

LONDON SYMPHONIA **2024-25** SEASON



JOE LANZA'S BAROQUE FAVOURITES

JANUARY 18, 2025 | 7:30 pm | Metropolitan United

This concert is dedicated to the memory of Jim Etherington by Bill, Barbara, Jill and Michael Etherington. Jim worked tirelessly over many years supporting London Symphonia as a volunteer, board member, fundraiser and financial contributor.

- Joseph Lanza, *leader and soloist*
- London Symphonia Strings

London
Symphonia 



JOSH MORGAN MAYOR

October 5, 2024

Dear Friends,

On behalf of London City Council, let me welcome you to London Symphonia's 2024-25 Season. We are honored to have such a distinguished ensemble in our community, and we eagerly anticipate the musical experiences you will bring to our residents.

London Symphonia has long been a shining star in our artistic constellation, and their dedication to excellence in music enriches the lives of residents across all ages. Each performance you deliver resonates deeply, creating cherished memories and fostering a love for the arts.

This season, London Symphonia is excited to present a diverse array of performances that will captivate your senses and enrich your spirit. From timeless classics to contemporary works, there is something for everyone to enjoy. I encourage you to explore the full program and immerse yourself in the magic that only live orchestral music can bring.

As we gather to appreciate the extraordinary talent of our musicians and guest artists, let us also celebrate the power of music to inspire, heal, and unite. I invite you to share in this season's festivities, whether you are a lifelong supporter or a newcomer to the concert hall.

Thank you for your dedication to enriching our lives through the power of music. Here's to a wonderful season ahead!

Kind regards,

Josh Morgan
Mayor, City of London

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WELCOME to JOE LANZA'S BAROQUE FAVOURITES!

Happy New Year! We are kicking off 2025 with three exceptional concerts, each of which will take you on a unique musical journey: from the pure Baroque joy of tonight's *Joe Lanza's Baroque Favourites*, to a celebration of Lunar New Year on February 1, and the re-discovery of the music of Samuel Coleridge-Taylor on February 22. We hope you will join us in the upcoming weeks.

To all our generous donors we want to express our deep gratitude for your continued belief in our creativity and commitment to bringing the joy and transformative power of music to people of all ages across the community. Your support is vital to London Symphonia's success, not just in bringing performances like the one tonight to life but through our comprehensive education and outreach programs. On behalf of the musicians, staff, and Board of Directors, our heartfelt thanks.

Glorious music and great artistry await you throughout the season. We hope you will enjoy tonight's concert and spread the word to family and friends.

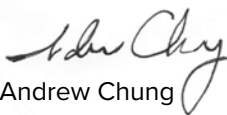
We look forward to seeing you often.

Sincerely,



April Voth

Executive Director



Andrew Chung

Artistic Producer

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

London Symphonia wishes to acknowledge and honour the land on which we are meeting as the traditional territory of the First Nations peoples; the Chippewa of the Thames First Nation (part of the Anishinaabe), the Oneida Nation of the Thames (part of the Haudenosaunee) and the Munsee-Delaware Nation (part of the Leni-Lunaape). Let us reflect on how we as individuals and as a community can carry this spirit of gratitude into everything we do to honour the work that all the First Nations peoples of the Turtle Island have done, and continue to do, for the land that supports us all.

JOE LANZA'S BAROQUE FAVOURITES

JANUARY 18, 2025 at 7:30 pm
Metropolitan United

- Joseph Lanza, *leader and soloist*
- London Symphonia Strings

George Frideric Handel

A Pastiche

A tempo ordinario – Allegro ma non presto, from “Parnasso in Festa”
Sarabanda, from “Almira”
Gigue, from “Terpsicore”

Francesco Geminiani

Concerto Grosso No. 4, after Arcangelo Corelli's Trio Sonata, Op. 3, No. 4

- I. Largo
- II. Vivace
- III. Adagio
- IV. Presto

Johann Sebastian Bach

Orchestral Suite No. 2, A Minor version with violin solo

- I. Overture
- II. Rondeau
- III. Sarabande
- IV. Bourrée
- V. Polonaise
- VI. Menuet
- VII. Badinerie

INTERMISSION

Charles Avison

Concerto Grosso No. 4 in A Minor, after Domenico Scarlatti

- I. Andante
- II. Allegro
- III. Largo
- IV. Vivace

Antonio Vivaldi

Concerto for Violin and Strings in E Minor, RV 278

- I. Allegro Molto – Largo – Allegro – Andantino
- II. [Largo]
- III. Allegro

The program runs approximately 2 hour and 10 minutes, including a 20-minute Intermission.



