

THE TAFELMUSIK BAROQUE ORCHESTRA

PRESENTS :

THE FOUR SEASONS: *A Cycle of the Sun*



*CELEBRATING THE CYCLE OF THE SEASONS WITH MUSIC FROM
BAROQUE ITALY, CHINA, INDIA, AND THE CANADIAN NORTH*

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As travelers on the earth's yearlong journey around the sun, we hurtle through space at a speed of 106,000 kilometers an hour. The immensity of the globe and the smoothness of the ride protect us from feeling this motion, yet the trip is not without drama; in northern and southern latitudes the tilt of the earth creates a cycle in the intensity and duration of the sun's rays resulting in the changing panorama of the four seasons.

Because the seasons affect so many aspects of our lives, it is not surprising that the theme of this annual cycle permeates the world's literature, art, dance and music. Our concert, "The Four Seasons: *A Cycle of the Sun*" is a musical journey around the world in 1725, the year in which Antonio Vivaldi's set of four violins concertos called The Four Seasons was published. We will travel to Vivaldi's Italy, to eighteenth-century China, to the far north of Canada and to India. Students will be introduced to the special qualities of the European baroque orchestra, to the Chinese classical instrument called the pipa, to the Indian sarangi and to the practice of Inuit throat singing. Our concert, which brings the traditions of four ancient cultures together on one stage will end with a new version of Vivaldi's 'Winter', created for all of the performers by Canadian composer Mychael Danna. The concert will be animated in French by Montreal harpsichordist and television host, Catherine Perrin.

Our journey begins in Venice, the Italian city of canals and gondolas. Venice was the birthplace of Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741), one of the most important composers in the history of European baroque music. Baroque is the term used today for music composed from about 1600 until the death of J.S. Bach in 1750.

Antonio Vivaldi was important in three ways:

1. AS A PERFORMER ON THE VIOLIN:

The son of a professional violinist, Vivaldi developed a dazzling technique, which surprised and excited the audiences who heard him play. Although we know him today as



his violin playing which pushed the

with an orphanage for girls in Venice. Women at the orphanage took music lessons, which was famous all over Europe. Many girls who came to Venice to study with

church services, but he is most famous for his concerto. His most famous concerto is a composition, usually in three movements, which shows a high level of musicality and technical

ability, with the accompaniment of an orchestra. Vivaldi's most popular compositions today are the four violin concertos in which he imitated the sounds of the seasons - the birds and gentle breezes of spring, the wild storms of summer, the dancing of autumn harvesters and the freezing cold of winter. These concertos are known as the *Four Seasons*.

The first publication of the *Four Seasons* in 1725 included four poems in sonnet form which presented the story of each concerto. Here are the texts of these sonnets:

Antonio Vivaldi

The Four Seasons

Spring

(Allegro)

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 are silenced, the little birds
return to fill the air with their sweet song.

(Largo)

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.

(Allegro)

To the rustic bagpipe's festive sound,
nymphs and shepherds dance beneath
the fair spring sky in all its glory.

Summer

(Allegro non molto)

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 goldfinch join in song.

Zephyr blows gently, but suddenly

Boreas contests its neighbour:
the shepherd weeps, fearful of the wild squall
and anxious for his fate,

(Adagio)

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

(Presto)

Alas! his fears are justified,
for furious thunder splits the heavens,
flattening the cornstalks and the grainfields.

Autumn

(Allegro)

The peasants celebrate with song and dance
their joy in a fine harvest
and with generous draughts of Bacchus' cup
their celebrations end in sleep.

(Adagio molto)

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

(Allegro)

At first light the huntsman sets out
with horns, guns and dogs;
the wild beast flees, and they follow its trail.

Terrified and exhausted by the great clamour
of guns and dogs, wounded and afraid,
the beast tries to flee but is overcome and dies.

Winter

(Allegro non molto)

To tremble with cold in the icy snow,
in the harsh breath of a cruel wind,
to run, all the time stamping your feet,
teeth chattering in the frightful cold.

