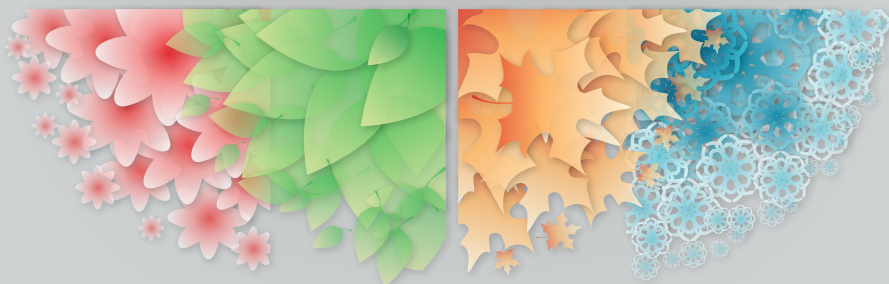


SEASONS



Strings
of St. John's
in concert

MEHDI JAVANFAR, conductor
RALITSA TCHOLAKOVA, violin

Music by Vivaldi, Webern,
Mozetich, and Grieg

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 13TH, 2022 AT 2 PM

St John the Evangelist Anglican Church
(Elgin St. at Somerset St. – Ottawa)

Admission by donation
(suggested \$20/adult)

2022
Strings
of St. John's

Ottawa
The Strings of St. John's gratefully
acknowledges the financial support
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PROGRAMME

The Four Seasons, op. 8

Antonio Vivaldi

(1678–1741)

Concerto in E major, “Spring”

Allegro

Largo

Allegro

Concerto in G minor, “Summer”

Allegro ma non molto

Adagio

Presto

Concerto in F major, “Autumn”

Allegro

Adagio molto

Allegro

Concerto in F minor, “Winter”

Allegro non molto

Largo

Allegro

-----INTERMISSION-----

Langsamer Satz

Anton Webern

(1883–1945)

Trans. by Gerard Schwarz

Postcards from the Sky

Marjan Mozetich

(1948–)

Unfolding Sky

Weeping Clouds

A Messenger

Two Nordic Melodies, op. 63

Edvard Grieg

(1843–1907)

Popular song

Cow Keeper’s Tune and Country Dance

PROGRAMME NOTES

Antonio Vivaldi (1678–1741)

The Four Seasons

Vivaldi, born in Venice, was a composer, virtuoso violinist, teacher, and priest, ordained in 1703 and nicknamed 'the red-haired priest.' He was regarded as one of greatest Baroque composers. He composed many instrumental concertos for the violin and a variety of other instruments, as well as sacred choral works and more than forty operas. His best-known works are the *Gloria* and a series of violin concertos known as the *Four Seasons*. Like most of Vivaldi's concertos, *The Four Seasons* was composed for women students at the Seminario dell Ospedale della Pieta in Venice where he taught violin. The four works are part of Vivaldi's collection of twelve concertos for violin and string orchestra which were published in Amsterdam in 1720. The four concertos describe each of the four seasons and are based on 4 sonnets, believed to have been written by Vivaldi himself. The sonnets, translated to English from the original Italian, are as follows:

Spring (Concerto in E major)

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.

PROGRAMME NOTES, CONTINUED

Allegro

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

Summer (Concerto in G minor)

Allegro ma non molto

Beneath the blazing sun's relentless heat
men and flocks are sweltering,
pines are scorched.
We hear the cuckoo's voice;
then sweet songs of the turtle dove and finch are heard.
Soft breezes stir the air....but threatening
north wind sweeps them suddenly aside.
The shepherd trembles,
fearful of violent storm and what may lie ahead.

Adagio e piano - Presto e forte

His limbs are now awakened from their repose
by fear of lightning's flash and thunder's roar,
as gnats and flies buzz furiously around.

Presto

Alas, his worst fears were justified,
as the heavens roar and great hailstones
beat down upon the proudly standing corn.

Autumn (Concerto in F major)

Allegro

The peasant celebrates with song and dance
the harvest safely gathered in.
The cup of Bacchus flows freely,
and many find their relief in deep slumber.

Adagio molto

The singing and the dancing die away
as cooling breezes fan the pleasant air,
inviting all to sleep
without a care.

Allegro

The hunters emerge at dawn,
ready for the chase,
with horns and dogs and cries.
Their quarry flees while they give chase.
Terrified and wounded, the prey struggles on,
but, harried, dies.

