



MIDDLEBURY
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P R E S E N T S

Le Consort

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2024

7:30 PM ET

ROBISON HALL, MAHANEY ARTS CENTER



Le Consort

Sophie de Bardonnèche and Augusta McKay Lodge*, Violins
Hanna Salzenstein, Cello · Justin Taylor, Harpsichord

A Journey Through Baroque Europe

Trio Sonata in G-minor, Op 1, No. 1

Antonio Vivaldi

(1678–1741)

Preludio. Grave

Allemanda. Allegro

Adagio

Capriccio. Allegro

Gavotta

Violin Sonata Op. 2, No. 1 (Grave)

Giovanni Battista Reali

(1681–1751)

Trio Sonata in C-Major, Op. 4, No. 1

Arcangelo Corelli

(1653–1713)

Preludio, Largo

Corrente, Allegro

Adagio

Allemanda, Presto

Gavotte et ses doubles

Jean-Philippe Rameau

Excerpts from “Les Indes galantes”

(1683–1764)

Trio Sonata in G Minor, Op. 1, No. 3

Jean-François Dandrieu

(1682–1738)

Adagio

Allegro

Adagio

Giga

“La Folia” Op. 1, No. 12

Giovanni Battista Reali

(1681–1751)

∞ *Intermission* ∞

Sarabanda Amorosa

Nicola Matteis

(ca. 1690–1749)

Sonata of Four Parts in G Minor, Z807

Henry Purcell

(1659–1695)

continued on next page

Trio Sonata in G-Major, BWV 1038

Largo

Vivace

Adagio

Presto

Johann Sebastian Bach

(1685–1750)

Andante, BWV 974 (after Marcello)

Johann Sebastian Bach

Trio Sonata in D Minor, Op. 1, No. 12, “Folia”

Antonio Vivaldi



*This performance is made possible with generous support
from the Paul Nelson Performance Endowment and the Rothrock Family Residency Fund.*

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**Le Consort is grateful to Augusta McKay Lodge for performing with us while Théotime Langlois de Swarte
is away on paternity leave for the birth of his second child.*



Program Notes

Notes by Sophie de Bardonnèche, ©2023

At the beginning of the 18th century, the city of Venice was home to violinists and genius composers. **Antonio Vivaldi**'s talents are beyond question: he has achieved lasting fame as one of the most inventive, prolific and virtuosic composers of the baroque period. The sonata in G minor is the very first work Vivaldi published, when he was 23 years old. Its five sections mingle elements of the sonata da chiesa (Preludio Grave and Adagio) with dances (Allemanda, Capriccio, Gavotta). Vivaldi first plunges us into the intensely contemplative atmosphere of a Venetian church, then surprises us with dance movements in which the violins vie with each other in virtuosity.

As for the violinist-composer **Giovanni Battista Reali**, his life is shrouded in mystery. He published only two opus numbers: a set of 12 trio sonatas in 1709, followed in 1712 by solo sonatas for violin and bass continuo. That his trio sonatas were republished in Amsterdam by Estienne Roger in 1710 is proof that his works enjoyed a degree of success, but we know very little of his biography. He is mentioned as being a violinist in Venice's Teatro San Fantin, then in 1727 as maestro di cappella for the Duke of Guastalla in Emilia-Romagna—after which we lose all trace of him. This Grave is an intimate duet of two violins.

The trio sonata was born during the second half of the 17th century and it was **Arcangelo Corelli**—the master of the genre—who developed, established, and popularized it throughout Europe. A violin virtuoso himself, he devoted his entire output to that instrument. Of the six sets of compositions he left behind, the first four are devoted to the trio with two violins, which became the paramount ensemble of the baroque era. The immensely famed Corelli became a model for his contemporaries, with a strong influence on the composers of his own time and on succeeding generations as well. Publication of his works was keenly anticipated in the whole of Europe, each new opus enjoying a success even greater than the last. The Sonata in C Major is luminous, with a breathtaking third movement.

In Gavotte et ses doubles, the term “double”, derived from the French air of the 17th century, denotes the variety of reprise of a piece. Here, Rameau has an “orchestral” bent; his variations are based on rhythm, harmony, melodic variation, and the interplay between registers.

Les Sauvages is undoubtedly **Jean-Philippe Rameau**'s most famous piece. Originally for harpsichord, it was orchestrated and inserted into the new “entrée” added in 1736 in his celebrated Opéra Les Indes Galantes. Rameau's source of inspiration was the presentation, in 1725, at the Théâtre des Italiens, of Indians from Louisiana dancing to the sounds of their instruments. Influenced by the exoticism of this encounter, he translated into music this obsessive rhythmic repetition.

The trio sonatas of **Jean-François Dandrieu** really do deserve a place in the very front rank of the chamber music of the period. They show a mastery of style as well as a variety of astonishing character types. There are dances overflowing with energy, a playful, spirited counterpoint between the three

voices, movements that seem suspended in time by the most expressive italianate ritardandi, with articulation, phrasing, rhythm, sweetness, passion—full of life. So who was Dandrieu? Born in 1682, in the heart of Paris, on l'Île de la Cité, Jean-François grew up in the family home. From his earliest years he devoted himself to music: even as a young boy he was able to play the harpsichord with tremendous facility. In 1687, aged only five, he presented himself at the court of Versailles before the Princess of the Palatinate, to whom he later dedicated his trio sonatas. On reaching adulthood, Dandrieu decided to consecrate himself to God, taking holy orders. Dandrieu's Op. 1 sonatas carry special meaning for us, as they were the very first works we read during our initial rehearsals! Perhaps we felt a special connection since he was about our ages—23—when he published them. Whatever the reasons, we felt a common bond with his Sonata in G minor. From our very first notes together we discovered the darting motifs of those descending appoggiaturas and there was, quite simply, a feeling we all shared: a common rhythm. The ensuing rapid, light-footed Allegro is marked by a fugue that is completely Italian in character. The third movement, meditative, quasi-liturgical, is a contemplation in an introspective lyrical form, without a trace of ostentation. The final Gigue brings us back to the French style, with its bass voice recalling the full, earthy style of a Forqueray. For all of us, it was the moment of falling in love, both musically and emotionally. This sonata has become our anthem, our watchword, an emblematic banner of our vision of the trio sonata.

