

Friday, February 24, 2017, 8pm
Zellerbach Hall



Simon Fowler

Nicola Benedetti, *violin*
Venice Baroque Orchestra

Gianpiero Zanocco, *concertmaster*

Giacomo Catana, *first violin*

Mauro Spinazzè, *first violin*

Francesco Lovato, *first violin*

Giorgio Baldan, *second violin*

David Mazzacan, *second violin*

Giuseppe Cabrio, *second violin*

Claudio Rado, *second violin*

Alessandra Di Vincenzo, *viola*

Meri Skejic, *viola*

Massimo Raccanelli Zaborra, *cello*

Federico Toffano, *cello*

Alessandro Pivelli, *double bass*

Ivano Zanenghi, *lute*

Lorenzo Feder, *harpsichord*



PROGRAM

- Baldassare GALUPPI (1706–1785) Concerto a Quattro No. 2 in G Major
for Strings and Continuo
Andante
Allegro
Andante
Allegro assai
- Charles AVISON (1709–1770) Concerto Grosso No. 8 in E minor
after Domenico Scarlatti
Adagio
Allegro
Amoroso
Vivace
- Francesco GEMINIANI (1687–1762) Concerto Grosso No. 12 in D minor,
after Corelli's Violin Sonata in D minor,
Op. 5, No 12, *La Folia*
[Adagio – Allegro – Adagio – Vivace –
Allegro – Andante – Allegro – Adagio –
Adagio – Allegro – Adagio – Allegro]
- Antonio VIVALDI (1678–1741) Concerto for Violin, Strings, and Continuo
in D Major, R. 212a, *Fatto per la solennità
della S. Lingua di St. Antonio in Padua*
Allegro
Largo
Allegro

INTERMISSION

- VIVALDI *The Four Seasons* for Violin and Orchestra,
Op. 8, Nos. 1–4
SPRING: (R. 269): Allegro –
Largo e pianissimo sempre –
Danza Pastorale (Allegro)
SUMMER: (R. 315): Allegro non molto –
Adagio – Presto
AUTUMN: (R. 293): Allegro –
Adagio – Allegro
WINTER: (R. 297): Allegro non molto –
Largo – Allegro

**Concerto a Quattro No. 2 in G Major
for Strings and Continuo****Baldassare Galuppi**

Baldassare Galuppi's importance in the 18th-century's radical evolution of musical taste is in almost precisely inverse proportion to his notoriety today—he was an influential agent of change from the deeply expressive profundities of the Baroque (he was born in Venice in 1706, when Bach was just beginning his first job, as organist in Arnstadt) to the elegant reserve of High Classicism (he died in 1785, the zenith of Mozart's career in Vienna) but is now almost unknown. Galuppi received his early musical instruction from his father, a barber and theater violinist living on the island of Burano, in the Venetian lagoon. He took his formal training with Antonio Lotti, principal organist at San Marco, and by age 20 had established himself as a harpsichordist in the Venetian theaters and started to compose. His first attempt at an opera, written before his studies with Lotti, did not succeed, but *Dorinda* of 1729 did, and it set the direction for a career that would make him one of the most popular and widely performed composers of his day. Galuppi was based in Venice throughout his life—his works were regularly produced at the city's theaters and across Italy, he taught at the Ospedale dei Mendicanti and Ospedale degli Incurabili, girls' orphanages with rigorous programs of music education for their wards, and served as *Vicemaestro* and later as *Maestro di coro* at San Marco—but he also held extended residencies at King's Theatre in London and at the court of Catherine the Great in St. Petersburg. When Galuppi died, in Venice in January 1785, the city's musicians showed their respect by establishing a fund to pay for his elaborate funeral Mass at Santo Stefano.

Galuppi was best known for his many operatic and sacred works, but he also composed numerous harpsichord pieces, sinfonias, and *concerti a quattro* for strings and continuo. The dates of these works are unknown, though their transitional style suggests they were composed at the Baroque-Classical nexus around 1750. The Concerto a Quattro No. 2 in G Major has characteristics of the old *sonata da chiesa*

("church sonata," a musical type often used during services in Italy)—four succinct movements disposed slow-fast-slow-fast, a fondness for contrapuntal textures—as well as encroaching Classicism—clear phrasing, symmetrical melodies, largely diatonic harmonies. Indeed, the concerto seems to bridge the two musical generations, with a noble opening Andante leading to an imitative Allegro, and somber, sparsely scored Andante paired with a dance-like finale.

