

Music@Menlo *LIVE*

Incredible Decades (2019) Disc 1.

1–5 **Trio Sonata in A Major, op. 3, no. 12** (1712)
EVARISTO FELICE DALL'ABACO (1675–1742)

Largo
Allemanda: Allegro
Aria: Adagio
Gavotta I and II
Allegro assai

AARON BOYD, JAMES THOMPSON, *violins*;
DMITRI ATAPINE, *cello*; HYEYEON PARK, *harpsichord*

6–9 **Concerto Grosso in D Major, op. 6, no. 1** (1714)
ARCANGELO CORELLI (1653–1713)

Largo – Allegro
Largo – Allegro
Largo – Allegro
Allegro

SOOVIN KIM, JAMES THOMPSON, *solo violins*;
BROOK SPELTZ, *solo cello*; AARON BOYD,
ARNAUD SUSSMANN, *violins*; PAUL NEUBAUER, *viola*;
DAVID FINCKEL, *cello*; PETER LLOYD, *bass*;
GLORIA CHIEN, *harpsichord*

10–19 **Suite no. 1 in F Major, HWV 348, from *Water Music***
(1717) **GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL** (1685–1759)

Ouverture: Largo – Allegro
Adagio e staccato
Allegro
Andante
Menuet
Air
Menuet
Bourrée
Hornpipe
Andante

JAMES AUSTIN SMITH, HUGO SOUZA, *oboes*;
PETER KOLKAY, *bassoon*; KEVIN RIVARD,
MARK ALMOND, *horns*; AARON BOYD,
ARNAUD SUSSMANN, ADAM BARNETT-HART,
MAX TAN, JAMES THOMPSON, LUKE HSU, *violins*;
PAUL NEUBAUER, PIERRE LAPOINTE, *violas*;
DMITRI ATAPINE, DAVID FINCKEL, *cellos*;
PETER LLOYD, *bass*; WU HAN, *harpsichord*

20–22 **Violin Concerto in a minor, TWV 51: a1** (ca. 1708–1716) **GEORG PHILIPP TELEMANN** (1681–1767)

Adagio
Allegro – Adagio
Presto

ADAM BARNETT-HART, *solo violin*; SOOVIN KIM,
ARNAUD SUSSMANN, *violins*; PIERRE LAPOINTE, *viola*;

BROOK SPELTZ, *cello*; PETER LLOYD, *bass*;
GLORIA CHIEN, *harpsichord*

23–25 **Double Oboe Concerto in C Major, op. 7, no. 2**
(1715) **TOMASO ALBINONI** (1671–1751)

Allegro
Adagio
Allegro

STEPHEN TAYLOR, JAMES AUSTIN SMITH, *oboes*;
JAMES THOMPSON, ADAM BARNETT-HART, *violins*;
PAUL NEUBAUER, *viola*; DMITRI ATAPINE, *cello*;
PETER LLOYD, *bass*; HYEYEON PARK, *harpsichord*

26–28 **Concerto in g minor for Two Cellos, Strings, and Continuo, RV 531** (after 1710)
ANTONIO VIVALDI (1678–1741)

Allegro
Largo
Allegro

DMITRI ATAPINE, BROOK SPELTZ, *solo cellos*;
ADAM BARNETT-HART, SOOVIN KIM, *violins*;
PAUL NEUBAUER, *viola*; DAVID FINCKEL, *cello*;
PETER LLOYD, *bass*; GLORIA CHIEN, *harpsichord*

29–32 **Brandenburg Concerto no. 1 in F Major, BWV 1046**
(before 1721) **JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH** (1685–1750)

[Allegro]
Adagio
Allegro
Menuet – Trio – Polonaise

STEPHEN TAYLOR, JAMES AUSTIN SMITH,
HUGO SOUZA, *oboes*; PETER KOLKAY, *bassoon*;
KEVIN RIVARD, MARK ALMOND, *horns*; AARON BOYD,
violino piccolo; ARNAUD SUSSMANN, SOOVIN KIM,
violins; PIERRE LAPOINTE, *viola*; DAVID FINCKEL, *cello*;
PETER LLOYD, *bass*; HYEYEON PARK, *harpsichord*

Music@Menlo *LIVE*

The seventeenth edition of Music@Menlo *LIVE* illuminates the evolution of chamber music over three hundred years by focusing on seven *Incredible Decades*. Each volume explores an extraordinary chapter in which history's most insightful composers chronicled the tectonic shifts in the world around them. Many of history's finest composers have captured the spirit of their times in sound, and in this collection of recordings, Music@Menlo encapsulates the dynamism of both an art form and the cultural winds that powered its evolution during these *Incredible Decades*.

