

BELSIZE BAROQUE

Simon Standage

**Music by
Albinoni & Vivaldi**

Saturday 23 June 2018, 6.30 pm
St Peter's, Belsize Square, Belsize Park,
London NW3 4HY

www.belsizebaroque.org.uk

Programme

Antonio Vivaldi (1678–1741) Concerto for strings in G minor RV 156 *Allegro – Andante – Allegro*

The spirited opening of Vivaldi's Concerto RV 156, with its two syncopated violin parts pitted contrapuntally against each other above a chromatically descending bass line, perfectly enshrines the idea of contest that is inherent in the idea of a concerto. But the contest we hear is not that of a solo instrument against an orchestra, which is what we tend nowadays to associate with a concerto. The Venetian baroque (every work in this evening's programme, except the Montanari concerto that follows, was written in Venice) took pride in cultivating the concerto for string orchestra, of which this is a splendid example. The jagged, fiery first movement is followed by a short Andante. Its chains of suspensions over a bass moving in quavers derive from Corelli, but the spectral harmonic intensity is Vivaldi's own distinctive hallmark.

Antonio Montanari (1676–1737) Concerto for violin in A major Opus 1 no 1 *Adagio – Allegro – Amoroso – Allegro*

Few here tonight will be familiar with the name of Antonio Montanari, but he was well known as a musician in Rome at the beginning of the eighteenth century, described as '*virtuosissimo sonator di violino*' by the contemporary cartoonist Pier Leone Ghezzi. His Opus 1 concertos are, to some extent, the missing link between the concertos of Corelli and those of later Italian composers. They have the Roman four-movement layout, but bring in a new degree of virtuosity for the violin, allied to sound contrapuntal craftsmanship.

Tomaso Albinoni (1671–1751) Concerto for two oboes in G major Opus 9 no 6 *Allegro – Adagio – Allegro*

Albinoni's Opus 9 concertos were published in 1722. Unlike Vivaldi, he held down no official post, and seems to have lived off his family's wealth (his father was a wealthy paper manufacturer). We know him now as composer of instrumental music, but his melodic writing reveals a master of operatic repertoire (he wrote well over fifty operas, now lost). Albinoni was one of the first Italian composers to incorporate oboes into his concertos. Like Venetian painting, Venetian music delights in a richness of colour supporting its chiseled lines, which the wind instruments helped to supply. The slow movement of this concerto is particularly fine, with a wealth of highly expressive suspensions.

Antonio Vivaldi Concerto in G major *Alla Rustica* RV 151 *Presto – Adagio – Allegro*

If any work gives the lie to the time-honoured taunt that Vivaldi composed the same concerto six hundred times, it is this one. The opening movement is a stomping peasant *perpetuum mobile*, ending surprisingly in the minor key. While it still evokes an Arcadian atmosphere, the remarkably forward-looking last movement sounds as if it could come from an early classical symphony.

Antonio Vivaldi Concerto for two violins in D Major RV 511

Allegro molto – Largo – Allegro

The concerto opens with a jagged fanfare motif over repeated rising scales in the bass. The solo violins then conduct aerial acrobatics that any bird would envy. Filigree ornamentation for the soloists in the Largo is followed by brilliantly variegated arpeggios in the finale.

Interval

Antonio Vivaldi Concerto in C major for oboe and two violins RV 554

Allegro – Adagio – Allegro

In this concerto Vivaldi delights in the combinations of colour he can conjure up from the interaction of the three soloists. They enter one by one, then combine in a kaleidoscope of figurations. The central *Adagio* entwines the solo lines in a rich bath of sound, and the concluding movement features extensive episodes for the solo instruments in concert, alternating with exuberant ritornellos from the string band.

Tomaso Albinoni Concerto in A minor *A Cinque* Opus 5 no 5

Allegro – Adagio – Allegro

All the Albinoni concertos in tonight's concert are really *a cinque*, in that they are written in five parts (harpsichord and theorbo forming one line with the bass part). The five parts in the Opus 5 concertos are however scored for two violins, two violas and bass, giving them a special richness of texture. This is beautifully demonstrated at the opening of the first movement, where a new voice is added to the ensemble every half bar from the top down, as if to show at the outset how the body of sound is built up.

Tomaso Albinoni Concerto in F major Opus 10 no 7

Allegro – Andante – Allegro

The great virtues of Albinoni as a composer, surely underestimated today, are clarity and directness of expression, meticulous craftsmanship and close attention to the part writing. The slow movement of this concerto, in a minor key, has a gently rocking, lilting rhythm, while echoes of the minor key surface in the ebullient triple-time finale.

Antonio Vivaldi Concerto in B flat major for string orchestra *La Conca* RV 163

Allegro molto marcato – Andante – Allegro molto

Not many concertos celebrate the conch shell – a symbol, no doubt, of Venice's maritime supremacy in exotic waters. Each movement of the work makes use of a bold octave leap; it is not hard to imagine this representing a solemn summons to some remote tribal gathering.

Programme notes by Norman MacSween

Design/layout by Andrew Welsh

Photographs of the orchestra by Steve Linehan, Meng He, Susan Cooksley and Andrea Liu



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Save the date! Belsize Baroque's next two concerts will be on **Sunday 30 September 2018** and **Sunday 25 November 2018**, both directed by Catherine Martin, at St Peter's Church, Belsize Park.

Details will be available at www.belsizebaroque.org.uk.

