



BRILLIANT
CLASSICS

COLLECTION



Vivaldi

Violin Concertos

Federico Guglielmo
L'Arte Dell'Arco

Antonio Vivaldi (1678–1741) – Violin Concertos

TRACK LISTS

CD1

46'57

L'ESTRO ARMONICO Op.3

Concerti Consacrati All'Altezza Reale di Ferdinando III Gran Principe di Toscana
World premiere recording authorized and based on the Critical Edition by Michael Talbot, Istituto Italiano Antonio Vivaldi, Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Venice.
Performing edition: © Universal Music Publishing Ricordi, Milan

Concerto No.10 in B minor RV580 for 4 violins, cello, strings and continuo

1. I. Allegro	3'17
2. II. Largo	0'51
3. III. Larghetto – Adagio – Largo	1'14
4. IV. Allegro	3'09

Concerto No.1 in D RV549 for 4 violins, strings and continuo

5. I. Allegro	2'58
6. II. Largo e spiccato	2'04
7. III. Allegro	2'23

Concerto No.5 in A RV519 for 2 violins, strings and continuo

8. I. Allegro	2'43
9. II. Largo	1'36
10. III. Allegro	2'26

Concerto No.7 in F RV567 for 4 violins, cello, strings and continuo

11. I. Andante	2'26
12. II. Adagio	0'53
13. III. Allegro	2'21
14. IV. Adagio – Allegro	2'15

CD2

47'15

Concerto No.9 in D RV230 for violin, strings and continuo

1. I. Allegro	2'05
2. II. Larghetto	3'33
3. III. Allegro	1'58

Concerto No.2 in G minor RV578 for 2 violins, cello, strings and continuo

4. I. Adagio e spiccato	1'23
5. II. Allegro	2'15
6. III. Larghetto	2'13
7. IV. Allegro	2'32

Concerto No.12 in E RV265 for violin, strings and continuo

8. I. Allegro	3'18
9. II. Largo	3'19
10. III. Allegro	2'42

Concerto No.6 in A minor RV356 for violin, strings and continuo

11. I. Allegro	2'40
12. II. Largo	1'55
13. III. Presto	2'23

Concerto No.11 in D minor RV565 for 2 violins, cello, strings and continuo

14. I. Allegro	0'39
15. II. Adagio e spiccato – Allegro – Adagio	3'14
16. III. Largo e spiccato	2'22
17. IV. Allegro	2'22

Concerto No.3 in G RV310 for violin, strings and continuo

18. I. Allegro	2'01
19. II. Largo	2'07
20. III. Allegro	2'00

Federico Guglielmo *solo violin & concert master*

L'Arte dell'Arco

Elisa Citterio *violin* (solo II: Nos. 5, 8 & 10; solo III: Nos. 1 & 4; solo IV: No.7)
Rossella Croce *violin* (solo II: Nos. 1 & 4 & 11; solo III: No.7; solo IV: No.10)
Esther Crazzolaro *violin* (solo II: Nos. 2 & 7; solo III: No.10; solo IV: Nos. 1 & 4)
Isabella Bison *violin* (Nos. 2, 3, 6, 9, 11 & 12)

Enrico Balboni, Davide Zaltron *violas*
Francesco Galligioni *cello* (solo: Nos. 2, 7, 10 & 11)
Paolo Zuccheri *violone/double bass*
Roberto Loreggian *harpsichord/chamber organ*
Michele Pasotti *theorbo/baroque guitar*

Recordings: 28-30 November 2013, Villa San Fermo, Lonigo (CD1); 1-3 February 2014,
Sala della Carità, Padua (CD2)
Producer, recording engineer & editor: Fabio Framba
© 2014 & © 2026 Brilliant Classics

CD3 **46'22**

LA STRAVAGANZA Op.4

*12 Concerti Consacrati a Sua Eccellenza il Sig.Vettor Delfi no Nobile Veneto
(Amsterdam, 1716)*

for violin, strings and basso continuo

Concerto No.1 in B flat RV383a

- | | |
|--------------------------|------|
| 1. I. Allegro | 2'56 |
| 2. II. Largo e cantabile | 3'04 |
| 3. III. Allegro | 2'23 |

Concerto No.11 in D RV204

- | | |
|-----------------------|------|
| 4. I. Allegro | 2'34 |
| 5. II. Largo | 1'36 |
| 6. III. Allegro assai | 1'47 |

Concerto No.9 in F RV284

- | | |
|-----------------|------|
| 7. I. Allegro | 2'37 |
| 8. II. Largo | 2'06 |
| 9. III. Allegro | 2'06 |

Concerto No.4 in A minor RV357

- | | |
|------------------------------|------|
| 10. I. Allegro | 2'52 |
| 11. II. Grave e sempre piano | 2'16 |
| 12. III. Allegro | 2'39 |

Concerto No.7 in C RV185

- | | |
|-----------------|------|
| 13. I. Largo | 2'14 |
| 14. II. Allegro | 1'58 |
| 15. III. Largo | 1'38 |
| 16. IV. Allegro | 1'55 |

Concerto No.2 in E minor RV279

- | | |
|------------------|------|
| 17. I. Allegro | 4'08 |
| 18. II. Largo | 2'12 |
| 19. III. Allegro | 3'01 |

Federico Guglielmo *solo violin & concertmaster*

L'Arte dell'Arco on original instruments

Esther Crazzolaro (concertino: Nos. 1, 9 & 11), Alessia Pazzaglia (ripieno) *violin I*
Isabella Bison (concertino: Nos. 1, 4 & 7), Mauro Massa, Andrea Vassalle
(ripieno) *violin II*

Olga Arzilli *viola* · Luigi Puxeddu *cello* · Mauro Zavagno *violone/double bass*

Davide Pozzi *harpsichord/chamber organ*

Luca Marconato *theorbo/Baroque guitar*

Recording: 2–4 July 2014, Abbazia di S. Maria di Carceri, Padua, Italy
Producer, recording engineer & editor: Matteo Costa & Gabriele Robotti
© 2014 & © 2026 Brilliant Classics

CD4 **50'19**

Concerto No.12 in G RV298

- | | |
|------------------------------|------|
| 1. I. Spiritoso e non presto | 2'29 |
| 2. II. Largo | 3'15 |
| 3. III. Allegro | 3'25 |

Concerto No.8 in D minor RV249

- | | |
|---------------------------------|------|
| 4. I. Allegro | 2'34 |
| 5. II. Adagio – Presto – Adagio | 1'23 |
| 6. III. Allegro | 3'22 |

Concerto No.5 in A RV347

7. I. Allegro	3'24
8. II. Largo	2'07
9. III. Allegro	3'12

Concerto No.10 in C minor RV196

10. I. Spiritoso	2'49
11. II. Adagio	2'08
12. III. Allegro	2'51

Concerto No.6 in G minor RV316a

13. I. Allegro	2'28
14. II. Largo	2'42
15. III. Allegro	3'33

Concerto No.3 in G RV301

16. I. Allegro	2'45
17. II. Largo	2'30
18. III. Allegro	3'03

Federico Guglielmo *solo violin & concertmaster*

L'Arte dell'Arco on original instruments

Rossella Croce *violin I* · Mauro Massa *violin II*
 Enrico Balboni *viola* · Jorge Alberto Guerrero *cello*
 Mauro Zavagno *violone/double bass*
 Roberto Loreggian *harpsichord/chamber organ*
 Diego Cantalupi *theorbo/Baroque guitar*

Recording: 23-25 July 2014, Chiesa di S. Maria in Vanzo, Padua, Italy

Producer, recording engineer & editor: Fabio Framba

© 2014 & © 2026 Brilliant Classics

CD5**47'50****VIOLIN CONCERTOS Op.6**

6 Concerti à Cinque Stromenti, tre Violini, Altro Viola e Basso Continuo
World premiere recording authorized and based on the Critical Edition by Alessandro Borin, Istituto Italiano Antonio Vivaldi, Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Venice.

Performing edition: © Universal Music Publishing Ricordi, Milan

for violin, strings and continuo

Concerto No.4 in D RV216

1. I. Allegro	2'01
2. II. Adagio	1'34
3. III. Allegro	2'25

Concerto No.5 in E minor RV280

4. I. Allegro	3'01
5. II. Largo	2'05
6. III. (Allegro)	2'04

Concerto No.6 in D minor RV239

7. I. Allegro	3'24
8. II. Largo	2'28
9. III. Allegro	3'12

Concerto No.2 in E flat RV259

10. I. Allegro	3'54
11. II. Largo	1'52
12. III. Allegro	3'01

Concerto No.1 in G minor RV324

13. I. Allegro	3'31
14. II. Grave	3'14
15. III. Allegro	2'38

Concerto No.3 in G RV318

16. I. Allegro	3'10
17. II. Adagio	1'47
18. III. Allegro	2'32

Federico Guglielmo *solo violin & concert master*

L'Arte dell'Arco

Glauco Bertagnin *violin I* · Stefano Zanchetta *violin II*

Mario Paladin *viola* · Francesco Galligioni *cello*

Alessandro Sbrogiò *violone*

Roberto Loreggian *harpsichord/chamber organ*

Diego Cantalupi *theorbo/baroque guitar*

Recording: 13–15 September 2010, Sala Canonica Capitolare,

Oratorio della Santissima Trinità (17th century), San Germano

Producer, recording engineer and editor: Fabio Framba

© 2011 & © 2026 Brilliant Classics

CD6

78'01

12 CONCERTOS Op.7

12 Concerti à Cinque Stromenti (Amsterdam, 1720)

World premiere recording authorised and based on the Critical Edition by Alessandro Borin, Istituto Italiano Antonio Vivaldi, Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Venice.

