Arcangelo Corelli Opus 1 & 3: Church Sonatas



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Recorded at St George's Church, Chesterton, Cambridge, UK from 7-8 November 2011, 12-16 December 2011 and 11-17 January 2012 Produced and recorded by Philip Hobbs Assistant engineering by Robert Cammidge Post-production by Julia Thomas Design by gmtoucari.com

'The immortal Works of CORELLI, are in the Hands of every one; and accordingly we find that from him many of our best modern Composers have generally deduced their Elements of Harmony.'

Charles Avison, 1752

Opus 1

Sonata da chiesa a tre in F Major, No. 1 1. Grave 2 II. Allegro 3 III. Largo 4 IV. Allegro

Sonata da chiesa a tre in E minor, No. 2 ⑤ I. Grave ⑥ II. Vivace ⑦ III. Adagio ⑧ IV. Allegro

Sonata da chiesa a tre in A Major, No. 3 I. Grave II. Allegro III. Adagio IV. Allegro

Sonata da chiesa a tre in A minor, No. 4 I. Vivace (attacca) II. Adagio III. Allegro IV. Presto IV. Allegro

Sonata da chiesa a tre in B-flat Major, No. 5 I. Grave II. Allegro III. Adagio – Allegro V. Allegro

Sonata da chiesa a tre in B minor, No. 6 ⁽²⁾ I. Grave ⁽³⁾ II. Largo ⁽³⁾ III. Adagio ⁽³⁾ IV. Allegro Sonata da chiesa a tre in C Major, No. 7 18 I. Allegro @ II. Grave @ III. Allegro

Sonata da chiesa a tre in C minor, No. 8 [®] I. Grave [®] II. Allegro [®] III. Largo [®] IV. Vivace

Sonata da chiesa a tre in G Major, No. 9 I. Allegro II. Allegro III. Adagio IV. Allegro – Adagio

Sonata da chiesa a tre in G minor, No. 10 ⁽²⁾ I. Grave ⁽³⁾ II. Allegro (attacca) ⁽³⁾ III. Allegro ⁽³⁾ IV. Adagio ⁽⁴⁾ V. Allegro

Sonata da chiesa a tre in D minor, No. 11 @ I. Grave ® II. Allegro @ III. Adagio ® IV. Allegro

Sonata da chiesa a tre in D Major, No. 12 I. Grave @ II. Largo e puntato @ III. Grave IV. Allegro

Opus 3

Sonata da chiesa a tre in F Major, No. 1 9 I. Grave 10 II. Allegro 10 III. Vivace 10 IV. Allegro

Sonata da chiesa a tre in D Major, No. 2 I. Grave II. Allegro III. Adagio IV. Allegro

Sonata da chiesa a tre in B-flat Major, No. 3 I. Grave II. Vivace III. Largo IV. Allegro

Sonata da chiesa a tre in B minor, No. 4 I. Largo II. Vivace III. Adagio IV. Presto

Sonata da chiesa a tre in D minor, No. 5 I. Grave II. Allegro III. Largo IV. Allegro

Sonata da chiesa a tre in G Major, No. 6 1. Vivace 1. Grave 1. Allegro 1. Al Sonata da chiesa a tre in E minor, No. 7 [®] I. Grave [®] II. Allegro [®] III. Adagio [®] IV. Allegro

Sonata da chiesa a tre in C Major, No. 8 18 I. Largo 19 II. Allegro 19 III. Largo 19 IV. Allegro

Sonata da chiesa a tre in F minor, No. 9 1. Grave 8 II. Vivace 8 III. Largo 8 IV. Allergo

Sonata da chiesa a tre in A minor, No. 10 Solution I. Vivace II. Allegro III. Adagio IV. Allegro

Sonata da chiesa a tre in G minor, No. 11 19 I. Grave 19 II. Presto 19 III. Adagio 19 IV. Allegro

