

The Four Seasons

(Pieces on Romantic and Celtic themes)

- 1 - Wondrous WINTER***
- 2 - Springing SPRING***
- 3 - Sweet SUMMER***
- 4 - Aching AUTUMN***

*for String Orchestra
with obligato Solo Violin*

DAVID JOHNSTONE

***** SOLO VIOLIN *****

The Four Seasons (Romantic and Celtic Pieces)

for String Orchestra with obligato Solo Violin

The Four Seasons (on Celtic and Romantic themes) of David Johnstone has been composed to fulfil a commission to complete a most interesting concert programme celebrating these very four seasons, to be placed alongside the master works of Antonio Vivaldi and Astor Piazzolla. The unusual work of Johnstone does not constitute a '*concerto*' as such, but does nevertheless give an important role to the solo violinist. There are four individual pieces which, when played as a set or *concertante* work should always follow the order *Wondrous Winter – Springing Spring – Sweet Summer – Aching Autumn*. The total duration of these works is of some 18 minutes.

The first two pieces show strong celtic influence; the last two a high romantic spirit. These are richly descriptive pieces, but they do not follow a specific 'programme' as such – rather they show changing atmospheres and sentimental moods. The briefest summary might be:-

I Wondrous Winter (c.5'00") – the snow, coldness, intimacy, eternity. The opening and closing bars from the orchestra are especially intense, giving a feel of timelessness. In all the central part a distant celtic air can be heard to transcend the ambience, especially taking into account the almost modal singing of the violin soloist. The orchestra gradually increases both its presence and harmonic weight, and thus is able to contribute increasingly to the very melodic nature of this composition.

II Springing Spring (c.5'30") – the new beginnings, growth, young creatures with abounding jumping energy. This is another celtic-influenced piece, somehow half-way between a *scherzo* and a *jig*, where not only the soloist, but also the orchestral sections, have many moments of melodic and rhythmic importance. The main theme acts as a kind of Rondo, with many interesting and fun episodes along the route.

III Sweet Summer (c.4'30") – flowers in bloom, agreeable temperatures, love in the air. A most romantic song from the solo violin, placed above the gentle ripples from the orchestra. There are small delightful solo moments too from the principal viola and principal cello. Near the end a little more romantic intensity shows itself, but the *amoroso* nature of the music quickly returns to 'round off' the composition.

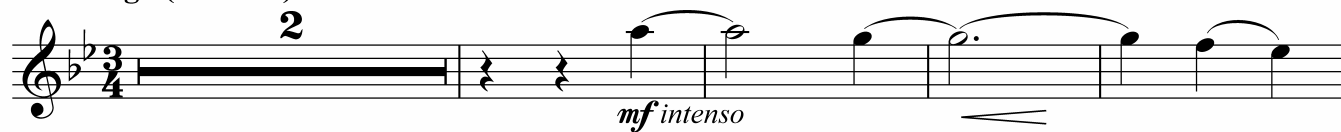
IV Aching Autumn (c.3'15") – the harvesting nearing completion, pleasant memories, sleeping (awaiting the re-birth). This is another instrumental song which, whilst faster than the preceding piece, feels more sluggish and slightly despondent, as if mentally preparing for the sleeping winter and a sense of hibernation. In this piece one can subtly hear references to the following seasons to come through mini-quotes from the '*Seasons*' of Vivaldi, and '*Invierno Porteño*' of Astor Piazzolla. In this way Johnstone links his own creations with the previous masters.

One often sees a concert artist performing the solo part to the Vivaldi *Seasons*, and artistically directing the orchestra at the same time; Johnstone also warms to this possibility, although he might equally suggest that the orchestral leader (concert master) could be an ideal person to play these 'obligato' solos (and therefore seated at the *front* of the first violin section with an individual music stand). However, the manner of performance should always be according to the personal preference of the invited soloist or orchestral leader. Finally, it should be borne in mind that these pieces are suitable for string orchestras of all sizes, and are certainly appropriate for quite small ensembles of some fifteen players or so.

