

**2009 CONCERT SERIES**  
WITH  
**THE PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA**  
AT THE MANN CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS  
ROSSEN MILANOV, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

---

*Wednesday, July 1, at 8 p.m.*

**LIO KUOKMAN** *conductor and harpsichord*  
**ROSSEN MILANOV** *conductor*  
**YU-CHIEN TSENG** *violin*

**MOZART** *Overture to **The Marriage of Figaro**, K. 492*

**VIVALDI** ***The Four Seasons***

I. *Spring*, Concerto in E major, RV 269

a. Allegro

b. Largo

c. Allegro

II. *Summer*, Concerto in G minor, RV 315

a. Allegro non molto

b. Adagio *alternating with* Presto

c. Presto

III. *Autumn*, Concerto in F major, RV 293

a. Allegro

b. Adagio molto

c. Allegro

IV. *Winter*, Concerto in F minor, RV 297

a. Allegro non molto

b. Largo

c. Allegro

**INTERMISSION**

**Theofanidis** ***Rainbow Body***  
*First Philadelphia Orchestra performance*

**Stravinsky** ***Suite from **The Firebird** (1919 version)***  
I. Introduction—The Firebird and its Dance  
II. The Princesses' Round Dance  
III. Infernal Dance of King Kastcheï—  
IV. Berceuse—  
V. Finale

*This program runs approximately 1 hour, 40 minutes.*

The Philadelphia Orchestra's appearance is made possible in part by Dr. Richard M. Klein.

*The Steinway Piano is the official piano of The Philadelphia Orchestra and The Mann Center for the Performing Arts and is provided by Jacobs Music.*

*Photographic and recording equipment may not be used in the Mann Center.*

## OVERTURE TO *THE MARRIAGE OF FIGARO*, K. 492

COMPOSED IN 1786

### WOLFGANG AMADÈ MOZART

BORN IN SALZBURG, JANUARY 27, 1756

DIED IN VIENNA, DECEMBER 5, 1791

The overture in Mozart's time was frequently identical to the symphony; operas began with a *sinfonia*, often in a fast-slow-fast arrangement of movements. (The naming of genres is one of the principal reasons for the confusion about exactly how many symphonies Mozart composed.) Eventually symphonies grew in proportion and rose to the highest rank of instrumental music in which the mature Mozart, Haydn, and Beethoven would make some of their greatest statements. At the same time, the overture also assumed a new role. No longer did it serve merely as an instrumental attention getter, meant to settle the audience down, but rather it would come to introduce and anticipate what was about to happen dramatically in the theater.

Some of Mozart's overtures to his great mature operas, such as *Don Giovanni*, *Così fan tutte*, and *The Magic Flute*, offer musical motives that will be heard in the course of the opera. Other composers did the same thing, although the practice eventually degenerated, at least in Wagner's assessment, to mere potpourris, a preview of catchy tunes in the opera. The Overture to *The Marriage of Figaro* is a somewhat unusual case. It does not "preview" any specific melody from the opera, but it brilliantly anticipates the mood of the opera and helps to prepare the audience. In other words, this Overture is intimately connected on a dramatic and emotional level, if not obviously so on a musical one.

Mozart wrote *Figaro*, the first of the three operas with librettos by Lorenzo da Ponte, in 1786. They based the work on Caron de Beaumarchais's revolutionary play of the same name, which was part of a trilogy that included the earlier *Barber of Seville* and the concluding *The Guilty Mother*. The upstairs/downstairs story of the Count and Countess Almaviva and their servants Figaro and Susanna involves a day of intrigue as the young couple prepare for their wedding. This "crazy day" (Beaumarchais's subtitle for the play) begins with Figaro and his fiancée preparing their new bedroom and discussing their wedding. But when Susanna informs him that the Count is pursuing her (as he apparently does all young women), Figaro vows revenge. By the end everything works out just fine, with lessons learned by all.

