



A close-up photograph of a young woman with dark hair, wearing a blue dress, playing a cello. She is looking down at the instrument. The cello is a rich brown color with white strings. The background is dark, making the subject stand out.

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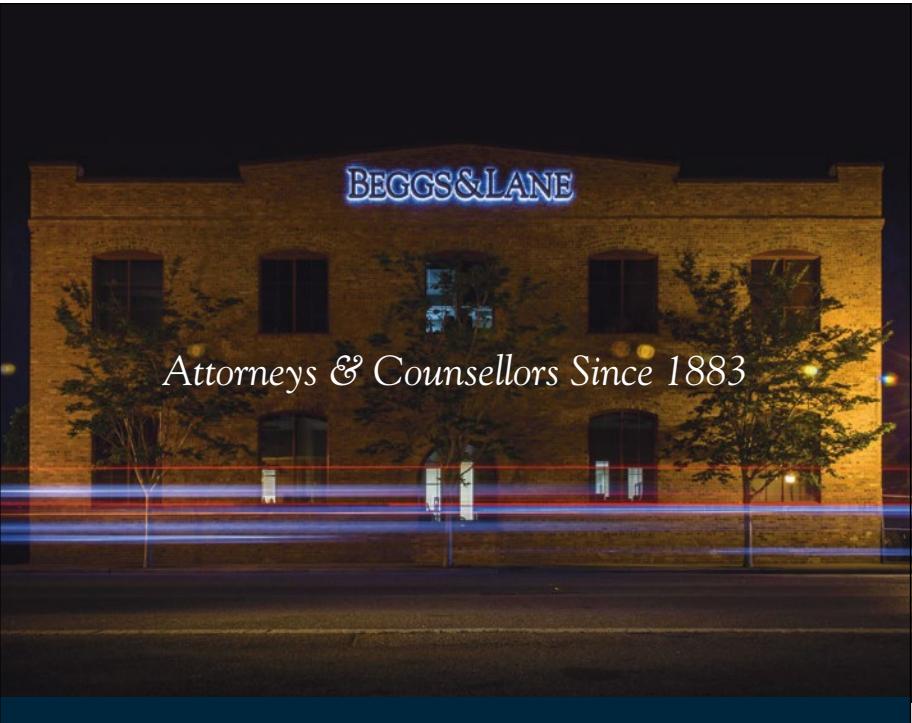
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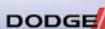
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Welcome to the Pensacola Symphony Orchestra

We are glad that you are here! We look forward to sharing meaningful musical experiences together. Thank you for adopting the health precautions that are intended to provide the safest possible environment for you, your fellow audience members, and the musicians.

Please contact us at 850.435.2533 or info@pensacolasymphony.com with any comments or suggestions about enhancing your experience.

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Photo by Meg Burke Photography

Peter Rubardt

Music Director

CELEBRATING
25 YEARS

Peter Rubardt has earned wide acclaim for powerful and insightful performances that inspire passionate responses to symphonic music. In addition to his long-standing position as Music Director of the Pensacola Symphony, he also serves as the Music Director of the Meridian and Gulf Coast Symphonies. Throughout his career he has worked successfully to deepen the relationships between communities and their orchestras, leading to growing audiences and a broad base of support. A gifted speaker about music as well as a performer, he actively engages audiences and community groups in the appreciation of symphonic music. Also busy as a guest conductor, Rubardt recently debuted with the Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra, the Alabama Symphony, the Fort Worth Symphony, and the Augusta Symphony, among others.

Now in his 25th season as Music Director of the Pensacola Symphony Orchestra, Rubardt continues to grow the organization through a wide range of classical, pops, and educational programs. He has played a central role in designing the orchestra's innovative "Beyond the Stage" program, partnering with a range of local organizations to bring music to hospitals, schools, and neighborhoods. Previously he was at the forefront of the effort that successfully renovated the historic Pensacola Saenger Theatre, giving the

orchestra increased visibility and vitality. He also led a significant capital campaign for the orchestra and played a key role in the creation of an hour-long documentary in collaboration with WSRE public television. Since assuming the Music Directorship in Meridian, that community has seen a sharp increase in concert attendance, an acoustical retrofit of the hall, a new symphonic pops event, and the introduction of a newly formed symphony chorus.

Prior to his appointment in Pensacola, Rubardt served four seasons as Associate Conductor of the Syracuse Symphony Orchestra and three seasons as Resident Conductor of the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra, conducting numerous classical and pops performances, regional tours, and educational programs with both orchestras. He has also conducted the Utah Symphony, Alabama Symphony, Louisiana, Rochester, and Las Vegas Philharmonic Orchestras, The Louisville Orchestra, Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra, Richmond Symphony, Japan's Hiroshima Symphony Orchestra, Century Orchestra Osaka, Yamagata Symphony, Hyogo Performing Arts Center Orchestra (where he performed for Her Imperial Highness The Princess Hitachi of Japan), Kansai Philharmonic Orchestra, and Nova Filarmónia Portuguesa, with which he toured Portugal several times, as well as the orchestras of Acadiana, Anchorage, Annapolis, Augusta, Bangor, El Paso, Lubbock, Peoria, Portland, Quad Cities, Rogue Valley, South Dakota, Southwest Florida, Spokane, and Youngstown, among others. From 1991 – 96, he served as Music Director of the Rutgers Symphony.

A native of Berkeley, California, Rubardt holds a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Orchestral Conducting from The Juilliard School, where he was the recipient of the Bruno Walter Fellowship. A Fulbright Scholar, he studied piano and conducting at the famed Vienna Hochschule für Musik and pursued further

studies at the Tanglewood Music Center and the Los Angeles Philharmonic Institute. He has participated in the masterclasses of Leonard Bernstein, Seiji Ozawa, André Previn, and Herbert Blomstedt; his major teachers have included Otto-Werner Mueller, Sixten Ehrling, Michael Sunturia, and David Lawton. He was selected by the League of American Orchestras to perform in the National Conductor Preview with the Jacksonville Symphony in 2005.

Rubardt has served on the faculties of The Juilliard School, Rutgers University, and the State University of New York at Purchase. In addition to Juilliard he has received awards and degrees in music from the State University of New York at Stony Brook and the University of California at Berkeley. Rubardt has recorded for Pantheon Records International. He resides in Pensacola with his wife Hedi Salanki, a Distinguished University Professor in the Grier Williams School of Music at the University of West Florida, and their two children.

PeterRubardt.com

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From Our Music Director

Welcome to this performance of the Pensacola Symphony—we are so very glad that you are with us!

Planning a symphony season is a miracle of logistics in the best of circumstances, but as with so much else in our pandemic lives, finding the path forward this year has been a revelatory challenge. So many things we thought we knew now look quite different. It has been chaotic to be sure, yet also bracing and stimulating to embrace this beloved art form in the light of new perspectives.

In the midst of our zig-zag planning process, I remember a rare moment of clarity. In February 2021 we performed the Brahms' Violin Concerto in our first public performance in nearly a year. It is a piece of exquisite expression and deep humanity, and sharing those emotions after a year of near silence was a profound experience. There is a sense of truth in much of the music of Brahms, and a radiant beauty of lasting impact; quite simply, it feels like the music we need at this time that is both hopeful and fraught with uncertainty. That quality of Brahms is at its peak in his fourth and final symphony, a probing and dark-hued work, and I knew that was the perfect piece to open this season.



Brahms' Fourth is but one of many pieces that are touching me deeply right now; truth be told, I'm feeling that way about most everything we are playing this season. The sizzling vitality of Ginastera's *Variations*, the aching nostalgia of Rachmaninoff's Second Symphony, the soaring triumph of Sibelius' Second Symphony; every piece, every concert, every rehearsal feels unimaginably more compelling, more urgent, in our transformed lives. I recently watched a documentary about the late, great jazz pianist Bill Evans. It included an interview with Tony Bennett, shortly after they had finished a recording together near the end of Evans' life. Bill told him "Just go for truth and beauty, and forget about all the rest." Truth and beauty; I can think of nothing more important to strive for. In that spirit we welcome you to a symphony season of extraordinary richness and variety. Nothing can be routine in this new world of ours, music least of all.

Thank you for being a part of the
Pensacola Symphony!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter Rubardt".

Peter Rubardt, Music Director

Meet the Musicians

FIRST VIOLIN

Leonid Yanovskiy, Concertmaster
Pensacola Symphony Orchestra Guild Chair
Petra Bubanja, Associate Concertmaster
Enen Yu, Concertmaster, Pensacola
Opera Productions
Edward Charity
Ken Davis
Burcu Goker
Nicholas Hatt
Molly Hollingsworth
Gosia Leska
Hannah MacLean
Natasha Marsalli
Tania Moldovan
Maeanna Naffe
Sarah Yen

SECOND VIOLIN

Grace Kim, Principal
Brian Brown
Juliana Gaviria
Ellen Grant
Joe Ortiguera
Ayumi Peek
Alejandro Romero
Megan Sahely
Barbara Withers
Nathan Witter

VIOLA

Michael Fernandez, Principal
Marion Viccars Chair
Victor Andzulis
Rossana Cauti
Courtney Grant
Daniela Pardo
Dave Rebeck

CELLO

Sasha Pereverzeva, Principal
Helen N. Williams Chair
Jose Sunderland
Litvak Family Chair
Chun-hsin Chang
Jordan Galvarino
Juan Jose Gutierrez
Paul Hanceri
Daniel Martinez
Ryan Snapp

BASS

Taylor Hollyer, Principal
Andrew Chilcote
Samuel Dahmer
John Palensky
Ernie Szugyi
Doug Therrien

FLUTE

Stephanie Riegler, Principal
Bethany Witter Wood
Gay and Bruce Burrows Chair
Sarah Jane Young
Mary Elizabeth Patterson Chair

PICCOLO

Sarah Jane Young

OBOE

Matt Fossa, Chair
Margaret Cracchiolo
Bobby and Suzanne Kahn Chair
Rebecca Mindock
Jillian Camwell

ENGLISH HORN

Margaret Cracchiolo

CLARINET

Richard Jernigan, Principal
Newell Hutchinson
Kim Whaley
Melissa Turner

E♭ CLARINET

Newell Hutchinson

BASS CLARINET

Kim Whaley
Melissa Turner

BASSOON

Jeff Keesecker, Principal
Paul W. Runge and Phyllis G. Runge Chair
Abigail Walker
Richard Hopkins
Kristina Nelson

CONTRABASSOON

Richard Hopkins

SAXOPHONE

Dave Camwell, Principal

HORN

Jacquelyn Adams, Principal
Claudio Torres, Jr. M.D. Chair
Jodi Graham Wood
Stuart Kinney
Tony Chiarito
James Baker
Josiah Bullach

TRUMPET

Dale Riegler, Principal
Marea Jo Milner Chair
Jonathan Martin
Ned and Jan Mayo Chair
Tom Savage
Mike Huff

TROMBONE

Bret Barrow, Principal
Dona and Milton Usry Chair
Don Snowden
Josh Bledsoe

BASS TROMBONE

Wess Hillman

TUBA

Mike Mason, Principal

TIMPANI

Laura Noah, Principal

PERCUSSION

Jordan Wood, Principal
Adam Blackstock
Matt Greenwood
Pete Krostag

HARP

Katie Ott, Principal
Rebekah Atkinson

PIANO

Tina Buran, Principal
Blake Riley

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Robin Bonta, *Production Manager*
Molly Hollingsworth, *Library & Community Engagement*
Dale Riegler, *Personnel Manager*



Hotel Ensemble, 1940s

The History of the PSO

Instrumental music performances and music study clubs began to appear in Pensacola during the late 1800s and early 1900s. By 1919, the Pensacola Music Study Club formed and in 1925, John and Louise Northup began hosting regular music gatherings with friends in their home on the southwest corner of Spring and Gregory Streets (today the Pensacola Victorian Bed & Breakfast). In 1926, representatives of the Civic Music Association of America came to Pensacola to sell memberships that gave exclusive access to performances of classical music through a series of concerts featuring national talent. In their initial campaign, they were able to sell 800 memberships for the traveling series at \$5 each. The Pensacola Philharmonic Orchestra was first formed in 1926 by German immigrant John W. Borjes as a reaction to the visiting concert series. Professor Borjes, who studied music at the storied conservatory Leipzig, recognized the need for Pensacola to have an institution of its own that could develop local talent.

The History of the PSO

and also provide access to symphonic music for the entire community. We know from Borjes' comments that he formed the ensemble with a hope "to demonstrate to this city that it is not necessary to go out of town to get good music."

Having been music director of orchestras in New York's Shubert Theatre and Memphis' Orpheum Theatre no doubt gave Borjes the requisite experience and credibility this new venture would need. Members of this early ensemble included many members of the 20-piece Saenger Theatre Concert Orchestra, among others. Their debut performance, a free concert that took place at Pensacola High School, was well received as documented in the local newspaper.

From those early years, the Pensacola Philharmonic Orchestra transitioned through a few name changes. Under the baton of Dr. John Venetozzi in the 1950s, the organization emerged as the Greater Pensacola Symphony Orchestra, its legal name to this day. The Ladies Auxiliary of the Orchestra formed in 1956, and later the Pensacola Symphony Orchestra Guild formed in 1973. After a major renovation effort in 1982, the Saenger Theatre became the concert home of the Orchestra while under the direction of Dr. Grier Williams. Dr. Williams led the PSO until 1996. During that time he was also the founder of the Music Department at the University of West Florida, music director of First Presbyterian Church, and also brought together a group of singers that later became the Pensacola Children's Chorus. In 1997, the Pensacola Symphony welcomed Peter Rubardt as its new music director. Since that time, Dr. Rubardt has played a central role in increasing the organization's impact through a wide range of classical, pops, and community engagement programs. In 2003, Rubardt assisted the

Orchestra in launching a capital campaign that grew PSO's endowment, provided percussion equipment, added chamber orchestra concerts, boosted musician compensation, and expanded community engagement opportunities.

