

signum  
CLASSICS

VIVALDI

Opus 8 Vol. 2



La Serenissima

Adrian Chandler *Director / Violin*

# VIVALDI 8 VOLUME 2

Sponsored with the generous support of John Osborn CBE

Opus 8: *Il cimento dell'armonia e dell'invenzione (libro secondo)*

6 concertos for violin, strings & continuo; Concertos RV 155, RV 512

## Concerto VII for violin, strings and continuo in D minor, RV 242

|   |         |        |
|---|---------|--------|
| 1 | Allegro | [3.15] |
| 2 | Largo   | [2.04] |
| 3 | Allegro | [3.11] |

## Concerto VIII for violin, strings and continuo in G minor, RV 332

|   |         |        |
|---|---------|--------|
| 4 | Allegro | [3.29] |
| 5 | Largo   | [2.58] |
| 6 | Allegro | [3.53] |

## Concerto IX for violin, strings and continuo in D minor, RV 236

|   |         |        |
|---|---------|--------|
| 7 | Allegro | [3.15] |
| 8 | Largo   | [2.24] |
| 9 | Allegro | [3.02] |

## Concerto X *La caccia* for violin, strings and continuo in B $\flat$ , RV 362

|    |         |        |
|----|---------|--------|
| 10 | Allegro | [3.27] |
| 11 | Adagio  | [2.37] |
| 12 | Allegro | [2.51] |

## Concerto XI for violin, strings and continuo in D, RV 210

|    |         |        |
|----|---------|--------|
| 13 | Allegro | [5.14] |
| 14 | Largo   | [2.57] |
| 15 | Allegro | [4.51] |

## Concerto XII for violin, strings and continuo in C, RV 178

|    |         |        |
|----|---------|--------|
| 16 | Allegro | [3.21] |
| 17 | Largo   | [2.51] |
| 18 | Allegro | [3.40] |

## Concerto for violin, strings & continuo in G minor, RV 155

|    |         |        |
|----|---------|--------|
| 19 | Adagio  | [2.08] |
| 20 | Allegro | [1.43] |
| 21 | Largo   | [3.47] |
| 22 | Allegro | [3.00] |

## Concerto for 2 violins, strings & continuo in D, RV 512

|    |               |        |
|----|---------------|--------|
| 23 | Allegro molto | [3.17] |
| 24 | Largo         | [4.33] |
| 25 | Allegro       | [3.02] |

Total timings: [1.20.58]

## ANTONIO VIVALDI

*Opus 8 concertos 7 – 12; concertos RV 155 & 512*

Towards the end of the seventeenth century, the publication of music underwent a technological revolution. Since the first issue of instrumental music by Ottaviano Petrucci in Venice, 1507, the cumbersome method of printing using a moveable typeface (requiring one piece of type for every note) remained largely unchanged. The resulting prints were hard to read, notoriously inaccurate (particularly regarding the portrayal of slurs) and struggled to transmit any degree of nuance which, as music became ever more complex, was problematic. A practical solution was urgently needed.

In the 1690s, Estienne Roger, a French Huguenot, started a printing house in Amsterdam. The critical difference between his editions and those of the Italian houses, previously considered to be the best in the world, was that the music was engraved onto copper plates. This sped up the printing process, enabled best-sellers to be reissued with ease and, perhaps most importantly, communicated the composer's intentions to the musicians with clarity and in a legible manner. Vivaldi himself, whose first two publications were issued in Venice, hints at these reasons for

switching his allegiance to Roger in the foreword to his Opus 3 (*L'estro armonico*, 1711). He continued to use this publishing firm until his final collection of concertos, Opus 12 (1729).

Prior to publication, the composer would send his autograph manuscripts (or fair copies made by a trusted copyist) to Amsterdam, the works would be engraved, printed, and put on sale. It was normal for a composer's manuscripts then to be discarded, explaining why the majority of Vivaldi's published concertos survive only in Roger's prints (or pirated copies).

However, the fate of the manuscripts for the Opus 8 concertos has been rather different. In addition to the 'Manchester' partbooks, that include concertos I – V in the hands of some of Vivaldi's best-known scribes, partial or complete autograph manuscripts survive for another six concertos. Complete copies of concertos VIII, IX, X and XI can be found in Vivaldi's personal manuscript collection held in the Biblioteca Nazionale Universitaria, Turin, whilst in the Sächsische Landesbibliothek, Dresden, there survives a bass part to concerto V as well as the first movement of Concerto VII.

