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**PIETER HELLENDAAAL**

Six Grand Concertos Op. 3

**La Sfera Armoniosa**

**Mike Fentross** conductor

**Lidewij van der Voort** concertmaster

**Live  
recording**

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**PIETER HELLENDAAAL (1721-1799)**

**Concerto I in G Minor**

[1] I. Overture	2:36
[2] II. Allegro	1:56
[3] III. Largo	2:33
[4] IV. Presto	1:44
[5] V. Menuet	1:31

**Concerto II in D Minor**

[6] I. Overture	1:41
[7] II. Allegro	3:00
[8] III. Affettuoso	2:42
[9] IV. Presto	2:57
[10] V. Borea	1:34

**Concerto III in F Major**

[11] I. Largo-Allegro	2:21
[12] II. Allegro	2:22
[13] III. Adagio	2:34
[14] IV. Alla breve	1:39
[15] V. March	2:00

**Concerto IV in E flat Major**

[16] I. Grave sostenuto	3:37
[17] II. Alla breve	2:11
[18] III. Affettuoso	1:52
[19] IV. Presto	1:49
[20] V. Pastorale	2:45

**Concerto V in D Major**

[21] I. Largo	4:45
[22] II. Allegro	4:23
[23] III. Larghetto	5:25
[24] IV. Allegro	2:50
[25] V. March	1:47

**Concerto VI in F Major**

[26] I. Largo	1:37
[27] II. Allegro	4:39
[28] III. Adagio	3:05
[29] IV. Allegro	1:54
[30] V. Largo	1:12
[31] VI. Menuet	2:19

Total time 79:38

**Pieter Hellendaal, Six Grand Concertos, Opera terza** (London, 1758)

In the eighteenth century, London was one Europe's biggest metropolises and also a musical centre of the first order. Musical life in the city relied on a broad class of wealthy amateurs, who were supported in their hobby by countless professional musicians. Concert life had already started there in the seventeenth century: music in public places, accessible for a fee. No wonder that the city was a great attraction for musicians from other countries, especially Germany and Italy. As far as German musical immigration into England is concerned, mention must of course be made of Georg Friedrich Händel (with *Umlaut*), known in England as George Frideric Handel (without *Umlaut*). The most famous Italian with an English career is certainly Francesco Geminiani. But Dutch musicians also settled in England to earn a living. Two names should be mentioned in this connection: the first is Willem de Fesch, born in Alkmaar, who settled in London shortly after 1730. Twenty years later, the Rotterdam-born Pieter Hellendaal did the same.

Eighteenth-century London musical life was strongly oriented towards Italian music, with Arcangelo Corelli as the prime example. Corelli never visited England, but his music, sonatas for one or two violins with continuo accompaniment and *concerti grossi* for a string ensemble were heard everywhere, at home and on the concert stage. Handel and Geminiani, who composed in a style based on Corelli's work, took full advantage of this 'Corellimania'. If programs of concerts in England at that time are looked at, the names of Corelli, Handel and Geminiani will pop up over and over again. Evidently their style – melodious, with the right mixture of polyphony and

homophony and not too difficult to perform – was ideally suited to English audiences, both at home and on the concert stage. And we must not forget that in England there were at that time numerous amateur music clubs and societies – usually led by a professional musician – who rehearsed the works of these composers and then played them at concerts. The ensemble works of the aforementioned 'big three' were also quite suitable for these clubs and societies

No wonder, then, that English composer and also foreign composers living in England were inspired by the work of the big three and continued their formula for success. Among these continuators (which sounds better than followers) Pieter Hellendaal must be counted.

Although Hellendaal must have already displayed remarkable musical talent at an early age, he did not come from a family of musicians – as was the case for many of his colleagues: he was born in 1721 in Rotterdam as the son of a candle maker. The family moved to Utrecht, where he became organist of the Nicolaikerk at the age of 10. But he wasn't just a keyboard player: his violin playing must also have attracted attention. Around 1740 he was in Padua for a while to be trained as a violinist and composer with Giuseppe Tartini, Europe's most famous violin teacher. Hellendaal then settled in Amsterdam where he built up a life as a violinist and composer. He played regularly at concerts and published two collections of violin sonatas, his Opus 1 and Opus 2. His short Amsterdam period was followed by an even shorter Leiden period. And although Amsterdam and Leiden had a well-developed musical

life in those years, with regular concerts and many musical amateurs, Hellendaal nevertheless chose to leave for London in 1751, presumably with the hope of greater fame and income.

