

signum
CLASSICS

LET THE BRIGHT SERAPHIM

Works by **J.S.Bach,**
Telemann, A.Scarlatti
and **Handel.**

Armonico Consort
Elin Manahan Thomas *soprano*
Crispian Steele-Perkins *trumpet*
Christopher Monks *musical director*



LET THE BRIGHT SERAPHIM

Jauchzet Gott in allen Landen, BWV 51

Johann Sebastian Bach

1	Jauchzet Gott in allen Landen	[4.13]
2	Recit: Wir beten zu dem Tempel an	[2.04]
3	Aria: Höchster	[4.09]
4	Sei Lob und Preis mit Ehren	[3.22]
5	Alleluia	[2.18]

Trumpet Concerto in D major

Georg Philipp Telemann

6	i. Adagio	[1.47]
7	ii. Allegro	[1.57]
8	iii. Grave	[1.57]
9	iv. Allegro	[1.51]

Su le sponde del Tebro

Alessandro Scarlatti

10	Sinfonia	[1.29]
11	Recitativo: Su le sponde del Tebro	[0.59]
12	Aria: Contentatevi, o fidi pensieri	[2.54]
13	Recitativo: Mesto, stanco e spirante	[0.35]
14	Arioso: Infelici miei lumi	[3.15]
15	Aria: Dite almeno	[1.55]
16	Recitativo: All'aura, al cielo	[0.52]
17	Aria: Tralascia pur di piangere	[1.34]

Music for the Vauxhall Gardens

George F. Handel

Compiled by Crispian Steele-Perkins

18	'March' from <i>Judas Maccabeus</i> , HWV 63	[1.22]
19	'Sinfonia' from <i>Floridante</i> , HWV 14	[1.20]
20	'Lentement' from <i>Dedemia</i> , HWV 42	[1.46]
21	'March' from <i>Scipione</i> , HWV 20	[1.28]
22	Eternal Source of Light Divine, HWV 74	[3.21]
	<i>"Water Music"</i>	
23	Overture	[1.43]
24	Air	[1.50]
25	Hornpipe	[3.39]
26	'Let the Bright Seraphim' from <i>Samson</i> , HWV 57	[5.24]
	Total timings:	[59.07]

ELIN MANAHAN THOMAS SOPRANO
CRISPIAN STEELE-PERKINS TRUMPET
ARMONICO CONSORT
CHRISTOPHER MONKS MUSICAL DIRECTOR

Bach, Telemann, Alessandro Scarlatti (father of Domenico Scarlatti) and Handel were arguably the four greatest composers of their time, and all of them wrote superbly, and in their own ways, for the trumpet – not the modern valved trumpet, but the longer, valve-less Baroque trumpet, ingeniously disguising the instrument's very limited range, which was confined to its harmonic series in (with very few exceptions) the keys of D and C. This programme eloquently demonstrates how in their hands the instrument could be festive, dramatic or deeply expressive as an adjunct both to solo voices and to the Baroque orchestra.

J.S. Bach's solo cantata **Jauchzet Gott in allen Landen, BWV 51**, for the combination of soprano, trumpet, strings and continuo, is believed to have been composed in about 1730, by which time the composer had been Kantor of the Thomaskirche in Leipzig for about seven years. Though it was intended for the 15th Sunday after Trinity, the text – which is possibly Bach's own literary effort – does not correspond closely to appointed readings for that Sunday, which are concerned with vanity and faithlessness; and Bach added the qualification 'et in ogni tempo', indicating the work could, in fact, be performed at any time.

Cantata 51 follows the traditional chorale cantata pattern. The first movement is a brilliant da capo aria, in ritornello form, that features bravura passage-work for the singer and the trumpeter, often in virtuoso counterpoint that ranks among Bach's most original writing for a voice with an obbligato instrument. The recitative second movement opens with a serene chordal accompaniment in the upper strings over a bass ostinato. The soprano's part, at first restrained and mostly syllabic, becomes much more ornate as it develops. There is a notable example of Bach's word-painting at the word 'lallen', set to a long-drawn-out, rather jagged melisma. The ensuing aria, in a flowing 12/8 rhythm, is under-girded by a mainly stepwise bass line that gives the impression of aspiring continually upwards. The soprano's elaborate, wide-ranging melodic line perfectly complements the prayer for God to bestow his mercies each day.

