

SLIGO BAROQUE MUSIC FESTIVAL



29 Sept - 1 Oct 2023

www.sligobaroquefestival.com

Festival at a Glance

Friday 22 September (Culture Night)

8.00 pm	Tradroque	Hawk's Well Theatre	FREE
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Friday 29 September

7.30 pm	Sharon Carty	St John's Cathedral	€20
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Saturday 30 September

1.00 pm	Westland Baroque	Gillooly Hall	€15
2.30 pm	Sligo Youth Voices	City Hall	FREE
7.00 pm	Meditations	St John's Cathedral	€20
9.00 pm	Soirée at Versailles	Gillooly Hall	€15

Sunday 1 October

12.00pm	Sligo Academy of Music	The Model	FREE
4.00 pm	Sligo Baroque Orchestra	The Model	€15
7.30 pm	Acis and Galatea	Hawk's Well Theatre	€25



Online bookings are provided by The Model and The Hawk's Well Theatre, via the Events page on www.sligobaroquefestival.com, or by visiting their websites directly. Bookings may also be made in person at the box offices or by phone (Hawk's Well 071 916 1518, The Model 071 914 1405). Half-price tickets for under-18s are available. (Tickets may also be purchased at the door in St John's Cathedral and the Gillooly Hall, cash only, please tender exact amount.)



Music Generation
Sligo/Shligigh

The Festival Pass admits the holder to the ticketed events at all venues over the weekend of 29 September to 1 October. It can be purchased as a single transaction, saving €15 on the ticket prices as well as the trouble of booking them individually.

Welcome!

It is an immense pleasure to present another festival of excitement, spectacle, and music, bringing together musicians, artists, and performers of the highest calibre to our home in the northwest in a celebration of Baroque music and culture. We are particularly proud to bring to you Handel's most popular dramatic work, *Acis & Galatea*, the greatest pastoral opera ever composed - but not as you've ever seen it before! To perform this work we're privileged to welcome back Prague based ensemble Collegium Marianum and puppet company Buchty a Loutky to marry fantastical visuals with magical sound as befits a story of mythological proportions, told through Handel's mastery and imagination. Collegium Marianum will also delight us with a concert of *Meditations*, and a *Soirée at Versailles*. We are honoured to be joined by mezzo soprano Sharon Carty with her intriguing concert of "Witches, Bitches & Britches". Westland Baroque Ensemble will be taking their expertise into Sligo schools as part of our commitment to inspiring our local younger generations, and will also be joining Music Generation's Youth Choir at City Hall for the "One Vision, One Voice" community performance. And as always, we are delighted to have our very own Sligo Baroque Orchestra grace the Model for a journey into the concerto grosso. And to set it all off, Tradroque on Culture Night brings toe tapping fusion to a full house at the Hawk's Well. A bouquet of baroque fantasy here in the land of heart's desire!

Special thanks to our festival team, volunteers, venue partners, donors and funders, and to you for supporting these wonderful performances.

Nicola Cleary, Festival Director



Thanks

In addition to our main funders, The Arts Council and Sligo County Council, we warmly thank those who have donated under the Festival Friends scheme and helped to bring about this 28th Sligo Baroque Music Festival.

Thanks also for advice, help and support to: Bernard Mulhern, Daragh Stewart, Dean Arfon Williams, Breda Roche, Emer Harte, Emer McGarry, FCC Chartered Accountants, Ferdia Durkin, Helena Kane, John Coleman, Linda McMahon, Luisa McConville, Margrit Fahy, Marie O'Byrne, Mary Bell, Mary McDonagh - Sligo Arts Service, Mercy College, Music Generation Sligo, Noreen McIntyre, Pat Durkin, Rod Alston, Sligo BID, Steve Wickham, Tara McGowan, Very Revd Declan Boyce, Yonit Kosovske.

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Friday 22 September, 8.00pm
Hawk's Well Theatre



TRADROQUE Culture Night Concert

Sligo Baroque Orchestra with Michael Rooney, harp;
Liam Kelly, flute; Leonard Barry, pipes;
Seamie O'Dowd, guitar.



For Culture Night, Sligo Baroque Music and The Hawk's Well Theatre have commissioned a new edition of the Tradroque concert which was performed to great acclaim in 2018. In this exciting collaboration, Sligo Baroque Orchestra and leading traditional musicians explore the relationship between baroque and traditional performance, style and forms. As a prelude to the Festival on the next weekend, what could be better?



