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CD

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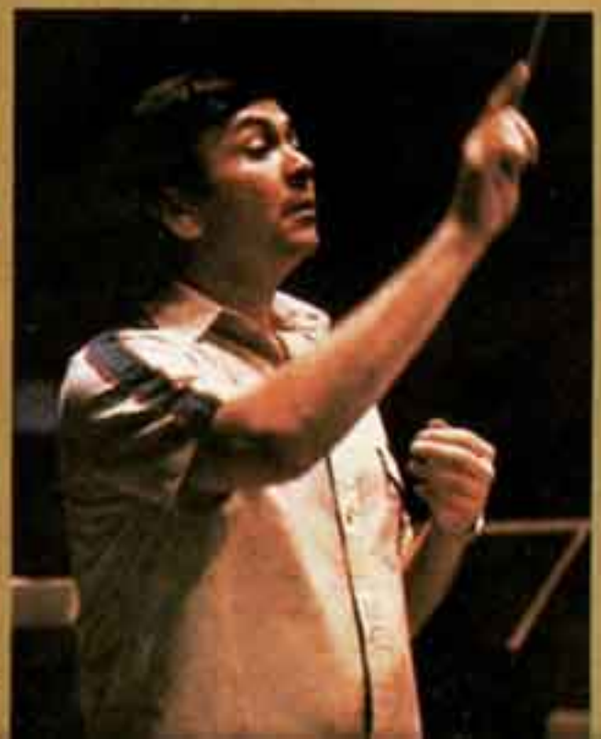
DELOS DIGITAL MASTER SERIES

VIVALDI THE FOUR SEASONS

GERARD SCHWARZ

LOS ANGELES CHAMBER ORCHESTRA



ELMAR OLIVEIRA

(GOLD MEDAL WINNER TCHAIKOVSKY COMPETITION)

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VIVALDI: THE FOUR SEASONS

ELMAR OLIVEIRA *violin solo*
GERARD SCHWARZ *conductor*
Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra

Opus VIII, Nos. 1, 2, 3 & 4

LA PRIMAVERA (SPRING) (10:11)
Concerto No. 1 in E Major (P. 241)

1 I. Allegro (3:22)
2 II. Largo (2:47)
3 III. Allegro (3:55)

L'ESTATE (SUMMER) (10:04)
Concerto No. 2 in G Minor (P. 336)

4 I. Allegro non molto (5:15)
5 II. Adagio (2:08)
6 III. Presto (2:36)

L'AUTUNNO (AUTUMN) (10:29)
Concerto No. 3 in F Major (P. 257)

7 I. Allegro (4:32)
8 II. Adagio molto (2:41)
9 III. Allegro (3:11)

L'INVERNO (WINTER) (8:37)
Concerto No. 4 in F Minor (P. 442)

10 I. Allegro non molto (3:16)
11 II. Largo (2:08)
12 III. Allegro (3:06)

Co-Producers: Marc Aubort/Joanna Nickrenz
Executive Producer: Amelia Haygood
Recording Engineer: Marc Aubort

Digital Recording, Editing and Mastering by Soundstream, Inc.: Thomas Stockham, Bruce Rothaar, Jules Bloomenthal, Richard Feldman

Recorded in Bridges Auditorium, Claremont, California, May 13-14, 1980.

Cover Photos: Ken Veeder
Liner Photos: Ken Veeder, Jack Mitchell (portrait of Mr. Schwarz)
Design: Tri-Arts, Inc.

Mr. Oliveira played his Stradivarius 1731 in this recording
Harpsichord: Challis

In Memoriam: Thomas Winkelnkaemper

The set of violin concertos entitled *The Four Seasons* has taken its place as the best-known and best-loved work of the Italian Baroque Master Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741). Born seven years earlier than Bach, Handel and Domenico Scarlatti, Vivaldi was a native and resident of Venice at a time when that city was a cultural center rich in fine musicians and painters who set the trends for the rest of Europe. From the time his op. 3, *L'Estro Armonico,* was published (1711), Vivaldi's audience went far beyond national boundaries. The composer of over 400 concertos, he was a considerable influence on musicians in the rest of Europe, and in fact established a tradition in concerto form that continued through to the 19th Century. Bach, for instance, admired Vivaldi's concertos so much that he transcribed several of them for keyboard. Vivaldi's large following in Germany had its center in Dresden, and his patron, Count Wenceslas von Morzin, for whom he wrote *The Four Seasons,* was Bohemian. Perhaps partially due to its programmatic content, *The Four Seasons* became especially popular in France, where it was given command performances for Louis XV and where the *Spring* concerto was transcribed for several different instrumental combinations.

