



Tuesday 2nd July 2024 at 20:00

Concerto Copenhagen

Lars Ulrik Mortensen, artistic director and harpsichord

Soloist: Fredrik From, violin

Violin I: Fredrik From, Hanna Ydmark, Karin Samuelsson, Julia Dagerfelt,

Violin II: Hannah Tibell, Gabriel Bania, Jens Solgaard, Marie-Louise Marming

Viola: Antina Hugosson, Marie Stockmarr Becker

Violoncello: Judith-Maria Blomsterberg, Ingrid Andersson Kjellsdotter

Double bass: Megan Adie

Oboe I: Shai Kribus

Oboe II: Gustav Friedrichson

Bassoon: Jane Gower



Johan H. ROMAN (1694-1758)

“Golovinmusiken” BeRi 1; excerpts

Georg F. HÄNDEL (1685-1759)

from Trio Sonate in F major, HWV 401

1. *Largo*; 2. *Allegro*

Johan H. ROMAN (1694-1758)

Oboe Concerto (concerto grosso) in B-flat major, BeRi 46

1. *Allegro* 2. *Andante* 3. *Allegro*

Georg F. HÄNDEL (1685-1759)

from Trio Sonata in F major, HWV 401

3. *Adagio* 4. *Allegro*

Johan H. ROMAN (1694-1758)

“Golovinmusiken” BeRi 1; excerpts

Francesco GEMINIANI (1687-1762)

Concerto Grosso (La Folia), Op. 5, No. 12 in d minor

Georg F. HÄNDEL (1685-1759)

from Trio Sonate in G major, HWV 399

2. *A tempo ordinario - allegro* 3. *Passacaille*

Johan H. ROMAN (1694-1758)

Violin Concerto in d minor, BeRi 49

1. *Allegro* 2. *Andante* 3. *Allegro*

Johan H. ROMAN (1694-1758)

Sinfonia in B-flat major, BeRi 11

1. *Non troppo allegro*

--- Intermission ---

15:30 Timothy Ridout, viola and Federico Colli, piano

20:00 Concerto Copenhagen

22:30 Alon Sariel, mandolin



Roman, Händel, London – An educational journey in music

It's a story we've heard many times before: a young, talented artist travels the world to be inspired, and when he encounters the wider world, his life and art are transformed. Countless artists went on this kind of 'educational journey' in the 18th and 19th centuries. But this particular journey would prove to have major consequences, not only for the artist himself, but also for art and history as a whole; the journey changed Swedish music forever.

Johan Helmich Roman (1694-1758) was born into a musical family as the son of Johan Roman the Elder, who was a violinist in the Court Orchestra - the orchestra of the Swedish royal court in Stockholm. Johan Helmich quickly showed an interest in music, and he undoubtedly received a thorough musical education from home. So in 1711, at the age of seventeen, Johan Helmich was also given a position in the Royal Orchestra as a violinist.

In the court orchestra that Roman became part of, the North German influence was still predominant - during the Thirty Years' War, Sweden had subjugated large parts of what is now Mecklenburg-Vorpommern. Among the musicians was oboist Johann Jakob Bach, one of Johann Sebastian Bach's older brothers. Roman had the oboe as his second instrument and no doubt drew considerable inspiration from the experienced German oboist from the traditional Bach dynasty. However, the French influence from the Sun King's court in Versailles also found its way to the Swedish court, and Roman was exposed to both German and French stylistic ideals through the Court Orchestra.

The Swedish court was in the somewhat unusual situation that King Karl the 12th was in his third year of hiding from the Russian army in the city of Bender in the Ottoman Empire - today in Moldova. However, the absolute king still insisted on remotely controlling his kingdom in detail via depeches; in a note from one of these we find the following:

"It is our gracious will that [...] the musician Johan Roman the Younger may travel for some years to

perfect himself in music and willingly support his journey, and we grant him full pay"

Karl the 12th, Bender, 19 March 1712.

For Karl 12th, this note was probably of minor importance. For the young musician and for the development of the Swedish music scene, the decision was crucial. But the Court Orchestra was reluctant to let Roman go; "the economy and the times are not in favour of it", they thought, and perhaps that was true - after all, Sweden was in the middle of the war we now call the Great Northern War, and they were threatened on many fronts by both Russia and Denmark. But a few years later, Roman was finally allowed to leave. In 1716, he travelled to London.

London was by far the largest city in Europe at the time, and that alone must have been enticing to the young man. In addition, a few years earlier, a young German composer had arrived in London and turned the city upside down with his spectacular Italian operas. The composer was G.F. Handel, and in just a few years he had completely transformed the city's music scene. London attracted musicians, singers and composers from all over Europe, and Roman quickly became an active part of London's musical life. In 1717, he was employed by the King's Theatre, possibly the most desirable orchestra to be employed by at the time. We find Roman on the payroll in 1719/20, which means that the young Swede must have been in the orchestra when Handel himself conducted the premiere of his opera "Radamisto" in April 1720.

Throughout London, Roman met talented musicians, singers and composers from all over Europe, bringing with them all kinds of musical traditions from their home countries. Among them was Italian violinist and composer Francesco Geminiani.