The last movement opens with a violin duet, against which the soprano enunciates the chorale melody 'Nun Lob', mein Seel', den Herren'. There are joyful, extended ritornello sections, making much use of instrumental imitation. The movement, and the work, culminates in a blissful setting of 'Alleluia' in which the trumpet rejoins the soprano for a display of spiritual virtuosity that has often been rated

the finest 'Alleluia' setting before that in Mozart's *Exsultate, Jubilate*.

Though Bach was an enormously prolific composer, he – and just about everyone else – was outdone in this regard by his contemporary Georg Philipp Telemann, whose total of works runs into the thousands. Telemann is known to have composed several concertos using the trumpet: there is one for trumpet and 2 oboes, another for trumpet and violin, and at least two for 3 trumpets. As far as I am aware, however, he wrote only one concerto in which a single trumpet is the sole soloist, namely the **Trumpet Concerto in D major** for trumpet, violins, and basso continuo. In fact very few other trumpet concerti by German composers are known from this period, and it is possible that Telemann's is among the first of them to use this title, though essentially this is work in the Italianate sonata da chiesa (Church Sonata) form. Though its exact date is not known, this sparkling work dates from somewhere in the period 1710-1720, so most probably while Telemann was City Director of Music in Frankfurt, a post he occupied from 1712 to 1721. The *sonata da chiesa* customarily has four movements arranged in a slow-fast-slow-fast pattern, and this is the case here. Telemann makes extraordinary demands on the trumpet soloist: the part requires exceptional

control of breathing and embouchure. As Crispian Steele-Perkins has commented: 'What is remarkable is that Telemann must have known a player capable of playing this upon a 7 foot 8 inch piece of pipe'.

The trumpet is certainly the focus of attention in the opening Adagio, but here it is its expressive and sonorous qualities that come to the fore. In the following Allegro, the interest is more equably divided between the violins and the trumpet, while in the Grave third movement, in B minor, the trumpeter is allowed a rest and the expressive phrases are unfolded just by violins and continuo. It is the Allegro finale that really puts the trumpet through its paces, in a bright, joyous conclusion to a concise but entertaining piece.

Su le sponde del Tebro (On the Banks of the Tiber) is one of possibly 800 solo chamber cantatas that Alessandro Scarlatti, one of the greatest masters of that early Baroque genre, composed during his career. Such works were commissioned by the aristocracy and plutocracy of Italy for performance at their houses to entertain guests or for special occasions. They were also performed at conversazioni or academies: gatherings of the nobility with their friends. Though most of Scarlatti's cantatas have little to suggest a precise dating, this one (one of the more remarkable,

precisely because of the trumpet obbligato) is believed to have been written between 1690 and 1695, during his 20-year sojourn as maestro di cappella to the royal court of Naples.

The general character of *Su le sponde del Tebro* is pastoral, exploring the conventional situation of an unrequited love. The text and the form of the cantata, which derives ultimately from the madrigals of Monteverdi, are shaped by narrative passages interspersed with the pathetic recitatives and arias of the lovelorn Aminto. Thus impersonal narration contrasts with lyrically-expressed, human emotion. The arias are designed to contrast and complement one another both emotionally and musically. Scarlatti uses a trumpet as an obbligato instrument and in duo textures with the voice. After the orchestral sinfonia, and the scene-setting recitative, the opening aria features a trumpet obbligato with a vocal part that imitates the trumpet themes. Probably the most remarkable movement in the cantata is 'Infelice miei lumi', designated an 'arioso' because of its free form: this is rich in chromaticism, suspensions, and diminished-seventh chords as Aminto gives voice to his grief. 'Dite almeno' is an aria written over an ostinato bass, and highly inventive rhythmically. Another brief narration precedes the final aria, in which

the trumpet comes into its own as a martial and heroic instrument, its triumphal music expressing Aminto's resolve to endure.