The atmosphere at the outset is one of expectation and excitement. A new world is beginning for Figaro and Susanna, and the drama that unfolds will be breathless from nearly beginning to end. (The noble figure of the Countess, who first appears in the second act, is the only character who consistently brings a slower, more reflective mood to the hectic pace that envelops all the others.) The *presto* Overture sets the stage for what will follow.

—Christopher H. Gibbs

## **THE FOUR SEASONS**

PUBLISHED IN 1725

### **ANTONIO VIVALDI**

BORN IN VENICE, MARCH 4, 1678

DIED IN VIENNA, JULY 28, 1741

The idea of depicting the seasons through music did not originate with Vivaldi—indeed, spring's sensuous languor and winter's icy chill had been favorite topics of the Renaissance madrigalists—but the notion reached one of its most eloquent expressions in the four concertos that constitute what Vivaldi called *The Four Seasons*. Since 1725, when these works first appeared in print in Amsterdam, dozens of composers have followed suit, not only in works intended to depict all four seasons (symphonies of Hadley and Malipiero, a ballet by Glazunov, a piano suite of Tchaikovsky, an oratorio by Haydn), but also in compositions that characterize the mood or activities of a single season (Berlioz's *Les Nuits d'été*, Schumann's "Spring" Symphony, Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring*, Copland's *Appalachian Spring*, Alfvén's *Midsommarvaka*, Grieg's *Im Herbst*).

Vivaldi's set of four concertos remains among the most popular of these—indeed, among the most celebrated programmatic music of all time. They were initially published as part of the composer's Op. 8, a set of 12 concertos published in 1725 as *The Contest of Harmony and Invention*. The provocative title hinted at the composer's challenge of creating works that were musically powerful but also poetically interesting. The concertos bore colorful titles, including not only the names of the four seasons (for the first four concertos), but others such as "The Hunt," "The Storm at Sea," "Pleasure," etc. Dedicated to Count Václav Morzin of Bohemia, a frequent visitor to Venice, Op. 8 contains some of the most dazzling instrumental music of the Baroque.

For the publication of Op. 8 Vivaldi appended a poem for each of the concertos of *The Four Seasons*; though the verses are not signed, many scholars have assumed that they are from Vivaldi's own pen, largely because of the meticulous detail with which the programmatic elements of the poetry follow the musical events of the concertos. Vivaldi's expression of the mood of each season is quite ingenious, in fact, and even led him to a new approach to the *ritornello* concerto (a term chosen to describe the manner in which full-orchestra material *returns* again and again, lending cohesiveness to an otherwise fairly fluid design). The orchestral *tuttis* are often used to depict the overall mood of the season (such as the frozen landscape at the beginning of "Winter," or the melting heat of "Summer"), while the soloistic passages evoke more specific elements—such as the bird songs at the opening of "Spring," or the Bacchic harvest-revelry at the opening of new wine, as expressed in the opening solo passagework of "Autumn."

—Paul J. Horsley

**RAINBOW BODY**  
COMPOSED IN 2000

**CHRISTOPHER THEOFANIDIS**  
BORN IN DALLAS, TEXAS, DECEMBER 18, 1967  
CURRENTLY LIVING IN NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT

Christopher Theofanidis has been hailed as one of the leading composers of his generation. Educated at the University of Houston, the Eastman School of Music, and Yale University, he has served on the music faculties at the Juilliard School and the Peabody Conservatory at Johns Hopkins University. In 2008 he began teaching composition at Yale University.

Theofanidis is the recipient of numerous major awards and prizes, including the Prix de Rome, a Guggenheim Fellowship, a Grammy nomination, and the Barlow Prize. *Rainbow Body*, composed in 2000, earned him the 2003 Masterprize. *Rainbow Body* is currently an audience favorite among recently-composed orchestral works, having already been performed by nearly 100 orchestras, and been recorded on a critically-acclaimed album by the Atlanta Symphony conducted by Robert Spano.

