

Cedille Records
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GEORGE FRIDERIC
HANDEL

THE SONATAS FOR
VIOLIN AND CONTINUO

RACHEL BARTON, VIOLIN

DAVID SCHRADER, HARPSICHORD

JOHN MARK ROZENDAAL, CELLO



GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL (1685–1759)
THE SONATAS FOR VIOLIN AND CONTINUO

Sonata in A Major, HWV361 (6:56)

1 Andante (2:15) 2 Allegro (1:37) 3 Adagio (0:37) 4 Allegro (2:19)

Sonata in D Minor, HWV 359a (6:54)

5 Grave (2:23) 6 Allegro (1:28) 7 Adagio (0:50) 8 Allegro (2:05)

Sonata in F Major, HWV370 (12:32)

9 Adagio (3:04) 10 Allegro (3:04) 11 Largo (2:57) 12 Allegro (3:17)

Sonata in G Major, HWV358 (4:07)

13 Allegro (1:35) 14 Adagio (0:41) 15 Allegro (1:47)

Sonata in G Minor, HWV364a (6:03)

16 Larghetto (1:57) 17 Allegro (1:32) 18 Adagio (0:38) 19 Allegro (1:48)

20 **Allegro in C Minor, HWV408 (2:49)**

Sonata in A Major, HWV372 (6:51)

21 Adagio (1:08) 22 Allegro (2:13) 23 Largo (1:09) 24 Allegro (2:13)

25 **Andante in A Minor, HWV412 (1:26)**

Sonata in G Minor, HWV368 (8:30)

26 Andante (1:57) 27 Allegro (2:22) 28 Adagio (1:50) 29 (Allegro) (2:10)

Sonata in D Major, HWV371 (10:57)

30 Affettuoso (2:33) 31 Allegro (2:25) 32 Larghetto (2:25) 33 Allegro (3:25)

Rachel Barton, violin David Schrader, harpsichord John Mark Rozendaal, cello **TT: (68:07)**

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Handel's Sonatas for Violin and Continuo

Handel's solo sonatas for violin, oboe, flute and recorder are less celebrated works of a major master composer. Yet their beauty has earned for them a cherished place in the repertoire of instrumentalists as works both satisfying to play and effective for audiences.

Handel's surviving violin sonatas span his entire career, beginning with the brilliant HWV358 in G major (c. 1706-08), and ending with the great D-Major sonata of c. 1750, HWV371. Unfortunately, nothing is known of the occasions for which these works were created or their first performances. However, careful study of the autograph manuscripts has allowed scholars to establish dates of composition with some accuracy.

HWV358 survives in a manuscript that dates from Handel's brief Hanover residence (1710). Its style suggests it was composed previously, however, possibly early in Handel's Italian sojourn (1706-09). While in

Rome, Handel received the support of the Arcadian Academy, a group of the most prestigious patrons of the arts in the eternal city. His work in the palaces of Prince Ruspoli, Cardinal Pamphili, and Cardinal Ottoboni brought him into collaboration with Arcangelo Corelli, the most influential violinist of the time. Corelli's impassioned playing and refined Apollonian style of composition became the ideal for violinists throughout the eighteenth century. Personal contact with this paragon clearly influenced Handel's concept of writing for the violin. Corelli participated in the first performances of some of Handel's works; he was concertmaster for the famous 1708 production of Handel's oratorio *La Resurrezione*. It is tempting to imagine that Handel composed HWV358 for Corelli, perhaps as an offering at one of the meetings of the Arcadian Academy. The theatrical brilliance of the piece suggests an ear-opening prelude to a sumptuous cantata or serenata. Yet the style of this

early sonata — virtuosic fast movements connected by a brief linking Largo — suggests that Handel had not completely absorbed the more lyrical Corellian approach to the violin and the sonata genre.

