

**2024–2025 | 125th Season**  
**Marian Anderson Hall**

# The Philadelphia Orchestra

Tuesday, October 8, at 7:00

**Austin Chanu** Conductor

**David Kim** Violin

**Bach** Air, from Orchestral Suite No. 3 in D major, BWV 1068

**Mozart** *Eine kleine Nachtmusik*, Serenade in G major, K. 525

I. Allegro

II. Romance: Andante

III. Menuetto (Allegretto)—Trio—Menuetto da capo

IV. Rondo: Allegro

## Intermission

**Vivaldi** *The Four Seasons*

and

**Piazzolla/arr. and orch. Desyatnikov** *The Four Seasons of Buenos Aires*

1. *Spring*, Concerto in E major, RV 269

a. Allegro

b. Largo

c. Allegro

2. Summer in Buenos Aires

3. *Summer*, Concerto in G minor, RV 315

a. Allegro non molto

b. Adagio *alternating with Presto*

c. Presto

4. Autumn in Buenos Aires

5. *Autumn*, Concerto in F major, RV 293

a. Allegro

b. Adagio molto

c. Allegro

6. Winter in Buenos Aires

7. *Winter*, Concerto in F minor, RV 297

a. Allegro non molto

b. Largo

c. Allegro

8. Spring in Buenos Aires

This program runs approximately 1 hour, 55 minutes.

This concert is supported by the **James and Agnes Kim Foundation**.

This concert is part of the **Ellenberg Philadelphia Orchestra Soloist Spotlight Series**.

This concert is also part of the Peter A. Benoliel Violin Concerts, established in his honor by **Dr. Richard M. Klein**.

Philadelphia Orchestra concerts are broadcast on WRTI 90.1 FM on Sunday afternoons at 1 PM and are repeated on Monday evenings at 7 PM on WRTI HD 2. Visit [www.wrti.org](http://www.wrti.org) to listen live or for more details.



Jeff Flacco

# The Philadelphia Orchestra

The world-renowned Philadelphia Orchestra strives to share the transformative power of music with the widest possible audience, and to create joy, connection, and excitement through music in the Philadelphia region, across the country, and around the world. Through innovative programming, robust education initiatives, a commitment to its diverse communities, and the embrace of digital outreach, the ensemble is creating an expansive and inclusive future for classical music and furthering the place of the arts in an open and democratic society. In June 2021 the Orchestra and its home, the Kimmel Center, united. Today, The Philadelphia Orchestra and Ensemble Arts brings the greatest performances and most impactful education and community programs to audiences in Philadelphia and beyond.

Yannick Nézet-Séguin is now in his 13th season with The Philadelphia Orchestra, serving as music and artistic director. His connection to the ensemble's musicians has been praised by both concertgoers and critics, and he is embraced by the musicians of the Orchestra, audiences, and the community. In addition to expanding the repertoire by embracing an ever-growing and diverse group of today's composers, Yannick and the Orchestra are committed to performing and recording the works of previously overlooked composers.

Your Philadelphia Orchestra takes great pride in its hometown, performing for the people of Philadelphia year-round, at the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts and around the community, in classrooms and hospitals, and over the airwaves and online. The Kimmel Center has been the ensemble's

home since 2001, and in 2024 Verizon Hall at the Kimmel Center was officially rededicated as Marian Anderson Hall in honor of the legendary contralto, civil rights icon, and Philadelphian. The Orchestra's award-winning education and community initiatives engage over 50,000 students, families, and community members of all ages through programs such as PlayINs; side-by-sides; PopUP concerts; Our City, Your Orchestra Live; the free annual Martin Luther King, Jr., Tribute Concert; School Concerts; sensory-friendly concerts; open rehearsals; the School Partnership Program and School Ensemble Program; All City Orchestra Fellowships; and residency work in Philadelphia and abroad.

Through concerts, tours, residencies, and recordings, the Orchestra is a global ambassador and one of our nation's greatest exports. It performs annually at Carnegie Hall, the Mann Center, the Saratoga Performing Arts Center, and the Bravo! Vail Music Festival. The Orchestra also has a rich touring history, having first performed outside Philadelphia in its earliest days. In 1973 it was the first American orchestra to perform in the People's Republic of China, launching a now-five-decade commitment of people-to-people exchange.

