

LSO St Luke's

# CHAMBER MUSIC

BBC  
RADIO 3

**BAROQUE FANCIES  
RACHEL PODGER AND FRIENDS**

Friday 3 November 2023 1–2.05pm  
Jerwood Hall, LSO St Luke's

Heinrich Biber Sonata representativa  
Georg Philipp Telemann Fantasie No 7 in E-flat major  
Johann Jakob Froberger Toccata in D major  
Heinrich Biber Sonata No 6 in C minor, 'The Agony in the Garden'  
Robert de Visée Chaconne for lute  
Georg Philipp Telemann Fantasie No 3 in F minor  
Francesco Maria Veracini Violin Sonata No 12 in D minor

Rachel Podger violin  
Elizabeth Kenny lute  
Marcin Świątkiewicz harpsichord

Recorded for future broadcast on BBC Radio 3

LSO

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## **ACOUSTIC TRIAL**

While LSO St Luke's undergoes an acoustic trial, there will be window coverings in place until the end of January 2024. We welcome any feedback you may have on the impact of these coverings, be it acoustically, aesthetically and operationally. Please email [tickets@lso.co.uk](mailto:tickets@lso.co.uk) to share feedback.

## **THE CRYPT CAFÉ & BAR**

The Crypt café and bar is open from one hour before the concert and during the interval (where applicable), selling hot and cold drinks. Please note we can accept card payments only. Only cold drinks will be permitted inside the Jerwood Hall.

## **PROGRAMME NOTE WRITER**

**Wendy Thompson** studied at the Royal College of Music, before taking an MMus in musicology at King's College, London. In addition to writing about music she is Executive Director of Classic Arts Productions, a major supplier of independent programmes to BBC Radio.

*In accordance with the requirements of Islington Council persons shall not be permitted to stand or sit in any gangway.*

*The taking of photographs and the use of recording equipment are strictly forbidden without formal consent from LSO St Luke's.*

*Please make sure that digital watch alarms and mobile phones are switched off during the performance.*

# Sonata representativa

Heinrich Biber



1669



9 minutes

During the second half of the 17th century, as Italian violin music and performers were becoming increasingly fashionable throughout Europe, a parallel tradition combining virtuosity with a native love of polyphony took root in German-speaking nations. Its prime exponent was the Bohemian-born Heinrich Biber, one of the outstanding violinists of his time. Biber began his career in central Moravia, but in 1670 moved to Salzburg to work at the court of the Prince-Archbishops.

Among his works for violin, which feature brilliant passage-work over ostinato basses, multiple stoppings and polyphonic passages, as well as extensive use of scordatura (unusual tunings of the strings), is the *Sonata representativa*. This extraordinary piece, which dates from around 1669, is a very early example of programme music. It was inspired by Athanasius Kircher's 1650 compendium *Musurgia Universalis*, in book one of which he attempted to reproduce in musical notation the songs of various birds.

Biber's *Sonata representativa*, has nine sections, beginning with an Allegro, and ending with an Allemande. In between are seven sections in which the violinist imitates, respectively, the songs of a

nightingale (Nachtigall), cuckoo (Cucu), the croaks of a frog (Frosch), the clucking of a hen and the crowing of a cockerel (Die Henne und Der Hann), the call of a quail (Die Wachtel), the mewling of a cat (Die Katze), and finally, a musketeers' march (Musquetio Mars).

# Fantasia No 7 in E-flat major

Georg Philipp Telemann



1735



4 minutes

Although Johann Sebastian Bach and George Frideric Handel are now considered to be the greatest masters of the Baroque era, their contemporary Georg Philipp Telemann (who outlived both of them) was more widely respected during his long lifetime. It was Telemann, not Bach, who was the Leipzig town council's first choice in 1723 for the vacant post of music director at the Thomaskirche. Telemann was working as music director in Hamburg at the time – his salary there was promptly upped in order to keep him, and Bach took the post in Leipzig instead.

Telemann was one of the most prolific composers in the entire history of music, and his works were widely published and disseminated. Among them was a set of 12 Fantasias for solo violin, published in 1735, and aimed at the profitable domestic market. The violin writing in these multi-section Fantasias reveals both contemporary Italian influence and an enduring attachment to German polyphony. Fantasia No 7, which is cast in the more modern 'galant' style, has four sections in a slow-fast-slow-fast pattern: an ornate Dolce, a lively Allegro, a minor-key Largo and a dance-like Presto.

# Toccatà in D major

Johann Jakob Froberger



1656



3 minutes

This keyboard Toccata is by another German composer and virtuoso keyboard player who was much esteemed in his lifetime, but has generally since receded into the shadows. Johann Jakob Froberger was born into a musical family in Stuttgart, but aged 18 he moved to Vienna, where he became organist to the Hapsburg court. He spent several extended periods of study in Italy, and then travelled widely, visiting various cities in Germany and the Low Countries as well as Paris and London.

He returned to Vienna in 1653, but after the death of Emperor Ferdinand III he spent his final decade as music teacher to the dowager duchess of Württemberg. Only two of Froberger's compositions were published in his lifetime: the rest survived in manuscript.

