

RED PRIEST

PIERS ADAMS – Recorders
DAVID GREENBERG – Violin
ANGELA EAST – Cello
DAVID WRIGHT – Harpsichord

PIRATES OF THE BAROQUE

Stolen masterworks and long-lost jewels of the Baroque era performed with swashbuckling virtuosity!

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH (1685-1750)
Preludio (from Partita BWV 1006)

GEORG PHILLIP TELEMANN (1681-1767)
Gypsy Sonata in A minor
Largo
Vivace
Affetuoso
Allegro

GEORG FREDERICK HANDEL (1685-1759)
Aria Amorofo from Trio Sonata Op 2 No 1
‘Vo Far Guerra’ (from Rinaldo, arr. William Babbell)

ANON (17th Century)
Budro: A Pirate’s Hornpipe

TOMASSO ALBINONI (1671-1751) / REMO GIAZZOTO (1910-1998)
Adagio

ANTONIO VIVALDI (1676-1741)
Concerto in G major “The Sea Storm” (“La Tempesta di Mare”) RV 433
Allegro
Largo
Presto

INTERMISSION

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH
Prelude and Fugue in C minor (BWV 847)

FRANÇOIS COUPERIN (1668-1733)
Tromba Marina, Plaint and Devil’s Hornpipe

BACH/O'CAROLAN/DOW/TRAD arr. DAVID GREENBERG

Bach on G, or 'We won't let her go till you give us back our boat'

Allegro

Poppy Leaf Hornpipe

The Princess Royal Hornpipe I

The Princess Royal Hornpipe II (traditional Cape Breton setting)

Miss Charters' Reel

GIUSEPPE TARTINI (1692-1770)

Senti Lo Mare (Listen to the Sea)

JEAN-MARIE LECLAIR (1697-1764)

Tambourin

ARCANGELO CORELLI (1653-1713)

Concert Fantasy on "La Folia"

Red Priest appears by arrangement with Lisa Sapinkopf Artists, www.chambermuse.com

PROGRAMME NOTES

The popular Hollywood image of pirates as likeable, swashbuckling rogues is certainly at odds with the gory reality of their trade, and to equate such scoundrels to our most learned baroque composers may seem fanciful in the extreme. But on closer inspection there are parallels which, if nothing else, ignite the imagination and allow us to take an alternative look at one of the most colourful periods in musical history.

The leading musicians from this time were pioneers and adventurers, riding the seas of change with wild abandon, ever searching for new musical treasures to titillate the ears and move the souls of the public. Only in retrospect has the mythology of highbrow, rule-bound men of quill and parchment been created; the reality was much more down to earth, the majority of composers living boozy, philandering, extravagantly bohemian lives, intent on maximising their profits through, if necessary, dubious means. Yet ironically it is from this very atmosphere of skulduggery that some of the greatest works of art were produced.

Johann Sebastian Bach was a prolific arranger of the works of others, taking inspiration in particular from Italian composers such as Vivaldi and Marcello—but in this program we have turned the tables on him through our own arrangements of the great master's music, with four-part re-workings of two of his celebrated works: the E-major Preludio for solo violin and the Prelude and Fugue in C minor, originally for solo harpsichord. David Greenberg's 'Bach on G'—subtitled 'We won't let her go till you give us back our boat'—takes things even further, as an innocent violin sonata is hijacked by marauding pirates!

The theme of musical piracy extends from the poaching of themes (was the wealthy **Georg Phillip Telemann** perhaps guilty of this crime as he stole the tunes of poor gypsies from Eastern Europe?) to the false attribution of famous composers' names to the works of lesser-known authors—a common practise among the unscrupulous music publishers of the 17th and 18th centuries. The '**Albinoni**' *Adagio* may well be a recent example of such identity theft, as it's composer, Remo Giazzoto, was never able to show the world the fragment of Albinoni's music upon which it was supposedly based, and one wonders weather he simply came up with a clever way of marketing his own music!

When researching ancient, dusty manuscripts, one can easily lose sight of the thrall in which performers of the day held their audiences – some accounts describe scenes more akin to modern day rock concerts than classical recitals as we have come to know them. One musical star who clearly knew how to set the stage alight was **George Frederick Handel**, whose performances on the harpsichord were famous for their outrageous virtuosity. The solo transcription of the aria '*Vo Far Guerra*' from the opera 'Rinaldo' was taken down note-for-note from Handel's original improvisations by the English composer William Babell, and gives us a glimpse into this rock'n'roll world of the baroque! Handel was also prone to musical piracy, as evidenced by the haunting *Aria Amorosa* from his trio sonata op.2 no.1, which sounds suspiciously reminiscent of an aria composed many years earlier by a former musical colleague, Reinhardt Kaiser.

The life of **Antonio Vivaldi**—the original Red Priest of Venice—is a case study in baroque extravagance. Indeed he was described by the English composer William Hayes as a man with “too much mercury in his constitution,” a characteristic in plentiful display in the pounding seas of his famous *Tempesta di Mare* concerto. As with most of the works in this program, this piece has been subjected to our own form of musical piracy, stolen and freely adapted from the orchestral originals - a common enough practise in the baroque era, when arrangements of the works of others were rife, but we confess that our imagined arrival of a pirate ship onto Vivaldi’s stormy seascape may stretch the point a bit...