Under Yannick's leadership, the Orchestra returned to recording with 14 celebrated releases on the Deutsche Grammophon label, including the GRAMMY® Award-winning *Florence Price Symphonies Nos. 1 & 3*. The Orchestra also reaches thousands of radio listeners with weekly broadcasts on WRTI-FM and SiriusXM. For more information, please visit [www.philorch.org](http://www.philorch.org).

# Conductor

Cristina Burgos



A recipient of the 2023 and 2024 Career Assistance Award from the Solti Foundation U.S., Brazilian-American conductor **Austin Chanu** just concluded his tenure as the assistant conductor of The Philadelphia Orchestra, where he supported Music and Artistic Director Yannick Nézet-Séguin. He made his Philadelphia Orchestra subscription debut in April 2023 conducting Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring*.

Mr. Chanu has recently appeared as a guest conductor with the Filarmonica Banatul Timișoara in Romania, the Baltimore Symphony, the St. Louis Symphony, the Rochester Philharmonic, and the Omaha Symphony. He has worked with prominent conductors including Esa-Pekka Salonen, Herbert Blomstedt, Stéphane Denève, Alan Gilbert, and Marin Alsop. He is currently co-leading a project with The Philadelphia Orchestra to restore, rebuild, and elevate the underperformed works of American composer William Grant Still. In this context, he recently led the world premiere of a newly restored edition of Still's *Wood Notes* that he helped create.

Stemming from his background as a composer, Mr. Chanu has a passion for contemporary music. He served as a teaching artist and conductor for the LA Philharmonic Association's Associate Composer Program and as a conducting fellow at the 2022 Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music, where he studied with conductor Cristian Măcelaru. He was commissioned by the Eastman School of Music to compose an orchestral work for the school's centennial celebration and conducted its world premiere in the fall of 2021.

Previously, Mr. Chanu was music director for the Los Angeles Music and Art School, where he conducted and developed the artistic direction for the youth orchestra, choirs, and jazz band. Drawing on his Latino heritage he found it rewarding to foster representation for the predominantly Latinx students and families in the program through repertoire selection. In addition to his orchestral background, he has extensive experience in jazz and musical theater styles. While living in Los Angeles, he was a high-call woodwind performer for musical pit orchestras and jazz ensembles. He received a Bachelor of Music in composition from the USC Thornton School of Music in 2015, graduating magna cum laude. He graduated from the Eastman School of Music in 2021 with a master's degree in orchestral conducting.

# Soloist

Allie Sklyar Photography



Violinist **David Kim** was named concertmaster of The Philadelphia Orchestra in 1999 and currently holds the Dr. Benjamin Rush Chair. Born in Carbondale, Illinois, in 1963, he started playing the violin at the age of three, began studies with the famed pedagogue Dorothy DeLay at the age of eight, and later received his bachelor's and master's degrees from the Juilliard School. As a child prodigy, Mr. Kim was featured on many national television programs including Disney's *The Mickey Mouse Club*.

Mr. Kim's 2024–25 season includes numerous concerto, festival, and chamber music appearances across the United States, Italy and Korea. He has appeared with orchestras on nearly every continent including Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe, Central and South America, and in the United States, and with the Boston Pops Orchestra, and the Buffalo, Dallas, and Pittsburgh symphonies. Each season, in addition to his duties as concertmaster, he appears as soloist with The Philadelphia Orchestra both at home and on tour. Mr. Kim continues to appear as concertmaster of the nine-time Emmy Award–winning All-Star Orchestra on PBS stations across the United States and online at the Khan Academy. His first book, *The Audition Method for Violin*, was published by GIA Publications and released in 2022.

Mr. Kim is a frequent touring guest of famed modern hymn writers Keith and Kristyn Getty at venues such as the Grand Ole Opry House in Nashville, the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, and Carnegie Hall. He is also a regular performer around the nation at events for Young Life, Illuminations, and the Gathering. He serves as distinguished artist at the Robert McDuffie Center for Strings at Mercer University in Macon, Georgia, and frequently serves as an adjudicator at international violin competitions such as the Menuhin and Sarasate. Mr. Kim has been awarded honorary doctorates from Eastern University in suburban Philadelphia, the University of Rhode Island, and Dickinson College. His instruments are a J.B. Guadagnini from Milan, ca. 1757, on loan from The Philadelphia Orchestra, and a Francesco Gofriller, ca. 1735. He exclusively performs on and endorses Larsen Strings from Denmark. He is an avid golfer and outdoorsman.