Performing edition: © Universal Music Publishing Ricordi, Milan
for violin, strings and basso continuo

Concerto No.11 in D RV208a

1. I. Allegro 4'27

2. II. Grave 1'20

3. III. Allegro 3'31

Concerto No.10 in F RV294a 'Il ritiro'

4. I. Allegro 3'03

5. II. Grave 1'32

6. III. Allegro 3'07

Concerto No.4 in A minor RV354

7. I. Allegro 2'53

8. II. Adagio 2'46

9. III. Allegro 3'03

Concerto No.2 in C RV188

10. I. Allegro 3'13

11. II. Largo 2'06

12. III. Allegro 2'08

Concerto No.3 in G minor RV326

13. I. Allegro 2'48

14. II. Grave 2'00

15. III. Presto 1'42

Concerto No.6 in B flat RV374

16. I. Allegro 2'46

17. II. Largo 2'00

18. III. Allegro 2'34

Concerto No.12 in D RV214

19. I. Allegro 2'33

20. II. Grave assai 2'03

21. III. Allegro 2'17

Concerto No.8 in G RV299

22. I. Allegro 2'01

23. II. Largo cantabile 1'24

24. III. Allegro 1'57

Concerto No.9 in B flat RV373

25. I. Allegro 3'26

26. II. Grave spiccato 2'34

27. III. Alla breve 3'38

Concerto No.5 in F RV285a

28. I. Allegro 3'17

29. II. Grave 2'47

30. III. Allegro 2'45

Federico Guglielmo *solo violin & concertmaster*

L'Arte dell'Arco

Gianpiero Zanocco *violin I* · Isabella Bison *violin II*
 Simone Laghi *viola* · Luigi Puxeddu *cello*
 Franco Catalini *violone/double bass*
 Roberto Loreggian *harpsichord/chamber organ*
 Fabio Framba *chamber organ* (RV214)
 Ivano Zanenghi *theorbo/Baroque guitar*

Recording: 19-23 May (19-30), 19-24 July 2014 (1-18), Abbazia di Carceri d'Este, Padua, Italy

Producer, recording engineer & editor: Fabio Framba
 © 2014 & © 2026 Brilliant Classics

CD7**54'49****IL CIMENTO DELL'ARMONIA E DELL'INVENTIONE Op.8**

*12 Concerti a 4 e 5 e Consacrati all'Illustrissimo
 Signor Conte Venceslao di Morzin (Amsterdam, 1725)*
 for violin, strings and basso continuo

Concerto No.1 in E RV269 'La primavera'

1. I. Allegro 3'09
 2. II. Largo 2'37
 3. III. Allegro 3'42

Concerto No.2 in G minor RV315 'L'estate'

4. I. Allegro non molto – Allegro 5'04
 5. II. Adagio – Presto – Adagio – Presto – Adagio – Presto – Adagio –
 Presto – Adagio 2'39
 6. III. Presto 2'43

Concerto No.3 in F RV293 'L'autunno'

7. I. Allegro – Larghetto – Allegro assai 4'30
 8. II. Adagio molto 2'11
 9. III. Allegro 3'16

Concerto No.4 in F minor RV297 'L'inverno'

10. I. Allegro non molto 3'22
 11. II. Largo 1'42
 12. III. Allegro – Lento 3'09

Concerto No.5 in E flat RV253 'La tempesta di mare'

13. I. Presto – Allegro 2'36
 14. II. Largo 2'40
 15. III. Presto 3'34

Concerto No.6 in C RV180 'Il piacere'

16. I. Allegro 2'48
 17. II. Largo e cantabile 2'26
 18. III. Allegro 2'32

Federico Guglielmo *solo violin & concertmaster*

L'Arte dell'Arco

Isabella Bison *violin I* · Mauro Massa *violin II*
 Mario Paladin *viola* · Luigi Puxeddu *cello*
 Alessandro Pivelli *violone/double bass*
 Roberto Loreggian *harpsichord/chamber organ*
 Ivano Zanenghi *theorbo/Baroque guitar*

Recording: 19-21 June 2014, Abbazia di Carceri d'Este, Padua, Italy

Producer, recording engineer & editor: Fabio Framba
 © 2014 & © 2026 Brilliant Classics

CD8**76'51****Concerto No.11 in D RV210**

1. I. Allegro 4'39
 2. II. Largo 3'00
 3. III. Allegro 4'22

Concerto No.10 in B flat RV362 'La caccia'

4. I. Allegro	3'10
5. II. Adagio	2'38
6. III. Allegro	2'21

Concerto No.7 in D minor RV242

7. I. Allegro	2'41
8. II. Largo	1'49
9. III. Allegro	2'43

Concerto No.8 in G minor RV332

10. I. Allegro	3'06
11. II. Largo	2'41
12. III. Allegro	3'37

Federico Guglielmo *solo violin & concertmaster*

L'Arte dell'Arco

Glauco Bertagnin *violin I* · Isabella Bison *violin II*

Mario Paladin *viola* · Luigi Puxeddu *cello*

Franco Catalini *violone/double bass*

Roberto Loreggian · Francesca Bacchetta (RV210 & 362)

harpsichord/chamber organ

Michele Pasotti *theorbo/Baroque guitar*

OTTO CONCERTI SOLENNI (selection)

Editions: Pablo Queipo de Llano

Concerto for two violins, strings and basso continuo in G minor RV155

13. I. Adagio	2'19
14. II. Allegro	3'49
15. III. Largo	3'38
16. IV. Allegro	4'23

Concerto for two violins, strings and basso continuo in D minor RV247

17. I. Allegro	2'46
18. II. Grave	3'12
19. III. Allegro	3'05

Concerto for strings and basso continuo in F RV292

20. I. Largo	2'28
21. II. Allegro	2'13
22. III. Adagio	0'49
23. IV. Allegro	4'16

Concerto for strings and basso continuo in E minor RV134

24. I. Allegro	2'46
25. II. Largo	1'30
26. III. Allegro	2'34

Enrico Casazza *first violin & director*

La Magnifica Comunità on original instruments

Recording: *Concerti Solenni*: 2009, Chiesa Parrocchiale di Cavarzere, Venice;

Il Cimento: 25–27 June 2014, Abbazia di Carceri d'Este, Padua, Italy

Producer: Gabriele Rebotti (Concerti Solenni)

Producer, recording engineer & editor: Fabio Framba (Il Cimento)

© 2010 (Concerti Solenni) & 2014 (Il Cimento) Brilliant Classics

© 2026 Brilliant Classics

CD9**53'24****LA CETRA Op.9**

12 Concerti Consacrati alla Sacra Cesarea Cattolica Real Maestà di Carlo VI Imperatore (Amsterdam, 1727)

for violin, strings and basso continuo

Concerto No.1 in C RV181a

1. I. Allegro	3'20
2. II. Largo	2'57
3. III. Allegro	2'22

Concerto No.5 in A minor RV358

4. I. Adagio – Presto	2'42
5. II. Largo	1'56
6. III. Allegro	2'52

Concerto No.4 in E RV263a

7. I. Allegro non molto	4'14
8. II. Largo	2'39
9. III. Allegro non molto	3'04

Concerto No.12 in B minor RV391 'con violino scordato'

10. I. Allegro non molto	4'50
11. II. Largo	2'39
12. III. Allegro	3'43

Concerto No.3 in G minor RV334

13. I. Allegro non molto	3'13
14. II. Largo	2'58
15. III. Allegro non molto	3'01

Concerto No.7 in B flat RV359

16. I. Allegro	2'41
17. II. Largo	1'19
18. III. Allegro	2'44

CD10**52'37****Concerto No.9 in B flat RV530 'con due violini obbligati'**

for 2 violins, strings and basso continuo

1. I. Allegro	3'19
2. II. Largo e spiccato	2'38
3. III. Allegro	2'35

Concerto No.10 in G RV300 for violin, strings and basso continuo

4. I. Allegro molto	3'14
5. II. Largo cantabile	1'28
6. III. Allegro	2'38

Concerto No.8 in D minor RV238 for violin, strings and basso continuo

7. I. Allegro	3'24
8. II. Largo	2'49
9. III. Allegro	2'46

Concerto No.2 in A RV345 for violin, strings and basso continuo

10. I. Allegro	3'38
11. II. Largo	1'58
12. III. Allegro	2'40

Concerto No.11 in C minor RV198a for violin, strings and basso continuo

13. I. Allegro	3'41
14. II. Adagio	2'06
15. III. Allegro	2'49

Concerto No.6 in A RV348 'con violino scordato'

for violin, strings and basso continuo

16. I. Allegro	3'56
17. II. Largo	2'26
18. III. Allegro non molto	4'25

Federico Guglielmo *solo violin & concertmaster***L'Arte dell'Arco**Esther Crazzolaro (RV391), Isabella Bison, Elisa Citterio *violins*Gianpiero Zanocco *solo violin II* (RV530)Simone Laghi *viola* · Luigi Puxeddu *cello*Mauro Zavagno *violone/double bass*Roberto Loreggian *harpsichord/chamber organ*Flora Papadopoulou *harp* · Michele Pasotti *theorbo/Baroque guitar*

