



DORIAN.
Sono Luminus

Vivaldi

“La Tempesta di Mare”

Concerto in F Major
for recorder, 2 violins,
and continuo

Concerto in Bb Major
for bassoon, strings,
and continuo

Tartini

Concerto in A Major
for violin, strings,
and continuo

Sammartini

Concerto in F Major
for soprano recorder,
strings, and continuo

Fire Beneath My Fingers

**MUSICA
PACIFICA**
baroque ensemble

Fire Beneath My Fingers

Virtuosic Concertos of Vivaldi, Sammartini and Tartini

MUSICA PACIFICA

Catalog No. DSL-90704

Judith Linsenberg, *recorders*

Elizabeth Blumenstock, *violin*

Michael McCraw, *bassoon*

Robert Mealy, *violin*

Claire Jolivet, *violin*

Peter Bucknell, *viola*

William Skeen, *violoncello*

Josh Lee, *double bass*

Daniel Swenberg, *theorbo, archlute, baroque guitar*

Charles Sherman, *harpsichord, organ*

Producer: Ronn McFarlane

Recording Engineer: Dan Shores

Mixing and Editing: Brandie Lane

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Other Dorian Musica Pacifica releases are:

DOR-93192 Alessandro Scarlatti, *Concerti da Camera*

DOR-93209 Francesco Mancini (1672-1737), *Concerti da Camera*

DOR-93239 Georg Philipp Telemann (1681-1767),

Chamber Cantatas & Trio Sonatas

DOR-93252 Vivaldi: *La Notte, Concerti per strumenti diversi*



Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741)

Concerto in F Major, after RV 98/570 "La Tempesta di Mare"
recorder, 2 violins, and continuo

Allegro 2:24

Largo 1:38

Presto 2:18

Giuseppe Tartini (1692-1770)

Concerto in A Major, D 91
violin, strings, and continuo

Allegro 7:27

Adagio 5:18

Presto 4:24

Vivaldi

Sonata in A minor, RV 86
recorder, bassoon, and continuo

Largo 2:41

Allegro 2:31

Largo cantabile 1:57

Allegro molto 2:11

Giuseppe Sammartini (1695-1750)

Concerto in F Major
soprano recorder, strings, and continuo

Allegro 3:55

[Siciliano] 5:17

Allegro assai 3:56

Vivaldi

Concerto in G minor, RV 106
recorder, violin, bassoon, and continuo

[Allegro] 2:51

Largo 2:39

Allegro 2:27

Vivaldi

Concerto in Bb Major, RV 503
bassoon, strings, and continuo

Allegro non molto 4:44

Largo 3:36

Allegro 3:36

Total Program Length 65:50

Program Notes

by Kate van Orden

Performers as Composers

The untold history of instrumental music is a story of great performers, something particularly true of the period around the turn of the seventeenth century. Arcangelo Corelli (1653-1713) is often said to be the first composer to derive his fame exclusively from instrumental composition, but we should remember that his compositions sustained his career as a virtuoso violinist, teacher and director of orchestras. In his footsteps followed an illustrious generation of Italian instrumental virtuosi who took to composition. Foremost was Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741), a Venetian violinist of remarkable ability whose tremendous output included over 500 concerti, 90 sonatas, much sacred music, and over 20 operas.

These figures alone seem to suggest that the development of new instrumental genres at the time—the solo sonata, trio sonata, and concerto—opened the way for violinists such as Vivaldi to become composers of a stature that would rival the longstanding tradition of vocal composition by the career composers employed at institutions such as the Papal Chapel (Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina), San Marco in Venice (Claudio Monteverdi), and the court at Dresden (Johann Adolf Hasse).

