

2023–2024 | 124th Season

The Philadelphia Orchestra

Thursday, February 1, at 6:30

Orchestra After 5

Xian Zhang Conductor

Tristan Rais-Sherman Host

David Kim Violin

Vivaldi *The Four Seasons*

and

Piazzolla/arr. and orch. Desyatnikov *The Four Seasons of Buenos Aires*

1. *Spring*, Concerto in E major, RV 269
 - a. Allegro
 - b. Largo
 - c. Allegro
2. Summer in Buenos Aires
3. *Summer*, Concerto in G minor, RV 315
 - a. Allegro non molto
 - b. Adagio *alternating with Presto*
 - c. Presto
4. Autumn in Buenos Aires
5. *Autumn*, Concerto in F major, RV 293
 - a. Allegro
 - b. Adagio molto
 - c. Allegro
6. Winter in Buenos Aires
7. *Winter*, Concerto in F minor, RV 297
 - a. Allegro non molto
 - b. Largo
 - c. Allegro
8. Spring in Buenos Aires

This program runs approximately 65 minutes and will be performed without an intermission.

This concert is presented in honor of **David Kim's 25th anniversary.**

Philadelphia Orchestra concerts are broadcast on WRTI 90.1 FM on Sunday afternoons at 1 PM and are repeated on Monday evenings at 7 PM on WRTI HD 2. Visit www.wrti.org to listen live or for more details.



The
Philadelphia
Orchestra

Yannick Nézet-Séguin Music Director

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Photo: Jeff Fusco



The Philadelphia Orchestra

The world-renowned Philadelphia Orchestra strives to share the transformative power of music with the widest possible audience, and to create joy, connection, and excitement through music in the Philadelphia region, across the country, and around the world. Through innovative programming, robust education initiatives, a commitment to its diverse communities, and the embrace of digital outreach, the ensemble is creating an expansive and inclusive future for classical music, and furthering the place of the arts in an open and democratic society. In June 2021 the Orchestra and its home, the Kimmel Center, united to form The Philadelphia Orchestra and Kimmel Center, Inc., reimagining the power of the arts to bring joy, create community, and effect change.

Yannick Nézet-Séguin is now in his 12th season with The Philadelphia Orchestra, serving as music and artistic director. His connection to the ensemble's musicians has been praised by both concertgoers and critics, and he is embraced by the musicians of the Orchestra, audiences, and the community.

Your Philadelphia Orchestra takes great pride in its hometown, performing for the people of Philadelphia year-round, in Verizon Hall and around the community, in classrooms and hospitals, and over the airwaves and online. The Orchestra's award-winning education and community initiatives engage over 50,000 students, families, and community members of all ages through programs such as PlayINs; side-by-sides; PopUP concerts; Our City, Your Orchestra Live; School

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Conductor

Benjamin Eatovega



Conductor **Xian Zhang** is in her eighth season as music director of the New Jersey Symphony, which celebrated its centennial in the 2022–23 season. She also holds the positions of principal guest conductor of the Melbourne Symphony and conductor emeritus of the Orchestra Sinfonica di Milano, where she held the position of music director from 2009 to 2016. In high demand as a guest conductor, she juggles an exceptionally busy diary of guest engagements alongside her titled

commitments. From January through May 2024 she makes her Metropolitan Opera debut leading Puccini's *Madame Butterfly*.

Ms. Zhang made her Philadelphia Orchestra debut in June 2012 at the Mann Center and her subscription debut in May 2022. In addition to these current performances, symphonic highlights of the 2023–24 season include returns to the Seattle Symphony, the Houston Symphony, the São Paulo State Symphony, the Orchestra of St. Luke's, and the National Symphony in Washington, DC. A busy summer season in 2023 included conducting the Boston Symphony at Tanglewood. She remains a popular guest of the London Symphony, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the San Francisco Symphony, the Detroit Symphony, the Baltimore Symphony, the Montreal Symphony, the Toronto Symphony, the National Arts Centre Orchestra in Ottawa, the Orchestre National du Capitole de Toulouse, the Belgian National Orchestra, and Norwegian Opera, where she returned last season for Puccini's *Tosca*. Additional previous opera productions have included Verdi's *Nabucco* with Welsh National Opera, Verdi's *Otello* at the Savonlinna Festival, Puccini's *La bohème* for English National Opera, and Verdi's *La forza del destino* with National Opera.