Vivaldi's brilliant and innovative virtuosic writing for the solo violin reflects not only a golden age of violin playing and violin making in Italy but also the composer's own expertise on the instrument. First taught by his father, a violinist employed in the ducal chapel in San Marco, Vivaldi was a violin virtuoso who was said to have played dazzlingly fast. Some biographers suggest that the speed with which he played and composed (he was

known to boast that he could compose music faster than the copyist could copy it) was compensation for the fact that he was forced to walk slowly and with help due to a chest ailment, probably asthma, which he had from childhood. The chest ailment was his official reason for retiring from an active priesthood, for which he had been trained, one year after his ordination (he was known all his life by the nickname "Il Prete Rosso," "The Red Haired Priest.") Since, however, training for the priesthood was *de rigueur* for someone, born into a family of modest means, who nevertheless desired a good general education, it seems likely that Vivaldi ended up doing what he wanted to do: composing, playing, teaching, directing and supervising musical productions.

From 1704, Vivaldi had at his disposal the orchestra of the *Ospedale della Pietá*, an orphanage for girls which put a strong, conservatory-like emphasis on music. The *Ospedale* retained resident *virtuose* who played and taught the younger girls and were highly regarded throughout Europe. Vivaldi, who was employed as house composer, director of the orchestra and, for part of his long association, violin teacher, added much to the school and to the orchestra, raising it to a high artistic standard. In turn, he had an ensemble with unlimited rehearsal opportunities, one with which he could experiment in the areas of "form and instrumentation." Vivaldi retained his connection with the *Ospedale* until he left Venice in 1740 for Vienna, where he died a pauper. A generous nature and considerable expense due to his poor health had eroded the small fortune he had earned in the course of his career.

The Four Seasons was published in Amsterdam in 1725 as

part of the composer's op. 8, a set of 12 concertos entitled *Il cimento dell'armonia e dell'inventione* (The contest between harmony and invention). "Harmony" represents the formal structure of the compositions; "invention" the unhampered flow of the composer's creative imagination; and the "contest" implies a dynamic balance between the two, which allows neither "harmony" nor "invention" to gain the upper hand. The perfect balance which results offers a richness in both areas: the outpouring of melody, the variety of instrumental color, the vivid musical imagery are all to be found within a formal framework which is elegant and solid.

In the published edition each concerto was preceded by a *sonetto dimostrativo* (explanatory sonnet), which describes the programmatic content of the work. Unsigned and probably written by Vivaldi himself, the sonnets contain cue letters which match each line to a section of the musical score. In the outer movements of the four concertos, the *ritornello* sections (refrains), which are played by the full orchestra, depict the fundamental character of the movement, while the episodes between these sections portray the more specific events in the sonnet. In the *Spring* concerto, for example, the *ritornello* establishes the joyful arrival of spring, and the freer episodes fill in such colorful details as the bird song and sounds of flowing streams. Each slow movement (with the exception of the *Summer* concerto) is a single scene, a *tableau*, though different instruments may indicate different elements of the scene. In the middle movement of *Winter*, raindrops are suggested by the pizzicato in the violins, while the solo violin and other strings portray the pleasure of sitting by a

fire. To help the listener locate each section more easily, the following translation of the sonnets includes not only the musical fragment which identifies each section, but also the cumulative timing at the beginning of the section. The timings are of course measured from the beginning of each concerto.

– AMELIA HAYGOOD

SPRING Concerto No. 1 in E Major (P.241)

PRIMAVERA

A Giunt' e' la Primavera e festosetti
B La Salutan gl' Augei con lieto canto,
C E i fonti allo Spirar de' Zeffiretti
Con dolce mormorio Scorrono intanto:

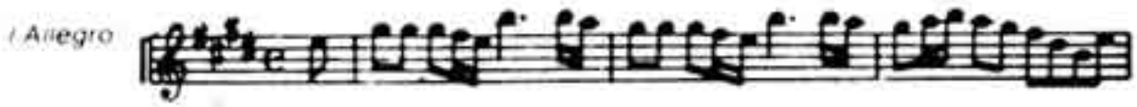
D Vengon' coprendo l'aer di nero amanto
E Lampi, e tuoni ad annuntiarla eletti

