

# *Linden* baroque orchestra

Director & Harpsichord solo **Steven Devine**  
Counter-tenor **Philip Jones**



Young Mozart  
the  
London Bach  
and  
The Castrato



## **PROGRAMME:**

**JC Bach** Overture to Gioas (1770)

Accompagnato & 'Sventurati! In van mi lagno' from Gioas, Act II

**JC Bach** Concerto in D, op. 1, no. 6 (1763) harpsichord & strings in 3 movements, the last, Variations on 'God save the King'

**Giordani** Queen Mary's Lamentation

**Gluck** 'Che faro' from Orfeo ed Euridice

**JC Bach** Symphony in D, op. 18 no. 4 *Allegro con spirito – Andante – Rondo: Presto*

- Interval -

**JC Bach** Symphony in E major for Double Orchestra, op. 18, no. 5 *Allegro – Andante- Tempo di Minuetto*

**Arne** 'A thousand racking woes' and 'O too lovely' from Artaxerxes (1762)

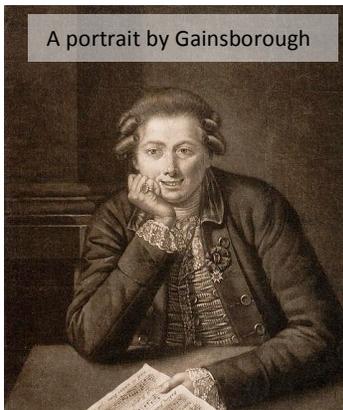
**JC Bach** 'Farewell to Lochaber' (from Four Scotch Songs)

**Mozart** Symphony No 1 E flat maj K16 *Molto allegro – Andante- Presto*

**Giusto Fernando Tenducci** (1735 – 25 Jan 1790) was one of the finest castrati of his generation and spent much of his creative life in London where, a society figure, he was associated with the leading composers of the day and met the child Mozart during his stay in city; Mozart later composed an elaborate 'Scena' for Tenducci (now lost).

He also left a number of compositions and a very fine harpsichord, almost certainly also played by JC Bach and which can be heard to this day on a recording by David Leigh ("Tenducci's Harpsichord", Acanthus International Recordings).

Tenducci was unusual amongst castrati for having married, though this was later annulled on the predictable grounds of non-consummation. The elopement of the teacher with his 15yr old student, the daughter of a respectable and prominent Dublin family, was a great scandal at the time. She wrote about the event later and it seemed that in addition to professing a great passion for her teacher, Dorothea wished to escape an unwanted impending arranged marriage. The marriage to Tenducci proved fortuitous again later when Dorothea became a mother of an otherwise illegitimate child, the father likely the man she married after Tenducci. The unlikely rumours at the time that this was Tenducci's child were scotched by the preserved testimony of the barber-surgeon / part-time butcher who carried out the original mutilation and by a contemporary of Tenducci recording that the singer always carried around a red velvet purse in which were contained the dried remnants of his surgery presumably as some sort of charm.



A portrait by Gainsborough

Tenducci was born in Siena to a poor family, his father a servant to a noble household. The boy was castrated around the age of 11 or 12, for unknown reasons.

Families at that time would have required at least two sons, an heir and a 'spare' - childhood mortality was high. Additional children were a burden on the family resources and one way this could be lessened in Catholic Italy would be to enter the church. A sure way of being accepted was to have a good voice and whilst illegal and officially not condoned, castration for the production of pure toned high voices (women were not allowed in the church choirs) was not an unusual practice; several thousand a year were being produced by the early eighteenth century.

The official position of the church was at odds with its practice and four castrati were officially required at all times for the Sistine Chapel, new ones being enrolled as late as 1903. The last official castrato, who sang in the Sistine Chapel until 1913, was Alessandro Moreschi and he is remembered in a unique but poor quality early recording. It is a poignant and rather sad document from someone clearly well past his prime but it gives an intriguing glimpse into what might have been.