(Largo)

To remain in quiet contentment by the fireside
while outside the rain pours in torrents;
to walk on the ice, with slow steps
in fear of falling, treading carefully;

(Allegro)

Then to step forth boldly, slip, fall to the ground,
and again run boldly on the ice
until it cracks and breaks;

To listen as from the iron portals
rush forth Sirocco and Boreas
and all the winds at war:
This is winter, but even so, what joy it brings!

How will the music of the *Four Seasons* be performed in the concert?

Members of Tafelmusik, an orchestra which plays on original instruments, will perform the music from the Four Seasons. Orchestral instruments have changed a great deal over the years to reflect changing tastes in sound quality. The violins, violas, cellos and basses in Vivaldi's own orchestra in Venice, and in the Tafelmusik orchestra, would have had gut strings made from the intestines of sheep. The same material was used for stringing tennis racquets and snowshoes; it produces a beautiful, clear warm sound when used on a stringed instrument.

If you play a stringed instrument you will notice that the baroque bows used in the Tafelmusik are quite different from modern bows. They are lighter and taper to a fine point at the tip. Baroque bowing distinguishes between a strong down-bow and a light up-bow, often giving the music a dance-like character.

In our concert you will also meet the harpsichord, a keyboard instrument with thin metal strings plucked by small pieces of quill, cut from feathers. The harpsichord plays almost all the time in the *Four Seasons*, doubling the line played by the cello and bass, and improvising chords to fill in the harmonies.

In the baroque period orchestras usually played without a conductor and were led instead by the principal violinist or the harpsichord player. The music director of Tafelmusik is Jeanne Lamon, who directs the orchestra while she is playing the violin.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT TAFELMUSIK AND ITS INSTRUMENTS PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT WWW.TAFELMUSIK.ORG

The next stop on our journey is in eighteenth-century China.

In 1725 the capital of Beijing was a bustling city with an ancient tradition of celebrating the seasons. Eighteenth-century writers left many accounts of the special clothing, foods and even fireworks associated with each season. Music also played a large part in the celebrations and one of the most important instruments in city life was the pipa. This four-stringed, pear-shaped instrument has known in China since about 400 A.D. It is a plucked instrument demanding a highly virtuosic technique and it is often used to portray natural phenomena such as storms of bird-songs. On our concert the pipa player Wen

Zhao will play one of the most famous pieces in the pipa repertoire, *White Snow in Summer*.

Next we travel to the north of India.

The 'sarangi' is the most important bowed stringed instrument of North Indian music. It has three playing strings, which like baroque violin strings, are made from gut. It also has 36 metal strings which are not played, but resonate strongly on the instrument, producing a magical, silvery sound. The instrument is played with a large bow and the strings are pressed from the side by the fingernails and cuticles of the fingers of the left hand to make the pitches.

Sarangi music is improvised by the performer in a highly ornamented style within a strict set of guidelines embodied in the musical form of the 'raag' or 'raga'. Each raag uses its own scale, characteristic phrases, and has its own association with a certain time of day or season. In our concert, Aruna Narayan will demonstrate the music of a raag for the monsoon, or rainy season in India.

We'll end our journey in Canada.



sappears altogether for many days in the winter. For themselves during long hours of darkness by playing and singing. Two women stand facing each other and imitating the birds, animals and tools associated with

ers from the famous ensemble 'Aqsarniit' who have their elders, will sing and demonstrate their art and culture.

Ontario Tour 2004

*This concert and education programme has been designed and researched by Tafelmusik bassist **Alison Mackay**. Alison has created several innovative programmes for Tafelmusik and Toronto Consort, and has also developed a number of school projects for Tafelmusik, including the Four Seasons Project, a cross-cultural multi-disciplinary arts curriculum for students in grade six. This season she is busy developing Metamorphosis, a Toronto-wide festival of music, art, dance, film and theatre inspired by the stories from Ovid's Metamorphoses, to be held in the spring of 2005. Alison has provided the following programme notes for this week's concerts.*

