The Sixteen Edition

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Delirio
Amoroso
G. F. Handel
Italian Secular Cantatas

Heroes and Heroines
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SARAH CONNOLLY
Harry Christophers
The Symphony of Harmony and Invention
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BBC Radio 3 CD Review

Ikon of Light
John Tavener  COR16015
“As time goes by, I find Harry Christophers’ music-making more and more captivating”
BBC Radio 3, CD Review

Allegri Miserere
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“Christophers draws brilliant performances from his singers, both technically assured and vividly impassioned.”
The Guardian

Ann Murray
The Symphony Of Harmony And Invention
HARRY CHRISTOPHERS

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It is not every day that one gets the opportunity to record a disc with a diva, especially a diva in the form of Ann Murray. Now I hasten to add Ann is no “handbags at dawn” diva. I use the word in its correct sense: a great or famous singer, from the Latin meaning "goddess". Ann is quite simply all of those. Some of you might have had the good fortune to see her in the title role of two of Handel’s greatest operas, Nicholas Hytner’s original production of Xerxes and David Alden’s Ariodante at English National Opera; if you were fortunate enough, then you will already know what an incredible artist and Handelian she is.

The three cantatas chosen for this disc are all to do with classical love, that eternal theme so adored by composers of the baroque; the absence, departure and finally the death of a lover. Handel’s music, as you would expect, is delightful from beginning to end. However, if the text does not live, the music does not either. It was the attention to the written word that made the recording sessions such a thrill. Ann was alert to every nuance that exuded from the orchestra and, likewise, we responded to all Ann’s inflections and range of colour she uses to exemplify differing emotions. One could almost say that this was a marriage of harmony and invention. What was also quite extraordinary was her stamina; she would have sung for the whole day non-stop, if we had let her!

Handel's Italian Cantatas

The period of four years which Handel spent in Italy, from mid-1706 to mid-1710, was of major importance to his development as a composer. In his native town of Halle he had acquired from his teacher Friedrich Wilhelm Zachow the thorough technical grounding expected in a German church musician, and in composing and playing for the opera house in Hamburg between 1704 and 1706 he had gained some knowledge, albeit at second hand, of the French and Italian styles in dramatic music. The experience of Italy itself was however essential to a composer drawn to opera. There Handel could gain fluency in the language, he could work with virtuoso singers and instrumentalists, and he could absorb into his own compositions the colour and flair of the latest work of such composers as Alessandro Scarlatti and Francesco Gasparini. Handel’s skills both as a composer and a keyboard player immediately drew the attention of the great Italian patrons of music, especially in Rome, where public performances of operas were banned and their place was taken by other vocal works, including oratorios, serenatas and cantatas performed privately in the palaces of the nobility. The term ‘cantata’ itself covered a wide range of works, from the most common type written for a single voice and continuo, to pieces requiring several singers with full orchestral accompaniment. Handel wrote over a hundred cantatas for various patrons, covering the full range of styles, gaining the experience he needed and producing a stream of wonderful music to which he often returned in later years when seeking ideas for new compositions.

One of Handel’s first patrons in Rome was Cardinal Benedetto Pamphili (1653-1730), who was also something of a poet. He provided the text of Handel’s first oratorio, Il trionfo del Tempo e del Disinganno, and also that of the cantata Delirio amoroso (HWV 99). Both works were performed at one of Pamphili’s residences in the early months of 1707 (a copyist’s bill for the cantata is dated 14 February). Pamphili also wrote the text of a much shorter cantata in which he compares Handel to the mythical musician Orpheus, a form of flattery for which Handel did not have a high regard. Many years later he told his friend Charles Jennens that Pamphili was ‘an old Fool’. Jennens asked: ‘Why Fool? because he wrote an Oratorio? perhaps you will call me Fool for the same reason?’ ‘So I would’ , replied Handel, ‘if you flatter’d me as he did.’ Nevertheless Pamphili’s text for Delirio amoroso (‘Love’s delirium’) is more imaginative than most cantata texts, and inspired Handel to create some expansive and delightful music. The cantata may have been presented with a simple form of staging, as is suggested by the unusual feature of dance movements for the instruments alone, and , are narrations, setting and closing the scene. In between the singer impersonates the lover Chloris mourning the death of her beloved Thrsis. Apparently he never responded to her love, so in her ‘delirium’ she imagines that he is being punished in hell for his cruelty. She resolves to enter the underworld herself and bring him back to life - but even in death he continues to reject her. At first she is angry, but then she decides in an act of
companion to move him from the fiery part of Hades to the Elysian Fields.

