

Antonio Vivaldi - Dresden Concertos Vol. 1 (1997)



Violin Concerto in C Major, RV 170 1. *I. Presto* 00:03:10 2. *II. Largo* 00:03:05 3. *III. Allegro* 00:03:18
Violin Concerto in B-Flat Major, RV 383
4. *I. Allegro* 00:02:52 5. *II. Largo* 00:02:46 6. *III. Allegro* 00:02:23
Violin Concerto in G Minor, RV 319
7. *I. Allegro* 00:03:22 8. *II. Lento* 00:02:05 9. *III. Allegro* 00:03:53
Violin Concerto in G Major, RV 314a
10. *I. Allegro* 00:05:08 11. *II. Adagio* 00:03:25 12. *III. Allegro* 00:03:58
Violin Concerto in A Major, RV 341
13. *I. Allegro* 00:05:08 14. *II. Largo* 00:03:04 15. *III. Allegro* 00:03:01
Violin Concerto in B-Flat Major, RV 366
16. *I. Allegro* 00:03:49 17. *II. Adagio* 00:01:49 18. *III. Allegro* 00:04:01
Accademia I Filarmonici (Orchestra) Alberto Martini (Violin)

Vivaldi composed these concertos specifically for the Dresden Hofkapelle, whose 40-plus players made it one of the largest orchestras at the time (circa 1719). It also was among the finest, and Vivaldi took full advantage of the ensemble's capabilities in these "concerti con molto Istromenti". This form differs from the usual concerto grosso in that the many solo instruments are not given equal prominence but rather are positioned in a definite hierarchy—the violin is given the lion's share of the solo material while pairs of other instruments, primarily woodwinds, get the spotlight for briefer periods.

The most striking example of this is the first movement of the G minor concerto RV 576, where we hear an intricate, brilliantly constructed panoply of wind voices juxtaposed with the solo violin. The sound of duo recorders lends this concerto (as well as the other in G minor—RV 577) a wonderfully archaic quality, while the F major and C major concertos display the usual Vivaldian high spirits and cleverness of invention. However, the real gem in this collection is the Sinfonia RV 192, a work that blurs the lines between sinfonia and concerto and features some strikingly novel (even for Vivaldi) themes and ensemble textures. This is fascinating, stimulating

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music that Vivaldi fanciers, or even those whose exposure is limited to the Four Seasons, will find richly satisfying. The impressive result is all but guaranteed by the Freiburg Baroque Orchestra's stylish and virtuosic performances under Gottfried von der Goltz's cogent and committed leadership. Opus 111's clear and vibrant recorded sound is the icing on the cake. ---Victor Carr Jr, classicstoday.com

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