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# vivaldi

GROSSO MOGUL  
THE CUCKOW

the four seasons



ELIZABETH WALLFISCH BAROQUE VIOLIN  
AUSTRALIAN BRANDENBURG ORCHESTRA  
PAUL DYER ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

**The Four Seasons**, Op. 8 Nos. 1-4

for violin, strings and basso continuo (published Amsterdam, 1725)

**La Primavera (Spring)**

**Concerto in E major, Op. 8 No. 1, RV 269**

[3'08]

- |   |              |      |
|---|--------------|------|
| 1 | I. Allegro   | 3'22 |
| 2 | II. Largo    | 2'01 |
| 3 | III. Allegro | 3'39 |

**L'Estate (Summer)**

**Concerto in G minor, Op. 8 No. 2, RV 315**

[8'25]

- |   |                                |      |
|---|--------------------------------|------|
| 4 | I. Allegro non molto – Allegro | 4'17 |
| 5 | II. Adagio                     | 1'29 |
| 6 | III. Presto                    | 2'37 |

**L'Autunno (Autumn)**

**Concerto in F major, Op. 8 No. 3, RV 293**

[10'57]

- |   |                  |      |
|---|------------------|------|
| 7 | I. Allegro       | 5'03 |
| 8 | II. Adagio molto | 2'33 |
| 9 | III. Allegro     | 3'12 |

**L'Inverno (Winter)**

**Concerto in F minor, Op. 8 No. 4, RV 297**

[7'40]

- |    |                      |      |
|----|----------------------|------|
| 10 | I. Allegro non molto | 3'19 |
| 11 | II. Largo            | 1'23 |
| 12 | III. Allegro         | 2'52 |

**'Grosso mogul'**

**Concerto in D major, RV 208**

[14'52]

for violin, strings and basso continuo

- |    |                      |      |
|----|----------------------|------|
| 13 | I. Allegro           | 5'31 |
| 14 | II. Grave recitativo | 2'36 |
| 15 | III. Allegro         | 6'37 |

**'The Cuckow'**

**Concerto in A major, RV 335**

[9'27]

for violin, strings and basso continuo  
(published London, c.1720)

- |    |              |      |
|----|--------------|------|
| 16 | I. Allegro   | 3'45 |
| 17 | II. Largo    | 2'02 |
| 18 | III. Allegro | 3'31 |

Total Playing Time 60'29

**Elizabeth Wallfisch *baroque violin***  
**Australian Brandenburg Orchestra**  
**Paul Dyer *artistic director***

### Vivaldi's most celebrated concertos

Vivaldi's first two published sonata collections, Opp. 1 and 2 (1705 and 1709) were both issued in his native Venice. However for his next release, the concertos 'Opera Terza' in 1711, he abandoned the local presses with their antiquated moveable type for the Amsterdam printer and 'Merchant Bookseller' Estienne Roger. Nor was Vivaldi the only Venetian to make the move. Tomaso Albinoni also threw in his lot with Roger at around this time. Albinoni had already watched for ten years while Roger profited from elegantly engraved editions pirated from his Venetian opuses. And now, Roger's entrepreneurial flair in selling Italian music to the large northern European market persuaded both Albinoni and Vivaldi of the benefits of joining the enemy. For Roger, too, Vivaldi's *L'estro armonico ... Opera terza* was a landmark, being the first authorially sanctioned set of Italian concertos he had released, predating even his authorised edition of Corelli's retrospective *Concerti grossi*, Opus 6, in 1714.

The new set of Vivaldi's concertos generated immediate interest. Among dilettanti, J.F.A. von Offenbach was arranging performances of Opus 3 in Strasbourg within a year. Among professionals, evidence points to Johann Sebastian Bach's discovery of the Opus 3 concertos by 1713, while he was serving at the court of Weimar. When the young composer

prince Johann Ernst returned home from studies at Utrecht University in April 1713, Bach's pupil Philipp David Kräuter was expecting him to bring back 'many beautiful pieces of French and Italian music'. That this music included the Opus 3 is attested to by the almost immediate appearance of some of the contents in keyboard arrangements by Bach. Bach also arranged other concertos by Vivaldi not yet in print, perhaps from manuscript copies also obtained by the prince in Amsterdam. Among them was the '**Grosso mogul**', **Concerto in D major** (RV 208).

