



# Advance Program Notes

*Four Seasons*

**Orpheus Chamber Orchestra**

**Monday, February 24, 2014, 8 pm**

These Advance Program Notes are provided online for our patrons who like to read about performances ahead of time. Printed programs will be provided to patrons at the performances. Programs are subject to change.

## Orpheus CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

with  
RYU GOTO, *Violin*

### **Cello**

Ahrim Kim  
Melissa Meell  
Wilhelmina Smith

### **Violin**

Ronnie Bauch  
Emily Bruskin  
Liang-Ping How  
Sarah Kapustin  
Sophia Kessinger  
Doori Na  
Richard Rood  
Miho Saegusa

### **Viola**

Christof Huebner  
Shmuel Katz  
Nardo Poy

### **Keyboard**

Paolo Bordignon

### **Double Bass**

Gregg August

BACH

*Brandenburg Concerto No. 3 in G major, BWV 1048*

Allegro  
Adagio  
Allegro

VIVALDI

*The Four Seasons*

Concerto No. 1 in E Major, "La primavera" (Spring)  
Concerto No. 2 in G minor, "L'estate" (Summer)  
Concerto No. 3 in F Major, "L'autunno" (Autumn)  
Concerto No. 4 in F minor, "L'inverno" (Winter)

RYU GOTO, *Violin*

### **Intermission**

TCHAIKOVSKY

*Serenade for Strings Op. 48*

Pezzo in forma di Sonatina:  
Andante non troppo—Allegro moderato  
Valse: Moderato (Tempo di Valse)  
Elegia: Larghetto elegiaco  
Finale (Tema Russo): Andante—Allegro con spirito

MetLife Foundation is the Official Tour Sponsor of Orpheus.

This concert is supported in part by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts, the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature, and the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council.

Orpheus is represented in North America exclusively by Opus 3 and in Europe by Konzertdirektion Schmid. Orpheus has recorded for Deutsche Grammophon, Sony Classical, EMI Classics, BMG/RCA Red Seal, Decca, Nonesuch, and Verve.

# *Program Notes*

by Aaron Grad

## **Johann Sebastian Bach**

### **Brandenburg Concerto No. 3 in G major, BWV 1048**

Composed: 1721

Instrumentation: strings and continuo

Duration: approximately 12 minutes

In 1721 Bach compiled a diverse set of six previously composed concertos for the benefit of one Margrave Christian Ludwig, the Duke of Brandenburg; the enterprising composer was looking for supplementary employment, and maybe even a new court position. The duke ignored the solicitation, and it is only due to Bach's ornate and obsequious dedication that the name "Brandenburg" has stuck to the pieces. The concertos are notable for their novel instrumental forces and exuberant orchestral sound so exemplary of Bach's early, Italianate style.

Bach's Third "Brandenburg" Concerto, departing from the usual construct of a soloist or solo group pitted against the orchestra, features all members of the ensemble as independent solo voices. The instrumentation is a symmetrical arrangement of three violins, three violas, and three cellos, supported by a continuo group of bass and harpsichord (some performances, however, augment the string sections, adding extra players for tutti sections). The stately opening movement is structured in a typical ritornello format, alternating between episodes and restatements of the theme. The second movement consists simply of two linking chords, sometimes elaborated by an improvised cadenza, or even the insertion of another Bach slow movement. As strange as this may sound today, such a practice was typical in Bach's time. This short concerto, like many of Bach's suites of the time, concludes with a whirlwind triplet dance, a gigue.

## **Antonio Vivaldi**

### **The Four Seasons**

#### **From *Il cimento dell'armonia e dell'inventione* (The Contest of Harmony and Invention), Op. 8**

Composed: 1723

Instrumentation: solo violin with strings and continuo

Duration: approximately 40 minutes

Antonio Vivaldi enjoyed tremendous success in his lifetime, with his buoyant and refreshing Italian style capturing the fascination of musicians throughout Europe. He composed in a wide range of genres, including a significant body of church music, but over the centuries his reputation has come to rest almost exclusively on one form: the concerto. Besides the staggering number of examples he contributed—more than 500 in total, with at least 230 featuring his primary instrument, the violin—Vivaldi developed or codified some of the most important aspects of what we know as a concerto, such as the fast-slow-fast progression of movements and the adaptation of ritornello structure as a way to organize solo and tutti passages.

