



CONCERT PROGRAM I:
The Path to Bach

JULY 15

Saturday, July 15
 6:00 p.m., The Center for Performing Arts at Menlo-Atherton

SPECIAL THANKS

Music@Menlo dedicates this performance to Betsy Morgenthaler with gratitude for her generous support.

Fête the Festival (8:30 p.m., following the concert)

Join the Artistic Directors, festival musicians, and friends on July 15 to celebrate the season opening at a catered dinner reception at the Menlo Park Arrillaga Family Recreation Center. (Tickets: \$65. Advance purchase required.)

CARLO FARINA (ca. 1604–1639)

Capriccio stravagante (1627)

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| <i>Entrata</i> | <i>Timpana (Drum)</i> |
| <i>La lira (The Hurdy-Gurdy)</i> | <i>La gallina (The Hen) – Il gallo (The Rooster)</i> |
| <i>Il pifferino (The Little Fife)</i> | <i>Il flautino (The Little Flute)</i> |
| <i>La lira variata (The Unkeyed Hurdy-Gurdy)</i> | <i>Il tremulante (The Organ with Tremulant)</i> |
| <i>Qui si batte con il legno dell'archetto (Col legno)</i> | <i>Fiferino della soldatesca, il tamburo (Soldier's Fife and Drum)</i> |
| <i>La trombetta (The Little Trumpet) – Il clarino (The Clarinet)</i> | <i>Il gatto (The Cat)</i> |
| | <i>Il cane (The Dog)</i> |
| | <i>La chitarra spagnola (The Spanish Guitar)</i> |

Soovin Kim, violin; Hsin-Yun Huang, Amy Schwartz Moretti, violas; Brook Speltz, cello; Scott Pingel, bass; Gilbert Kalish, harpsichord

MARCO UCCELLINI (ca. 1603–1680)

Sonata no. 18 for Two Violins from Sonatas, Correnti, and Arias, op. 4 (1645)

Adam Barnett-Hart, Arnaud Sussmann, violins; Dmitri Atapine, cello; Gloria Chien, harpsichord

GIOVANNI BATTISTA VITALI (1632–1692)

Passagallo primo from Varie partite del passamezzo, ciaccone, capricci, e passagalii for Two Violins and Continuo, op. 7 (1682)

Soovin Kim, Amy Schwartz Moretti, violins; Brook Speltz, cello; Hyeeyon Park, harpsichord

PIETRO ANTONIO LOCATELLI (1695–1764)

Concerto in g minor from L'arte del violino, op. 3, no. 6 (1733)

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| <i>Largo – Andante</i> | <i>Vivace</i> |
| <i>Adagio</i> | |

Arnaud Sussmann, solo violin; Aaron Boyd, Soovin Kim, violins; Hsin-Yun Huang, viola; Dmitri Atapine, cello; Gloria Chien, harpsichord

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The 2017 festival journey begins in the generation before J. S. Bach: through the ingenuity of such composer-virtuosi as Carlo Farina, Marco Uccellini, and Pietro Antonio Locatelli, the violin evolved from the modest fiddle of street musicians to the voice of musical nobility. Next to the works of these early innovators, Concert Program I features one of the iconic masterpieces of the instrument's repertoire, Tartini's famous *Devil's Trill* Sonata. The latter half of the program brings together the Baroque period's most influential composers—Arcangelo Corelli, Antonio Vivaldi, and Johann Sebastian Bach—whose sea-parting concerti simultaneously crowned a king of instruments and defined a musical era.