E Indi tacendo questi, gl' Augelletti;
Tornan' di nuovo allor canoro incanto:

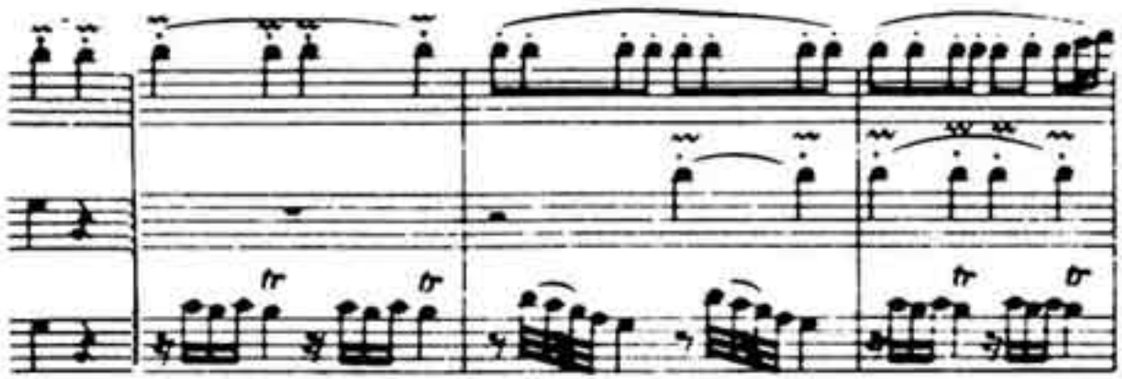
F E' quindi Sul fiorito ameno prato
Al caro mormorio di fronde e piante
Dorme 'l Caprar col fido can' à lato.

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

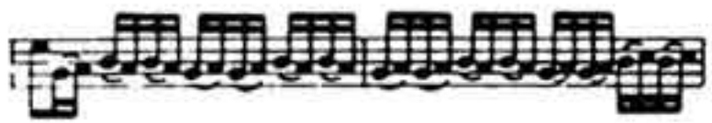
0:00 **A** *Spring has arrived, joyfully*



0:31 **B** *The birds welcome it with happy songs*



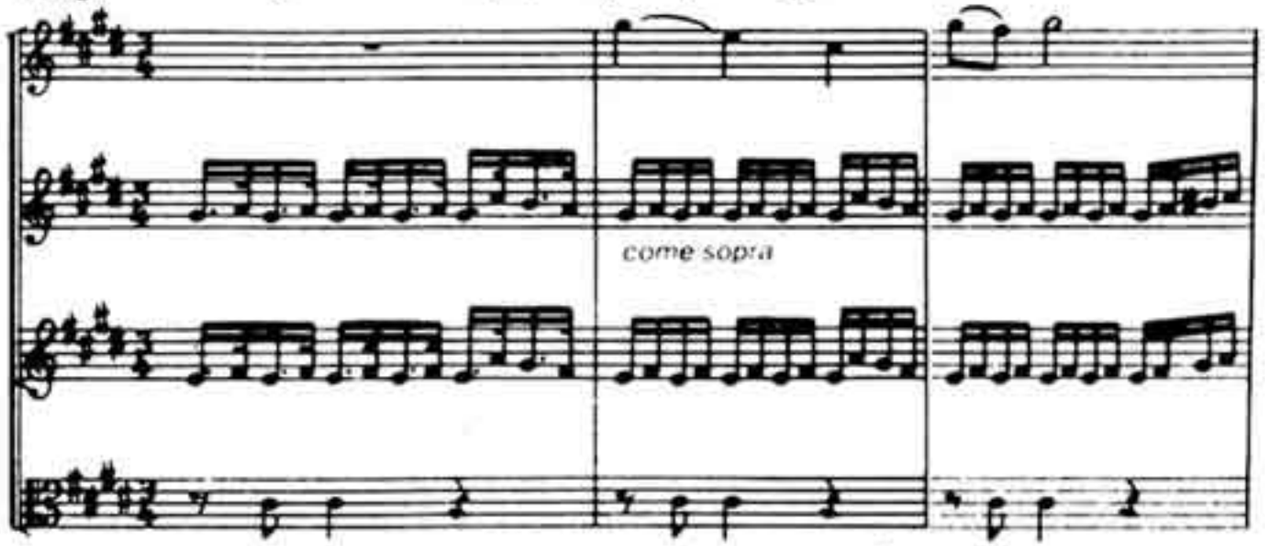
1:14 **C** *And the streams, in the gentle breezes, flow forth with sweet murmurs*



