

LIVE STREAM CONCERT PROGRAMME

V O C E S L U M I N I S

FRIDAY NOVEMBER 6 2020 - LIVE FROM GALWAY CATHEDRAL
PERFORMED BY THE LUMINOSA STRING ORCHESTRA WITH AISLING KENNY & MARK CHAMBERS



Dear Friends,

Firstly, I would like to thank you so much for buying a ticket for this live streamed event. Your purchase means that we can continue to support artists here in Galway and continue to bring divine music into your homes and hearts. I realise that you might be greatly affected by the pandemic and, therefore, I am all the more grateful than ever that you are able to join us this evening.

As this is the only way we can now engage with you and bring you some wonderful music, I really hope that you enjoy the performance. We still have all the energy of performing live and performing to camera is something new for some of us, so the atmosphere should be electric.

I hope also that you have prepared a nice space for yourself to sit and watch. The sound is always going to be better through the best speakers you have, or indeed, streamed to your own T.V. if that's an option for you.

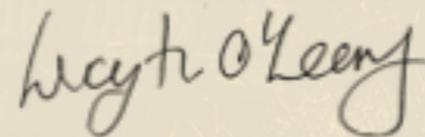
If you experience any problems streaming, please let me know. The performance will be available to view up to a week after the live stream.

We devised this programme - Voces Luminis (voices of light) to reflect on the suffering we have all experienced and give whatever relief we can through the medium of sublime baroque music. The programme moves through reflective and sorrowful colours to find the light and lift the spirits with a celebratory and thankful tone. The beauty within this music is at once divine and mortal and the ability to celebrate and be thankful is so important during these difficult times.

So, sit back and enjoy the performance.

We would love to hear your feedback if you feel so inclined, by email to lucy@luminosa.ie

With very best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lucy Hayward O'Leary". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lucy Hayward O'Leary
Orchestra Manager and CEO

THE PROGRAMME

Giovanni Battista Pergolesi (1710 – 1736)
Stabat Mater

Antonio Vivaldi (1678 - 1741)
Nulla in Mundo

Arcangelo Corelli (1653 – 1713)
Concerto Gross Op. 6 No. 4

THE LUMINOSA STRING ORCHESTRA

Led by Concertmaster Paul Ezergailis

First Violins
Bodgan Sofei
Áine Kelly
Brigid Leman

Second Violins led by
Ingrid Nicola
Nuala Ni Chanainn
David Clarke
Tom Murphy

Violas led by
Andreea Banciu
Karen Dervan
Elish Devine

Cellos led by
Adrian Mantu
Alona Kliuchka
Nicola Geddes

Bass Teresa Turner

Organ Ray O'Donnell

Soloists
Aisling Kenny
Mark Chambers

THE PROGRAMME

VOCES LUMINIS (VOICES OF LIGHT)

Messages of hope during uncertain and troubling times are a running theme through much of Western music history. Every period of war, unrest, or strife has been equally met with the indefatigability of the human spirit, and when it comes to the musically creative spirit, the response to adversity has often been a touchstone for some of the most inspired—and inspiring—works of vocal and instrumental beauty. This evening's programme brings together a triptych of Baroque works, each of which are in their own way a testament to the perseverance of human spirit over difficulty. One depicts the anguish of extreme loss, but looks forward to eternal rest in paradise, another speaks frankly of the bitterness of hardship, even as it looks forward to the promise of peace; and another, through its effusive joy, can summon hope even in the darkest of times.

GIOVANNI BATTISTA PERGOLESI (1710 – 1736) STABAT MATER

Giovanni Battista Draghi, who like his father and grandfather took on the name “Pergolesi” from their town of origin, was born in January of 1710 into a family that would know tragedy

and loss early on: his three siblings died in infancy, and young Giovanni was prone to illness and plagued by physical hardship throughout his life. However, he poured his energies into his musical training, and by adolescence his talents earned him great renown, especially in the field of *drammi sacre*—sacred dramas, a type of religious opera which served as a compositional proving-ground for the more advanced pupils of the Naples conservatoire where Pergolesi studied in the early 1720s. By the time he was ready to leave the Conservatorio dei Poveri di Gesù Cristo in 1731, commissions for a Mass and an opera were already in the offing, and despite a few false starts to his opera career, Pergolesi soon entered a phase of increased patronage and renown that carried him through the first half of the 1730s. Opera, *commedia musicale*, masses and vespers, even the odd instrumental commission all landed on his composer's docket, and it seemed for a while that his star was on the rise. However, ill-health came calling once again in 1735, coinciding with a decline in his operatic success, and in November of that year he retired to a monastery in the outskirts of Naples, where he wrote the cantata *Orfeo*, his *Salve Regina* in C minor, and his final work: the *Stabat Mater*. Written for the same Neapolitan *Confraternita dei Cavalieri di San Luigi di Palazzo* that had earlier commissioned Alessandro Scarlatti's setting of the *Stabat Mater*, Pergolesi's setting of the 13th-century text shows off so many of the same devices which earned him success on the operatic stage—duets, arias, cabalettas—but transforms them into an

