

 *The English Concert*

BRITAIN'S ORPHEUS

HANDEL

THE PHILANTHROPIST

1st of October 2020 - Great Hall, Bart's Hospital

Dame Sarah Connolly - Mezzo Soprano

Sophie Bevan - Soprano

Soraya Mafi - Soprano

James Way - Tenor

Harry Bicket - Director



WELCOME

From St. Bartholomew's Hospital
West Smithfield
London EC1A 7BE
Chief Executive: William Palin
Registered Charity
No. 1167316.
www.bartsheritage.org.uk

Barts Heritage was formed in 2017 to repair, conserve and renovate the nationally important Grade I listed North Wing (with the Great Hall and Hogarth Stair), King Henry VIII Gatehouse and other heritage assets at St Bartholomew's Hospital in the City of London. The Hospital is the oldest in Britain, having dispensed free healthcare on the same site for nearly 900 years. Its historic buildings, art collection and archives remain at the heart of this unique institution and busy working hospital.

Our project, over 2020-2025, is estimated at £10.5m. The capital works will include the external repairs of the North Wing and Henry VIII Gatehouse, and the conservation and re-presentation of the two grand interiors, the Great Hall and Hogarth Stair. Core services and security systems to support public use will be brought into the North Wing, with lighter touch redecoration and upgrade of reception rooms and ancillary spaces and the introduction of a temporary exhibition and visitor orientation space. The rejuvenated buildings will serve as the setting and inspiration for a new public engagement and activity programme focusing on health and wellbeing, and designed and delivered in close partnership with the Hospital.

Cover image of Sarah Connolly
by Christopher Pledger

Though Handel was sometimes described as quick-tempered and ill-mannered by his contemporaries, he also evidently had a charitable side. Following a series of benefit performances from 1749 onward, Handel became connected with the Foundling Hospital in Bloomsbury, a home for sick, orphaned and abandoned children. Including excerpts from the oratorio Solomon (1748), this programme features music drawn from Handel's first concert for the Foundling Hospital. Handel's association with the hospital was a fruitful one. He raised the equivalent of 2.5 million in today's equivalent money, for the Foundling Hospital which later became the Coram Foundation.

While the concert is free to view, it is not free to produce. We encourage viewers to follow in the spirit of the original event and donate generously as they are able.

Alfonso Leal del Ojo
Chief Executive

PROGRAMME

Handel

Selection from Solomon HWV 67

Handel

Foundling Anthem HWV 268

The English Concert

Harry Bicket

Artistic Director /
Harpsichord

Dame Sarah Connolly

Solomon

Sophie Bevan

Queen of Sheba

Soraya Mafi

Queen

James Way

Zadok

Alison Balsom

Presenter

HANDEL THE PHILANTHROPIST

The great Georg Frideric Handel is sometimes portrayed as a curmudgeon, a man quick to temper, gluttonous, overfond of money and prickly in his personal relationships. There is some truth in each of these accusations but, happily, they represent only a part of his multi-faceted character. He was also a man of great personal generosity to colleagues and gave huge support to charitable causes whose legacies survive in various forms to this day. In truth the quality which distinguishes Handel's vocal output and raises it above all his contemporaries is its emotional range, and it is hard to see how this could possibly have been achieved unless his more business-like qualities were outweighed by his generosity and compassion.

Handel's first formal venture into charitable involvement came in 1738, arising out of a desire to help the family of a colleague who had fallen on hard times: John Christian Kytch was an oboist who had played in his orchestras for nearly 30 years until displaced by the brilliant Sammartini. Kytch had died in poverty and his two recently bereaved sons were one night found wandering in Haymarket in a state of extreme destitution. In order to help them Handel, assisted by the violinist/composer William Festing, organised a group of over two hundred of London's

leading musicians (including, in addition to Festing and Handel themselves, William Boyce, Thomas Arne and Henry Purcell's son Edward amongst many others) set up a Fund for Decay'd Musicians, a charity which is still with us today, having undergone (unsurprisingly but perhaps a little disappointingly) a change of name to the Royal Society for Musicians.

