

signum
CLASSICS

FRANCESCO SCARLATTI

DANIELE

Il Daniele nel Lago de' Leoni

ARMONICO
CONSORT

Christopher Monks *director*

DANIELE

FRANCESCO SCARLATTI

This recording was made possible by Alison and Jamie Justham.

1	Sinfonia & Chorus: 'Alle straggi alle vendette'	[3.22]
2	Dario: Recitative & Aria 'Di Bello, del Cielo'	[2.34]
3	Daniele: Recitative & Aria 'Misero non cader'	[3.18]
4	Dario & Daniele: Recitative & Duet 'Che brami veder più'	[2.36]
5	Dario & Daniele: Recitative; Daniele: Aria 'D'Israele il Dio sovrano'	[4.29]
6	Abacucco: Recitative & Aria 'Correre per soccorrere'	[4.06]
7	Demone: Recitative & Aria 'La sostanza vi lascio'	[4.32]
8	Angelo: Recitative & Aria 'Tutto governa'	[4.46]
9	Daniele: Recitative & Aria 'Non son per credere'	[4.05]
10	Dario: Recitative; Tutti Aria 'Per terra'	[1.40]
11	Angelo: Recitative & Aria 'Combattere per vincere'	[3.31]
12	Daniele: Recitative & Aria 'L'empia fiera'	[4.01]
13	Dario: Recitative & Aria 'De' Leoni chiudete stringete'	[4.03]
14	Daniele: Recitative & Ecco Aria 'Poco, poco è la morte'	[6.13]
15	Abacucco & Angelo: Recitative; Daniele, Abacucco & Angelo: Trio 'Mai sempre dona'	[4.03]
16	Abacucco, Daniele & Angelo: Recitative; Angelo, Daniele & Abacucco: Trio 'Restati lieto intanto'	[2.41]
17	Dario: Recitative; Chorus 'Gloria al Dio d'Israele'	[1.42]
	Total timings:	[1.01.46]

ARMONICO CONSORT · CHRISTOPHER MONKS DIRECTOR

www.signumrecords.com

FRANCESCO SCARLATTI IL DANIELE NEL LAGO DE' LEONI

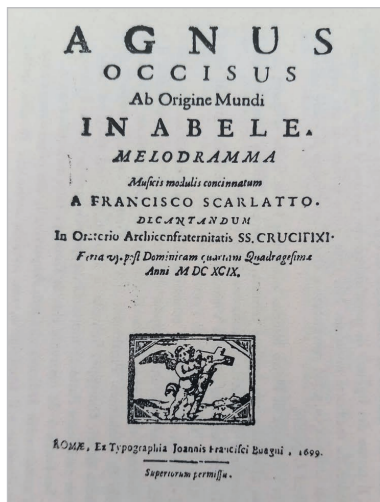
Although not quite reaching the scale of the Bach dynasty, the Scarlatti family of musicians was certainly one of the most impressive during the baroque era, with eight members claiming individual entries in the *New Grove Dictionary of Music & Musicians*. Two are well-known today, Alessandro and Domenico, but this recording will introduce many to the impressive talents of Francesco Scarlatti. Alessandro the opera composer, born in Palermo, Sicily, in 1660, had seven siblings, one of whom was a younger brother named Francesco Antonio Nicola, born (also in Palermo) in 1666. Alessandro had 10 children, the middle one of which was Giuseppe Domenico. Thus Francesco Scarlatti was Alessandro's brother and Domenico's uncle. Most of Alessandro's siblings were professional musicians, either composers, singers or instrumentalists, working either in Sicily or on mainland Italy. In 1684, Alessandro was made *maestro di cappella* at the Royal Court in Naples, but the appointment over a local musician caused great upset, and life was not easy either for Alessandro or the various family members, including Francesco and his sister Anna Maria, who were brought in by Alessandro to work under him at the court. Opera singer Anna Maria

was forced out of her post, being required to go with her female companions either to a convent or to leave the city. Francesco was leader of the court orchestra and worked there for his brother for seven years before moving back to Palermo in 1691. It's not entirely clear what post he held there, but he seems to have remained in Sicily for the next c.24 years. He applied unsuccessfully for the post of Vice-Kapellmeister in Vienna in 1715, though he was highly commended by Johann Fux, and a few years later, in 1719, he moved to London. Work for musicians was plentiful there, and continental musicians held significant posts, notably Handel, Bononcini and Geminiani. Violinist Scarlatti was a former pupil of Alessandro Scarlatti who led the Neapolitan orchestra a few years after Francesco Scarlatti had returned to Palermo, and his success in London, and also in Dublin, may well have encouraged Francesco to move there. Francesco's name turns up in many London concert programmes in the 1720s, though he did not manage to echo Geminiani's fame in terms of appointments and recognition, and in 1733 he moved to Dublin. Sadly the only concrete evidence we have of him during his years in Ireland are concerned with marital problems and illness. A newspaper reported in August 1733 that "Jane Scarlatti... hath eloped from her said Husband... This is to desire that noBody may give any Credit