Of the hundreds of Vivaldi concertos, four have risen over the years to hallowed status. "The Four Seasons" are not a single work, but the first four pieces from a larger volume known as *The Contest of Harmony and Invention*, published in 1725 as Op. 8 (although Vivaldi likely composed the "Four Seasons" as much as a decade earlier). Not only did Vivaldi name each concerto after a season, he crafted the music to correspond literally to descriptive sonnets that he probably wrote himself. Beyond the familiar melodic riches of the "Four Seasons," listeners can find on closer inspection myriad layers of textural shadings, subtle dynamic manipulations, and commanding application of stringed instrument technique.

# *Program Notes, continued*

**Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky**

***Serenade for Strings* in C major, Op. 48**

Composed: 1880

Instrumentation: string orchestra

Duration: approximately 32 minutes

Tchaikovsky's *Serenade for Strings* was composed concurrently with the most unlikely of bedfellows: the "1812" Overture. Tchaikovsky wrote of the two works, "The overture will be very showy and noisy, but will have no artistic merit because I wrote it without warmth and without love. But the *Serenade*, on the contrary, I wrote from inner compulsion. This is a piece from the heart." The *Serenade* is indeed one of the most introspective and sublime works from the composer's output, and it owes much of its character to the influence of Mozart and other early idols. The title *Serenade*, the instrumentation and the nature of the material (especially the first movement) all recall a simple, elegant Classicism.

The first movement's chorale introduction is the most overtly antique feature of the piece, establishing a theme starting with the descending notes C-B-A. The Sonatina suggested by the movement title commences with a homophonic theme in C Major, although it is the later secondary theme in G Major that steals the spotlight with its scampering 16th-notes. The movement concludes with a return to the initial chorale material. The following waltz is a delightful palette-cleanser after the austere chorale, with Tchaikovsky showing off that musical facet that confirms him one of the pre-eminent dance composers of all time. The *Élégie* returns to the "antique" aesthetic with another chorale introduction and parallel motion between the outer voices, although a heartbreaking melody is introduced that is more native to Tchaikovsky's own Romantic style. The *Finale* offers yet again a slow introduction, this time cleverly arriving at a theme of C-B-A, transformed now into the seed of a rollicking "Russian theme." A final coda quotes the initial chorale, driving home a thematic unity among the piece, and then concluding with a last look at the fast version of the theme.

# Artist Biographies

## Orpheus Chamber Orchestra

The 2013–14 season marks Orpheus Chamber Orchestra's 41st year of making internationally acclaimed music while reinventing the way the world thinks about collaboration, outreach, and democratic leadership. With over 70 albums, including the Grammy Award-winning *Shadow Dances: Stravinsky Miniatures*; associations with the leading contemporary soloists; and 39 commissioned works as part of their history, Orpheus continues to grow this season, with innovative projects and new musical adventures around the globe. By performing without a conductor and integrating musicians into virtually every facet of the organization, Orpheus empowers its members and infuses performances with unparalleled energy.



Orpheus' four-concert season at Carnegie Hall in 2013–14 explores the history of the concerto. Featuring soloists such as pianist Brad Mehldau, clarinetist Martin Fröst, pianist Nobuyuki Tsujii, and violinist Christian Tetzlaff, Orpheus demonstrates the continuing impact that virtuoso soloists working with sensitive orchestras can have. The first concert of the season featured the New York premiere of Mehldau's new arrangement of Variations on a Melancholy Theme in a commission for Orpheus. Marking the 100th anniversary of the birth of Irving Fine, Orpheus has programmed his *Serious Song: A Lament for String Orchestra* for their second Carnegie Hall concert of the season. In their first collaboration, Orpheus welcomes young Japanese pianist and 2009 Van Cliburn Competition winner Tsujii to perform Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 5, *Emperor*, for their third concert. The final Carnegie Hall concert of the season features an all-Hungarian program highlighting the country's musical traditions with a performance of Joseph Joachim's rarely-heard Violin Concerto No. 2 with Tetzlaff.