Corelli's influence is more clearly heard in the beautiful sonatas of 1724-26, with their extended cantabile slow movements. These sonatas all conform to the *sonata da chiesa* (church sonata) layout typified in the second part of Corelli's Opus V. Each sonata consists of four movements arranged in a slow-fast-slow-fast order, with the fast movements most often in *canzona* style (fugue-like, with imitative entries), only occasionally in the form of a dance movement. A number of these works (including HWV371) were published c. 1730 by John Walsh in a collection entitled *Twelve Sonatas or Solo's for the German Flute, Hautboy and Violin*, and sometimes referred to as "Opus I" (six of these were for violin). Walsh's earliest publications of Handel's music were not authorized, and much confusion has been caused by Walsh's unscrupulous methods. In an effort to conceal his involvement in this pirated

edition, Walsh's first printing of the collection carried a fraudulent title page indicating that it was published by the Amsterdam printer Etienne Roger in 1724. The collection also includes a number of sonatas which are almost certainly not by Handel. We have included three of these in our program (HWV368, 370, 372). Regardless of authorship, they are very beautiful, well worth playing and hearing. The sonata in E-major, HWV373 is excluded from our program, however, not because of its questionable authorship, but because of its inferior quality.

Special mention should be made of several fine pieces from the 1724-26 period that do not appear in their original form in the Walsh publication (the sonatas are in Walsh but transcribed for different instruments): the sonatas in d-minor (HWV359a) and g-minor (HWV364a), the a-minor Andante (HWV412) and the c-minor Allegro (HWV408). These relatively little-known works, all surviving in autograph manuscripts in the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, (and therefore securely attributed to Handel) have much to recommend them.

Note the lively Italianate dialogues between the violin and the bass line in the second movements of both sonatas; the broad lyricism of the Andante; and the Beethovenian drive of the c-minor Allegro.

Handel returned to the violin sonata one last time, around 1750, to compose his masterpiece in the genre: the Sonata in D-Major (HWV371). This exciting piece, unpublished in the composer's lifetime, surpasses its siblings in its virtuosic treatment of both parts and the nobility of its melodic lines. Handel thought so highly of this work that he reused its last movement in the oratorio *Jephtha* to give special brilliance to the appearance of the angel.

The performers on this recording have attempted to create historically informed performances using a combination of 18th-century and modern practices and equipment. Ms. Barton's violin was made in 1617 by Nicolo Amati (see note below); it is in "modern" condition, strung with steel strings. The cello is the work of the Roman maker Jacobus Horil from circa 1740, in restored baroque condition with gut strings.

The bows used are modern reproductions of early 18th-century models. The double-manual harpsichord used in this recording was built in 1983 by Lawrence G. Eckstein of West Lafayette, Indiana. It is based on the Dumont-Taskin harpsichord which is kept in the museum of the Conservatoire National de Paris. It has two sets of unison-pitched strings and one set tuned an octave higher. Extensive work on the instrument's action was carried out by Paul Y. Irvin. The pitch used in this recording is the modern standard of A=440.

Given this mixed approach, the listener may ask whether this is an "authentic" rendition or a "modern" one. In fact, our performances are probably more conditioned by our particular temperaments, attitudes, and training (including performance practice study) than by any of the conditions noted above. The truth is, we strive, as all artists should, to reveal beauty in the music by whatever means seem best; and that is the most important authenticity.

— John Mark Rozendaal

About the Musicians

Harpsichordist **David Schrader** received his Performer's Certificate (1975), Master's (1976) and Doctor of Music Degree (1987) from Indiana University and is now a Lecturer at Roosevelt University's Chicago Musical College. A familiar figure to audiences in the Chicago area, the multifaceted Schrader has been hailed for his performances of baroque and classical repertoire on harpsichord and fortepiano, and music of vastly divergent styles and eras on organ and piano. Mr. Schrader has appeared in recital and performed with major orchestras throughout Japan, Europe and North America, including frequent appearances as soloist with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Schrader is currently organist at Chicago's Church of the Ascension. This is his eleventh recording for Cedille Records. His other Cedille CDs include harpsichord music of Antonio Soler, organ works by Bach and César Franck, and modern chamber works for harpsichord and ensemble as a member of the Rembrandt Chamber Players.