GIUSEPPE TARTINI (1692–1770)

Sonata in g minor, Devil's Trill (ca. 1714)

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| <i>Andante</i> | <i>Andante – Allegro</i> |
| <i>Allegro</i> | |

Adam Barnett-Hart, violin; Keith Robinson, cello; Hyeeyon Park, harpsichord

INTERMISSION

ARCANGELO CORELLI (1653–1713)

Concerto Grosso in g minor, op. 6, no. 8, Christmas Concerto (1714)

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| <i>Vivace – Grave</i> | <i>Vivace</i> |
| <i>Allegro</i> | <i>Allegro</i> |
| <i>Adagio – Allegro – Adagio</i> | <i>Pastorale: Largo</i> |

Amy Schwartz Moretti, Soovin Kim, Aaron Boyd, Adam Barnett-Hart, violins; Pierre Lapointe, viola; Keith Robinson, cello; Scott Pingel, bass; Hyeeyon Park, harpsichord

ANTONIO VIVALDI (1678–1741)

Concerto in D Major for Two Violins, Two Cellos, Strings, and Continuo,

- RV 564** (before 1742)
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|----------------|----------------|
| <i>Allegro</i> | <i>Allegro</i> |
| <i>Largo</i> | |

Adam Barnett-Hart, Soovin Kim, solo violins; Aaron Boyd, Amy Schwartz Moretti, violins; Pierre Lapointe, viola; Keith Robinson, Dmitri Atapine, cellos; Scott Pingel, bass; Gilbert Kalish, harpsichord

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH (1685–1750)

Double Violin Concerto in d minor, BWV 1043 (1730–1731)

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|----------------------------|----------------|
| <i>Vivace</i> | <i>Allegro</i> |
| <i>Largo, ma non tanto</i> | |

Aaron Boyd, Amy Schwartz Moretti, solo violins; Soovin Kim, Adam Barnett-Hart, violins; Hsin-Yun Huang, viola; Brook Speltz, cello; Scott Pingel, bass; Wu Han, harpsichord

The Dream, engraving by James Marshall for the Violin Sonata in g minor, Devil's Trill, by Giuseppe Tartini (1692–1770). Zenetorteneteti Muzeum. © DeAgostini Picture Library/Art Resource, NY

Program Notes: The Path to Bach

Notes on the program by Patrick Castillo

CARLO FARINA

(Born ca. 1604, Mantua, Italy; died 1639, Vienna)

Capriccio stravagante

Composed: Completed by 1627

Published: 1627, Dresden

Other works from this period: *Libro delle pavane, gagliarde, brand: mascharata, aria franzesa, volte, balletti, sonate, canzone* (1626); *Il terzo libro delle pavane, gagliarde, brand: mascherata, arie franzese, volte, corrente, sinfonie* (1627); *Il quarto libro delle pavane, gagliarde, balletti, volte, passamezi, sonate, canzoni* (1628)

Approximate duration: 16 minutes

MARCO UCCELLINI

(Born ca. 1603 or 1610, Forlimpopoli, Forlì, Italy; died September 11, 1680)

Sonata no. 18 for Two Violins from Sonatas, Correnti, and Arias, op. 4

Composed: Completed by 1645

Published: 1645, Venice

Other works from this period: *Violin Sonatas over Canzoni, op. 5* (1649)

Approximate duration: 5 minutes

GIOVANNI BATTISTA VITALI

(Born February 18, 1632, Bologna, Italy; died October 12, 1692, Bologna)

Passagallo primo from Varie partite del passamezo, ciaccone, capriccii, e passagalii for Two Violins and Continuo, op. 7

Composed: Completed by 1682

Published: 1682, Modena

Other works from this period: *Balletti, correnti, e capriccii per camera for Two Violins and Continuo, op. 8* (1683); *Sonate da chiesa for Two Violins and Continuo, op. 9* (1684); *Varie sonate alla francese e all'italiana, op. 11* (1684)

Approximate duration: 2 minutes

PIETRO ANTONIO LOCATELLI

(Born September 3, 1695, Bergamo, Italy; died March 30, 1764, Amsterdam)

Concerto in g minor from L'arte del violino, op. 3, no. 6

Composed: Completed by 1733

Published: 1733, Amsterdam

Other works from this period: *Twelve Flute Sonatas, op. 2* (1732); *Sei introduzioni teatrali e sei concerti grossi, op. 4* (1735); *Six Sonatas for Two Violins and Continuo, op. 5* (1736)

