## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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# Mr. Corelli in London Recorder Concertos • La Follia

after Corelli's op.5

## Maurice Steger

The English Concert Laurence Cummings



MR. CORELLI IN LONDON / Maurice Steger

PRODUCTION USA

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#### **CONCERTI GROSSI**

Con due Violini, Viola e Violoncello di Concertini Obligati, e due altri Violini e Basso di Concerto Grosso – Composti del Opera Quinta D'ARCANGELO CORELLI PER FRANCESCO GEMINIANI – London. Printed for and Sold by I. Walsh (all Concerti)

## WALSH ANON (CALIFORNIA) MANUSCRIPT

A manuscript bound into a London re-edition of op.5 by Walsh & Hare (c. 1711, RISM C3816) Music Library of the University of California, Berkeley, c. 1720 (Concerto 10)

## MANCHESTER MANUSCRIPT

Manchester Public Library, Newman Flower Collection, Ms.130, with other manuscripts from Handel's circle; possibly the ornaments of Pietro Castrucci (1679-1752) (Concerti 7 & 8)

## The Favorite GIGG in CORELLI'S 5.th SOLO

with Divisions by Sig.rs Cateni & Valentini, Adapted for the Violin and Harpsichord London. Printed and Sold by John Preston no.97 (Track 10)

## Christopher Pe(t)z, A Second collection of SONATAS

Some Excellent SOLO'S out of the First Part of Corelli's Fifth OPERA – Artfully transpos'd and fitted to a FLUTE London, Walsh & Hare, 1707 (Concerto 4)

## ENGLISH THEATRE MUSIC

A manuscript with Music by Jacques or James Paisible and others Durham MSS. Mus E25 (Ground upon the Sarabanda, track 21)

Wir danken dem Mikrofilm-Archiv am Musikwissenschaftlichen Institut der Universität Basel für die Zurverfügungstellung sämtlichen Notenmaterials.

## Mr. Corelli in London

'Arcangelo Corelli's Opus 5 in the orchestral edition by Francesco Xaverio Geminiani (1687–1762) and ornamented versions of severall Eminent Masters\*

1   2   3   4   5	Allemanda. Allegro Sarabanda. Largo	<b>13'46</b> 2'52 1'56 3'13 2'08 3'37	
6   7   8   9	Allemanda. Allegro	<b>13'33</b> 5'10 1'57 4'19 2'07	
10	The Favorite Gigg in Corelli's 5.th Solo in G minor / sol mineur / g-mollGiga. Allegro with Divisions by Sig.rs Cateni & Valentini2'36		
11	Concerto grosso after Corelli's 'La Follia' in D minor / ré mineur / d-mollTheme & 25 Variations upon the Sarabanda11'14		
12   13   14   15   16	<b>Concerto per flauto no.4</b> in F major / <i>Fa majeur</i> / F-dur Adagio Allegro Vivace Adagio Allegro	<b>10'14</b> 2'22 2'12 1'02 2'49 1'49	
17   18   19   20	Sarabanda. Largo	<b>8'46</b> 1'49 3'03 1'56 1'58	
21	<b>Ground upon the Sarabanda theme of the 7.th Sonata</b> Sarabanda. Largo	10'10	

## Maurice Steger, recorder

Fifth flute (Soprano recorder in c") by Ernst Meyer, after Thomas Stanesby (Concerto 7 & 10) Voice flute (Tenor recorder in d') by Ernst Meyer, after Peter Bressan (Concerto 8) Fourth flute (Soprano recorder in b-flat") by Ralf Ehlert, after Peter Bressan (Gigg) Common flute (Alto recorder in f') by Ernst Meyer, after Jacob Denner (Concerto 4 & Ground)