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## Peter A. Benoliel Violin Concerts

A passionate violinist from early childhood, Peter A. Benoliel joined the Philadelphia Orchestra Board of Directors in 1980 and served as chair from 1995 to 2000. His huge contributions to the Orchestra as a leader and philanthropist are paralleled only by his deep love for the violinists who help bring the famous Philadelphia Sound to the world.

# Framing the Program

## Parallel Events

**1725**

**Vivaldi**

*The Four Seasons*

**Music**

Bach

*Anna*

*Magdalena*

*Notebook*

**Literature**

Ramsay

*The Gentle*

*Shepherd*

**Art**

Canaletto

*Four Views of*

*Venice*

**History**

Peter the

Great dies

**1787**

**Mozart**

*Eine kleine  
Nachtmusik*

**Music**

Devienne

Flute Concerto

No. 7

**Literature**

Goethe

*Iphigenie auf*

*Tauris*

**Art**

David

*The Death of*

*Socrates*

**History**

U.S.

Constitution

signed

**1968**

**Piazzolla**

*The Four  
Seasons of  
Buenos Aires*

**Music**

Lutosławski

*Livre pour*

*orchestra*

**Literature**

Hailey

*Airport*

**Art**

Warhol

*Campbell's Soup*

*I: Tomato*

**History**

Martin Luther

King, Jr.,

assassinated

This concert offers Antonio Vivaldi's thrilling *The Four Seasons* as well as Astor Piazzolla's later reimagining of that theme in his tango-tinged *The Four Seasons of Buenos Aires*. J.S. Bach's beloved Air, drawn from his Third Orchestral Suite, opens the program, followed by Mozart's charming *Eine kleine Nachtmusik* (A Little Night Music).

Vivaldi composed in many genres, including dozens of operas and more than 500 concertos. Among this wealth of music, four violin concertos stand out as his signature compositions: the collection published in 1725 as *The Four Seasons*. Vivaldi not only provided titles but also sonnets running alongside the music. This all serves as a guide to register the changes of the year as we hear the sounds of nature, including birds, barking dogs, and a summer storm.

We then fast forward nearly 250 years, from Italy to South America, where the celebrated Argentinian composer Astor Piazzolla composed his *The Four Seasons of Buenos Aires*. It is heard today in an arrangement for violin solo and strings, providing a brilliant showcase for Philadelphia Orchestra Concertmaster David Kim.

The Philadelphia Orchestra is the only orchestra in the world with three weekly broadcasts on SiriusXM's *Symphony Hall*, Channel 76, on Mondays at 7 PM, Thursdays at 12 AM, and Saturdays at 4 PM.

# The Music

## Air, from Orchestral Suite No. 3

**Johann Sebastian Bach**

**Born in Eisenach, March 21, 1685**

**Died in Leipzig, July 28, 1750**



While it was the French (or, more specifically, Jean-Baptiste Lully) who developed the instrumental Baroque dance suite, it was J.S. Bach who combined this form with the Italian concerto style of Vivaldi to produce a new variety of orchestral suite. Each of Bach's four orchestral suites begins characteristically with an extended French Overture, followed by typical French dance forms such as the gavotte, courante, menuet, bourrée, sarabande, and gigue. But Bach's

writing also manifests the Italian influence by contrasting smaller groups of instruments within the larger ensemble. To this he brings a Germanic flair for counterpoint, creating an idiosyncratic and distinct yet cosmopolitan style.

**Composed in Cöthen, Leipzig, or Both** It seems reasonable to assume that Bach's orchestral works would date from his Cöthen period (1717–23), when he had a court orchestra at his disposal. But recent studies have suggested that the majority of Bach's instrumental music might date from his later Leipzig years where, in addition to his duties at St. Thomas Church, he was associated with the town's Collegium musicum. The autograph manuscripts for Bach's four orchestral suites have all been lost, making it difficult to accurately date their composition. Stylistically they seem to belong to the Cöthen years, but the extant copies are from the Leipzig period. If they did originate in Cöthen, then all four suites were undoubtedly revised for the Collegium musicum in Leipzig, and it is in their Leipzig form that they are known today.