Winter (Concerto in F minor)

Allegro non molto

Shivering, frozen mid the frosty snow
in biting, stinging winds;
running to and fro to stamp one's icy feet,
teeth chattering in the bitter chill.

PROGRAMME NOTES, CONTINUED

Largo

To rest contentedly beside the hearth,
while those outside are drenched by pouring rain.

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 coarse through the home
despite the locked and bolted doors...
this is winter, which nonetheless
brings its own delights.

Anton Webern (1883–1945)

Langsamer Satz

Anton Friedrich Wilhelm von Webern, better known as Anton Webern, was an Austrian composer. He was a student and follower of Arnold Schoenberg and formed part of the Second Viennese School—a group of composers, particularly Schoenberg and his pupils Alban Berg and Anton Webern who developed an expanded form of late Romantic music without a firm tonal centre often referred to as atonality. Webern did, however, compose two short tonal movements for string quartet—*Langsamer Satz* being one of them.

Langsamer Satz (Slow movement) dates from 1905 and is believed to have been inspired by a hiking holiday in the mountains of Austria that Webern took with his future wife. Webern intended to write an entire quartet which included *Langsamer Satz* as the slow movement but never completed it. The movement, transcribed for string orchestra by Gerard Schwarz, is a little masterpiece full of dramatic sections but also tranquility and peace.

Marjan Mozetich (1948–)

Postcards from the Sky

Born in Italy to Slovenian parents, Marjan Mozetich moved to Hamilton in 1952 and began studying piano and later composition before receiving a Bachelor of Music degree from the University of Toronto. He developed a style of post-modern romantic music consisting of a blend of the traditional, the popular and the modern. Many of his compositions have been used by contemporary dance companies as well as in films.

Postcards from the Sky (1996) is a three-movement work for string orchestra written for and premiered by Thirteen Strings of Ottawa. The movements are: 'Unfolding Sky', 'Weeping Clouds' and 'A Messenger'.

Edvard Grieg (1843–1907)

Two Nordic Melodies, op. 63

Edvard Grieg was a Norwegian composer and pianist. He is widely considered to be one of the main Romantic era composers and his music is part of the standard classical repertoire. His use of many Norwegian folk songs within his own compositions brought the music of Norway to international notoriety much as Sibelius did in Finland and Smetana in Bohemia. A century after his death, Grieg's legacy continues far beyond music. There are numerous statues depicting his image in Bergen, Norway, many cultural venues that bear his name, a large sculpture in Seattle and a crater on the planet Mercury is named after him.

Two Nordic Melodies, individually titled 'Popular song' and 'Cow Keeper's Tune and Country Dance' and scored for string orchestra, is a relatively minor composition of Grieg's but gives an abundance of local colour and a taste of Norwegian life. The first is a slow movement based on a Norwegian folk tune as the name suggests. It was written by Fredrik Duc, the Norwegian-Swedish ambassador to France who had sent it to Grieg. The second is arranged from a set of 25 Norwegian folk dances and songs first published in 1870.

MEHDI JAVANFAR, CONDUCTOR



Mehdi Javanfar is an active conductor and educator. He is a two-time recipient of the Graduate Merit Awards in Conducting at the University of Michigan, where he studied with Maestro Kenneth Kiesler. His other conducting mentor includes the late Gustav Meier. Mehdi has conducted the London Ontario Symphony Orchestra, Windsor Symphony Orchestra, Hamilton Symphonic Band, University of Michigan various orchestras, Hart house Strings, the

Composers' Orchestra consisting of the members of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Kharkiv Philharmonic Orchestra in Ukraine, and the Toronto Sinfonia of Nations, which he founded. Also, he has held the position of the Music Director of the Pembroke Symphony Orchestra since 2017.