MEET JOE LANZA AND LONDON SYMPHONIA STRINGS MUSICIANS AFTER THE CONCERT

Join us in the Great Room behind the stage and speak with the musicians.

TONIGHT'S MUSICIANS

Violin 1

Joe Lanza
Sarah Wiebe
Mel Martin
Andrew Chung

Violin 2

Mikela Witjes
Alyssa Stevenson
Calvin Tsang
Sheilanne Lindsay

Viola

Kelvin Enns
John Wiebe
Jacqueline Milne

Cello

Ben Bolt-Martin
Sonya Nanos

Bass

Brian Baty

Harpsicord

Borys Medicky

PERFORMER'S BIO

Joe Lanza



Joe Lanza has been the Concertmaster of London Symphonia and its forerunner, Orchestra London, since 1987. He is well known to audiences as a regular soloist with the ensemble in every musical genre and has directed programs with his colleagues on numerous occasions.

In addition to appearing several times as the lead violinist of the Westben Festival Orchestra, Joe has been a concertmaster/mentor for many years at The National Academy Orchestra, a training program for young professionals that features guest concertmasters from Canada's finest orchestras.

A busy freelance musician across the region, Joe is particularly active on the period instrument scene in southern Ontario. In 2016, he served as one of four creative directors of Nota Bene Baroque Players in Kitchener. He is proud of, and takes great satisfaction in being regularly engaged by Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra since 1996, including numerous recordings and tours around the world.

Joe is active in music education. He has taught both violin and baroque performance at Western University since 1995 and is now coordinator of the Don Wright Faculty of Music Early Music Studio. Joe coaches chamber music at Forest City Talent Education and is a private teacher committed to the development and growth of his students. He is a frequently sought after adjudicator for music festivals across Ontario.

Joe is married to London Symphonia oboist Jennifer Short and they are the proud parents of a multi-talented daughter. The family is ably herded by a fine Shetland sheep dog.

PROGRAM NOTES

George Frideric Handel (1684-1759) **A Pastiche**

As an overture to tonight's concert, London Symphonia concertmaster Joseph Lanza has chosen three short excerpts from the works of George Frideric Handel to form a brief suite. The first selection, from the serenata "Parnasso in Festa" for the 1734 wedding of Anna, Princess Royal, provides an opening in the style of a French overture. Handel's very first opera "Almira", composed in Hamburg at the age of 19, is the source of the following Sarabanda, while the conclusion is a Gigue from "Terpsicore", an opera-ballet written as a prologue to the 1734 London revival of his opera "Il Pastor Fido" or 'The Faithful Shepherd'. And by way of disambiguation: it has nothing to do with a dog.

Francesco Geminiani (1687-1762) **Concerto Grosso No. 4, after Arcangelo Corelli's Trio Sonata, Op.3, No.4**

Arcangelo Corelli (1653-1713), in addition to being one of the foremost violinists of his time, was also one of its most influential composers. His pupils included two of the most prominent 18th century Italian violinists, Pietro Locatelli, who took the technique of playing to new heights of difficulty, and Francesco Geminiani, who continued the Corelli tradition of making virtuosity subservient to form and expression. Geminiani settled in England in 1714, where

violinistically he was a much larger frog in the pond and where his connection to Corelli was valued the more, as the late master's music was then the rage.

Geminiani's concerto grosso transcriptions of Corelli's Op.3 trio sonatas were issued in 1735. The originals, published in 1689, consist only of two violin parts and a bass line with figures indicating the intended harmony; Geminiani's task was not only to add interesting inner voices but also to create meaningful contrasts between the solo group, or *concertino*, and the orchestral strings. This he managed skilfully while remaining true to the text and spirit of his models, his only innovation being to add a viola to the concertino and thereby turn it from a string trio into a string quartet.

The brief B minor Concerto grosso is in a standard Baroque pattern of 4 movements alternating slow and fast tempos; the elegant 3rd movement Adagio is linked to the final Presto by a familiar three-chord formula ending with a pause, permitting the first violinist to improvise a brief cadenza if desired.

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750) **Orchestral Suite No. 2, A Minor version with violin solo**

J.S. Bach's output is certainly some of the most closely examined music in existence – and sometimes, not in existence. Examples abound of his re-use in his many church cantatas of movements from other compositions – the

Brandenburg Concertos, for instance – and it is known from records of his estate that much of his output has been lost. And yet, with ever newer investigative techniques and no little cunning, it has been possible for musicologists to reconstruct some of these missing pieces convincingly if not precisely.