## The English Concert /Laurence Cummings

## 'But Corelli's the man after all' Professionals and Amateurs in the Cult of Corelli

Any eighteenth-century English gentleman wishing to signal his impeccable taste in music would often do so by referring to the works of Corelli, whose œuvre was considered to be beyond reproach in matters of style and construction. The vogue for Corelli in England and Scotland appears to have begun to flourish around 1700, when the first prints of op.5 began to circulate, brought out to England by the recorder-playing violinists John Banister II and Robert King, Soon Corelli was being played all over the country, Roger North wrote in 1710 that 'It [is] wonderfull to observe what a scratching of Corelli there is every where – nothing will relish but Corelli.' So fundamental were his works in performance and pedagogy that North remarked that they 'are to the musitians like the bread of *life*'. Composition treatises and harpsichord manuals alike treated Corelli's works as exemplars to be imitated, as both models for counterpoint and lessons for practice. His music was 'sublime', 'transcendent', 'pure', and 'serious'. Furthermore, it was tempered by 'simplicity', 'grandeur', and 'solemnity'. Hawkins in 1776 said that 'men remembered, and would refer to passages [of Corelli], as to a classical author'. No praise was too much for him, with North declaring that 'if music can be immortal, Corelli's consorts will be so'.

From the very beginning, the main consumers of Corelli's music were the many amateur musical societies based in large cities such as London, Dublin, Norwich, and Edinburgh, as well as those in towns like Bath, Leeds, Manchester, Hull, Liverpool, and Bristol. These societies, or clubs, as they were often termed, were largely homosocial affairs in which gentlemen could try their hand at 'fiddling' and 'piping', the whole event enlivened by food, alcohol, and tobacco. Membership was by subscription and we occasionally find that ladies were admitted as listeners to the instrumental concerts. Women would have apprehended Corelli's works only through playing transcriptions in their harpsichord manuals or as listeners.

The instrumental concerts and rehearsals of these societies were often depicted in prints and drawings and appear infinitely more decorous than the all-male drinking binges that characterised the singing of bawdy catches and glees, which took place later in the evening. All in all, they were informal events constituted more for fraternising than for music-making. One or two public concerts a year would take place under the auspices of a hired professional. Corelli was their most favoured composer. Between 1725 and 1750, over fifty clubs subscribed to Corelli reprints and publications. Corelli was literally written into their founding constitutions. In Aberdeen in 1748 a resolution was made that each evening be 'divided into three Acts, in each of which some of Corelli's Musick shall be performed'. Minute-books of musical clubs record continual frustrations associated with the varying degrees of musical prowess, punctuality and commitment encountered amongst its members. Consequently, many musical clubs imported Italian professionals in order to flesh out the concerts and stimulate the rehearsals. Roger North noted the facility with which Corelli 'hath condescended to compose consorts fitted to the capacitys of the minor performers'. In the concerti grossi, the solo parts could be taken by the better amateur performers or hired professionals. For the ripienists, the occasional mistake or wrong entry would not have mattered, particularly when the wine began to flow.

In Edinburgh, for example, many of the professionals involved in musical clubs were Italian virtuosi imported directly from the Continent. The Italians listed among them include 'Mr. Passerini', 'Mr. Pollani' and 'Mr. Rochetti'. An advertisement for a musical society concert in the *Nottingham Weekly Courant* in 1715 promised an imported professional: 'a very good Consort of Instrumental Musick: With several of Corelli's, Vivaldi's, and Albinoni's Concerto's: And one of Corelli's Solo's by an extraordinary Hand.'

Musical societies in larger cities like London, of course, had much higher standards of musical excellence and included the Academy of Ancient Music and the Apollo Society Concerts as well as orchestras attached to the Masonic lodges. The high-ranking civil servant who led the Academy in the 1720s, Henry Needler, was known as a particularly fine performer and a great lover of Corelli.

Arrangements, embellishments and variations of Corelli's works abounded. Geminiani was inducted into the Masonic lodge Philo-Musicae et Architecturae Societas and made 'Solo Director and perpetual Dictator of all Musical Performances' precisely in order 'that the First Six Solo's [op.5] of Corelli be made into Concerti Grossi' for their musical society. Anonymous arrangements for treble recorder and basso continuo of the last five sonatas of op.5 and variations of *La Follia*, originally written for violin, were published by Walsh & Hare in 1702. Along with Geminiani, Giovanni Platti in Würzburg and Obadiah Shuttleworth in London (whose arrangements were also published by Hare) additionally made arrangements of op.5 as concertos. With such a plethora of formats in wide circulation, it is easy to conceive of circumstances in which hired professionals such as Castrucci, Cervetto, Giardini, Besozzi or Barsanti could have performed their own versions of Opus 5 either as solo sonatas (as is documented for Gasparo Visconti, who performed them in theatre entertainments) or in a concerto format. as is the case in the present recording, where a virtuoso performs the solos of op.5 to the accompaniments of existing instrumental arrangements.