The extant score for the Orchestral Suite No. 3 most likely dates from 1730–31. The orchestral parts are in three different hands—Bach's own, his pupil Johann Krebs, and his son C.P.E. Bach—giving the impression that getting the parts ready quickly was a priority. This may well have been the case as Bach was constantly seeking new repertory for the Collegium musicum's weekly concerts at Zimmermann's Coffee House in Leipzig.

**A Closer Look** The **Air** is one of the most famous pieces of Baroque music, largely through an 1879 arrangement by the German violinist August Wilhelmj. In his arrangement for solo violin and piano, Wilhelmj transposed the movement's key and register so that it could be played entirely on the violin's G-string. The

melody itself has consequently come to be widely (and inaccurately) known as the "Air on the G String." Tuneful and tender, this Air maintains the repeating two-part form of a stylized dance, with the pendulum-like movement of the bass providing the regular pulse.

—Luke Howard

*Luke Howard is associate director of the School of Music at Brigham Young University, and for many years wrote program notes for The Philadelphia Orchestra, the Aspen Music Festival, and Utah Opera. His research focuses on classical music in popular culture and the reception histories of well-known concert works.*

*Bach's Third Orchestral Suite was composed around 1730 to 1731.*

*The Orchestral Suite No. 3, especially the second movement Air, has been a popular piece with The Philadelphia Orchestra since its first performances in November 1906 with Fritz Scheel conducting. The most recent subscription performances of the entire Suite were with Ton Koopman in March 2016.*

*The Philadelphia Orchestra has recorded the Air three times: in 1936 for RCA with Leopold Stokowski, in an arrangement by him, and in 1954 and 1959 for CBS with Eugene Ormandy.*

*The score calls for harpsichord and strings.*

*Performance time is approximately five minutes.*

# The Music

## *Eine kleine Nachtmusik*

**Wolfgang Amadè Mozart**

**Born in Salzburg, January 27, 1756**

**Died in Vienna, December 5, 1791**



Of the many instrumental genres prevalent during Mozart's lifetime, the serenade or "divertimento" is the category most closely associated with the servile role that most composers played in the European palaces under the old feudal aristocracy. After working arduously from dawn to late afternoon—composing, copying, teaching, rehearsing, and writing lengthy official letters in meticulous bureaucratic prose—a court composer was then required to put on a nightly

concert for the after-dinner leisure of his underworked noble employer.

Such an evening program might include symphonies, concertos, and vocal works. But more than likely it would include one of the numerous types of "background" music that broadly fall under the rubric of divertimento—literally, music for diversion. Titles of these works ranged widely, and during the 18th century the varying designations were often mixed freely: serenade, cassation, notturno, partita, tafelmusik, finalmusik. The names probably had some basis of differentiation among them, at least for 18th-century audiences. The notturno, for example, was often performed at about 11 PM, in contrast to the serenade, which tended to begin around 9 PM. Moreover, in the late 18th century the serenade still carried traces of its ancient association with a musical performance outside a young woman's window.

**The Work's Genesis and Title** The precise circumstances surrounding the composition of the Serenade in G major are unclear. We do know that it was composed in 1787, when Mozart was thoroughly occupied with the second act of *Don Giovanni*. ("Completed in Vienna, August 10, 1787," he wrote on the title page.) It was uncharacteristic of Mozart to interrupt work on an important commission, particularly an opera, in order to compose an instrumental work for his own pleasure. More than likely the serenade was produced for a sum of money, at the request of some member of the nobility.

The subtitle of the Serenade in G, K. 525, stems from Mozart himself: "eine kleine Nacht-Musik ..." he wrote when he entered the piece into the handwritten catalogue of his works—doubtless indicating that he thought of the work as a notturno. His phrase "a little night music" (better translated "short notturno") was

simple shorthand and was never intended to serve as the piece's title. In any case, it was ever after referred to as a serenade, rather than a nocturno.