Vivaldi's own autograph score of this concerto (Turin MS) bears neither date nor additional title. Toward the end of the two outer movements, he gives the direction *Qui si ferma à piac[imen]to*, indicating that the principal violin may interpolate an unaccompanied cadenza-like passage. This intention was realised in a later north German copy made by P.J. Fick for the Mecklenburg court (Schwerin MS), which adds elaborate written-out cadenzas at both points, that to the last movement over 100 bars long. Unique to Fick's copy is the curious title *Grosso mogul*, an Italian name for the 'kingdom' of India. It suggests that the work may be related to another concerto, *Il gran mogul*, one of four lost flute concertos by Vivaldi listed in a 1759 catalogue. (Including *La Francia*, *La Spagna* and *L'Inghilterra*, the set seems to have been a geographical equivalent of *The Four Seasons*.)

Another copy from Italy (Civiale del Friuli MS) has similar cadenzas, that for the last movement being even more extended (126 bars) and bearing an appended note stating that Vivaldi composed it especially for Count Leonardo Pontotti, the amateur violinist from whose collection the copy came. Bach's arrangement (for organ, BWV 594), apparently based on a copy similar to the Schwerin MS, is a fourth source. Finally, Roger engraved and printed the concerto as No. 5 in Book 2 of Vivaldi's Opus 7 (c.1720). This revised version (RV 208a) replaces the original slow movement found in all other sources and recorded here (a *Grave recitativo* for soloist and continuo alone) with another more up-to-date piece for principal and *ripieno* violins alone.

The Schwerin, Friuli and Bach copies provide an early example of a concerto with a written-out solo apotheosis, described in contemporary sources as a *cadenza*, *capriccio* or *phantasie* (Quantz dated the introduction of the *cadenza* to 'between 1710 and 1716'). In direct response, Bach incorporated similar passages in his early D minor violin concerto (preserved as BWV 1052) and in the fifth Brandenburg Concerto (BWV 1050). Locatelli later appended notoriously extensive *capricci* to the concertos of his *L'arte del violino*, Opus 3 (1733). Locatelli's *capricci* are almost free-standing pieces, and so too are those to the last movement of RV 208 in the Schwerin and substantially similar Friuli versions; as if to signify its independence from the

surrounding 3/4-time movement, it is cast entirely in duple time. In Venice in 1715, Offenbach (mentioned above) was present when:

*'Toward the end, Vivaldi appended a splendid phantasie that really terrified me, for such has not, nor ever can be played; his fingers came within a hair's-breadth of the bridge, so that the bow had no room, and this on all four strings, playing in many parts and at incredible speed.'*

Roger's Vivaldi editions were themselves widely copied. The London publisher John Walsh released a pirate edition of the Opus 3 set in 1714. Roger's London agent, Henry Ribotteau, countered with an advertisement warning that Walsh's print may have been cheaper, but that it was also incomplete. Roger took care that his next venture would not meet the same fate, and his authorised first edition of Vivaldi's next set of concertos, *La stravaganza ... Opera quarta* (1715) was advertised in London before it was even mentioned in the Amsterdam press. By fair means or foul then, Vivaldi's concertos became familiar in England. The travel writer Edward Wright, who encountered the violinist 'whom they call the *Prete Rosso* ... a topping man among them at Venice' in Italy in the early 1720s, reminded his readers at home that this Vivaldi was already 'very well known among us for his concertos'.

A notable import was the **'The Cuckow', Concerto in A major** (RV 335). In London's *Post Man* (19–21 December 1717), the publisher Daniel Wright advertised 'The favourite Concerto, printed single for the violin, composed by Sig. Vivaldi, it being the choicest of all his Works'. Unfortunately, no copy of Wright's edition survives. However, it being unlikely that such a 'favourite' work would disappear entirely, the lost concerto is conceivably identical with 'A consorto of Vivaldo's, call'd The Cuckoo, from his own Manuscript' advertised in the *Daily Post* (8 December 1719) by Wright's rival John Jones. Luckily, a copy of Jones's 'pirate' edition does survive (including also a concerto pirated from Roger's edition of Opus 4), tantalisingly entitled 'Two Celebrated Concerto's Compos'd by Sig[no]r Antonio Vivaldi; being his own Favourites: One, commonly call'd the Cuckow, and the other, out of his Extravagances'.

