

Concerts presented by the South African Early Music Trust (SAEMT) and the Cape Consort

Friday, 31 July, 20h00, St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Somerset Rd, Cape Town
Sunday, 2 August, 16h00, Wahnfried, McGregor

From a Georgian Drawing Room

rare works for tenor and soprano

Giovanni Carlo Maria Clari arr. Handel: Quando tramonta il sola (ca1720)
(1677-1754)

Johann Christoph Pepusch The island of beauty
(1667 - 1752) from *Six English cantatas* (1710)

Francesco Geminiani Sonata for Cello & Bc in F, op. 5, no. 5 (1746)
(1687-1762)

Johann Christoph Pepusch Alexis
from *Six English cantatas* (1710)

Johann Ernst Galliard The Hymn of Adam and Eve (1728)
(1687–1747)

Thomas Arne Sonata nr 8 in G-major
(1710 - 1778) from *8 Sonatas or Lessons*
for the Harpsichord (1756)

Georg Friedrich Handel Caro autor di mia doglia HWV 182 (1707)
(1658-1759)

performed by members of the

**Cape
Consort**

Lente Louw – soprano

Nick de Jager – tenor

Erik Dippenaar – harpsichord

Hans Huyssen – Baroque cello

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The South African
Early Music Trust

Throughout the reign of the Hanoverian kings in England, the opera and concert stages of London were dominated by an influx of foreign composers and performers, which led to a pre-occupation with music in the then fashionable Italian style. 1710 marked the year of George Frederick Handel's arrival in London, as well as the founding of the *Academy of Vocal Music*, (renamed in 1726 in the *Academy of Ancient Music*), by, amongst others, Johann Christoph Pepusch and Thomas Ernst Galliard. Later members included some of the most important scholars, composers and performers of the time, including Tosi, Senesino, Geminiani and Bononcini. The *Academy* took a scholarly approach to both ancient and contemporary music, in particular that of the Italian masters. The *Academy* collected, studied and performed to a very high standard a large number of works for more than 80 years and thereby played a most valuable role in the preservation of early music for scholars and performers today. The tastes of the day, as well as the work of the *Academy*, undoubtedly contributed to music-making in fine Georgian drawing rooms, the soundscape of which we try to re-imagine here.

While working at the Prussian court back home in Berlin, Pepusch was distressed when witnessing an act of despotism and found he preferred to live under a "government founded on other principles"; he settled in his much beloved England and remained there for the rest of his life, working as scholar, teacher and composer. Pepusch's most popular work was and remains '*The Beggars opera*' of 1728, written in reaction to the antiquated plots of the popular Italian operas, in particular those by Handel. Although primarily an instrumental composer, his 12 English cantatas (two volumes of 6 from 1710) are of fine quality. Written in the Italian mold with alternating recitatives and ensemble passages, its melodies are nevertheless more English in style.

The only other 18th century composer to write 6 English cantatas was the other German co-founder of the *Academy*, Johann Ernst Galliard, who was also a renowned oboe player in Handel's Italian opera orchestra from 1713. His duet cantata, *Morning hymn of Adam and Eve* (1728) with text from John Milton's *Paradise Lost*, followed the mold of his earlier English cantatas. A later arrangement by Benjamin Cooke, who was the organist at Westminster Abbey as well as director of the *Academy* after Pepusch, became much better known than the version we present here, but it is scored for larger forces.

Another distinguished member of the *Academy* was Francesco Geminiani, former pupil of Arcangelo Corelli. Geminiani was a virtuoso violinist (who played for King George I with Handel at the harpsichord) and the author of numerous important treatises on performance practice of violin and *basso continuo*. His six cello sonatas are recognized today as one of the finest sets of cello sonatas to emerge from the last half of the 18th century. His writing is highly elaborate, filled with sophisticated ornamentation and an active continuo-part. One of the benchmark recordings of these works were made in 1975 by cellist Anthony Pleeth, accompanied by Christopher Hogwood, who were both at the center of the period instrument revival in London in the '70's. In 1973 Hogwood founded the modern-day *Academy for Ancient Music*, who played, and still plays, a leading role in the study and development of historical performance practice of early music - much like the original *Academy* did. In 1983 Hogwood also published *VIII Sonatas or Lessons* by The London-born composer Thomas Arne. Arne, a former pupil of Pepusch, is generally regarded as the most important British composer of the 18th century, particularly for his contribution to the genre of dramatic vocal music.