Recording: 14–18 July 2014, Chiesa di Santa Maria in Vanzo, Padua, Italy

Producer, recording engineer & editor: Fabio Framba

© 2014 & © 2026 Brilliant Classics

CD11 **64'25****VIOLIN CONCERTOS Op.11**

6 *Concerti a Violino Principale, Violino Primo e Secondo, Alto, Viola, Organo e Violoncello (Amsterdam, 1729)*

Concerto No.5 in C minor RV202 for violin, strings and continuo

- | | |
|---------------------------|------|
| 1. I. Allegro non molto | 4'47 |
| 2. II. Largo | 2'21 |
| 3. III. Allegro non molto | 3'57 |

Concerto No.4 in G RV308 for violin, strings and continuo

- | | |
|------------------------|------|
| 4. I. Allegro | 4'08 |
| 5. II. Largo cantabile | 3'40 |
| 6. III. Allegro | 3'49 |

Concerto No.2 in E minor RV277 "Il Favorito" for violin, strings and continuo

- | | |
|-----------------|------|
| 7. I. Allegro | 4'29 |
| 8. II. Andante | 4'20 |
| 9. III. Allegro | 4'24 |

Concerto No.3 in A RV336 for violin, strings and continuo

- | | |
|----------------------|------|
| 10. I. Allegro | 4'06 |
| 11. II. Aria Andante | 2'34 |
| 12. III. Allegro | 3'20 |

Concerto No.1 in D RV207 for violin, strings and continuo

- | | |
|------------------|------|
| 13. I. Allegro | 3'09 |
| 14. II. Largo | 2'13 |
| 15. III. Allegro | 2'39 |

Concerto No.6 in G minor RV460* for oboe, strings and continuo

- | | |
|----------------------------|------|
| 16. I. Allegro non tanto | 3'43 |
| 17. II. Largo | 3'02 |
| 18. III. Allegro non molto | 3'34 |

Federico Guglielmo *solo violin & concertmaster*

Pier Luigi Fabretti *solo oboe**

L'Arte dell'Arco

Francesco Bonomo *violin I* · Carlo Lazari *violin II*

Mario Paladin *viola* · Francesco Galligioni *cello*

Paolo Zuccheri *violone/double bass*

Roberto Loreggian *harpsichord/chamber organ*

Ivano Zanenghi *theorbo*

Recording: 31 March-2 April 2014, Abbazia di Carceri d'Este, Padua, Italy

Producer, recording engineer & editor: Fabio Framba

© 2014 & © 2026 Brilliant Classics

CD12**54'08****VIOLIN CONCERTOS Op.12**

6 *Concerti a Violino Principale, Violino Primo e Secondo, Alto, Viola, Organo e Violoncello (Amsterdam, 1729)*

Concerto No.5 in B flat RV379 for violin, strings and continuo

- | | |
|-----------------|------|
| 1. I. Allegro | 3'43 |
| 2. II. Largo | 2'49 |
| 3. III. Allegro | 3'14 |

Concerto No.1 in G minor RV317 for violin, strings and continuo

- | | |
|-----------------|------|
| 4. I. Allegro | 3'24 |
| 5. II. Largo | 3'41 |
| 6. III. Allegro | 2'59 |

Concerto No.4 in C RV173 for violin, strings and continuo

- | | |
|-------------------------------|------|
| 7. I. Largo spiccato, Allegro | 4'10 |
| 8. II. Largo | 2'06 |
| 9. III. Allegro | 2'27 |

Concerto No.2 in D minor RV244 for violin, strings and continuo

- | | |
|-------------------|------|
| 10. I. Allegro | 3'39 |
| 11. II. Larghetto | 2'42 |
| 12. III. Allegro | 2'35 |

Concerto No.6 in B flat RV361 for violin, strings and continuo

13. I. Allegro	4'08
14. II. Largo	2'14
15. III. Allegro	4'02

Concerto No.3 in D RV124 for strings and continuo

16. I. Allegro	2'13
17. II. Grave	2'00
18. III. Allegro	1'50

Federico Guglielmo *solo violin & concertmaster*

L'Arte dell'Arco

Isabella Bison *violin I* · Elisa Imbalzano *violin II*

Mario Paladin *viola* · Francesco Galligioni *cello*

Mauro Zavagno *violone/double bass*

Andrea Coen *harpsichord*

Diego Cantalupi *theorbo/Baroque guitar*

Recording: 17-19 March 2014, Abbazia di Carceri d'Este, Padua, Italy

Producer, recording engineer & editor: Fabio Framba

© 2014 & © 2026 Brilliant Classics

CD13 **60'40****CONCERTI 'CON ORGANO OBBLIGATO'**

Performing edition from the sources by Federico Guglielmo

Concerto for violin, organ, strings and continuo in D minor RV541

(msc I-Tn, Giordano)

1. I. Allegro	3'21
2. II. Grave	2'29
3. III. (Allegro)	2'01

Concerto for violin, organ, strings and continuo in F RV542 *(msc D-DI)*

4. I. (Allegro)	3'56
5. II. (Largo)	2'37
6. III. Allegro	7'02

Sonata for violin, oboe, organ and salmoè in C RV779

(msc D-DI, "a Violino, Oboè e Organo obbligati et anco se piace il Salmoè")

7. I. Andante	3'45
8. II. Allegro	4'06
9. III. Largo cantabile	2'05
10. IV. Allegro	4'19

Concerto for violin, organ, strings and continuo in C minor RV766

(msc GB-Lam)

11. I. Allegro	2'36
12. II. Largo	1'19
13. III. Allegro	2'18

Concerto for violin, organ, strings and continuo in F RV767 *(msc GB-Lam)*

14. I. Allegro	3'11
15. II. Larghetto	1'56
16. III. Allegro	2'12

Concerto for violin, cello, organ, strings and continuo in C RV554

(msc I-Tb, Foà)

17. I. (Allegro)	4'22
18. II. (Adagio)	3'26
19. III. (Allegro)	3'29

Roberto Loreggian *organ*

L'Arte dell'Arco

Federico Guglielmo *solo violin and concert master*

Stefano Zanchetta *violin* · Massimo Piva *viola*

Francesco Montaruli *cello* · Alessandro Sbrogiò *violone*

Andrea Mion *oboe* · Luca Lucchetta *salmoè*

Recording: 26–28 September 2007, Sala superiore (Capitolo della Confraternita),
Oratorio di S. Bovo (XVII sec.), Padua, Italy

Producer and editor: Fabio Framba

Recording engineer: Marco Lincetto

© 2010 & © 2026 Brilliant Classics

NOTES

L'ESTRO ARMONICO

Along with the famous collection *Il cimento dell'armonia e dell'invenzione* (Op.8), *L'Estro Armonico* (Op.3) is arguably the most important printed edition of Vivaldi's concertos. Published in 1711 in Amsterdam by the printer Estienne Roger, the 12 concertos immediately met with great acclaim.

Over the following 32 years there were over 20 reprints that greatly contributed to the spread of Vivaldi's fame in Holland, England and France. In the wake of this success, the composer's earlier Op.1 and Op.2, respectively printed in 1705 and in 1709 by the somewhat dated Venetian printers Bortoli and Sala, were republished in Amsterdam, London and Paris in more elegant, practical editions.

In those years, as an up-and-coming violinist and composer, Vivaldi was free of ties with the Ospedale della Pietà, and would have been keen to devote himself with increased intensity to the solo concerto, a genre of composition that was much in demand, and not only in Venice. As Michael Talbot has pointed out, a great many pieces written in the first decade of the century that have only survived in manuscript form reveal how Op.3 represents, at least in part, the fruit of many years of work. For the first time Vivaldi appeared before European audiences as Violin Master at La Pietà. The frontispiece of the collection reads: *L'Estro Armonico / Concerti / Consacrati / All'Altezza Reale / Di / Ferdinando III / Gran Principe di Toscana / da D. Antonio Vivaldi / Musico di Violino e Maestro de' Concerti / del Pio Ospedale della Pietà di Venezia / Opera Terza / Libro Primo / Libro Secondo / A Amsterdam / Aux dépens d'Estienne Roger Marchand Libraire / n°50–51.*

The dedication to Prince Ferdinando de' Medici, son and heir of Cosimo III, Grand Duke of Tuscany, reveals the composer's desire to work in some way with the Florentine court, but does not explain exactly what his relationship was with the heir to the Grand Duchy, for all that he was an excellent amateur musician. The fact that the *Estro Armonico* was the first collection of concertos to be published with a title proves that Vivaldi himself was well aware of the exceptional nature of the event. It was also the first collection of concertos to appear in two separate volumes.