But to declare Vivaldi or the other instrumental virtuosi whose works appear on this recording “composers” in the style of Monteverdi is to miss the point that these new stars of the musical firmament were first and foremost performers. Giuseppe Sammartini (1695-1750), who was born in Milan, studied oboe with his father, Alexis Saint-Martin, and began his career in the opera orchestra there. In 1726, the great flutist Johann Joachim Quantz visited Milan and claimed that Sammartini was the only good wind player at the opera, subsequently ranking him with Vivaldi as one of the best instrumentalists in Italy. After Sammartini moved to England, Sir John Hawkins praised him as the “greatest [oboist] that the world had ever known,” lauding his remarkable tone and its vocal qualities. And at the time of his death in 1750, the London press announced that Sammartini was the “finest performer on the hautboy in Europe.”

Fewer testimonials are left to us about the virtuosity of Giuseppe Tartini (1692-1770), the Slovenian-born violinist who made his career in Padua as first violinist at the Basilica of San

Antonio. This may be because he declined the many invitations extended to him to travel to France, Germany, and England where he would have come before a bigger public; he also suffered a stroke around 1740 that partially paralyzed his left arm and affected his playing. Nonetheless, some enthusiasts traveled to Padua to hear him, and in 1739 Charles de Brosses praised his playing in the *Lettres familières*. By that time, Tartini was equally famous as a teacher, and his violin school was called the “school of all nations,” so widely did it attract students to his classes. Another testament to his dedication to the violin is the fact that he staunchly refused to write for the voice. “I have been asked to write for the opera houses of Venice,” he told de Brosses, “but I always refused, knowing only too well that a human throat is not a violin fingerboard.” His output is devoted almost entirely to solo violin concerti and solo sonatas for violin; it also includes treatises that promote the cantabile style of violin playing for which he and his students were famous.

Even as great a “composer” as Vivaldi was admired first as a violinist, though few commentators were as unbalanced in their praise as the librettist Carlo Goldoni, who called him an “excellent” violinist but an only “mediocre” composer. The German amateur Uffenbach reported that in one performance he heard, Vivaldi stole the show with a cadenza at the end of an operatic aria, “a fantasy which really terrified me, for such has not been nor can ever be played; he came with his fingers within a mere grass-stalk’s breadth of the bridge, so that the bow had no room – and this on all four strings with imitations and at incredible speed.”

Music by Performers

Accounts such as this give us a good indication of how to listen to the music of Vivaldi, Sammartini, and Tartini. Theirs is a compositional art that breathes with the performer and is close to the improvisatory “fantasies” at the center of the instrumental tradition. The flights of fancy in solo passages, the visual drama of string crossings, high positions near the bridge, and double-, triple- or quadruple-stops on the violin, the space left for ornamentation—these are the hallmarks of music written by virtuosi immersed in performance and instruction. This is music perhaps best appreciated in the ways it puts the performer center stage and evokes improvised invention.

Hawkins found Vivaldi’s concerti “wild and irregular” in their composition, and the Englishman William Hayes attributed these faults to Vivaldi having “too much mercury in his constitution,” but such critiques only fueled further reports of his fiery personality and

vivid imagination. At the opening of his “Sea Tempest” we hear waves lashing in the Venetian lagoon, while the insistent knocking in the last movement of the Concerto in G minor for recorder, violin, bassoon, and continuo gives it a distinctly maniacal quality. The halting opening and dynamic shifts of the Concerto in Bb Major for bassoon seem deliberately designed to confuse the listener; they are followed by a dark and mysterious slow movement that shows off the wide range of the bassoon and its extraordinary tone color.

Two pieces included here—the bassoon concerto and the Sonata in A Minor for recorder and bassoon—may seem out of place in the output of a violinist, but Vivaldi wrote many concerti for his students. Most were for the young women of the Ospedale della Pietà, an institution that, like the other three *ospedali* in Venice, took in illegitimate, orphaned, and abandoned children. Supported from public funds, private donations, and fees, the *ospedali* began to function as conservatories during the seventeenth century, running concert series so legendary that visitors such as Burney and Jean Jacques Rousseau made a point of attending them. The Pietà was exclusively for girls, who received instruction from the most excellent masters in the city. Indeed, Vivaldi began at the Pietà as *maestro di violino* in 1703, working his way up to *maestro de’ concerti* by 1709.

