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Die Jahreszeiten

THE SEASONS

The collaboration of the BROADWAY SYMPHONY and the SEATTLE CHAMBER SINGERS has become a respected musical force in the Pacific Northwest. This company of volunteer artists is dedicated to the presentation of exciting and polished musical performances. Each ensemble rehearses at University Unitarian Church, where they enjoy the status of artists-in-residence, and where they further develop their repertoire under conductor George Shangrow. Membership is by audition, and general auditions for vacant positions are held every August and September. On several occasions each season, smaller ensembles are formed from the main ensembles for the performance of chamber music. Especially important to the Broadway Symphony/Seattle Chamber Singers is the support and presentation of local performing artists and the work of local composers.

GEORGE SHANGROW, Music Director and Conductor of the Broadway Symphony and Seattle Chamber Singers, is a native of Seattle who founded the chorus (in 1968) and the orchestra (in 1978) in order to give Seattle area artists and audiences an opportunity to hear and perform great works of music. In addition to acclaimed performances of the classic repertoire for both chorus and orchestra, he has brought to Seattle world premieres of operas, choral works, and symphonies by Seattle's most gifted local composers. Mr. Shangrow has toured Europe as a conductor and keyboard artist; appeared as a guest conductor with the Seattle Symphony, Northwest Chamber Orchestra, and Eastern Texas University Opera; and lectures frequently for the Seattle Opera and Symphony. As Director of Music for University Unitarian Church, Mr. Shangrow is a leader in the performance of sacred music, and as the guiding producer of The Bach Year in Seattle (1985) he brought to our city the world's most extensive celebration of the music of J.S. Bach.



CATHERINE HAIGHT, soprano, is a graduate of Seattle Pacific University. She has appeared frequently as a soloist with the Broadway Symphony/Seattle Chamber Singers, most recently in their fall 1986 presentation of Handel's Jephtha. During the BACH YEAR, Catherine performed as a soloist in the Cantata Sunday series, including the performance of the solo cantata for soprano, "Jauchzet Gott in allen Landen." She currently holds the position of soprano soloist at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Seattle.

BARTON GREEN returns as tenor soloist for the Broadway Symphony/Seattle Chamber Singers with whom he has sung Bach's St. John Passion, Magnificat, B minor Mass, and Christmas Oratorio as well as Handel's Messiah. A graduate of the University of Washington, he has been seen in Tosca, Eugene Onegin, and Otello with Seattle Opera. With Tacoma-Pierce County Opera he sang the role of Tamino in The Magic Flute and Jenik in The Bartered Bride, a role he will repeat this October in Everett. Future engagements include Carmen with Seattle Opera and the role of the Prince in Prokofiev's Love for Three Oranges in Berkeley, Calif.

MICHAEL DELOS, bass-baritone, is one of America's busiest young singers, with concert and opera credits throughout the United States and Canada. Trained in Vienna, Delos has made a specialty of the Bach repertoire. In the 1985 Tri-centenary year, he performed the St. Matthew Passion with noted conductor Margaret Hillis, as well as the Christmas Oratorio, St. John Passion, and B minor Mass in Washington, Oregon and California. A mainstay of the Seattle Opera since 1979, Delos also performs regularly with the opera companies of Chicago, Vancouver, Portland, Honolulu, Spokane, and Boise, and is currently under contract to the New York City Opera. Mr. Delos has appeared frequently with the Broadway Symphony/Seattle Chamber Singers, most recently in Bach's St. Matthew Passion.

THE BROADWAY SYMPHONY/SEATTLE CHAMBER SINGERS
George Shangrow, conductor

FRANZ JOSEPH HAYDN

) **Die Jahreszeiten**
THE SEASONS

DER FRÜHLING/SPRING

DER SOMMER/SUMMER

INTERMISSION

DER HERBST/AUTUMN

DER WINTER/WINTER

WITH

CATHERINE HAIGHT.....HANNE

BATRON GREEN.....LUKAS

) MICHAEL DELOS.....SIMON

PROGRAM NOTES

by

Huntley Beyer

The Seasons, finished in 1801, is the delicious, rich, seasoned finish of Haydn's long and productive career. Haydn's own life was finished off several years later. He died in 1809. Haydn said, "The Seasons has finished me off."

