

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Orchestra Sinfonica Nazionale della Rai, strings / Andrea Bacchetti, pianist & conductor

CD 1, total time: 71'31

| | | |
|--|-------------------------------|------|
| Keyboard Concerto No. 1 in D Minor, BWV 1052 21'41 | 1. I. Allegro | 7'26 |
| | 2. II. Adagio | 6'25 |
| | 3. III. Allegro | 7'50 |
| Keyboard Concerto No. 2 in E Major, BWV 1053 20'37 | 4. I. Allegro | 8'27 |
| | 5. II. Siciliano | 5'28 |
| | 6. III. Allegro | 6'42 |
| Keyboard Concerto No. 3 in D Major, BWV 1054 15'35 | 7. I. Allegro | 7'23 |
| | 8. II. Adagio e piano sempre | 5'37 |
| | 9. III. Allegro | 2'35 |
| Keyboard Concerto No. 4 in A Major, BWV 1055 13'35 | 10. I. Allegro | 3'57 |
| | 11. II. Larghetto | 5'08 |
| | 12. III. Allegro ma non tanto | 4'30 |

CD 2, total time: 23'01

| | | |
|--|-----------------------|------|
| Keyboard Concerto No. 5 in F Minor, BWV 1056 9'59 | 1. I. Allegro | 3'34 |
| | 2. II. Largo | 3'04 |
| | 3. III. Presto | 3'21 |
| Keyboard Concerto No. 7 in G Minor, BWV 1058 12'58 | 4. I. Allegro | 3'25 |
| | 5. II. Andante | 5'56 |
| | 6. III. Allegro assai | 3'37 |



Instrument

**Steinway grand piano
model D - 440230**

Piano Technician

Francesco Pelati

Recording

**Turin Rai Auditorium
July 30th-31st 2014**

Recording Engineer

Antonio Verderi

Executive Producers

**Luciano Rebeggiani
Mario Marcarini**

Texts/Testi

Mario Marcarini

Photos

**Marco Manarini (A. Bacchetti)
Laura Casale (A. Bacchetti)
+piùluce (Rai Orchestra)**

Translation

Laura Casale

The Concertos for keyboard by Johann Sebastian Bach

Mario Marcarini

The recent recovery, revision and reconstruction - due to Ottavio Dantone - and the performance of a stack of exquisite pieces for solo harpsichord, strings and basso continuo (which arrived directly from the age between the 17th and the 18th century from the Naples of Alessandro Scarlatti, to whom they are attributed with a certain confidence), show us how the theory that Bach is the only possible and incontrovertible European "inventor" of the modern form of Concerto for single keyboard and orchestra could be entering a dangerous territory. Affirming this, none of the modern academics wants to instil doubt about the work of the German Maestro, a great and meticulous organizer of forms and typologies; instead, the knowledge of precedent works, in this case from Italy, proves how much the Composer was able to treasure the most disparate and variegated - as ancient as contemporaneous - music experiences, showing his capabilities to filter, assimilate and transform them in absolute masterpieces, according to those unwritten but well-known rules that were part of a cultural cosmopolitanism that reaches its highest peaks the 18th century, peaks which probably are never been touched again in fact of free circulation of ideas, opinions and, naturally, arts. While he was employed as organist and Konzertmeister in Weimar (1708-1717), Bach got in touch with a great number of scores from Italy (but not only), which he studied and transcribed - as we all know - at the beginning for solo harpsichord: these scores were concerts by Antonio Vivaldi, Alessandro and Benedetto Marcello, which were transformed and transfigured with amazing competence and technical expertise. In the following years (1717-1723), when he