Concerto Grosso No. 8 in E minor**after Domenico Scarlatti****Charles Avison**

The career of the English composer, conductor, organist, and writer on music Charles Avison followed an unusual path—he chose to make his professional life not in the Empire's major cities, declining important positions in London, Dublin, York, and Edinburgh, but in the provinces, working contentedly in his native city of Newcastle upon Tyne. Avison was the fifth of nine children born to a Newcastle town wait (i.e., municipal musician), and began his musical training at home at an early age. Around 1730, he moved to London, probably to study with the Italian composer and violin virtuoso Francesco Geminiani. In June 1736, he returned home to Newcastle to assume the position of organist at St. John's Church, and four months later moved to a similar post at St. Nicholas (now the city's cathedral). In 1738, Avison was promoted to the post of the church's music director, by which time he had also become director of concert series in Newcastle and Durham. Avison was also active as a teacher of harpsichord, organ, violin, and flute, and in 1752 issued *An Essay on Musical Expression*, one of the first treatises in English to discuss the effect of music upon the emotions and the proper manner of instrumental performance. As a composer, Avison is best known for his 60 *concerti grossi*, works unrepentantly influenced by the music of Corelli, which appeared in a half-dozen collections of six, eight and 12 works each between 1740 and 1769. There are, in addition, some 20 trio sonatas, an oratorio (*Ruth*), a few liturgical pieces in English, and the 12 *concerti grossi* based on in-

dividual movements from the harpsichord sonatas of Domenico Scarlatti (1685–1757).

The British taste for Domenico Scarlatti's keyboard sonatas may be traced to Thomas Roseingrave, a harpsichordist and organist born in Winchester in 1690 who met the Italian composer during his studies in Venice. After returning to London in 1720, Roseingrave produced Scarlatti's opera *Narcisa* and in 1739 published a collection of his own *Essercizi* ("Exercises"), the one-movement harpsichord sonatas upon which his slim historical reputation as a composer rests. By 1744 Avison had arranged a dozen *concerti grossi* in the manner of Corelli and Geminiani, with a solo group set off from the larger ensemble, from some three dozen of Scarlatti's sonatas. The thematic sources for the four movements of the Concerto No. 8 in E minor have been traced to Scarlatti's sonatas, K[irkpatrick] 81a, 20, 81d, and 15. Avison retained the essential melodic and harmonic elements of Scarlatti's originals but excised some repeated passages and skillfully transcribed the remainder for string ensemble. The E-minor Concerto consists of a somber introductory Adagio, a spirited Allegro in a brighter key, a gently poignant Amoroso, and a supple finale in the nature of a swaying dance.

**Concerto Grosso No. 12 in D minor,
after Corelli's Violin Sonata in D minor,
Op. 5, No 12, *La Folia***

Francesco Geminiani

Francesco Geminiani was baptized (therefore, presumably, born) in Lucca, Italy in 1687. He first studied violin with his father, a player in the Signoria Orchestra in Lucca, then went to Milan as a pupil of Carlo Ambrogio Lonati and finally traveled to Rome, where his teachers were Arcangelo Corelli and Alessandro Scarlatti. He joined the Lucca orchestra in 1707, but was discharged in 1710 "for frequent absences." He settled in Naples in 1711 as concertmaster of the opera orchestra there, and three years later moved to London. Little is known of Geminiani's activities during the decade after 1716; in 1726, he published his arrangements of Corelli's Op. 5 sonatas as *concerti grossi*, and was again demonstrably active in London. The period

from 1726 to 1748 was a busy time for Geminiani of performing, teaching, composing, producing concerts, and touring extensively in Britain and on the Continent to perform his works. He continued his travels during his later years, dividing his time among Paris, London, and Dublin, where he died in 1762.

