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Wang Liang, Gui Li & Katrina Rafferty
VIOLINS

熊谷佳織 中提琴
Kaori Wilson
VIOLA

宋亞林 大提琴
Song Yalin
CELLO

姜馨來 低音大提琴
Jiang Xinlai
DOUBLE BASS

史德琳 長笛
Megan Sterling
FLUTE

王譽博 雙簧管
Wang Yu-Po
OBOE

鍾裕森 古鍵琴
David Chung
HARPSICHORD

J. S. Bach
20
JUN
2022

MON 7:30PM
大館賽馬會立方
JC Cube, Tai Kwun

hkphil.org

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Jaap van Zweden Music Director

聽見巴赫

HK PHIL X TAI KWUN: CHAMBER MUSIC SERIES THE JOY OF BACH



巴赫 JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

P. 3

A大調古鍵琴協奏曲，BWV 1055
Harpsichord Concerto in A, BWV 1055

13'

快板 **Allegro**
小廣板 **Larghetto**
不太快的快板 **Allegro ma non tanto**

王亮、桂麗及華嘉蓮，小提琴 Wang Liang, Gui Li & Katrina Rafferty, violins
熊谷佳織，中提琴 Kaori Wilson, viola
宋亞林，大提琴 Song Yalin, cello
姜馨來，低音大提琴 Jiang Xinlai, double bass
鍾裕森，古鍵琴 David Chung, harpsichord

P. 4

C小調小提琴與雙簧管協奏曲，BWV 1060
Concerto for Violin and Oboe in C minor, BWV 1060

15'

快板 **Allegro**
慢板 **Adagio**
快板 **Allegro**

王亮、桂麗及華嘉蓮，小提琴 Wang Liang, Gui Li & Katrina Rafferty, violins
熊谷佳織，中提琴 Kaori Wilson, viola
宋亞林，大提琴 Song Yalin, cello
姜馨來，低音大提琴 Jiang Xinlai, double bass
王譽博，雙簧管 Wang Yu-Po, oboe
鍾裕森，古鍵琴 David Chung, harpsichord

P. 5

第三管弦組曲：G弦之歌，BWV 1068
Orchestral Suite no. 3: Air on G String, BWV 1068

5'

王亮、桂麗及華嘉蓮，小提琴 Wang Liang, Gui Li & Katrina Rafferty, violins
熊谷佳織，中提琴 Kaori Wilson, viola
宋亞林，大提琴 Song Yalin, cello
姜馨來，低音大提琴 Jiang Xinlai, double bass
鍾裕森，古鍵琴 David Chung, harpsichord

P. 6

G大調三重奏鳴曲，BWV 1039
Trio Sonata in G, BWV 1039

13'

慢板	Adagio
不太急的快板	Allegro ma non presto
慢板及輕柔地	Adagio e piano
急板	Presto
史德琳，長笛	Megan Sterling, flute
王譽博，雙簧管	Wang Yu-Po, oboe
宋亞林，大提琴	Song Yalin, cello
鍾裕森，古鍵琴	David Chung, harpsichord

P. 7

B小調第二管弦組曲，BWV 1067
Orchestral Suite no. 2 in B minor, BWV 1067

20'

序曲	Ouverture
輪旋曲	Rondeau
薩拉班德舞曲	Sarabande
布雷舞曲	Bourrée
波蘭舞曲	Polonaise
小步舞曲	Menuett
嬉戲曲	Badinerie
王亮、桂麗及華嘉蓮，小提琴	Wang Liang, Gui Li & Katrina Rafferty, violins
熊谷佳織，中提琴	Kaori Wilson, viola
宋亞林，大提琴	Song Yalin, cello
姜馨來，低音大提琴	Jiang Xinlai, double bass
史德琳，長笛	Megan Sterling, flute
鍾裕森，古鍵琴	David Chung, harpsichord

P. 8

王亮 小提琴	Wang Liang Violin
桂麗 小提琴	Gui Li Violin
華嘉蓮 小提琴	Katrina Rafferty Violin
熊谷佳織 中提琴	Kaori Wilson Viola
宋亞林 大提琴	Song Yalin Cello
姜馨來 低音大提琴	Jiang Xinlai Double bass
史德琳 長笛	Megan Sterling Flute
王譽博 雙簧管	Wang Yu-Po Oboe
鍾裕森 古鍵琴	David Chung Harpsichord