Giovanni Carlo Clari is the only composer on this programme that did not live in England. Handel, however, held Clari in very high esteem; so high, in fact, that he appropriated themes from five of Clari's duets (written some time after 1720) for the music of the oratorio *Theodora* that premiered in London in 1750. In *Quando tramonta il sole* one clearly recognizes the material for the tenor-aria 'Descend, kind pity'.

German-born Handel was never a member the *Academy* himself, but his music was frequently performed and studied by its members. The scholarly approach of the *Academy*, as well as their intimate subscription performances of smaller-scale works over 80 years, would undoubtedly have led them to his early Arcadian duets, written during his stay in Italy just before he came to England. Handel wrote *Caro autor di mia doglia* in 1707 - his only duet for the surprisingly rare combination of soprano and tenor.

Lente Louw

TEXTS, TRANSLATIONS & SUMMARIES

Quando tramonta il sola

va cantando ogni augello
al nido ombroso
e lieta al suo riposo.
Nigella ricondur l'agnelle suole.

Sventurato son io
che spargo ai venti
trà gli orror della note
i miei lamenti.

Allora, o Fille, vaghegiar
m'è tollo nel sole il tuo bel volto.

Piango or sù queste sponde,
dove, o mia Fille,
seco il sol t'asconde.

When the sun sets

every bird sings
while going to the shady nest
And Nigella joyfully returns
her lambs to their rest.

But I am unfortunate
and the winds
spread my laments
in the horrors of the night.

Then, oh Fille, I'm struggling
as I long for the sun of your
beautiful face.

I cry now on these shores
where, my dear Fille,
you are hidden from the sun.

The island of beauty

Venus rises from the sea near the coast of Britain, and sings its praises, declaring it to be her favourite dwelling place. Britannia hears her and welcomes her, shortly before declaring that the beauties of her blessed island outshine even Venus herself.

Alexis

Alexis, in an attempt to recover from the pain of love, appeals to the arts: 'Music, embody my pain, and appease the passions - may Apollo, the patron of music, prevail over Cupid, the deceiver of hearts.' But Apollo knows from experience that music cannot cure love's pain. He strums his lyre and says: 'Sounds alone will not cure your pain. But music is the voice of love. Sing your love to her, and if you convince her, you will see that it is love itself that cures love's pain.'

The hymn of Adam and Eve

Adam and Eve praise their Creator:

'You are the almighty Creator of the glorious universe. We, Your humblest beings, who cannot see You, nevertheless declare Your infinite goodness and power. May all heavenly bodies and earthly creatures praise You:

The morning star at daybreak,
the mighty sun when it rises and sets,
the moon and stars at night,
the four elements in its perpetual flux,
the waters in all its forms,
every tree and plant
and warbling stream.

We join our voices with those of the birds who carry your praises to heaven upon their wings.

Fish and animals bear witness that our praises have neither end nor boundary.

You, oh almighty Creator, dispel evil as you have dispersed darkness.'

Caro autor di mia doglia,
dolce pena del core,
mio respiro, mia pace.

Nò, nò che d'altrui
che di te mai non sarò.
O lumi! O volto! O luci! O labbra!

Dagli amori flagellata
la discordia fuggirà!
Bella gloria innamorata
lampi eterni spargerà.

Dear author of my pain,
sweet sorrow of the heart,
my breath, my peace.

No, what is another's
can never be yours.
Oh light! Oh face! Oh light! Oh lips!

Scourged by love
discord flees.
And the joy of loving hearts
contribute to eternal flames.

upcoming concerts:

Anguish and Solace

Christopher Ainslie & the Cape Consort

perform

Lamentos, Motets & Cantatas

by

German Baroque composers

Friday, 28 August 2015, 19h30, St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Somerset Rd, Cape Town
Sunday, 30 August 2015, 16h00 – Lutheran Church, 26 Hofmeyr St, Stellenbosch

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