



## Higher Love: Virtuoso Arias

April 28–29, 2023

Directed by Julia Wedman  
Samuel Mariño, male soprano

George Frideric Handel  
1685–1759

Overture to *Il Trionfo del Tempo*  
Motet “Saeviat tellus inter rigores”

Concerto grosso in F Major, op. 6, no. 2  
*Andante larghetto – Allegro – Largo – Allegro, ma non troppo*  
Aria “Quella fiamma” from *Arminio*

INTERMISSION

Antonio Vivaldi  
1678–1741

Sinfonia to *L’Olimpiade: Allegro–Andante*  
Aria “Vedrò con mio diletto” from *Il Giustino*

Concerto for cello in E Minor, RV409  
*Adagio/Allegro molto – Allegro*  
Keiran Campbell, cello soloist

Alessandro Scarlatti  
1660–1725

Aria “Caldo sangue” from *Il Sedecia Re di Gerusalemme*

Johann Adolph Hasse  
1699–1783

Aria “Morte col fiero aspetto” from *Marc’Antonio e Cleopatra*

Johann Georg Pisendel  
1688–1755  
G.F. Handel

Concerto in E-flat Major  
Aria “Non sarà poco” from *Atalanta*

### Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra

Violin 1	Julia Wedman, Chloe Fedor, Geneviève Gilardeau, Cristina Zacharias
Violin 2	Patricia Ahern, Elizabeth Loewen Andrews, Christopher Verrette
Viola	Patrick G. Jordan, Brandon Chui
Violoncello	Michael Unterman, Keiran Campbell
Double Bass	Sue Yelanjian
Oboe	John Abberger, Marco Cera
Bassoon	Dominic Teresi
Archlute	Lucas Harris
Harpsichord/Organ	Charlotte Nediger



## TEXTS & TRANSLATIONS

### Handel *Saeviat tellus*

#### **Aria**

*Saeviat tellus inter rigores:  
Impete, turbine  
Carmelitae ne pavete.*

*Fremat Lucifer inter ardores.  
Artibus, astibus  
Ditis minas irridete.*

*Saeviat, &c.*

#### **Recitativo**

*Carmelitarum ut confirmet ordinem  
Dormienti Honorio Virgo apparet.  
Cujus luce nox coruscate, et lux augetur  
Cum quasi confertur una.  
Turpis est sol, turpis ets luna.*

#### **Aria**

*O nox dulcis, quies serena,  
Carmelitis sis longa, sis stabilis.*

*Non te turbet tristis Megaera  
Dum Mariae lux nitet amabilis.*

*O nox dulcis, &c.*

#### **Aria**

*Stellae fidae, vobis sit cura  
Carmelitas mundo servare.  
Vestra pax sit firma et segura.  
Qua mortals debent beare.*

*Sub tantae Virginis tutela.  
Carmelitae triumphate.  
Imbellies est Lucifer,  
Innoxia sunt tela.  
Carmelitae, jubilate.*

*Stellae fidae, &c.*

*Alleluia.*

#### **Aria**

Let the earth rage amid austerities:  
by attacks and turbulence  
be not frightened, Carmelites.

Let Lucifer roar amid the flames  
with his wiles and his weapons:  
you may laugh at the threats of Dis [Hell].

Let the earth, &c.

#### **Recitative**

To confirm the order of the Carmelites  
the Virgin appears to sleeping Honorius;  
the night shines by her light, and the light is increased  
so that if together they were compared to it  
both sun and moon would seem soiled.

#### **Aria**

O sweet night, serene tranquility,  
be for the Carmelites long and unchanging.

Let not doleful Megaera disturb you  
while the kindly light of Mary shines on.

O sweet night, &c.

#### **Aria**

Faithful stars, be it your care  
to save the Carmelites from the world.  
May your peace be constant and secure,  
by which they must bring blessing to mortals.

Under the protection of so great a Virgin,  
be victorious, Carmelites;  
Lucifer is disarmed,  
his weapons are harmless:  
rejoice, Carmelites.

Faithful stars, &c.

Alleluia.

Translation by Anthony Hicks, from *Handel Carmelite Vespers*,  
EMI Records



**Handel *Arminio*** (Sigismondo)

*Quella fiamma, che il petto m'accende  
S'alimenta col sangue dei cor.*

That flame that warms my breast  
is kindled by the blood of my heart.

*Tanto puro quel foco risplende,  
Quanto è l'esca che nutre l'ardor.*

So pure that fire glows,  
so much the kindling feeds the ardour.

*Quella fiamma &c.*

That flame &c.

**Vivaldi *Il Giustino*** (Anastasio)

*Vedrò con mio diletto  
L'alma dell'alma mia  
Il core del mio cor  
Pien di contento*

What pleasure it will give me  
to see the soul of my soul,  
The heart of my heart,  
filled with happiness.