The pleasant parklands of Vauxhall Gardens, with their stages and pavilions, formed one of the leading venues for public entertainment in 18th-century London. Tightrope walkers, hot-air balloon ascents, concerts and fireworks provided amusement, and in their musical capacity the Gardens were most closely associated with George Frideric Handel, whose statue (now to be seen in London's Victoria and Albert Museum) stood within the grounds. Crispian Steele-Perkins has accordingly given the collection of nine disparate Handel pieces in this programme the overall title 'Music for the Vauxhall Gardens' as examples of music that might at any time have been heard there. The first four pieces, extracted from one oratorio and three operas, are the famous marches from *Judas Maccabeus* and *Scipione*, a Sinfonia from *Floridante* and a 'Lentement' from Handel's last opera *Deidamia*. Crispian Steele-Perkins says he has compiled them 'in the style of Walsh's *'Musica Bellicosa'*¹ published in various guises throughout the 18th century, probably for mainly (but not exclusively) instructional use. These usually comprise two part books, one containing the melodies (Treble)

and the other the Bass (sometimes figures). The Alto and Tenor parts are either missing or require composing/editing. The two marches are transposed from the horn key of G to the trumpet key of D ... but harmonies have been taken from later rather than original versions'.

The aria with trumpet 'Eternal Source of Light Divine', here sung by soprano (but originally composed for the unusually high tenor voice of Richard Elford) comes from Handel's 1713 Birthday Ode for Queen Anne, probably his first royal commission. Like his *Utrecht Te Deum* completed shortly before, it shows Handel imitating the style of Purcell, well-loved by the two queens, Mary and Anne – and Elford himself had sung for Purcell.

The three pieces of Water Music are in fact probably not all by Handel, though the concluding *Hornpipe*, which survives in various forms, certainly is. Steele-Perkins believes that the *Overture* and *Air*, which come from the 'Famous Water Piece', a five-movement suite in D major for trumpet, strings and continuo ascribed to Handel in a manuscript in Cambridge's Pendlebury Library, may in fact be the work of the trumpeter, flautist and composer John Baptist Grano (c.1692–c.1748), who worked with Handel at the opera house in London's Haymarket.

Finally one of the most famous of all 'trumpet arias', namely the joyous 'Let the Bright Seraphim' from the oratorio *Samson*. It makes a fitting finale to a programme devoted to the harmonious interplay of trumpet and voice.

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¹ That is, *Musica Bellicosa, or Warlike Music. Being a Choice Collection of sixty-eight Marches and Trumpet-tunes for the German Flute, Violin & Hautboy, with a Through Bass to the whole*, published by John Walsh in London, 1733.

TEXTS

Jauchzet Gott in allen Landen, BWV 51 Johann Sebastian Bach

1 Jauchzet Gott allen Landen

Jauchzet Gott in allen Landen!
Was der Himmel und die Welt
An Geschöpfen in sich hält,
müssen dessen Ruhm erhöhen,
und wir wollen unserm Gott
gleichfalls itzt ein Opfer bringen,
dass er uns in Kreuz und Not
allezeit hat beigestanden.

Rejoice unto God in all lands!
Every creature,
in heaven and earth
must exalt His fame,
and we would likewise bring
our God an offering now,
for that He has always stood beside us,
in affliction and distress.

2 Recit: Wir beten zu dem Tempel an

Wir beten zu dem Tempel an,
da Gottes Ehre wohnt,
da dessen Treu,
so täglich neu,
mit lauter Segen lohnet.
Wir preisen, was er an uns hat getan.
Muss gleich der schwache Mund von seinen
Wundern lallen,
so kann ein schlechtes Lob ihm dennoch
wohlgefallen.

We worship in your temple,
where God's own glory dwells,
since His faith,
which is new every morning,
is rewarded with pure blessings.
We praise Him for what He hath done for us.
Though our feeble voices babble
about His wonders,
our meager praise can nonetheless still
please Him.

