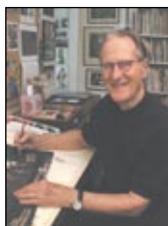


ABOUT

the Author and Illustrator



JANICE AND TOM SHEFELMAN have collaborated on several children's books, among them *A Peddler's Dream* (Houghton Mifflin), a Reading Rainbow selection, and *Comanche Song* (Eakin Press), a New York Public Library Best Book for the Teen Age. Janice worked as a teacher and librarian before becoming a full-time writer. In addition to his work as an illustrator, Tom has his own architectural firm. The Shefelmans live in Austin, Texas.

Janice says that *I, Vivaldi* was inspired by the couple's passion for Vivaldi's music and their love of Venice, Italy. "We lived for a time in the square where Vivaldi's childhood home stands. Tom played kickball with the neighborhood children. And we attended a concert of his music in the Pietà where he taught the orphan girls. While Tom drew in his journal and took photographs, I absorbed the sights and sounds and smells of Venice," she says.



PRaise FOR

I, Vivaldi

"Giving even Canaletto a run for his money, the illustrator sets expressive, natural-looking figures against golden-toned backdrops of 17th-century Venice's rich interiors, splendid vistas, opulent churches and serene canals . . . [A] fetching introduction to one of the great masters of the Baroque era."

— *Kirkus*

I, VIVALDI

Written by Janice Shefelman
Illustrated by Tom Shefelman

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10" x 11" ❖ 32 pages ❖ Ages 7-11

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If you have any suggestions for using *I, Vivaldi* with young readers, we would be happy to hear from you.

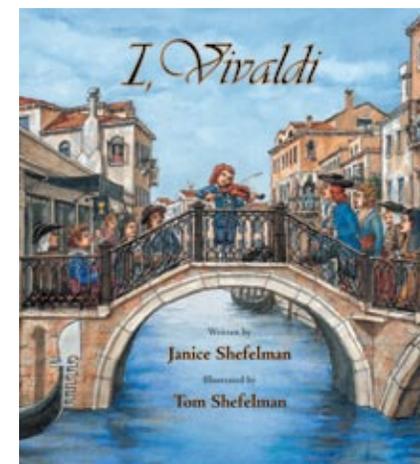
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I VIVALDI

Written by **Janice Shefelman**
Illustrated by **Tom Shefelman**



When I was four, Papa bought a small violin for me. Mama did not like the idea. "He is not going to be a musician, so he does not need a violin."

THEMATIC CONNECTIONS

- ❖ Biography
- ❖ Music
- ❖ Music History
- ❖ Creativity
- ❖ Self Determination

Eerdmans Books for Young Readers
Discussion Guide

VOCABULARY

Look up the following terms in a reference book: cardinal; gondola; gondolier; maestro; Mass; midwife; ordained; piazza



THINGS TO THINK ABOUT BEFORE READING THE BOOK

1. Based on the title and cover illustration, what do you think the book is about? Where do you think the story takes place?
2. List all the types of music that you know. Write a short description about each type. What is your favorite? Why?
3. Who is Antonio Lucio Vivaldi? What do you know about his life? Use a reference book, such as an encyclopedia, to help you.
4. Everyone has a gift. Antonio's gift was making music. Do you know what your gift is? If not, how can you find it?



QUESTIONS TO REFLECT ON AFTER READING THE BOOK

1. When he was born, Antonio's mother made a vow that he would become a priest. How did her vow cause trouble for Antonio?
2. Antonio's mother did not want his father to

buy him a violin. Why not? Why did his father feel it was important to buy Antonio a violin?

3. To Antonio, the sounds and rhythms of the gondoliers rowing by were like music. What does the author mean? What sounds and rhythms do you hear in the environment?

4. Do you think the cardinal understands Antonio's passion for music? Why or why not?

5. Instead of saying Mass, Antonio was sent to teach violin to orphan girls. Why was this a better fit for Antonio? Why do you think the girls became the finest musicians in Italy?

6. Why do you think Antonio's father and mother were beaming with pride after they heard the girls perform in the chapel? Do you think they were glad they permitted Antonio to play the violin when he was a child?

7. If you were in Antonio's place, do you think you would have fulfilled your mother's vow and become a priest? Why or why not? How was Antonio able to keep his mother's vow to become a priest and his own vow to become a musician?



ACTIVITIES

1. Antonio lived with his family in Venice. On a map, locate Venice, Italy. Then use an encyclopedia to read more about this city. In

what ways is Venice different from all other cities in the world?

2. Antonio Vivaldi was born in 1678. Use online and library resources to research what life would have been like for a boy like Antonio. Find out about how careers were chosen and what life would have been like as a priest. Compare your findings to what life is like today. Share your research with the class.

3. Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons* is one of the most popular pieces of classical music. Listen to a recording of *The Four Seasons* as you review the illustration on pages 32–33 of *I, Vivaldi*. Try to identify the sound pictures. Do you hear birds singing, thunder rumbling, or a dog barking? List other musical pictures you hear.

4. Vivaldi created his compositions during the baroque period. Use library and online resources to research other composers who were popular during this period. How were the lives of these composers similar to the life of Vivaldi? How were they different?

5. Using a keyboard, a recorder, or an instrument you have at home, try composing a short melody. If you know how to write and read music, write your melody on a staff. If not, try to memorize your melody. Once you have had sufficient time to practice, perform your melody for the class.