

TRACK INFORMATION

PERSONAL STATEMENT

LINER NOTES

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

**Vivaldi Four Seasons &
Locatelli Harmonic Labyrinth**
Chloe Chua

Singapore Symphony Orchestra

VIVALDI FOUR SEASONS & LOCATELLI HARMONIC LABYRINTH

Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741)

The Four Seasons, Concerto No. 1 in E Major, RV 269 "Spring"

1	I. Allegro	03. 21
2	II. Largo	02. 52
3	III. Allegro pastorale	04. 06

The Four Seasons, Concerto No. 2 in G Minor, RV 315 "Summer"

4	I. Allegro non molto	05. 53
5	II. Adagio – Presto	02. 10
6	III. Presto	02. 42

The Four Seasons, Concerto No. 3 in F Major, RV 293 "Autumn"

7	I. Allegro	04. 59
8	II. Adagio molto	02. 27
9	III. Allegro	03. 14

The Four Seasons, Concerto No. 4 in F Minor, RV 297 "Winter"

10	I. Allegro non molto	03. 29
11	II. Largo	02. 13
12	III. Allegro	03. 40

Pietro Locatelli (1695-1764)

Violin Concerto in D Major, Op. 3 No. 12 "Harmonic Labyrinth"

13	I. Allegro – Capriccio	05. 52
14	II. Largo – Presto	03. 13
15	III. Allegro – Capriccio	11. 59
Total playing time:		62. 11

Chloe Chua, violin

Singapore Symphony Orchestra

Violin I

Chan Yoong-Han (leader), Cindy Lee,
Kong Xianlong, Cao Can, Foo Say Ming

Violin II

Zhao Tian, Hai-Won Kwok
Margit Saur, Shao Tao Tao, Nikolai Koval

Viola

Zhang Man Chin (Principal)
Luo Biao, Dandan Wang, Marietta Ku

Cello

Yu Jing (Associate Principal)
Guo Hao, Jamshid Saydikarimov

Double bass

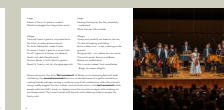
Yang Zheng Yi (Associate Principal)

Organ

Koh Jia Hwei

Harpsichord

Gerald Lim



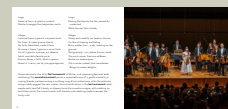
Recording the *Four Seasons* is a dream come true for me. I grew up listening to classical music and Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* was one of the pieces that my mom would often play on her CD player at home.

It brings back fond memories of my time at the Menuhin Competition in 2018, when I played my favourite season, *Winter*, with the wonderful Orchestre de Chambre de Genève in the magnificent Victoria Hall in Geneva.

Playing through the complete *Four Seasons* makes me feel as if I have lived in Italy for a year, experiencing the changing weather, the activities unique to every season, and living the joys and sorrows of it all alongside its people. It is very meaningful to me.

I would like to thank the Singapore Symphony Orchestra for the privilege to be Artist-in-Residence and the opportunity to record this album with msm-productions. It has been an exciting experience working with recording producer Mr Dominik Streicher and recording engineer Mr Ephraim Hahn, SSO concertmaster Mr Yoong-Han Chan and Director of Artistic Planning, Mr Hans Sørensen. Without their effort and support, this production would not have been possible. I would especially like to thank the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts School of Young Talents, and my violin teacher Mr Yin Ke, for his ingenious teaching, dedication and mentorship throughout my violin career. In addition, I wish to thank the Rin Collection for their generous loan of the wonderful Guaragnini used in this recording. Last but not least, I am grateful for the love, care and unwavering support that I have received from my parents, family members, friends and fans who have encouraged me to become a better violinist.

Chloe Chua



While the music of Handel and Bach remained popular and continued to be played and studied after their deaths, that of the Venetian violinist and composer-priest Antonio Vivaldi did not. Though a good portion of his work had been published in his lifetime, mostly by Estienne Roger in Amsterdam, few copies survived, all in libraries and private collections, and his name was known only to musicologists and scholars. The average musician and general public would not have recognised his name. Vivaldi's main place of employment, the convent-orphanage Ospedale della Pietà, for which he wrote much of his output, was known to have accumulated an extensive collection of his works in manuscript form, but had closed well after his 1741 death, with all its property (including its library) either sold or transferred to other religious establishments, and that was the status quo until 1926.