Whether this concerto was indeed one of Vivaldi's personal favourites (a decade later Roger's successor Le Cène nominated an oboe concerto, Op. 11 No. 2 as 'Il favorito'), or already widely known, as Wright seems to suggest, cannot be verified. Yet, on publication, Jones's edition did make a splash. It took the canny Walsh only a matter of months to bring out his own re-pirated edition, luring customers by advertising in the *Post Boy* (April 1720) that *The Cuckow* had been 'Perform'd by Monsieur Duburge at his late Consort'. This performance would certainly have

attracted attention, for Matthew Dubourg had been a well-known child prodigy, and was still only sixteen. Years later, Charles Burney (1776) recalled the English response to Vivaldi's concertos 'which among flashy players, whose chief merit was rapid execution, occupied the highest place of favour. The *Cuckoo Concerto*, during my youth, was the wonder and delight of all frequenters of country concerts.'

No autograph score is known to survive, and Jones's edition is the earliest source of the title *The Cuckow*. If it was indeed Vivaldi's, its Venetian title would probably be *Il cucco* (after the spelling in the sonnet *L'Estate of The Four Seasons*). Yet, curiously, the sole surviving Italian copy of the concerto (Ancona MS) calls it *Il rosignuolo* (The Nightingale) and includes a different slow movement. Curiously too, there are few similarities between the first movement of RV 335 and the 'Il cucco' music in *Summer* (RV 315). Instead, it has much more in common with the passage marked 'Il gardellino' (The Goldfinch) in the same concerto, and with the 'Canto dè gl'uccelli' in *Spring* (RV 269). Its opening is also startlingly similar to that of the flute concerto (RV 428), called *Il gardellino* in its published version (Opus 10 No. 3).

Back in Amsterdam, Roger had retired in 1716 and passed the business to his elder daughter, Jeanne. With the help of the firm's longtime employee Gerrit Drinkmann, she saw three

more Vivaldi publications through the presses by 1720 (Opp. 5–7). However, these bear neither authorised dedications nor figurative titles and may, rather, be 'semi-pirate' collections, compiled without the composer's direct oversight. Vivaldi, meanwhile, may have been planning the genuinely authorised collection of twelve concertos that ultimately, in 1725, became his 'Opera ottava'. His autograph scores of at least three of the works can be dated to c.1718–20. Yet autographs of the most famous items, **The Four Seasons**, have not been discovered, and a tentative dating for their composition relies on a web of circumstantial evidence. At the latest, *The Four Seasons* seems likely to have been in existence by early 1724, when the opening *ritornello* of *Spring* formed the basis of a short sinfonia used to greet the goddess Fortuna in the opera *Giustino* (RV 717). (Elsewhere, the middle movement of *Autumn* appears transposed as a *largo* with the subtitle 'Il sonno' (Sleep) in the undated flute concerto *La notte* (Night) (RV 104/293).)

Importantly, no direct link can be made between *The Four Seasons* and Vivaldi's on-again off-again tenure as a *maestro* at the Ospedale della Pietà, one of Venice's four institutional homes for 'foundling' (i.e. illegitimate) girls that fostered generations of exceptional musicians. A manuscript belonging to one of the most talented inmates of this period, the violinist Anna Maria of the Pietà, reveals that though she

had a large number of exceptionally virtuosic Vivaldi concertos in her repertoire, they included none of the works recorded here. Indeed, even Venice's traditional claim to *The Four Seasons* may be in doubt. If they began to circulate in manuscript at around the same time as some of their companion concertos (c.1718–20), it is conceivable that they were composed in Mantua, where Vivaldi worked for three consecutive seasons from 1718 as *maestro* to Prince Philipp of Hesse-Darmstadt. More important evidence is contained in the 1725 print itself, especially its prefatory letter of dedication to Count Wenceslaus von Morzin of Prague, in which Vivaldi writes:

*Most Illustrious Sir ... I would ask you not to be surprised if, among these few and modest Concertos, Your Most Illustrious Lordship finds the Four Seasons which for so long have encountered the Generous Bounty of Y.M.I. Lordship, but that you will realise that I have thought it fitting to print them because, while they may be the same, I have added to them, besides the Sonnets, a very clear statement of all the things that occur in them, so that they will, with certainty, appear as new.*

It is not known where, when – or if – the two men met, nor exactly how long Vivaldi had served as Morzin's *maestro in Italia*. However, by 1723 Morzin possessed copies of at least

seven of Vivaldi's concertos, and there are records of his payments to Vivaldi from 1724 to 1728 for more concertos, presumably sent to Prague by post. Nor is it known just how long was the 'so long' ago that Morzin first encountered *The Four Seasons*. Did Morzin perhaps hear them on a visit to Venice (presumably after Vivaldi's return from Mantua c.1720), or were they part of a postal consignment for which Vivaldi received a 'Generous Bounty' in return? What is clearly implied is that some time elapsed between their composition and final appearance in print in 1725. But why?

