

## **Astor Piazzolla**

Cuatro Estaciones Porteñas. (The Four Seasons of Buenos Aires)

Arranged for string orchestra and piano by José Bragato.

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|----------------------|-------|
| 1. Primavera Porteña | 4'09" |
| 2. Verano Porteño    | 9'16" |
| 3. Otono Porteño     | 6'40" |
| 4. Invierno Porteño  | 7'50" |

**Anatoly Sheludyakov, piano**

**Shakhida Azimkhodjaeva, violin.**

**Josip Petrac, cello**

Recorded live in Hugh Hodgson Hall, University of Georgia, Athens, October 12, 2006

## **Mikhail Bronner**

"The Seasons"

Dedication and 12 pieces for flute, clarinet and chamber orchestra.

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| 5. Dedication                              | 3'25" |
| 6. January. Frost patterns on the window   | 3'06" |
| 7. February. The snow-covered road         | 4'23" |
| 8. March. Winter's Farewell Song           | 5'05" |
| 9. April. Early water spring               | 2'37" |
| 10. May. Dandelion Wine                    | 5'40" |
| 11. June. Butterflies                      | 2'09" |
| 12. July. Seagulls over water              | 2'51" |
| 13. August. A Dialogue of Cuckoos          | 1'46" |
| 14. September. Full Moon                   | 3'27" |
| 15. October. Lullaby to a forest           | 4'45" |
| 16. November. What the North Wind Has Told | 3'00" |
| 17. December. Christmas                    | 5'03" |

**Angela Jones-Reus, flute**

**D. Ray McClellan, clarinet**

Recorded live in Hugh Hodgson Hall, University of Georgia, Athens, April 12, 2007

Sound engineer: Douglas Moore

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**Astor Piazzolla** is widely considered the most important Argentine tango composer of the second half of the twentieth century. A virtuoso bandoneonist, Piazzolla performed his own compositions with many different ensembles, developing the nuevo tango style—a fusion of traditional Argentine tango, jazz, and such compositional techniques as extreme chromaticism and fugal elements. While this new style was not immediately accepted by Argentine tango composers and performers, Piazzolla was eventually recognized as a savior of tango, with his popularity growing both in Argentina and abroad. Astor Pantaleon Piazzolla was born in southern Argentinean city of Mar del Plata in 1921. In 1924 Astor and his family moved to New York City, where he was exposed to both jazz and classical music, also learning to play the bandoneon. In 1937 Piazzolla returned to Argentina, where he studied classical composition with Alberto Ginastera. It was upon Ginastera's encouragement that Piazzolla entered his newly composed symphony in a composition contest that won him a grant to study composition with the legendary Nadia Boulanger in Paris. After returning to Argentina in 1955, Piazzolla formed his own groups to play tango - first the Octeto Buenos Aires, and later Quinteto Nuevo Tango. Until his death in 1992, Piazzolla lived and composed in Argentina, France, and Italy, producing a large body of over 750 compositions, including film scores, symphonic works, and numerous shorter works for smaller ensembles.

Piazzolla finished his *Cuatro estaciones porteñas* in 1970. The work pays homage to the tango of Buenos Aires (the adjective “porteñas” in the title refers to the port city - Buenos Aires) and to Vivaldi's famous *Four Seasons*. The suite was written for Piazzolla's own quintet, consisting of bandoneon, violin, electric guitar, piano, and double bass. The string orchestra arrangement was made by Jose Bragato, Piazzolla's friend, colleague, and collaborator.

**José (Giuseppe) Bragato** was born in Udine, Italy, in 1915 into a family of woodworkers and musicians. Early music education included piano lessons and singing in the choir. The Bragato family fled the Mussolini regime in 1928, settling in Argentina, where José continued his piano and cello lessons. In 1946, Bragato won the position of the soloist with the Orquesta Filarmónica de Buenos Aires, performing also with Buenos Aires and Pessina quartets. In 1954 Bragato met Astor Piazzolla, and became his arranger, admirer, and lifelong friend. Due to his outspoken defense of human rights, José Bragato was exiled to Brazil from 1976 to 1982, where he served as a solo cellist with the orchestra in Porto Alegre, also teaching at Universidad de Natal. José Bragato made significant contributions to the tango music through his compositions, arrangements, and collaboration with Astor Piazzolla.

