

Hopkins Center for the Arts

at Dartmouth

presents

Dartmouth Symphony Orchestra ***Eight Seasons***

Filippo Ciabatti, conductor

with

David Kim, violin

Tuesday, November 14, 8 pm

Rollins Chapel • Dartmouth College • 2023

Funded in part by the Roesch Family Fund in support of Instrumental Ensembles and by gifts from Friends of the Dartmouth Symphony Orchestra.

Program

Approximate duration: 75 minutes with no intermission

Simple Symphony, Op. 4

Benjamin Britten (1913–1976)

- I. Boisterous Bourrée. Allegro ritmico
- II. Playful Pizzicato. Presto possibile pizzicato sempre
- III. Sentimental Saraband. Poco lento e pesante
- IV. Frolicsome Finale. Prestissimo con fuoco

Eight Seasons

Le quattro stagioni (The Four Seasons)

Antonio Vivaldi (1678–1741)

and

Las cuatro estaciones porteñas (The Four Seasons of Buenos Aires)

Astor Piazzolla (1921–1992)

arr. Leonid Desyatnikov (1955–)

Violin Concerto in E major, RV 269 “La primavera” (Spring)

Verano Porteño (Buenos Aires Summer)

Violin Concerto in G minor, RV 315 “L'estate” (Summer)

Otoño Porteño (Buenos Aires Autumn)

Violin Concerto in F major, RV 293 “L'autunno” (Autumn)

Invierno Porteño (Buenos Aires Winter)

Violin Concerto in F minor, RV 297 “L'inverno” (Winter)

Primavera Porteño (Buenos Aires Spring)

David Kim, violin

Program Notes

Benjamin Britten

Simple Symphony, Op. 4

Benjamin Britten was born in Lowestoft, Suffolk, England, on November 22, 1913; he died on December 4, 1976, in Aldeburgh, Suffolk. He composed his Simple Symphony for string orchestra in 1933–4; the work premiered in Norwich on March 6, 1934, with Britten conducting an amateur orchestra.

In 1933, 19-year-old Benjamin Britten was seeking his musical identity. Post-grad travel grant in hand, he intended to study with Berg in Austria, but Britten's mother, who rigidly controlled her son's life until her death, forbade the trip. It was back to the family home in Lowestoft for Britten.

There, in the house overlooking the Suffolk coast, Britten perused piles of scores written in his precocious youth (100 opus numbers by age 14!) for material for a new work: a miniature symphony for strings. "This 'Simple Symphony' is entirely based on material from works which the composer wrote between the ages of 9 and 12," he informs us in the score. Compositional soul-searching could wait, it seemed. But the mature Britten is here in spirit—the theme of childhood would become his lifelong personal and musical obsession.

The opening "Boisterous Bourrée" is a vigorous neo-Baroque sonatina; for the second movement's nimble jig of a scherzo, the orchestra plucks *pizzicato* from start to finish. The coda features the terrific sound of all the orchestra's open strings plucked simultaneously. Longest by far, the "Sentimental Saraband" contrasts two tender themes. First is a slow ground bass, almost Elizabethan at first, giving way to some real heart-on-sleeve Romantic gestures. These die away, and the cello sings a bittersweet strain to hushed, plucked double bass: an elegy of a long-forgotten dance. Softest and sweetest of all is the muted coda. Rollicking with an impish streak, the finale takes what could have been a

Mozart theme and shakes it up with raggy syncopation and constant musical surprises.

Eight Seasons

In tonight's performance, Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* concertos take turns with *Las cuatro estaciones porteñas* by Astor Piazzolla to form an eight-part concertante suite for violin and string orchestra. This Baroque-meets-tango mashup was popularized by Latvian violinist Gidon Kremer on his 1999 CD *Eight Seasons*.

Antonio Vivaldi

Le quattro stagioni (The Four Seasons)

Antonio Vivaldi was born on March 4, 1678, in Venice, and died on July 28, 1741, in Vienna. He wrote his Four Seasons violin concertos some time before 1725, when they and eight other violin concertos were anthologized as Il cimento dell'armonia e dell'inventione ("The Contest Between Harmony and Invention"), Op. 8. The scores call for solo violin accompanied by strings and continuo.

