

A man with dark hair, wearing a white long-sleeved shirt and dark jeans, is playing a violin. He is standing in a garden with lush greenery, including rose bushes and lavender. The background is a warm, golden light, suggesting sunset or sunrise. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

# VIVALDI THE FOUR SEASONS

Le Quattro Stagioni, Op. 8

FRANCISCO FULLANA, *violin* | JEANNETTE SORRELL – APOLLO'S FIRE



Antonio VIVALDI (1678-1741)

## THE FOUR SEASONS

*Le Quattro Stagioni, Op. 8*

**La Folia** (“Madness”), arranged by Jeannette Sorrell  
After the *Sonata in D Minor, RV 63*

APOLLO’S FIRE | The Cleveland Baroque Orchestra

*on period instruments*

JEANNETTE SORRELL

FRANCISCO FULLANA, *violin*  
with Alan Choo, *violin (La Folia)*



### LA PRIMAVERA (SPRING), OP. 8 NO. 1

- |           |      |
|-----------|------|
| ① Allegro | 3:37 |
| ② Largo   | 2:45 |
| ③ Allegro | 4:29 |

### L'ESTATE (SUMMER), OP. 8 NO. 2

- |                                    |      |
|------------------------------------|------|
| ④ Allegro non molto – Allegro      | 5:02 |
| ⑤ Adagio e piano                   | 2:21 |
| ⑥ Presto: Tempo impetuoso d'estate | 2:52 |

### L'AUTUNNO (AUTUMN), OP. 8 NO. 3

- |                |      |
|----------------|------|
| ⑦ Allegro      | 5:11 |
| ⑧ Adagio molto | 2:45 |
| ⑨ Allegro      | 3:20 |

### L'INVERNO (WINTER), OP. 8 NO. 4

- |                     |      |
|---------------------|------|
| ⑩ Allegro non molto | 3:34 |
| ⑪ Largo             | 2:15 |
| ⑫ Allegro           | 3:20 |

- ⑬ Vivaldi/arr. Sorrell: “La Folia” (Madness) – Concerto Grosso 10:45  
Francisco Fullana & Alan Choo, *violin*

**TOTAL TIME:**

**52:25**

*This recording is made possible in part by a generous gift from  
MR. ROBERT CONRAD*



## Why Another Recording of *The Four Seasons*?

I have waited 30 years to release an album of *The Four Seasons*. That might seem odd, since Apollo's Fire and I have always seen ourselves primarily as musical storytellers, and *The Four Seasons* is one of the great musical stories. Moreover, this is the program that we are most often requested to perform on tour. After performing it countless times over the years, with so many concertgoers telling us that they never understood *The Four Seasons* until they heard our performance, I have come to realize that our approach to this masterpiece may deserve a wider audience.

We all tend to think that we know *The Four Seasons* if we can hum the melodies. Everyone knows it has some weather effects and bird calls. But that barely scratches the surface.

When Vivaldi published *The Four Seasons* in 1725, he set out to prove that music – instrumental music – is so powerful that it can tell a story without words. In this case, the story is about life in the Italian countryside, and the lives of the *contadini* – the Italian peasants of the 18th century who lived and breathed and celebrated with the changing of the seasons.

My role in performing *The Four Seasons* is to conjure a story. The notes on the page exist to convey an emotion or mood or an event. Our job is to evoke those moods in the listener. For Apollo's Fire, it has been a joy and a challenge to hone our storytelling skills in so many performances of *The Four Seasons*, testing our ideas out on audiences and trying some experiments – they don't always work(!), but we are exhilarated when they do.

In this album we will meet a shepherd boy and will follow his joys, sorrows, and fears. We will meet some farmers celebrating the harvest, with plenty of Chianti. We will take a peek into their dreams as they slumber. We will stagger and slip with our peasant friends on the winter ice, and our teeth will chatter as the icy wind whips in from the North. We will feel what it was like to live in harmony with nature. This, above all, is Vivaldi's gift to us in the 21st century.

As I write these notes, the Pacific Northwest of the United States and Canada is suffocating in temperatures 30 degrees higher than normal. Wildfires rage. Famished polar bears wander into Russian villages because



their Arctic ice has melted. We can barely remember what it was like to live as part of nature, instead of working against it. Vivaldi offers us a precious window into the past – a window uncluttered by statistics and profits. He works on our hearts and our senses, inspiring us to an understanding of nature through musical poetry. He reminds us of the precious and fragile gift that has been entrusted to us.

In the following pages, you can read about the details of Vivaldi's storytelling; the mystery surrounding the lost manuscript of *The Four Seasons*; and the extraordinary orchestra of orphan girls who most likely premiered this music. Or if you prefer, you can just immerse yourself in the emotional moods of the piece. Vivaldi wrote this music to be played by teenagers. Like pop music today, it speaks to the heart.