The difficulty of Vivaldi’s concerti attests to the exceptional virtuosity of the young women. Even more striking, however, is the large number of works for winds—unusual instruments for women of the time. But the *ospedali* produced virtuosi on every instrument. In 1739, Charles de Brosses exclaimed “They sing like angels and play the violin, the flute, the organ, the oboe, the ’cello, the bassoon: in short, there is no instrument so large that it makes them afraid of it.”

The second movement of the Sonata for recorder and bassoon in A Minor is a wonderful example of how intimately Vivaldi knew the idiom of each instrument. The relentless passages of large leaps are truly pyrotechnic—not only do they exploit the unique capabilities of the recorder and bassoon, they show off their similar constitutions with an ease that Vivaldi clearly gained from years of concerts with the girls. Slow movements, too, are often closer to the performer’s art than the composer’s writing desk. The second movement of the Concerto in G minor for recorder, violin, bassoon, and continuo is little more than a series of variations written over a simple chord progression, much like the grounds over which virtuosi of the time improvised divisions.

Indeed, in one sense, all of Vivaldi’s works are records of performances sooner than they are finished “compositions.” For this reason, it is not inappropriate to alter them for a new occasion and new set of performers. The arrangement of the “Sea Tempest” recorded here, for example, relies on materials drawn from three different extant versions of the piece. The members of Musica Pacifica picked and chose passages and changed the instrumentation according to what suited them best, a practice very much in line with the Baroque traditions that generated the multiple versions of the piece in the first place. Likewise, in the G minor concerto, some solos are redistributed, and the flute called for is here replaced by recorder, an instrument much happier playing in that key, and one for which the range of the part is virtually ideal.

Vivaldi’s path-breaking violin concertos offered both model and inspiration for the generation of composer-violinists after him. Tartini drew on and expanded the violin concerto, both formally and by his exploration of figuration in solo passages, often imbuing them with a markedly eccentric and personalized character. The slow movement of his Concerto in A Major for solo violin is a splendid example of the gorgeous cantabile for which Tartini was famed as a player and at which his students excelled. Here a simple melody is spun into a quietly emotional meditation that spills into a bright triple-time allegro at the end.

Sammartini garnered his fame not only in the concert halls of London, but in the opera houses there as well. He accompanied Farinelli, played for Bononcini, and also played in Handel’s orchestra. In the opera orchestra, he would have been expected to double on flute and recorder, which probably explains the concerti for these instruments among his works. The recorder Concerto in F Major is a piece that, in its outer movements, presages the galant style which would soon banish the contrapuntal density and harmonic busyness of high Baroque compositions. Its slow movement, by contrast, displays the lyricism and harmonies familiar to us from Handel’s opera arias, here beautifully transferred to the wind idiom. Like Tartini’s famous instrumental cantabile, it would seem that in some respects the “greater” genre of Italian opera dominated even in instrumental works. But this generation of instrumentalist-composers also bequeathed to the future unique vehicles of virtuosity that have continued to appeal to audiences to this very day. The sensitivity of their writing to the best each instrument had to offer made their sonatas and concerti models of new compositional genres, to be sure. But more than that, they provided performers with a repertoire of music that is as rich and satisfying to bring to the stage today as it was when the ink was still wet on the page.

Musica Pacifica achieved recognition as one of North America's premier baroque ensembles soon after the group's founding in 1990. They have been described by the press as "some of the finest baroque musicians in America" (*American Record Guide*) and "among the best in the world" (*Alte Musik Aktuell*). At home in the San Francisco Bay area, the artists are members of Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra, and they appear with many other prominent early music ensembles nationally and abroad.

