



The Four Seasons

Knoxville Symphony Orchestra
Moxley Carmichael Masterworks Series
Sept. 23-24, 2021
Tennessee Theatre

Sponsored by



Aram Demirjian, *conductor*

Robyn Bollinger, *violin*

The 5th Woman: Rhea Carmon, Heather Davis, Drew Drake, Taria Person,
spoken word artists

VALERIE COLEMAN

Umoja: Anthem of Unity

ANTONIO VIVALDI

The Four Seasons

I. Spring

i. Allegro

ii. Largo e pianissimo sempre

iii. Danza pastorale. Allegro

II. Summer

i. Allegro non molto

ii. Adagio; Presto

iii. Presto

III. Autumn

i. Allegro

ii. Adagio molto

iii. Allegro

IV. Winter

i. Allegro non molto

ii. Largo

iii. Allegro

Robyn Bollinger, *violin*

Rhea Carmon and The 5th Woman, *spoken word artists*



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- INTERMISSION -

EDWARD ELGAR

Enigma Variations

Theme: Enigma

Variation I (C.A.E.)

Variation II (H.D.S-P.)

Variation III (R.B.T.)

Variation IV (W.M.B.)

Variation V (R.P.A.)

Variation VI (Ysobel)

Variation VII (Troyte)

Variation VIII (W.N.)

Variation IX (Nimrod)

Variation X (Dorabella)

Variation XI (G.R.S.)

Variation XII (B.G.N.)

Variation XIII (***)

Variation XIV (E.D.U.)

This performance is funded in part by a grant from South Arts in partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts and Tennessee Arts Commission.



This concert will be broadcast on WUOT 91.9 FM on Tuesday, October 12, 2021, at 8:00 p.m.

Latecomers will be seated during the first convenient pause in the performance. The use of recording devices and/or cameras is strictly forbidden. Please remember to silence all electronic devices and refrain from text messaging during the concert. Mobile devices may be used to read program notes during the concert. Programs and artists subject to change



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ARTIST: ROBYN BOLLINGER

Daring, versatile, and charismatic, American violinist Robyn Bollinger is recognized for her musical creativity, rich tones, emotional depth, and technical mastery. Having made her Philadelphia Orchestra debut at age twelve, Ms. Bollinger has since performed with orchestras throughout the United States, in chamber music on national and international stages, in recitals, and at numerous festivals.



Following 2019 summer engagements at the music festivals of Halcyon and Monadnock, and at the Highlands-Cashiers and Orcas Island chamber music festivals, Ms. Bollinger's 2019-20 season is anchored by a prestigious Dumbarton Oaks Early-Career Musician Residency in Washington, DC. Orchestral performances this season include the symphony orchestras of Helena, Southern Pennsylvania, and Symphony In C. Ms. Bollinger can be heard on tour in the fall and spring with Musicians From Marlboro (with concerts at Boston's Longy School of Music and Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, New York City's Weill Hall at Carnegie Hall, Philadelphia's Perelman Theater, and Washington, DC's Freer Gallery), and with the New York-based ensemble The Knights. Festival appearances include St. Bart's Music Festival and TaoArts Chamber Music Festival, and she can be heard in recital for the Santa Monica Music Society. Based in Boston, Ms. Bollinger can be heard throughout the season around the city in concerts at Jordan Hall with A Far Cry (in a program curated by her), at Sanders Theatre in Cambridge with the Boston Chamber Music Society, and at First Church on the Glissando Concert Series.

A recipient of a prestigious 2016 Fellowship from the Leonore Annenberg Arts Fellowship Fund for her multimedia performance project entitled "CIACCONA: The Bass of Time," Robyn Bollinger began touring the program in 2018. The multi-media concert tells the story of one of the oldest musical ideas, the repeating bass line, through solo violin music. To date, the concert has appeared at the Lake Champlain Chamber Music Festival, Emory University, National Sawdust (Brooklyn, NY), and the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum. The Boston Globe praised "...she did more than just perform dauntingly difficult works by Biber, Bach, Bartok, and Berio. She melded them into an evening-length exploration of the ciaccona as such — a Baroque dance form that has morphed over the course of centuries.... Throughout the night, Bollinger's technique proved equal to every challenge, with playing that was poised, precise, and musical." And The Boston Musical Intelligencer called her "an engaging and original talent."

Past season highlights include engagements with the Boston Pops and the symphony orchestras of California, Charleston, Grand Tetons Music Festival Orchestra, Helena, Illinois, Indian Hill, Knoxville, and Symphony In C. She has performed in such distinguished venues and respected series as Boston's Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, New York City's Carnegie Hall's Weill Hall, the Smithsonian Museum's Freer Gallery in D.C., Connecticut's Greenwich Library Series, Philadelphia Chamber Music Society Series, and Schenectady's Union College Concert Series. Festival credits include Aspen, Lake Champlain, Maui, Marlboro, Orcas Island Chamber, and Rockport. During the 2018-19 season, Ms. Bollinger gave the world premiere of Artifacts, a five-movement violin concerto commissioned by California Symphony by composer Katherine Balch written specifically for her.