On a broader social level the previous two decades had seen a determined, but so far unsuccessful, campaign by a retired sea captain and philanthropist, Thomas Coram, to respond to the appalling poverty and violence on London's streets. Coram had been born in Lyme Regis but had made his fortune as the proprietor of a shipyard in Boston. Eventually returning to London with his American wife they were shocked at the stark contrast between the street life of the two cities, but their efforts to provide for London's destitute children was met with resistance, mainly because of the unforgiving attitudes to illegitimacy then prevalent in polite society. However, Coram persisted and made a significant step forward in the mid-1730s when he formed an unlikely alliance with the artist William Hogarth who of course shared his interest in, and sympathy with, the low life on London's streets.

Hogarth's fascination with the unfortunates of everyday London life may well have been born of his own bitter childhood experience: his father had sunk all his money into a bizarre commercial venture, to establish an exclusively Latin-speaking coffee shop in the City of London. Unsurprisingly this enterprise proved a catastrophic failure with the result that the Hogarth family fell into debt. At this period if a man was sent to prison for debt his entire family suffered the same fate, with the consequence that the young William Hogarth had spent five long years of his childhood as an inmate of the notorious Fleet debtors' prison. This may have proved a laboratory in terms of his artistic development but it also gave him a lifelong mission to improve the lot of society's casualties, many of whom, as he well knew, suffered their fate through no fault of their own.

The turning point in Hogarth and Coram's campaign came in 1739 when George II eventually signed a Royal Charter for the creation of a Foundling Hospital "for the education and maintenance of exposed and deserted young children." Loosely modelled on the famous ospedali orphanages in Venice, the hospital would arrange foster families for the youngest children until, at the age of 5, they could be brought to live in the hospital and be educated, most often with a view to domestic service or a military or naval career. Every child admitted was baptised and given a new name, but the mothers, when known, were always asked to leave a token which could be used as

identification in the hope that they might one day return to reclaim their child if their circumstances had taken a turn for the better.

During the long period of fundraising and building which followed the granting by charter of the hospital site in Bloomsbury Hogarth painted a famous portrait of Coram, donating it to the hospital. He also persuaded many of his colleagues in London's artistic community, most notably Thomas Gainsborough and Joshua Reynolds, to follow suit. The donated pictures were to be hung in the hospital's dining room. This was a clever strategy: 18th Century London had nowhere to see new art other than each painter's individual studio, and before long, once a critical mass of pictures was assembled, the Foundling Hospital became a fashionable place to be seen viewing the new works on show. The hospital governors charged admission fees and could simultaneously tug at the heart-strings and pockets of the wealthy patrons as they would also be viewing the work of the hospital as well as the pictures. For the artists it was an effective shop window for their works and a source of new commissions. Everyone benefited. The Foundling Hospital can with justification lay claim to the title of London's first art gallery (many of the paintings are still to be seen in what is now the Foundling Museum) and as a model for the Royal Academy of Art which was to be founded 20 years later.

The First Foundling Hospital

Of course the ingenious marriage of commerce with philanthropic purpose and support for and promotion of artists greatly appealed to Handel's entrepreneurial nature. In 1749 he offered to promote a benefit concert to help pay for the completion of the hospital's chapel into which he promised to install an organ entirely at his own expense. Naturally the hospital's governors gratefully accepted this offer from London's most celebrated composer and the concert eventually took place under royal patronage in May of that year (after two postponements arising from difficulties with royal diaries).

The programme comprised new works, in keeping with Hogarthian 'business model', including excerpts from one of the previous year's two oratorios, Solomon, and ending with a new Anthem. Solomon is based on the biblical accounts of King Solomon's reign, with each of the three Acts dealing with a different aspect of his character. Ever the astute businessman Handel paid homage to his patron George II by highlighting the perceived parallels, for his 18th Century audience, between Solomon and their own Hanoverian king. Act I opens, appropriately for the occasion of this concert, with the consecration of a new temple. The remainder of the Act describes Solomon's piety and marital bliss, the unknown librettist tactfully

omitting the Old Testament references to his 700 wives and 33 concubines. Act II deals with the wisdom of Solomon, while in Act III the emphasis is on splendour, opening with the sinfonia known as "The Arrival of the Queen Sheba".

The new anthem, now known as the Foundling Anthem, with which Handel concluded his 1749 concert was a typically Handelian affair: the new text, mainly a paraphrase of Psalm 41, is set to music drawn together from other recent works including the Funeral Ode for Queen Caroline, the previous year's other oratorio Susanna, concluding with the rousingly familiar (for the modern listener) Hallelujah chorus from Messiah which was as yet relatively unknown to London audiences.

