

St
Martin
in
the
Fields

FRESH HORIZONS

London Mozart Players: Four World Seasons

London Mozart Players
Ruth Rogers Director/Soloist

*Available to watch as many times as you like
from 7.30pm, Thursday 28 January 2021,
and available for 30 days.*

St Martin-in-the-Fields
Trafalgar Square
London
WC2N 4JJ
020 7766 1100
www.smitf.org

FRESH HORIZONS

PROGRAMME

Four Seasons of Buenos Aires – Piazzolla (1921-1992)

- i. Buenos Aires Autumn (Otoño Porteño)*
- ii. Buenos Aires Winter (Invierno Porteño)*
- iii. Buenos Aires Spring (Primavera Porteña)*
- iv. Buenos Aires Summer (Verano Porteño)*

Four World Seasons – Roxanna Panufnik (b. 1968)

- i. Autumn in Albania*
- ii. Tibetan Winter*
- iii. Spring in Japan*
- iv. Indian Summer*



London Mozart Players (c Kevin Day)

FRESH HORIZONS

PROGRAMME NOTES

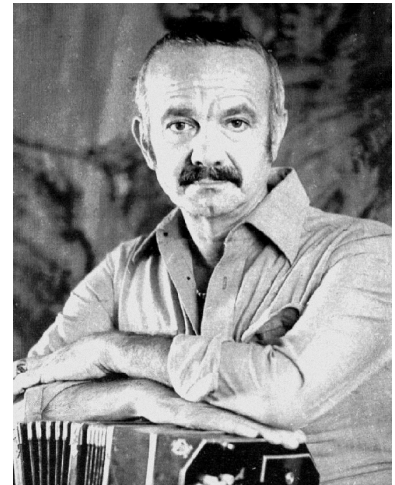
by Sarah Maxted

The four seasons of the year have long provided artistic inspiration; from the paintings of Arcimboldo and Delacroix to the perennially popular concerto series *The Four Seasons* (*Le quattro stagioni*) composed by Antonio Vivaldi in the eighteenth century. In tonight's concert, Ruth Rogers and the London Mozart Players bring together two more recent reimaginings of the four seasons in music: Piazzolla's tour through the bustling streets of Buenos Aires and Panufnik's *Four World Seasons*, inspired by the landscapes and traditions of Albania, Tibet, Japan and India.

Astor Piazzolla (1921-1992) was an influential Argentinian musician, renowned for his innovative compositions and virtuosity on the bandoneon, a concertina instrument typically played in Latin American tango ensembles. He was born to Italian parents in the Argentinian coastal city of Mar del Plata but spent most of his childhood living in New York before returning to Argentina in 1936 and moving to Buenos Aires at the age of 17. This early variety of cultural contexts exposed him to classical and jazz styles, integral to his later compositional ingenuity.

Piazzolla's musical career began performing and arranging music in traditional tango night clubs where he was quickly recognised as a prodigy and, after encouragement from pianist Arthur Rubinstein, he focussed on studying classical composition and orchestration. His stylistic influences included modernist greats like Stravinsky, Bartók and Ravel. In 1953 Piazzolla submitted his classical *Buenos Aires Symphony* for a prestigious award and – despite controversy over the inclusion of two bandoneons in the setting of an otherwise traditional symphony orchestra – he won a grant to study in Paris with Nadia Boulanger. Following Boulanger's advice to pursue his unique and authentic voice in tango music, Piazzolla returned to Buenos Aires and fused his varied musical experiences to create a 'nuevo tango' style, revolutionary for its incorporation of jazz elements and instruments, its use of Bach-inspired counterpoint and extended compositional forms. Piazzolla composed extensively in this masterful new style, established and led numerous nuevo tango ensembles and recorded albums with classical cellist Yo-Yo Ma and jazz saxophonist Gerry Mulligan.