Mozart's inscription in his catalogue continued: " ... comprising an Allegro, Minuet and Trio, Romance, Minuet and Trio, and Finale." Such "extra" dance movements—in this case, a second minuet—distinguished the serenade or divertimento from other chamber and symphonic genres. At some point the first minuet movement from K. 525 disappeared, however, and it has never been found. Possibly Mozart himself removed it, to make the work suitable for "serious" occasions; the result is a light piece that strongly resembles a symphony.

**A Closer Look** During the 18th century, serenades were performed by small orchestras, often with two players or perhaps two stands for each upper part, and at times with only one double bass. Flexibility was the rule, however: *Eine kleine Nachtmusik* might just as well have been played one-on-a-part as with a large, full orchestra. The size of the group depended on the forces available at the time, and often on the patron's demands as well. There was no universal 18th-century performing ensemble; each court and each region forged its own customs.

The expansive opening theme of the **Allegro** suggests a larger group than a quintet, and charms the listener with Mozart's coy, almost manipulative sense of symmetry. The suaveness spills over into the **Andante Romance**, where a hesitant, sigh-filled melody is varied three times. The brevity of the **Menuetto** again reminds the listener that this is a serenade, in which dance movements are frequently shorter and more numerous. The work closes with a **Rondo** in **Allegro** tempo, which is an abridged sonata form full of Mozartian verve and dash.

—Paul J. Horsley

<p><i>Paul J. Horsley is performing arts editor for The Independent in Kansas City. Previously he was program annotator and musicologist for The Philadelphia Orchestra and music and dance critic for the Kansas City Star.</i></p>
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*Eine kleine Nachtmusik was composed in 1787.*

*Fritz Scheel conducted The Philadelphia Orchestra's first performance of the G-major Serenade, in January 1906. Eugene Ormandy took the piece on the Orchestra's United States tours during the 1940s and early '50s, but since that time it has been played only occasionally. The most recent performances of the work on subscription were under David Kim's leadership, in January 2013.*

*The Orchestra recorded Eine kleine Nachtmusik in 1959 with Ormandy for the CBS label.*

*The work is scored for strings.*

*Performance time is approximately 16 minutes.*

# The Music

## The Four Seasons

**Antonio Vivaldi**

**Born in Venice, March 4, 1678**

**Died in Vienna, July 28, 1741**



The idea of depicting the seasons through music did not originate with Antonio Vivaldi. Spring's sensuous languor and winter's icy chill had been favorite topics of the Renaissance madrigalists centuries earlier. But the notion reached one of its most eloquent expressions in the four concertos that constitute what Vivaldi called *The Four Seasons*. Since 1725, when these works first appeared in print in Amsterdam, dozens of composers have followed suit, not only in works intended to depict

all four seasons (an oratorio by Haydn, a piano suite by Tchaikovsky, a ballet by Glazunov), but also in compositions that characterize the mood or activities of a single season (Berlioz's *Les Nuits d'été*, Schumann's "Spring" Symphony, Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring*, Copland's *Appalachian Spring*, Grieg's *In Autumn Overture*).

Vivaldi's set of four concertos remains among the most popular of these—indeed, among the most celebrated programmatic music of all time. They were initially published as part of the composer's Op. 8, a set of 12 concertos released in 1725 as *The Contest of Harmony and Invention*. The provocative title hinted at the composer's challenge of creating works that were musically powerful but also poetically interesting. The concertos bore colorful titles, including not only the names of the four seasons (for the first four concertos), but others such as "The Hunt," "The Storm at Sea," and "Pleasure." Dedicated to Count Václav Morzin of Bohemia, a frequent visitor to Venice, Op. 8 contains some of the most dazzling instrumental music of the Baroque era.

**A Prolific Composer** Yet these concertos form but a tiny part of a vast oeuvre. Few composers can begin to match the sheer volume of Vivaldi's output, much less its peerless consistency. In addition to 50 operas, 150 vocal works, and more than 100 solo sonatas, the Venetian cleric and composer known as the Red Priest (because of his hair) wrote more than 500 concertos, for all manner of solo instruments. The variety of this concerto output is fascinating enough: In addition to 250 concertos for solo violin, there are works for oboe, bassoon, flute, recorder, cello, viola d'amore, mandolin, lute, and sundry other instruments. There are also some 80 ensemble concertos for two or more soloists, cast in various combinations. Considering the lightning speed at which they must have been

written, it is amazing that so many are absolutely first-rate pieces. Despite the fact that even during his lifetime Vivaldi was criticized for assembly-line-style composition (the same trait that has given rise, more recently, to the quip that he “wrote the same concerto 500 times”), a large number of these works have durably withstood the test of time. Like his younger contemporary Handel, Vivaldi was born with an extraordinary facility: He could compose a piece faster than others could copy it.