What did a castrato sound like? Neither male, nor female but possessing qualities of both, the castrato voice was not of course ever one type; there were high, soprano and lower, alto voices and they usually changed over the life of the singer. Nowadays castrato roles are taken with more or less success by female contraltos and altos, male altos, falsettists and counter-tenors and in the film '*Farinelli*' an electronically edited amalgam of a male and a female voice. Michael Maniaci, a young 'male soprano' and definitely not a castrato, has a defective maturation of his vocal cords which allows him to sing an excellent, lithe soprano, a compelling suggestion of the lost sound but the the voice remains an enigma it's mystique preserved.

Castration was a chancy business. If sepsis and death were avoided, even a good pre-pubertal voice was often not retained and the vocal outcome was always uncertain. Only a

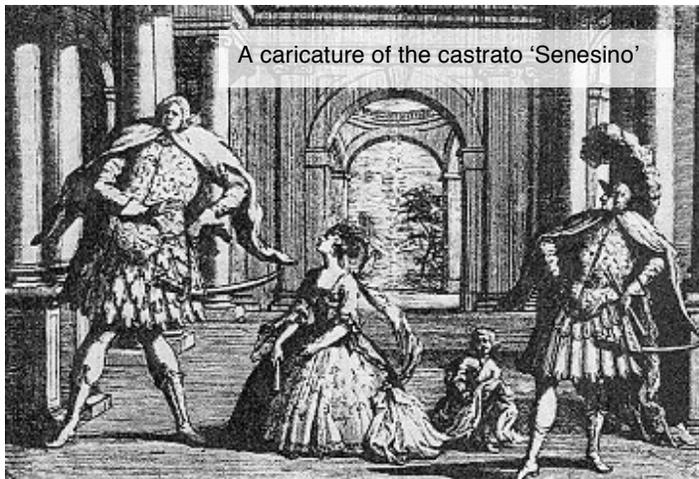
few castrati developed into fine singers with a good career. A lucky few became super-stars. Tenducci's operation was carried out by a travelling part-time barber-surgeon and butcher and luckily, having survived, so did his excellent voice and sure enough he entered the church and became a singer in the choir school.

Tenducci developed into a fine singer, studying and singing in the church and later in private concerts and public opera in Naples and beyond. He was head-hunted by British talent scouts and lured to London to fill the insatiable appetite for new Italian singers to command the opera stage.

Tenducci was a huge success in London, earning fabulous amounts of money and continually wowed audiences at the Kings Theatre and Royal Opera House in operas by among others, Handel, Arne and Gluck. He was a regular attraction at Ranelagh pleasure gardens (a more upmarket competitor to Vauxhall). He also travelled to Bath, Dublin and Scotland generating a similar level of excitement.

Castrati were the rock-stars of their time. Their unique other-worldly sound and huge vocal range coupled with their vocal agility inspired musical compositions of thrilling virtuosity one moment, sumptuous, sustained lushness the next. Due to their physical attributes they could hold extremely long notes and had a great range of volume and beauty of sound throughout. Musical extravagance, combined with the more salacious elements of their lives - they were often notably badly-behaved too - and their often somewhat extraordinary appearance, typically very tall, long-limbed, with small heads and big bottoms and fat thighs, gave them a fascination for the sensation-seeking audiences of the eighteenth century. Tenducci, however, was a good looking man of more normal proportions.

Tenducci was near the end of the castrato line and the appetite for these curiosities gradually waned. The *opera seria* style evolved into other forms less suited to their talents. Mozart, however, wrote one or two operatic roles and other works for castrati throughout his life, notably Idamante in *Idomeneo* and pieces such as *Exultate Jubilate*. The tradition was coming to its end and its sometimes eccentric, temperamental and highly paid practitioners were being lampooned as the novelty wore off and artistic fashions changed.