The explanation for this may lie in Amsterdam, for in 1722, a macabre train of events saw the decease of almost the entire house of Roger in a matter of months. First, Estienne died in July; then Jeanne became ill and died in December. Having cut her only sister Françoise out of her will, Jeanne left the business to her employee, Drinkmann; but Drinkmann, too, died within months. Françoise and her husband, Michel-Charles Le Cène, then bought the press from the widow Drinkmann in June 1723. Finally, Françoise died in August 1723, leaving her husband to run the business alone. Le Cène must have quickly formalised a continuing relationship with Vivaldi, for they were soon planning the release of not one, but two concerto sets (Opp. 8 and 9), or so it would appear from a letter of 1724, which finds Vivaldi

looking for six subscribers to buy copies of no fewer than twenty-four concertos. (Presumably Le Cène contracted to provide Vivaldi with a number of free copies which he could then sell; apart from the customary gratuity from Morzin in 'payment' for the dedication, this was probably the chief means by which Vivaldi profited from the publication.) Le Cène printed Opus 8 at his own expense, and likewise Opus 9 (in the event, delayed until 1727).

The Opus 8 collection consists of twelve concertos of which the *Seasons* are the first four. Overall, it bears the figurative title *Il cimento dell'armonia e dell'invenzione* (The Contest of Harmony and Invention), suggesting that the set is the site of a battle engaging (if not necessarily between) the forces of musical form and rationality (harmony) on the one hand, and something more unexpected and irregular, akin to whimsy and fantasy (invention) on the other. How Vivaldi adjudicates this contest in practice is nowhere clearer than in *The Four Seasons* themselves. There he stretches the familiar bounds of 'harmony' (as epitomised by the instrumental concerto of his day) decisively in the direction of 'invention', in ways made quite explicit through the unusual means of four instructive sonnets (*Sonetti dimostrativi*), perhaps specially written by one of his regular librettists. In 1776 the music historian John Hawkins warned those approaching the music for the first time:

*The plan of this Work must appear very ridiculous; for the first four Concertos are a pretended paraphrase, in musical notes, of so many Sonnets on the four Seasons, wherein the Author endeavours, by the force of Harmony ... to excite ideas correspondent with the sentiments of the several Poems ... whether it be that the attempt was new and singular, or that these compositions are distinguished for their peculiar Force and Energy, certain it is that the Opera VIII is the most applauded of Vivaldi's works. Indeed the peculiar characteristic of Vivaldi's music, speaking of his Concertos ... is, that it is wild and irregular ... some of his compositions are*

*expressly entitled Extravaganzas, as transgressing the bounds of Melody and Modulation; as does also that Concerto of his in which the notes of the Cuckoo's Song are frittered into such minute Divisions as in the Author's time few but himself could express on any instrument whatsoever.*

Hawkins, then, would conclude critically that, in the case of *The Four Seasons*, 'invention' was the clear winner. The close connection between words and music was clearly established with the help of letters which cue the lines of the sonnet to exact points on the score, and, for the 1725 print, Vivaldi tells Morzin that he added further descriptive headings, quoted below.

### **Sonetto Dimostrativo Sopra il Concerto Intitolato**

#### **LA PRIMAVERA**

- A** Giunt'è la Primavera e festosetti  
**B** La Salutan gl'Augei con lieto canto,  
**C** E i fonti allo spirar de' Zeffiretti  
 Con dolce mormorio scorrono intanto:  
**D** Vengon' coprendo l'aer di nero amanto  
 E Lampi, e tuoni ad annuntiarla eletti

#### **SPRING**

##### **(First movement: Allegro)**

*Here comes the spring, and festively  
 The birds salute her with a merry song,  
 And the fountains, to the whispering Zephyrs,  
 With sweet murmuring flow all the while.*

*Advancing over the heavens is a black canopy  
 With lightning, and thunder chosen to announce her*

**E** Indi tacendo questi, gl'Augelletti;  
Tornan' di nuovo al lor canoro incanto:

*Then, when they go silent, the little birds  
Return anew to their tuneful songs.*

**(Second movement: Largo)**

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

*And later, in the lovely flowering fields,  
To the charming murmuring of fronds and leaves,  
The goatherd sleeps, his faithful dog beside.*

**(Third movement: Allegro)**

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

*To the rustic bagpipes' festive sound,  
Nymphs and shepherds dance beneath heaven's canopy  
And spring appears so brilliantly.*