The *Four Seasons of Buenos Aires* (*Las Cuatro Estaciones Porteñas*) were composed by Piazzolla between 1965 and 1970 and intended as separate tango works, although also performed by Piazzolla as a complete suite. The adjective in the original Spanish titles 'porteño' literally means 'port area' but has come to describe anything relating to the port and city of Buenos Aires. The first composed was *Summer* (*Verano porteño*), written as



Astor Piazzolla (c. Pupeto Mastropasqua)

incidental music for the play *Melenita de oro* by Alberto Rodriguez Muñoz, followed by *Winter (Invierno porteño)* in 1969 and completed with *Spring (Primavera porteño)* and *Autumn (Otoño porteño)* in 1970. The original works were scored for Piazzolla's nuevo tango quintet of violin, piano, electric guitar, double bass and bandoneon and discreetly allude to Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons* in concept and structure. In 1999 Russian composer Leonid Desyatnikov arranged the suite for solo violin and string orchestra, emphasising the references to Vivaldi's work with direct quotations of Vivaldi's melodies.

Roxanna Panufnik (b. 1968) is a celebrated British composer whose oeuvre includes opera, ballet, choral works, orchestral and chamber compositions, and music for film and television. She studied composition at the Royal Academy of Music and is particularly esteemed for her work exploring the music of different cultures, countries and faiths.



Roxanna Panufnik
(c Benjamin Ealovega)

The ***Four World Seasons*** were commissioned in 2008 for performance by violinist Tasmin Little. Panufnik describes the work's genesis: "Considering a world where global concern for climate change and seismic shifts in international political landscapes affect us all, we decided to take Antonio Vivaldi's much-loved *Four Seasons* (1725) and give the concept a 21st-century twist, creating an entirely new work with each season influenced by a country that has become culturally associated with it."

Autumn in Albania takes inspiration from the numerous Albanian religious festivals which coincide during the agriculturally important autumn months. Panufnik incorporates two contrasting folk music motifs: the movement begins with the festivity and rhythmic vitality of 'Dance of Chimes', traditionally played at central-Albanian weddings, before moving to the more plaintive and wistful mood of a love song from the southern city of Vlora. This evokes the transient beauty of autumn's falling leaves. Panufnik dedicated the other three *World Seasons* to Tasmin Little, but *Autumn* is specially dedicated to her father, Polish composer and conductor Andrzej Panufnik, who "was born, loved and died in this season".

In *Tibetan Winter* Panufnik transports us to the sparse snowscape of the Tibetan plateau in winter. The tremulous sonority of the solo violin brings vocal expressivity to the melodic line of a traditional Tibetan love song.

Spring in Japan begins still wintry in atmosphere, hesitant with anticipation as the season's first shoots break through the cold earth. Using a Japanese pentatonic mode and eruptions of violin ornamentation inspired by the birdsong of the Japanese bush warbler, Panufnik conjures spring's dramatic transformation. The tentative buds multiply and burst into bloom like the magnificent cherry blossoms associated with springtime in Japan.

Panufnik's seasonal exploration of world music finds its finale in *Indian Summer* through a rich tapestry of Indian musical influences. The movement starts gently with a double bass drone and sweeping violin solo. Gradually Panufnik incorporates tabla drum rhythms and four different modal tonalities from Northern India, bringing to life the intense warmth and colours of summer with exhilarating effect.

FRESH HORIZONS

PERFORMERS

London Mozart Players

Ruth Rogers Director/Soloist

Violin I

Sijie Chen (Leader)
Nicoline Kraamwinkel
Ann Criscuolo
Martin Smith
Nicola Gleed

Violin II

Antonia Kesel
Gemma Sharples
Jeremy Metcalfe
Jayne Spencer

Viola

Judith Busbridge
Bryony Gibson-Cornish
Michael Posner

Cello

Sebastian Comberti
Julia Desbruslais
Ben Chappell

Double bass

Benjamin Russell
Catherine Elliott



LONDON MOZART PLAYERS

The **London Mozart Players**, the UK's longest established chamber orchestra, was founded to delight audiences with the works of Mozart and Haydn. Since 1949, the LMP has developed a reputation for adventurous, ambitious programming from Baroque through to genre-crossing contemporary music, and continues to build on its association with many of the world's finest artists including Dame Jane Glover, Howard Shelley, Nicola Benedetti and Simon Callow. The orchestra enjoys an international reputation, touring in Europe and the Far East, and records frequently for Naxos, Convivium, Chandos and Hyperion Records.

