



Tilford Bach Society



Tatty Theo

Carolyn Gibley

Lisete da Silva Bull

The Brook Street Band

Lisete da Silva Bull - baroque flute

Tatty Theo – baroque cello

Carolyn Gibley – harpsichord

24 November 2018

www.tilbach.org.uk

Programme

Christoph Schaffrath (1709-1763)

Trio Sonata CSWV E:3 (D major)

Allegro; Adagio; Allegro

The little-known composer Christoph Schaffrath deserves to be more widely played. His music bridges the baroque and early classical periods, and he was a popular composer in Berlin, firmly associated with the Prussian court. He was described by the 18th century German music critic Friedrich Wilhelm Marpurg as being “*known well enough in the world for his fine and universally well-liked compositions*”. Schaffrath’s early life centred around his birthplace of Hohnstein, near to Dresden. By the 1730s he was established at the court of Frederick the Great, where he played harpsichord in the orchestra. From 1741 however, he worked exclusively for Frederick’s sister, Anna Amalia, who was an accomplished composer, flautist, violinist and keyboard player. The manuscript for this piece (composed in 1760) survives in Anna Amalia’s extensive and important music collection. It is not too much of a stretch of the imagination to picture Schaffrath composing it for Anna Amalia herself to play, Schaffrath himself at the keyboard. The cello part could have been taken by one of the many cellists present in Berlin.

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Sonata for Flute and Obligato Harpsichord BWV1030 (B minor)

Andante; Largo e dolce; Presto

Bach’s sonata for flute and obligato harpsichord in b minor dates from c.1736, and although Bach was firmly entrenched in Leipzig’s musical life at the time, it could easily have found its way to Berlin and the flute-loving Frederick the Great, at the hands of a travelling musician, or via Bach’s son CPE Bach, who worked for Frederick. Over the previous two decades the flute had begun to replace the recorder in chamber and orchestral music, and this work represents Bach exploiting the flute to its full potential. These years represent the zenith of Bach’s writing for flute, also encompassing the *Orchestral Suite No. 2*, written roughly two years later. The sonata for flute and obligato harpsichord is the most extensive of all Bach’s flute sonatas, although one of only two that equally pairs the flute with the harpsichord, rather than consign the harpsichord to an accompanying ‘continuo’ role.

Johann Christoph Friedrich Bach (1732-1795)

Cello Sonata HW X/1 (G Major)

Allegretto; Rondeaux

Although JCF Bach has the distinction of being JS Bach’s longest surviving son, his work has naturally been eclipsed by that of his father. He is also frequently muddled up with his brother JC Bach who was a prolific and well-connected composer in London, known in fact as the ‘London’ Bach, running the famed Bach-Abel concert series. However, JCF Bach, known as the ‘Bückeburg’ Bach (where he was a chamber musician at the court of Count Wilhelm) was an altogether less well-documented character. The style of the majority of his compositions was pre-classical (galant) and this work is a charming example of this style. Its unusual form (featuring just two sprightly-paced movements) and clever use of the cello’s compass, allows the performer to fully exploit the rich deep bass register, as well as the more sonorous treble, bound together in an utterly delightful, and smile-inducing piece!

Joseph Bodin de Boismortier (1682-1765)

Sonata Op.37 No.2 (E minor)

Allegro; Adagio; Allegro

Boismortier had a popular and successful career as a composer. Many of his works were reprinted during his lifetime, leaving him more financially independent than many of his fellow musicians. Unlike many of his contemporaries, he was far less reliant on patronage and this enabled him to bypass service as a court musician, producing a wide variety of music. Boismortier was incredibly prolific, producing over one hundred works with opus numbers in 23 years, for all manner of vocal and instrumental combinations, including some as diverse as the musette, viol and vielle, although his preferred medium seems to have been the flute, and wind chamber music in general.

Interval

(Drinks are free but donations to costs are much appreciated)

Johann Christoph Friedrich Bach (1732-1795)

Trio HW VII (D major)

Allegro con spirito; Andante; Rondeau scherzo

Dating from 1780, this piece is in fact an early keyboard trio, in the style of those by Haydn or Beethoven. The main musical focus falls to the keyboard player, with both flute and cello players taking supporting roles, for melodic and harmonic emphasis at key points. Keyboard (rather than harpsichord or fortepiano) is specified and this no doubt reflects the fact that although early pianofortes were played at this point, not everyone had access to them; a place such as Bückeburg could well have been as much as a generation behind the times. JCF Bach had in fact visited London in the late 1770s to see his brother JC Bach, and brought back a fortepiano, but this might well have been the only instrument of its kind in Bückeburg, and performances of the piece would have used whatever keyboard instrument was available.