**A Closer Look** For the publication of *The Four Seasons*, Vivaldi appended a poem for each of the concertos; though the verses are not signed, many scholars have assumed that they are from Vivaldi’s own pen, largely because of the meticulous detail with which the programmatic elements of the poetry follow the musical events of the concertos. Vivaldi’s expression of the mood of each season is quite ingenious, in fact, and even led him to a new approach to the ritornello concerto (a term chosen to describe the manner in which full-orchestra material returns again and again, lending cohesiveness to an otherwise fairly fluid design). The orchestral tuttis are often used to depict the overall mood of the season (such as the frozen landscape at the beginning of “Winter,” or the melting heat of “Summer”), while the soloistic passages evoke more specific elements, such as the bird songs at the opening of “Spring,” or the Bacchic harvest-revelry at the opening of new wine, as expressed in the opening solo passagework of “Autumn.”

—Paul J. Horsley

*The Four Seasons was published in 1725.*

*Carlo Maria Giulini led the first Philadelphia Orchestra performances of the complete Four Seasons in December 1973; Norman Carol was the soloist. Eugene Ormandy and violinist Anshel Brusilow premiered three of the four movements with the Orchestra: “Spring” in March 1960, “Summer” in April 1960, and “Autumn” in December 1959. “Winter” was first performed in January 1958, with Ormandy and Jacob Krachmalnick. Most recently on subscription the complete piece was performed in February 2024, with Concertmaster David Kim and Xian Zhang.*

*Ormandy, Brusilow, and the Orchestra recorded the complete Four Seasons in 1959 for CBS.*

*The score calls for harpsichord, strings, and solo violin.*

*The Four Seasons runs approximately 40 minutes in performance.*

### **"Spring"**

Spring has come, and joyfully  
the birds welcome it with cheerful song,  
and the streams, at the breath of zephyrs,  
flow swiftly with sweet murmurings.  
But now the sky is cloaked in black  
and thunder and lightning announce  
themselves;  
when they die away, the little birds  
turn afresh to their sweet song.

Then on the pleasant flower-strewn  
meadow,  
to the gentle rustle of the leaves and  
branches  
the goatherd rests, his faithful dog at  
his side.

To the rustic bagpipe's gay sound,  
nymph and shepherd dance beneath  
the fair spring sky in all its glory.

### **"Autumn"**

The peasant celebrates with song and  
dance  
his joy in a fine harvest  
and with generous draughts of  
Bacchus' cup  
his efforts end in sleep.

Song and dance are done,  
the gentle, pleasant air  
and the season invite one and all  
to the delights of sweetest sleep.

At first light a huntsman sets out  
with horns, guns, and dogs,  
putting his prey to flight and following  
its tracks;  
terrified and exhausted by the great  
clamor  
of guns and dogs, wounded and afraid,  
the prey tries to flee but is caught and dies.

### **"Summer"**

In the torrid heat of the blazing sun,  
man and beast alike languish, and  
even the pine trees scorch;  
the cuckoo raises his voice, and soon after  
the turtledove and finch join in song.  
Sweet zephyrs blow, but then  
the fierce north wind intervenes;  
the shepherd weeps, anxious for his fate  
from the harsh, menacing gusts.

He rouses his weary limbs from rest  
in fear of the lightning, the fierce  
thunder  
and the angry swarms of gnats and  
flies.

Alas! his fears are justified,  
for furious thunder irradiates the heavens,  
bowing down the trees and flattening  
the crops.

### **"Winter"**

To shiver icily in the freezing dark  
in the teeth of a cruel wind,  
to stamp your feet continually,  
so chilled that your teeth chatter.

To remain in quiet contentment by the  
fireside  
while outside the rain soaks people by  
the hundreds.