Tenducci amassed several personal fortunes, such as the earning power of a star castrato but became embroiled in various scandals and ended up in the debtors' prison more than once, escaping and being captured on one occasion. Following his failed marriage he continued to be involved in intrigues with women (castratos were a fashionably safe option for affairs); he had a reputation as a ladies man and claimed he was trying to find his life-companion. He fled England in debt once more and stayed a while in Paris,

performing there and at Versailles. He was visited by both J C Bach and Mozart in Paris, much to his father, Leopold's disapproval, for fear of his spendthrift ways infecting his son. Bach bailed him out of his financial difficulties and he was able to return to London but ended up, after further financial disgrace, finally fleeing to Italy where he continued to be appreciated for his singing until his last days, dying in Genoa aged just 54yr.

**Johann Christian Bach** (1735 - 1782), the 'London Bach', the eleventh and youngest son of the great Johann Sebastian, arrived here in 1762, three years after Handel's death. He became known as John Bach and stayed until his death, residing today in his grave at St Pancras Old Church. His illustrious father died when Johann Christian was 15yrs. Bach considered him his favourite and best pupil. He gradually moved away from the rigid Protestant life of his family which caused his father so many professional problems. Following a period of tutelage under his brother CPE Bach's in Berlin, he studied in Bologna and became organist in Milan Cathedral, converting to Catholicism on the way.

He gained and never lost an easy-going melodic Italian charm, quite different and more modern than his father's music. His early-classical 'galante' style of long song-like melodies against simple accompaniments was in contrast to his father's more harmonic, florid, contrapuntal writing and it served as an inspiration for Mozart and led to the broader classical repertoire, which gradually added more flesh to the bones. Mozart wrote to his father later, that not only did he consider JC Bach a role model but also as a great friend. Bach was responsible for the success of the young Mozart's appearances in London with his sister during the year of their stay in 1764-5: Mozart perched between J C Bach's knees to play duets before the King and Queen. They maintained their relationship in subsequent years and met again when they both visited Paris.

Bach produced delightful, fresh, elegant and often surprisingly vigorous music and Mozart was heavily influenced, particularly by his stage works. Whilst in Italy, Bach had developed a great interest in opera and wrote much for the stage. He heard Tenucci among other star singers and became adept at writing music to show the particular qualities of the individual voices. He came to London on the back of commissions to write two operas for the Kings Theatre and he stayed. Opera was in decline due to financial mismanagement and political shenanigans and the huge fees commanded by the star, mainly Italian, singers. Handel had strategically moved into more economically sensible oratorio and Bach is credited with resurrecting London's operatic fortunes, following the vacuum left by Handel's death. Like Handel, however, he suffered the ups and downs of commercial opera and even his light started to fade by the 1770s.

Of his instrumental works Bach's opus 18 symphonies - out of the 40 odd definitely by him - are quite adventurous for the time. He also wrote many concerti, 25 for keyboard, much delightful chamber music and songs and instrumental works for the Pleasure Gardens at Vauxhall and he became renowned as a teacher was also famous as music master for Queen Charlotte only a year after his arrival. He was a notable concert promoter and with his friend Abel set up a series of popular and influential subscription concerts. He also kept his contacts and influence alive in France and Austria where his music was frequently performed. His health failed and he died young at only 47 years. He and his rather older wife produced no heirs.

**Johannes Chrysostomus Wolfgangus Theophilus Mozart** (1756 -1791) as he was baptized, was born in Salzburg. Mozart's Symphony No 1 was written at the age of eight whilst staying in Chelsea during the Mozart family's 15 month stay in London in 1764/5 (180 Ebury Street: marked with a blue plaque). He was already widely known as a *wunderkind*, having been dragged round Europe over the previous two years to display his - and his sister's - skills and tricks to one and all : today this would be classed as child exploitation. The hope was to gain a good position. Not surprisingly, Mozart visited many of the same European cities visited earlier by J C Bach, so they were certainly exposed to similar musical influences. The young Wolfgang was by all accounts an accomplished performer on various instruments and though he had composed little, already had 3 years' experience of the art. His development was prodigious: over the next five years he was to excel in all the musical forms from chamber music to symphonies and concertos to opera.