to the said Jane Scarlatti on account of her said Husband; for he will not pay any Debts that she shall contract". Then in 1741 a benefit concert was advertised for him, since the composer – “though a long confinement by sickness, is reduced to very distressful circumstances”. The advert runs: “At Geminiani’s Musick Room in Dame-street, on Saturday the 7th of February, will be performed a CONCERT OF MUSICK. In which Mr Dubourg will perform a solo, and Mr Worsdale sing some Songs.” There is no record of his death that has been found, but it is assumed that he died in that same year.

In 2023 Armonico Consort issued a recording of Francesco Scarlatti’s two large-scale sacred works, his *Missa* and *Dixit Dominus* (Signum SIGCD740). Now the group has turned its attention to his only surviving oratorio, *Il Daniele nel lago de’ leoni* - ‘The [prophet] Daniel in the lake [or den] of lions’. Francesco appears to have composed at least four oratorios, two in Latin (both lost) and two in Italian, between 1699 and c. 1710. Mirroring the larger output of his brother Alessandro, those in Latin were performed in Rome, and those in Italian were performed in the south, in Naples or Palermo. We know that one of the Italian pieces, *La profetessa guerriera*, was performed in 1703 at a convent in Palermo,

though the first performance of *Daniele* remains unknown. The composer appears to have brought copies of his two Italian oratorios to England: a small fragment of *La profetessa* survives in the British Library (the bulk of the work is lost), but fortunately *Daniele* survives complete in an autograph score in the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge, along with some secular cantatas.



The title-page of the libretto of Francesco Scarlatti’s lost oratorio *Agnus occisus* (Rome, 1699)

The term ‘oratorio’ refers to the buildings in which dramatic musical renditions of biblical stories were performed during Lent when the opera houses were closed. Composers and librettists often described their works using different terms reflecting their dramatic nature. Francesco Scarlatti’s Latin oratorio *Agnus occisus* from 1699 was entitled ‘Melodramma’ (see illustration), and he described his *Daniele* as a ‘Dialogo a 5 voci’.

Scarlatti’s *Daniele* conforms in all general aspects to the typical Sicilian oratorio of the late-seventeenth century, which was itself closely modelled on Roman practice: four or five singers inhabit character roles, without a separate narrator, together with a chorus often consisting of the soloists singing in ensemble. The anonymous libretto of *Daniele* is notably different to those found in other contemporary oratorios that concern Daniel, such as the *Oratorio di Daniele profeta* with music attributed to Giacomo Carissimi, or *Il Daniele* with a libretto by Giovanni Battista Grappelli published in Rome in 1708. Rather than focusing mainly on the lions’ den, it comprises an amalgam of different parts of the Book of Daniel, including the later chapters that are generally regarded as apocryphal in the Protestant tradition and deutero-canonical in the Roman church. This allowed the addition of

another dramatic encounter in the form of Bel and the smoke-loving dragon who endures a splendidly gruesome demise. The singers are as follows: Daniel and the Angel are sopranos, King Darius the Mede is an alto, the Prophet Habbakuk a tenor, and the Demone (dragon) a bass.

A literal translation of the Italian text does not always make the drama clear to anyone unfamiliar with the complete Book of Daniel, so a mix of synopsis, translation and paraphrase has been used in this booklet. The aim of contemporary librettists was to do much more than simply report the biblical narrative. One of the leading writers of the time, Arcangelo Spagna, wrote in his *Oratorii ove Melodrammi sacri* (Rome, 1706) of the desire to produce works of real spiritual melodrama, absorbing techniques from the secular genres of opera and cantata as necessary. As is found in other printed libretti, Spagna introduces each of his texts with an ‘Argomento’, introducing the story to the readers before presenting the libretto itself.

Francesco Scarlatti’s *Missa* and *Dixit Dominus* are impressive for their musical imagination, with the composer employing innovative ideas such as the use of quartets of a single voice part. *Daniele* reveals an equally inventive musical mind, with

flexible structures, varied scoring for the string parts, and most notably an echo aria in which the echos are not sung by played by two instruments. The precise allocation of the string parts written in the score is not always clear since the parts are not named, the only clue being the selection of ranges and clefs, but the echo instruments would seem to be a violin and viola, used here to represent the cavernous acoustics of the lions' den. Elsewhere Scarlatti provides frantic demisemiquaver scales and triplet semiquavers to depict Daniel's fight with the dragon, and throughout the work care is given to contrasting tutti and solo groups of strings to provide textural variety across and within the arias. Francesco adds a trumpet to the basic string ensemble, thus giving the same overall scoring as used in his *Missa* and *Dixit*.