Letters for the Future, Ms. Zhang's recording released in 2022 on Deutsche Grammophon with The Philadelphia Orchestra and Time for Three, won two GRAMMY awards, for Best Contemporary Classical Composition (for Kevin Puts's *Contact*) and Best Classical Instrumental Solo. The recording also includes Jennifer Higdon's *Concerto 4-3*. Ms. Zhang previously served as principal guest conductor of the BBC National Orchestra and Chorus of Wales, the first female conductor to hold a titled role with a BBC orchestra. In 2002 she won first prize in the Maazel-Vilar Conductor's Competition. She was appointed the New York Philharmonic's assistant conductor in 2002, subsequently becoming the ensemble's associate conductor and the first holder of the Arturo Toscanini Chair.

Host

Nile Scott



American conductor **Tristan Rais-Sherman** was conducting fellow of The Philadelphia Orchestra for the 2022–23 season and was named assistant conductor in June 2023, a role he will continue through the 2023–24 season. While in Philadelphia, he will assist Music and Artistic Director Yannick Nézet-Séguin as well as other guest conductors and lead The Philadelphia Orchestra in a variety of different concert programs.

Establishing his presence on the global music scene, Mr. Rais-Sherman recently competed in the renowned 2023 Gustav Mahler Conducting Competition with the Bamberg Symphony. Further solidifying his international standing, he made successful debuts with The Philadelphia Orchestra and the San Diego Symphony and this season is scheduled to make his debut with the Baltimore Symphony.

In recognition of his growing impact in the orchestral field, Mr. Rais-Sherman has twice received the Career Assistance Award from the Solti Foundation U.S., in 2022 and 2023. His dedication to nurturing future generations is reflected in his educational work, which includes leading the World Youth Symphony Orchestra at Interlochen, conducting master classes at the Philadelphia International Music Festival, and implementing educational programs with The Philadelphia Orchestra, the San Diego Symphony, and the NEC Symphony.

Mr. Rais-Sherman's unique approach to conducting has been shaped by industry leaders such as Hugh Wolff, Kenneth Kiesler, Cristian Măcelaru, David Zinman, Sian Edwards, Neil Varon, and Jeffrey Meyer. He holds an artist diploma from the New England Conservatory, a master's degree in orchestral conducting from the University of Michigan, and a bachelor's degree in cello performance from Ithaca College.

Soloist

Allie Sklyar Photography



Violinist **David Kim** (Dr. Benjamin Rush Chair) 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. His 2023–24 season includes appearances with The Philadelphia Orchestra in the Tchaikovsky Concerto under the baton of

Music and Artistic Director Yannick Nézet-Séguin on tour in North Carolina and multiple performances of the *Eight Seasons of Vivaldi and Piazzolla* (the former's *The Four Seasons* and the latter's *The Four Seasons of Buenos Aires*). Mr. Kim's master class schedule sees him visit the Curtis Institute of Music, Dartmouth College, Georgetown University, and the Manhattan School of Music, among others, and he gives concerto and recital appearances across the United States. Summer festival visits include Festival Napa Valley and Music in the Vineyards, also in Napa. He continues to appear as concertmaster of the nine-time Emmy Award-winning All-Star Orchestra on PBS stations across the United States and online at the Khan Academy. Mr. Kim's first book, *The Audition Method for Violin*, was published by GIA Publications and released in 2022. This long-awaited collection of standard orchestral excerpts walks the reader through each work with his suggestions on execution, audition strategy, bowings, and fingerings.

Mr. Kim is a frequent touring guest of famed modern hymn writers Keith and Kristyn Getty at venues such as the Grand Ole Opry House, the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, and Carnegie Hall. Mr. Kim serves as distinguished artist at the Robert McDuffie Center for Strings at Mercer University in Macon, Georgia. He frequently serves as an adjudicator at international violin competitions such as the Menuhin and Sarasate.

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 Francesco Goffriller, ca. 1735. He exclusively performs on and endorses Larsen Strings from Denmark.