At the hands of Corelli, Vivaldi, Handel, and others, the music of the Baroque era reached new heights of complexity and expressive depth. But by the early eighteenth century, Johann Sebastian Bach had emerged as the supreme artist, who even three centuries later many recognize as history's greatest composer. The opening disc of Music@Menlo *LIVE* 2019 brings together a colorful selection of music composed between 1710 and 1720 that set the stage for Bach's resplendent First *Brandenburg Concerto*.

Liner notes by Patrick Castillo © 2019

EVARISTO FELICE DALL'ABACO (1675–1742)

Trio Sonata in A Major, op. 3, no. 12 (1712)

Though relegated to near-total historical obscurity, the Italian composer Evaristo Felice Dall'Abaco led a vital musical career. He was skilled on both violin and cello (he is thought to have studied in his youth under Giuseppe Torelli, a musician and composer known as a developer of the concerto and concerto grosso) and developed a compositional language indebted to the Italian masters of the day—Corelli and Vivaldi in particular—as well as to the French style he absorbed on his various professional travels. (His use of rondeau form and of French dance movements is uncommon among Italian composers of his time.) He spent part of his twenties in Modena, Italy, where he encountered the court orchestra's French music director; and his later employment by the Bavarian elector Maximilian II Emmanuel brought him to the Netherlands, Belgium, and eventually France, as political circumstances denied the elector stability in one place. In 1715, Emmanuel returned to Munich, where he rewarded Dall'Abaco for his years of loyal service with an appointment to the position of Konzertmeister there. Dall'Abaco remained in Munich until his death in 1742.

His compositional output survives in six published opuses, comprising three volumes of sonatas and three volumes of concerti. His Opus 3, published in Amsterdam in 1712, is a set of twelve *sonate da chiesa e da camera a tre* (sonatas for the church and for the chamber); see the Corelli notes that follow for more on the church and chamber sonata genres).

The last of the Opus 3 set, the Trio Sonata in A Major, begins with a gallant *Largo* in the Corellian mold. The second movement is an *Allemanda*, the first of the work's two dance movements, but it loses nothing of the opening movement's refinement. Following the lovely third movement *Aria*, the Sonata features a gavotte, a French court dance illustrative of Dall'Abaco's Francophilia. The work concludes with a brilliant *Allegro assai* finale.

ARCANGELO CORELLI (1653–1713)

Concerto Grosso in D Major, op. 6, no. 1 (1714)

Though inarguably the first of the great violin virtuosi, Arcangelo Corelli curiously never achieved a successful performance career, nor undertook even one international concert tour. He withdrew from public performance after 1708 and spent his final years preparing his compositions for publication. His five published sets of sonatas and his Twelve Concerti Grossi, op. 6 (which only appeared posthumously, in 1714), represent a watershed in the history of Western music, consequently garnering Corelli greater international renown as a composer than as an instrumentalist.

The Baroque concerto grosso—as most gloriously exemplified by Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons* and *L'estro armonico*; Handel's Twelve Concerti Grossi, op. 6; and Bach's *Brandenburg Concerti*—arose from the formal innovations of Corelli's Opus 6. 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 known as 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 of Opus 6, 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*—nos. 1–8—are more solemn and dignified in character and exclude dance movements, which appear in the concerti and sonatas *da camera*. Each of the concerti is scored for a concertino of two violins and cello, ripieno strings, and continuo.