The LMP performs regularly on London's concert platforms, including the Royal Festival Hall, St John's Smith Square and Cadogan Hall, as well as cathedrals and venues across the UK. The resident orchestra at Croydon's Fairfield Halls, LMP plays an important part in the borough's cultural life. LMP recently relocated its office to St John the Evangelist, SE19, undertaking an award-winning programme of initiatives within the community, including family concerts and collaborations with local schools.

As a pioneer of orchestral outreach work, LMP collaborates regularly with schools and music hubs across the UK and abroad to inspire the next generation of musicians and music lovers. LMP continues its 72-year tradition of promoting young talent: Nicola Benedetti, Jacqueline du Pré and Jan Pascal Tortelier are just three of many young musical virtuosi championed early in their careers by the orchestra.

LMP is the only UK professional orchestra to be managed operationally and artistically by the players. The orchestra has enjoyed the patronage of HRH The Earl of Wessex since 1988.

Ruth Rogers studied with Itzhak Rashkovsky and Herman Krebbers. Described as ‘the finest of the younger generation of violinists’ (Musical Opinion) and hailed by the Guardian as ‘superb’, Ruth is in demand as soloist, leader, and chamber musician.



Ruth Rogers (c Jack Liebeck)

In 2015 Ruth was appointed as a leader of the London Mozart Players. She worked as Co-Leader of the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra from 2008 until 2012 and appears as a guest leader of many other major orchestras including the Hallé, BBC Philharmonic, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Scottish Chamber Orchestra and the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic. Ruth appears regularly with the Aquinas Piano Trio, Iuventus Quartet and the Nash Ensemble and has appeared at the Wigmore Hall and Kings Place. Ruth has performed in many interesting places including in front of the Pyramids in Cairo, the Acropolis in Athens and in refugee camps on the Thailand-Burma border.

Our thanks to The National Lottery Heritage Fund, for supporting the Fresh Horizons concert series at St Martin-in-the-Fields.

This concert was pre-recorded in the church and edited together before broadcast. The performers and technical crew carefully adhere to all current government regulations for COVID-19.

FRESH HORIZONS

Other concerts in the **Fresh Horizons series:**

**Stile Antico: Josquin –
Father of the Renaissance**
Thursday 4 February, 7.30pm

**St Martin's Players:
The Golden Age of Jazz**
Thursday 11 February, 7.30pm

Stile Antico: A Garden of Delights
Thursday 18 February, 7.30pm

**London Mozart Players:
Beethoven Violin Concerto**
Thursday 25 February, 7.30pm

Stile Antico: Toward the Dawn
Thursday 4 March, 7.30pm

**Academy of St Martin in the Fields:
Bach and Brahms**
Thursday 11 March, 7.30pm

Peter Donohoe
Thursday 18 March, 7.30pm

Piatti Quartet
Thursday 25 March, 7.30pm

Stainer – The Crucifixion
Thursday 1 April, 7.30pm

Handel – Messiah
Thursday 8 April, 7.30pm

The Gesualdo Six
Thursday 15 April, 7.30pm

**Academy of St Martin in the Fields
with John Butt**
Thursday 22 April, 7.30pm

Chineke! Chamber Ensemble
Thursday 29 April, 7.30pm

Don't miss your chance to **purchase a season ticket** for all 14 concerts in the series and get 30% off – book by Thursday 25 February to save over £40!

As the impact of COVID-19 continues, we need people like you to keep supporting us and helping the musicians we work with.

To help us keep playing on, please consider making a donation today:
www.smitf.org/donate

 @stmartins_music

 St Martin's Music

 @stmartins_music