Geminiani's teacher Arcangelo Corelli published his 12 Sonatas for Violin and Continuo, Op. 5 in Rome on January 1, 1700, and they proved to be among the most popular musical items of their time. All 12 were arranged as *concerti grossi* by Francesco Geminiani in 1726–27. The last, Op. 5, No. 12 in D minor, is not a sonata in the traditional sense but rather a set of two dozen brilliant and contrasted variations on the old progression of modal harmonies known as *La Folia di Spagna* ("The Folly of Spain"). *La Folia* originated as the accompaniment to wild dances in Portugal and Spain in the 15th century, but it had been domesticated for more sedate musical purposes by Corelli's time.

**Concerto for Violin, Strings, and Continuo
in D Major, R. 212a, *Fatto per la solennità
della S. Lingua di St. Antonio in Padua*
Antonio Vivaldi**

The Violin Concerto in D Major (R. 212)—*Fatto per la solennità della S. Lingua di St. Antonio in Padua*: "Composed for the Feast of the Holy Tongue of St. Anthony in Padua"—is a rarity among Vivaldi's works, a piece whose exact premiere date and first executant are known: February 15, 1712; Padua's Basilica di Santo; Vivaldi. The work's curious title is explained by the venue and occasion for which it was written. The Basilica Pontificia de Sant' Antonio di Padova was begun around 1232, soon after its patron saint's death in that city and the year that he was canonized, to house his relics. His body was placed in an elaborate side chapel but his tongue and chin, memorials of the forceful preaching of the Gospel for which he was known, were preserved separately in a golden reliquary. St. Anthony was venerated at the Basilica twice annually, on his nominal feast day (June 13) and at a special service on February 15 honoring the church's most precious relic—the Feast of the Holy Tongue of St. Anthony.

The Basilica in Padua had a strong musical tradition and the services honoring its patron saint were observed with splendor, with new works composed specially for the occasion and extra performers brought in from Venice, the great city of music just 30 miles to the east. The Venetian violinist Giovanni Battista Vivaldi, Antonio's father and his principal teacher, participated in services in 1698, 1699, and 1700, and both father and son took part in the February service in 1712, for which Antonio wrote the D-Major Violin Concerto and appeared as soloist in its first performance. The purpose of the service, of course, was to focus the congregation's attention on the holy relics, but the flamboyant virtuosity of Vivaldi's new concerto, one of the most technically demanding pieces he ever wrote, could not have helped but draw some notice to himself, as well—he even allowed for solo cadenzas, an adventurous departure from established practice and form, by fully notating one in the finale and providing a place for an improvised one in the first movement. Sometime between 1718 and 1720, he created a second version of the Concerto (R. 212a) by making a few cuts in the outer movements and substituting a more lyrical and expressive slow movement (which he liked well enough to use again intact in his Sonata for Violin and Continuo in G Major, R. 22).

The concerto's framing Allegro movements are brilliant, energetic, and built according to the Baroque formal principle that embedded solo episodes within a recurring orchestral refrain (*ritornello*, in Italian). The central movement is melodic and deeply felt.

***The Four Seasons*, Op. 8, Nos. 1–4 (ca. 1720) Vivaldi**

The *Gazette d'Amsterdam* of December 14, 1725 announced the issuance by the local publisher Michele Carlo Le Cène of a collection of 12 concertos for solo violin and orchestra by Antonio Vivaldi—*Il Cimento dell'Armonia e dell'Inventione*, or “The Contest between Harmony and Invention,” Op. 8. The works were printed with a flowery dedication typical of the time to the Bohemian Count Wenzel von Morzin, a distant cousin of Haydn's patron before he came

into the employ of the Esterházy family in 1761. On the title page, Vivaldi described himself as the “*maestro* in Italy” to the Count, though there is no record of his having held a formal position with him. Vivaldi probably met Morzin when he worked in Mantua from 1718 to 1720 for the Habsburg governor of that city, Prince Philipp of Hessen-Darmstadt, and apparently provided the Bohemian Count with an occasional composition on demand. (A bassoon concerto, R. 496, is headed with Morzin's name.)