The opening music (**A**) recurs throughout the first movement, binding its diverse series of episodes into a whole. Such returning sections, found in most of the fast outer movements of *The Four Seasons*, are called appropriately *ritornelli* (returns). For the first solo episode, the principal violin is joined by the leaders of the first and second violins for a trio (**B**) captioned in the score 'Canto dè gl'uccelli' (Song of the Birds). A brief reprise of the *ritornello* is extended with a quiet passage (**C**) headed 'Scorono i fonti' (The Brooks Flow). Suddenly 'Tuoni' (Thunder) breaks (**D**) with flashy rising scales, and the principal violin's figurations representing lightning. This leads to a brief *ritornello*, this time in a minor key, and (**E**) a tentative transformation of 'Canto dè gl'uccelli' (Song of the Birds). A final reprise of the *ritornello* brings the movement to a close.

In the second movement, Vivaldi gives out the three components of this section of his sonnet (**F**) simultaneously. The principal violin part is marked 'Il capraro che dorme' (The Sleeping Goatherd); the other violins provide an accompaniment of 'Mormorio di fronde e piante' (Murmuring Fronds and Leaves), and regular interjections from the violas represent 'Il cane che grida' (A Barking Dog).

The opening of the final movement (**G**) is headed 'Danza pastorale' (Pastoral Dance). In this *ritornello*, Vivaldi evokes the *zampogna* (Italian bagpipes) with a drone from the cellos and double basses. Otherwise, as the sonnet makes clear, the music is an invocation of the spirit of spring itself.

**L'ESTATE**

**A** Sotto dura staggion dal sole accesa  
Langue l'huom, langue'l gregge, ed arde il Pino;

**B** Scioglie il Cucco la Voce, e tosto intesa

**C** Canta la Tortorella e'l gardellino.

**D** Zeffiro dolce spira, mà contesa  
Muove Borea improvviso al suo vicino;

**E** E piange il Pastorel, perchè sospesa  
Teme fiera borasca, e'l suo destino;

**F** Toglie alle membra lasse il suo risposo  
Il timore de'Lampi, e tuoni fieri  
E de mosche, e mosconi il stuol furioso!

**G** Ah che pur troppo i suoi timor son veri  
Tuona e fulmina il Ciel e grandinoso  
Tronca il capo alle spiche e a'grani alteri.

**SUMMER**

**(First movement: Allegro non molto – Allegro)**

*Beneath this hard season of the burning sun  
Man languishes, flocks languish, and pines burn;  
The cuckoo raises its stuttering voice, and in answer  
The turtledove and goldfinch sing.*

*The sweet Zephyr blows, but is challenged  
As Boreas moves in on his territory;  
And the shepherd weeps, because he fears  
The fierce looming storm, and for his destiny:*

**(Second movement: Adagio)**

*Depriving his tired limbs of their rest  
Is the fear of the lightning and fierce thunder  
And the flies, large and small, in a furious swarm!*

**(Third movement: Presto)**

*Ah, his fears are all too true:  
Thunder and flashes in the heavens and hailstones  
Dash the heads from the stalks of the ripe grain.*

*Summer* is, perhaps, the most realistic of the four concertos. Vivaldi imaginatively bends some of the musical conventions of the concerto in the interest of a more continuous realisation of its sonnet. The (**A**) opening *ritornello* of the first movement is captioned 'Languidezza per il caldo' (Languishing in the heat). In triple time, it contrasts with the (**B**) succeeding episode for principal violin and continuo in quadruple time, in which 'Il cucco' (The Cuckoo) sets up a veritable racket. A brief reprise of the *ritornello* ushers in a second solo episode (**C**) in which the violin represents first 'La tortorella' (The Turtledove) and then the higher voice of 'Il gardellino' (The Goldfinch). Then the rest of the strings join the principal violin to introduce the 'winds' (**D**): first 'Zeffiretti dolci' (Sweet Zephyrs) softly, then loudly 'Venti diversi' (Many Winds) and the turbulent 'Vento borea' (North Wind) especially. After the briefest reminiscence of the *ritornello*, the solo violin (**E**) continues with 'Il pianto del villanello' (The Weeping of the Peasant Boy). In place of a final *ritornello*, the music of the winds returns to round off the movement.

Unique among *The Four Seasons*, the **(F)** second movement of *Summer* shares the home key (G minor) of its framing movements, thereby enhancing the feeling of continuity. The principal violin's melody evokes the languishing shepherd, to the quiet but buzzingly intrusive accompaniment of 'Mosche e mosconi' (*Gnats and Wasps*) from the other violins. Interrupting throughout are low rumbles of approaching 'Tuoni' (Thunder).

