



Baroque Violin Music and Composers

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BACKGROUND

- Baroque period in music history extends from the early 1600s to the early 1700s
- The Baroque period was known for its ornate and complex musical styles, and the violin was a key instrument in this type of music
- Composers like Antonio Vivaldi and Giuseppe Tartini wrote many famous works for the violin during this time
- Violin makers during this period sought to improve the instrument's sound and playability, and many of their innovations are still in use today



INSPIRATION

- Baroque violin was created in the early 17th century as an evolution of the earlier Renaissance violin
- The inspiration behind the creation of the Baroque violin was to create an instrument that could produce a wider range of tones and dynamics
- could better express the complex melodies and harmonies of the Baroque era
- This was achieved by making several changes to the design of the violin,
 - Includes shape of the body, size and shape of the sound holes, and the length and curvature of the neck
- Designed to be easier to play than the earlier Renaissance violin, which was often difficult to control and produce a consistent sound on



USE IN CLASSICAL MUSIC

- Was central to the development and expression of the Baroque period
- The violin was used to create a wide range of musical expressions
- Often used to play complex melodies and harmonies, and to create a rich and expressive sound
- Used in ensemble settings, ranging from small chamber groups to large orchestras
- Played a key role in creating the overall sound and texture of the music, and was often used to highlight important melodies and harmonies



ANTONIO STRADIVARI



- 1644 - 1737
- came from a family of renowned instrument makers
- potentially a pupil of Nicolò Amati
- made/supervised the creation of 1100+ instruments
 - about half of these survive today + are used by the best players in the world



- Stradivari originally created violins using the Amati method passed down from previous generations
 - 1679: already showing signs of talent even using old techniques
- 1680: began to move away from Amati method + created his own violins using the same principles
- spent lots of time mastering the violin
- 1700-1725: Stradivari's 'Golden Period'
 - finalized soundbox design
 - red varnish, black edging, etc.
- also made other string instruments during this time
- made instruments up until his death
 - 1737: Khevenhüller
 - 1737: death

THE STRADIVARIUS VIOLIN: CREATION



- highest quality wood used
 - pine: front and sides
 - maple: back
- instrument body is slightly rounded instead of flat
 - required precise carving
- f holes
 - optimization of vibrations + maximization of sound
- varnish
 - protection from dirt + moisture
 - natural sheen

THE STRADIVARIUS VIOLIN: CREATION





TONALITY COMPARISON



is there an audible difference?

GIUSEPPE GUARNERI



- 1698 - 1744
- came from a family of renowned instrument makers
- also a pupil of Nicolò Amati
- fewer than 200 of his violins are still around today



- Known to be very experimental with his instruments
 - Tried various archings, f-holes and thicknesses in order to assess how they affected the sound
- Violins were inconsistent in appearance, unlike his famous counterpart Stradivari who exhibited a perfectionist attitude
- There is speculation that he was in hurry to make as many as possible because he knew of his illness
 - his later violins from the mid 1730s to the last ones in 1744 are the most valued of his instruments

THE GUARNERI VIOLIN: CREATION



- Extremely resonant and powerful sound
 - Have a rich lower end which is why they are the favorite for some soloist
- Often have quite a robust tone, which can make them appear harsh in close proximity but enables them to project in very large spaces
- Gained recognition because of their exotic sound
- Played by some of the best musicians in the world
 - Many notable artists have preferred Guarneri instruments late in their careers
- Made just 150 violins in his lifetime
- Died at age 46, in 1744