The concert was a triumph; with tickets priced at half a guinea (over £60 in today's money) and an audience of over one thousand in the (unfinished) hospital chapel, plus private donations including a regal £2,000 from the King himself, the hospital raised enormous sums. Within a few months Handel was appointed a governor of the charity and resolved to repeat the concert the following year. These concerts, and those for the 'decay'd musicians', were to become annual events until his death 10 years later.

Felix Warnock © 2020

George Frideric Handel

(1685–1759)

Selection from Solomon HWV 67

Overture

ACT I

Scene I

Accompagnato (Solomon)

Almighty pow'r, who rul'st the earth and skies,
And bade gay order from confusion rise;
Whose gracious hand reliev'd Thy slave
distress'd,
With splendour cloath'd me, and with knowledge
bless'd;
Thy finish'd temple with Thy presence grace,
And shed Thy heav'nly glories o'er the place.

Recitative (Zadok)

Imperial Solomon, thy pray'rs are heard.
See, from the op'ning skies
Descending flames involve the sacrifice;
And lo! within the sacred dome
That gleamy light,
Profusely bright,
Declares the Lord of hosts is come.

Air (Zadok)

Sacred raptures cheer my breast,
Rushing tides of hallow'd zeal,
Joys too fierce to be express'd,
In this swelling heart I feel.
Warm enthusiastic fires
In my panting bosom roll,
Hope of bliss, that ne'er expires,
Dawns upon my ravish'd soul.
Sacred raptures. . . da capo

Scene II

Recitative (Solomon)

Bless'd be the Lord, who look'd with gracious
eyes
Upon His vassals' humble sacrifice,
And has with an approving smile
My work o'erpaid, and grac'd the pile.

Air (Solomon)

What though I trace each herb and flow'r,
That drink the morning dew,
Did I not own Jehovah's pow'r,
How vain were all I knew.
Say what's the rest but empty boast,
The pedant's idle claim,
Who having all the substance lost
Attempts to grasp a name.
What though. . . da capo

Scene III

Recitative (Solomon)

Thou fair inhabitant of Nile,
Rejoice thy lover with a smile!

(Queen)

O monarch, with each virtue bless'd,
The brightest star that gilds the east:
No joy I know beneath the sun,
But what's compris'd in Solomon.
With thee, how quickly fled the winter's night,
And short is summer's length of light

Duet (Queen & Solomon)

Welcome as the dawn of day
To the pilgrim on his way,
Whom the darkness caus'd to stray,
Is my lovely king to me.

(Solomon)

Myrtle grove, or rosy shade,
Breathing odours through the glade
To refresh the village maid,
Yields in sweets, my queen, to thee.

Scene IV

Recitative (Queen)

When thou art absent from my sight,
The court I shun, and loathe the light.

Air (Queen)

With thee th'unshelter'd moor I'd tread,
Nor once of fate complain,
Though burning suns flash'd round my head,
And cleav'd the barren plain.
Thy lovely form alone I prize,
'Tis thou that canst impart
Continual pleasure to my eyes,
And gladness to my heart.

ACT III

Sinfonia

Scene I

Chorus

Music spread thy voice around,
Sweetly flow the lulling sound.

Air (Zadok)

Golden columns, fair and bright,
Catch the mortals' ravish'd sight;
Round their sides ambitious twine
Tendrils of the clasping vine;

Cherubims stand there display'd,
O'er the ark their wings are laid:
Ev'ry object swells with state,
All is pious, all is great.

Scene II

Air (Queen of Sheba)

Will the sun forget to streak
Eastern skies with amber ray,
When the dusky shades to break
He unbars the gates of day?
Then demand if Sheba's queen
E'er can banish from her thought
All the splendour she has seen,
All the knowledge thou hast taught.

Recitative (Solomon)

Adieu, fair queen, and in the breast
May peace and virtue ever rest

Scene III

Duet (Queen of Sheba and Solomon)

Ev'ry joy that wisdom knows,
May'st thou, pious monarch, share!

Solomon

Ev'ry blessing Heav'n bestows,
Be thy portion, virtuous fair!

Queen of Sheba

Gently flow thy rolling days.

Solomon

Sorrow be a stranger here.