LA STRAVAGANZA

La Stravaganza Op.4 consists of works that can be considered the first true examples of the genre associated with Vivaldi: that of the concerto for solo violin. However, they also appear to be considerably more traditional and

conventional than those of the previous collection, *L'Estro Armonico* Op.3. With the exception of Concerto No.7, and to some extent of Concerto No.8, all the works that make up Op.4 are in the well-established three-part form (fast–slow–fast) that was unfailingly adopted by various composers, from Torelli to Albinoni. Despite its distinctly less 'extravagant' name, *L'Estro Armonico*, which was published in 1711 and thus predated Op.4 by four or five years, comes across as considerably more experimental, both in the structure of the pieces and in the composition of the ensemble.

As Michael Talbot has observed, what is new about Op.4 is not so much the form as the style.

A certain taste for what was curious, strange and unconventional had already made its presence felt within the Baroque literary sphere, and indeed in the figurative arts in general, as well as in chamber vocal music. Moreover, the word *stravagante*, or 'extravagant', had also appeared in relation to music: suffice to recall Trabaci's *Consonanze stravaganti* or Carlo Farina's *Capriccio stravagante* (1627). In his Op.4 Vivaldi sought to express beauty by means of what was 'strange', largely through the way he handled modulation and in the subtlety of melody. It was particularly in this work that he focused his interest in modulation on a wide range of fifths, going beyond the range of neighbouring keys that were used by other composers of the period to involve, for example, first the flat notes and then the sharps. Of special interest in this collection is the second movement of Concerto No.7, where the lower D sharp is boldly transformed into an E flat by means of enharmonic modulation.

A brilliant feature of Vivaldi's handling of melodic 'extravagance' is the frequent use of the diminished third, the augmented second and the reiteration of certain distinctly unusual intervals. While there is also plenty of conventional composition in these works, it is clear that the composer deliberately chose to introduce extraordinary elements throughout the collection.

It could well be that many of these concertos were actually composed in the period that preceded the publication of *L'Estro Armonico*. Vivaldi himself suggests this in the preface to Op.3, where he tells his audience of *dilettanti di musica*, or amateur musicians, that a collection of 'concertos for four instruments' will soon be available. Given the inherent difficulties in performing *L'Estro Armonico*, he was evidently anxious to reassure them by announcing the imminent publication of concertos written for the smallest possible ensemble. It is thus certain that some of the concertos existed in an earlier form, and were then adjusted or updated according to requirements. As is often the case with printed collections, Vivaldi unfortunately does not seem to have kept copies of

the original manuscripts handed over to the printers. Clearly this has hindered modern scholars in their efforts to pin down the precise chronology of the works. At all events, there is no doubt that *La Stravaganza* cannot have been published, as Rudolf Rasch has argued, before the end of 1715 or the beginning of 1716, since this was the date given in an advertisement launched by the publisher Estienne Roger's London agent.

Despite the somewhat covert *solì di concertino* in the two violin parts, the ideal ensemble for the *Stravaganza* was closer to the model of three violin parts established by Albinoni than it was to the form common in Rome, especially with Corelli and Valentini. Yet Concerto No. 7 actually seems to be closer to the Corelli model, both as regards form and on account of the concertino entrusted to the two violins and the cello. For this reason we decided to devote CD1 to the works that focus on the ensemble and CD2 to pieces that are more like solo works in the chamber tradition. Vettor Delfino (1687–1735), to whom the collection was dedicated, was a young Venetian nobleman renowned for his skill in card games, especially those that earned him a considerable fortune. Delfino's father was a well-known librettist connected to the Hanover court, and clearly his son was also something of a musician, since Vivaldi addresses him as 'more of a study companion than a master' in his somewhat cryptic dedication.

The collection probably did not meet with the same degree of success as *L'Estro Armonico*, a situation that has not substantially changed in modern times. Yet at the time it was widely distributed and followed by a number of reprints, including an edition of a selection of the concertos, the best known of which was published by Walsh in London. The edition of *Il Pastor Fido* published in Paris in 1737 as Vivaldi's Op. 13 was in fact an impersonation by Nicolas Chédeville and Jean-Noël Marchand. Despite their spurious nature, these works included two themes from Op. 4, borrowed from Concertos Nos. 6 and 7, which clearly speaks for the acclaim the original works had enjoyed.

© Federico Guglielmo

Translation: Kate Singleton

CONCERTOS OP.6

The six *Concertos for five instruments* that make up Antonio Vivaldi's Op. 6 were published in Amsterdam by Jeanne Roger, in around 1719, about halfway through the six-year period during which she worked with her father, Estienne, in the family's printing business. The absence of any dedication and the lack of any mention on the title page of the heading 'maestro di cappella di camera' for the Governor of Mantua – Prince Philip of Hesse-Darmstadt – with whom Vivaldi

resided from the Spring of 1718, imply that this is a collection that was published without the involvement and perhaps even without the explicit consent of the composer. The publication is in fact littered with a particularly high number of typographical errors and as a whole is quite different from the works published according to the usual Vivaldian traditions. There are many irregularities, ranging from the combined number of compositions (six instead of twelve), to the criteria governing the distribution of the different keys within the volume, and the lack of uniformity in the technical resources demanded of the soloist. It is therefore only natural to wonder how it would have been possible to create something which could quite well be defined as a 'commercial' operation, on the crest of the wave of the wide distribution of Vivaldi's instrumental music in the second decade of the century and of the favourable welcome given by Northern European markets to *L'Estro Armonico* and *La Stravaganza*. Was the manuscript sent to Amsterdam by the composer himself, in the form of a collection that had already been finalised? Or was the publication the result of a series of independent contributions, gathered together *ad hoc* by the publisher? What is certain is that Vivaldi never publicly disowned the concertos (perhaps at the time there was not even any news about their publication), some of which would continue to enjoy a certain level of popularity with publishers. After 1723 Op. 6 was in fact republished in full by Estienne Roger's successor, his son-in-law Michel-Charles Le Cène, while the first two concertos in the series would be brought together in *Select Harmony*, published in London in 1730 by Walsh & Hare.

Another point that differentiates Op. 6 from previous and future collections of Vivaldi concertos is the slightness of its manuscript tradition. Only two compositions were circulating independently in this form, compared to eight for Op. 4 and nine for Op. 3 and Op. 7 (in all three cases, out of a total of twelve compositions). This discrepancy seems to back up the hypothesis according to which Roger based her own edition on a single source, because if the publication was the result of contributions from different sources and of different types, we would probably have found ourselves with a more obvious distribution of individual pieces in manuscript form.

Despite the many anomalies, Op. 6 is a decisive step forward from the first two printed collections of Vivaldi's concertos marked both by the methodical adoption of the structure of three movements (following the fast–slow–fast pattern), and by the absence of additional solo passages apart from for the principal violin, and more noticeably by the now full command of all of the elements involved in a composition following the principles of a construction with a *ritornello*.

Concerto No.1, RV324, is most closely related (at least in terms of structure) to Albinoni's example. The initial *ritornello* is made up of two passages that contain some of the elements common to all three of its sections, like the streams of demisemiquavers and the dotted rhythms so typical of a French overture. The tonal structure emphasises the role of the dominant and the subdominant (i-v//iv-i) and is characterised by an occasional return to the original key. Overall, this *ritornello* is a particularly eloquent example of the concept of a 'piece within a piece' coined by Michael Talbot to indicate a musical whole capable of paraphrasing the structure of an entire movement in miniature. If we take into account the tonal passages with some level of stability, it is in fact possible to analyse the way the harmonic pattern of the initial *ritornello* is repeated a further four times during the movement, both in an unvaried pattern (i-v-iv-i), and expanded upon (i-v-III-iv-i) or contracted (i-iv-i). Another unifying aspect is represented by the development of the motif, which is pervasive enough to create references and harmonies between the two outer movements of the piece: the *ritornello* in the third movement is actually a paraphrase of that of the first, while the solo passages in both use a large number of the same subjects and themes. The central movement on the other hand follows Sicilian lines and includes a number of characteristics typical of a *da capo* aria.

In Vivaldi's era, Concerto No.2, RV259, was perhaps the best known and most popular of the whole cycle. The element that brings the whole piece together is the delicate lyricism pervading all three movements. A manuscript copy of this concerto has survived and is kept at the Saxon State Library in Dresden and was written by the German violinist Georg Friedrich Pisendel in 1716-1717, when he was visiting Venice with the Elector of Saxony, Frederick Augustus. Like other sources of Vivaldi's music in Dresden, the manuscript of RV259 includes alternating passages for the principal violin added by Pisendel in the empty sections intended for other instruments. However, unlike other similar additions made subsequently in other manuscripts from the same source, in this case they are generally hasty annotations (sometimes only hinted at), almost as though they were 'recordings' on paper of solutions used for examples for the violin, added as improvisations by Vivaldi himself. This possibility should make us reconsider the highly prescriptive nature that we tend to attribute to such notations (particularly when it comes to Vivaldi, who tended to control almost every aspect of the performance), and to see them as a sort of rough outline to show only the essential elements of the composer's thoughts. A second manuscript of RV259, kept at the Gräfllich von Schönbornsche Musikbibliothek in Wiesentheid, is a copy produced in Italy in 1717. As this source predates

Roger's publication by at least two years and contains the same errors, it is clear that both came from the same prototype which has since been lost.