Jeannette Sorrell | Cleveland, July 2021

## *An Inspired Collaboration*

After waiting 30 years, I am delighted to have found the ideal violinist storyteller in Francisco Fullana. Francisco grew up in the Mediterranean countryside and walked on a similar hillside to the one where Vivaldi's shepherd boy slept. He brings heartfelt poignancy to this story of village life. In April 2021, still in the midst of the 16-month Covid-19 pandemic, Apollo's Fire and I spent three joyful days recording this music with Francisco – who cooked an Italian meal for all 17 of us in my backyard. Like Vivaldi's villagers, we enjoyed plenty of (excellent) Chianti.



# A Priest and Some Orphans Make Revolutionary Music

by Jeannette Sorrell

One day when Vivaldi (the Redhead Priest) was saying Mass, a musical theme came into his mind. He at once left the altar where he was officiating and repaired to the sacristy to write out his theme, then he came back to finish the Mass. He was reported to the Inquisition, which luckily looked on him as a musician, that is, AS A MADMAN, and merely forbade him to say Mass from that time forward.

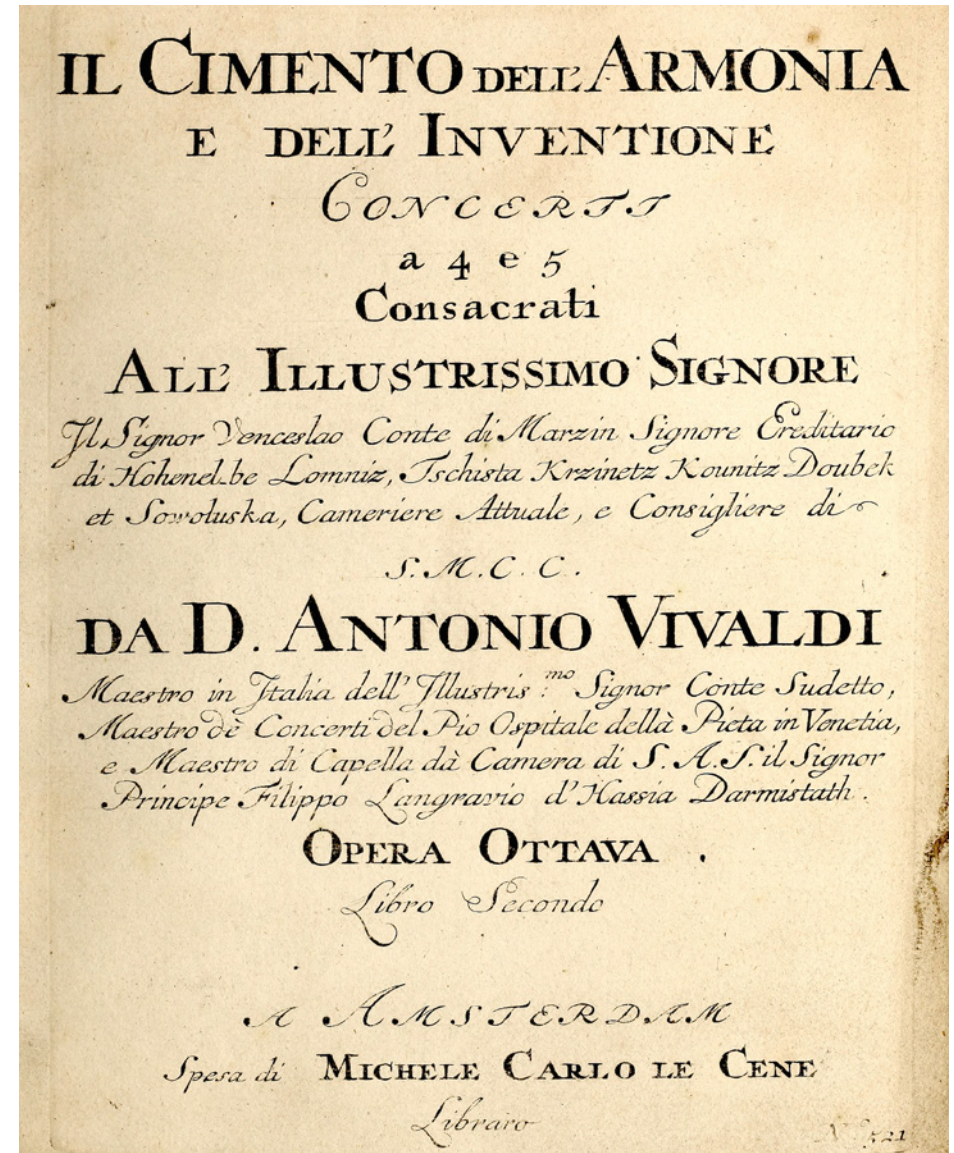
—P. L. de Boisgelou, 1800

## I. A Revolutionary Experiment

In 1725 Antonio Vivaldi published a collection of twelve concertos titled *Il Cimento dell'Armonia e dell'Invenzione* – The Contest Between Harmony and Invention. With this curious title, he unleashed a revolutionary question: should music simply be about harmony, or could it serve to illustrate inventive ideas, events, moods, natural scenes, and so forth? Vivaldi set out to prove that it could do both. The first four concertos of the collection, titled *Le Quattro Stagioni* (*The Four Seasons*), are virtuoso demonstrations of music in the service of storytelling – in this case, the story of Nature and her various moods.

