda to reform opera and rid it of what had come to be seen as artificial and distracting Italian extravagances. There was opposition, amounting to street brawls, to Gluck's purity campaign, and the length and intensity of his rehearsal schedule was something Paris was not accustomed to, so the house was packed when *Iphigénie* opened in April 1774. The Overture, which provides a collage of some of the opera's main themes, along with the series of dances which Gluck was obliged to incorporate (no opera in Paris, however pure, could neglect the opportunity for balletic display), show why *Iphigénie* was such a triumphant success, earning the composer 20,000 livres.



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## **Johann Christian Bach (1735–1782)** Symphonie Concertante in G WC30

*Allegro Spiritoso – Andante – Allegro*

The concerto for multiple instruments flourished in the concert rooms of major European cities in the second half of the 18th century. The genre was particularly cultivated in Paris, where it went under the name of Symphonie Concertante, though today the best known examples are probably Mozart's Sinfonia Concertante for violin and viola K364 and Haydn's Hob.I:105 for violin, cello, oboe and bassoon. The highly cosmopolitan Johann Christian Bach was as much at home in the concert halls of Paris and Mannheim as he was in London, where he arrived in 1762 after spending seven years in Italy. It was only to be expected that he would excel in writing fashionable concertos for multiple instruments, and several fine concertos by him survive. This one features a flute, two violins and a cello as concertante instruments, sometimes performing as solo lines and often in combination as a group, recalling the concertino trading of the Baroque Concerto Grosso. Bach's skill in interweaving these into the orchestral texture and his mastery of the Italianate singing line, so much admired by the young Mozart, are much in evidence.

*Interval*

## **Joseph Haydn (1732–1809)** Symphony 83 'La Poule' (Hob.I:83)

*Allegro Spiritoso – Andante – Menuet: Allegretto – Finale: Vivace*

Haydn's commission to write six symphonies for Paris reflects his new-found freedom to sell his music abroad and, ultimately, to travel. The invitation came from the Loge Olympique, a Masonic lodge led by Claude-François-Marie Rigoley, Comte d'Ogny. Haydn was offered 25 Louis d'or for each symphony, a sum which he described at the time as colossal. The Paris commission enabled him too to begin to plot his symphonies on a much more expansive scale, since the Loge's orchestra ran on occasion to nearly 70 strings and doubled woodwind, three times the size of the band at Esterháza. No. 83 is the second of the 'Paris' symphonies, written in 1785. The first movement starts in a stormy G minor, the opening triad spiced with a dissonant C sharp. The sharply dotted rhythms that follow are transformed into fanfares, then reappear in the oboe as the accompaniment to a clucking figuration in the strings. The jerky effect of this second theme endeared the Symphony as 'the Hen' to its first audience, by which nickname it has been known ever since. The expressive slow movement in E flat also makes much use of repeated staccato notes. The Minuet is in a luminous G major, which is also the key of the Finale, a boisterously bucolic movement in triple time.

*Programme notes by Norman MacSween  
Design and typesetting by Andrew Welsh*

# Belsize Baroque

Formed in 2002, Belsize Baroque is one of the leading amateur baroque orchestras. It comprises young professionals, students and committed amateurs. The orchestra performs on period instruments in an historically informed style. It collaborates regularly with leading baroque directors to give orchestral performances as well as working with choral groups.

The orchestra showcases the talents of music college students and young professional musicians, providing these players with the opportunity to perform with top directors, to learn core repertoire and to gain experience in section leading.

Recent fundraising events in which the orchestra has participated include concerts for the Coram Trust, Cancer Research UK and the Dominic Simpson Memorial Trust.

The orchestra can be hired for orchestral or choral concerts and other events, and is delighted to assist other charities.

Belsize Baroque Orchestral Society Ltd is a registered charity (number 1108596) and company (number 5267265).

[www.belsizebaroque.org.uk](http://www.belsizebaroque.org.uk); Twitter: @Belsize\_Baroque

## First violins

Adelia Myslov  
Graham Nicholson  
Luke Fowler  
Jenny Frost

## Second violins

Maria Fiore Mazzarini  
Janet Smith  
Bruce Jamson

## Violas

Simon Hill  
Joanna Patrick  
Chris Long

## Cellos

Corrina Connor  
David Winfield  
Andrew Welsh

## Double bass

Nic Hyde

## Violone

Paul Ratcliffe

## Flutes

Richard Austen  
Mafalda Ramos

## Oboes

Susan Cooksley  
Sami Taylor

## Bassoons

Jenni Cooper Routledge  
Kristina Hedley

## Horns

Laurie Truluck  
Tom Bettley

## Timpani

David Merseguer Royo

Save the date! Our next concert, directed by the harpsichordist Julian Perkins, will be at 6.30pm on **Sunday 21 February 2016**, also in St Peter's, Belsize Square.

Like most arts organisations, we rely on donations to cover the expenses of putting on concerts. As a charity we can benefit from *easyfundraising*. If our friends and supporters sign up to support us at [www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/belsizebaroque](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/belsizebaroque) or download the *easyfundraising* app, we will receive a donation every time you shop online at one of 2700 retailers. Retailers include Amazon, most major grocery and department stores, trainline, and many, many more. There is no cost to you. Please sign up – it's very easy to use, and every amount you spend, large or small, will help us.

**Adrian Butterfield** is a violinist, director and conductor who specialises in performing music from 1600–1900 on period instruments. He is Musical Director of the Tilford Bach Society and Associate Director of the London Handel Festival and regularly directs the London Handel Orchestra and Players as well as working as a guest soloist and director in Europe and North America with modern and period ensembles.

The London Handel Players perform regularly at the Wigmore Hall and throughout Europe and North America and made their debut at Carnegie Hall in 2014. The Revolutionary Drawing Room specialises in classical and romantic music on period instruments and has also performed in North America and Europe. A new recording of quartets by Haydn, Mozart, Vanhal and Dittersdorf has been released by RDR to coincide with their 25th anniversary in 2015. Other recent CD releases include Mozart's Clarinet Quintet with Colin Lawson on Clarinet Classics and Geminiani's Op.1 sonatas (SOMM) by LHP in 2012. Adrian's world premiere complete recordings of Leclair's Books 1 and 2 violin sonatas were released in 2009 and 2013 on Naxos Records.

Plans for the 2015/16 season include an invitation to the Sweetwater Music Festival in Ontario, Canada, RDR appearances at St. John's, Smith Square and at The London BachFest 2015, conducting Handel's Dixit Dominus and Chandos Anthems in the London Handel Festival and Bach's B minor Mass at Tilford and directing the London Handel Orchestra at the Wigmore Hall.



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