

Bjarte Eike

Baroque Violin



“Bjarte Eike mixes period-performance with alehouse singalongs to exhilarating effect”

The Guardian

Baroque violinist Bjarte Eike pushes the boundaries of classical music, constantly looking for new projects in the borderland of genres and reaching out to new audiences with his infectious playing and style.

As the Artistic Director of Barokksolistene, he has created new and innovative programmes including *The Early Joke*; a journey through musical history exploring different aspects of humour and music; *The Image of Melancholy* dealing with sad songs and emotions through renaissance, folk and experimental music and the critically acclaimed *Alehouse Sessions* which explores 17th century music from the pubs and alehouses in England and which continues to play to sell-out audiences throughout Europe. Commercial recordings include *The Image of Melancholy* for BIS and *The Alehouse Sessions* on Rubicon Classics.

As a freelance violinist he explores alternative ways of approaching classical music. Although rooted in Historically Informed Performance practice he strives to include other artistic aspects in his performances, using visual arts, dance, storytelling and improvisation. Major collaborations include Handel's *Alcina* at the Norwegian National Opera, *Vespertine* with choreographer Liam Scarlett, a staged *Messiah* with Netia Jones for

Bergen National Opera at the Bergen International Festival and recordings and concerts with jazz pianist Jon Balke, including as part of the Siwan project which explores the links between North African Arabic, Andalusian and baroque music.

This broad, unifying approach to music, as well as a desire to curate exhilarating new experiences for audiences has led to him being invited to be Artist-in-Residence at festivals for early music, classical music, folk music, experimental music and jazz and as a conductor he is increasingly in demand for play-direct engagements with major symphony orchestras.

Recent collaborations include performances with Royal Northern Sinfonia, Royal Academy of Music at the London Handel Festival, Aalborg Symphony, Arctic Phil and Oulu Symphony. In 2023, Bjarte curated the Esbjerg Classical Music Festival which included directing a new production of Dido and Aeneas.

Bjarte received his training from the Grieg Academy in Bergen, Norway and with Richard Gwilt in London. He teaches baroque violin at the Norwegian Academy of Music in Oslo and as a guest-teacher at the Royal Danish Music Conservatory in Copenhagen.

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