moved to Köthen, Bach's career went on also through composing some works in the concerto style, a genre that was establishing in Germany and in which Johann Sebastian Bach knew how to admirably merge Italian virtuosity and love for melody into formal rigor and Nordic polyphonic wisdom. With the Brandenburg Concertos, written in that period, he has literally created a formal model that can be considered the European synthesis of the most advanced and avant-garde tendencies of that age. The composition of religious and liturgical music represented the principal task for Bach during the first years of his stay in Dresden, starting from 1723, in a determinant way: in 1729, however, the Kantor got a proposal to become director of the Leipzig Collegium Musicum, a society of amateurs, professional musicians and music lovers created by Telemann in 1702 that performed a secular repertoire weekly in some city bars, like the famous Café Zimmermann. The performances' frequency, the cultured audience and the presence of eminent middle class exponents put Bach in the position to present a large part of his previously written instrumental repertoire again (e.g. the Brandenburg Concertos), adding some new works, among which there are also the concertos for solo keyboard and instrumental ensemble, that in many cases seem to be composed from preexisting works that were skilfully transcribed and elaborated also for the ablest Bach's pupils' benefit (many among his numerous children included). We should remark that almost all the original pieces from which Bach took his Concertos for keyboard went lost; so, in addition to their principal musical importance, these pieces get a very important documentary value, and on this last one we are going to dwell. Going on in this activity, that was favoured by the circumstances, Johann Sebastian Bach handed down no fewer than

fourteen concertos to posterity (one of them, BWV 1059, has arrived to us only as fragment) in which harpsichord is the absolute protagonist: excluding the fragmentary page, we can recognize seven times that the soloist is an unique instrument (BWV 1052-1058); in other three occasions, there are two keyboards concertante (BWV 1060-1062); two "triple" concertos are under the catalogue numbers BWV 1063-1064, while four soloists appear in the very famous BWV 1065 (borrowed by a concert for four violins by Antonio Vivaldi). Concerning the concertos for solo harpsichord known nowadays with catalogue numbers BWV 1052-1059, we have a main source available: an autograph manuscript arrived to us and is actually kept in Staatsbibliothek Berlin. It is a document that shows clearly the unitary nature of this collection. Beyond Bach's numerous corrections and changes of mind, the manuscript presents - as further proof of the formal cohesion ideated by the Composer - the initial and final annotations "JJ" ("Jesu Juva") and "Finis. S. D. Gl." ("Soli Deo Gloria") relative to the six Concertos BWV 1052-1059, that were evidently considered as an overall corpus by the Author, although the Concerto BWV 1058 and the fragmentary BWV 1059 were probably excluded from this unity, having been confined at the end of the working score: maybe they were simply kept out of the compilation, maybe it was done to indicate a second never-completed collection. According to musicology, this precious document was drawn up between 1733 and 1746. As usual in Bach's way to work, the six concertos - that are normally considered as a single work - offer an extreme variety in terms of inspiration (we already cited the cosmopolitan cultural substratum that makes the Author able to access to Italian, French and, of course, German scores), that Bach treats with a combinatory mastery

and a counterpoint ability that have a very few terms for comparison in all the history of music. Virtuosity and rigorous spirit are put in a thrilling contrast in the three movements (Allegro - Adagio - Allegro) of the first Concerto BWV 1052, taken by a precedent piece for solo violin, in which it is possible to find also thematic materials that were recurring in religious cantatas written in the '20s of the 18th century. In the same way, BWV 1053 owes many soloist sparks to two cantatas (BWV 49 and BWV 169) written in 1726. Here the spirit is less severe than in the precedent piece, and the harpsichord creates a relaxed, richly adorned in the central movement, melody. Flowery and virtuous, also the third and last movement claims the soloist preeminence on instrumental accompaniment. The renown, solemn preamble of the wide introduction in the sequent Concerto recalls the largeness and the magniloquent poetry in BWV 1042 (solo violin, bows and continuo), a counterpoint masterpiece in its two rapid movements, which hold the melancholic and thoughtful beauty of the Adagio e piano sempre. The fourth in this series (BWV 1055) is inexplicably one of the least known and performed works, but it is every bit as good as the most renowned pages of the collection. For a long time, it has been considered an original composition, as if it was not derived from re-elaborated preexisting pages, although in recent years musicology hypothesized that its source of inspiration could have been a concerto for solo oboe that went lost. Among the most touching pages of the collection, the Concerto BWV 1056 distinguishes itself for its thoughtful pace also in brightest movements, while abandoning itself to purity and to the most painful melancholy in the rightfully famous Largo (taken from the introductory Symphony of the Cantata BWV 156) in which the soloist plays only with the right hand.