Friday 29 September, 7.30pm
St John's Cathedral

SHARON CARTY

Handel's witches, bitches and britches



Sharon Carty, mezzo-soprano;
Claire Duff, Nicola Cleary, violin; Lisa Dowdall, viola; Norah O'Leary, cello; David Adams, harpsichord.

All pieces are by G. F. Handel (1685-1759),
other than the concerto grosso *La Folia*, by Francesco Geminiani (1687-1762).

Overture to Alcina

Mi lusinga (*Alcina*)

Concerto Grosso in D Minor, La Folia, H.143

Verdi prati (*Alcina*)

Dopo notte (*Ariodante*)

Cara speme (*Giulio Cesare*)

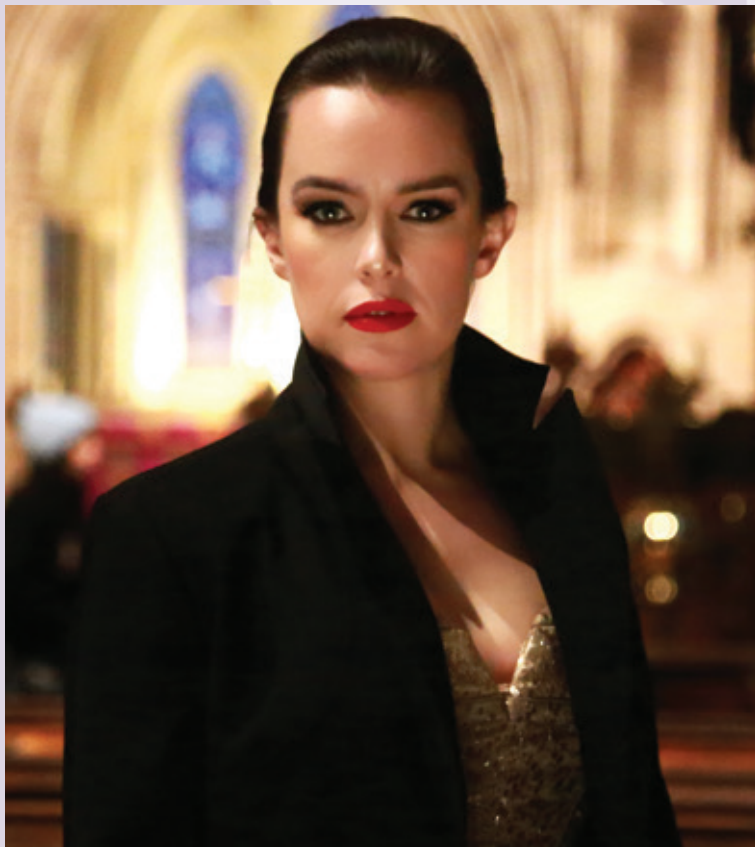
Passacaglia from Trio Sonata in G, HWV 399

Where shall I fly? (*Hercules*)

Concerto Grosso in D, HWV 316
Adagio; Allegro, ma non troppo; Allegro

Lascia la spina (*Il Trionfo del Tempo e del Disinganno*)

"Witches, bitches and britches" is a playful title which encompasses the three standard operatic archetypes for the mezzo-soprano voice. In this programme, we take a whirlwind trip around baroque Europe, exploring some of the most beautiful arias for both male and female characters, good and bad, flawed and virtuous.



In the first half we meet two of Handel's great heroes, Ruggiero and Ariodante. Ruggiero is under the spell of the sorceress Alcina and in a true display of girl power, is only set free when his beloved comes to rescue him. We include the triumphant "Dopo notte" of Ariodante to symbolise awakening from the nightmare of the dark powers. Geminiani's magnificent *La Folia* (madness) embodies the delirium and delusion of those under the spell of witchcraft.

In the second half of the programme, we meet one of Handel's youngest characters, and another britches-role, Sesto, whose touching aria "Cara speme" looks forward hopefully as he steels himself to avenge his father's murder. And we conclude our programme with two women, a witch and a bitch. Firstly, Hercules' wife Dejanira, driven mad by a terrible mistake made in jealousy, which results in her sorcery causing the death of her husband, and concluding with the character Pleasure from Handel's oratorio *Il Trionfo del Tempo e del Disinganno* (the triumph of time and truth) wistfully reflecting on the nature of beauty.