WONDROUS WINTER

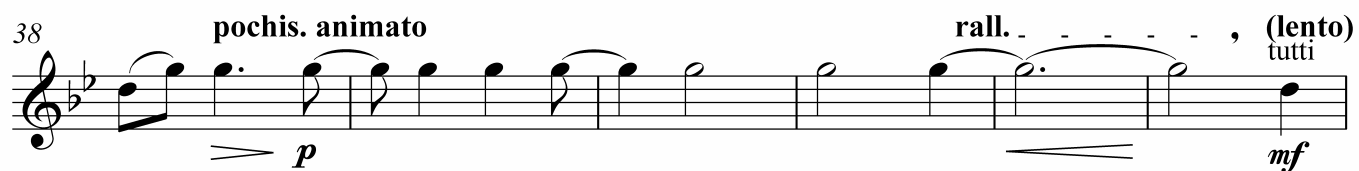
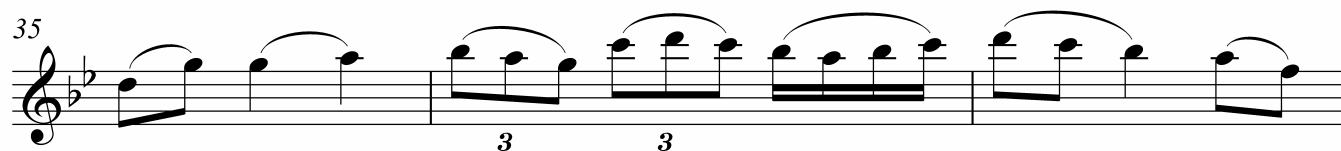
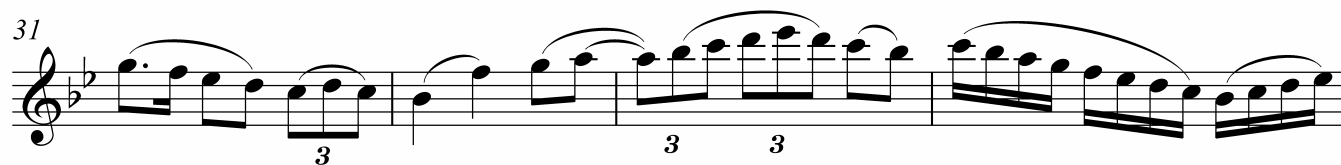
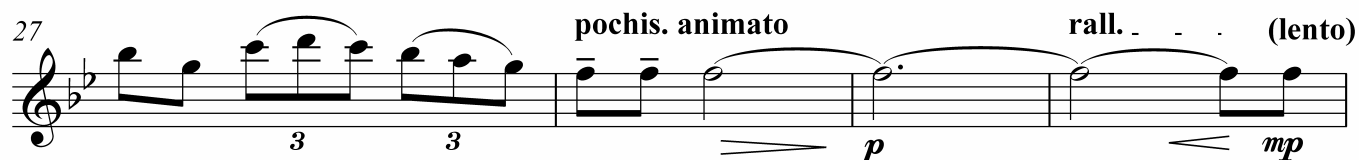
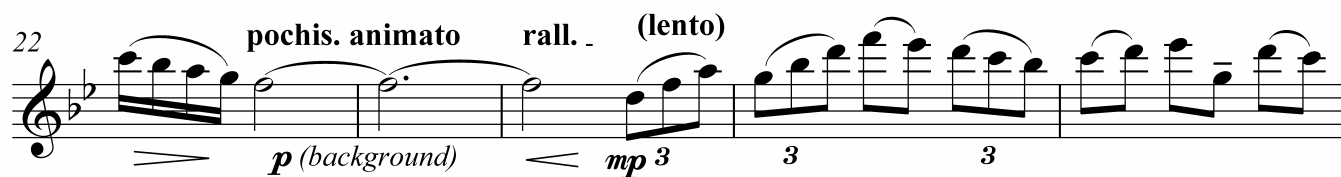
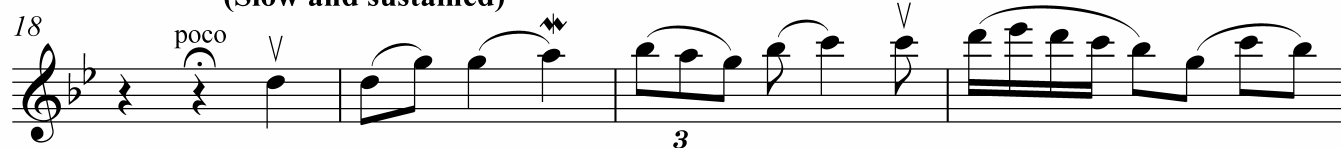
DAVID JOHNSTONE