Although it is a true Vivaldi composition – whose energy is particularly reminiscent of the more famous concerto in A minor, RV356 (Op.3 No.6) – the third concerto in the series, RV318, contains both stylistic and formal features that distinguish it fairly noticeably from its five sister compositions. The anomalies are particularly clear in the first movement, which uses the *ritornello* form that was still fairly experimental at the time, in which all of the solo passages would re-use the motif material from the initial *ritornello* and the last one, designed in two halves. Even the body is fairly unusual, as RV318 is the only concerto in the series that only contains one full violin part, which is even limited to the central movement alone. The technical section demanded of the soloist is also much more modest than other compositions in Op.6, in that the last movement does not even contain any solo passages. The central movement is based on the alternation between the soloists' rhapsodic elements, interlaced with the repeated arrangements played by all instruments, following a very common template used by Venetian concertos at the time.

The *ritornello* in the first movement of Concerto No.4, RV216, has only one theme, or rather it is based on a single element, groups of four semiquavers, repeated and passed around between the different instruments. Concerto No.5 on the other hand, RV280, is characterised by a particularly bold violin part, which goes up to B5 at the top of the range. In the first movement, Vivaldi worked particularly to develop the last solo passage, which takes on the dimension and function similar to a cadence. For the middle movements, RV216 adopts a scaled-down version of a *ritornello* form (two brief solos framed by three *tutti* sections), while RV280 uses the juxtaposition/overlapping of brief interludes by the soloist and the repeated arrangements of the *tutti* sections already used in RV316.

Concerto No.6, RV239, is also characterised by a distinctly virtuosic violin part which uses double chord sections with frequent ventures into the high notes, strings of arpeggios with sweeping intervals and leaps across registers. Unlike the first concerto in the series, which it resembles in terms of a certain propensity for a rather French style (particularly in the third movement), RV239 is characterised by the thorough diversification of the musical material included in the *ritornello* and the solo sections, all highly personalised. In one manuscript copy of the concerto, also kept in Dresden, some of these passages are slightly different from the printed version, perhaps because the manuscript was taken from an older version of the concerto. Like the Wiesentheid copy of RV259, many of the errors that litter the Dresden manuscript also appear in the edition published by Roger.

As these are almost exclusively mechanical transcription errors (and not the slips that are so common in Vivaldi's compositions), it is very likely that the sources used by the printer and by the anonymous hands behind the manuscripts were copies. This leads to the more consistent distribution of these concertos than that of the few surviving sources would seem to suggest.

The musical content of Op.6 is very diverse overall, but coherent enough for it to be seen as an organic, unified collection, and therefore the result of an editorial strategy that could come directly from the composer. On the other hand, if Vivaldi had sent a collection of concertos to Amsterdam, it is fairly unlikely that its content was exactly the same as that of Roger's edition. The RV316 concerto is actually a clear anomaly. However, as unlikely as it is that such a collection would contain only five works, RV318 could be an addition, or more probably a replacement made independently by the printer. It should not be forgotten that printed instrumental music was distributed through a publisher, so the possibility should not be excluded whereby some parts could have been manipulated and therefore lost some of their original elements. The modern trend to organise the works of a composer in fairly rigid categories (for example into genuine authorised works, genuine non-authorised works and non-genuine works) could therefore hardly correspond to the concrete forms that governed the production and consumption of the instrumental music printed in Europe in the early 18th century.

© Alessandro Borin

Translation: Syntacta Translation & Interpreting

12 CONCERTOS OP.7

All in all, the two collections of concertos, *L'Estro Armonico* Op.3 and *La Stravaganza* Op.4, clearly proved to be such a success for the Amsterdam publisher Estienne Roger that he decided to print other collections between 1716 and 1720. R. Rasch's detailed study of the numbering of the printer's clichés resolves a number of doubts concerning the exact chronology of these works. As the edition itself declares, the *opera quinta* was published in the autumn of 1716, whereas the following collections respectively comprising 6 and 12 concertos, published as *opera sesta* and *opera settima*, came out in 1719 and 1720. It is more than likely that the actual selection of the pieces to be published was the work of Estienne Roger and his daughter Jeanne, who took over the family business after her father's death, but without Vivaldi's consent and direct control. The fact that not one of the three collections included a dedicatory epistle would appear to support this hypothesis, not least because a

frontispiece of this sort could play a considerable role in the financial success of a new publication. Moreover, in those very years (1718–20), Vivaldi was employed as chamber chapel master to Prince Philip of Hesse-Darmstadt, the Governor of Mantua. Since Vivaldi had been so keen to dedicate his Op.2 collection of sonatas to Frederick IV, King of Denmark, on the occasion of the sovereign's unexpected visit to Venice a few years earlier, it is extremely unlikely that he would have lost an opportunity for dedicating a collection to so powerful a prince, especially if this allowed him to publicise his own new position. Indeed, in the following years the composer never failed to include a dedication in the published editions of his works, from Op.8 through to Op.12.

Unlike the frontispiece of the *opera quinta*, that of Op.7 once again mentions Vivaldi's name in connection with his positions at the Pietà. The text reads as follows: *Concerti a Cinque Stromenti, tre Violini, Alto Viola e Basso Continuo di D. Antonio Vivaldi, musico di Violino, e Maestro de Concerti del Pio Ospitale della Pietà di Venetia, Libro Primo (Libro Secondo) uno é con Oboe...* ('Concertos for Five Instruments, three Violins, Alto Viola and Basso Continuo by Don Antonio Vivaldi, violinist and Concert Master at the Pio Ospitale della Pietà in Venice, Book One (Volume Two) is with the Oboe...').

As many eminent Vivaldi scholars have pointed out, this particular work, like the two previous collections of instrumental pieces printed in Amsterdam, was published without the composer's direct approval or control. In this case the 12 concertos are divided into two homogeneous collections that both begin with an oboe concerto, and continue with five violin concertos. The inclusion of the two oboe concertos is certainly related to the growing popularity of the instrument, and its increasingly important role for solo performance. A few years earlier Roger himself had published a first collection of concertos for one or two oboes (Albinoni, Op.7), and in 1717 had printed a sort of anthology of oboe concertos by various composers (Sammartini, Marcello, Valentini). Although the Ryom catalogue originally included the two Op.7 oboe concertos, in recent years they have been removed from the list of original works. They feature in this recording at the end of CD2 for their documentary value. R. Rasch's meticulous study of the scores of these two concertos and his comparative analysis of Vivaldi's many extant manuscript compositions for the oboe have definitively demonstrated that the two works are not authentic. Indeed, Rasch argues that at least half the pieces published in Op.7 are of dubious authenticity, and C. Fertonani maintains that some of the manuscripts acquired by Roger were not supplied by Vivaldi himself, but by third parties. It is likely that Vivaldi provided the publisher with enough material for a single volume of six concertos, and that Roger independently decided to publish two more volumes, including unauthorised works from other European sources and compositions that were

not actually by Vivaldi. The concerto RV354, for instance, is defined in the Manchester manuscript version as 'bad and not by Vivaldi'. All in all, there were slightly different manuscript versions of five of the Op.7 concertos in circulation. In particular they were often simplified in form, or tended to have different central movements. Although we have no written evidence that Vivaldi was irritated by his Amsterdam publisher's unscrupulous behaviour, for the following five years he certainly kept his distance from Roger, only returning to him for the publication of *Il Cimento dell'Armonia e dell'Inventione*.

IL CIMENTO DELL'ARMONIA E DELL'INVENTIONE OP.8

Il cimento dell'armonia e dell'inventione was published towards the end of 1725. Although the collection was dedicated to Count Wenzel von Morzin, the expenses for the entire edition were ultimately covered by the publisher Michael-Charles Le Cène, who had inherited Roger's publishing concern in Amsterdam. A letter written to Count Roero di Guarene suggests that the collection had in fact already been largely edited for a couple of years. Moreover, from the dedication in the frontispiece it is clear that certain of the concertos, in particular the four of 'Le stagioni' (The Seasons), were well known before they reached publication, which speaks for a well-established relationship with Morzin. Op.8 unites what was probably the most consistent and 'representative' group of Vivaldi concertos. It comprises a mixture of works that may or may not have been deliberate. The assortment embodies the traditional canons of imitation of nature, a homage to the 'French style', a certain theatrical dimension, and an astute commercial awareness of the importance of certain titles and references that had little to do with music but certainly responded to the tastes and passions of the times. The title itself was enough to arouse curiosity in potential buyers of the period. In general, the representative elements of the concertos are found in the first and last movements, while the central movements are entrusted with the expression of additional images.

It is not easy to add anything meaningful or interesting to what has already been written (and indeed recorded) about 'The Four Seasons'. This explains why I have chosen to focus on certain aspects of L'Arte dell'Arco's interpretation of the works rather than provide notes on the pieces themselves. L'Arte dell'Arco had already recorded the works for CPO in 2001, in a version based on a hypothetical performance by Count Morzin's virtuoso orchestra. This meant rewriting the solo parts (or accompaniment) for wind instruments. At the time I felt that the desire to achieve 'naturalness through artifice' had urged musicians interpreting 'The Four Seasons' to go well beyond the limits of the works themselves. For some

time these pieces had become a launching pad for young virtuoso players, and the tendency was still on the increase, as a flurry of unscrupulous commercial operations involving every sort of adaptation and arrangement went to show. When we came to address the scores afresh for Brilliant's new, comprehensive recording project, we thus decided to rethink our overall approach, to make it as lively and bold as possible, but without ever veering towards exhibitionism.