Now in its 96th season, the PSO continues to seek ways to fulfill its mission of promoting the well-being of the Greater Pensacola community through excellence in live symphonic music and lifelong learning through engaging musical activities. From the stage, PSO's goal is to provide the Pensacola community with transformative musical experiences through performances with world-renowned artists. In addition to enlivened performances, PSO's "Beyond the Stage" program brings musical experiences to the Pensacola community in virtual and in-person settings that include schools, retirement communities, health care facilities, and galleries.

Season Calendar

October 16, 2021 - 7:30 p.m.

Masterworks - Opening Night!

November 6, 2021 - 7:30 p.m.

Masterworks - Variations & Virtuosity

November 7, 2021 - 1:30 p.m.

Free Community Concert
Great Gulfcoast Arts Festival
Seville Square

November 11, 2021 - 3:30 p.m.

From Sea to Shining Sea: A Musical Salute

to Service

Presented by Pensacola Opera
Hunter Amphitheater

November 28, 2021 - 3 p.m.

Special Event

Home for the Holidays

Featuring Ashley Brown

December 31, 2021 - 7 p.m.

Pops! - Celebrate the New Year!

January 15, 2022 - 7:30 p.m.

Masterworks - Beethoven & Blue Jeans:
Poetry, Prose & Verse

February 12, 2022 - 7:30 p.m.

Pops! - Come Fly with Me: Music of
Sinatra and More

February 19, 2022 - 7:30 p.m.

Chamber Orchestra Concert

Mozart Madness

March 5, 2022 - 7:30 p.m.

Add-On Concert - Russian Spectacular

March 26, 2022 - 7:30 p.m.

Masterworks - American Classics

April 3, 2022 - 3 p.m.

Free Community Concert
PSO in the Park
Museum Plaza

April 23, 2022 - 10 a.m.

Special Event
Music for Families

April 30, 2022 - 7:30 p.m.

Masterworks - Sounds Triumphant

May 8, 2022 - 3 p.m.

Free Community Concert
PSO in the Park
Museum Plaza

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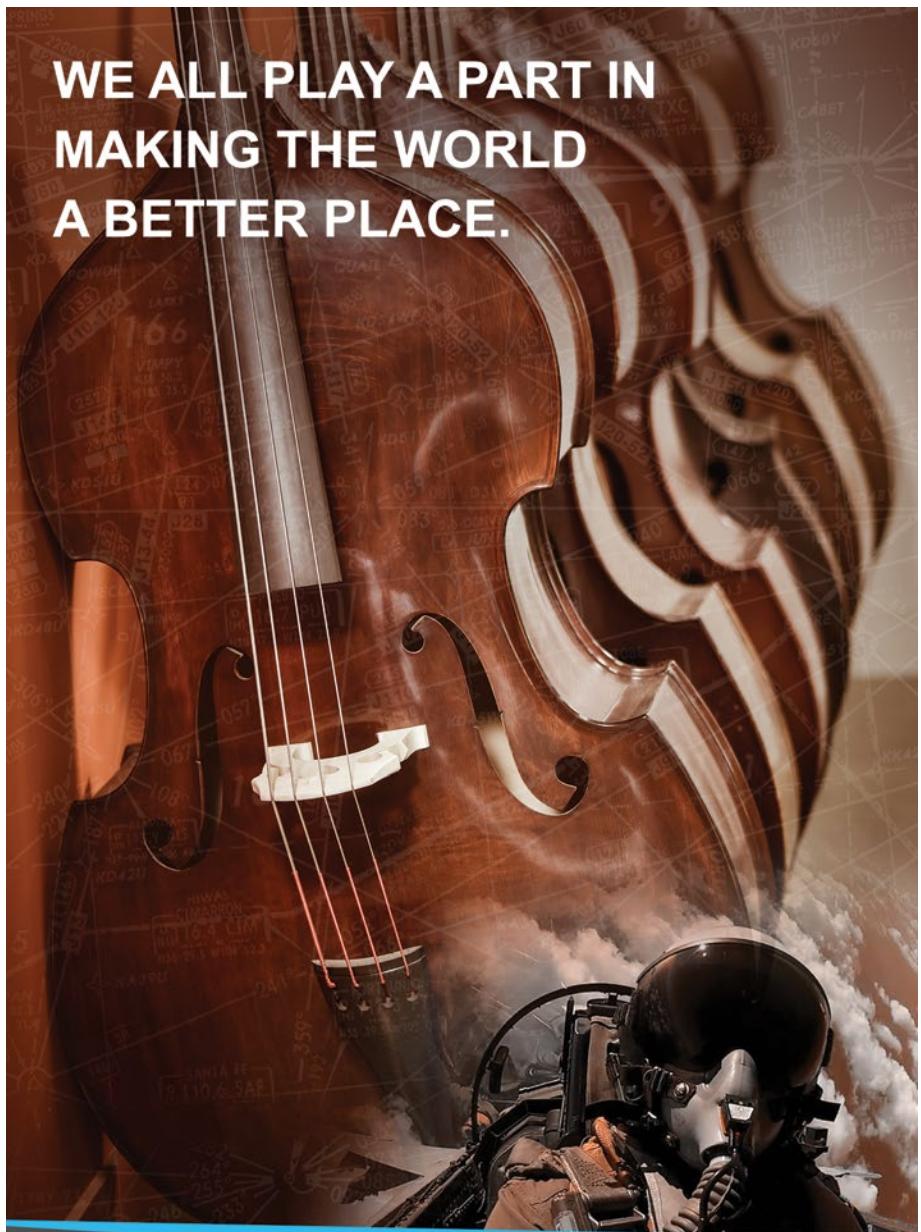
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TECHNOLOGIES



Photo by Bill Mertins

Beyond the Stage

Since 1926, musicians in our community have been performing, teaching, and sharing music under the auspices of this Orchestra. The legacy of this work creates a solid foundation on which we continue to build. During the past several years, your involvement and generosity have made it possible for the Pensacola Symphony Orchestra to move beyond the stage and join with key community partners in providing meaningful musical experiences during every stage of life. During the pandemic, it became critically important to find new ways to experience music, fostering encouragement, joy, and connections. We are gradually resuming on-site activities with our community partners as it is safe to do, and we are gratefully embracing new opportunities to serve.

If you know of a community organization with whom we should partner, please contact Molly Hollingsworth, Library & Community Engagement, at mhollingsworth@pensacolasymphony.com or 850-435-2533 ext. 104.

Virtual Fifth Grade Concerts

For more than 40 years, Escambia and Santa Rosa County fifth graders have enjoyed a field trip to the Saenger Theatre to experience a symphony performance. When it became apparent that this beloved tradition might not be possible, your local teachers and administrators made it a priority for this generation of fifth graders to experience orchestral music in a new way. Through a compilation of archival and new footage, we put together a virtual education concert that was streamed in classrooms across both counties and enjoyed by students learning virtually. Through interviews with musicians along with a selection of music, local students were still able to enjoy their day “with” the symphony.

PSO in the Park

Since the fall of 2020, hundreds have joined us for a series of free outdoor performances at Museum Plaza in Downtown Pensacola. Featuring small ensembles of Pensacola Symphony Orchestra musicians, these concerts are a wonderful way to experience live music in a socially distanced setting. Join us for upcoming opportunities on April 3 and May 8, 2022.

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If you would like to support a partnership through annual giving, please contact Jessica Hyche, Advancement & External Relations, at jhyche@pensacolasymphony.com or 850.435.2533 ext. 102.

SPECIAL THANKS

These special opportunities would not have been possible without the assistance of the following people and groups:

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Santa Rosa County School District

The Southern Creative

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Board of Directors



From Left: Kevin Nelson, Charles Beall, Jack Zoesch, and Diane Appleyard

The board of directors plays an active role in strategic thinking, financial and legal oversight, and relationship building for the organization. Their vast experience and passion for serving our community through music are essential in addressing the PSO's challenges and opportunities. Members serve a three-year, renewable term and meet regularly to discuss the direction of the PSO, ensuring that our resources are most effectively allocated toward the fulfillment of our mission.

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From Left: Nora Bailey and Sonya Davis

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We have recently changed the formatting of this recognition. If you have inadvertently been omitted, please accept our sincere apologies and contact us at info@pensacolasyphony.com or 850.435.2533 so that you may be listed in future publications.

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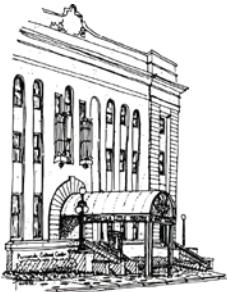
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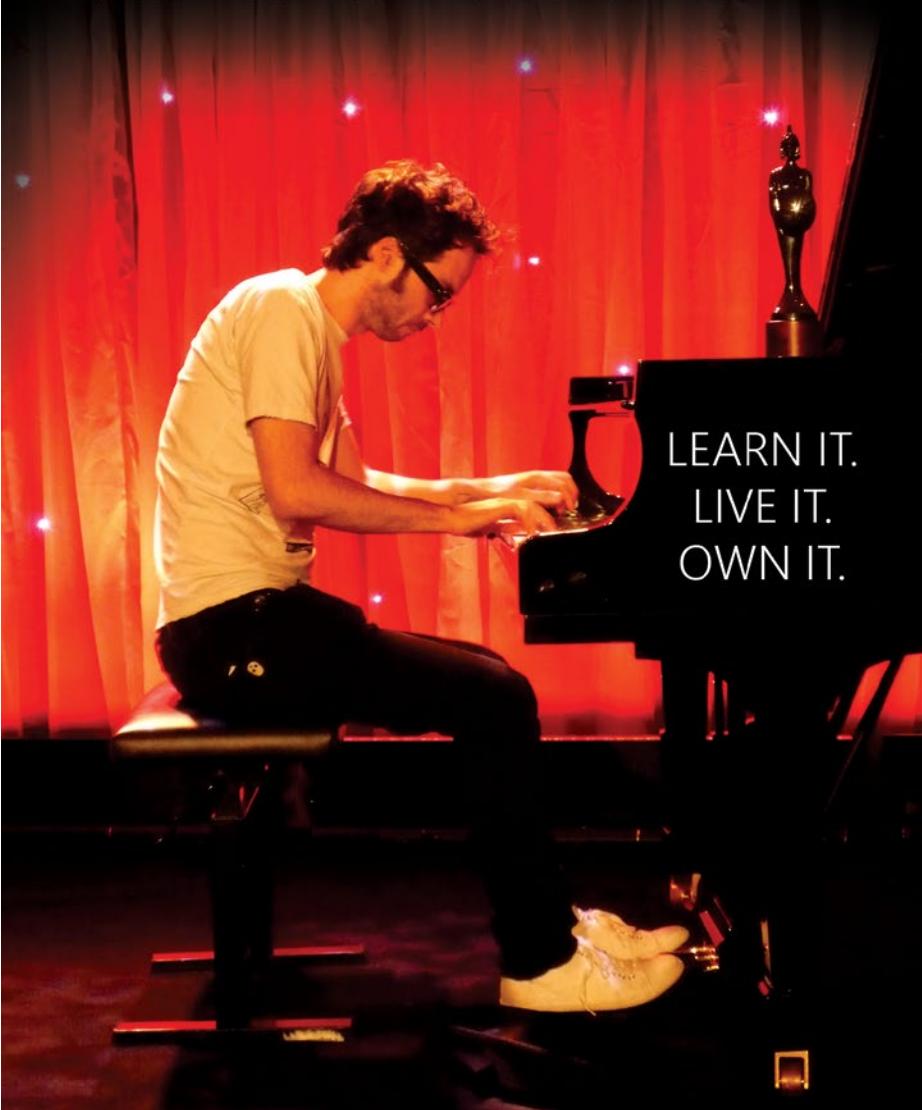


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Opening Night!

Saturday, October 16, 2021, 7:30 p.m.

Peter Rubardt, Conductor

Roberto Plano, Piano

Hector Berlioz "Hungarian March" from *The Damnation of Faust*, Op. 24
(1803-1869)

Franz Liszt Piano Concerto No. 1 in E♭ Major, S. 124
(1811-1886)
I. Allegro maestoso
II. Quasi adagio
III. Allegretto vivace – Allegro animato
IV. Allegro marziale animato

Featuring Roberto Plano, Piano

The movements are performed without pause.

INTERMISSION

Johannes Brahms Symphony No. 4 in E Minor, Op. 98
(1833-1897)
I. Allegro non troppo
II. Adante moderato
III. Allegro giocoso
IV. Allegro energico e passionato

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Roberto Plano

Piano

Italian-native Roberto Plano has performed all over the world, appearing with prestigious orchestras, including Kremerata Baltica, Houston Symphony, Berliner Philharmoniker Camerata, and Festival Strings Lucerne under the direction of renowned conductors such as Sir Neville Marriner, James Conlon, Pinchas Zukerman, and Miguel Harth-Bedoya. As a recitalist he has played at Lincoln Center, Sala Verdi, Salle Cortot, Wigmore Hall, Herkulessaal, and at the internationally acclaimed Newport Festival, Portland Piano Festival, Ravinia Festival, Gilmore International Keyboard Festival, Chopin Festival, Gijón International Piano Festival, and Bologna Festival. An avid chamber musician as well, Plano has played with some of the most prestigious string quartets in the world, including the Takács, Cremona, St. Petersburg, Fine Arts, Jupiter, and Muir string quartets.

