



**FORTISMERE COMMUNITY CHOIR PRESENTS**

# **THE SEASONS**

**JOSEPH HAYDN**

**Marvin L. Perrott** - musical director

**Elise Lefay** - soprano (Hanne)

**Tim Kingston** - tenor (Lukas)

**Thomas Kennedy** - bass (Simon)

with the **Fortismere Community Symphony Orchestra**

and **John Eady** - continuo

# Die Jahreszeiten (The Seasons) – Joseph Haydn

*Der Frühling*



*Spring*

*Der Sommer*



*Summer*

*Der Herbst*



*Autumn*

*Der Winter*



*Winter*

The bar will be open before the concert and during the interval between *Summer* and *Autumn*.

## Our visual display

The artwork for this evening's visual display was created by artist and choir member **Caroline Elliott**, assisted by her choir colleague Viola Sampson (translation for surtitles) and the SWARC (Swimming, Art & Creativity) team. Caroline works as a mixed media artist:

*"In recent years I have taken inspiration from wild swimming trips and the surrounding abundant richness of countryside. Attracted to the quiet, overlooked or neglected elements of nature, cycles of the seasons, of growth, of change, the opportunity to work on Haydn's Seasons was the most perfect opportunity."*

Caroline will be exhibiting this artwork as an installation at the East Finchley Open weekends on 30<sup>th</sup> June/1<sup>st</sup> July and 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> July 2018; find out more at [www.eastfinchleyopen.org.uk](http://www.eastfinchleyopen.org.uk) or view her work at [bluelaurelart.artweb.com](http://bluelaurelart.artweb.com).



## Setting industry to music

**(Franz) Joseph Haydn** (1732–1809), one of the most popular composers of his time, is venerated along with Mozart and Beethoven as a master of the Viennese Classical era. He is known as the father of both the symphony and the string quartet for his ground-breaking contributions to those forms. Over his lifetime he wrote more than 100 symphonies, more than 65 string quartets, and numerous operas, masses, and other choral works.

This master composer was born in Austria to a working-class family, the second of 12 children. His father was a wheelwright with no particular interest in music; his mother

hoped that Joseph would eventually take holy orders. Haydn's musical talent became evident at the age of five, however, when a relative, impressed by the boy's singing, convinced his parents that he needed musical training. When Joseph was seven, he was sent to sing in the choir at the Stephansdom in Vienna, where he received instruction in the violin, the harpsichord, and vocal technique. He was dismissed from the choir in about 1749 when his voice broke, after which, in his own words, "*for eight whole years I was forced to eke out a wretched existence by teaching young people*".

In these early years, Haydn struggled to make ends meet and often had to rely on the generosity of friends for places to live. He began to compose, and his early compositions were sufficiently accomplished to bring him to the notice of Count Morzin in Vienna, who hired him as his orchestra director in 1758. Haydn wrote his first symphonies while in Morzin's employ. In 1761 he accepted the post of assistant kapellmeister for the powerful and wealthy Esterházy family. In 1766, he became their chief kapellmeister, and for the next 25 years he composed under the family's patronage and directed its in-house orchestra at the family estate in Eisenstadt.

In 1790, due to financial constraints, the Esterházy orchestra was disbanded. Haydn then made several trips to London, where his music was already fantastically popular. There, between 1791–1792 and 1794–1795, he composed some of his greatest works, the "*London Symphonies*". In 1795 he returned to Vienna and settled there under the patronage of the new Esterházy prince, Nikolaus II.

Haydn was a kind, pious, and hard-working man, possessed of a sharp business sense that allowed him to amass a comfortable fortune by the end of his life. He was reportedly very fond of women; his childless marriage was not a happy one, and he had a number of mistresses throughout his life. As his wealth and fame grew, he gave numerous concerts for charitable causes, including for the maintenance of families of musicians who were less fortunate than he. Haydn was always very devoted to his own large extended family, giving generously of his time and money to his many nieces and nephews.