Bach's position as Cantor of Leipzig's St. Thomas Church from 1723 until his death required a steady production of music for church services, and consequently much of his purely orchestral music was presumed a product of his previous appointment as Kapellmeister to the Court of Cöthen. But analysis of his music paper, evolving penmanship and maturing style has proven that assumption to be unreliable. In fact, from 1729 until 1736, and again in 1739, Bach's Leipzig career included supervision of the Collegium Musicum, an instrumental society founded by Georg Philipp Telemann for the public performance of secular music. Telemann himself wrote literally hundreds of orchestral suites, so Bach's four known suites would have been typical fare for these concerts, and it is now believed that the Second and Third Suites were composed for them.

And that's not all. Taking Bach's own example of recasting his earlier violin concertos as concertos for harpsichord, scholars examining his other extant instrumental works have determined that some, and maybe most of them, are actually reworkings of previous compositions for other instruments – in which case Bach's surviving instrumental pieces are more likely to be Leipzig versions of earlier material, destined for the Collegium concerts at

Zimmerman's Coffee House.

Under these circumstances, the presence of a solo flute throughout the Suite No. 2 attracted attention, since none of the other three Suites comparably suggests a concerto. Examination of the flute part has revealed its range and figuration to be eminently violinistic when transposed down a tone, to A minor from its flute-friendly B minor. Therefore, the eminent American musicologist and conductor Joshua Rifkin has arranged the suite in that key for violin and strings as a putative original version later adapted for a flautist of considerable ability, perhaps a visiting artist. Bach's 1739 return to the leadership of the Collegium Musicum has been proposed as a logical occasion for such an event, which would make the Second Suite in effect the Fourth – however, the identity of a soloist remains speculative, as does the date of, or even existence of an earlier score.

Those who are unfamiliar with the flute version of the Suite need have no qualms about this one; apart from a few octave displacements and the change of instrumental timbre the notes themselves have not been altered. Mr. Rifkin does find that the lower pitch and greater uniformity of tone colour impart a new gravitas to the piece. But as Bach himself displayed no compunction in recasting his compositions for available resources, there can be no serious objection to others doing the same. So, tonight London Symphonia has programmed a reverse-engineered transcription for violin and strings of a postulated lost earlier version of Bach's Suite No.2 for flute and strings. Enjoy!

Charles Avison (1709-1770) **Concerto Grosso No. 4 in A Minor, after** **Domenico Scarlatti**

Newcastle organist, composer, and essayist Charles Avison, like many an Englishman had definite opinions on music. He did not like Vivaldi (“...only a fit amusement for children; nor indeed for these if ever they are intended to be led to a just taste...”). Handel he reckoned to be a lesser composer than Marcello and Geminiani (who had apparently been Avison’s teacher). However, he did like Domenico Scarlatti (1685-1757), at least enough to seek out and arrange for strings several dozen of his harpsichord sonatas. The process involved selecting and collating these single movement works into standard four-movement patterns of slow-fast-slow-fast and scoring them for the concerto grosso (2 solo violins and cello plus string orchestra; interestingly, he did not follow Geminiani in adding a viola to the concertino). Since most of the Scarlatti sonatas in print were fast movements, Avison had to obtain manuscripts of unpublished works to supply sufficient slow movements; in fact, he was not entirely successful, and accordingly presented as slow movements some sonatas originally intended to be quick!

The publication of the whole set by subscription in 1744 attests to Scarlatti’s popularity in England at the time. An Italian by birth and training (son of the renowned Alessandro Scarlatti), Domenico had landed at the Spanish court in Madrid in 1729; several volumes drawn from his 555 harpsichord sonatas had appeared in England beginning in 1738.

It might be considered somewhat ironic to have a harpsichordist playing continuo to sixteen string players when he might do the whole job himself, but Avison had a ready explanation:

“These Lessons for Harpsichord being extremely difficult, and many delightful Passages entirely disguised, either with capricious Divisions, or an unnecessary Repetition in many Places, few Performers are able to execute them with that Taste and Correctness they require: Therefore, the forming them into Parts, and taking off the Mask which concealed their natural Beauty and Excellency, will not only more effectually express that pleasing Air, and sweet Succession of Harmony, so peculiar to the Compositions of this Author, but render them more easy and familiar to the Instrument for which they were first intended...”

