

# BELSIZE BAROQUE

A portrait of a man in 18th-century attire, likely a Scottish noble or official, wearing a red and green plaid kilt and a white cravat. The background is dark and textured.

Catherine Martin,  
*Director*

## Fiddler Tam in Edinburgh

Sunday 22 January 2023, 6.30 pm

St Peter's Church, Belsize Square,  
Belsize Park, London, NW3 4HY

[www.belsizebaroque.org.uk](http://www.belsizebaroque.org.uk)

Scotland has a violin folk tradition that extends over many centuries. String instruments called ‘fiddles’ were made in Scotland as early as the 8th century. After the Italians invented the violin in the 17th century, it quickly made its way to Scotland, where it was adopted as the new fiddle. By the 18th century very high-quality violins were being made all over Scotland using native woods. Many Scottish violinists played both folk music and contemporary (Baroque or Classical) music from the continent, with some employed in orchestras based in London and Edinburgh. These players’ influence also extended to the continent, where composers such as Telemann and later Mendelssohn incorporated Scottish folk elements into their music.

### **Thomas Erskine (1732–1781) – Overture to ‘The Maid of The Mill’**

*Allegro – Adagio – Minuet*

Thomas Erskine, 6th Earl of Kellie, is one of the most important British composers of the 18th century. He was born in 1732 into an aristocratic but poor family of Scottish landowners and learnt the violin at a young age, later becoming known to his retainers as ‘Fiddler Tam’. The family’s circumstances were not helped when his father backed the wrong side in the 1745 Rebellion, thus ending Kellie’s formal education. Around 1752 he went to Mannheim, where he had violin and composition instruction from Johann Stamitz. On his return, Kellie set about propagating the modern ‘Mannheim style’, of which he was to become widely acknowledged as the leading British exponent. The early 1760s found Kellie spending much of his time in London, where the overture he composed for the hugely popular pastiche *The Maid of the Mill* (Covent Garden, 1765) achieved exceptional popularity. In 1767 the Earl returned to Scotland, where he not only became a leading light of the Edinburgh Music Society but also enjoyed a dissolute lifestyle, founding an all-male club of somewhat dubious repute, and imbibing generously of wine, women and song. Such pleasures inevitably took their toll, and by his mid-40s Kellie had apparently become a physical and psychological wreck. He died at Spa in Belgium, where he had gone to take the waters in 1781.

The opening *Allegro* bristles with Mannheim effects such as strong thematic and dynamic contrasts, buzzing, urgent *sforzandos*, and, of course, examples of the so-called ‘Mannheim crescendo’. Meanwhile, the finale is a triple-time *Presto* that displays a very British clear-cut sturdiness.

### **James Oswald (1710–1769) – A Sonata of Scots Tunes**

*‘O dear mother, what shall I do’ (Andante) – ‘Ettrick banks’ (Adagio) – ‘She rose and let me in’ (Allegro) – ‘Cromlit’s Lilt’ (Largo) – ‘Polwart on the Green’ (Vivace)*

Oswald was born in Crail, later working as a young man in Dunfermline, Fife, as a musician and dancing master. Throughout his career he maintained an interest in traditional Scottish music in both Edinburgh and London, but he also composed in the contemporary Italian Baroque style. In London, Oswald set up his own publishing house and published 12 volumes of the *Caledonian Pocket Companion*, a collection of Scottish folk tunes, some with his own variations. Along with contemporaries, he was a member of ‘The Temple of Apollo’, a secret musical society of composers in London along with Thomas Erskine, John Reid, Charles Burnley and others.

This sonata sees Oswald take five Scottish airs and arrange them in the Italian Baroque style. The result is a unique work that combines Scottish melodies with Baroque counterpoint and harmony.

## **Sammartini/Barsanti – Concerto Grosso No. 1 Op. 6**

*Vivace – Andante – Minuet*

Francesco Barsanti (1690–1775) was an Italian flautist, oboist and composer from the Tuscan city of Lucca, but he moved to London in 1714 and then in 1735 he moved to Edinburgh, where he obtained a post as a ‘master’ with the Edinburgh Musical Society. Despite the high quality of his published music he made little from it, and when his career did not take off in Scotland he returned with his family to London, taking up work as a violist in Handel’s orchestra. Whilst his career as a composer did not reach the heights of stardom, his daughter Jenny Barsanti became a famous actress on the London stage in the 1770s. Engravings of her portraying characters from Shakespeare’s plays can be found in theatre collections.

Like Charles Avison in his arrangement of Scarlatti harpsichord sonatas, Barsanti acceded to English popular taste during the mid-1700s for orchestral arrangements of popular chamber works. Sammartini was on the cutting edge of ‘new’ music at the time and these orchestrations have the same modern orientation towards the galant style; a simple, unfussy and clean structure that was very much the English taste. Barsanti uses a solo group of two violins and cello in the first movement, and in the final stately minuet. In contrast the Andante is a typical pensive Italian slow movement found in opera sinfonias.