*E se dal caro oggetto  
Lungi convien che sia  
Sospirerò penando  
ogni momento*

And if I must be parted  
from the one I love,  
I will spend every moment  
sighing and suffering.

*Vedrò &c.*

What pleasure &c.

**Scarlatti *Il Sedecia Re di Gerusalemme*** (Ismaele)

*Caldo sangue, che bagnando  
il sen mi vai, e d'amore  
fai gran fede al genitore,  
fuggi pur, fuggi da me,  
ch'io già moro, e resto esangue!*

Warm blood, now washing over  
my breast as proof of the love  
I bear to my father,  
flow now, flow from me,  
I am drained and close to death!

*Forse un dì risorgerai  
per vendetta della man  
che mi saetta; e il vigor  
che in me già manca, caldo sangue,  
passerà più saldo in te.*

Perhaps one day you will rise again  
to exact your vengeance on the hand  
that wounded me; and the flame  
now fading inside me, warm blood,  
will burn more brightly in you.

*Caldo sange, &c.*

Warm blood, &c.

**Hasse *Marc'Antonio e Cleopatra*** (Cleopatra)

*Morte col fiero aspetto  
orror per me non ha,  
s'io posso in libertà  
morir sul trono mio,  
dove regnai.*

The proud face of death  
holds no terror for me,  
if I may only die in freedom  
upon the throne  
on which I reign.

*L'anima uscir dal petto  
libera spera ognor,  
sin dalle fasce ancor  
sì nobile desio  
meco portai.*

My soul hopes to escape,  
freed from my breast;  
since early childhood  
do I bear this noble wish  
within me.

*Morte col fiero &c.*

The proud face &c.



### Handel *Atalanta* (Meleagro)

*Non sarà poco, se il mio gran foco  
potessi rallentar con la speranza.*

It would not be a small thing, if I could  
subdue my great fire with hope.

*A far più cara almen, agli occhi  
del mio ben la mia costanza.*

To at least make my constancy  
more dear in the eyes of my beloved.

*Non sarà poco &c.*

It would not be a small thing &c.

### Program Notes

By Charlotte Nediger

A young **Handel** arrived in Rome from his native Saxony at the age of 21, in 1706, and was immediately embraced by the Romans. Although he had come to Italy with opera foremost in his mind, the fact that his sojourn began in Rome, where opera was forbidden by papal decree, meant that the first music he composed in Italy was in fact settings of sacred texts. It is proof of Handel's remarkable talents that the young Lutheran was able to swiftly procure the enthusiastic patronage of three Catholic cardinals (Ottoboni, Pamphili and Colonna) and a marquis (Ruspoli)—and that he was permitted to play the organ of one of the great churches of Rome soon after his arrival.

Cardinal Colonna was among the first to commission sacred music from “il Sassone,” asking him to provide music for the 1707 festival of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, celebrated each July in the Roman church of the Carmelite order, S. Maria di Monte Santo. The feast was in honour of the Virgin Mary as patroness of the Carmelites, and the major services were First Vespers on the eve of the festival, and Mass and Second Vespers on the day itself. The music was on a very lavish scale and was entirely financed by Colonna. The First Vespers began with the motet “**Saevia tellus**,” an extraordinary work which culminates in a stunning Alleluia.

We introduce the motet with the Overture to Handel's oratorio ***Il Trionfo del tempo e del Disinganno*** (*The Triumph of Time and Disillusion*), commissioned by Benedetto Pamphili and premiered in Lent in 1707, a few months before the *Carmelite Vespers*.

The concertmaster for many of Handel's productions in Rome was none other than the renowned violinist Arcangelo Corelli, and it is Corelli who we can credit for the great popularity of the concerto grosso form in 18th-century England. Concerto grosso literally means “big concerto,” and refers to an orchestral work in which a small group of instrumentalists (called the “*concertino*” or “small concerto”) plays in dialogue with the full orchestra (called the “*ripieno*,” the Italian word for stuffing or filling). Corelli's final publication was a set of 12 concerti grossi, and its arrival in London in 1714 was greeted with great enthusiasm. By this time “Il Sassone” had moved to London, where he was to remain the rest of his life. By the late 1730s he enjoyed considerable success with his productions of English oratorios in the London theatres, and no oratorio performance was complete without the addition of several concertos. To this end, Handel sat down to compile a set of 12 concerti grossi, or **Grand Concertos**, modelled on those of Corelli. All 12 were completed within a month in the fall of 1739, and were issued by Handel's publisher, John Walsh, as Opus 6. If Corelli's concertos were to English musicians “like the bread of life” (Roger North), then Handel's concertos could be said to add the “butter and jam.”