Largo (♩ = c. 76)



Lento (♩ = c. 56)

(Slow and sustained)



44 **Più lento**

48

52 *mf* *cresc.*

56 *ff* *mf*

60

63 **più tranquillo** *p dolce*

66 **Tempo I° (Largo) (♩ = c. 76)** *accel. poco* *mp*

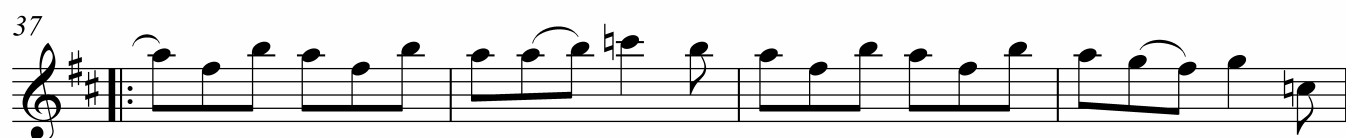
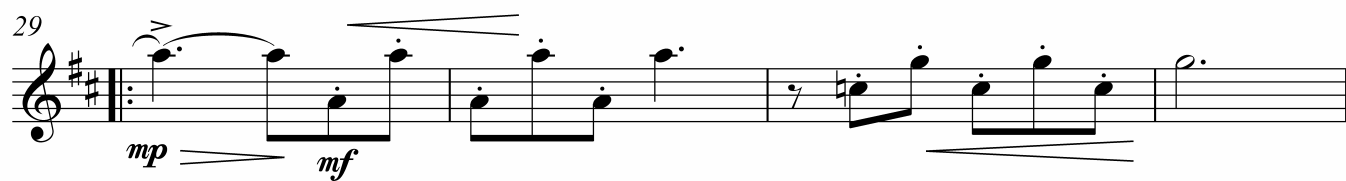
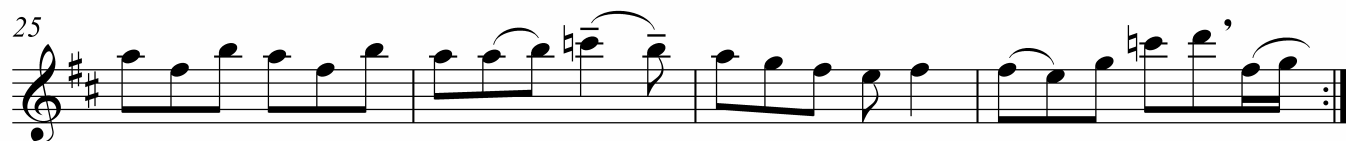
72 *poco a poco dim.*