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A sought-after collaborator, Ms. Bollinger is a popular figure on the chamber music stage, both as a member of the renowned, Grammy-nominated Boston-based ensemble A Far Cry, and for her work at Festivals and on chamber music series. She has performed in Midori's Music Sharing International Community Engagement Program "ICEP" in Japan, performed in recital in Japan's Phoenix Hall (Osaka), Oji Hall (Tokyo), and Tokyo National Arts Center, and served as a Young Artist Fellow for Music for Food, the national musician-led initiative for local hunger relief. A former member of the Newman String Quartet, which took the silver medal at the 2007 Fischhoff National Chamber Music Competition, she has also served as a member of the Lake Champlain Chamber Music Festival's Young Trio in Residence (2015 - 2017). Collaborations include the Chameleon Arts Ensemble, Jupiter Chamber Players at Lincoln Center, Chameleon Arts Ensemble, Mistral Music, and with members of the Borromeo, Cleveland, Juilliard, Johannes, Lydian, Mendelssohn, and Pro Arte quartets, among others.

Robyn Bollinger records for Crier Records. During the 2017-18 season, she released her debut solo CD and DVD, both titled "CIACCONA: The Bass of Time." James Oestreich of The New York Times reviewed the CD and selected her performance of Biber's Sequenza VIII as one of "8 Best Classical Music Moments of the Week on YouTube," writing: "It was the concept that drew me to the new CD, CIACCONA: The Bass of Time, from Crier Records, but it was the young violinist Robyn Bollinger who held me captive. Through solo works of Biber, Bach, Bartok, and Berio, Ms. Bollinger explores the lineage of the chaconne or passacaglia, call it what you will, with its often obsessive focus on a bass figure." As a member of A Far Cry, she recorded the Grammy-nominated "Dreams and Prayers" and "Visions and Variations." The all-premieres CD includes arrangements of works by Hildegard von Bingen, Ludwig van Beethoven, and Osvaldo Golijov, as well as works by Mehmet Ali Sanlıkol written for and premiered by A Far Cry.

In addition to the Leonore Annenberg Fellowship, Ms. Bollinger's talent has been recognized with numerous awards, among them an Entrepreneurial Musicianship Grant from New England Conservatory for her groundbreaking "Project Paganini" performance project featuring all twenty-four Paganini Caprices. Ms. Bollinger has received top prizes at many international competitions, among them the International Fritz Kreisler Competition in Vienna, the Yehudi Menuhin International Competition for Young Violinists in France, and the Louis Spohr International Competition in Germany. She has been specially recognized with prizes for her performances of Bach and Beethoven works at several competitions. A familiar figure on radio, Ms. Bollinger came to national attention through her 2014 residency on PRI's "Performance Today" and several appearances on NPR's "From the Top."

Born in Philadelphia in 1991, Robyn Bollinger is a former recipient of the Laurence Lesser Presidential Scholarship at the New England Conservatory of Music, Boston, MA, where she received both her Bachelor's and Master's degrees with honors. Ms. Bollinger's former teachers include Miriam Fried, Soovin Kim, and Paul Kantor. From July 2013 to May 2017, Ms. Bollinger played a 1778 Joseph and Antonio Gagliano violin on generous loan from the Ravinia Festival's Steans Institute Instrument Bank. As of May 2017, she now performs on a beautiful 2017 violin made by the world-renowned luthier Samuel Zygmuntowicz, on loan from a private collection.



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ARTIST: RHEA CARMON & THE 5TH WOMAN

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The 5th Woman Poetry Collective uses poetry as a means of community, activism, inspiration, and sharing the stories of any person. The 5th Woman sponsors virtual and in-person gatherings of poetry. The 5th Woman On Stage is a full-length theatrical presentation that focuses on the experiences of women. We are also responsible for the first poetry reality web series, "Beyond the Spark". Our mission is to allow Poetry, the 5th Woman, to radicalize the souls of people by sharing stories and inspiring audiences to be active in their communities.

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PROGRAM: UMOJA: ANTHEM OF UNITY (2019)

Valerie Coleman was born in Louisville, Kentucky, in 1970. The first performance of Umoja: Anthem of Unity took place at Verizon Hall in the Kimmel Center, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, on September 19, 2019, with Yannick Nézet-Séguin conducting the Philadelphia Orchestra. Umoja: Anthem of Unity is scored piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, English horn, two clarinets, bass clarinet, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, trombone, bass trombone, tuba, timpani, snare drum, bass drum, temple blocks, triangle, cymbals (large ride, suspended, and crash), tambourine, glockenspiel, xylophone, marimba, vibraphone, harp, piano, and strings. Approximate performance time is ten minutes.