Young musicians today may know of Haydn from the child's song, "*Papa Haydn's dead and gone/But his mem'ry lingers on/When his mood was one of bliss/He wrote jolly tunes like this*", which is sung to the opening melody of the second movement of the Symphony No. 94 in G major, the "*Surprise Symphony*". The musicians whom Haydn directed while in the employ of the Esterházy family first gave him the title of "*Papa*" on account of his benevolence and generosity toward them. Many aspiring young composers in Vienna, including his good friend Mozart, also called Haydn by that affectionate name.

Haydn claimed he never wrote in haste, but rather composed diligently and deliberately. He enjoyed jokes of all kinds. His music often demonstrates an inventive, sometimes whimsical, sense of humour. He was a master of musical tropes, figures, and contrasts, and "*a brilliant and enthusiastic word painter*". Word painting, or tone painting, is the use of musical techniques to represent the literal meaning of a text.

Haydn composed his two famous oratorios, *The Creation* and *The Seasons*, near the end of his musical career in Vienna. He had heard performances of Handel's *Messiah* in London and was so moved by the piece that he decided to write something similar. With financial support for his project from his librettist and mentor Gottfried van Swieten, his first oratorio, *The Creation*, premiered in Vienna in 1799 to universal praise. It is said that Beethoven was in attendance and that after hearing the piece, the young composer was so overcome by its power that he knelt in homage to Haydn.

Following the phenomenal success of *The Creation*, van Swieten urged Haydn to compose another oratorio, to be based on "The Seasons" by Scottish poet James Thomson, which van Swieten had translated loosely into German. Haydn was 69 years old when he completed *The Seasons* and complained that the project was an exhausting one. Some of the difficulty he had with its composition was perhaps due to artistic disagreements with van Swieten, who apparently wanted Haydn to include more specific and whimsical word painting than Haydn felt comfortable with, including the croaking of frogs, which Haydn scorned as "*Frenchified trash*". When Haydn first read the portion of the libretto praising "*Fleiß*", or "*industry*", he is said to have remarked that he "*had been an industrious man all his life, but that it had never occurred to him to set industry to music*".

Despite this grumbling, Haydn's agile, inventive spirit is evident in each of the four parts of *The Seasons*, which portray not only the cycles of nature but also the cycles of human life in scenes presented by the trio of soloists — the peasant characters of Simon, Hanne, and Lukas — and a chorus of country folk. The piece abounds in evocative and witty word painting.

*The Seasons* was first performed on April 24, 1801, at the palace of Prince Schwarzenberg. On May 29, Haydn conducted the first public performance. The oratorio was an immediate popular success. A correspondent of the Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung described the public reaction thus: "*Silent reverence, amazement, and loud enthusiasm alternated, for the powerful appearance of colossal visions, the immeasurable abundance of splendid ideas surprised and overwhelmed the boldest expectations*".

After completing *The Seasons*, Haydn's health declined. Though he lived until 1809, he stopped composing altogether in 1803, complaining that he no longer had the strength to give voice to all the music that was still inside him. He nevertheless continued to receive awards and prizes from all corners of Europe, which cheered him greatly. In 1808, he was invited to a tribute performance of *The Creation*, where he was carried into the hall to great applause and tears of devotion from the audience. Salieri conducted the performance, and Beethoven was in attendance. Sadly, Haydn was forced to leave halfway through the piece. This was his last public appearance.

Haydn died in 1809, in the midst of the French assault on Vienna. His biographer reports that Napoleon ordered a guard to protect Haydn's house because he considered the composer such a treasure.

*Programme notes throughout courtesy Nina Anne Greeley (www.sfchoral.org)*

## Der Frühling (Spring)

Emphasising the cyclical nature of the seasons, Haydn opens the oratorio with the transition from winter to spring. The opening overture presents the demise of winter through its vigorous evocation in the strings of the torrents of melting snow and winter's dying blasts. Hanne's gentle recitative introduces the chorus of country people's hymn-like prayer invoking spring. The orchestra alternates between gentle, almost tentatively lyric passages and more triumphant, energetic ones; the hoped-for spring appears only gradually. But spring has truly arrived by the time Simon sings his dancelike song (*Schon eilet froh*) depicting a farmer cheerfully planting his fields. Listen to the orchestra immediately after Simon's first phrase and you'll hear the famous melody from the *Surprise Symphony* played by the piccolo. Perhaps the farmer is whistling that very tune as he ploughs his fields!



