Antonio Vivaldi - Concerti e Sinfonia per Archi (2006)



01 - Sinfonia in C major, RV111a - 1. Allegro 02 - Sinfonia in C major, RV111a - 2. Andante 03 - Sinfonia in C major, RV111a - 3. Presto. 04 - Concerto in G minor, RV157 - 1. Allegro 05 - Concerto in G minor, RV157 - 2. Largo 06 - Concerto in G minor, RV157 - 3. Allegro 07 - Concerto in D minor, RV127 - 1. Allegro 08 - Concerto in D minor, RV127 - 2. Largo 09 - Concerto in D minor, RV127 - 3. Allegro 10 - Sinfonia in B minor, RV168 - 1. Allegro 11 - Sinfonia in B minor, RV168 - 2. Andante 12 - Sinfonia in B minor, RV168 - 3. Allegro 13 - Concerto in C major, RV114 - 1. Allegro 14 - Concerto in C major, RV114 - 2. Adagio 15 - Concerto in C major, RV114 - 3. Ciaccona 16 - Concerto in G minor, RV152 - 1. Allegro molto 17 - Concerto in G minor, RV152 - 2. Andante molto 18 - Concerto in G minor, RV152 - 3. Allegro molto 19 - Concerto in D major, RV121 - 1. Allegro molto 20 - Concerto in D major, RV121 - 2. Adagio 21 - Concerto in D major, RV121 - 3. (Allegro) 22 - Concerto in B flat major 'Conca', RV163 - 1. (Allegro) - Allegro molto 23 - Concerto in B flat major 'Conca', RV163 - 2. Andante 24 - Concerto in B flat major 'Conca', RV163 - 3. Allegro 25 - Concerto in C minor, RV119 - 1. Allegro 26 - Concerto in C minor, RV119 - 2. Largo 27 - Concerto in C minor, RV119 - 3. Allegro. 28 - Concerto in G minor, RV156 - 1. Allegro 29 - Concerto in G minor, RV156 - 2. Adagio 30 - Concerto in G minor, RV156 - 3. Allegro 31 - Concerto in B flat major, RV167 - 1. Allegro 32 - Concerto in B flat major, RV167 - 2. Andante 33 - Concerto in B flat major, RV167 - 3. Allegro 34 - Sinfonia in G major, RV146 - 1. Allegro. 35 - Sinfonia in G major, RV146 - 2. Andante 36 - Sinfonia in G major, RV146 - 3. Presto Venice Baroque Orchestra Andrea Marcon – conductor

Someone ought to get some t-shirts made that say "Vivaldi rocks!" At least that partly accounts for his popularity in the twenty first century; among the old masters, Antonio Vivaldi's sense of rhythmic dynamics and the gale-like force of many of his string concertos are close enough to the ever-enervating pulse of pop music that he has found an unlikely audience among younger listeners. Andrea Marcon and the Venice Baroque Orchestra's disc Vivaldi: Concerti & Sinfonie per Archi delivers these very kinds of goods, and will prove pleasing to Vivaldi fanciers of the younger set. However, for listeners whose tastes are a bit longer in the tooth, Vivaldi: Concerti & Sinfonie per Archi also provides a very useful tool in distinguishing what is different between Vivaldi works titled by him "Sinfonias" and those designated as "Concerto."

Some older listeners are just waking up to the notion of variety in Vivaldi's music, living for too long under the mistaken apprehension that "Vivaldi wrote the same concerto 600 times." Certain cheaper record companies further complicate matters by issuing Vivaldi's sinfonias as "concertos," and there is a particularly persistent older recording of Vivaldi's Sinfonia in G minor, RV 142, that repeatedly shows up as a concerto, driving some to distraction. To an academic, these distinctions are simply understood; a sinfonia is not a symphony, but an opera overture, and these tend to be shorter and somewhat pithier than Vivaldi's concertos, which also tend to feature solo instrumentalists or groups of them. However, there is an entire rank of some 38 concertos in which no solo instrument is specified, and the whole ensemble is seen as the "soloist"; in these cases, even some experts would be hard pressed to tell the difference between such pieces and Vivaldi's sinfonias.

With Vivaldi: Concerti & Sinfonie per Archi the distinction is clear, and it is one of flavor as much as of form. One can almost hear the curtain rise in the sinfonias, whereas the concerti shows the musicians busily engaged in putting over exceedingly difficult ensemble jams -- it is as if whole band is functioning as a singer in one of Vivaldi's operas. For getting a grip on these issues, Vivaldi: Concerti & Sinfonie per Archi is terrific, and it is a heck of a good performance and recording as well. This one gets an easy "thumbs up." --- Uncle Dave Lewis, Rovi

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