With the **(G)** third movement a storm breaks. The heading is 'Tempo impetuoso d'estate' (Stormy Summer Weather), and Vivaldi provides no more verbal cues. Musically, the regular reprises of the tempestuous *ritornello* frame two solo episodes of extraordinary brilliance for the principal violin.

## L'AUTUNNO

**A** Celebra il Vilanel con balli e Canti  
Del felice raccolto il bel piacere

**B** E del liquor di Bacco accesi tanti

**C** Finiscono col sonno il lor godere.

**D** 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.

**E** I cacciator alla nov'alba à caccia  
Con corni, schioppi, e canni escono fuore

**F** Fugga la belva, e seguono la traccia;

**G** Già sbigottita, e lassa al gran rumore  
De'schioppi e canni, ferita minaccia

**H** Languida di fuggir, mà oppressa muore.

After the meteorological dramas of summer, *Autumn* begins on a more human scale with **(A)** a post-harvest celebration, 'Ballo e canto de'villanelli' (Dance-song of the Villagers); and the music of this opening *ritornello* also serves as the basis for the principal violin's first solo episode. The long second episode **(B)**, liberally punctuated with *ritornelli*, is additionally marked 'L'ubriaco' (The Drunk). As a

## AUTUMN

### (First movement: Allegro)

*The peasant celebrates with dance and song,  
The pleasures of a good harvest,  
And many, so fired by Bacchus' drafts,  
End revelry in sleep.*

### (Second movement: Adagio molto)

*Making each one leave off singing and dancing,  
The air, which is mild and pleasant,  
And the season invite one and all  
To enjoy the sweetest sleep.*

### (Third movement: Allegro)

*The hunter at the new dawn sets out to the chase,  
With horns, guns and dogs;  
The quarry flees, and he follows its scent.  
  
Already bamboozled, distracted by the great noise  
Of guns and dogs, and wounded, it tries  
Listlessly to escape but, exhausted, dies.*

result of excessive revelry, the principal violin slides and cascades all over the place, answered by other 'Ubriachi' (Drunks) in the rest of the orchestra, ending up unmistakably in a heap, and falling into a stupor in a contrasting slower episode **(C)** captioned 'L'ubriaco che dorme' (The Sleeping Drunk). The *ritornello* rounds off the movement.

The sustained **(D)** second movement is marked 'Dormienti ubriachi' (Sleeping Drunks). The harpsichord leads the muted string band into a dreamy, nocturnal labyrinth of dissonances, in which each resolution leads to stranger and more tantalising discord.

The **(E)** opening *ritornello* of the final movement is marked 'La caccia' (The Hunt), and it is extended with appropriate *bravura* in the principal violin's first solo episode. After a brief reprise of the *ritornello*, there is a new solo episode **(F)** that portrays 'La fiera che fugge' (The Fleeing Quarry). Then a brief but dramatic orchestral interjection, captioned 'Schioppi e cani' (Guns and Dogs), announces that the dogs, too, are away and the guns blazing. From this point on, the principal violin seems to represent the hunted rather than the hunters. Its desperate, topsy-turvy rush **(G)** to escape, 'La fiera che fugge' (The Game Flees) in the solos, is punctuated by the hunter's *ritornello*; before a series of shots (loud *tremolos* from the orchestra), and the soloist's final cadenza **(H)**, like death throes, announces 'La fiera fuggendo muore' (The Death of the Quarry). With a final *ritornello*, the hunter is triumphant.

## L'INVERNO

**A** Aggiacciato tremar trà nevi argenti

**B** Al severo spirar d'orrido Vento

**C** Correr battendo i piedi ogni momento;

**D** E pel soverchio gel batter i denti;

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

**F** Caminar sopra 'l giaccio, e à passo lento

**G** Per timor di cader gersene intenti;

**H** Gir forte sdruzzolar, cader à terra

## WINTER

### (First movement: Allegro non molto)

*Frozen, to shiver, amid the silvery snows,  
At the cutting breath of the horrid wind,  
To run on, battering our feet each moment;  
While the excessive frost sets teeth a-chatter.*

### (Second movement: Largo)

*To pass by the fire quiet and contented days,  
While the rain outside drenches hundreds.*

### (Third movement: Allegro)

*To walk out on the ice, and with slow steps,  
For fear of falling, to tread cautiously.  
  