The role of the performer as an animated and improvisatory storyteller was fundamental to baroque performance, and especially to Vivaldi's music. Though Vivaldi had written music in imitation of Nature before, he took the art to new heights this time, supplying sonnets to clarify the meaning of the music. Scholars generally believe that the sonnets were composed by Vivaldi himself, as they do not seem to be the work of a trained poet. In the first publication (1725 in Amsterdam), the lines of the sonnets are labeled A, B, C, D, E, etc. These letters are also placed at the corresponding points in the score, so that the performer can understand which lines of poetry correspond to which passages in the music. However, Vivaldi also provided many more specific indications directly in the score, telling the performer exactly what each phrase is depicting. This level of detail is often lost today.

Here follows a description of Vivaldi's story, as told through specific indications in the score.



Title page of Vivaldi's *Cimento dell'Armonia e dell'Invenzione*, which included *The Four Seasons*



# LA PRIMAVERA SPRING

*Allegro*

Giunt' è la Primavera e festosetti  
La Salutan gl' Augei con lieto canto,  
E i fonti allo Spirar de' Zeffiretti  
Con dolce mormorio Scorrano intanto.  
Vengon' coprendo l' aer di nero amant  
E Lampi, e tuoni ad annuntiarla eletti  
Indi tacendo questi, gl' Augelletti;  
Tornan' di nuovo al lor canoro incanto.

*Largo*

E quindi sul fiorito ameno prato  
Al caro mormorio di fronde e piante  
Dorme 'l Caprar col fido can' à lato.

*Allegro*

Di pastoral Zampogna al suon festante  
Danzan Ninfe e Pastor nel tetto amato  
Di primavera all' apparir brillante.

*Allegro*

*Springtime is here!  
The birds celebrate with festive song,  
And breezes caress  
The murmuring streams.  
Thunder and lightning, those heralds of Spring,  
Cast their dark shadow over heaven;  
Then they die away to silence, and the birds  
Take up their charming songs again.*

*Largo*

*On the flower-strewn meadow,  
With leafy branches rustling overhead,  
Sleeps the goat-herd, his faithful dog at his side.*

*Allegro*

*Led by the festive sound of rustic bagpipes,  
Nymphs and shepherds dance  
Beneath the brilliant canopy of spring.*



In the first movement, a joyful chirping theme tells us that spring has come. A trio of three birds (solo violins) sing in canon, and then fly away. The little brook that was frozen all winter now babbles merrily. A brief spring shower with thunder and lightning does not disturb the joyful mood. In the second movement, we meet the shepherd boy (solo violin), who naps peacefully on a hillside while watched by his famous “barking dog” (the insistent violas). The third movement is a delightful peasant dance using a drone in the bass to suggest the musettes or bagpipes associated with outdoor festivities.

2 *Violino Principale*  
*La Primavera* *A giunt' è la Primavera*  
**CONCERTO I** *Allegro* *Piano*  
*Forte* *B* *Canto de' gl' Vcelli* *Piano*  
*e Zeffiretti*  
*La Salutan gl' Augei con lieto canto* *Tutti*  
*E i fonti allo Spirar de' Zeffiretti* *Scorrano i Fonti*  
*Con dolce mormorio Scorrano in tanto* *Piano*  
*D* *Tuoni Vengon coprend*  
*Forte*

# L'ESTATE ☀ SUMMER

*Allegro non molto - Allegro*

Sotto dura Stagion dal Sole accesa  
Languè l' huom, languè 'l gregge,  
ed arde il Pino;  
Scioglie il Cucco la Voce, e tosto intesa  
Canta la Tortorella e 'l gardelino.  
Zeffiro dolce Spira, mà contesa  
Muove Borea improvviso al Suo vicino;  
E piange il Pastorel, perche sospesa  
Teme fiera borasca, e 'l suo destino.

*Adagio e piano - Presto e forte*

Toglie alle membra lasse il Suo riposo  
Il timore de' Lampi, e tuoni fieri  
E de mosche, e mossoni il Stuol furioso!