Sonata da chiesa a tre in A Major, No. 12 10 I. Grave – Allegro – Adagio 10 II. Vivace 10 III. Allegro – Adagio 10 IV. Allegro – Adagio 10 V. Allegro

TOTAL TIME: 147:63

Arcangelo Corelli

1681 was a largely uneventful year in the history of the Western world; the same can also be said of musical history. That year saw the births of the future eminent musicians Georg Philipp Telemann and Johann Mattheson but little else of consequence occurred. However, there was one other major occurrence and that was the issue of a set of twelve trio sonatas, printed by the Roman publisher Giovanni Angelo Mutij. At first glance the publication of a set of sonatas should hardly have been a noteworthy event; the Mantuan composer Salomone Rossi had published similar works as early as 1607, and numerous other comparable sets had appeared over the subsequent seventy-four years. What placed the 1681 set above all others was that it became an important landmark in the development of Western classical music. Published as the Op. 1, this set of sonatas originated from the quill of the Italian musician Arcangelo Corelli (1653-1713), a man who was then more highly regarded for his skill as a violinist than his compositional ability. Nevertheless, it was through this set and his subsequent five opera that Corelli established himself as one of the most celebrated and influential composers in Europe, and secured a prominent place in the roll call of the greatest musicians of all time.

By the time of the Op. 1's publication in 1681, Corelli had been settled in Rome for a number of years. He had arrived in the Italian capital by 1675, before which he had spent time in study at both Lugo and Bologna. In Rome, Corelli cultivated his career as a violinist through his participation in various church orchestras, ultimately becoming one of the foremost violinists in that city. As with other musicians in Rome at that time, Corelli sought the support of a wealthy patron and in 1677 entered into the service of Christina, the former Queen of Sweden, who was then in the last of her four sojourns in that city. Queen Christina, who was well-known for her eccentric lifestyle and masculine mannerisms, abdicated in 1654 at the age of twenty-seven and soon after converted to Catholicism. Pope Alexander VII, who viewed her conversion as a victory, welcomed her into Rome in December 1655 and established her there in a manner that more befitted a reigning monarch. However, her behaviour and refusal to conform to the expected rules of conduct caused a strain in her relationship with the papacy.

Queen Christina was an avid supporter of the arts, particularly music, and was an accomplished musician herself. In 1674 she founded the Accademia Reale, a sanctuary for the cultural elite of her day, and cultivated a taste for French ballet and Italian music. By 1679, Corelli had begun to satisfy her musical desires by composing sonatas for the Academy held on the upper floor of her residence, the Palazzo Riario. Given the support that Queen Christina had shown Corelli, it is not a surprise that he chose to dedicate his first published work to her. Corelli was, however, wary of the criticism which might have befallen his Op. 1 Sonatas and requested that she protect *'the first-fruits of my study'*. Whatever fears Corelli had were soon quashed as, over the coming decades, his *'first-fruits'* were reissued by the entrepreneurial music publishers in Bologna, Venice, Modena, Antwerp, Amsterdam and London. They remained in print throughout the eighteenth century, a feat unrivalled by any earlier collection.

Corelli's Op. 1 Sonatas, like those in the Op. 3 set, have been described as sonata da chiesa (church sonatas), despite the fact that Corelli did not use this term himself. Corelli referred to them as Sonate a trè, while Peter Allsop (1999) described them as 'free' sonatas. Despite the implications of the da chiesa label, they were not conceived for use in church although, as Mattheson observed, they could be used to accompany worship. Corelli followed their success with another set of trio sonatas, the Op. 2 of 1685; they are of the da camera (chamber) type. For his 1689 Op. 3 Sonatas, Corelli returned to the *da chiesa* design. He dedicated this set to Francesco II d'Este of Modena, a wealthy patron of music and a capable musician. During Francesco's tenure as Duke of Modena, the city's cultural life had experienced a renaissance. He more than doubled the number of musicians at court, re-established the University of Modena, and vastly enlarged the great library, the Biblioteca Estense. Corelli's dedication led to speculation that he had spent time working at this vibrant musical centre, but there is no evidence to support such a visit. Francesco's first encounter with Corelli is believed to have been in 1686, when he had heard the virtuosic violinist play at the home of Benedetto Pamphili. Francesco subsequently made a move to secure Corelli's services for the Modenese court but Corelli, who was then well established in Rome, declined his offer. Unwilling to accept Corelli's rebuff, the Duke made several further unsuccessful attempts to lure Corelli to Modena. Notwithstanding Corelli's rejections, Francesco was grateful for the dedication and rewarded the composer through the gift of a hundred ounces of silver and a splendid silver casket.

