



Johann Ernst IV. von Sachsen-Weimar: Concerti

aud 97.769

EAN: 4022143977694



www.amazon.com (2019.09.03)

source: <https://www.amazon.com/-/de/Concerti-THU...>



This is an exceptional recording of some exceptional music. Prince Johann Ernst IV (1696-1715) was known as the "Thüringian Vivaldi." Ernst showed musical talent at a young age. He composed nineteen works, all within nine months of his death at age 18.

But there's more to the story. His primary teacher was Johann Gottfried Walther. Walther's cousin, Johann Sebastian Bach arrived in Weimar in 1707 as court organist.

Ernst had a substantial collection of Vivaldi's music. which he carefully studied. Bach would create keyboard transcriptions from those Vivaldi works, as well as some of Ernst's concertos. Georg Phillip Telemann also took an interest in the young composer, editing and publishing six of his violin concertos as Ernst's Op. 1.

That publication makes up the bulk of this new release. Also included are two additional violin concertos (one for 2 violins), and a trumpet concerto.

Ernst thoroughly absorbed Vivaldi's style. The works are all in three brief movements, alternating fas-slow-fast. They also mimic Vivaldi's use of ritornello and extended sequences.

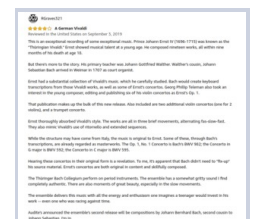
While the structure may have come from Italy, the music is original to Ernst. Some of these, through Bach's transcriptions, are already regarded as masterworks. The Op. 1, No. 1 Concerto is Bach's BWV 982; the Concerto in G major is BWV 592; the Concerto in C major is BWV 595.

Hearing these concertos in their original form is a revelation. To me, it's apparent that Bach didn't need to "fix-up" his source material. Ernst's concertos are both original in content and skillfully composed.

The Thüringer Bach Collegium perform on period instruments. The ensemble has a somewhat gritty sound I find completely authentic. There are also moments of great beauty, especially in the slow movements.

The ensemble delivers this music with all the energy and enthusiasm one imagines a teenager would invest in his work – even one who was racing against time.

Audite's announced the ensemble's second release will be compositions by Johann



Bernhard Bach, second cousin to Johann Sebastian. I'm in.



RGraves321

★★★★☆ **A German Vivaldi**

Reviewed in the United States on September 3, 2019

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