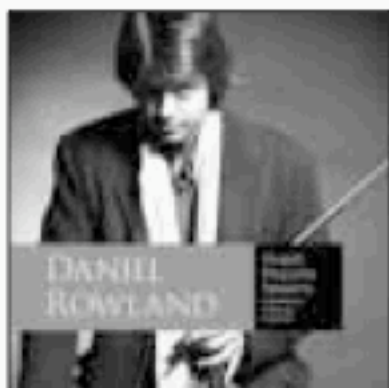


Vivaldi/Piazzolla Seasons

Daniel Rowland, violin; Stellenbosch University Camerata
twopianists.co.za 103 901-5 (62 min 46 s)

★★★★★☆

What to make of yet another recording of Vivaldi's ubiquitous *Four Seasons*? The challenge to any performer trying to make a meaningful statement with this music is overwhelming. One way



is by pairing it with another "Four Seasons", Piazzolla's *Four Seasons of Buenos Aires*, as Gidon Kremer and Lara St. John have both done in recent years, in performances with modern-instrument ensembles. Daniel Rowland's new recording for the New Zealand label, Two Pianists, follows suit. Daniel Rowland, a Dutch-born violinist with impeccable credentials, who has studied with Igor Oistrakh and Ivry Gitlis among others, is currently the leader of the London-based Brodsky String Quartet. Despite the risks involved, Rowland rises to the occasion on this release. His Vivaldi *Seasons* are highly engaging, giving the score an improvisatory, organic quality, creating the impression of being both polished and delightfully messy at the same time. In the Piazzolla, Rowland takes this approach even further, and you feel transported to the cafés of Latin America, with his spicy, lyrical, and off-the-cuff playing style. In a sea of recordings, this disc succeeds because it goes to great lengths to bring out the many characters of the music, always in interesting and unexpected ways. **PP**