First prize winner at the 2001 Cleveland International Piano Competition, prize winner at the Honens, Dublin, Sendai, Géza Anda, and Valencia competitions, and finalist at the 2005 Van Cliburn International Piano Competition, Plano has an engaging personality that has made him a favorite guest on radio programs such as NPR's *Performance Today*, and on television shows for PBS, France's Mezzo, and Japan's NHK. Plano was also named the "Best Ensemble Performer" at the Honens Competition for his performances with cellist Shauna Rolston and soprano Ingrid Atrot, and he was the winner of the "Best Recital" and "Best Performance of a Commissioned Work" prizes at the Dublin International Piano Competition.



Photo by Ravaioli Werner Marco

In 2013 he performed the world premiere of Andrea Luchesi's two piano concertos with the Busoni Chamber Orchestra in Trieste, Italy, Massimo Belli conducting. The performance included a never-before-heard cadenza written for one of the concertos by Mozart.

Plano studied at the Giuseppe Verdi Conservatory of Music in Milan, the École "Cortot" in Paris, and the International Piano Academy Lake Como Academy. During his career he has been awarded several prizes, including the Lumen Claro. In January 2018 he won the American Prize in the solo professional division.

Music critic Anthony Tommasini of *The New York Times* has written: "This Italian pianist showed artistic maturity beyond his years... there was a wonderful clarity and control of inner voices in his performances..."

A member of the faculty at Boston University since 2016, Plano joined Indiana University's Jacobs School of Music as Associate Professor of Piano in August 2018.

Opening Night!

Hector Berlioz

"Hungarian March" from *The Damnation of Faust*, Op. 24

*Hector Berlioz was born on December 11, 1803 at La Côte-Saint-André, France and died on March 8, 1869 in Paris. The first performance of the "Hungarian March" was given in Pest, Hungary on February 15, 1846. The first performance of *The Damnation of Faust* took place at the Opéra-Comique in Paris on December 6, 1846. The march is scored for piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, four bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, two cornets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion, and strings.*

While Hector Berlioz cited Shakespeare and Beethoven as the two primary influences on his creative life, the Faust legend, specifically the dramatic version by the great German poet Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, was certainly not far behind. Berlioz initially encountered Goethe's Faust in Gérard de Nerval's French translation in 1828, and it inspired him to immediately compose *Eight Scenes from Goethe's Faust*, which would later evolve into *The Damnation of Faust*, a concert work for vocal soloists, chorus, and orchestra.

Berlioz worked sporadically on his Faust over the following two decades, but the "Hungarian March" was a late addition. For a concert in Pest, Hungary in February 1846, Berlioz was encouraged by a Viennese acquaintance to write something that would win favor with his Hungarian audiences. His solution was a vibrant orchestration of the Rákóczi March, composed to honor Hungarian nobleman Francis II Rákóczi II, who led a revolt against the Austrian Hapsburg rulers of Hungary in the early 18th century. There are records of the tune being played in concerts by the Romani violinist János Bihari around 1830, and it became a rallying cry for the Hungarian insurgents who would eventually rise in revolt against their Austrian overlords in 1848. The melody was arranged and adapted

by a number of composers, notably Franz Liszt in his *Hungarian Rhapsody No. 15* for piano.

At the first performance in Pest, Berlioz described the audience reaction to the March as "a volcano in eruption," and that "the thunders of the orchestra were powerless (against the audience noise)... We had to repeat the piece, of course. The second time, the audience could scarcely contain itself.... It was a good thing that I had placed [it] at the end of the program, for anything we had tried to play after it would have been lost."

Berlioz incorporated it into *The Damnation of Faust* to depict soldiers marching past Faust on the plains of Hungary (a scene not found in Goethe – Berlioz invented it for dramatic effect). As the soldiers march past, Faust expresses his world weariness by proclaiming "With such fire their eyes blaze! Every heart thrills to their song of victory—mine alone stays cold, indifferent to glory."

While the "March" gathered rave reviews, the initial hearing of *The Damnation of Faust* at the Opéra-Comique in December 1846 was both an artistic and financial catastrophe for the composer. Plagued by exorbitant copying costs, bad weather, and singers who failed to capture the public's attention, *Faust* was performed twice to half-full halls, with a third performance canceled for lack of public interest. In his memoirs, Berlioz bitterly recalled the pain and humiliation of this failure.

"The fashionable Paris audience, the audience which goes to concerts and is supposed to take an interest in music, stayed comfortably at home, as little concerned with my new work as if I had been the obscurest Conservatoire student... Nothing in my career as an artist wounded me more deeply than this unexpected indifference."

Despite the cool initial reception, *The Damnation of Faust* has gone on to become one of the staples of the choral/orchestral repertoire, and the "Hungarian March" is heard frequently in

the concert hall, both in its original version and in various transcriptions for wind orchestra.

The “March” begins with a brass fanfare followed by a delicately scored theme notable for the accents on the second half of the measure. After several contrasting sections, the music builds to a climax over repetitions of the principal idea. At the climax, Berlioz unleashes the full power of the orchestra, led by the trombones and abetted by prominent brass and percussion. The main melody returns, this time scored for the full orchestra, and the work concludes in a triumphant fanfare.

Franz Liszt

Piano Concerto No. 1 in E♭ Major, S. 124

Franz (Ferenc) Liszt was born on October 22, 1811 in Raiding, Hungary and died on July 31, 1886 in Bayreuth, Bavaria, Germany. Piano Concerto No. 1 was first performed on February 17, 1855 at the Ducal Palace in Weimar, Germany with the composer as soloist and Hector Berlioz conducting. The concerto is scored for solo piano, three flutes (the third doubling piccolo), two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, three trombones, timpani, percussion, and strings.

What are we to make of the enigma of Franz Liszt? Both personally and musically, simple categorization of his unique art and personality seems nearly impossible. What are we to make, for example, of a man who spent his early life as a touring virtuoso and womanizer, engaging in scandalous affairs with Countess Marie d'Agoult (with whom he had three children) and Princess Carolyne Sayn-Wittgenstein, and the solitary Catholic penitent who was ordained in 1865 and was henceforth known as Abbé Liszt? And how do we reconcile his knuckle-busting virtuoso works, the summit of piano technique even today, with the meditative and groundbreaking works of his later life, works which stretch

conventional harmony and form to its very limits, even crossing the boundary into what might be considered atonal music? It is as though Liszt's psyche was a fascinating combination of Thomas Merton and Elvis Presley, with no real boundaries where one ended and the other began.

That said, if you needed a simple answer to the Liszt enigma, it would be that Liszt was both all of those things and none of them. He followed his own distinctive path as a person and as a musician, constantly exploring and pushing both musical and technical boundaries. He was widely imitated by his contemporaries and served as a guiding beacon to composers who followed, influencing everyone from Richard Wagner to John Williams.

As for Liszt's obsession with technical virtuosity, it can be summed up in one name: Niccolò Paganini. As a young pianist caught up in the heady cultural ferment of Paris in the 1830s, Liszt attended a benefit concert in April 1832 given by the mysterious Italian violinist and was stupefied at Paganini's dazzling technique. As a result, Liszt gave up public appearances for nearly a year to devote himself to cultivating pianistic technique to match Paganini's talents. He wrote to a friend about his new mindset:

“For the past fortnight my mind and fingers have been working away like two lost spirits. Homer, the Bible, Plato, Locke, Byron, Hugo, Lamartine, Chateaubriand, Beethoven, Bach, Hummel, Mozart, Weber, are all around me. I study them, meditate on them, devour them with fury; and in addition I spend four to five hours practicing exercises (thirds, sixths, octaves, tremolos, repeated notes, cadenzas, etc. etc.). Ah! provided I don't go mad you will find an artist in me! Yes, an artist such as you desire, such as is required nowadays!”

The Piano Concerto No. 1 was one of the additional fruits of his labors, a concerto designed to display Liszt's virtuosity to its fullest effect. While the four movements of a Classical work

Opening Night!

can be easily heard (fast first movement – slow movement – triple-meter scherzo – fast finale), they are played without pause, and unified by the initial musical phrase of the concerto. Liszt varies and transforms this musical idea throughout the piece, with nearly all of the melodic material deriving from this opening motive. This cyclical technique became the means of breaking down the strict barriers of Classical form and creating a more fluid structure. Cyclical form proved influential well into the 20th century, from works as varied as Saint-Saëns' Organ Symphony and the Eighth String Quartet of Dmitri Shostakovich.

The concerto opens with a thunderous unison statement by the entire string section, answered by sharp punctuation from the winds. The soloist enters in a ferocious onslaught of octaves and arpeggios leading to a brief cadenza before the opening idea returns, quiet and mysterious. The movement is by turns lyrical and rhapsodic, with extensive dialogue between the pianist and various solo instruments as well as with the full ensemble. Quietly murmuring chromatic scales lead to the Quasi adagio, with the pianist introducing a dreamy and wistful melody, so different than the opening of the concerto, but still derived from it. The overall mood is one of serene fantasy, with occasional outbursts of passion from both the soloist and the orchestra. The quicksilver scherzo follows without pause, much in the manner of Mendelssohn's Midsummer Night's Dream music. The inclusion of a triangle in the orchestra caused great controversy at the time, but today seems to add the perfect sparkle to the gossamer texture. A brief transition reviews some of the concerto's opening material before leaping into a swaggering march (transformed from the dreamy theme of the slow movement). The stormy dialogue of the first movement returns, along with reminiscences of early material, but the visceral energy of the march proves irresistible, and the concerto concludes with a final surge of triumphant virtuosity.

Johannes Brahms

Symphony No. 4 in E Minor, Op. 98

Johannes Brahms was born on May 7, 1833 in Hamburg, Germany, and died on April 3, 1897 in Vienna. The Fourth Symphony was first performed on October 25, 1885 by the court orchestra in Meiningen, Germany, conducted by the composer. The symphony is scored for two flutes (the second flute doubling piccolo), two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons and contrabassoon, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, timpani, percussion, and strings.

"A symphony is no joke." – Attributed to Johannes Brahms

"Once again I've just thrown together a bunch of polkas and waltzes." – Johannes Brahms, describing his Fourth Symphony to his friend and biographer, Max Kalbeck

One could be forgiven for thinking that next to the word "curmudgeon" in the dictionary there would be a portrait of Johannes Brahms. Various descriptions of him by friends and contemporaries enumerate many aspects of his often prickly personality and his somewhat anti-social behavior. Even though he made a comfortable salary, he lived very frugally, often dressing in frumpy and threadbare clothes. When asked by a violist rehearsing one of his string quartets whether or not he liked the tempos, Brahms replied "Yes, especially yours." Upon leaving a fancy dinner party, Brahms turned to the assembled guests and said, "If there is anyone here whom I have not insulted tonight, I beg his pardon."

Yet the same man who could spit such insults could also joke with his publisher Simrock that his joyful Second Symphony "is so melancholy that you will not be able to bear it. I have never written anything so sad, and the score must come out in mourning." He was also once asked

for his autograph by Adele Strauss, the wife of Brahms' friend Johann Strauss II, the waltz king of Vienna. Cheekily, he quickly scribbled down the opening bars of her husband's *The Blue Danube* and signed underneath the music staff "Unfortunately, not by Johannes Brahms."

This same dichotomy applies to Brahms' musical personality; he is a Janus-headed figure, simultaneously looking forward and backward. How otherwise to reconcile his interest in the music of Palestrina, Schütz, Handel and Bach with assertions by both Arnold Schoenberg and Anton Webern that Brahms' musical techniques foreshadowed and influenced the composers of the Second Viennese School? Or the disdain of the followers of Liszt and Wagner for Brahms' "old-fashioned" style of absolute (i.e., non-programmatic) music, compared to the pronouncement of music critic of the *Boston Traveler*, who asserted in 1882:

"It would appear as though Brahms might afford occasionally to put a little more melody into his work—just a little now and then for a change. His Second Symphony gave the impression that the composer was either endeavoring all this while to get as near to harmonic sounds as possible without reaching them; or that he was unable to find any whatever."

The gestation of the Fourth Symphony reflects these two sides of Brahms' mind. For a symphony with such a tragic outlook, it was composed in a beautiful and picturesque location: Mürzzuschlag in the Styrian Alps southwest of Vienna, where Brahms worked on the Fourth Symphony during the summers of 1884 and 1885. In a letter to conductor Hans von Bülow, the composer dropped a hint of the bittersweet nature of the work: "I'm afraid [the symphony] tastes of the climate here; the cherries are hardly sweet here—you wouldn't eat them!"

Brahms' friends were less than enthusiastic when they heard his new work. At the initial

piano reading, the influential Viennese critic Eduard Hanslick joked at the end of the first movement "I feel I've just been beaten up by two terribly intelligent people." Max Kalbeck suggested to Brahms that the slow movement should be rewritten, the scherzo discarded, and that the finale should be a separate work entirely. As the premiere approached, Brahms, who was notoriously self-critical, doubted whether he would keep the work after its premiere, scheduled for Meiningen in October 1885.

That first performance proved Brahms' judgment to be correct, and his confidence in his new work justified. After the first rehearsal in Meiningen, von Bülow made note of the new work by writing, "Difficult, very difficult. No. 4 gigantic, altogether a law unto itself, quite new, steely individuality. Exudes unparalleled energy from first note to last." The premiere, with Brahms conducting von Bülow's Meiningen Court Orchestra, was a triumph, with the first and third movements encored at the royal request of the Duke of Meiningen. Eduard Hanslick evidently found the orchestral performance far more persuasive than the initial piano run-through, writing in his review that "Brahms is unique in his resources of genuine symphonic invention; in his sovereign mastery of all the secrets of counterpoint, harmony, and instrumentation; in the logic of development combined with the most beautiful freedom of fantasy."