Reali's Folia has a highly original instrumentation—Reali adds an extra violoncello concertante part to the two violins and continuo, to enrich the mellifluous dialogue between the violins. He also introduces an extremely novel feature by altering the meter, changing the triple time of the Folia to duple time for the last two variations. The effect is quite dramatic, making the performer increase the pace (well before the term 'accelerando' had appeared in any score!) Between the Corelli tradition and the influence of Vivaldi, Reali establishes his own eminently personal style, dramatizing the play of textures, resonances, and fragmented phrases in sumptuous and inspired harmonic language. `

Although born in Naples, **Nicola Matteis**—a violinist of supreme accomplishment—spent his entire musical career in London. He brought to England an Italian lyricism and virtuosity, and created an eccentric type of Anglo-Italian melancholy which can be heard in the Sarabanda Amorosa.

The greatest musical genius of late 17th-century London was undoubtedly **Henry Purcell**, an extraordinary musician present on all fronts. At a time when both the form and the instrument already belonged to a fast-disappearing world, he wrote the last fantasias for viols in the great English tradition. He was also enthusiastic about the newer violin and the Italian sonata. Purcell had his Sonatas of III Parts printed at his own expense in 1683, a significant risk for the youthful composer, still only 24 years old. And sadly, these works remained misunderstood: the 1683 collection, along with a successor of 1697 published by his widow after his death, sold so poorly that Frances Purcell was forced to remainder them, without being able to sell off her stock. Purcell, so beloved for his operas, had bad luck with his sonatas. Yet from the very beginnings of our ensemble we have performed the wonderful Sonata VI. Built on a ground that repeats itself tirelessly, this work is a compendium of Purcell's genius which questions the human soul in its most intimate aspects, and through its emotional intensity reminds us of Dido's *Lament* by the same composer.

Bach's trio Sonata BWV 1038 is enigmatic. While the surviving material is in Bach's handwriting, the source is unsigned and its authenticity regularly questioned. In four movements, this sonata in G major is inspired by the Italian style. This influence is even more visible in the Andante BWV 974, adapted from a work originally by the venetian composer Marcello for oboe and orchestra. Bach discovered the score and decided to transcribe it for his own instrument, the harpsichord.

The Sonata No. 12, La Folia by **Vivaldi** is a masterpiece of the trio sonata repertoire, irresistible in its sheer momentum. The variations are built up impressively: by turns slow and fast, introspective and passionately fiery, they unfold organically with stylistic mastery, taking performers and listeners alike on a journey from intimacy to virtuosity.



Biography

Le Consort

Théotime Langlois de Swarte, Violin*

Sophie de Bardonèche, Violin

Hanna Salzenstein, Cello

Justin Taylor, Harpsichord

“Ravishing, exhilarating and uniquely beautiful.”—*BBC Music Magazine*

Le Consort, a leading baroque chamber ensemble co-directed by harpsichordist Justin Taylor and violinist Théotime Langlois de Swarte, comprises four young musicians who interpret the trio sonata repertoire with enthusiasm, sincerity, and modernity. The group's mission is to bring together compelling musical personalities in the service of chamber music from the repertoire of the 17th and 18th centuries. From Corelli to Vivaldi, from Purcell to Couperin, the dialogue between the two violins and the basso continuo displays a wealth of contrasts between vocality, sensuality, and virtuosity. Le Consort takes this genre, the quintessence of baroque chamber music, and interprets it with a personal, dynamic, and colorful language.

With a core which has remained constant since their founding in 2016, Le Consort performances approach a level of musical integration typically found in long-standing string quartets. In 2017 they claimed First Prize and the Audience Prize at the Loire Valley International Early Music Competition, chaired by William Christie. Their recordings, including OPUS 1 (featuring the unpublished sonatas of



Jean-François Dandrieu), and Specchio Veneziano (trio sonatas of Vivaldi alongside music of his less familiar contemporary, Giovanni Reali), have earned numerous awards and extensive critical acclaim.

In the 2023–24 season, Le Consort will make its North American debut with concerts in cities across the continent, including Montreal, Boston, Chicago, New Orleans, Kansas City, Berkeley, La Jolla, Vancouver, and many others. The ensemble has performed extensively throughout Europe, including at Radio France Auditorium and Louvre Auditorium (Paris); the Dijon Opera; the Deauville Easter Festival; the Arsenal in Metz; the MA Festival Brugge and in Antwerp de Singel (Belgium); the Pau Casals Foundation (Spain); and at the Misteria Paschalia Festival in Krakow (Poland). They have also been featured on numerous broadcasts on France 3, France Musique, France Inter, and Radio Classique.

Le Consort is in residence at the Banque de France, the Singer-Polignac Foundation, and the Abbaye de Royaumont.

**Le Consort is grateful to Augusta McKay Lodge for performing with us while Théotime Langlois de Swarte is away on paternity leave for the birth of his second child.*

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www.leconsort.com

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