

**BJARTE EIKE and THE BAROKKSOLISTENE**  
**IN CONCERT at THE GLOBE THEATRE**  
**SUNDAY 20 SEPTEMBER & MONDAY 21 SEPTEMBER**

Fast establishing a name for himself for his individual programming which mellifluously blends old and new music with hints of Norwegian folk, violinist Bjarte Eike brings the Barokksolistene to the Sam Wanamaker Playhouse at the Globe Theatre for two of his signature programmes on 20 and 21 September.

**THE IMAGE OF MELANCHOLY - Sunday 20 September, 7.00pm**

First conceived as a recording project on BIS, this programme is Bjarte Eike's personal image of melancholy which he performs live in the UK for the first time:

*"For me, melancholy is not only synonymous with sadness and despair, it is a state also harbouring reflection, meditation and relief. In various folk traditions, for instance, bridal songs are in minor keys, or a mix of major and minor, perhaps reflecting the conflicting emotions brought on by the transition from child to adult and the uncertainty of moving from one home to another. In post-Elizabethan England, around 1600, melancholy was in high fashion among composers and writers, and among them none was more renowned than the great singer/songwriter John Dowland, an arch-melancholic whose motto was: 'Semper Dowland, semper dolens', 'always Dowland, always mourning'. Similar cults and fashions among artists have continued ever since. The music in our programme does not belong to any particular style, nationality or period in time; it's rather a string of tunes, songs and expressions that have all had a special and personal significance to me throughout my career. Together they form a musical matrimony between the Nordic melancholy, the rich sounds of the Elizabethan consort and a modern approach to music-making."*

**WHAT THE CRITICS SAID ABOUT THE RECORDING:**

"It's probable that you'll be smiling more than frowning as this disc works its subtle magic. ... and you feel as if the sun's just emerged from behind a cloud.... Unmissable."

*[The Arts Desk, UK](#)*

"Eike and his ensemble let the harmonies penetrate deep into the soul and know how to bridge the centuries effortlessly."

*Der Telegraaf, Netherlands*

"It's an hour of superb music-making that somehow washes away the day's irrelevances."

*Klassisk Magazine, Norway*

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**THE ALEHOUSE SESSIONS - Monday 21 September, 8.00pm**

Bjarte Eike and friends let their hair down in their second concert which starts in the Sam Wanamaker Playhouse at 8pm and will continue ad hoc in the Swan Pub until closing time. This is a programme which opens a comic window into Jacobean pub life replete with music, dance, improvisation, anecdotes and plenty of beer. Always developing, always taking new forms, this project receives incredible feedback from audiences of all ages wherever it is presented - whether it's played in concert halls, in schools, in clubs, pubs or anywhere where people are ready to have a good time.

"Imagine an Irish folk band ranging in time back to the taverns of Purcell's era and geographically across Europe, then delivering the pot pourri in a storm of stamping, dancing and raucous humour. Irresistible." *The Times*

TRAILER: **IMAGE OF MELANCHOLY** [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j\\_-xRa3Ccs8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j_-xRa3Ccs8)  
**ALEHOUSE** [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vGQZj\\_rU2Cc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vGQZj_rU2Cc)

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**BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON BJARTE EIKE & BAROKKSOLISTENE**

Founded and led by Norwegian violinist and Artistic Director Bjarte Eike, Barokksolistene is an ensemble which "brings the raw rhythms of Scandinavian folk music to...the high baroque" [Financial Times, 2014]. They draw on their native influences and traditions to produce unique projects and programmes that range from their performances of Handel's operas to their uniquely branded 'Alehouse Sessions'. They are the ensemble in residence at the Bergen National Opera.

Recent highlights have included a critically acclaimed production of Handel's *Alcina* with the Norwegian National Opera, a series of performances in Norway of a reconstruction of Bach's *St Mark Passion* and a European tour of their 'Alehouse Sessions' to mark their 10th anniversary in 2015. Upcoming performances include appearances at many of Europe's leading venues and festivals, including; the Musikverein in Vienna, Norwegian National Opera, Utrecht Early Music Festival, Klagenfurt Festival, the Rheingau Festival, and Shakespeare's Globe Theatre.

An original project devised by leader Bjarte Eike, *The Alehouse Sessions* features the group blending folk traditions with classical repertoire in an informal context. Described as "irresistible" by The Times, BBC Music Magazine adds that, "their extempore playing [creates] an air of a late-night jamming-session". The ensemble is in demand across Europe for their virtuosity and infectious humour, evident in both the Alehouse Sessions and programmes designed around specific composers including Schubert, Mozart and Handel.

With an expanding recording catalogue, their latest recording *The Image of Melancholy* (BIS) explores the use of melancholy in music throughout the centuries. Amongst major critical acclaim, the album was named the 2014 International Recording of the Year at the Danish P2 Prisen Awards in January 2015.

Bjarte Eike and Barokksolistene are very grateful to receive support from the Norwegian government and community and proud to serve as ambassadors of Norwegian culture.