This entire section celebrates the promise of youth, with lilting passages that call attention to the beauty of newly budding flowers, the playful energy of frisking lambs, and the busy activities of the bees. It closes with a stirring hymn of praise to God, punctuated by the soloists' prayerful trio, concluding in a fugue of unmitigated joy.

**Introduction and Recitative (all):** *Seht, wie der strenge Winter flieht!*  
Behold the blustery Winter takes flight! To polar regions he retreats...

**Chorus of Country People:** *Komm, holder Lenz, des Himmels Gabe, komm!*  
Come, lovely spring! Gift of heaven, come!...

**Recitative (Simon):** *Vom Widder strahlet jetzt die helle Sonn' auf uns herab*  
From Aries now, the beaming Sun shines on us below...

**Aria (Simon):** *Schon eilet froh der Ackersmann zur Arbeit auf das Feld*  
The joyful ploughman goes eagerly to till the waiting field....

**Recitative (Lukas):** *Der Landmann hat sein Werk voll- bracht*  
The farmer now has done his work, and neither care nor pains has spared...

**Trio and Chorus:** *Sei nun gnädig, milder Himmel!*  
Sweet Heaven, smile upon us: open and shower blessings over our waiting Earth below....

**Recitative (Hanne):** *Erhört ist unser Flehen*  
Our prayer is heard on high; a warming breeze ...

**Trio and Chorus - Song of Joy:** *O, wie lieblich ist der Anblick der Gefilde jetzt!*  
O how lovely is the morning of this welcome Spring!... Eternal, almighty, merciful God!...

### *Der Sommer* (Summer)

This section begins with an adagio passage describing the first light of dawn gently dispelling the gloom of night. The birdlike song of the oboe — “the day’s herald” — awakens the peasant to his toil. We then hear the shepherd’s horn as the sun rises and he sets out, guiding his flock from one verdant hill to another. *Sie steigt herauf* evokes the sunrise: the trio’s harmonies ascend in brightness with the sun, culminating in the peasants’ joyful, blazing chorus. Subsequent movements describe both the joyous energy of the sun and its enervating heat. A lilting, pastoral flute accompanies Hanne as she welcomes the shade of the groves. Oboes suggest light zephyrs that lift and die away. Once in the reviving coolness of the shady grove, the oboe continues, and like the newly refreshed hearts of the villagers, grows in energy into a soaring melody.



This peace is disturbed by the approach of a summer storm. We can hear the faint rumbling of summer thunder in the timpani, followed by the suspenseful plinks of the first raindrops at the close of *O seht*. A deathlike silence reigns until the chorus of peasants suddenly erupts in panic, fleeing the turbulent thunderstorm. The storm grows to a fever pitch, the timpani’s thunder punctuating the frantic sixteenth notes in the strings. As the clouds disperse and the sun shines over the fields once again, both people and animals emerge from their shelters, the quail calling to his mate and the crickets chirping. The chorus hails peaceful evening as the vocal lines descend into restful sleep.

**Introduction and Recitative (Lukas, Simon):** *In grauem Schleier rückt heran*  
Softly veiled in grey, the morning light appears...

**Aria (Simon) and Recitative (Hanne):** *Der muntre Hirt versammelt nun*  
The shepherd now gathers his contented herd...

**Trio and Chorus:** *Sie steigt herauf, die Sonne, sie steigt*  
She climbs aloft; the Sun ascends, she nears, she comes, she beams, she shines...

**Recitative (Simon):** *Nun regt und bewegt sich alles umher*  
Now everyone rushes to the fields: They are alive with colourful crowds...

**Recitative (Lukas):** *Die Mittagssonne brennet jetzt*  
The midday Sun is blazing with mighty power...

**Cavatina (Lukas):** *Dem Druck erliegt die Natur*  
The earth succumbs to parching drought. Withered flowers, barren meadows...