1:45 **D** *Now the sky is draped in black*
Thunder and lightning announce a storm

2:20 **E** *When the storm has passed, the little birds*
Return to their harmonious songs

3:25 **F** *And in the lovely meadow full of flowers*
To the gentle rustling of leaves and branches
The goatherd sleeps, his faithful dog at his side



6:16 **G** *To the rustic bagpipe's merry sound*
Nymphs and shepherds dance under the lovely sky
When spring appears in all its brilliance.

10:11 **end**

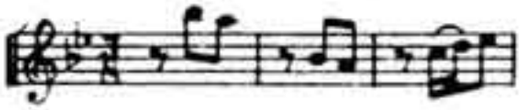
SUMMER Concerto No. 2 in G Minor (P.336)

L'ESTADE

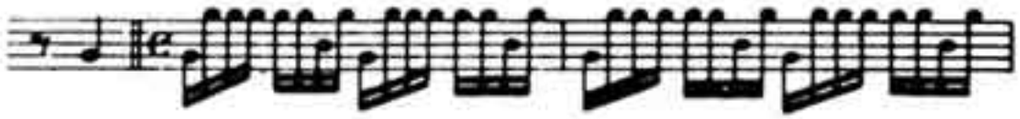
A Sotto dura Staggion dal Sole accesa
Langue L'huom, langue 'l gregge, ed arde il Pino
B Scioglie il Cucco la Voce, e tosto intesa
C Canta la Tortorella e 'l gardelino.
D Zeffiro dolce Spira, mà contesa
Muove Borea improviso al Suo vicino;
E E piange il Pastorel, perche Sospesa
Teme fiera borasca, e 'l Suo destino;
F Toglie alle membra lasse il Suo riposo
Il timore de' Lampi, e tuoni fieri
E de mosche, e mossoni il Stuol furioso!
G Ah che pur troppo i Suoi timor Son veri
Tuona, e fulmina il Ciel e grandena:
Tronca il capo alle Spiche e a' grani altieri.

00:00 **A** *In the heat of the blazing summer sun*
Man and beast languish; the pine tree is scorched

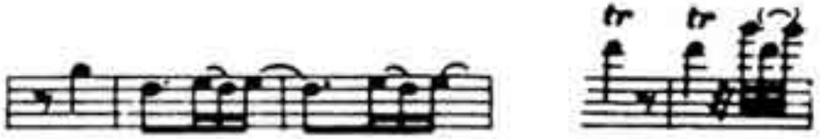
I Allegro
non molto



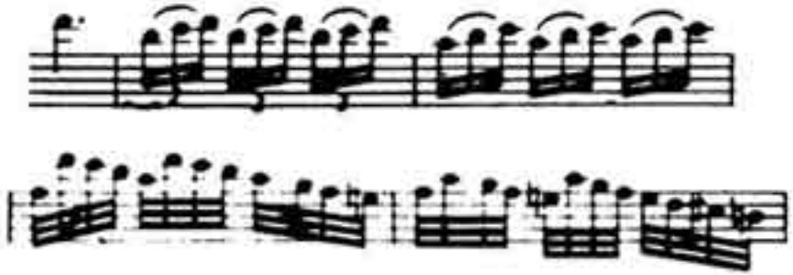
01:07 **B** *The cuckoo raises his voice and soon*