The first movement is constructed from the simplest of materials – so simple, in fact, that a waggish musician (possibly the young Gustav Mahler) made up words to the opening that translate roughly "I have...no ideas...no ideas...have I..." Yet this superficial snarky comment ignores the ingenious construction of the opening phrase, where a descending interval of a major third (in this case, B to G) is succeeded by its inversion, a minor sixth, or, more plainly, a simple musical idea is answered by its mirror image or its polar opposite, a concept that would

Opening Night!

form one of the pillars of Schoenberg's methods of serial composition. Though the movement conforms to the parameters of sonata form, the musical process Brahms follows is constantly blurring the outlines of the various sections. This tendency produces moments of utter magic like the mysterious onset of the recapitulation, where the first phrase of the symphony returns, but with the opening phrase slowed to a meditative stillness and wreathed with swirls of mysterious string arpeggios, with only the second phrase returning us to the familiar sounds of the opening.

The solemn procession of the slow movement opens with a singular horn call, taken up by the rest of the woodwinds, and then underscored by the quiet tread of pizzicato strings. The character of this fanfare pervades the movement, appearing in different guises and generating new variations from the original idea. In its way, the movement bears comparison with the opening movement of Beethoven's Fifth, with its reliance on the unity of a single idea, even though the tempo and character of the two movements are very different.

In Brahms' initial three symphonies, none of the middle movements could be characterized as a true scherzo in the Beethoven mold; they function more as intermezzi in moderate tempo, each with its own distinctive character. In the Fourth Symphony, Brahms gets close to the character of a scherzo, even though the meter is duple rather than triple, more in the character of an energetic march. The martial feeling is heightened by the use of the triangle, making its only appearance in a Brahms symphony. There is no traditional trio section, merely a brief *Poco meno presto* which provides a temporary respite from the defiant energy of the rest of the movement.

Brahms dispenses with the traditional Classical finale of either a sonata-form movement or a rondo, structuring the movement as a Romantic interpretation of the Baroque passacaglia form, a set of continuous variations over a repeating bass line or harmonic progression. Though

Brahms composes his own variations, he chose a passacaglia theme from Bach's Cantata No. 150, *Nach Dir, Herr, verlanget mich*—"I long to be near you, Lord," an intriguing choice for a composer writing the last movement of his last symphony. Where the finale of his First Symphony battles to a hard-won triumph, the finale of the Second dances with exuberant joy, and the finale of the Third resolves its strife in serene peace, the finale of the Fourth Symphony unfolds with grim inevitability, with little respite from its stark pronouncements. The work ends not in triumph, but in fury, the passacaglia theme roaring from the brass surrounded by a maelstrom of strings, the push to the final cadence grim and unrelenting. In his final symphony, Brahms does truly demonstrate that a symphony, especially this symphony, is no joke.

— David Cole

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Saturday, November 6, 2021, 7:30 p.m.

Peter Rubardt, Conductor

Geneva Lewis, Violin

Maurice Ravel
(1875 – 1937)

Le Tombeau de Couperin

- I. Prélude
- II. Forlane
- III. Menuet
- IV. Rigaudon

Alberto Ginastera
(1916 – 1983)

Variaciones Concertantes, Op. 23

- I. Theme for Cello and Harp
- II. Interlude for Strings
- III. Humorous Variation for Flute
- IV. Variation in the Style of a Scherzo for Clarinet
- V. Dramatic Variation for Viola
- VI. Canonic Variation for Oboe and Bassoon
- VII. Rhythmic Variation for Trumpet and Trombone
- VIII. Variation in the Style of a Moto perpetuo for Violin
- IX. Pastoral Variation for Horn
- X. Interlude for Winds
- XI. Reprise of the Theme for Double Bass and Harp
- XII. Final Variation in the Mode of Rondo for Orchestra

The movements are performed without pause.

INTERMISSION

Antonín Dvořák
(1841 – 1904)

Violin Concerto in A Minor, Op. 53

- I. Allegro ma non troppo
- II. Adagio ma non troppo
- III. Finale: Allegro giocoso – ma non troppo

Featuring Geneva Lewis, Violin

The first and second movements are performed without pause.

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Geneva Lewis

Violin

New Zealand-born violinist Geneva Lewis has forged a reputation as a musician of consummate artistry whose performances speak from and to the heart. Hailed by conductor Nic McGegan as “a name to watch,” Lewis is the recipient of a 2021 Avery Fisher Career Grant and grand prize winner of the 2020 Concert Artists Guild Competition. Other recent accolades include Kronberg Academy’s Prince of Hesse Prize and being named a finalist at the 2018 Naumburg Competition, *a Performance Today* Young Artist in Residence, and *Musical America’s* New Artist of the Month.

After her solo debut at age 11 with the Pasadena Symphony, Lewis has gone on to perform with orchestras around the world, including recent and forthcoming appearances with Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, Auckland Philharmonia, Sarasota Orchestra, Augusta Symphony, and Duluth Superior Symphony Orchestra. She has worked with a number of notable conductors, including Nic McGegan, Edwin Outwater, and Michael Feinstein. In recital, recent and upcoming highlights include performances at Wigmore Hall, the Concertgebouw, Tippet Rise Art Center, Emory University, Purdue Convocations, Kravis Center for the Performing Arts, and Dame Myra Hess Memorial Concerts, among others.

While Lewis’ claim to chamber music fame came early on as a member of the renowned Lewis Family Trio with her siblings Nathan (piano) and Rochelle (cello), she has since established the Callisto Trio, artists-in-residence at the Da Camera Society in Los Angeles. Callisto received the bronze medal at the Fischoff Competition as the youngest group to ever compete in the senior division finals. They were recently invited on the Masters on Tour series of the International



Holland Music Sessions and performed at the celebrated Het Concertgebouw Amsterdam.

An advocate of community engagement and music education, Lewis was selected for the New England Conservatory Community Performances and Partnerships Program’s Ensemble Fellowship, through which her string quartet created interactive educational programs for audiences throughout Boston. Her quartet was also chosen for the Virginia Arts Festival Residency, during which they performed and presented masterclasses in elementary, middle, and high schools.

Lewis is currently in the Artist Diploma Program as the recipient of the Charlotte F. Rabb Presidential Scholarship at the New England Conservatory, studying with Miriam Fried. Past summers have taken her to the Marlboro Music Festival, Ravinia Steans Institute, Perlman Music Program’s Chamber Workshop, International Holland Music Sessions, Taos School of Music, and the Heifetz International Music Institute.

Geneva Lewis is a winner of the Concert Artists Guild International Competition and is represented by Concert Artists Guild, 135 East 57th Street, 7th Floor, New York, NY 10022 (www.concertartists.org)

Variations & Virtuosity

Maurice Ravel

Le Tombeau de Couperin

*Maurice Ravel was born on March 7, 1875 in Ciboure, Basses-Pyrénées, France and died in Paris on December 28, 1937. The first performance of the orchestral version of *Le Tombeau de Couperin* took place on February 28, 1920, performed by the Pasdeloup Orchestra conducted by Rhené-Baton. The score calls for two flutes and piccolo, two oboes and English horn, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, trumpet, harp, and strings.*

The devastation of the First World War would require volumes to cover in detail, but it can be summarized by looking at the statistics of one battle: the Battle of the Somme, which began on July 1, 1916. On the first day of combat, the forces of the British Empire (including Canadian, Australian, Indian and other troops from the Empire) suffered casualties of nearly 20,000 killed and 37,000 wounded (out of a fighting force of 120,000), with most of those casualties occurring during the first hour of battle. For that day, the bloodiest in the history of the British Army, it was calculated that one British soldier died every 4.4 seconds.

Both sides pushed back and forth for four-and-a-half months. Summer heat preceded heavy autumn rains, which turned the battlefield soil into a quagmire of mud, slowing or trapping both men and machines. British and French troops made more than 90 assaults on German positions between July 1 and November 18, 1916, with the Allied Forces gaining a total of six miles in that time. Casualties for the entire battle amounted to 420,000 dead and wounded for the British, 300,000 for the French, and 500,000 for the Germans and Austrians, or roughly 200,000 dead and wounded per mile. While no other battle of the war matched the level of carnage seen at the Somme, the war devastated an entire generation of young men, with far-reaching effects throughout the rest of the century.

The calamitous impact of the war had its effect on the world of music as well. Both sides lost budding young talent to combat, including composers like England's George Butterworth and Germany's Rudi Stephan. French composer Albéric Magnard lost his life in September of 1914 defending his home as invading German soldiers set fire to it. Spanish pianist and composer Enrique Granados drowned when a German U-boat sank the S.S. Sussex, the Channel ferry on which he was a passenger. While Sir Edward Elgar was too old to be a combatant, the tragedy of the war and the death of his beloved wife all but stifled his creative muse – he wrote almost nothing between the war's end in 1918 and his death in 1934.

Maurice Ravel's response to the war took on a different form. Originally swept up in the initial war fervor, he volunteered for service in the hopes of joining the French Air Force as a pilot, but was rejected because of his fragile health. He was eventually accepted by the Army Motor Transport Corps as an ambulance driver and medical orderly. Even though he tried to maintain his optimism and sense of humor – he named his ambulance "Adélaïde" and signed his letters from the front as "Chauffeur Ravel" – the brutal and dangerous conditions at the front took a toll on his health. Ravel's beloved mother died in early 1917, causing further deterioration of his physical and mental health. The army finally discharged Ravel from service in June of 1917, and he spent the remainder of the war at his godmother's house in Normandy, returning to compositions that he had drafted when the war began.

The piano suite *Le Tombeau de Couperin* was started in 1914 and was originally intended as a tribute to the music of the great 18th-century French harpsichordist and composer François Couperin. The suite was in the format of Couperin's keyboard suites, with a Prélude followed by five dances, 20th-century versions of Baroque dance forms. In writing to one of his pupils, Ravel gave a hint of his original ideas for the suite:

"I'm beginning ... a French Suite—no, it's not what you think—the Marseillaise doesn't come into it at all, but there'll be a forlane and a jig; not a tango, though."

When Ravel returned to the work after his traumatic war experience, he dedicated each movement to a friend who had died in combat. The title evokes both the past and the present, "Tombeau" originally meaning a piece written as a memorial to a friend or a musical colleague. When Ravel was asked to create an orchestral version in 1919, he chose not to use two movements (the Fugue and the concluding Toccata) and scored the remaining four movements for chamber orchestra.

The Prélude is a delicate and mellifluous perpetual motion led by the oboe and wreathed in swirling arabesques by the woodwinds and strings. The Forlane skips pertly in a beguiling kaleidoscope of orchestral colors, with the initial three-note rhythm pervading the movement. Ravel's Menuet retains the elegance of the original 17th-century dance, but with a tinge of melancholy nostalgia which rises to a solemn surge of emotion in the middle of the movement. The concluding Rigaudon brims with witty energy in its outer sections, and with seductive charm in the middle, with woodwind solos singing sweetly over harp and pizzicato strings.

Ravel received criticism because of the largely upbeat and introspective nature of *Le Tombeau de Couperin*, but he replied that "The dead are sad enough, in their eternal silence." Ultimately *Le Tombeau de Couperin* lives up to its title; it is not a lament, but both a loving and dignified tribute to fallen comrades and to a past that will never return, whether it be Couperin's past or the Belle Epoque before the Great War.

Alberto Ginastera

Variaciones Concertantes, Op. 23

Alberto Ginastera was born on April 11, 1916, Buenos Aires, Argentina, and died on June 25, 1983 in Geneva, Switzerland. Variaciones Concertantes received its first performance on June 2, 1953 in Buenos Aires, Argentina, with the Asociación de la Música Orquesta conducted by Igor Markevitch. The work is scored for two flutes (second doubling piccolo), oboe, two clarinets, bassoon, two horns, trumpet, trombone, timpani, harp, and strings.

The wave of patriotic fervor that swept through Europe in the 19th century had its effect on music as well as politics. In Italy, as the *risorgimenti* gradually gained control of the Italian peninsula, audiences in Italian opera houses shouted "Viva Verdi!" for the Italian maestro's dramas. What is less well known is that cry of enthusiasm held a secret code for Italian nationalists, with "Verdi" serving as an acronym for "Viva Vittorio Emmanuele, Re d'Italia" (Victor Emmanuel, King of Italy), the head of the House of Savoy, who would eventually become Italy's first king. Likewise, operas and symphonic works like Czech composer Bedřich Smetana's *The Bartered Bride* and Má Vlast (*My Homeland*) gave artistic voice to the aspirations of the Czech people eager to break away from the rule of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Their dream of becoming an independent nation was realized with the Treaty of Versailles in 1918.

Yet "nationalism" for musicians evolved beyond mere politics into a desire to absorb the style and syntax of their native folk music into their own compositions for the opera house and concert hall. Through the study and collection of their native melodies, they absorbed that style into their own music and made it their own, and in so doing made it a language in which they could speak to the entire world. The pioneering work of collecting folk songs by composers like Ralph Vaughan Williams

Variations & Virtuosity

and Gustav Holst in England and Zoltán Kodály and Béla Bartók in Eastern Europe transformed those composers' own musical language. While they wrote their share of simple folksong arrangements, the flavor of folk song appears in both the thorny string quartets of Bartók and the imposing symphonies of Vaughan Williams. Nationalist composers became not just purveyors of their countries' folk idiom, but great composers who distilled the essence of their nations' voices to produce universally resonant music.