The London period lasted from 1751 to 1760, and also now Hellendaal will have made a living by performing at concerts and giving lessons. His *Six Grand Concertos* (about which more shortly) were published during this period: they were issued in 1758 by the London music publisher John Walsh. But Hellendaal was unable to acquire a permanent position as a musician, and after an unsuccessful application to Oxford he became, in 1760, organist in the English provincial town of King's Lynn. However, he resigned from this position after just over a year and now his final destination came into sight: the city of Cambridge, famous for its university. Hellendaal was appointed organist of Pembroke Hall Chapel in 1762 and he would spend the rest of his life, a time span of almost forty years (!), in the city. His position as organist – from 1777 of Peterhouse Chapel – formed the basis of his existence; in addition, there were numerous concert performances; several collections of new compositions for violin and cello were published; and he would also have had his students. He lived through the French Revolution and the turbulent times that followed – albeit from the safety of England. He died in 1799, aged 78.

The *Six Grand Concertos* of 1758 are his only known works for orchestra, albeit that we must understand 'orchestra' as an ensemble of four to a maximum of, say, twenty strings – violinists, violists and cellists – with a harpsichordist for the continuo part. The characteristic of such a 'grand concerto' – a translation

of the Italian *concerto grosso* – is the distinction between solo and tutti parts. In Hellendaal's *Grand Concertos* there are four soloists, two violinists, an alto player, and a cellist, who together form the concertino. Then there are four corresponding parts that can be played singly or by multiple players and which then form the *concerto grosso*. Usually, concertino and *concerto grosso* play together, but from time to time only the concertino musicians play, which is a welcome change in the course of the composition.

The basic idea of the Italian-English 'grand concerto' is a four-movement scheme. The first movement is a slow introduction, often with dotted rhythms, a style based on the so-called French overture, a legacy of the seventeenth-century French composer Jean-Baptiste Lully. This overture is then followed by a fugue, a polyphonic piece in which the different voices introduce the theme of the movement one by one. Then follows a slow movement, often in a different key than the previous movements and usually with a 'affective' character. Finally, there is the fourth and last movement, the finale, usually a cheerful piece of music without too many complications, sometimes with a form derived from the dance, such as a minuet.

Hellendaal's *Concertos I and II* neatly fit the description given above and with that traditional set-up there are also numerous echoes of the music of Corelli, Handel and Geminiani. Both concertos are concluded by an extra movement, a Menuet and a Bourrée (Italianized as Borea) respectively. That Hellendaal is a composer of a later generation than Handel and Geminiani is clear from the concertos that follow. There is a large variation in metre and texture and

therefore also in character. The movements no longer slavishly follow the traditional model and regularly a movement breaks down into sections with contrasting characters. This does not mean that we do not regularly hear traditional elements. In a country where everything that happened musically was measured against the yardstick of Handel's oeuvre, it was unwise to leave this beacon too far and for too long.

Concerto III is closed by a March (impossible with Corelli and Geminiani, not with Handel), Concerto IV adds a Pastorale to the four standard movements, with its 6/8 time and long sustained bass notes certainly based on Italian examples. Concerto V begins with an introductory section that goes on for so long that it takes on more weight than would just fit an introduction. The fugue that follows is equally comprehensive, and so is the original Larghetto that follows (with a tempo somewhere in between slow and fast). Then, there is another fugue, but with a more playful character than the first. And finally, another March. In Concerto VI, Hellendaal also adds something extra to the four movements that first follow the standard formula: this time a Menuet.

Hellendaal certainly took the work of his three illustrious predecessors Corelli, Handel and Geminiani as a starting point, but he added a completely individual interpretation to it. The result is a set of six masterpieces.

Dr. Rudolf Rasch





## **Mike Fentross**

Artistic director & conductor | Basso continuo: theorbo, baroque guitar

Conductor and lutenist Mike Fentross has largely earned his credits as an early music specialist. He is working all over Europe as a conductor, soloist and basso continuo player and he is professor of lute and basso continuo at the Royal Conservatory in The Hague. In 2006 he founded the baroque orchestra La Sfera Armoniosa.