Both

May thy people sound thy praise,
Praise unbought by price of fear.

Chorus

The name of the wicked shall quickly be past;
But the fame of the just shall eternally last.

Foundling Anthem HWV 268

Aria (Tenor)

Blessed are they that considereth the poor
and needy:
the Lord will deliver them in time of trouble,
the Lord preserve them and comfort them.

Chorus

They deliver the poor that crieth, the
fatherless
and him that hath none to help him.
The Lord will comfort them.

Aria (Alto)

O God, who from the suckling's mouth
ordaineth early praise,
of such as worship Thee in truth
accept the humble lays.

SATB Soli

The charitables shall be had in everlasting
remembrance
and the good will shine as the brightness of
the firmament.

Chorus

Comfort them, O Lord, when they are sick:
make thou their bed in sickness.
Keep them alive, let them be blessed upon the
earth
and not deliver them unto their foes.

Duet

The people will tell of their wisdom,
and the congregation will shew forth their
praise.
Their reward is also with the Lord,
and the care of them is with the Most High.

Chorus

Hallelujah.
The Kingdom of this world
is become the kingdom of our Lord
and of His Christ,
and He shall reign forever and ever.
Hallelujah!

BIOGRAPHIES

HARRY BICKET

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR / HARPSICHORD



Photo: Richard Haughton

Internationally renowned as an opera and concert conductor of distinction, Harry Bicket is especially noted for his interpretation of baroque and classical repertoire and since 2007 has been Artistic Director of The English Concert, one of Europe's finest period orchestras. In 2013, following regular guest appearances for Santa Fe Opera, he became their Chief Conductor and in 2018 assumed the Music Directorship. Since taking up his position, he has conducted *Così fan tutte*, *Fidelio*, *La Finta Giardiniera*, *Romeo et Juliette*, *Alcina* and *Candide*. In the 2019 season, he also performed Strauss' Four Last Songs with Renée Fleming. Born in Liverpool, Harry studied at the Royal College of Music and the University of Oxford.

In September, together with The English Concert, he recorded Handel's *Rodelinda*, which will be released in the Spring of 2021.



Photo: Christopher Pledger

DAME SARAH CONNOLLY

MEZZO SOPRANO / SOLOMON

Sarah Connolly was made a DBE in the 2017 Birthday Honours, having previously been awarded a CBE in the 2010 New Year Honours. In 2020 she was made an Honorary Member of the Royal Philharmonic Society in recognition of her outstanding services to music.

She has sung at the Aldeburgh, Edinburgh, Lucerne, Salzburg and Tanglewood festivals and the BBC Proms where, in 2009, she was a soloist at the Last Night. Opera engagements have taken her around the world from the Metropolitan Opera to the Royal Opera House, the Paris Opera, La Scala Milan, the Munich State Opera and the Bayreuth, Glyndebourne and Aix-en-Provence festivals.

Recent highlights include Fricka in The Ring Cycle at both the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden and the Teatro Real in Madrid and recitals for the Schubertiada a Vilabertran, the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, Grand Théâtre de Genève, Teatro de la Zarzuela in Madrid and for the Philadelphia Chamber Music Society.

Recent performances on the concert platform have included Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde* (Rundfunk-Sinfonieorchester Berlin/Jurowski & London Philharmonic Orchestra/Jurowski), his *Symphony No. 8* (Wiener Symphoniker/Jordan), *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* (Orchestre national de Paris/Saraste) and Tippett's *A Child of our Time* (Orchestre de Paris/Adès). In the 2018/19 season, Sarah curated a residency at Wigmore Hall.

SOPHIE BEVAN

SOPRANO / QUEEN OF SHEBA



Photo: Robert Workman

Sophie was the recipient of the 2010 Critics' Circle award for Exceptional Young Talent, The Times Breakthrough Award at the 2012 South Bank Sky Arts Awards, the Young Singer award at the 2013 inaugural International Opera Awards and was made an MBE for services to music in the Queen's Birthday Honours in 2019.

Conductors she works with include Sir Antonio Pappano, Daniel Harding, Andris Nelsons, Edward Gardner, Laurence Cummings, Sir Mark Elder, Ivor Bolton and Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla.

