



# BELSIZE BAROQUE

Director: Persephone Gibbs

Soprano: Nia Coleman

Music by  
Handel, Purcell,  
Corelli & Muffat

Sunday 27 November 2016, 6.30 pm  
St Peter's, Belsize Square, Belsize Park,  
London NW3 4HY

# Programme

## **George Friderick Handel (1685–1759)** Concerto Grosso in B flat Op.3 No.1 HWV 312

*Allegro – Largo – Allegro*

The Concerti Grossi Opus 3, drawing together pre-existing works by Handel, were published by the less than scrupulous London publisher John Walsh in 1734. A rival composer, Geminiani, had just taken Walsh to court for printing two sets of his Concerti which he claimed Walsh had acquired illegally. While there is no evidence that Handel objected to Walsh's selection of his works as Opus 3, it looks as if he did not have a chance to edit them pre-publication; it is for instance odd that the last movement of this B flat concerto is in G Minor. The opening movement has solos for the oboes and a violin, the slow movement adds recorders over an orchestral texture with divided violas, and the final movement features bassoons towards the end: all giving London's best instrumentalists a chance to shine.

## **George Friderick Handel** Two arias from the opera *Rinaldo*, HWV 7 *'Augelletti, che cantate' – 'Lascia ch'io pianga'*

*Rinaldo* is the first Italian opera Handel composed for London, opening in the Haymarket in February 1711. These two arias are sung by Almirena, the daughter of Godfrey of Bouillon, who is capturing the city of Jerusalem from the infidel during the First Crusade (1096–99). Almirena, a character unknown to Torquato Tasso, from whose epic the plot of the opera is drawn, has been introduced into the plot by the librettist to provide a love interest. A consort of recorders imitate birdsong in her garden while she sings (*'Augelletti'*) of her love for Rinaldo. Her second aria *'Lascia ch'io pianga'*, in the rhythm of a sarabande, is of course one of Handel's most famous melodies; he had already used it in two previous operas, but it achieved immortality in this setting.

<i>Augelletti, che cantate,</i>	<i>You Birds that sing,</i>
<i>Zefiretti, che spirate,</i>	<i>you Zephyrs that blow</i>
<i>Aure dolci intorno a me,</i>	<i>sweet breezes around me,</i>
<i>Il mio ben dite dov'è!</i>	<i>tell me, where is my beloved?</i>

<i>Lascia ch'io pianga</i>	<i>Let me weep over</i>
<i>Mia cruda sorte,</i>	<i>my cruel fate,</i>
<i>E che sospiri</i>	<i>let me sigh</i>
<i>La libertà.</i>	<i>for liberty.</i>

<i>Il duolo infranga</i>	<i>May my sorrow break</i>
<i>Queste ritorte,</i>	<i>these chains</i>
<i>De' miei martiri.</i>	<i>of my torment,</i>
<i>Sol per pietà.</i>	<i>if only out of pity.</i>



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**Georg Muffat (1653–1704)** *Armonico Tributo* No.2 in G minor

*Grave/Allegro – Grave/Forte e Allegro/Grave – Aria – Grave – Sarabanda:  
Grave – Borea: Alla Breve*

Muffat was born in Megève in the Duchy of Saxony, of Scottish descent. He studied in Paris and is best known for having popularised the French style in Prague, Salzburg and Passau, where he held musical posts. *Armonico Tributo* of 1682 is his first important published work, enriched with ‘how to’ instructions which have proved to be gold dust for today’s interpreters. As its title suggests, there are also strong Italianate elements in the writing of the Harmonic Tribute (compare with Corelli’s Christmas Concerto later in the programme), and in the alternation of solo Concertino sections with the full string band, sumptuous with two viola parts. Wind was added to the score when the set was republished in 1701.