Mike Fentross conducted in many festivals and concert halls like the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, the Festival van Vlaanderen, Festival d'Ambronay, Festival Oude Muziek Utrecht, Musikfestspiele Potsdam Sanssouci, Paradiso Amsterdam, Monteverdi Festival Cremona, Festival de Musica Portico de Zamora, Festival Musica Antiqua Brugge, Vantaa Early Music Festival, Bayreuth Barock and Muziekcentrum Vredenburg in Utrecht. For two times he had the honour to conduct in the presence of Queen Beatrix of Holland.

In 1994 he won the Van Wassenaer Competition in Amsterdam with violinist Helene Schmitt. He played chamber music with musicians as Yo Yo Ma, Ton Koopman, Janine Jansen, Marion Verbruggen, Sonia Prina, Maria Bajo, Wilbert Hazelzet, Bruce Dickey, Lucy van Dael, Andrew Lawrence King, Philippe Jarousski, Eduardo Lopez Banzo, Skip Sempe and Gerard Lesne.

Fentross studied conducting with Stefan Pas. As conductor he debuted in 1999 with La Dafne from Marco da Gagliano in a production of the New Opera

Academie in Amsterdam. In 2006 he conducted in the presence of Queen Beatrix the modern world premiere from the opera *l'Ipermestra* from Cavalli in a prestigious jubilee production from the Utrecht Early Music Festival and in 2008 he conducted a second unearthed Cavalli opera *La Rosinda* in a production from the Musikfestspiele Potsdam Sanssouci Potsdam. In 2009 he conducted for the first time in the big hall from the Amsterdam Concertgebouw and in the same year he was musical director in the production *Granida* performed in the presence of Queen Beatrix. About his debut as conductor from the Dutch Chamber Choir in 2010 in the Concertgebouw the press wrote: *Conductor Mike Fentross rivalled Caravaggio with the score of the Maria Vespers. His first time conducting the Nederlands Kamerkoor was a resounding success.*

Mike doesn't only conduct Early Music, in 2004 he conducted *Pierrot Lunaire* from Arnold Schoenberg. The press wrote: *There was great enthusiasm for Mike Fentross as conductor of a double bill consisting of Monteverdi's Combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda and Schoenberg's Pierrot lunaire. Mike Fentross gave a performance of Pierrot lunaire that 'appeared to come from another planet'.*

Since the 2010's Mike made his Austrian debut in the Haydn Festival Eisenstadt with great success in a program with coloratura soprano Simone Kermes, conducted the pre jubilee concert for the Concertgebouw in a program with soloists Lucy van Dael (violin), Henk Neven (bariton) and Andreas Scholl (counter-tenor), the Paradiso Orchestra with Beethoven's *Eroica*,

the Netherlands Chamber Choir in the Purcell's *Fairy Queen* and in a Bach-Faure program live broadcast on national radio and curated the Dutch Masters series for Challenge Records highlighting almost forgotten composers from the 17th and eighteenth century.

Mike Fentross is regularly conducting the baroque orchestra and choir of the Royal Conservatory.

**La Sfera Armoniosa** was founded in 1992 by Mike Fentross and Paulina van Laarhoven and focuses on performing music from the 17th and 18th centuries. In a short time, La Sfera Armoniosa developed to a top level ensemble performing on major European festivals and venues receiving raving reviews over many years for a wide variety of projects. La Sfera Armoniosa has proved tonight that it belongs to the leading baroque orchestras, wrote Operapoint.

Partners of La Sfera are a.o. De Nederlandse Reisopera, Het Nederlands Kamerkoor, Opera2Day, historian and writer Geert Mak, Zero Dance Company, jazz musician Maarten Ornstein, flutist Kersten McCall, soprano Simone Kermes, soprano Johannette Zomer, soprano Claron McFadden, soprano Channa Malkin, soprano Nora Fischer, soprano Roberta Invernizzi, mezzo soprano Barbara Koselj, mezzo soprano Kadri Tegelmann, countertenor Andreas Scholl, countertenor Maarten Engeltjes, alto Sonia Prina, tenor Marcel Beekman, tenor Jan van Elsacker, tenor Ian Honeyman, baritone Henk Neven, bass Harry van der Kamp and contemporary composers Boudewijn Tarenskeen and Merlijn Twaalfhoven.



