Stefano Marcocchi - viola

Stefano Marcocchi was born in Parma (Italy) in 1974. He studied viola at the Conservatorio "A. Boito" where he graduated *"Cum Laude"* and developed his interest in early music and playing on historic instruments.

He joined the Gustav Mahler Youth Orchestra while still a student in Italy, and at age 22 he was the youngest ever principal violist of the Italian National Radio-Television (RAI) Symphony Orchestra.

From 1998–2004 Stefano was a member of the Mahler Chamber Orchestra, serving also as leader of the viola section, under such conductors as Claudio Abbado, Daniel Harding, Christopher Hogwood, Kurt Masur, Mark Minkowski, Trevor Pinnock and Andras Schiff. He was invited by Claudio Abbado to join the Lucerne Festival Orchestra and the Orchestra Mozart.

In the early 90s Stefano started to be passionately involved in the research of Baroque, Classical and Romantic strings historical performance aside with the discovery of the underrated repertoire of the *Viola da Braccio* through a personal research conducted on the authentic sources of which he owns a notable collection of ancient originals.

He has been principal violist of Europa Galante since 2001, playing extensively in Europe, North and South America, Asia and Australia, and taking part in twenty recording projects.
Stefano appears regularly as principal viola with other prominent period-instrument ensembles in Italy and Europe, including Les Talens Lyriques, Il Complesso Barocco, Ensemble Zefiro, I Barocchisti, Il Pomo d'Oro, Ensemble Cordia, Ars Musica Zürich, and he has also enjoyed playing with Accademia Bizantina, Ensemble Aurora, Ensemble Concerto and Modo Antiquo.

He is a founding member of AleaEnsemble, a period-instrument string quartet that specializes in the classical and early romantic repertoire. Their debut recording of the complete String Quartets, Op.2 of Luigi Boccherini's was awarded with the Diapason d'Or and the Choc du Monde de la Musique.

Stefano is in great demand both as a principal orchestral player and as a chamber musician, and fellow eminent artists include Stanley Ritchie, Fabio Biondi, Giuliano Carmignola, Hélène Schmitt, Alfredo Bernardini, Alberto and Paolo Grazzi, Gaetano Nasillo, Patxi Montero, Marcello Gatti and Maurice Steger to name a few.

Aside from his two different solo recordings of Telemann's *Viola Concerto* - the first with Ensemble Cordia (Brilliant Classics) and the second with Europa Galante conducted by Fabio Biondi (Label Agogique) for which Diapason magazine praised for his "jeu suave" - Stefano has taken part in several other recordings for Deutsche Grammophon, Virgin Classics, Arkiv Produktion, Harmonia Mundi, Erato, Naïve, Deutsche Harmonia Mundi, Glossa, Naxos and Stradivarius.

In 2011 he was invited to play the 1774 *"Berta-Salabue II"* viola on the occasion of the G.B.Guadagnini 300th Birth Anniversary Exhibition in Parma.
Stefano plays an original viola made by the Austrian luthier Jakob Petz in 1769 and a copy after Carlo Antonio Testore, 1745, built by Renzo Mandelli.

Since 2006 he has taught baroque and classical viola at the Akademie für Alte Musik in Bruneck (Südtirol).

In September 2014 Stefano has moved to Canada, and joined as co-principal viola Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra.