

Sunday, October 30, 2011, 3pm
Hertz Hall

Apollo's Fire Baroque Orchestra

Jeannette Sorrell, *Music Director*

with

Philippe Jaroussky, *countertenor*

PROGRAM

Handel & Vivaldi Fireworks

Antonio Vivaldi (1678–1741) Allegro, from Concerto Grosso in D major,
(arr. Sorrell) after Concerto, RV 511

George Frideric Handel (1685–1759) “Agitato da fiere tempeste,” from *Oreste* (1734)

Handel Orfeo's recitation and aria “Ho perso il caro
ben,” from *Il Parnasso in Festa* (1734)

Vivaldi Violin Concerto in E-flat, Op. 8, No. 5,
“Tempesta di Mare”
Presto — Largo — Presto

Olivier Brault, *violin*

Handel “Se potessero i sospir miei,” from *Imeneo* (1740)

Handel “Con l'ali di costanza,” from *Ariodante* (1735)

INTERMISSION

Handel/arr. Sorrell Prelude in A major, for solo harpsichord

Handel Chaconne from *Terpsichore (Il pastor fido)*,
HWV 8c

Vivaldi “Se mai senti spirati sul volto,” from
Catone in Utica (1735)

Vivaldi/arr. Sorrell Concerto Grosso “*La Follia*” (“Madness”),
after Sonata XII

Olivier Brault & Johanna Novom, *violin*

Vivaldi “Vedrò con mio diletto,” from *Giustino* (1724)

Vivaldi “Frà le procelle,” from *Tito Manlio* (1719)

This performance is made possible, in part, by Patron Sponsors Françoise Stone and Bernice Greene.

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Love & Rage: Operatic Fireworks from the 18th Century

“Farinelli drew every Body to the Haymarket. What a Pipe! What Modulation! What Extasy to the Ear!”—Roger Pickering, London, 1755

TONIGHT’S CONCERT is a tale of two cities—two great baroque cities that attracted the greatest composers and singers of the time. Though 18th-century Venice and London boasted wealth and sophistication, it was their opera stages, above all, that made them the spotlights of the world.

Venice was a city of cosmopolitan decadence. On a given day, Handel and Scarlatti might be found playing a duel as keyboardists at a lavish party, while down the street foreign tourists listened to a famous virtuoso orchestra of orphan girls, led by Vivaldi. Music was the supreme attraction—especially opera, which flourished in eight opera theaters.

In this magical city lived Antonio Vivaldi, a priest (of sorts) who served as music-master for the orphaned girls of the famous *Ospedale della Pietà*, while pursuing an ambitious international career as soloist and opera composer. And in this city, for about five years, visited the young George Frideric Handel—equally ambitious, equally international and equally fascinated by opera. Both composers were destined for tumultuous successes, failures, and upheavals in their careers as they pursued that passionate art form of love and rage: opera.

A Priest Misunderstood

Many people think of Vivaldi as the composer of the Four Seasons. In reality, though, we are still in the early stages of getting to know his work. His 49 operas and approximately 30 sacred works are still in the process of being published. It is therefore surprising to hear prominent musicians talk about Handel as being “the only important baroque opera composer,” and to hear people toss Vivaldi aside as merely a composer of violin concertos. When I ask these people how many of Vivaldi’s operas they know, they look

blank. Likewise, we tend to talk about Vivaldi as a composer of youthful, light music, forgetting that we are primarily acquainted with his concertos—which he wrote for performance by orphan girls. His operas and sacred music could hardly be described as light or playful.

Vivaldi had a meteoric career, achieving the popularity of a rock star and then crashing to complete oblivion. In his concertos for his orphan protégées, he was the great developer of *ritornello* form—the form that became the model for concerto-writing by all European composers of the century, including J. S. Bach. The Italian word “*ritornello*” means something that *returns*. The same word is used to mean the *refrain* in pop music—and indeed, Vivaldi’s *ritornelli* convey the bold and driving sense of rhythm and melody found in pop music. Like pop composers today, he was writing for teenagers. The concerto “*Tempesta di Mare*” combines spirited ritornellos with stormy and virtuosic writing that brilliantly depicts the crashing waves of a tempest.