LA SERENISSIMA · ADRIAN CHANDLER

[www.signumrecords.com](http://www.signumrecords.com)

The manuscript of the latter work bears an inscription to Johann Georg Pisendel, the virtuoso violinist of the Dresden court who studied both violin and composition with Vivaldi between 1716 and 1717. Of special interest are the final 25 bars which transmit an entirely different version to that found in the Opus 8 (listeners will be able to hear this on a later release). It seems reasonable to suggest that this was the original version of the concerto and that it was composed during Pisendel's stay in Venice, lending credence to the hypothesis that most, if not all the concertos of the Opus 8 had been composed much earlier than the suspected publication date of 1725. Indeed, Vivaldi's epistle honouring the dedicatee of the collection, Count Wenzel von Morzin, suggests that the count was already well acquainted with the set's opening concertos, *Le quattro stagioni*.

Turning to the concertos that survive in Turin, again it is noticeable – but not necessarily surprising - that there are significant differences between the manuscript and published sources. In the case of Concerto IX, a work that along with Concerto XII can be played either on the violin or the oboe, the Turin manuscript confirms that it was initially conceived as an oboe concerto. Vivaldi's efforts to make the concerto 'violin-ready' can be seen in changes he made to one

solo in the opening movement under the heading *violino principale*. Interestingly, although it is the violin that is more suited to playing fast passages, here, Vivaldi's modifications exchange virtuosity for lyricism, dispensing with streams of continuous semiquavers.

Perhaps the most intriguing of the Turin sources is that of Concerto XI. This manuscript started life as a fair copy conveying the concerto almost exactly as it appears in the Opus 8, but in the 1730s, Vivaldi decided to revise the work extensively. (Again, listeners will be able to hear the revised version on a future release.) Vivaldi crossed out large chunks and replaced them with passages copied on new leaves; these were then inserted into the original manuscript or even bound in a different volume altogether, with the result that the outer movements are rendered quite distinct when compared to the concerto's original draft.

It is worth pointing out that Vivaldi borrows a portion of one of his modifications from another D major concerto, *Il Grosso Mogul* (RV 208), a work that predates the modified version of Concerto XI by two decades or more, thus highlighting the pitfalls of dating a work on stylistic grounds alone. It is interesting that a concerto with oriental

associations is linked to Concerto XI, perhaps demonstrating a similar choice of *inventio* for both concertos; after all, Concerto XI is a work which, to eighteenth century ears at least, possesses its own eastern promise. Whatever the case may be, Vivaldi evidently thought highly enough of this work to use sections of it in other D major violin concertos.

Concerto X, is the only concerto in the second volume of Vivaldi's Opus 8 to bear a designated name, *La caccia* (*The Hunt*), despite the set's collective title of *Il cimento dell'armonia e dell'invenzione* (*The Fusion of Harmony and Invention*). *Inventio*, to which the title alludes, was one of the five key parts of rhetoric, and was a concept used by painters to help them draw inspiration for their pictorial compositions. Composers used a similar process to help them develop musical 'figures' in order to express their ideas or affects in an allegorical manner.

Although Vivaldi gives no further clues regarding the concerto's enigmatic allegory, as Zavateri's captions to his concerto *A tempesta di mare* (*The Sea Storm*) can intriguingly be applied to Vivaldi's similarly titled concerto (Concerto V), so the captions given to *La caccia*, the finale of Vivaldi's *L'autunno* (*Autumn*), can be applied to the present

concerto. Thus, we can discern horns, guns, dogs, the fleeing deer and the death of the hunted beast; it is tempting also to imagine the drumming of the horses' hooves in the ritornellos of the opening movement, a figure which retained here, has been much simplified for the Opus 8.

The final concerto to survive in Turin is that of a work in G minor, Concerto VIII. Although there exist some slight textual differences between the sources, perhaps the most interesting aspect of this concerto are the pedal-cadenzas in the finale. These are reworkings of segments from the third sonata of a set of six by Johann Paul von Westhoff (1656 – 1705), entitled *Imitatione delle campane* (*Imitation of bells*); Vivaldi also uses similar passages in two other violin concertos (RV 237 & RV 347). Such borrowings are relatively unusual for Vivaldi's instrumental output, particularly from a work whose provenance was from north of the Alps. As Pisendel must have known the works of Westhoff (once a member of the Dresden Hofkapelle himself), it is likely to have been Pisendel who introduced Vivaldi to their delights.