To walk on the ice, with slow steps  
in fear of falling, advance with care.  
Then to step forth strongly, fall to the  
ground,  
and again run boldly on the ice until it  
cracks and breaks;  
to listen as from the iron portals  
winds rush from south and north,  
and all the winds in contest;  
such is winter, such the joys it brings.

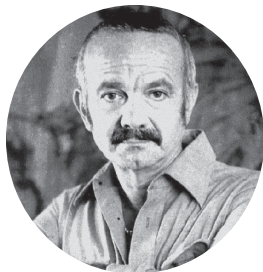
# The Music

## ***The Four Seasons of Buenos Aires* (arranged and orchestrated by Leonid Desyatnikov)**

**Astor Piazzolla**

**Born in Mar del Plata, Argentina, March 11, 1921**

**Died in Buenos Aires, July 4, 1992**



Astor Piazzolla once declared, "My dream is to impose my music, my country's music, all over the world." True to his word, the composer remained loyal to his native Argentinian musical traditions but lived a peripatetic existence; his wife, Laura Escalada, once observed, "His life was a love triangle: Buenos Aires, New York, Paris." While Piazzolla was born in the seaport of Mar del Plata into an Argentine-Italian immigrant family, his childhood was spent in New York, where his musical career began.

On his eighth birthday he longed for a pair of roller skates, but his father gave him a bandoneon instead. The bandoneon is an accordion-like instrument of rural German origin that is immensely popular in Argentina. The boy rapidly mastered the complex button system of his father's gift, becoming a prodigy on this bulky instrument. Piazzolla's time in New York gave him a broad perspective on popular music that he carried with him when his family repatriated to Argentina in 1937.

In Buenos Aires the teenaged Piazzolla maintained a double musical life, playing in bands and composing popular songs while also studying the music of Stravinsky, Bartók, and Ravel with the Modernist composer Alberto Ginastera. In 1954 one of Piazzolla's orchestral works earned him a scholarship to Paris, where he studied with the renowned pedagogue Nadia Boulanger. As he later recalled, when the young composer presented some of his concert music to Boulanger, she remarked, "This is a music very well written, but where here is Piazzolla?" After he reluctantly played one of his tangos for her on the piano, she exclaimed, "There is Piazzolla, never leave it!" These studies with Ginastera and Boulanger proved to be valuable, as his expanded technique, along with his knowledge of contemporary composers, produced an expressive, versatile, and commanding musical style.

**Piazzolla and the Tango** In Argentinian concert halls and nightclubs, Piazzolla's music was bound up with the unique status of the tango, a dance that is intimately intertwined with Argentinian national identity. The tango arose in the late 19th century from the lower-class barrios of Buenos Aires; the great Argentinian writer Jorge Luis Borges believed that the dance had its origins in the seedy brothels of that city's underworld. By the early 20th century the tango had become inextricably

associated with the inhabitants of Buenos Aires, who are colloquially referred to as *porteños*—port city folks. By the time that Piazzolla returned from Paris in 1955, the tango had become a virtually sacrosanct collection of musical and cultural traditions that were fiercely protected by a series of authoritarian Argentinian regimes.

Piazzolla fused European Modernism and New York's popular music with the traditional tango, forging an innovative style, the tango nuevo. Predictably, the "new tango" drew bitter criticism from his country's conservative upper class, and his relations with various Argentinian governments remained uneasy at best. However, during the later stages of his career, as his reputation grew steadily and he won international awards, including a 1986 César Award (the French Oscar) for the score he composed to the film *El exilio de Gardel*, he came to be regarded as an Argentinian national treasure. Like George Gershwin, whose music he admired, Piazzolla was a "crossover composer" who wrote both popular and concert music. His concert works include an oratorio, *El Pueblo Joven* (1970); his Bandoneon Concerto (1979); and a piece for cello and piano, *Le Grand Tango* (1982), composed for the great Russian cellist Mstislav Rostropovich.

