

Linden Baroque Orchestra

Director Steven Devine

Sunday 10th October 6.00pm
St Mary's Church Stoke Newington



Hidden gems from the Dresden Court

J C Schmidt Overture in A minor* (4-part band & continuo)
1. Overture 2. Air grave 3. Sarabande 4. Forlane 5. Loure 6. Passepieds 1 & 2

J. G. Pisendel Concerto in D Solo violin, oboes, bassoon, strings & continuo
1. Vivace 2. Andante 3. Allegro

J. F. Fasch Sinfonia in F* (for oboes, horns, strings & continuo)
1. [Vivace] 2. Grave 3. [Menuet]

INTERVAL

J. F. Fasch Overture in D* (for flutes, oboes, horns, strings & continuo)
1. Overture 2. Air en menuet 3. Air – adagio 4. Passepieds 1 & 2 5. La Chasse

J. C. Pez Suite in D minor* (4-part band & continuo)
1. Overture 2. Allemande 3. Gavotte 4. Menuet & Trio 5. Gigue

G. A. Ristori Sinfonia in F* (for horns, strings, wind & continuo)
1. Allegro assai 2. Andante 3. Allegro (Menuet)

* World Premieres in modern times – history in the making: remember you heard it first with Linden Baroque!

Dresden, 'The Florence of the Elbe', has known both the heights and depths of existence. By 1745 it was one of the cultural centres of Europe.

Under the Elector of Saxony (also King of Poland in his spare time), Augustus the Strong and later his son Augustus II, the arts flourished and over 20 glittering palaces were built to house the increasingly sumptuous art collections, Germany's pre-eminent library and in which to hold lavish entertainments. The court was second only to Versailles. But these riches, enjoyed by statesmen and scholars from across Europe, were also opened up to the local public. Germany's first public library started in Dresden. Craft workshops abounded: one example, Meissen porcelain originated in Dresden.

Two hundred years later, In 1945, the entire city had been almost wholly flattened: just two days of Allied bombing killing 150-200,000. It was nearly the very end of the war and just 3 months later, the bitter Soviet occupation began.

The people never lost hope of seeing their splendid city again and they have, ever since, been painstakingly rebuilding many of its lost monuments from the piles of rubble: once again we can experience something of the magnificence of Dresden's past.

Dresden's musical heritage goes far back to medieval times and although Heinrich Schütz was perhaps its most famous composer a many others of note had strong associations; Quantz, Hasse, Zelenka, and later Weber, Schumann, Wagner, and Richard Strauss, especially through the Opera House, one of the foremost in Europe. The city was very cosmopolitan and artistic and musical influences from Italy and France were particularly strong. French and Italian instrumentalists and singers poured into Dresden, earning often huge amounts of money, much to the chagrin of their indigenous colleagues who generally earned much less and were fed up of foreigners taking their jobs.

Tonight's programme is of music typical of that heard in Dresden in the early 1700s. **Johann Georg Pisendel** (1687- 1755) was one of 18th century Europe's most celebrated violinists. He studied with Torelli in Ansbach and then travelled to France and Italy, where he studied with Vivaldi and on return joined the Dresden Court Orchestra, becoming its leader until his death. His orchestra was famed throughout Europe. His compositions are often incredibly virtuosic and he must have been a formidable player. It has been suggested that Bach wrote some of his solo sonatas and partitas for Pisendel. Italian music was all the rage in Germany at the time and Vivaldi's influence is often heard in Pisendel's compositions. Pisendel brought many concertos back from his time in Italy and of course Bach also studied these and composed many concertos in the Italian style.

Johann Friedrich Fasch (1688 – 1758) was born near Weimar to a family of Lutheran cantors. He played the violin and organ and was sent to Leipzig to study law. He studied at the Thomasschule – the choir school whose later more illustrious director was JS Bach and became friends with Telemann. Graupner was Fasch's senior prefect at the school and Heinichen, another of Dresden's most prominent composers, was also a fellow pupil. This cosmopolitan city was thronging with music, rivaling Dresden.

After taking a variety of insignificant posts, Fasch finally settled in 1722 at a minor court in Zerbst near Magdeburg where he composed prolifically for the remaining 36 years of his life. The castle he served still partially stands as a burnt out shell following

enemy action in the war and plans are afoot to restore part of it for use during the biennial Fasch Festival.

Despite composing at least 16 masses, 4 operas, 12 cantata cycles, 60 concertos, 90 orchestral suites and copious other music, he was never published and most of his vocal music burnt in the castle, though there is still a large body of instrumental works. He was well thought of in his time; Pisendel regularly played his concertos at the Dresden Court, JS Bach transcribed some of his overtures for the Leipzig Collegium musicum and his friend Telemann performed a cycle of church cantatas in Hamburg. Sitting at the cusp of sweeping changes in music, at times quite 'cutting edge'. Thanks to the scholarship of people such as **Brian Clark**, who has edited his thematic catalogue and whose editions we use today, his music is gradually becoming better known. We recorded three pieces, a melodious Missa Brevis, an exuberant Violin Concerto and an exciting Suite for 3 oboes, bassoons and strings on the Meridian label and we have some copies available today.