---

During his lifetime, Vivaldi composed around 500 concertos, mostly for a single soloist with an accompaniment of strings and continuo;

the bulk of these were probably written for the chapel of the Ospedale della Pietà, the Venetian founding hospital which provided Vivaldi with significant periods of employment throughout his career. Concertos for a single soloist – or even with no soloist at all – would suffice for most chapel services, but sometimes the occasion demanded something a little more celebratory. For special religious festivals, Vivaldi composed either grandiose solo concertos or concertos with more than one soloist. The largest group of these works is a body of around 40 concertos written for identical pairs of instruments with a further 15 for contrasting instruments such as violin and organ, violin and oboe, and violin and cello; only three – for viola d’amore and lute, oboe and bassoon and for oboe and cello – survive in single examples.

As in his solo concertos, it is the violin for which Vivaldi composed the bulk of his double concertos. Around thirty concertos for two violins survive spanning a period between 1711 and 1740. It is difficult to assign precise dates to most of Vivaldi’s instrumental compositions, but we suspect that the concerto in D (RV 512) was probably written during the 1730s; this work is heavily influenced by the gallant style, a fashion that Vivaldi embraced increasingly towards the end of his life in order to keep abreast of

the trends emanating from modish Neapolitan composers such as Hasse, Porpora and Vinci. The techniques required by both violinists show exactly why Vivaldi’s reputation as a great violinist was undisputed (even by his critics) and why his pupils from the Pietà such as Anna Maria, were said to be among the finest violinists in Europe.

The final concerto to be discussed is unique in the known repertory of Vivaldi. The concerto in G minor (RV 155) is a ripieno-solo concerto hybrid; the first two movements are for orchestra alone whilst the final two movements are conceived in the manner of a violin concerto. Given the concerto’s slow introduction and the counterpoint displayed in the first two movements, it is highly likely that this was a concerto written for the church.

The manuscript, again housed in Turin, is unusual as it uses a central European paper in portrait format (as opposed to the standard Italian landscape format) which enables us to ascribe the concerto to the period when Vivaldi visited Bohemia with his father in 1729 – 1730.

Given the paucity of biographical documentation (as is so often the case with Vivaldi) one is forced to speculate regarding the reasons for this journey.

We do know, however, that Vivaldi composed a group of 14 instrumental compositions whilst on tour (all identifiable by their use of Bohemian manuscript paper) of which six were violin concertos. It is tempting to suggest that they were written for Vivaldi himself, but given the disparity in levels of technical difficulty (four are virtuoso in the extreme, two are violinistically facile) it is probable that they were composed for players of differing levels of ability, possibly

as didactic works. One potential suggestion we need to consider is the possibility that they were composed in order to fulfil his duties to the Ospedale della Pietà, to whom he was known to have supplied works by post when absent from Venice. A concerto such as the present work in G minor would surely have suited the chapel of the Pietà admirably.

© Adrian Chandler, June 2025



## LA SERENISSIMA

Recognised for 'whipping up a storm with Vivaldi', La Serenissima is 'one of Britain's best-loved chamber orchestras' (*The Telegraph*) known for championing a host of neglected Italian baroque composers and its outstanding performances. Uniquely, the group's entire repertoire is edited from source material by founder and violinist, Adrian Chandler OSI. La Serenissima plays to a global audience of millions, evidenced by 1.3m monthly listeners on Spotify alone and regularly features on international radio (BBC Radio 3, Radio:24, Sveriges Radio), advertising (Beats, 2022) and film (*Portrait of a Lady on Fire*, 2020). La Serenissima albums have topped the UK Classical Chart (2018) and won two Gramophone Awards (2010 & 2017).



La Serenissima has performed throughout the UK and internationally in concert series and festivals including London Festival of Baroque Music, MustonenFest (Estonia), Handel-Festspiele (Germany), Valletta International Baroque Festival (Malta) and International Cervantes Festival (Mexico). The group celebrated its 30th Anniversary at London's Wigmore Hall during 2024-5 with a Residency 'The A-Z of the Italian Baroque' and is proud to have as its Honorary Patron, His Excellency The Ambassador of Italy to the UK.

[www.laserenissima.co.uk](http://www.laserenissima.co.uk)

## ADRIAN CHANDLER OSI

Director / Violin

Born on Merseyside in 1974, Adrian Chandler is recognised internationally as a leading interpreter of Italian baroque music with an 'avant-garde approach that would have awed Hendrix' (*The Guardian*). Adrian founded La Serenissima in 1994, channelling his love affair with Vivaldi into a lifetime's mission. He has performed and directed a host of recitals, concertos and operas for major festivals and his performances have been broadcast by radio stations throughout the world.

