

Handel's
Water Music

Featuring,
The Sebastians
with
Stephen Sands,
conductor

Saturday, June 24, 2017
The Lake Club, Far Hills

SAVE THE DATE

» October 28, 2017 «

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PROGRAM

Excerpts from *The Four Seasons* - Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741)

Concerto No. 1 in E major, Op. 8, RV 269, "Spring" (La primavera)

Allegro
Largo e pianissimo sempre
Allegro pastorale

Concerto No. 2 in G minor, Op. 8, RV 315, "Summer" (L'estate)

Allegro non molto
Adagio e piano - Presto e forte
Presto

Water Music - George Frideric Handel - (1685-1759)

Suite in F major (HWV 348)

Overture (Largo - Allegro)
Adagio e staccato
Allegro - Andante - Allegro da capo Aria
Minuet
Air
Minuet
Bourrée
Hornpipe
Allegro

Suite in D major (HWV 349)

Overture (Allegro)
Alla Hornpipe
Minuet
Lentement
Bourrée

Suite in G major (HWV 350)

Allegro
Rigaudon
Allegro
Minuet
Allegro

PROGRAM NOTES

Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741) was seven years older than Handel. Their paths may have crossed in Italy when they were both making their way as young composers, but it is not known that they ever met. In about 1717, Vivaldi left Venice to become *maestro di cappella* in Mantua, and *The Four Seasons* appears to have been inspired by the countryside around that city-state. The work is made up of four separate and self-contained violin concerti, each of them depicting a separate season and each of them written to illustrate the words of a sonnet (it is possible that Vivaldi was both the poet and the composer). The match between words and music is very striking. Just as each sonnet has three sections, so each concerto has three corresponding movements - fast-slow-fast - with Vivaldi's markings in the score often adding emphases. In the middle section of Spring, for instance, "the barking dog" is indicated as being in the viola section, and the mood of the first movement of Summer is specified as "Languor caused by the heat".

Spring **(Concerto No. 1 in E Major)**

Allegro

*Spring has arrived with joy
Welcomed by the birds with happy songs,
And the brooks, amidst gentle breezes,
Murmur sweetly as they flow.
The sky is caped in black, and
Thunder and lightning herald a storm
When they fall silent, the birds
Take up again their delightful songs.*

Largo e pianissimo sempre

*And in the pleasant, blossom-filled
meadow,
To the gentle murmur of leaves and plants,
The goatherd sleeps, his faithful dog
beside him.*

Allegro

*To the merry sounds of a rustic bagpipe,
Nymphs and shepherds dance in their
beloved spot
When Spring appears in splendor.*

Summer **(Concerto No. 2 in G Minor)**

Allegro non molto

*Under the merciless sun of the season
Languishes man and flock, the pine
tree burns.
The cuckoo begins to sing and at once
Join in the turtledove and the goldfinch.
A gentle breeze blows, but Boreas
Is roused to combat suddenly with
his neighbor,
And the shepherd weeps because
overhead
Hangs the fearsome storm, and
his destiny.*

Adagio

*His tired limbs are robbed of rest
By his fear of the lightning and the
frightful thunder
And by the flies and hornets in
furious swarms.*

Presto

*Alas, his fears come true:
There is thunder and lightning in
the heavens
And the hail cuts down the tall
ears of grain.*



PROGRAM NOTES CONTINUED

Handel's *Water Music*

George Frideric Handel (1685-1759): In 1710, aged 25, with four years of productive experience in Italy already on his resumé, Handel accepted the prestigious post of *maestro di cappella* to the Elector of Hanover and promptly requested leave to visit London. He liked England and decided to settle there - a decision made all the easier when, in 1714, his German employer, the Elector, inherited the English crown and became King George I. The new king did not find it easy to be accepted in London - he spoke almost no English when he arrived - so Handel's popularity with the British public, and especially with the aristocracy, was a considerable boon to the King. It was to Handel he turned in July of 1717 when he decided to organize a party for the royal court. It was held on the Thames at night-time as the King and his court traveled from Westminster to Chelsea, and back again. Next day, Britain's first daily newspaper, *The Daily Courant*, published an enthusiastic report:

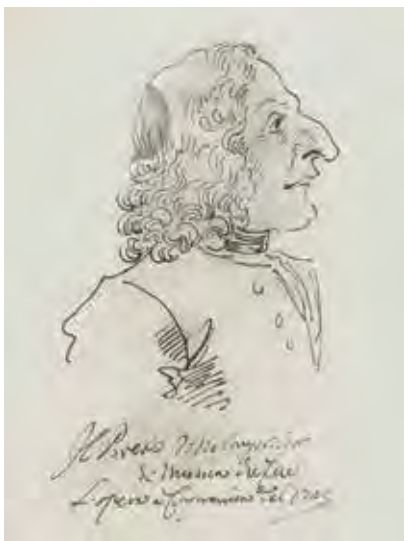
At about 8, the King took Water at Whitehall in an open Barge ... and went up the River towards Chelsea. Many other Barges with Persons of Quality attended, and so great a Number of Boats, that the whole River in a manner was cover'd; a City Company's Barge was employ'd for the Musick, wherein were 50 instruments of all sorts, who play'd all the Way from Lambeth the finest Symphonies, compos'd express for this Occasion, by Mr. Hendel; which his Majesty liked so well, that he caus'd it to be plaid over three times in going and returning. At Eleven his Majesty went a-shore at Chelsea where a Supper was prepar'd, and then there was another very fine Consort of Musick, which lasted till 2; after which, his Majesty came again into his Barge, and return'd the same Way, the Musick continuing to play till he landed.