Corelli scored both the Op. 1 and 3 for three melodic stringed instruments and continuo, a favoured Roman arrangement. The two upper parts were intended for

violins, and the bass part was originally written for violone or archlute. Exactly what Corelli meant by 'violone' is unclear, given that there were at least three different sizes of bass violin in use at the time. The term did not refer to the violoncello, which was a distinctly different instrument. There was also a predilection for plucked stringed instruments in Rome, such as the lute, a trend that lasted well into Corelli's lifetime. Archlutes were regularly employed to fulfil a wide range of musical roles. They could be used as solo instruments, or to provide the bass and continuo parts to cantatas, operas, oratorios and various instrumental genres. Nevertheless, as the trios began to circulate Europe, it became commonplace for a cello to play the bass line; some early editions, including those by the London publishers John Walsh and John Johnson, specifically call for that instrument. Corelli had originally written the continuo part for an organ, although this again in no way implies that these sonatas were intended for church use. At the time, organs were commonly used as chamber instruments and were the preferred choice to provide the continuo. Queen Christina's music room possessed two organs, as well as two harpsichords and two spinets. If an organ was unavailable, another keyboard instrument, such as the harpsichord, would make a suitable alternative.

In composing these sonatas Corelli drew upon two principal areas of musical activity, that of Bologna and Rome. Evidence of the Bolognese influence can be found within the music itself; some of the most important influences on Corelli were Maurizio Cazzati, Giovanni Battista Bassani and Giovanni Battista Vitali. Although Corelli never acknowledged the Bolognese influence outside his music, his adoption of the moniker 'Il Bolognese' has always been considered sufficient proof of this debt. However, a clear reference to the Bolognese school can be found in

the second movement of Sonata Op. 1 No. 1, where Corelli pays a compliment to Cazzati through the reuse of material from his sonata *La Casala*, Op. 35 (1665). In Rome, Corelli immersed himself in the study of music by Roman masters including Alessandro Stradella, Lelio Colista, Carlo Mannelli and Carlo Ambrogio Lonati. He also studied composition with one of the singers of the papal chapel, Matteo Simonelli, who had, despite his limited number of compositions, been dubbed the 'Palestrina of the seventeenth century'.

Most of Corelli's *da chiesa* sonatas use a four-movement slow-fast-slow-fast plan, a layout with whose establishment Corelli has been credited. In the Op. 1, only the Sonata No. 4, with its three fast movements, deviates significantly from this plan. Of the other Sonatas, the seventh lacks an opening slow movement, while in Sonatas Nos. 6 and 12 Corelli places a 'Largo' as the second movement; he also adds an opening 'Allegro' to Sonata No. 9. Even though the four-movement SFSF form became commonplace in the eighteenth century, it was unusual in 1681. However, despite its association with Corelli, he was not the first to employ this pattern; it had already been used, albeit rarely, by composers such as Giovanni Battista Mazzaferrata and Petronio Franceschini.

