



WARNER BROS. PICTURES

presents

P R I M A V E R A

a film by

DAMIANO MICHIELETTO

with

TECLA INSOLIA MICHELE RIONDINO
ANDREA PENNACCHI FABRIZIA SACCHI
with the participation of VALENTINA BELLÈ
with the participation of STEFANO ACCORSI

a

WARNER BROS. ENTERTAINMENT ITALIA
INDIGO FILM
production

International Sales
PARADISE CITY SALES

CREW

Director DAMIANO MICHIELETTO
Story LUDOVICA RAMPOLDI DAMIANO MICHIELETTO
Screenwriter LUDOVICA RAMPOLDI

Freely based on the novel *STABAT MATER* by Tiziano Scarpa published in Italy by Einaudi

Dop DARIA D'ANTONIO CCS - AFC
Editor WALTER FASANO AMC
Music FABIO MASSIMO CAPOGROSSO
Production Designer GASPARE DE PASCALI
Costume Designer MARIA RITA BARBERA GAIA CALDERONE
Suond recordist GIANLUCA SCARLATA
Sound Designer DAVIDE FAVARGIOTTI
Make-up Designer VINCENZO MASTRANTONIO
Hair Designer MARTA IACOPONI
Delegate Producers CAROLINA IORIO SERENA FILIPPONE
Associate Producer STEFANO D'AVELLA

Producers NICOLA GIULIANO FRANCESCA CIMA
CARLOTTA CALORI VIOLA PRESTIERI
Coproducer MARC MISSONNIER

Produced by WARNER BROS. ENTERTAINMENT ITALIA
INDIGO FILM

An Italian-French co-production with
In association with
With the participation of
MOANA FILMS
PARADISE CITY SALES
DIAPHANA DISTRIBUTION

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Distribution in Italy WARNER BROS. PICTURES
Intl. Sales PARADISE CITY SALES

LENGTH 110 min.
YEAR 2025
LANGUAGE Italian, French





CAST

TECLA INSOLIA Cecilia

MICHELE RIONDINO Antonio Vivaldi

ANDREA PENNACCHI Governor

FABRIZIA SACCHI Prioress

HILDEGARD DE STEFANO Laura

COSIMA CENTURIONI Marietta

FEDERICA GIRARDELLO Agnese

REBECCA ANTONACI Caterina

CHIARA SACCO Maddalena

MIKO JARRY King of Denmark

With the participation of

VALENTINA BELLÈ Elisabetta Parolin

And with the participation of

STEFANO ACCORSI Sanfermo





SYNOPSIS

Early in the 18th century. The Ospedale della Pietà is the biggest orphanage in Venice, but it is also where the most talented of the orphans who live there are introduced to the study of music. Its orchestra is one of the world's most highly regarded. Cecilia is 20 years old, she has spent most of her life in the Pietà and she is an extraordinary violinist. Art has opened her mind, but not the doors of the orphanage; this is the only place she can perform, behind a grille, for the rich patrons of the orphanage. That is until a wind of spring suddenly disrupts her life and everything changes with the arrival of the new violin teacher. His name is Antonio Vivaldi.

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

In making *Primavera*, my first feature film, it immediately became clear to me that my expressive world cannot be separated from music, whose narrative and emotional power has fed into my work in directing opera for 20 years.

