



CONCERTO IN D MINOR, OP. 3 NO. 11

Antonio Vivaldi (1711)



POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Features of Baroque Music
- The concerto
- Violin virtuosity
- Typical features of Vivaldi's music

STRUCTURE:

- Concerto made up of 4 movements. Standard structure in comparison to other concertos of the time.

HARMONY AND TONALITY:

- Mostly in D minor
- Brief modulations to dominant and subdominant (Cm and Am)
- Occasional passages in F minor (More remote key)
- Functional tonality
- Figured bass system
- 7th chords common in root and 1st inversion.
- Circle of 5ths
- Diminished 7th chords
- Suspensions
- Chromatically descending bass line.
- Dominant and tonic pedals
- Secondary 7th chord
- II7#b

CONTEXT:

- Leading Italian composer and virtuoso violinist of the Baroque period. Also a contemporary of J.S. Bach and Handel. Wrote church music and more than 40 operas, though best known for his music for string orchestra.
- Op. 3: Named 'L'Estro Armonico' (Harmonic Inspiration); consists of 12 concertos and established his reputation across Europe. Some were arranged for harpsichord and orchestra, and others for solo organ.
- Previous concertos (Eg. Corelli) had been for the concerto grosso consisting of a trio sonata group with string orchestra and continuo. The solo violin concerto was an innovative idea.

MELODY:

- Opening based on broken chords and descending scales.
- Decorative scalar ideas
- Frequent use of sequence
- Conjunct solo violin with larger leaps of 7ths and diminished 5ths, chromatic notes.
- Disjunct movement- outlining the circle of fifths
- Rising scales

TEXTURE:

- Begins with 2-part writing for the two solo violins: Unaccompanied,, continuous tonic pedal, 2 part canon in exact imitation,
- Solo section of the middle movement: homophonic
- Homorhythmic (chordal) writing: where all instruments play in tutti.
- Polyphonic/contrapuntal texture in fugue section.
- Solo violins sometimes play in thirds in movement 4.

SONORITY:

- Standard trio sonata group (two violins and cello), string orchestra and continuo.
- Non fixed instrumentation- more chordal instruments such as harpsichord, organ or lute..
- Continuo: improvised chords based on the figured bass line.
- Cello: virtuoso solo music
- Adagio: spiccato.
- Ritornello-type instrumentation in fugue of movement 2.
- Tutti passages: soloists double the orchestra
- Solo sections in movement 3 no solo cello or continuo, viola plays bass lines,

RHYTHM, METRE AND TEMPO:

- Continuous quavers and semiquavers (a typical Vivaldi feature)
- Movement 1: simple triple time (3/4).
- Movement 2: (simple quadruple time
- Occasional syncopation
- Movement 3: Compound quadruple time- Uses typical dotted rhythm of the siciliano dance.
- Finale: Common time and begins on an anacrusis