The great Argentinian composer Alberto Ginastera followed a similar path, writing music based on the Gaucho traditions and tales of his native land, incorporating the style features of those songs and dances into his operas and concert music. His ballet *Estancia* (1941) was an international success, both through its portrayal of life on an Argentine ranch (much like Aaron Copland's later *Rodeo*) and through its evocative music. After 1950, Ginastera turned away from such overtly nationalist works, exploring more abstract forms and incorporating other compositional elements like serialism, polytonality and microtones into his musical language. While his early compositions are evocative symphonic poems, ballets, and operas, his later works are more abstract in nature, including two piano concertos, two cello concertos, and a concerto for harp.

Variaciones Concertantes dates from 1953 and represents a synthesis of Ginastera's folk and abstract styles. The work was written on a commission from the Asociación Amigos de la Música of Buenos Aires (Argentine Friends of Music) and given its first performance in June of that year by the Asociacion de la Musica Orquesta under Igor Markevich.

Ginastera had this to say about the style of *Variaciones*:

"These variations have a subjective Argentine character. Instead of using folkloristic material, I try to achieve an Argentine atmosphere through the employment of my own thematic and rhythmic elements. The work begins with an original theme followed by 11 variations, each one reflecting the distinctive character of the instrument featured. All the instruments of the orchestra are treated soloistically. Some variations belong to the decorative, ornamental, or elaborative type, others are written in the contemporary manner of metamorphosis, which consists of taking elements of the main theme and evolving from it new material."

The *Variaciones* are both an exercise in the traditional variation form, but also a miniature "concerto for orchestra," showcasing the talents of individual instrumentalists within the orchestra. The work opens with a slow introduction, the harp gently intoning a chord composed of the same notes as the open strings of the guitar. Over the harp's accompaniment, the cello sings the melancholy and yearning theme of the subsequent variations. After a brief interlude for strings, nine variations follow, each variation featuring a solo instrument or pair of instruments, similar to Benjamin Britten's approach to *The Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra*. The solo flute is succeeded by clarinet, viola, oboe and bassoon, trumpet and trombone, violin, and horn. A brief wind interlude (to parallel the earlier string interlude) is followed by a reprise of the theme, this time with the double bass assuming the solo role. The final rondo variation features the entire ensemble, dancing to the end with the infectious rhythms of the Argentine *malambo*.

Antonín Dvořák

Violin Concerto in A Minor, Op. 53

Antonín Dvořák was born on September 8, 1841 in Mühlhausen, Bohemia (now Nělahozeves, Czech Republic) and died on May 1, 1904 in Prague. The concerto's first performance was given on October 14, 1883 by František Ondříček, with the composer conducting the National Theatre Orchestra in Prague. The concerto is scored for solo violin, two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, timpani, and strings.

Long before Facebook, YouTube, Instagram and TikTok, a young musician, especially a budding composer, had to put forth extra effort to be noticed by critics and audiences. Antonín Dvořák was just such a musician, with the additional challenge of growing up in small villages rather than in a cultural mecca like Vienna, Paris, or London. Yet his rigorous training and hard work through his youth earned him the post of principal viola in the National Theatre Orchestra in Prague, where he spent a decade learning the orchestra from the inside out, continuing to study and compose when his orchestral duties permitted. In 1871, he took a leap of faith and left his secure position with the National Theatre to devote more time to composition.

Dvořák achieved his first taste of success in 1873 with a performance by the Prague Choral Society of his patriotic choral work *The Heirs of the White Mountain*, but even with this triumph, his fame as a composer still barely extended beyond the outskirts of Prague. Having married at the end of 1873, he was desperately in need of both a steady income and a career boost. When he learned of a competition for the annual Austrian State Music Prize, he jumped at the opportunity and took no chances concerning the outcome. Most composers would have submitted a composition or two; Dvořák entered 15 works. His strategy paid off handsomely, winning the

33-year-old composer the first prize and praise from the judges for his "genuine and original gifts." Dvořák's win was no fluke; he entered and won the prize for the following three years.

His music impressed a judging panel consisting of Johann von Herbeck, director of the Imperial Opera, the influential (and often acid-penned) music critic Eduard Hanslick, and, most importantly for Dvořák's career, Vienna's preeminent composer, Johannes Brahms. Brahms introduced Dvořák to his publisher, Fritz Simrock (who published most of Dvořák's music for the rest of his life), and also to Brahms' lifelong friend, the Hungarian violinist Joseph Joachim.

Both Simrock and Joachim would influence the genesis of Dvořák's Violin Concerto. Simrock sent a note to Dvořák early in 1879 "Would you like to write a violin concerto for me? Highly original, tuneful and for good violinists? Let me know what you think!" Dvořák began composition almost immediately, completing the first version by September and sending it to Joachim shortly thereafter. Joachim responded by meticulously marking dozens of corrections and suggestions on every page, to which Dvořák graciously agreed, writing to Simrock that:

"At [Joachim's] request, I have revised the whole concerto; not a single bar has been left unaltered. I have no doubt that he will be pleased with what I have done. I have taken immense trouble over it. The whole concerto has now assumed a different aspect."

It was at this point that Dvořák and Joachim began to part company on the structure and content of the concerto. Upon receiving the second draft, Joachim expressed his dissatisfaction with it, and a subsequent revision was still not to his liking. Joachim insisted that the orchestral accompaniment was too heavy, but his principal objection was to the Romantic structure of the work. As an artist, Joachim favored the Viennese tradition of Mozart, Beethoven, and Schubert

Variations & Virtuosity

as well as contemporaries like Mendelssohn and Brahms who followed that same aesthetic path. Dvořák's blurring of the lines of the Classical concerto was not to Joachim's taste, and so the violinist never publicly performed the concerto that Dvořák dedicated to him. The young Czech violinist František Ondříček took up the challenge of the new concerto and gave the first performance in Prague in 1883, nearly four years after Dvořák's original draft.

The concerto is in three movements, with the first and second connected without pause. In the opening movement, the orchestra's stern opening fanfare receives a rhapsodic response from the solo violin, with cascades of double stops and arpeggios. These two phrases will form the primary material for the first movement, with contrast provided by a yearning folk-like second theme. This distinctive opening returns but only to provide the transition to the second

movement, a heartfelt hymn where the soloist's ardent melody is wreathed in gentle woodwind textures. The middle section contrasts passionate outbursts with ardent lyricism and even the faintest whiff of a polka before the opening returns to bring the movement to a serene conclusion over gentle horn calls and seraphic woodwinds.

Simrock must have been delighted to discover that the concerto's finale was in the form of a furiant, a lively Bohemian dance that alternates duple and triple meter, and which Dvořák had so brilliantly emulated in his popular *Slavonic Dances*. Cast in the form of a rondo, rhythmic verve and violin pyrotechnics abound in this movement; contrasting sections include a striking minor-key episode where the soloist imitates bagpipes. The orchestra is a full participant in the lively dance, helping to sweep the movement to its thrilling conclusion.

-David Cole



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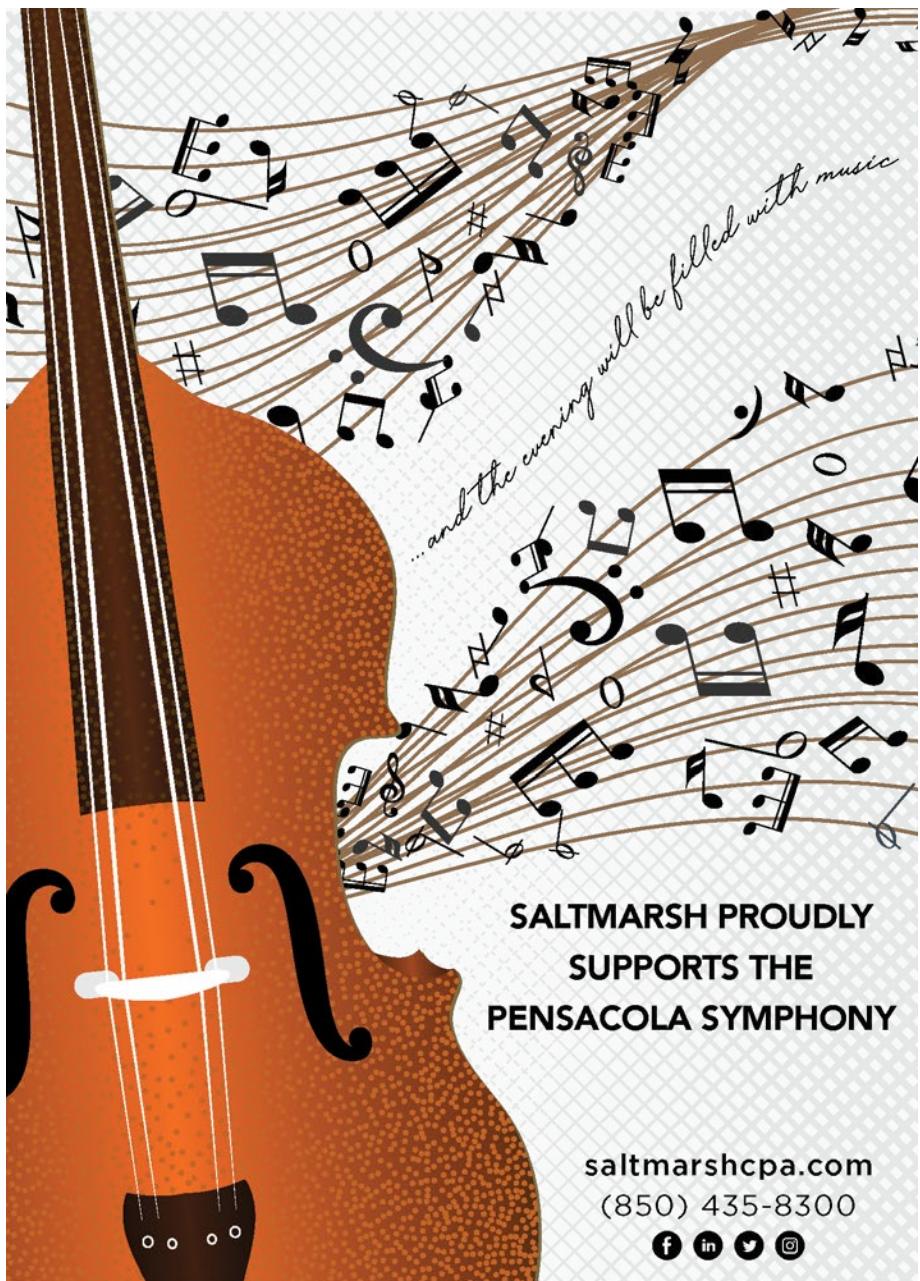


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Carmen Bradford, Vocals

Eddie Edwards, Nick LaRocca, *Tiger Rag*

Henry Ragas, Tony Sbarbaro,

Larry Shields

Arr. Lloyd "Tiny" Grimes

Irving Harold Mills "Joe Primrose" *St. James Infirmary Blues*

Arr. Jeff Tyzik

Ella Fitzgerald and Al Feldman *A Tisket A Tasket*

Sam Coslow and Ella Fitzgerald *(If You Can't Sing It) You'll Have To Swing It
(Mr. Paganini)*

George Gershwin *I Got Rhythm*

Arr. Nelson Riddle

Jimmy McHugh and Dorothy Fields *I Can't Give You Anything But Love, Baby*

George Gershwin and Ira Gershwin *But Not For Me*

Arr. Nelson Riddle

George Gershwin and Ira Gershwin *They Can't Take That Away From Me*

Byron Stripling *Satchmo Scattin' & Swingin'*

Arr. Dennis Mackrel

INTERMISSION

W.C. Handy	<i>Saint Louis Blues</i>
Arr. Jeff Tyzik	
Spencer Williams	<i>Basin Street Blues</i>
Jerome Kern	<i>I Won't Dance</i>
George Gershwin and Ira Gershwin	<i>Someone To Watch Over Me</i>
Arr. Nelson Riddle	
George Gershwin and Ira Gershwin	<i>A Foggy Day</i>
George Gershwin and Ira Gershwin	<i>Love Is Here To Stay</i>
Traditional	<i>(Won't You Come Home) Bill Bailey</i>
Arr. Jeff Tyzik	

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Byron Stripling

Trumpet and Vocals

A powerhouse trumpeter, gifted with a soulful voice and a charismatic onstage swagger, Byron Stripling has delighted audiences internationally. As a soloist with the Boston Pops Orchestra, Stripling has performed frequently under the baton of Keith Lockhart, as well as being featured soloist on the PBS television special, *Evening at Pops*, with conductors John Williams and Lockhart. Currently, Stripling serves as Artistic Director and Conductor of the highly acclaimed, award-winning Columbus Jazz Orchestra.

Since his Carnegie Hall debut with the New York Pops, Stripling has emerged as one of America's most popular symphony pops guest artists, having performed with more than 100 orchestras around the world, including the Boston Pops, National Symphony, Pittsburgh Symphony, Detroit Symphony, Seattle Symphony, Baltimore Symphony, Dallas Symphony, Minnesota Orchestra, Vancouver Symphony, and Toronto Symphony, to name a few. He has been a featured soloist at the Hollywood Bowl and performs at jazz festivals throughout the world.

An accomplished actor and singer, Stripling was chosen, following a worldwide search, to star in the lead role of the Broadway-bound musical, *Satchmo*. Many will remember his featured cameo performance in the television movie, *The Young Indiana Jones Chronicles*, and his critically acclaimed virtuoso trumpet and riotous comedic performances in the 42nd Street production of *From Second Avenue to Broadway*. Television viewers have enjoyed his work as soloist on the worldwide telecast of the Grammy Awards. Millions have heard his trumpet and voice on television commercials



and television theme songs, including *20/20*, CNN, and soundtracks of favorite movies.