Handel first arrived in London with great ambitions as an opera composer, and for over 20 years



produced opera after opera for an adoring public. The opera **Arminio** is one of his last for the London stage, written in 1737, a few years before the publication of the concerti grossi. It was premiered at Covent Garden, and is based on the events of the Roman invasion of Germany in the year 9AD. The opera itself had but limited success—opera was waning in popularity—but the aria “**Quella fiamma**” thrilled audiences and has remained one of Handel’s great hits. It was written for the brilliant young soprano castrato Gioacchino Conti (known as Gizziello) in the role of Sigismondo, the son of a German prince who has imprisoned Arminio, the brother of Sigismondo’s love, Ramise. Throughout the opera, romantic love is challenged by love for family and country. Before singing “*Quella fiamma*,” Sigismondo asks, “If to each side a fond affection tends, let it prey secretly upon my heart, and duty and my love be still kept sacred.”

**Antonio Vivaldi** is best known today as a composer of concertos, but was also a renowned composer of opera. **Il Giustino** was composed for the 1724 carnival season in Rome, and recounts the story of the peasant Giustino being guided by the goddess Fortuna to become head of the Byzantine army, and finally emperor of Rome. The libretto reads like an adventure tale, replete with bears, sea monsters, and ghostly voices. The first act opens with a celebration of the coronation of Anastasio, ruler of Byzantium, and his wife Empress Arianna. The famous aria “**Vedro con mio diletto**” is sung by Anastasio as he stands alone on a plain below Constantinople, preparing a nocturnal attack on the troops of his enemy, who has imprisoned Arianna and intends to take her for himself. We introduce the aria with the opening sinfonia of **L’Olimpiade**, written for Venice in 1734, and follow it with one of the 27 concertos wrote for solo cello. The plaintive melodies of the **Cello concerto in E Minor** are unusually accompanied by a lone bassoon. The concerto recounts an adventure tale of its own, but the story is left to the imaginations of the performers and listeners.

We move south to Naples in the year 1706: a Papal ban on opera inspired the prolific composer **Alessandro Scarlatti** to turn to oratorio. The Old Testament story of Zedekiah in battle with the Babylonian kings is recounted in Scarlatti’s **Il Sedecio Re di Gerusalemme**. It is a tale of ambition and corruption. Sedecia’s son Ismaele offers his own life to the Babylonian king Nabucco in exchange for his captured father’s life, thinking Nabucco would be moved and would spare both father and son. But Nabucco orders that the foolhardy Ismaele be killed before his father’s eyes. Ismaele is stabbed and sings the hauntingly beautiful aria “**Caldo sangue**” as he lies dying.

**Johann Adolph Hasse** left his native Germany to study singing in Italy at age 22, but soon took up the study of composition, primarily with Alessandro Scarlatti in Naples. In 1725 the royal adviser Carlo Carmignano commissioned the young Hasse to compose a *serenata* for performance at his country estate. The resulting **Marc’Antonio e Cleopatra** is a sort of small-scale opera scored for two solo singers and orchestra, and was so successful that Hasse was immediately commissioned to compose a full opera for the Royal Theatre. The soloists for the first performance of the serenade were the 19-year-old castrato Farinelli in the role of Cleopatra, and the female contralto Vittoria Tosi in the role of Marc’Antonio. The serenade opens with Marc’Antonio having fled from battle against Ottavio (later Caesar Augustus), abandoning his political ambitions to be with Cleopatra. Upon hearing the news, Cleopatra responds that she did not dare enter the fight against Ottavio for fear of being captured, a fate she fears more than death, as expressed in the aria “**Morte col fiero aspetto**.”

By 1730 Hasse had been appointed *Kapellmeister* (Music Director) at the Dresden court, quickly becoming one of the most renowned composers of opera in Europe. There his concertmaster was the



remarkable violinist **Johann Georg Pisendel**. Beyond being the leading violinist of his day, he was greatly admired as an orchestral leader, and was an important collector of scores: countless pieces of music by his contemporaries survive only in the copies in his library. His own compositions number a few dozen concertos and sonatas, including the single-movement concerto grosso that introduces the final aria on the program.

For this final aria we return to **Handel** and the London theatre, and to another aria premiered by the young superstar castrato Gizziello. ***Atalanta*** was written for the celebrations of the marriage of Frederick, Prince of Wales (eldest son of George II) to Princess Augusta of Saxe-Gotha in 1736. Its premiere at Covent Garden closed with an impressive firework display, and both the opera and the fireworks were revived numerous times. Set in ancient Greece, the opera is appropriately a tale of pastoral love. King Meleagro of Aetolia is disguised as the shepherd Trisi, enjoying life in the countryside far from the cares of state. He is in love with the huntress Amarilli, not realizing she is the Princess Atalanta of Arcadia. He sings the aria “**Non sarà poco**” at the end of Act I, hopeful that despite his doubts, Amarilli may be harbouring love for him. By the end of the opera they have indeed declared their love to each other, their true identities are revealed, and their marriage is blessed is Jove himself.