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Concert 2 || Concerto Adriatico



FRIDAY, JANUARY 24, 2025 | 7:30 P.M.

Mount Olive Lutheran Church, Rochester, MN

SATURDAY, JANUARY 25, 2025 | 7:30 P.M.

Sundin Music Hall, Hamline University, St. Paul, MN



# Concert 2

## Concerto Adriatico

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Mount Olive Lutheran Church, Rochester, MN

SATURDAY, JANUARY 25, 2025 | 7:30 P.M.

Sundin Music Hall, Hamline University, St. Paul, MN

### PROGRAM

**EVARISTO FELICE DALL'ABACO** (1675–1742)

#### Concerto a pie stromenti

*Op. 6, No. 12 in D*

Allegro | Grave | Allegro ma non troppo

**ANTONIO VIVALDI** (1678–1741)

#### Concerto for Violin

*RV 213a; per Signora Anna Maria*

Allegro | Largo | Allegro-cadenza

**VINKO JELIĆ** (1596–1636)

#### Ricercar Primo

#### Ricercar Tertio

**GIUSEPPE MICHELE STRATICO** (1728–1782)

#### Concerto for Violin and Strings in G Minor

Allegro | Grave | Allegro assai

### INTERMISSION

**GIUSEPPE TARTINI** (1692–1770)

#### Senti lo fonte, senti lo Mare from Sonata XXII Sinfonia in A Major for Strings c. 538

Andante assai | Menuett, Allegro assai | Allegro assai

**GABRIELE USPER** (fl. 1609–1632)

#### Sonata à 4

**GIUSEPPE TARTINI**

#### Concerto for Violin and Strings in E Major

*D. 48; Rondinella vaga e bella*

Allegro | Largo | Allegro



### Tonight's Orchestra

Bojan Čičić

*violin soloist and guest director*

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Bojan Čičić

Croatian-born violinist **BOJAN ČIČIĆ** has established himself as one of the leading names on the early music scene, as both a soloist and music director.

In addition to being the leader of the Academy of Ancient Music, he directs several ensembles, including De Nederlandse Bachvereniging, Dunedin Consort, Slovenian Philharmonic Orchestra, and Phion Orkest van Gelderland & Overijssel.

As a soloist he has appeared with the Academy of Ancient Music, Orchestra of the 18th-Century, Kioi Hall Chamber Orchestra Tokyo, and Orquesta Barroca de Sevilla.

Bojan formed his own group, Illyria Consort, which explores and specializes in lesser-known repertoire of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Their debut album, Giovanni Stefano Carbonelli: *Sonate da Camera*

Nos 1–6 (Delphian Records, 2017), achieved great critical acclaim and won Presto Recordings of the Year Award in 2017.

Their collaboration with Marian Consort, titled *Adriatic Voyage*, won the same award in 2021. The same year saw the release of *Pyrotechnia: Fire & Fury from 18th Century Italy*, featuring Italian virtuoso violin concertos by Vivaldi, Tartini, and Locatelli (“a thrilling musical discovery”—*Classical Music Daily*).

In 2022, Illyria Consort released the first-ever complete recording of Johann Jacob Walther, *Scherzi da Violino: Cucu* (“enviously spontaneous and carefree”—*Gramophone*), as well as an album of Christmas instrumental music titled *La Notte: Concertos and Pastorales for Christmas Night* (“One for every December!”—*BBC Music Magazine*)

His recent recording, *Bach: Sonatas and Partitas*, was nominated for the Critic’s Choice 2023 by *Gramophone* and Editor’s Choice by *BBC Music Magazine*.

In 2016, Bojan was appointed Professor of Baroque Violin at the Royal College of Music, and is passionate about training the next generation of instrumentalists in historically-informed performing styles. ●

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# Concerto Adriatico || Program Notes by Bojan Čičić

Tonight's concert focuses on composers whose lives and careers were related to the Adriatic Coast, spanning over a century of music making, showing different styles and purposes for which the music was written.

The Adriatic region is an area of coastline stretching from the Venetian Republic in the north to the Republic of Ragusa (present-day Dubrovnik) in the south. Most of it was under the influence of La Serenissima, though there was a small pocket of islands and a major city of Fiume (present-day Rijeka), where the Habsburg monarchy had a major port on the Adriatic Sea and therefore offered a different cultural influence to the one given by Venice.

We start tonight's programme with a romp.

**EVARISTO FELICE DALL'ABACO** (1675–1742) is certainly a name one should be more familiar with, based on the final Concerto No. 12 from his Op. 6 titled, *Concerti a piu stromenti*. Venice was renowned throughout Europe for its achievements in music and many tourists arrived from afar to admire, among other things, music performed in the city. The luminous virtuosity presented here reminds us very much of the style of Antonio Vivaldi.

**ANTONIO VIVALDI** (1678–1741) was among the most influential violinists of his day. His Op. 3, *l'Estro Armonico*, and Op. 4, *La Stravaganza*, left a great impression on the young J. S. Bach, who was not the only German musician to be impressed by Vivaldi's work. Johann Georg Pisendel, among the most revered German violinists of the time, lived and worked at the Dresden Court, and in 1716 he came to Venice to study violin and composition with Vivaldi. Upon his return to Dresden, he took with him a great deal of music that he had collected on his travels to Italy, including works dedicated to him by Vivaldi himself.

