



Friday 21 October, 8pm
St George's Church

IN RIME SPARSE IL SUONO

Airs and laments by **Sigismondo d'India**

Carlotta Colombo *soprano* & Michele Pasotti *theorbo*

The music

Sigismondo d'India 1582–1629

Cara mia cetra
Vorrei baciarti, o Filli
Torna il sereno zefiro

Giovanni Girolamo Kapsberger 1580–1651

Toccata IX
Lamento di Arianna

Claudio Monteverdi 1567–1643

Sigismondo d'India

Voi ch'ascoltate
Tutto il dì piango

Alessandro Piccinini 1566–1638

Toccata I
Piangono al pianger mio

Sigismondo d'India

Interval

Sigismondo d'India

O Primavera
Canzone Prima
Intenerite voi
Così mi disprezzate?

Kapsberger

Sigismondo d'India

Girolamo Frescobaldi 1583–1643

Piccinini

Toccata VI
Vedrò il mio Sol
O che Gradita

Giulio Caccini 1551–1618

Sigismondo d'India

'Moved by that desire, which naturally nestles in us, to know, as the leading philosophy teaches us, from my earliest childhood I sought to converse with intelligent men about music, and from their learned discourse to learn that which I desired to know, as much about composing for several voices as solo song.'

Thus wrote Sigismondo D'India himself, about his own development, in the preface introducing the courteous reader to his first book of 'Music to sing solo with the keyboard, chitarrone, double harp and other similar instruments'.

The book was published in Milan in February 1609; but the 'Nobile Palermitano' began life in the Sicilian capital probably in 1582. Despite having been one of the great protagonists of the period of incandescent creativity that was the early 17th century in Italy, these few lines quoted, in which he proclaimed himself more instructed by conversation than being part of a school, provide the only information about his education. It is possible that he received some musical education in Naples at the end of the 16th century when Carlo Gesualdo and Giovanni de Macque, masters of the chromatic style, were active in the city. Sigismondo would explore in depth the full potential of this style in his music for solo voice.

Between 1600 and 1610 he visited the most important cities for the development of the new style of monody (solo song) accompanied by a chord-playing instrument. He was in Florence, where he certainly met Caccini and Peri; in Mantua, the city of Monteverdi; and then Rome, Naples, Parma and Piacenza, to whose Duke the first book is dedicated. In 1611, after this period of travels, he finally found a position in Turin as director of chamber music for Carlo Emanuele I, Duke of Savoy. It was his most prolific period, which lasted until 1623. Forced to leave Turin owing to intrigues at court, he began his travels again between Emilia and Rome. He died in Modena in 1629.

The music we will hear this evening comes from five books that Sigismondo described as 'music to sing solo'. These books provide an exploration of all forms of accompanied monody and duets: arias, ostinato basses, laments, sonnets and canzonettes. Like his illustrious contemporaries Caccini and Monteverdi, Sigismondo makes oration the centre of musical composition:

'I found that one could compose in the true manner with extraordinary intervals, passing with as much novelty as possible from one consonance to another, according to the variety of meanings in the words, and that by this method the songs had greater affect, and greater power in moving the affections of the soul'.

Perhaps no one has gone as far as Sigismondo in expressing the dramatic power of words through the use of extreme chromaticism in compositions for solo voice and continuo. Especially in the lamentations of unhappy lovers, he twists the melody and harmony by stretching it by a semitone to give power and reality to the sense of pain. His dramatic and theatrical feeling places him next to the great Italian composers of the period and his long and tormented laments (Olimpia, Dido) would be perfectly at home within an opera. Sigismondo was also the author of some of the texts he set to music, but mostly he drew upon the finest contemporary poets (Rinuccini, Guarini and Marino) and, naturally, Petrarch.

At the end of the 16th century the desire – eternally in Western culture – was to return to the greatness and power of the music of the ancient Greeks; the dream of the rebirth of Orpheus took the form of accompanied monodies. That is, a song accompanied by one instrument exactly as Orpheus accompanied himself on the cetra (lyre). Thus the chitarrone was born from the 'kithara' or 'cetra': the new 'cetra' of Orpheus. Naturally the chitarrone soon also had much success as a solo instrument. Piccinini and Kapsberger, whose compositions are also heard tonight, are the two best known Italian composers to dedicate themselves to this instrument.