Her operatic roles include Ilia Idomeneo, title role The Cunning Little Vixen, Sophie Der Rosenkavalier, Susanna Le nozze di Figaro, Governess The Turn of the Screw and Pamina. She made her debut at Glyndebourne Festival Opera as Michal Saul, at Teatro Real, Madrid as Pamina and at the Salzburg Festival and Metropolitan Opera as Beatriz in Thomas Adès' The Exterminating Angel.

SORAYA MAFI

SOPRANO / QUEEN



Photo: Christina Haldane

Soraya Mafi is a graduate of the Royal College of Music. She is the winner of the 2016 Susan Chilcott Award – an award from the Susan Chilcott Scholarship to support a 'major young artist with the potential to make an international impact'.

Highlights in her 2020/21 season include Musetta La bohème for English National Opera at Alexandra Palace, Johanna Sweeney Todd in her debut for the Opernhaus Zurich and Sophie Der Rosenkavalier for both the Welsh National Opera and Garsington Opera.

A Harewood Artist at the English National Opera, her roles for the company have included Tytania A Midsummer Night's

Dream, Mabel The Pirates of Penzance and Yum Yum The Mikado. Elsewhere she has sung Susanna Le nozze di Figaro for the Welsh National Opera, Gilda Rigoletto for the Seattle Opera, Nanetta Falstaff for Garsington Opera and Gretel Hänsel und Gretel for Grange Park Opera. She has also appeared at the Théâtre du Châtelet, the Opéra national du Rhin, with English Touring Opera, Opera North and the Opéra national de Lorraine.

JAMES WAY

TENOR / ZADOK

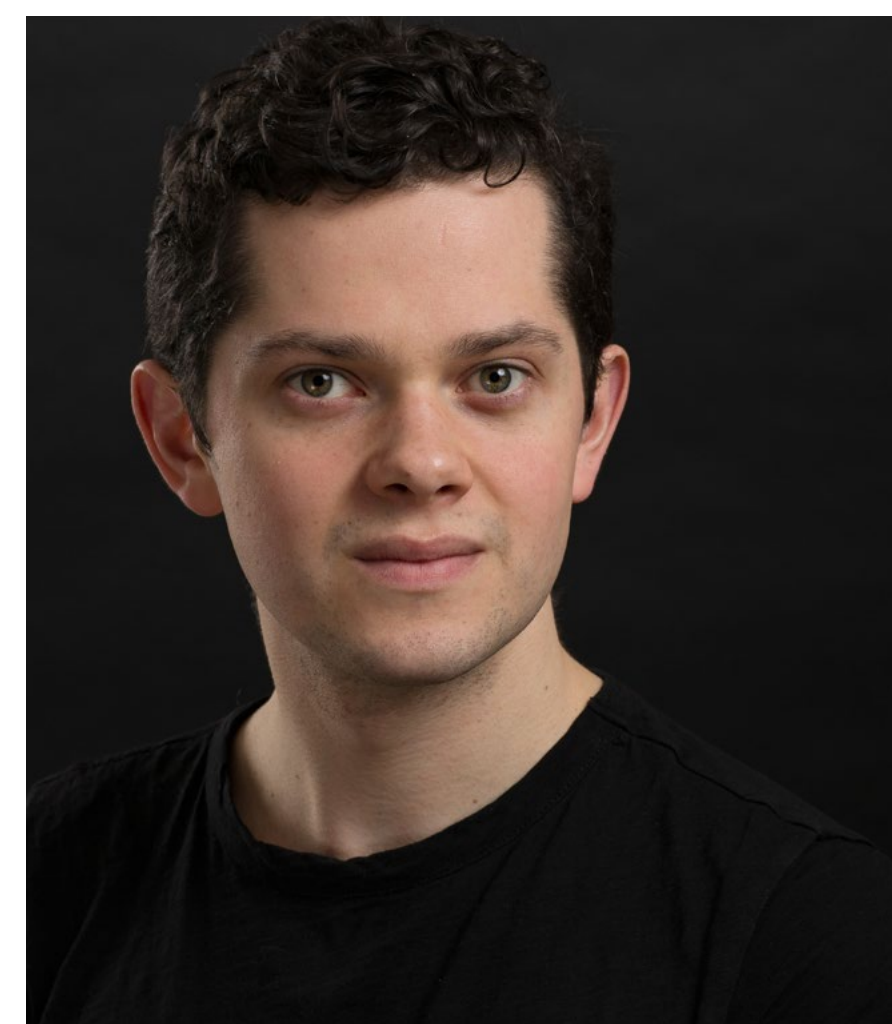


Photo: Ben McKee

Born in Sussex, tenor James Way was winner of the 2nd Prize in the 62nd Kathleen Ferrier Awards at Wigmore Hall. James is a former Britten-Pears Young Artist, a laureate of both the Les Arts Florissants 'Jardin des Voix' young artists programme and the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment's Rising Stars award, and holds an Independent Opera Voice Fellowship. A highly versatile performer, James is increasingly in demand on the concert platform in appearances spanning the breadth of the repertoire from the baroque to the present day.