To go boldly, skid, fall to the ground,*

**I** Di nuovo ir sopra 'l ghiaccio e correr forte  
**L** Sin ch'il ghiaccio si rompe, e si disserra;  
**M** Sentir uscir dalle ferrate porte  
**N** Sirocco, Borea, e tutti i Venti in guerra  
Quest'è 'l verno, mà tal, che gioja apporte.

*And go on the ice anew, to run strongly  
Until the ice breaks, and splits apart.*

*To hear, as they emerge from the iron portals,  
Sirocco, Boreas, and all the winds at war.  
This is winter, but it too brings joy.*

In the measured (**A**) opening *ritornello*, biting dissonance, bowed vibrato and shivering repeated quavers depict the ice and glittering snow. Suddenly, the principal violin (**B**) conjures up an 'Orrido vento' (Horrid Wind). The *ritornello* then resumes and is rounded off exuberantly (**C**) in what Vivaldi describes as 'Correre e battere li piedi per il freddo' (Running and Stamping the Feet in the Cold). The next prolonged solo episode is one of the most virtuosic of the set, and is interrupted by heavy bowed tremolos from the rest of the strings, marked 'Venti' (Winds). The measured opening *ritornello* reappears (in E-flat major), leading to a climactic episode in which the full strings accompany the rapidly repeated demisemiquavers of the principal violin (**D**) like the chattering of teeth. A reprise of the second more exuberant part of the *ritornello* rounds off the movement.

The (**E**) central movement has a dual focus: the violin's melody represents a cosy hearth, while the *pizzicato* accompaniment is 'La pioggia' (The Rain) pouring down outside.

The final movement deals with the precarious sport of iceskating. It is the only movement to begin with a (**F**) violin solo, tracing in its melody the circular motion of the skater around the attenuated held note in the bass. The orchestra enters and, in (**G**) slightly longer notes, the first 'Caminar piano e con timore' (Slow and Careful Steps) are taken; however the slippery descending scales (**H**), and the final unison 'bump' leave us in no doubt that the result has been a 'Cader a terra' (Fall to the Ground). Immediately, in (**I**) a new solo section, the skater is on the ice again, returning to the opening spiral patterns, becoming bolder until disaster strikes and (**L**) the ice breaks in another dramatic unison for the whole band. Suddenly (**M**) the tempo changes to *Lento*, portraying 'Il vento sirocco' (The Warm Sahara Wind), in a passage that goes on to quote, appropriately, the opening *ritornello* of the *Summer* concerto. The soloist then conjures up a final storm (**N**), representing 'Il vento Borea e tutti li venti' (The North Wind and All the Other Winds) in battle.

**Graeme Skinner**



### **Paul Dyer**

Paul Dyer is one of Australia's leading specialists in period performing styles. He founded the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra in 1990 as a natural outcome of his experience as a performer and teacher of Baroque and Classical music, and has been the Orchestra's Artistic Director since that time.

Having completed postgraduate studies in solo performance with Bob van Asperen at the Royal Conservatory in The Hague, Dyer performed with many major European orchestras and undertook ensemble direction and orchestral studies with Sigiswald Kuijken and Frans Brüggen.

As well as directing the Orchestra, Dyer has a busy schedule appearing as a soloist, continuo player and conductor with many major ensembles, including the Sydney Symphony, The Queensland Orchestra, Australia Ensemble, Australian Chamber Orchestra, Opera Australia, The Australian Youth Orchestra, the Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra and the Pacific Baroque Orchestra, Vancouver.

Dyer has performed with many prominent soloists including Graham Pushee, Yvonne Kenny and Emma Kirkby. In 1998 he made his debut in Tokyo with countertenor Derek Lee Ragin, leading an ensemble of Brandenburg Orchestra soloists, and in August–September 2001 Dyer toured the Orchestra to Europe with guest soloist Andreas Scholl, appearing in Vienna, France, Germany and London (Proms). As a recitalist, he has toured the United States, playing in Carnegie Hall in New York, as well as Germany, France, Belgium and the Netherlands.

In 1995 he received a Churchill Fellowship and has won numerous awards for his CD recordings with the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra, including the 1998 and 2001 ARIA Award for Best Classical Recording. Dyer was recently awarded the Australian Centenary Medal for his services to Australian society and the advancement of music.



the Britten-Pears Orchestra, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, Hanover Band, Raglan Baroque Players and Parley of Instruments in the UK, Les Musiciens du Louvre, Nordwestdeutsche Philharmonie and Camerata of Athens in Europe, the Israel Chamber Orchestra, as well as the American Bach Soloists, the Brandywine Baroque and the orchestras of the Boulder Bach Festival and Carmel Bach Festival in the USA. In her native Australia she has directed the Australian Chamber Orchestra, Queensland Philharmonic, Melbourne Chamber Orchestra, the Academy of Melbourne and the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra. She has given performances of Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* at the Sydney Opera House and the Melbourne Concert Hall and performed it with the Queensland Philharmonic Orchestra.

