

Oboe

Charlie Barber



*Instrumentation:*

2 Flutes  
 2 Oboes  
 2 Clarinets in Bb / A  
 2 Bassoons

2 Horns in F  
 2 Trumpets in B flat

Timpani

Violin 1  
 Violin 2  
 Viola  
 Violoncello  
 Contrabass

Score in C

*Duration:*

c. 11 minutes

*Programme note:*

**Sinfonia Britannica** — a 'pasticcio' of British baroque music for chamber orchestra.

The term *pasticcio* — Italian for a mixture or pie — describes a popular Baroque practice of assembling new works from existing music. Particularly common in 18th-century opera, composers such as Handel and Vivaldi would curate and adapt arias (sometimes by other composers) to suit performers and audiences. Originality was less important than expressive impact, practicality, and the pleasure of familiar, stirring music presented in a new way. This chamber suite embraces that spirit, bringing together four works by composers active in Britain during the Baroque period.

The suite opens with the first movement of *Symphony No. 4* by **William Boyce** (1711 - 1799), one of the leading English composers of the 18th century. Boyce's symphonies, derived from his theatre overtures, are elegant and energetic, blending French grandeur with Italian brightness.

*A New Ground* by **Henry Purcell** (1659 - 1695) provides the second movement. A "ground" is a set of repeating bass notes over which increasingly elaborate variations unfold. Purcell, one of the greatest composers of the English Baroque, transforms this simple pattern into music of poise and expressive depth, balancing decorative detail with graceful restraint.

The mood shifts again with *Canon 4 in 2* by **Matthew Locke** (1621 - 1677), originally written as the concluding music for a Restoration-era production of *The Tempest*. Locke, a generation before Purcell, was a key figure in early English theatrical music. This ingenious canon layers interweaving lines to create a rich, almost hypnotic texture — both intellectually satisfying and warmly sonorous.

The suite concludes with music of unmistakable grandeur: *Music for the Royal Fireworks* by **George Frideric Handel** (1685 - 1759). Written for a vast outdoor celebration in 1749, this music was designed to dazzle. The stately *Adagio* leads to a jubilant and rhythmically driven *Allegro*, bringing the suite to a festive close.

Like the Baroque pasticcios that inspired it, this *Sinfonia* celebrates contrast, variety, and the art of re-imagining. Familiar and lesser-known voices meet across time, not in strict historical sequence, but in a shared language of vitality, invention, and expressive charm.

Allegro

♩ = 90

## 1. Overture

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Sheet music for Oboe, measures 1 through 71. The key signature is one flat (Bb) and the time signature is 2/4. The tempo is Allegro (♩ = 90).

Measures 1-7: Section A, first ending (a 2). Dynamics: *f*.

Measures 8-17: Section A, second ending (a 2). Dynamics: *mf*, *f*.

Measures 18-23: Section A, third ending (a 2). Dynamics: *f*.

Measures 24-28: Section A, fourth ending (a 2). Dynamics: *f*.

Measures 29-35: Section B, first ending (B a 2). Dynamics: *mf*, *f*.

Measures 36-46: Section B, second ending (B a 2). Dynamics: *p*, *p*, *pp*.

Measures 47-54: Section B, third ending (B a 2). Dynamics: *f*.

Measures 55-61: Section B, fourth ending (B a 2). Dynamics: *f*.

Measures 62-70: Section B, fifth ending (B a 2). Dynamics: *f*.

Measures 71-76: Section B, sixth ending (B a 2). Dynamics: *f*. The piece concludes with a repeat sign and a key signature change to C major (indicated by a sharp sign on the F line).

## 2. A New Ground

Andantino

♩ = 80

77 **C** 5 1. **D** *p* *delicatamente* 3

86 **E** 4 *mf*

95 **F** 1. **G** 2 *p*

103 a 2 **H** *mf* *cresc.* *f* *p*

108 2 1. *p*

113 **I** 5 **J** 2 a 2 *f* *cresc.*

124 **K** 5 **L** a 2 *p* *Rit.* *mf*

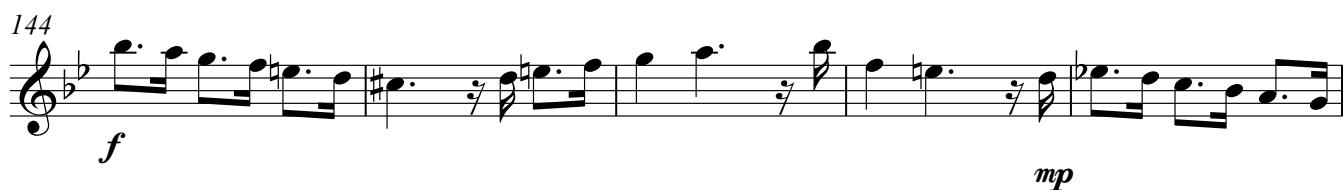
133 *p*

## 3. Canon 4 in 2

Moderato

♩ = 108

M



## 4. Fireworks

## Adagio

 $\text{♩} = 60$ 

180 **O**

*mf* *sf*

**P**

## Allegro

 $\text{♩} = 132$ 

185 **6** *a 2*

*f*

196 **Q**

*f*

202 **R** *a 2*

*f*

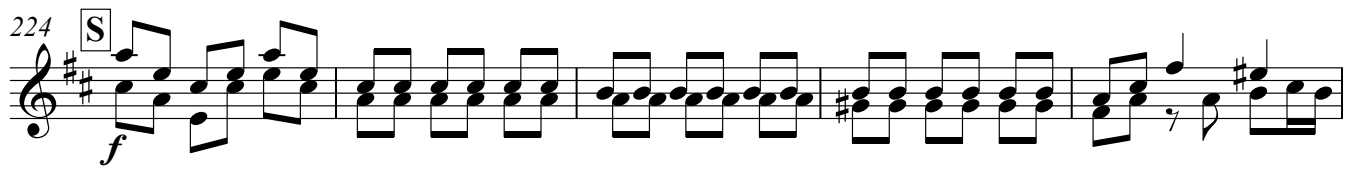
208 *a 2*

*a 2*

212

215

## Charlie Barber - Sinfonia Britannica



247

*mf* *cresc.*

250

*f*

256

*f* *a 2*

261

*f*

266

*f*

271

*Piu lento* *tr*

*sf* *sf* *sf* *ff*