Scholars believe that the great *follia* or *folia* dance tune originated in Portugal, where girls would engage in the “folly” of a mad dance around the fire. The *follia* is a ground bass in haughty sarabande-like rhythm, traditionally growing faster and faster toward the end. It was said that the girls finished in a state of frenzied collapse. The theme is full of the tension of courtship and seduction, and has served as inspiration for variations by dozens of baroque composers, including Corelli, Marais, Geminiani, C.P.E. Bach and, of course, Vivaldi. Vivaldi’s version, which I believe is the finest of them all, was originally a trio sonata; I arranged it as a *concerto grosso* so that all of us could join in the fray.

Divas and Castrati

Opera performances in 18th-century Venice resembled the atmosphere of a casino—people chatting, playing cards, and shouting their approval or annoyance with the show. The operas were formulaic and the public demanded new ones every few weeks. This was the pop music

of the times. Into this circus walked Handel and Vivaldi, both with ambitions to conquer the fickle public. In 1712, Handel indeed had the Venetian public at his feet with his wildly successful opera *Agrippina*, performed 27 times that year.

Fifteen years later, we see Vivaldi, already an international operatic star, producing perhaps his greatest masterpiece for the stage: *Orlando furioso*. With this opera, Vivaldi declared war on the trivial and formulaic operas that were all the rage. Based on the 16th-century epic poem by Ariosto, *Orlando furioso* is a tragic and heroic *dramma per musica* that explores the fragile strength of humanity. It can be seen as Vivaldi’s manifesto, proclaiming boldly that “great music can and should be in the service of great drama.”

London, too, was a city of rival opera companies and a fickle public. Handel made London his home after his Italian studies were completed, and during his checkered career in the opera world he both made and lost a fortune. In 1729, he became joint manager of the Theatre in the Haymarket, and traveled to Italy to engage seven new singers. But he failed to compete with the rival Opera of the Nobility, who brought in more famous singers such as the castrato Farinelli.

Seven of the eight arias performed tonight were written for the great *castrato* singers of Italy (several of whom went to London to work with Handel). Castrati had entered the musical world in the late 16th century, when papal decree established them in the cathedral choirs. (Women were banned by the Vatican from performing.) By 1680, castrati were the rage. An Italian opera not featuring at least one renowned castrato would be doomed to fail. Singers such as Farinelli and Carestini became the first operatic superstars, earning enormous fees and hysterical public adulation.

By presenting Vivaldi’s neglected arias alongside the well-known ones of Handel, we hope tonight to give you, our Noble Publick, the chance to decide for yourselves: Does Vivaldi deserve a place beside Handel on the baroque opera stage?

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Seven Operas in One Afternoon: A Whirlwind Tour

Handel's *Oreste*

1734 pastiche for Covent Garden. Cobbled together from earlier works by Handel, this opera featured the great Italian castrato Giovanni Carestini in the role of Oreste, the tragic Greek hero who must murder his mother in order to avenge his father's death.

Handel's *Il Parnasso in Festa*

1734 serenade for the wedding of Princess Anne and Prince William of Orange. At a wedding feast on Mount Parnassus, the great musician Orpheus sings the angst-ridden song of longing for his lost beloved: "Ho perso il caro ben."

Handel's *Imeneo*

1740 opera for Lincoln's Inn Fields in London. Act I opens with Tirinto's lamentation for his lost beloved, kidnapped by pirates: "Se potessero I sospir miei." The role of Tirinto was sung by castrato Giovanni Battista Andreoni.

Handel's *Ariodante*

1735 opera for Covent Garden, based on Ariosto's classic poem *Orlando furioso*. The Act I aria "Con l'ali di costanza" ("With wings of faithfulness") was written for Carestini, and contains many thrilling vocal acrobatics.

Vivaldi's *Catone in Utica*

1735 opera for the Teatro Filarmonico in Verona. Composed to a pre-existing libretto by Metastasio, the opera concerns Julius Cæsar ("Cesare"), who sings the tender Act II aria "Se mai senti spirati sul volto." The role of Cesare was sung by castrato Giacomo Zaghini.

Vivaldi's *Giustino*

1724 *dramma per musica* for the carnival celebrations in Rome. Vivaldi recycled much of the music from his earlier works. Anastasio, the emperor of Byzantium, sings the Act I love song "Vedrò con mio diletto." Anastasio was sung by the castrato Giovanni Ossi.

