

CKD 217

Recorded at The National Centre for Early Music, York, August 11-13th 2001

Produced by Philip Hobbs

Post-production by Julia Thomas

Photography & design by John Haxby at Treasurer's House, The National Trust, York

Alto recorder by Fred Morgan

Soprano and sopranino recorders are by Yuzuru Fukushima

Chamber organ by Peter Collins, 1995

Single manual harpsichord by Robert Deegan after Christian Vater, 1738

Thanks to The Marriott Hotel, York

Dedicated to Fiona Ferguson

Baroque Recorder Concertos

PAMELA THORBY

with **SONNERIE**

ANTONIO VIVALDI (1678-1741)
'Concerto per Flautino' in G major (orig. C major) RV 443
soprano recorder, strings and continuo

- 1 **untitled**..... 3.37
- 2 **Largo** 3.54
- 3 **Allegro molto** 2.56

GEORG PHILIPP TELEMANN (1681-1767)
Suite in A minor TWV 55:a2
alto recorder, strings and continuo

- 4 **(Ouverture)** 5.59
- 5 **Les Plaisirs** 3.03
- 6 **Air à L'italien** 6.36
- 7 **Menuet I & II** 3.36
- 8 **Réjouissance** 2.14
- 9 **Passepied I & II** 1.31
- 10 **Polonoise** 3.40

GIUSEPPE SAMMARTINI (1695-1750)
Concerto in F major
soprano recorder, strings and continuo

- 11 **Allegro** 3.58
- 12 **untitled** 4.24
- 13 **Allegro assai** 3.42

ANTONIO VIVALDI (1678-1741)
'Concerto per Flauto' in C minor RV 441
alto recorder, strings and continuo

- 14 **Allegro non molto** 4.53
- 15 **Largo** 2.14
- 16 **untitled** 3.27

ANTONIO VIVALDI (1678-1741)
'Concerto per Flautino' in C major RV 444
sopranino recorder, strings and continuo

- 17 **Allegro non molto** 4.08
- 18 **Largo** 2.02
- 19 **Allegro molto** 2.58

and chamber musician she has performed throughout the UK including London's Albert Hall, the South Bank Centre and Wigmore Hall, Birmingham Symphony Hall and Bridgewater Hall, Manchester and toured extensively in Europe (including such prestigious venues as the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, Konserthus Stockholm, Konzerthaus Wien, Frankfurt Alte Oper, Cologne Philharmonie and Lyon Opera), USA, South America, the Middle and Far East. Pamela has featured in many recordings for BBC radio and television and on numerous CD recordings of music from the 14th century to the present day.

As well as her 'classical' playing Pamela has been a featured soloist on all of Karl Jenkins crossover *Adiemus* albums and *Imagined Oceans*. Pamela has appeared with the British modern jazz quartet Perfect Houseplants and features on their *New Folk Songs* album (Linn AKD 130).

Pamela teaches recorder at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London and has given classes in Urbino, Italy, Dartington Summer School and the Royal Academy of Music in London.

SONNERIE dir. **Monica Huggett**

Monica Huggett *violin* **Emilia Benjamin** *violin*
Katherine McGillivray *viola* **Alison McGillivray** *cello*
Sarah Groser *violone* **Matthew Halls** *harpsichord, organ*

Vibrant and technically impeccable, SONNERIE is acclaimed at home and abroad for its lively and expressive interpretations in concerts and recordings. Under the direction of Monica Huggett, one of the world's most respected baroque violinists, the group performs regularly at major festivals in the UK and on the international concert circuit. Sonnerie has a versatile instrumentation ranging from trio to chamber orchestra and has recorded for Virgin Classics, ASV, Harmonia Mundi USA, Teldec, and CPO.

the autograph manuscript of the *flautino* concerto in A minor, RV 445 (not included on our recording), he notes that ‘on the first page of the manuscript, Vivaldi has inscribed the following words: *L’Istrom^{ti} alla 4^a Bassa*; the exact interpretation of this has not been determined’. Now, the phrase means ‘the instruments a fourth lower’, and Vivaldi wrote something similar on the manuscript of the flautino concerto: *Gl’Istrom^{ti} trasporti alla 4^a* (‘the instruments transposed a fourth’). No such indication is found on the manuscript of the third flautino concerto, RV 444, but nevertheless, scholars began to sit up. Did Vivaldi really mean for *all* the instruments in these two concertos to be transposed down a fourth? Such a practice was common in Italian music of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, when its purpose was to facilitate the reading of music in the common clefs of the time; but what would be its purpose here? One scholar-performer, Winfried Michel, has taken Vivaldi at face value and published editions of all three concertos transposed down a fourth for soprano recorder, arguing that this takes full advantage of the stringed instruments by making use of the lowest string of the violins and viola and the lowest two notes of the cello.