On one of the surviving manuscripts of the concerto RV 213a, now housed in the State Library in Dresden, Vivaldi wrote "*per Signora Anna Maria*." This is one of Vivaldi's lesser-known concertos, but one has to wonder why its popularity has not increased alongside that of the rest of Vivaldi's work. It uses very advanced violin technique on a par with some of his more popular concertos, crowned at the end with a cadenza for solo violin. We are going to

perform the ornamented version done by Pisendel himself. The extraordinary slow movement shows to what extent the violinists such as Pisendel tried to show his abilities, adding greater and greater complexity until it became a different piece of music than the one that Vivaldi originally published.

Only a few of Vivaldi's capriccios or cadenzas for his concertos have survived, though it seems that violinists were happy to add one whenever they felt like it. Later in the program we will hear another violin concerto that ends with a capriccio, this time by Giuseppe Tartini. Both Vivaldi and Tartini left us with fascinating examples of capriccios that come from a period of experimentation and technical advancement in the baroque era, not previously witnessed on the violin.

**VINKO JELIĆ** (1596–1636) was born in the port of Fiume (Rijeka), which was, like Trieste, in the Habsburg domain. His first post was that of a choir-boy in Archduke's Ferdinand's chapel in Graz and later as an instrumentalist in Alsace, serving at the court of Ferdinand's brother Leopold in Strasbourg. His career was cut short, possibly as a consequence of the turmoil that the Thirty Years War had on the region. Although his *ricercars* were published after his move to Alsace, they likely originate from his time in Graz and may have been composed as a counterpoint exercise.

His contemporary **GABRIELE USPERS** (1609–1632) comes from the Istrian town of Parenzo (Poreč). Both he and his uncle, Francesco Usper, made a career in Venice, where in 1619 they published *Compositioni Armoniche*. It is possible that the vocal works in this opus were composed by Francesco, an organist in Santissimo Salvatore in Venice, while the instrumental works were by his nephew Gabriele. Both of them abandoned their original surname of Sponga and took the one of their Venetian patron Cesare Usper. The *Sonata à 4* shows the influence of Venetian masters of the late sixteenth century, such as Giovanni Gabrieli, with whom Francesco studied in his youth.



The Croatian-Italian violinist **GIUSEPPE MICHELE STRATICO** (1728–1782), born in Zadar, came from a renowned family of Greek descent. He left Zadar to train as a lawyer in Padua, where he also studied music with Antonio Bonaventura Sberti and Giuseppe Tartini. Tartini proved a lasting influence on Stratico, evident in his vast opus of around 280 instrumental works: 36 sinfonias, 60 violin concertos and 170 violin sonatas for one or two violins and continuo. Among the most successful is the Violin Concerto in G Minor, whose melancholic opening presents a style of music typical of Tartini's own works, in which virtuosity is never far removed from the ideal of creating music that is as close as possible to the human voice.

In 1771, Stratico's teacher Bonaventura Sberti wrote: "Tartini therefore abandoned the rowdy muddles that deafen the ears and bewilder the brain, which, imported into Italy by the Teutonic craze to ruin good taste, to this very day enjoy, by what blindness or fanaticism I know not, to much applause in the Academies..."

In these days of our comfortable familiarity with the baroque repertoire and its main composers, performers (and therefore audiences) rarely cast their eyes toward the vast opus of the man who was probably the most influential Italian violinist of the eighteenth century, the Istrian-born **GIUSEPPE TARTINI**. In 1728 he founded his violin school, Scuola di Nazioni, at Padua, which gained wide recognition across Europe. Students came from Italy, France,

Holland, Germany, Sweden, Bohemia, and even the island of Java, as princes of various European courts sent their musicians to perfect their technique under his guidance.

From 1735 onward, Tartini started using the specific trait of representing various affetti, or states of emotion, by materializing them as fragments of poetry by Petrarch, Tasso, Ariosto, and Metastasio, instead of giving us a movement title. The Concerto D.48 in E Major is one such example, where the opening movement has the following fragment: "Cast a more loving look upon me, oh beautiful, but proud eyes." The second movement, which also bears the title of this concerto, has the following line: "The little, beautiful swallow, wandering above the sea, leaves her nest and puts her trust, hope, and flight in the hands of the treacherous sky." The last movement has neither markings nor any poetry at the beginning, but the lyrical, simple quality of its opening seems to suggest a more mundane origin, as if Tartini had heard someone singing or whistling the tune on the streets of Padua before he used it as a closing movement of this concerto.

His early childhood memories, growing up by the sea in the coastal town of Pirano, can be found in such works as the lovely sonata movement in E Minor titled *Senti lo fonte, senti lo mare*, while his Sinfonia in A Major shows popular tropes of the gallant style that the Italian composers of the eighteenth century were renowned for throughout Europe. ●



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