

Josef Haydn (1685 – 1750)

Violin Concerto No.1 in C major

Of the nine violin concertos at one time ascribed to Haydn, only four were genuine, and one of the four is lost. With their considerable use of the relatively higher register of the violin, chains of dotted notes, double stopping and ornamental figuration, they were written to showcase the considerable virtuosity of the principal violinist in Haydn's Esterházy orchestra, Luigi Tomasini. The C major concerto, only recently rediscovered, is the most easily recognizable as a Haydn concerto and is certainly the most technically demanding. It is a marvel of pyrotechnical brilliance that all the while seems completely natural and fluid. It is one of the mid-eighteenth century's most delightful concerti.

The opening movement is energetic and regal, as one would expect from its C major tonality, with virtuoso writing in the Italian tradition. The solo part has wide melodic leaps, long strings of harmonic sequences, and frequent use of arpeggios. The slow movement has become rightly famous on its own. It is a beautiful cantilena, cast in three sections, with the opening and closing sections built on a simple yet sublime rising scale motif in the violin part, supported by a repetitive accompaniment which crescendos to a climax along with the solo melody. The central section is sweetly lyrical, with the strings providing gentle support for the violinist's musings. The final movement, a lively romp in triple time, is technically demanding, full of fast runs, double stops and extensive changes in both volume and pitch.

This radiantly festive work clearly was conceived to display the particular talents of Mr Tomasini in 18th Century and will do the same with the extraordinary talents of Ms Hall in the 21st.

(Notes by Roger Booth from sources including Blair Johnston and Peter Gutman)

ORCHESTRA

Violins I	Mary O'Brien, Joe Pinto, Helen Lewis, Jim Hessel, Shyam Sankaran, Sharanya Sankaran
Violins II	Sonya Bennett, Tsui-Wen Chen, Susie Kasza, Roger Booth, Linda Whitcombe, Ben King
Violas	Robyn Strange, Katie Lin, Megan Wang, Zoë Vincent
Celli	Janet Robinson, Maxine Cunliffe, Graham Falla
Bass	Huko Kobé
Harp	Patrick Cornfield

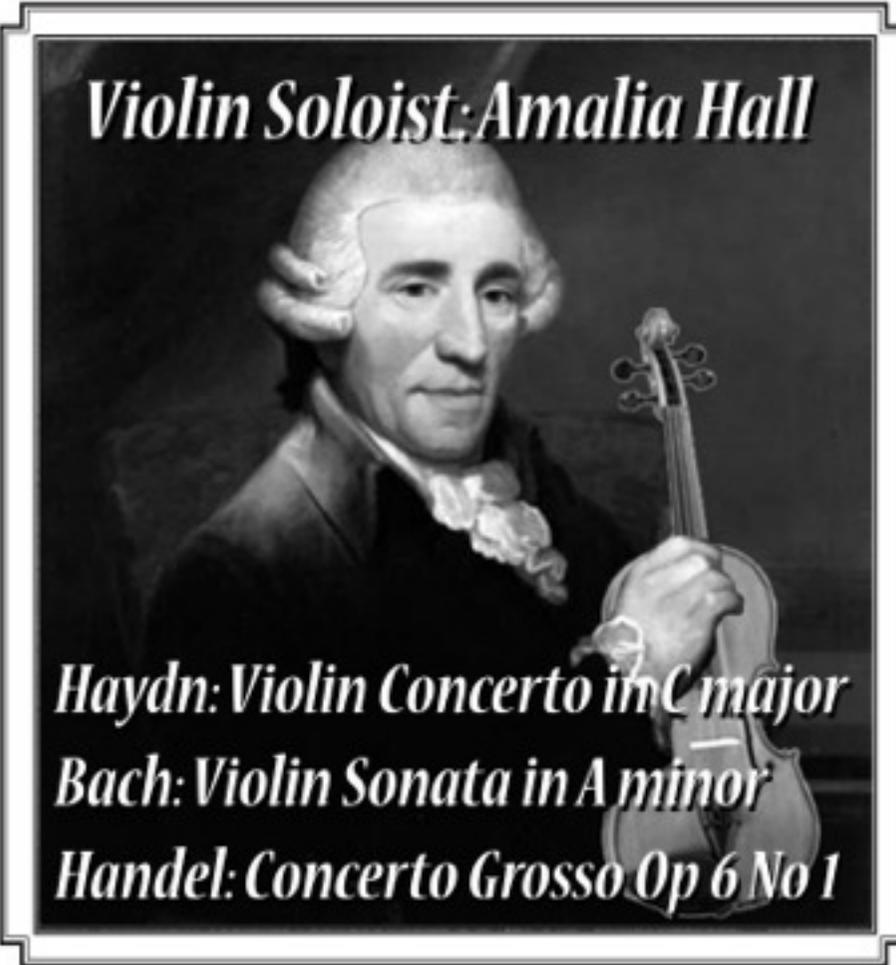
*Next Concert: "Serenades for Strings"
Sunday 25th September, 2pm, Depot Artspace*

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Devonport Chamber Orchestra at the Depot

