



# THE GRAND TOUR



SATURDAY NOVEMBER 9, 2024, 7:30 PM • SUNDAY NOVEMBER 10, 2024, 2:30 PM  
BOURGIE HALL OF THE MONTREAL MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS

# PROGRAMME

## **Arcangelo Corelli (1653-1713)**

Concerto Grosso in D Major, Op. 6 No. 4

Adagio – Allegro

Adagio

Vivace

Allegro – Allegro

## **Georg Muffat (1653-1704)**

Sonata da camera No. 5 in G Major, from *Armonico tributo*

Allemanda: Grave

Adagio

Fuga

Adagio

Passacaglia: Grave

## **Arcangelo Corelli**

Concerto grosso in F Major, Op. 6 No. 9

Preludio: Largo

Allemanda: Allegro

Corrente: Vivace

Gavotta: Allegro

Adagio – Minuetto: Vivace

## INTERMISSION

## **Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741)**

Concerto in A Major la majeur *per Violino principale et altro violino per eco in lontano*, RV 552

Allegro

Larghetto

Allegro

## **Johann Georg Pisendel (1687-1755)**

Violin Concerto in G Major, JunP I.4.a

Allegro

Largo

Allegro

## **Antonio Vivaldi**

Concerto for Two Violins and Cello in D Minor, Op. 3 No. 11, RV 565

Allegro – Adagio e spiccato – Allegro

Largo e spiccato

Allegro

D'ITALIA.

## DIRECTION

Leila Schayegh, violin

## MEMBERS OF THE ORCHESTRA

### First Violins

Jessy Dubé (solo violin echo)

Louella Alatiit

Mélanie de Bonville

### Second Violins

Julie Rivest (solo)

Sari Tsuji

Sarah Douglass

Sallynee Amawat

### Violas

Jacques-André Houle

Valérie Arsenault

### Cellos

Andrea Stewart (solo)

Jessica Korotkin

### Double Bass

Francis Palma-Pelletier

### Harpsichord

Hank Knox

### Archlute

Sylvain Bergeron




# LEILA SCHAYEGH,

Leila Schayegh was born and raised in Switzerland. She began learning modern violin before moving to period instruments. Since then she has not looked back, and she is now regarded as one of the leading figures on the violin of the early music scene. On stage she is a captivating performer through her great expressiveness and energy, drawing audiences into her playing. Her repertoire now ranges from the beginning of the violin literature around 1600, when the instrument was held lower down against the chest, to the high romantic period. As well as the core repertoire of Bach, Vivaldi, Mozart, Brahms and their contemporaries, she champions works which have been unjustly overshadowed by names which are well-known today. In 2017 she released a highly-regarded CD with sonatas by Carlo Farina, and in 2020 she concluded a complete recording cycle of Jean-Marie Leclair's concertos with La Cetra Basel which has been very enthusiastically received.

Schayegh's recordings have regularly won awards including several *Diapason de l'année* prizes, the *Diapason d'Or*, Gramophone magazine's Editor's Choice, and the German Record Critics' Best List. In 2024 she was awarded the Swiss Music Prize.



# violin and direction



Leila Schayegh is in great demand at major international festivals and a regular guest leader of both early music ensembles and modern orchestras. Invitations include concerts in the United States, South America, Australia, Europe and Asia. She enjoys a close musical collaboration with the harpsichordist, organist and conductor Jörg Halubek. The two perform as a duo and have released several prize-winning recordings, focusing on the repertoire for violin with obbligato keyboard instruments. For the classical period and later, her collaborator is the Austrian pianist Christoph Berner on the fortepiano. Other important collaborators in concerts and recordings are Stephan MacLeod and Gli Angéli Genève, as well as Vaclav Luks and Collegium 1704. In 2019 Schayegh founded her own ensemble, La Centifolia, enabling her to expand her programmes to include orchestral works.

Since 2010, Leila Schayegh has been Professor at the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis, passing on her knowledge and experience to the up-and-coming generation of players. As Chiara Banchini's successor, she seeks to convey the importance of great expressivity founded in historically informed performance practice.





# ARION

**At the heart of Montreal's musical life for over forty years,** Arion Orchestre Baroque is a pioneer in Quebec and Canada in the world of early music on period instruments. Under the artistic direction of conductor and bassoonist Mathieu Lussier since 2019, Arion presents a concert series featuring internationally renowned guest conductors and soloists.