The decision to perform 'in real parts' (with no doubling of instruments), in accordance with the fruits of Richard Maunder's studies, has helped us recover the desired simplicity of gesture and transparency of sound, thereby revealing the underlying structure for so long buried beneath a heavy load of ornamentation and excess. 'La tempesta di mare' (Storm at Sea) is a magnificent portrayal of nature (arguably the finest of Vivaldi's various works in the genre), while 'Il piacere' (Pleasure) belongs to the series depicting emotions, or what were then referred to as 'human passions'. 'La caccia' (The Hunt) returns to the rural setting already suggested in 'L'autunno' (Autumn) but with a deeply introspective Adagio that skilfully divides the two more monochromatic outer sections.

Two of the Op.8 concertos allow the option of performance with either the violin or the oboe. In this instance we chose to entrust the solo part to the wind instrument, since the 'earlier versions' (RV454 and RV449) both called for the solo part to be played by the oboe. Indeed, the instrument is particularly well suited to the tessitura of these works and the absence of extreme virtuoso passages. Little wonder, then, that it should create a marked contrast with the three most virtuosic scores of the whole collection, Nos. 7, 8 and 11. Concerto No.7 (RV242) also exists in a version dedicated to the German virtuoso player Pisendel currently kept in the Dresden library, but this latter work contains a number of differences. The second movement of the concerto was to feature again in the central movement of the Flute Concerto Op.10 No.6. Concerto No.8 (RV332), on the other hand, comprises two remarkable arpeggio passages in cadenza that invest the third movement with heady virtuoso energy, while No.11 (RV210) is wide-reaching, solemn and celebratory, with solo passages that delve into the technical and expressive potential of the violin. In this it can be likened to the grand concertos 'con cadenza', such as 'Grosso Mogul' and the early Concerto 'per la Solennità della S. Lingua di S. Antonio in Padua'. As with 'La caccia', where the composer added an introspective central movement to separate two movements that were too similar in colour, so in this concerto the introduction of a Largo of minimal duration, ensemble forces and technique serves to achieve the height of poetry.

© Federico Guglielmo

Translation: Kate Singleton

EIGHT CONCERTOS FOR SOLEMN OCCASIONS

Of Antonio Vivaldi's immense corpus of concertos, only a very small number have titles linking them to particular festive or solemn occasions. These include the famous concertos 'Per la Solennità de San Lorenzo' (RV286, RV556 and RV562) and 'della S. Lingua di S. Antonio in Padua' (RV212), the two concertos for double orchestra 'Per la Santissima Assunzione di Maria Vergine' (RV581 and RV582), the *Concerto funebre* (RV579), and even, in a way, the programmatic 'La caccia' (Op.8 No.10, RV362). However, given the central role played by music in 18th-century Venitian social life – in both the secular and the religious sphere – it seems obvious that many of the Vivaldi concertos that have survived untitled would have been written with a possible festive or ceremonial performance in mind, depending on their musical characteristics.

In Vivaldi's instrumental language, solemnity is usually denoted by the presence of an introduction – generally speaking in a slow tempo and scored for the full ensemble – which acts as a prelude to the usual three movements. This is true of the abovementioned 'San Lorenzo' concertos, the *Concerto funebre* and, albeit in a two-movement structure, the two wonderful 'Al Santo Sepolcro' works, RV130 and RV169 (a sonata and a sinfonia respectively). This four-movement design harks back, in fact, to the traditional structure of the *sonata da chiesa* (church sonata), although it has to be said that its incidence in the concertos known to have been written by Vivaldi for ecclesiastical use, while significant, is far from systematic, as demonstrated by RV212 and RV582, both of which are cast in three movements only, with no solemn introduction. Given that his concertos follow no one single formal pattern, therefore, their serious or sombre nature may also be determined by their content – in other words, by the stylistic qualities of their musical idiom. Above and beyond formal distinctions or any kind of subjective consideration, the stylistic registers of Baroque music define a work's expressive character very precisely, making it easy to categorise within the repertoire of the day. Thus, counterpoint, polyphony, complex harmonies, the traditional *stile osservato*, are the defining features of the *da chiesa*, or solemn style, whereas the *da camera* (chamber) style is characterised by homophony, the dominant melody in the top line and the emphasis of rhythm over harmony.

This apparent opposition was of course frequently tempered by a judicious blending of the two styles (*stile misto*), which reached its high point in the sacred music of the eighteenth century, where the traditional polyphonic idiom coexisted with solo elements imported from opera. In any case, the *stile osservato* – the touchstone for any composer with ambition – remained so

dominant over the light *stile da camera* that even a partial or intermittent use of contrapuntal writing implicitly suggests a link to the traditional style and, therefore, a solemn intent.

Vivaldi, the supreme master of the *ars combinatoria*, knew better than any of his contemporaries how to exploit this ambiguity: good examples are the 'San Lorenzo' concertos, and the two 'Maria Vergine' concertos, whose sacred character, though seemingly slightly blurred by effusive solo writing, is in fact clearly defined by means either of formal solutions – the ceremonial *introduzioni* in RV286, RV556, RV562 and RV581 and the inclusion of a devotional *Grave* in RV582 – or of sophisticated expressive subtleties, such as the prevalence of rising motifs – echoing Mary's Assumption – in the two 'Maria Vergine' pieces. In fact, these famous concertos demonstrate that in spite of the striking stylistic variety of Baroque music in general, and Vivaldi's works in particular, compositions rooted in the sacred tradition – the paradigm of Baroque solemnity – are always distinguished by a certain *gravitas* which, by contrast, may be lacking in conventional chamber works. Generally speaking, then, the hallmark of the sacred was provided by an adherence to contrapuntal writing or, in its absence, by subtle and symbolic rhetorical touches.

The programme presented by La Magnifica Comunità on this CD brings together a select grouping of 'solemn' works by the Red Priest. Far from limiting itself to the well-known *per la solennità* repertoire (the 'San Lorenzo', 'Maria Vergine' and 'S. Lingua de S. Antonio' works mentioned above), however, the ensemble has made the world premiere recordings of eight concertos created *ad hoc* by the author of these notes. In so doing, I resorted to that well-known Vivaldian practice – one that was moreover universal in the Baroque era – of *pasticcio*: in other words, creating new works from existing pieces taken from different sources but with stylistic, idiomatic, formal or expressive similarities, and all in keeping with the new musical purpose – here, the *solennità* of the Vivaldi concerto. The composer left a rich legacy of instrumental pastiches, including such outstanding works as the *Concerto madrigalesco*, RV129 or the Concerto 'Per la Santissima Assunzione di Maria Vergine', RV582. The inspiration behind our programme, however, is the *Concerto funebre*, RV579, the diverse origins of whose musical constituents make it a genuine model of recycling. This sumptuous concerto in B flat major for solo violin, oboe, chalumeau, 3 violas da gamba, strings and continuo, presumably composed for a funeral service held at the Ospedale de la Pietà in Venice, opens with the sombre sinfonia from Act III, scene 12 of the opera *Tito Manlio*, RV738 (music originally designed to set the scene for the protagonist's walk to the scaffold) and closes with the fugue,

suitably adapted and transposed, from the Concerto for strings, RV123. Between these two admirably recycled movements, the spiritual essence of the work, Vivaldi placed a pair of movements presumably composed for the occasion, an Allegro poco poco – the only movement to feature the solo violin – and an ethereal Adagio for the full ensemble. The *Concerto funebre* is a consummate *pasticcio* which, at the same time as illustrating the composer's legendary creative flair, is also perfectly suited to the gravity of the occasion for which it was composed.

The *pasticcio* model of the *Concerto funebre* and many other Vivaldi concertos sparked my interest, from both a philological and a musical point of view, in the idea of returning to the Baroque pastiche tradition in order to put together eight solemn concertos based on various of the composer's works. This was common practice for the Dresden court orchestra under the leadership of the virtuoso violinist Johann Georg Pisendel, who studied for a while under Vivaldi, as can be seen in the variant versions (apparently reworked or arranged by Pisendel and which include recycled Vivaldian movements and/or newly composed sections) of the following concertos, now held at Dresden's Sächsische Landesbibliothek: RV172a, RV192, RV212, RV213, RV225, RV370, RV562, RV564a, RV568, RV569 and RV571. Therefore, and in accordance with early 18th-century compositional practice, the pastiches on this album comprise a mix of reworked original materials and newly written passages. For example, in the case of various movements from solo concertos which have been converted into *concerti ripieni* – the first movements of RV197 (R) and RV316 (R), the fast movements of RV185 (R), the first two movements of RV134 (R), all except the third of RV292 (R), and the finale of the Sinfonia, RVAnh. 85 – the solo episodes had to be replaced by new orchestral material, either thematic or episodic, depending on the model in question, the aim being to give the new compositions an organic and structural coherence. The opposite *modus operandi* came into play, meanwhile, when original orchestral writing had to be reworked for two solo violins, as was the case with the first three movements of the Concerto in G minor, RV155 (R). In other cases, such as that of the finale of that same work, adapted from the first movement of the Violin Concerto, RV319 (music Vivaldi himself reused to open the *Salve Regina*, RV618), or the finale of RV247 (R), the reconstruction consisted of incorporating a second solo violin to works originally designed for a single solo violin. It is also worth noting here that two of the pastiche movements were newly composed on the basis of Vivaldi originals – the third movement of RV155 (R) and the initial Allegro of the Concerto for two violins in D minor, RV247 (R). The leading element of the Allegro's ritornello, for example, is a recycled version of the initial theme from

the movement *Intellectus bonus omnibus* (itself borrowed from the Sonata for violin and continuo, RV12) from the *Confitebor tibi Domine*, RV596.

