

# *Linden Baroque Orchestra*



**Dr Thomas Arne** –

a 300<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration  
of one of England's most popular  
composers

**Steven Devine:** harpsichord/director

**Kate Semmens:** soprano

Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> February 6.30pm

St Mary's Church, Stoke Newington N16 9ES

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There is no interval, this being a programme of comfortable proportions. Please feel welcome to bring a drink to your seat. This is a new format and we'd appreciate your opinions

**Overture: Alfred (1740)**

Allegro moderato – Andante – Largo – Tempo di Minuetto

**Cantata: The Morning (1755)**

Andante – Allegro – Recitative – Adagio – Andante

**Harpsichord Concerto No 5 in G**

Minor Largo – Allegro con Spirito – Harpsichord solo- Vivace

**Cantata: The Lover's Recantation(1761)**

Recitative – Allegro – Recitative – Moderato

**Symphony No 4 in C Minor (1767)**

Tempo Moderato – Larghetto - Vivace

**Ariel's Song from 'The Tempest': Where the Bee Sucks**

Andante

*Welcome to our early evening concert of melodious and elegant music from London's mid 1700s.*

**Thomas Arne (1710 - 1779)** was born comfortably into a family of upholsterers in Covent Garden and he was educated at Eton College. He was both baptised and buried in St Paul's Church, Covent Garden where you can see a plaque illustrated with his most famous composition, 'Rule Britannia', from his Masque *Alfred*.

He was crazy about music but just like Handel his family disapproved of his interests and wanted him to study law. He had to practice in secret and again like Handel smuggled a spinet into the house and played, the strings muffled by a handkerchief, whilst the family slept. A meeting with the composer Michael Festing at the opera made him determined to follow his passion and give up his legal training. Festing taught him the violin and introduced him to the musical life of London and Oxford.

Being a Catholic, Arne was barred from most of the important musical posts but was at the centre of theatrical musical activities in London in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century. He composed popular masques and operas for Drury Lane and later Covent Garden to where he defected after a dispute between his sister, the famous soprano Mrs Cibber (who also sang in the first ever Messiah in Dublin) and David Garrick. This led to both opera houses giving competing productions of *Romeo and Juliet* at the same time with music by Boyce in one and Arne in the other.

Arne married Cecilia Young, a soprano who had studied with Geminiani and was much favoured by Handel for whom she performed in several of his premieres. However, she and Arne became estranged for twenty years with rumours of her drinking heavily. Arne said of her that she suffered from 'passions, equal to raving madness' and took up with one of his pupils. During the separation Arne became the leading composer of the pleasure gardens at Vauxhall, Ranelagh and Marylebone writing numerous songs and organ concertos and other instrumental music. In 1759 Arne was awarded an honorary doctorate by Oxford University. He kept up with fashion, adapting to the emerging early classical style of JC Bach and Haydn, particularly in the 4 Symphonies of 1767.

He continued writing for the stage; incidental music, masques and operas including his most popular two, *Comus* and *Ataxerxes* both of which were performed well into the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the latter of which impressed Haydn greatly.

However theatre work dried up in the 1770s and such were the financial difficulties in which he found himself that he failed to keep up support payments for his estranged wife. They were, however, eventually reconciled but after reuniting had only six months together before Arne fell ill and died.

Arne was credited with writing what became recognised as a typically English style of music. During his lifetime it was said that he achieved more popularity than any other English composer including Purcell. Charles Burney wrote, "*The melody of Arne ... was so easy, natural and agreeable to the whole kingdom, that it had an effect upon our national taste*".

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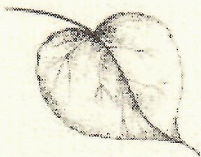
**Steven Devine** has since 2007 been the harpsichordist with London Baroque in addition to his position as Co-Principal keyboard player with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment. He is also the principal keyboard player for The Gonzaga Band, Apollo and Pan, The Classical Opera Company, I Fagiolini 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 next major recording project will be Bach's *Goldberg Variations* for Chandos.

He 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 a 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 Il Comte Ory, Handel's Xerxes, Arne's Artaxerxes, Galuppi's Il Mondo Reverso. Steven is conducting the first performance of the newly-acquired score of Cavalli's Erismena this summer. For the Dartington Festival Opera he has conducted Handel's Orlando.

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.

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

**Kate Semmens** is a soloist with many leading groups and opera companies, and sings with some of the UK's finest choirs. Her opera performances have included Cupid (Venus and Adonis), Mycene (*Isis*), Suzanna (*Le Nozze de Cherubino*), and Mrs P (The Man who mistook his wife for a hat). For New Chamber Opera, performances include Galatea (Acis and Galatea), Second Woman (Dido and Aeneas), Orgando (*Amadigi*), Atalanta (*Xerxes*) and Semira (*Artaxerxes*). She also created the role of Euridice in Caldwells' The Story of Orpheus. Of her *Ciro*, in their production of Stradella's *Il Trespolo Tutore*, Opera Magazine wrote "the clarity and charm of Kate Semmens' soprano was disarming". She sang the title role in the first modern performance of John Stanley's *Tereminta* for Opera Restor'd and the soprano solos for Purcell's Fairy Queen for Peter Holman. Recent highlights include recitals for the Handel House and the London Handel Festival as well as a series of recitals with both recorder player Emma Murphy and violinist Margaret Faultless.



## LINDEN BAROQUE ORCHESTRA

**Violin 1: Ilana Cravitz (leader)**, Kate Eden, Alan Selwyn, Rosemary Galton, Ian Cutts,

**Violin 2:** Michael Jenner, Clive Letchford, Barbara Grant, Linda McDonald, Simon Hill

**Viola:** John Sutherland, Michael Blee      **Harpichord continuo:** Masumi Yamamoto

**Cello:** Alice Manthorpe Saunders, Mary Walton      **Bass:** Andrew Kerr

**Flutes:** Nicholas Jackman, Will Summers      **Oboes:** Simon Galton, Lysander Tennant

**Bassoons:** Maggie Bruce, Mathew Dart      **Horns:** Kate Goldsmith, Richard Lewis

**Linden Baroque**, now in its 26th year, combines the talents of young professionals, amateurs and students and many members have moved on to 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 the renowned keyboard player, Steven Devine, is Musical Director following Walter Reiter. 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. The instruments are at a lower tension than modern concert pitch and their design and set-up means they sound much softer and more subtle than today's steel-strung and multiple-keyed successors, allowing the music to be heard closer to the way it was when composed.

Together with the Linden Baroque Choir, the orchestra has given 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. It is available in the shops and we have just a few remaining for sale at the end of this concert priced at just £10.

### **Linden Baroque's next concert is :**

**20<sup>th</sup> March Bach's B min Mass** In Brighton at the Church of St Michael and All Angels. Tickets available via our website.

**Linden Baroque** is a registered Charity (No 1014921) and, apart from receiving a National Lottery grant in 1999, is entirely self-supporting. We are always looking for sponsorship for individual events or series.

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

Add your name to our mailing list by filling in the attached form and leaving near the exit



**Correction:**

**A slight spelling mistake has occurred in the programme – Our leader's name, Diane, is spelt DIANE MOORE rather than Ilana Cravitz. The management would like to apologise for this error.**