



MARINE CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

Saturday, June 17, 2017 at 7:30 P.M.

Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center

Northern Virginia Community College

Alexandria Campus

Captain Ryan J. Nowlin, conducting

Lieutenant Colonel Jason K. Fetting, Director

Antonio Vivaldi (1678–1741)

The Four Seasons, Opus 8

Concerto No. 1 in E, *Spring*

Allegro

Largo e pianissimo

Allegro

Concerto No. 2 in G minor, *Summer*

Allegro mà non molto

Adagio

Presto

Concerto No. 3 in F, *Autumn*

Allegro

Adagio molto

Allegro

Concerto No. 4 in F minor, *Winter*

Allegro non molto

Largo

Allegro

SSgt Karen Johnson, violin soloist

INTERMISSION

Max Richter (b. 1966)

The Four Seasons Recomposed (2012)

Spring I

Spring II

Spring III

Summer I

Summer II

Summer III

Autumn I

Autumn II

Autumn III

Winter I

Winter II

Winter III

MSgt Regino Madrid, violin soloist

The Marine Chamber Orchestra performs Saturday, July 29, and Saturday, August 26, at 7:30p.m. at the Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center on the Alexandria Campus of Northern Virginia Community College.

Please visit www.marineband.marines.mil for more information.

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PROGRAM NOTES

The Four Seasons, Opus 8

Antonio Vivaldi (1678–1741)

Since the earliest days of music, composers have attempted to portray a variety of non-musical concepts through their craft. While not the first, Antonio Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons* (*Le Quattro Stagioni*) is by far the most successful of the earliest known attempts at this technique. Few works, especially from the Baroque period, have resonated with modern audiences more than *The Four Seasons*. In attempting to understand its success, one must acknowledge that in addition to its compelling programmatic qualities, it is also a striking example of the Baroque concerto and of course a virtuosic showcase for the solo violin.

In the score, Vivaldi included sonnets that correspond to the scenario of *The Four Seasons*. There is no author credited for these sonnets, and there is considerable speculation that the composer himself penned them. Various elements of these sonnets are graphically portrayed in the music. The musical canvas reveals birdsong, barking dogs, howling winds, thunder storms, chattering teeth, and even drunken revelry (followed in due course by drunken stupor). Nearly three hundred years after they were conceived, Vivaldi's depictions have lost none of their charm, excitement, and uniqueness.

Spring

Spring has arrived merrily
the birds hail her with happy song
and, meanwhile, at the breath of the Zephyrs,
the streams flow with a sweet murmur:

thunder and lightning, chosen to proclaim her,

come covering the sky with a black mantle,
and then, when these fall silent, the little birds
return once more to their melodious incantation:

and so, on the pleasant, flowery meadow,

to the welcome murmuring of fronds and trees,
the goatherd sleeps with his trusty dog beside him.

To the festive sound of a shepherd's bagpipe,
nymphs and shepherds dance beneath the beloved roof
at the joyful appearance of spring.

Summer

Beneath the harsh season inflamed by the sun,
Man languishes, the flock languishes, and the pine
tree burns;

the cuckoo unleashes its voice and, as soon as it is
heard,
the turtle dove sings and the goldfinch too.

Sweet Zephyrus blows, but Boreas suddenly
opens a dispute with his neighbor,
and the shepherd weeps, for he fears
a fierce storm looming—and his destiny

the fear of lightning and fierce thunder

and the furious swarm of flies and blowflies
deprives his weary limbs of repose.

Oh alas! his fears are only too true.

The sky thunders, flares, and with hailstones
severs the heads of the proud grain crops.

Autumn

The peasant celebrates in dance and song
the sweet pleasure of the rich harvest
and, fired by Bacchus' liquor,
many end their enjoyment in slumber.

The air, which, fresher now, lends contentment,
and the season which invites so many
to the great pleasure of sweetest slumber,
make each one abandon dance and song.

At the new dawn the hunters set out on the hunt

with horns, guns, and dogs.

The wild beast flees, and they follow its track;

already bewildered, and wearied by the great noise
of the guns and dogs, wounded,
it threatens weakly to escape, but, overwhelmed, dies.

Winter

To shiver, frozen, amid icy snows,
at the harsh wind's chill breath;
to run, stamping one's feet at every moment;
with one's teeth chattering on account of the excessive
cold;

to pass the days of calm and contentment by the
fireside
while the rain outside drenches a hundred others;

to walk on the ice, and with slow steps
to move about cautiously for fear of falling;

to go fast, slip, fall to the ground;
to go on the ice again and run fast
until the ice cracks and breaks open

to hear, as they sally forth through the iron-clad gates,
Sirocco, Boreas, and all the winds at war.
This is winter, but of a kind to bring joy.