In writing *Rainbow Body*, the composer draws inspiration from and pays homage to the music of Hildegard von Bingen, the medieval abbess whose chants have a simplicity, directness, and distinctive shape that set them apart from other plainchants of the time. Theofanidis identifies in Hildegard's music a "kind of communication with the divine" and he selected one of her pieces, "Ave Maria, O Auctrix vite" (Hail Mary, Source of Life) as the melodic basis of this orchestral work.

The title introduces the second inspiration for the work, an idea drawn from the Dzogchen practices of Tibetan Buddhism, which hold that at death, an enlightened being is absorbed back into the universe as pure, astral light. Theofanidis regards this belief as a metaphor for Hildegard's music and its prolonged ability to invoke the numinous in different cultures and eras.

The understated opening of *Rainbow Body* highlights some of the key intervals and motifs that will be used throughout the piece. The main melody is heard first in the strings, surrounded by a "halo" of sound achieved by sustaining each note of the melody. This recreates the kind of acoustic one might hear in a cathedral. Fragments of the melody recur throughout, and the entire chant is repeated intact several times, functioning (in the composer's words) as a kind of "plateau of stability and peace within an otherwise turbulent environment." The work closes with a lush, Wagnerian restatement of the chant melody.

—Luke Howard

## SUITE FROM *THE FIREBIRD* (1919 VERSION)

COMPOSED IN 1909

### IGOR STRAVINSKY

BORN IN LOMONOSOV, RUSSIA, JUNE 17, 1882

DIED IN NEW YORK CITY, APRIL 6, 1971

Stravinsky left Russia as a very young man, settling first in Paris and then the United States and finally becoming for all practical purposes a citizen of the world. Yet something of the spirit and character of his native Russia remained with him throughout his long and fruitful life. This spirit, consisting partly of a deep knowledge of Russian folklore, and partly of a large repertoire of folk tunes of which he made liberal use in his scores, grew from his own adventurous nature.

Young Stravinsky's veneration of Russian folklore was manifested early on, in the loving care with which he set to music the fairy-tale of the Firebird in 1909. Written on commission from the great dance impresario Sergei Diaghilev, the ballet *Firebird* was composed for the first Parisian season of the exiled Ballets Russes. Its enormous success at the Paris Opéra premiere in June 1910 not only established Diaghilev as the leader of Paris' avant-garde, it proclaimed Stravinsky as the most promising of Europe's young generation of composers. *Petrushka* and *The Rite of Spring*, both also composed for Diaghilev, followed in rapid succession. Igor Stravinsky, aged 27, had "arrived."

The tale of the Firebird is simple, even elemental. An enchanted bird guides Crown Prince Ivan, who is lost in the woods, to the castle of Kastcheï the Deathless. The evil Kastcheï, who holds 13 princesses captive, would ordinarily turn Ivan to stone, as he has all the other knights who have attempted to free the princesses. But Ivan is more valiant; and he has a magic bird on his side, too, which helps a great deal. Aided by the Firebird, the prince slays Kastcheï and his band; the magic castle vanishes with a "poof," all the knights come back to life to comfort the freed princesses, and Ivan makes away with the most beautiful princess, of course, who becomes his bride as the dark woods fill with light and all dance to the familiar finale-music.

After the ballet's premiere, Stravinsky prepared a five-movement concert suite from *Firebird*; in 1919 he revised this suite, omitting two movements and adding the "Berceuse" and Finale. The concise form and lavish orchestration of the 1919 suite have made it the favorite of concert performances.

—Paul J. Horsley

Rossen Milanov currently holds the positions of associate conductor of The Philadelphia Orchestra and artistic director of The Philadelphia Orchestra at The Mann Center for the Performing Arts. In addition, he serves as music director of both New Jersey's Symphony in C (formerly the Haddonfield Symphony) and the New Symphony Orchestra in his native city of Sofia, Bulgaria.

During the 2008-09 season Mr. Milanov debuted with the Swedish Royal Opera, the New Jersey Symphony, the Komische Oper Berlin, the Singapore Symphony, the Orchestra of St. Luke's, the San Antonio Symphony, and the Charlotte Symphony. He also made return engagements with the Seattle Symphony, the Seoul Philharmonic, and the National Orchestra of Mexico.

