



Van Diemen's Band

ITALIAN BAROQUE SESSIONS

Hobart Town Hall, 5–8 March 2020

*Concerti Grossi Gala Concert*

Hobart Town Hall  
SUNDAY 8 MARCH 3PM

**CONCERTINI**

**Julia Fredersdorff**  
baroque violin

**Lizzy Welsh**  
baroque violin

**James Bush**  
cello

**CONCERTO GROSSO**

Violin  
**Sophie Longmuir**  
**Dawn Lindsay**  
**Kim Bishop**  
**Susie Furphy**  
**Josh Kok**  
**Natasha Charles**  
**Isabella Beudel**  
**Christopher John**

Viola  
**Jennifer Owen**  
**Emily Sheppard**

Cello  
**Martin Penicka**

Violone  
**Laura Vaughan**  
**Chris Gelok**

Harpsichord/Organ  
**Donald Nicolson**

Theorbo  
**Simon Martyn-Ellis**

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ARCANGELO CORELLI (1653–1713)  
Concerto Grosso Op 6 No 4 in D  
*Adagio – Allegro – Adagio – Vivace – Allegro – Allegro*

EVARISTO FELICE DALL'ABACO (1675–1742)  
Concerto a più strumenti Op 5 No 2 in G  
*Allegro e spiccato – Largo – Grave – Allegro – Grave – Presto*

ARCANGELO CORELLI  
Concerto Grosso Op 6 No 6 in F  
*Adagio – Allegro – Largo – Vivace – Allegro*

GEORG MUFFAT (1653–1704)  
*Passacaglia* from Sonata V in G major, *Armonico tributo*

ARCANGELO CORELLI  
Concerto Grosso Op 6 No 2 in F  
*Vivace – Allegro – Adagio – Vivace – Allegro – Adagio  
Largo – Andante – Allegro – Grave – Andante – Largo – Allegro*

Approximate durations (minutes): 10 – 12 – 11 – 11 – 10

EVARISTO DALL'ABACO (1675–1742), like Corelli, published a relatively modest quantity of music, less than 70 works all up. Born in Verona, where he learnt violin and cello, Dall'Abaco later moved to Modena, thence to Munich. Because of the War of the Spanish Succession, the Bavarian court was peripatetic in the early 18th century and Dall'Abaco, as a musician in the service of the Bavarian elector, Maximilian II Emmanuel, was frequently on the move. Maximilian and his retinue temporarily established themselves in various towns and cities in the Low Countries and France before returning to Munich in 1715. This was consequential for Dall'Abaco as it most likely explains various French influences that can be found in his music.

Like many Baroque composers, GEORG MUFFAT (1653–1704) felt the influence of Corelli keenly. A French-born German of Scottish ancestry, Muffat did his early music training in Paris (with Lully, no less) before holding posts in Strasbourg, Salzburg and Passau. From Lully he came to know French styles and practices. While in Salzburg, he was granted leave to study in Rome where he immersed himself in up-to-date Italian styles, becoming acquainted with Corelli and his music. Like many German composers who came after him (notably JS Bach), Muffat was fluent in French and

**A**LTHOUGH he left behind a relatively small body of music, ARCANGELO CORELLI (1653–1713) was tremendously influential. He was renowned as a violinist and did much to establish Baroque violin practice and technique. His early activities were centred around Bologna before he made tracks for Rome, where he worked in a number of important households including those of Queen Christina of Sweden, a great patron of the arts, and Cardinal Pietro Ottoboni. There are five published collections of sonatas by Corelli (Opp 1–5), mostly trio sonatas (i.e. for two

violins and basso continuo) as well as a collection for solo violin and basso continuo (Op 5). A single and highly influential collection of 12 concerti grossi (Op 6) was published the year after his death. It is possible that Corelli wrote a good deal more music which never made it into print. Corelli's influence was felt far and wide, from Couperin in France, to Telemann in Germany to Handel in England (indeed, Corelli met twentysomething Handel during the latter's stay in Rome in 1707-8). In his native Italy, Corelli was an important influence on Torelli, Albinoni and Vivaldi.

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Italian styles and found his own voice by drawing upon the two. Upon returning to Salzburg, Muffat published what is literally a tribute to Corelli and the music he heard in Italy, *Armonico tributo*, a collection of five concerti grossi (which, rather confusingly, he called sonatas). But not just Italy, Muffat's collection also pays homage to the musical styles of France.

Corelli's **Concerto Grosso in D Major, Op 6 No 4**, commences with an *Adagio–Allegro* movement. The very brief *Adagio* mainly functions to establish the key of D. Once that is firmly in our ears, thanks to a few rudimentary chord progressions, the *Allegro* sets off at a crackling pace with brilliant flourishes shared between the two solo violins. The ripieno offers 'backup', underpinning the harmony and filling out the texture. The *Adagio* which follows brings not only a change of tempo, but a change of key and mode, as D major is left behind for B minor. The opening gesture, with its stepwise descending movement, summons the 'lament' topic, which is enhanced still further through the use of pungent accented dissonances. We return to D and an altogether brighter mood for the *Vivace*, which is marked by strong dance rhythms. This is followed by a still more brilliant *Allegro*, which calls to mind the *giga*, before Corelli ups the ante with a breathtaking coda.

Dall'Abaco's **G Major Concerto Op 5 No 2** commences with a binary-form fast movement, *Allegro e spiccato*. The opening ritornello presents several short ideas, some of which recur as structural markers later in the movement (including at the start of the second half, transposed to the key of D). The episodes make use of figuration typical of the Italian string style. The solo violin comes to the fore in the *Largo*, which is based upon a dance model and introduces a French touch with its use of dotted rhythms. A somewhat breathless *Allegro* follows and this, in turn, is followed by an extraordinary *Grave*. Though brief, the *Grave* brings a surprisingly tragic tone. Falling semitones and minor harmonies predominate, and a homorhythmic texture further enhances the gravitas of the movement. But the tragic interlude is dispelled with a sprightly final movement, *Presto*, that features rapid bow strokes, tumbling sequences and almost continuous semiquavers.

Like Op 6 No 4, Corelli's **Concerto Grosso in F Major, Op 6 No 6** consists of movements in contrasting tempi and contrasting textures. The opening *Adagio* is predominantly homophonic while the middle movement, *Largo*, unfolds from a point of imitation announced by the concertino first violin before migrating to other parts. Dance rhythms are pressed into service in the

*Vivace* including some use of syncopation. The concerto closes with a predominantly homophonic *Allegro*.

Muffat's **Passacaglia** is the last movement of the final sonata of the 1682 collection, *Armonico tributo*. A grand set of variations, it consists of a refrain built around a fixed bass line and chord progression interspersed with contrasting 'verses'. This *rondeau* type of passacaglia is typically encountered in French music of the period. Indeed, Muffat moves between French and Italian idioms and, in an adventurous move, briefly superimposes the two about minute or so before the end.

The many changes of tempi in the first few minutes of Corelli's **Concerto Grosso in F Major, Op 6 No 2**, concerto elaborate what is essentially a single movement extending from the opening *Vivace* to the *Largo Andante*. The 'second movement', *Allegro*, commences with a point of imitation passed down through the concertino with additional ideas exchanged between the soloists and tutti as the movement unfolds. The *Grave* and *Andante Largo* take us into the key of D minor before we return to F major for the concluding *Allegro* with its well-marked dance rhythms.



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