The eighteenth-century English music historian John Hawkins described Corelli as “remarkable for the mildness of his temper and the modesty of his deportment”—traits well admired in Corelli's time, especially in so esteemed a public figure. These qualities permeate Corelli's musical style as well: the Concerto Grosso in D Major, op. 6, no. 1, begins with a *Largo* introduction at once noble and elegant. The first movement's *Allegro* section sets even-tempered discourse

between the concertino violins, fueled by ebullient sixteenth notes in the cello. This music is punctuated by periodic *grand pauses* and recurrences of the *Adagio* music, which end the movement on a sober note.

The second movement's *Largo* beginning is similarly refined. Here, sixteenth-note runs in the violins launch the music into the *Allegro* section. A contemplative *Largo* in b minor follows, concertino violins combining for a thoughtful duet. The ripieno weighs in, Greek chorus style, on the proceedings. A resplendent D major *Allegro* responds, featuring broad melodic statements in each voice.

A playful dialogue between the solo violins, in rapid-fire triplets, drives a sprightly finale. For this buoyant conclusion, Corelli allows the Concerto's most virtuosic indulgence—yet even here, his aristocratic temper prevails. Within just a few years, the generation of composers in his wake—Vivaldi, Handel, Bach—would inject Corelli's formal innovation with new dramatic fire.

GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL (1685–1759) Suite no. 1 in F Major, HWV 348, from *Water Music* (1717)

With the premiere of *Agrippina* to open carnival season in Venice, Italy, in 1709, George Frideric Handel scored a great success before a major international audience, advancing his prospects for a flourishing career as a dramatic composer. The following year, he was appointed Kapellmeister in Hanover, Germany, a position that allowed him a fair amount of travel. He spent several weeks in Düsseldorf in Germany before journeying to London in the early fall. Italian opera (Handel's stock-in-trade) was in vogue in the English capital, and he consequently enjoyed a meteoric rise to celebrity. The premiere of *Rinaldo* at the Queen's Theatre in 1711 marked another major success.

After his dismissal from his Hanover post (likely for political reasons, though Handel seems to have demonstrated a clear preference to remain in London in any case), Handel took up permanent residence in London and became a British citizen in 1727. These first years in London saw the composition of choral music (as Handel aimed to get a foothold in the Anglican church) and cantatas in addition to opera. But his best-known work from this period is unquestionably the set of three orchestral suites known as the *Water Music*.

Handel composed the *Water Music* at the request of King George I for a royal fête on the River Thames on July 17, 1717. Friedrich Bonet, a Prussian national living in London, noted the performance in his diary: "Next to the King's barge was that of the musicians, about 50 in number—trumpets, cors de chasse [horns], oboes, bassoons, German flutes, French flutes, violins and basses, but no singers...His Majesty's approval was so great that he caused it to be played three times in all, twice before and once after supper, even though each performance lasted an

hour. The evening was as fine as could be desired for this occasion and the number of barges and boats full of people wanting to listen was beyond counting."

The *Water Music* comprises three suites (in F major, D major, and G major), with the second and third suites often combined into one in performance. In fulfilling the king's request, Handel may have recycled earlier music: the *Ouverture* that begins the Suite no. 1 in F Major is scored for a concertino of oboe and first and second violin, with ripieno strings and basso continuo—the absence of horns suggests it may have originated as music intended for indoors. Nevertheless, it is a proud, regal music, befitting the occasion. The contemplative second movement, too, seems conceived for an indoor setting, its intimate oboe solo floating atop a halting quarter-note accompaniment in the strings.

The full ensemble comes together for the exuberant *Allegro* third movement. Horns in particular make a forceful entrance, emerging as a dominant part of the Suite's instrumental palette hereafter. The following *Andante* offers an affecting change in color, setting the trio of oboes and bassoon in dialogue with the strings. Following this introspective, d-minor episode, the horn-driven *Allegro* returns. Horns remain in the fore in the jaunty *Menuet*.

The *Air* is an exquisitely conceived thing: touching and intimate music, while yet sufficiently self-assured to suit the occasion. Horns sit idle for half the movement before adding a miraculous color with sustained notes in their high register.