Irish mezzo-soprano **Sharon Carty** has firmly established a reputation as a respected interpreter of both early and contemporary works, while maintaining a busy schedule in mainstream opera and concert repertoire. She is an alumna of the RIAM Dublin, MDW Vienna, and Oper Frankfurt Young Artist Programme, and has been an Artistic Partner to Irish National Opera since the company began in 2018. She is the 2023/2024 Artist in residence for the Irish Chamber Orchestra. Her most recent CD, a disc of Schubert songs with pianist Jonathan Ware, was released to critical acclaim in May 2020, and in 2024 will release a CD of songs by Charles Villiers Stanford with pianist Finghin Collins for the SOMM label, to celebrate the centenary of the composer's death. www.sharoncarty.com





Saturday 30 September, 1.00pm
Gillooly Hall

WESTLAND BAROQUE

French Chamber Music

Michael Noonan, flute; **Kevin Meehan**, violin;
Peadar Ó Loinsigh, cello; **Laoise McMullin**, harpsichord.

Élisabeth Jacquet de la Guerre (1665-1729)

Trio Sonata in G minor

Grave; Presto; Allegro; Presto; Adagio;
Presto; Aria affettuosa; Allegro

Jean-Marie Leclair (1697-1764)

Deuxième Récréation de Musique

Ouverture; Forlane; Sarabande; Menuets;
Badinage; Chaconne; Tambourin

Georg Philipp Telemann (1681-1767)

Concerto Secondo in D major, from the 'Paris Quartets,'

TWV 43:D1

Allegro; Affettuoso; Vivace

Élisabeth Jacquet de la Guerre came from a musical family. From the age of five she sang and played the harpsichord in the court of Louis XIV. For years, she was attached to the household of Madame de Montespan, the king's principal mistress. After marrying and moving to Paris in 1684, she dedicated herself to teaching and performance, hosting concerts in her home as well as public venues. She retired from performance in 1717, and her last known work, which is now lost, was performed in 1721.

This sonata is in eight movements, played straight through. In the manuscript score, none of the movements had a tempo marking, indicating a somewhat unified tempo throughout. Opening with a stately *Grave*, the upper instruments weave through the melody in beautiful harmony. The closing leads into a lively *Presto*, with all instruments passing the movement's main motif between them. This movement leads seamlessly to the *Allegro*, which is driven by continuous triplet movement under a descending melodic line, ending with a pause before the fourth movement. This *Presto* has a similar rhythmic motif to the *Allegro*. The following *Adagio* has a sustained pedal note in the continuo, with a delicate, sensitive melody in the upper instruments.

The sixth movement, another *Presto*, consists primarily of a virtuosic cello solo, before all instruments unify in the leadup to the *Aria affettuosa*, the second last movement. The final movement, *Allegro*, has some vastly contrasting moods, before the final continuo solo draws the sonata to a dramatic close.

Often considered to have founded the French violin school, composer and violinist **Jean-Marie Leclair** was born in Lyon but studied in Turin, and Italian influence is often heard in his music. Leclair was also a dancer, which also inspired his music.

Leclair worked at the court of Louis XV from 1733, but resigned in 1736 after a dispute with another composer. For the rest of his life, he served various noble patrons as a composer and violinist. In 1758, his second marriage had broken up and Leclair moved to the Paris district of Le Marais. His life ended dramatically when he was attacked and stabbed in his home. The murder remains a mystery, with suspects including his ex-wife, his brother (also named Jean-Marie), his nephew – even a gardener!

Published in the mid-1730s, this work is typical of a French suite in its structure, with an overture followed by a set of dances. The *Overture* has a sense of stately elegance and drama, in two slower outer sections, with a light, quick section in between. The *Forlane*, in rondo form, captures the energetic dance spirit perfectly, with its strong minor character contrasted by sweeter major sections. The *Sarabande* has a singing melody emphasising the second beats of the bars. The *Menuets*, one major and one minor, share melodic content, with the alternating keys offering contrasting characters. The title of the *Badinage* (banter) indicates its playful spirit, with lots of movement in the two melody instruments, sometimes over pedal points in the continuo. The magnificent *Chaconne* can be seen as the emotional core of the work, moving through various keys, with a masterly contrast of playful and tender character. The *Tambourin* returns to a lighter, cheeky character in a devilishly quick tempo, bringing the work to a close in a greatly entertaining dance.