The Seasons is a large, complex, brilliant and unusual work. It is practically postmodern in its stylistic eclecticism; Haydn's palette includes light Viennese, rustic Folk, high Classicism and chromatic Romanticism. It has a Shakespearean range of expressiveness, from lowbrow imitations of animals to the profundity of fugues. It is ground-breaking and almost Romantic in that the music and lyrics are not only objective descriptions of nature, but are concerned with human feelings about nature. The separation of the human and natural worlds, so prevalent in previous centuries, here begins to crumble. The work, finally, is fascinatingly non-dramatic. It is lyrical and episodic. Aesthetic organization is based not so much on story and tension but on variety, change, breadth and contrast. It is a structure suited to express what Haydn expresses throughout the piece: enjoyment and appreciation of variety, abundance and basic goodness of nature and life. The Seasons is a Thanksgiving dinner.

Baron van Swieten wrote the words for The Seasons, as he had for his recent successful collaboration with Haydn, The Creation. For The Seasons he used as his source James Thomson's long poem "The Seasons." This Scottish poet's major work was one of the most popular poems of the eighteenth century. It was also one of the first and longest in the English language to take nature for its theme. In our contemporary days of camping, parks and weather reports, it might be hard to imagine a time when nature was not given favorable reviews. But until the mid-eighteenth and more generally the nineteenth century nature was ignored, thought crude, or at the most, cultivated in gardens in order to express perfection and God. In art and music, nature was an objective backdrop or symbolic cipher for human actions and emotions. Thomson's poem was new. With Thomson's poem, "People began to look at the country with fresh eyes, and discovered beauty and sublimity where they had seen nothing but crudity before. The liberating effect of this new vision on the arts, and particularly on painting, was striking" (Hans Hammelmann). Thomson's vision of the country is to our modern eyes a bit idyllic, a bit permeated with the desire to see goodness in of creation. Nevertheless it was fresh in that the human and natural worlds are related. The human world depends on and rejoices in the natural. People have feelings for nature. (Who would have thought The Seasons would lead to camping?)

Haydn brilliantly captures feelings for the natural world in The Seasons. For example, near the beginning of Summer, in #12, Haydn paints a sunrise. The strings begin softly, the soloists and woodwinds enter singly and so the color changes gradually, the harmony is modulating, never still but always leading somewhere, and finally the chorus and then the brass and timpani come bursting in. Haydn does more than create a sunrise in sound; he creates excitement about a sunrise, a joyous response to the sun coming up. Another example is the very beginning of the piece. Haydn here paints the passage from Winter to Spring, from dark to light, in such a way that we feel lightness and relief and freedom emerging. We are happy spring is arriving, as the peasants in The Seasons are. Haydn begins in G minor and gradually moves to G major, creating a dark to light tonal shift. The soloists sing in the order: bass, tenor, soprano. This lightening of vocal timbre is accompanied by an increasing lightening of the orchestration: the brass and timpani disappear as the bass enters, the clarinets drop out before the soprano enters. Then, when the chorus sings "Come, gentle Spring," a lilting folk-like piece, one feels, because one has been led

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to feel, happiness, release and a sense of newness in the arrival of Spring. Thus Haydn does more than imitate natural events; he expresses, through sophisticated musical structures, emotions about the natural world.

The story of The Seasons is told through three soloists/characters: Simon, a bass farmer, Lukas, a tenor country guy, and Hanne, Simon's soprano daughter. Each season has a general course of events the soloists narrate. Spring, emerging out of cold, dark, mean winter, is about planting seed, praying for rain, and giving thanks to God and nature when the rain comes. Spring is a hymn of joy and thanksgiving to God for the beauty and abundance of nature. The very structure of Spring expresses thanksgiving by building from the dark to the simple to the majestic. It begins with darkness turning to light. The chorus and then Simon sing lilting folk-like tunes about the goodness of Spring. Haydn adds to this good-naturedness the fun of having Simon whistling a popular tune of the day: Haydn's own very popular tune from his Surprise Symphony. From the simple Haydn then moves to the majestic, as the people pray to God for rain and give God thanks for providing food. Haydn sets this in an insistent, urgent fugue. Then the rain comes and the final chorus, titled "Song of Joy," catches up all of Spring. There is folk simplicity and innocent delight and silliness (Haydn describes gamboling lambs, tumbling fish, buzzing bees, fluttering birds and other aspects of creation, and there is grandeur and thanks to God for creation and Spring in the final, majestic, classical fugue. This finale gives the listener an attitude, a way of feeling Spring: thanksgiving.

