

BAROKKSOLISTENE THE ALEHOUSE SESSIONS

Directed by Bjarte Eike

The Alehouse Sessions – curated and devised by Bjarte Eike – is an ever changing and evolving insight into the music of the English 17th Century tavern. It gives audiences a window into this tumultuous period through Purcell overtures, English sea shanties, and raucous Scandinavian and Canadian folk songs thrown in for good measure. In 17th century England, Oliver Cromwell moved to close all the theatres and concert venues- forcing the musicians, actors, and dancers off the stages and into any number of “alternative” venues. In 1630, there were registered more than 30,000 alehouses, 2,000 inns and 400 taverns in England and Wales. These were the new homes for the artists of the day.

This diversion from the traditional concert model is what is at the heart of the Sessions. Through the medium of these well-loved tunes, a story of the period is interwoven into the music making; creating a unique environment between audience and performer. These sessions have already been hailed as ‘irresistible’ [[The Times](#)], ‘superb’ [[The Scotsman](#)] and ‘fabulously unrestrained’ [[The Guardian](#)], and they have diverted away from the traditional concert model by ‘creating the effect of a late night jamming session’ [[BBC Music Magazine](#)].



Bjarte Eike goes into detail about what makes this special:

“The signature of this project is the interaction on stage between the players and the audience. If it has to be put in a historical context, the project draws its inspiration from the Shakespearian theatre where there was a direct communication between stage and hall- going in-between the story that was being told and occurring events happening in the hall. This is in stark contrast to the 19th century drama with dark halls looking at the “gods” on stage. It is the latter which the classical mainstream industry has adapted fully.”

Using their own arrangement of the tunes, these ‘Alehouse Boys’ combine this unique format with humor, an unrivalled virtuosity and flare for improvisation.

The Alehouse Sessions was released on the Rubicon Classics label.

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