### Elizabeth Wallfisch

Elizabeth Wallfisch is an outstanding concerto and recital soloist specialising in 'period' violin performance. She undertakes a busy schedule of concerts, recordings and broadcasts, both as concerto soloist (often directing from the violin) and as a recitalist. Her expertise in directing music – particularly of the Classical period – from the instrument, score on stand, is unrivalled, as is communication with all sections of the orchestra due to her abilities as a superb instrumentalist and her personality and musicianship.

With over twenty years experience, she has directed orchestras all over the world, including

### Australian Brandenburg Orchestra

The Australian Brandenburg Orchestra is Australia's finest period instrument orchestra, made up of leading specialists in the performance of Baroque and Classical music. The Orchestra is committed to energetic and lively programming, combining popular Baroque and Classical favourites with premiere Australian performances of seldom-heard masterpieces.

The musicians play from original edition scores and on instruments of the period. These have been restored or faithfully reproduced to recreate a seventeenth-century orchestral sound and differ significantly from their modern equivalents – softer and more articulated with an often raw and earthy timbre.

The Orchestra's name pays tribute to the Brandenburg Concertos of J.S. Bach, whose musical genius was central to the Baroque and Classical periods.

Founded in 1990 by Paul Dyer when a team of hand-picked musicians was assembled for intensive rehearsals leading up to debut performances at the Sydney Opera House for its Mostly Mozart Festival, the success of that first concert still rings true to this day – the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra combines historical integrity with a distinctly fresh Australian style.

The Australian Brandenburg Orchestra makes regular appearances in the major concert halls and historic cultural venues of Australia, and has

performed with guest artists such as Andreas Scholl, Emma Kirkby, Andreas Staier, Cyndia Sieden, Marc Destrubé, Elizabeth Wallfisch, Hidemi Suzuki, Derek Lee Ragin and Andrew Manze.

The Orchestra has appeared at both Sydney and Melbourne Festivals, performed Monteverdi's *L'incoronazione di Poppea* with Opera Australia in 1993, and from 1994 established a sell-out annual series of 'salon style' concerts at the Art Gallery of New South Wales.

In March 1998 the Orchestra made its Tokyo debut with countertenor Derek Lee Ragin. Moving from strength to strength, the Orchestra accompanied 'the world's leading countertenor of our time', Andreas Scholl, in a concert tour to Europe in August 2001, finishing at the London Proms.

The year 2000 brought two major developments: the use of the newly-built City Recital Hall Angel Place as the Orchestra's major concert venue, and the highly successful launch of the Orchestra's first subscription season. Since then the Orchestra has developed into a significant player in the Australian music scene and was admitted into the Major Performing Arts Group of the Australia Council in 2003.

The Australian Brandenburg Orchestra has released ten compact discs, with soloists including Andreas Scholl, Genevieve Lacey, Yvonne Kenny, Elizabeth Wallfisch, Sara Macliver, Graham Pushee and Cyndia Sieden. Several of these recordings have received awards, including two ARIA awards for Best Classical Recording.

**Director/Harpisichord** Paul Dyer

**Violin I** Brendan Joyce (leader), Stephen Freeman, Shelley Wilkinson, Adam Piechocinski, Matthew Bruce, Rex Carr-White

**Violin II** Rachael Beesley (leader), Marina Phillips, Chris Halls, James Jennings, Laura McCrow, Samantha Montgomery

**Viola** Bridget Crouch (leader), Nicole Forsyth, Deidre Dowling, Anna Maguire

**Cello** Roseanne Hunt (leader), Jamie Hey, Peter Morrison

**Double Bass** Rosemary Webber

**Organ** June Tyzack

**Executive Producers** Robert Patterson, Lyle Chan

**Recording Producer** Stephen Snelleman

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#### Performing Editions

*The Four Seasons*: performed from printed parts of the Amsterdam edition, 1725.

*Grosso mogul*: outer movements performed from printed parts based on Amsterdam edition, c.1720 (Op. 7 No. 11; RV 208a) with cadenzas and middle movement after the Scherwin MS.

*The Cuckow*: modern edition by Clifford Bartlett (King's Musick, 1996) after English edition c.1720 by John Jones.

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