Musica Pacifica's stylish, high-energy, and virtuoso performances have consistently received enthusiastic reviews from critics and audiences alike. These qualities have led to appearances on such prestigious chamber and early music concert series as the Frick Collection and Music Before 1800 (NY), Tage Alter Musik (Regensburg), the Shrine to Music Museum (Vermillion, SD), the Cleveland Art Museum, the Pittsburgh Renaissance and Baroque Society, the Seattle Early Music Guild, the Los Angeles County Museum, Milwaukee's Early Music Now, the Houston and Arizona Early Music Societies, the Bloomington Early Music Festival, and the Cambridge Early Music Society (MA), among others. They have been a featured ensemble at the Berkeley Early Music Festival three separate times, and their very first appearance there was cited in *Early Music* (UK) as "perhaps the standout of the entire festival." They have performed at festivals in Germany and Austria and have been heard on German National Radio, the BBC, and on National Public Radio's "*Performance Today*" and "*Harmonia*."

Musica Pacifica's six previous CD releases—Bach Trio Sonatas and a 2-CD set of Marais, *Pièces en trio* on Virgin/Veritas; Alessandro Scarlatti *Concerti da camera*; Mancini *Concerti da camera*; Telemann *Chamber Cantatas and Trio Sonatas*; and Vivaldi *La Notte: Concerti per strumenti diversi* on Dorian—have won national and international awards, including the highest ratings in several CD magazines and each one being chosen as "CD of the Month" by the early music journal *Alte Musik Aktuell* (Regensburg). Their Telemann CD, described by *Early Music America Magazine* as "superbly elegant...exemplifying the finest in historical performance today," won Chamber Music America and WQXR's 2003 Record Award honoring the best chamber music recordings of the year. The Mancini recording was cited as a "Noteworthy Disc" in the 2000 International Antonio Vivaldi Awards for Italian Early Music in Venice—the only CD that year by a North American ensemble to receive the honor.

For more information on Musica Pacifica, please visit their website at www.musicapacifica.org.

Judith Linsenberg is one of the leading exponents of the recorder in the U.S. and has been hailed for her "virtuosity," "expressivity," "fearless playing" and "masterly control with risk-taking spontaneity." She has performed extensively throughout the United States and Europe, including solo appearances at the Hollywood Bowl and Lincoln Center; and has been featured with such leading American ensembles as the San Francisco Symphony, the San Francisco and Los Angeles Operas, the LA Chamber Orchestra, Philharmonia Baroque, American Bach Soloists, the Portland, Seattle, and Los Angeles Baroque Orchestras, the Oregon, Carmel, and Philadelphia Bach Festivals, the Oregon Symphony, Musica Sacra of New York, Musica Angelica of Los Angeles, and others. She is the winner of national performance awards, and has premiered several pieces for the recorder, including the US premiere in 2002 of Vivaldi's recorder concerto, RV 312R. Ms. Linsenberg has recorded for Virgin Classics, Dorian, Harmonia Mundi USA, Koch International, Reference Recordings, Musical Heritage Society, and Hänssler Classics. A Fulbright scholar to Austria, she was awarded the Soloist Diploma with Highest Honors from the Vienna Academy of Music. She is a *summa cum laude* graduate of Princeton University, holds a doctorate in early music from Stanford University, and has been a visiting professor at the Vienna Conservatory and Indiana University's Early Music Institute in Bloomington. She has taught at Stanford, the San Francisco Conservatory, and at early music workshops throughout the United States.

Elizabeth Blumenstock, whose performances have been called "magical," "rapturous," and "riveting," is one of the country's leading baroque violinists. A frequent soloist, concertmaster, and leader with Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra, American Bach Soloists, Chicago Opera Theater, and the Italian ensemble, Il Complesso Barocco, she is also a member of several of California's finest period instrument chamber ensembles, including Musica Pacifica, Trio Galatea, Trio Galanterie, and the Arcadian Academy. Ms. Blumenstock is Resident Artistic Director of the Los Angeles-based period-instrument orchestra, Musica Angelica, and is a concertmaster of the newly formed Festival Orchester Goettingen in Germany. With over 85 recordings to her credit, she has recorded for Dorian, harmonia mundi, Virgin Classics, BMG, Reference Recordings, Koch International, Sony, and New Albion. Ms. Blumenstock has appeared with period orchestras and chamber ensembles throughout the United States and abroad, and has performed at the Boston and Berkeley Early Music Festivals, the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival, Los Angeles Opera, Carmel Bach Festival, and San Luis Obispo Mozart Festival, among others. She is instructor of baroque violin at the University of Southern California, teaches regularly at the International Baroque Institute at Longy in

Cambridge, MA, and conducts residencies in Baroque style at conservatories and universities across the country. Ms. Blumenstock is also organist/choir director at Holy Trinity Episcopal Church in Richmond, CA, and is an avid Scrabble and pinball player.