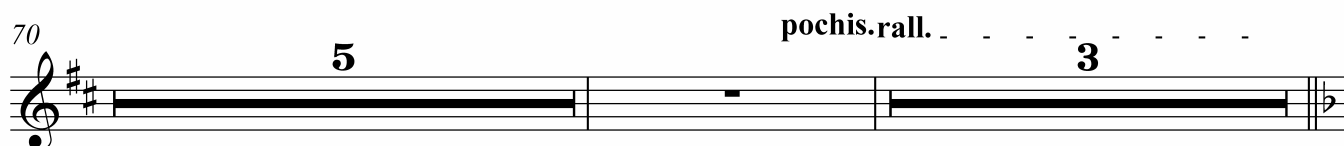
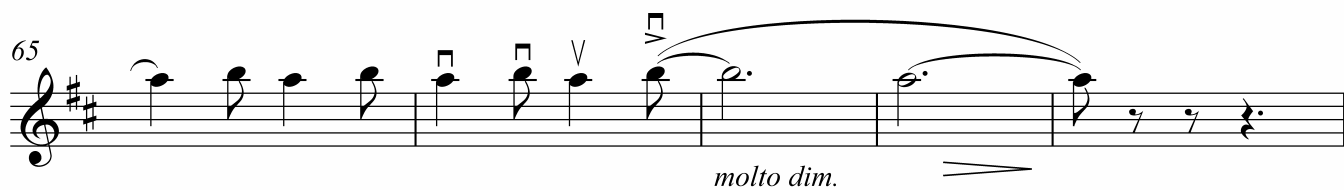
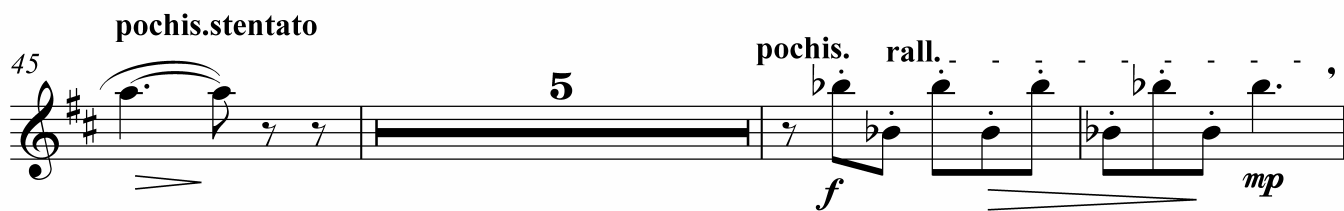
78 **rall.** **Più lento** *p*

SPRINGING SPRING

DAVID JOHNSTONE

Allegro rustico (♩ = 104-120)





Solo Violin

8

87

mf più legato

91

95

f

98

f *mp*

100

f

103

scherzando

106

109

111

gliss.

Solo Violin

9

115

gliss.

119

124

tremolo rapido e intenso

ff

129

134

non. trem.

138

dim.

141

poco a poco rit.

mp

145

mf *mp* *pp*

Solo Violin

10

150 **4** **Andante** **Lento (a 6)**

Molto tranquillo, ma poco a poco accel. e cresc.