For professional players, the very 'simplicity' of Corelli's music that was often lauded by commentators instead signalled the opportunity to display their virtuosic talents. In 1730, the violinist Castrucci played a 'Solo, in which he will perform 24 notes with one Bow' and then two concertos 'of his Master the famous Corelli', who taught him. It seems impossible to imagine that Castrucci did not grace his Corelli in a manner comparable to his difficult solo; indeed, surviving embellishments of Corelli attributed to Castrucci demonstrate a similarly impressive technical filigree. Contemporary journalists warned amateurs not to embellish; such a skill was best left to professionals.

For male amateurs, Corelli's music offered them the balm of classical grace; performed simply and without embellishments, they were seen as models of excellence that constituted a pleasant evening's pastime. As far away as India, Corelli's praises were sung by Englishmen who, like their contemporaries in London, recognised in him the transcendence of the ancient poets. 'But Corelli's the man after all', writes a gentleman to a musical Englishwoman in Calcutta, 'Handel and Corelli – to a Man of my great Ignorance these two great Musicians when compared to all others appear to me as far superior as Homer and Virgil do to all other Poets.'

ERIN HELYARD

## From violin sonata to solo concerto by way of the concerto grosso

## The London Handel clan

London in the 1720s and 1730s saw the blossoming of a diverse and colourful musical landscape that was strongly influenced by George Frideric Handel. The celebrated master from Halle and director of the Royal Academy of Music acted like a magnet for foreign musicians keen to play in his orchestra at the King's Theatre in the Haymarket. Italians, above all, flocked to the English capital. Alongside opera, concert life was in an equally flourishing condition: there was enthusiastic music-making during intervals at the theatre, in taverns, and in associations. Most of these musicians combined the roles of virtuoso, composer, and teacher. They brought their own works with them and also created new ones, tailored as far as possible to the tastes of the English public. In 1714 Francesco Geminiani and Francesco Barsanti arrived in London, followed a year later by the violinist Pietro Castrucci, and subsequently by Matthew Dubourg, Charles Dieupart, the English harpsichord virtuoso William Babell, and the recorder players John Loeillet from Belgium and James (Jacques) Paisible from Paris. However, the real star throughout the British Isles was the almost fifty-year-old music of the Italian composer Arcangelo Corelli. He himself had never trodden English soil, vet his works attained there the very highest degree of fame and honour. The musicians of the Handel clan quickly realised that variations on themes by the Roman composer enjoyed far greater success than their own works. And soon they all had variations and passaggi on Corellian themes in their baggage, based chiefly on his Violin Sonatas op.5.

## Inspired by Corelli

Thus a whole host of virtuoso arrangements of these twelve sonatas of Corelli were produced over the next few years. The second part of the collection above all, the secular *sonate da camera* (chamber sonatas) with their sequences of dance movements, was perfectly attuned to public taste. These works, originally conceived by Corelli as solo sonatas for violin and continuo, were arranged for the most diverse formations or as pieces for solo recorder or harpsichord. Gradually solo performance fell out of favour, to be replaced by the many fashionable consorts, and it is not surprising that Francesco Geminiani's Corelli arrangements became a hit. His 'new' Concerti grossi after Corelli's op.5 garnered plaudits; they were subscribed to by many societies and orchestras for years to come, and played with great success all over England. Soon Geminiani's concertos in their turn became orchestral templates for the extravagant virtuosos, who promptly added a solo part in their own versions.