A virtuoso violinist himself, Antonio Vivaldi wrote most of his (more than 500!) concertos for that instrument, including the uber-famous *Four Seasons*, presented to Vivaldi's Bohemian patron the Count of Morzin. Included with the scores were four anonymous sonnets, possibly written by Vivaldi himself, which decode the musical events of each concerto into poetic images of seasonal change in the countryside. With this careful pairing of poetry and sound, *The Four Seasons* represents one of the earliest examples of "program" music—that is, music meant to evoke non-musical images or events beyond the emotional impulse to which so-called "absolute" music limits itself. If careful listeners can shrug off the work's unfortunate latter-day connotations of ringtones, elevators and on-hold music, they'll hear that every pastoral motif described in the poems has its musical counterpart. Season by

Program Notes *continued*

season, it's all here, from the twittering birdsong of solo violins to the faithful barking of a goatherd's watchdog in the violas.

Spring

Allegro

Springtime is upon us.

The birds celebrate her return with festive song,
and murmuring streams are
softly caressed by the breezes.

Thunderstorms, those heralds of Spring, roar,
casting their dark mantle over heaven,
Then they die away to silence,
and the birds take up their charming songs once
more.

Largo

On the flower-strewn meadow, with leafy branches
rustling overhead, the goat-herd sleeps,
his faithful dog beside him.

Allegro

Led by the festive sound of rustic bagpipes,
nymphs and shepherds lightly dance
beneath the brilliant canopy of spring.

Summer

Allegro non molto

Under a hard Season, fired up by the Sun
Languishes man, languishes the flock and burns
the pine
We hear the cuckoo's voice;
then sweet songs of the turtledove and finch are
heard.

Soft breezes stir the air, but threatening
the 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
Robs his tired limbs of rest
As gnats and flies buzz furiously around.

Presto

Alas, his fears were justified
The Heavens thunders and roar and with hail
Cuts the head off the wheat and damages the grain.

Autumn

Allegro

Celebrates the peasant, with songs and dances,
The pleasure of a bountiful harvest.
And fired up by Bacchus' liquor,
many end their revelry in sleep.

Adagio molto

Everyone is made to forget their cares and to sing and
dance
By the air which is tempered with pleasure
And (by) the season that invites so many, many
Out of their sweetest slumber to fine enjoyment

Allegro

The hunters emerge at the new dawn,
And with horns and dogs and guns depart upon their
hunting
The beast flees and they follow its trail;
Terrified and tired of the great noise
Of guns and dogs, the beast, wounded, threatens
Languidly to flee, but harried, dies.

Winter

Allegro non molto

To tremble from cold in the icy snow,
In the harsh breath of a horrid wind;
To run, stamping one's feet every moment,
Our teeth chattering in the extreme cold

Largo

Before the fire to pass peaceful,
Contented days while the rain outside pours down.

Allegro

We tread the icy path slowly and cautiously,
for fear of tripping and falling.
Then turn abruptly, slip, crash on the ground and,
rising, hasten on across the ice lest it cracks up.
We feel the chill north winds course through the home
despite the locked and bolted doors...
this is winter, which nonetheless
brings its own delights.

Astor Piazzolla

arr. Leonid Desyatnikov

Las cuatro estaciones porteñas

(The Four Seasons of Buenos Aires)

Composer and bandoneonist Astor Piazzolla was born in Mar del Plata, Argentina, on March 11, 1921; he died on July 5, 1992, in Buenos Aires. He wrote his Cuatro Estaciones Porteñas as separate tango compositions between 1965 and 1970, later grouping them into one concert suite. Each was scored for and premiered by his famous Quinteto: bandoneon, violin, electric guitar, piano and double bass. In 1998, commissioned by Gidon Kremer, Leonid Desyatnikov orchestrated Piazzolla's

suite as a set of violin concertos, splitting each "season" into three miniature movements to mirror the structure of Vivaldi's work. Performed tonight is Desyatnikov's arrangement for solo violin and string orchestra.

Astor Piazzolla transformed tango. Before Piazzolla was born, the urban Afro-Argentine folk dance had already seized Europe and the Americas in gentrified ballroom form. Meanwhile, Argentina's own middle-class tango craze solidified in the 1930s and '40s into a cabaret institution dance to standardized *orquesta típica* ensembles full of bandoneons and violins. In those heyday years, Piazzolla was a mainstay on the thriving Buenos Aires tango scene as a bandoneon star with some of the leading bands, simultaneously studying concert music with Alberto Ginastera. In the 1950s, Piazzolla reinvented the tango as a wholly new genre of concert music, incorporating traditional tango rhythms, cabaret idioms, Baroque textures, modern jazz harmonies, electric guitar and formal influences from the American songbook. His *Four Seasons of Buenos Aires* exemplifies the *nuevo tango*, leaning into its Baroque inspirations with direct quotations from Vivaldi's concertos.