Chitarrone and theorbo (tiorba) are synonymous and 'Cara mia cetra' (My dear kithara) is the first piece in Sigismondo's first book. Our decision to perform his music for solo voice with the continuo realised on the theorbo therefore aims to recreate the ideal sonority, the mirage of Orpheus, from whom the new music, 'nuova musica', was born.

Michele Pasotti

The performers

Since his beginnings with the electric guitar, **Michele Pasotti** has played and listened to very different musical genres. He graduated in Lute with highest honours, studying with Massimo Lonardi and attending masterclasses with Hopkinson Smith and Paul O'Dette. He later specialised in Renaissance music theory and counterpoint at the Civica Scuola di Musica in Milan and deepened his study of late medieval practice both in Milan and Barcelona (Esmuc). At Rome's University 'Tor Vergata' he attended the specialist course Ars Nova in Europa, obtaining a first class degree. He also received a first class degree in Theoretical Philosophy with a dissertation on Martin Heidegger. From 2013 to 2018 Michele held an Ars Nova course at the Civica Scuola di Musica di Milano. He is professor of Lute at the Conservatorio di Musica 'B. Maderna' in Cesena. As a soloist (lutes, theorbo, baroque guitar), his repertoire spans from the Middle Ages to the late 18th century.

Michele is founder and director of La Fonte Musica, the centre of his musical life, and is also invited to conduct other ensembles including Capella Cracoviensis and Harmonia Cordis. He plays regularly with Il Giardino Armonico, I Barocchisti, Les Musiciens du Louvre, Collegium Vocale, Arcangelo, Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin, Balthasar-Neumann Ensemble, Les Musiciens du Prince, Il Ricercar Continuo, Sheridan Ensemble and Cecilia Bartoli. He also loves playing chamber music with Alena Dantcheva, and his trio Il Ricercar Continuo with Giulia Genini and Alessandro Palmeri.

lafontemusica.com

Carlotta Colombo graduated in Opera from the Conservatory in Como and furthered her studies in Renaissance and Baroque Singing at the Guido Cantelli Conservatory in Novara, studying with Professor Roberto Balconi. She also gained a First Class Honours Degree in Philosophy from the University of Milan. Carlotta has completed numerous specialist courses and masterclasses with internationally renowned artists including Emma Kirkby, Evelyn Tubb, Claudio Cavina, Paolo Beschi and Michael Fields.

She has performed at many leading international festivals including Bologna Festival, I Pomeriggi Musicali di Milano, Festival dei Due Mondi in Spoleto, Roma Festival Barocco, Urbino Musica Antica, Styriarte in Graz, Trigonale, Osterfestival in Tirol, Klangvokal Musikfestival in Dortmund, Schwetzingen Festival, Days of Early Music in Bratislava, Printemps des Arts in Monte Carlo, Musica Sacra Maastricht, Festtage Alte Musik Basel, Festival Cervantino in Guanajuato, and Sastamala Gregoriana, and has performed as a soloist or in ensemble in major concert halls including Teatro alla Scala in Milan, Teatro Comunale in Ferrara, Teatro alla Pergola in Florence, Boulez Saal in Berlin, Theater an der Wien, Wiener Konzerthaus, and Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in Paris.

Carlotta has sung with prominent Italian ensembles including: La Venexiana, laBarocca, Ensemble Zefiro, Il Canto di Orfeo, Fantazyas, Concerto Romano, La divina armonia, La Fonte Musica and il Pomo d'Oro, and has collaborated with many leading baroque specialist conductors. In 2022, she was named a finalist in the International Cesti Competition in Innsbruck.

carlottacolombo.com

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The translations

Cara mia cetra andianne,

a ritrovar colei,
ch'è mio solo desio, tuo solo oggetto,
quivi, à te da le corde, à me dal petto,
escan' gli accenti tuoi, gl'affanni miei,
che pietosa armonia
può forse impetrar pace, à l'alma mia.