intimate chamber work for much more modest forces: two vocal soloists, strings, and a continuo group. Despite the sombre overtones of the sequence's text—the Seven Dolours of the Blessed Virgin Mary—the composer's *Stabat Mater* includes downright sprightly accompanied sections of a more operatic vein (such as the 'Quae moerebat'), contrasting with bittersweet chromaticism during moments of intense emotion, or fiery fugal writing such as at 'Fac, ut ardeat'. Word painting abounds, and moments such as 'Ad te suspiramus' deliver sighs of longing, interwoven by Pergolesi's gifted melodic writing, which culminates in the poignant closing duet 'Quando corpus morietur' and its energetic, final coda-like 'Amen'.

ANTONIO VIVALDI (1678 - 1741)
NULLA IN MUNDO PAX SINCERA, RV 630

Antonio Vivaldi's solo sacred motet 'Nulla in mundo pax sincera'—'There is no true peace in this world (without bitterness)', was written in 1735, a decade later than the majority of the Red Priest's solo voice motets, which were composed when the composer replaced Francesco Gasparini as maestro di coro at the Ospedale della Pietà orphanage in Venice. More so than the earlier of Vivaldi's works in this genre, which date as far back as the early 1710s, the later solo motets display the emotional and dramatic influence of opera, a world in which Vivaldi was fully engaged in the

1730s. However, one constant was the formula upon which these motets were built: a da capo aria, connected by means of recitative to a second da capo aria but in a different key, followed by a closing Alleluia. The anonymous Latin text of 'Nulla in mundo pax sincera' speaks in disapproving tones of the world of sin and deceit, offering Jesus as the path out of torment: the colourful metaphors employed throughout the work offer a wealth of material for Vivaldi's word painting and florid, dramatic lines. From the opening waltz-like *Larghetto*, the first aria leads into the recitative 'Blando colore' with a deceptively simple start—only to jump into a maddening, quickly alternating *Adagio* and *Presto*, then *Largo* and *Presto*, and back again—a perfect display of the devil's trickery. The second aria, 'Spirat anguis', describes the coils of the demonic serpent in its quickly-moving, springing lines and wide melodic jumps, and hastens to the final Alleluia, with its rapid-fire *fioritura* and duets between soprano and violin, representing the soul's hopeful pursuit of divine redemption.

ARCANGELO CORELLI (1653 - 1713)
CONCERTO GROSSO OP. 6 NO. 4

For a composer whose output is limited to three genres—the solo sonata, trio sonata, and concerto—and a sum total of under a hundred works, Corelli's influence was exceedingly large both during his life as well as long afterwards. Originally

from Bologna, he settled in Rome around 1675, where he quickly became one of the most sought-after violinists in the city. His first opus, a collection of 12 'sonate di chiesa' (church sonatas) from 1679, was dedicated to his then-patroness, Queen Christina of Sweden, whose employ he had entered as a chamber musician; within the following decade, Corelli would have completed three sets of 12 trio sonatas each, as well as the Op.6, a collection of twelve Concerti Grossi for an expanded ensemble of concertino and ripieno players that adapted to a larger format the same layout of the trio sonata with which he was so well-versed. Although written in the 1780s, they were not published until 1714 in Amsterdam, but they quickly achieved fame across Europe, and re-established the concerto grosso as a style at a time when Vivaldi's ritornello concerto was more in vogue. Perhaps only second in renown to No.8 in the collection—the so-called 'Christmas Concerto', No.4 is a particularly engaging piece which builds an energetic, joyful sound around Corelli's cantabile instrumental writing. Whilst most of the other concerti grossi in Op.6 have either five or more sections patterned after Baroque dances, No.4 employs four well-proportioned movements that emulate the structure of the sonata da chiesa, which also resemble (and in certain respects, foreshadow) the structure of the later Romantic-period symphony. The opening Andante-Allegro turns mellow with the second movement, Adagio, which is followed up by the Minuet: a lead-in to the final, jubilant Allegro.

ONWARDS, UPWARDS

The works in this evening's programme establish an optimistic rhythm and a discernible direction: onwards, upwards. From darkness to light, from despair to hope, and from pain to joy. While it is fully human to grieve and to feel the strong emotions that arise from experiencing hardship, it is also in our nature to push against these more oppressive forces with tenacity and resolve, and to compensate for the dark by tempering it with light. It is no small coincidence that the tensions created by struggle and which are reflected in our various arts—chiaroscuro and chromaticism, harmony and dissonance, luminosity and shadow—create such delight and satisfaction when resolved, if even just for an instant. We live in times that may lead us into dark moments, and which provide a greater share of challenges than under our past, more usual circumstances. May we find ourselves transformed by the adversity, reaching ever to find the luminous alternative in this world, listening always for the voices of light.