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until the end of the entire work



Johann Sebastian Bach
Wikimedia Commons

1685-1750

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

Johann Sebastian Bach was born in the small German city of Eisenach, the eighth son of a musician from an old family of musicians. As a student on the keyboard and the organ, in 1705 he walked 450km to learn from the greatest organist of the day, Dieterich Buxtehude. And over five decades as a musician at the courts of Weimar and Köthen, and finally (from 1723) at the church of St Thomas in Leipzig, he composed over 1,100 surviving works: for the keyboard and the organ, for orchestra and chamber ensembles, and above all for the church. He composed suites and sonatas, cantatas and motets, and massive choral settings of the Passion and the Mass.

Those are the bare facts of Bach's career, but they can't do justice to Bach the man – fiercely intelligent, hard-working but full of life: a loving family man, and the father of 20 children. Or the power and legacy of his music, which for its beauty, its emotional power and its supreme technical skill, remains unsurpassed in western music. To Beethoven, Bach was “the immortal god of harmony”. To listeners down the centuries he's quite simply an enduring source of solace, delight and wonder – truly, one of music's most beautiful minds.

Harpsichord Concerto in A, BWV 1055

Allegro

Larghetto

Allegro ma non tanto

Bach's position in Leipzig was that of a *Kantor*, a working church musician, responsible not just for composing new sacred music throughout the year, but training, directing and even living alongside the choir of St Thomas Church. Leipzig, in 1730, was a particularly lively and inspiring place – a great trading city, addicted to caffeine. Outside of the church, coffeehouses were where most music-making happened, and where Bach from 1729 to 1737 directed the *Collegium Musicum*: a thriving concert club at Zimmermann's coffee house, made up of moonlighting church musicians, amateurs and professionals. Standards were high. Musicians were fined for drinking or smoking while performing, and the Collegium's supporters were willing to pay for quality. In 1733, the new season of concerts was advertised thus:

It will begin with a fine concert, to be continued weekly; featuring a new harpsichord, the likes of which has never been heard in these parts before; and the friends of music, as well as virtuosi, are invited to attend.

Genius thrives on appreciation, and during the 1730s, Bach composed a series of brilliantly imaginative keyboard concertos, almost certainly for performance at the *Collegium Musicum*. They were almost all adapted from earlier works, but that would have posed no problem to Bach, who was widely recognised as one of the finest keyboard players of his time. In the words of his biographer Johann Forkel:

Bach's easy, unconstrained use of the fingers, his beautiful touch, the clearness and precision of every note he struck...all combined to give him almost unlimited power over his instrument, so easily did he overcome the difficulties of the keyboard.

This particular concerto seems to have been based on an earlier work for oboe d'amore, and even in Bach's keyboard reworking it kept some of the sweetness and brightness of that instrument. He might have performed the solo part himself, or it might have served as a solo vehicle for his famously gifted son Carl Philipp Emanuel. Either way, the harpsichord takes the lead from the **first movement**: cascading through the texture like a steadily flowing fountain. The **second movement** drops into the minor key: the mood is one of stately drama, and almost operatic pathos. But Bach always strives for balance, and the soloist swirls and glitters through the sunlit dance of the **finale**.

Concerto for Violin and Oboe in C minor, BWV 1060

Allegro
Adagio
Allegro

Skill of a supreme order is the foundation of everything Johann Sebastian Bach wrote, and his musical craftsmanship extended far beyond the organ loft. A baroque composer was expected to be a master of all trades, and Bach was a skilled violinist, who took pride in his violin playing. According to his son Carl Philipp Emanuel (in a letter to Bach's biographer Forkel in 1774) he "played the violin from youth to old age with a pure and searching tone". And as Carl Philipp Emanuel also pointed out:

He had a complete grasp of the possibilities of every member of the violin family. This is abundantly evident in his solos and sonatas for violin and cello without bass. One of the greatest violinists once told me that he had never seen anything more perfectly suited for becoming a good violinist.

Few violinists today would dispute that. And of course, as an artist who worked daily with singers (of all abilities), Bach had a headstart in making instruments sing. This Concerto in C minor has come down to us in a version for two harpsichords that Bach seems to have created in Leipzig in the late 1730s, but scholars agree that it originated as a concerto for oboe and violin, most probably in the early 1720s when Bach was in service at the court of Köthen (1717-23). "There I had a gracious Prince as master, who knew music as well as he loved it, and I hoped to remain in his service until the end of my life" commented Bach years later, and with royal support and few demands from the church, he focused on instrumental music in Köthen to an extent unmatched in the rest of his career. He will have played the solo violin himself, directing the orchestra as he did so.