The cantata begins with an orchestral Introduzione in da capo form, the lively opening section with solo oboe being repeated after a short Largo for strings alone. Chloris's first aria, with its extensive part for solo violin, is one of the most elaborate that Handel ever wrote, and he made good use of it in other works. It became the closing aria of Act 1 of his opera Rodrigo, produced in Florence in the autumn of 1707, and a more substantially revised version also appeared in the first version of Radianista, produced in London in April 1720. The second aria, Per te lasciati, begins as a wistful minuet, but immediately broadens into a dialogue between the voice and a solo cello; in the more dramatic middle section, Chloris's pleas to Thyris are answered only by eloquent moments of silence. Yet another solo instrument, a recorder, appears in the next aria, from which Handel later took ideas for Hush, ye pretty warbling choir in Act and Galatea and for his violin sonata in D major. The orchestral Entrée was one of the earliest known examples of Handel's borrowing from other composers: the opening bars come directly from Reinhard Keiser's opera Claudius, produced in Hamburg in 1703, where they also begin an Entrée of Spirits in the Elysian Fields; the rest of the movement comes from an earlier Entrée of Handel's own, in Act 3 of Almira, his first opera for Hamburg.

After a short spell with Pamphili, Handel moved on to his most important Roman patron, the Marchese Maria Ruspoli. Armida abbandonata (HWV 105) was one of the first cantatas which Handel wrote for Ruspoli and was probably first sung by the soprano Margherita Durastanti, who later worked with Handel in Venice and London. A copyist's bill dated 30 June 1707 survives in the Ruspoli archives. The anonymous text is based loosely on Canto 16 of Tasso's epic poem Gerusalemme liberata, which tells how the knight Rinaldo escapes the seduction of the sorceress Armida and sails away from her enchanted island. Armida's love for Rinaldo is genuine, however, and she experiences real anguish at his departure. The cantata opens with a short narration set as a remarkable accompanied recitative, the bass line being suppressed and violin arpeggios alone indicating Armida's desperate pursuit of Rinaldo. The singer then represents the abandoned Armida, her emotions passing from despair to anger, and finally to a forlorn hope that she may be able to forget her lost lover. Her changes of mood are expressed in four arias, of which the third (Mie pupille) is perhaps the most beautiful, drooping figures in the violins being answered by descending phrases in the bass. This aria was later used by Handel as the basis of a solo in the Chandos anthem The Lord is my light, and the first aria (Chiari lumi) was re-worked as Di Sion nell'alta sede in Rinaldo.

THE SYMPHONY OF HARMONY AND INVENTION

VIOLIN I
Walter Reiter (leader)
Helen Orsler
James Ellis
Claire Sansom
VIOLIN II
Theresa Caudle
Stefanie Heichelheim
Ilana Cravitz
VIOLA
David Brooker
Katie Heller
CELLO
Jennifer Ward-Clarke
Helernerney
BASS
Peter Buckoke
FLUTE
Rachel Beckett
OBOE
Anthony Robson
BASSOON
Sally Jackson
HARPSICHORD
Alastair Ross
THEORBO
Elizabeth Kenny

CLORI, MIA BELLA CLORI
1 Recitative
Clori, mia bella Clori
0.51
2 Aria
Chiari lumi
3.51
3 Recitative
Temo ma pure io spero
0.36
4 Aria
Ne'gigli e nelle rose
2.27
5 Recitative
Non è però che non molesta
0.29
6 Aria
Mie pupille
3.43
7 Recitative
Tu, nobil alma
0.30
8 Aria
Di gelosia il timore
2.22
9 Aria
Lascia omni le brune vele
5.47
10 Recitative
Dietro l'orme fugaci
1.01
11 Aria
Ah, crudele, e pur ten vai
5.05
12 Recitative
Per te mi struggo, infido
0.23
13 Recitative
Ma siamo giunti in Lete
0.47
14 Aria
Non ti bastava, ingrato
9.22
15 Recitative
Ma fermati, pensier
1.00
16 Aria
Per te lasciati la luce
6.42
17 Recitative
Armida ABANDONATA
Introduction
4.55
Recitative
Da quel giorno fatale
0.57
Recitative
Un pensiero voli in ciel
9.22
Recitative
Ma fermati, pensier
1.00
Recitative
Per te lasciati la luce
6.42
Recitative
Non ti bastava, ingrato
0.47
Recitative
Lascia omni le brune vele
5.47
Recitative
Ma siamo giunti in Lete
0.21
Entrée
2.11
Minuet
In queste amene
2.32
Recitative
Si, disse Clori
0.20
Minuet
0.52
Total Timing
66.32

ANTHONY HICKS
Recitative

Clori, mia bella Clori,
lungi da te, che sei dolce
d’ogni mio ben cagione amata,
quest’alma sventurata,
come viver potrà?
Se sol da quelle
luci del volto tuo,
serene e belle,
prende il misero cor
grato alimento,
come lungi starò,
senza che mia morte il mio tormento?

