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FEDERICO MARIA

Sardelli

Stefano Bruni
Giovanni Battista Scarpa
violins

Lorenzo Parravicini
Bettina Hoffmann
cellos

Paola Talamini
organ

6 SONATE
À TRE
TRIO SONATAS

Federico Maria Sardelli
6 Sonate à tre · Trio Sonatas

Sonata I in B flat

- | | |
|------------------|------|
| 1. Allegro | 3'01 |
| 2. Larghetto | 3'48 |
| 3. Allegro molto | 2'00 |

Sonata II in D minor

- | | |
|------------------|------|
| 4. Largo | 4'10 |
| 5. Allegro | 3'14 |
| 6. Andante | 3'09 |
| 7. Allegro molto | 2'19 |

Sonata III in E

- | | |
|--------------------------------|------|
| 8. Allegro ma d'un mezzo tempo | 3'36 |
| 9. Adagio | 4'57 |
| 10. Allegro e spiritoso | 1'26 |

Sonata IV in A minor

- | | |
|-------------|------|
| 11. Andante | 2'56 |
| 12. Allegro | 2'29 |
| 13. Andante | 3'32 |
| 14. Allegro | 2'58 |

Sonata V in C

- | | |
|-----------------------|------|
| 15. Andante | 4'55 |
| 16. Allegro | 2'39 |
| 17. Largo e cantabile | 4'06 |
| 18. Allegro | 1'47 |

Sonata VI in G

- | | |
|-------------|------|
| 19. Allegro | 3'29 |
| 20. Largo | 2'02 |
| 21. Allegro | 3'35 |

Stefano Bruni · Giovanni Battista Scarpa *violins*
 Lorenzo Parravicini *cello* [sonatas I, IV, V, VI]
 Bettina Hoffmann *cello* [sonatas II, III]
 Paola Talamini *organ*

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 Cover: Federico Maria Sardelli «Quadro di quadri», oil on canvas, cm 50 x 60
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Live Baroque

There are always people who greet music of this sort with the usual old question: «It's lovely, fair enough, but what's the point of writing baroque music today?». The answer's simple: today, as in the past, it only makes sense to write beautiful music, music that is engaging, elevating, moving. And this is precisely what Sardelli's music is. What's more, the baroque idiom stands out among the many languages available to contemporary society because it is beautiful, like noble attire that still conveys ideas and feelings, real ones that actually exist. And Sardelli has plenty of ideas: they're definitely his even if they seem to come from Venice of the 1720s. In fact the ideas he expresses in these 6 *Trio Sonatas* pertain to a very special aesthetic and chronological framework.

Sardelli doesn't compose in a generic baroque style, and nor does he write "neo-baroque" music with a touch of contemporary elements. His aim is strictly historicist. He chooses a given location and timeframe, and then starts asking questions: how did they compose in Venice at the start of the second decade of the 1700s? Only a deliberate aesthetic circumstance can give rise to stylistically convincing music, to compositions that adhere perfectly to a historical idiom. So Sardelli sets out from this form of total mimesis, precisely because it allows him to penetrate the gestures, proportions and linguistic paradigms of the style he loves. At which point he is ready to invent, which is what all composers have always done. Superficial listeners of his works may believe they are discovering instances of plagiarism or citations, but they would be wrong. Sardelli's ideas closely resemble those of Vivaldi only because he spent so long in his master's workshop that he adopted the earlier musician's methods and skill. In this Sardelli has proved to be a good disciple. But there is no instance of plagiarism in his music. The fact is that the baroque idiom – like all other styles prior to the 20th century – did not encourage artists to be original at all costs. Instead it embodied a shared corpus of gestures, recurring figures and codified forms within which each composer could exercise his fantasy without exaggerating. The artist

of the ancien régime attended his master's workshop and learned by copying and repeating forms and methods until he was ready to add something of his own. This did not mean rejecting the shared code of accepted ingredients.