One of the most famous Baroque composers, **Georg Philipp Telemann** was a multi-instrumentalist, mostly self-taught. He began studying law, but left, against his family's wishes, to embark on his career in music. He settled in Hamburg in 1721, as musical director of the city's five main churches. In contrast to his successful career, Telemann's personal life was turbulent:

his first wife died within two years of their marriage, while his second wife had extramarital affairs and accumulated large debts before leaving him.



Telemann's music was always quite forward-thinking, and he is seen as one of the first links between the late Baroque and early Classical styles. The Paris Quartets are named for their connection to Telemann's visit to Paris in 1737-1738. Despite being written for the Parisian musicians and audience, the Paris quartets are not reflections of the French style. Unlike the other works in this programme, the cello part differs from the harpsichord continuo part. The first movement contains lively dialogue between the three obbligato instruments, with quite dense textures at times. Each instrument has a moment to shine in this *Allegro*, with virtuosic solos dotted throughout. The second movement, a tender *Affettuoso*, opens with an expressive melody in the cello, which is taken over by the flute and violin. The *Vivace* finale is fiercely energetic and spirited, with the instruments sometimes fighting for the spotlight. A demi-semi-quaver scalic passage in complete unison closes the movement in a fiery manner, a fitting end to this masterly work.

Laoise McMullin



Saturday 30 September, 2.30pm



Sligo Youth Voices

The 61 members of Sligo Youth Voices are delighted to give a free public concert in the old City Hall (no booking required). The young singers with support from Music Generation Sligo have been engaging with Baroque music and receiving tuition from Festival artist mezzo-soprano Sharon Carty. Together with the members of Westland Baroque ensemble, they will perform Handel pieces including the Hallelujah Chorus and O Lovely Peace.

Music Generation Sligo provides opportunities to all children and young people to access and participate in high quality music performance education that will encourage and inspire Sligo's future young musicians. This year for example Music Generation are supporting the Festival to bring engaging workshops to schools in Sligo, where local children will hear live performances on Baroque instruments and get to interact with the music and musicians in a familiar setting.





Saturday 30 September 7.00pm
St John's Cathedral

COLLEGIUM MARIANUM

Meditations: French Baroque Motets

Vojtěch Semerád, countertenor; Ondřej Holub, tenor; Tomáš Král, baritone; Hana Fleková, viola da gamba;
Jan Krejča, theorbo; Marek Čermák, organ.

Marc-Antoine Charpentier (1643–1704)

Méditations pour le Carême

Desolatione desolata est

Sicut pullus hirundinis

Tristis est anima mea

Ecce Judas

Cum cenasset Jesus

Quarebat Pilatus dimittere Jesum

Tenebrae factae sunt

Stabat Mater

Sola vivebat in antris

Tentavit Deus Abraham

Henry du Mont (1610–1684)

Allemande gravis

Pierre Méliton (d. 1684)

Regina caeli laetare

Henry du Mont

Memorare, o piissima Virgo Maria

Jesu dulcedo cordium

Robert de Visée (1655–1732/33)

Les Sylvains de Monsieur Couperin

Pierre Robert (c1618–1699)

Splendor aeternae gloriae

Marc-Antoine Charpentier

Salve Regina



The Lenten Meditations, a cycle of motets by **Marc-Antoine Charpentier**, were highly expressive compositions for performance during Lent and Holy Week, when opera and theatre stages were closed, and music-loving society moved to the churches. French composers of the late 17th century wrote harmonically rich and dramatic music in settings for three male voices (countertenor, tenor and baritone) accompanied by basso continuo, picking up the vocal coherence of these voices and the sometimes dark, sometimes powerful and radiant timbre. In this work, Charpentier was able to run the small cast in impressive colours, with some of the ten meditations being a call to contemplation, and others representing lively biblical scenes, presented with maximum theatricality. *Ecce Judas*, *Cum cenasset Jesus* and *Tentavit Deus Abraham* belong to the dramatic type of motets, where the three voices play different roles prescribed in the score (Jesus, Peter, Abraham, etc.). The theme unfolds as follows: 1. The earth is desolate, and the wrath of God is feared. 2. Believers pray God for help. 3. Jesus reveals his impending sacrifice to the disciples. 4. Judas betrays Jesus and the soldiers arrest him.