Founded in Montreal in 1981 by Claire Guimond, Chantal Rémillard, Betsy MacMillan and Hank Knox, Arion has performed throughout Quebec, Canada, the United States, Mexico, Asia and Europe. The clarity and freshness of Arion's interpretations of Baroque and Classical works are underpinned by a discography of over thirty critically acclaimed and award-winning titles.





Committed to the creation and dissemination of youth and educational projects, and a partner of renowned institutions such as Université de Montréal, McGill University, the Arte Musica Foundation, the Studio de musique ancienne de Montréal, the Centre de musique baroque de Versailles and SAMS, Arion is a key player on the Canadian musical scene.

# PROGRAMME NOTES

## Two Germans in Italy

*Italy was the preferred destination of the Grand Tour, a museum, the land of priests and the arts. [...] Those who declared they were making the journey to Rome, [Venice] or Naples might not care much for the scenery, and might draw the curtains of their carriages until they reached a major city, but they felt a keen satisfaction at the thought that they were entering the land of Virgil and Horace, or approaching the capital of Christendom.*

Gilles Bertrand,  
*Le Grand Tour revisité*, 2008.

The concept of the “Grand Tour,” though not originally so named, originated in 17th-century England. To further their education, young men of the gentry, often accompanied by a tutor, embarked on an extended journey across Europe, ultimately visiting the great cities of the Italian peninsula, cradles of the Renaissance and windows on antiquity. This kind of cultural tourism found followers in many European nations (among whom Montesquieu, Goethe and Dickens) and continued in this form until the mid-19th century. In a similar vein, the Prix de Rome, instituted in France in 1663 and giving prizewinning painters and sculptors access to an apprenticeship in the Eternal City, was opened up to musical composition in 1803. Here in Quebec, the Prix d’Europe, created with a similar purpose in 1911 for composers and performers, has since expanded to include destinations the world over.

In the 17th and 18th centuries, the cultural pole represented by Italy (as we shall call it, though the nation was not mostly unified until 1861) attracted a number of foreign musicians, curious not only to discover the artistic treasures offered by Italy’s most important cities, but also to work with famous composers, instrumentalists and orchestras, most of whom were supported by generous patrons and with whom they hoped to perfect their own musical practices and broaden their horizons. We present two German composers who benefited from their relationship with two of Italy’s most innovative and influential masters.




If the concerto grosso, that conversational musical genre, first arose under the quill of Alessandro Stradella (1639-1682), it met with a much wider audience thanks to the final opus of **Arcangelo Corelli**, who was active mostly in Rome under the successive patronage of Cardinals Pamphili and Ottoboni. The twelve works of his Opus 6 concerti grossi, the composition of which may well have spanned a number of years, were the fruit of Corelli's experience with his trio and solo sonatas, and he was preparing them for publication just prior to his death. They were issued posthumously in 1714, in Amsterdam, and feature eight *concerti da chiesa* (church concertos), with a succession of slow and quick "abstract" movements, and four *concerti da camera* (chamber concertos), which also include dance movements. Concerto No. 4 is of the first kind, while No. 9 is of the second variety. Compared to several of his contemporaries, the virtues of Corelli's music lie more in its balanced and well-crafted design than in any excessive technical display. This apparent restraint did not necessarily exclude a bold performance style, and it seems these two aspects could coexist in Corelli's manner, whose playing was sometimes described as "learned, elegant and pathetic," while it was elsewhere reported that "it was usual for his countenance to be distorted, his eyes to become as red as fire and his eyeballs to roll as if in agony."

Partly of Scottish descent, born in Savoy but considering himself a German, **Georg Muffat** spent most of his career in Salzburg and Passau. The *Sonata da camera in G Major*, No. 5 of Muffat's set *Armonico tributo* (The Harmonic Tribute) — published in Salzburg in 1682 and written like the others of the set for a five-part ensemble with two optional violas — can be performed with different instrumental combinations as specified by the composer in his preface to the "*Dear Reader*." One of these possibilities is to play them as concerti grossi when taking into account the *solo* and *tutti* indications in the parts. Muffat later rearranged the five sonatas of this set and added others to form the twelve concerti grossi he published in 1701. In the preface to this last collection, we learn he composed the earlier works during a sabbatical in Rome (between 1780 and 1782), where he studied the Italian keyboard style with Bernardo Pasquini and heard with great excitement concertos by Corelli, at whose home he had his own recent works performed and commented on. This explains how it has been suggested Muffat may even have influenced Corelli.