SSgt Karen Johnson, violin soloist

Concertmaster Staff Sergeant Karen Johnson joined “The President’s Own” United States Marine Chamber Orchestra in March 2011. She was appointed concertmaster in October 2015. Staff Sgt. Johnson began her musical training at age four. Upon graduating in 1996 from Highland High School in Gilbert, she earned a bachelor’s degree in violin performance from The Juilliard School in New York. She earned a master’s degree in music from the University of Maryland, College Park in 2002. Her notable instructors include Dr. William Magers, formerly of Arizona State University; Joel Smirnoff, formerly of the Juilliard String Quartet; and William Preucil, concertmaster of the Cleveland Orchestra. She has been featured as a soloist with the Marine Chamber Orchestra on Erich Wolfgang Korngold’s Violin Concerto and Henryk Wieniawski’s Violin Concerto No. 2. She also has performed as a violin soloist with the Quantico Marine Band of Quantico, Va. Prior to joining “The President’s Own,” Staff Sgt. Johnson was concertmaster of the Richmond Symphony Orchestra and guest concertmaster of the Seattle, Oregon, and Phoenix Symphonies.

The Four Seasons Recomposed (2012)

Max Richter (b. 1966)

Composer Max Richter is now part of Deutsche Grammophon’s acclaimed Recomposed series, in which contemporary artists are invited to re-work traditional pieces of music. The idea of recomposing, reprocessing, and repurposing musical works was common in Vivaldi’s time, and Richter’s approach is offered in the spirit of making revered classics relevant to a wider audience.

One reason behind the selection of *The Four Seasons* as the subject of his reconstruction was its ubiquity. “It’s just everywhere,” Richter states. “In a way, we stop being able to hear it. So this project is about reclaiming the music for me personally, by getting inside it and rediscovering it for myself—and taking a new path through a well-known landscape. Vivaldi’s music is very modular. It is pattern music in a way, so there’s a connection with the whole post-minimalist aesthetic I’m part of.”

The work is bound to play tricks on the way the listener recalls Vivaldi’s original treatment, adding a new level of re-engagement and delight. Similarly, the performers are not immune to the challenge of fighting decades of muscle memory and centuries of performance practice to carve what Richter describes as “a new path through a well-known landscape.”

The vivid imagery and progressive techniques from the 1725 original still remain at the heart of the work; the composer simply uses modern techniques to recast the emotion. For example, Richter describes part of the first movement of his Summer as “heavy music for orchestra. It’s relentless pulsed music, which is a quality that contemporary dance music has.” Similarly in the second movement of Autumn, he prescribes a very specific and mechanical harpsichord to serve as a ticking clock. “That was partly because I didn’t want the harpsichord part to be attention-seeking, but also because that style connects to various pop records from the 1970s where the harpsichord or clavinet was featured, including various Beach Boys albums and the Beatles’ *Abbey Road*.”

When the iconic music from Winter finally makes its appearance in mixed meter, one may need convincing it is not a direct quote. The line where Vivaldi’s music stops and Richter’s music begins has been decidedly erased. In the final movement, Richter explains “There is deliberately more going on in the music than we can hear at any one time: the searching solo line, the various descending upper orchestral string lines, the lower chorale-like material—we cannot take it in as a whole, but, like a landscape, we can explore it bit by bit, listening in to its various surfaces.”

MSgt Regino Madrid, violin soloist

Violinist Master Sergeant Regino Madrid joined “The President’s Own” Marine Chamber Orchestra in July 1998. He was appointed assistant concertmaster in December 2007. Master Sgt. Madrid began his musical training at age six. After graduating in 1992 from Hamilton High School in Los Angeles, he earned a bachelor of music degree in violin performance from the Cleveland Institute of Music in 1998. He studied with Linda Cerone of the Cleveland Institute and Laura Schmieder of the Colburn School in Los Angeles. With the Marine Chamber Orchestra he has performed Béla Bartók’s Violin Concerto No. 2; Leonard Bernstein’s Serenade; Ludwig van Beethoven’s Violin Concerto in D, Opus 61; Antonio Vivaldi’s *The Four Seasons*, Opus 8; Astor Piazzolla’s *Four Seasons of Buenos Aires*; Johann Sebastian Bach’s Concertos for Violin and Oboe, and Concerto for Two Violins; Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart’s Sinfonia Concertante; and Ralph Vaughan Williams’ *The Lark Ascending*. In 2008, he was a soloist with the Marine Band performing Franz Waxman’s *Carmen Fantasie* at the National Association for Music Education’s Conference in Milwaukee. He also presented educational outreach clinics throughout New England in 2012 as part of a Marine string quartet. Prior to joining “The President’s Own,” Master Sgt. Madrid performed with the Canton Symphony in Ohio; Erie Philharmonic in Pennsylvania; and the Hamilton String Quartet in Los Angeles. He has participated in chamber music festivals such as Holland Music Sessions, Santa Barbara’s Music Academy of the West, Idyllwilde, Musicorda, and Soundfest.