02:01 **C** *The turtledove and goldfinch join in the song.*

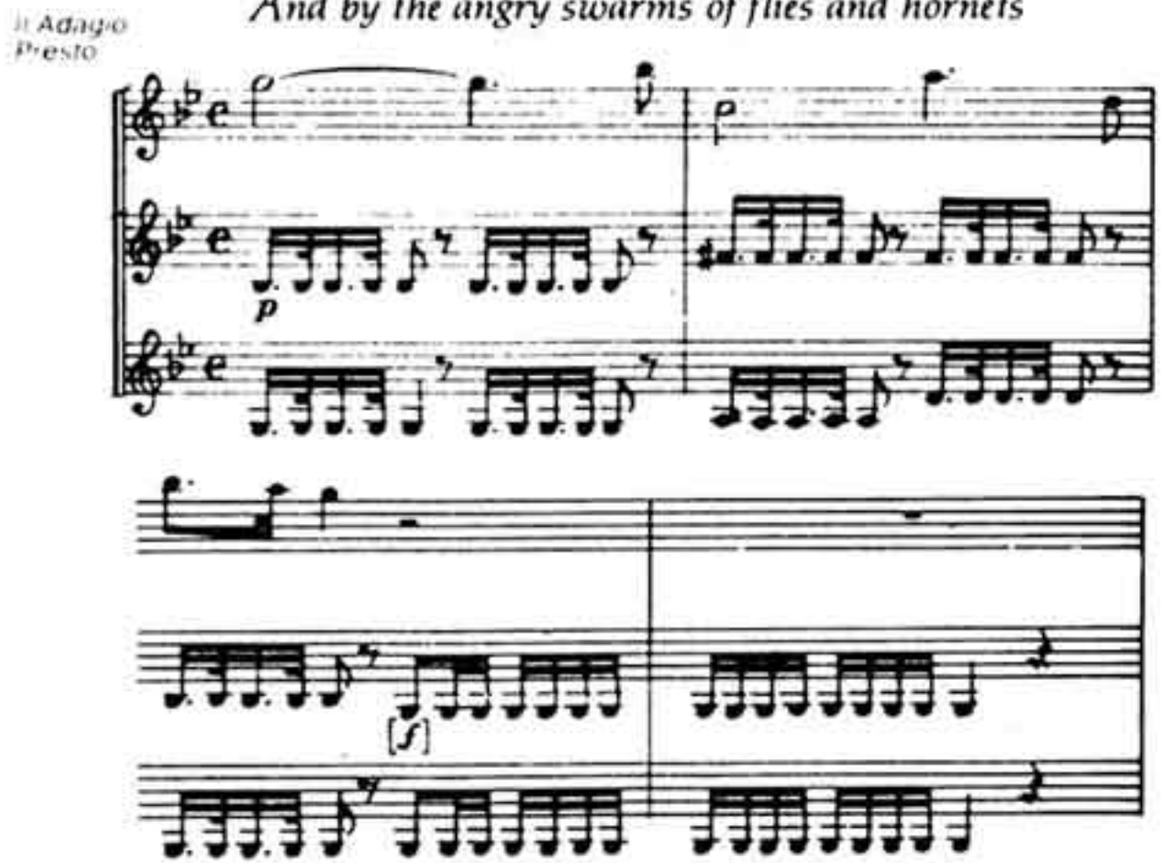


02:37 **D** *A gentle breeze blows, but then*
The north wind battles with its neighbor



03:30 **E** *And the shepherd weeps, as above him*
The dreaded storm gathers, controlling his fate.

05:18 **F** *His weary limbs are roused from rest*
By his fear of the lightning and fierce thunder
And by the angry swarms of flies and hornets



07:28 **G** *Alas, his fears are borne out*
Thunder and lightning dominate the sky
Bending down the tops of the trees and flattening the grain.

10:04 **end**

AUTUMN Concerto No. 3 in F Major (P.257)

L'AUTUNNO

A Celebra il Vilanel con balli e Canti
Del felice raccolto il bel piacere
B E del liquor di Bacco accesi tanti
C Finiscono col Sonno il lor godere

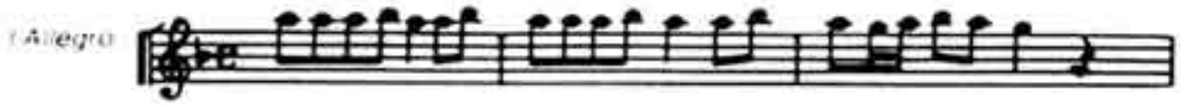
D Fà ch'ogn'uno tralasci e balli e canti
L'aria che temperata dà piacere,
E la Staggion ch'invita tanti e tanti
D'un dolcissimo Sonno al bel godere.