Since the work dates from around the turn of the eighteenth century, the arias are in the early manifestation of the 'Da capo' pattern. In the more familiar late-baroque aria the A section of the ABA structure is substantial and a shorter B section provides a clear music contrast. Here, the A section is generally shorter and the B section offers less contrast but more development of the opening material. However, structural flexibility is an important element of mid-baroque music, and

whilst the Angel's aria 'Tutto governa' is more like the later pattern with its long A section and shorter, contrasted, B section, Habbakuk's aria 'Correre per soccorrere' adds a contrasting C section before the A section returns. Francesco's harmonic style employs all the variety found in Italian music of the period, including of course the chord for which Naples has always been associated, the 'Neapolitan 6th', heard for example to good effect on the word 'miserabile' near the start of Daniele's aria 'Non son per credere'.

It would be surprising if Francesco's oratorios weren't influenced to some extent by those composed by his older brother Alessandro, who composed 38 mostly Italian oratorios dating from after 1679 (21 of which survive). But Francesco's inventive string writing in *Daniele* more than matches his brother's efforts. A BBC Radio 3 programme once described Alessandro as the 'Sicilian Godfather of the Oratorio'. Francesco's *Daniele* represents a small but brilliant contribution to this fortunately more benign family business.

Geoffrey Webber



DANIEL IN THE LIONS' DEN
IL DANIELE NEL LAGO DE' LEONI

Daniel and Baal

Darius has become king of the Babylonians, who worship as gods both a clay idol, Baal, and a dragon demon. Each day the priests leave sacrifices of food and wine for the idol, Baal, in its temple, which appear to have been consumed the following morning. Darius's friend and close companion, the prophet Daniel, refuses to acknowledge that Baal is a god, incurring the wrath of the Babylonian priests.

Track 1

1. Sinfonia and Chorus:

To slaughter, to revenge!

May the evil one

be cut down by lightning,

cut to pieces by its arrows.

Alle straggi, alle vendette,

cada l'empio fulminato;

abbattuto lacerato

dentro fulmini e saette.

Darius is perplexed by Daniel's refusal and pleads with him to change his mind.

Track 2

2. Recit: (A, Darius) Come to your senses, Daniel;

can you not see

that Baal does not offend heaven,

and that you are making yourself

an enemy to Baal,

to the cruel heaven?

Daniele, che pensi,

che fai, stolto, ove giri

mal fondati i tuoi sensi?

Torna in te stesso, pur che se non miri

che il Ciel, che Belo offendi,

nemico a Belo al Ciel crudel ti vendi.

3. Aria: (A, Darius) Admire the power and strength of Baal and heaven. Be contrite and repent with tears and sighs, and worship his power – I want no more.

Di Belo, del Cielo, se miri i portenti, confessa potenti lor pregi e virtù. Pentito, contrito con gemiti e pianti, adora i suoi vanti, né bramo di più.

Track 3

4. Recit: (S1, Daniel) It is you, Darius,

who is delirious, you who is in awe

and gaze at his power.

Ah, stop your raving

and only hope that the God of Israel

bring the true light to the eyes of the blind.

Ah, Dario, ah, tu deliri

e quei vanti rimiri

in quell'Idolo infame e osservi intento.

Deh, raffrena l'accento,

e brama sol che d'Israele il nume

porga agli occhi ciechi il vero lume.

5. Aria: (S1, Daniel) Alas, poor wretched one,

do not go astray while you are unable to see.

Do not close your eyes to the light,

if you crave daylight!

Misero, non cader,

non traviar così mentre non miri,

né già così voler

chiudere gl'occhi al dì se al giorno aspiri.

Track 4

6. Recit: (A, Darius) It is you who are blind, not me,

if you condemn the worshipping of my god.

Non vedi tu, non io,

se il culto venerar nieghi al mio Dio.

(S1, Daniel) He is a demon.

È demone costui.

(A, Darius) You are mad, since I see

That you are raving when you speak;

Look how many sacrifices

have been devoured by Baal

to appease the wishes of a devoted soul!

Pazzo ti credo

se nel tuo dir freneticar ti vedo;

quante vittime ogn'ora

Belo inghiotte e divora

per gradire il desio d'alma devota!