Horns power the start of the Suite's second *Menuet*, boldly announcing the tune sans orchestral accompaniment. A contrasting f-minor section places the melody in the bassoon's tenor voice, doubled by second violin, expanding the Suite's instrumental palette still further.

This is followed by a brisk *Bourrée*, a court dance of French origin, and the festive *Hornpipe*, a dance form related to the English jig. Both are repeated three times, with each iteration differently colored: played first by strings, then by winds, and finally by the full ensemble.

Rather than offer a boisterous finale, the Suite concludes with a thoughtful *Andante* in d minor that forgoes horns and ultimately arrives at a somber, *Adagio* final cadence. Yet somehow, by Handel's singular alchemy, even in its most inward moments, nothing of the Suite's splendor is sacrificed.

GEORG PHILIPP TELEMANN (1681–1767) Violin Concerto in a minor, TWV 51: a1 (ca. 1708–1716)

Only when Georg Philipp Telemann declined the music directorship of Leipzig's Thomaskirche was the position begrudgingly offered to the second-choice candidate, Johann Sebastian Bach. Telemann was recognized in his lifetime as his generation's finest composer; and if history

has ceased to view him as such (more reflecting a reappraisal of Bach and Handel than of Telemann), he was unquestionably one of its most versatile and prolific. His output of instrumental music alone is staggering, comprising some 125 orchestral suites and 125 concerti, as well as several dozen other orchestral works, 40 quartets, 130 trios, 145 solo keyboard works, etc. In addition to these, Telemann produced numerous annual cycles of church cantatas, as well as oratorios, masses, and other sacred music, and a varied range of secular vocal music, from songs to serenades and cantatas to opera.

Some twenty-five violin concerti survive, which almost certainly represent just a portion of Telemann's total contribution to the genre. The earliest of these date from the composer's tenure in Eisenach, Germany, where he served as court Secretary and Kapellmeister from 1709 until 1712; this was followed by a stint in Frankfurt, Germany, where he remained prolific in the composition of concerti.

The Violin Concerto in a minor, TVW 51: a1, dates from this period in Telemann's career; music historian Steven Zohn surmises that the concerti of these years predate Telemann's familiarity with those of Vivaldi. Their thematic material is pithy, as opposed to Vivaldi's demonstrative ritornelli; and whereas Vivaldi's concerti explicitly spotlight the soloist, the textures in Telemann's early concerti distinguish the solo instrument from the ensemble to a lesser degree.

Mysterious chords in the ensemble violins and viola begin the A minor Concerto as if suspended in midair—without the foundation of cello and continuo and marked by silent downbeats, somewhat disorienting the listener before the entrance of the solo violin. In this opening *Adagio*, the soloist eschews virtuosity; rather, depth of expression seems Telemann's prime objective, as long-held notes bloom into poignant melodic gestures. "Virtuosity for its own sake," Zohn wrote, "seems to have interested [Telemann] far less than innovations in scoring, style, and structure." Indeed, the *Allegro* second movement, a stern rejoinder to the *Adagio*'s introspection, achieves great dramatic intensity through texture and character rather than instrumental pyrotechnics. The fleet *Presto* finale, while featuring the Concerto's flashiest passagework, nevertheless impresses more for its ensemble writing than for its glorification of the soloist.

TOMASO ALBINONI (1671–1751) **Double Oboe Concerto in C Major, op. 7, no. 2 (1715)**

The Italian composer Tomaso Albinoni was extremely prolific. While some fifty operas survive, the libretto to *Candalide* (1734), known to be his penultimate opera, notes that it is his eightieth. He also composed shorter dramatic works, a three-voice mass, and fifty cantatas. His surviving instrumental music includes one hundred sonatas, nearly

sixty concerti, and other works. Though Albinoni's fine reputation during his lifetime owed largely to his vocal output, his instrumental music was regarded as on par with that of Corelli and Vivaldi—Bach utilized Albinoni's music for pedagogical purposes and composed fugues on subjects taken from his Opus 1 Trio Sonatas—and it is that body of work on which his legacy endures.

