

# BELSIZE BAROQUE

Director: Bojan Cicic

Music by  
Jean-Féry Rebel  
and Johann Kusser

Concert followed by  
a garden party

Sunday 2 July 2017, 6.30 pm  
St Peter's, Belsize Square, Belsize Park,  
London NW3 4HY



# Programme

**Johann Sigismund Kusser (1660–1727)** Overture No.1 from  
*Festin des Muses*

*Overture (Lentement – Gai – Lentement) – Rondeau (Gai) – Gavotte – Gigue – Passepied I – Passepied II – Les Combattants (Très Vîte) – Air I – Air II – Choeur (Gai)*

How many in the audience will have heard of Johann Kusser? Far from being just an interesting historical figure (he was born in Bratislava – then a major city in Hungary – studied with the great opera impresario Lully in Paris and brought French opera techniques to Braunschweig, Hamburg and Württemberg), he wrote more than a dozen operas, among others on the subjects of Cleopatra, Ariadne and Jason. Later, when he had moved in the early 1700s to London and subsequently to Dublin, he wrote birthday odes for our King and Queen, which surely deserve to be heard today. This theatrical overture from his collection ‘The Banquet of the Muses’ of 1700 shows that, like his contemporary Purcell in England, he had made himself a master of the Lullian orchestral style. The colourful overture is followed by a series of lively and contrasting dance movements.

**Jean-Féry Rebel (1666–1747)** Nouvelle Symphonie – *Les Éléments*

*Le Chaos – Air pour l’Amour – La Terre (Air pour les Violons) – Le Feu (Chaconne) – L’Air (Ramage) – Rossignol – Loure – Tambourin I – Tambourin II – Sicilienne – Caprice (Rondeau) – Air*

Another pupil of Lully, Rebel became a leading instrumentalist at the courts of Louis XIV and Louis XV. He pioneered a new type of theatrical entertainment: the ballet-pantomime, in which gesture and dance told the story and provided a showcase for superstar dancers such as Marie Sallé and Marie-Anne Cupis de Camargo, both idolised by Voltaire. *Les Éléments* was Rebel’s last ballet, composed in 1737. It opens with a depiction of chaos unique in the baroque sound-world, and startling to us even today. As Rebel described it, ‘I dared to undertake to link the idea of the confusion of the elements with that of confusion in harmony. I hazarded to make heard first all of the notes of the octave united as a single sound.’ In other words, the piece opens with a tone-cluster, that ‘invention’ of the twentieth century avant-garde! The reiterations of the chaos theme gradually resolve into the perfect concordance of the octave. The succeeding movements represent the elements of earth, water, fire and air, concluding with dances more commonly found in the instrumental suites of the day.



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**Jean-Féry Rebel** *Les Caractères de la Danse* – Fantaisie

*Prélude – Courante – Menuet – Bourrée – Chaconne – Sarabande – Gigue – Rigaudon – Passepied – Gavotte – Sonate – Loure – Musette – Sonate*

This was the second of Rebel's ballets, premiered in 1715. The dancer Marie Sallé performed it in London in 1727, conducted by no less a person than George Friderick Handel. A gentle prelude is followed by a sequence of compressed dance numbers. Two movements entitled 'sonate' are interpolated; these are in the Italian style, which was sufficiently novel in Paris to be worth dignifying with the title 'sonata'.

Programme notes by Norman MacSween

Design/layout by Andrew Welsh

Photography by Antanas Martinkus, Meng He and Susan Cooksley

Save the date! Belsize Baroque's next concert will be on **Sunday 19 November** in St Peter's, Belsize Square, and will be a programme of Bach cantatas directed by Tim Roberts.

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

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As one of the rising stars in the world of period performance, **Bojan Cicic** is fast making a name for himself with his sensitive and virtuosic playing. In addition to being the leader of Florilegium, he frequently guest directs and performs as a soloist with groups such as the *Academy of Ancient Music*, *European Union Baroque Orchestra* and *Budapest Festival Orchestra*. His recording of J.S.Bach's Concerto for two violins with Rachel Podger was recently named the best available recording by BBC Music Magazine.

Bojan's own group, the *Illyria Consort*, recently recorded their first disc with Delphian Records, a groundbreaking recording of Carbonelli's virtuosic violin sonatas, and it was released to critical acclaim in March 2017: 'Cicic makes even the high-wire showy stuff sing with a lyricism that is shapely, aerated and totally unforced' (*The Guardian*). The *Illyria Consort* explores rare repertoire of the 17th and 18th centuries from the Venetian Republic and Habsburg Empire, and have performed at the Utrecht Early Music Festival, the Korkyra Baroque Festival, Laus Polyphoniae, and at the Festival de Sablé.

Future projects include directing Vivaldi's Four Seasons with the *European Union Baroque Orchestra* and performing Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto with *Instruments of Time and Truth*. Bojan is Professor of Baroque Violin at the Royal College of Music, and plays a violin by Rugieri from the 1680s, kindly loaned to him by the Jumpstart Junior Foundation.

**Belsize Baroque** would like to thank Father Paul Nicholson, Ken Robbie and Pauline Sy for their assistance.



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The orchestra's long-standing wish to have a harpsichord has been realised thanks to eminent harpsichordist and harpsichord-maker Colin Booth. We now have a fine example of his work resident here at St Peter's. The harpsichord is almost an antique! It's an early example of Colin's work, made in the 1970s, but completely refurbished more recently. Based on 17th century Italian designs, it is a simple instrument with two sets of strings, but the re-working included the construction of a transposing keyboard, meaning that it can be used conveniently, either with period instruments at low pitch, or modern ones at concert pitch. Its age means that its tone is fully mature and bright, which will carry particularly well in the acoustic of St. Peter's. Belsize Baroque should like to thank all those whose contributions have made this purchase possible. The harpsichord is a great asset to the orchestra.



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 would like to thank all those whose support has made possible the continuation of our scholarship scheme. The current holder of the Belsize Baroque Leader Scholarship, Kate Agostino, will be leading the orchestra this evening. Full details of the scheme can be found at [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** leads 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★  
Christine-Marie Louw  
Nick Hardisty  
Maxim del Mar

## **Second violins**

Ada Witczyk★  
Michael Jenner  
Sally Heath  
Chris Cunninghame  
Bruce Jamson  
Isobel Clarke

## **Violas**

Cecile Ross  
Matthew Le-Mage  
Andrew Spencer  
Deborah Miles-Johnson

## **Cellos**

Mark Walkem  
Elinor Bishop  
Mary Walton  
**Double bass**  
Harry Buckoke

## **Theorbo**

Quentin Miller

## **Harp**

Jane Bliss

## **Harpsichord**

Michael Strange

## **Flutes**

Richard Austen  
Yu-wei Hu

## **Oboes**

Susan Cooksley  
Andres Villalobos

## **Bassoon**

Hillary Ougham

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