

Music Box

SEPTEMBER 18, 2016

David Dally, violin
Melinda Coffey Armstead, piano & organ

Concerto in D “Grosso Mogol” Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741)

- I. Allegro
- II. Adagio
- III. Allegro

Concerto in F Major “L’Autunno” A. Vivaldi

- I. Allegro “Ballo e canto de’ villanelli”

Concerto “L’Autunno” A. Vivaldi

- III. Allegro “La Caccia”

Everybody knows THE SEASONS, by Antonio (“The Red Priest”) Vivaldi. But only the most extravagantly informed, such as myself, know that he wrote a sonnet to describe each concerto. Most are quite charming, but the last two stanzas of the Autumn sonnet tell a grim story about a hapless pheasant, tracked down by a hunter and a dog, shot and killed.

In our version, the pheasant explodes out of the bushes and the startled hunter trips on a root, fires into the air as he bangs his patella (Italian for kneecap) on a rock. He curses and fires again, missing the pheasant. The pheasant flies back like a boomerang and nips the dog on his ear. The dog, all input channels now saturated, runs in a small clockwise circle, comforted, after two or three revolutions, by the familiar terrain and the scent of a dog just ahead.

The music is a banquet of sound, including the loud, angry, peasant vocabulary superimposed on a triumphant bird in flight and the soulful Doppler-shifted baying of the hound. The visual scene is perfectly clear from the music itself, but this short description will give you a leg up in case your attention wanders.

Melinda Coffey Armstead



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