Vivaldi's *Tito Manlio*

1719 opera composed for the Duke of Mantua. Perhaps because of the lavish Mantuan resources, this opera features exuberant orchestral writing and many elaborate ensembles in addition to solo arias. The Act II aria "Frà le procelle" depicts Tito being rescued from a storm at sea. The wild accompaniment shows similarity to the concerto "La Tempesta di Mare."

Jeannette Sorrell

"Agitato da fiere tempeste," from Handel's *Oreste*

ORESTE

Agitato da fiere tempeste
se il nocchiero rivede
sua stella tutto lieto
e sicuro sen va.
Lo ancor spero tra l'ire funeste
dar la calma a quest'alma rubella,
che placata, poi lieta sarà.
Agitato da fiere tempeste....

After the distress of a fierce tempest,
the captain sees again the serene skies.
Secure and joyful, he steers on his course.
So I too hope, amidst the storms
that fly around me, that I will find
calm and joy.

"Ho perso il caro ben," from Handel's *Il Parnasso in Festa*

ORFEO

Dopo d'aver perduto il caro bene,
Saria grande il conforto,
Se si perdesse ancora la memoria funesta,
Oh Dei! Questa pur resta,
E chi fa nell'amor si fortunato,
Non può agli Elisi ancor esser beato.

After having lost my dear beloved,
I would find great solace,
If I only could lose
The fatal memory of her!
That memory, oh gods,
Stays with me, tormenting me.
And so, even if my beloved were happy,
Not even in Heaven could I be happy.

Hò perso il caro ben,
son l'ombre il mio seren,
pietà del mio dolor!
S'unisca al mio martir il vostro bel soffrir,
soccorso a questo cor,
soccorso al mio dolor!
Hò perso il caro ben....

I've lost my dear beloved,
And my sky is dark.
Ah, pity my sorrow!
Oh that in martyrdom I may unite with her
suffering!
Help for this heart,
Help for my sorrow!

"Se potessero i sospir miei," from Handel's *Imeneo*

TIRINTO

Se potessero i sospir miei
far che l'onde
a queste sponde
ritornassero il legno infido:
lo verrai
tutti scogliere là sul lido
i sospiri del mio cor.
Ma non posso far dal mare ritornare
a me Rosmene
Deh! Fu l'ali a questa Arene
la conduca il dio d'amor.
Se potessero....

If only my sighs
could make the waves
bring back the faithless ship
to this shore,
I would spill my heart
in sighs
here on the shore.
But they cannot return
Rosmene to me
from the ocean;
Oh, that the god of love
would bring her back here on his wings!

“Con l’ali di costanza,” from Handel’s *Ariodante*

ARIODANTE

Con l’ali di costanza
Alza il suo volo Amor,
Fa trionfar nel cor
Fede, e speranza.

Non devo più temere
Di sorte il rio tenor,
Ma col mio bel tesoro
Sempre godere.

Love takes its flight
on the wings of constancy,
and causes faith and hope
to triumph in the heart.

No longer need I fear
the cruel course of Fate,
but with my fair beloved
can always rejoice.

“Se mai senti spirarti sul volto,” from Vivaldi’s *Catone in Utica*

CESARE

Se mai senti spirarti sul volto
lieve fiato, che lento s’aggiri,
di son questi gli es tre mi sospiri
del mio fido
che langue me.
E se fia dal suo seno raccolto,
la memoria di tanti martiri
sarà dolce con tanta mercè.

—*Metastasio*

If you ever feel wafting around your face
the breath of a gentle breeze,
say that these are the ardent sighs
of my beloved,
who languishes within me.
And if it is treasured in her heart,
the memory of such suffering
will be sweet with such a reward.

“Vedrò con mio diletto,” from Vivaldi’s *Giustino*

ANASTASIO

Vedrò con mio diletto
l’anima dell’anima mia
Il core del mio cor
pieno di contento.
E se dal caro oggetto
lungi convien che sia
Sospirerò pensando ogni momento....

I will see with joy,
the soul of my soul,
the heart of my heart,
full of contentment.
And if I be far away
from my dear beloved
I will sigh, suffering every moment....

“Frà le procelle,” from Vivaldi’s *Tito Manlio*

LUCIO

Frà le procelle
del mar turbato,
lo sconcolato
il porto avrà.

E all’alme belle,
ricche d’onore,
suò gran valore
legge sarà.

Amid the storms
of the troubled sea,
the unhappy man
will have a haven.

