

VIVALDI

Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741)—Various works

Although Antonio Vivaldi was an ordained priest, his exceptionally fruitful career as a violinist, composer, and teacher has afforded him a reputation as among the most important composers of the Baroque era. In 1703, he began his long tenure at an orphanage where he taught music and composed an entire body of repertoire for his students. Vivaldi was recognized for his work in his own time, benefited from numerous commissions from Europe's elite, and was a major influence for Bach.

In addition to countless sacred works, Vivaldi's impressive output included more than 500 concertos and sinfonias, mostly composed for his students, and includes such popular works as the *Concerto Alla rustica*, the *Sinfonia Al santo sepolcra* (composed as part of a larger Easter work) and other such pieces which feature one or more instrumental soloists. He also composed eight serenatas, large-scale secular orchestral and vocal works, of which three remain, including *La Senna festeggiante*, or Festival on the Seine. Still, the most popular form of entertainment of his day was opera. While his reputation in opera was modest compared to his more successful peers, persistent, he completed at least 50 works in the genre, such as his 1733 *L'Olimpiade*.

Evaristo Felice Dall'Abaco (1675-1742)—Various works

Italian composer Evaristo Felice Dall'Abaco was born into a well-respected musical family and studied with renowned violinist Giuseppe Torelli. He spent his career as a performer in European courts, most notably as the head of chamber music, and eventually Concert Master, for the Elector of Bavaria in Munich.

As a result of the time Dall'Abaco spent in Brussels and France, his style as a composer is considered fairly international, but his primary influencers were the biggest personalities in Italian chamber music of the time, Corelli and Vivaldi. His published output as a composer was released in six opuses and included dozens of small chamber works, as well as his final two opuses, composed for string orchestra.

Giovanni Battista Pergolesi (1710-1736)—*L'Olimpiade*: Sinfonia, P. 145

Although Giovanni Battista Pergolesi produced only six operas in his short life, his youthful influence on the opera world resonated for decades. He is considered a key figure in the early development of what would become a dominating style of opera, comic opera, or *opera buffa*. Strongly associated with Naples, five of his operas were premiered in the city, with the exception of *L'Olimpiade*, which was first produced in Rome. The libretto was created by Pietro Metastasio and was used for some 50 other operas, but it was considered among the most successful of the time. While Vivaldi's setting reflected his Baroque sensibilities, Pergolesi, a young innovator, created a score foreshadowing the Classical era to come.

Giuseppe Torelli (1658-1709)—Sinfonia in C major, G. 33

The many concertos composed by Vivaldi had their historical developmental roots in the works of earlier Italian composers such as Giuseppe Torelli. Having published several volumes in the genre, the accomplished violinist was prompted to compose many early concertos while serving in various courts throughout Italy. While other composers also served as violinists, Torelli was unique for his interest in the trumpet, for which dozens of his concertos were composed. Further, while not an inventor of the *sinfonia*, these baroque proto-symphonies composed by Torelli deployed diverse forces of winds and strings inspired by his instrumental curiosity.

Chaz Stuart, 2019