Vorrei baciarti, o Filli,

ma non so come, ove il mio bacio scocchi,
ne la bocca o negli occhi.
Cedan le labbra a voi, lumi divini,
fidi specchi del core,
vive stelle d'amore.
Ah pur mi volgo a voi, perle e rubini,
tesoro di bellezza,
fontana di dolcezza,
bocca, onor del bel viso:
nasce il pianto da lor, tu m'apri il riso.

(Giovan Battista Marino)

Torna il sereno Zefiro,

e gl'augellini garruli,
de' boschi dolci musicì,
cantando insieme, temprano,
al suon del rio che mormora
con corde e note armoniche.

Io sol, involto il tristo core,
anzi sepolto in trist'horrore,
al suon del pianto intuon in tristi lai:
Primavera per me non sarà mai.

Le nube d'acque gravide,
che sgorgano i deluvi
hor tutte si ristagnano
e i venti, che fremano
orgogliosi con furia
taciti e chieti hor dormono.

Io sospirando senza riposo
e ancor versando tristo e doglioso
nembo di pioggia, intuono in tristi lai:
Primavera per me non sarà mai.

Ringiovenito ogn'arbore
di verde manto vestesi,
ridenti campi e pratore
di verde spoglia immantansi,
e in fin le grotte adornansi
di fior vermigli e candidi.

My dear kithara, go forth
and find her;
that is my only desire, your only object.
There from your strings and my breast come forth
your accents, my suffering,
that such pitiful harmony
can perhaps bring peace to my soul.

I would love to kiss you, O Phyllis,
but I don't know how or whether to kiss
your mouth or eyes.
The lips concede to you, divine eyes,
faithful mirror of the heart,
living stars of love.
Ah, then I just turn to you, pearls and rubies,
treasure trove of beauty,
fountain of sweetness,
your mouth, the honour of your lovely face:
tears are born from them (eyes), at me you laugh.

The gentle west wind returns,
and the little birds chatter,
sweet musicians of the woods,
singing together they colour
the sound of the murmuring river
with chords and harmonious notes.

I alone with a sad heart
indeed, buried in sadness and horror
to the sound of weeping I sing a sad song:
Spring will never be for me.

The clouds of heavy water
that gush in floods
now are all still,
and the winds which shake
proudly with fury
quietly and silently now sleep.

I am sighing without resting
and still pouring out, sad and miserable,
a mist of rain, I sing a sad song:
Spring will never be for me.

Every arbour is renewed
dressed in a mantle of green
laughing fields and meadows
clothe themselves in green
and even the caves adorn themselves
with flowers of red and white.

Io sol smarrita fuor d'ogni usanza
secca e sfiorita di mia speranza
il più bel verde intuono in tristi lai:
Primavera per me non sarà mai.

Lamento di Arianna

Lasciatemi morire
e che volete voi che mi conforti
in così dura sorte
in così gran martire?
Lasciatemi morire.

O Teseo, o Teseo mio
sì che mio ti vo' dir
che mio pur sei
benchè t'involi, ah! crudo
a gl'occhi miei.

Volgiti Teseo mio
volgiti Teseo, o Dio
volgiti indietro a rimirar colei
che lasciato ha per te la Patria e'l regno
e in queste arene ancora
cibo di fere dispietate e crude
lascierà l'ossa ignude.

O Teseo, o Teseo mio
se tu sapessi, o Dio
se tu sapessi, oimè
come s'affanna
la povera Arianna
forse, forse pentito
rivolgeresti ancor la prora al lito.

Ma con l'aure serene
tu te ne vai felice, ed io qui piango
a te prepara Atene
liete pompe superbe, ed io rimango
cibo di fere in solitarie arene.
Te l'uno e l'altro tuo vecchio parente
stringeran lieti
ed io più non vedrovvi
O Madre, O Padre mio.