## **Georg Philipp Telemann (1681–1767) Concerto in E minor TWV53:e2**

*(Allegro) – Andante – Menuet*

Whilst this work might appear to be the odd one out in this programme, like the Barsanti Concerto Grosso it has many features that were popular with English audiences in London. The melodic lines are clean and clear, and the overall structure has a simplicity that allows the melodies to shine through. Like the Barsanti work, the overall structure is closer to that of a sinfonia, with the final movement being a simple minuet for the full orchestra. The first two movements alternate a solo violin with two oboes.

## **George Frederick Handel (1685–1759) – Suite from Ariodante**

*Ouverture – Larghetto – Gavotte – Purcell Scotch Tune – Musette 1 & 2 – Allegro – Gavotte – Rondeau*

Set in medieval Scotland, Handel’s 1735 opera was (along with his opera Alcina) the first to be performed at his new theatre in Covent Garden after his previous relationship with the Queen’s Theatre Haymarket ended. The story depicts the trials and tribulations of Ginevra, daughter of the Scottish king, who is in love with and betrothed to Prince Ariodante. Following the attempted suicide of Prince Ariodante, the lovers are reunited. Both Ariodante and Alcina feature extended dance sequences (the operas share some of the same dance music, with music composed for Alcina inserted into the score for Ariodante). This was a regular feature of French opera, which Handel here incorporates for the first time.

This means that there is large amount of music we can extract from Ariodante. The music depicts battle scenes, innocent love, and scenes of medieval Scottish dancing. Although not part of Handel’s score, we have added Purcell’s Scotch Tune from Amphitryon. It fits in very well with Handel’s music, highlighting the Scottish setting of the story, and it is a very good tune that is rarely performed.

Programme notes by Richard Austen  
Design/layout by Andrew Welsh

## Belsize Baroque's 2022–23 Leader Scholar – Andrew Taheny



Andrew, originally from Glasgow, is now based in Manchester. He began playing the baroque violin during his time at Edinburgh University, where he studied with Ruth Crouch and Hilary Michael, and was awarded the Early Music Bursary from the Friends of St. Cecilia's Hall, as well as the Sir Thomas Beecham Scholarship for Performance, the Andrew Grant Bequest for Recital, and the Frederick Niecks Essay Prize for Dissertation. Andrew's dissertation explored performance practices in nineteenth-century string playing and the modern performer's relationship with musical Romanticism.

Whilst a student at Edinburgh, Andrew also studied with the Parley of Instruments at the Cambridge Early Music Summer School and performed in masterclasses with Judy Tarling and Rachel Podger. In consecutive years he was Leader and President of the Edinburgh University String Orchestra, and in 2019 he won the University Chamber Orchestra's

Concerto Competition, leading to a performance of the rarely-heard Finzi Violin Concerto. He also performed with the Berlin Opera Academy Chamber Orchestra, and began working with the Nevis Ensemble, bringing orchestral music of various genres to communities across Scotland.

Andrew is currently studying with Julia Hanson and Pauline Nobes as a Masters student at the Royal Northern College of Music. Since moving to Manchester, Andrew has performed professionally with Manchester Baroque and the Northern Chamber Orchestra. He has also led the RNCM Baroque Ensemble, and was recently selected to join the Cambridge Handel Opera Company's Talent Development Scheme. He regularly performs with Leeds Baroque, under the direction of Peter Holman.

Passionate about music education, Andrew is a Lead Ambassador for the Benedetti Foundation, and has worked with the West of Scotland Schools Orchestra Trust since 2018. In 2021 he was invited to work as one of four Lead Musicians for Nevis Ensemble's Glasgow Life Artist Residency, for which he contributed to the creation and delivery of a series of primary school composition workshops.



**Catherine Martin**, Belsize Baroque's current musical director, read music at St Anne's College, Oxford, completing her postgraduate studies with David Takeno at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London, on the Advanced Solo Studies course.

During this time, she became interested in historical performance, playing the baroque violin alongside her modern violin studies. Catherine spent twelve years as a member of The English Concert under the direction of Trevor Pinnock, before leaving in 2005 to take up the post of leader of the Gabrieli Consort and Players. In 2010 Catherine was also appointed concertmaster of Die Kölner Akademie in Germany. She has been the leader of the orchestra of the Early Opera Company since its inception in 1994.



Catherine has been directing Belsize Baroque and performing with us since 2016. In addition, she leads regular workshops with us that focus on particular technical issues and give us an opportunity to work on a variety of repertoire.

In 2003, Catherine joined the Salomon String Quartet as second violin to Simon Standage, with whom she also plays trio sonatas in Collegium Musicum 90.

Catherine appears on many recordings; for Deutsche Grammophon and Winged Lion with The Gabrieli Consort and Players, EMI with Ensemble Galant, and Chandos with I Fagiolini. She teaches historical violin at the Royal College of Music in London. Catherine has a particular interest in Norwegian folk music, playing the hardanger fiddle.

**Save the date!** Belsize Baroque's next scheduled concert is on Sunday 19 February 2023, at St George's, Hanover Square, when we will be taking part in the London Handel Festival (tickets can be bought at [www.london-handel-festival.com](http://www.london-handel-festival.com)). On Saturday 15 April we will be performing Handel's Messiah at St Peter's, Belsize Park in aid of Cancer Research UK. On Sunday 11 June 2023 we will hold a concert at St Peter's to mark ten years of our residency at the church. Details will be available soon at [www.belsizebaroque.org.uk](http://www.belsizebaroque.org.uk).