Mehdi began his musical career as a violinist in Tehran Symphony Orchestra. Following immigration to Canada in 1994, while studying at the University of Toronto, he joined the Scarborough Philharmonic Orchestra where he served as the Principal Second Violin. As a conductor, his first concert at the Faculty of Music, University of Toronto, in 1997, featuring Dvorak's Serenade in D minor, and Stravinsky's Histoire du Soldat was recorded and broadcast by CJRT FM. His conducting repertoire is varied and includes more than a hundred forty pieces from the standard repertoire, as well as pieces by contemporary composers of various nationalities, such as Behzad Ranjbaran, Arsalan Kamkar, Shahin Farhat, Reza Vali, Suad Bushnaq, Fikret Amirov, Vladimir Solyanikov, and Goulak Artemovsky. As an advocate for Canadian music, Mehdi has performed pieces by Gary Kulesha, Marjan Mozetich, Larysa Kuzmenko, Abigail Richardson-Schulte, Murray Schafer, Tawnie Olson, Maya Badian, Andrew Ager, Carmen Braden, Elizabeth Raum, André Gagnon, and John Weinzwieg to name a few.

As an educator, Mehdi is a senior member of the College of Examiners at the Royal Conservatory of Music. He has taught and prepared countless students for RCM examinations in various subjects of Theory, History, as well as Violin, and Piano, from elementary to advanced levels. As a music writer, Mehdi's activities include participation in writing a textbook of fundamentals of music for the University of Tehran, Iran; translation of "The Story of Music" by Geoffrey Brace (Ladybird Books) into Persian; biographical writings on Tchaikovsky, Bartok, Prokofiev, and Mahler; correction of the list of errata published in the journal of the Conductors' Guild, for "Rite of Spring" by Stravinsky; essays on Iranian Traditional Music, and a variety of other subjects, published in various magazines.

A graduate of the University of Toronto with a Bachelor of Music Education, the University of Michigan with a Master's degree in Orchestral Conducting, and the University of Ottawa with a Master of Arts in Music Research, Mehdi is currently pursuing his Doctorate in Philosophy Interdisciplinary Research in Music at the University of Ottawa.



RALITSA TCHOLAKOVA, VIOLIN



Ralitsa Tcholakova is an internationally known, Ottawa-based violin/viola player. She has performed as soloist with orchestras, at chamber music series and festivals in over 25 countries. She is the recipient of bursaries, scholarships, awards and grants from Ottawa City Arts Funding, FACTOR, SOCAN Foundation, Canada Arts Council, Department of Foreign Affairs of Canada, Europe 2000 and many others. In 2017 she was nominated for the GG's Persons Case award. In 2018

she was nominated for the Premier's Award for Excellence in the Arts. Ralitsa has recorded numerous highly acclaimed CDs, including "Ballad of the North," consisting of music by Canadian women composers and distributed by SOCAN to 135 radio stations worldwide. Her latest CD "Aboriginal Inspirations" features Grammy winner flutist Ron Korb. It is released and promoted nationally and internationally by the Canadian Music Centre and NAXOS. She is currently working on a CD with violin concertos by Canadian Women Composers funded by various Canadian organizations. Since 2014 she performs annual recitals and solo concert performances on Parliament Hill. In 2016 she played two duets with the Hon. Ed Fast (including one of Fast's own compositions) at the inaugural concert "Spirit of Change" at the Canadian Senate. Ralitsa is a music performance instructor at Carleton University and at the City of Ottawa. Her upcoming performances include the premiere of "Prayer for Peace" a composition for solo viola written for her by Evelyn Stroobach at Carnegie Hall, New York on November 21.

THE STRINGS OF ST. JOHN'S

Violin I

Jackie Morris,
Concertmaster
Rosalind Spencer
Daniela Turcanu
Carolyn Phillips
Sonia Dimitrov
Marg Macpherson
Lauren Phillips
Khalid Ahmad

Violin II

Iain Macpherson,
Principal
Jennifer Arrigo
Katherine Tinkler
Gabriella Csoti
Carol Deaville
Marko Yanishevsky
Alessandra Kempson

Viola

Mary Young,
Principal
Olivia Pelling
Laura Mennill
Stephen Rouble
Talia Kennedy

Cello

Sandra Allan,
Principal
Catherine Campbell
Andrew Deaville
David Van Dine

Bass

Patrick Kline,
Principal
Ann Downey

Harpsichord

Gordon Johnston

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UPCOMING CONCERTS

The combined choirs of **St. John the Evangelist** and **Woodroffe United Church** invite you to join them for some glorious **CHRISTMAS MUSIC!**



Sunday December 4th, 2:00 pm,
Woodroffe United Church



Sunday December 11th, 2:00 pm,
St. John the Evangelist Church



THE STRINGS OF ST JOHNS IN CONCERT

Sunday March 5th, 2023, 2:00 pm