This is why Sardelli's *Trio Sonatas* seem to be the works of a Venetian composer slightly younger than Vivaldi, the sort of music that Etienne Roger printed. So the fact that they were actually written by a composer in 2019 and not in 1719 is neither here nor there. Listen to them without prejudice, and enjoy them for what they are: brilliant music that is full of character, evenly divided between church sonatas (nos. 2, 4, 5) and chamber sonatas (nos. 1, 3, 6) – even this distribution was typical for the period. You will discover moments of poignant melancholy (such as the Larghetto of Sonata I), the rousing rhythms of perpetual motion (like the second movement of Sonata V), meditations on life (like the Adagio with no bass of Sonata III), declarations of love in a Vivaldi-like vein (like the first movement of Sonata VI). In a word, live baroque.

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Translation by Kate Singleton

Barocco vivente

Di fronte a queste musiche qualcuno ripete ogni tanto la solita, vecchia domanda: «belle, sì, ma che senso ha scrivere oggi musica barocca?». La risposta è semplice: oggi, come sempre, ha senso soltanto scrivere musica bella, musica che coinvolga, che elevi, che emozioni. E la musica di Sardelli, coinvolge, eleva, emoziona. Perdi più, il linguaggio barocco è – fra tutti i linguaggi a disposizione della contemporaneità – un linguaggio bellissimo, un vestito nobile che permette ancora oggi di veicolare idee e sentimenti, purché se ne abbiano. E Sardelli d'idee ne ha in gran quantità: sono idee sue, anche se sembrano provenire dagli anni '20 del settecento veneziano. Sì, perché queste 6 *Sonate a 3* hanno un riferimento estetico-cronologico ben preciso.

Sardelli non compone in un generico stile barocco, né tantomeno in un 'neo-barocco' contaminato da elementi contemporanei. Il suo intento è strettamente storicistico. Egli sceglie un punto geografico e un'altezza cronologica e poi si domanda: come si componeva a Venezia agli inizi della seconda decade del Settecento? Solo da una circostanza estetica precisa può scaturire musica stilisticamente convincente, anzi perfettamente aderente a un'idioma storico. Sardelli parte dunque da questa mimesi totalizzante, premessa che gli consenta di calarsi in profondità nei gesti, nelle proporzioni e nei paradigmi lessicali dello stile che ama. Dopodiché egli inventa, come tutti i compositori hanno sempre fatto. I più superficiali ascoltatori di questa musica crederanno di scoprire plagî o citazioni, ma s'ingannano: le idee di Sardelli somigliano incredibilmente a quelle di Vivaldi solo perché egli è stato per anni alla sua bottega e, da buon discepolo, s'è appropriato del metodo e del mestiere del maestro. Ma nulla c'è di plagiato in questa musica. E, d'altra parte, è proprio il linguaggio barocco – come tutti quelli pre-novecenteschi – a non desiderare artisti originali a tutti i costi: è un codice comune fatto di gesti, di figure ricorrenti e forme codificate in cui ciascun compositore è chiamato ad esercitare la sua fantasia ma senza eccedere. L'artista di *ancien-régime* andava a bottega dal maestro e imparava copiando e ripetendo forme e metodi, finché non vi metteva qualcosa di

suo, rendendolo personale. Ma sempre restando nel codice comune dei segni accettati.

È per questi motivi che le *Sonate a 3* di Sardelli sembrano uscite dai torchi di Etienne Roger per mano d'un compositore veneziano poco più giovane di Vivaldi. Poco importa se questo compositore le ha scritte nel 2019 anziché nel 1719. Ascoltate queste sonate senza pregiudizi e godetele per quello che sono: musica brillante e piena di carattere, ripartita equamente, come si usava al tempo, fra sonate da chiesa (nn. 2, 4, 5) e sonate da camera (nn. 1, 3, 6). Vi scoprirete squarci di malinconia struggente e lagunare (come il Larghetto della Sonata I), moti prepetui dal ritmo travolgente (come il II tempo della Sonata V), meditazioni sulla vita (come il l'Adagio senza basso della Sonata III), dichiarazioni d'amore vivaldiano (come il primo tempo della Sonata VI). Insomma, barocco vivente.