The most thorough discussion of both *flautino* concerto puzzles has come from an Italian scholar, Federico Maria Sardelli, in a book on Vivaldi’s flute and recorder music published in 2001. Sardelli demonstrates that the flageolet lived in a different social world than the recorder, and that Vivaldi did specify it once under the name *flasolet*, so he clearly knew it and distinguished it from any kind of recorder. From his knowledge of Vivaldi’s general practice, Sardelli states that the composer often wrote notes in the ritornellos of his concertos that the solo instrument could not play, relying on the performer to leave them out or transpose them appropriately. He also believes that the one note below the compass of the sopranino recorder in a solo section was an oversight, and he points out several instances in sequential passage work in which Vivaldi deliberately avoided going below

which has the character of a *double*, or ornamental variation, although the harmonic scheme is altered, and the style again owes as much to Poland as to France or Italy. The next movement, *Réjouissance*, rejoices with lively snippets passed between strings and soloist as well as contrasting passage work for the recorder, at first stepwise leading to a climax on *g*''' (the note that Vivaldi avoided), then arpeggios. A pair of sprightly *Passepieds* follows the pattern of the *Menuets* heard earlier: a first dance played by the strings alone, then a *trio* for the recorder, this time accompanied by the basso continuo and, for the only time in the work, switching to the parallel major key (A major). The last movement is a *Polonoise*, a Polish dance far removed from the civilized examples of Chopin over a century later. The folk style comes to the fore in the snapping rhythms of the strings and the recorder’s repeated notes and winding, slurred groups of semiquavers, like some inspired tavern fiddler warming to his task.

GIUSEPPE SAMMARTINI

Giuseppe Sammartini (1695-1750), a native of Milan, emigrated to England in late 1728 or early 1729. The son of an émigré French oboist, Sammartini was considered to be perhaps the finest oboist of his day. As an occasional member of the London opera orchestras, he would also have been called upon to play the recorder and flute, for obbligatos in special arias. From 1736 until the end of his life, he served as music master to Augusta, the Princess of Wales. His lyrical concerto for fifth flute (soprano recorder), which survives in a manuscript in Sweden, was presumably written for the composer himself to play in the 1730s. In the public concerts of London, and in the mini-concerts known as ‘entertainments’ given in the intervals of plays, concertos for small recorders had been all the rage since about 1715. The sound of a little recorder piping away above a string orchestra seems in fact to have given the recorder a new lease of life among professionals, although it had had been declining as an amateur instrument since about the same date. By the mid-1730s, the

In RV 444 the ritornello sections of the fast movements are cut to a minimum, allowing the solo instrument full scope in the relatively extended solo sections. In the slow movement in the relative minor (A minor), the soloist is given an elaborately ornamented melody line containing some of the same devices as the fast movements (trills, rapid scales and triplets) over pizzicato semiquavers in the strings. RV 443 has a more striking melodic profile and the passage work is at least as brilliant. Nevertheless, the most memorable movement is perhaps the slow one, marked merely *Largo*, but in fact an elaborately ornamented *Siciliano* in the unexpected key of E minor (relative minor of the dominant).

Vivaldi's great C minor concerto is the most virtuosic recorder composition of the Baroque era, eclipsing even the *flautino* concertos because of the key (which requires many cross-fingerings). Sardelli rightly calls it "the most profound, elaborate, and inspired work of Vivaldi's destined for the recorder or flute." He demonstrates that the composer created it by reworking a violin concerto in the same key, RV 202, dated 1728 in the autograph manuscript and published by Le Cene in Amsterdam the following year as the fifth concerto in Opus 11. The method of reworking was a favourite of Vivaldi's: adapt the solo sections to the new instrument and write brand new ritornellos. In this case, he made the solo part shorter, replacing or omitting the most violinistic passages (such as an entire solo section of demisemiquaver string-crossing in the third movement), and modifying those passages he kept intact to fit the recorder's compass, by skirting around the forays onto the violin's G-string, transposing up an octave and avoiding *g'''* (which his recorder player evidently did not play). He also expanded the last movement from 2/4 to 3/4 time, often repeating the figure from the second beat of the bar on the third beat. Nevertheless, the concerto belies its origins, the wistful and subdued ritornellos contrasting with the brilliant solo sections, which often make striking use of the harmonic minor scale.