Framing the Program

Parallel Events

1725

Vivaldi

The Four Seasons

Music

Bach

Anna

Magdalena Notebook

Literature

Ramsay

The Gentle Shepherd

Art

Canaletto

Four Views of Venice

History

Peter the

Great dies

1968

Piazzolla

The Four Seasons of Buenos Aires

Music

Lutosławski

Live pour orchestra

Literature

Hailey

Airport

Art

Warhol

Campbell's

Soup I: Tomato

History

Martin Luther

King, Jr.,

assassinated

Tonight's concert alternates movements from two compositions written nearly 250 years apart.

The phenomenally prolific Antonio Vivaldi composed in many genres, including dozens of operas and more than 500 concertos. Among this wealth of music, four violin concertos stand out as his signature compositions: the collection published in 1725 as *The Four Seasons*. Unlike many nicknames that are unsanctioned by the composer, Vivaldi not only provided titles but also sonnets running alongside the music. This all serves as a guide to register the changes of the year as we hear the sounds of nature, including birds, barking dogs, and a summer storm.

We then fast forward nearly 250 years, from Baroque Italy to South America, where the celebrated Argentinian composer Astor Piazzolla composed his tango-tinged *The Four Seasons of Buenos Aires*. It is heard today in an arrangement for violin solo and strings, providing a brilliant showcase for Philadelphia Orchestra Concertmaster David Kim.

The Philadelphia Orchestra is the only orchestra in the world with three weekly broadcasts on SiriusXM's *Symphony Hall*, Channel 76, on Mondays at 7 PM, Thursdays at 12 AM, and Saturdays at 4 PM.

The Music

The Four Seasons

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 Antonio Vivaldi. Spring's sensuous languor and winter's icy chill had been favorite topics of the Renaissance madrigalists centuries earlier. 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 (an oratorio by Haydn, a piano suite by Tchaikovsky, a ballet by Glazunov), 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 *The Rite of Spring*, Copland's *Appalachian Spring*, Grieg's *In Autumn Overture*).

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 released 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," and "Pleasure." 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 era.

A Prolific Composer Yet these concertos form but a tiny part of a vast oeuvre. Few composers can begin to match the sheer volume of Vivaldi's output, much less its peerless consistency. In addition to 50 operas, 150 vocal works, and more than 100 solo sonatas, the Venetian cleric and composer known as the Red Priest (because of his hair) wrote more than 500 concertos, for all manner of solo instruments. The variety of this concerto output is fascinating enough: In addition to 250 concertos for solo violin, there are works for oboe, bassoon, flute, recorder, cello, viola d'amore, mandolin, lute, and sundry other instruments. There are also some 80 ensemble concertos for two or more soloists, cast in various combinations. Considering the lightning speed at which they must have been

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The
Philadelphia
Orchestra

Yannick Nézet-Séguin
Music and Artistic Director

written, it is amazing that so many are absolutely first-rate pieces. Despite the fact that even during his lifetime Vivaldi was criticized for assembly-line-style composition (the same trait that has given rise, more recently, to the quip that he “wrote the same concerto 500 times”), a large number of these works have durably withstood the test of time. Like his younger contemporary Handel, Vivaldi was born with an extraordinary facility: He could compose a piece faster than others could copy it.

A Closer Look For the publication of *The Four Seasons*, Vivaldi appended a poem for each of the concertos; 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

The Four Seasons was published in 1725.

Carlo Maria Giulini led the first Philadelphia Orchestra performances of the complete *Four Seasons* in December 1973; Norman Carol was the soloist. Eugene Ormandy and violinist Anshel Brusilow premiered three of the four movements with the Orchestra: “Spring” in March 1960, “Summer” in April 1960, and “Autumn” in December 1959. “Winter” was first performed in January 1958, with Ormandy and Jacob Krachmalnick. Most recently on subscription the complete piece was performed in April 2022, with violinist Gil Shaham, who also led the Orchestra.

Ormandy, Brusilow, and the Orchestra recorded the complete *Four Seasons* in 1959 for CBS.

The score calls for harpsichord, strings, and solo violin.

The *Four Seasons* runs approximately 40 minutes in performance.

"Spring"

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 die away, the little birds
turn afresh to their sweet song.

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.

To the rustic bagpipe's gay sound,
nymph and shepherd dance beneath
the fair spring sky in all its glory.