He sharpens his teeth
to the benefit of his worshippers –
so if you think that my strong belief
is mistaken, you will surely
be punished by my rage.

*Cortese il dente arruota
a pro' de' suoi devoti,
onde s'errore
l'alta credenza mia tu crederai,
ben punir ti vedrai dal mio furore.*

7. Duet: (A, Darius) What more proof do you need?
And you still do not believe!
You will receive my harsh punishment.

*Che brami veder più? Né credi ancor;
del mio rigor bersaglio sarai tu.*

(Daniel) I don't need to see more.
I don't believe it – and I laugh at your pride.

*Più veder voglio.
Non credo, rido al tuo orgoglio.*

Track 5

8. Recit: (A, Darius) What, what do you want to see?

Che, che vuoi veder?

(S1, Daniel) Put the sacrifices
on that profane altar, cover
the ground with ashes, and then,
if my thoughts are misjudged, time will tell.
Close that evil vessel, haunted with error:
God will reveal the rest.

*Su quell'altar profano
le vittime riponi e ancor ricopri
di cenere quel suolo, e poi, se vano
sia il mio pensier, tempo verrà che scopri.
Chiudi quell'orcio rio, d'errori infesto,
ché a Dio convien poi di scoprire il resto.*

9. Aria: (S1, Daniel) The sovereign God of Israel
will, I know, reveal the truth,
and with His hand
will open your eyes to the light.

*D'Israele il Dio sovrano
so che il ver discoprirà,
e saprà con la sua mano
rischiarar tua cecità.*

*Meanwhile, in the land of Judea, the prophet Habakkuk is setting out on a journey to give aid
to one who needs it.*

Track 6

10. Recit: (T, Habakkuk) Come, Habakkuk
[speaking to himself],
it is now time to set out whither you must go;
tarry not, hasten.
The starving peasants, tired
with hateful work, are eager
to assuage their dreadful hunger,
so it is not right
that you should linger lazily.

*Abacucco, è pur l'ora
d'incaminarti ove ragion richiede;
e che s'indugia ancora
ad affrettare e accelerare il piede?
Già lassi e stanchi al faticar noioso,
braman di ristorar la fame orrenda
famelici i bifolchi, onde ozioso
dritto non è che ancora il piè sorprenda.*

11. Aria: (T, Habakkuk) Hasten to give aid
to him who is in anguish.
With fearful passion and steadfast footsteps,
I shall not lack the strength and valour
that, I see, the kind Heavens provide.

*Correre per soccorrere
a chi languendo sta.
Per me non mancherà con passo intrepido
vigor, valor nel piè; scorgo ch'il Ciel
mi diè benigno e lepido.*

*Back in Babylon, the dragon demon, which the Babylonians also worship, presents the sacrifices
to be taken into the temple for Baal to consume.*

Track 7

12. Recit: (B, Dragon demon) My priests, here are
the sacrifices
ready to be taken;
now through a secret passage
make sure

*Ministri miei, le vittime
ridutte eccole pronte;
or per l'occulta strada
da voi che più si bada*

that you sneak in and devour them all.
Let your theft be secret to heaven too,
and it will be believed that Baal has devoured them.

*d'entrar furtivi e trangugliarle tutte.
Sia il vostro furto occulto ancora al cielo,
e credo e pur che le divora un Belo.*

13. Aria: (B, Dragon demon) I leave to you the
tasty offerings,
if I can seize all the honours in one fell swoop.
If I can only hope to be fed with smoke,
there is no better offering than that for me.

*La sostanza vi lascio e i sapori,
se a fascio gl'onori recidere io vo.
Se a nudirmi di fumo ho speranza,
più bella sostanza del fumo non ho.*

Meanwhile, an angel is winging his way to Habakkuk, to carry out God's command.

Track 8

14. Recit: (S2, Angel) A winged messenger,
I have come from the high spheres,
hastening to these black and sinister rocks,
because God, the clear-sighted God,
wills that I remedy
what may befall.

*Sceso dall'alte sfere,
alato messaggiero Angel son io
che in queste rupi solitarie e nere
rapido vengo, or che l'impone Dio,
Dio che con ciglio puro
vide e vuol ch'io ripari anche al futuro.*

15. Aria (S2, Angel) He who causes all motion,
foresees everything
and resolves everything.
The eternal light that all sees
all darkness turn to light.