Which recorder virtuoso (or virtuosa) of Vivaldi's acquaintance would have been capable of performing such concertos (as well as the trio sonata in A minor, RV 86, for recorder, bassoon and basso continuo)? They all seem to date from the late 1720s or early 1730s, which would put them far beyond the famous women musicians of the Venetian orphanage, Pio Ospedale della Pietà, where Vivaldi had taught 1703–1718. Scholars have suggested that the performer in question might have been Giuseppe Sammartini, whom we shall also meet in this recording. The famous flautist Johann Joachim Quantz, visiting Venice in 1726, heard both Sammartini and Vivaldi play. If our Vivaldi works stem from the late 1720s, then the dates might just work for Sammartini as the dedicatee: he left Milan for London in 1728 or early 1729.

GEORG PHILIPP TELEMANN

Georg Philipp Telemann (1681-1767) played the recorder himself and wrote more music for the instrument than probably any other composer in history: duets, solo sonatas, trio sonatas, quartets, concertos, suites and cantatas, as well as obbligato parts in a vast repertoire of vocal works that we have hardly explored. In 1936, towards the beginning of the twentieth-century Telemann renaissance, Eulenburg published an edition of a 'Suite in A minor for flute and string orchestra' which rapidly became the composer's most widely performed composition. Modern flautists took it up with alacrity, but again recorder players soon took note: Telemann called for *fluto*, a Baroque word for recorder rather than flute, and the key and the compass of the solo part fit the treble recorder perfectly. By the 1960s, the suite had become the most widely performed work by any composer for recorder and orchestra. If the Vivaldi concertos have now edged ahead of it in recorded performances, it is because of the modern recorder professionals' love of display. Nevertheless, Telemann's suite is not without its own technical challenges, and it was clearly intended for a professional – presumably one at the Hesse court in Darmstadt, in whose library the manuscript is found today.

Telemann actually called the work an *Ouverture*, the designation for a French-style overture followed by a suite of dances. But if we are expecting a standard pattern of dances such as allemande, sarabande, courante and gigue, we are in for a surprise. Rather, Telemann treats us to a mixture of movements such as we could not find in the works of any other late Baroque composer. He was the leading proponent of a mixed style of composition that blended French, Italian, and German elements. And what set him further apart from his contemporaries was his use of elements of ‘Polish and Moravian [folk] music in their true barbaric beauty’ (autobiography, 1740), which he had heard during his stint as *Kapellmeister* in Sorau in 1705-08. Telemann was also the pioneer of a mixed type of work which the critic Johann Adolf Scheibe called *Concertouverture* (concerto-suite) – a suite with parts for one or more *concertante* instruments (in our case, of course, the recorder) in addition to the customary strings.

The overture to the A minor suite commences in that French manner invented by Jean-Baptiste Lully, all courtly dotted notes and ornaments played by the recorder and strings together, then a fast section in four-part counterpoint. The texture is simplified to usher in the Italianate recorder, whose three concerto-like solo sections become longer and more impassioned. *Les Plaisirs* (the pleasures) is a capricious French dance movement with a hint of Polish folk music about it. After a first part for strings, the recorder has the *trio* accompanied by basso continuo alone. Then follows an ‘air in the Italian style’, like the slow movement of some magnificent concerto, with a twisting, turning melody line and many chromatic surprises. But the biggest surprise is the sudden transformation of the movement into an *Allegro*, with passage work reminiscent of Telemann’s recorder sonatas over a simple accompaniment. The first section then returns *da capo*.

The ensuing *Menuet* for the strings has an angular melody and an alternation of emphasis between first and second beats. The recorder dominates the *trio*,

f”. Thus Sardelli has no doubt that for Vivaldi, *flautino* meant small recorder and normally a sopranino. Again drawing on Vivaldi’s practice, Sardelli notes that by ‘Gl’istromenti’ the composer meant not all the instruments, but only the orchestra parts. The concept of writing the recorder part in another key from the orchestra, or in other words treating it as a transposing instrument, was common in England, where the notation assumed that the player was reading a part as if it were intended for an alto recorder. (This concept is found, for example, in the manuscript of the Sammartini concerto performed on our recording, in which the soprano recorder part is notated a fourth higher than the orchestra.) In conclusion, Vivaldi intended RV 443 and 445 for the soprano recorder – at least, in one particular performance – and RV 444 for the sopranino recorder. The present recording follows these intentions. Pamela Thorby had in fact already been playing RV 443 down a fourth on the soprano recorder for several years before she discovered the evidence outlined above. She feels that in doing so the violins have a more fluent range, and the presence of more open strings makes the sound of the ensemble richer.

