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Between the Bellows: The Four Seasons

Martynas LEVICKIS & Mikroorkéstra

2026.10.31 Sat. 19:00

Weiwuying Concert Hall

The duration is 75 minutes, with no intermission.



National Kaohsiung
CENTER FOR THE ARTS

WEI WUYING 衛武營

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國家表演藝術中心 National Performing Arts Center

Program

Martynas LEVICKIS: "Leliumoj"(Winter Song)

A. VIVALDI: Concerto No. 1 in E Major, Op. 8, RV 269, "Spring", from *The Four Seasons*
(arranged for accordion, strings, and harpsichord by Martynas LEVICKIS)

Martynas LEVICKIS: "Palinko liepa šalia kelio" (A linden by the roadside bowed)

A. VIVALDI: Concerto No. 2 in g minor, Op. 8, RV 315, "Summer", from *The Four Seasons*
(arranged for accordion, strings, and harpsichord by Martynas LEVICKIS)

Martynas LEVICKIS: "Beauštantī aušrelė" (The Dawn is Breaking)

A. VIVALDI: Concerto No. 3 in F Major, Op. 8, RV 293, "Autumn", from *The Four Seasons*
(arranged for accordion, strings, and harpsichord by Martynas LEVICKIS)

Martynas LEVICKIS: "Rūta žalioj" (The verdant Rue)

A. VIVALDI: Concerto No. 4 in f minor, Op. 8, RV 297, "Winter", from *The Four Seasons*
(arranged for accordion, strings, and harpsichord by Martynas LEVICKIS)

In tonight's concert, *Between the Bellows: The Four Seasons*, Martynas LEVICKIS weaves his original arrangements into Antonio VIVALDI's *The Four Seasons*, creating a dialogue between past and present. As LEVICKIS noted in an interview: "I have to take the pieces that touch my soul, explore them, and make them my own. My mission is to make these works sound as if they were written for the accordion."

Accompanied by strings and harpsichord, LEVICKIS's accordion replaces the solo violin in VIVALDI's *The Four Seasons*. As the preeminent Baroque violin virtuoso, VIVALDI composed over two hundred violin concertos. This work was written during his tenure as Kapellmeister at the court of Mantua, and published in Amsterdam in 1725. Composed three centuries ago, this revolutionary masterwork pioneered narrative program music, translating nature and daily life into delicate musical vignettes.

The complete cycle comprises four three-movement concertos in a "Fast–Slow–Fast" scheme. VIVALDI included explanatory sonnets in the score (the authorship of these remains unknown, with the composer himself a possibility), which closely mirror the music and offer listeners the clearest guide.

"Spring"—First movement: Spring arrives; birds sing, breezes murmur, and streams trickle. Dark clouds, thunder, and lightning herald an oncoming storm; once it passes, the birds resume their song. Second movement: In a blooming meadow, leaves rustle gently as a shepherd dozes peacefully beside his faithful dog. Third movement: Nymphs and shepherds dance across the fields to the festive melody of bagpipes.

"Summer"—First movement: Under the blazing sun, the shepherd and flock languish while pine trees seem ablaze; the cuckoo, turtle dove, and goldfinch sing. Gentle breezes are suddenly swept away by violent gusts, striking fear into the shepherd. Second movement: Thunder and lightning incite terror, while swarms of buzzing flies deny the shepherd all rest. Third movement: His fears come true as a violent storm of thunder, lightning, and hail batters and destroys the crops.

"Autumn"—First movement: Peasant songs and dances celebrate a bountiful harvest. Bacchus's wine flows, lulling everyone into peaceful slumber amid the revelry. Second movement: Singing and dancing subside into sweet serenity; the idyllic season invites all into restful dreams. Third movement: At dawn, horns sound as hunters and hounds set off on the hunt. Fleeing game is pursued, wounded, and eventually dies in exhaustion.

"Winter"—First movement: Shivering in icy snow and biting winds, feet stamp continuously for warmth as teeth chatter relentlessly. Second movement: Outside, incessant rain, while

inside, by the fireplace, one savors tranquility. Third movement: Treading carefully across slick ice, one slips and falls. The fierce northern winds howl. Winter is harsh, yet joyful.

Born in Lithuania, LEVICKIS roots his creations in the melodies of his homeland. The concert opens with "Leliumoj" (Winter Song). In Lithuanian, "Leliumoj" is a meaningless vocable consistently used in traditional winter songs; from ancient winter solstice chants to later Advent carols, "Leliumoj" is a recurring refrain. In this piece, LEVICKIS expands the ancient folk tune into a musical winter adventure of a Lithuanian girl.

"Palinko liepa šalia kelio" (A linden by the roadside bowed) is a famed Lithuanian patriotic song written during the post-WWII Baltic partisan resistance against Soviet occupation, when youths formed guerrilla units underground. The lyrics trace a mother's sorrow for her departing son, followed by the young fighter's love for his beloved and readiness to sacrifice for his homeland. Blending traditional Lithuanian melancholy with martial solemnity, this collective folk creation symbolizes the yearning for freedom and resistance against oppression.

"Beauštantī aušrelė" (The Dawn is Breaking) is a traditional wedding song depicting the groom arriving at the bride's home. At dawn, the bride hesitates to part as the groom arrives on horseback. The bride's brothers split the gate with a sword—a Baltic wedding tradition—yet the final line evokes deep foreboding: "He split the wooden gate with a sword, but could not split away the sorrow destined for my life." Though a wedding song, its melancholic melody carries a delicate balance of light and shadow.