This – to use a Northern English expression often directed toward overly clever little boys – could be looked on as ‘teaching your grandmother to suck eggs’; however, Scarlatti never had a chance to express himself on the matter, and posterity has decided that Avison’s confident opinion of his own work is justified.

In the Fourth Concerto, unlike some of the others, the first violin part remains quite within the normal concerto grosso range of difficulty. One can readily hear the keyboard origins of the second movement in the opening rapid five-finger cascades. The initially gloomy key of A minor is alleviated by a third movement in C

major, apparently of Avison's own composition, and ultimately dispelled by the final movement's sly deke into A major.

Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741)

Concerto for Violin and Strings in E Minor, RV 278

Of Vivaldi's 108 surviving solo violin concertos probably only five are widely known: the Four Seasons concertos and the one included in the Suzuki violin course (of course). Perhaps two dozen others have been recorded with some frequency because of some outstanding feature – a nickname or a bizarre tuning scheme – or because they were published in the same volume as the aforementioned five. That leaves a lot of great music looking for ears.

Surprisingly, 65 of these concertos were published in Vivaldi's lifetime, a time in which publication was still an expensive process, so we know they were popular. It was also common for popular works to circulate in manuscript copies at that time, both sanctioned and bootlegged; in general, though, the concertos that were not part of published collections have remained obscure, irrespective of their artistic worth.

The present concerto is just such a work. It has been assigned a date of 1730, a year that the Venetian Vivaldi spent in Bohemia. This may be irrelevant, for what occasioned the writing of this turbulent and tragic concerto, one of Vivaldi's longest, is unknown; as a matter of pure speculation it could have been intended for performance between the acts of

an opera, possibly by Vivaldi himself. Certainly the **opening** suggests the beginning of a vocal scene; only at the end of this rather long orchestral *ritornello* do the dramatic outbursts and sighs settle into the regular phrases and scales of the familiar Vivaldi concerto introduction. With the entry of the soloist the basses fall silent; the violin line comments on rather than quotes the expressive main theme of the tutti. Appearances throughout the concerto of an unnaturally lowered second degree of the scale (i.e. 're' in the sol-fa syllables) contribute to the sense of anguish.

The **second movement**, with its achingly dissonant harmonies, chromatic lines and constant dotted rhythmic accompaniment, speaks a language of suffering made familiar by the sacred oratorios of Bach and Handel. The violin has a simple line made for tasteful decoration.

A remarkable number of contrasting figures of different lengths and volumes are strung together in the ritornello of the **finale**, including broken arpeggios, a striking descending chromatic scale embedded in a jagged figuration and a rising scrap of galant melody that might almost be by Gluck; indeed, in its spare texture and limited counterpoint the concerto is quite forward-looking. Its intensity and singularity of emotional affect are however completely Baroque.

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Saturday, April 5, Beethoven and Sibelius with Kerson Leong, with London Symphonia at Metropolitan United

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Janet Mowat, *Senior Marketing Consultant*
Scott Good, *Composer, Assistant Producer*
Alexia Hlynialuk, *Social Media Specialist*
Jo-Dee Burbach, *Digital Communications Assistant*
Wendy Perry, *Administrative Assistant*
Rachael Hunter, *Front of House Manager*
Mila Todorova, *Bookkeeper*
Kate Stone, *Personnel Manager, Musicians*
Shawn Spicer, *Music Librarian*
Louise Good, *Communications & Fundraising Assistant - Volunteer*

ARTISTIC ADVISORY COUNCIL

Joe Lanza, *Chair*
Graham Lord
Mikela Witjes

PRODUCTION TEAM

Jay Jacobs, *Production Coordinator*
Shawn Spicer, *Production Manager*
Mike Fisher, *Stream Studio, Film Production*
Rose Erb, Abby McLeod, Flo Reichhardt, *Camera Operators*
Earl McCluskie, *Audio Supervision and Mixing Engineer*
Geoff Warder, *Recording Engineer*
Rob Cairns, *Lighting*

CONCERT POLICIES

- Photography and video/audio recording of any kind is not permitted during the Performance.
- Photos are permitted before and after the performance and during Intermission.
- Mask wearing is not currently required. Not everyone may have the same degree of comfort with the lifting of restrictions, and we ask that you please respect the personal space and comfort level of those around you.
- Please put your cell phone on silent.
- Please do not remove cushions from the Reserved seating areas.

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