Dove, dov' è la fede
che tanto mi giuravi?
Così nell'alta sede
tu mi ripon degl'Avi?
Son queste le corone
onde m'adorn'il crine?
Questi gli scettri sono
queste le gemme e gl'ori?
Lasciarmi in abbandono
a fera che mi strazi e mi divori?

I alone lost and beyond any use
my hope dried and withered
of its beautiful green, I sing a sad song:
Spring will never be for me.

Let me die!
What do you think can comfort me
in such a harsh fate
in such a great martyrdom?
Let me die.

Oh Theseus, oh my Theseus
yes I still want to call you mine
for mine you are
although you fly, cruel one
from my sight.

Return my Theseus,
return Theseus, oh God
turn back to look again upon she
who left her country and kingdom for you
and left on this shore
as food for pitiless and cruel wild beasts
will leave her naked bones.

Oh Theseus, oh my Theseus
if you knew, oh God,
if you knew, alas
how afflicted
is your poor Arianna,
perhaps, perhaps penitent,
you would turn your prow back to the shore.

But with a gentle breeze
you depart happily, while I remain, weeping.
for you Athens prepares
joyful celebrations, while I remain
food for wild animals on this lonely shore.
You will be embraced joyfully
by your aged parents
and I will never see you again
oh my mother, oh my father.

Where, oh where is the faith
that you swore so much to me?
This is how you place me
on the high throne of my ancestors?
Are these the crowns
with which you adorn my head?
These are the sceptres,
these the gems and gold?
To leave me abandoned
for beasts to tear apart and devour?

Ah Teseo, ah Teseo mio
lascerei tu morire
invan piangendo, invan gridando aita
la misera Arianna
ch'a te fidossi e ti diè gloria e vita?

Ahi, che non pur rispondi
ahi, che più d'aspe è sordo a miei lamenti.

O nemi, o turbi, o venti
sommergetelo voi dentr'a quell'onde
correte orche e balene
e delle membra immonde
empiete le voragini profonde.

Che parlo, ahi, che vaneggio?
Misera, oimè, che chieggio?
O Teseo, o Teseo mio
non son, non son quell' io
non son quell'io che i ferì detti sciolse.
Parlò l'affanno mio
parlò il dolore
parlò la lingua sì, ma non già il core.

Misera, ancor dò loco
a la tradita speme
e non si spegne
fra tanto scherno ancor, d'amore il foco?
Spegni tu morte omai le fiamme indegne.

O Madre, O Padre
O de l'antico Regno superbi alberghi
ov'ebbi d'or la cuna
O servi, O fidi amici
ahi fato indegno!
Mirate ove m'ha scort'empia fortuna
mirate di che duol m'ha fatto erede.

L'amor mio, la mia fede
e l'altrui inganno
Così va chi tropp'ama
e troppo crede.

(Ottavio Rinuccini)

Voi che ascoltate in rime sparse il suono
di quei sospiri ond'io nudriva il core
in sul mio primo giovenil errore
quand'era in parte altr'uom da quel ch'ì sono:

Del vario stile in ch'io piango e ragiono,
fra le varie speranze e il van dolore,
ove sia chi per prova intenda amore,

Ah Theseus, ah my Theseus
would you let die,
weeping in vain and in vain crying for help,
your miserable Arianna
who trusted you and gave you glory and life?

Alas, you do not reply,
alas, that you are more deaf than a snake to my
laments.

Oh clouds, oh storms, oh winds
throw him under the waves
fly orcas and whales
and fill your deep cavities
with his inhuman limbs.

What am I saying, what raving?
Miserable as I am what am I asking?
Oh Theseus, oh my Theseus
it isn't me,
I am not that person who spoke those fierce words.
My misery spoke;
my sorrow spoke,
my tongue spoke, yes, but not my heart.

Miserable as I am, I still give place
to betrayed hope
and despite such scorn is the fire of love not
extinguished?
let death put out the unworthy fire.

Oh mother, oh father
oh superb palaces of the ancient kingdom
where my golden cradle lived,
oh servants, oh faithful friends,
ah unjust fate!
See where wicked fortune has led me,
see to what wretchedness I have been made
heiress.

My love and my faith
and the betrayal of another.
This is what happens to those who love
and trust too much.