George Frideric Handel (1685-1759)

Cello Sonata (G major)

Larghetto; Allegro; Larghetto; A tempo di Gavotti; Allegro

Handel was clearly one of the eighteenth century's ultimate re-heaters of musical material, finding uses for good melodies in many different guises and incarnations. This wasn't sheer laziness on his part. In the eighteenth century, performed music often had a very short shelf life, sometimes of no more than ten years. A hit from an opera in the early 1720s might be completely forgotten by the 1730s. Handel also managed to avoid composing for solo cello during his long and extremely varied compositional life. The reasons for this must remain a mystery – it certainly wasn't due to the cello's lack of popularity for it was the most popular string instrument in England for most of the eighteenth century. There are no Handel cello suites or sonatas, however tonight's 'cello' sonata is taken from a recorder sonata, composed c.1725. This is the sonata HWV365, originally in C Major, and its re-heating by The Brook Street Band is a move Handel probably would have condoned himself. Handel reused musical material from this sonata in *Scipione* (1726), and music from the 3rd movement also appears in the sonata HWV363a (for oboe) and HWV363b (for flute), although this pre-dates the recorder or 'cello' sonata.

Jean-Marie Leclair l'aîné (1697 – 1764)

Sonata Op.2 No.8 (D major)

Adagio; Allegro; Sarabande (Largo); Allegro Assai

Leclair is widely considered to be the founder of the French violin school, responsible for fusing the Italian baroque sonata style, with written out ornamentation and notes inégales representing refined French taste. He was famed for his virtuosic capabilities and brilliant ability at performing multiple stops, and was widely travelled both as a student and performer. His violin sonatas were at the time described as '...[appearing] at first a kind of algebra capable of rebuffing the most courageous musicians...'. Through his appointment as Ordinaire de la Musique du Roi to Louis XV in 1733, Leclair was at the centre of musical life in Paris. His life was extremely colourful as was his death - he was murdered in his home in a seedy area of Paris, probably killed by his own nephew, a jealous rival. This particularly virtuosic trio sonata, owing much to Handel and various French and Italian influences, dates from 1728. Unusually, the cello leaves the bass line, taking one of the melody lines.

All Notes © Tatty Theo

The Brook Street Band

The Brook Street Band is named after the London street where composer George Frideric Handel lived from 1723-1759. It was formed in 1996 by baroque cellist Tatty Theo and rapidly established itself amongst the UK's leading Handel specialists, winning grants, awards and broadcasting opportunities from various organisations including BBC Radio 3 and the Handel Institute. Eighteenth century chamber repertoire has always been the Band's driving passion, focusing particularly on Handel's music. However, in recent years the Band's activities have expanded to include regular collaborations with conductors, choirs and venues on larger-scaled works by Handel and his contemporaries. Currently, the BSB is working with conductor John Andrews, bringing Arne's much neglected *Judgment of Paris* back to life, with the premiere recording due for release in 2019.

The Brook Street Band has performed and taught at prestigious British and European Festivals and venues all over Europe, and is now developing plans for an American tour, supported by its loyal group of USA Friends. Last year The Brook Street Band celebrated its 20th birthday, and its present to itself was the creation of a biennial Handel festival, based in Norfolk, called *love: Handel*. The inaugural festival took place in April 2017, with the next one due in Autumn 2019. *love: Handel*, is dedicated to Handel's music, and as well as workshops, talks, interactive concert experiences, live projections, and general Handelian, the festival incorporates other passions in his life such as food and drink!

The Brook Street Band regularly broadcasts for Radio 3 and Classic FM and its extensive discography for AVIE has been singled out to critical acclaim with accolades, nominations and awards including Gramophone Magazine Editor's Choice.

"*Finely balanced, deliciously spiced, infectiously musical!*" **BBC Radio 3**

"*[The band members] approach everything with a spring in their step, relishing the harmonic crunches and keeping everything vital and vivacious.*"

The Guardian Online

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