Approximate duration: 17 minutes

GIUSEPPE TARTINI

(Born April 8, 1692, Pirano, Istria [now Slovenia]; died February 26, 1770, Padua, Italy)

Sonata in g minor, Devil's Trill

Composed: ca. 1714

Published: 1798, in *L'art du violon*, ed. J. B. Cartier

Approximate duration: 14 minutes

The violin traces its origins to the early or mid-sixteenth century. The first documented description of the instrument “supported on the arm,” without frets, and with four strings tuned in fifths (as they are today) dates from 1556; for more than four centuries, this invention’s fundamental design has remarkably required no updating to remain in ubiquitous daily use.

Though originally considered a commoner’s instrument (gentlemen played the six-string viol), over the course of the seventeenth century, the violin gradually attained supremacy. Its rise to greater prominence was catalyzed by the experimentation of a succession of early violinist-composers—a lineage of innovators that culminated in Arcangelo Corelli, the first of the great violinists.

The violin writing in Claudio Monteverdi’s *L’Orfeo*, which premiered in Mantua in 1607, introduced **tremolando**, **pizzicato**, and other dramatic idiomatic effects. Monteverdi served at the court in Mantua; his Concertmaster was the violinist and composer Salamone Rossi, also an important early innovator, whose publications included the earliest **trio sonatas**, scored for two violins and bass lute.

Little is known of the Italian violinist and composer **CARLO FARINA**’s early life, but, born in Mantua in 1604, he can be presumed to have absorbed Monteverdi’s legacy and encountered Rossi’s playing firsthand. In 1625, after gaining some renown as a violinist, Farina was appointed Konzertmeister of the court of Johann Georg I, Elector of Saxony, in Dresden, where he worked under Heinrich Schütz. He returned to Italy in 1629 and held various posts in different cities until 1635; he thereafter held positions in Danzig and Vienna, where he died in 1639.

All of Farina’s extant music dates from his time in Dresden: five volumes of music (primarily dance pieces) for the violin, featuring early examples of virtuosic writing idiomatic to the instrument. The colorful **Capriccio stravagante**, from the *Libro di pavane e gagliarde*, is Farina’s best-known work. The *Capriccio* deploys the violin to mimic the sounds of various other instruments (a lyre, a clarion trumpet, a military drum, and a Spanish guitar) and even animals (a cat, a dog, and a hen) using **glissando**, **pizzicato**, **col legno** (using the wood of the bow, rather than the hair), **sul ponticello**, and other techniques.

Much of the Italian violinist and composer **MARCO UCCELLINI**’s biography is likewise unknown. He was born in Forlimpopoli, in the Northern Italian *comune* of Forlì, and held the music directorship at the court of Modena from 1641 to 1662 and then at the Modena cathedral from 1647 to 1665. He subsequently served as **maestro di cappella** in Parma until his death in 1680.

The majority of Uccellini’s surviving music comprises **sonatas** for violin and **continuo**, which represented some of the most technically advanced violin writing at the midpoint of the seventeenth century, utilizing virtuosic runs and derring-do leaps into the instrument’s highest register. It is with Uccellini that we first encounter violin playing as high as the sixth position, expanding the instrument’s range to three **octaves**, which would suffice for composers until Vivaldi’s sea-parting concerti grossi. Uccellini’s music is also noteworthy for its deep expressivity, his melodic writing for the violin demonstrating a lyrical soulfulness, enhanced by the use of **trills** and other ornamentation. The **Sonata no. 18** from Uccellini’s **Opus 4** collection of *Sonatas, Correnti* (a fast, triple-meter dance form), and **Arias** demonstrates such lyricism, as well as crackling virtuosity and a harmonically adventurous ear.

Bologna was at this time one of Italy’s academic and cultural centers, and the 1657 appointment of Maurizio Cazzati as the new Music Director of the Basilica of San Petronio revitalized the city’s musical life. Cazzati hired a large complement of musicians to serve at San Petronio: twenty-two singers and thirteen instrumentalists. Among these was the composer, cellist, and singer **GIOVANNI BATTISTA VITALI**. (Vitali’s students included his son Tomaso, who would achieve acclaim in his own right as a violinist and composer.)