3 Aria: Höchster

Höchster, mache deine Güte
ferner alle Morgen neu.
So soll vor die Vätertreu
auch ein dankbares Gemüte
durch ein frommes Leben weisen,
dass wir deine Kinder heißen.

Highest One, renew Thy goodness
each morning from now on.
Thus for Thy father's love
shall a grateful soul
show through a righteous life
that we are called Your children.

4 Sei Lob und Preis mit Ehren

Sei Lob und Preis mit Ehren
Gott Vater, Sohn, Heiligem Geist!
Der woll' in uns vermehren,
was er uns aus Gnaden verheißt,
dass wir ihm fest vertrauen,
gänzlich uns lass'n auf ihn,
von Herzen auf ihn bauen,
dass uns'r Herz, Mut und Sinn
ihm festiglich anhangen;
drauf singen wir zur Stund:
Amen, wir werd'n's erlangen,
glaub'n wir aus Herzensgrund.

Laud and praise with honour
God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost!
May He increase in us
what He pledges us in mercy:
that we may firmly trust in Him,
wholly depend on Him
and rely on Him with our hearts,
that our heart, mind and will
steadfastly cling to Him;
to this now let us sing:
Amen, we shall achieve it,
if we believe with all our heart.

5 Alleluia

Alleluia!

Alleluia!

Su le sponde del Tebro

Alessandro Scarlatti

11 Recitativo: Su le sponde del Tebro

Su le sponde del Tebro
ove le Dee latine
fecero à gl'Archi
lor corde del crine,
colà, colà Aminta il fido
da Clori vilipeso
con dolore infinito
disse al ciel',
disse al mondo,
io son tradito!

On the banks of the Tiber,
where the Latin goddesses
make for their bows
strings from their hair,
there, there, faithful Aminta
scorned by Chloris
with infinite sorrow
declared to heaven
declared to the world,
I am betrayed!

12 Aria: Contentatevi, o fidi pensieri

Contentatevi,
o fidi pensieri,
trattenervi per guardie
al mio core.

Che gl'affanni gigantic guerrieri
dan'l'assalto
et è duce il dolore.

Oricalchi di mesti sospiri
Segno danno d'attacco potente.
Ed a truppe I tiranni martiri
Fanno breccia al mio seno innocente.

Be content
My faithful thoughts,
Keep check and watch
Over my heart

For giant warlike troubles
make assault
and sorrow is their leader.

Brazen trumpets of sad sighs
signal powerful attack
and tyrant sufferings together
breach my innocent bosom.

13 Recitativo: Mesto, stanco e spirant

Mesto, stanco e spirante
dal duol che l'opprimea,
rivolto a gl'occhi suoi,
così dicea:

Sad, weary and sighing
through the sorrow that oppresses him
he turns his eyes
and thus he speaks:

14 Arioso: Infelici miei lumi

Infelici miei lumi
già che soli noi siamo,
aprite il varco al pianto,
e concedete al core,
che tramandi su gl'occhi
il mio dolore

Unhappy eyes of mine,
now we are alone,
open your gates to my weeping,
and allow my heart
to pass on to my eyes
my sorrow.

15 Aria: Dite almeno

Dite almeno
astri crudeli
quando mai vi offese il petto,
he ricetta
voi lo fate di dolore.

Tell me, at least,
cruel stars,
when my heart is so sore
what remedy
you have for sorrow.

E già martire d'amore
nelle lagrime defeli
a sperar solo è costretto.
Dimmi, o ciel, se de' miei mali,
sono ancor satie le sfere,

And now a martyr to love
In faithful tears
he must only hope.
Tell me, O heaven, if my ills
are enough for the spheres

Che sì fiere
A penar m'han destinato?
Crudo ciel, perfido fato,
Con saette più mortali
Del mio sen fatale arciere.

that so cruelly
have destined me for suffering?
Cruel heaven, false fate,
with arrows more deadly
to my heart, fatal archer.

16 Recitativo: All' aura, al cielo

All'aura, al cielo, ai venti
pastorello gentil così parlava,
e pur l'aura crudel fido adorava.

To the air, to heaven, to the winds
the gentle shepherd so spoke,
and then, trusting, paid honour to the cruel breeze.