*Tutto governa, tutto prevede,
ripara tutto l'alto motor.
La luce eterna che tutto vede
tenebre e tutto muta in chiaror.*

*In Babylon, the following morning, the sacrifices left for Baal have gone, but Daniel points out to
Darius the tell-tale footprints in the ashes, proof of the priests' deception who had secretly
entered to consume the food themselves.*

Track 9

16. Recit: (S1, Daniel) Darius, what say you,
now you see
these footprints imprinted
in the scattered ashes?

*Dario che più dirai
se ne la sparsa polve
stampate e impresse
rimanon l'orme? Or miri.*

(A, Darius) Today Darius resolves
to believe no longer
in the false god – take me wherever you want.
If what the gullible populace offers
only enriches the table of our evil ministers,
then my only wish is to believe what you do,
even if you believe our dragon a god.

*Di non dar fé più mai
oggi Dario risolve
al falso nume, e dove vò mi tiri;
se quanto il popol credulo dispensa
rende a ministri rei lauta la mensa,
creder quanto tu credi ho sol desio,
pur che tu creda il nostro drago un Dio.*

Daniel and the Dragon

*Daniel faces his next challenge: the dragon demon, which
he also refuses to worship and believe is a god.*

17. Aria: (S1 Daniel) I am not prepared to believe
in that indomitable monster
in which you believe,
O wretched king.
I will make him succumb
to my fire of my anger,
and, rendered helpless,
he will not survive.

*Non son per credere
quel mostro indomito,
re miserabile,
qual credi tu.
Farollo cedere
d'ira al mio fomito;
reso incurabile,
non vivrà più.*

Track 10

18. Recit: (A, Darius) For now, as you asked,
destroy Baal, and then
I shall see how you fare
against our powerful monster.

*Per or come chiedesti
Belo fracassa, e poi
vedrò come dicesti
contro il mostro possente i vanti tuoi.*

19. Quintet: (S1, Daniel) Be shattered
and thrown to the ground,
and do not return,
evil monster
that destroys
the wretched.

*Per terra va'
pur fracassato,
né rieder più già,
quest'empio
che scempio
del misero fa.*

(B, Dragon demon) My evil adversary, who
destroys the wretched,
knocks me to the ground.

*Mi atterra l'iniquo spietato,

Che scempio del misero fa.*

(S1, Daniel, A, Darius, S2, Angel) Evil monster that destroys the wretched;
(B, Dragon demon, T, Habakkuk) Evil adversary who destroys the wretched!

Track 11

20. Recit: (S2, Angel) Daniel is already advancing
to where the dragon lives;
armed with faith,
he is sure, not hopeful, to prevail.

*Già Daniele il piede
move ove il Drago ha stanza,
ed armato di fede
di vincere ha certezza, e non speranza.*

21. Aria: (S2, Angel) Can a tender, gentle hand
armed with pity
win the battle?
It can strike down and defeat –
if he prays to heaven –
even the powers of hell.

*Combattere per vincere
può lenta mano e tenera
armata di pietà?
Abbatte ed avvincere,
se il Cielo invoca e venera,
l'inferno anche potrà.*

Track 12

22. Recit: (S1, Daniel) Here is the horrible beast
that infests this forest.
While I light up my breast in divine fury,
I hope that as it tries to swallow this bait
it will choke and be vanquished.

*Ecco l'orrenda belva
che infesta questa selva
lo, mentre di furore il seno accendo
in Dio, spero ed attendo
che con tal pania ad ingoiar accinta
soffocata rimanga, oppressa e vinta.*

*[Chapter 14 of the Book of Daniel recounts how Daniel boiled pitch, fat and hair to make cakes, which he
put into the mouth of the dragon. When the dragon swallowed them, it exploded.]*

23. Aria: (S1, Daniel) The evil beast, dead and pale,
can be harsh no more.
It was not I who made it powerless,
but my God has choked it.

*L'empia fiera, morta e pallida,
più severa esser non può.
E non io la resi squallida,
ma il mio Dio la soffogò.*

Daniel in the Lions' Den

*The Babylonians are furious at Daniel's destruction of their gods and demand that
Darius put him to death by feeding him to the lions.*

Track ¹³

24. Recit: (A, Darius) Alas, all the people
want poor Daniel dead.

Oh, wretched!

He will be repaid
with vengeance for his service,
death for his good deeds.

And although I am king,
to my pain and sorrow, I cannot go against them:
against many, one is, after all, always alone.

25. Aria: (A, Darius) Close the door of the lions' den,
and shut inside the poor man who fought successfully.
If you wish him to die quickly,
then there is no fiercer, harsher death than this.

Track ¹⁴

26. Recit: (S1, Daniel) If, my God, it is your wish
that I should be the plaything of wild beasts,
then, with ardent desire,
I consider suffering a trifle, death of no consequence.

