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Label: [Fonè](#) - <http://www.fone.it/>**Serial:** 005 SACD**Title:** Vivaldi: Four Seasons etc. - Fone Ensemble/Fornaciari

Vivaldi: Four Seasons, Sonatas for Violin

Description:Fone Ensemble
Mark Fornaciari**Details:****Genre:** Classical - Chamber**Content:** Stereo/Multichannel**Media:** Hybrid**Recording type:** DSD**Recording info:**
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Reviews: 6 [show all](#)Site review by [Polly Nomial](#) January 10, 2007

Performance: ★→ Sonics (MC): ★★

There are already 13 different versions of the Four Seasons on SACD with a violin soloist so a new version has to have some special attributes to stake a lasting claim of a space on anyone's shelf. The two distinguishing aspects of this recording are that

(a) the total number of players is only 7

and

(b) the instruments all hail from Cremona and most come some very special makers.

The instrumentalists, despite their small number, certainly manage to produce a full tone that has largely disappeared from Baroque music today; it is unusual to say the least and many might find it uncomfortably large, myself included, now that HIP is the norm in this repertoire. Whether this is entirely the instrumentalists fault is hard to determine because the recording is very close which doesn't give them much opportunity to pare down their sound - this is just as true in the sonatas as well as the concertos so I must conclude that it is more the engineers than artists doing.

The performances themselves, partly because of the sound, are not particularly special to my ears; they do have a certain laid back and sunny feel but I feel that they are a little too relaxed in mood. The rather casual approach unfortunately extends into Marco Fornaciari's intonation, especially at the most taxing moments of this well known collection of Vivaldi's. Really, in this day and age, there is no excuse for this as many student ensembles around the world could perform better.

Not recommended.

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Review by [brenda](#) October 28, 2004 (7 of 9 found this review helpful)

Performance: ★★★★★ Sonics: ★★★★★

Well, I've really enjoyed this disc and don't find either the sound or the performances to be "tiny" (as JW did). This is, after all, a chamber version of the Seasons, with one (original period) instrument to a part and shouldn't sound like a full orchestra. Having said that, the performances aren't "scaled down" but quite full blooded and more detailed and zestful than many others I've heard. The sound is intimate without being small. Indeed, it's warm and accurate and perfect for domestic listening. Overall, I agree with stvnhar's review that this is a very worthwhile disc, - "a nice recording and a nice contrast" to so much standardised Vivaldi.

Was this review *helpful* to you? Yes No

Review by [stvnhar](#) May 22, 2004 (3 of 3 found this review helpful)

Performance: ★★★★★ Sonics: ★★★★★

Few pieces are as well known as these four Op.8 concertos. Most every recording of them has a moderate, or larger, sized group with the featured soloist. This recording differs from the norm in that it is a small group recording, one instrument per part plus the soloist. Added to that is that each instrument is a heritage instrument, with pics in the booklet.

The sound of the smallish group may not be for everyone's taste, as it differs a bit from the norm. But the sound and the playing here are quite good. And the more one listens, the more enjoyable it all becomes as the ear and brain get accustomed to the smaller sound.

I once heard one of these concertos at a concert played by a similar sized group. The natural amplification of the stone cathedral made it all sound like a much larger group.

All in all this is a nice recording and a nice contrast to the more usual way these pieces are recorded.

Was this review *helpful* to you? Yes No

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