Program notes © 2023 Grant Cook '19

About the Artists

Praised for his “sensitive and nuanced” musicianship and for delivering performances “with admirable sweep and tension,” **Filippo Ciabatti** is a dynamic and versatile conductor who enjoys a multifaceted career. A native of Florence, Italy, Mr. Ciabatti has appeared as a guest conductor with numerous orchestras in Europe and the Americas. He regularly serves as cover conductor for the Portland Symphony Orchestra (Maine) and will make his guest conducting debut for them in 2024. This year, he will also make his guest conducting debut with the Macon-Mercer Symphony Orchestra and the San Angelo Symphony (Texas).

Mr. Ciabatti has collaborated with artists including Philadelphia Orchestra concertmaster David Kim, baritone Nathan Gunn, cellist Gabriel Cabezas, pianist Sally Pinkas, flutist Luciano Tristaino and mandolinist Carlo Aonzo. An advocate for contemporary music and collaborations between musical genres, he premiered a secular oratorio composed by renowned jazz composer Taylor Ho Bynum, and commissioned a cello concerto by composer Noah Luna that was aired on NPR’s *From the Top*.

Starting in October 2023, he will serve as Assistant Conductor of Boston Baroque. He is the founding Artistic Director of Upper Valley Baroque.

Also at ease on the opera stage, Mr. Ciabatti has recently been named Music Director of the Opera Company of Middlebury and has also conducted many full operatic productions while serving as guest conductor at Opera North (New Hampshire) and Lyric Theatre at Illinois.

Mr. Ciabatti is the Director of Orchestral and Choral Programs at the Hopkins Center for the Arts at Dartmouth College. Since the beginning of his tenure, he has been invested in working on innovative and cross-disciplinary projects that provide exceptional opportunities for both students and audiences.

As a collaborative pianist and vocal coach, Mr. Ciabatti has been on the faculty of Camerata de’ Bardi in New York City, and Scuola Italia per Giovani Cantanti

Lirici in Sant’Angelo in Vado (Italy). He is currently on faculty at the summer opera program Opera Viva! in Verona (Italy).

Mr. Ciabatti holds advanced degrees in piano, choral conducting and orchestral conducting from Italy and the United States. He is the winner of the 2021 American Prize in Conducting (college/university division). In 2018, he served as a Conducting Fellow at the Aurora Music Festival (Sweden), under the direction of Jukka-Pekka Saraste.

Marcia Cassidy is a long-time member of the faculty of Dartmouth College. She came to Dartmouth in 1987 as a member of the Franciscan String Quartet. The quartet concertized extensively in the United States, Europe, Canada, and Japan to critical acclaim and was honored with many awards including first prize in the 1986 Banff International String Quartet Competition. Ms. Cassidy currently teaches violin and viola students and directs and coaches in the chamber music program. As the assistant to the Dartmouth Symphony, Ms. Cassidy participates in and advises all aspects of running the orchestra and enjoys playing alongside her students. In addition to her Dartmouth commitments, Ms. Cassidy is an active orchestral and chamber musician, playing with groups such as the Vermont Symphony, Opera North, Juno Orchestra, and period performance chamber ensembles, Musicians of the Old Post Road and Upper Valley Baroque.

Violinist **David Kim** was named concertmaster of The Philadelphia Orchestra in 1999. 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. 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 Michael Angelo Bergonzi from Cremona, ca. 1754. Mr. Kim is an avid golfer and outdoorsman.

Dartmouth Symphony Orchestra

Filippo Ciabatti, conductor
Marcia Cassidy, assistant conductor
Leslie Sonder, librarian

Violin I

*Annie Mills '26
Hinano Kawaiaea '27
Omar Guey F
Connor Zhang '27
Elena Oh '27
Mina Lavcheva
Sophia Chang Stauffer '22, G
Hanna Zhdan
Ira Morris

Violin II

Teddy Glover '25
Jessica Jiang '25
JJ Kim '27
Marcia Cassidy F
Kathy Andrew
Melanie Dexter
David Horak
Greg Diehl

Viola

Jason Pak '24
Elaine Chi '24
Mac Waters G
Hunter Kui UG-TH
Anaïse Boucher-Browning '22
Ethan Wu UG-TH
Leslie Sonder F

Cello

William An '27
Ava Rosenbaum '26
Duncan Mahony '27
Tyler Grubelich '26
Elizabeth Lee '24
Tucker McSpadden '27
Liam Tassiello '26
Dilshod Narzillae

Double Bass

Alex Ponasik '26
Paul Horak TH '94
Nick Browne F

Harpsichord

John McKean

* Concertmaster
F = Dartmouth faculty
G = Graduate student
Italics = Guest musician
TH = Thayer
UG-TH = Thayer dual-degree student

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