The score for Umoja: Anthem of Unity includes the following commentary:

Listen my people,
Children of ALL
It's time for Unity Hear the Winds Call.

Oh a-hum, a-hum Nkosi ah..
Oh a-hum, a-hum Nkosi ah..

In its original form, Umoja, the Swahili word for Unity and the first principle of the African Diaspora holiday Kwanzaa, was compose(d) (as) a simple song for women's choir. It embodied a sense of 'tribal unity', through the feel of a drum circle, the sharing of history through traditional "call and response" form, and the repetition of a memorable sing-song melody. It was rearranged into woodwind quintet form during the genesis of Coleman's chamber music ensemble, Imani Winds, with the intent of providing an anthem that celebrated the diverse heritages of the ensemble itself.

Almost two decades later from the original, the orchestral version brings an expansion and sophistication to the short and sweet melody, beginning with sustained ethereal passages that float and shift from a bowed vibraphone, supporting the introduction of the melody by solo violin. Here the melody is sweetly singing in its simplest form with an earnest reminiscent of Appalachian style music. From there, the melody dances and weaves throughout the instrument families, interrupted by dissonant viewpoints led by the brass and percussion sections, which represent the clash of injustices, racism, and hate that threatens to gain a foothold in the world today. Spiky textures turn into an aggressive exchange between upper woodwinds and percussion, before a return to the melody as a gentle reminder of kindness and humanity. Through the brass-led ensemble tutti, the journey ends with a bold call of unity that harkens back to the original anthem.

Umoja has seen the creation of many versions, that are like siblings to one another, similar in many ways, but each with a unique voice that is informed by Coleman's ever-evolving creativity and perspective.

"This version honors the simple melody that ever was, but is now a full exploration into the meaning of freedom and unity. Now more than ever, Umoja has to ring as a strong and beautiful anthem for the world we live in today."



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PROGRAM: LE QUATTRO STAGIONI (THE FOUR SEASONS) OPUS 8, NOS. 1-4 (ca. 1725)

Antonio Vivaldi was born in Venice, Italy, on March 4, 1678, and died in Vienna, Austria, on July 28, 1741. In addition to the solo violin, *Le quattro Stagioni* is scored for strings and continuo. Approximate performance time is thirty-seven minutes.

Antonio Vivaldi composed more than 230 concertos for solo violin. Among them, *The Four Seasons* is by far the best known. Indeed, almost three centuries after its composition, *The Four Seasons* remains one of the most popular works in all of concert music.

The Four Seasons, scored for solo violin, continuo, and strings, is part of a larger work, a series of twelve concertos for violin and orchestra the composer entitled *Il cimento dell'armonia e dell'inventione* (*The Contest of Harmony and Invention*), Opus 8. *The Four Seasons* comprises the first four of the Opus 8 concertos. Le Cène, in Amsterdam, published *Il cimento dell'armonia e dell'inventione* in 1725.

The 1725 score of *The Four Seasons* includes sonnets (that may have been written by the composer), describing the programs for each of the twelve movements. Further, certain passages in the score are accompanied by additional captions describing what the music is intended to portray. For example, the repeated forte viola figure in the second movement of Spring is designated by the composer as “*Il cane che grida*” — the goat herd’s “barking dog”!

What is remarkable is that while Vivaldi incorporates dozens of such descriptive touches into *The Four Seasons*, the music never deteriorates into a series of effects. Rather, *The Four Seasons* demonstrates an admirable — and highly satisfying — sense of cohesion. This is achieved, in great part, by Vivaldi’s use of the *ritornello* (a recurring instrumental phrase) in the outer movements of each “Season.” Further, Vivaldi’s considerable melodic gifts, daring harmonies, and brilliant writing for the solo instrument produce an immensely entertaining work. If there was ever music that radiated the composer’s joy in its creation, it is Vivaldi’s *The Four Seasons*. The continued affection for Vivaldi’s masterpiece reflects that such enthusiasm was not misplaced.

The poetic nature and rhythmic vitality of Vivaldi's *Seasons* prompted KSO Music Director Aram Demirjian to approach Knoxville Poet Laureate Rhea Carmon about creating a new set of poems inspired by Vivaldi's music, continuing a cycle of creativity that began three centuries ago, which they have called *Vivaldi Reimagined*. Carmon comments:

"We all look at the four seasons of a year through a different lens. I interact with Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* by examining the stories of my life and community as we travel through each season. Through conversations, I have learned that I can connect with all types of people through shared experiences. I invite you to find yourself in the words that are presented and allow these stories and experiences to promote connection with the humanity of those around you."