Antonio Stradivari 1717



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Simon Standage is well-known as a violinist specialising in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century music. After reading music at Cambridge University he joined the Netherlands Chamber Orchestra under Szymon Goldberg before receiving a Harkness Fellowship to study violin with Ivan Galamian in New York. On his return to England he played with the London Symphony Orchestra and the English Chamber Orchestra of which he was sub-leader for four years. Leader and soloist with The English Concert from its foundation in 1973 until 1990, he also fulfilled the same role for many years with the City of London Sinfonia. As well as the many records he made with The English Concert (including Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons*, nominated for a Grammy award), he also recorded solo and chamber music

– including all of Mozart's violin concertos – with the Academy of Ancient Music, of which he was, with Christopher Hogwood, Associate Director from 1991 to 1995. Since his foundation, with Richard Hickox, of Collegium Musicum 90, he has made numerous recordings for Chandos Records, which have met with consistent critical acclaim.

As soloist and director of chamber orchestras and chamber musician, he is active both in Britain and abroad, where he had for some years a regular collaboration with Collegium Musicum Telemann in Osaka and Haydn Sinfonietta in Vienna. He is leader of the Salomon String Quartet (founded by him in 1981), which specialises in historical performance of the Classical repertoire, and has performed worldwide and made many recordings and broadcasts. He is Professor of Baroque Violin at the Royal Academy of Music in London and the Franz Liszt Academy in Budapest, and teaches at summer courses in Europe.

In 2008 he received a medal for services to Polish Culture, in 2009 he was awarded Honorary Membership of the Royal Academy of Music and in 2010 he was the recipient of the Georg Philipp Telemann Prize, awarded by the city of Magdeburg.



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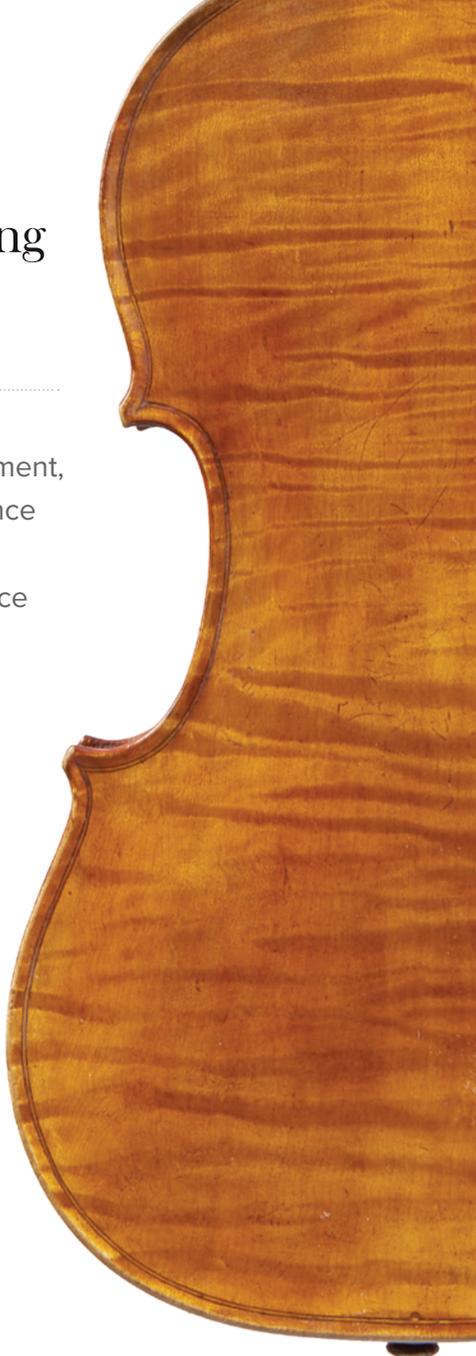
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*Pictured: A Very Fine Italian Violin by Giuseppe Rocca, Turin 1839 recently sold by Brompton's for **a new world auction record price of £210,000***



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Belsize Baroque Leader Scholarship

Ada Witczyk is the holder of the 2017 Belsize Baroque Leader Scholarship, and we are currently reviewing applications for the 2018 scholarship. Many thanks to everyone whose support makes our scholarship programme possible.



Ada Witczyk was born in Poland and made her solo orchestral debut at the age of eleven with the Odeon Orchestra. Since then she has performed in such venues as Buckingham Palace, the Royal Festival Hall, Barbican Centre, St Martin-in-the-Fields, Cadogan Hall and Palazzo Pallavicini-Rospigliosi, and has taken part in concerts with Gabrieli Consort & Players, WOB, The English Concert and Florilegium.

She has won several prizes in international violin competitions, including first prize at the Baroque Competition in Gorzów Wielkopolski, Honourable Mention at the Polish Forum of Young

Instrumentalists, and third prize in The Rising Stars Grand Prix - International Music Competition in Berlin.

Ada completed her Bachelor's degree at the Royal College of Music, studying violin with Itzhak Rashkovsky and Michal Cwizewicz and Baroque violin with Catherine Martin. Thanks to an Anthony Edward Brookes Award Ada is currently in her second year of a Master's degree at the Royal Academy of Music, studying with Levon Chilingirian and Simon Standage. Ada has played with Belsize Baroque since 2016, when she was awarded the 2016 Belsize Baroque Leadership Bursary.





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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 a 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; Twitter: @Belsize_Baroque



Belsize Baroque would like to thank Father Paul Nicholson and the churchwardens of St Peter's for their assistance.

First violins

Simon Standage (director and leader)

Nick Hardisty

Michael Jenner

Christine-Marié Louw

Wendy Talbot

Second violins

Ada Witczyk (leader)

Sally Heath

Val Hudson

Jenny Frost

Violas

Liz Hart

John Sutherland

Roger Mears

Cellos

Mark Walkem

David Winfield

Steven Clarke

Double bass

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