Bassoonist **Michael McCraw**, cited in the newest edition of “Grove’s Dictionary of Music and Musicians” as one of the most important early bassoon players and pedagogues of our time, began his career in New York City as a member of the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra and as one of the pioneers in the field of baroque performance with original instruments. From 1979, he lived in Cologne, Germany, playing with such ensembles as Musica Antiqua Köln, Concentus musicus Wien, London Baroque, Amsterdam Baroque Orchestra, and Camerata Köln. Mr. McCraw moved to Toronto in 1991 to take up the position of principal bassoonist with the Tafelmusik Orchestra, a position he held through 2002. Also a gifted teacher, he has taught at festivals and workshops all over the world and was on the faculty at the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto as well as the University of Toronto. In August 2004, he was appointed director of the Early Music Institute at Indiana University. His recordings number more than 140, including a highly acclaimed CD of Vivaldi bassoon concerti with the Seattle Baroque Orchestra. American Record Guide names this recording “number one for Vivaldi bassoon, with no reservations.” Mr. McCraw continues to free-lance in North America and Europe and is also musical director of the baroque double reed workshop in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Judith Linsenberg, recorders

Alto recorder by Joachim Rohmer, Celle, Germany, 2004, after Denner (Tempesta di Mare)
Soprano recorder by Friedrich von Huene, Boston, 1994, after Terton (Sammartini concerto)
Alto recorder by Friedrich von Huene, Boston, 1994, after Stanesby, Jr (A minor trio)
Alto recorder by Joachim Rohmer, Celle, Germany, 2003, after Bressan (G minor concerto)

Elizabeth Blumenstock, violin

Violin by Desiderio Quercetani, Parma, Italy, 1995, after Stradivari

Michael McCraw, bassoon

Bassoon by Guntram Wolf, Kronach, Germany, 2002, after HKICW, circa 1680.

Robert Mealy, violin

Violin by Karl Dennis, 2004, Rhode Island, after Amati

Claire Jolivet, violin

Violin by Timothy Johnson, 2003, Hewitt, Texas, after Joseph Guarnerius del Gesù, Cremona.

Peter Bucknell, viola

Viola, Anonymous Tyrolean, 18th century

William Skeen, violoncello

Violoncello, Tirol, c. 1720

Josh Lee, double bass

Bass by John Pickering, Greenmont, New Hampshire 1743

Daniel Swenberg, theorbo, archlute, baroque guitar


- Theorbo by Michael Schreiner, Toronto, Canada, 2001, after Schelle, 1728 (Sammartini concerto, A minor trio, G minor concerto)
- Archlute by Michael Schreiner, Toronto, Canada, 2005, after Tecchler, 1725,
- Baroque Guitar by Michael Schreiner, Toronto, Canada, 2003, after Benedid c. 1760 (Tempesta di Mare)

Charles Sherman, harpsichord, organ

- Antique Italian harpsichord, signed GBC 168?, Courtesy of Thomas and Barbara Wolf
- Chest organ by Orgelmakerij van der Putten, Finsterwolde, the Netherlands, 2004. Courtesy of Kenneth Slowik.

Organ tuning by Barbara Wolf; harpsichord tuning by Charles Sherman

Musica Pacifica is very grateful to the following individuals, whose generous contributions helped make this recording possible: Linda Shortridge, Eiji Miki, Keith Jantzen and Scott Beth (in memory of Vivian), Joan Nissman and Morton Abromson, Stevie White, Kathryn Cochran.



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