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Federico Maria Sardelli is a composer, conductor, flautist, writer, essayist and painter. He founded the Modo Antiquo baroque orchestra, but also conducts other important orchestras throughout the world. He has recorded dozens of CDs, published essays and books on music and satire, and edited many critical editions. He heads the Antonio Vivaldi Catalogue. He has been composing and painting since he was 11 and has no intention of stopping.



From left to right: *Stefano Bruni, Giovanni Battista Scarpa, Federico Maria Sardelli, Lorenzo Parravicini, Paola Talamini*

Stefano Bruni achieved a diploma in violin at the Venice Conservatoire, and then continued under Enzo Porta and Daniele Pascoletti. He specialized in baroque violin with Stefano Montanari. He has played with the Offerta Musicale, Orchestra da Camera di Venezia, the Orchestra Regionale Filarmonia Veneta and the Teatro La Fenice orchestra. He has been a member of the Modo Antiquo orchestra since 2011, playing with the ensemble in many prominent international festivals. He has recorded with Brilliant, Naïve and Sony. He teaches Music at MIUR.

Giovanni Battista Scarpa studied under Michele Lot and Enzo Porta, then specialized with Renato Zanettovich, Daniele Pascoletti and Cinzia Barbagelata. He has played with the Offerta Musicale, Orchestra da Camera di Venezia, and the Orchestra J. Futura, also as soloist, as well as with the Orchestra Filarmonica del Teatro La Fenice. He and Stefano Bruno have together worked on and performed rare music for violin duo. With saxophonist Emma Nicòl Pigato he also performs original works and transcriptions of baroque and classical compositions. He teaches violin at the Liceo Musicale Marco Polo in Venice.

Lorenzo Parravicini studied the cello with Adriano Vendramelli, Marin Cazacu and Radu Aldulescu, as well as attending courses on musical phenomenology held by Christa Büttbenger. He has worked with numerous Italian orchestras, including the Offerta Musicale, performing throughout Europe as part of the chamber ensemble and as a soloist. He is a member of the La frottola ensemble specialized in medieval and renaissance works. He has taught cello in various schools and at the Liceo Musicale in Venice.

Bettina Hoffmann plays the viola da gamba and cello, and is also a musicologist. As a soloist she performs with Modo Antiquo in prominent festivals and theatres throughout Europe. Her many recordings include CDs devoted to Marais, Ortiz, Ganassi, Schenck and Gabrielli. Her two CDs with Modo Antiquo were nominated for Grammy Awards. She is author of the *Catalogo di musica per viola da gamba* and the book *La viola da gamba* that has been published in Italian, German and English. She has also written numerous articles and curated various critical editions. She teaches at the Vicenza Conservatoire and at the Scuola di Musica di Fiesole. Bettina also founded the Giornata Italiana della Viola da Gamba, for which she was awarded a medal by prior Italian President Giorgio Napolitano.

Paola Talamini has been the principal organist at the Basilica della Salute in Venice since 1999. She took a diploma in piano, organ and organ composition, then specialist degrees in organ and harpsichord, in Gregorian chant at the Pontificio Istituto Ambrosiano di Musica Sacra, as well as a European diploma in early performance practice and a further diploma in liturgical music at the Pontificia Università Lateranense. She has taught sacred vocal music at the Seminario Patriarcale in Venice and music at the Istituto Cavanis in Venice. Alongside her busy concert schedule, she also continues her research work, publishing with Edizioni Carrara, Schotti, Il Levante, Libreria Editrice, Marcianum Press and Ut Orpheus.