THE TAFELMUSIK BAROQUE ORCHESTRA

Jeanne Lamon Music Director

Violin I

Jeanne Lamon
Geneviève Gilardeau
Linda Melsted
Christopher Verrette

Violin II

Thomas Georgi
Patricia Ahern
Cristina Zacharias

Viola

Elly Winer
Patrick G. Jordan

Violoncello

Christina Mahler
Allen Wear

Bass

Alison Mackay

Lute

Lucas Harris

Harpichord

Olivier Fortin

BIOGRAPHIES

THE TAFELMUSIK BAROQUE ORCHESTRA Jeanne Lamon Music Director

Tafelmusik, Canada's orchestra on period instruments, is celebrating its 25th anniversary this season. Under the inspired leadership of Music Director and concertmaster Jeanne Lamon since 1981, Tafelmusik has achieved international recognition for its concerts and recordings. The ensemble has eighteen core members and is expanded as the need arises. All members of the orchestra are specialists in historical performance practice and perform on original instruments or modern replicas faithful in design and construction to the originals.

Tafelmusik's success has taken it around the world, with regular tours across North America, Europe, and Asia. This season the orchestra is performing in Europe, the US, Ontario and Quebec.

Tafelmusik performs over 50 concerts each season at its home base, the historic Trinity-St. Paul's Centre in downtown Toronto. It also performs at other Toronto venues, including Massey Hall, George Weston Recital Hall and the Royal Ontario Museum.

Tafelmusik's education programme continues to thrive, this year with numerous student concerts both in Toronto and on tour. Tafelmusik musicians also work directly with students in their classrooms, and offer workshops to teachers and to visiting ensembles. The season ends with the Tafelmusik Baroque Summer Institute, an intensive residency for senior students, pre-professional and professional musicians which focuses on instrumental and vocal baroque performance practice.

Tafelmusik has released over 65 CDs on the Analekta, Sony Classical, CBC Records, BMG Classics, Hyperion and Collegium labels, and has been awarded numerous international recording prizes, including five Junos. A recent award-winning film project on the life and music of the classical French Black composer Le Chevalier de Saint Georges, entitled "Le Mozart Noir," has been produced by Media Headquarters for CBC, BBC, TV5 and ARTV. This documentary was nominated for five Gemini Awards, a Rose d'Or award in Switzerland, and was the only Canadian production to win a Banff Rockie Award in June 2003.

JEANNE LAMON

Music Director

Music Director of Tafelmusik since 1981, Jeanne Lamon has been praised by critics in Europe and North America for her virtuosity as a violinist and her strong musical leadership. Her solo recordings of Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* and Bach *Violin Concertos* with Tafelmusik have been widely praised. Ms. Lamon has received numerous awards: recent honours include the Prix Alliance from the Alliance Française, and the 1997 M. Joan Chalmers Award for Artistic Direction. In 1994 Ms. Lamon received an honorary Doctor of Letters degree from York University, and in 1999 she received the prestigious Molson Prize from the Canada Council for the Arts. In 2000 Jeanne was appointed a member of the Order of Canada in recognition of her exceptional achievements as Music Director of Tafelmusik. Jeanne guest directs symphony orchestras regularly across Canada. Recent engagements include Symphony Nova Scotia, Victoria Symphony, Vancouver Symphony, Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony, Orchestra London and Calgary Philharmonic. She teaches at the University of Toronto and the Royal Conservatory of Music.

Aqsarniit

Aqsarniit (which means "northern lights" in Inuktitut) is a group of young Inuit performing artists from Nunavik (northern Quebec), Nunavut (eastern Arctic) and Greenland. The ensemble works to preserve and promote Inuit culture through performances of traditional and modern forms of dancing, throat singing, theatre and games. Since 1995, Aqsarniit has toured in Canada, Japan, Italy, Germany, Norway and the United States, often performing for heads of state and

royalty. Members of Aqsarniit performing in this programme are Sylvia Cloutier and June Shappa.