His instrumental catalog features four published sets of twelve *concerti a cinque* for various instrumentations, including the Twelve Concertos, op. 7, each scored for one or two oboes with strings and basso continuo. Subsequent to the oboe's emergence to prominence in seventeenth-century France, the instrument came into fashion in Venice, Italy, in the 1690s. Albinoni's Opus 7 marks the first concerti of their kind to be published by an Italian composer.

Each of the Opus 7 concerti comprises three movements. The Concerto in C Major, op. 7, no. 2, begins with a declamatory opening fanfare, presented by the strings in octaves and answered by the oboes in thirds. This sequence establishes the entire movement's prevailing dynamic: soloists in concert with one another, counterbalanced by the strings en masse. Here is music of Corellian refinement rather than Vivaldiesque flair—a concerto conceived more as chamber music than as a soloist vehicle. Indeed, oboes are absent in the *Adagio* second movement (though, not uncommonly, one or both soloists opt to double, and ornament, the violin lines in performance). Following this sober, chromatically rich c-minor interlude, oboes return for the vivacious *Allegro* finale.

ANTONIO VIVALDI (1678–1741) **Concerto in g minor for Two Cellos, Strings, and Continuo, RV 531 (after 1710)**

The formal innovation and instrumental brilliance of Antonio Vivaldi's vast catalog of concerti establish him as the most influential Italian composer of his generation, and indeed as one of the most important musical figures of the Baroque period at large. In the lineage of great composer-violinists, Vivaldi succeeds Corelli with a fury, infusing Corelli's stylistic and technical innovations with 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 held as the gold

standard of Baroque concerti grossi—are unthinkable without the precedent of Vivaldi's concerti.

While the majority of Vivaldi's concerti are for violin, they also feature a diverse range of other instruments. His output includes six concerti for viola d'amore, twenty-five for solo cello, and dozens more for flute, oboe, recorder, and bassoon. There are concerti for two, three, and four soloists, likewise heavily favoring the violin.

The Concerto in g minor for Two Cellos, Strings, and Continuo, RV 531, is the only surviving concerto of its kind among Vivaldi's oeuvre. It was most likely composed, like many of his concerti, for the orchestra at the Pio Ospedale della Pietà, one of four major Venetian orphanages for girls that specialized in rigorous musical training, and where Vivaldi served as Maestro di Cappella. The Concerto comprises three movements. The two solo cellos begin the brisk *Allegro* first movement. Following the subsequent entrance of the full ensemble, the intensity never relents. The solo writing throughout features, for its day, uncommonly agile passagework across the cellos' bass and tenor registers. The keening *Largo* is an intimate affair: ensemble strings sit idle as the solo cellos, accompanied only by basso continuo, engage in an ardent duet. The Concerto concludes with a high-octane *Allegro* finale.

Igor Stravinsky's oft-repeated wisecrack that "Vivaldi did not compose 600 concertos; he wrote the same concerto 600 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 (1685–1750)

Brandenburg Concerto no. 1 in F Major, BWV 1046 (before 1721)

In late 1717, Johann Sebastian Bach departed Weimar, Germany, where he had held the post of court organist and Konzertmeister for nearly ten years. His ambition to rise to the prestigious post of Kapellmeister—whether at Weimar or elsewhere—set off a bizarre saga between Bach and his employer, Duke Wilhelm: a feud that culminated in Bach's brief incarceration and unceremonious dismissal. Notwithstanding this embarrassing episode, these events also marked a transition into one of the happiest times in Bach's career, as he took the position of Kapellmeister at the court in Cöthen, Germany. Indeed, Bach's obituary, written by his son Carl Philip Emanuel, takes care to note

that when he later left Cöthen for a position in Leipzig, Germany, he did so with a heavy heart—not least of all on account of taking leave of his employer, Prince Leopold, with whom he would develop a close kinship during his time in Cöthen. Leopold was an amiable ruler and an avid music lover and had been responsible for a musical renaissance of sorts in Cöthen. After assuming power, he increased the number of court musicians from three to seventeen, thereby having, upon Bach's arrival, an able chamber orchestra ready to serve as muse for the accomplished composer—and, specifically, for an important catalog of instrumental works. The wealth of instrumental talent available to Bach at Cöthen afforded him the opportunity to produce such pieces as the Suites for Solo Cello, the Sonatas and Partitas for Solo Violin, and the magnificent *Brandenburg Concerti*, whose autograph is dated 1721 and which testify to the vitality of his writing for large instrumental ensembles during this period.