Ma conscendo alfine
che nè pianti, nè preghi
sapevano addolcire
un cor di sasso
risoluto e costante
così disse al cor schernito,
schernito amante:

But understanding at last
that neither weeping nor prayer
would soften
a heart of stone
resolute and constant
he spoke thus to his scorned heart
scorned, loving:

17 Aria: Tralascia pur di piangere

Tralascia pur di piangere,
povero afflittito cor,
che sprezzato dal tuo fato
non ti resta
che compiangere d'un infida il suo rigor.

Leave then your weeping,
poor troubled heart,
for disdained by your fate
it remains for you
to lament the faithless one's cruelty.

22 **Eternal Source of Light Divine, HWV 74**

Eternal source of light divine
With double warmth thy beams display,
And with distinguish'd glory shine,
To add a lustre to this day.

Ambrose Philips (1674-1749)

26 **'Let the Bright Seraphim' from *Samson*, HWV 57**

Let the bright Seraphim in
burning row their loud uplifted
angel-trumpets blow.

Let the cherubic host, in tuneful
choir, touch their immortal
harps with golden wire.

Let the bright Seraphim in
burning row their loud uplifted
angel-trumpets blow

ELIN MANAHAN THOMAS

Born and bred in Swansea, Elin read Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic at Clare College Cambridge, before moving to the musical world and a busy career of performing, broadcasting and presenting. She released her debut album, *Eternal Light*, in 2007 with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment; and is the first singer ever to record Bach's *Alles mit Gott*, a birthday ode written in 1713 and discovered in 2005.

She first received great acclaim for her 'Pie Jesu' on Naxos' award-winning recording of the Rutter *Requiem*, and won critical praise for her performance in Bach's *St Matthew Passion* at the Thomaskirche in Leipzig, under Sir John Eliot Gardiner. She has performed in Classic FM's fifteenth birthday concert, at *Songs of Praise's* 'The Big Sing', and gave the World Première of Sir John Tavener's *Requiem* in Liverpool Cathedral (also recorded for EMI). Elin was invited to perform in the Vatican on Easter Sunday, and appeared at the Edinburgh International Festival with the Royal Flanders Ballet. Elin has released five solo albums, and appeared as featured soloist on innumerable discs. BBC Music Magazine awarded her recording of Vivaldi motets five stars, while International Record Review placed it in their 'Outstanding'



category. Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater*, also with Florilegium, was BBC Music Magazine Choice of the Month; and her 2011 release *Ravish'd with Sacred Extasies* was awarded Pizzicato Magazine's coveted Supersonic Award.

Her concert performances have taken her to many of the world's leading venues, from the Wigmore Hall to St Mark's Venice and she has sung for such distinguished conductors as Richard Hickox, Sir John Eliot Gardiner, Harry Christophers, Paul McCreech, Thierry Fischer and Stephen Layton. As well as being a busy singer, Elin is also greatly in demand as a presenter and broadcaster, for the BBC and S4C.

CRISPIAN STEELE-PERKINS

Crispian Steele-Perkins is a trumpet soloist who is world-renowned for the quality of his performances and wide-ranging musical experience. On graduating from the Guildhall School of Music, Crispian spent his early career playing with the English National Opera and Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. He then spent 15 years working in recording, TV and film studios, developing a body of work which is universally recognizable today, from Handel to *James Bond* themes and pop classics. His interest in collecting and restoring antique trumpets led him to begin performing on them – you may have heard Crispian's playing introducing the BBC's *The Antiques Roadshow*.

His unique performances and recordings on genuine historic instruments led *Continuo Magazine* to describe him as 'the world's leading player of the Baroque trumpet'. Playing alongside some of the world's greatest singers, Crispian's purity of tone and artistic subtlety has received critical acclaim for more than three decades. Recordings of Handel's *'Let the Bright Seraphim'* with Dame Kiri te Kanawa and *'Eternal source of Light Divine'* with James Bowman are familiar to many. More recently his recordings and performances with Emma Kirkby, Lynne Dawson,



Carolyn Sampson, Bryn Terfel, Sir John Tomlinson, Elin Manahan Thomas and Lesley Garrett have firmly established his reputation.