The “abstract” movements of Muffat’s sonatas clearly show how well he assimilated the Italian style, while the dance movements display the French style he learned in his youthful six years of study in Paris. Remarkable in this respect is the final Passacaglia of *Sonata No. 5*, a series of variations on an ostinato bass combined with the French rondeau form in which the initial theme recurs periodically. Even in these early works, one can appreciate his lifelong yearning for the reconciliation of national styles as he expressed it in 1695: “I practice the Study of sweet symphonies, & when I combine French airs with those of the German and Italian, it is not to cause War: but to act as a prelude, if may be, to the harmony of nations, to kind Peace.”

**Antonio Vivaldi**, known as the Red Priest because of his ecclesiastical title and the color of his hair, was an indefatigable inventor in almost every musical genre of his time, but especially in that of opera and of the concerto for one or several instruments. It is most certainly his first set of published concertos that ensured his celebrity. *L’Estro Armonico* (translated as something like “The Harmonic Whim”), Op. 3, published in 1711 in Amsterdam, contains some of his most accomplished works till then. “Their variety, sheer invention, and rhythmical vibrancy helped rank them as best-sellers during the first half of the Settecento,” writes musicologist Jean-Pierre Demoulin. In the *Concerto in D Minor, Op. 3 No. 11*, the three bows of the *concertino*—two violins and a cello — cross swords, so to speak. Bach transcribed this splendid concerto for the organ, but the strings of Vivaldi’s original are truly irresistible in the outer movements’ musical pursuits, the exciting fugue, and the enchanting Largo e spiccato featuring a solo violin. As for the *Concerto per Violino principale et altro violino per eco in lontano*, RV 552, it bears witness to Vivaldi’s later, more homophonic and relaxed style, and was played for the 1740 visit to Venice of the young Frederick Christian, heir to the Electorate of Saxony, himself on a Grand Tour. After the solo violin’s first phrase, we discover, beguiled, that another violin sounding in the distance, accompanied by two equally distant violins, will henceforth echo it.





Frederick Christian's grandfather, the Elector of Saxony Frederick Augustus "the Strong," traveled to Venice in 1716 with a delegation of musicians, which included the violinist and composer **Johann Georg Pisendel**. Pisendel took advantage of his nine-month stay in *La Serenissima* to study with the Red Priest, who gave him manuscripts of his works old and new, comprising a few dedicated to his student and to the Dresden court orchestra. *Konzertmeister* of the Dresden court orchestra and himself a proponent of the *goûts réunis*, the "mixed tastes" of the French and Italian styles, Pisendel is considered as one of the founders of the German school of violin playing. Although few of his works have come down to us, they bear witness to a formal clarity and melodic flair inherited in part from Vivaldi, as can be heard in his *Violin Concerto in G Major*, composed sometime between 1720 and 1735. It has survived only in several manuscript copies, one of which includes winds and a variant second movement. We will play the version for strings only, based on the autograph manuscript.

Our two German composers definitely succeeded in integrating musical pan-Europeanism with their own sensibilities, influenced notably by the two great Italian masters Corelli and Vivaldi, and thanks to their curiosity, their travels and their encounters.

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# UPCOMING CONCERTS CHEZ ARION

Jouez hautbois, résonnez musettes !	SALLE BOURGIE		8 DÉCEMBRE 2024 14H30
Arion au Café Zimmermann	SALLE BOURGIE	18 JANVIER 2025 19H30	19 JANVIER 2025 14H30
Les Fantômes d'Hamlet	SALLE BOURGIE	8 MARS 2025 19H30	9 MARS 2025 14H30
Arion reçoit Thomas Dunford	SALLE BOURGIE	5 AVRIL 2025 19H30	6 AVRIL 2025 14H30
L'Amant jaloux	SALLE BOURGIE	17 MAI 2025 19H30	18 MAI 2025 14H30

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