No manuscript survives of that original version, but it has been reconstructed from the harpsichord version, and that reconstruction is what we hear today. In the **first movement**, the two soloists and the orchestra start together, before the oboe and violin begin to converse, weaving ever more imaginative patterns around each other – the oboe often singing while the violin spins brilliant, intricate passagework beneath it. The oboe leads off in the songlike central **Adagio**, with the violin echoing and pressing against it in harmonies of yearning expressive sweetness: the orchestra treads steadily and softly in the background. And then the **finale** bounces back into the world of action: of earnest conversation, bustling energy and bracing (but always civilised) wit.

Orchestral Suite no. 3: Air on G String, BWV 1068

It was probably for the *Collegium Musicum* that Bach wrote his third suite (or as he called it, overture) for orchestra, some time around 1730. It may originally have been for strings alone (the trumpet and drum parts were added in the handwriting of his son Carl Philipp Emanuel), but 18th century musicians didn't worry unduly about these details. What's unmistakable is the sheer imagination of this music: from the blazing ceremonial overture with which it opens to the tuneful freshness and swing of the three dance movements with which it concludes – to say nothing of the timeless simplicity of the second movement – an *Air*, or wordless song, later dubbed “Air on the G string” and made world-famous by the 19th century virtuoso violinist August Wilhelmj. Don't be fooled: it takes a craftsman of genius to make a melody sound this natural. But it's the Kantor's day off, and he's letting his imagination soar. As they used to say in 18th century Leipzig, *Res severa est verum gaudium*: “True pleasure is a serious business”.

Trio Sonata in G, BWV 1039

Adagio

Allegro ma non presto

Adagio e piano

Presto

Here is some useful trivia for a classical music quiz: how many players are there in a trio sonata? The answer, as a rule, is four. Just as baroque orchestral music is supported by a group of so-called continuo players (usually at least a pair), the early 18th century harpsichord was considered in its time to require assistance, even in chamber music. Its bass notes, in particular, required support. So a duo sonata would be performed with three players: the wind or string instrument and the harpsichord plus a cello or bass viol to strengthen the left hand. A trio sonata (with a pair of melody instruments alongside the harpsichord and its supporting cello) would actually need four players!

Bach understood these conventions instinctively. During his lifetime, chamber music was saleable but of relatively low status, and in an era before copyright, small-scale compositions had a habit of falling between the cracks. Works would be grouped together for publication long after their composition, they could be freely adapted or cobbled together from other works. In the case of the Trio Sonata BWV 1039 it seems that Bach originally wrote it as a sonata for viola da gamba (though with no original manuscript in existence, the precise date is frustratingly unclear). Scholars have suggested dates from around 1725 to the early 1740s, and Bach seems to have re-arranged it as a Trio Sonata somewhere between 1736 and 1741, while he was a member of the *Collegium Musicum*. It's in the standard four movements (slow, fast, slow, fast) of a so-called *sonata da chiesa* (church sonata), with an expressive third movement whose melancholy shade throws the livelier movements around it into wonderfully vivid contrast.

Orchestral Suite no. 2 in B minor, BWV 1067

Ouverture
Rondeau
Sarabande
Bourrée
Polonaise
Menuett
Badinerie

In the mid-18th century, the flute was the instrument of choice for amateurs and dilettantes – from the humblest busker to King Frederick the Great of Prussia himself, who regularly performed (and even composed) flute concertos at his palace of Sans Souci. Johann Sebastian Bach’s brilliant son Carl Philipp Emanuel would later work at Frederick’s court, but it’s unlikely that Bach had any royal ambitions when he completed his Suite in B minor for Flute and Strings in Leipzig in 1738 or 1739 (for one thing, Frederick didn’t take the throne until 1740). He was probably just following fashion: flutes were all the rage and a professional composer moved with the times. There’d have been no shortage of skilled flautists, both amateur and professional, in Leipzig’s clubs and coffeehouses.