You who listen to the sound, in scattered rhymes,
of those sighs with which I emptied my heart
in my first youthful error,
when it was partly a different man from that which
I now am:

From the various styles in which I weep or reason,
between various hopes and vain sorrows
wherever there is one who by experience

spero trovar pietà non che perdono.

Ma ben vegg'hor si come al popol tutto
favola fui gran tempo, onde sovente
di me medesimo meco mi vergogno;

E del mio vaneggiar vergogna è 'l frutto
e 'l pentersi, e 'l conoscer chiaramente
che quanto piace al mondo è breve sogno.

(Francesco Petrarca)

Tutto'l dì piango; et poi la notte, quando
prendon riposo i miseri mortali,
trovomi in pianto, et raddoppiansi i mali:
così spendo 'l mio tempo lagrimando.

In tristo humor vo li occhi consumando,
e 'l cor in doglia; et son fra li animali
l'ultimo, sí che li amorosi strali
mi tengon ad ogni or di pace in bando.

Lasso, che pur da l'un a l'altro sole,
et da l'una ombra a l'altra, ò già 'l piú corso
di questa morte, che si chiama vita.

Piú l'altrui fallo che 'l mi' mal mi dole:
ché Pietà viva, e 'l mio fido soccorso,
vèdem' arder nel foco, et non m'aita.

(Francesco Petrarca)

Piangono al pianger mio le fere, e i sassi
ai miei caldi sospir traggion sospiri.
L'aer d'intorno nubiloso fassi
mosso anch'egli a pietà de' miei martiri.
Ovunque io poso, ovunque io volgo i passi,
par che di me si pianga e si sospiri.
Par che dica ciascun, mosso al mio duolo:
'Che fai tu qui, meschin, doglioso e solo?'

(Ottavio Rinuccini)

O primavera, gioventù dell'anno,
bella madre di fiori,
d'herbe novelle e di novelli amori,
tu torni ben, ma teco
non tornano i sereni
e fortunati dì de le mie gioie;
tu torni ben, tu torni,
ma teco altro non torna
che del perduto mio caro tesoro.
la rimembranza misera, e dolente.
Tu quella sè, tu quella

understands love
I hope to find pity and forgiveness.

But well I see now that since to all people
I was a myth for a long time, now often
I am ashamed of myself;

And shame is the fruit of my vanity
and contrition and clear understanding
that which pleases the world is a brief dream.

All day I weep; and then at night when
wretched mortals take their rest
I find myself in tears, and doubled up in misery:
thus I spend my time in weeping.

In sad moisture my eyes are drowned
and my heart in sorrow; and I am among creatures
the lowest, the arrows of love
pierce me and all peace is banished.

Alas, that as one sun follows another,
and one darkness another, or that I have already
passed most of this death that is called life.

Another's error pains me more than my own:
that living Pity, and the comfort of my faith,
see the flames burning, and does not help me.

The beasts weep at my weeping, and the stones
draw sighs at my burning sighs.
The surrounding air makes mist
also moved to pity by my suffering.
Everywhere I go, everywhere I walk
it seems I cause weeping and sighing.
It seems everything says, moved by my sorrow:
'What are you doing here, miserable one, alone
and sad?'

Oh Spring, the year's youth,
beautiful mother of flowers,
of new grass and new loves,
you return lovely, but with you
those fortunate and serene days
of my joy do not return;
you return lovely, you return,
but with you also nothing returns beyond the
memory, miserable and painful,
of my dear, lost treasure.
You are the same thing

ch'eri pur dianzi sì vezzosa e bella;
ma non son io già quel ch'un tempo fui
sì caro à gli occhi altrui.

(Giovan Battista Guarini)

Intenerite voi lagrime mie,
intenerite voi quel duro core,
ch'en van percoss' Amore,
versat' à mill' à mille,
fate di pianto un mar dolenti stille.

Che'l mio vago scoglio
d'alterezz' e d'orgoglio,
ripercosso da voi men duro sia,
o se n'esca con voi l'anima mia.