Stripling earned his stripes as lead trumpeter and soloist with the Count Basie Orchestra under the direction of Thad Jones and Frank Foster. He has also played and recorded extensively with the bands of Dizzy Gillespie, Woody Herman, Dave Brubeck, Lionel Hampton, Clark Terry, Louis Bellson, and Buck Clayton, in addition to the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra, Carnegie Hall Jazz Band, and the GRP All-Star Big Band.

Stripling enjoys conducting seminars and master classes at colleges, universities, conservatories, and high schools. His informative talks, combined with his incomparable wit and charm, make him a favorite guest speaker to groups of all ages. Stripling was educated at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York, and the Interlochen Arts Academy in Interlochen, Michigan. One of his greatest joys is to return, periodically, to Eastman and Interlochen as a special guest lecturer.

A resident of Ohio, Stripling lives in the country with his wife, former dancer, writer, and poet Alexis, and their beautiful daughters.

Carmen Bradford

Vocals

Born in Austin, Texas, and raised in Altadena, California, Carmen Bradford grew up with music in her home and in her heart. It was only natural that Bradford would follow in the footsteps of her great family legacy, being the daughter of legendary trumpeter/composer Bobby Bradford and world-renowned jazz vocalist/author Melba Joyce. Her grandfather Melvin Moore sang with Lucky Millender and Dizzy Gillespie's Big Band in the 1940s and sang with the Ink Spots, making Bradford the third generation of incredible musicians. She has carved out a place in music history for herself and is playing an integral role in this uniquely American art form called jazz.

Bradford was discovered and hired by William "Count" Basie and was the featured vocalist in the legendary Count Basie Orchestra for nine years. She has since performed and/or recorded with: Wynton Marsalis, Shelly Berg, John Clayton along with the Clayton-Hamilton Orchestra, Nancy Wilson, Doc Severinsen, Tony Bennett, James Brown, Patti Austin, Byron Stripling, Dori Caymmi, George Benson, Lena Horne, Frank Sinatra, Joe Williams, DIVA Jazz Orchestra, the National Symphony, Rochester Philharmonic, the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra, Dani Felber Big Band, Dallas Symphony, Oklahoma Symphony, Vancouver Philharmonic, and countless artists around the world. Bradford performed on two Grammy Award-winning albums with the Basie Band in the 1980s and later collaborated on a third Grammy Award-winning album, *Big Boss Band*, with guitarist George Benson in 1991. Her soulful voice warmed the hearts of Americans through the celebrated performance of the classic duet, *How Do You Keep The Music Playing?* on *The Tonight Show Starring Johnny Carson* that same year.



Bradford began another chapter in her illustrious career as a solo artist with her critically acclaimed debut album *Finally Yours* (Evidence Records) in 1992. The 1995 release of her second solo album, *With Respect*, (Evidence Records) established the Atlanta-based singer as one of jazz music's most diverse and exciting vocal stylists, proving to the world that Bradford was a unique voice in jazz in her own right.

On occasion, Bradford has loaned her talented voice to stage productions and the music of Hollywood films. She sang on the haunting soundtrack for Oprah Winfrey's *Beloved* and starred in the title role of Duke Ellington's folk opera *Queenie Pie* at the University of Texas, Butler School of Music.

Bradford's body of work reflects a vast depth of musical experience and technical brilliance. She is also recognized for the overwhelming passion she brings to the lyric. She has truly contributed to the perpetuation and preservation of jazz.

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Beethoven & Blue Jeans

Poetry, Prose & Verse

Saturday, January 15, 2022, 7:30 p.m.

Peter Rubardt, Conductor

Halley Gilbert, Soprano

Jamey Jones, Poet

Charles McCaskill, Jr., Poet

Ludwig van Beethoven

(1770 – 1827)

Symphony No. 1 in C Major, Op. 21

- I. Adagio Molto – Allegro con brio
- II. Andante cantabile con moto
- III. Menuetto: Allegro molto e vivace
- IV. Adagio – Allegro molto e vivace

INTERMISSION

Tobias Picker

(b. 1954)

Old and Lost Rivers

Samuel Barber

(1910 – 1981)

Knoxville: Summer of 1915, Op. 24

Featuring Halley Gilbert, Soprano

George Walker

(1922 – 2018)

Lyric for Strings

Leonard Bernstein

(1918 – 1990)

Symphonic Suite from *On the Waterfront*

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Halley Gilbert

Soprano

Critically acclaimed soprano Halley Gilbert is quickly establishing herself as a vocal and dramatic force to be reckoned with. Of her star turn as the saucy comedienne Zerbinetta in Utopia Opera's production of *Ariadne auf Naxos*, James Jorden of the *New York Observer* wrote: "Stealing the show was Halley Gilbert as Zerbinetta, flinging out crystalline trills, arpeggios, staccati and roulades with an almost lazy insouciance.... Ms. Gilbert's frankness.... made the text sound like it could have been written yesterday." She has performed multiple leading roles with Bronx Opera, including Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni*, Constanze in *The Abduction from the Seraglio*, Birdie in *Regina*, Susanna in *The Marriage of Figaro*, Miss Wordsworth in *Albert Herring*, Violetta in *La traviata*, and Lucy in the United States premiere of Kirke Mechem's *The Rivals*.

A fan of performing new works, she has also premiered Rautavaara's *Vigilia* (soprano soloist) with the Great Music in a Great Space concert series, David Gilbert's *Toward the One* and *Three Songs of Youth* with the Greenwich Symphony and Eastman School of Music respectively, and many more. Other roles include Lucia in *Lucia di Lammermoor*, Cunégonde in *Candide*, Gilda in *Rigoletto*, Adina in *Lelisir d'amore*, Le feu in *L'enfant et les sortileges*, Baby Doe in *The Ballad of Baby Doe*, Marzelline in *Fidelio*, and Frasquita in *Carmen* with such companies as State Repertory Opera of New Jersey, Opera Company of Brooklyn, New York Lyric Opera Theatre, and Opera for Humanity.

Gilbert is a graduate of the Eastman School of Music, where her roles included Female Chorus in *Rape of Lucretia*, Arminda in *La finta giardiniera*,



and La Fée in *Cendrillon*. She has made solo concert appearances with the Cathedral of St. John the Divine concert series: Great Music in a Great Space, Greenwich Symphony Orchestra, Lake Placid Sinfonietta, Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra, Bronx Arts Ensemble, Music at Christ Church Oyster Bay, and Rutgers Symphony Orchestra, performing such diverse repertoire as Mahler's Second Symphony, Canteloube's Chants d'Auvergne, Mozart's *Requiem*, Barber's *Knoxville: Summer of 1915*, Handel's *Messiah*, and Mozart's *Great Mass in C Minor*.

Gilbert has enjoyed considerable success in competition, placing first in the Jenny Lind Competition, the Opera Idol Competition NYC, and the Steinway Hall Vocal Competition, and finishing as a Regional Finalist in the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions.

In addition to earning a Bachelor of Music degree from the Eastman School of Music, Gilbert is an alumna of the Boston University Tanglewood Institute, the American Academy of Dramatic Arts, Manhattan School of Music's Preparatory Division, and New York University's Deutches Haus. She resides in Nutley, New Jersey.

Jamey Jones

Poet

Jamey Jones is the author of several books and chapbooks, including *Twelve Windows*, *Blue Rain Morning*, *In The Key of Clothespin*, and *morning coffee from the other side*. His work has been published in various journals such as *The Otter*, *Zen Monster*, *Fell Swoop*, *The Brooklyn Rail*, and *Brooklyn Paramount*. He is the editor of Rachael Pongetti's *Uncovering The Layers: The Pensacola Graffiti Bridge Project* and the faculty editor of *Hurricane Review*, the national literary journal of Pensacola State College, where he teaches English, Literature, and Poetry. From 2014 to 2020 he served as the Northwest Florida Poet Laureate.



Charles McCaskill, Jr.

Poet

Charles Andre McCaskill, Jr. is a 32-year-old native of Pensacola, Florida. He has been an active member of several communities of local art and activism for the past decade. His words have appeared in various local publications, including *Hurricane Review*, *Panopoly*, and a few newspapers. He has been a co-host of the longest running poetry open-mic event in the city, performed his words in museums, art galleries, bars, cafés, and political rallies and protests, and most recently was recognized as a finalist for Poet Laureate of Northwest Florida by the West Florida Literary Federation. He has published three books of poetry and is currently



Photo by Kristina Wright

working on his fourth, *Notes From a Native Son*, a dedication to his hometown of Pensacola.

Beethoven & Blue Jeans

Ludwig van Beethoven

Symphony No. 1 in C Major, Op. 21

Ludwig van Beethoven was born in Bonn, Germany on December 16, 1770 and he died on March 26, 1827 in Vienna. His Symphony No. 1 was first performed in Vienna on April 2, 1800 conducted by the composer. The symphony is scored for two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, timpani, and strings.

The popular perception of Ludwig van Beethoven is of the heaven-storming Romantic composer, writing powerful and dramatic music inspired by a largely tragic muse. If musical triumph is achieved in his works, it is only through titanic struggle, as in the Third, Fifth, and Ninth Symphonies. He is the ultimate hurler of musical thunderbolts, the grim, fiery-eyed, wild-haired trailblazer of a new musical path, pointing to the work of Berlioz, Liszt, Wagner, Mahler, and beyond.

That is certainly one aspect of Beethoven's musical personality, but not the only one. As a young man in Vienna, Beethoven often lived a hand-to-mouth existence, writing dance music and fulfilling other commissions to make ends meet, all the while trying to earn the favor of publishers, patrons and audiences with his music while remaining true to his own principles. Where Beethoven's later music bent and broke the "rules" of the Classical style, his earliest compositions show a young composer who has learned valuable lessons from the works of Haydn, Mozart, and others, and is just beginning to flex his compositional muscles to see if he can push the envelope in terms of form, technique, and expression.

The First Symphony is in the typical four-movement form of a Classical symphony, but delightful surprises abound, especially the prominent writing for the woodwinds. The slow introduction opens with an astonishing chord that skillfully sidesteps a resolution to C Major, the principal key of the work. This introduction

takes its sweet time in establishing this home key, fleetingly touching on it in the eighth bar, but only truly arriving at it in the downward swoop into the subsequent Allegro con brio. The movement is full of ingenious invention and admirable concision, with most of the ideas developing from the initial Allegro theme. There is a sense of joy and amusement as Beethoven fragments and manipulates his themes. He closes the movement in epic fashion, the final C major fanfares aided and abetted by trumpets, horns, and timpani.

The slow movement's opening theme is both graceful and slyly playful, and Beethoven shows off a bit by treating his principal melody in fugal fashion. The subsequent material is equally delightful, ranging from beautiful cantabile to a gentle polonaise. The trumpets and timpani, usually silent in a Classical slow movement, here add a delightful and subtle flavor to the texture.

The Menuetto resembles the elegant 18th-century version in name only – in fact, this is the first of Beethoven's symphonic scherzi, where the stately minuet's tempo is hastened so that it feels like one beat per bar instead of three. The jovial minuet sections are simplicity itself, based on a rising and slightly chromatic scale. The music bubbles along in good spirits, even in the trio section, where a noble chorale in the woodwinds receives swirling and slightly cheeky replies from the violins.

The halting and comic scales that open the finale (extended by one note at each iteration) display a Haydn-like wit and a wonderful sense of comic timing. They lead into the exuberant Allegro molto e vivace very much indebted to Haydn's folk music-inspired final movements. The contrasting second theme kicks up its heels, resembling nothing so much as a can-can. The good humor drives the symphony to the very end, where the first of Beethoven's "endless" symphonic codas brings the symphony to a brilliant conclusion.

Tobias Picker

Old and Lost Rivers

*Tobias Picker was born on July 18, 1954 in New York City. *Old and Lost Rivers* was commissioned by the Houston Symphony during Picker's tenure as that orchestra's Composer-in-Residence. The work received its first performance on June 9, 1986, with the Houston Symphony conducted by Sergiu Comissiona. *Old and Lost Rivers* is scored for three flutes (third doubling piccolo), two oboes, three clarinets (third doubling bass clarinet), three bassoons, six horns, three trumpets, tuba, timpani, percussion, harp, piano, and strings.*

Tobias Picker, called "our finest composer for the lyric stage" by *The Wall Street Journal*, is a prolific composer in all genres. He has composed six operas, commissioned by Dallas Opera, LA Opera, Metropolitan Opera, San Francisco Opera, Santa Fe Opera, and Opera Theatre St. Louis. Picker has also composed numerous symphonic works, including three symphonies, concertos for violin, viola, cello, oboe, four piano concertos, and a ballet. His numerous awards and honors include membership in the prestigious American Academy of Arts and Letters. Picker is the Artistic Director of Tulsa Opera.

Tobias Picker had this to say about *Old and Lost Rivers*:

"Driving east from Houston along Interstate 10, you will come to a high bridge which crosses many winding bayous. These bayous were left behind by the great wanderings, over time, of the Trinity River across the land. When it rains, the bayous fill with water and begin to flow. At other times-when it is dry-they evaporate and turn green in the sun. The two main bayous are called 'Old River' and 'Lost River.' Where they converge, a sign on the side of the highway reads: 'Old and Lost Rivers.'

*In 1986 the state of Texas was engaged in a celebration of its sesquicentenary. This event was to be marked by the commissioning of a series of concert openers for the Houston Symphony, of which I had just been appointed Composer in Residence. Though not a traditional fanfare, *Old and Lost Rivers* took its place in what came to be known as the 'Fanfare Project', alongside 20 other compositions from around the world.*

I composed this piece in the spring of 1986 in Houston, as a tribute to my new home. Later that year, I made a piano version of the piece for Ursula Oppens and presented it to her as a birthday present."