**Mikhail Bronner** graduated from the Moscow Tchaikovsky Conservatory where he studied composition with Tikhon Khrennikov. Mr. Bronner became a member of the Union of Composers in 1979 and since 1997 he is a Chair of the Select Committee on membership of the Moscow Union of Composers. In November 2000 he was elected a Secretary of the Russian Union of Composers. Since 2001 he is a Professor of Composition at the Moscow Music Ippolitov Institute, Moscow. One of the main landmarks in his career was stage production of his ballets *The Optimistic Tragedy* and

*The Taming of the Shrew* at the Stanislavsky and Nemirovich-Danchenko Moscow Academic Music Theater and the performance of his opera *The Golden Island* at the Nataliya Sats Moscow State Academic Children's Music Theater. Mr. Bronner has set a large number of sacred texts: *Dona nobis pacem*, *Stabat mater*, *Ave Maria*, *Book of Psalms*, and others and has written many compositions inspired by images, themes and characters of *The Book* (Old Testament). His *Jewish Requiem* was performed with great success in six cities in Germany, including Berlin. The Russian monthly *Muzykalnoe Obozrenie* (The Music Review) named Mikhail Bronner "Composer of the Year 2002". Mr. Bronner is the author of more than 100 compositions: three operas, three ballets, symphonic, choral, vocal and chamber music. His works are performed at concerts and festivals in Russia, Germany, Bulgaria, Hungary, Great Britain, France, Italy, Belgium and the USA and many are available on compact disc.

For the composer, this work is a token of love and admiration for the beloved composer Tchaikovsky; who is a great Master and a great Melodist. This is why the composer made a last-ditch attempt to write a large work at the end of the 20th century comprising distinctly melodic pieces. Elaboration on the melodic material is the chief musical objective of this work. It consists of various thematic pieces, in which different instruments play solo parts. Orchestral pieces are set off against four duets for unusual mixes of instruments. Along with familiar pairs – flute & clarinet ("A Dialogue of Cuckoos") and violin & cello ("What the North Wind Has Told"), the author uses rare instrument combinations in his duets: cello & clarinet ("The snow-covered road"), violin & flute ("Butterflies"). Orchestral parts are led by diverse instruments: flute & string quintet ("Winter's Farewell Song"), flute & clarinet ("Early Water Spring"), flute, clarinet & violin ("Seagulls"), flute, clarinet, three violas & three cellos ("A Lullaby to a Forest"), violin & cello ("Dandelion Wine"), violin & flute ("Full Moon"), and clarinet ("Frost Patterns on the Window"). The last piece ("Christmas") integrates all the solo instruments together with the orchestra. This lyrical composition is filled with musical and semantic allusions. It aims at the listener's heart.

The **ARCO Chamber Orchestra** was founded in 1990 by Levon Ambartsumian at the world-renowned Moscow Tchaikovsky Conservatory, where he served as Professor of Violin. Among its handpicked charter members were a few instructors, some of his students, and several recent graduates from the Conservatory. Almost immediately ARCO performances throughout Europe drew the kind of high critical praise and enthusiastic audience responses. The international acclaim grew in subsequent years, following ARCO's concert tours in Italy, Spain, Germany, Romania, France and Korea. In 1995, Mr. Ambartsumian joined the University of Georgia's School of Music as the Franklin Professor of Violin, while remaining the artistic director and conductor of ARCO. Because he was able to bring some of his students to America with him, the home base of the orchestra shifted to this hemisphere, where the ensemble has now become a talented international blend of musicians. In 2001 ARCO made its New York premiere in the Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall, followed by invitation to return every year thereafter. Arco has released several CD's with music by Vivaldi, Haydn, Mozart Mendelssohn, Tchaikovsky, Shostakovich, Vasks, Bronner, and Nielson.

**Levon Ambartsumian** studied in the Moscow Central Music School and then in the Moscow Tchaikovsky Conservatory, where his teachers were Mikhail Garlitsky, Felix Andrievski, Yury Yankelevich, Leonid Kogan and Igor Bezrodny. In 1977 he was awarded First Prize in the Zagreb International Violin Competition headed by Henryk Szeryng. Two years later he was a prizewinner of the Montreal International Competition, and in 1981 he won the All-Union Violin Competition in Riga. Levon Ambartsumian was distinguished as *Honored Artist of Armenia* in 1988 and *Honored Artist of Russia* in 1997. In 1989 Ambartsumian founded the Moscow Chamber Orchestra ARCO which regularly performed in Russia and abroad and now resides in Athens, Georgia, USA.