In 1926, a Piedmontese boarding school discovered a large number of dusty old volumes in their archives and thought to sell them to raise funds for the school. Wishing to have them valued, they contacted the National Library in Turin, who passed the matter to Dr Alberto Gentili, professor of music in the Turin University. Gentili was amazed to find the stash contained 97 volumes of rare printed music, manuscripts, and autographs of the 16th to 18th centuries, much of it hitherto unknown Vivaldi, yet many of these volumes were incomplete and indicated that they belonged to a much larger collection which had been divided. A long detective's adventure ensued, and Gentili spent much time begging sponsors to acquire the volumes for the Turin Library. Eventually, with the rest of the larger collection being tracked down, the great collection of 319 items of Vivaldiana had been saved in bulk.

A Vivaldi week in Siena in 1939 marked the beginning of Vivaldi's return to the public, but the project of publishing his complete works was halted by World War II, and it was not till

after the war that the newly discovered works appeared in print, spreading throughout Europe, firmly establishing Vivaldi's status as the great Italian contemporary of Bach and Handel.

Le quattro Stagioni ("The Four Seasons") are the first four concerti in a set of 12 entitled *Il cimento dell'armonia e dell'invenzione* ("The Contest between Harmony and Invention") published by Roger in Amsterdam in 1725, but could have been written as early as 1716–1720, when Vivaldi was *maestro di cappella* at the court of the duke of Mantua. Unusually, Vivaldi accompanied the printed music with sonnets, possibly by himself, explaining the elements of each season the listener was to notice, and his music reflects clearly those themes.

La Primavera

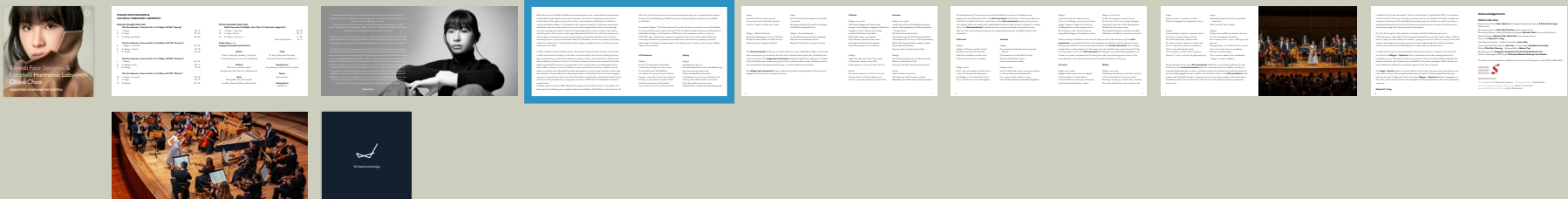
Allegro

Giunt' è la Primavera e festosetti
La Salutan gl' Augei con lieto canto,
E i fonti allo Spirar de' Zeffiretti
Con dolce mormorio Scorrano intanto:
Vengon' coprendo l' aer di nero amanto
E Lampi, e tuoni ad annuntiarla eletti
Indi tacendo questi, gl' Augelletti;
Tornan' di nuovo al lor canoro incanto:

Spring

Allegro

Springtime is upon us.
The birds celebrate her return with festive song,
And murmuring streams are
Softly caressed by the breezes.
Thunderstorms, announcing Spring, roar,
Casting their dark mantle over the air.
Then they fade away to silence;
The birds return to sing their enchanting songs.



Largo

E quindi sul fiorito ameno prato
Al caro mormorio di fronde e piante
Dorme 'l Caprar col fido can' à lato.

Allegro – Danza Pastorale

Di pastoral Zampogna al suon festante
Danzan Ninfe e Pastor nel tetto amato
Di primavera all' apparir brillante.

The **first movement** of *Spring* in E major sets us in a sort of Garden of Eden, with simple and unrestrained joy of nature. The solo violin imitates various bird calls, echoed by two other solo violins. The **Largo slow movement** describes a goatherd napping in the fields with his faithful dog slowly snoring next to him, while branches rustle overhead, and lo — the viola presents the barking of the dog, no doubt woken by some birds.

The **Allegro last movement** brings a dance of nymphs and shepherds to the sound of bagpipes, with the lower strings as a drone.

Largo

On the flower-filled meadow, with leafy
branches
Rustling overhead, the goat-herd sleeps,
His faithful dog beside him.

Allegro – Danza Pastorale

To the festive sound of rustic bagpipes,
Nymphs and shepherds dance
Beneath the brilliant canopy of spring.