## In a new guise

For this project I studied the numerous exciting English manuscripts of these composing virtuosos and made a selection from them which illustrates the stylistic features of performances in and on the

fringes of the Handel clan during these years. Music that in Corelli's original was so clear, straightforward and easy to understand has been so transformed in these arrangements that they have become one of the richest sources for English Baroque virtuosity. The Manchester manuscript is a wonderful example of the unique art of slipping fashionable trends and personal style into existing music and thereby creating something new. Eccentric decorations of astonishing rhythmic variety, added chromaticisms, and embellishments of the fast passages with highly virtuosic chains of trills and stunt-like arpeggios demand the well-nigh impossible of the soloist. Looking at the manuscript I wonder if its likely author, Pietro Castrucci, could really have played all the written notes. Or were these primarily compositional exercises? At what tempo are these heavily decorated versions likely to have been played? Here the differences between manuscript and printed edition become clear. In the former we encounter the personal, spontaneous ideas of a musician working for himself or for another soloist; we immediately recognise personal preferences and current fashions. In the printed music, on the other hand, only the simpler variants are published, in order to appeal to the widest possible audience. Moreover, less account is taken of current vogues, since the partbooks and scores had to retain their usefulness years later. In Concerto no.7 I opt for what was originally an Italian practice, that of performing the embellishments with a small recorder sounding in the four-foot register: the orchestra begins with Geminiani's string version, followed by the repeat with all marked decorations, played on a 'fifth flute'. This instrument, a descant recorder, is also specifically called for in other Corelli prints by Walsh, and was used nowhere else as frequently as in England. From the same collection we have recorded the eighth concerto, in this case with the 'voice flute', an eight-foot instrument, which takes over the top part containing the variations by Pietro Castrucci, without string doubling. The melancholy mood of the work is given particularly touching expression in this formation.

Concerto no.4 is the most conservative in our collection. It is built on the form of the *sonata da chiesa* (church sonata), in which outlandish melodic ornaments like those in the Manchester manuscript would scarcely be appropriate and would not correspond to the serious framework of this church music. I chose the simplest version, the one closest in style to the Corelli's Italian original. It was made by the German Kapellmeister Christoph(er) Pe(t)z, who had his arrangements printed by the London publisher Walsh as early as 1707 as recorder sonatas 'fittet for the Flute'. In Concerto no.10 you will hear the version from the California manuscript, which also exists in an edition for solo harpsichord, thus suggesting William Babell as the possible author or at least intended performer. Ornate, expansive decorations in the two slow movements, exuberant and emotionally voluptuous by modern standards, and substantial, playful embellishments in the allegros make this work an adventure for any soloist.

## The 'favourites':

## La Follia, Gigg, Gavotta and Sarabanda

The theme from *La Follia*, the twelfth of Corelli's sonatas, with its twenty-five variations, became the most popular and famous of the set. In our recording The English Concert performs the concerto grosso in the original version by Geminiani with interpolations for solo strings.

It was a popular practice to take the so-called 'favourites', the most attractive pieces in a sonata or a concerto, and amplify them with elaborate variations, thereby making autonomous works out of them. Here we present Corelli's 'Gigg' from Concerto no.5 in the form of an independent intermezzo with a variation by one Sigr. Cateni and a further set of variations by the English record player Robert Valentine, which has come down to us in a later print by Preston and, interestingly enough, is clearly violinistic in nature. Another 'hit tune' was the Gavotta from the tenth concerto. I have integrated it into the context of the complete work, and (following contemporary practice) placed it at the end of the concerto. After the melody we play a variation from the California manuscript, followed by five variants which bewitchingly embellish the simple tune with the most exhilarating virtuosity; these are by the French flautist Michel Blavet, who used them to demonstrate his impressive skill in London. This little Gavotta is one of Corelli's most frequently arranged movements - almost every composer exercised his fancy on it, every soloist wanted to shine with his new ideas on the theme, and so it is no wonder that Blavet later also published his miniatures on the gavotte in France for solo flute. The Ground upon the Sarabanda is very difficult to classify. These variations on the first part of the Sarabanda from Concerto no.7 are profound, inventive and complex in both harmony and melody, and work extremely well on the recorder (although no instrument is mentioned in the title, this is in fact a violin piece). At the beginning of the last third of the piece, the ostinato bass part and the melancholy melody are joined by an obbligato harpsichord part. This takes the Sarabanda in an extraordinary and original direction, at first with melodies in dialogue, then suddenly with brilliant harpsichord arpeggios, which end in an unexpected tragic coda. We can only surmise that this ground was written by Johann Mattheson, who repeatedly praised Corelli during his stay in London and had already shown his appreciation of variations on an ostinato bass. The texture of this composition points to Mattheson as one of the most likely authors. For whom could the atypical and demanding harpsichord part have been composed? Perhaps for the