Mr. Ambartsumian joined the faculty of the Moscow Tchaikovsky Conservatory in 1978 where he taught for 15 years. For two years, he was a Visiting Professor at Indiana University School of Music (Bloomington, Indiana). In 1995, he accepted the position of Franklin Professor of Violin at the University of Georgia School of Music (Athens, Georgia).

**Angela Jones-Reus**, is Professor of Flute at the University of Georgia (USA) since 2001. Angela Jones-Reus was the principal flutist of the Stuttgart Philharmonic, Germany and played regularly as principal flutist with the Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra from 1991-2000. A guest with the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra since 1999, Ms. Jones-Reus has performed extensively throughout Europe, the United Kingdom, North and South America and Japan. She has recorded for ECM Records, Koch International, Naxos, Sterling Records, Verdi Records, Arte Nova Classic, Mediaphon and ACA Digital. Angela Jones-Reus is a graduate of the North Carolina School of the Arts (BM), The Juilliard School (MM) and was a Fulbright Scholar to Italy in 1987.

Acclaimed for "a remarkable technique, tone and lyricism", clarinetist

**D. Ray McClellan** teaches clarinet at The University of Georgia. He appeared as soloist with "The President's Own" United States Marine Band, Symphony Orchestra of Goiania in Brazil, The Augusta Symphony, The Queens Philharmonic, The Athens Symphony, and The Little Rock Wind Symphony and has performed internationally in Canada, Taiwan, Japan, Italy, Brazil, Kenya and Tanzania. Mr. McClellan has performed as principal clarinetist with the Savannah Sinfonietta, Augusta Symphony, Charleston Symphony, Alexandria Symphony, and the Garden State Philharmonic. He has recorded a solo and chamber music CD for ACA Digital Recordings and has taught at James Madison University and Henderson State University. He is a graduate of The Juilliard School where he studied with world-renowned pedagogue David Weber.

Native of Tashkent, Uzbekistan, **Shakhida Azimkhodjaeva** began to study violin at the Special Music School, Tashkent State Conservatory with Professor Gulnar Suleimanova. She gave her debut with the Uzbekistan Symphony Orchestra when she was eleven and won the National Violin Competition in 1985. Ms. Azimkhodjaeva graduated from the Moscow Tchaikovsky Conservatory where she studied with Professor Irina Medvedeva. Ms. Azimkhodjaeva was one of the founders of the Moscow Chamber Orchestra ARCO.

Since 1989, she has been concertmaster and soloist of the orchestra and has performed extensively in Germany, France, Spain, Romania, Latvia, Russia, South Korea, the USA, and Canada. Ms. Azimkhodjaeva joined the violin faculty of the University Of Georgia School Of Music in 1995. Her recent performances included three appearances at Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall and the Moscow Tchaikovsky Conservatory.

Cellist **Josip Petrac** got his Bachelor of Music degree from the Academy of Music Zagreb University, his Master's degree at Georgia State University, and is currently working towards the completion of Doctor of Musical Arts degree at the University of Georgia. Mr. Petrac studied with Nino Ureic, Martha Gerschefski and David Starkweather. He attended master classes held by Valter Despalj, Silvia Sondeckiene, David Grigorian, Menahem Meir, Mineo Hayashi, and Karoly Botvai. He was awarded 1st prize at the national state competition in Zagreb, Croatia in 1992, and 3rd prize at the same competition in 1994. He also won the Concerto competition in 2006 at UGA.

**Anatoly Sheludyakov** was born in Moscow, where he graduated from the Gnessin Music Institute and completed his postgraduate studies there under Professor Anatoly Vedernikov. He also graduated from the Moscow Conservatory studying composition with Tikhon Khrennikov. In 1977, Mr. Sheludyakov was the winner of the All Soviet Piano Competition as well as the winner of the Russian National Piano Competition. He has performed solo concerts with orchestras, solo recitals, and chamber music performances in the most prestigious concert halls in Moscow, St. Petersburg, and other major cities in Russia, the USA, Germany, France, Italy, Finland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, China and Australia. He has recorded sixteen CDs under different Russian and American labels. Mr. Sheludyakov was distinguished as Honored Artist of Russia in 1999. His recent performances include four appearances at Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall. Currently Mr. Sheludyakov is an Artist in Residence at the University of Georgia, USA.