**Recitative (Hanne):** *Willkommen jetzt, o dunkler Hain*  
How welcome, then, the shadowed grove...

**Aria (Hanne):** *Welche Labung für die Sinne!*  
What sweetness for the senses, what a relief to the heart!...

**Recitative (all):** *O seht! Es steigt in der schwülen Luft*  
Now look! Arising in the sultry air, up to the summit of the hills a thunderhead has formed...

**Chorus – The Tempest:** *Ach, das Ungewitter naht!*  
Ah! The thunderclouds draw near. Heaven help us! O how the thunder rolls!...

~~~ **INTERVAL** ~~~

### ***Der Herbst*** (Autumn)

This section starts with the paean to human industry that so annoyed Haydn — appropriately set to an energetic fugue. Also notable is the duet between Hanne and Lukas, which celebrates a love uncomplicated by artifice, through pastoral imagery and alternating ecstatic and tender expressions of devotion. The depiction of hunting in the middle section is perhaps the most evocative of the entire oratorio. Hunting horns sound as the huntsman's bird dog runs faster and faster, tracking the scent of the prey. When the dog stops, pointing, so does the music, only to erupt again as the bird suddenly flushes and, with a loud report in the timpani, falls dead to the ground. In the following, galloping chorus, hunters and dogs pursue and kill a stag, with shouts of "Tally ho!" accompanied by horns and the gleeful villagers. Finally, in a boisterous drinking song and dance, the country folk celebrate the best part of the harvest: the wine. This movement ends with a "tipsy fugue" in which the singers, who have clearly imbibed too much, are barely able to execute the complicated fugue subject.



**Introduction and Recitative (all):** *Was durch seine Blüte der Lenz zuerst versprach*  
What in springtime's blossom was promise, mutely vowed...

**Trio with Chorus:** *So lohnet die Natur den Fleiß*  
Thus Nature rewards those who diligently toil...

**Recitative (all):** *Seht, wie zum Haselbusche dort*  
Look there, in yonder hazelwood, some lively lads have run!...

**Duet (Hanne, Lukas):** *Ihr Schönen aus der Stadt, kommt her!*  
Ye beauties of the town, look here, and see the daughters of the field...

**Recitative (Simon):** *Nun zeigt das entblösste Feld*  
Now on the new-mown fields, some uninvited guests have come to feast on fallen grain...

**Aria (Simon):** *Seht auf die breiten Wiesen hin!*  
Look far across the meadows now, see how the hound streaks through the grass...

**Recitative (Lukas):** *Hier treibt ein dichter Kreis Die Hasen aus dem Lager auf*  
The rabbits now, and the hares, must flee out from their hiding place...

**Chorus (Country People and Hunters)** *Hört, hört das laute Getön*  
Hark! Hear the sound of the horn, that sets the forest ringing!...

**Recitative (all):** *Am Rebenstocke blinket jetzt die helle Traub*  
The heavy-laden vines rejoice in juicy grapes at fullest ripeness...

**Chorus:** *Juchhe! Juchhe! Der Wein ist da*  
Yo-ho! Yo-ho! The wine is here! The casks are brimming full, now let us merry be!...

## *Der Winter* (Winter)

The final section begins slowly in a minor key, as winter imprisons all nature in its cold and gloom. The following movements describe a lost traveller, blundering through the flurries of snow in confusion, who suddenly sees the light of a cottage before him and enters to find warmth and comfort. Inside, the country folk pursue their winter work and entertainments — spinning, gossiping, and storytelling. Especially notable is Hanne's spinning song, lilting above the orchestra's whirring accompaniment.

Finally, the oratorio grows serious, as Simon warns that our own spring and summer will inevitably also pass into the autumn and winter of our lives. We can hear Haydn's own end-of-



life meditations in Simon's lamentation over the loss of the hopes and pleasures of this world. But the concluding message of the oratorio is that human beings, while a part of the natural world, can ultimately transcend its cycles of birth and death. The triumphant final chorus assures us that those who do the will of God will enter heaven and live eternally in the peace of the Lord.