Vivaldi claimed that Morzin had been enjoying the concertos of the 1725 Op. 8 set “for some years,” implying earlier composition dates and a certain circulation of this music in manuscript copies, and hoped that their appearance in print would please his patron. The first four concertos, those depicting the seasons of the year, seem to have especially excited Morzin's admiration, so Vivaldi made specific the programmatic implications of the works by heading each of them with an anonymous sonnet, perhaps of his own devising, and then repeating the appropriate verses above the exact measures in the score which they had inspired. *The Four Seasons* pleased not only Count Morzin, but quickly became one of Vivaldi's most popular works. A pirated edition appeared in Paris within weeks of the Amsterdam publication, and by 1728, the concertos had become regular items on the programs of the Concert Spirituel in Paris. The *Spring* Concerto was adapted in 1755 as an unaccompanied flute solo by Jean Jacques Rousseau, the philosopher and dilettante composer who was attracted by the work's musical portrayal of Nature, and as a motet (!) by Michel Corrette to the text “*Laudate Dominum de coelis*” in 1765. Today, *The Four Seasons* remains Vivaldi's best-known work, and one of the most beloved compositions in the orchestral repertory.

Of Vivaldi's more than 400 concertos, only 28 have titles, many of them referring to the performer who first played the work or to the occasion for which it was written. Of the few composition titles with true programmatic significance, seven are found in the Op. 8 collection: *The Four Seasons* plus *La Tempesta di Mare* (“The Storm at Sea”), *La Caccia* (“The Hunt”), and *Il Piacere*

("Pleasure"). Concerning the title of the Op. 8 set—"The Contest between Harmony and Invention"—Amelia Haygood wrote, "'Harmony' represents the formal structure of the compositions; 'invention' the unhampered flow of the composer's creative imagination; and the 'contest' implies a dynamic balance between the two, which allows neither 'harmony' nor 'invention' to gain the upper hand. The perfect balance which results offers a richness in both areas: the outpouring of melody, the variety of instrumental color, the vivid musical imagery are all to be found within a formal framework which is elegant and solid."

Though specifically programmatic, the fast, outer movements of these works use the *ritornello* form usually found in Baroque concertos. The opening *ritornello* theme (Italian for "return"), depicting the general emotional mood of each fast movement, recurs to separate its various descriptive episodes, so that the music fulfills both the demands of creating a logical, abstract form and evoking vivid images from Nature. The slow, middle movements are lyrical, almost aria-like, in style. Though Vivaldi frequently utilized in these pieces the standard *concertino*, or solo group, of two violins and cello found in the 18th-century concerto grosso, *The Four Seasons* is truly a work for solo violin and orchestra, and much of the music's charm comes from the contrasting and interweaving of the soloist, *concertino*, and accompanying orchestra. Of these evergreen concertos, Marc Pincherle, in his classic biography of Vivaldi, wrote, "Their breadth, their clearness of conception, the obvious pleasure with which the composer wrought them, the favorable reception which has been theirs from the first, their reverberations since then—all these unite to make them one of the masterpieces of the descriptive repertory."

For the publication of *The Four Seasons* in 1725, Vivaldi prefaced each of the concertos with an explanatory sonnet. These poems are given below with a note describing the music relating to the particular verses:

Spring, Op. 8, No. 1 (R. 269)

The spring has come, joyfully
(*the vivacious opening section for full orchestra—the ritornello—that returns between episodes and at the end of the movement*)

The birds welcome it with merry song
(*trills and shakes, violins*)

And the streams, in the gentle breezes,
flow forth with sweet murmurs.
(*undulating violin phrases*)

Now the sky is draped in black,
Thunder and lightning announce a storm.
(*tremolos and fast scales*)

When the storm has passed, the little birds
Return to their harmonious songs.
(*gently rising phrases and long trills in the violins*)

And in the lovely meadow full of flowers,
To the gentle rustling of leaves and branches,
The goatherd sleeps, his faithful dog at his side.
(*Movement II*)

To the rustic bagpipe's merry sound,
Nymphs and shepherds dance under the
lovely sky
When spring appears in all its brilliance.
(*Movement III*)

Summer, Op. 8, No. 2 (R. 315)

In the heat of the blazing summer sun,
Man and beast languish; the pine tree is
scorched.