Old and Lost Rivers opens in an atmosphere of blissful serenity, with strings and woodwinds murmuring quietly underneath gently flowing melodic fragments. Solo instruments and individual sections are heard in constantly shifting tone colors, rising to a quiet climax before subsiding to the unbroken calm of the opening.

— Notes ©1986/2013 by Tobias Picker, courtesy of www.tobiaspicker.com and ©2021 by David Cole

Samuel Barber

Knoxville, Summer of 1915, Op. 24

*Samuel Barber was born in West Chester, Pennsylvania in 1910 and died in New York City in 1981. *Knoxville, Summer of 1915* was composed in 1947 and given its first performance in April 1948 by Eleanor Steber and the Boston Symphony under the baton of Serge Koussevitzky. The work is scored for solo soprano, one of each woodwind (with doublings on piccolo and English horn), two horns, one trumpet, triangle, harp, and strings.*

It's not particularly surprising that Samuel Barber would be drawn to singing and to composing for the human voice; one could say that it was in his

Beethoven & Blue Jeans

DNA. Barber's aunt was Metropolitan Opera contralto Louise Homer, and his uncle Sidney Homer was a well-known art song composer at the turn of the 20th century. Vocal music pervades Barber's career from his earliest song, written at age 7, to his final 3 Songs, Op. 45, written in 1972. His output of opera and art song forms the backbone of American vocal repertoire, and his songs and arias have been sung and recorded by some of the greatest vocal artists of the past 80 years.

The first reference to Barber's setting of James Agee's *Knoxville, Summer of 1915* dates from April of 1947, when the composer telegraphed Serge Koussevitzky, conductor of the Boston Symphony, that he had written a work for soprano and orchestra and wanted to play it for him. Koussevitzky was enthusiastic about the piece and urged Barber to show it to soprano Eleanor Steber, who agreed to pay the composer's fee and to give the world premiere of the piece, which she did in April of 1948 with the Boston Symphony under Koussevitzky's baton.

For a musical setting that is so lyrical, it comes as something of a surprise to discover that Agee's text is not a poem, but an essay. Originally published under the title *Knoxville, Summer of 1915*, Agee eventually published it as the prologue to his novel *A Death in the Family*. The text is an evocation of the idyllic life of a child, seen both as an immediate eyewitness account of a summer night (the listing of the child's relatives, the various sights and sounds of the town) and as a nostalgic reflection of a time long past. Both the composer and the soprano found resonance in Agee's words; Eleanor Steber, upon first rehearsing the piece, said, "That was exactly my childhood in Wheeling, West Virginia." Barber wrote to his uncle that "It reminded me so much of summer evenings in West Chester, now very far away, and all of you are in it."

Barber's music evokes both the moods and sounds of Agee's summer evening. The gently lilting woodwinds that open the work create the peaceful serenity of a time gone by. The calm is briefly

shattered by "a streetcar raising its iron moan," but peace returns at the words "Now is the night one blue dew," and the evocation of rocking chairs on porches, flowers languorously drooping, and the quiet buzz of locusts. There follows the child's humorous listing of his family as they lie on quilts in the twilight, engaging in light chit-chat, and the blessing of both child and adult on their family and a sad nostalgia that at some point mortality will claim them all. At the end, the child is taken to bed, rocked gently to sleep by strings and woodwinds.

George Walker

Lyric for Strings

George Theophilus Walker was born in 1922 in Washington, D.C., and died in Montclair, New Jersey in 2018. Lyric for Strings was written in 1946 and given its first performance in 1947 in Washington, D.C. by the National Gallery Orchestra under the direction of Richard Bales. The work is scored for strings only.

George Walker graduated from Oberlin College and then the Curtis Institute of Music. He later earned his doctorate at the Eastman School of Music. He gave his first important piano recital at Town Hall in New York and made his debut with the Philadelphia Orchestra as soloist in the Rachmaninoff Third Piano Concerto. As a composer, he wrote more than 90 published works, with commissions from the greatest orchestras, chamber ensembles, singers, and instrumentalists all over the world. Walker's numerous prizes and awards included Fulbright, Rockefeller, and Whitney Fellowships. He studied composition in Paris with the legendary Nadia Boulanger, teacher of great composers from Aaron Copland to Quincy Jones. He taught and lectured at colleges and universities all over the country and was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in music in 1996, and he continued writing and publishing music beyond his 90th year.

This would be an impressive legacy for any musician, but even more so for a young African-American pianist growing up during one of the most racially divisive periods of United States history. In many cases, Walker was the first African American to achieve the distinctions listed above, and his groundbreaking career paved the way for subsequent generations composers, singers, and instrumentalists who were minorities.

Lyric for Strings began life as the slow movement of his String Quartet No. 1, written in 1946. The slow movement was originally titled *Lament*, and was composed in memory of Walker's grandmother, who had passed away the previous year. The work has much the same genesis as Samuel Barber's *Adagio for Strings*, and the warm lyricism and skillful counterpoint of Walker's work display musical parallels to Barber's. The interweaving melodic strands rise to an impassioned climax, but instead of collapsing in desolation, the music sings in tones of quiet solace all the way to the final cadence.

Marlon Brando. Bernstein initially turned down producer Sam Spiegel's offer to write the score, but after Spiegel wooed him with a private screening of the film, Bernstein accepted and took a leave of absence from his teaching position at Brandeis to head to Hollywood.

Bernstein later described his initial enthusiasm at viewing the rough cut for *On the Waterfront*:

"I heard music as I watched: that was enough. And the atmosphere of talent that this film gave off was exactly the atmosphere in which I love to work and collaborate. Day after day I sat at a Moviola (a film editing machine), running the print back and forth, measuring in feet the sequences I had chosen for the music, converting feet into seconds by mathematical formula, making homemade cue sheets."

When Bernstein's score reached the editing stage, he initially bristled at to how the music was treated in relation to the dialogue, but he reconciled himself to the process and the instincts of the production team. He wrote:

"I had to keep reminding myself that it (the score) really is the least important part: that a spoken line covered by music is a lost line; and by that much a loss to the picture; while a bar of music completely obliterated by speech is only a bar of music lost... I repeated this little maxim to myself like a good Coué disciple, as I found myself pleading for a beloved G-flat."

On the Waterfront proved a huge critical and box office success, winning eight of its 12 Oscar nominations, including Best Picture, Best Director, and Best Actor. Bernstein's score was edged out for Best Original Score by Dmitri Tiomkin's music for *The High and the Mighty*, but the composer fashioned the music into a symphonic suite in 1955.

Bernstein's music deftly characterizes the gritty setting of the Hoboken docks, and the rough

Leonard Bernstein

Symphonic Suite from *On the Waterfront*

Leonard Bernstein was born in Lawrence, Massachusetts on August 25, 1918 and died in New York City on October 14, 1990. The Symphonic Suite from On the Waterfront received its first performance at the Tanglewood Music Center in Lennox, Massachusetts on August 11, 1955, with the composer conducting the Boston Symphony Orchestra. The suite is scored for piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, E-flat clarinet, bass clarinet, alto saxophone, two bassoons, contrabassoon, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, two timpanists, percussion, harp, piano, and strings.

Leonard Bernstein's only score written expressly for Hollywood was for the 1954 film *On the Waterfront*, directed by Elia Kazan and starring

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character of rebellious longshoreman Terry Malloy (Marlon Brando) as he defies his corrupt bosses. The bluesy mournful horn solo that begins the suite transforms into a solemn hymn before ferocious timpani do battle with wailing saxophones and trumpets in powerful passage that crackles with tension. A spiky theme in brass and percussion snarls over an ostinato of tempestuous strings. Relief from the musical conflicts arrives with the love theme for Malloy and Edie Doyle (Eva Marie Saint), heard on flute and harp. Out of the quiet textures of strings, harp, and piano, the love theme begins quietly on cellos and builds to a climax in the full orchestra. The initial horn theme returns, but this time growing in resolve, first in brass, then in strings

and woodwinds. It is interrupted by a nervous scherzo, by turns brash and ominous, leading into a hymn-like passage for quiet woodwinds. The opening horn solo gains power in the full orchestra, and the Suite ends powerfully on its emotionally ambiguous final chord.

— David Cole

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Michael Andrew

Vocals

For two years, Michael Andrew was the headline singer and bandleader at the world-famous Rainbow Room atop Rockefeller Center in New York City, where he entertained audiences nightly and hosted a live radio broadcast,

Live from the Rainbow Room. He was also the bandleader and singer at Merv Griffin's Coconut Club in The Beverly Hilton in California.

While on *Larry King Live*, Griffin called Andrew "one of the great singers of all time."

A frequent symphonic pops guest artist, Andrew has appeared with symphonic orchestras in Akron, Albuquerque, Birmingham, Charlotte, Houston, Jacksonville, Long Beach, Melbourne, Missoula, Orlando, Palm Beach, Palm Springs, Pasadena, Philadelphia, Providence, San Antonio, Sarasota, and other cities across America.

His hit musical, *Mickey Swingerhead & The Earthgirls*, led to the formation of his swingin' eight-piece band, Swingerhead, which toured all over the country. Michael formed The Atomic Big Band, an 18-piece band that has performed in Hollywood for the premiere of the Warner Bros. movie, *Poseidon*, and continues to play engagements from presidential inaugural balls to high society fundraisers. His newest orchestra, The Gershwin Big Band, will debut with a national tour and CD release this year.

Andrew performs in musicals and comedies in regional theatre from Shakespeare to Cole Porter. On the other side of the curtain, as a composer, lyricist, and book writer, he has created shows paying tribute to the writers of the "American Songbook," including Johnny Mercer, Sammy Cahn, and the Gershwins. He has composed or performed his music



for motion pictures, including *Heartbreakers*, *Inglorious Bastards*, *Mad Hot Ballroom*, *Bobby Jones – Stroke of Genius*, and *The Five People You Meet in Heaven*. Recently, he produced music for Mitch Albom's new musical, *Hockey*, which debuted in Detroit.

In 2012, Andrew starred in the world premiere of the new musical, *The Nutty Professor*, written by Marvin Hamlisch and Rupert Holmes, directed by Jerry Lewis. He received rave reviews from the press including: "... terrific lead performance" (*Time Magazine*); "...astonishing..." (*The Tennessean*); "Andrew creates his own glittering path..." (*ArtsNash*); "Star-Making... Andrew's virtuoso performance is startling in its complexity...clearly this is a role he was born to play." (*Broadway World*); and "One of the best talents to come down the pike in 50 years" (Jerry Lewis on *Playbill.com*).

Gunhild Carling

Vocals and Multi-Instrumentals

Gunhild Carling grew up in a musical family in Sweden. The Carling Family Hot Six performed for many television shows and toured throughout Sweden and around the world in international jazz festivals in Scotland, France, England, Poland, Hungary, Germany, Wales, Denmark, Norway, Dresden, Helsinki, Copenhagen, Hamburg, Paris, and the United States.

Carling has had starring roles on Swedish television, her own show on German television, and she took third place on Sweden's *Dancing with the Stars*.

Carling formed her own touring show called Jazz Veriete, which toured for 14 years all over the world.

As a solo artist, Carling has been a featured guest with several big bands and orchestras, including



the Count Basie Orchestra, Harlem Blues and Jazz Band, and Scott Bradlee's Postmodern Jukebox.

Her streaming music videos have more than 9 million views, and she continues to stream music videos with several shows on YouTube, Facebook and Instagram. Her social media clips have more than 40 million views.

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Saturday, March 5, 2022, 7:30 p.m.

Peter Rubardt, Conductor

Sara Davis Buechner, Piano

Modest Mussorgsky
(1839 – 1881)

Prelude to *Khovantchina*, "Dawn Over the Moscow River"

Sergei Prokofiev
(1891 – 1953)

Piano Concerto No. 1 in D♭ Major, Op. 10

Featuring Sara Davis Buechner, Piano

INTERMISSION

Sergei Rachmaninoff
(1873 – 1943)

Symphony No. 2 in E Minor, Op. 27

- I. Largo – Allegro moderato
- II. Allegro molto
- III. Adagio
- IV. Allegro vivace

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Sara Davis Buechner

Piano

Noted for her musical command, cosmopolitan artistry, and visionary independence, Sara Davis Buechner is one of the most original concert pianists of our time. She is lauded for her “intelligence, integrity and all-encompassing technical prowess” (*The New York Times*), “thoughtful artistry in the full service of music” (*The Washington Post*), and “astounding virtuosity” (*Philippine Star*). Japan’s *InTune* magazine sums up: “Buechner has no superior.”

In her 20s Buechner earned a bouquet of top prizes at the world’s premier international piano competitions—Queen Elisabeth (Brussels), Leeds, Mozart (Salzburg), Beethoven (Vienna), and Sydney. She was a bronze medalist of the 1986 Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow and the gold medalist of the 1984 Gina Bachauer International Piano Competition.

Buechner has performed in every state and province of North America—as recitalist, chamber musician, and soloist with top orchestras like the New York Philharmonic, San Francisco Symphony, and Philadelphia Orchestra; and in venues such as Carnegie Hall, Kennedy Center and the Hollywood Bowl. She has toured throughout Latin and South America and Europe, and she enjoys a special following in Asia, where she has been a featured soloist with the Sydney Symphony, New Zealand Philharmonic, New Japan Philharmonic, and Shanghai Philharmonic, among many others.

She has commissioned and premiered important contemporary scores by composers such as Michael Brown, John Corigliano, Ray Green, Dick Hyman, Vítězslavá Kaprálová, Jared Miller, Joaquín Nin-Culmell, and Yukiko Nishimura. Buechner’s performance versatility extends to unique



collaborations with film and dance, including tours with the Mark Morris Dance Group, and Japanese kabuki-mime-mask dancer Yayoi Hirano.