**Introduction and Recitative (Simon, Hanne):** *Nun senket sich das blasse Jahr*

The year, now dying, sinks to rest, and falling mists congeal the air...

**Cavatina (Hanne):** *Licht und Leben sind geschwächt*

Light and life in sadness languish, warmth and joy have gone forever...

**Recitative (Lukas):** *Gefesselt steht der breite See*

By icy chains, the lake is bound, the rushing stream is stopped in its course...

**Aria (Lukas):** *Hier steht der Wand'rer nun*

A traveller is standing there: he is lost and wandering; Which way should he steer his path?...

**Recitative (all):** *So wie er naht, schallt in sein Ohr*

As he comes near, his reddened ears, still deafened by Winter's howling winds, hear the welcome sounds of home...

**Chorus (Hanne):** *Knurre, schnurre, knurre!*

Whirling, purling, whirling, turning, ever-turning! ...

**Recitative (Lukas):** *Abgesponnen ist der Flachs*

Now the flaxen thread is wound, the spinning wheels are still...

**Chorus (Hanne):** *Ein Mädchen, das auf Ehre hielt*

An innocent and lovely maid went walking out one day, when up there rode a nobleman...

**Recitative (Simon):** *Vom dürren Oste dringt ein scharfer Eishauch*

Now from the east a terrifying ice-storm blusters forth...

**Aria (Simon):** *Erblicke hier, betörter Mensch*

Behold thyself, deluded man: behold and see your earthly life!...

**Chorus:** *Dann bricht der Große Morgen an!*

The glorious morning dawns at last; from heaven sounds the trumpet call...  
Amen! Amen!

Poster/cover image by **Mara Manini**.

Created as part of her A level studies  
at Fortismere school.



## Our choir

Fortismere Community Choir started in 2009 and is an un auditioned choir. We welcome those with and without musical experience, who have a desire to sing with like-minded people. The choir meets at Fortismere School every Saturday in the music block in north wing, from 10.30am to 1.00pm during school terms.

Our repertoire in recent years has included Mozart's *Requiem*, *Mass in C minor* and *Coronation Mass*, Handel's *Odes* and *Zadok the Priest*, Duruflé's *Requiem*, Monteverdi's *Lauda Jerusalem*, Tallis' *O Nata Lux*, John Rutter's *The Sprig of Thyme*, and Vaughan Williams' *Fantasia on Christmas Carols*.

The choir has a steering committee and an active social network. Relaxed but supportive home-based sectionals, picnics and parties have all helped to create a friendly atmosphere at rehearsals and events. We are proud to be part of the community that is Fortismere Music Centre, which brings neighbours, teachers and pupils together to create high-calibre music.



We welcome new members, especially tenors and basses. For more information and tickets for concerts, please visit our website:

**[www.fortismeremusiccentre.co.uk](http://www.fortismeremusiccentre.co.uk)**

or contact Joseph Winters at: [fmcinfo@fortismere.org.uk](mailto:fmcinfo@fortismere.org.uk)

## Our singers

**SOPRANOS:** Janet Dobney, Charlie Dunn, Laura Fransella, Jill Heath, Linda Hooper, Norma Hunter, Rose Lamberty, Jane Lauchlan, Sarah McMenemy, Diana Mendlicott, Chris Mohr, Gill Morris, Claire Murdoch, Jenny Poirier, Viola Sampson, Diane Winters

**ALTOS:** Margaret Battley, Mari-Wyn Burley, Helen Finch, Maggie Garner, Angela Head, Mattie Hulbert, Anne Keogh, Lotta Kitchen, Buz Loveday, Judy Malek, Jo Maude, Janice McLaren, Catherine Mkhize, Judith Rosen, Sabine Schutte, Sue White, Joan Wickham

**TENORS:** Tasha Barlow, Annie Coombes, Steve Dell, Catrin Dillon, Colette Dockery, Ruth Hogarth, Anne Hutchings, Michael Lewis, Sami Moxon, Deborah Rookes, Helen Tackaberry, Nick Thomas, Catherine Whybourn, Carolyn Woodmason

**BASSES:** Justin Baron, Bernard Battley, Graham Bradley, Rob Dibble, Phil Dunn, Steven Goodlife, Dominic Green, Adrian Henriques, Nick Kitchen, Stuart Little, Gavin Lumsden, Tom Lyon, Michael Parfett, Andrew Wickham.

Correct at time of going to press.

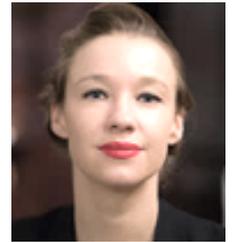