Within the four-movement plan Corelli tended to use a distinct pattern of movements, a model that was also widely imitated. Nearly all of the first movements are derived from the Bolognese School, particularly their slow duple-metre movements, while those in second position also tend to use a duple-metre and take the form of fugues. Many of the slow third movements are in triple time, while those in last place, which have a much lighter tone to the more serious second movements, are largely in simple or compound triple-metre and feature a regular phrase structure. A typical example is Sonata No. 11, which begins with a sombre 'Grave', followed by an impressive fugal 'Allegro' that features a chromatically descending theme. The connecting 'Adagio', whose theme is linked with that of the 'Grave', leads into an arresting 'Allegro' finale. Thematic links within individual sonatas are generally slight, but a striking example can be found in Sonata No. 4 where the themes in the first three movements are formed out of a descending scale; this idea then returns in the finale as a conclusion to the Sonata.

Just like Op. 1, the Op. 3 set was a huge success. Immediately after its Roman publication in 1689 it was reissued in Bologna and by 1691 it had also appeared in Modena, Venice and Antwerp. Bach was familiar with the Op. 3 set and borrowed the theme from the second movement of Sonata No. 4 for his Fugue in B minor, BWV. 579. This later set reinforces what Corelli had already established in the Op. 1. In the Op. 3, eleven sonatas have four movements and nine of these are the SFSF pattern. Thematic links continue to be slight, but similarities can be seen between the themes in some sonatas, for example the first two movements of Sonata No. 2. Many of the finales in the Op. 3 take the form of fugues.

Regarding Corelli's two *da chiesa* sets, the English music historian Sir John Hawkins writing in 1776 thought highly of the Op. 3, but viewed the Op. 1 as 'an essay towards that perfection to which he afterwards arrived; there is but little art and less adventure in it'.

He went on to say that the Op. 3 is:

The most elaborate of the four [sets of trios], as abounding in fugues. The first, the fourth, the sixth, and the ninth Sonata of this opera are the most distinguished; the latter has drawn tears from many an eye; but the whole is so excellent, that, exclusive of mere fancy, there is scarce any motive for preference.

Like all of Corelli's other works, his church sonatas were widely imitated. Some sets of sonatas, such as those by Telemann and British composer William Topham, went so far as to record Corelli's influence on their title-pages; another British composer, John Ravenscroft, wrote a set of sonatas so similar to Corelli's own that the Amsterdam publisher, Michel Le Cène, attempted to pass it off as Corelli's Op. 7. Charles Avison held Corelli in particularly high esteem, and described him as *'chaste and faultless'* in his 1752 treatise, *An Essay on Musical Expression*. Predictably, Avison's first published work, his Op. 1 set of trio sonatas, has a marked deference to Corelli. Avison's teacher and a former pupil of Corelli, Francesco Geminiani, published concerti grossi arrangements of Corelli's Op. 1 No. 9 and five sonatas from the Op. 3 in 1735.

Corelli achieved the status of a cult figurehead in England where his music was widely circulated and frequently performed. Hawkins recorded that for many years Corelli's trios were performed 'before the play at both theatres in London', while Roger North said in circa 1710: 'It [is] wonderfull to observe what a skratching of Correlli there is every where'. A remarkable indicator of how commonplace Corelli's music had become is recorded in a letter written by the Dean of Durham Cathedral, Spencer

Cowper. In 1752 Cowper reported that a request for some Corelli at a local concert, which involved Avison, elicited the exaggerated claim that 'there was not one part of Corelli that the children in the streets cou'd not whistle from beginning to end'. Numerous eighteenth-century writers praised Corelli's musical works and held them up as models of perfection. North thought that Corelli's music 'ever will be valued against gold', while the French music theorist, Sébastien de Brossard, in his discussion of sonata da chiesa form, advised: 'for models see the works of Corelli'. Charles Burney observed in 1789 that:

Scarce a co[n]temporary musical writer, historian, or poet, neglected to celebrate his [Corelli's] genius and talents; and his productions have contributed longer to charm the lovers of Music by the mere powers of the bow, without the assistance of the human voice, than those of any composer yet existed.

