



*Linden* baroque orchestra

Director Ashley Solomon

Alto Deborah Miles-Johnson

# The Elements

1. Telemann - Water Music
2. Hasse - Symphony Op.5 No.6 Gmin.
3. Hasse - Aria: '*Furit grando procellosa*'
4. Rebel - Les Eléments

Sunday March 16th 6.30pm

St Stephens  
Hampstead  
NW3 2PP

## PROGRAMME

The world is heating up; flash floods, wild-fires, hurricanes, earthquakes, sandstorms, volcanic eruptions, tidal surges, landslides and hailstorms are causing fear and existential concerns. We live in a very uncertain and fragile world and are subject to forces beyond our control. We rely on our religious beliefs and superstitions to try to make sense of it all and give us some agency. Was it ever thus.

In our programme we look at some representations of nature in music of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and man's attempt to come to terms with these natural phenomena.

Welcome to our concert! Wine and soft drinks are included – please feel free to take them to your seats.

Please refrain from filming during the performance as it can be distracting for others.

## 1. Telemann Overture 'Wassermusik' ('Water Music') TWV55:C3

**Ouverture** (Grave, allegro) – **Sarabande** (*sleeping Thetis*) – **Bourée** (*Thetis awakes*) – **Loure** (*amorous Neptune*) – **Gavotte** (*playful Naiads*) – **Harliquinade** (*sporty Triton*) – **Storm** (*Aeolus*) – **Minuet** (*pleasant Zephyr*) – **Gigue** (*ebb and flow*) – **Canarie** (*jolly sailors*)

**Georg Phillip Telemann's (1681 – 1767)** was one of the most prolific and popular composers of the baroque era and a personal friend of Bach and Handel. He was highly regarded in his time and only in more recent years has his music become freshly admired. After prominent positions around Germany, he settled in Hamburg in 1721 as director of music in the city's five main churches.

Telemann's *Water Music* (properly titled '*Hamburger Ebb' und Fluth*' (Hamburg ebb and flow) was written in 1723 for the celebrations in Hamburg of the centenary of the city's Admiralty. This organisation provided physical protection for Hamburg's important trade routes as well as controlling pilotage and marine insurance. The sea captains, civic dignitaries and merchants were entertained to a sumptuous banquet which lasted until dawn, during which tonight's suite of character pieces was played alongside Telemann's large scale Hamburg Admiralty Music, an oratorio with six soloists and choir.

After the Overture depicting the restless ocean, we have a series of dance movements. These pay homage to allegorical figures from ancient mythology. There is a mix of Greek and Roman deities and attendant beings. The sleeping **Thetis** was the sea goddess, mother of Achilles. She then awakens in a lively **Bourée**. **Neptune** was the Roman god of fresh water but by association with the Greek god Poseidon he became ruler of the sea. He is in love with a water nymph, Salacia, she equated with the Greek Amphitrite and their son was **Triton**, often depicted as a merman. He could blow on a sea shell to calm or whip up the waves. The **Naiads** were beautiful, frolicking water nymphs. **Aeolus** was Greek lord of the winds (the owner of an Aeolian harp, of course), here in a stormy mood in contrast with **Zephyrus**, the gentle god of the kindly west winds, dancing an elegant minuet. The last two movements depict the ebb and flow of the tide – the vital force keeping open the navigational channels and city canals – and finally, the rollicking sailors, on whom the city's wealth depended, close the suite with a canary, a jumping, stamping dance, probably originating in the Canary Islands.

## 2. Hasse Symphony Op.5 No.6 G minor

**Allegro – Andante – Allegro**

This symphony is a short and fiery piece in a rather Vivaldian style, probably used between acts in one of Hasse's operas.

**Johann Adolph Hasse (1699 -1783)** was an immensely popular and prolific composer, especially of opera (probably 70 or more of them) and sacred music. He had left Hamburg before Telemann arrived and spent several years in Naples and then Dresden, where he was friendly with JS Bach and wrote some flute music for Frederick the Great, several opera and oratorios. He frequently moved back and forth between Dresden, Vienna (where he met the young Mozart) and Italy and spent his last years in Venice. He was married to one of Europe's foremost opera divas, Faustina Bordoni, who, before her marriage, had starred in several of Handel's London productions. Though wildly popular in its time, opera moved away from his rather rigid text-based *Opera Seria* style with its long recitatives and florid *da capo* arias, to a more fluid, direct and emotive format introduced by Gluck and his followers which paved the way for Mozart and beyond.