5. Peter denies Jesus. 6. Pilate is reluctant to condemn Jesus, but the crowd demands his death. 7. The crucifixion of Jesus. 8. Mary's lament at the foot of the cross. 9. Mary Magdalene lament on Jesus' sacrifice. 10. God tests Abraham to sacrifice his son Isaac. Nine out of the ten meditations are therefore directly inspired by the Passion story. The final meditation, *Tentavit Deus Abraham*, tells the story of Isaac's sacrifice, but ends abruptly just as Abraham is about to complete the deed (where in the Bible an angel appears and restrains the father's hand). This dramatic climax intensifies the effect of the story of the sacrifice of Jesus.

Henry Du Mont was a Walloon native who spent the most of his musical career in the French capital, where he gained fame and prestigious positions at the royal court. As a church musician, he composed over a hundred short motets. The first collection of them, *Cantica Sacra* (Paris 1652), contains the first printed basso continuo part showing numerical marks for its interpretation. In addition to vocal pieces, the collection also features several instrumental pieces that represent the oldest sources of French chamber music with basso continuo accompaniment.

Pierre Robert was a native Parisian who became famous for creating large ceremonial motets for the chapel of Louis XIV. We know little of his peer **Pierre Méliton**, except that he was organist at the Paris church of Saint-Jean-en-Grève and learned to play the viola da gamba with the famous Jean de Sainte-Colombe, and that Marin Marais wrote a tombeau on his death.

Robert de Visée (ca. 1655–1732), a renowned theorbist and guitarist, worked in Louis XIV's band of chamber players. In addition to his own compositions, he was the author of numerous arrangements of works by his contemporaries for theorbo, as in this transcription of François Couperin's *Les Sylvains* (The Forest Men)





Saturday 30 September 9.00pm
Gillooly Hall

COLLEGIUM MARIANUM

Soirée at Versailles

Jana Semerádová, flute; Hana Fleková, viola da gamba; Jan Krejča, theorbo.

Jacques-Martin Hotteterre (1673 –1763)

Pourquoy, doux rossignol

Rocher, je ne veux point

Marin Marais (1656–1728)

Sonate à la Maresienne

Un peu grave; Sarabande; Vivement-gravement; Gigue

Robert de Visée (c.1655– c.1732)

Suite in D minor for theorbo

Prélude; Allemande

Jacques Morel (c.1700- c.1747)

Chaconne en trio

Johann Joachim Quantz (1697 –1773)

Allemande; Sarabanda con variazioni

Johann Joachim Quantz / Michel Blavet

Menuet L 'Inconnue

Michel Blavet (1700-1768)

Sonate La Vibray in D minor

Andante; Allemande; Gavotta; Sarabanda; Allegro

Georg Philipp Telemann (1681–1767)

Sinfonie à la Francaise TWV 41:h2

Tendrement; Gayment; Gravement; Vite



The first part of the program is connected with *grand siècle* of Louis XIV, whose reign gave impetus to the development of many musical genres (motet, lyric tragedy, cantata, symphony). The king's favorite instruments included the lute, guitar and viola da gamba; the sound of the baroque transverse flute also pleased him, which was best heard on gut stringed instruments – theorbo, lute and viola da gamba. Every evening except Saturday concerts were held in the royal apartments, where he had his favorite pieces played. The repertoire of the royal evening concerts varied according to the king's preferences and the development of musical genres. Popular solo songs, arranged for flute accompanied by lute, were gradually replaced by instrumental dances and pieces arranged for trio.

One such flutist was **Jacques-Martin Hotteterre**. Born into an illustrious family of woodwind makers, Hotteterre was active at court from the age of seventeen as an oboist and double bassist, and achieved success as a composer and teacher. His book of arrangements of tunes by other composers, *Airs et Brunettes*, published around 1720, included the opening pieces in our programme, *Pourquoy, doux rossignol* by Jean-Baptiste Drouart de Bousset (1662–1725) and *Rocher, je ne veux point* by Benigne de Bacilly (ca1625–1690).