Corelli's trio sonatas are in every aspect a high point of Italian Baroque instrumental music. Even though what Corelli achieved in these works could hardly be defined as new, he was able to synthesise pre-established forms and ideas to create works that raised the musical bar to a new height. As such, Corelli's trios stand head and shoulders above the best examples by his Italian contemporaries. As time progressed, Corelli's compositions evolved from innovative, frequently imitated models to well-respected, timeless classics. Hawkins, almost ninety-five years after the publication of the Op. 1 set, wrote that:

...There is in every nation a style both in speaking and writing, which never becomes obsolete; a certain mode of phraseology, so consonant and congenial to the analogy

and principles of its respective language, as to remain settled and unaltered. This... may be said of music; and accordingly it may be observed of the compositions of Corelli....Men remembered, and would refer to passages in it as to a classic author; and...do not hesitate to pronounce...that, of fine harmony and elegant modulation, they are the most perfect exemplars.

Even today, over 200 years after Hawkins' comments and 300 years since the death of the great composer himself, these words still ring true. Corelli's music is exquisite, highly refined, and as close to perfection as any composition has ever come; it is and will remain, as both Avison and North observed, immortal.

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The Avison Ensemble

The Avison Ensemble is one of England's foremost exponents of eighteenth-century music on period instruments. It is named after Charles Avison (1709-1770), the Newcastle-born composer, conductor and organist, 'the most important English concerto composer of the 18th Century' (New Grove).

In addition to playing other works from the Baroque and early Classical periods, The Avison Ensemble is also a training ground for young up and coming musicians to gain experience at period performance practice and styles, affording them the opportunity to work with outstanding directors and soloists. The Ensemble has an active outreach programme involving thousands of children each year in music education projects throughout the north-east of England.

The Avison Ensemble's recording of the complete works of Charles Avison on both the Naxos and Divine Art labels has been exceptionally well received. Their recording of *Six Cello Concertos* by John Garth has been a sensational success, having been reprinted several times during the first year of its release and is regularly played on Classic FM. In 2009, The Avison Ensemble released their acclaimed first recording on Linn: Handel's *Concerti Grossi Opus 6*. This work is widely regarded as the composer's greatest contribution to the Baroque period and the recording received critical acclaim:

Orchestral Choice: 'I shall certainly return frequently to this splendid set.'

BBC Music Magazine

'The Avison's accounts under Pavlo Beznosiuk have a natural, easy virtuosity that will endear them to purists...'

The Sunday Times

'Where The Avison Ensemble really triumphs... is in conveying a sense of occasion and musical opulence...Magnificent!'

International Record Review

In 2011 The Avison Ensemble released its second recording with Linn, *Vivaldi: Concerti Opus 8*, which includes the wonderful 'Four Seasons'. This album received similarly high praise:

Disc of the Week: 'Plenty of bold colours... recorded with immediacy and real presence.'

BBC Radio 3 CD Review

'One of the most vibrant, authentic and involving recordings of Vivaldi's violin concertos I've heard.'

Classic FM Magazine

In 2012, The Avison Ensemble began its greatly anticipated series to mark the 300th anniversary of the death of Arcangelo Corelli and to celebrate his chamber music with the release of *Corelli: Opus 6 Concerti Grossi, Corelli: Opus 5 Violin Concertos* and *Corelli: Opus 2 & 4 Chamber Sonatas*.

'The Avison Ensemble offer suave, personable performances, allowing this exquisitely engaging music to do its own work.' **The Sunday Times**

'What emerges in Pavlo Beznosiuk's supple performance with the Avison Ensemble is music of immense suavity and elegance – from the enchanting largo of the 6th, to the tender pastoral of the Christmas Concerto.'

The Independent

'This is an immensely enjoyable release.'