"Autumn"

The peasant celebrates with song and
dance
his joy in a fine harvest
and with generous draughts of
Bacchus' cup
his efforts end in sleep.

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

At first light a huntsman sets out
with horns, guns, and dogs,
putting his prey to flight and following
its tracks;
terrified and exhausted by the great
clamor
of guns and dogs, wounded and afraid,
the prey tries to flee but is caught and dies.

"Summer"

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 finch join in song.
Sweet zephyrs blow, but then
the fierce north wind intervenes;
the shepherd weeps, anxious for his fate
from the harsh, menacing gusts.

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

Alas! his fears are justified,
for furious thunder irradiates the heavens,
bowing down the trees and flattening
the crops.

"Winter"

To shiver icily in the freezing dark
in the teeth of a cruel wind,
to stamp your feet continually,
so chilled that your teeth chatter.

To remain in quiet contentment by the
fireside
while outside the rain soaks people by
the hundreds.

To walk on the ice, with slow steps
in fear of falling, advance with care.
Then to step forth strongly, fall to the
ground,
and again run boldly on the ice until it
cracks and breaks;
to listen as from the iron portals
winds rush from south and north,
and all the winds in contest;
such is winter, such the joys it brings.

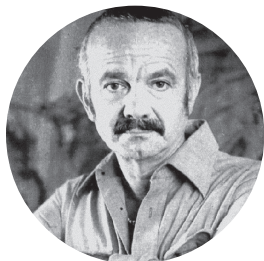
The Music

***The Four Seasons of Buenos Aires* (arranged and orchestrated by Leonid Desyatnikov)**

Astor Piazzolla

Born in Mar del Plata, Argentina, March 11, 1921

Died in Buenos Aires, July 4, 1992



Astor Piazzolla once declared, "My dream is to impose my music, my country's music, all over the world." True to his word, the composer remained loyal to his native Argentinian musical traditions but lived a peripatetic existence; his wife, Laura Escalada, once observed, "His life was a love triangle: Buenos Aires, New York, Paris." While Piazzolla was born in the seaport of Mar del Plata into an Argentine-Italian immigrant family, his childhood was spent in New York, where his musical career began.

On his eighth birthday he longed for a pair of roller skates, but his father gave him a bandoneon instead. The bandoneon is an accordion-like instrument of rural German origin that is immensely popular in Argentina. The boy rapidly mastered the complex button system of his father's gift, becoming a prodigy on this bulky instrument. Piazzolla's time in New York gave him a broad perspective on popular music that he carried with him when his family repatriated to Argentina in 1937.

In Buenos Aires the teenaged Piazzolla maintained a double musical life, playing in bands and composing popular songs while also studying the music of Stravinsky, Bartók, and Ravel with the Modernist composer Alberto Ginastera. In 1954 one of Piazzolla's orchestral works earned him a scholarship to Paris, where he studied with the renowned pedagogue Nadia Boulanger. As he later recalled, when the young composer presented some of his concert music to Boulanger, she remarked, "This is a music very well written, but where here is Piazzolla?" After he reluctantly played one of his tangos for her on the piano, she exclaimed, "There is Piazzolla, never leave it!" These studies with Ginastera and Boulanger proved to be valuable, as his expanded technique, along with his knowledge of contemporary composers, produced an expressive, versatile, and commanding musical style.

Piazzolla and the Tango In Argentinian concert halls and nightclubs, Piazzolla's music was bound up with the unique status of the tango, a dance that is intimately intertwined with Argentinian national identity. The tango arose in the late 19th century from the lower-class barrios of Buenos Aires; the great Argentinian writer Jorge Luis Borges believed that the dance had its origins in the seedy brothels of that city's underworld. By the early 20th century the tango

had become inextricably associated with the inhabitants of Buenos Aires, who are colloquially referred to as *porteños*—port city folks. By the time that Piazzolla returned from Paris in 1955, the tango had become a virtually sacrosanct collection of musical and cultural traditions that were fiercely protected by a series of authoritarian Argentinian regimes.