156 *p* **3**

160

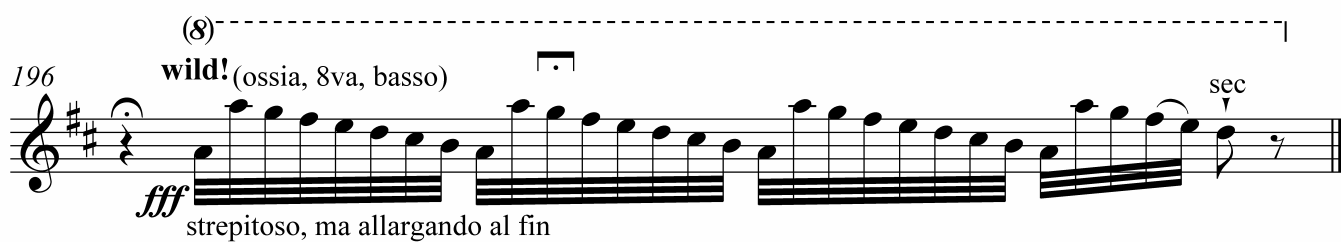
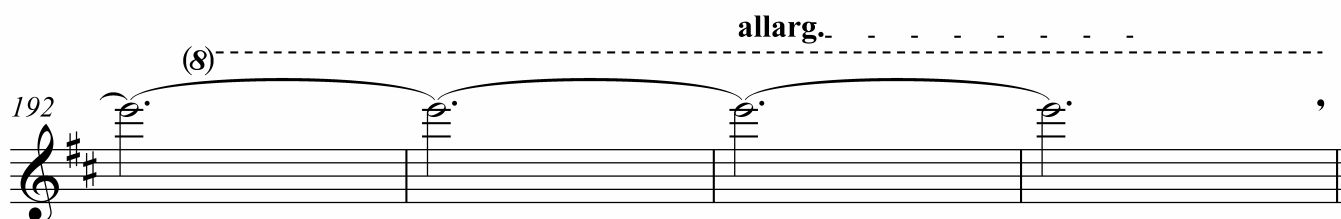
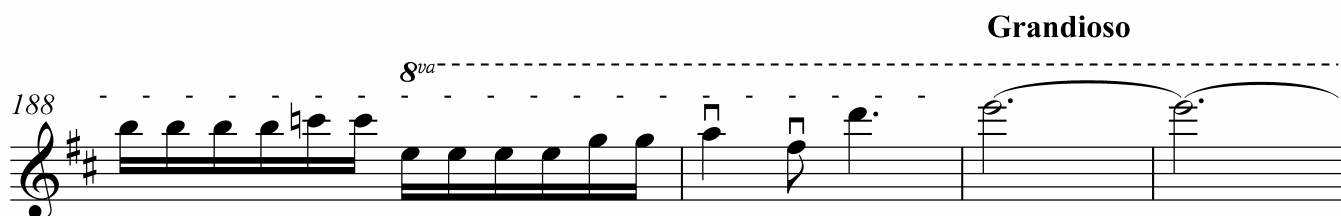
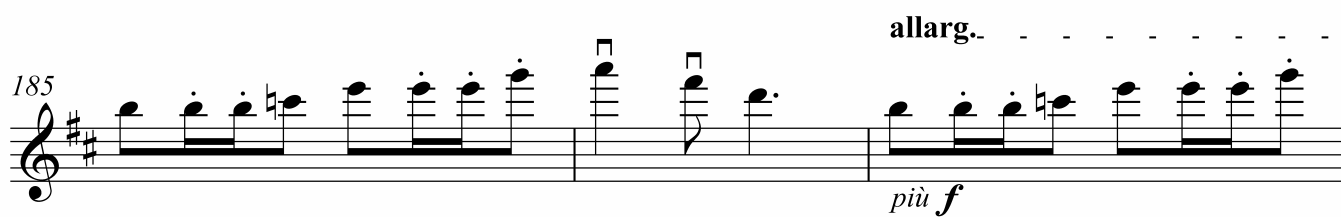
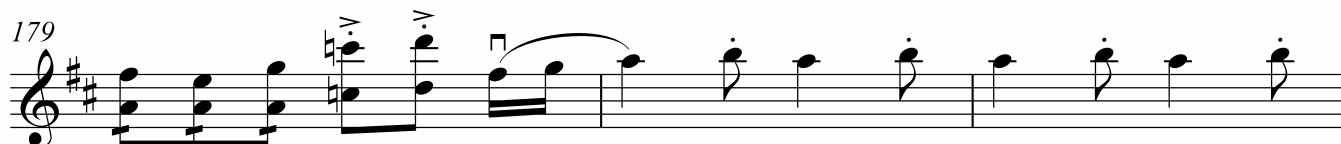
Tempo I° giusto

164 *f* *spic. brillante*

167

170 *p* **più f**

173 *sim.*



SWEET SUMMER

Very tender, slow but always flowing (♩ = c. 69)

DAVID JOHNSTONE

4

parlando

mp dolce

p (background)