transcription specialist William Babell? Or did he even add the part himself? There is also a theory that this set of variations could be by Geminiani. It would be fascinating to compare this work with his own, unfortunately lost, decorations to Corelli's op.5. But whoever wrote it, this music speaks and sings for itself.

## Mr. Corelli and the recorder: a perfect match

For whom and for what purposes these singular manuscripts were written, and whether and on which instruments they were actually played, is largely unknown to us. There are rarely any indications as to the forces to be used, and so the question of instrumentation generally remains open – in many cases the violin, as the solo instrument of the virtuosos, is the most probable solution. But the recorder suggests itself as especially appropriate in these surroundings: nowhere on the continent at that time was it played so much, by both dilettantes and professional musicians, as in England. The eccentric demands on the instrumentalist show the instrument off to advantage in all its different varieties. I have used English instruments of the types mentioned or stipulated in period treatises and printed editions. In addition to the 'common flute' (treble recorder in f') and the 'fifth flute' (descant recorder in c"). you will also hear the specifically English instruments: the 'voice flute' (tenor recorder in d'), the 'sixth flute' (flautino or sopranino recorder in d"), and the 'fourth flute' (soprano recorder in b flat"). As a result, all the concertos are for the first time performed here in the original keys as given by Walsh, in order to do full justice, in terms of both sound and tonality, to the affect of the individual works. But in all these exercises in variation, instrumentation, and ornamentation, one thing is striking: none of the manuscripts deviates from the harmonic or melodic contours of the original line. This shows the respect in which the musicians of this era held the 'old master' Corelli.

Never before have I seen such complex patterns of ornamentation. To immerse oneself in them is an exciting adventure for any musician. And it is another adventure to try to play this music! Working to make it possible to hear these historical embellished versions again has rekindled my relationship not only with the Italian original, but also with the English taste of the time and its style, at once highly artificial and naturalistic – and confirmed my love for it. A really exceptional adventure. Thank you, Mr. Corelli!

> MAURICE STEGER Translation: Charles Johnston





**Maurice Steger**, 'the world's leading recorder virtuoso' (*The Independent*), is one of the main artistic personalities of his generation. He is a frequent guest soloist with renowned Baroque ensembles such as The English Concert, the Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin, Europa Galante, and I Barocchisti. He also appears with modern-instrument groups such as the Berliner Barock Solisten, Les Violons du Roy, and the Zurich Chamber Orchestra.

He has performed with celebrated artists such as the soloists Hilary Hahn, Sol Gabetta, Andreas Scholl, Thomas Quasthoff and Igor Oistrakh, the Baroque specialists Reinhard Goebel, Fabio Biondi, Laurence Cummings and Andrew Manze, and the conductors Howard Griffiths, Diego Fasolis and Bernard Labadie.

As a chamber musician, he regularly plays with the harpsichordist and organist Naoki Kitaya, the cellist Mauro Valli, the keyboard player Sergio Ciomei, the bassoon player Christian Beuse, and in trio formation with Hille Perl (viola da gamba) and Lee Santana (lute). He also appears as a conductor of symphonic, Baroque and chamber ensembles, especially with the Zurich Chamber Orchestra which he directs in Baroque and Classical repertoire.

Maurice Steger's recordings have enjoyed great success, especially Telemann's quartets, sonatas by Sammartini, the CD *Venezia 1625* with his ensemble, and even a musical fairy-tale for children *Tino Flautino*. In 2006, his interpretation of Telemann's recorder concertos with the Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin won top awards from the international press. Maurice Steger lives in Zurich and gives masterclasses throughout Europe and overseas. He was awarded the prestigious Karajan Prize in 2002.