Gramophone

As well as performing regularly in the English regions, The Avison Ensemble has appeared to critical acclaim at St John's, Smith Square in London and at the Hallé Handel Festival in Germany, and has recently performed at St. James' Palace with the Choir of Her Majesty the Queen's Chapel Royal. The Ensemble was the largest orchestra in the opening concert series at Kings Place, London, performing Beethoven's *Triple Concerto* as part of an all-Beethoven programme on period instruments, and they returned to Kings Place in December 2012 to present a Corelli festival series.

www.avisonensemble.com

Pavlo Beznosiuk

violin

Pavlo Beznosiuk has secured his reputation as one of Europe's most respected Baroque violinists over the last twenty-five years with a busy international career as soloist, chamber musician, concertmaster and increasingly as a director.

In the mid 1980s he was involved in pioneering work in the use of Renaissance violins with The Parley of Instruments and was a key member of the groundbreaking Medieval ensemble The New London Consort playing Vielles, Rebec and Lira da Braccio. He is a frequent soloist/director with the Academy of Ancient Music and recent recital work has included performances of Biber's *Rosary* sonatas and concerts combining solo violin music of Bach with that of Berio and Bartók.

As musical director of The Avison Ensemble he has completed an exhaustive recorded survey of the music of Charles Avison. In 2010 The Avison Ensemble released a recording of Handel's *Concerti Grossi Opus 6* and in 2011 released *Vivaldi: Concerti Opus 8* both of which have been received enthusiastically in the music press. Other recordings include J. S. Bach's *Sonatas & Partitas for Solo Violin*, Biber's *Rosary Sonatas*, Vivaldi's *Opus 12 Violin Concerti* with The Academy of Ancient Music and Christopher Hogwood, and two recordings of Mozart's *Sinfonia Concertante* with Monica Huggett and Rachel Podger and works by Walther and Westhoff. He has also performed in Europe, Australia, China, Korea and Singapore.

Violin by Matthys Hofmans, Antwerp, 1676.



Photography by Joanne Green

Richard Tunnicliffe

cello

Richard Tunnicliffe has enjoyed a long and varied career at the forefront of Britain's thriving period-instrument movement, combining this with a lively involvement in 'modern' performance.

He is principal cello with The Avison Ensemble and is regularly invited to be principal/continuo cello or viola da gamba soloist with major orchestras. These have included The Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, the Boston Symphony Orchestra, Frankfurt Radio S.O., City of Birmingham S.O., English National Opera, Scottish Chamber Orchestra and the London Mozart Players, and under conductors such as Haitink, Rattle, Iván Fischer, Mackerras and Elder.

He is a member of the renowned viol consort Fretwork, known worldwide for their innovative programmes. Their recording of Purcell's *Fantasias* (Harmonia Mundi USA) received a Gramophone award in 2009. They regularly tour in the USA and Europe, and their most recent recording, a new arrangement of Bach's *Goldberg Variations* (also for H.M.U.) was released to critical acclaim.

Richard is regularly heard as soloist and chamber musician, and his performances of Bach's *Six Cello Suites* (Linn) have been admired in many countries, in venues such as London's Wigmore Hall and Purcell Room, Berlin's Schauspielhaus, and the Warsaw Philharmonie. He currently teaches Baroque and Classical cello at the Royal College of Music, London, and at CEMPR, Birmingham University.

Bass Violin by Clive Morris, Neath, after the 'Servais' Stradivari, 1700.

Caroline Balding

violin

Caroline Balding has been described as a violinist of 'poetic intensity' (Music and Musicians), 'rapt beauty' and 'virtuosic distinction' (Gramophone) as well as 'a formidable soloist combining beauty of sound with infallible articulation' (La Nacion, Buenos Aires). She has appeared as guest leader with The English Concert, Florilegium and the Hanover Band, in addition to being first violin of The Band of Instruments based in her home town of Oxford. She was recently part of an acclaimed innovative project to rediscover the art of seventeenth-century improvisation with The Division Lobby.