Giovanni Alberto Ristori (1692 - 1753) was born into a family of travelling comedians. He earned a modest living as a composer of Italian opera, in Venice and earned a little popularity in Germany. However when Hasse was appointed Kapellmeister, Ristori realised his opportunities were limited and re-joined his parents on tour on Russia and Poland. One of his operas was the first Italian opera to be performed in Moscow. Eventually he found his way back to spend the latter part of his life in Dresden where he became Vice-Kapellmeister to Hasse.

Johann Christoph Schmidt (1664- 1728) was an organist, teacher (Graun was his best-known student) and composer at the Dresden court. He assembled and directed a fine orchestra for the church services in Dresden and Poland including such famous players as Pisendel –its leader, Veracini, Richter (the composer, official court glockenpielist and organist for 50 years), Volumier, Buffardin and Zelenka (that highly original composer and double bass player).

Johann Cristoph Pez (1664 – 1716) was a chorister in St Mark's Church, Munich for the early part of his life, later becoming Kapellmeister in Bonn and Württemberg. He played the lute and viol and also spent some time in Rome studying violin with Corelli who, of course, heavily influenced his compositional style as well as Lully. Telemann mentions him in a poem alongside Handel and other greats of the day but relatively little of his music has come down to us.

Steven Devine has since 2007 been the harpsichordist with London Baroque in addition to his position as Co-Principal keyboard player with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment. He is also the principal keyboard player for The Gonzaga Band, Apollo and Pan, The Classical Opera Company, I Fagiolini and performs regularly with many other groups around Europe. He has recorded over thirty discs with other artists and ensembles and made three solo recordings. His next major recording project Bach's *Goldberg Variations* for Chandos will be released in 2011.

He made his London conducting debut in 2002 at the Royal Albert Hall and is now a regular performer there - including making his Proms directing debut in August 2007 with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment. He will return there with the same group in 2011. He has conducted the Mozart Festival Orchestra in every major concert hall in the UK and also across Switzerland. In opera, Steven has worked at the Comische Oper in Berlin and alongside Paul McCreesh throughout France. With Opera

Restor'd, he has conducted at Wigmore Hall in London, at the Warwick, Lake District, Stour Norwich and English Haydn Festivals. Steven is a Music Director for New Chamber Opera in Oxford and with them has conducted performances of Purcell's Dido and Aeneas, Mozart's La Finta Semplice, Stradella's Il Trespolo Tutore, Rossini's Il Comte Ory, Handel's Xerxes, Arne's Artaxerxes, Galuppi's Il Mondo Reverso. Steven is conducting the first performance of the newly-acquired score of Cavalli's Erismena this summer. For the Dartington Festival Opera he has conducted Handel's Orlando and will return next year with Purcell's Dido and Aeneas. Passionate about the role of music in education, Steven is a regular member of the OAE education team, Professor of Fortepiano at Trinity College of Music and a visiting teacher, adjudicator and examiner for many other institutions. One of Steven's proudest (and longest) associations is with the Finchcocks Musical Museum in Kent where holds the post of Director of Education.



Linden Baroque Orchestra

Director from the Harpsichord: Steven Devine

Violin 1: **Ben Samson** (leader) Barbara Grant Kate Eden Clive Letchford Yvonne Schwartz
Violin 2: Michael Jenner Alexandra Ait Mansour Ian Cutts Linda McDonald Alan Selwyn
Viola: Michael Blee, John Sutherland, Simon Hill
Cello: Corrina Connor Mary Walton Violone: Andrew Kerr
Flutes: *Byron Mahoney* Nick Jackman Bassoon: Maggie Bruce
Oboes: Lysander Tennant Simon Galton Horns: Helen Shillito Kate Goldsmith

Linden Baroque was formed in late 1984 by a group of early music enthusiasts in the front room of a house in Linden Gardens, Chiswick. Unusually - and uniquely anywhere at that time - it combines the talents of young professionals, amateurs and students and many members have moved on to have prominent careers in the early music field. From the beginning, the musical director was the well-known baroque oboist Paul Goodwin. Now pursuing a busy international conducting career, Paul is Honorary President and Steven Devine, following Walter Reiter, as Musical Director. The orchestra has played at venues from Norfolk to Rome (where it gave the first performances there of Purcell's King Arthur). The instruments are either 18th century originals or modern copies - some made by the players themselves and we play at "baroque pitch" of 415Hz.

Together with the Linden Baroque Choir they gave first modern performances of music by Jean Gilles and J F Fasch. Their first CD, issued in 2002 on the Meridian label of music by Fasch, was well received and was played on Radio 3. **Copies are available for sale tonight at £10 and make excellent early Christmas presents - only 70 shopping days left!**

Linden Baroque and Steven Devine recently appeared on BBC TV's 'The One Show'.

Next Linden concert November 13th Holy Trinity Church, Sloane Square
(Mozart Coronation Mass, music by Pergolesi with Thomas's Choral Society)

www.Lindenbaroque.org

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