

## Barokksolistene



" The whole joyous evening was a liberation, carrying us back to a time when the words "classical" and "folk" hadn't yet been invented, and music was simply music" **The Telegraph**

Founded and led by Norwegian violinist Bjarte Eike, **Barokksolistene** is now recognised as one of the world's most dynamic and exciting early music groups, fusing virtuoso musicianship with flawless ensemble playing. Constantly striving to reach out to new audiences, their passion to engage with folk and experimental music, improvisation, visual arts, dance and story-telling has led them to create unique concert experiences which play to sold-out audiences worldwide.

Nowhere is this more evident than in their signature project "*The Alehouse Sessions*". Curated and devised by Bjarte Eike, this project is an ever-changing and evolving look into the music of the English 17th century tavern, with the group diverting away from the traditional concert model, to create an evening that is "innately theatrical, genre bending and suffused with great musicianship" (The Strad). An album of the project was released on Rubicon Classics in 2017 and immediately made the UK top 10 classical charts. Since then Barokksolistene has toured the project throughout Europe and the US. It continues to return season-after-season, each time with new ideas, performing in venues ranging from intimate spaces such as by candlelight at the Sam Wanamaker Playhouse at The Globe to the Elbphilharmonie in Hamburg. In 2023, *The Alehouse Sessions* was broadcast as a feature film on BBC Four, directed by filmmaker Dominic Best.

Their album *The Image of Melancholy*, one of the group's first major recordings, was released on BIS and explores the use of melancholy in music throughout the centuries. In the same month that the album was released it featured as Recording of the Week on Danish Radio,

going on to win "International Recording of the Year" at the Danish Prisen Awards.

Their newest album "*The Playhouse Sessions*" was released by Rubicon Classics in 2022 and has already been enthusiastically received with critics praising the exhilarating and stylish performances.

On stage their collaborations have found them working with artists as diverse as choreographer Liam Scarlett on his ballet *Vespertine* and Norwegian jazz musician Jon Balke, whose *Siwan* project explores the links between North African Arabic, Andalusian and baroque music. Further concerts have included performances of the Malcom Bruno reconstruction of Bach's *St Markus Passion* and a series of major opera productions, including a staged *Messiah* with Netia Jones for Bergen National Opera at the Bergen International Festival, Handel's *Alcina* for Den Norske Opera Oslo as well as a collaboration with Norwegian Arctic Philharmonic Orchestra. They took their approach to integration further, appearing on stage both as musicians and actors in productions of Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* at Den Norske Oper and Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at Haugeund Teater.

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