*Interval*

**Henry Purcell (1659–1695)** Selection of dances from *The Fairy Queen*

‘Semi-opera’ is the rather clumsy title given to a genre cultivated after the Restoration in England, of which *The Fairy Queen* is perhaps our greatest surviving example. It describes a series of masques which were played and sung within the acts of a play: in this case, Shakespeare’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*. The masques included ‘*Night and Sleep*’ in Act II, and metamorphoses both of real and feigned love and of beings that are not what they seem in Act III. *The Fairy Queen* culminates in a masque celebrating Hymen, the god of marriage, and it is thought that this may commemorate the fifteenth wedding anniversary of William and Mary, then on the British throne (a Chinese garden was introduced symbolising Queen Mary’s love of oriental porcelain). The musical numbers are thus interwoven throughout with the themes of magic and allegory.

**Arcangelo Corelli (1653–1713)** Concerto Grosso Op.6 No.8 in

G minor *Fatto per la Notte di Natale*

*Vivace/Grave/Allegro – Adagio/Allegro/Adagio – Vivace – Allegro – Largo:  
Pastorale ad Libitum*

This concerto was probably composed about the same time as Purcell’s semi-opera, for a Roman patron in the early 1690s. The opening movement, in three sections, shows how Corelli revolutionised the musical language of his day. Two strong chords draw our attention, and seem to summon us to a solemn ceremony. A sombre yet sensuous chain of suspensions, a hallmark of Corellian style, bring us to the Allegro, where the two violins and cello of the concertino group alternate on a bar by bar basis with the weight of the full string section. A series of further short movements, subtly varied in texture, tempo and articulation, ushers in the Christmas element – familiar to us from the Pastoral Symphony in Handel’s *Messiah* – the lilting of two shepherd’s pipes over a drone bass, symbolising the imminence of Christ’s birth.

## Georg Friderick Handel Motetto *Silete Venti* HWV 242

*Symphonia: Largo/Allegro – Aria – Recitative – Aria – Aria*

'Be silent, ye winds!' Is the cry we hear from the soprano, interrupting the fast section of the opening overture. The unusual text in Latin, with its florid religious imagery, seems to have been set by Handel in London between 1724 and 1730, probably for a Roman patron such as Cardinal Colonna. This masterpiece of a scena for solo soprano with orchestra draws on Handel's full range of dramatic and vocal writing skills. The grave introspective beauty of the aria '*Dulcis amor*', with its initial walking bass and exquisite chromaticism as the soloist begs to be pierced by Christ's love, is followed by a more assertive aria '*Date serta*', in which a central section reconjures up the spirit of the winds. A virtuoso '*Alleluia*' in gigue rhythm brings the work to an exultant conclusion.

<i>Silete venti.</i>	<i>Be silent, ye winds,</i>
<i>Nolite murmurare frondes.</i>	<i>let your leaves stop rustling,</i>
<i>Quia anima mea</i>	<i>since my soul</i>
<i>Dulcedine requiescit.</i>	<i>rests in sweet peace.</i>
<i>Dulcis amor, Jesu care,</i>	<i>Sweet love, dear Jesus,</i>
<i>Quis non cupit te amare,</i>	<i>who does not desire to love you?</i>
<i>Veni, veni, transfige me.</i>	<i>Come, come and pierce me through.</i>
<i>Si tu feris non sint clades,</i>	<i>If you strike me, there is no injury,</i>
<i>Tuae plagae sunt suaves,</i>	<i>your blows are gentle,</i>
<i>Quia totus vivo in te.</i>	<i>because I live totally within you.</i>
<i>O fortunata anima,</i>	<i>Oh happy soul,</i>
<i>O jucundissimus triumphus,</i>	<i>Oh most sublime triumph,</i>
<i>O foelicissima laetitia!</i>	<i>Oh happiest bliss!</i>
<i>Date serta, date flores,</i>	<i>Offer garlands, offer flowers,</i>
<i>Me coronent vestri honores,</i>	<i>let your honours crown me,</i>
<i>Date palmas nobiles,</i>	<i>offer noble palm fronds;</i>
<i>Surgant venti et beatae</i>	<i>let the winds rise,</i>
<i>Spirent almae fortunatae</i>	<i>let the souls of the blessed</i>
<i>Auras coeli fulgidas.</i>	<i>breathe the luminous air of heaven.</i>
<i>Alleluja!</i>	<i>Alleluia!</i>

Programme notes by Norman MacSween  
Photography by Meng He

Save the date! We will be holding an event to raise funds for our scholarship programme on 31 January 2016.