27. Aria, with instrumental echoes: (S1, Daniel)
Death is of no consequence,
if you wish me to die
to fulfil your will.
Even if you find
a worse fate for me,
my spirit is resigned
to endure it.

*Ahi, che il popolo tutto
sento che morto brama
Daniele. Infelice,
ei coglierà per frutto
vendetta al suo servir, morte a sua fama,
né contraddir mi lice,
se ben son re, per mio martire e duolo
che contro tanti alfine un solo è solo.*

*De' leoni chiudete, stringete
nel lago l'afflitto, che invito pugnò.
Se in brev'ora bramate ch'ei mora,
più stragge severa, più fiera non ho.*

*S'è tuo voler, mio Dio,
ch'io sia di fiere un miserabil gioco,
con fervido desio
stimo lieve il patir, la morte poco.*

*Poco è la morte,
se vuoi ch'io mora
per adempire tua volontà.
Più dura sorte
se trovi ancora,
l'alma a patire
piegata sta.*

While Daniel is in the lions' den, the angel approaches Habakkuk.

Track ¹⁵

28. Recit: (T, Habakkuk) Who are you, who seems to me
like a winged nymph?

(S2, Angel) I am that which you think I am:
a heaven-sent, nymph-like angel of God.

(T, Habakkuk) Angel of God, whither are you flying?

(S2, Angel) To you, and I am alone,
because I need you to come with me
to help Daniel today in Babylon;
this is the will of He who rules the stars.

(T, Habakkuk) Who is this Daniel, and where is Babylon?

(S2, Angel) If you do not know, then come with me:
I will carry you there, holding you by your hair.

(T, Habakkuk) Oh wonder, oh look!
Hanging by my hair,
I see at once
lands I have never seen before!

(S1, Daniel) O Heaven! I still have breath!

*Ma chi sei tu, che parainfo alato
rassembi al guardo mio?*

*Tal son quale ho sembrato:
parainfo celeste Angel di Dio.*

Angel di Dio, dove tu spieghi il volo?

*A te ne vengo e solo
perché meco precorra
e in Babel Daniele oggi soccorra;
sì vòl colui che domina le stelle.*

Chi è questo Daniele, ov'è Babelle?

*Se nol sai, vieni meco,
che per il crin sospeso io la ti reco.*

*Oh che stupore, oh come
sospeso per le chiome
in un tratto rimiro
parte giammai veduta.*

Oh Cielo, respiro.

29. Trio: (S1, Daniel) To the repentant heart,
divine mercy
always offers
welcome succour.

*Mai sempre dona
soccorso gradito
a cor contrito
divina pietà.*

(S2, Angel) The eternal God
never abandons him.

*Non abbandona
l'eterno superno.*

(T, Habakkuk) Tenderly and kindly,
he comes to our rescue.

*Soave e caro
riparo ci dà.*

Track ¹⁶

30. Recit: (T, Habakkuk) Take this food, just man,
the merciful creator
wishes to spare you the evil pangs of hunger.

*Prendi, uomo giusto: il creator pietoso
vuol fugarci di fame il duolo rio.*

(S1, Daniel) He who nourishes himself with God,
always finds rest.

Chi si alimenta in Dio trova riposo.

(S2, Angel) The man who trusts in God is always
rescued.

Riparo trova uom che fida in Dio;

Daniel, I am leaving, and reveal to you
that the ruler of heaven
has decreed that, because of your great faith,
you should have freedom and life.

*Daniele, mi parto e ti disvelo
che il regnator del Cielo
già stabili de la superna fede
di darti vita e libertade al piede.*

31. Trio: (S2, Angel) Be happy now!

Rèstati lieto intanto.

(S1, Daniel) I shall enjoy quiet and rest.

Cheto mi resterò.

(T, Habakkuk) Wipe the tears from your eyes.

Tergi dagli occhi il pianto.

(S1, Daniel) I shall do what God wills.

Quanto vuol Dio farò.

Track ¹⁷

32. Recit: (A, Darius) I shall go to see whether Daniel
has been fed to the ferocious beasts.

It cannot be that he has remained untouched
by their furious fangs.

But he is unharmed – therefore, if he is still alive
and Heaven has decreed
that he should not die of hunger or be mauled by
the beasts,

I shall keep my promise:

Daniel shall live unshackled and free,
and the foolish people who wanted him dead shall
perish instead.

*Da le fiere spietate
vedrò se Daniel già pasto è reso,
ché da le zanne irate
esser non può che sia rimasto illeso.
Ma illeso egl'è, dunque se vive ancora
e tra fiere e tra fame
non vuole il Ciel che mora,*

*adempirò mie brame:
Daniele vivrà libero e sciolto,
e perisca in sua vece il volgo stolto.*

33. Chorus with Daniel: Glory to the God of Israel.

Gloria al Dio d'Israele.