Not a violinist himself, Vitali “did not expand the technique of the instrument,” writes violinist and musicologist Boris Schwarz, “but used the violin idiomatically, exploring its songfulness and agility”—as demonstrated in the **Passagallo primo** for Two Violins and Continuo from his *Opus 7* volume of *Varie partite del passamezo, ciaccone, capriccii, e passagalii*. Vitali’s contributions to the repertoire also included numerous trio sonatas, which influenced Corelli, Torelli, and Purcell and helped to establish the genre as a **Baroque** standard.

*Bolded terms are defined in the glossary, which begins on page 92.

Arguably the most technically accomplished violin virtuoso of the following generation, and of the eighteenth century at large, was **PIETRO ANTONIO LOCATELLI**, born in 1695. One of Corelli's three star pupils (along with Francesco Geminiani and Giovanni Battista Somis), Locatelli "must be considered the founding father of modern instrumental virtuosity," writes musicologist Albert Dunning. Proudly aware of his standing among the musical elite, Locatelli moreover jealously guarded his gifts. One contemporary account noted, "Locatelli is so afraid of people's learning from him that he won't admit a musician into his concert," calling to mind anecdotes of Louis Armstrong covering his fingers in performance lest a rival musician steal a lick.

Nevertheless, Locatelli managed to exercise considerable influence via *L'arte del violino*, his confidently titled volume of twelve violin concerti published in 1733. These concerti constitute the most significant part of Locatelli's oeuvre and illustrate the most advanced instrumental technique of the day. They captivated no less a master than Paganini, who credited *L'arte del violino* with "open[ing] up a world of new ideas and devices that never had the merited success because of excessive difficulties." The twelve concerti collectively feature twenty-four solo violin **caprices**, in the first and last **movements** of each **concerto**. Paganini began composing his celebrated Twenty-Four Caprices after discovering *L'arte* and quoted Locatelli's Concerto in E Major, op. 3, no. 4, in his own first caprice. Abroad, *L'arte del violino* was nothing short of transformative of the instrument's tradition: its Paris publication in 1740 triggered a sudden rise in virtuosity among French violinists. Jean-Marie Leclair, regarded as the founder of the French violin school, is known to have valued Locatelli's concerti.

Though the twenty-four caprices of *L'arte del violino* are occasionally performed independently of the concerti, this approach loses the totality of what are, in actuality, quite delectable concerti. Witness the **Concerto in g minor**, bookended by an affecting slow first movement and a rousing **Vivace** finale, despite the unsmiling key. Yet indeed, the concerto's highlights are the dazzling caprices in these outer movements, which prefigure the Romantic concerto tradition in their glorification of the heroic virtuoso.

Among the luminaries of the instrument spellbound by *L'arte del violino* was **GIUSEPPE TARTINI**. Though largely self-taught, save for the influence of Corelli, Vivaldi, and Locatelli, Tartini came to be considered, by the mid-eighteenth century, the finest violinist of his generation. The flutist Johann Joachim Quantz praised Tartini as "indeed one of the greatest violin players. He drew a beautiful tone from his instrument. Fingers and bow were at his command. He executed the greatest difficulties very cleanly without visible effort. He could play trills, even double trills, equally well with all the fingers. In fast as well as in slow movements, he intermingled many **double-stops** and liked to play in extremely high positions."

"If you had heard him," noted one Count Algarotti, "you would believe that never before in your life have you heard a violin."

Aside from a brief visit to Prague in 1723, which he did not enjoy, Tartini spent his entire life in his native Italy. The rest of Europe came to him instead: in 1727 or 1728, he founded a violin academy in Padua, which attracted students from across the continent, earning Tartini the sobriquet of "maestro delle nazioni." Three centuries later, a student traveling in pursuit of an acclaimed pedagogue is par for the course—Tartini's school marks this academic tradition's point of origin.