Summer is hot. It begins in a morning fog for two songs, followed by sunrise. This is followed by a bold compositional move designed to express the oppressive heat of a summer day: five slow movements. They are shared by the three soloists. Somehow a chorus would have seemed too energetic. There is some lovely word painting: drooping flowers, trembling ash leaves, a stream, fragrance, and panting syncopations. The tonality gradually sinks from E down to C down to B-flat. After this a trembling kettledrum, unsettled harmony and pizzicato strings announce relief but also a new oppression (What a day!) a thunderstorm. This is the first modern storm scene, in that it is the first to use the large forces of the orchestra to evoke the terrors of thunder and lightning (represented by the flute in descending triplets). Beethoven and Berlioz later followed suit. Haydn's storm is pure, naked power. After the storm, animals are heard, then the people come out and go home to bed as the stars twinkle and all is quiet. The section with the animals caused Haydn some consternation, for he had to graphically depict cows, a quail, cricket and frog and this kind of imitation was in slightly bad favor at the time. Haydn quipped that "This whole passage imitating a frog has not flowed from my pen. I was forced to write down this Frenchified trash." It is surely a silly section but part of Haydn's and van Swieten's view of nature and country life was that it was innocent and fun, so the silliness fits in wonderfully. Also, the funny animal sounds have another meaning: it is as if the people know the storm is over and it's safe to go back out because of the animals, who act as though nothing major has happened. The funny animal sounds humorously mock human wisdom.

Summer is felt differently than Spring. Spring ends with grandeur and thanksgiving whereas Summer begins and ends with repose, with languid movements and sounds of nature, broken by a brief, collective madness. Spring is more God-centered, Summer more nature-centered.

Autumn is people-centered. It is a harvest festival, with pagan overtones. It is felt as a time for celebrating, in keen and lusty ways, the fruits of nature as brought successively by farmers, hunters and winegrowers. The opening chorus, "In Praise of Industry" (#23), celebrates the grainful rewards of the industrious farmer. The text van Swieten wrote for this chorus lacks the beauty of Thomson's poetry. Van Swieten's text begins "O Fleiss, von dir kommt alles Fleiss, kommt alles Heil. Die Rutte die uns schirmt, die Wolle, die uns deckt,

die Speise, die uns naehrt, ist deine Gab, ist deine Geschenk." Haydn objected to this mouthful, and quipped that he had always been very industrious himself but had never thought of setting it to music. Haydn nevertheless crafted a beautiful number, somewhat operatic in style. Next is a love duet set in light opera style. The hunters then arrive. First a dog follows a scent. As the scent becomes hotter the music speeds up. The music and dog are rushing when suddenly the dog points and the music stands still. The key changes as the fowl tries to escape by rising up. It is shot (crash from the timpani and woodwinds) and plummets to the ground. All this is musically depicted. There follows a brief scene where frantic rabbits are herded into a circle and killed. Suddenly the horns blare, and we are off on a great stag hunt. For this hunt (#26) Haydn used actual hunting calls. First a "search call" followed by two signals for the dogs. The search call recurs but the famous "le lance" signal is added, meaning the game has been flushed. The next signals are part of "Le Volce-l'est" and mean a new scent has been found, which Haydn also illustrates by a modulation to D minor. Suddenly the key shifts to E-flat as the hounds lose the trail. An Austrian search signal is heard several times, the trail is found, the stag is at bay, and, preceded by cries of "Ho, ho, tajo, tajo, tajo" we hear the "signal of the dead game." Haydn not only gives us in The Seasons an operatic style, a Classical fugal style and a folk style but a catalogue of the hunt as a music topic in eighteenth-century Austro-French aristocratic life.

Culminating Autumn is possibly the greatest chorus of The Seasons. The chorus starts with a praise of wine. A faster German dance takes over, followed by bagpipes. The wine begins to be felt as the music becomes increasingly hectic. There is dancing and jumping and we are soon in the middle of a drunken fugue. This begins confusingly in two keys, and contains belches, yells, syncopations and sforzandos which pile up on each other hilariously.

Winter is death-centered, a thought particularly poignant after the hearty affirmation of life in Autumn. Winter is a season of old age, of mortality. It is not as related to the natural world as the other seasons, but is more metaphoric in content. To feel Winter is to feel death approaching. Haydn sets his tonal scheme for his metaphor carefully. It is based on a gradually descending, "weakening" motion: C minor down to A, to F, E, D, down a fifth to G, E-flat and finally C major. G minor-major was the beginning of Spring (compare to the C minor-major frame of Winter), and G being the dominant of C, all the seasons are held together within this opening-closing, Spring-Winter cadence.