Cellist **John Mark Rozendaal** is the artistic director of the critically acclaimed Chicago Baroque Ensemble, Chicago's only ensemble dedicated to performing music of the eighteenth century on period instruments. Rozendaal served as principal 'cellist of The City Musick and Basically Bach, and has performed both solo and continuo roles with many period instrument ensembles, including Early Music at the Newberry Library, the Harwood Ensemble, Orpheus Band, Genesee Baroque Players, Ensemble Musical Offering (Milwaukee), Apollo's Fire (Cleveland) and His Majestie's Clerkes. Mr. Rozendaal teaches at the Music Center of the North Shore and Roosevelt University.

(Please see back cover for information on Rachel Barton.)

About the Violin

Rachel Barton plays the “ex-Lobkowitz” Antonius & Hieronymus Amati of Cremona, 1617.

The Seal of the Lobkowitz Family on the back of the violin identifies it as one of the instruments held by this illustrious European family. Prince Lobkowitz was a significant patron of Beethoven.

The Amati family is responsible for the violin as we know it today. Andreas Amati invented the violin c. 1550. His sons Antonius and Hieronymus, known as the Brothers Amati, brought violin making forward into the 17th century. Hieronymus's son Nicolo continued to nearly the end of the 17th century and was the teacher of Andreas Guarneri and Antonio Stradivari.

The violin Miss Barton plays is a particularly fine example of the makers' work and is excellently preserved. The top is formed from two pieces of spruce showing fine grain broadening toward the flanks. The back is formed from two pieces of semi-slab cut maple with narrow curl ascending slightly from left to right. The ribs and the original scroll are of similar stock. The varnish is golden-brown in color.

The violin is on loan to Ms. Barton from the Stradivari Society through Bein and Fushi, Inc., Chicago. The Stradivari Society is a non-profit organization that advocates and enhances classical music performance by seeking patrons who will acquire the finest violins, violas, and cellos and loan them to the world's most talented artists. Founded in 1985, the Stradivari Society has helped many gifted performers including Rachel Barton, Joshua Bell, Sarah Chang, Leila Josefowicz, Midori, Vadim Repim, Gil Shaham, and Maxim Vengerov.

About Rachel Barton

22-year-old violinist Rachel Barton, a Chicago native, has appeared as soloist with major orchestras across North America and Europe, including the St. Louis, Chicago, Montreal, Vienna, and Budapest Symphonies. Miss Barton began violin studies at the age of 3, made her professional debut with the Chicago String Ensemble at the age of 7, and soloed with the Chicago Symphony on public television when she was 10 and 15 years old. Most recently, she appeared with the Chicago Symphony, Semyon Bychkov conducting, at the Ravinia Festival in July 1996, and on the CSO's subscription concerts in Orchestra Hall, with conductor Neeme Järvi, in February 1997.

Recent recital appearances include Ravinia's Rising Stars series with pianist Samuel Sanders and a recital at the historic Troy Savings Bank Music Hall in Troy, New York. Miss Barton has twice performed her own rendition of the national anthem at Chicago Bulls playoff games. She was honored as an Olympic torchbearer in June 1996, and was featured in the opening ceremony of the Paralympics in Atlanta that August, soloing the Paralympic Hymn with members of the Atlanta Symphony in Centennial Stadium.

In 1992, Miss Barton won the gold medal at the Ninth Quadrennial J.S. Bach International Violin Competition in Leipzig, becoming the first American and youngest person ever to do so. She was the only American Laureate of the 1993 Queen Elizabeth International Violin Competition in Brussels, and took second prize in both the 1992 Kreisler International Violin Competition in Vienna and the 1992 Szigeti International Violin Competition in Budapest. She also won the prize for best interpretation of the Paganini Caprices at both the Szigeti and 1993 Paganini (Genoa) International Violin Competitions.

Rachel Barton plays the "ex-Lobkowitz" A&H Amati of 1617 (see note on the previous page). Her home page on the world wide web is at <http://members.aol.com/rachbarton>. Rachel Barton is represented by ICM Artists, Inc.

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