Handel (left) and King George I on the River Thames July 17, 1717. Painting by Edouard Hamman.

This was a sizable orchestra - 50 instruments - and it probably had to be in order to make itself heard on the broad river. Handel's later orchestration, published in 1733 as *The Celebrated Water Musick* (and incorporating additional pieces he had set for subsequent royal river parties), specified only 24 instruments, and that is how it is performed tonight. The 21 separate movements are arranged into three suites according to their keys and instrumentations. The first suite, in F major, is notable for featuring two French horns (the first time that instrument had been featured in English music, so far as is known). The second suite, in D major, adds trumpets to the mix. And the third suite, in G major, is more lightly scored with flutes.

The Water Music is about dance - all sorts of dances from several different countries, but most of all from France where dance was not just a popular craze but the height of fashion, promoted and directed by King Louis' royal court at Versailles. *The Water Music* features giges and rigadouns and sarabandes (all of them French court dances, although Handel doubtless knew that the gigue was derived from the British 'jig' and the sarabande from a Mexican- Spanish dance). There are bourrées, also from France, and the famous minuet in waltz-time, written by Handel more than fifty years before the waltz became fashionable in Vienna and swept all of Europe. In a nod to his adopted homeland, Handel even included the English hornpipe, in duple time with syncopated rhythms. As befits a royal commission, each suite begins with a stately overture (allegro) in what was then the French style.



Antonio Vivaldi. Caricature by P.L. Ghezzi (1723).

THE SEBASTIANS

The Sebastians (www.sebastians.org) are a dynamic and vital musical ensemble specializing in music of the baroque and classical eras. Lauded as “everywhere sharp-edged and engaging” (The New York Times), the Sebastians have also been praised for their “well-thought-out articulation and phrasing” (Early Music Review) and “elegant string playing... immaculate in tuning and balance” (Early Music Today). *I Care If You Listen* praised the ensemble’s “beautifully-nuanced playing and thoughtful expressivity” in their debut album, calling the recording a “technical and timbral tour-de-force.” This season, in addition to performances in Massachusetts, New Jersey, and Seattle, the Sebastians presented a year-long celebration of their namesake, J. S. Bach, in New York City, featuring Bach’s *Brandenburg Concerti*; *Vivaldi’s Four Seasons* with a newly-commissioned companion work by Tawnie Olson; Bach’s sonatas and partitas for solo violin as an installation piece in the Cathedral of St. John the Divine; a program exploring the Musical Offering; and a production of Bach’s *St. John Passion* with TENET called “riveting” by The New York Times.

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David Ross

Oboe

Priscilla Herreid

Sarah Davol

Bassoon

James Kopp

Trumpet

Timothy Will

Perry Sutton

Horn

R.J. Kelley

Meredith Moore

Timpani

Ben Harms

Violin I

Daniel S. Lee,
concertmaster

Edson Scheid

Toma Iliev

Alana Youssefian

Holly Nelson

Violin II

Chloe Fedor

Jeremy Rhizor

Peter Kupfer

Emily Hale

Viola

Jessica Troy

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MUSIC IN THE SOMERSET HILLS



Stephen Sands, Music in the Somerset Hills founder and Artistic Director is highly sought after as a soloist, conductor, music educator and ensemble member. He holds his Bachelors and Masters degrees from Westminster Choir College. Stephen is the director of Downtown Voices, a semi-pro choral group that is part of the Trinity Wall Street Music program, focused on bringing the best volunteer and professional singers in the NYC area together for high level performances. He has taught choral music to thousands of students in grades 3-12 in the Somerset Hills School District for more than 18 years, and is a founding member and executive director of the internationally acclaimed Antioch Chamber Ensemble. Stephen sings with the Grammy-nominated Trinity Choir in New York. He has been praised as a "crystalline tenor" (Backstage) and "a tenor with a focused, powerful tone" who sings with "subtlety" and "poignancy" by the New York Times.