(S1, Daniel) Kindly pleased
with a contrite heart,
God on high,
benign and pious,
makes the stars shine brighter.

*D'un cor contrito
l'eccelso Dio
dolce e gradito,
benigno e pio
fa dominar le stelle.*



ARMONICO CONSORT

Armonico Consort is a critically acclaimed choir, instrumental ensemble and music charity. It is renowned for inspiring audiences through passionate performances, providing imaginative singing opportunities for young people and helping people living with dementia through the power of music.

Armonico Consort began life in 2001, set up by Christopher Monks and a group of university colleagues with a shared passion for music from the Renaissance to Baroque, coupled with the

imagination to find new and unusual ways to present concerts. Audiences seemed to love their engaging and innovative approach, and most concerts in the first years sold out.

“That gave us the confidence, energy and self-belief to do more; to take more risks with our programming and keep on experimenting” says Christopher.

The ideas kept flowing, as did the titles (many of them created down the pub...) including the concert programmes *Naked Byrd*, *Supersize Polyphony*, *Too Hot to Handel*, *Monteverdi's*



Flying Circus and *Baroque around the Block*. Although their horizons have broadened to encompass contemporary repertoire and new commissions, Armonico's signature concerts continue to feature choral masterpieces, rarely heard gems and new musical discoveries from the Renaissance and Baroque, performed in imaginative ways by some of the world's finest singers and period instrument players.

"I'm particularly proud of Supersize Polyphony where we perform 40 and 60-part works by Tallis and Striggio in the round, surrounding the audience, interpolated by the timeless chants of Hildegard of Bingen," Christopher continues. It was this particular programme which earned the group their first 5 star reviews, from The Times and BBC Music Magazine, and there were plenty more to follow.

Most recently Armonico Consort has become the world's leading authority on the choral works of Francesco Scarlatti – a forgotten member of the famous dynasty. Their recording of his *Dixit Dominus* and *Messe a 16* has been named *"Spectacular - the classical music find of the century"* by Le Figaro, Paris, and the first modern performance of his only surviving oratorio *Daniele* described as *"an exemplary resuscitation"* by The Times.

Armonico's education programme – AC Academy – was fundamental from the outset and now encompasses after-school choirs and an in-school Choir Creation programme which has established almost 300 choirs and trained teachers as choir leaders, reaching over 250,000 young people. The programme offers high quality performance opportunities in venues across the country, including the Royal Albert Hall where Armonico's biggest project to date, *It Takes a City* for 2000 voices and orchestra, was premiered in 2022.

"Many of these young people have been with the group since the age of 7 and are now singing as AC Academy Scholars alongside the professional singers. It is so rewarding to see how the opportunities we have created have changed them not just as musicians, but as humans, and this drives much of what we create," Christopher says.

The Choir Creation programme has recently expanded through partnerships with Westlands Entertainment Venue Yeovil, and overseas in Kenya, and with Fundación Azteca Mexico where the training of new choir leaders will help create the country's first high level symphony orchestra and chorus.

The mental and physical well-being benefits of singing are well established, and Armonico Consort witnessed this first hand through creating a workplace choir for its sponsors Phillips 66 in 2016. New research suggests Baroque music is extremely effective at unlocking memories for those affected by dementia and, with training from the Alzheimer's Society, Armonico's Communities programme now includes singing sessions in care homes and the first of what will soon be many community choirs, Warwick Memory Singers.

Throughout 2024, Armonico tours the 'Forgotten Scarlatti' – Francesco Scarlatti's choral

masterpieces in brand new editions by Dr Geoffrey Webber – and presents a new semi-staged version of Purcell's *The Fairy Queen*. The summer also sees the return of AC Academy Does the Royal Albert Hall, a biennial celebration of the Choir Creation programme involving thousands of children. It will include a bespoke musical work by children with special educational needs, feature guest dancers from BBC's Strictly Come Dancing, and what may well be the world's largest ever performance of Orff's *Carmina Burana* with 2500 singers.

www.armonico.org.uk

Soprano

Billie Robson

Angelo

Hannah Fraser-Mackenzie

Daniele

Alto

William Towers

Dario

Tenor

Graham Neal

Abacuccho

Bass

Alex Jones

Demone

Violin

Edmund Taylor

Charlotte Fairbairn

Rebecca Windram

Kate Agostino

Cello

Hetti Price

Viola

Joanne Miller

Dan Shilladay

Double Bass

Andrew Durban

Organ Continuo

George Herbert

CHRISTOPHER MONKS

The founder and Artistic Director of Armonico Consort and its ground-breaking education programme AC Academy, Christopher Monks is a versatile and busy conductor and keyboard player.

