Early Life and Musical Training: Antonio Lucio Vivaldi was born on March 4, 1678, in Venice, Italy. He was baptized immediately after his birth, which suggests that he might have been in poor health. He was trained in music by his father, Giovanni Battista Vivaldi, who was a professional violinist at St. Mark's Basilica in Venice. Despite a childhood illness that left him with a chest condition (likely asthma), Vivaldi became a virtuoso violinist.

The Red Priest: Vivaldi was nicknamed "Il Prete Rosso" ("The Red Priest") due to his distinctive red hair and his status as an ordained Catholic priest. He was ordained in 1703 but soon after ceased to say Mass, citing his ill health as the reason.

The Pietà: Much of Vivaldi’s work was associated with the Ospedale della Pietà, a home for abandoned or orphaned children where he worked as a violin master and later as the maestro de' concerti. He composed many of his most famous works for the female musicians of the Pietà.

Prolific Output: Vivaldi was exceptionally prolific, having composed over 500 concertos, nearly 50 operas, and a variety of sacred music, sonatas, and chamber works. His best-known work, "The Four Seasons" ("Le quattro stagioni"), is a group of four violin concertos that give musical expression to the seasons of the year.

Innovation in Concerto Form: Vivaldi is credited with contributing to the development of the concerto form. He refined its structure and wrote concertos for an unprecedented variety of instruments. His concertos typically have three movements in the pattern fast-slow-fast and feature a ritornello form, where the main theme returns throughout the movement, interspersed with freer episodes.

Operatic Successes: While known predominantly for his instrumental music, Vivaldi was also a successful opera impresario. He produced operas in Venice and other Italian cities, sometimes involving himself in nearly every aspect of the production.

Influence and Dissemination: Vivaldi's music was known and admired throughout Europe. Johann Sebastian Bach was significantly influenced by Vivaldi’s concertos and transcribed several of them for keyboard and other instruments.

Economic Hardships: Despite his fame, Vivaldi often had financial troubles. He sought patronage from foreign nobility and eventually moved to Vienna, hoping for the patronage of Emperor Charles VI. Unfortunately, the emperor died shortly after Vivaldi’s arrival, leaving the composer in a dire situation.

Final Years and Death: Vivaldi died in poverty in Vienna on July 28, 1741, and was buried in a simple grave after a funeral service that reflected his status at the time of his death. The exact location of his grave is unknown.

Rediscovery and Legacy: Vivaldi's music fell into relative obscurity after his death and was largely unknown during the classical and romantic periods. It wasn't until the early 20th century that his work was rediscovered, primarily through the efforts of scholars such as Alberto Gentili. Today, Vivaldi is considered one of the greatest Baroque composers, and his work is an essential part of violin repertoire and classical music programming worldwide.