The Introduction to Winter is stark, dark and densely chromatic. There is a sad cavatine about life passing and then begins a story about a traveler who is lost in the snow. He is near death when he sees a light in a hut. He goes there and is greeted by a scene of women spinning. The spinning song (#38), with its fierce whirring motions, dark tonality and stepwise modulations influenced Romantic composers. The spinning song concerns young women wanting suitors, a song of budding sexuality and life. Then men and women gather in the hut and Hanne tells a story in traditional verse-chorus song form (yet another style Haydn adopts). The story has romantic content and sexual overtones, and ends with a country woman getting the best of a nobleman. The bitterness of Winter and old age fiercely return with the next aria (#42), which Haydn said was his song. With the phrase "exhausted is thy summer's strength" Mozart's andante theme from his G minor symphony is quoted, a tribute to life cut short. The aria continues in rage against death. Winter is about the old man/traveler figure, and the songs in the hut are not songs to identify with, but are songs heard from a distance, as through a window. Life is now a story to hear about, a set piece of verse-chorus. Haydn defines and intensifies old age by its contrast with vivid German folk life and lore.

The finale to Winter is yet another contrast. Old age and death now are

transformed into the peace of heaven. There is morning and new light. The light is the light of heaven, and a prayer is made to God to enable all of the people to gain entrance into such life after death, such light after dark, such morning after night. The music ends in prayer and strong affirmation. And so The Seasons ends. And so the season cycle ends. And yet continues, for new light and new life are also the symbols of Spring. The end of Winter is the beginning of Spring, a new Spring. Haydn lives.



THE SEATTLE CHAMBER SINGERS
George Shangrow, conductor

SOPRANO

Laila Adams
Jane Blackwell
Belle Chenault
Crissa Cugini
Kyla DeRemer
Laurie Flint
Pamela Hill
Mary Jane Loizou
Margaret Marshall
Liesel Rombouts
Michelle Thoreson
Jeanne Van Bronkhorst

TENOR

John Addison
Henry Elsen
Ronald Haight
Darren Hollenbaugh
Phil Mortenson
Tom Nesbitt
David Reyes
Jerry Sams
Tim Southwell

ALTO

Marta Chaloupka
Kristina Haight
Mary Beth Hughes
Ruth Libbey
Suzy Means
Laurie Medill
Susan Miller
Janet Ellen Reed
Nancy Robinson
Nancy Shasteen
Nedra Slason
Kay Verelius
Jane Seidman Vosk

BASS

John Behr
Steve Brault
Jim Brigham
Andrew Danilchik
Ken Hart
Skip Satterwhite
Bob Schilperoort
John Stenseth
Richard Wyckoff

THE BROADWAY SYMPHONY
George Shangrow, conductor

VIOLIN

Tineke Anderson
Karen Beemster
Jeff Forbes
Debbie Kirkland, principal second
Fritz Klein, concertmaster
Diane Lange
Eileen Lusk
Avron Maletsky
Patrice Weed Pehrson
Timothy Prior
Rebecca Lowe Reed
Beth Schmidt
Kenna Smith
Janet Showalter
Sally Thompson

VIOLA

Beatrice Dolf
Alice Leighton
Katherine McWilliams
Robert Shangrow
Katrina Sharples
Sam Williams, principal
Nancy Winder

CELLO

Gery Anderson
Vera Groom
Norma Meyers
Rebecca Parker
Joan Selvig
Maryann Tapiro, principal

BASS

Jo Hansen, principal
Jay Wilson

The Broadway Symphony has the policy of regular rotation for orchestral seating: therefore, our personnel are listed alphabetically in each section.

FLUTE

Claudia Cooper
Janeen Shigley, principal

OBOE

Huntley Beyer
M. Shannon Hill, principal

CLARINET

Kathleen Boone
Gary Oules, principal

BASSOON

Daniel Hershman
William Schink, principal

CONTRABASSOON

Michel Jolivet

HORN

Laurie Heidt
Bill Hunnicutt
Cynthia Jefferson, principal
Beverly Southwell

TRUMPET

Gary Fladmoe
David Hensler, principal

TROMBONE

David Brewer
William Irving, principal
Steve Sommer

TIMPANI

Daniel Oie

BS/SCS BUSINESS MANAGER

Sara Hedgpath