Whilst in London, Bach organised Mozart's appearances at court, his accommodation and concert schedule. London was a musically vibrant city, a magnet to Europe's finest musicians of all sorts with a huge audience among the growing middle classes and a lively amateur musical scene feeding a constant demand for new compositions and publishing as well as performance. It would have been a most stimulating environment for a budding composer.

This symphony was the first serious statement of future ambition. Heavily influenced by J C Bach, it is already showing the qualities of the fully formed Mozart but with the inevitable lack of sophistication and awkwardness in places one might imagine. How much his father had to do with it is anyone's guess but one could say the son had already surpassed his father's musical level. JC Bach's music was very modern, a great contrast to the world of Handel, pre-eminent until this point. The lyrical singing style and many of the gestures, elegant balance, simplicity and thematic contrasts were all thoroughly absorbed by Mozart. His father clearly recognised the new direction in music and encouraged his son to explore it and to learn from Bach. Mozart's musical *London Sketchbook* shows many of the stylistic features learned. On leaving England the young composer took a pile of Bach's music with him, so highly did he regard the value to his education and a little later, as exercises, he transcribed three keyboard sonatas by Bach into full concerti. Mozart continued to make flattering and warm personal references to JC Bach throughout his life.

Highly regarded in his own lifetime, Bach's music became seen, after his death, as too simple and straightforward and was quickly forgotten. Mozart's was considered much more intense and sophisticated to the point of being 'difficult' for many contemporary ears but his genius was widely recognized. Today we can see the interesting connections and developments and marvel in the skill and genius of both. Musical history moved on, leaving in its wake the sad fate of the castrato.

**Tommaso Giordani** (c.1730 –1806) was born in Naples to a musical family which moved to London around 1752. He wrote opera for the London stage and also sang. In 1764 he settled in Dublin where he was one of the leading musicians. There he taught John Field, who wrote the first nocturnes. He spent much of the remainder of his life in London running a music shop and shared the running of an opera house. Both were failures.

**Thomas Arne** (1710 -1778) was a leading British composer for the stage working at Drury Lane and Covent Garden. He wrote *Rule Britannia* (a fact unknown to our Prime Minister as recently demonstrated on US television) and *God Save the King*. He was born, comfortably, into a family of upholsterers and was educated at Eton. Like Handel, his family had him study law (which proved useful as Arne was probably the first musician to file for breach of copyright) but music was Arne's passion (he practiced covertly at night on a specially damped spinet smuggled into his room). Arne's opera *Artaxerxes* was wildly successful, and is the only formal Italian style *opera seria* in English. It was performed regularly into the 1830s. It greatly impressed Haydn when he heard it in London. Arne is buried in St Paul's, Covent Garden.

**Christoph Willibald Ritter von Gluck** (1714 – 1787) changed the course of opera, moving it from the highly stylised Italian *opera buffa* and *opera seria* forms towards a more naturalistic and free flowing style based firmly on the drama. He argued that the singers had become too important, the music mere vehicles for their showy vocal gymnastics and the drama predictable and incidental. He got rid of the formal, dry recitative (*recitativo secco*) which broke up the flow. He aimed to make the words and music equally important and return to a powerful dramatic sweep involving great passions and fine emotions. His great operas which have never been out of the repertoire – he wrote 35 in all- paved the way for the

intense music dramas of composers such as Berlioz and Wagner. He was also a great influence on Mozart (interestingly, Gluck's own disciple was Salieri).

Gluck was born in Bavaria and became house composer at London's Kings Theatre in 1745. Unfortunately the theatre was closed for most of his tenure, due to the Jacobite Rebellion. He spent the time studying Handel's works which became a big influence but Handel didn't much care for Gluck, stating his cook knew more about counter-point. *Orfeo ed Euridice*, the first of Gluck's reform operas, was originally written in Italian for the Vienna opera in 1762 with the protagonist cast as castrato. For the French stage in 1774, the opera was revised and Orfeo regained his equipment and became a high tenor.

