



LEEDS  
BAROQUE  
Choir & Orchestra

REGISTERED CHARITY NO: 1116610

The Old Woollen, Sunny Bank Mills,  
83-85 Town St, Farsley,  
Pudsey LS28 5UJ



3:00pm Sunday 26 June 2022

# *A Venetian Summer!*

LEEDS BAROQUE ORCHESTRA

directed from the violin by **Asuka Sumi**

## *Programme*

£2

Leeds Baroque is a registered charity No.1116610



**Claudio Monteverdi :**

Ballet from 'Il Ballo delle Ingrata' (1608, Mantua / 1638, Venice)

**Giovanni Legrenzi :**

Sonata Prima a 4 violini e basso from La Cetra Op.11 (1673, Venice)

**Johann Rosenmüller :**

Sonata Undecima a 5 from Sonate a 2, 3, 4 e 5 stromenti da arco et altri (1682, Nuremberg)

**Tomaso Albinoni :**

Sonata VI in g minor from Sinfonie e Concerti a 5 (1700, Venice)

1. Adagio – 2. Allegro – 3. Grave – 4. Allegro

---

**Interval**

---

**Giuseppe Brescianello :**

Allegro from Sinfonia I in D major from 12 Concerti e Sinfonie Op.1 (1738, Amsterdam)

**Antonio Vivaldi :**

Le Quattro Stagioni 'L'Estate' from 'il Cimento dell'armonia edell'inventione' Op. 8 (1725, Amsterdam)

Concerto I for 4 violins in D major from L'Estro Armonico Op.3 (1711, Amsterdam)

1. Allegro – 2. Largo e Spiccato – 3. Allegro

Concerto for Strings A major RV158

1. Allegro molto – 2. Andante molto – 3. Allegro



Welcome to Leeds Baroque's 'A Venetian Summer!' Concert.

In the 17th and early 18th centuries, the Republic of Venice, known as *La Serenissima*, provided an environment of unparalleled richness and variety for music-making in Europe. Musicians working in the coveted position of *maestro di capella* for St. Mark's Basilica were in great demand, composing operas for theatres in the city and thus capturing the ears of many foreign audiences who chose the city as their destination whilst on The Grand Tour. Many renowned musicians also worked as music teachers for Ospedale; an orphanage to give shelter and education to abandoned children. While boys had to leave the institution for trade schooling when they reached the age of fifteen, girls received an ongoing musical education, and the most talented among them stayed and became members of the orchestra and choir. Beyond these institutions, the city dominated Italy's music publication more broadly, producing mainly vocal works from solo songs to large scale choral works, but ample instrumental works as well until its presses were finally overtaken by music publishers in Bologna and Amsterdam.

One specific musical director (*Maestro di Capella*) appointed in 1613 at St. Marks made a special impact -- Claudio Monteverdi. Monteverdi was at the time the sole foreigner to be appointed to the job, having developed his career in Mantua under the patronage of the Gonzaga family.

Our opening piece, *Il Ballo delle Ingrate* (The Ballet of the Female Ingrates) is a semi-dramatic ballet by Monteverdi. It was first performed in Mantua in 1608 as part of the wedding celebrations for Francesco Gonzaga (a son of Vincenzo Gonzaga who was the major patron of Monteverdi) and Margaret of Savoy. Thirty years later, the piece was revised and appeared as part of Monteverdi's famous Eighth Book of Madrigals in Venice.

The story of the ballet takes place in the mouth of the Underworld. Venus and Cupid visit Pluto, King of the Underworld. The music depicts a dance of women rejected in love who, in Monteverdi's words, move "two by two...with grave steps" as Pluto sings a warning to the women in the audience.

After the grand opening with *Ballo*, you will hear three *Sonata da Chiesa* (church sonatas), a genre which flourished in the mid to late century. In this period, the techniques of bowed instruments proliferated and rapidly advanced, and string ensembles gained popularity over *piffari* (trombone, cornets and trumpets) in the liturgical service and music publication in general.

Giovanni Legrenzi (1626 – 1690) built his successful career in Bergamo and Ferrara before settling in Venice. On the strength of eight volumes of works from a Venetian publisher, he joined the elite world of opera in the city, gaining his first performances in 1664 (another 18 operas were to follow). In 1670, he became a music teacher in one of the *Ospedale* and eventually joined the pantheon of directors of *Maestro di Cappella* of St. Mark's, even though his health failed him shortly after his appointment. The sonata we are performing is from his fourth collection entitled *La Cetra*. 'Cetra' is an Italian descendant of *chitarra*, an ancient, plucked instrument. Legrenzi was the first to use the word to entitle sets of instrumental works. Showing a further chain of referents, Vivaldi later called his *Concerto Op.9 La Cetra*.

Legrenzi's collection consists of 18 sonatas in varied combinations of string ensembles from two to four voices including curious sets of sonatas for four violins. These provide an enjoyable close interaction of the players as the individual parts link the chain of musical motives.