Stephen has been heard as the Evangelist and tenor soloist in numerous performances of Bach's sacred oratorios, most recently with the Trinity Choir and Baroque Orchestra in the St. John Passion of J.S. Bach. StephenSands.net

Matthew J. LaPine, Director of Education, is an active performer, educator, conductor, and composer in central New Jersey. In addition to his work with Music in the Somerset Hills, he is the choral director at Bernards High School, the Director of Male Choirs with the New Jersey Youth Chorus (including the Coro Vivo and Camerata ensembles), sings professionally for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Metuchen, and has worked as a guest conductor and clinician for regional honor choirs. Mr. LaPine received his Master of Music degree in Choral Conducting and Music Education from Westminster Choir College where he studied voice and graduated with distinction. His writings on the teaching of choral music have been published in several books by GIA Publications and are used regularly as undergraduate and graduate choral conducting textbooks.



Brian Preston Harlow, Church Concert Series Director, serves as Director of the Rutgers University Chorus, Newark Campus, the Director of the Apprentice Chorus and music theory teacher at the Newark Boys Chorus School and Organist and Choirmaster of St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Gladstone, NJ. Dr. Harlow frequently performs throughout the United States and Europe, often collaboratively with choirs, instrumentalists, and with Christopher Jennings as Duo Organists. Dr. Harlow holds the degrees of Doctor of Musical Arts, Master of Musical Arts and Master of Music from Yale University School of Music, as well as the Bachelor of Music degree with High Distinction from Indiana University School of Music. He received a number of prestigious awards from both schools and from the American Guild of Organists. Dr. Harlow is a member of the board of the Metropolitan New Jersey chapter of

the American Guild of Organists, and the Instrumental Music Reviewer for the Journal of the Association of Anglican Musicians.

Richard Somerset-Ward, President, was, for 21 years, on the staff of the British Broadcasting Corporation, latterly as Head of Music & Arts Programming. He has lived in the United States since 1984 and is the author of *The Story of Opera* (Abrams 1998) and *Angels & Monsters: Male and Female Sopranos in the Story of Opera* (Yale 2004).



Billy Webster (Administrator) earned his BA in Literature and Theater Arts at Hunter College in Manhattan and his Master of Divinity at Princeton Theological Seminary. For seven years he served as Director of Admissions at The General Theological Seminary in New York City. He has also released seven albums of original music, including a rock opera based on The Lord's Prayer entitled "Bold Enough To Say", which held its live debut in Brooklyn in October 2014.

MUSIC IN THE SOMERSET HILLS



Joan Seigle, Co-chair of Development, is a native of the Somerset Hills. Raised by two music enthusiasts, both proficient pianists, she was exposed to concerts and theater from a very young age. She graduated from The University of the South, Sewanee with a degree in English and started a career in marketing and advertising where she continued to develop her creative writing and persuasive verbal skills. Once she left the work force to raise a family, she began volunteering for local non-profit organizations such as St. Luke's Church, St. Philip's Academy, The Gallo Scholarship Committee, Camp Brett-Endeavor, and Plaid House, with fund-raising being the primary focus. By volunteering for MISH, Joan is able to combine her love of community with her passion for music to promote this very dynamic, worthwhile organization.

Pamela L. Nardone, Co-Chair of Development, has been a part of Music in the Somerset Hills, almost from the beginning, as a member of its Community Chorus. Her singing and performing go all the way back to her early school years and have never stopped, simply for the pure joy it brings her. In addition to the Somerset Hills Chorus, she also sings in the choir of St. Luke's, Gladstone, and rings in their Bell Choir. She has day jobs, too: she owns and operates Hibernate Bedding in Bernardsville and helps to manage BORREGAARD of Gladstone. Pamela brings her love and passion for music and this organization along with her many years of experience chairing fundraising events to her development role with Music in the Somerset Hills.



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Music in the Somerset Hills (MISH) is a musical community whose mission is to create musical experiences of the highest quality for those who live and work in the Somerset Hills and the surrounding area. Founded in 2010 by Artistic Director Stephen Sands, MISH's primary focus is the Somerset Hills Community Chorus, The Concert Series and Music Education.

The Somerset Hills Chorus is open to anyone aged 14 and upwards, with or without expertise, and enables young performers to sing extraordinary repertoire alongside more seasoned professionals in fine venues within and around the community.

The Concert Series brings accomplished professional musicians to perform with the Chorus in local venues. Since 2010, performances have included the Vivaldi Gloria, Handel's *Semele* and *Messiah*, a centenary concert of works by Benjamin Britten, a jazz concert of George Shearing works, the Fauré *Requiem*, Bach's *St. John Passion* and, in 2016, Music of the Movies with Peter Dinklage. The concert series also includes performances by distinguished visitors - a Christmas concert by Chanticleer this season, a performance of Handel's *Messiah* by the Choir of Trinity Wall Street the previous year.

Music Education centers on an **Early Childhood Music Program**, which runs classes for children up to 8-years old. These classes take place at a number of venues throughout the Somerset Hills. MISH also runs **Summer Music Camps** for children, including the very popular Summer Voices camp, which attracts between 40 and 70 children in August each year. A guitar workshop is available for adult participation. And MISH offers scholarships to high school seniors who demonstrate musical excellence.

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