(*the enervated ritornello*)
The cuckoo raises his voice
(*wide, fast leaps in the solo violin*)

Soon the turtledove and goldfinch join in
the song.
(*a solo violin episode with leaps and trills*)

A gentle breeze blows
(*quick triplets, violins*)

But then the north wind battles with its
neighbor
(*rushing scales, full orchestra*)

And the shepherd weeps
(*expressive, chromatic theme for solo violin and continuo*)

As above him the dreaded storm gathers,
controlling his fate.
(forceful scales and figurations in the full orchestra)

His weary limbs are roused from rest
By his fear of the lightning and fierce thunder
And by the angry swarms of flies and hornets.
(Movement II, alternating bittersweet plaints from the solo violin with quick, repeated note interjections by the full orchestra)

Alas, his fears are borne out
Thunder and lightning dominate the sky
Bending down the tops of trees and flattening the grain.
(the tempestuous third movement)

Autumn, Op. 8, No. 3 (R. 293)

The peasants celebrate with dance and song
The joy of a fine harvest
(the merry opening ritornello)

And filled with Bacchus' liquor
(inebriated arpeggios, scales, trills and figurations from the solo violin alternating with the ritornello theme)

He ends his fun in sleep.
(progressively slower notes in the solo violin until the music stops completely before ending with the ritornello theme)

Everyone is made to leave off dancing and singing
The air is gentle and pleasing
And the season invites everyone
To enjoy a delightful sleep.
(Movement II)

At dawn the hunters set out
With horns, guns and dogs.
(the bounding main theme)
The hunted animal flees, the hunters follow its tracks
(arpeggiated triplets in the solo violin)

Terrified and exhausted by the great noise
Of guns and dogs.

(violent, shaking figures in the orchestra)
Wounded, it tries feebly to escape,
But is caught and dies.

(flashing scales by the soloist cut short by the violent interjections of the orchestra)

Winter, Op. 8, No. 4 (R. 297)

Freezing and shivering in the icy darkness
(the chordal, almost motionless main theme)

In the severe gusts of a terrible wind
(rushing scales and chords in the solo violin)

Running and stamping one's feet constantly
(a brief, repeated note motive alternating with a leaping figure)

So chilled that one's teeth chatter.
(tremolo)

Spending quiet and happy days by the fire
While outside the rain pours everywhere.
(Movement II)

Walking on the ice with slow steps
(the plaintive main theme, solo violin)

Walking carefully for fear of falling
(slow, steady chords in the orchestra)

Then stepping out boldly, and falling down.
(quick scales and then several brief descending flourishes)

Going out once again onto the ice, and running boldly
(steady motion up and down the scale in the solo violin)

Until the ice cracks and breaks,
(snapping, separated figures)

Hearing, as they burst forth from their iron gates, the Scirocco,
(a smooth melody in close-interval harmony)

The North Wind, and all the winds battling.
This is winter, but such joy it brings.
(rushing figurations close the work)

Nicola Benedetti (*violin*) is one of the most sought after violinists of her generation. Her ability to captivate audiences with her innate musicianship and dynamic presence, coupled with her wide appeal as a high-profile advocate for classical music, has made her one of today's most influential classical artists. With concerto performances at the heart of her career, Benedetti is in much demand with major orchestras and conductors across the globe. She began the 2015–16 season by embarking on a tour of the UK's leading concert halls performing a personally curated program together with a specially formed ensemble. The program features Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* and the world premiere of a work by Mark-Anthony Turnage written for her and cellist Leonard Elschenbroich. The commissioning of new works continued with the highly anticipated world premiere of Wynton Marsalis' Violin Concerto with the London Symphony Orchestra written especially for Benedetti.

Further concerto performances this season include engagements with the Israel Philharmonic, Verdi Orchestra Milano, RSO Stuttgart, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Royal Scottish National Orchestra, Scottish Ensemble, BBC National Orchestra of Wales, National Arts Centre Orchestra of Ottawa, Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, Minnesota Orchestra, New Zealand Symphony Orchestra, and at the Ravinia Festival with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. This season also sees Benedetti continuing her passion for music of the Italian Baroque and historical performance realized in collaborations with Andrea Marcon with the Manchester Camerata and WDR Cologne.

