

STOUR MUSIC 2021



Barbaric Beauty

London Handel Players

*Sponsored by
James Bird & The Rothermere Foundation*

Sunday 20th June
2.30pm & 4.30pm

BOUGHTON ALUPH CHURCH

Programme

France and the fascination for lands afar

Lully *Marche pour la Ceremonie des Turcs* from *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*

Corrette *Les Sauvages* from *Concerto Comique No.25 in G minor*

Rameau *Contredanse en Rondeau* from *Les Boréades*

Polish bagpipes and Barbaric Beauty

Telemann Paris Quartet No.3 in G major, *Modéré*

Schmelzer Trio Sonata *Der Polnische Sackpfeifer*

Telemann *Hanasky* from Suite in E major, TWV 55:E1

Spices of the Orient, Spanish folly and curiosities from the Canaries

Vivaldi Flute Concerto in D minor *Il Gran Mogul, Larghetto*

Corelli Violin Sonata Op.5 No.12 in D minor *La Follia*

Scarlatti Keyboard Sonata in A major K.24, *Allegro*

Murcia and Sanz *Canarios*

From the far-flung corners of the Earth - the British Isles

Matteis *Ground after the Scotch Humour*

Purcell Hornpipes from *Ayres for the Theatre, 'The Married Beau'*

Scottish tunes:

My Time! O ye muses

Miss Mary Gordon of Braid

Lochail's away to France

Hon'ble Mrs Maules Reel

Performers

Rachel Brown *flute and recorder*

Adrian Butterfield *violin*

Oliver Webber *violin*

Rachel Byrt *viola*

Gavin Kibble *cello*

Silas Wollston *harpsichord*

Programme note

Many composers of the baroque period were fascinated by the music and culture of foreign lands and this programme brings together examples that demonstrate the huge variety of styles and influences available to them at that time.

The programme begins in France with a grand yet satirical show of pomp and ceremony in which Lully conjures up the allure of Turkish royalty for Molière's upwardly aspirational *Bourgeois Gentilhomme*. This is followed by Corrette's arrangement of Rameau's *Danse des Sauvages* from *Les Indes Galantes*, inspired by the spectacle of six Native American chiefs who came to Paris in 1725, and the set is rounded off with a bizarre and almost hypnotic country dance (the *Contredanse* from Rameau's *Les Boréades*) which exploits the grotesque interval of the *Diabolus in Musica*, the diminished fifth.

To Poland next, a country where the proud spirit of a nation long under foreign rule found freedom of expression in its rich musical heritage. The pungent drones of bagpipes, and the 'barbaric beauty' of the music of the gypsies provided Telemann with 'enough ideas for a lifetime of composition'

Vivaldi's recently discovered flute concerto, *Il Gran Mogol*, thought to have been written for the visit of an Indian delegation to Venice, evokes the sultry heat of the Indian subcontinent, whilst Corelli's intensely passionate depiction of frenzied madness takes a captivating Spanish traditional melody and adds highly imaginative variations over the famous *Follia* ground. This wild and flamboyant Hispanic character was captured by another Italian, Domenico Scarlatti, in his virtuosic harpsichord sonata in A major, composed for Maria Bárbara de Bragança, a Portuguese princess who became Queen of Spain.

The earliest Europeans to land on the Canary Islands were astonished to discover a civilisation rooted in the stone age. Their customs may have seemed primitive, yet their vibrant and rhythmically complex music, replete with striking syncopations and *sesquialtera* (changes of time signature) held a magnetic appeal for guitarists such as Gaspar Sanz and Santiago de Murcia.

Finally we round off our folk-inspired programme with music which to European ears sounded as if it had emanated from alien territory, the British Isles! Mattheson considered the English hornpipes so untamed and unpredictable, they 'might have been composed by the court composers of the North or South Pole'. Immigrant musicians such as Nicola Matteis and later Handel embraced this earthy musical heritage but it was Henry Purcell who wrote the most inspired examples of this rustic dance. With the advent of widespread publishing, many Scottish tunes, which had hitherto always been passed on by aural tradition, became widely available to the general public and composers such as Barsanti, Geminiani and even Haydn and Beethoven cultivated the fashion of composing variations on these hauntingly beautiful and invigorating melodies.

The London Handel Players



Praised by the *New York Times* for their “soulful depth” and their “consummate skill and musicianship”, The London Handel Players captivate audiences across the world with their performances and recordings. Established in 2000, the Players appear regularly at leading venues and festivals in the UK, Europe and North America, performing baroque chamber music and concertos and collaborating with the world’s leading singers.

The ensemble has performed across North America, making their New York debut at the Frick Museum in 2012 and returning to perform at Carnegie Hall in 2014. Concerts have included performances at Wigmore Hall, Internationale Händel-Festpiele Göttingen, Halle International Handel Festival, East Cork Early Music Festival and in Spain, Ireland, Germany and Croatia. Committed educators at every level and holding professorships in early music at London’s Conservatoires, The London Handel Players give numerous masterclasses and workshops.

2021 sees them return mainly to UK venues such as Wigmore Hall with soprano Lucy Crowe, the Tilford Bach and Stour Festivals, Wendover, Wells and Canterbury as well as Sligo in Ireland and with programmes of Bach Cantatas and Brandenburg Concertos.