*Presto*

Ah che pur troppo i Suo timor Son veri  
Tuona e fulmina il Ciel e grandinoso  
Tronca il capo alle Spiche e a' grani alteri.

*Allegro non molto - Allegro*

*During the harsh season of the sun,  
Humans and sheep languish,  
And the pine trees burn.  
We hear the cuckoo's voice,  
Then sweet songs of turtledove and goldfinch.  
Soft breezes stir the air, but the threatening  
North Wind sweeps them suddenly aside.  
The shepherd trembles,  
Fearing violent storms and his fate.*

*Adagio e piano - Presto e forte*

*The fear of lightning and fierce thunder  
Prevents him from resting his tired limbs,  
As gnats and flies buzz furiously around him!*

*Presto*

*Ah, his fears were justified –  
The Heavens thunder and roar with hail,  
Cutting the heads off the tall stalks of wheat.*



The first movement is a brilliant evocation of hot summer days in Italy. The opening two-note sighing figure evokes the peasants sighing in the heat. A lively cuckoo springs into action, followed by a lonely goldfinch and a turtledove. A chilly North Wind hints of an approaching storm. Our shepherd boy fears the storm, and we sense his anxiety in some tearful music. In the slow movement, the shepherd boy tries to take another siesta, but this time is tormented by buzzing flies and wasps. His frayed nerves are not helped by the intermittent rumbling thunder, growing louder as the storm approaches.

The third movement is a stunning depiction of a thunderstorm. Anyone who has been in Italy during a summer storm will appreciate how the torrent of cascading violin scales evokes the deluge that comes when the clouds burst. The wind and rain batter the crops furiously.



An 18th century manuscript copy, but not in Vivaldi's hand



# L'AUTUNNO AUTUMN

*Allegro*

Celebra il Vilanel con balli e Canti,  
Del felice raccolto il bel piacere.  
E del liquor de Bacco accesi tanti,  
Finiscono col Sonno il lor godere.

*Adagio molto*

Fà ch' ogn' uno tralasci e balli e canti  
L'aria che temperata dà piacere,  
E la Staggion ch' invita tanti e tanti  
D' un dolcissimo Sonno al bel godere.

*Allegro*

I cacciator alla nov' alba à caccia  
Con corni, Schioppi, e canni escono fuore.  
Fugge la belua, e Seguono la traccia;  
Già Sbigottita, e lassa al gran rumore  
De' Schioppi e canni, ferita minaccia  
Languida di fuggir, mà oppressa muore.

*Allegro*

*Peasants celebrate with songs and dances,  
The joy of a bountiful harvest.  
And fired up by Bacchus' liquor,  
Many end their revelry in sleep.*

*Adagio molto*

*After much singing and dancing  
The mood is quietly happy.  
It is the time that invites so many  
To the enjoyment of sweet slumber.*

*Allegro*

*At dawn the hunters are off to the hunt  
With horns, rifles, and dogs.  
They follow the trail of the wild beast.  
Frightened and fatigued by the noise  
Of rifles and dogs, the wounded beast  
Tries to flee; but overcome, it dies.*



The first movement concerns the merry gatherings of peasants celebrating the harvest – including a fair amount of drinking. We meet an intoxicated farmer who staggers merrily. Things get progressively more tipsy until the farmers fall asleep towards the end of the first movement. In the second movement, the dreams of the slumbering farmers ebb and flow. Vivaldi indicates that the harpsichord should play continuous arpeggios. In our performance, the solo violin plays occasional cascades suggesting the movement of dreams.

In the third movement we are invited to join a hunting party, complete with galloping rhythms and horn-calls. Animal lovers, be warned: this movement includes gun-shots and squeals of the desperate animal. The poor creature finally gives up his spirit in a lightly floating violin arpeggio, immediately followed by the return of the jolly hunting theme.

10 Celebra il Vilanel con Violino Principale balli e canti Del felice raccolto  
Autunno A Ballo, e Canto de Villanelli  
CONCERTO III   
Illegro Piano  
il bel piacere Forte  
Piano Solo Forte Piano  
B L'Vbrigo E Tutti del liquor di Bacco accesi tanti  
Solo



# L'INVERNO ❄ WINTER

*Allegro non molto*

Aggiacciato tremar trà nevi algenti  
Al severo spirar d' orrido Vento,  
Correr battendo i piedi ogni momento;  
E pel soverchio gel batter i denti;

*Largo*

Passar al foco i di quieti e contenti  
Mentre la pioggia fuor bagna ben cento.

*Allegro*

Caminar sopra 'l ghiaccio, e à passo lento  
Per timor di cader gersene intenti;  
Gir forte sdruzzolar, cader à terra  
Di nuove ir sopra 'l ghiaccio e correr forte  
Sin ch' il ghiaccio si rompe, e si disserra;  
Sentir uscir dalle ferrate porte  
Sirocco Borea, e tutti i Venti in guerra  
Quest' è l'inverno, mà tal, che gioia apporta.