Perhaps the most famous of those who performed in the king's private chambers was **Marin Marais**, a virtuoso on the viola da gamba who wrote almost 600 compositions for it. The mysteriously named sonata a la Maresienne was published in 1723.

The guitarist, theorbist and gambist **Robert de Visée** had been a privileged royal musician since 1680. The suite in D minor is from *Pièces de théorbe et de luth*, published in 1716, the year after Louis XIV was succeeded by his five-year-old great-grandson Louis XV, to whom de Visée became guitar tutor.

Very little is known of the life of **Jacques Morel** (fl. 1700-1747) except that he was a pupil of Marin Marais, to whom he dedicated his *Première livre de pièces de violle* in 1709, which included this courtly chaconne for trio of flute, viol and basso continuo.

Johann Quantz was one of the first professional flute players in 18th-century Europe. He began as a town musician, trained to play many instruments, but began to specialise in the flute in 1719. He traveled to France, Italy and England to broaden his musical education, then returned to Dresden. In 1741 he entered the service of Frederick the Great of Prussia, where he remained until his death, composing, performing, and making flutes for the king. His essay on flute-playing (1752) made him famous throughout Europe.

Michel Blavet was by all accounts the most brilliant French flute virtuoso in the first half of the eighteenth century. The son of a turner, he taught himself to play almost all instruments, specialising in flute, which he played left-handed, and bassoon. He made his debut with the newly-formed *Concert Spirituel* in 1726, and enthusiastic reports of Blavet's playing indicate that his 'exciting, exact, and brilliant' style made the flute even more popular in France, where the instrument had previously been played only in a languorous manner. 1726 was also the year he met Quantz in Paris, and they became firm friends. The flute sonata in D minor was published in 1732.

During the heyday of French opera, **Georg Philipp Telemann** spent eight months in Paris at the turn of 1737 and 1738. Telemann's music was very popular in France, as he knew how to endear himself to the French audience with his music, as he also proved in other national contexts. He offered them pieces with dance movements with French charm spiced with Italian virtuosity, all in a rich orchestration with a dense musical texture.





Sunday 1 October 12.00pm
The Model

SLIGO ACADEMY OF MUSIC Student Proms

Students interested in learning the techniques of period instruments and playing have been rehearsing a concert of favourite works by Baroque composers. All are welcome to hear them perform and cheer on their enthusiasm!
Free entry, no booking required.



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Sunday 1 October 4.00pm
The Model

SLIGO BAROQUE ORCHESTRA

Concerti Grossi

Arcangelo Corelli (1653-1713) Concerto grosso in F, Opus 6 No. 2
for 2 violins & cello, strings and basso continuo

George Frideric Handel (1685-1759) Concerto grosso in G, Opus 6 No. 1
for 2 violins & cello concertino, strings, 2 oboes, basso continuo

Johann David Heinichen (1683-1729) Concerto grosso in G, Seibel 215
for 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 3 violins, 2 violas and bass

Francesco Geminiani (1687-1762) Concerto grosso in D, Opus 2 No. 4
*for flauto traverso I or violin I, flauto traverso 2 or violin 2, viola and b.c. concertino;
violin I, violin 2, viola and b.c. concerto grosso*

Johann Friedrich Fasch (1688-1758) Concerto in F, F, L:F3
for 2 flutes, 2 oboes, bassoon, 2 French horns, strings, basso continuo. In one movement

Charles Avison (1709-1770) Concerto grosso in E, Opus 6 No. 3
for 2 violins and cello concertino; violins, viola and basso continuo, concerto grosso

Johann Georg Pisendel (1687-1755) Concerto for two oboes and bassoon in E flat
for 2 oboes, bassoon, 2 horns, violins, viola, and basso continuo. In one movement

Violin: Aoife O'Callaghan (leader), Brigid McCafferty,
Katja Schenkel, Leo Tarrant, Clare Horler, Trudy Prescott,
Victoria Gladka, Olga Kalugnaya, Mairead Whelan,
Thomas Kennedy.

Viola: Cillian Houston.

Cello: Anna Houston, Conor Flynn, James O'Donnell.

Double bass: Anna Houston.

Flute: Lorraine Howley, Ilaria Castellazzi, Katie Regan.

Oboe: John Flanagan, Sophie Monaghan.

Bassoon: Milo Cummins.