Caroline has had the privilege of giving many premiere performances, working alongside the foremost composers of our day, Peter Maxwell Davies, Harrison Birtwistle, Judith Weir, Brian Ferneyhough, Nicola Lefanu and Michael Finissy to name but a few. Her extensive discography ranges from seventeenth-century English chamber music to new works by British composers, via such things as an alternative 'Four Seasons' by Antonio Guido (Divine Art), solo violin music by Roberto Gerhard (Metier), Kuhlau quintets (ASV), and the first recordings of early twentieth-century piano trios for the British Music Society. With associations at King's College, London and the universities of Birmingham, Southampton and Surrey, she devotes much time to workshops and classes. Other projects with students have taken place all over Great Britain and abroad in Italy, Taiwan, Argentina, Macedonia and recently at MIT in Boston, USA.

Violin by Stainer School, c.1690.





Paula Chateauneuf

archlute

Soloist, accompanist, teacher and linchpin of numerous ensembles, lutenist Paula Chateauneuf has earned her reputation as one of the most respected and admired musicians in the early music world; her playing has been described as 'one of the most exciting things on the pre-classical concert circuit.' Arriving in London as an American Fulbright Scholar she quickly established herself as a versatile member of the London scene, during which time she was involved in pioneering work with the groups Circa 1500 and Sinfonye, where her improvisational skills came to the fore. It was also then that long-lasting musical relationships were established with the New London Consort, and the Gabrieli Consort, whose principal lutenist she remains to this day.

Paula's in-depth knowledge and skill in the art of basso continuo has made her one of the most sought-after accompanists in early music, resulting in fruitful collaborations with many leading soloists. Her wealth of experience in early opera has led to involvement as both repetiteur and continuo player with the Bayerische Staatsoper, Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, New Israeli Opera, Royal Opera House, Glyndebourne, and Liceu Barcelona.

Paula has recorded extensively for Decca, EMI, Deutsche Grammophon, Linn, and Hyperion. She is a regular coach on courses for the Britten-Pears Young Artist Programme, Royal Academy of Music, and De Nieuwe Opera Academie (Amsterdam); she is the lute tutor for the University of Birmingham's early music department and was an AHRC Creative Arts Fellow. 2009 saw the establishment of her seventeenth-century style improvisation ensemble, The Division Lobby.

Archlute by Michael Schreiner in 2011 after David Tecchler, Rome.

Roger Hamilton

harpsichord / organ

Roger Hamilton read Music at Clare College Cambridge, and his first professional musical experience was as a horn player and singer. He subsequently studied conducting and harpsichord at the Royal Academy of Music and the National Opera Studio.

As a harpsichordist he has performed and recorded with many ensembles including The English Concert, English Baroque Soloists, London Classical Players, Les Arts Florissants, Gabrieli Consort, Concerto Köln, Walking to Lübeck and Concordia, as well as The Band of Instruments of which he is Music Director.

He was named as an Arts Council of Great Britain Young Conductor of the Year in 1992 and since then he has conducted many orchestras including the Südwestrundfunkorchester Stuttgart, The English Concert, Scottish Chamber Orchestra, The Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, European Sinfonietta, Orchestra of the National Arts Centre Ottawa, Israel Camerata, and Fränkishces Kammerorchester, as well as acting as assistant conductor for, among others, the Berlin Philharmonic, Budapest Festival Orchestra and Salzburg Camerata. In the theatre he has conducted opera productions for Théâtre de la Monnaie Brussels, New Kent Opera, English Touring Opera, Opera Northern Ireland, RNCM Opera, and Cambridge University Opera. He is currently Teaching Fellow in Historical Performance at the Royal Northern College of Music.

Harpsichord partially built by Marc Ducornet and finished by Mark Ransom and Claire Hammett. Box Organ after Loosemore, 1655, by William Drake of Buckfastleigh, 2001.

Photography by Joanne Green

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The Avison Ensemble Corelli: Opus 5 Violin Sonatas



The Avison Ensemble Corelli: Opus 6 Concerti Grossi



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CKD 414

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