Violin Soloist: Amalia Hall



*Haydn: Violin Concerto in C major
Bach: Violin Sonata in A minor
Handel: Concerto Grosso Op 6 No 1*

Sunday 14th August, 2pm

28 Clarence Street, Devonport

Admission \$10, Children under 12 free

Amalia Hall - Violin Soloist

Amalia Hall is a laureate of the International Tchaikovsky Competition for Young Musicians and the Kloster Schöntal International Violin Competition, where she was also awarded a prize for the best interpretation of Bach. She has won numerous awards including the Gisborne International Music Competition, the National Concerto Competition, the National Young Performer of the Year and the Pettman/Royal Overseas League Arts Scholarship. Since the age of 9 Amalia has had over fifty solo appearances with orchestras in New Zealand including the Auckland Philharmonia, Auckland Symphony Orchestra, Christchurch Symphony Orchestra, St Matthews Chamber Orchestra and Bach Musica. At the age of 10 she was the youngest ever member of the NZSO National Youth Orchestra, and continued on to become its Concertmaster. At the age of eight Amalia commenced playing chamber music with her siblings in the Hall String Quartet. She has since toured for Chamber Music New Zealand with John-Paul Muir, performed chamber music in the *Music from Angel Fire* and *Amelia Island* Festivals, collaborated with Jonathan Biss, Pamela Frank, Roberto Diaz and Sharon Isbin, and performed throughout Europe as a member of *Curtis on Tour*. She is currently undertaking postgraduate study at the Curtis Institute of Music with renowned violinists Pamela Frank and Joseph Silverstein, where she also receives chamber music coachings from distinguished artists such as Ida Kavafian, Shmuel Ashkenasi, Peter Wiley and Ignat Solzhenitsyn. Prior to this, she completed her Bachelor of Music at The University of Auckland studying with Dimitri Atanassov.



George Frederic Handel (1685 – 1759)

Concerto Grosso Op.6 No.1 HWV319

Soloists: Violins: Joe Pinto and Sonya Bennett; Cello: Janet Robinson

The 12 Handel concerti grossi Op.6 are written for a concertino trio of two violins and violoncello and a ripieno four-part string orchestra with harpsichord continuo. Taking the older *concerto da chiesa* and *concerto da camera* of Corelli as models, rather than the later three-movement Venetian concerto of Vivaldi favoured by Bach, they were written to be played during performances of Handel's oratorios and odes. Despite the conventional model, Handel incorporated the full range of his compositional styles, including trio sonatas, operatic arias, French overtures, Italian sinfonias, airs, fugues, themes and variations and a variety of dances. Although Handel regularly recycled his music in different forms, these concerti largely

contained newly-composed material and are amongst the finest examples in the genre of baroque concerto grosso.

Today's concerto starts dramatically as the orchestra ascends majestically by degrees towards a more sustained section, each step in the ascent followed by a downward sighing figure. This solemn grandeur elicits a gentle and eloquent response from the concertino string trio, in the manner of Corelli, with imitations and passages in thirds in the violins. The orchestra and soloists continue their dialogue until, in the last few bars, there is a reprise of the introductory music, now in the minor key, and ending with a remarkable chromatic passage of noble simplicity descending to a final drooping cadence. The second movement is a lively allegro. It displays some elements of later classical sonata form and captures the listeners with unpredictable interchanges between orchestra and soloists. The third movement is a dignified adagio using similar figures to those in the opening bars of the first movement. The fourth movement, despite being fugal, does not adhere to the strict rules of counterpoint, surprising the listener instead with ingenious episodes, alternating between the ripieno and concertino. At the close, where a bold restatement of the theme would be expected, Handel playfully curtails the movement with two pianissimo bars. The last concerto-like movement is an energetic gigue in two parts, with the soloists echoing responses to the full orchestra.

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685 – 1750)

Sonata in A minor for Solo Violin

The sonatas and partitas for solo violin (BWV 1001–1006) are a set of six works consisting of three *sonatas da chiesa* in four movements, and three partitas in dance-form movements. The sonatas and partitas exemplify the middle period of Bach's composing life. From 1708 to 1717, Bach served as organist at Weimar and wrote most of his masterworks for the "king of instruments". From 1723 through to the end of his life he was responsible for religious music at Leipzig, where he focused on cantatas, masses and other choral works. In between, he was employed at Cöthen by Prince Leopold. As a Calvinist, Leopold shunned religious music other than standard hymns, and as an enthusiastic musician, he encouraged Bach to focus on instrumental secular music. During this brief but fertile period, Bach was free from the demands of religious duties and could let his imagination soar. He was also happy, free from constant chafing against frugal and conservative authorities, and buoyed by an appreciative patron.

His cello and orchestral suites also date from the Cöthen period, as well as the famous Brandenburg concertos and many other well-known collections of instrumental music. At the time, the tradition of polyphonic violin writing was already well-developed in Germany, particularly by Heinrich Ignaz Biber, Johann Heinrich Schmelzer, and the composers of the so-called Dresden school - Johann Jakob Walther and Johann Paul von Westhoff, and so Bach had models to follow and improve upon in his own unique way. Interestingly, it is not known whether any of Bach's sonatas and partitas were performed during his lifetime, or, if they were, who performed them.