Così mi disprezzate?
Così voi mi burlate?
Tempo verrà, che Amore
farà di vostro core
quel che fate del mio;
non più parole, addio.

Datemi pur martiri,
burlate i miei sospiri,
negatemi mercede,
oltraggiate mia fede,
ch'in voi vedrete poi
quel che mi fate voi.

Beltà sempre non regna,
e s'ella pur v'insegna
a disprezzar mia fè
credete pur a me
ché s'oggi m'ancidete,
doman vi pentirete.

Non nego già ch'in voi
Amor ha i pregi suoi,
ma so che il tempo cassa
beltà, che fugge, e passa.
Se non volete amare,
io non voglio penare.

Il vostro biondo crine,
le guance porporine
veloci più che maggio
tosto faran passaggio:
prezzategli pur voi,
ch'io riderò ben poi.

Vedrò il mio Sol, vedro prima ch'io muoia,
quel sospirato giorno
che faccia'l vostro raggio a me ritorno.

that you were before, so lovely and beautiful;
but I am no longer that which I once was
so dear to the eyes of another.

Soften you, my tears,
soften you that hard heart
that Love in vain strikes,
pour out an ocean made of thousands upon
thousands of wretched tears.

That my lovely rock
so haughty and proud,
struck by you should become less hard,
or my soul washes out with you.

Is this how you despise me?
This how you ridicule me?
There will come a time when Love
will make of your heart
what he has made of mine;
no more words, farewell.

Let me have torments,
make fun of my sighs,
deny me mercy,
insult my faith,
for then you will see happening to you
what you have done to me.

Beauty does not reign for ever,
and if she teaches you
to despise my fidelity
just believe me
that if today you kill me,
tomorrow you will repent.

I do not deny that in you
Love has his merits,
but I know that time checks out
beauty, which flies and passes.
If you do not wish to love
I don't want to suffer.

Your blonde hair,
your blushing cheeks
faster than the month of May
soon will pass:
value them now,
for I will be laughing then.

I will see my sun, I will see before I die,
that sighed for day
in which your rays return to me.

O mia luce, O mia gioia,
be piu m'è dolc'il tormentar per vui,
O ch'el gioir per altrui,
ma senza morte io non potro soffrire
un si longo martire,
e s'io morro, morra mia speme ancora,
di veder mai d'un si bel di l'Aurora.

O che gradita

ha dolce vita
chi tien nel core
ardor d'amore!
O che dolcezza
chi un viso adora!
O felice colui che s'innamora!

Son i tormenti
gioie e contenti;
sono i sospiri
cari respiri.
Amor natura
muta d'ogni ora.
O felice colui che s'innamora!

Lo strale appaga
e non impiaga:
son le ferite
anime e vite.
Amor consola,
non addolora.
O felice colui che s'innamora!

S'amor non senti,
sei nei tormenti:
non vivi e spiri,
se non sospiri.
Amor chi il serve
fa che non mora.
O felice colui che s'innamora.

Chi gioie cerca
Amor si merca:
non v'è piacere
s'amor non fere.
Amor, deh vieni,
l'etade indora!
O felice colui che s'innamora!

Oh my light, of my joy,
better far for me the sweetness of torments for you,
than joy for any other,
but without death I can't suffer
such a long torture,
and if I die, my hope of seeing the dawn
of such a beautiful day will also die.

Oh what delight
and sweet life
for whoever keeps in his heart
the passion of love!
Oh what sweetness
for whoever adores a face!
Oh happy he who is in love!

The torments
are joy and contentment;
the sighs are
those of pleasure.
Natural love
changes every hour.
Oh happy he who is in love!

The spear pleases
and does not hurt:
wounds are
souls and lives
Love consoles
and does not cause pain.
Oh happy he who is in love!

If you do not feel love
you are in torment:
you do not live or breathe,
unless you can sigh.
Love who offers it
let him not die.
Oh happy he who is in love!

Whoever seeks joy
Love will supply:
there is no pleasure
if love is not fierce.
Love, oh come
and gild this age!
Oh happy he who is in love!

Translations: Deborah Roberts