This season he makes his debuts with Copenhagen Philharmonic Orchestra (Stravinsky Pucinella), the Ulster Orchestra (Evangelist, Bach St Matthew Passion under Daniele Rustioni), Grange Park Opera (Lechmere Owen Wingrave) and NDR Hamburg Chor for a programme of Charpentier/Lully with Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin. Returns include to The English Concert for Handel and Purcell arias with Harry Bicket. In 2021 James creates the role of The King in the world premiere of Gerald Barry Salome with Barbara Hannigan and the LA Philharmonic. James's recent recording of Purcell The Fairy Queen with the Gabrieli Consort and Players won high praise, and their subsequent recording of King Arthur won the Opera category at the 2020 BBC Music Magazine Awards, and was named Recording of the Year.

THE ENGLISH CONCERT



The English Concert is an outstanding orchestra: exceptional, in the world-renowned quality, ambition and variety of its live and recorded output; unique, in the zeal of its players for working and performing together; unwavering, in its desire to connect with its audience throughout the world.

Under the artistic direction of Harry Bicket and principal guest Kristian Bezuidenhout, The English Concert has earned a reputation for combining urgency, passion and fire with precision, delicacy and beauty.

The artistic partners we collaborate with reflect and enhance our pursuit for new ways to bring our music to life.

Joyce DiDonato, Dame Sarah Connolly, Iestyn Davies, Alison Balsom, Trevor Pinnock, Dominic Dromgoole, Tom Morris and many more have not only brought their extraordinary skills to individual projects, but

continue to help us shape the way we perform. One cornerstone of the orchestra's annual cycle is its international Handel opera series. Blossoming from an ongoing relationship with Carnegie Hall, the tour regularly takes in an ever-increasing roster of the world's great concert halls, from Theater an der Wien and Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, to Hamburg's Elbphilharmonie and London's Barbican. Meanwhile, our regular London series allows us to explore a radically different path, presenting programmes to our home audience that challenges and inspires us.

We launched our partnership with Garsington Opera last year with performances of Monteverdi's *Vespers of 1610* and despite the ravages of the current pandemic, we look forward to our opera there next year, Handel's *Amadigi, Re di Gaula*.

Violin I

Nadja Zwiener *leader*
Alice Evans
Julia Kuhn

Violin II

Tuomo Suni
Elizabeth MacCarthy
Kinga Ujszászi

Viola

Oliver Wilson
Louise Hogan

Violoncello

Joseph Crouch
Jonathan Byers

Double bass

Christine Sticher

Oboe

Katharina Spreckelsen
Hannah McLaughlin

Bassoon

Katrin Lazar

Horn

Ursula Paludan Monberg

Trumpet

Mark Bennett
Richard Thomas

Timpani

Robert Howes

Chorus

Sophie Bevan
Soraya Mafi
Rachel Ambrose Evans
Dame Sarah Connolly
Judy Brown
Katie Schofield
James Way
Peter Di-Toro
Michael Solomon Williams
Malachy Frame
Christopher Borrett
Alex Jones

Organ

Tom Foster

Harpichord is copied from an instrument by Carlo Grimaldi (Sicily 1697) by Andrew Wooderson (Bexley 2001). Provided and tuned by Simon Neal

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Join our friends

As we begin the slow road to recovery from this debilitating pandemic, we hope you may consider supporting our work.

The situation as it stands is still very challenging for the arts community; our players are freelance artists and when performances are cancelled, we cannot pay them. The English Concert is wholly reliant on income from ticket sales, fees from venues, donations from trusts and foundations and private individuals.

Whilst, it is clear the full repercussions of the Coronavirus for our community are yet to be fully known, I am certain that the human spirit will prevail. I take heart in the demonstrations of humanity during the worst of lockdown, with people singing, making music from their balconies and celebrating those things that make us human.