In the *flautino* concertos, and even more so in the C minor recorder concerto also performed here, Vivaldi invented a new virtuosic language for the instrument, unprecedented in the work of his contemporaries: the English composers who wrote Vivaldian concertos (Babell, Baston and Woodcock) wrote largely stepwise passage work of little difficulty. In Vivaldi, however, the whirlwind arpeggios, leaps and pedal tones are modelled on the violin’s string-crossing technique. Passing trills are plentiful, and the frequent slurred groupings are unlike anything found before in woodwind history, in which virtually all notes had been separately tongued. If there remains any doubt that the recorder was (and is) a serious musical instrument, these concertos should put paid to it. Yet they are not just technical exercises, but full of surprise and delight.

vogue for such concertos had ended and the recorder capitulated to the flute, although it was still played a little by amateurs until the end of the century.

The opening *Allegro* of Sammartini's concerto is in the ritornello form pioneered by Vivaldi, but the ritornellos are lighter than Vivaldi's, being made up of short phrases, *galant* in mood, over a simple, static bass line. During the opening ritornello the recorder comes in unexpectedly with a cadenza-like passage before being joined by the orchestra again with further motivic material leading to the expected cadence in the home key. The imaginative passage work in the two solo sections has deft chromatic touches and one unexpected modulation through a circle of fifths. This flurry of virtuosity is interrupted only by the briefest of second ritornellos, and the movement ends with the first ritornello *da capo*. The slow movement is a poignant *Siciliano* with an ornamented and rhythmically unpredictable melody line, again displaying attractive chromatic touches in an almost *empfindsam* style. Two orchestral sections, one long one brief, frame the soloist's discourse. The final *Allegro assai* is in 6/8 time. If the opening figures suggest that the movement is going to be a *giga*, the syncopations soon make it more rhythmically complex. Sammartini again interrupts the first ritornello with a kind of cadenza for the recorder, then allows the soloist to stretch out with brilliant trills, rapid triplets and leaps, once more with some delightful chromaticism.

DAVID LASOCKI

PAMELA THORBY *recorder*

The British recorder player Pamela Thorby is perhaps best known as a member of the Palladian Ensemble (with whom she has made 8 acclaimed CD recordings for LINN) and for her concerto performances and recordings with ensembles and orchestras such as the English Concert, Sonnerie, New London Consort, Musicians of the Globe and Guildhall Strings. As a soloist

Baroque Recorder Concertos

ANTONIO VIVALDI

The three concertos for *flautino* by Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741) have been controversial since they were first published in the Vivaldi complete works in the early 1950s. Until recently, the major talking point was their instrumentation: what was a *flautino*? The original editor of the concertos, the Italian composer Gian Francesco Malipiero, published them without comment for *ottavino*, the modern Italian word for the piccolo. But recorder enthusiasts soon took notice, pointing out that *flautino* is the diminutive of *flauto*, which in the Baroque period meant recorder rather than flute: thus a *flautino* was presumably a small size of recorder. Moreover, the keys of the concertos, C major and A minor, are much better suited to the recorder than to any size of Baroque flute. But which small recorder? Here the problems start, because the range of the solo part fits the soprano recorder in *f*" well – except for an *e*" in a solo section of the Concerto in A minor, RV 445, and a few other notes in the ritornellos that go below the soprano's compass. Could the recorder have been a soprano in *c*" or *d*" (known in England as the fifth flute and sixth flute, respectively)? Possibly, but the solo part would lie extremely high on either of them. A Baroque piccolo (lowest note *d*") might have been able to handle the range and the high tessitura, but the keys are more suitable for the recorder, and the piccolo does not seem to have been invented until the late 1730s – a little late for our concertos. As for the flageolet, a duct flute with six finger holes rather than the recorder's eight, neither size (lowest notes *d*" or *g*") would apparently have had the range or the compass. Most scholars therefore agreed, for the time being, that a *flautino* was probably a soprano recorder and that Vivaldi, composing hastily, just slipped up in writing those notes below its compass.

A new wrinkle emerged in 1986, with the publication of Peter Ryom's thematic catalogue of Vivaldi's instrumental works. In his commentary on