In both his playing and his compositional style, Tartini presaged **Classical** and even Romantic aesthetics. His famous **Devil's Trill Sonata** burns with an intense ardor a century ahead of its time and befitting its paranormal inspiration. "One night," the composer claimed, "I dreamed that I had sold my soul to the Devil. All went well; my new servant fulfilled all my wishes. I gave him my violin out of curiosity; but I was amazed to hear him play a sonata so miraculous and beautiful...that it exceeded all flights of imagination. I was enchanted, my breath stopped, and I awoke. I reached for my violin to reproduce some of the sounds I heard in my dream. In vain. The music I composed at that moment is no doubt the best I ever wrote—and I call it the Devil's Sonata—but it is a far cry from what I heard in my dream."

Boris Schwarz surmises, "In the history of violin playing, Tartini is the mighty ancestor whose basic concepts of the instrument are still valid today: variety of bow articulations, sturdy left-hand technique both in double-

stops and fluent runs, and—above all—a singing **cantabile** style which he preached to all his students. *Per ben suonare bisogna ben cantare* ("to play well one must sing well") was his motto, and it has guided violinists through the centuries." As the inheritor of the tradition of Corelli and Locatelli, Tartini subsequently cast a spell on the master violinists of the nineteenth century, including Vieuxtemps, Wieniawski, Joachim, and others. His and his contemporaries' contributions to the instrument's repertoire outline the beginning of a dynamic tradition, safeguarded for centuries and nurtured anew with each performance of these foundational works.

ARCANGELO CORELLI

(Born February 17, 1653, Fusignano, Italy; died January 8, 1713, Rome)

Concerto Grosso in g minor, op. 6, no. 8, Christmas Concerto

Published: 1714, Amsterdam

Other works from this period: Twelve Violin Sonatas, op. 5 (1700); Sonata in D Major for Trumpet, Two Violins, and Bass (1704); Six Trio Sonatas (1714)

Approximate duration: 13 minutes

The violin's earliest innovators—a generation of Italian violinist-composers including Salamone Rossi, Biagio Marini, Carlo Farina, G. B. Vitali, Giuseppe Torelli, et al.—can fairly be viewed as forerunners to Arcangelo Corelli, the first of the great violinists. Corelli represents the start of the tradition of instrumental excellence that continues with today's finest virtuosos.

One contemporary observer attested:

I never met with any man that suffered his passions to hurry him away so much whilst he was playing on the violin as the famous Corelli, whose eyes will sometimes turn red as fire; his countenance will be distorted, his eyeballs roll as in an agony, and he gives in so much to what he is doing that he doth not look like the same man...A symphony of furies shakes the soul...the artist himself, whilst he is performing it, is seized with an unavoidable agony; he tortures his violin; he racks his body; he is no longer master of himself but is agitated like one possessed with an irresistible motion.

It is surprising, then, that he never enjoyed a particularly successful performance career or undertook even one international concert tour. But Corelli's sonatas and, especially, his concerti grossi mark a watershed in the history of the instrument—indeed, of Western music at large—and it is consequently as a composer rather than as an instrumentalist that Corelli achieved international renown. Furthermore, as opposed to Locatelli, whose *L'arte del violino* garnered acclaim for its fiendish virtuosity, Corelli's music, rather short on pyrotechnics, instead won over admirers with its formal elegance and noble character.

Corelli withdrew from public performance after 1708 and spent his final years preparing his concerti grossi for publication. The twelve concerti grossi appeared posthumously, in 1714, as his Opus 6.

The structure of the Baroque **concerto grosso** (e.g., Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons* and *L'estro armonico*, Bach's *Brandenburg* Concerti, et al.) arose from Corelli's formal innovations. The concerto grosso involves a dialogue between sections of music played by the full ensemble and more intimate sections played by a group of soloists, called the **concertino**. This convention reflected the structure of the personnel at large musical chapels, which comprised two categories of musicians: the **ripieno**, or full ensemble, and a small group of soloists. The ripienists were typically players of average ability, whereas the soloists exhibited higher instrumental facility.