*Allegro non molto*

*Shivering in the frosty snow,  
In biting, stinging winds;  
Stamping our feet to stay warm,  
Our teeth chatter in the bitter chill.*

*Largo*

*We rest contentedly beside the fireplace,  
While the rain pours down outside.*

*Allegro*

*We tread the icy path slowly and cautiously,  
For fear of falling.  
Then turning abruptly, we slip to the ground.  
Rising, we hasten across the ice  
Worried that it may break.  
We feel the chill north winds course through  
The house despite bolted doors...  
This is winter, but even so, what joy it brings!*



Vivaldi partly dispenses with ritornello form in order to relate the details of winter life: we begin stiff with cold (reminiscent of Purcell's *Cold Genius*), then the howling wind arises together with the famous chattering teeth (violins playing staccato repeated notes, very high and fast). In the second movement we experience a more typical Venetian winter: drizzling rain on the rooftop, brought to life by pizzicato violins.

The third movement begins with slipping and sliding on the ice, and suddenly the orchestra interrupts with jagged intervals, signaling that the ice has broken right in front of us. A quick series of descending arpeggios in the violin conveys attempts to get up from the ice and walk, with plenty of stumbling. A brief respite comes from the gentle spring breeze in the upper strings, soon interrupted with the return of the fierce North Wind. Vivaldi notes in the sonnet that while winter brings challenges, it ultimately brings joys as well.

14 *L'Inverno* *Violino Principale*  
*Allegro non molto*  
**CONCERTO IV**  
*Orrido Vento Al Severo Spirar d'orrido vento*  
*Solo*

In writing these violin concertos for his young orphan protégés, Vivaldi was also the great developer of *ritornello* form – the form that became the model for concerto-writing by all European composers of the century, including J.S. Bach. The Italian word “ritornello” means something that returns. The same word is used to mean the refrain in popular music – and indeed, Vivaldi’s ritornellos convey the bold and driving sense of rhythm and melody that is commonly associated with pop music. Like many pop music composers today, he was writing for teenagers as well as adults. So he imbued his concertos with the same sense of driving rhythm and earthy harmonies that we all respond to in rock music. I think of him as the rock-n’-roll composer of the 18th century.

Vivaldi’s trio sonata *La Folia* (“Folly” or “Madness”) is one of many baroque works based on the traditional folia ground-bass pattern. Scholars believe that the great *folia* or *folia* dance-tune originated in Portugal, where girls would engage in the “folly” of a mad dance around the fire. The *folia* is a ground bass in haughty sarabande-like rhythm, full of the tension of courtship and seduction. Traditionally, the dance grew faster and wilder toward the end. The theme has served as inspiration for variations by dozens of baroque composers, including Corelli, Marais, Geminiani, C.P.E. Bach, and of course, Vivaldi. I believe that Vivaldi’s version is the finest of them all; but since he wrote it as a trio sonata (for two violins and continuo) I felt compelled to arrange it as a concerto grosso so that all of us could join in the fray.

## II. Unraveling a Mystery:

### *The Case of the Missing Manuscript*

Vivaldi’s *Four Seasons* are the most popular pieces in Western classical music, but they remain shrouded in mystery nearly 300 years after publication. The manuscript has not survived, which makes it difficult to determine for whom Vivaldi wrote the pieces and when. He published the concertos in 1725, but mentions in the preface that he composed them much earlier.

For decades, Vivaldi was the music master at the *Ospedale della Pietà* in Venice, the renowned orphanage where he composed hundreds of concertos – mostly violin concertos – for the teenage orphan girls. Nevertheless, in modern times many sources will tell you that Vivaldi wrote *The Four Seasons*

for the musicians at the court of Mantua, where he worked briefly during 1718-1720.

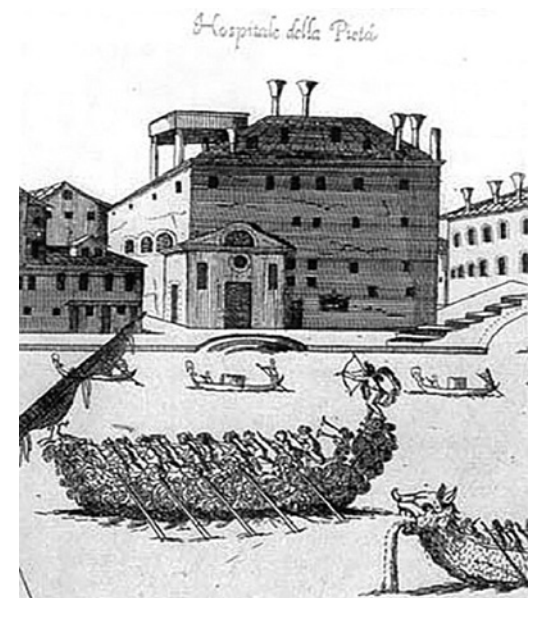
The question is tantalizing, because it determines whether Vivaldi wrote these pieces for a professional ensemble, or for teenage orphan girls. To me as a conductor, that question influences how the composer envisioned the music to be performed.