L'Estate*Allegro non molto*

Sotto dura Staggion dal Sole accesa
Langue l' huom, langue 'l gregge, ed arde il Pino;
Scioglie il Cucco la Voce, e tosto intesa
Canta la Tortorella e 'l gardelino.
Zeffiro dolce Spira, mà contesa
Muove Borea improvviso al Suo vicino;
E piange il Pastorel, perche sospesa
Teme fiera borasca, e 'l suo destino;

Adagio

Toglie alle membra lasse il Suo riposo
Il timore de' Lampi, e tuoni fieri
E de mosche, e mosconi il Stuol furioso!

Presto

Ah, che pur troppo i Suo timor Son veri
Tuona e fulmina il Ciel e grandinoso
Tronca il capo alle Spiche e a' grani alteri.

Summer*Allegro non molto*

Under the sun-burned hardship of summer
season, Man languishes, the flock languishes,
the pine burns.
We hear the cuckoo's voice,
The sweet songs of the turtledove and finch.
Soft breezes stir the air, but the threatening
North Wind sweeps them suddenly aside.
The shepherd trembles,
Fearing violent squalls and his fate.

Adagio

The threat of lightning and fierce thunder
Robs his tired limbs of rest
As gnats and flies buzz furiously around.

Presto

Alas, his fears come true:
The skies roar with thunder and hail
Beheading the wheat and wrecking the grain.



The blazing heat of the summer sun and the birdcalls of cuckoos, turtledoves, and goldfinches are displayed in full in the **first movement** of *Summer*, in the dry windless key of G Minor. Crickets and other insects buzz in the **slow movement**, giving us the picture of a relaxed afternoon siesta with light breezes and some dark clouds to indicate a coming storm. The **final movement** is where the storm arrives, and what a torrential shower, with the violin mimicking pouring rain accompanied by thunder and lightning from the orchestra!

L'Autunno

Allegro

Celebra il Vilanel con balli e Canti
Del felice raccolto il bel piacere
E del liquor de Bacco accesi tanti
Finiscono col Sonno il lor godere.

Adagio molto

Fà ch' ogn' uno tralasci e balli e canti
L' aria che temperata dà piacere,
E la Staggon ch' invita tanti e tanti
D' un dolcissimo Sonno al bel godere.

Autumn

Allegro

The peasants celebrate with songs and dances
The pleasure of a bountiful harvest.
Drunk with Bacchus' liquor,
Their revelry ends in sleep.

Adagio molto

Let all forget their cares, to sing and dance
In the air tempered with pleasure.
It's a season that invites so many
Out of sweet slumber into beautiful enjoyment.

Allegro

I cacciator alla nov' alba à caccia
Con corni, Schioppi, e cani escono fuore
Fugge la belva, e Seguono la traccia;
Già Sbigottita, e lassa al gran rumore
De' Schioppi e cani, ferita minaccia
Languida di fuggir, mà oppressa muore.

Allegro – La Caccia

In the morning, the hunters set out
On the hunt, with horns, dogs and guns.
They follow the trail of the fleeing beast.
Terrified by their great noise,
The exhausted beast, critically wounded,
Faltering in its flight, is overcome, and dies.

Autumn brings us relief from the summer heat, as well as the harvest, and the **first movement** music evokes both the rustic dancing of peasants and the falling of leaves. Having had their fill of wine, the peasants sleep in the **second movement**, with cooling breezes fanning the pleasant air. The same time also traditionally marks the start of the hunting season, and in the **last movement** Vivaldi gives us an exhilarating depiction of hunters on horses, complete with hunting horn calls, guns and dogs, the sound of the wounded deer, and finally the end of the hunt with the death of the prey.

L'Inverno

Allegro non molto

Agghiacciato tremar trà nevi argenti
Al Severo Spirar d' orrido Vento,
Correr battendo i piedi ogni momento;
E pel Soverchio gel batter i denti;

Winter

Allegro non molto

Trembling, trembling, cold in the icy snow,
In the harsh breath of a horrid wind;
Running, stamping our feet every moment,
Our teeth chattering in the extreme cold.



Largo

Passar al foco i di quieti e contenti
Mentre la pioggia fuor bagna ben cento

Allegro

Caminar Sopra il ghiaccio, e à passo lento
Per timor di cader girsene intenti;
Gir forte Sdruzziolar, cader à terra
Di nuove ir Sopra 'l ghiaccio e correr forte
Sin ch' il ghiaccio si rompe, e si disserra;
Sentir uscir dalle ferrate porte
Sirocco, Borea, e tutti i Venti in guerra
Quest' é 'l verno, mà tal, che gioja apporta.