In addition to its Carnegie Hall concerts, Orpheus will travel to Japan on a 10-city tour with Tsujii. They will also tour with the pianist to Florida for three concerts in January. Orpheus will perform as orchestra-in-residence at Colombia's Festival Internacional de Música with four concerts in January, and will embark on a five-city tour of the United States with Japanese violinist Ryu Goto. Members of Orpheus also performed Michel van der Aa's *Up-close* at the Lincoln Center White Light Festival in October with cellist Kaori Yamagami.

The Orpheus Process, an original method that places democracy at the center of artistic execution, has been the focus of studies at Harvard and Stanford and of leadership seminars at Morgan Stanley and Memorial Sloan Kettering Hospital, among others. On and off the stage, Orpheus provides learning opportunities for over 1,500 New York City public school students each year.

The Orpheus Institute offers musicians, university students, and business leaders experiential training in collective leadership through the Orpheus Process. With support from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the program is expanding nationwide; the 2011–12 season featured the launch of a year-long residency at the University of Maryland. During the 2012–13 season, the Orpheus Institute was in residence at Interlochen Arts Academy, University of Maryland, Dartmouth College, Muhlenberg College, and University of Connecticut. As artists-in-residence, Orpheus visited the campuses to facilitate coaching sessions, rehearsals, and master classes as well as performances. In the coming season Orpheus will continue to share its leadership methods and performance practices through working rehearsals and training programs as the ensemble provides its audiences with the highest level of musicianship and programming.

# *Artist Biographies, continued*

## **Ryu Goto**

Ryu Goto made his concert debut at the age of seven, playing all of Paganini's Violin Concerto No.1 at the Pacific Music Festival in Sapporo, Japan. Since then, he has appeared as soloist with numerous international ensembles, including the National Symphony Orchestra, London Philharmonic, Symphonica Toscanini, Vancouver Symphony, Philharmonia Orchestra, European Union Youth Orchestra, Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, Shanghai Philharmonic Orchestra, and the Taipei Symphony Orchestra. The renowned conductors under whose direction he has played include Vladimir Ashkenazy, Lorin Maazel, Myung-Whun Chung, Gerard Schwarz, Rossen Milanov, Yutaka Sado, Jonathan Nott, and Yip Wing-sie.



An active chamber musician, Goto has collaborated with such notable instrumentalists as Mischa Maisky, Myung-Whun Chung, The Chung Trio, Jorg Widmann, Nobuko Imai, Michael Dussek, and Naoko Yoshino.

Highlights of recent seasons include a debut in Seoul and appearances in Taipei and Shanghai. Following his eight-city Japan Recital Tour 2009, Goto gave concerts in the U.S., Mexico, and Vienna. In May 2010, he made his debut at New York's prestigious Carnegie Hall with the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra.

An acclaimed young artist, Goto has appeared on a number of television shows, radio programs, and magazines throughout Europe, the U.S., and Asia. Beginning in 1996, Fuji TV broadcast a documentary series entitled *Ryu Goto's Odyssey*, which aired annually for 10 years. He has also been featured in the television commercials and print advertisements of the East Japan Railway Company.

In May 2010 Goto launched The Ryu Goto Excellence In Music Award initiative to give back to New York in cooperation of the NYC Council, NYC Department of Education, and S&R Technology Holdings.

Goto records for Deutsche Grammophon in collaboration with Universal Classics Japan. In May 2011, he graduated from Harvard University with a bachelor's degree in physics. Goto performs on the 1722 Stradivarius, known as the "Jupiter," on loan to him from Nippon Music Foundation.