Vivaldi began his work at the *Pietà* orphanage in 1703, as a violin teacher. His reputation as a virtuoso grew quickly, attracting daughters of the nobility to seek places in the *Pietà*’s music program, though it had originally been intended for orphan girls. Ten years later, he was promoted to the post of *maestro di coro*, meaning that he was responsible for composing and directing sacred choral works. Then in 1716, he was given a new title of *maestro de’ concerti*. This meant that he was now welcome to compose instrumental concerti, not only sacred music. Instrumental concerti... such as *The Four Seasons*?

Musicologist Karl Heller has shown that *The Four Seasons* were most likely composed during 1716-17. At that time, Vivaldi was still the *maestro de’ concerti* at the orphanage. And even after he left Venice in 1718, he remained under contract with the *Pietà* to compose 24 concertos per year for the orchestra and to rehearse with them at least five times when in Venice.

In Mantua, Vivaldi’s job involved directing chamber music and composing opera. As far as we know, he was not responsible for writing concertos.

Much of the repertoire and records of the *Ospedale della Pietà* were burned by Napoleon’s invading army in 1797. If Vivaldi had written *The Four Seasons* in Mantua, the manuscript would more likely have survived. It hasn’t.



Ospedale della Pietà in Venice





Napoleon's army in Italy

From the available evidence, then, it seems to me that the teenage girls of the *Pietà* most likely premiered Vivaldi's *Four Seasons*.

### III. A Youth Orchestra Like No Other

To fully understand Vivaldi's work, including *The Four Seasons*, we need to understand the extraordinary young musicians for whom he wrote nearly all his violin concertos. Their unique situation, their intense focus and passion, probably made it

possible for Vivaldi to envision and achieve a new level of virtuoso artistry in his concerto-writing.

Venice in Vivaldi's time was already a tourist destination. The floating city's extraordinary music and entertainment scene attracted European princes and British aristocrats by the hundreds. Eight opera houses flourished in Venice, but the biggest attraction of all was the famous Sunday evening concerts performed by... an orchestra of orphan girls.

Venice in Vivaldi's time had several thousand illegitimate and orphaned children, especially girls. Why? Because aristocratic Venetian men liked to keep mistresses. It was common – even acceptable. The city was home to over 10,000 elegant prostitutes, who generated much revenue for the city. Illegitimate babies could not be brought up in the marital home, so the city maintained several very large religious orphanages, or *ospedali*. Babies were deposited at the orphanages through the tiny door known as the *scaffetta*. Most of them were the daughters of noblemen, and their wealthy fathers took an interest in their welfare. Thus, the orphanages were well funded.

And so it was that when the young Antonio Vivaldi failed to cut the mustard as a priest, the church elders decided to send him to the *Ospedale*



Venice, c. 1720

della *Pietà* – a large convent and girls' orphanage with an extraordinary emphasis on music. There he could be useful as a music teacher.

The *Pietà* was essentially the precursor to today's *El Sistema* youth orchestras, designed to provide underprivileged youth with a pathway out of poverty through musical accomplishment. The girls at the *Pietà* played and studied music for hours every day. They may have been the most music-absorbed young people that history has known. Other than music and academic classes, they lived the life of nuns. They were bound to silence and were not allowed to speak at meals or chat with each other at any time. As noted by a German tourist in 1730, the girls were not allowed to leave the orphanage unless they received a marriage proposal.

The *Pietà* had several orchestras of different levels. Vivaldi became the music-master and composer for the most elite orchestra, known as the *figlie del coro*. Their public concerts every Sunday drew aristocratic tourists from far and wide, thus bringing in revenue that supported the orphanage. When Jean-Jacques Rousseau visited Venice, he wrote that the music at the orphanage had “no equal, either in Italy or the rest of the world.”

The orphans for whom Vivaldi wrote his concertos had no identity other than their roles in the elite orchestra. They had no last names, and were known as “Marietta dal Violino,” or “Bernardina dal Violoncello,” etc. Vivaldi often wrote his concertos for a particular girl, indicating her name at the top of the manuscript. Many of the most virtuosic violin concertos were written for “Anna Maria dal Violino.” Since the manuscript of *The Four*



Antonio Vivaldi at his writing desk

Seasons did not survive, we do not know if Vivaldi wrote the solo part for Anna Maria, or for himself to perform.