Programme notes by: Dr Wolodymyr "Vlad" Smishkewych

THE COMPÈRE

WOLODYMYR SMISHKEWYCH

Wolodymyr “Vlad” Smishkewych has performed as tenor soloist with artists as diverse as Sequentia, Theatre of Voices, Carlos Nuñez, Jordi Savall and Hesperion XXI, The Harp Consort, Ars Nova Copenhagen, and Ensemble Dialogos. He has recorded for Sony/BMG, Harmonia Mundi, Naxos, Norton, and Focus Records. He holds the Doctor of Music in Voice Performance from Indiana University, and has lectured and taught masterclasses and performance programmes at universities in the USA, South America, Canada, and Europe. His passion for writing and creating audio and video about music, culture, and nature, brought him to Spain as a Fulbright Fellow in 2005.



In 2011 he moved to Ireland to become director of the MA in Ritual Song and Chant at the University of Limerick, Ireland, where he taught until 2014. He then returned to performing and to the world of audio broadcasting and film, in 2015 joining Ireland’s RTÉ lyric fm as an announcer and programme writer, and as the host of Ireland’s weekly early music programme, Vox Nostra.

Together with music educator Dr. Mary Goetze and ethnomusicologist Dr. Cornelia Fales, he co-authored “Exploring the Universal Voice,” which helped singers in Western traditions respectfully and healthfully explore the singing traditions of other cultures, and which featured as a chapter in the Cambridge Companion to Choral Music (Cambridge University Press).

He is currently working on a co-edited volume titled “Medieval Song in Modern Performance.” Find out more about his upcoming projects at: www.wolodymyrsmishkewych.com and www.hipsterireland.com.

THE SOLOISTS

AISLING KENNY - SOPRANO

Aisling Kenny, is a soloist and ensemble singer specialising in early music and art song. She pursues a busy freelance career at home and abroad and sings frequently as a soloist in chamber music and oratorio. She has sung as a soloist with Irish Baroque Orchestra, Camerata Kilkenny, Irish Chamber Orchestra, Marlborough Baroque, Luminosa String Orchestra, The Orchestra of St Cecilia, Linden Baroque and the Staatskapelle Halle and as a soloist with numerous choirs including Resurgam, Sestina, and Chamber Choir Ireland. Aisling features regularly in the National Concert Hall's Chamber Music Series, most recently with IBO for their La Donna Barocca project directed by Claire Duff, and Handel in Italy with countertenor Francesco Giusti directed by Peter Whelan.

Find out more at <https://aislingkenny.com/>



MARK CHAMBERS - COUNTERTENOR

Since leaving the Royal Northern College of Music in 1992, Mark Chambers has enjoyed a varied career both as a soloist and ensemble singer. He has performed opera at the Royal Opera House, The Globe Theatre, Sanssouci Palace, Potsdam, Beijing, Jerusalem and New York. As an ensemble singer Mark has performed with Tenebrae, The Monteverdi Choir, The Gabrieli Consort, Gallicantus, Theatre of Voices and Alamire. In the commercial world, Mark provided the Voice of the Ood for the BBC Dr Who series and has appeared on soundtracks to many movies. Mark currently lives in Buncrana, Co. Donegal and combines his singing career with teaching voice at the University of Birmingham, and as musical director of Sestina.

Find out more at <https://www.sestinamusic.com/about>



CONTINUO

RAY O'DONNELL – ORGANIST

Raymond O'Donnell has been organist & Director of Music at Galway Cathedral since January 1994. A native of Dublin, he studied organ with Gerard Gillen, and served three years as Organ Scholar at Dublin's Pro-Cathedral. He studied music and mathematical physics at Maynooth University, graduating in 1991 with a first-class honours Master's Degree in organ performance and interpretation. He founded Galway Cathedral Recitals in 1994, which presents a major series of organ concerts in the Cathedral every summer; and in 2006-2007 he oversaw the rebuilding of the Cathedral organ by Trevor Crowe, which saw it become one of the finest symphonic organs in the country.

In addition to his work in the Cathedral, he has a busy performing career, and is in demand as soloist and accompanist in Ireland and across Europe. About 12 years ago he returned to Maynooth University as a part-time lecturer in harmony and counterpoint, and a tutor in organ performance and keyboard skills.

Find out more at : <https://recitals.galwaycathedral.ie/>



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