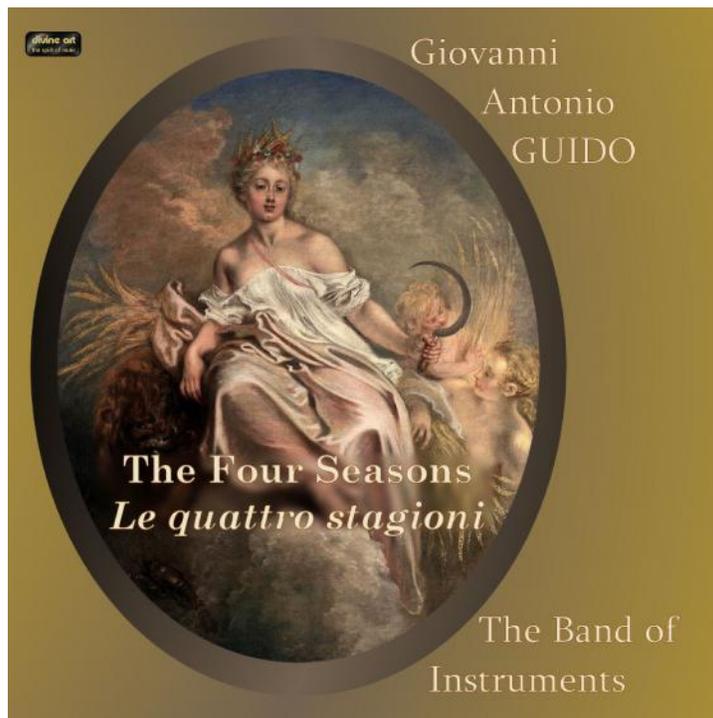




New Release - Press Information



ARTIST(S): The Band of Instruments/Caroline Balding (violin)/Directed by Roger Hamilton

COMPOSER(S): Giovanni Antonio Guido (1675 - after 1728)

TITLE: The Four Seasons

CATALOGUE NUMBER: DDA25072 [Bar Code 0809730507229]

RELEASE DATE: 11th February 2013

PRICE POINT: Single CD/Full Price/Standard Case [UK Dealer £7.95]

Track Listing:

Spring; Summer; Autumn; Winter

Total Playing time 66.05



Repertoire/Product Information:

THE EDITION

The Italian composer, Giovanni Antonio Guido, remains a mysterious figure. The lack of information concerning his life has been attributed to his habit of using both 'Antonio' and 'Guido' as surnames, as illustrated by the name used in the *privilèges généraux* of 1707 and 1726, as opposed to the one used in the works they list. But this cannot be the whole, as-yet-untold, story. His origins appear to be Genoese, where he was born in about 1675; by December 1683, he is recorded studying violin at the Conservatorio della Pietà dei Turchini in Naples under Nicola Vinciprova. Guido is noted still at the Conservatorio as a copyist in 1691, and from September 1698 to January 1702, his name appears in the list of the payments to musicians employed at the Royal Chapel. In the latter year, his name was replaced by that of the composer and violinist, Giuseppe Avitrano (1670-1756), and Guido appears in Paris, where the *Mercure gallant* records his presence at a concert in November 1703 for the Queen of England, given at Fontainebleau, where he was praised as "an excellent violinist in the service of the Duke of Orléans".

The date for the writing of Guido's *Scherzi armonici sopra le quattro stagioni dell'anno* ('Musical divertissements on the four seasons of the year') is unknown. The work survives in a set of undated printed parts that were published at Versailles, supposedly at the composer's own expense, and listed as Opus 3. The engraving of the parts is elegant, if a little haphazard, and the edition contains a complete cycle of poems, *Les caractères des Saisons*, printed anonymously in the front of the score. Each movement draws on these poems, and phrases from them are placed at crucial points in the music, where particular musical ideas illuminate the sentiments of the text. Partly because of this, the forms of the movements have more in common with the French suite than with the Italian concerto. As an Italian musician accepted in French circles, it comes as no surprise that Guido had the ability to adapt his own Italian style in a way that was palatable to his French patrons.

Artist Information:

The Band of Instruments is a versatile ensemble of musicians based in Oxford, well known for its imaginative programmes and persuasive performances. It was formed in 1995 by Gary Cooper, and its musical director is now Roger Hamilton. The Ensemble comprises Caroline Balding, Matthew Truscott and Sarah Moffat (violins); Alison McGillivray (cello); Peter McCarthy (bass) and Roger Hamilton (harpsichord).

The Band has been funded by the Arts Council of Great Britain and the National Lottery, and has been Early Music Ensemble in Residence at the Faculty of Music in the University of Oxford. Appearances have included many BBC Broadcasts, the opening concert at the Southwark Festival, performances at St. John's Smith Square, St. Giles Cripplegate, the National Gallery, Musicfest Aberystwyth, and the Tudeley, Semley and South Bank Early Music Festivals. It gives regular concerts at many venues in Oxford, including one for the recent inauguration of the redevelopment of the Ashmolean Museum.



The Band's recordings include music by Purcell, Rameau, Charpentier & Vivaldi. It has also accompanied New College Choir on a disc of Purcell anthems for CRD.

Caroline Balding has been described as a violinist of "poetic intensity" (Music and Musicians), "rapt beauty" and "virtuosic distinction" (Gramophone) and "a formidable soloist combining beauty of sound with infallible articulation" (La Nacion, Buenos Aires). As the violinist with the chamber ensembles Gemini and Lontano, amongst others, she has given recitals throughout the world. Often to be heard on BBC Radio 3 and numerous other European radio stations, she also participated in the series "Women in Music" for Channel 4 TV, and in a series about Beethoven for the BBC (dressed as a man). She made her second solo Proms appearance in 1999 with Lontano.

As a baroque violinist, she has appeared as guest leader with Florilegium, The English Concert and the Hanover Band, in addition to being first violin of The Band of Instruments based in her home town of Oxford. Her extensive discography ranges from 17th century English chamber music to new works by British composers.

Additional Details & Marketing:

The CD will be fully serviced to all UK classical music press and radio.

Advertising will include major classical music magazines and publications.

For more details, and to request a review sample, please contact John Cronin at Music & Media Consulting Limited.