"Rūta žalioj" (The verdant Rue) is a Lithuanian work song. Rue, Lithuania's national flower, symbolizes chastity. Depicting a woman toiling long after sunset, each stanza frames its verse with the refrain "Rūta žalioj," pleading with the landowner to let her return home, or praying that the moon and stars will light her way. LEVICKIS's minimalist arrangement evokes the relentless grind of endless labor, culminating in a dramatic climax.

Performer

Accordion | Martynas LEVICKIS



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Martynas LEVICKIS likes to call his instrument a "magical box of tricks" - and indeed, when the Lithuanian accordionist steps onto the stage, he conjures mesmerising soundscapes with dazzling virtuosity, refined musicality, and boundless imagination. Hailed by *The Independent* as "the amazingly talented Martynas LEVICKIS, the man who is single-handedly reinventing the accordion", he stands as one of the most exciting and transformative forces in classical music today.

LEVICKIS's musical journey began not in a concert hall, but deep in the Lithuanian woods. At just three years old, he began imitating birdsong and the rustling of leaves on a toy accordion - a gift born of necessity, when his family couldn't afford a piano. What seemed like a compromise soon became the foundation of an extraordinary career. He enrolled at the S. Sondeckis School of the Arts in Šiauliai at the age of eight and later studied with Prof. Owen MURRAY at the Royal Academy of Music in London, as well as with Prof. Iñaki ALBERDI at Musikene in San Sebastián.

His breakthrough came in 2010, when he captured the public's imagination by winning Lithuania's *Got Talent*. Soon after, he became the first accordionist ever signed to Decca Classics; his debut album *Martynas* soared to No. 1 on the UK Classical Chart. Since then, he has received over 30 international awards, including the prestigious Coupe Mondiale and, in 2023, an OPUS KLASSIK as "Instrumentalist of the Year".

For LEVICKIS, the accordion is not a relic of nostalgia but a dynamic vehicle for emotional nuance, stylistic breadth, and sonic innovation. Whether interpreting Bach or Philip GLASS, baroque transcriptions or his own compositions rooted in Lithuanian folk traditions, he brings a fresh, vibrant perspective to every piece. His 2023 solo album *Autograph* (accentus

music) - featuring works by GLASS, BACH, Franck ANGELIS, and LEVICKIS himself - showcases the full range of his artistry, from introspective minimalism to expressive, folkloric colors.

A global performer in high demand, LEVICKIS is equally at home in solo recitals and large-scale productions, he moves effortless between styles and centuries. He appears at leading venues such as Royal Albert Hall, Elbphilharmonie Hamburg, National Kaohsiung Center for the Arts and is a frequent guest at major festivals such as Rheingau Musik Festival where he is "Fokus Künstler 2025" and Festspiele Mecklenburg-Vorpommern where he was "Preisträger in Residence" in 2023.

He brings intense musical curiosity and emotional depth to collaborations with conductors such as Andris NELSONS, Joana MALLWITZ, Omer Meir WELLBER or Andrés OROZCO-ESTRADA, organist Iveta APKALNA, baritone Benjamin APPL and orchestras such as Gewandhausorchester Leipzig, Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen or Iceland Symphony Orchestra.

In autumn 2024, ARTE TV aired a dedicated documentary "Martynas Levickis and the accordion", offering an intimate portrait of his life and work.

But Martynas LEVICKIS is more than a performer - he is a visionary and cultural catalyst. He founded the Composers Academy for accordion music in Lithuania, leads Accordion Music Week, and is the creative force behind Mikroorkéstra- a genre-defying ensemble that fills Baltic concert halls with immersive, cross-genre productions. A committed mentor to young musicians, he was recently appointed Visiting Professor at the Royal Academy of Music - a testament to his impact on the future of his instrument.

At every step, Martynas LEVICKIS challenges expectations, expands the accordion's expressive vocabulary, and connects with audiences across genres and generations. As both guardian of tradition and trailblazer of the future, he proves - again and again - that his "magical box of tricks" holds virtually limitless possibilities.

Mikroorkéstra



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Mikroorkéstra was founded in 2015 by accordionist Martynas LEVICKIS. The young and unique chamber orchestra is comprised of outstanding musicians from Lithuania, giving dynamic performances at the highest international standard. It embodies its founder's youthful energy and creative artistry.

All orchestra players are handpicked by Martynas LEVICKIS and alongside their work with Mikroorkéstra many of them enjoy positions with Kremerata Baltica, the Baltic Youth Philharmonic, Lithuanian Chamber Orchestra. The members are alumni of the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre, and winners of many international competitions.

Members of Orchestra

Violin

Ulijona PUGAČIUKAITĖ-MAŽEIKIENĖ

Levicki KONRAD

Augustina VIZBARAITĖ

Jokūbas ŠVAMBARIS

Lukas PRONSKUS

Nadia GAILĖ

Ernesta VANAGAITĖ-SRIUBIENĖ

Adriana ČERNIUKAITĖ

Viola

Birutė ILCIUKAITE

Gabriella Elizabeth SNIPES

Cello

Lukas CIKANAVIČIUS

Vaiva SODAITYTĖ

Double Bass

Kriščiūnas AUŠVYDAS

Harpsichord

Vadimas VYSTAVKINAS

Production Team of Weiwuying

Program Coordinator | Joe LEE

Production Coordinator | CHAN Hoe-yin

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