He is credited with consolidating the four main components of the Baroque suite, but his solo keyboard music, including fantasias, canzonas, ricercars, capriccios and 29 toccatas, are mostly exercises in German polyphony. The toccatas, such as this one in D major, alternate between improvisatory and imitative polyphonic sections.

# Sonata No 6 in C minor, 'The Agony in the Garden'

Heinrich Biber



1674



9 minutes

Chief among Biber's compositions is a set of 15 'Mystery' Sonatas for violin and continuo. These were evidently intended to form a part of the traditional Rosary devotions which took place during September and October in Salzburg. During the Rosary devotions, the congregation would process around a church, pausing to reflect on the Sacred Mysteries, a cycle of religious paintings or sculptures portraying episodes in the lives of Christ and His mother.

Each Sonata in Biber's original manuscript has an appropriate engraving depicting each of these pasted at its head. Sonata No 6 in C minor depicts Christ's solitary vigil in the Garden of Gethsemane the night before his arrest and execution. It is an example of the scordatura tuning of which Biber's patron was very fond: the two lower violin strings are tuned a semitone higher and the two upper ones a tone lower than normal, lending a poignancy to this eloquent sonata. There are two movements: the first has four sections (Lamento – Adagio – Presto – Adagio); the second has an Aria-like opening leading to two Adagio sections.

# Chaconne for lute

Robert de Visée



1699



3 minutes

The French musician Robert de Visée was a fine player of both guitar and theorbo, or bass lute. In 1680 he became a chamber musician to Louis XIV and was much in demand for his performances at court soirées during the later years of the Sun King's reign. He taught the guitar to Louis XV.

His Chaconne in G is an example of a genre very popular in French Baroque music, in which a sequence of elaborate variations unfolds over a repeated ground bass pattern. This particular example comes from the Saizenay Manuscript, an important source of French Baroque music for lute and theorbo compiled in the late 17th century by de Visée's pupil Jean-Etienne Vaudry, an amateur musician and local politician who was lord of the manor at Saizenay in the mountainous Jura region of Burgundy-Franche-Comté.

# Fantasia No 3 in F minor

Georg Philipp Telemann



1735



4 minutes

This is the third of Telemann's 1735 set of 12 Fantasies for solo violin. The key – F minor – suggests a lament, and the opening Adagio section with its triple stopping (playing on three strings simultaneously) has a desolate quality. It's followed by a fast fugue marked 'Presto', based on a three-note theme. A short, improvisatory section marked 'Grave' leads into a final Presto.

# Adagio and Ciaccona from Violin Sonata No 12 in D minor

Francesco Maria Veracini



1744



10 minutes

These are the last two movements from Francesco Maria Veracini's last published Violin Sonata within a set of twelve Sonate accademiche, dedicated to the Elector of Saxony. Veracini, who was regarded as one of the finest violinists and composers for the violin of his time, led a life full of incident. He broke his leg badly after leaping or falling from an upstairs window in Dresden during a violent altercation with some German musicians, and later survived a shipwreck in the English Channel in which he lost two of his cherished Stainer violins.

Noted for his arrogant and eccentric nature, this Florentine musician spent his career flitting between Italy, Dresden, and London (where he was 'greatly applauded'). He 'built his freaks on a good foundation', according to the music historian Charles Burney, who praised Veracini's bowing, vibrato, arpeggio technique, and his loud and clear tone. According to Burney, Veracini was 'an excellent contrapuntist', which is evident in the elaborately contrapuntal Ciaccona (the Italian version of a chaconne, based on a major key descending ground bass) which concludes this Sonata.

# Rachel Podger

## violin



© Broadway Studios

Rachel Podger, 'the unsurpassed British glory of the Baroque violin' (*The Times*), has established herself as a leading interpreter of the Baroque and Classical music periods. She was the first woman to be awarded the prestigious Royal Academy of Music/Kohn Foundation Bach Prize in October 2015, *Gramophone* Artist of the Year 2018, and Ambassador for REMA's Early Music Day 2020. A creative programmer, she is the founder and Artistic Director of the Brecon Baroque Festival and her ensemble Brecon Baroque. Podger is Patron for the Continuo Foundation.

Following an exciting and innovative new collaboration, *A Guardian Angel*, with the vocal ensemble VOCES8, she was thrilled to be one of the Artists in Residence at the Wigmore Hall throughout the 2019/20 season. The series featured Podger in all-Bach performances as a soloist and with

Brecon Baroque. Alongside this, Podger and Christopher Glynn recorded the world premiere of three previously unfinished Mozart sonatas which were completed by Royal Academy of Music Professor Timothy Jones for release in March 2021.

Podger featured in The VOCES8 Foundation's LIVE From London festival in a new advent version of *A Guardian Angel*. She performed solo Bach for *Gramophone* Magazine's Winners' Digital Gala, appeared in Bitesize Proms, BOZAR at Home, Living Room Live, Baroque at the Edge, and a collaborative disc by Musicians For Musicians *Many Voices on a Theme of Isolation*. Podger presented BBC Radio 3's *Inside Music* and directed a new arrangement by Chad Kelly, *The Goldberg Variations Reimagined*.