**Laurence Cummings** is one of Britain's most exciting and versatile exponents of historical performance both as conductor and harpsichord player. He is Music Director of the London Handel Festival and a trustee of Handel House London. Opera credits include productions for English National Opera, Glyndebourne Festival Opera, Gothenburg Opera, Garsington Opera, English Touring Opera and at the Linbury Theatre Covent Garden. He made his US debut conducting the Handel and Haydn Society, Boston. He regularly directs The English Concert and the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment and has worked with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, Ulster Orchestra, Wiener Akademie, Hallé Orchestra, Northern Sinfonia, Britten Sinfonia, Jerusalem Symphony and Basel Chamber Orchestra.

He has made numerous recordings including the first recording of Handel's newly discovered Gloria with Emma Kirkby and recital discs with Angelika Kirchschlager and Lawrence Zazzo with the Basel Chamber Orchestra.



## THE ENGLISH CONCERT

Violin 1	Nadja Zwiener Miles Golding Graham Cracknell David Wish	Instrument Makers Anonymous Viennese, second half of 18th Century Antonio Mariani, c.1660 Joseph Gagliano, c.1760 Leopold Widhalm, c.1780
Violin 2	Walter Reiter Huw Daniel Kristin Deeken Louella Alatiit	Mathias Klotz, Mittenwald, 1727 Anonymous Dutch c.1700 Tilman Muthesius, Potsdam, 2006 after Jacob Stainer Timothy Johnson, Hewitt (USA), 2006, after A. Stradivari
Viola	Alfonso Leal del Ojo Peter Collyer	Anonymous German, mid 18th Century Joseph Hill, London, c.1775
Violoncello	Sarah McMahon Timothy Kraemer	Thomas Smith, England, c.1740 Barak Norman, St Paul's Alley, 1704
Double-bass	Peter McCarthy	Leopold Widhalm, Nuremberg, 1720
Bassoon	Alberto Grazzi	P. de Konigh, 1999, after J.H.Eichentopf, first half of 18th Century
Archlute & Baroque guitar	William Carter	Archlute by Klaus Jacobsen, 1998 Baroque guitar by Martin Haycock, 1991, after Sellas
Organ	Naoki Kitaya	Robin Jennings chamber organ supplied by Malcolm Greenhalgh
Harpsichord & Direction	Laurence Cummings	Ian Tucker Rucker-Hemsch harpsichord supplied by Edmund Pickering
		Pitch: A = 416 Hz Temperament: Young Tuning by Claire Hammett and Edmund Pickering

**The English Concert** is among the world's finest chamber orchestras for Baroque and Classical repertoire. The ensemble presents an annual concert series at London's major venues and festivals. Internationally, it tours in Europe, the United States, South America, Australasia and the Middle East, and since its foundation by Trevor Pinnock in 1973 it has appeared on famous stages such as the Amsterdam Concertgebouw, the Vienna Musikverein, the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in Paris, the Berlin Philharmonie, the Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center in New York, and the Grosse Festspielhaus Salzburg.

In 2007 Harry Bicket became its third Artistic Director, succeeding Andrew Manze. Highlights of the last few years include a first visit to the United Arab Emirates, tours to Germany, Austria, Spain and France, and a six-city tour of the USA with countertenor David Daniels. Recent and future seasons also feature collaborations with Maurice Steger, Mark Padmore, Carolyn Sampson, Alice Coote, Rosemary Joshua, Sarah Connolly, and Anna Caterina Antonacci. The ensemble also regularly works with guest directors, among them oboist Alfredo Bernardini, violinist Fabio Biondi, and harpsichordists Laurence Cummings, Kenneth Weiss, Rinaldo Alessandrini, and Christian Curnyn.

The English Concert has more than 100 recordings to its credit. *As steals the morn*, a recording of Handel Scenes and Arias with Mark Padmore, won a 2008 BBC Music Magazine Award.