Largo

Passing the days by the fire, peacefully
contented,
While the rain falls outside.

Allegro

*Slowly and carefully we tread on the ice,
For fear of tripping and falling.
But a sudden turn - a slip, crashing on the
ground.
Rising quickly - run, before the ice cracks.
The north winds, Sirocco and Borea
Batter our locked doors.
This is winter indeed, that nonetheless
Brings its unique delights.*

Shivers abound in the chilly **first movement** of *Winter*, as do stamping feet and teeth chattering. The **second movement** paints a contented scene of a gentle snooze by a roaring fireside, perhaps nursing a soothing mug of hot mulled wine, while the pizzicato strings subtly suggest the rain outside. Ice and winds return in the **last movement** while people walk (and fall!) slowly on slippery ice as the snowstorm rages, with cracking ice and sharp winds. The concerto ends with the solo violin dashing inside to escape the frosty cold.



Locatelli's Op. 3 *L'arte del violino* ("The Art of the Violin"), published in 1733, is a collection of 12 concerti for solo violin, strings, and basso continuo. A student of Corelli, Locatelli was unique in inserting an often devilishly demanding *capriccio* (what we might now call an extended cadenza) into the first and last movements of each concerto, and these were sometimes longer than the movements themselves.

No. 12 is the longest in the collection and bears the title '*Il labirinto armonico*' ("The Harmonic Labyrinth"). The composer inscribed the score with '*facilis aditus, difficilis exitus*' ("easy to enter, difficult to escape"), giving us a hint of what is in store, for the work requires extraordinary technique, going up to the highest registers of the instrument, and it is one of the most challenging in the entire repertory for the violin.

Locatelli structures his movements like Vivaldi, alternating full orchestra with solo violin, and starts the ***Allegro – Capriccio*** with an extended violoncello passage before the orchestra joins in. The *capriccio* flies into a world of its own and immediately displays the player's virtuosity, with double stops and difficult chromatic passages. When the ear has been sufficiently tickled, the orchestra rejoins to end the movement.

The ***Largo – Presto*** gives us a lyrical melody on the violin, spinning long lines above a solo cello and continuo, then a surprise presto second section features rapid leaps that go high up the violin fingerboard. The concluding ***Allegro – Capriccio*** features arpeggios on the violin, which dances around the energetic orchestra, especially in the unaccompanied *capriccio*.

Edward C. Yong

Acknowledgements

PRODUCTION TEAM

Executive producer **Hans Sørensen** (Singapore Symphony Group) & **Renaud Loranger** (Pentatone)

Recording producer **Dominik Streicher** (msm-productions)

Recording, Editing, Mixing & Mastering Engineer **Ephraim Hahn** (msm-productions)

Editing Engineer **Martin Li Shi, Mina Kim** (msm-productions)

Liner notes **Edward C. Yong**

Four Seasons Sonnets - English Translation **Leon Chia**

Cover photo & Portrait photo **Joel Low** | Cover design **Marjolein Coenrad**

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Recording photos **Singapore Symphony Orchestra & Nathaniel Lim**

Product management & Design **Francesca Mariani & Kasper van Kooten**

This album was recorded live at Esplanade Concert Hall, Singapore on April 23th & 24th 2022.

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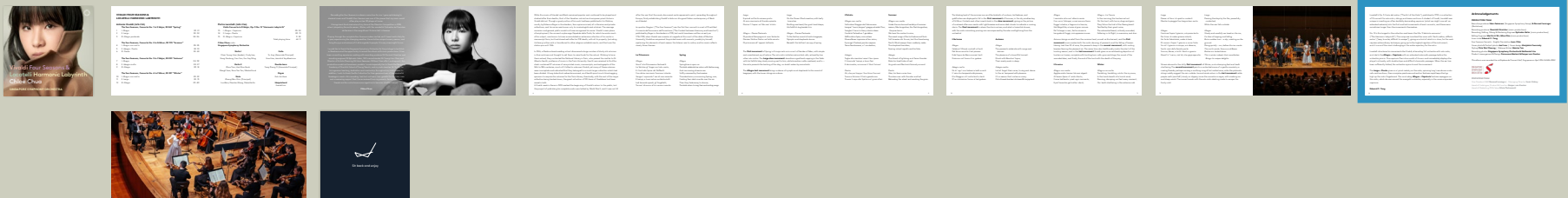


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