The guiding spirit behind this programme, giving it its title and unity, is a sense of solemnity, and I want to underline that the objective in putting together these *pasticci* was to create an anthology of *concerti solenni*, or of *concerti da chiesa*, following the models mentioned earlier, specifically the *Concerto funebre*, RV579 and the *Concerto madrigalesco*, RV129. With this in mind, it is worth mentioning the starring role played as a consequence by contrapuntal writing: as laid down by the canons of the *stile osservato*, all the concertos possess at least one fugue – two in the cases of RV134 (R), RV155 (R), RV185 (R), RV197 (R) and RV247 (R) – and there are also many *fugatos* and other contrapuntal procedures to be found throughout these works. Equally notable is the 'cyclical' thematic unity given to Concertos, RV155 (R), RV197 (R) and RV316 (R), all of which, somewhat in the manner of 17th-century canzonas, present germinal themes that reappear in all subsequent movements, both quoted and paraphrased. Some key examples of this are the omnipresent repeated-note theme in RV155 (R), the minor-third motif in RV197 (R), and the theme (introduced by a descending fourth) that characterises the three movements of RV316 (R) in G minor. Other, more subtle traces of thematic integration – so much to Vivaldi's taste – can also be heard in the marked chromaticism of all three movements of RV134 (R), the ascending octave interval at the start of each movement of the Sinfonia, RVAnh. 85, and the *incipit* – based on an ascending triad on the tonic – of the three movements of the Concerto in F major, RV292 (R).

It is also worth highlighting the fact that the finale of the Concerto for strings in G minor, RV316 (R) is a four-part reworking of the stunning two-part double fugue – in all likelihood an original Vivaldi piece – in Sonata No.6 [RV58 = RVAnh. 95.6] from *Il pastor fido*, Vivaldi's 'Op.13' (actually written by the French composer Nicolas ChéÉdeville), published in Paris in 1737, while the finale of the Concerto for strings in C minor, RV197 (R) is an adaptation of the double fugue in the *Ouverture* of the serenata *La Senna festeggiante*, RV693 (a piece which Vivaldi in turn had adapted from the closing section of Lotti's *Moralità d'una perla*). Finally, and in addition to those already cited, there are certain notable cases of recycling that deserve a mention, for example that of the mercurial opening Allegro of the Cello Concerto, RV419 which resurfaces here, adapted and transposed to E minor, as an incisive opening to the chromatic Concerto, RV134 (R); the elegiac Grave from the Trio Sonata, Op.1 No.8, RV64 in D minor, which appears as an opportune solo episode in the slow movement of the same name in the Concerto for two solo violins, RV247 (R), also in D minor; and the grandiose double fugue in A major, taken from the Violin Concerto,

RV344, and which, once reworked (for string ensemble without soloist), provides a dazzling conclusion to the Sinfonia, RVAnh. 85, an anonymous work from the Dresden collection which can only have issued from the ever unpredictable pen of the Prete Rosso.

© Pablo Queipo de Llano, May 2009

Translation: Susannah Howe

LA CETRA OP.9

La Cetra (meaning cittern or lyre) is a title that was adopted for various collections of music written both before and after Op.9. In 1673 Legrenzi called his collection of instrumental sonatas (Op.10) *La Cetra*, and Vivaldi's two collections (one printed in 1727 and the other in manuscript form of 1728) were followed in 1738 by a like-titled collection of concertos for one and two oboes by Alessandro Marcello. The 12 concertos for solo violin (Op.9), published in 1727 under the title *La Cetra*, included a frontispiece bearing the following dedicatory description: *La Cetra, Concerti Consacrati alla Sacra, Cesarea, Cattolica, Real Maestà di Carlo VI Imperadore e terzo Re delle Spagne, di Bohemia, di Ungaria, etc, etc, etc da D. Antonio Vivaldi, Musico di Violino, Maestro del Pio Ospitale della Città di Venetia e Maestro di Capella di Camera di S.A.S. Il Signor Principe Filippo Langravio d'Hassia Darmstadt Opera Nona* ('La Cetra, Concertos dedicated to His Holy, Caesarean, Catholic, Royal Majesty Charles VI, Emperor and third King of Spain, of Bohemia, of Hungary, etc., etc., etc., by Don Antonio Vivaldi, Violinist, Master at the Pio Ospitale of the City of Venice and Chamber Chapel Master to His Supreme Highness Prince Philip Landgrave of Hesse Darmstadt Opus Nine'). The publisher was Michel-Charles Le Cène, with whom Vivaldi was once more on good terms thanks to the success of the earlier *opera ottava*.

The collection itself contains a number of significant allusions; the *cetra*, or lyre, was not only part of the Hapsburg coat of arms, but also a symbol associated with Apollo and Orpheus.

As K. Heller has pointed out, this reference clearly underlined the importance of the Hapsburgs' love of music. Yet an even more explicit homage to the powerful emperor, who did indeed cultivate the arts and enjoy music first hand as an amateur player, is to be found in the two pieces with which Vivaldi concluded the two volumes. Each of the two tomes comprised six concertos, of which the last in order involved the violin tuned to different pitches (A/E/A/E for No.6 and B/D/B/D for No.12). This was an instrumental expedient that was common at the time, especially in Austria and Southern Germany. Advertised at the publisher's

expense in the *Gazette d'Amsterdam* on 31 January 1727, the collection promised 11 violin concertos (two with alternative tunings, as mentioned above) and one concerto for two violins.

In September 1728 Vivaldi had the opportunity to meet the Emperor in Trieste and present him personally with the dedicated score. The two conversed together at length, and Vivaldi was nominated *cavaliere* and given a gold medal on a chain as well as a considerable sum of money.

The erudite Venetian Antonio Conti reported the event in a letter as follows: 'The emperor entertained Vivaldi for quite some time on the subject of music; it is said that in fifteen days he spoke with him more than he would normally do with his ministers in two years'. The collection that was handed over to the Emperor did not, however, correspond to the printed edition. Indeed, it consisted of a totally different series of pieces, with the exception of one movement of the concerto RV183 (which corresponds to the seventh concerto of the printed edition) and the entire concerto RV391. The original manuscript score, which is lacking the solo violin part, is to be found in a magnificent manuscript copy kept at the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek in Vienna. By comparing this with numerous other documents in the same hand it has been possible to reconstruct or integrate most of the missing parts, so that in 1995 the collection could be recorded for the first time by L'Arte dell'Arco in what was in fact the ensemble's own first recording.

What remain to be explained are the reasons that led Vivaldi to donate to the Emperor a collection that differed from the one he had already delivered to the printers. One possibility is that the manuscript scores the composer handed over to Le Cène were not returned to their author in time for him to be able to pay homage to the Emperor with a copy when they met in Trieste. This would have forced Vivaldi to put together a collection of available pieces with due haste. R. Rasch's studies based on comparisons with the extant manuscript scores (8 concertos out of the 12 are preserved in Turin, Manchester and Dresden) suggest that the works were composed between 1723 and 1725, which means little time had passed since editing the earlier collection. What stands out is the remarkable variety of the music and the virtuoso skill required of the soloist. The main violin part often reveals extreme use of virtuoso passages, almost beyond the threshold of instrumental collections of the time, which implies that Vivaldi was well aware of the significance of the new virtuosos who were then making a name for themselves: Veracini initially, and then more markedly Tartini and Locatelli.

VIOLIN CONCERTOS OP.11 & OP.12

Vivaldi had a fairly problematic relationship with publishing throughout his life, even though the printed editions of his works must have contributed to his widespread fame. At the outset, he turned to two, somewhat-dated traditional printers in Venice, respectively entrusting his Op.1 and Op.2 to Bortoli and Sala. Then in 1709 he decided to go over to Estienne Roger, the Amsterdam-based publisher whose techniques were considerably more advanced. Following two enormously successful collections, *L'Estro Armonico* and *La Stravaganza*, published in direct accordance with the composer, Roger evidently felt it behoved him to take advantage of Vivaldi's fame by publishing three collections hastily put together, in all probability without the composer's supervision. This decision must have undermined his relationship with Vivaldi, however, because no more of his scores were offered for publication for the following five years. Something similar would seem to have taken place a decade later as well, around 1728–9, when Michel-Charles Le Cène, the publisher who had taken over the company, printed *Il Cimento dell'Armonia e dell'Invention* and *La Cetra*, along with three 'small' works consisting of Concertos for Flute (Op.10) and Violin (Opp. 11 and 12). As with the Opp. 5, 6 and 7 mentioned previously, here again the three collections were underwritten directly by the publisher, and printed without dedicatory epistles. Furthermore, they also comprised pieces that had been adapted or rearranged on the basis of earlier versions, especially the Flute Concertos Op.10.