Through his research, Adrian has created an extensive catalogue of music by Italian baroque composers from Ariosti to Zavateri. During the 2020 UK lockdown, he edited a Vivaldi violin concerto daily reaching fans, musicians and scholars across the globe via social media. His landmark recording of *The Devil's Trill* sonata in 2024 prompted Gramophone to write: 'He's a violinist-shaped tornado.' Adrian regularly guest-directs concerts abroad, including recent projects for Concerto Copenhagen and Deutsche Philharmonie Merck. He was awarded the honour of 'Cavaliere' of the Order of the Star of Italy for his services to Italian baroque music in 2022.



## PERFORMERS & INSTRUMENTS

Adrian Chandler, *violin & director*

Rowland Ross, Guildford, 1981, after Amati

Oliver Cave, *violin I (violin II solo in RV 512)*

Martin Hilsden, UK, 1985 after anonymous c1650

Henrietta Haynes, *violin I* [1] – [3] only

Longman and Broderip, No.26 Cheapside,  
London, C18

Abel Balazs, *violin I*

John Betts, London, c.1800 on loan from The  
Harrison-Frank Family Foundation

Maxim Del Mar, *violin I* not [1] – [3]

Thomas Kennedy, London, 1840, on loan from the  
Harrison-Frank Family Foundation.

Simone Pirri, *violin II* not [1] – [3]

Pietro Paolo de Vitor, Venice, 1730-1740 on loan  
from the Harrison-Frank Family Foundation

Samuel Staples, *violin II* [1] – [3] only

Anon, c1780

Camilla Scarlett, *violin II* [1] – [3] only

Rowland Ross, Hampshire, 1996, after Amati

Ellen Bundy, *violin II*

Kloz Family, Mittenwald, c1780

Jim O'Toole, *violin II* [1] – [3] only

Anon, c1750, Tyrol

Charlotte Amherst, *violin II* not [1] – [3]

Anon., England, c1680

Joanne Green, *violin II* not [1] – [3]

Michiel de Hoog, France, 1988

Oliver Wilson, *viola*

Eric Mawby, UK, 2012, after Guarneri

Thomas Kirby, *viola*

Bernd Hiller, Germany, 2006

Sam Kennedy, *viola* [1] – [3] only

Willibrord Crijnen, Amsterdam, after C18

Jim O'Toole, *viola* not [1] – [3]

Eric Mawby, UK, 2012, after Guarneri

Vladimir Waltham, *continuo cello*

Anon., c1710, Venice

Carina Drury, *cello* [1] – [3] only

Maker unknown, Italy, c1850

Samuel Ng, *cello* not [1] – [3]

Johann Christoph Leidlff, Vienna, 1758

Jan Zahourek, *double bass*

Domenico Busan, 1756, Venice

Lynda Sayce, *theorbo & baroque guitar*

Theorbo in A: Michael Lowe, Wootton-by-  
Woodstock, 2000, after iconography c.1700

Baroque guitar: Ivo Magherini, Bremen, 2002,  
after Giovanni Tesler, Ancona, 1620

Robin Bigwood, *harpsichord, organ*

Alan Gotto, Norwich, 2024, after Florentine (?)

C18 (harpsichord)

Hauptwerk, digitisation of organ by Pietro  
Nacchini (c1730), Izola, Slovenia (organ)



## THANK YOU

La Serenissima wishes to acknowledge the patronage of His Excellency The Italian Ambassador to the UK and the generous support of its Patrons including:

|                                       |                               |   |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|---|
| Katy Ashman                           | Patrick & Caroline Heininger  | John & Anne Robertson                       |
| Antoine Bommelaer                     | Joanne & John Hindle          | Bill & Viv Sellwood                         |
| Ursula Brennan                        | Elliot Grant & Janet Thompson | Gerard & Sally Strahan                      |
| Nathan Burkey                         | Professor Martin Kemp         | Lara Veroner Gubitosi                       |
| Guy Burkill KC                        | Mary Kane & Tony Loader       | Ted Wake                                    |
| Richard Chandler & Pauline Fairclough | Tony & Criona Mackintosh      | Sam Webster & Thomas Hale                   |
| Elizabeth Canning                     | Hilary & Grant McGowan        | Mark West                                   |
| Gillian Charlesworth                  | John MacGowan                 | Seán & Janet White                          |
| Ian & Bronwen Fair                    | Ben Mazower                   | Alison Wilkinson                            |
| David & Marilyn Faithfull             | John Osborn CBE               | Diana Woolley                               |
| Gilly French & Jeremy Gray            | Ian Pollock                   | Hilary Younger                              |
| Barry Gregson-Allcott                 | Sarah Priday                  | & other donors who wish to remain anonymous |
| Pamela Harper                         | Tom & Hilde Purves            |   |