Just as, in a later era, Haydn would formalize certain conventions, to be crystallized by Mozart and Beethoven, Corelli's Opus 6 laid the foundation for the Baroque concerto grosso. The twelve concerti, like Corelli's trio sonatas, fall into two distinct categories: *da camera* (for the chamber) and *da chiesa* (for the church). The concerti *da chiesa* are more solemn and dignified in character and typically exclude dance movements, which appear in the concerti and sonatas *da camera*.

The most famous of the Opus 6 concerti is the Concerto no. 8 in g minor, “Fatto per la notte di Natale”—made for Christmas night. Its precise year of composition is unclear; Corelli had composed a Christmas concerto as early as 1690, which may be this g minor concerto.

The *Christmas Concerto*, as it is more simply known, also exemplifies Corelli’s *da chiesa* style. The work is scored for a concertino of two violins and cello, ripieno strings, and continuo and is cast in six movements instead of the usual four. After a stately **tutti** opening comes a mysterious **Grave**, marked by sensual dissonances, and then a sprightly **Allegro** propelled by the concertino.

The **Adagio** third movement features expressive lyricism, centered on a tender dialogue between the concertino violins. A vigorous **Allegro** episode interrupts before the movement ends with a reprise of the loving **Adagio**. A gallant triple-meter **Vivace** and spirited **Allegro** follow, proceeding **attacca** to one of Corelli’s most beloved creations: the *Pastorale ad libitum* in lilting 12/8 time.

ANTONIO VIVALDI

(Born March 4, 1678, Venice; died July 27 or 28, 1741, Vienna)

Concerto in D Major for Two Violins, Two Cellos, Strings, and Continuo, RV 564

Composed: Before 1742

Approximate duration: 11 minutes

Antonio Vivaldi’s vast catalogue of concerti demonstrates an imaginative breadth that ranks him among the most important voices of the Baroque period and certainly as the most influential Italian composer of his generation. In the lineage of great composer-violinists, Vivaldi succeeds Corelli with a fury, infusing Corelli’s stylistic and technical innovations with an incandescent virtuosity and dramatic audacity that would inform listeners’ fundamental understanding of music for generations.

The concerto medium—a form intended as a vehicle for soloistic virtuosity—was Vivaldi’s calling card, and it developed into the quintessential Baroque genre largely by his hand. Vivaldi’s concerti were of consequential influence on no less a genius than Johann Sebastian Bach: when Bach first discovered the violin concerti of Vivaldi’s *L’estro armonico*, he was helplessly seduced by their high-flying virtuoso quality; it is no exaggeration to say that Bach’s *Brandenburg* Concerti—often regarded as the gold standard of Baroque concerti grossi—are unthinkable without the precedent of Vivaldi’s concerti.

The Concerto in D Major for Two Violins, Two Cellos, Strings, and Continuo, RV 564, demonstrates all of those qualities that so enthralled Bach and others among Vivaldi’s contemporaries. Largely forgoing melodic, harmonic, or **contrapuntal** complexity, the opening **Allegro** instead builds overwhelming ensemble textures to create a sweeping dramatic intensity. The movement features exciting passagework for both solo violins and notably agile writing for the cellos nearly to match. The **Largo** second movement counters with soulful melodic writing, while fleet filigree by all four soloists highlights the bracing **Allegro** finale.

Characteristic of Vivaldi’s numerous concerti (only a fraction of which, strangely, were published during the composer’s lifetime, leaving the lion’s share of his accomplishments to come to light upon the discovery of his manuscripts in the early twentieth century), the instrumental writing here reveals the extent and nature of his own gifts as a violinist: he was a dazzling virtuoso, to be sure, but also a technician with a keen understanding of the violin, and his musical language proceeded from the instrument.