Aqsarniit would like to acknowledge the Inuit elders who continue to inspire Inuit youth to learn about our Inuit musical traditions: Mary Sivuarapik, Alacie Tulaugak, Nellie Nungak, Lucy Amogoalik, and my late grandmother, Daisy Watt, who shared her music with all of us . . . Nakurmingaii! — Sylvia Cloutier

Aruna Narayan

Aruna Narayan is an esteemed performer on the sarangi, the bowed lute of North India. Born in Bombay and now living in Toronto, she comes from a famous musical family and is the daughter of the renowned sarangi master, Pandit Ram Narayan, with whom she still performs from time to time. In her concert tours of India, Europe, Australia and North America, Aruna Narayan is particularly known for the subtlety, precision and grace of her playing, and for the beauty of her strong sound and powerful bowing style. Her most recent CD, *Aruna Narayan*, was recorded in Paris in 2002 and is distributed by French Harmonia Mundi. She may be heard in the music for a number of international films, including Mychael Danna's soundtrack for *Monsoon Wedding*.

Wen Zhao

Born in Beijing, Wen Zhao began to study the pipa at the age of seven. She holds a B.A. from the music department of Beijing Normal University where she was a first-prize winning student of Wang Fan Di, one of the most famous pipa players in China. After post-graduate studies at the University of London, she performed and taught in England and Europe for eight years. She has lived in Toronto since 1997, while continuing to pursue her international career, including performances at the Swiss International Festival, Edinburgh Festival, Queen Elizabeth Hall in London, and major festivals in Canada and the United States. For the past year, Wen has been a performing artist in Tafelmusik's Four Seasons Project, an ongoing arts programme for students in grade six.

Geneviève Gilardeau

Geneviève Gilardeau, a native of Québec, studied at the University of Montréal, the Conservatoire du Québec, and the Royal Conservatory in Toronto. Her principal violin teachers were Jean-François Rivest, Jeanne Lamon, and Martin Foster. A member of Québec City's chamber orchestra *Les Violons du Roy* from 1995-1998, she later joined Tafelmusik full time in 2000. In addition to being a core member of the Aradia Baroque Ensemble, she also performs with the Toronto Consort, the Studio de Musique Ancienne de Montréal, and Ensemble Masques. Ms. Gilardeau is featured as a soloist on Tafelmusik's *A Baroque Feast* performing Vivaldi's Concerto in A Minor for two violins (with Jeanne Lamon) as well as on the more recent *Le Mozart Noir* playing a Leclair Concerto.

Linda Mølsted

Linda Melsted, originally from Seattle, has made Toronto her home since 1992 when she joined the Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra. She has performed as guest leader and soloist with the Portland Baroque Orchestra, Seattle Baroque Orchestra and Pacific Baroque Orchestra, and has played with Concerto Köln, Freiburg Baroque Orchestra, Philharmonia, and the New York Baroque Ensemble. She is active as a soloist and chamber musician, praised for her virtuosity, sweetness of tone, and for the musical commitment and fire that she brings to a performance. Her recent performances and recording of the Violin Concerto in D Major by Chevalier de Saint-Georges with Tafelmusik have received widespread acclaim. Linda shares her home with her beloved cats Cleo and Gus, her collections of Mexican "Day of the Dead" figures and Byzantine icons, and a garden that has engulfed the lawn. Ms. Melsted performs on a Nicolo Amati violin and is a member of Duo Chiaroscuro, with harpsichordist Charlotte Nediger.

Christopher Verrette

Christopher Verrette has been a member of Tafelmusik since 1993. He is a founding member of Ensemble Ouabache in Indianapolis and the Chicago Baroque Ensemble. A frequent collaborator here in Toronto with the Musicians in Ordinary, he has also been a guest artist with the King's Noyse, Apollo's Fire, Seattle Baroque Orchestra, Newberry Consort, and has been guest director

and soloist with the Indianapolis Baroque Orchestra. In recent seasons he has participated in festivals in Boston, Bloomington, Elora and Monadnock. He is a graduate of Indiana University, where he was awarded the first-ever Performer's Certificate for accomplishment on the baroque violin and was a student of Stanley Ritchie. In addition to over 20 recordings with Tafelmusik, he can be heard on CDs in chamber music of Vivaldi, Erlebach, Soler, Lully and Bonporti on the Cedille, Centaur and Dorian labels, and most recently with guitarist Terry McKenna in "Throw the house out the window" on Marquis Records.