In this recording, it has been decided to keep the Concerto BWV 1057

(a transcription of the Fourth Brandenburg Concerto) out. So, we go on listening to the Concerto BWV 1058, which opens once again with a severe solemnity, like the Concerto BWV 1041 for solo violin from which it has been taken. The distinctive sign of the two Allegro movements is the extreme virtuosity requested to the keyboard player, while the central tempo seems to be, as usual, very meditative. Although Johann Sebastian Bach probably wasn't the first composer who chose to dedicate a main role to solo harpsichord in orchestra, we have to say that since the dawn of this genre, the German Composer has proved not only to be an organizer of a form, but also to be able to give life to that form, innervating it with an extraordinary technical wisdom, on which he inserted all those emotions that only the genius of art can communicate to their beneficiaries, without explanations, without intermediaries; because the most divine poetry does not need to be decoded, and in this sense Bach teaches to posterity that music can be the most elevated of arts, because it speaks directly to our senses, and that only the greatest minds are able to accomplish this prodigy.

Andrea Bacchetti

When he is still very young, he collects wise advice by Karajan, Magaloff e Berio. He has his debut at the age of eleven, playing with the Solisti Veneti lead by Scimone. Andrea plays in festivals such as Lucerne, Salzburg, Toulouse (Piano aux Jacobins), Lugano, Sapporo, Brescia e Bergamo, La Roque d'Anteron (RadioFrance), Milan (MI.TO), La Coruna (Festival Mozart), Pesaro, Ravenna, Warsaw (Beethoven Festival). He also plays in musical centres such as: Konzerthaus (Berlin); Salle Pleyel (Paris); Rudolfinum Dvorak Hall (Prague); Rachmaninov Saal, The Moscow State Philharmonic Society (Moscow); Auditorium Nacional de España (cycle Scherzo and CNDM), Teatro Real (Madrid); Musashino Concert Hall (Tokyo); Parco della Musica (Rome); Gewandhaus (Leipzig). He has worked with many orchestras (Lucerne Festival Strings, Camerata Salzburg, RTVE Madrid, MDR Lipsia, Filarmonica della Scala, ORF Vienna, Philharmonie der Nationen, Hamburg, Enescu Philharmonic, Bucharest) and with orchestra leaders such as Venzago, Luisi, Zedda, Lu Ja, Justus Frantz, Baumgartner, just to mention some among them. He records in exclusive for Sony Classical. Memorable discs in his discography: the SACD with Cherubini's Sonatas (Penguin Guide UK, Rosette 2010), The Scarlatti Restored Manuscript, vincitore (ICMA Baroque Instrumental winner in 2014), Bach's Inventions & Sinfonias (Disc of the Month BBCMusicMagazine, September 2009), The Italian Bach (Disc of the Month Record Geijutsu, May 2014).

www.andrabacchetti.net

Orchestra Sinfonica Nazionale della Rai

The first Orchestra of the Italian public radio authority was founded in 1931 in Turin; then also the orchestras of Rome, Milan and Naples were created. Orchestra Sinfonica Nazionale della Rai was born in 1994 after their unification, becoming one of the most prestigious Italian orchestras.

Starting from november 2009, its principal conductor is Juraj Valčuha; it has been announced that James Conlon will be the new principal conductor starting from October 2016.

With its presence in radio and television show schedules, the Orchestra contributed to broadcast the symphonic repertoire and historical and artistic avant-garde,

collecting important discographical awards.

It goes on with special cycles side by side the Turin concert season and participates to the principal international festivals. Among its recent abroad dates: Abu Dhabi Classics, a tour in Germany, Austria and Slovakia - that marked the orchestra debut to Wien Musikverein and its comeback to Berlin Philharmonie - the RadiRo and the Enescu festivals in Bucharest, another tour in Germany and Swiss and one in Russia. The Rai Orchestra is also in charge of recording theme songs and soundtracks for Rai TV shows. CDs and DVDs are often recorded from its live concerts.

www.osn.rai.it






CLASSICA
★★★★★★
MUSICAL
★★★★★ *Opinion*

RITMO
★★★★★
SUPERSONIC
pizzicato

THE BACH
EDITION



SONY MUSIC

88875184942 - © & © 2015 Sony Music Entertainment Italy Spa.
Distributed by Sony Music Entertainment. All trademarks and logos are
protected. Made in the EU. Sony Music Entertainment International Services
GmbH, PO Box 510, 33311 Gütersloh, Germany.  and Sony Classical are
trademarks of Sony Corporation. LC 06868 - Biem/Gema.