Johann Rosenmüller (1619-1684) is a German composer who was born in Saxony and studied at the University of Leipzig. He served as organist of the Nikolaikirche Leipzig from 1651 and had been assured of advancement to cantor. However, in 1655 he was involved in a scandal in which he was implicated in homosexual activities. To avoid prison, he fled to Italy. By 1658 he was employed at Saint Mark's in Venice where his talents brought him into contact with prominent Italian composers like Legrenzi, who influenced his composition style shown in the sonata we perform today. In his later years, Rosenmüller also taught at the *Ospedale della Pietà*, the orphanage

which became famous for the string orchestra Vivaldi taught decades later.

If Monteverdi was a transplant and Rosenmüller a refugee, Tomaso Albinoni (1671-1751) was a true Veneto; he never left the city. Albinoni also remained a dilettante, if a talented one – a man of independent means who delighted himself (and others) through music. The sonata we are performing is from *Sinfonie e Concerti a Cinque* Op.2 published in 1700 in Venice, the precise year of the landmark publication in Rome of the Sonata collection for violin by Arcangelo Corelli. Albinoni adopted the old-fashioned instrumentation of the former century, composing two viola parts, just as in Rosenmüller's sonata you have just heard. Even amid these nods to the past, however, you can still hear how the music itself suggests the coming century, featuring four completely independent movements in slow-fast order, with tonal integrity, and full of Corellian suspensions.

The opening piece for the second half of the concert is the first movement of the '*Sinphonia*' by Giuseppe Antonio Brescianello (1690-1758), an Italian violinist-composer who was active in Munich and Stuttgart. It is a good example of the Venetian style *sinfonia* exported to Northern parts of Europe in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

And now you feel the breeze of a Venetian hot summer day with the following three concerti by Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741), the famous composer and an exceptionally virtuosic violinist of the time. His best-known work, *The Four Seasons* was published in 1725, not in Venice, but in Amsterdam, together with eight additional concertos, as *Il cimento dell'armonia e dell'inventione* (The Contest Between Harmony and Invention). Unusually, Vivaldi published the concerti with accompanying sonnets (their origin remains unclear, but it is possible that he wrote them himself) in a type of programme music. The poems interpret the spirit of each season which his music vividly

depicts with his staggering imagination and prodigious violin technique.

Here is the sonnet for the Summer.

*Beneath the blazing sun's relentless heat  
men and flocks are sweltering,  
pines are scorched.*

*We hear the cuckoo's voice; then sweet songs of the  
turtle dove and finch are heard.*

*Soft breezes stir the air...but threatening north wind  
sweeps them suddenly aside. The shepherd trembles,  
fearful of violent storm and what may lie ahead.*

*His limbs are now awakened from their repose by fear  
of lightning's flash and thunder's roar, as gnats and flies  
buzz furiously around.*

*Alas, his worst fears were justified, as the heavens roar  
and great hailstones beat down upon the proudly  
standing corn.*

In 1703, Vivaldi became maestro di violino at the Ospedale and for the next thirty years he composed most of his major works while working there. His volume of twelve concerti, entitled *L'estro armonico* (The Harmonic Inspiration), was his first publication in the genre and were probably written to be performed by the girls in the Ospedale. His orchestral writing is remarkable especially in the concerto for four violins; witness the rapid conversations between soloists, echoing effect, and the power of full orchestral 'Unisono' in the slow movement and the ending.

The last concerto is for the orchestra. Vivaldi wrote abundant concertos – numbering about five hundred, some might say he became overly fond of the genre. But why move away from the concerto when one has experienced such success with it? Most of his concerti were never published during his lifetime, and were

found only many years after his death, amidst his autograph manuscripts collections in libraries such as Biblioteca Nazionale in Turin.

Finally, a personal reflection: It was not very hard for me to choose this specific concerto to perform today with Leeds Baroque, as a new leader of the orchestra. It is because of my personal memory. My late father was a violin pedagogue in Tokyo who formed his own string orchestra with his students; students in the conservatories or those aspiring to conservatoire places, alumni students at the start of their professional careers, and his former students who kept playing while following a different path. We played many Baroque string ensembles and his favourites were Vivaldi's works, among them was the Concerto in A, and L'Estro Armonico. Younger members were often given the opportunity to play solo parts while mature members supported them from the tutti and gave them insights and knowledge. It is my wonderful memory – the reason I fell into Baroque music and took up Baroque violin at age 18, a gift from my father.

I am grateful to be given this opportunity to lead this wonderful orchestra of Leeds Baroque with its tradition and passion, knowledge and challenge!



Vivaldi's monument in  
Vienna

Photo Credit: Adam Cathcart

---

## About the performers:

---

### **Asuka Sumi** – leader & director



Asuka Sumi is a violinist based in Leeds, specialising in historical performance practice.

She holds degrees from the Tokyo National University of Arts and the Conservatorium van Amsterdam, where she studied with Lucy van Dael and Sophie Gent. In 2013, Asuka was awarded the Romanus Weichlein

Prize at the Biber Competition in Austria, which led to her solo debut concert at the Vienna Konzerthaus.

