

Art Inspires Art 2020

Antonio Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* – Winter

ABOUT THE ARTIST:

Antonio Vivaldi was born on March 4, 1678 in Venice, Italy. Antonio's father, Giovanni Battista, a barber before becoming a violinist, taught young Antonio to play the violin and then toured Venice playing the violin with him. At the age of 15, Antonio began training to become a priest. At the age of 25, he was ordained a priest and soon after became known as the Il Prete Rosso, "The Red Priest", because of his red hair. Due to his health, he left the priesthood in 1703 after only 3 years. But he was still able to pursue a career in music. Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons*, composed in 1723, is a set of four concertos for violin. It is his most popular work and is among the most popular works of the Baroque Era. For this composition he wrote sonnets to match each season. At the age of 25, Antonio Vivaldi was named master of violin at the Ospedale della Pietà (Devout Hospital of Mercy) in Venice. He composed most of his major works in this position over three decades. The Ospedale was an institution where orphaned girls received musical instruction on the violin. Vivaldi's work, including 500 concertos, have influenced other composers, including Johann Sebastian Bach.

About the Music:

The Four Seasons is a group of four violin concerti by Italian composer Antonio Vivaldi, each of which gives musical expression to a season of the year. They were written around 1716–1717 and published in 1725 in Amsterdam. Unusual for the period, Vivaldi published the concerti with accompanying sonnets (possibly written by the composer himself) that clarified what it was in the spirit of each season that his music was intended to evoke. The concerti therefore stand as one of the earliest and most detailed examples of what would come to be called program music—i.e., music with a narrative element. Vivaldi took great pains to relate his music to the texts of the poems, translating the poetic lines themselves directly into the music on the page. For example, in the middle section of "Spring", when the goatherd sleeps, his barking dog can be heard in the viola section. The music is elsewhere similarly reminiscent of other natural sounds. Vivaldi divided each concerto into three movements (fast–slow–fast), and, likewise, each linked sonnet into three sections.

About the Art Project:

This project is inspired by the [Winter Scene by Pieter Bruegel](#). Listen to [Vivaldi's Winter](#) and select the theme for your winter composition drawing inspiration from this painting.



Materials:

- Dark or light blue construction paper
- Pencil
- Acrylic paint (white, black, yellow)
- Paint brush or sponge
- Black or brown marker
- Paper towels or baby wipes
- Paper plate for paint palette
- Small pieces of evergreen branch

Directions:

1. Select type of paper you wish to use. Begin by having the student lightly sketch out their winter image in pencil. In this example it is an owl sitting on the branch of a tree.
2. Next, put some white acrylic paint on a paper/plastic plate. Using the upper most end of the pine bough, dip it into the white paint. Randomly dab the painted end of the pine onto the blue paper to create snowflakes. It is ok if they slightly overlap the penciled image. You will be painting over this image later. Add a few white dots with your paintbrush to create a sense of depth (snowflakes that are farther away).
3. Allow the painted snowflakes to dry
4. Using a brush and acrylic paint, begin to paint in the owl and the branch. Don't forget to add accumulated snow to your tree branch
5. Once the acrylic paint is dry, use the black and/or brown marker to add texture details to the owl; feathers, beak, etc.

Notes & Resources: Students could use the sponge to paint the owl and add light grey in a dabbing motion to create the textured look of feathers. Once dry, this can be followed with markers to add even more detail to the feathers.

Project by: Christy Caravaglio

Project Image:

