

# Concert report essay



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

I attended Antonio Vivaldi's Four Seasons concert on Sunday April 17, 2011 at the Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church performed by the SCC chamber orchestra. Vivaldi was a baroque composer and the Four Seasons is considered to be a great masterwork in all Western Art. The Four Seasons is a series of four concertos; Spring, Summer, Autumn, and Winter. Each season contains 3 movements and was composed in 1725, in a set of 12 concertos entitled "Il cimento dell'armonia e dell'inventione" (The test of Harmony and Invention). Each concerto is in the distinct form of fast-slow-fast movements.

The Four Seasons is a set of four solo concertos for violin, string orchestra and basso continuo. The texture of each concerto resembles each of the presented season. This piece by Vivaldi is considered program music.

Program music is instrumental music associated with a story, scene, poem, or idea that is often found in the romantic period. The first season we heard in this concert was Winter. It was performed by Stephenie Roeper, who has played the violin for 13 years. This season has three movements, but only the second movement was performed for us.

The second movement sounds like someone spending quiet content days by the fire while it's raining outside drenches people by the hundreds. When I heard this movement, it felt like I was sitting in front of a fireplace, while trying to warm up from the bitter cold outside. But, when she played it almost sounded like her violin was not tuned correctly, or something was off, but she kept playing, and that takes a lot of courage. Overall it was a wonderful performance. I thought the Dynamics were good and when it needed to be loud it was, and when it needed to be soft it was.

When the orchestra and Stephenie on the Violin came together, it was pretty cool, especially at the beginning when the violins were plucking their strings along with her. The second season we heard was Spring. In the first movement comes the picture of spring to your mind. Spring has come and joyfully the birds are there and sing happy songs, while streams flow along with light winds. Then the skies are filled with black clouds and thunder and lightning appear and a storm erupts. After the storm, there is silent and the little birds return to their singing.

The second movement takes place in a flowery meadow and you hear the soft murmur of leaves and plants along with a goat-herder sleeping, with his faithful dog by his side. In the last movement, you hear the festive sounds of a bagpipe, nymphs and Shepherds dance under their beloved canopy, welcoming the arrival of spring. I enjoyed this movement of the concert the most. It was performed by Andria Ball, and she did a wonderful job and I highly enjoyed it. The Spring concerto has always been my favorite piece, and gives me chills every time I hear it performed.

It is the piece I listen to the most when I am studying or working on homework. When Andria Bell performed, it was amazing. It was almost like she didn't even move her bow, she only needed to move her body and this wonderful sound was produced. I enjoyed this performance the best, by far. And when the full orchestra was incorporated in the church, with her, it blew me away and made the hair on my arms stand up it was so incredible. Next came Summer, It was performed by Allison Custer. In the first movement, you are under the harsh summer sun.

Men and flocks languish and pines are scorched. The cuckoo begins to call and soon after, the turtledove and the goldfinch are heard singing. The west wind gently blows, but the north wind suddenly takes over and the little shepherd weeps in fear of a threatening storm and his own fate. In the second movement, the shepherd is tired and rest is denied because of the fear of lightning and thunder and the furious swarm of flies and hornets. In the third movement, his fears are justified. The sky is filled with thunder, lightning and hail cuts down the standing grain.

I thought Summer was one of the hardest movements to play, because of the harsh loud beginning that had so many notes and you just had to keep on going, there was not a chance to stop. She portrayed the thunderstorms wonderfully; you could almost feel the thunderstorms and fear in your bones. I think there were a few moments when she didn't quite hit the notes correctly, but I am not musical genius, and enjoy most everything. The Dynamics in this performance played a great role. If it wasn't loud, you wouldn't be able to feel the fear of the oncoming thunderstorm. Last but not least Autumn has come and is performed by Christiana Horn.

In the first movement, the peasants are celebrating the delight of the harvest with dances and songs: and inflamed by the liquor of Bacchus, many end their rejoicing with a deep sleep. In the second movement, the mild air makes all abandon dance and song; this is the season that invites all to the sweet delights of peaceful sleep. In the last movement, the hunters are up at the break of dawn and set out with horns, guns and hound dogs. The animal flees, and they follow its tracks. Already frightened and tired by the great

noise of the guns and hounds, the wounded animal struggles to escape, but it is overwhelmed and dies.

Autumn, is my second favorite movement of The Four Seasons. I thought Christiana did a fabulous job, even though there were a few parts you could tell just didn't go good. I thought this piece was also difficult because it was softer in dynamics, and you didn't have a full blown orchestra to hide behind. I give her much credit being a newbie to the violin and playing with such courage and grace. She seemed a little stiff while playing her violin, and that could be from nerves, lack of experience, or her personal style.

I thought it was also so sweet when her son walked up and gave her flowers after her performance. During this Concert, you could tell the conduct had so much passion for what she was doing. The conductor was Mary Sweetin. You could tell she was so into every note played. Her movements portrayed the pieces being played so well. When it was to be soft, her gestures were soft. When it was to be harsh, her gestures were harsh. That is how I know she could feel the music, almost like it was flowing out of her, into the performers, then into our ears.

I thought the performance was laid back in one aspect because the conductor involved the crowd. She talked to use at the beginning and let us know what was going to happen, and what should be expected. Also, she did not get mad when the crowd clapped when they were not supposed to. She merely turned around and politely informed the crowd when the appropriate time to clap was. It was so evident that the conductor loved everyone in the orchestra, and she thought of them as her own kids. She was a proud parent

at the end of the performance. I personally enjoyed the experience of going to this classical concert.

I highly enjoyed the give in take between the solo instruments, and the orchestra as a whole. The orchestra and solo violins were very in sync and coordinated. It was in a beautiful church, with great acoustics, and it was laid back, so that you could enjoy the experience, the music and the people that attended. I brought my mom along and we both had a lot of fun and enjoyed the performance. Everybody in the orchestra did phenomenal. When we first got to the concert, we grabbed our program and took or seats waiting for the show to begin.

I didn't know what to expect at first from the performance. At one point it gave me goose bumps, and there were a few points where it made me cringe, but the little disasters were covered up well, and I'm sure most of us did not even notice the mistakes. My overall experience was great and I highly enjoyed every minute of it. Listening to Vivaldi's Four Seasons through headphones is nothing like listening to it performed live, right in front of your eyes. Every time I hear Four Seasons, I will think of this day, at this concert with my mom.