Piazzolla fused European Modernism and New York's popular music with the traditional tango, forging an innovative style, the tango nuevo. Predictably, the "new tango" drew bitter criticism from his country's conservative upper class, and his relations with various Argentinian governments remained uneasy at best. However, during the later stages of his career, as his reputation grew steadily and he won international awards, including a 1986 César Award (the French Oscar) for the score he composed to the film *El exilio de Gardel*, he came to be regarded as an Argentinian national treasure. Like George Gershwin, whose music he admired, Piazzolla was a "crossover composer" who wrote both popular and concert music. His concert works include an oratorio, *El Pueblo Joven* (1970); his Bandoneon Concerto (1979); and a piece for cello and piano, *Le Grand Tango* (1982), composed for the great Russian cellist Mstislav Rostropovich.

A Closer Look Considering his lifelong financial difficulties and constant performing, it is astounding that Piazzolla managed to compose a substantial body of music, much less create such works as *Cuatro estaciones porteñas* (The Four Seasons of Buenos Aires), a cycle of four tangos each reflective of a particular season. (Being in the Southern Hemisphere, the seasons in Argentina are opposite to those in Europe and North America.) By using the word *porteñas* in his title, Piazzolla is specifically locating this music in his beloved Buenos Aires—these are the seasons of the port and its people.

Each of these tangos was written separately from 1964 to 1970 but Piazzolla repeatedly performed them as a group with his own quintet of violin, piano, electric guitar, double bass, and, of course, bandoneon. While the basic concept of Piazzolla's work was likely suggested by Vivaldi's famous *The Four Seasons*, published in 1725, they contain no musical references to the Baroque composer's ubiquitous set of violin concertos.

—Byron Adams

Piazzolla composed The Four Seasons of Buenos Aires from 1964 to 1970.

The first Philadelphia Orchestra performance of the work was at the Bravo! Vail Music Festival in July 2008, with violinist Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg and Miguel Harth-Bedoya. Since then, "Summer" was performed in Saratoga in August 2016 with Joshua Bell and Steven Reineke, and "Winter" was performed on a Family Concert in December 2016 with First Associate Concertmaster Juliette Kang and Cristian Măcelaru.

The instrumentation of Desyatnikov's arrangement calls for solo violin and strings.

Performance time is approximately 22 minutes.

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Musical Terms

GENERAL TERMS

Cadence: The conclusion to a phrase, movement, or piece based on a recognizable melodic formula, harmonic progression, or dissonance resolution

Chord: The simultaneous sounding of three or more tones

Dissonance: A combination of two or more tones requiring resolution

Harmonic: Pertaining to chords and to the theory and practice of harmony

Harmony: The combination of simultaneously sounded musical notes to produce chords and chord progressions

Legato: Smooth, even, without any break between notes

Meter: The symmetrical grouping of musical rhythms

Modernism: A consequence of the fundamental conviction among successive generations of composers since 1900 that the means of musical expression in the 20th century must be adequate to the unique and radical character of the age

Op.: Abbreviation for opus, a term used to indicate the chronological position of a composition within a composer's output. Opus numbers are not always reliable because they are often applied in the order of publication rather than composition.

Oratorio: Large-scale dramatic composition originating in the 16th century with text usually based on religious subjects. Oratorios are performed by choruses and solo voices with an instrumental accompaniment, and are similar to operas but without costumes, scenery, and actions.

Polyphony: A term used to designate music in more than one part and the style in which all or several of the musical parts move to some extent independently

Ritornello: Literally "a little thing that returns." Relatively short passages of music played by the entire ensemble alternating with sections dominated by the soloist(s).

RV: The thematic catalogue of all the works of Vivaldi, first compiled by Peter Ryom

Sonata: An instrumental composition in three or four extended movements contrasted in theme, tempo, and mood, usually for a solo instrument

Suite: During the Baroque period, an instrumental genre consisting of several movements in the same key, some or all of which were based on the forms and styles of dance music. Later, a group of pieces extracted from a larger work, especially an opera or ballet.

Timbre: Tone color or tone quality

Tonality: The orientation of melodies and harmonies toward a specific pitch or pitches

Tutti: All; full orchestra

THE SPEED OF MUSIC (Tempo)

Adagio: Leisurely, slow

Allegro: Bright, fast

Largo: Broad

Presto: Very fast

TEMPO MODIFIERS

Molto: Very

Non molto: Not very



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Photos: Jeff Fusco, Bowie Verschuuren



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