**A Closer Look** Considering his lifelong financial difficulties and constant performing, it is astounding that Piazzolla managed to compose a substantial body of music, much less create such works as *Cuatro estaciones porteñas* (The Four Seasons of Buenos Aires), a cycle of four tangos each reflective of a particular season. (Being in the Southern Hemisphere, the seasons in Argentina are opposite to those in Europe and North America.) By using the word *porteñas* in his title, Piazzolla is specifically locating this music in his beloved Buenos Aires—these are the seasons of the port and its people.

Each of these tangos was written separately from 1964 to 1970 but Piazzolla repeatedly performed them as a group with his own quintet of violin, piano, electric guitar, double bass, and, of course, bandoneon. While the basic concept of Piazzolla's work was likely suggested by Vivaldi's famous *The Four Seasons*, published in 1725, they contain no musical references to the Baroque composer's ubiquitous set of violin concertos.

—Byron Adams

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*Piazzolla composed The Four Seasons of Buenos Aires from 1964 to 1970.*

*The first Philadelphia Orchestra performance of the work was at the Bravo! Vail Music Festival in July 2008, with violinist Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg and Miguel Harth-Bedoya. The Orchestra's most recent performances of the full work were in February 2024, with Concertmaster David Kim and Xian Zhang.*

*The instrumentation of Desyatnikov's arrangement calls for solo violin and strings.*

*Performance time is approximately 22 minutes.*

# Musical Terms

## GENERAL TERMS

**Air:** Song-like, lyrical pieces, often one part of a larger composition

**Bourrée:** A 17th-century French dance in double time with a long-short-short rhythm

**BWV:** The thematic catalogue of all the works of J.S. Bach. The initials stand for Bach-Werke-Verzeichnis (Bach-Works-Catalogue).

**Cassation:** An 18th-century instrumental suite, similar to the divertimento and serenade

**Counterpoint:** The combination of simultaneously sounding musical lines

**Courante:** An old French dance in 3/2 time

**Da capo:** To repeat from the beginning

**Divertimento:** A piece of entertaining music in several movements

**Finalmusik:** Literally "final music." A term used for music at ceremonial occasions, sometimes outdoors

**Gavotte:** A French court dance and instrumental form in a lively duple-meter

**Gigue:** A Baroque instrumental dance, written in a moderate or fast tempo

**Minuet:** A dance in triple time commonly used up to the beginning of the 19th century as the lightest movement of a symphony

**Modernism:** A consequence of the fundamental conviction among successive generations of composers since 1900 that the means of musical expression in the 20th century must be adequate to the unique and radical character of the age

**Notturmo:** A piece of a dreamily romantic or sentimental character, without a fixed form

**Oratorio:** Large-scale dramatic composition originating in the 16th century with text usually based on religious subjects. Oratorios are performed by choruses and solo voices with an instrumental accompaniment, and are similar to operas but without costumes, scenery, and actions.

**Partita:** A term used at different times for a variation, a piece, a set of variations, and a suite or other multi-movement genres

**Romance:** A title for short instrumental pieces of sentimental or romantic nature, and without special form

**Rondo:** A form frequently used in symphonies and concertos for the final movement. It consists of a main section that alternates with a variety of contrasting sections (A-B-A-C-A etc.).

**RV:** The thematic catalogue of all the works of Vivaldi, first compiled by Peter Ryom

**Sarabande:** One of the most popular of Baroque instrumental dances and a standard movement of the suite; characterized by an intense, serious affect, set in a slow triple meter based on four-bar phrases

**Serenade:** An instrumental composition written for a small ensemble and having characteristics of the suite and the sonata

**Sonata:** An instrumental composition in three or four extended movements contrasted in theme, tempo, and mood, usually for a solo instrument

**Suite:** During the Baroque period, an instrumental genre consisting of several movements in the same key, some or all of which were based on the forms and styles of dance music

**Tafelmusik:** Literally "table music." A term used since the 16th century for music at feasts and banquets

**Trio:** A division set between the first section of a minuet or scherzo and its repetition, and contrasting with it by a more tranquil movement and style

**Tutti:** All; full orchestra

## THE SPEED OF MUSIC (Tempo)

**Adagio:** Leisurely, slow

**Allegretto:** A tempo between walking speed and fast

**Allegro:** Bright, fast

**Andante:** Walking speed

**Largo:** Broad

**Presto:** Very fast

## TEMPO MODIFIERS

**Molto:** Very

**Non molto:** Not very

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