THE GUARNERI VIOLIN: CREATION



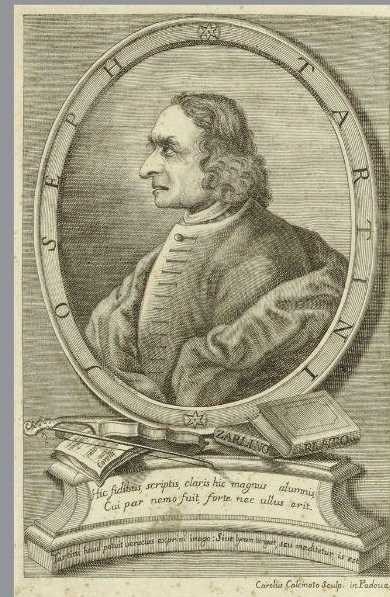
STRADIVARI VS. GUARNERI



The difference between Perfectionism and Passion

GIUSEPPE TARTINI

- 1692-1770
- Born in Piran, Slovenia
- Italian Baroque composer and violinist
- Best known for his "The Devil's Trill" Sonata
- Wrote over 250 concertos and sonatas
- Studied violin and law at Padua



- Tartini studied in Padua, Italy where he was able to establish the first modern school of violin playing in the city.
- He exploited the full range of the violin which developed an entirely new style of violin playing
- Highly expressive and lyrical playing
- His style was characterized by varied articulations and dynamics, making for a highly individual and virtuosic playing style.



THE DEVIL'S TRILL SONATA



- Demonstrates the extent of Tartini's distinct style
- One of the most technically difficult pieces to play on the violin
- Vigorous use of trills and runs
- Violin is used to its full range with the use of rapid arpeggios
- Tartini claimed that he was inspired to create the piece when he had a dream about the devil playing the violin
- Unique use of harmony to create a sense of tension and drama



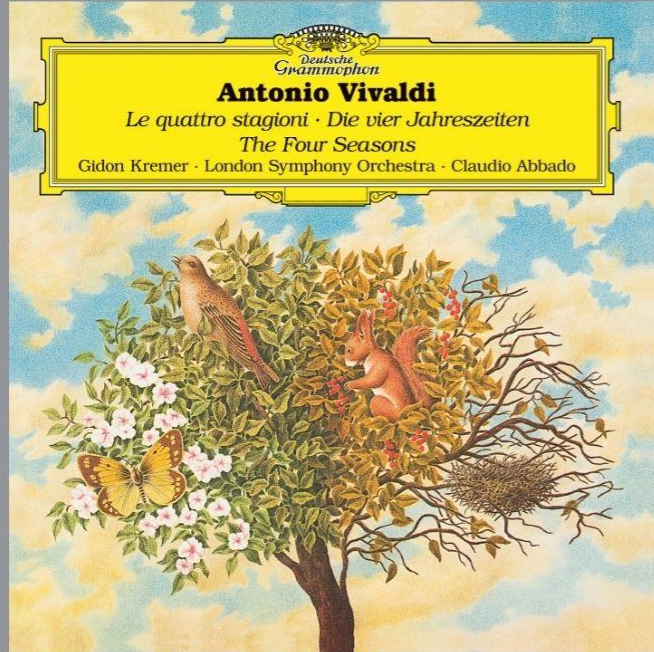


ANTONIO VIVALDI



- 1678-1741
- Born in Venice, Italy
- Composer, Violin Virtuoso and Violin Instructor.
- Studied violin and composition at the Ospedale della Pietà in Venice
- Composed over 500 concertos, operas, symphonies and sonatas
- Best known for his "The Four Seasons" concertos

...THE FOUR SEASONS?



- A set of four concertos that were structured in three movements, one concerto for each season
- Vivaldi utilized tonality and harmony uniquely in order to establish a sense of atmosphere
- He creates a certain "texture" that you can hear among these elements
- Heavy emphasis on violin parts
- His work became extremely popular (and you will probably be familiar with some of these pieces!)



WHAT TO TAKE AWAY

- The Baroque era was a time of great musical innovation and creativity, with many famous violin makers and composers emerging
- These violin makers, such as Antonio Stradivari and Giuseppe Guarneri, were known for their exceptional craftsmanship and their instruments continue to be sought after today
- Composers such as Antonio Vivaldi and Georg Philipp Telemann were known for their intricate and expressive violin compositions
- The Baroque violin, with its distinctive shape and sound, played a crucial role in the development of classical music and continues to be an important instrument in classical music today





THANK YOU