In this sense, *Stabat Mater*, Tiziano Scarpa's novel, on which this film is loosely based, encapsulated many themes that are dear to me, but two above all: music as a generative and subversive force of existence; and Venice, my adopted home, whose unique history is central to the story and a means of emotional expression for the protagonists. *Primavera* tells the story of the springtime meeting and reawakening of two souls after a long winter: that of the young and talented violinist Cecilia, an orphan in search of her own identity, and that of Antonio Vivaldi, a man swept along by a creative frenzy but also weakened by a constant need to see his talent recognised. Cecilia has always lived in the Pietà, an institution in Venice that took in and educated orphans. She is a young woman who knows nothing about her past, not even who gave birth to her, but she cherishes the hope that one day this woman, to whom she writes heart-rending letters, will come forward to take her back. This pain tears her apart and seems to prevent her from seeing any future. But inside Cecilia and her young companions lie hidden passions and desires, suppressed and ready to explode, along with a fierce curiosity about an unknown world, one they only glimpse from behind the grille of the church where they perform for the Venetian patricians. When he comes to the Pietà as a violin teacher and conductor, Antonio Vivaldi is a lonely man worn-out by illness, a musician searching for recognition. Inside himself he conceals a wild, overwhelming imagination that leads him to write emotional music, never heard before, music that is restless and melancholic, frenzied and poignant. Before long, Vivaldi's colours infect the musicians of the Pietà and reveal Cecilia's extraordinary talent. They free her from the pain of a past she will never know and show her a way towards a horizon that goes beyond music, beyond her violin. Music creates, it gives shape to the imagination, it brings fame – this is what Vivaldi is pursuing – but that is not enough for Cecilia. It is not enough for her to imagine the world through music. She chooses to seek freedom beyond the walls that separates her from the world.

Damiano Michieletto



HISTORICAL NOTES

Antonio Vivaldi, along with his contemporaries Bach and Handel, is one of the most representative and prolific composers of the Baroque, but his fame, which reached its peak in the first half of the 18th century, was not enough to prevent his work slipping into oblivion for almost two centuries, until the discovery by chance of a large number of his manuscripts in the early 20th century rekindled interest in this extraordinary composer. Vivaldi was born in Venice on 4 March 1678, the first of ten children and the only one whom his father, a violist at St Mark's Basilica, encouraged to study music and pursue an ecclesiastical career. 1703 was a pivotal year for the talented young violinist who, aged 25, was ordained a priest – he would be nicknamed the “red priest” because of the colour of his hair – and published his first work, *Twelve Trio Sonatas, Op. 1*, which included the famous *Follia*. That same year, he was appointed to the Ospedale della Pietà in Venice, an institution that provided a home for abandoned children.



The most gifted of the orphans would take music lessons and become part of the Pietà orchestra and choir. This was a large ensemble composed entirely of women and girls, all orphans who lived in the institute and performed behind a grille or with their faces covered by masks, invisible to the world. Their faces might have been invisible, but their fame drew rulers and intellectuals to Venice from all over Europe to attend the concerts of what was considered the most talented orchestra in the world.

The Ospedale della Pietà, managed by a board of governors, raised money through the concerts of its orchestra, which had to compete as well with those of three other Venetian institutions: the *Derelitti*, the *Incurabili* and the *Mendicanti*, which also had orchestras composed solely of orphans. Over the years, Vivaldi did not limit himself to teaching music, but also worked hard to ensure his students had instruments fitting for their talent and the music he composed for them. If the Pietà orchestra was probably the most important of the 18th century, some of its musicians were the greatest of their time. These incredibly gifted players pushed their teacher to explore new paths in composition, and Vivaldi, for his part, led his orchestra in tackling music that sounded like nothing listeners of the time had ever heard before. Gifted with exceptional talent, Vivaldi astounded his audiences with original musical themes that shook traditional notions of harmony. His compositions constantly pushed the boundaries of rhythmic structure, and his imagination exploded in *allegri* attacks followed by poignant *adagios* of immense expressive intensity. A restless and versatile character, it was not long before Vivaldi turned to composing operas as well, making his debut at the Teatro Sant'Angelo in Venice, where he was also impresario from 1713. A priest sui generis, who suffered from a disease not unlike bronchial asthma, which prevented him from saying Mass his whole life and was a great hindrance to him, violinist, composer and music teacher at the Pietà, writer of operas and theatrical impresario, in the 1720s Vivaldi was a very sought-after musician who composed sacred and secular music at a frantic rate. His great originality also characterised the titles of his musical collections. In 1711, the publication of *L'estro armonico* brought him extraordinary success, so much so that even Bach transcribed his music for keyboard.