His work in the studios has included more than 80 films, TV scores and commercials, appearing alongside Sir Cliff Richard, Sir Bob Geldof, Sir Harry Secombe, Kate Bush, Elaine Page, Chris Rea and Lulu. His many solo recordings extend from Purcell to Gershwin and his largest 'live' audience was 133,000 at the Edinburgh International Festival.

ARMONICO CONSORT

Armonico Consort is the largest arts organisation of its type in the UK, with its choir, orchestra and opera company performing unique programmes and finding new ways to bring classical music to modern audiences through projects such as 'Supersize Polyphony', 'Naked Byrd', 'Too Hot to Handel' and 'Monteverdi's Flying Circus' (written by Kit Hesketh Harvey). The group prides itself on working with only the finest talent, and its original (and occasionally unusual) approach to performing almost 50 concerts every year has earned it two 5 star reviews in The Times and The Independent in the last year.

The proudest achievement of Armonico Consort in the last 11 years is the foundation of AC Academy – a fully accessible and interactive education programme which has benefited over 100,000 young people, and currently sees over 800 children sing in an AC Academy Choir every week across the UK. The specialist leaders of AC Academy now work in partnership with the Royal Albert Hall, in a relationship which will see over 1,500 AC Academy members perform in a gala concert in March 2013. In projects which see teachers trained as choir leaders, and choir creation programmes in school – the intention of AC

Academy is to create new choirs with sustainable leadership consisting of over 50,000 over the next 5 years.

In its first ten years, the achievements of Armonico Consort have been stratospheric – and highlights have included: *Magic Flute* at the Barbican in London, Vivaldi Violin Concertos at the Hampton Court Palace Festival with Nicola Benedetti, *Carmina Burana* at the RSC new Theatre with 350 AC Academy children, and amongst the many inspirational names to have worked with the group are Jeremy Irons, Dame Judi Dench, Sir Willard White, Dame Emma Kirkby and Dame Evelyn Glennie – the final three also being artistic patrons of Armonico Consort.

Future plans of Armonico Consort include a brand new opera – 'Baroque Around the Clock', a national tour of 'Too Hot to Handel', an appearance on BBC Radio 3, a tour with Elin Manahan Thomas including a performance at King's College Cambridge as part of the Cambridge Summer Music Festival and tours to the US of 'Supersize Polyphony' and 'Monteverdi's Flying Circus'.

Armonico Consort is grateful to many funders for making these ventures possible. Arts Council England, Youth Music and many regional authorities across the UK are just some of the statutory funders who invest in our work. The considerable achievements however would not

be possible without the generous support of many charitable trusts, businesses and private individuals and we are enormously grateful to all of them. Please visit www.armonico.org.uk for more information about how to help invest in the future Armonico Consort.



CHRISTOPHER MONKS

As founder and Artistic Director of Armonico Consort, Christopher is a dynamic and innovative conductor and keyboard player. Equally at home with early, classical and modern music, he is the driving force behind Armonico Consort's success, developing the group into a choir and orchestra specialising in skilled and moving interpretations of Renaissance and Baroque and modern music and as an opera company giving ground-breaking performances.

Along the way, Christopher has established an education programme now reaching out to tens of thousands of young children across the country, and is closely involved in the establishment of AC Academy, Armonico Consort's series of choirs which sees over 700 children singing each week across the UK.

Christopher has performed world premieres with internationally renowned musicians such as Evelyn Glennie and the fine arts brass ensemble and regularly performs with some of the country's finest musicians. He has conducted a range of high-profile orchestras, including the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, The Philharmonia and the European Union Chamber Orchestra.



Christopher was organ scholar at Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, and studied conducting with David Hill whilst an organ scholar at Winchester Cathedral.

This disc is dedicated to the memory of John Wallis. A talented engineer, he found in music and singing a joy which he passed on to us, his family. We hope it will bring pleasure to many and for someone, perhaps, be the beginning of just such a lifelong delight in music.

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