Visitors were fascinated by the *Pietà*'s all-female orchestras, because such a thing was unheard of in the rest of Europe. These girls, confined in a convent and punished if they spoke, gave world-class, virtuoso performances. They knew that their two options in life were either to marry or to remain at the convent and dedicate their lives to music in the service of God. They needed to maintain pure and chaste reputations if they were to win a husband; however, women who

gave public concerts were usually considered loose and irreputable. So, the church elders found a solution: Vivaldi's orchestra performances could not be called "concerts." Instead, they were called Vespers services.

The girls performed behind a screen in a balcony above the audience. Audience members were not supposed to applaud, so they shuffled their feet in appreciation at the end of a virtuoso performance. The spectators peered in fascination at the gallery above, trying to see the girls better. Tourist after tourist, including Charles Burney and Samuel Sharp, commented regretfully that the girls were hidden. Sharp wrote in 1765, "However beautiful the girls may be... their melody is intercepted from the sight of the audience by a black gauze hung over the rails



A concert at the Ospedale della Pietà

of the gallery in which they perform; it is transparent enough to show the figures of women, but not in the least their features and complexion."

The girls often received proposals of marriage from wealthy gentlemen. However, any orphan of the *Pietà* who chose to marry was required to sign a contract saying that she *would never perform as a musician again*. She also had to return her instrument to the *Pietà*. This was how the *Pietà* maintained its standing as a leading tourist attraction of the world. Many of the girls turned down their marriage offers because they could not face the idea of living without music. Anna Maria *dal Violino* received proposals year after year, and was the subject of love poems printed in Venice newspapers. Nevertheless, she apparently could not bring herself to marry in view of the sacrifice she would have to make. She remained at the *Pietà* her entire life, becoming the principal Maestra of the orchestra.

The girls of the *Pietà* must have poured out their energy and passions at these Sunday concerts. Then, back to their vow of silence again.

@2021 Jeannette Sorrell | Cleveland, OH







## FRANCISCO FULLANA

*“A paragon of delicacy”* –SAN FRANCISCO CLASSICAL VOICE

Spanish-born violinist Francisco Fullana is one of the first international solo violinists to fully embrace and absorb the baroque language of historical performance. Hailed as a “*rising star*” (BBC MUSIC MAGAZINE), he is the winner of four international violin competitions as well as an Avery Fisher Career Grant. His Carnegie Hall recital debut was noted for its “*joy and playfulness in collaboration... it was perfection*” (NEW YORK CONCERT REVIEW).

Born into a family of educators, Francisco was raised in Mallorca and Madrid and was recognized in Spain as a prodigy. He moved to the U.S. at the age of 16 to study at The Juilliard School. His primary teachers and mentors for the next 8 years were Donald Weilerstein, Masao Kawasaki, and Midori.

His lifelong fascination with baroque music has influenced both of his prior recordings: his 2018 debut album, *Through the Lens of Time* (Orchid Classics) and his 2021 solo album, *Bach’s Long Shadow*, which juxtaposes Bach *Partitas* on gut strings and baroque setup with virtuoso solo violin works from the next three centuries.

As a concerto soloist, his engagements have included the Bayerische Philharmonie, Münchner Rundfunkorchester, City of Birmingham Symphony, Vancouver Symphony, and St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, among others. He is Artist-in-Residence with Apollo’s Fire, performing as soloist with the GRAMMY®-winning period band at Carnegie Hall and Cleveland’s Severance Hall in 2022.

As a chamber musician, Francisco is a Bowers Program Artist at the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center. His many performances have included the Marlboro Festival and the Perlman Music Program, as well as collaborations with Mitsuko Uchida and members of the Guarneri, Juilliard, Pacifica, Takács, and Cleveland quartets.

Using gut strings and a baroque bow, Francisco performs on the 1735 “Mary Portman” ex-Kreisler Guarneri del Gesù violin, on loan from Clement and Karen Arrison through the Stradivari Society of Chicago.

# JEANNETTE SORRELL

“Sorrell led a resplendent performance... breathtaking.” – NEW YORK TIMES



Photo: Apollo's Fire

GRAMMY®-winning conductor Jeannette Sorrell is recognized internationally as one of today's most compelling interpreters of Baroque and Classical repertoire. She is the subject of the 2019 documentary by Academy award-winning director Allan Miller, titled *PLAYING WITH FIRE*.

Sorrell studied conducting at the Aspen and the Tanglewood music festivals under Leonard Bernstein and Roger Norrington and harpsichord with Gustav Leonhardt in Amsterdam. She won First Prize in the Spivey International Harpsichord Competition, competing against over 70 harpsichordists from Europe, Israel, the U.S., and the Soviet Union.