12

E I cacciator alla nov' alba à caccia
Con corni, Schioppi, e cani escono fuore
F Fugge la belua, e Seguono la traccia;

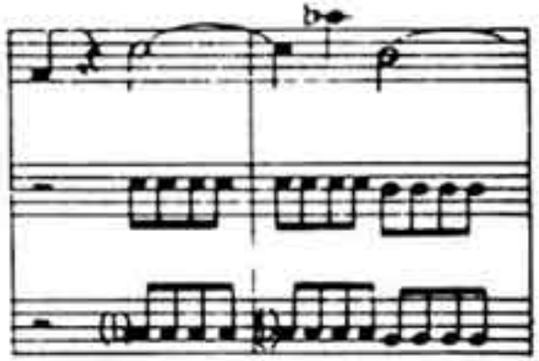
G Già Sbigottita, e lassa al gran rumore
De' Schioppi e cani, ferita minaccia
H Languida di fuggir, mà oppressa muore.

0:00 **A** *The peasant celebrates with dance and song*
The joy of a fine harvest

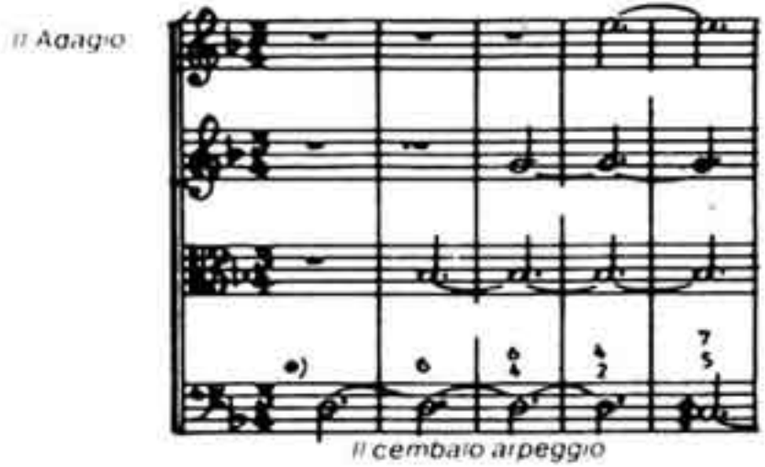


1:10 **B** *And filled with Bacchus' liquor*

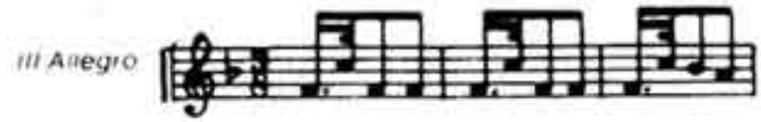
3:14 **C** *He ends his fun in sleep*



4:36 **D** *Everyone is made to leave dancing and singing*
The air is gentle and pleasing
And the season invites everyone
To enjoy a delightful sleep

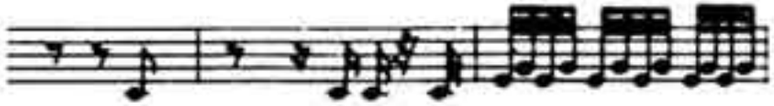


7:18 **E** *At dawn the hunters set out*
With horns, guns and dogs

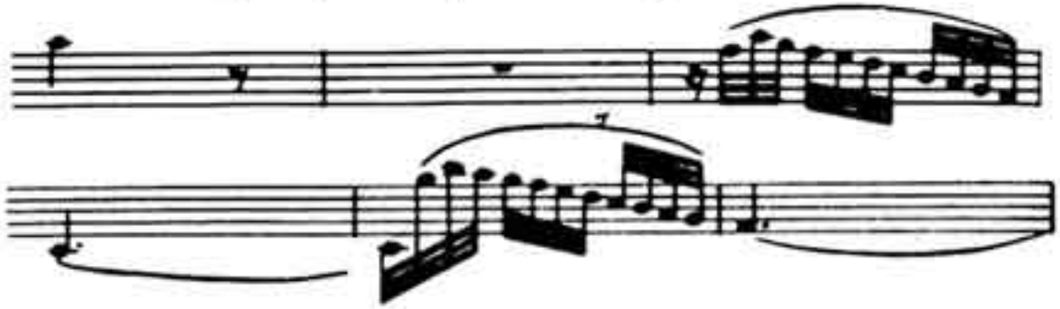


8:48 **F** *The hunted animal flees, the hunters follow its tracks*

8:55 **G** *Terrified and exhausted by the great noise*
Of guns and dogs, and wounded