Igor Stravinsky’s oft-repeated wisecrack that “Vivaldi did not compose six hundred concerti; he wrote the same concerto six hundred times” is surely unfair. For if it is true that Vivaldi’s concerti have their share of common formal characteristics (illustrating a heady formula, *nota bene*, of Vivaldi’s own concoction), Stravinsky’s criticism fails to acknowledge the audacity of Vivaldi’s musical imagination within that form. The strongest of Vivaldi’s concerti combine rhythmic vitality with melodic invention; his understanding of instruments and keen dramatic instinct moreover place Vivaldi’s concerto oeuvre among the most thrilling glorifications of instrumental virtuosity in the repertoire to this day.

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

(Born March 21, 1685, Eisenach, Germany; died July 28, 1750, Leipzig)

Double Violin Concerto in d minor, BWV 1043

Composed: 1730–1731

Other works from this period: *Jauchzet Gott in allen Landen!*, BWV 51 (church cantata) (1730); *Nun danket alle Gott*, BWV 192 (chorale) (1730); Suite in g minor for Lute, BWV 995 (ca. 1730); Violin Concerto in a minor, BWV 1041 (ca. 1730)

Approximate duration: 17 minutes

Johann Sebastian Bach was elected in 1723, at the age of thirty-eight, to the position of Music Director and Cantor in Leipzig, where he taught at the St. Thomas School and directed all musical activities at the city’s two churches, the Thomaskirche and Nikolaikirche. Bach would remain in Leipzig until his death, in 1750, and produced many of his mature masterpieces during his time there. In fulfillment of his church duties during this period, Bach created his greatest sacred works, including the cantatas, the *St. Matthew* and *St. John Passion*, and the Mass in b minor.

But Bach’s second decade in Leipzig saw the creation of much of his great instrumental music, as well. In 1729, Bach assumed the directorship of the Collegium Musicum, a concert series presented by local musicians and students, which had been founded in 1702 by Georg Philipp Telemann. The Collegium presented weekly concerts for the Leipzig culturati, primarily at the consequently iconic Zimmermann’s Coffeehouse near the city center; Bach programmed music by Telemann, Corelli, Vivaldi, and other leading composers of the day and also composed much new music himself for the series. With the Collegium as a newly available outlet for Bach’s creativity in addition to the church, the 1730s saw a revitalized output of keyboard, chamber, and orchestral music to match the inspired catalogue of sacred vocal music composed over the previous decade.

Bach’s Double Violin Concerto in d minor, **BWV 1043**, was certainly among the concerti performed at Zimmermann’s Coffeehouse, though its composition may date from Bach’s time in Cöthen, where he served as **Kapellmeister** prior to his Leipzig appointment. Around 1736, Bach prepared a version of the concerto for two harpsichords (BWV 1062) expressly for the Collegium Musicum.

It is known that when Bach first discovered the violin concerti of Vivaldi’s *L’estro armonico*, he was riveted by their demonstrative character and high-flying virtuosity; the Double Concerto betrays Vivaldi’s influence in its melodic and textural content, combined with the razor-sharp acuity of Bach’s own contrapuntal art. This adroit integration of form and flair is on display from the concerto’s opening **fugato**. The second violins present the commanding **subject**: a rocket-like ascending figure, an **arpeggio** back down the scale, a pungent upward leap of a seventh, and then a clipped descent back to the tonic. The first violins respond in kind, up a fifth.

Vivace



Vln. II

Following this energetic tutti opening, the concertino features a crackling repartee between the solo violins, both displaying florid passagework. Ripieno strings and continuo interject with fragments of the opening subject.

Though likewise exhibiting a fugato opening, the concerto’s slow second movement may not be immediately recognizable as such, as its enchanting lyricism belies the form’s cerebral rigor. Here instead, Bach trades the fugal sound of perfect engineering for fetching **cantilena** melody. The two solo violins issue long-breathed lines, delicately swirling about one another like plumes of smoke.

The slow movement’s merciless beauty gives way in the concerto’s finale to no-holds-barred dramatic intensity, audibly beholden to the concerto of Vivaldi that so held Bach in their thrall.