Aria

Chiari lumi, voi che siete
il mio fato, rispondete,
senza voi viver potrò?
Voi ch’il duol mio non gradite,
già pietosi un sì mi dite,
ma il mio cor teme di no.
Chiari lumi...

Recitative

Temo ma pure io spero,
bella, di non morir,
che quello stesso pensier che mi tormenta,
mi dice ancor: se il bel sembiante impresso
porti della tua Clori
in mezzo al petto,
all’alta virtù del tuo costante affetto,
ovunque il piè s’aggiungi,
farà che quella in ogni oggetto miri.

Aria

Ne’ gigli e nelle rose,
cara, le tue vezzose
sembianze io mirerò.
Nel sole e nelle stelle,
delle tue luci belle,
l’imago adorerò.
Ne’ gigli e nelle rose...

Recitative

Non è però che non molesta e grave
lontananza si dura, abbia l’alma a soffrire,
che quel piacer soave,
di cui parte si perde,
perdere non si può senza martire.

Aria

Ne’ gigli e nelle rose,
cara, le tue vezzose
sembianze io mirerò.
Nel sole e nelle stelle,
delle tue luci belle,
l’imago adorerò.
Ne’ gigli e nelle rose...

Recitative

I fear, yet I hope,
my lovely, not to die,
for that same thought which tortures me,
still tells me: if you hold your Chloris’
lovely appearance imprinted
within your heart,
the noble virtue of your undying love,
wherever you direct your steps,
will make you see her in every object.

Aria

In the lilies and in the roses,
my dear, I shall see
your beautiful charms.
In the sunshine and in the stars,
I shall adore
the reflection of your lovely eyes.
In the lilies and in the roses...

Recitative

It is not however that my soul does not
have to suffer at such harsh, painful,
severe separation, for that sweet pleasure
which I partly lose,
cannot be lost without agony.
My eyes,
if you were tranquil
one day,
now I invite you to weep.
And you will
never more be happy
unless I return
to see my lovely Chloris again.

You, noble soul, meanwhile,
if you feel pity for my tears,
the result both of love and jealousy,
that part which is mine in your heart,
poichè tuo servo io fui,
serba tutta per me, niegala altrui.

Fear of jealousy
tells my lover’s heart
that you will not be faithful,
So that I, between frost and fire,
pine away gradually
through my cruel destiny.

Aria
Mie pupille
se tranquille
foste un giorno,
or v’invito a lacrimar.
Né saresti mai più liete
se non torni
Clori vaga a rimirar.
Mie pupille...

Recitative
Tu, nobil alma, intanto,
se hai pietà del mio pianto,
figlio insieme d’amore e gelosia,
quella parte che mia è nel tuo sen,
poichè tuo servo io fui,
serba tutta per me, niegala altrui.

Di gelosia il timore
tells my lover’s heart
that you will not be faithful,
So that I, between frost and fire,
pine away gradually
through my cruel destiny.

Aria
Ah, crudele, e pur ten vai
e mi lasci in preda al duolo, e pur sai
che sei tu solo il diletto del mio cor.
Come, ingrato, e come puoi
involare a questo sen, il seren de’lumi tuoi,
se per te son tutta ardor?
Ah, crudele...

Recitative
Dietro l’orme fugaci del guerrier,
che gran tempo in lascivo soggiorno
ascoso avea,
Armida abbandonata
il pié movea;
e poi che vide al fine
che l’oro del suo crine,
I vezzi, i sguardi, i preghi
non han forza che leghi
il fuggitivo amante,
fermò le stanche piante,
e affissa sopra un scoglio,
calma di rio cordoglio,
a quel leggerio abete,
le luci affisse,
piangendo e sospirando
cosi disse:

Ah, cruel one, so you go away
and leave me grief-stricken, and yet you know
that you alone are the delight of my heart.
How, ungrateful man, how can you steal
from my heart the calm peace of your eyes,
if all my love is for you?
Ah, cruel one...
**Recitative**

*Per te mi struggo, infido,*
*per te languisco, ingrato;*
*ah, pur lo sai*
*che sol da tuoi bei rai*
*per te piagato*
*ho il seno,*
*e pur tu m’abbandoni,*
*infido amante:*

---

**Accompanied Recitative**

*O voi, dell’incostante*
*e procelloso mare,*
*orridi mostri,*
dai più profondi chiostri,
e contro quel crudel incredulite,*
*si, si, sia vostro vanto*
e del vostro rigore*
*di voi maggiore.*

Onde, venti, che fate,*
che voi nol sommergete?
Ah no, fermate!