Mr. Milanov's recent highlights include guest conducting appearances with Tokyo's NHK Symphony, the BBC Symphony, the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, the Indianapolis Symphony, and the Orchestre de la Suisse Romande. Also an active opera conductor he has conducted numerous productions.

Mr. Milanov has led concerts and tours with the Rotterdam and Seoul philharmonics; the Baltimore, Colorado, Honolulu, and Lucerne symphonies; the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra; the Civic Orchestra of Chicago; the Residentie Orchestra of the Hague in the Netherlands; and the Teatro Colón Buenos Aires. He was music director of the Chicago Youth Symphony from 1997 to 2001 and chief conductor of the Bulgarian National Radio Symphony from 2003 to 2008. He has also participated in numerous summer festivals, including Aspen, Grand Teton, and Tanglewood.

Mr. Milanov retains a close association with his hometown of Sofia. As music director of the New Symphony Orchestra, Eastern Europe's first privately funded orchestra, his work has included commissions and premieres of new works and the introduction of American music to Bulgarian audiences. He has received the Award for Extraordinary Contribution to Bulgarian Culture, awarded by the Bulgarian Ministry of Culture. In 2005 he was chosen as Bulgaria's Musician of the Year.

Mr. Milanov studied conducting at the Juilliard School (recipient of the Bruno Walter Memorial Scholarship), the Curtis Institute of Music, Duquesne University, and the Bulgarian National Academy of Music.

**Lio Kuokman**, originally from Macau, China, entered the Curtis Institute of Music in 2005, where he studies conducting with Otto-Werner Mueller. Mr. Lio, 27, holds the Albert M. Greenfield Fellowship at Curtis. While at Curtis he has participated in master classes with Michael Tilson Thomas and Christoph Eschenbach.

Mr. Lio has led the Portland Repertory Orchestra and the New Symphony Orchestra in Bulgaria, and he has toured China with the Macau Youth Symphony. He has attended the International Conducting Workshop and Festival in the Czech Republic and the Chautauqua Institution, on the David Efron Conducting Fellowship.

Also an accomplished pianist, Mr. Lio has performed as soloist with the Fort Worth Symphony, the Bacau Philharmonic in Romania, the Hong Kong Academy Symphony, the Pan Asia Symphony, the Macau Orchestra, and the Shanghai Symphony. He has also performed at the Giardini La Mortella in Italy and at the Janáček and Martinů Festival in Turnov, Czech Republic. Mr. Lio is the recipient of numerous piano awards, including an honorary diploma from the Macau government in 2004, second prize in the 2003 Mauro Paolo Monopoli International Piano Competition in Italy, and first prize in the 2002 Toyama Asian Youth Music Competition.

Prior to entering Curtis, Mr. Lio earned a bachelor's degree from the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts and a master's degree from the Juilliard School in 2005. He has studied piano with Robert McDonald and Gabriel Kwok, and conducting with Virginia Allen. This performance marks his Philadelphia Orchestra debut.

Fourteen-year-old **Yu-Chien Tseng** recently won the junior division of the 2009 Philadelphia Orchestra Albert M. Greenfield Student Competition. He has performed as a soloist with the Taipei Symphony, the Academy of Taiwan Strings, and the Taipei Philharmonic Youth Orchestra. He won third prize at the junior section of the 2006 Yehudi Menuhin International Violin Competition. In 2004 he won first prize at three national violin competitions, including the Taiwan National Music Competition.

Originally from Taipei, Taiwan, Mr. Tseng began studying violin at age five. He entered the Curtis Institute of Music in 2008, where he studies with violinist Ida Kavafian. Prior to entering Curtis, where he holds the John J. Medveckis Annual Fellowship, he studied with C. Nanette Chen. In addition to music, he enjoys reading, jogging, basketball, and biking. This performance marks his Philadelphia Orchestra debut.