Putting on performances, running workshops, and maintaining our scholarships all require funds. Concerts alone cannot cover the costs of these and we receive no regular external funding. All of the administration is carried out by unpaid volunteers. We hope that tonight's concert will inspire you to donate to the orchestra, which you can do very easily via the link below. Thank you for your generosity.  
[www.justgiving.com/campaign/belsizebaroque](http://www.justgiving.com/campaign/belsizebaroque)

# Belsize Baroque

The orchestra comprises music professionals, music students and amateur players. Our amateur musicians come from many different walks of life, and our players in general come from all over the world. Many musicians who joined us as students over the years have gone on to successful careers in top orchestras. Since 2016 the generosity of supporters has in addition made our formal scholarship programme possible.

Over the past two decades, we have been privileged to work with renowned directors and many talented musicians. We have performed many large-scale works with numerous choirs, and have given performances in aid of charities, as well as working with the Handel House and the London Handel Festival. Our first concert at St Peter's was on 22 June 2013, since when we have been orchestra in residence at the church, enjoying the support of its staff and the local community.

Belsize Baroque Orchestral Society Ltd is a registered charity (number 1108596) and company (number 5267265). The orchestra can be hired for orchestral or choral concerts and other events, and is delighted to assist other charities. [www.belsizebaroque.org.uk](http://www.belsizebaroque.org.uk); Twitter: @Belsize\_Baroque



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# THE OLD MASTERS IN NEW HANDS

Sheku Kanneh-Mason MBE plays on a cello by Matteo Goffriller, Venice c1700, the 'Ex-Goritzki', made possible by the Florian Leonhard Fellowship, and an exceptionally fine bow by Nicolas Maire c1855, lent by a private sponsor.



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## **First violins**

Catherine Martin  
Sally Heath  
Nick Hardisty  
Christine-Marié Louw  
Michael Jenner

## **Second violins**

Andrew Taheny  
Miranda Ford  
Graham Nicholson  
Camilla Nelson  
Jenny Frost

## **Violas**

Elizabeth Hart  
Roger Mears  
John Sutherland

## **Cellos**

David Winfield  
Mary Walton  
Yuji Kubo

## **Double bass**

John Mears

## **Harpsichord**

Michael Strange

## **Theorbo**

Quentin Miller

## **Harp**

Jane Bliss

## **Oboes**

Susan Cooksley

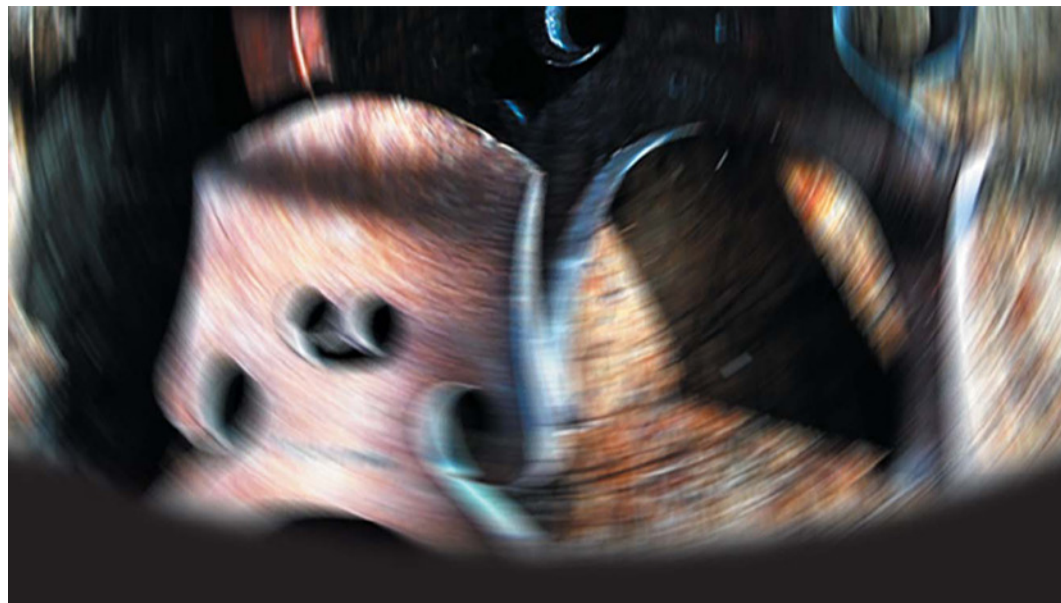
Joel Dixon

## **Flute/recorder**

Richard Austen

**Belsize Baroque** would like to thank Reverend Paul Nicholson, St Peter's Priest-in-charge, and the churchwardens of St Peter's for their assistance. It has been a privilege to have been directed by such a distinguished musician as Father Paul, and we wish him well in his retirement.

We would also like to thank Richard Link and The Rofeh Trust for their generous donations in support of the orchestra and the Leader Scholarship in particular.



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