**Lidewij van der Voort** (violin, concertmaster, concertino) grew up with baroque music. After studying modern violin in Amsterdam she specialised with Sigiswald Kuijken in Brussels and with violinists such as John Holloway, Enrico Gatti and Roy Goodman. For years she was first violin of the European Union Baroque Orchestra and soon played, often as concertmaster, with the major European baroque orchestras: Academy of Ancient Music, Les Musiciens du Louvre, Musica Antiqua Köln, Anima Eterna, De Nederlandse Bachvereniging, B'Rock, The King's Consort, La Sfera Armoniosa, and Capriccio Sravagante. Among her musical partners are Rachel Podger, Lars Ulrik Mortensen, Jos van Immerseel and Richard Egarr and Skip Sempé. Lidewij van der Voort was co-founder of the Dutch baroque orchestra Holland Baroque Society, where she was concertmaster for many years and won several prizes. Lidewij plays on an Amsterdam violin by Hendrik Jacobs from the late 17th century.

**Elise van der Wel** (violin, concertino) studied at the Royal Conservatoire in The Hague with Theodora Geraets and baroque violin with Kati Debretzeni and Walter Reiter. She took masterclasses with David Rabinovich, Lucia Swarts, Petra Mülleijans and Kristin von der Goltz. Elise performed with many early music ensembles such as the Nederlandse Bachvereniging, Capriola di Gioia (België), Dutch Baroque, the Luthers Bach Ensemble, Collegium Marianum and the Apollo Ensemble. Elise is member and cofounder of Le Concert d'Apollon, an orchestra specialized in French baroque music.

**Joseph Tan** (violin) received his bachelor's degree in baroque violin from the University of Austin Texas in 1994 under Eugène Gratovitch. He continued

his studies at Oberlin College, where he obtained his master's degree under Marilyn McDonald in 1997. Eager to learn, he chose to deepen his historical performance practices even further by specializing at the Royal Conservatory of The Hague, where he studied under Monica Higgett, Elizabeth Wallfisch, and Pavlo Beznosiuk, and obtained his artistic diploma in baroque violin in 2001. Joseph Tan's specialized in historical violin and viola playing with a focus on chamber music and orchestral works from the 17th to the early 20th century. His main interest lies in late 18th and early 19th century music and ways of playing. Joseph is a regular player in various ensembles and orchestras at home and abroad.

**Annabelle Ferdinand** (violin) studied at the Amsterdam Conservatory, Royal Conservatory in The Hague and in Sint Petersburg. After finishing her modern violin studies at in The Hague, she studied baroque violin with Monica Huggett and Pavlo Beznosiuk again at the Royal Conservatory in The Hague. Next to her work as violin teacher she has a regularly performs with Anima Eterna, the Nederlandse Bachvereniging, the Amsterdam Baroque Orchestra.

**Luca Alfonso Rizzello** (violin) received his degree at the conservatory in Bari with F. Cristofoli and then studied baroque violin with D. Longo at the conservatory in Lecco. He wrote a dissertation on a collection of violin sonatas, "Prothimia Suavissima" from 1672. Luca Alfonso Rizzello received his master's degree in baroque violin from Enrico Gatti at the conservatories in Piacenza and The Hague. Rizzello followed master classes and chamber music and baroque courses with Ryo Terakado, François Fernandez, Lucy Van Dael, Emilio Moreno and

Rachael Beesley, among others. He plays in many chamber music and baroque ensembles in Italy, the rest of Europe and Argentina and performed at festivals in Milan, Modena, Utrecht, Marseille, Maastricht and Deventer.

**Sakura Goto** (violin) studied baroque violin at Tokyo University of the Arts with Natsumi Wakamatsu, Emilio Moreno and Hidemi Suzuki, where she received a bachelor's degree in addition to the Acanthus Award and the Douseikai Prize. She came to the Netherlands in 2015 and started studying with Ryo Terakado at the Royal Conservatoire The Hague. In 2017 she received the 3rd prize with the ensemble Les Petit Riens in the international competition "Maurizio Pratola" and the 2nd prize in the "Premio Bonporti International Baroque Violin Competition". She was invited as a scholarship student for a Masterclass Course in Brunico, Italy, in 2018. Currently she performs with Le Concert d'Apollon, Castello Consort, Dutch Bach Association.