Asuka has been active as a member of Seconda Pratica (CD 'Nove Europa') and several period orchestras in Europe under the baton of Herve Nique, Enrico Onofri, Amandine Bayer, and Sigiswalt Kuiken, with whom she performed in prestigious venues and festivals such as Göttingen Handel Festival, Sablé, Ambronay, Utrecht (FOMU) and Brugge (MA Festival).

Since moving to the UK, she is a core member of groups such as the The Gabrieli Consort & Players, Cambridge Handel Opera Company, Manchester Baroque and London Early Opera (CD 'Caio Fabriccio'). She now organises a concert series, Otley Baroque, which brings in period performers from across the UK to Yorkshire. Their next concert is on 24 July with Amanda Babington on Musette.

She will also be appearing at Leeds International Concert Series in January 2023.

As a teacher, Asuka traces her roots to the well-known Sumi family of violin pedagogues in Tokyo. In 2021 she was appointed leader of Leeds Baroque orchestra.

[www.asukasumi.com](http://www.asukasumi.com)



## Leeds Baroque Orchestra



Leeds Baroque: Choir and Orchestra in rehearsal directed by Peter Holman  
Clothworkers Centenary Concert Hall, Leeds University

**Violins:** Asuka Sumi, Andrew Taheny\*, Nina Kumin\*

(\* soloists) Derek Revill\*, Robert Webb\*, Felicia McCormick

**Viola:** Susan Marshall (& violin) Peter Rose, Stephen Robinson,  
Simon Feather.

**'Cello:** George Kennaway, Catherine Carr, Rose Gallaway

**Violone:** Jillian Johnson

**Theorbo/ Baroque Guitar:** Martyn Hodgson

**Harpsichord:** Marc Murray

**Leeds Baroque** is the city's only 'period instrument' choir and orchestra specialising in performances of music of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It was founded in 2000, and made up of professional, student and talented amateur performers, under the general direction of international authority on the performance of this repertoire, Peter Holman.

We are particularly pleased to welcome our newly appointed leader Asuka Sumi to direct this performance, according to historical practice.

Leeds Baroque has gained an enviable reputation for performances covering standard works from Monteverdi to Mozart as well as bold

explorations of unfamiliar Baroque music. Most of the performers are unpaid, playing in the belief that this specialist, but very accessible, repertoire should be available to all and more widely appreciated. In addition to the core membership, Leeds Baroque welcomes a range of professional singers and instrumentalists for special projects and supports young performers at the outset of their professional careers.

Leeds Baroque ran a successful Crowd funding project to enable the purchase of historically appropriate timpani (which will make an appearance in their Autumn concert in October) to add to its collection of period instruments available on loan to students.

Leeds Baroque is financed solely from its ticket income, modest grant funding and a small, but supportive 'Friends' organisation. We hope you will help us continue to keep Baroque music alive in the region by attending our performances and joining the [Friends of Baroque Music in Yorkshire](#).

You can keep in touch via regular newsletters and the Leeds Baroque website [www.leedsbaroque.org](http://www.leedsbaroque.org), follow us on Facebook [www.facebook.com/LeedsBaroque](http://www.facebook.com/LeedsBaroque) and twitter [@LeedsBaroque](https://twitter.com/LeedsBaroque).

---

## Acknowledgements

---

We are very grateful to the following individuals and organisation for their support of today's performance:

Willian Gaunt, Sunny Bank Mills and The Old Woollen for their warm welcome, much practical support and this iconic venue.

Alex Temple, for providing and tuning his Italian Harpsichord.

The Friends of Baroque Music in Yorkshire for ongoing practical and financial support

Leeds University School of Music for use of rehearsal space.



---

## Forthcoming Events

---

### **Sunday July 3. University of Leeds school of Music**

Do you Sing?

Join Leeds Baroque Choir, some of their distinguished vocal alumni, and members of the orchestra for more Vivaldi in a workshop to explore the famous “Gloria”

Celebrating our long association with Leeds University’s School of Music we are delighted to join them for their Summer Festival next weekend, and you can too. For details and tickets see

<https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/uolconcerts/t-kromykr>

---



Sunday 30 October at 3:00pm

*Clothworkers Centenary Concert Hall,  
University of Leeds, LEEDS LS2 9JT*

LEEDS BAROQUE

**director** PETER HOLMAN

**J.S. Bach - Great Festive Cantatas.**

To celebrate the re-launch of their new historically appropriate timpani Leeds Baroque present a period- instrument performance of three of Bach’s most exciting cantatas, Nos. 29, 34 and 146 with spectacular scoring for chorus, organ obligato, trumpets and of course, timpani

*University of Leeds International Concert Series*

0113 3432584 [www.concerts.leeds.ac.uk](http://www.concerts.leeds.ac.uk)

*£20 (£18, £0 students and under16s)*



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

---