Details will be available at [www.belsizebaroque.org.uk](http://www.belsizebaroque.org.uk).



Hailed by *Time Out* as a 'rising star of the baroque violin', American-born violinist **Persephone Gibbs** studied with Dorothy DeLay at Juilliard, gained degrees in English at Yale and Law at Columbia, improvised with a rock band for a year and immersed herself in dancing tango before moving to London to study with David Takeno and Rachel Podger at the Guildhall School of Music.

Persephone leads, solos with, and occasionally directs the Brandenburg Baroque Soloists, Charivari Agreeable Simfonie and the Temple Players.

Persephone co-founded the baroque chamber group Gut Instinct, which explores music for two or three violins and continuo. She has appeared in chamber concerts with the Gabrieli Consort and Florilegium, and her interest in early Italian repertoire has led to single-string work with His Majestys Sagbutts and Cornetts, the English Cornett and Sackbut Ensemble and I Fagiolini.

Persephone is a member of the Academy of Ancient Music, the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment and the Gabrieli Consort, and plays frequently with the Amsterdam Baroque Orchestra.



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The British soprano **Nia Coleman** recently completed her Master of Arts in Vocal Performance at the Royal Academy of Music under the tuition of Glenville Hargreaves and Jonathan Papp. Nia was a grateful recipient of the Jennifer Vyvyan Scholarship and was also granted a Postgraduate Award from Help Musicians UK. She previously graduated with a First Class Honours degree in Music and Drama from The University of Manchester in 2012, where she was twice awarded the Procter-Gregg Prize for Performance. While at the Royal Academy, she performed as a soloist for the celebrated Royal Academy of Music/Kohn Foundation Bach Cantata Series and was placed as Very Highly Commended

in the Isabel Jay Operatic Prize. Recent engagements include performing Bach cantatas with Mark Padmore at the Snape Maltings Concert Hall for the Britten-Pears Young Artist Programme and leading roles in contemporary two-woman show *Sister* which ran at Ovalhouse, London. Nia is extremely grateful for the invaluable support from her recital series *Nia Coleman & Friends* and *It's Magic!* Charity based in her home county, East Sussex.

**Belsize Baroque** would like to thank:

- Ruth Muffett for generously loaning her harpsichord for tonight's performance
- Rev Paul Nicholson, Ken Robbie and Pauline Sy from St Peter's for their assistance
- Richard Austen for editing and preparing the scores for this evening's performance
- Andrew Welsh for designing and typesetting the programme notes



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.

## Belsize Baroque Scholarship

Belsize Baroque is delighted to have the two award winners of this year's Belsize Baroque Leadership Scholarship and Bursary, Kate Agostino and Ada Witczyk, playing as soloists this evening. Full details of the scholarship are available on [www.belsizebaroque.org.uk](http://www.belsizebaroque.org.uk).

**Kate Agostino** is leading the orchestra over the coming year. She has recently completed her masters at The Royal College of Music, having previously studied at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. She won the historical performance concerto competition at both institutions.



**Ada Witczyk** is leading our second violins. She recently won a scholarship to embark on a masters at the Royal College of Music. She previously won the baroque music prize at Gorzow Wielkopolski.



# 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.

Charity 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**

Kate Agostino★  
Nick Hardisty  
Michael Jenner  
Shannon Luk  
Christine Louw  
Adalia Myslov

## **Second violins**

Ada Witczyk★  
Fran Rogerson  
Jenny Frost  
Bruce Jamson  
Val Hudson  
Chris Cuninghame

## **Violas**

Roger Mears  
Simon Hill  
Elizabeth Hart  
Jane MacSween  
Gerardo Mendez Juarez

## **Cellos**

Mark Walkem  
David Winfield  
Mary Walton

## **Double bass**

Harry Bukocke

## **Harpsichord**

Norman MacSween

## **Theorbo**

Quentin Miller

## **Harp**

Jane Bliss

## **Flutes**

Richard Austen  
Julie Dean

## **Oboes**

Susan Cooksley  
Nicola Barbagi

## **Bassoon**

Hilary Ougham  
Mark Wilson

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