Notes A.Selwyn

## Text Translations:

### **JC Bach: Gioas - Recitativo**

Oh thou who hast made me out of nothing and imprinted on my forehead thy divine image, make me worthy of these, thine inestimable gifts! Thou hast rescued me in Samary, from the wrath of the impious Athalia, who unmercifully put to death my brothers and seized our throne. Ah, cruel slaughter. Ah, thou perfidious Athalia! Does not some foul remorse devour thy wicked heart? Methinks I do behold e'en now, those innocent creatures weltering in their blood, I count their wounds. Where'er I cast my eyes, I see them. Ah, striking fight! Most cruel slaughter! Oh fatal tragedy! I quake, am chilled with horror and pity. With recollection of such foul and atrocious crimes, here I remain deprived of my soul, motionless and without voice.

### **Aria**

Ye unfortunate brothers! Tis in vain I bewail your fate: and in vain do I ever hear a weak scho repeating all around me, my continual lamentations.

(O thou, eternal God! May thy propitious assistance defend me; and and out of my merciful compassion, deign to assuage at last, the afflictions my heart is overwhelmed with)

### **Gluck: Che faro senza Euridice**

Orfeo has been allowed to bring back his wife from Hades as long as he does not look upon her face until they are back on earth. However, urged by Euridice, he turns around and looks at her and she immediately dies. Grief-stricken, he wonders what he will ever do without his love.

What will I do without Euridice?

Where will I go without my beloved?

Euridice, oh God, answer me!

Yet I still belong to you faithfully.

Euridice! Ah, no help comes to me anymore,

No hope anymore,

Neither from this world, nor from heaven.

**Philip Jones** counter-tenor and ex-chorister of Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral Choir, won scholarships to study at the Royal College of Music. Here he completed a Masters in Advanced Vocal Performance with Distinction, under the tuition of Russell Smythe. He is also gained a First Class Honours in voice at Birmingham Conservatoire, under the tuition of Julian Pike, where he also studied the violin and baroque violin with Michael Seal and Diane Terry as well as receiving coaching from Michael Chance.

A finalist in the Lies Askonas Singing Competition, Philip has appeared in masterclasses with David Daniels and James Bowman, and he is generously supported by the Josephine Baker Trust. He is also a Britten-Pears Young Artist, where he has been coached privately in English Song by Ian Partridge and Ann Murray.

Recent solo work has taken Philip to Pavia in Italy, Nieul in France, National Music Festival in Israel, Cadogan Hall and St John's Smith Square. Recent work includes: Dido & Aeneas with Collegio Ghislieri's Arion Consort, Messiah with David Hill & Florilegium, Christmas Oratorio with the Choir of the Royal Holloway & RCM Baroque orchestra and Come ye sons of Art for Laurence Cummings and the London Handel Festival, Pergolesi's solo cantata Salve Regina and Stabat Mater with Florilegium on tour.

Opera roles include: Orimeno (*Erismena*) for New Chamber Opera, Apollo (*Il Pastor Fido*) conducted by Laurence Cummings for the London Handel Festival, Oberon (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*) for the Benjamin Britten Opera School at the Royal College of Music, title role of Flavio (cover) with English Touring Opera, Narciso (*Agrippina*) for the Barber Institute of Fine Arts, Raphael (*Tobias and the Angel*) for the Buxton Opera Festival, Ottone (*L'Incoronazione di Poppea*), Endimione (*La Calisto*) and Apollo (*Psyche*).