Notes on the Program by Ken Meltzer



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PROGRAM: VARIATIONS ON AN ORIGINAL THEME, OPUS 36, "ENIGMA" (1899)

Edward Elgar was born in Broadheath, near Worcester, England, on June 2, 1857, and died in Worcester on February 23, 1934. The first performance of the “Enigma” Variations took place at St. James’s Hall in London, England, on June 19, 1899, with Hans Richter conducting. The “Enigma” variations are scored for piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, contrabassoon, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, bass drum, cymbal, snare drum, triangle, organ (optional), and strings. Approximate performance time is twenty-nine minutes.

The triumphant premiere of Edward Elgar’s “Enigma” Variations took place at St. James’s Hall in London on June 19, 1899. The word “Enigma” is found in the score above the introduction of the principal theme. In a 1911 commentary, Elgar suggested that the “enigma” refers to the manipulation and development of the theme: “This work, commenced in a spirit of humour and continued in deep seriousness, contains sketches of the composer’s friends. It may be understood that these personages comment or reflect upon the original theme and each one attempts a solution of the Enigma, for so the theme is called.”

Andante — In the seventeen-bar introduction, the strings, followed by the winds, present the various elements of the haunting principal theme.

1. **(C.A.E.) L'istesso tempo** — The composer’s loving tribute to his wife, Caroline Alice Elgar.
2. **(H.D.S-P.) Allegro** — Hew David Steuart-Powell was an amateur pianist who, according to Elgar, would begin each session with “a characteristic diatonic run over the keys.”
3. **(R.B.T.) Allegretto** — Richard Baxter Townshend was an author and amateur actor who regaled audiences with his ability to instantly shift his vocal range from the deepest basso profundo to the highest soprano.
4. **(W.M.B.) Allegro di molto** — The shortest of the Variations depicts William Meath Baker informing his guests of arrangements he made for their transportation and then quickly leaving the room, “with a bang on the door.”
5. **(R.P.A.) Moderato** — Richard Penrose Arnold was the son of poet Matthew Arnold.
6. **(Ysobel) Andantino** — Isabel Fitton studied viola with Elgar.
7. **(Troyte) Presto** — Arthur Troyte Griffith was an architect and amateur painter.
8. **(W.N.) Allegretto** — Winifred Norbury served with Elgar as joint secretary of the Worcestershire Philharmonic Society.
9. **(Nimrod) Adagio** — “Nimrod” is Elgar’s heartfelt depiction of his friend, August Jaeger (“jaeger” in German means “hunter,” thus the reference to Nimrod, the biblical hunter).
10. **(Dorabella) Intermezzo. Allegretto** — Dora Penny was W.M.B.’s step-niece whom Elgar nicknamed “Dorabella,” after a character in Mozart’s opera, *Così fan tutte*.
11. **(G.R.S.) Allegro di molto** — According to Elgar, this section depicts George Robertson Sinclair’s bulldog, Dan, plunging into the river, vigorously swimming to shore and finally landing with a “rejoicing bark.”
12. **(B.G.N.) Andante** — Basil G. Nevinson was an amateur cellist who often played chamber music with Elgar.
13. **(***) Romanza. Moderato** — The penultimate Variation is inspired by Lady Mary Lygon.
14. **(E.D.U.) Finale. Allegro** — The composer himself appears (“E.D.U.” is derived from “Edoo,” Lady Elgar’s nickname for her husband) in the stirring *Finale*.

Notes on the Program by Ken Meltzer



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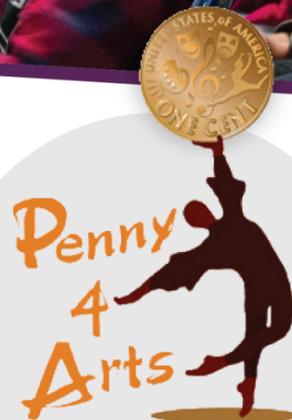


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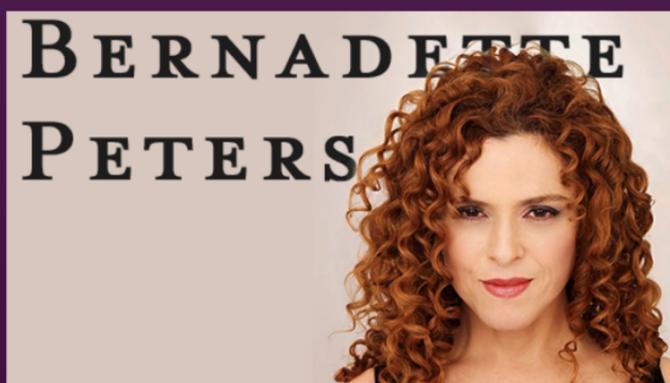
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