

# PREMIER | ENTERTAINMENT ARTS CULTURE

**Alison Balsom announces her return to recording with  
*Royal Fireworks***

**A collection of grand Baroque masterpieces and new versions performed with  
the Balsom Ensemble,  
a world-class group of period instrument specialists**

**Released worldwide on Warner Classics 8 November 2019**



Virtuoso trumpeter Alison Balsom makes her long-awaited return to recording with *Royal Fireworks*, a collection of beloved Baroque classics and new arrangements released worldwide on 8 November 2019 on Warner Classics.

Widely acknowledged as one of the greatest trumpeters of her generation, Alison Balsom has established a multi-faceted career as an in-demand soloist on the international concert stage, a passionate educator and spokesperson for music education and a curator; including her recent successful tenure as Artistic Director of the 75th Cheltenham Music Festival in 2019.

*Royal Fireworks* marks the continuation of Balsom's long-term partnership with Warner Classics, being her thirteenth solo release for the label and her first since 2016's *Jubilo*. In addition to the birth of her second child and marriage to the film and theatre director Sam Mendes, in the intervening years, Alison Balsom has maintained her performing career and developed, conceived and implemented her vision as Artistic Director of an international festival.

This all-Baroque album sees Balsom perform on the natural (valveless) trumpet and features concertos and orchestral masterpieces by Handel, JS Bach, Telemann and Purcell. A pioneer of adapting works written for other solo instruments, Balsom is committed to demonstrating the versatility of the trumpet and *Royal Fireworks* features three new orchestrations by arranger Simon Wright.

Baroque repertoire and the natural trumpet are long-held passions for Alison Balsom. Performed with the Balsom Ensemble, a hand-picked ensemble of world-class period instrument specialists, *Royal Fireworks* not only captures Balsom's virtuosity on the natural trumpet, but also her delight in making music as a group with like-minded colleagues.

Alison Balsom comments:

*"I've been making recordings for almost 20 years and this has been by far the most enjoyable recording experience I've had.' The music is full of utter joy and magic, the versions we play are often new, and in some cases quite maverick. The thrill of recording with some of the greatest artists around, all of us on Baroque instruments, who happen to also be my good friends, has been a privilege. I hope the pleasure we got from playing this music comes across on our album."*

The album opens with *Music for the Royal Fireworks*, Handel's instantly recognisable seven-movement showpiece for court instruments in a new orchestration by arranger Simon Wright. This is a work Balsom has performed in many settings, from international concert halls to a field at the Latitude Festival, and this new version demonstrates her mastery of the trumpet both as a solo instrument and as a partner to other Baroque trumpet virtuosos, such as Wolfgang Gaisböck and David Blackadder.

The first of two Purcell pieces then follows: his *Sonata for Trumpet and Strings in D major* with Balsom as soloist, followed by a new orchestration of JS Bach's cantata *Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring* by Simon Wright. Balsom performs Telemann's *Trumpet Concerto*, which is followed by Simon Wright's new orchestration of JS Bach's uplifting *Christmas Oratorio*. The album closes with the second Purcell piece; four movements from his reflective *Funeral Sentences for the death of Queen Mary II*.

Audiences at this summer's Snape Proms were treated to a preview of the album's repertoire in a sell-out concert performed by Balsom and the Balsom Ensemble, and in December 2019 they perform the programme on a six-date tour of Germany. In the UK, Alison Balsom is Artist-In-Residence at the Barbican's Milton Court for 2019-20, where concerts will include Dominic Dromgoole's *Gabriel* with The English Concert and Harry Bicket, a tribute to Miles Davis's concept album *Sketches of Spain*, and music from Purcell to Birtwistle with Britten Sinfonia. The residency also sees Balsom perform with jazz musicians and a chorus from her alma mater the Guildhall School. Other live performances in the UK include Thea Musgrave's *Trumpet Concerto* (composed for Balsom) with the CBSO at Symphony Hall Birmingham on 2 October.

Alison Balsom is the recipient of a Gramophone Award for Artist of the Year, three Classic BRIT Awards, a Nordoff Robbins Silver Clef Award and has performed as soloist at the Last Night of the Proms. In 2016 she was awarded the OBE for services to music. *Royal Fireworks* with the Balsom Ensemble is set to become a milestone recording in a successful and ever-evolving career.

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Images can be downloaded [here](#)

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[warnerclassics.com](http://warnerclassics.com)

## FULL DETAILS AND TRACKLISTING

**Alison Balsom**  
**Balsom Ensemble**  
***Royal Fireworks***

Alison Balsom *Natural trumpet*

### The Balsom Ensemble

*Natural trumpets*  
David Blackadder  
Wolfgang Gaisböck  
Franz Landlinger  
Adam Wright  
Adrian Woodward

*Violins*  
James Toll *Leader*  
Elin White  
John Crockatt  
Guy Button

Simon Wright *Harpsichord and Arranger*

Simone Jandl *Viola*  
Joe Crouch *Cello (Telemann, Purcell, Bach)*  
Jonathan Rees *Cello (Handel, Bach)*  
Peter McCarthy *Double bass / Bass violin*  
David Goode *Organ*  
Robert Howes *Timpani / Percussion*  
Alex McCartney *Theorbo*  
Martyn Sanderson *Sackbut (Purcell's March and Canzona)*

*For Purcell's Thou Knowest Lord:*  
Zoe Brookshaw *Soprano*  
Tom Lilburn *Alto*  
Matthew Beale *Tenor*  
Edmund Saddington *Baritone*

Warner Classics  
Catalogue number: 0190295370060 (CD) 0190295370619 (Digital)  
Executive Producer: Alison Balsom  
Producer / Engineering Assistant: Simon Kiln  
Balance engineer: Arne Akselberg  
Recorded at St Jude-on-the-Hill, Hampstead, London, 27 – 19 August 2019

## Tracklisting

### **Georg Friedrich Handel**

#### **Music for the Royal Fireworks**

*Orchestration by Simon Wright*

1. Ouverture (adagio)
2. Allegro - lentement – allegro
3. Bourrée
4. La Paix (largo alla siciliana)
5. La Réjouissance
6. Minuet 1
7. Minuet 2

### **Henry Purcell**

#### **Sonata for Trumpet and Strings in D major, Z850**

8. I Allegro
9. II Adagio
10. III Allegro

### **Johann Sebastian Bach**

#### **11. Cantata BWV 147 : Choral: *Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring (aka "joy")***

*Orchestration by Simon Wright*

### **Georg Philipp Telemann**

#### **Trumpet concerto TWV 51:D7**

12. Adagio
13. Allegro
14. Grave
15. Allegro

### **Johann Sebastian Bach**

#### **Christmas Oratorio BWV 248: *Ach mein herzliebes Jesulein***

*Orchestration by Simon Wright*

16. Teil I : *Jauchzet, frohlocket, auf, preiset die Tage*
17. Teil I : *Ach mein herzliebes Jesulein*
18. Teil IV : *Herr, wenn die stolzen Feinde schnauben*
19. Teil II : *Sinfonia Pastorale Pastoral Sinfonia*
20. Teil III : *Herrscher des Himmels*
21. Teil I : *Wie soll ich dich empfangen*
22. Teil IV : *Nun seid ihr wohl gerochen*

### **Henry Purcell**

#### **Funeral Sentences for the death of Queen Mary II Z27**

23. I March
24. VI "Thou knowest, Lord, the secrets of our Hearts"
25. III Canzona
26. VII March