Most recently Benedetti enjoyed collaborations with the London Symphony Orchestra, London Philharmonic, Orchestra of the Mariinsky Theatre, Berlin Konzerthausorchester, WDR Cologne, Camerata Salzburg, Danish National Symphony Orchestra, La Cetra Barockorchester, Czech Philharmonic, Royal Scottish National Orchestra, Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Pittsburgh Symphony, and Melbourne Symphony, among others.

Conductors with whom Nicola Benedetti has worked and will work include Vladimir Ashkenazy, Jiří Bělohlávek, Stéphane Denève, Chris-

toph Eschenbach, James Gaffigan, Valery Gerгиеv, Alan Gilbert, Jakub Hrusa, Louis Langrée, Andrew Litton, Kristjan Järvi, Neeme Jaarvi, Paavo Järvi, Vladimir Jurowski, Andrea Marcon, Sir Neville Marriner, Peter Oundjian, Vasily Petrenko, Donald Runnicles, Thomas Sondergard, Yan Pascal Tortelier, Krzysztof Urbanski, Pinchas Zukerman, and Jaap van Zweden.

With her regular duo partner, pianist Alexei Grynyuk, Benedetti frequently performs recitals in the world's leading concert halls and festivals with the most recent and future highlights including Wigmore Hall, Concertgebouw Amsterdam, Utrecht, Rome, Copenhagen, Dortmund, Ludwigshafen, Bielefeld, and Kiel. Benedetti is also a devoted chamber musician and collaborates with cellist Leonard Elschenbroich and pianist Alexei Grynyuk; the three have been performing as a trio since 2008. Recent and future performances include St John's Smith Square in London, Amsterdam Concertgebouw, Birmingham Symphony Hall, Edinburgh Usher Hall, Glasgow Royal Concert Hall, LSO St. Luke's, Frankfurt Alte Oper, Die Glocke Bremen, Hong Kong City Hall, two tours of South America, and at the Edinburgh, Ravinia, Schloss Elmau, and Cheltenham festivals.

Fiercely committed to music education and to developing young talent, Benedetti has formed associations with education establishments including schools, music colleges, and local authorities. In 2010 she became Sistema Scotland's official musical "Big Sister" for the Big Noise project—a music initiative partnered with Venezuela's El Sistema (Fundación Musical Simón Bolívar). As a board member and teacher, Benedetti embraces her position of role model to encourage young people to take up music and work hard at it, and she continues to spread this message in school visits and master classes, not only in Scotland, but around the world.

In addition, Benedetti recently developed her own education and outreach initiative entitled The Benedetti Sessions. Established in March 2013 at Glasgow's City Halls, these sessions give hundreds of aspiring young string players the opportunity to rehearse, undertake, and observe master classes culminating in a performance alongside Benedetti. She has also presented The

Benedetti Sessions at the Royal Albert Hall and Cheltenham Festival and has plans to develop this exciting initiative on an international scale.

Winner of Best Female Artist at both the 2012 and 2013 Classical BRIT Awards, Benedetti records exclusively for Decca (Universal Music). The success of her most recent recording, *Homecoming: A Scottish Fantasy*, made Benedetti the first solo British violinist since the 1990s to enter the Top 20 of the official UK albums chart. *The Silver Violin* also enjoyed a similar success. Her past six recordings on Universal/Deutsche Grammophon include a varied catalogue of works including the Szymanowski Concerto (London Symphony Orchestra/Daniel Harding), newly commissioned works by Tave-ner and *The Lark Ascending* (London Philharmonic/Andrew Litton), a disc of virtuosic works (Royal Liverpool Philharmonic/Vasily Petrenko), Tchaikovsky and Bruch concertos (Czech Philharmonic Orchestra/Jakub Hrusa), and Vivaldi, Tartini, and Veracini concertos (Scottish Chamber Orchestra with Christian Curnyn).

Benedetti attracts an enormous amount of worldwide media attention following the various facets of her extraordinary career and her international television appearances have been wide and varied, including performing at the Opening Ceremony of the 2014 Commonwealth Games to a live audience of nearly 40,000 and a television viewing audience of 9.4 million people.

Benedetti was appointed as a Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (MBE) in the 2013 New Year Honors, in recognition of her international music career and her work with musical charities throughout the United Kingdom. In addition, Benedetti has received eight honorary degrees to date.