Harpsichord: Ingrid Grolke, Rod Alston

SBO began life in 1990 as Sligo Early Music Ensemble, and has a couple of founder members still playing with the orchestra as well as second generation members. The orchestra enjoys having a membership of professionals, students and amateurs - instrumentalists from very different musical backgrounds and an age range of over sixty years!

Aoife O'Callaghan studied violin at the Cork School of Music. In addition to leading the Sligo Baroque Orchestra, she is a member of the European Doctors Orchestra, a founding member of the Irish Doctors Orchestra, and a former member of Hibernian Orchestra Dublin, Cork Concert Orchestra and the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland.

Nicola Cleary has been leader of the SBO for twelve years, so her recent resignation really feels to members like the end of an era. The serendipitous arrival of Aoife O'Callaghan in Sligo and her agreement to take on the role of leader means that SBO can embark on the next era with bold optimism - and a smile.

What's in a name ? The musical form "concerto grosso" has a fairly clear definition for those interested in baroque music today, but that probably was not the case for many musicians living in the 17th and 18th centuries. Indeed, during the 17th century the terminology that was starting to be used to denote different instrumental musical forms was fluid, almost indiscriminate: labels borrowed from vocal music, such as concert or concerto, sonata, sinfonia, motet, suite etc. were so loosely applied that it is almost impossible to detect an agreed definition at any particular time.

The term "concerto grosso" was first used to denote the larger number of voices in vocal pieces where there was a division between a small and large group of voices. It came to be used similarly in instrumental music - for instance by Stradella around 1680. The publication that launched the use of "concerto grosso" referring to a musical form was undoubtedly that of Corelli's Opus 6 in 1714, after the composer's death. It is quite possible that the impetus for using



the term came primarily as a marketing device by publishers, none-the-less it is a useful label, taking a concerto grosso to be a piece of music where a small group of soloists (concerto concertino, concertant, soloists) are contrasted with a larger group of instruments (the ripieno, tutti, concerto grosso), and so differentiated from the solo concerto. The form had a very short life, from about 1680 to 1765. It then evolved into the sinfonia-concertant, with notable examples by J. C. Bach, Abel, Haydn and Mozart, and also into the symphony, with wind parts in particular sometimes acting as soloists, and other times as part of a tutti ensemble.

The concerto grosso, whether bearing that name or not, developed quite differently in England and Ireland compared to what was being composed in Bohemia and Germany. Corelli's Opus 6 became very well known throughout Europe and was one of the most influential publications. In England, the regard for it as a model seems to have acted almost as a straitjacket, no doubt partly because Handel published his Opus 6 collection of 12 concerti grossi which in some respects, particularly in the make-up of the concerto concertino and concerto grosso being all strings, with two violins and a cello as the soloist group. Handel, for good or ill, had an immense influence on English music.

Geminiani, who spent a large part of his life living in London, Dublin and Edinburgh also had a great veneration for Corelli. He had studied under him, played with him in Rome, and went on to compose 18 original concerti grossi as well as arranging Corelli's violin sonatas as 12 concerti grossi, and similarly arranging six trio sonatas in concertos. Following on from Geminiani, with whom he had studied, Charles Avison was perhaps the greatest English composer in the mid 18th century, and a prolific producer of concerti grossi, all following the tradition of only including strings.

In this performance, both Handel's and Geminiani's concertos have wind parts added. Handel when directing any of his Opus 6 would add a pair of oboes, and Geminiani revised his Opus 2 to include the option of a pair of flutes playing instead of concertino violins. Heinichen's view of the concerto grosso is in notable contrast. The one chosen has a concertino group of two flutes, two oboes and a single violin, while other concerti he composed include pairs of bassoons, pairs of cellos, and a theorbo. Heinichen was Kapellmeister in the court in Dresden and contributed to the development of an orchestra and an orchestral style that was exciting, even extravagant when compared to much that was happening at that time.

The concertos by Fasch and Pisendel have been chosen partly because they are single movement works, and so allow us to include two further examples of Germanic approach to the concerto grosso where we have barely room for one. Fasch was Kapellmeister at a smaller music-mad court in Zerst where he composed a large mass of instrumental music of high quality and experimental in the choice of orchestration, rivalling Bach in his Brandenburg Concertos. Pisendel uses a solo group which is a fairly direct wind equivalent of the two violins and cello pattern that persisted in England, using two oboes and a bassoon. Fasch and Telemann composed numbers of concertos with this choice, as well as two flutes and a bassoon.