mf

12

mp

17

rit. *A tempo*

mf espressivo

6

21

tr *non. tr.*

mp

25

mf

3

29

3

3

32

rit. *a tempo*

3

mf

38

f

ff appassionato

Solo Violin

13

41 *sim.* *f* 3 3 6 6

43 *sim.* 6 6

44 6 6 6

45 6 6 6 6

46 6 6 6 9

47 *ff* 3 3 *ff*

50 *molto dim.* *mp* 3

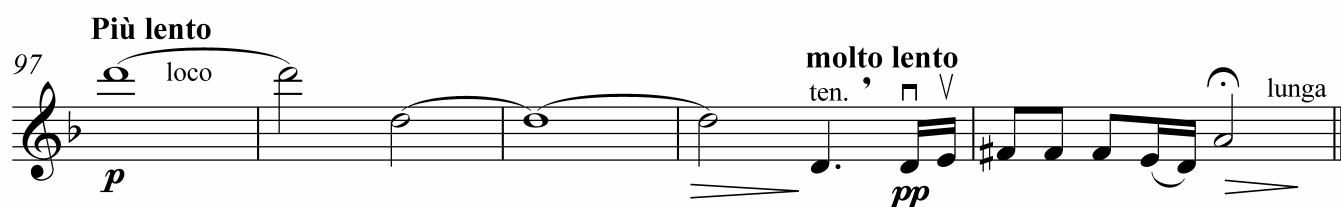
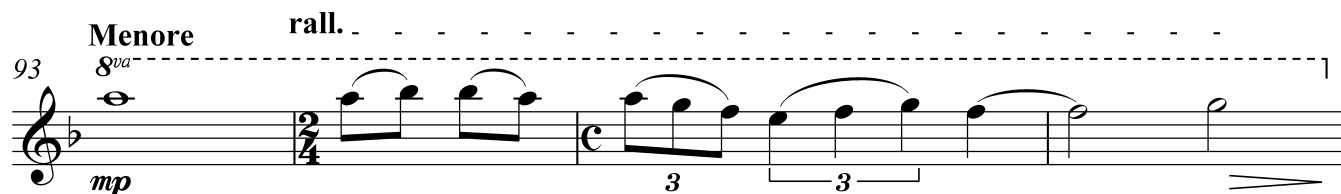
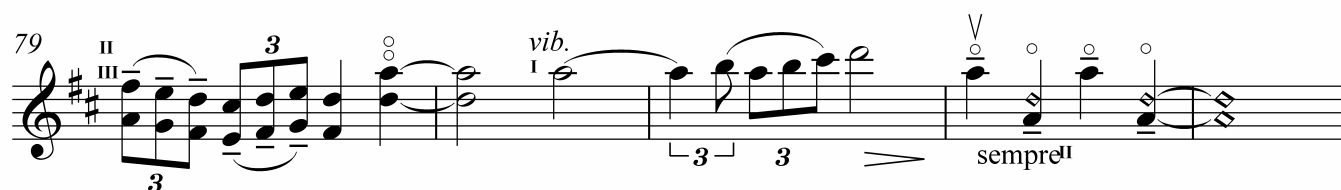
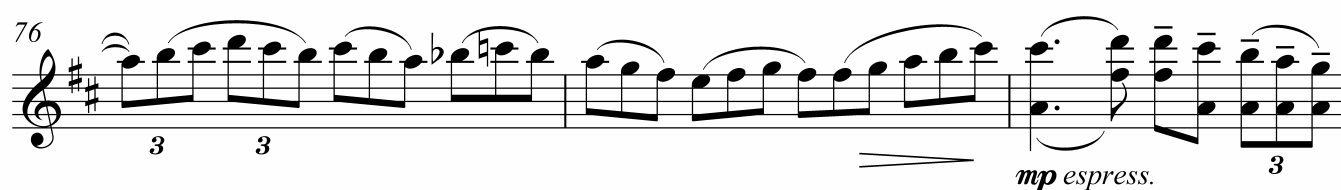
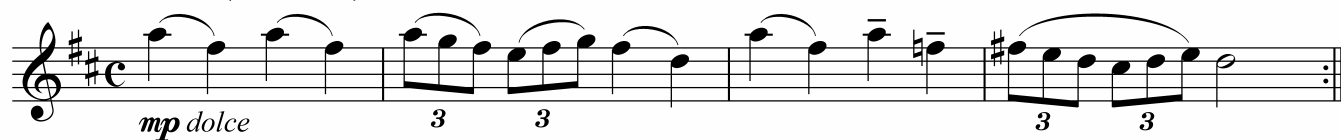
55 *pochis. rall.* *a tempo* *mp* *p*

59 *p* *rall.* *pp*

ACHING AUTUMN

DAVID JOHNSTONE

Andante (♩ = 72-76)





Individual Part for Solo Violin
JM56SC The Four Seasons: For String Orchestra with obligato Solo Violin
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