Podger is a dedicated educator and holds an honorary position at both the Royal Academy of Music and the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama. She also has a relationship with The Juilliard School in New York.

# Elizabeth Kenny

## lute



© Benjamin Ealovega

Elizabeth Kenny is one of Europe's leading lute players. Her playing has been described as 'incandescent' (*Music and Vision*), 'radical' (*The Independent on Sunday*) and 'indecently beautiful' (*Toronto Post*). In 20 years of touring she has played with many of the world's best period instrument groups and experienced many different approaches to music making. She played with Les Arts Florissants from 1992 to 2007 and with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment from 1997 to 2015 and still returns to initiate 17th-century projects such as *The Hypochondriack* and *A Restoration Tempest*.

Her research interests have led to critically acclaimed recordings of William Lawes, Henry Purcell and John Dowland, and to the formation of her ensemble Theatre of the Ayre. As well as regular collaborations with singers such as Robin Blaze, Ian

Bostridge and Nicholas Mulroy in recital, she has a great fondness for the viol consort repertory and has recorded William Lawes' *Royal Consort* with Phantasm, as well as Dowland's *Lachrime* (2016). Kenny also appears alongside Ian Bostridge on Warner Classic's *Shakespeare Songs*, which won a 2017 Grammy Award for 'Best Classical Solo Vocal Album'.

As a soloist she is committed to a diverse range of repertoire, from the *ML Lutebook* (a much-praised CD released on Hyperion records) to new music for lute and theorbo. She has premiered works by James MacMillan, Heiner Goebbels and Benjamin Oliver, and these were recorded alongside 17th-century solo music for theorbo in October 2018 for Linn records. With Theatre of the Ayre she judged the National Centre for Early Music's Composers' Award in 2016.

Liz Kenny is Director of Performance at the University of Oxford, and professor of Lute at the Royal Academy of Music. She was Professor of Musical Performance and Head of Early Music at Southampton University from 2009 to 2018. She was an artistic advisor to the York Early Music Festival from 2011 to 2014.

# Marcin Świątkiewicz

## harpsichord



© Adam Golec

One of the most renowned Polish harpsichordists, Marcin Świątkiewicz was awarded the prestigious Polityka Passport Award in 2015. His expertise extends to performing and improvising on various historical keyboard instruments. As a soloist and conductor, he maintains regular collaborations with esteemed ensembles such as Brecon Baroque, Arte dei Suonatori, and Capella Cracoviensis.

Świątkiewicz's exceptional artistry is reflected in his diverse discography, having recorded for distinguished labels like BIS, Channel Classics, CPO, Rubicon, Accent, Alpha, Decca, Linn Records, and DUX. Additionally, his performances have been featured on radio and television broadcasters throughout Europe. In 2015, he released an album showcasing harpsichord concertos by Johann Gottfried Mützel, which received the prestigious Diapason d'Or award.

In 2017 CPO launched his multi-award-winning CD *Cromaticca*. In 2018, he recorded J S Bach's harpsichord concertos for Channel Classics, and his interpretation of the Goldberg Variations was published by Rubicon Classics in 2020. Other notable accomplishments include the recording of Heinrich Biber's Rosenkranzsonaten with Rachel Podger and David Miller, which earned a *Gramophone* Award.

Beyond his virtuosity in Baroque repertoire, Świątkiewicz collaborates with symphony orchestras, showcasing his talent for 20th and 21st-century harpsichord concertos. In 2021, he played a pivotal role in the world premiere recording of *Drach. Dramma per musica* by Aleksander Nowak and Szczepan Twardoch, in collaboration with the Aukso Orchestra. Świątkiewicz's dedication to the advancement of music and education is evident through his role as a professor at the Academy of Music in Katowice, where he imparts his knowledge and passion to aspiring musicians.

# FUTURE CONCERTS

## AT LSO ST LUKE'S

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Thursday 9 November 1pm

### BAROQUE FANCIES

**Johann Sebastian Bach**

Chromatic Fantasy & Fugue in D minor

Plus music by **Wilhelm Friedemann Bach**,  
**Viktor Kalabis**, **William Byrd** and more.

**Mahan Esfahani** harpsichord

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Thursday 16 November 1pm

### BAROQUE FANCIES

**Johann Sebastian Bach** Sonata in E major

Plus music by **George Frideric Handel**,  
**Nicola Fiorenza**, **Georg Philipp Telemann**  
and more.

**Lucie Horsch** recorder

**Tom Foster** harpsichord

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Thursday 8 February 1pm

### SPANISH CONNECTIONS

**Joaquín Turina** Scene andalouse

**Maurice Ravel**

Violin Sonata No 1, 'Posthume'

**Enrique Granados**

The Maiden and the Nightingale

**Joaquín Turina** Piano Trio No 1

**Nash Ensemble**

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Thursday 15 February 1pm

### SPANISH CONNECTIONS

**Franz Liszt** Spanish Rhapsody

Plus music by **Manuel de Falla**, **Maurice Ravel**, **Claude Debussy** and **Joaquín Turina**.

**Juan Pérez Floristán** piano

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