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## Vivaldi Gloria and Imeneo Europa Galante

Martina Belli Léa Desandre

Fabio Biondi Europa Galante

Gloria e Imeneo is a serenata containing some of Vivaldi's finest music, alternating virtuosity with elegance, poignancy, and dramatic fervour comparable to his most compelling operas.

Commissioned by the French Ambassador to commemorate the nuptials of Louis XV and the Polish princess Maria Leszczyska, Vivaldi's work was first performed in 1725 in a loggia at the end of the garden at the ambassador's residence in Venice, a building which still stands today as the Grand Hotel 'Palazzo dei Dogi'.

The two characters are Imeneo (Hymen, representing marriage) and La Gloria (Glory, the attribute of the French monarch). Throughout the work the two protagonists compete with each other in celebrating the radiant future of the French monarchy, and in congratulating the young royal couple in the most extravagant language each can muster. After competing with one another, the two soloists eventually join together and duet and the work climaxes with a final recitative: this celebration, sings La Gloria, will remain etched in human memory forever.

The exceptionally high quality of the music features arias with tune-like qualities equivalent to the most unforgettable of Vivaldi's concerto melodies. Recitatives are short and lively and they never distract from what was most important to the composer and his French sponsors: a solid hour of ravishing and exciting Baroque music.

Orchestration:

2 soloists

15 musicians (Fabio Biondi + strings + harpsichord)