We are entirely reliant on the generosity of individuals, trusts and foundations to create our recording catalogue. If you would like to support a future release, please contact Camilla Scarlett, General Manager [camilla@laserenissima.co.uk](mailto:camilla@laserenissima.co.uk)

**La Serenissima** | 9 Brunswick Square, Gloucester GL1 1UG UK  
[info@laserenissima.co.uk](mailto:info@laserenissima.co.uk) / [www.laserenissima.co.uk](http://www.laserenissima.co.uk) / registered charity no. 1154940

## VIVALDI 8 VOLUME 2

**Opus 8: *Il cimento dell'armonia e dell'invenzione (libro secondo)* 6 concertos for violin, strings & continuo; Concertos RV 155, RV 512**

Album generously sponsored by  
**John Osborn CBE**

**Concerto VII for violin, strings and continuo in D minor, Op. 8, RV 242**  
sponsored by Antoine Bommelaer  
[1] Allegro [2] Largo [3] Allegro

**Concerto VIII for violin, strings and continuo in G minor, Op. 8, RV 332**  
sponsored by Jonathan Julian  
[4] Allegro [5] Largo [6] Allegro

**Concerto IX for violin, strings and continuo in D minor, RV 236**  
sponsored by John & Anne Robertson  
[7] Allegro [8] Largo [9] Allegro

**Concerto X *La caccia* for violin, strings and continuo in B<sup>b</sup>, RV 362**  
sponsored by G.B.  
[10] Allegro [11] Adagio [12] Allegro

**Concerto XI for violin, strings and continuo in D, RV 210**  
sponsored by Mark West  
[13] Allegro [14] Largo [15] Allegro

**Concerto XII for violin, strings and continuo in C, RV 178**  
sponsored by Elliot Grant & Janet Thompson  
[16] Allegro [17] Largo [18] Allegro

**Concerto for violin, strings & continuo in G minor, RV 155**  
sponsored by Diana Woolley  
[19] Adagio [20] Allegro [21] Largo [22] Allegro

**Concerto for 2 violins, strings & continuo in D, RV 512**  
sponsored by Hilary & Grant McGowan  
[23] Allegro molto [24] Largo [25] Allegro



Recorded during February & October 2024 in Cedars Hall, Wells Cathedral School, Somerset, UK.

Recording Engineer: Dave Rowell (Filo Classical)

Recording Producer: Simon Fox-Gal

Mix and mastering: Simon Fox-Gal

Editions: Adrian Chandler

The harpsichord used in this recording is based on an anonymous Italian instrument, made by Alan Gotto (Norwich UK) for La Serenissima, in 2024.

This commission was enabled by the support of several generous individuals.

Pitch: A = 440 Hz

Tuning Temperament: Vallotti & Young prepared by Robin Bigwood

Artist photographs: all images taken from the sessions © Robin Bigwood

Cover Image – Roman Sigaev via Shutterstock.

Cover Design – Matt Conn

Design and Artwork – Woven Design [www.wovendesign.co.uk](http://www.wovendesign.co.uk)

© 2025 The copyright in this sound recording is owned by La Serenissima

© 2025 The copyright in this CD booklet, notes and design is owned by Signum Records Ltd

Any unauthorised broadcasting, public performance, copying or re-recording of Signum Compact Discs constitutes an infringement of copyright and will render the infringer liable to an action by law. Licences for public performances or broadcasting may be obtained from Phonographic Performance Ltd. All rights reserved. No part of this booklet may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without prior permission from Signum Records Ltd.

SignumClassics, Signum Records Ltd., Suite 14, 21 Wadsworth Road, Perivale, Middlesex, UB6 7LQ, UK.

+44 (0) 20 8997 4000 E-mail: [info@signumrecords.com](mailto:info@signumrecords.com)

[www.signumrecords.com](http://www.signumrecords.com)

# ALSO AVAILABLE ON SIGNUMCLASSICS



SIGCD886

★★★★★ "Performance ★★★★★ Recording – "Be prepared to be enthralled by the energy and audacity of this version" **BBC Music Magazine**

*"It feels fresh, it feels inventive, it feels innovative, it's evocative...they are so immersed in this music, they have that freedom to play with it and kind of not treat it with kid-gloves...super high quality recordings and performances...a really vivid recording"* **BBC Radio 3 Record Review**

Available through most record stores and at [www.signumrecords.com](http://www.signumrecords.com) For more information call +44 (0) 20 8997 4000

SIGCD919