**Zdenka Prochaskova** (viola) is Czech in origin and studied violin and viola at the Utrecht Conservatory. As a viola player and violinist she regularly performs with various orchestras and chamber music ensembles in the Netherlands and abroad. She has her own ensemble, CORDEVENTO, with whom she has performed in venues such as the Concertgebouw Amsterdam, Philharmonie Cologne and at the Early Music Festival Utrecht. Besides many performances, Zdenka also teaches violin to children and adults who play at various levels. She teaches at the Vivaldi Music Lessons school in Delft.

**Esther van der Eijk** (viola, concertino) studied viola with Else Krieg and Jürgen Kußmaul in the Netherlands, She continued her studies at the Scuola di musica

di Fiesole with Antonello Farulli in Italy. After graduating, she played in the Radio Symphony Orchestra for several years, but she also specialised in the Historical Performance Practice with violinist Lucy van Dael and toured Europe with the European Union Baroque Orchestra in 2000. Esther has played with many different national and international groups since. In 2005 she co-founded the Holland Baroque Society and, as a member of the artistic team, is responsible for the Society's adventurous concerts. Esther plays on a beautiful viola from 1700 (Pieter Rombouts) which is made available to her by the National Musical Instrument Fund.

**Octavie Dostaler-Lalonde** (violoncello, concertino) is a versatile musician whose repertoire spans from the late 17th to the 20th century. Her main focus is historical performance practice. After studying modern cello under Denis Brott and Carole Sirois at the Conservatoire de Musique de Montréal, Octavie received the Prix avec Grande Distinction in 2011. Given her interest in historical performance practices, she continued with a study of baroque cello under Susie Napper in Montreal and under Viola de Hoog in Amsterdam. As a baroque soloist, she received the second prize at the international "Concours Corneille" in France in 2016. In Europe Octavie performs with groups such as Ensemble Masques, Vox Luminis, Camerata RCO, Amsterdam Corelli Collective, Terra Nova and the Nieuwe Philharmonie Utrecht.

**Evan Buttar** (violoncello) enjoys a varied and international performing career on both the baroque cello and viola da gamba. After studying modern cello he obtained a baroque cello master's degree with Jaap ter Linden at the Royal Conservatoire The Hague in 2016, and that same year started a second master's

study there on the viola da gamba with Mienke van der Velden and Philippe Pierlot, which he completed in 2018. His chamber and orchestral experiences have brought him to stages in numerous festivals, including Mozartfest Würzburg, Chopin and his Europe Festival, the Innsbruck Festival of Early Music, the Beethoven Academy in Wrocław, Musica Antica da Camera, Geelvinck Fortepiano Festival, and Bachfestival Dordrecht.

**Severiano Paoli** (double bass) graduated in double bass from the Istituto Musicale L. Boccherini (Lucca) with M. Gabriele Raghianti. He then perfected himself at the Prince Claus Conservatory (Groningen) and with Wolfgang Güttler (Berliner Philharmoniker). He also took part in masterclasses with Thierry Barbè, Rinat Ibragimov, Dorin Marc, Catalin Rotaru. Besides all that, he studied early music practice with Margaret Urquhart (Royal Conservatory in The Hague, Conservatorium van Amsterdam) and Robert Franenberg (Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra, Nederlandse Bachvereniging). He collaborates with various orchestras and ensembles.

**Teun Braken** (harpsichord and organ) studied both harpsichord and organ at the conservatoires of Utrecht and Amsterdam with Siebe Henstra, Reitze Smits and Menno van Delft. After finishing his Master degree in Amsterdam, Supported by the Prins Bernhard Cultuurfonds, he continued his studies in Basel at the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis, where he currently specializes in the basso continuo playing and ensemble-leading under the guidance of Prof. Jörg-Andreas Bötticher. Teun has performed with many different ensembles like Concerto d' Amsterdam, Musica Amphion and the Dutch Bach Society, with whom he has recorded J.S. Bach's Johannes Passion.

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