9:50 **H** *It tries feebly to escape but is caught and dies.*



10:29 **end**

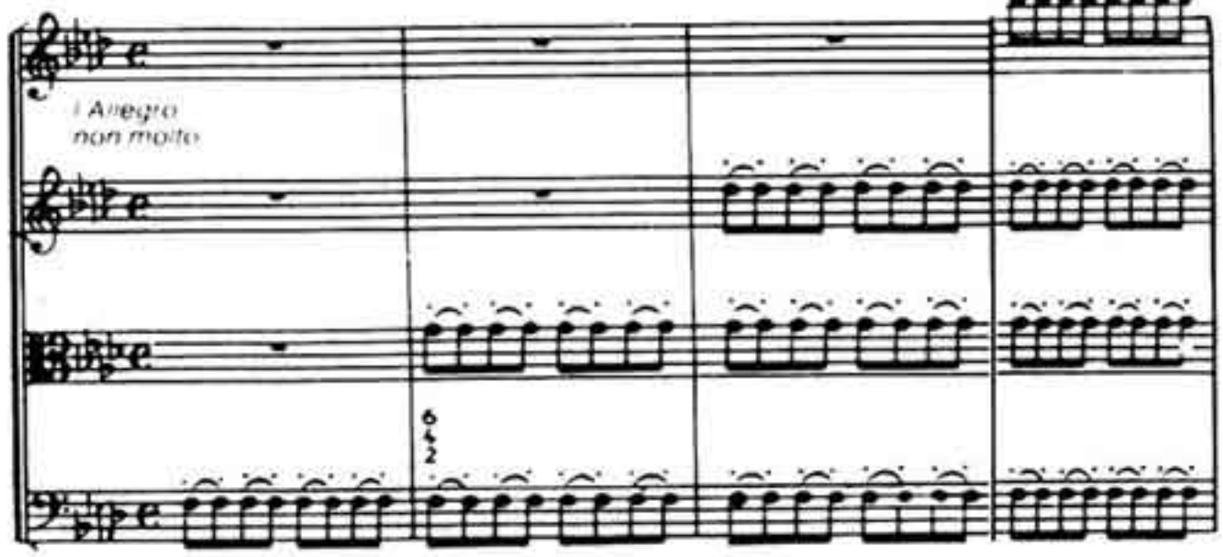
WINTER Concerto No. 4 in F Minor (P.442)

L'INVERNO

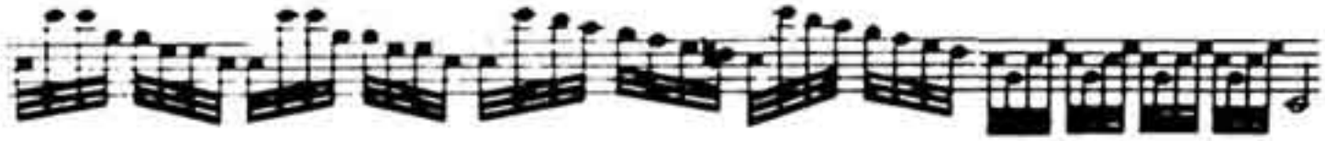
A *Aggiacciato tremar trà neri algenti*
B *Al Severo Spirar d'orrido Vento,*

C Corror battendo i piedi ogni momento;
D E pel Sovorchio gel batter i denti;
E Passar al foco i di quieti e contenti
Mentre la pioggia fuor bagna ben conto
F Caminar Sopra 'l giaccio, e à passo lento
G Per timor di cador gorrene intenti;
H Gir forte Sdrucciolar, cador à terra
I Di nuovo in Sopra 'l giaccio e corror forte
L Sin ch' il giaccio Si rompe, e Si disserra;
M Sentir uscir dalle ferrate porte
N Sirocco Borea, e tutti i Venti in guerra
Quest' e 'l verno, mà tal, che gioja apporte.

00:00 **A** *Freezing and shivering in the icy darkness*

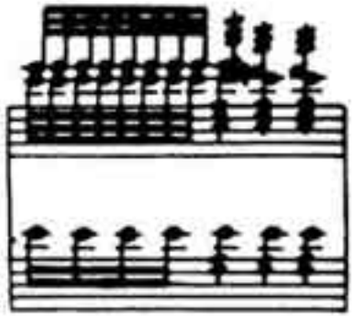


00:36 **B** *In the severe gusts of a terrible wind*

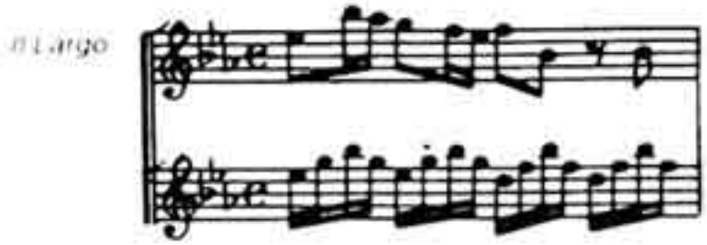


01:07 **C** *Running and stamping one's feet constantly*

02:24 **D** *So chilled through that one's teeth chatter*



03:17 **E** *Spending quiet and happy days by the fire*
While outside the rain pours everywhere