In Dublin in the mid 18th century (1730 - 1760) the most frequent orchestral performances were of Corelli's concerti grossi, with Handel's Opus 6 not far behind. Charles Avison's compositions did not figure but concertos by William Boyce and John Stanley, both in the Corelli mould, were performed. There is no record of any music by Heinichen, Fasch or Pisendel being performed – nor indeed, any by J S Bach.

Rod Alston



Sunday 1 October 7.30pm

Hawk's Well Theatre

ACIS AND GALATEA

Opera in two acts by G. F. Handel, HWV 49



Soloists

Galatea
Acis
Damon
Coridon
Polyphemus

Helena Hozová, soprano
Vojtěch Semerád, tenor
Ondřej Holub, tenor
Tomáš Lajtkep, tenor
Tomáš Král, baritone

Production

Musical direction:
Stage director:
Design & puppets:

Jana Semerádová
Vít Brukner
Barbora Čechová
& Kateřina Housková
Markéta Stormová
Irena Křížová
Lukáš Valiska

Costumes:
Make-up:
Lighting:

Collegium Marianum Orchestra

Jana Semerádová - artistic leader, flute, recorder
Lenka Torgersen, Eleonora Machová - violins
Petra Ambrosi, Nele Vertommen - oboes
Kryštof Lada - bassoon, recorder
Ján Prievozník - double-bass
Hana Flekova - violoncello
Jan Krejča - theorbo
Marek Čermák - harpsichord

Buchty a Loutky Marionette Theatre Company

Vít Brukner - artistic leader
Marek Bečka, Zuzana Bruknerová,
Radek Beran - actors





"The idea of staging Handel's *Acis and Galatea* with puppets originated while Collegium Marianum and Buchty a Loutky puppet theatre were collaborating in Cavalli's *La Calisto*. It was so inspiring for both parties, that we decided to create another performance linking the world of puppets with the art of singers and instrumentalists. In *Acis and Galatea*, the interaction between the singers and puppets, the stage effects, and Handel's eloquent music would bring out the magical character of this masterpiece.

On stage there will be a puppet theatre, of dimensions to allow the soloists to move with the puppets. And so Acis, Galatea, Damon and

Coridon are now in the puppet world, now in the real world, while baroque gestures accompany their emotions. The singers inspire the puppets and vice versa. Furthermore, there are things that a human cannot, but a puppet can do, for example, becoming the giant Polyphemus ..."

Act 1

Shepherds and nymphs rejoice in *the pleasure of the plains*. Galatea, a demi-goddess nymph, is in love with the shepherd Acis and tries to silence the birds that ignited her passion for him (*Hush, ye pretty warbling quire!*). Acis' friend Damon advises the two lovers as they pursue each other. She sings the serenade *Love in her eyes sits playing*, at their first meeting. The act closes with a duet of the young lovers, *Happy we*, which is echoed by a chorus.

Act 2

The chorus warns Acis and Galatea of the arrival of the monster Polyphemus, singing *No joy shall last*. The minor key of the choir along with the percussive line of the bass instruments, depicting the giant's heavy steps, provides an effective dramatic transition to the more sombre tone of the second act. Polyphemus enters with a partly comic aria in which he sings of his jealous love for Galatea, *I rage, I melt, I burn*. In his next aria, *O ruddier than the cherry*, Polyphemus threatens violence, but is soothed by the shepherd Coridon's *Would you gain the tender creature*. Meanwhile, Acis ignores Damon's warning about the transience of love (*Consider, fond shepherd*) and responds that he is determined to persevere (*Love sounds th' alarm*). Acis and Galatea pledge fidelity to each other until death in a duet (The flocks shall leave the mountains) that turns into a trio when Polyphemus interrupts them and kills Acis in a fit of rage. Galatea, along with the chorus, mourns the loss of her lover (*Must I my Acis still bemoan*). The chorus reminds her of her divine origin, and that she has the power to transform Acis' body into a beautiful fountain. In the lovely aria, *Heart, the seat of soft delight*, Galatea accomplishes the transformation of her beloved, and the opera closes with a chorus celebrating Acis's immortality.





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