Elsewhere in the program our transcriptions range from plaintive simplicity of **Giuseppe Tartini’s** *Senti Lo Mare* to the sparkle of **Jean-Marie Leclair’s** celebrated *Tambourin*, and a colourful trio of pieces by **Francois Couperin**, pirated for the cello – little-known works rediscovered in our hunt for forgotten musical treasures from distant times.

In our closing adaptation of **Arcangelo Corelli’s** famous ‘Folia’ Variations we take the art of arrangement to its logical conclusion, and while it may not fit the currently accepted boundaries of ‘authenticity’ we hope that it is taken in the truly baroque spirit with which it is intended!

(Piers Adams 2011)

RED PRIEST

Red Priest is the only early music group in the world to have been compared in the press to the Rolling Stones, Jackson Pollock, the Marx Brothers, Spike Jones and the Cirque du Soleil. This extraordinary acoustic foursome has been described by music critics as “*visionary and heretical,*” “*outrageous yet compulsive,*” “*wholly irreverent and highly enlightened,*” “*completely wild and deeply imaginative,*” with a “*red-hot wicked sense of humour*” and a “*break-all-rules, rock-chamber concert approach to early music.*”

Founded in 1997, and named after the flame-haired priest, Antonio Vivaldi, Red Priest has given several hundred sell-out concerts in many of the world’s most prestigious festivals, including the Hong Kong Arts Festival, Moscow December Nights Festival, Schwetzingen Festival, Prague Spring Festival, Ravinia Festival, Bermuda Festival, and in most European countries, Japan, Australia, and throughout North and Central America. The group has been the subject of hour-long TV profiles for NHK (Japan) and ITV (UK) - the latter for the prestigious South Bank Show in 2005, which documented the launch of the Red Hot Baroque Show, an electrifying marriage of old music with the latest light and video technology.

In 2008 Red Priest launched its own record label, Red Priest Recordings, which is now the home for all of the recordings of the ensemble and its members, and has attracted much attention in the music press worldwide. Recent releases have included a swashbuckling collection entitled “Pirates of the Baroque” and the group’s all-Bach blockbuster, “Johann, I’m Only Dancing.”

Red Priest is currently on its 29th coast-to-coast tour of America, and will shortly make its fourth tour of Japan and its debut in Taiwan, as well as ongoing performances in Germany, Italy, France, Norway and throughout the UK. .

To find keep informed about Red Priest's concerts and recordings join the Red Priest mailing list at www.redpriest.com - or visit our fan-page on Facebook!

Piers Adams has been heralded in the Washington Post as *'the reigning recorder virtuoso in the world today'*. He has performed in numerous festivals and at premiere concert halls throughout the world, including London's Royal Festival, Wigmore and Queen Elizabeth Halls, and as concerto soloist with the Philharmonia, the Academy of Ancient Music, the Singapore Symphony and the BBC Symphony. Piers has made several solo CDs reflecting an eclectic taste, ranging from his award-winning Vivaldi debut disc to David Bedford's Recorder Concerto - one of many major works written for and premiered by him. He has also researched, arranged and recorded many classical, romantic, impressionist and folk-influenced showpieces, which are a mainstay of his recital programs.

David Greenberg taught himself folk fiddle tunes by ear as a young child growing up in Maryland. In the mid 80s he studied baroque violin with Stanley Ritchie. Greenberg spent the 1990s with Tafelmusik while developing a speciality in Scottish baroque-folk music, recording three groundbreaking CDs in this genre with the group Puirt A Baroque. He immersed himself in Cape Breton traditional music and co-authored the popular treatise on Cape Breton fiddle music, the DunGreen Collection, with his wife, Kate Dunlay. He lives in Halifax, Nova Scotia. In addition to Red Priest, regular collaborators include his own Tempest ensemble, David McGuinness, Chris Norman and Doug MacPhee.

Angela East is widely respected as one of the most brilliant and dynamic performers in the period instrument world, praised in The Times, London, for the *"elemental power"* of her cello playing. She has given numerous concerto performances in London's Queen Elizabeth and Wigmore Halls, and has performed as soloist and continuo cellist with many of Europe's leading baroque orchestras, as well as with her own ensemble, the Revolutionary Drawing Room. Among her impressive list of concert credits are La Scala, Milan, Sydney Opera House, Versailles and Glyndebourne. Her long awaited disc of Bach's Cello Suites was recently released on Red Priest Recordings, together with a recital disc of popular baroque cello sonatas.

David Wright was an almost entirely self taught musician before gaining a scholarship to the Royal College of Music, where he won several prizes, including the International Broadwood Competition, and graduated with distinction. Since then he has worked with some of the world's leading musicians including Emma Kirkby, James Bowman and Steven Varcoe, and as a soloist with many groups of international renown. He has directed numerous concerts from the harpsichord, including the first modern performance of Arne's The Blind Beggar of Bethnal Green, and is guest conductor to several European orchestras. Much of David's time in recent years has been devoted to performing Bach's Goldberg Variations, which he recorded in 2007 and has since toured extensively, and performed on TV and radio. He joined Red Priest in January 2011.