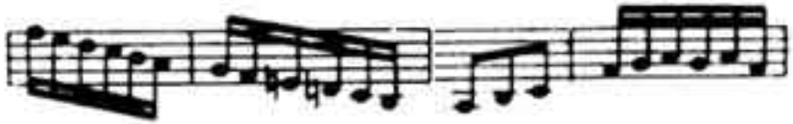


05:31 **F** *Walking on the ice with slow steps*

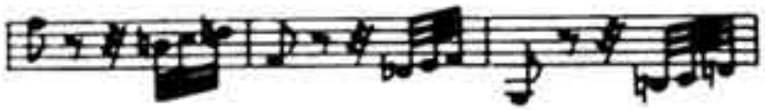
05:56 **G** *Walking carefully for fear of falling*

06:13 **H** *Then stepping out boldly, and falling to the ground*

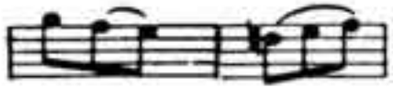
06:25 **I** *Going once again onto the ice, and running boldly*



07:06 **L** *Until the ice cracks and breaks*



07:21 **M** *Hearing, as they burst forth from their iron gates, the Scirocco*



07:57 **N** *The North Wind, and all the winds battling*
This is winter, but such joy it brings

08:37 **end**

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

For this recording we used two Schoeps 221B omni-directional microphones in a basic stereo placement to achieve a recording of optimum clarity and natural balance. The orchestra was positioned left to right of the conductor: first violins, violas, celli, second violins, and bass behind celli. The harpsichord was placed center and the soloist stood somewhat right of center to give the desired antiphonal effect with the concertmaster (left) for sections of the concerti where this balance lends excitement and clarification to the phrases which are tossed back and forth between the two violinists.

The hall we selected for this recording has a good music-making ambience: a large, warm, not echoing room with height, irregular surfaces and lots of wood. With our engineering we tried to recreate this ambience for the listener.

Our Studer Model 169 Stereo Mixer, was fed directly into the Digital Tape Recorder. The portable Studer console is battery-powered. There is no AC and therefore no chance of hum. The power supply for the Studer 169 console is a sophisticated battery charger.

For monitoring we used an ACD/John Meyer Precision Studio Monitor (with its own Meyers Sound Lab amplification system) which is uniquely designed to reduce distortion while simultaneously increasing dynamic range.

Once the balance and the dynamic level (gain) were set at the beginning of the first session they were not changed throughout the recording. With digital recording there is no need to increase signal level during quiet passages. Such gain-riding and/or use of peak limiters is unnecessary and highly undesirable for audiophile recordings.

COMPACT DISC CARE

The transparent plastic of the Compact Disc itself protects the information track. When the CD is played, the laser "pick-up" beams through this protective surface to focus directly onto the reflective information layer underneath. There is nothing in this process to wear the disc out, and unlike all other pre-recorded source material, the disc does not deteriorate with use, storage or age.

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Printed in Japan

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■ Exemplify the highest engineering in sound recording.

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■ Are produced directly from original digital master tapes with no intervening analog process—and as such represent the ultimate in audio technology.
■ Are the result of using a Studer transcoder (Studer Sampling Frequency Converter PCM SFC 16) to convert the sampling frequency of the original Soundstream Digital information directly into the format of the Compact Disc itself. This process insures that there will be no loss between the original digital master and the Compact Disc's digital playback. What this means to the listener is that the signal remains in the digital format through the entire process from the recording session through Compact Disc playback. No other process we know of can so faithfully reproduce the excitement of musical performance in all of its dimensions.

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■ Are playable on any quality cassette recorder with Dolby B or C. The HX PRO process does not require any playback decoding. It is a record-only function which gives the cassette greater clarity on peaks.

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