David Sanderson

Brian Self

Marilyn Stock

Rodney & Caroline Waldes

Alan Ward

George Warren

Marie Winckler

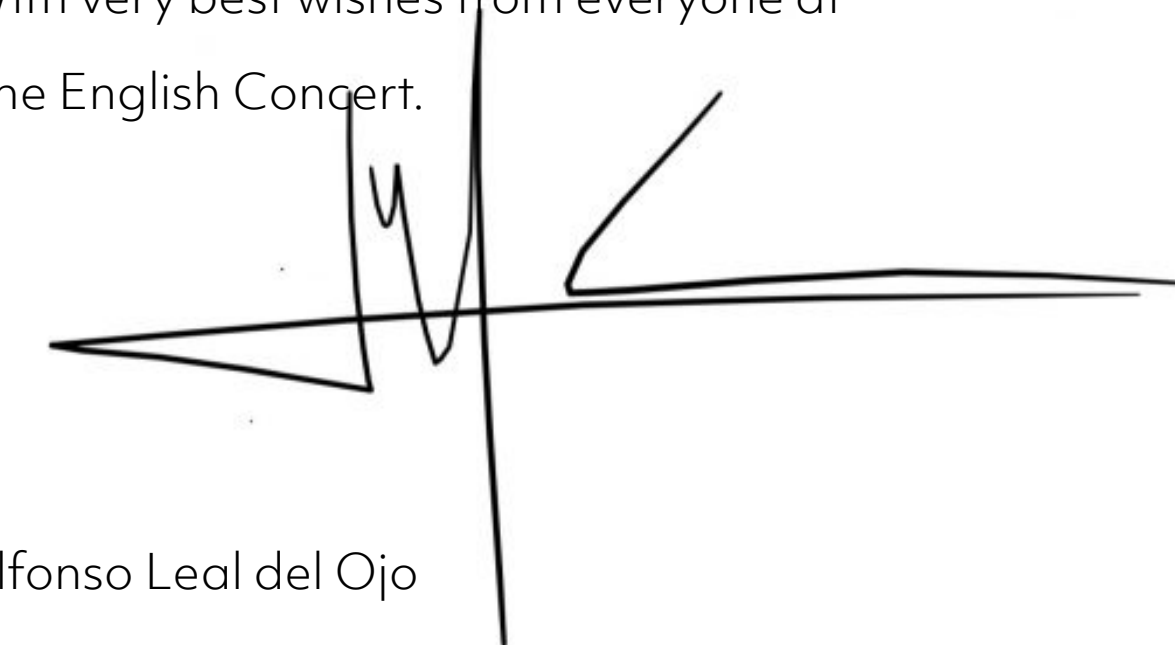
and various anonymous donors

Music-making is one of the most powerful means of bringing people together and when the dust fully settles, The English Concert will be with you, celebrating together the music we believe in. For now, please do consider giving us your support – we need it now more than ever.

You will find further information at

www.englishconcert.co.uk/support

With very best wishes from everyone at
The English Concert.



Alfonso Leal del Ojo

Chief Executive and Principal Viola

Exceptional music-making.

WALL STREET JOURNAL

THE ENGLISH CONCERT BRITAIN'S ORPHEUS SERIES CONTINUES

1 OCTOBER

Handel, The Philanthropist

from the Great Hall at Bart's Hospital
with Dame Sarah Connolly, Sophie
Bevan, Soraya Mafi & James Way
Harry Bicket, Director

4 OCTOBER

Purcell, O Solitude

from Eltham Palace
with Iestyn Davies
Harry Bicket, Director

6 OCTOBER

Purcell, Odes for a Queen

from St John's Smith Square
with Julia Doyle, James Laing,
Christopher Lowrey, Anthony Gregory,
Hugo Hymas & Ashley Riches
Kristian Bezuidenhout, Director

9 OCTOBER

Handel, The Italin

from Somerset House
with Lucy Crowe
Harry Bicket, Director

13 OCTOBER

Purcell, Music, Home & Heritage

From Boughton House
with Trevor Pinnock

15 OCTOBER

Handel & Milton

from St Giles Cripplegate
with Mark Padmore & Carolyn Sampson
Harry Bicket, Director

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