Born in Scotland of Italian heritage, Benedetti began violin lessons at the age of five with Brenda Smith. In 1997 she entered the Yehudi Menuhin School, where she studied with Natasha Boyarskaya. Upon leaving, she continued her studies with Maciej Rakowski and then Pavel Vernikov. She continues to work with multiple acclaimed teachers and performers.

Nicola Benedetti plays the Gariel Stradivarius (1717), courtesy of Jonathan Moulds.

The Venice Baroque Orchestra (VBO) was founded in 1997 by Baroque scholar and harpsichordist Andrea Marcon, and is recognized as one of today's finest period-instrument ensembles. The orchestra has received wide acclaim for its concert and opera performances throughout North America, Europe, South America, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, and China, and has appeared in more US cities than any other Baroque orchestra in history.

Committed to the rediscovery of 17th- and 18th-century masterpieces, under Marcon's leadership the VBO has given the modern-day premieres of Francesco Cavalli's *L'Orione*, Vivaldi's *Atenaide* and *Andromeda liberata*, Benedetto Marcello's *La morte d'Adone* and *Il trionfo della poesia e della musica*, and Boccherini's *La Clementina*. With Teatro La Fenice in Venice, the Orchestra has staged Cimarosa's *L'Olimpiade*, Handel's *Siroe*, and Galuppi's *L'Olimpiade*, and reprised *Siroe* at the Brooklyn Academy of Music in its first full US staging. The orchestra has been seen worldwide through several television specials, including films by the BBC, ARTE, NTR (Netherlands), and NHK. The musicians are the subject of three recent video recordings, and their performances were also featured on Swiss television in *Vivaldi in Venice*, a documentary film by Richard Dindo.

Highlights of the 2016–17 season include Vivaldi's *Juditha triumphans* at Carnegie Hall, London's Barbican Centre, and Brussels' Palais des Beaux-Arts, marking the occasion of the 300th anniversary of the oratorio's premiere in Venice; performances with violinist Viktoria Mullova at Vienna's Musikverein and in Budapest; and a tour of Japan with mandolinist Avi Avital.

Past performance highlights include extensive tours of Europe, the United States, and Asia with countertenor Philippe Jaroussky; concerts with contralto Marie-Nicole Lemieux in France and Belgium; concerts with mandolinist Avi Avital in Italy, Croatia, Germany, Spain, France, Mexico, the United States, and Canada; a performance in the Frauenkirche with soprano Karina Gauvin for the Dresden Music Festival; and a tour with mezzo-soprano Magdalena Kožená including the Istanbul Festival and



the Mariinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg. Highly unusual for a Baroque ensemble, the VBO premiered Philip Glass's violin concerto *The American Four Seasons*.

The Venice Baroque Orchestra's latest recording, featuring Avi Avital in Vivaldi concertos, was released by Deutsche Grammophon. The musicians' previous recording, featuring Philippe Jaroussky in Porpora arias on the Erato label, received a Grammy nomination. The 2012 release on Naïve, a pasticcio of Metastasio's *L'Olimpiade* featuring the recording premieres of many 18th-century opera arias, was awarded the Choc du Monde de la Musique. The VBO has an extensive discography with Sony and Deutsche Grammophon. The group's world-premiere recording of *Andromeda liberata* for DG was followed by violin concertos with Giuliano Carmignola; Vivaldi sinfonias and concertos for strings; Vivaldi motets and arias with soprano Simone Kermes; two discs with Magdalena Kožená—Handel arias and Vivaldi arias; Vivaldi violin concertos with Viktoria Mullova

and Carmignola; and Italian arias with Petibon. The orchestra's earlier discography on Sony with Carmignola includes *The Four Seasons*, previously unrecorded Vivaldi concertos, and a collection of Bach arias featuring Angelika Kirchschlager. The orchestra has also been honored with the Diapason d'Or, Echo Award, and the Edison Award.

The Venice Baroque Orchestra is supported by Fondazione Cassamarca in Treviso.

For more information, please visit <http://www.venicebaroqueorchestra.it/cms/>

The Venice Baroque Orchestra can be heard on Sony, Deutsche Grammophon, Naïve, and Warner Classics. Like Venice Baroque Orchestra on Facebook.

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