Between 1718 and 1719, Bach had played for the elector of Brandenburg in Berlin while negotiating the terms for a new harpsichord for the court at Cöthen. About two years later, he would compose these six concertos, scored for varied assortments of instruments, and dedicate them to the elector. The dedication reads, in the abject parlance of the eighteenth century:

To His Royal Highness Christian Ludwig, Margrave of Brandenburg, etc. Sire: Since I had the happiness, a few years ago, to play by command before Your Royal Highness, and observed at that time that you derived some pleasure from the small musical talent that Heaven has given me; and since, when I was taking leave of Your Royal Highness, you did me the honor to request that I send you some of my compositions: I have therefore, in compliance with your most gracious demand, taken the liberty of tendering my most humble respects to Your Royal Highness with the present concertos, arranged for several instruments, begging you most humbly not to judge their imperfection by the strict measure of the refined and delicate taste in musical pieces that everyone knows you possess, but rather to consider kindly the deep respect and the most humble obedience which I am thereby attempting to show to you. For the rest, Sire, I beseech Your Royal Highness most humbly to have the kindness to preserve your good will toward me and to be convinced that I have nothing so much at heart as to be able to be employed on occasions more worthy of you and your service, since I am with matchless zeal, Sire, Your Royal Highness' most humble and obedient servant Johann Sebastian Bach. Cöthen, March 24, 1721.

In spite of this flowery dedication, the margrave of Brandenburg—lacking the musical resources to stage a performance of the concerti—never thanked or paid Bach; but the works came to life nevertheless at Cöthen, as Bach

had deliberately suited them for the greater number of technically proficient musicians he had at his own disposal.

Apart from the circumstances of their genesis, the *Brandenburg Concerti* mark one of the finest musical achievements of the Baroque era. Each scored for a different instrumental ensemble, they represent the fullest development of the Baroque concerto grosso and demonstrate thorough mastery of composing for different instruments. The six concerti range in sonic profile from homogeneous string ensembles (Nos. 3 and 6) to works of more varied orchestration. The First *Brandenburg Concerto*, in F major, is scored for two horns, three oboes, bassoon, violino piccolo (a miniature violin, common in the Baroque era, a third or fourth higher than a standard violin), strings, and basso continuo. It is moreover distinguished from the rest of the set for comprising four movements, whereas the rest have three.

If its instrumentation featuring brass and double reeds immediately suggests a courtly setting, likewise does the Concerto's opening thematic material: a noble ascending arpeggio is followed by a flourish of sixteenth notes, as stately horns pace the proceedings with repeated triplets. Subsequent episodes deconstruct the ensemble's colorful palette: a gesture in the violins is answered by the oboes and then by horns. A lachrymose strain in the first oboe, above pulsing chords in the strings, begins the *Adagio*. Violino piccolo responds, with the chords now set in the oboes. Bassoon and continuo next take up the melody. As the movement unfolds, these principle voices continue to intertwine, like plumes of smoke in slow motion. An impassioned cry by the first oboe alone, followed by a stoic series of chords, brings the *Adagio* to a close.

The *Allegro* third movement, in rollicking 6/8 time, returns to the festive air of the opening movement. The violino piccolo here is cast in the role of dance master. The Concerto's final movement, a refined minuet given splendid voice by the full ensemble, is also its longest. The main minuet section recurs in alternation with three intervening episodes: a thoughtful trio section, issued by double reeds (oboes and bassoon); a polonaise, played by strings alone; and a rousing second trio, featuring horns and oboes. Bach's generosity in highlighting the ensemble's distinct instrument groups is matched by the finale's overall character—radiant in its variety of color, warm and welcoming from its first measure to its last.

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