She is the founder of APOLLO'S FIRE and has led the renowned ensemble as conductor and harpsichord soloist at the major halls of Europe and North America, including London's BBC Proms, Carnegie Hall, and Madrid's Royal Theatre. Sorrell and Apollo's Fire have released 26 commercial CDs, including 8 bestsellers on the Billboard classical chart and a 2019 GRAMMY® winner. Her recordings include the complete *Brandenburg Concerti*, Bach's *St. John Passion*, Handel's *Messiah*, and the *Monteverdi Vespers*.

In demand as a guest conductor with symphony orchestras and period ensembles alike, Sorrell makes debuts this season with the New York Philharmonic (Handel's *Messiah*) and the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic (Bach's *St. John Passion*). She has repeatedly conducted the Pittsburgh Symphony, St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, and Utah Symphony, and also led the National Symphony at the Kennedy Center, the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, Seattle Symphony, Opera St. Louis with the St. Louis Symphony, and Philharmonia Baroque (San Francisco), among others. Sorrell has attracted national attention and awards for creative programming using contextual and dramatic elements. She holds an Artist Diploma from Oberlin Conservatory, an honorary doctorate from Case Western University, and an award from the American Musicological Society.



# APOLLO'S FIRE



Photo: Apollo's Fire

Named for the classical god of music and healing, Apollo's Fire is a GRAMMY®-winning ensemble based in Cleveland, Ohio. The period-instrument orchestra was founded by award-winning harpsichordist and conductor Jeannette Sorrell, and is dedicated to the baroque ideal that music should evoke the various *Affekts* or passions in the listeners. Apollo's Fire is a collection of creative artists who share Sorrell's passion for drama and rhetoric.

Apollo's Fire has performed five European tours, with sold-out concerts at the BBC Proms in London, Madrid's Royal Theatre, Bordeaux's Grand Théâtre de l'Opéra, the National Concert Hall of Ireland, and venues in France, Italy, Austria, and Portugal.

Chosen by the DAILY TELEGRAPH as one of London's "Best 5 Classical Concerts of 2014," Apollo's Fire was praised for "superlative music-making... combining European stylishness with American entrepreneurialism."

North American tour engagements include Carnegie Hall, the Tanglewood, Aspen, and Ravinia music festivals, the Boston Early Music Festival series, the Library of Congress, the National Gallery of Art, the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City, and major venues in Toronto, Los Angeles, San Francisco and Houston. The ensemble has performed two major U.S. tours of the *Monteverdi Vespers* and a 9-concert tour of the *Brandenburg Concertos*. At home in Cleveland, Apollo's Fire enjoys sold-out performances at its subscription series, which has drawn national attention for creative programming. With over 7 million views of its YouTube videos, Apollo's Fire is one of the most popular baroque orchestras on the internet.

Apollo's Fire has released 26 commercial CDs and won a GRAMMY® award in 2019 for the album *Songs of Orpheus* with tenor Karim Sulayman. Eight of the ensemble's CD releases have become best-sellers on the classical Billboard chart, including the *Monteverdi Vespers*, Bach's *Brandenburg Concertos* & *Harpsichord Concertos*, and Sorrell's 4 crossover programs: *Come to the River – An Early American Gathering*; *Sacrum Mysterium – A Celtic Christmas Vespers*; *Sugarloaf Mountain – An Appalachian Gathering*; and *Sephardic Journey – Wanderings of the Spanish Jews*.

## VIOLIN

Alan Choo, *concertmaster*  
Emi Tanabe, *ass't concertmaster*  
Andrew Fouts, *principal 2nd*  
Chloé Fedor  
Evan Few  
Carrie Krause  
Holly Piccoli

## VIOLA

Kristen Linfante  
Yael Cohen

## CELLO

René Schiffer, *principal*  
Rebecca Landell Reed  
Kivie Cahn-Lipman

## CONTRABASS

Sue Yelanjian

## THEORBO & BAROQUE GUITAR

William Simms

## BAROQUE HARP

Anna O'Connell

## HARPSICHORD

Jeannette Sorrell



VIVALDI

## THE FOUR SEASONS

Le Quattro Stagioni, Op. 8

FRANCISCO FULLANA, *violin*

## LA FOLIA ("Madness")

*arranged by Jeannette Sorrell*

FRANCISCO FULLANA & ALAN CHOO, *violin*

Recorded April 15-17, 2021, Avon Lake United Church of Christ

Recording Producer & Editor: Erica Brenner

Recording, Mixing, & Mastering Engineer: Daniel Shores

Cover photo: Adrian Mendoza

Recording Session Photography: Ken Wendt

Booklet design: KeinZweifel

Francisco Fullana performs on the 1735 "Mary Portman" ex-Kreisler Guarnieri del Gesù violin, with gut strings and baroque bow. The violin is on loan from Clement and Karen Arrison through the Stradivari Society of Chicago.

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