So Bach goes to town, with an expansive overture, by turns solemn and bustling, and a sequence of sharply-characterised dances, including a stately *Sarabande* (in which the bass line trails the melody like a shadow) and for a dash of cosmopolitan colour, a strutting *Polonaise* (or Polish Dance) based on an actual Polish folksong *Wezmę ja kontusz*. If it’s true (as some scholars have suggested) that Bach adapted the Suite from an earlier work for solo oboe or violin, that’s merely proof of his adaptability, because the Suite ends with two movements that could have been perfectly tailored for the lightness, agility and sweet tone of the flute. *Badinerie* meant “jesting” in French, and it’s the wittiest, most nimble possible pay-off – as well as one of the 18th century’s catchiest tunes.

All programme notes by Richard Bratby



WANG LIANG Violin

Second Associate Concertmaster of the HK Phil, Wang Liang recently played the solo in “The Red Violin: Movie in Concert”, and was invited by The Chopin Society of Hong Kong – Joy of Music Festival to perform a Saint-Saëns’ Violin Concerto and *La Muse et le Poète*. He has also performed concertos with Shenyang Symphony Orchestra, Central Conservatory of Music Orchestra, Shaanxi Symphony Orchestra and Shanghai Summer Music Festival.



GUI LI Violin

Gui Li won the Second Prize at the National Violin Competition in China and the Best Performance of a Chinese Composition for solo violin. She then gained a Bachelor’s Degree from The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts (HKAPA) with a full scholarship and became a Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation Orchestral Fellow of the HK Phil in 2006.



KATRINA RAFFERTY Violin

Katrina joined the HK Phil after graduating from the Royal College of Music, London. She left for her Master’s studies at the University of Oklahoma and then returned to Hong Kong to teach at HKAPA, also freelancing as a concertmaster, soloist and orchestral player with a variety of ensembles and artists. She rejoined the HK Phil in 2005 and co-founded the Phoenix Quartet in 2020.



KAORI WILSON Viola

Kaori has been Assistant Principal Viola with the HK Phil since joining the orchestra in 1996. Her studies have taken her to Toho Gakuen School of Music, the Queensland Conservatorium and HKAPA. Festival performances have included the 1991 Nagano Aspen Music Festival, where she was Principal Viola, and the 1995 Pacific Music Festival, both held in Japan.



SONG YALIN Cello

Yalin has been recipient of numerous awards and prizes in China, England and the United States. Festival appearances include Tanglewood, the Music Academy of the West and the National Orchestra Institute. Prior to joining the HK Phil, he worked with the Memphis Symphony and the San Antonio Symphony orchestras as Principal Cello, and with the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra as cellist.

Please click onto the name of each artist for a full-version biography.



JIANG XINLAI Double bass

Currently Associate Principal Double Bass, Xinlai joined the HK Phil in 1997. She studied with full scholarship at The Juilliard School with Orin O'Brien from the New York Philharmonic. She participated in the Asian Youth Orchestra, the Pacific Music Festival, the Tanglewood Music Center and the National Orchestra Institute, and in 2001 was invited to perform at the International Laureates' Music Festival in Los Angeles.



MEGAN STERLING Flute

Principal Flute of the HK Phil since 2002, Megan has enjoyed working with some of the world's top conductors and soloists. She has appeared as a soloist with the orchestra, as well as in recitals, radio broadcasts, recordings and chamber music concerts in Hong Kong, Mainland China, Australia, Europe and the US. She has performed at the Parliament House for the Australian Prime Minister.



WANG YU-PO Oboe

Currently Co-Principal Oboe of the HK Phil, Yu-Po was Principal Cor Anglais with both the Konzerthausorchester Berlin and the Hannover State Opera. He has also worked in Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, NDR Radiophilharmonie and Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin. As soloist, he has performed with the Taipei Symphony Orchestra, the Taipei Wind Orchestra, the Emsland Festival Orchestra, the Ensemble Resonanz in Hamburg and the Deutsche Staatsphilharmonie Rheinland-Pfalz.



DAVID CHUNG Harpsichord

As a harpsichordist, David performs extensively in cities across Europe, North America and Asia. He has appeared in the Festival d'Ile-de-France, Geelvinck Fortepiano Festival, Cambridge Early Keyboard Festival, Vesper Concert Series in Lubbock, Hong Kong International Chamber Music Festival, French May Arts Festival and Hong Kong New Vision Arts Festival, and performed in recital series of the Benton Fletcher Collection and the Handel House.



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