**Steven Devine** Since 2007 Steven has been the harpsichordist with London Baroque in addition to his position as Co-Principal keyboard player with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment. He is also the principal keyboard player for The Gonzaga Band, Apollo and Pan, The Classical Opera Company and performs regularly with many other groups around Europe. He has recorded over thirty discs with other artists and ensembles and made three solo recordings. His latest recording of Bach's Goldberg Variations (Chandos Records) has been receiving critical acclaim - including Gramophone magazine describing it as "among the best". Steven made his London conducting debut in 2002 at the Royal Albert Hall and is now a regular performer there - including making his Proms directing debut in August 2007 with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment. He has conducted the Mozart Festival Orchestra in every major concert hall in the UK and also across Switzerland. In opera, Steven has worked at the Comische Oper in Berlin and alongside Paul McCreesh throughout France. With Opera Restor'd, he has conducted at Wigmore Hall in London, at the Warwick, Lake District, Stour, Norwich and English Haydn Festivals.

Steven is Music Director for New Chamber Opera in Oxford. and with them has conducted performances of Purcell's Dido and Aeneas, Mozart's La Finta Semplice, Stradella's Il Trespolo Tutore, Rossini's Le Comte Ory, Handel's Xerxes, Arne's Artaxerxes, Galuppi's Il Mondo alla Rovessa. He has directed the first performance of the newly-acquired score of Cavalli's Erismena and Sallieri's Falstaff with the same forces. For the Dartington Festival Opera he has conducted Handel's Orlando and Purcell's Dido and Aeneas.

In 2012 Steven is working with Nancy Argenta in Canada, conducting a Handel Oratorio and Bach Cantatas.

Passionate about the role of music in education, Steven is a regular member of the OAE education team, Professor of Fortepiano at Trinity College of Music and a visiting teacher, adjudicator and examiner for many other institutions. He is often heard on radio 3.

One of Steven's proudest (and longest) associations is with the Finchcocks Musical Museum in Kent where holds the post of Director of Development.

**Linden Baroque** was formed in late 1984 by a group of early music enthusiasts 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, amateurs and students and many members have moved on to have prominent careers in the early music field. From the beginning, the musical director was the well-known baroque oboist Paul Goodwin. Now pursuing a busy international conducting career, Paul is Honorary President and Steven Devine, following Walter Reiter, as Musical Director. The orchestra has played at venues from Norfolk to Rome (where it gave the first performances there of Purcell's King Arthur). The instruments are either 18<sup>th</sup> century originals or modern copies - some made by the players themselves and we play at "baroque pitch" of 415Hz.

Together with the Linden Baroque Choir they gave first modern performances of music by Jean Gilles and J F Fasch. Their first CD, issued in 2002 on the Meridian label of music by Fasch, was well received and was played on Radio 3.



## Linden Baroque Orchestra

**Director** Steven Devine

**Flute** Nicholas Jackman, Byron Mahoney

**Oboes** Lysander Tennant, Peter Tsoulos

**Bassoons** Mathew Dart, Martin Clark

**Horns** Stefan Mather, Alex Joyce

**Trumpets** Ian Cumming, Derek Taylor

**Timpani** Felicity Hindle

**Violin I** **Ben Sansom (leader)**, Anja Kuch, Claire Bisdorff, Katarina Djordjevic, Diane Wyatt, Barbara Grant, Michael Blee, Sarah Dodds

**Violin II** Michael Jenner, Linda Macdonald, Judy Taylor, Ian Cutts, Sophie Stevens, Michael Mullen, Simon Hill, Guy-Noel Clarisse

**Viola** Zen Edwards, Andrew Spencer, John Sutherland, Heather Bourne, Jane MacSween, Matyas Csiba

**Cello** Louise Jameson, Chris Lamb, Kate Conway, Helen Brauer, Lucia Capellaro

**Bass** Fergus Walker

**Harpichord** Steven Devine, Christine Thornton

We would like to thank Bill Tuck for the loan and transportation of the timpani

Be sure to visit and bookmark the Linden Baroque web-site

[www.lindenbaroque.org](http://www.lindenbaroque.org)

Next Linden Baroque concert – February 9<sup>th</sup> 2013 “The Art of the Chalumeau” – a celebration of the fore-runner of the clarinet. Details TBA