But his consecration came in 1725 when the Dutch publisher Michel-Charles Le Cène published *Il cimento dell'armonia e dell'invenzione*, which included The Four Seasons. Vivaldi's music, made up of dazzling colours and bold harmonies, became very fashionable and established him throughout Europe as the composer to imitate. After 1730, though, things began to change rapidly, with the emergence of new musical tastes. Theatres in the big cities began to close their doors to Vivaldi and he found it increasingly difficult to stage his works and obtain commissions for new music. His creative genius never waned, and even in the later phase of his life, Vivaldi was capable of composing concertos of poignant beauty. Despite his efforts, though, his financial situation remained dire, and in 1740 he was forced to take a drastic decision. At the age of 62, overwhelmed by debt and after trying to sell some concertos to the governors of the Pietà, he fled Venice. He embarked on a long journey that took him to Vienna, where he intended to offer his services to Charles VI of Habsburg, a great music lover whom he had met years earlier in Trieste, who had greatly admired his compositions. The court records note with cruel precision Vivaldi's numerous attempts to be received by the emperor, who died suddenly of mushroom poisoning without ever meeting the composer. Charles VI's death was followed by a year of mourning throughout the empire and the consequent closure of theatres. For Vivaldi, this was the end.

Unable to stage any of his works, he had no choice but to spend the last of his savings. In the end, he fell ill and died in poverty and solitude in 1741. He was buried in a simple grave, far from home. His manuscripts, which he had left in Venice, a collection of hundreds of signed scores, passed from hand to hand, and disappeared for almost two centuries. They were rediscovered by chance at the beginning of the 20th century. That moment marked the beginning of the true rediscovery of Antonio Vivaldi and his musical story. Along with the composer, the stories of Anna Maria, Chiara, Michielina, Agata and all the other female musicians and composers of the Pietà re-emerged as well, at least in part. These women and girls were among the greatest musicians of their time.

Founded in 1346, the Ospedale della Pietà continued to take in orphans for centuries. It still operates today as the headquarters of the Istituto Provinciale per l'Infanzia Santa Maria della Pietà di Venezia (*Provincial Institute for Children of Santa Maria della Pietà in Venice*).



DAMIANO MICHIELETTO

Damiano Michieletto (Venice, 1975) is recognised as one of the most visionary and revolutionary opera directors in Italy and abroad. He has directed numerous operas for the major Italian and international houses: from La Scala in Milan to the Royal Opera House in London, from La Fenice in Venice to the Staatsoper in Berlin and the Paris Opera. His productions have received prestigious awards such as the Laurence Olivier Award, the Irish Times Theatre Award, the Russian Casta Diva Award, the Franco Abbiati Prize of the National Association of Music Critics in Italy, the Österreichischer Musiktheaterpreis, the Reumert Prize and the Melbourne Green Room Award. He is currently the artistic director of the 2025 edition of the Caracalla Festival where he directed *West Side Story*. Primavera marks his debut as a film director.





ORIGINAL MUSIC

Original music composed and orchestrated by
Fabio Massimo Capogrosso
performed by Orchestra e Coro del
TEATRO LA FENICE

Conductor
Carlo Boccadoro

Solo Violin
David Romano

Transverse Flute
Angelo Mordente

Violin
Leonardo Spinedi

Recordings made at
TEATRO LA FENICE DI VENEZIA

Diegetic music performed by
I Solisti Aquilani

Solo Violin
Daniele Orlando

Recordings made at
Auditorium del Conservatorio Alfredo Casella





SOURCE MUSIC

NISI DOMINUS, RV 608- IV: CUM DEDERIT

(Antonio Vivaldi)

Performed by Ensemble Matheus, Jean-Christophe
Spinose, Philippe Jaroussky

BIRDS

(Anna Meredith)

Anna Meredith & Scottish Ensemble

JUDITHA TRIUMPHANS - RV 644, PT.1: ARMA CAEDES, VINDICTAE FURORES

(Antonio Vivaldi)

Alessandro De Marchi, Academia Montis Regalis, Marina
Comparato, Coro Giovanile

JUDITHA TRIUMPHANS, RV 644, PT.1: O QUAM VAGA, VENUSTA, O QUAM DECORA

(Antonio Vivaldi)

Alessandro De Marchi, Academia Montis Regalis, Coro
Giovanile

DAWN

(Anna Meredith / Antonio Vivaldi)

Anna Meredith, Scottish Ensemble & Antonio Vivaldi



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