Clearly these publications, which reveal various differences of content, were more commercial in intent. An advertisement that appeared in the *Gazette d'Amsterdam* on 2 September 1729 suggests that Op.11 and Op.12 were published at pretty much the same time. It may well be, however, that this time the composer himself selected the concertos that made up the collections.

Among the Op.11 concertos there are two pieces (RV202 Op.11 No.5 and RV277 Op.11 No.2) that were also included in *La Cetra* (Vivaldi's manuscript score of 1728, presented directly to the Holy Roman Emperor Charles VI). Moreover, there are also various manuscript versions of other concertos, though they do not entirely tally with the printed edition, as well as the oboe concerto that concludes the series.

What is remarkable about the Op.12 concertos – only two of which are kept in the Turin archive – is the inclusion of a concerto for strings with no solo part: the only one of its sort in Vivaldi's entire printed works. Something may have gone amiss on this occasion as well, though perhaps the most likely explanation, vindicated by something Vivaldi said to an English woman he met in 1733, is that the composer decided to suspend the publications because he hoped for better returns at a later date through direct sales of his scores.

The musical quality of the compositions of this latter period is particularly noteworthy. By this time in his full maturity, Vivaldi was highly receptive to the appeal of the new galant taste, enriched by his experience with opera, and sensitive to discussion with acclaimed composers such as Leonardo Vinci, Nicola Porpora and Leonardo Leo. At the same time, he also had to address the appearance on the scene of a new generation of violinists, particularly Giuseppe Tartini and Pietro Locatelli. He was thus more sensitive to harmony, especially in the central movements that often grew in length, adopting tempi that were less hurried and more varied, with unusual rhythmic figurations typical of the new taste. Moreover, the solo parts became extremely demanding, especially in the Op.11 concertos and two of the Op.12 concertos, to the extent that amateur musicians would have found them almost impossible to play.

Manuscript versions reveal that concertos Nos. 1 and 4 of Op.11 were part of the endowment of solo works created for Anna Maria, a young virtuoso student at the Ospedale della Pietà. Likewise noteworthy is the sixth and last oboe concerto, which had featured as a violin concerto in *La Cetra* (printed edition of 1727). Although it was published later, the arrangement for oboe is considered the original version of this concerto. Another outstanding work is the Concerto RV277 (Op.11 No.2), known as *Il favorito*, possibly on account of Charles VI's appreciation of it, or because it was particularly dear to the composer himself. The Op.12 concertos may also have been compiled somewhat hastily, given the presence of two consecutive concertos (Nos. 5 and 6) in the same key, which would have been unusual for Vivaldi at the time. The inclusion of the concerto *ripieno* for strings without a solo part is also strange, since it is unique in Vivaldi's printed works. At all events, the presence of the admirable fugue in the last movement certainly confutes the conviction that Vivaldi had little feeling for this genre of composition.

© Federico Guglielmo

Translation: Kate Singleton

CONCERTI 'CON ORGANO OBBLIGATO'

Vivaldi's output for keyboard instruments amounts to four double concertos for violin and organ (RV 541, 542, 766 and 767), a concerto for violin, oboe (or cello) and organ (RV554/554a), a sonata for violin, oboe, organ and chalumeau (RV779) and a single concerto for harpsichord (RV780 – see Brilliant Classics 93810). The *Concerto con molti istromenti*, RV555, very likely composed for the Ospedale della Pietà in Venice, on the other hand, includes two concertante harpsichords among the 17 solo instruments, and lastly, there is a handful of

pieces that have survived in incomplete or fragmentary form, including the violin part of a concerto for violin and organ obbligato (RV774) and the first movement of a fine concerto in F major with two violins and two obbligato organs, RV585. Taken as a whole, this music is bound to arouse our curiosity, because, intriguingly, there is so little of it, especially for a composer like Vivaldi, who had an almost unparalleled tendency to experiment with every kind of instrument, including particularly rare or obsolete ones such as the trumpet marine, viola d'amore, *flautino*, lute, mandolin or psaltery.

In terms of quality, the striking factor is actually the generally unidiomatic nature of Vivaldi's keyboard writing, where the right hand mostly plays elementary, rather violinistic figurations, and the left hand does no more than play a simple bass line. Nevertheless, this is fairly typical of much of the keyboard music composed in northern Italy at the end of the 17th and beginning of the 18th centuries. Indeed, in his *Geschichte der Orgel- und Klaviermusik bis 1700*, Willi Apel associates the bright, vivid fugue subjects in the few surviving keyboard works by a contemporary of Vivaldi's, the Brescia-born Carlo Francesco Pollarolo (organist and later assistant maestro at San Marco) with the former's instrumental manner. On the other hand, the very violinistic style of the writing for the right hand meant that the composer could, with little difficulty, 'recycle' for the organ a part originally conceived for the violin.

More than half of Vivaldi's instrumental output for keyboard in fact consists of alternative versions of works originally created for different forces, or of pieces in which the organ or harpsichord are considered simple alternatives to a string instrument (usually the violin).

Nevertheless, Vivaldi was well aware of the expressive potential and the inherent colours of keyboard instruments, and he made good use of them both in his sacred and operatic music.

There is an obbligato organ part in the 'Jucundus homo' section of his *Beatus vir*, RV597, and in the aria 'Noli, o cara, te adorantis' in *Juditha triumphans*, RV644, while the harpsichord is given a concertante role in the arias 'Io son qual gelsomino' in *Arsilda, regina di Ponto*, RV700, 'Onde chiare' in *Ercole sul Termodonte*, RV710, as well as in the recitative 'Numi che il ciel reggente' in *Il Giustino*, where it evokes the image of a monster rising from the deep. What, then, was the reason for this apparent lack of interest in the harpsichord and organ as solo instruments, whether in sonatas or concertos?

The fact is that Vivaldi's position was anything but eccentric or isolated, but completely in line with all other Italian composers of his generation, none of whom was inclined to assign a concertante role to a keyboard instrument. And yet, even just in connection with the Pietà, Vivaldi worked closely with many organists, including the *Maestra di Choro* Giulia, and the *figlie* Anzoletta,

Antonia, Bianca Maria, Maria Bolognese and Rosana. Nevertheless, it has to be kept in mind that at that time the role of the harpsichord and organ in an ensemble was to realise the basso continuo. Over the course of the 18th century this functional role became increasingly fixed, providing almost the only way in which harpsichordists and organists could take part in concertos. The effect of this trend was to hold back the emancipation of keyboards as 'melodic' instruments able to support a solo role within a concerto ensemble. The other probable deterrent was the survival of the old tablature notation, which in turn contributed to the organists' increasing sense of separateness, compared with players of other types of instruments.

The concertos in D minor, RV541 and F major, RV542 are among the few compositions by Vivaldi we know of that were conceived expressly for the violin and organ. Nevertheless, here again it remains possible that both pieces derive from pre-existing versions of the concertos for two violins, RV766 and RV767 respectively, that have now been lost, given the similarities in terms of both form and invention. The date of composition of RV542 could be placed around the mid-1720s, while RV541 is probably from some years previously, broadly in the middle of the first decade of the century. The two instruments mainly keep up a compact, close dialogue where short phrases or motifs are passed from one to the other, which means that longer solo lines for a single soloist tend to be ruled out. Where this does happen, as in the fast movements of RV541, it is in the form of sporadic statements of a few bars' length only. In the middle movements of both works, the forces are reduced to the solo instruments alone, as in many other Vivaldi concertos. The 'Grave' of RV541 stands out for its level of inspiration throughout, where the organ accompanies the violin's melodic line with a discreet bass line and three-note chords on the right hand. More generally, both works often give the impression that the player is free to elaborate the organ part spontaneously. Certainly, this is true of the final movement of RV542, which calls for an improvised cadenza (not given in the score) immediately before the final ritornello. For this recording we have used the cadenza Vivaldi wrote out in full in the violin part of the D major concerto RV208 ('Grosso Mogul'), following Bach's transcription, BWV594.

The concertos RV 766 and 767 are alternative versions of works originally conceived for two violins (RV 510 and 765 respectively). They are very similar pieces, although the second, RV767, probably lacks the intensity that characterises its partner. Nevertheless, in his recent monograph *Vivaldi and Fugue*, Michael Talbot has drawn attention to the wonderful crafting of the fugato opening of RV767, with its particularly long, fluid subject. Unlike RV 766 and 767, the C major concerto RV554 calls for an obbligato organ part right from the opening, later taken over by a second solo violin. In a subsequent version

(RV554a) the oboe part was in turn replaced by a solo cello, further confirmation of the extraordinary versatility Vivaldi displays in remodelling his own work. Overall, this concerto is notable for its particularly original blend of timbres and the effectiveness of those passages where all three soloists play different figurations simultaneously.

The *Sonata a violino, oboè et organo, et anco se piace il salmoè*, RV779, was composed for the Ospedale della Pietà around 1710. Next to the staves for each instrument, Vivaldi added the names of the girls who played the part: the *figlie* Prudenzia (violin), Pellegrina (oboe), Lucietta (organ) and Candida (chalumeau). The organ part of this sonata is striking for the extended cadenzas with pedal accompaniment in the first two movements, and especially for the way in which the figurations in the melodic line are shared between the player's right and left hands throughout the third movement.

© Alessandro Borin

Translation: Kenneth Chalmers