And to beautiful souls
rich in honor,
his great valor
will be law.

APOLLO’S FIRE BAROQUE ORCHESTRA

Jeannette Sorrell, *Music Director*

VIOLIN

Olivier Brault, *concertmaster*
Johanna Novom, *associate concertmaster*
Andrew Fouts, *principal*
Carrie Krause
Adriane Post
Emi Tanabe
Beth Wenstrom

VIOLA

Karina Fox, *principal*
Kristen Linfante

CELLO

Réne Schiffer, *principal*
Steuart Pincombe

CONTRABASS

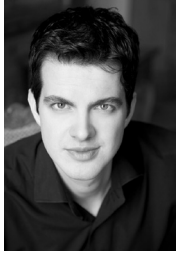
Sue Yelanjian

THEORBO & GUITAR

William Simms

HARPSICHORD

Jeannette Sorrell



Philippe Jaroussky (*counter-tenor*), born in 1978, has already established himself as one of the great vocal artists on the international scene. His awards include “Lyric Artist of the Year”—the French equivalent of a Grammy Award—and “Best Singer of the Year” at the Echo Classic Awards in Munich. Since 2005, he has been in demand at the most prestigious concert halls of Europe, including the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, London’s Wigmore Hall and Barbican Centre, the Vienna Konzerthaus, the Teatro Real in Madrid, the Berlin Staatsoper and the Palais des Beaux Arts in Brussels. He has twice given recitals at Carnegie Hall.

Mr. Jaroussky has collaborated with such conductors and ensembles as William Christie (Les Arts Florissants), Mark Minkowski (Les Musiciens du Louvre), Christina Pluhar (L’Arpeggiata) and Jean-Christophe Spinosi (Ensemble Matheus). His CD recording of Vivaldi opera arias, *Heroes*, was named Disque d’Or in France and won a *Gramophone* Award in the UK. His other recordings include discs of Monteverdi, Vivaldi and French *mélodie* on EMI and Virgin Classics.

Jeannette Sorrell (*conductor & harpsichord*) is recognized internationally as a leading voice among early music conductors. One of the youngest students ever accepted to the prestigious conducting courses of the Aspen and the Tanglewood music festivals, she studied conducting under Leonard Bernstein and Roger Norrington. After harpsichord studies with Gustav Leonhardt in Amsterdam, she won first prize in two international harpsichord competitions.

Since founding Apollo’s Fire in 1992, Ms. Sorrell has attracted national attention and awards for creative programming. She is twice the recipient of the prestigious “American Masterpieces” grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, for the research in early American repertoire. Her guest

engagements as conductor and solo keyboard artist include the Handel & Haydn Society in Boston, the Opera Theatre of St. Louis with the St. Louis Symphony, the Grand Rapids Symphony and the Cleveland Orchestra. She holds awards from the Cambridge Society for Early Music and the American Musicological Society, as well as an honorary doctorate from Case Western University.

Montréal-based violinist **Olivier Brault** (*violin*) enjoys an international career performing with Apollo’s Fire, Ensemble Caprice, Quatuor Franz Joseph and Les Boréades. An accomplished baroque dancer, he also holds a doctorate in baroque violin from the Université de Montréal. He can be heard on many award-winning recordings on the Canadian labels ATMA and Analekta.

Named for the classical god of music and the sun, **Apollo’s Fire** was founded in 1992 by award-winning harpsichordist and conductor Jeannette Sorrell. The ensemble is a collection of creative artists who share Ms. Sorrell’s passion for the baroque ideals of rhetoric and emotional communication (*Affekt*) in music.

Since its sold-out London debut at Wigmore Hall in 2010, Apollo’s Fire is credited with “forging a vibrant, life-affirming approach to the re-making of early music” (*BBC Music Magazine*). The ensemble’s appearances include the Aspen Music Festival, the Boston Early Music Festival series, the Library of Congress, and concerts this year in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Toronto, Boston, Madrid, Lisbon and Bordeaux.

Apollo’s Fire has released 17 commercial CDs and currently records for British label Avie. Since the ensemble’s introduction into the European CD market last summer, the recordings have won rave reviews in the European press. At home in Cleveland, the ensemble enjoys one of the largest subscription audiences of any American baroque orchestra.

CD recordings of Apollo’s Fire, including Vivaldi concertos, are on sale during intermission and after the performance.