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.. cont.: Roman, Händel, London – An educational journey in music

Geminiani was a pupil of the legendary Arcangelo Corelli, and when Geminiani arrived in London in 1714, his virtuoso violin playing caused a sensation. Geminiani was Handel's favourite violinist and concertmaster for a long time. Roman and Geminiani met regularly - perhaps Roman also received violin lessons from Geminiani, and Roman undoubtedly knew a number of Geminiani's compositions. As a composer, Geminiani often took the works of others as his starting point and embroidered on them with great ingenuity. A good example is his Concerto Grosso op 5, no. 12, which is based on La Folia - a particular harmonic/melodic theme that was very popular in the Baroque era for composing variations on. Geminiani "borrows" from both Corelli and Vivaldi, but with his daring harmonies and great inventiveness, he is also completely his own man.

When Roman returned to Stockholm in 1721, it was as a well-educated, modern-orientated composer and an experienced violinist, with a broad and keen eye for trends, styles and traditions from across Europe.

It is also a different Sweden that he comes home to. The warrior king Charles the 12th is dead, and after years of gruelling war, Sweden is now investing more in science, art and culture. So when Roman was appointed director of the Court Orchestra a few years after his return, he immediately set about modernising, restructuring and raising the orchestra to European standards. He also made the orchestra's concerts accessible to the general music-loving public, which was no longer limited to the court and the church. The first public concerts took place at Easter 1731 in Riddarhussalen in Stockholm with Handel's Brocke Passion on the programme. Several of Handel's works are on the repertoire in the years to come.

Perhaps it is for these concerts that Roman composes his orchestral works and his violin and oboe concertos. Although we don't know the

performance history of these works, it is easy to imagine Roman leading his orchestra as concertmaster and being the soloist on both violin and oboe in the solo concertos. What we do know is that the "Golovin Music" was commissioned by the Russian ambassador Nikolai Golovin in honour of the coronation of the twelve-year-old Tsar Peter II in St. Petersburg in February 1728. The event was celebrated with lavish parties that required a lot of music, and Roman delivered a total of 25 charming, highly varied instrumental pieces for the occasion.

In 1735, Roman was again given the opportunity to travel abroad, this time to Italy and Germany, in addition to England of course. He was "only" gone for two years, but the experiences he gained had an equally profound impact on his development. Roman travelled through a musical Europe that was greatly influenced by the break between the High Baroque and the new, galant style, and he was updated on the new musical ideas and techniques. All these modern currents and genres can be found in Roman's works, as well as the various national stylistic ideals - music that is extraordinarily well suited to both the court and the public concert halls.

Roman was associated with the Royal Orchestra and the Swedish court until his death in 1758. His impact on Swedish music, both artistically and structurally, is so profound and extensive that today he is referred to as "the father of Swedish music". Roman's formative journeys changed the history of Swedish music in a nutshell. It may be that a formative journey - or a sabbatical as we know it today - is not always convenient for "the times and the economy". Nor is an educational journey convenient if you want to maintain the status quo. But if we want to be inspired, challenged and developed, an educational journey is far from the worst thing you can ask a young person to embark on..

Frode Andersen / Concerto Copenhagen

15:30 Timothy Ridout, viola and Federico Colli, piano

20:00 Concerto Copenhagen

22:30 Alon Sariel, mandolin



Concerto Copenhagen

For over thirty years, Concerto Copenhagen has embarked on a journey of discovery, exploring music from the Baroque, Viennese Classical, and Early Romantic periods with historical awareness and unwavering commitment.

Today, Concerto Copenhagen stands as a leading light in its field, both nationally and internationally. Under the musical direction of Lars Ulrik Mortensen, Concerto Copenhagen combines a methodical approach to historical material with artistic originality and a continual evolution in performance style and delivery. This ensures that the music is brought to life in a process of dynamic renewal and remains relevant to contemporary audiences.

Since its inaugural concerts in 1991, Concerto Copenhagen has released multiple internationally acclaimed albums and participated in hundreds of concerts, opera productions, as well as soundtrack and video productions around the world. With a repertoire that combines more familiar European music with lesser-known works of Scandinavian origin and new music, the orchestra celebrated its 30-year anniversary in 2021

Concerto Copenhagen is supported by Statens Kunstfond, Augustinus Fonden and Aage og Johanne Louis-Hansens Fond

Lars Ulrik Mortensen

Mortensen has been active as a conductor for 25 years, and for almost twenty years he has worked exclusively with period instruments and original performance practice. He has toured most of the world and played with some of the most prominent international Early Music ensembles, including Holland Baroque Society, Irish Baroque Orchestra, Nederlandse Bachvereniging, and Collegium 1704.

He has participated in many iconic recordings - released by DGG-Archiv, ECM, EMI, Naxos, and CPO.

In the early years, Mortensen studied at the Royal Danish Academy of Music and afterwards with Trevor Pinnock in London. Between 1996 and 1999,

he was professor of harpsichord and performance practice at the Hochschule für Musik in Munich, and he continues to teach at prestigious institutions around the world, including Mozarteum Salzburg, Sibelius Academy in Helsinki, and Juilliard School of Music in New York.

Mortensen has been the Artistic Director of Concerto Copenhagen since 1999 and is today the epitome of CoCo's artistic, creative, and cultural identity. In 2007, he received Denmark's most prestigious music award, the Léonie Sonning Music Award, and since then he has continued to further develop and refine his artistic work.

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