---

**Aria**

*Venti, fermate,*
*nol sommergete; no,*
*è ver che mi tradi,*

---

**Recitative**

*Ma che parlo, che dico?*
*Ah, ch’io vaneggio,*
*e come amar potrei un traditore,*
*infelice mio core!*

Rispondi, o Dio, rispondi.

*Ah, che tu ti confondi,*
*dubbioso e palpitante*
*vorresti non amare e vivi amante.*

Spezza quel laccio indegno*
*che tiene avvinto ancor gli affetti tuoi.*

Che fai, miseror cor?
*Ah, tu non puoi!*

---

**Siciliana**

*In tanti affanni miei*
*assistimi almen tu,*
*Nume d’amore!*

E se pietoso sei,*
*fa ch’io non ami più*
*quel traditore.*

*In tanti affanni miei...*
DELIRIO AMOROSO

Introduction

Da quel giorno fatale
che tolse morte
il crudo Tirsi a Clori
ella per duolo immenso,
sciolto il crin, torvo il guardo,
incerto il piede, par ch’abbia
in sé due volontà, due cori:
e del chiaro intelletto,
per gran fiamma d’amor turbato il raggio,
ora s’adorna, ora del crin negletto
fa dispettoso oltraggio,
e varia nel pensier, ma sempre bella,
agitata così, seco favella.

Aria

Per te lasciati la luce,
ed or che mi conduce
amor per rivederti, tu vuoi partire da me.

Oh, stop your uncertain steps,
or if you want to go, tell me why.

For you I left the daylight,

Recitative

Ma fermati, pensier, pur troppo è vero che fra
l’ombra d’averno è condannato per giusta pena,
e per crudel mio fato.

Non ti bastava, ingrato,
d’avermi in vita lacerato il core?

But stay, my thoughts, alas, it is true that he is
condemned to darkest Hell
as a just punishment for my cruel fate.

Yes, yes, I’ll rapidly descend to save my
beloved from the red-hot sands of Pluto,
god of burning Hell.

But what do I see?

A wandering spirit angrily sees
my face again and then escapes me.

Thyris, Thyris, oh, you cruel one!

Recitative

Ma fermati, pensier, pur troppo è vero che fra
l’ombre d’averno è condannato per giusta pena,
e per crudel mio fato.

Non ti bastava, ingrato,
d’avermi in vita lacerato il core?

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Aria
”Lascia omai le brune vele,
nero pin di Phlegetonte.
Io farò che un zeffiretto, per diletto,
spirì intorno a te fedele;
and that it moves the white canvas,
on its way, along the river Acheron.
Leave now the dark brown sails..."

Recitative
”Ma siamo giunti in Lete.
Odi il suono soave degli Elisi beati.
But we have reached the river Lethe. Hear the sweet sound of the blessed in Elysium.

Entrée
”In queste amene piaggie serene,
da sé ridente nasce ogni fior.
Tra suoni e cantanti, sempre clemente,
lo vide almen per fantasia dipinto.
On these pleasant, serene shores, laughing to itself each flower springs up.
Amid music and song, always mild,
loved it is seen in the fancy.

Minuet
”Sì, disse Clori,
e se d’un sole estinto
più non vide il bel lume,
le vide almen per fantasia dipinto.
Yes, said Chloris,
and if the bright light
of an eclipsed sun, was not seen,
at least it was seen in the fancy.

ANN MURRAY
Ann Murray was born in Dublin and studied with Frederick Cox at the Royal Manchester College of Music. She has established close links with both the English National Opera, Welsh National Opera and the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. She has appeared with the world’s great orchestras and conductors, is a regular guest at the major festivals and is an internationally renowned recitalist, whilst her discography reflects not only her broad concert and recital repertoire but her great operatic roles.

The Symphony of Harmony and Invention
The Symphony of Harmony and Invention is the creation of its conductor, Harry Christophers. The orchestra’s strengths have been built around his passion for baroque music, that of its inspirational leader, Walter Reiter, and a continuo section full of invention and style. The accent is always on freshness of delivery. Part of its existence is as period orchestra to The Sixteen where it acts as a superb complement to the choir in major works of the baroque and classical eras.

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