## 3. Hasse 'Furit grando procellosa' Alto soloist : Deborah Miles-Johnson

**'Serpentes ignei in deserto'** (The fiery serpents in the desert) is an oratorio written for the girls of the Venetian orphanage of the *Osepdale degli Incurabili*. It tells the Old Testament story of the Israelites punished by God with serpents until Moses' prayers are answered and his people are saved.

After an Introductory Sinfonia and Recitative, **'Furit grando procellosa'** gives us a dramatic depiction of their plight:

'O Portents! Oh, the fury of God's vengeance presses down on us: behold, he has sent fiery serpents from heaven... they attack us poor unfortunates, with their ferocious bite. They take our lives; alas, falling down, scorched by this heat, all perish.  
Thus does the justice of God punish our faults. See, the deadly plagues already afflict us.  
A furious hailstorm rages, roaring downpours of rain are heard, the plants are already languishing, scattered and torn, by a cruel deep crash.  
Such a wild and furious force!  
As this evil oppresses us, and we do sincere penance,  
do not cease from weeping, and wait for help from your evils.'

#### 4. Rebel Les Eléments – Symphonie Nouvelle

**Le chaos** (chaos) - **Loure La terre et l'eau** (the earth and water) - **Chaconne: Le feu** (fire) - **Ramage: L'air** (air) - **Rosignols** (nightingales) - **Loure** - **Tambourin I & Tambourin II** - **Sicilienne** - **Rondeau: air pour l'Amour** - **Caprice (Rondeau)**

In 18<sup>th</sup> century French art representations of nature predominate; a natural world in which man had lost his fear and which had become a playground for his imagination and fantasy. A major part of life in the courts of Louis XIV and XV was the production of vast spectacles of all sorts, in the grounds of Versailles in particular, in which even the natural elements were shown under the control of the all-powerful king and his court (plus ça change!). The design and creation of the vast grounds themselves was a demonstration of the dominion of the king over nature – and incidentally over all other men!

**Jean-Féry Rebel (1661-1747)**, in this ballet, is concerned with a depiction of natural order developing from a primordial chaos. **Health Warning:** for those of a nervous disposition –the opening **chaos** is bizarre and wildly dissonant (and quite deliberate!). This chaos music reappears several times, gradually becoming tamed into something more civilised and recognisable as music rather than disorganised, clashing sounds. Each element, being distilled from this chaotic soup, is represented by its own music in short sections: **Earth** by repeated bass notes, **Water** by flowing scales, **Air** by trills, **Fire** by rapid violin flurries.

The following dances express characteristics of the elements. The Loure, for instance, is scored for watery flutes and the earthy bass with fiery violin interjections. After the chirping air for birds in the trees we hear nightingales. Cupid, as always, makes an entry in his Rondeau and brings all the elements together in harmony before they dance a final Rondeau.

Les Eléments was first performed at the Opera in Paris in 1737 where Rebel was director of the '24 violons du Roi', official composer to the King and chief beater - not a hunting or sado-masochistic activity: conducting at that time involved thumping a big stick on the floor to beat time. This caused, incidentally, the downfall of the famous composer Lully who gave himself a fatal foot wound when he badly misdirected his baton whilst directing a 'Te Deum' in celebration, ironically, of the king's own recovery from illness. It was Lully who had recommended Rebel to the king, having talent-spotted him at the age of eight.

#### Ashley Solomon



Active as a soloist and chamber musician, Ashley is the director of Florilegium, and much of his time is spent working and performing with this ensemble that he co-founded in 1991. Since 2001 he has been its director. They have a busy touring schedule and each year performing at major international festivals and concert series throughout Europe as well as the Americas. Florilegium have been recording with Channel Classics since 1993 and have to date made 35 recordings, many of which have garnered international awards. They have given over 1,250 performances over the years and recently their 80<sup>th</sup> performance at London's Wigmore Hall.

