

Le Mezze Stagioni

Cesare Carretta & JAS - Jazz
Acoustic Strings

14 JULY
2026

JAS

Jazz Acoustic Strings

Solo violin: Cesare Carretta

Violin: Silvia Maffeis

Viola: Claudia Brancaccio

Cello: Nicolò Nigrelli

Double bass: Nicola Ziliani

Drums: Teo Ravelli



Non solo Vivaldi

PROGRAMMA

Spring

A. Vivaldi	Allegro, I movimento (arr. Carretta)
Gene de Paul	I'll remember April
C. Carretta	Smile it's Spring

Summer

A. Vivaldi	Presto, III movimento (arr. Carretta)
C. Carretta	Caesar's Blues
G. Gershwin	Summertime

Autumn

A. Vivaldi	Allegro, I movimento (arr. Carretta)
Vernon Duke	Autumn in New York
J. Kosma	Autumn Leaves

Winter

A. Vivaldi	Allegro, (I mov) e Largo, (II mov) (arr. Carretta)
Tradizional	We wish you

Seasons are never merely seasons.

They mark the passing of time in nature, but also the course of human existence: birth and desire, fulfilment, change, loss and return. This idea lies at the heart of Le Mezze Stagioni, a project conceived by violinist, composer and arranger Cesare Carretta.

These are "half seasons" because Antonio Vivaldi's celebrated concertos meet some of the great standards of the jazz tradition. Movements from The Four Seasons, extensively reimagined and transformed, alternate with pieces that evoke spring, summer, autumn and winter through images, memories and emotions.

This is not simply a sequence of classical and jazz pieces, but a single musical journey. Written music and improvisation, rhythm and melody, the European tradition and African American musical languages enter into dialogue, casting new light on one another.

The result is a journey through the cycle of the year and, at the same time, through the different stages of life: everything is born, changes, seems to come to an end and eventually begins again.

PROGRAMME NOTES

The art of making the familiar new

The history of music is also a history of encounters, transformations and reinterpretations.

The Latin principle *non nova, sed nove*—not necessarily new things, but familiar things presented in a new way—has shaped musical creation for centuries. Bach transcribed and reworked Vivaldi; Brahms built an entire monumental piano composition upon Paganini's celebrated Caprice No. 24; Stravinsky turned to eighteenth-century Italian music when creating *Pulcinella*.

Every reinterpretation involves a dialogue with memory. Music from the past is not simply reproduced, but viewed from a different perspective. The original material retains its identity while, at the same time, acquiring unexpected meanings.

The encounter between the European musical tradition and jazz broadened this territory still further. During the twentieth century, the movement known as Third Stream sought to overcome the separation between classical music and jazz, granting equal importance to written composition and improvisation.

It is within this borderland that *Le Mezze Stagioni* takes shape.

Vivaldi's music is not used merely as a decorative framework, nor is it simply "jazzified". Its themes, rhythmic gestures and musical images become the raw material for a new narrative. Alongside them, jazz standards offer different representations of the seasons: no longer simply natural phenomena, but inner landscapes shaped by memory, love and human experience.

Spring is birth and expectation; summer is warmth, restlessness and the need for protection; autumn is celebration, but also nostalgia; winter is an apparent ending and the promise of a new beginning.

As in life, every season already contains something of the one that will follow. None is entirely complete and none is ever truly final. They are, indeed, "half seasons": places of transition, transformation and renewal.

Listening Guide

Spring

Spring represents the awakening of nature and the beginning of the journey.

In the first movement of Vivaldi's *Spring*, birdsong and the stirrings of the landscape are reimagined through Afro-inspired rhythms, transforming the original energy of the concerto without erasing its identity.

This explosion of vitality is followed by the melancholy of *I'll Remember April*: spring has already become a memory, the image of a love and happiness destined to pass.

With *Smile, It's Spring*, a fully jazz-inflected brightness returns, driven by the energy of swing.

Summer

Summer is light and warmth, but also tension.

The storm that brings Vivaldi's *Summer* to a close becomes the starting point for a broader narrative. The violence of nature is imaginatively linked to the story evoked by *Caesar's Blues*, in which an African American voice tells of oppression and suffering.

After the storm, *Summertime* becomes a place of refuge: a lullaby and, at the same time, a symbolic return to the arms of the mother, understood as a universal figure of protection and consolation.

Autumn

Autumn begins with celebration.

In the first movement of Vivaldi's concerto, the harvest, dancing and collective revelry are transported into a contemporary soundscape.

Autumn in New York then shifts our gaze towards the multicultural city par excellence: a metropolis in which different languages, traditions and rhythms coexist and continually transform one another.

In Autumn Leaves, falling leaves become a metaphor for a love that has come to an end. Celebration gives way to nostalgia: autumn is maturity, but also an awareness of loss.

Winter

Winter represents the completion of the cycle, but not its definitive end.

The first movement of Vivaldi's concerto is extensively reworked—almost turned inside out—before flowing into the celebrated Largo. The journey passes through quotations, rhythmic transformations and changes of atmosphere, moving freely between swing and Latin-inflected rhythms.

The coldest season is not merely a time of stillness or silence. Within it already lies the possibility of new life.

The circle closes and, at that very moment, begins again.

Cesare Carretta

Violinist, composer and arranger Cesare Carretta has developed his artistic research within the territory where the classical tradition, jazz and improvised music meet.

He is the founder of JAS — Jazz Acoustic Strings and the creator of Le Mezze Stagioni, a project in which he performs as solo violinist in his own reinterpretations of movements from Antonio Vivaldi's The Four Seasons, placing them alongside celebrated jazz standards.

His work combines the rigour of written composition with the freedom of improvisation, approaching the repertoire of the past not as an unchanging legacy, but as living material capable of engaging with the musical languages of the present.

JAS — Jazz Acoustic Strings

JAS — Jazz Acoustic Strings was founded in 2016 as a project created by Cesare Carretta. The group brings together a string quintet and drums and is made up of musicians associated with Milano Classica.

The ensemble explores the borderland between the classical musical tradition, jazz and improvisation, working within the field commonly known as Third Stream.

Over the course of their careers, its members have collaborated with numerous Italian and international artists, including Stefano Bollani, Richard Galliano, Trilok Gurtu, Lee Konitz, Jan Garbarek, Astor Piazzolla, Enrico Rava and Fabrizio Bosso.

Together with pianist Enrico Pieranunzi, they have also recorded an album devoted to works by John Lewis, a founding member of the Modern Jazz Quartet.