### **Marvin L. Perrott – musical director**

Marvin studied Early Music at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama and has extensive experience both as a singer and conductor. He has performed in numerous roles both in the United Kingdom and abroad. Equally at home in the concert hall Marvin has performed as a soloist in the *Messiah*, Monteverdi's *1610 Vespers* and Bach's *H-moll Messe* at the Aldeburgh Music Festival. In 2004 Marvin formed the Clemens non Papa Consort, a group whose aim is to perform lesser known works of the Baroque, Renaissance and Classical periods to a high artistic standard. Marvin is also the guest conductor of the Lavenham Singers.



### **Elise Lefay – soprano**

Elise has recently performed opera roles including works by Charpentier and Lully with Clemens non Papa Consort. She also enjoys performing oratorios, cantatas and motets such as Mozart's *Exsultate Jubilate*, *Coronation Mass*, Haydn's *D Moll Mass*, Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater*, Couperin's *Leçons de Ténèbres* and Vivaldi's *Nulla mundo pax sincera*. She has sung with choirs including the London Philharmonic Chorus and the BBC Symphony Chorus.



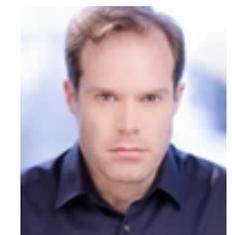
### **Tim Kingston – tenor**

Tim trained as an operatic tenor at the Royal Academy of Music. He has extensive experience as both a choral singer and a soloist, as well as in professional opera. As a choral singer, he has performed with many cathedral choirs and consorts, including Wells Cathedral Choir, Norwich Cathedral Choir, the Rodolphus Choir, and the Wellensian Consort. As a soloist he has performed a wide variety of music, from Bach's *B Minor Mass* to Jonathan Dove's opera *'Flight'*.



### **Thomas Kennedy – bass**

Previously a choral scholar at New College, Oxford, Thomas taught maths before returning to postgraduate musical study at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, graduating with distinction in 2009. He has performed numerous operatic roles and chorus for ENO, Garsington and Grange Park Opera. His concert work includes Handel's *Messiah*, the song project *Lads in their hundreds* at Kings Place and on BBC Radio 3, and Ives' *General William Booth* with Sir Andrew Davis and the BBCSO at the Barbican Hall



### **John Eady – répétiteur and continuo**

John studied music at King's College London, the Royal Academy of Music and cello at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. In 2002 he started to learn the organ at the St Giles International Organ School and in 2006 he became a Fellow of the Royal College of Organists. He is a freelance cellist and organist, manages his string quartet named Four Strings Attached, and is organist at St Magnus the Martyr, London Bridge.



## Our nominated charity

This evening's concert is supporting local charity **North London Hospice** through a donation from any profits and a collection after the concert. The hospice is particularly valued by one of our members whose family has been supported recently through their wonderful services. More information at: [www.northlondonhospice.org](http://www.northlondonhospice.org).

*"North London Hospice is a registered charity which has been caring for local people since 1984. We help those with a potentially life-limiting illness who have specialist needs. Care is provided to help them physically, emotionally and spiritually. We support our patients in making the most of their life, despite their illness. People are treated as individuals with respect shown for their personal beliefs, lifestyle and culture. The Hospice is multi-faith and welcomes patients from all faiths and communities."*



Thank you for any donations you are able to give to this deserving local cause.

## Our upcoming concerts at St Andrew's Church



Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> June

**Fortismere Community Symphony Orchestra**

*Stravinsky & Music of the Theatre*

Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> December 2018

**Fortismere Community Choir**

*Christmas concert featuring music by female composers and a new work by Phoebe McFarlane commissioned especially for the choir*



Information and tickets: [fortismeremusiccentre.co.uk](http://fortismeremusiccentre.co.uk)

**With thanks to Revd Antony F. Pybus, Ms Gay O'Rourke and St Andrew's Church**

Programme design by Anne Hutchings