As a soloist, he has performed worldwide, including concertos in the Sydney Opera House, Esplanade (Singapore), Teatro Colon (Buenos Aires), Concertgebouw (Amsterdam), Konzerthaus (Vienna), Beethoven-Haus (Bonn), Handel-Haus (Halle) and Frick Collection (New York). He also records as a solo artist with Channel Classics and his recording of the complete Bach's Flute Sonatas was voted the best overall version of these works on either modern or period flute by Gramophone Magazine (February 2017): *Solomon's luminous tone and unfussy command of the complicated melodies conflate into something utterly*



*beautiful. Slow movements are soulful in their infinite variety, fast ones are clever and with a wealth of invention behind them.*

Since 2003 Ashley has been training vocalists and instrumentalists in Bolivia, working on the remarkable collection of music held in archives by the Moxos and Chiquitos Indians. He formed Arakaendar Bolivia Choir in 2005 and has directed them in concerts throughout North and South America, Europe and in the Far East and on their 3 cd recordings. In 2008 Ashley was the first European to receive the prestigious Bolivian Hans Roth Prize, given in recognition of the enormous assistance he has given to the Bolivian native Indians, their presence on the international stage and the promotion and preservation of this music.

Combining a successful career across both theory and practice, Ashley Solomon is Head of Historical Performance at the Royal College of Music, having been appointed a professor in 1994. In 2014 he was awarded a Personal Chair and in July 2017 he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Academy of Music (FRAM) which was conferred on him by HRH Duchess of Gloucester. In 2019 he was also elected a Fellow of the Royal College of Music (FRCM) which was conferred on him by HRH Prince of Wales. Both Fellowships are in recognition of outstanding services to music. Since 2014 Ashley has been working closely with the Royal Collection Trust to curate musical performances in their Royal venues including Buckingham Palace (Queen's Gallery, Ballroom) at Windsor Castle and in the Queen's Chapel.

### Deborah Miles-Johnson



Deborah has had a diverse and exciting career as a singer during the past 40 years. Although she originally trained as a flautist at the Royal College of Music, she took up singing and joined the BBC Singers. After 10 years, she went freelance and performed and recorded with The Sixteen, the Tallis Scholars and other consort groups. As a soloist Deborah sang under many high profile conductors including Sir Simon Rattle and became known for her ability to sing contemporary music, particularly at short notice, and claimed some world premieres. Deborah has also been a member of the Royal Opera House Extra Chorus for the past 25 years and in that time has performed under Sir Antonio Pappano and others

in many operas. Her recordings include *The Beggars Opera*, Puccini's *Suor Angelica* for EMI and excerpts from the role of Carmen with Gerald Finley on his recital disc. Her diverse musical life also includes contributions to the soundtrack of many major international films including *Star Wars*, *Lord of the Rings*, *Harry Potter*, *Shrek* and *Pirates of the Caribbean*. She now increasingly focuses on practising the viola!

## *Linden* baroque orchestra

**Violin 1:** Ben Samson, Gillian Taylor, Alex Ait-Mansour, Ian Cutts, Diane Wyatt, Alan Selwyn,

**Violin 2:** Michael Jenner, Sally Heath, Linda McDonald, Carolyn Liefkes, Liz Hart

**Viola:** Roger Mears, John Sutherland, Deborah Miles-Johnson, (Liz Hart)

**Cello:** Paul Woodmansterne, David Winfield    **Double Bass:** John Mears

**Flute:** Richard Austen (+ recorder), Nikki Wilkinson    **Oboe:** Lysander Tennant, Simon Galton (+ recorder)

**Bassoon:** Mathew Dart    **Harpsichord:** Tom Dewey

**Linden Baroque** was formed in 1983-ish in the front room of a house in Linden Gardens, Chiswick. Unusually - and uniquely anywhere at that time - it combines the talents of young professionals, advanced students and amateurs and many members have moved on to have prominent careers in the early music field. The founding musical director was the well-known baroque oboist, Paul Goodwin. Now pursuing a busy international conducting career, Paul is Honorary President and was followed by Walter Reiter (ex-English Concert) and Steven Devine (Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment) and now Ashley Solomon. Linden Baroque has played at venues from Norfolk to Rome (where it gave the first performances there of Purcell's King Arthur) and Berlin. Together with the Linden Baroque Choir we gave first modern performances of music by Jean Gilles and J. F. Fasch.

Linden Baroque is a registered Charity (No 1014921) and receives no financial support.

**Linden Baroque Concerts for your diary:** (at St Stephens):

**22<sup>nd</sup> June** 'Italians come to London'    **12<sup>th</sup> October** 'Paving the way to the classical era'

**6<sup>th</sup> December** Handel '*Messiah*' (at Heathfield, East Sussex)

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