Specialising in the performance of music from the Baroque and late Renaissance, he is equally at



© Steve Marshall

home with modern choral repertoire and during his career has conducted at many of the greatest concert halls in the UK. Many of his concerts and recordings, including *Supersize Polyphony* and Purcell's *Dido & Aeneas*, have earned five-star reviews in The Times, Independent, Guardian and BBC Music Magazine.

Christopher performs regularly at major national festivals and has worked extensively abroad, including in Israel, Italy, Ireland and France. Alongside his work with Armonico Consort, he has conducted internationally renowned orchestras and ensembles such as the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, the Philharmonia and the European Union Chamber Orchestra.

A chorister at the age of eight, Christopher was introduced to the musical world of Byrd, Tallis, Bach, Monteverdi and Handel. After graduating from Cambridge University, where he was organ scholar at Gonville and Caius College, he became an organist under David Hill at Winchester Cathedral and it was through David's inspiration, he developed an enthusiasm and talent for choral conducting.



Passionate about reaching out to children of all backgrounds through the creation of youth choirs, Christopher developed AC Academy, a music education programme: *"It is unique in the UK, highly effective in its legacy and absolutely brilliant in quality. I never cease to feel proud of it."*

Christopher coaches and lectures on the MMus choral conducting course at Cambridge University and is a guest speaker on the Harvard Global Leadership Programme. He is also part of a programme to roll out AC Academy's Choir Creation and leadership programmes in Kenya with institutions aiming to reinstate street children into mainstream education and with Fundación Azteca Mexico.

When not conducting, Christopher loves fine cooking. After a long day of music preparation, he often enjoys going for a cycle to process everything he has worked on.

"When I talk to other people about their jobs for which they struggle to get out of bed, I have never felt like I have a job, I just wake up and do a hobby."

GEOFFREY WEBBER

Geoffrey Webber is Director of Music at Hampstead Parish Church in North London, and General Editor of the Church Music Society. He studied music at Oxford University, initially serving as Organ Scholar at New College under Edward Higginbottom, and later becoming Assisting Organist at Magdalen College and the University Organist. As a doctoral student he researched music of the German Baroque period. From 1989-2019 he worked in Cambridge as Precentor and Director of Studies in Music at Gonville & Caius College, releasing many CD recordings with the Caius choir of varied repertoire from first-millennium chant to music by contemporary composers such as Judith Weir and Julian Anderson. During this time he also taught extensively for the Faculty of Music, and from 2011-19 he served as Course Principal and Director of the MMus degree in Choral Studies. His regular work with Armonico Consort has resulted in the creation of editions of the sacred music of Francesco Scarlatti.



This recording was made possible by Alison and Jamie Justham.

Recorded 4th - 5th March 2024 at St Johns Upper Norwood, Sylvan Road, London, SE19 2RX

Producer and Editor – Tim Oldham

Recording Engineer – Tom Lewington

Recording Assistant – Joshua Mannall (4th), Tom Mungall (5th)

Translations by Alessandro Gallenzi

Cover Image – © Alexander Bashkirezew / iStock

Design and Artwork – Woven Design www.wovendesign.co.uk

© 2025 The copyright in this sound recording is owned by Signum Records Ltd

© 2025 The copyright in this CD booklet, notes and design is owned by Signum Records Ltd

Any unauthorised broadcasting, public performance, copying or re-recording of Signum Compact Discs constitutes an infringement of copyright and will render the infringer liable to an action by law. Licences for public performances or broadcasting may be obtained from Phonographic Performance Ltd. All rights reserved. No part of this booklet may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without prior permission from Signum Records Ltd.

SignumClassics, Signum Records Ltd., Suite 14, 21 Wadsworth Road, Perivale, Middlesex, UB6 7LQ, UK.

+44 (0) 20 8997 4000 E-mail: info@signumrecords.com

www.signumrecords.com

ALSO AVAILABLE ON SIGNUMCLASSICS



★★★★★ *"This extraordinarily successful release has a musical significance of the highest order. The performances throughout betoken both care in preparation and total commitment in the realisation of these neglected masterworks...This release is a shining example of what the gramophone can achieve"*
The Organ

★★★★★ *"The sparkling setting of Dixit Dominus features dramatic word painting and a lavish use of a high trumpet; this performance is full of high energy"*
Choir and Organ

"It's fresh and invigorating music and performances"
BBC Radio 3—Record Review