Buechner joined the faculty of Temple University’s Boyer College of Music and Dance in 2016 after previously teaching at the Manhattan School of Music, New York University, and the University of British Columbia. She has presented masterclasses and workshops at major pedagogic venues worldwide, adjudicated important international piano competitions, and is also a contributing editor for Dover Publications International. In 2017 Buechner marked her 30th year as a dedicated Yamaha Artist.

As a proud transgender woman, Buechner also appears as a speaker and performer at important LGBTQ events and has contributed interviews and articles about her own experience to numerous media outlets worldwide.

Buechner is a dual American-Canadian citizen who makes her home in Philadelphia.

Russian Spectacular

Modest Mussorgsky

Prelude to *Khovantchina*, "Dawn Over the Moscow River"

*Modest Mussorgsky was born in 1839 in Karevo, Russia; he died in 1881 in St. Petersburg, Russia. His opera *Khovantchina* received its first performance on February 21, 1886 in St. Petersburg by the Musical Dramatic Circle conducted by Eduard Goldshteyn. The Prelude is scored for two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, timpani, tam-tam, harp, and strings.*

The line “I get by with a little help from my friends” from the eponymous Beatles song could certainly be applied to Modest Mussorgsky. At his death from alcohol poisoning in 1881, Mussorgsky left many works in incomplete form. But because of his association with the group of Russian composers known as the *moguchaya kuchka* (the “Mighty Handful”), his composer friends stepped in after his death to edit or complete these unfinished pieces; foremost among those colleagues was Nicolai Rimsky-Korsakov.

Rimsky-Korsakov’s efforts succeeded in creating performance-ready versions of several of Mussorgsky’s major works, including the tone poem *Night on Bald Mountain* and the operas *Boris Godunov* and *Khovantchina*. Rimsky-Korsakov worked tirelessly to present those works’ first performances to the public. The only downside to Rimsky-Korsakov’s editing is that he considered Mussorgsky’s music rather crude in its compositional techniques and formal structure, and so he felt no compunction about revising them according to his own aesthetics. While there’s really nothing wrong with Rimsky’s versions, some of Mussorgsky’s creativity and originality is either dampened or lost. Yet without those “refurbished” versions, some of Mussorgsky’s best music might have vanished from the repertoire completely.

The opera *Khovantchina* had its roots in the bicentennial celebrations of the birth of Peter the Great in 1872. Within a year, Mussorgsky was starting to sketch arias and scenes concerning the uprising led by Prince Ivan Khovansky against the regent Sofia Alekseyevna (Peter the Great’s mother), who rose to the throne upon the death of Peter’s elder brother, Tsar Feodor III. The opera would occupy Mussorgsky for the remainder of his life – his sketches begin in 1873 and continue through August of 1880. The result was a five-act epic with an episodic and somewhat chaotic plot, which Rimsky-Korsakov did his best to streamline and clarify. Rimsky-Korsakov’s version is still the standard performing edition, though Maurice Ravel and Igor Stravinsky collaborated on a version for the Ballets Russes in 1911 and 1912. Sadly, all but Stravinsky’s finale has been lost. In 1960, Dmitri Shostakovich revised and reorchestrated the work for a production in Moscow, but that version is rarely heard today.

The title “Dawn over the Moscow River” was the composer’s own idea for the brief Prelude. He described the work as “depicting dawn over the Moscow River, matins at cock crow, the patrol, and the taking down of the chains (on the city gates).” From its open undulating melodic lines in violas and clarinets, second violins sing a rhapsodic melody with hints of Russian Orthodox chant, surrounded by birdcalls in oboe, flute, and bassoon. As the oboe sings the same tune, it is accompanied by *pianissimo* violin scales. We hear the church bells of Red Square tolling in horns, percussion, and harp, with a more impassioned statement of the principal tune in cellos, clarinets, and bassoons. As the music begins to fade, flute, clarinet, and horn are heard intoning brief fragments of the tune over shimmering tremolo violins, and the Prelude ends quietly, with harp and *pizzicato* strings leading to a final mystical tremolo in the violas.

Sergei Prokofiev

Piano Concerto No. 1 in D♭ Major, Op. 10

Sergei Prokofiev was born on April 23, 1891 in Sontsovka, Ukraine, and died on March 5, 1953 in Moscow. The Piano Concerto No. 1 was first performed on August 7, 1912 in Moscow, with the composer as soloist and conducted by Konstantin Sardzhev. The concerto is scored for solo piano, two flutes and piccolo, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons and contrabassoon, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, bells, and strings.

Elvis. Jerry Lee Lewis. The Rolling Stones. Motley Crüe. Public Enemy.

Sergei Prokofiev?

Prokofiev's name might not be the first to come to mind when the subject of musical "bad boys" comes up, but his earliest music rarely lacked shock value. Accepted for admission to the Saint Petersburg Conservatory at the age of 12, Prokofiev did not endear himself to his teachers or fellow students, though his abilities could not be doubted. With a loss of financial support after the death of his father in 1910, Prokofiev found an audience and an income outside the Conservatory by playing his own dissonant and rhythmically complex piano works for the St. Petersburg Evenings for Contemporary Music.

The premiere of Prokofiev's First Piano Concerto took place under less-than-ideal conditions. Swelteringly hot weather, an orchestra slow to grasp the complexities of the work, and a piano which left much to be desired were a recipe for disaster. On the positive side, both Prokofiev and his conductor were well-prepared for the performance, which was enough of a success that Prokofiev was obliged to perform three encores.

The critical reviews were split. Leonard Sabanayev, critic for the *Moscow Voice*, wrote that:

"This energetically rhythmed concerto, coarse and crude, primitive and cacophonic, scarcely merits its honorable title. The composer, in his quest of novelty, but lacking it in the depth of his nature, has apparently contorted himself to the ultimate limit. This sort of thing does not happen with real talents."

Another writer commented that a collection should be taken up to "buy the poor fellow a straitjacket." Yet there were others who saw the considerable merits in the work, praising its "wit, imagination, and brilliance."

Two years later, Prokofiev again stirred up controversy with the same concerto. For his performance in the Conservatory's performance competition, Prokofiev chose to perform his own concerto instead of a mainstream masterwork by Beethoven, Brahms, or Tchaikovsky. Like the Moscow critics, the competition jurors were split on the composition, though no one could fault Prokofiev's performance. Despite the objections of the most conservative jurors, Prokofiev was awarded the Anton Rubinstein Prize, which was the best reward a pianist could ask for: a new grand piano.

While the work bristles with driving rhythms and requires maximum power and athleticism from the soloist, it has a concise and logical structure. Written as a single compact movement of about fifteen minutes' duration, both the outlines of a three-movement concerto and a loose sonata-form construction can be heard. After the initial orchestral chords, the pianist leaps into action with a driving toccata-like melody, aided and abetted by the full orchestra. This section will appear twice more, in the middle of the piece and at the end, to provide the structural pillars for the work. The opening transforms without pause into an eerie, dreamlike slow movement, with a hint of the enigmatic piano works of

Russian Spectacular

Prokofiev's older contemporary Alexandre Scriabin. With the final return of the opening material, it is the motoric energy of the piece that wins the day, and both soloist and orchestra dash to the concerto's thrilling conclusion.

Sergei Rachmaninoff

Symphony No. 2 in E Minor, Op. 27

Sergei Rachmaninoff was born on April 1, 1873 in Semyonovo, Russia, and died on March 28, 1943 in Beverly Hills, California. The Symphony No. 2 was first performed on February 8, 1908 in St. Petersburg, conducted by the composer. The symphony is scored for three flutes and piccolo, three oboes and English horn, two clarinets and bass clarinet, two bassoons, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion, and strings.

If ever a symphony were jinxed at its first performance, it would be Rachmaninoff's Symphony No. 1. The circumstances surrounding the 1897 premiere read like every composer's worst nightmare. The symphony received insufficient rehearsal time, largely due to the incompetence of conductor Alexander Glazunov, the Director of the Moscow Conservatory. While Glazunov was a musician of considerable gifts (he reconstructed the overture from Borodin's *Prince Igor* from memory, having heard Borodin play it for him once on the piano), he was at best a mediocre conductor, and at worst a hindrance to any ensemble he directed. Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov said of his conducting: "Slow by nature, maladroit and clumsy of movement, the maestro, speaking slowly and in a low voice, manifestly displayed little ability either for conducting rehearsals or for swaying the orchestra during concert performances." In the rehearsals of Rachmaninoff's First, Glazunov compounded his sins as a conductor when he forced the young composer to make several illogical cuts in the work, and he

tampered with the orchestration in several spots. While unproven, allegations that Glazunov was drunk during the rehearsals and performance are borne out by eyewitness descriptions of his movements on the podium, and by later accounts of his steadily worsening alcoholism.

A description of the premiere by Rachmaninoff's friend, the conductor Alexander Khessin, sums up the performance succinctly: "The Symphony was insufficiently rehearsed, the orchestra was ragged, basic stability in tempos was lacking, many errors in the orchestral parts were uncorrected; but the chief thing that ruined the work was the lifeless, superficial, bland performance, with no flashes of animation, enthusiasm, or brilliance of orchestral sound." The performance was so bad that Rachmaninoff fled the concert hall before the conclusion of the work, unable to bear the thought of being brought on stage to acknowledge the audience's response. Rachmaninoff, too, laid the blame for the failure at the feet of Glazunov: "How could so great a musician as Glazunov conduct so badly? It is not even a question of his conducting technique, poor as that is, but of his musicianship; he beats time as if he had no feeling for music at all."

The aftermath of the concert was even worse for the young composer. The audience reaction was tepid at best, a combination of apathy, confusion, and hostility. The critics in attendance were equally antagonistic, unsparing in the vitriol they heaped upon Rachmaninoff's new work. Even César Cui, the composer and critic who ardently championed new Russian music throughout his career, seemed to dip his pen in a special blend of poison to savage Rachamaninoff's symphony:

"If there were a conservatory in Hell, and if one of its talented students were to compose a programme symphony based on the story of the Ten Plagues of Egypt, and if he were to compose a symphony like Mr. Rachmaninoff's, then he would have fulfilled his task brilliantly and would delight the inhabitants of Hell."

The psychological trauma of the symphony's premiere flung Rachmaninoff into a deep depression. He battled the demons of self-doubt daily, usually with the aid of alcohol, and in the subsequent three years, barely a note of music left his pen. The sketches for another symphony were abandoned and later destroyed. He stopped working on his opera *Francesca da Rimini* and waited nearly nine years before resuming work on it. Much later he recalled: "The despair that filled my soul would not leave me. My dreams of a brilliant career lay shattered. My hopes and confidence were destroyed."

Rachmaninoff's career and possibly his life were saved by what we would now call an intervention. A group of his friends recommended that he visit the psychologist Dr. Nikolai Dahl, an internist and avid amateur musician who successfully treated patients through hypnosis and psychotherapy. After a great deal of hesitation and continued pressure from his closest friends, Rachmaninoff scheduled a session with Dahl in January of 1900. Dahl worked with Rachmaninoff to restore his health by establishing regular patterns of sleeping and nourishment, and through hypnotic and conversational suggestions that Rachmaninoff would write a successful piano concerto. Over the next four months, Dahl instilled Rachmaninoff with affirmations of his forthcoming success: "You will begin your concerto . . . you will work with great facility . . . the concerto will be of excellent quality . . ." Dahl's treatments apparently succeeded: Rachmaninoff began composing again, producing his Second Piano Concerto within the space of several months. The world-premiere performance in November of 1901, with Rachmaninoff as the soloist, was a resounding triumph with both the audience and the critics.

Even with the triumph of the Second Piano Concerto, Rachmaninoff remained hesitant to return to symphonic composition. When he did sketch ideas for a new symphony in 1906 while living in Dresden, he did so privately, with no hint

to anyone of what he was doing. When the work was nearly complete, he confided to his cousin, the conductor and pianist Alexander Siloti, that he had been secretly writing a symphony. Siloti asked Rachmaninoff to conduct its first performance in St. Petersburg, where Siloti was the music director. Rachmaninoff readily agreed to Siloti's suggestion, though he made no mention of a date, nor agreed to any of the other performance details. Siloti, assuming that Rachmaninoff's acceptance meant that the concert was a done deal, blithely informed the press that Dresden would hear the first performance of Rachmaninoff's new symphony in the forthcoming season. Rachmaninoff only found out when a friend from St. Petersburg wrote to him to inquire about the new piece. Rachmaninoff, more than a little surprised, responded:

"A month ago, or more, I really did finish a symphony, but to this must be added the phrase 'in rough draft.' I have not announced it to 'the world,' because I want first to complete it in final form. While I was planning the orchestration, the work became terribly boring and repulsive to me. So I threw it aside and took up something else. Thus 'the world' would not have known, yet, about my work—if it hadn't been for Siloti, who came here and pulled out of me news of everything I have done and of everything that I am going to do. I told him that there will be a symphony. That's how I've already received an invitation to conduct it next season! And news of this symphony has flown everywhere."

Rachmaninoff conducted the premiere in St. Petersburg in January of 1908 to universal acclaim, and the work received the Glinka Prize in 1911, an award of 1,000 rubles. Conductors and orchestras around the world quickly took up the work, and it was a regular feature of Rachmaninoff's own appearances as a conductor in Europe and the United States. In its earliest performances, the composer sanctioned a number of cuts throughout the work, often reducing the length of the symphony from over an hour to approximately

Russian Spectacular

three-quarters of that length. From about 1970 onwards, conductors have largely eschewed the cuts and have performed the symphony in its entirety, giving listeners the opportunity to experience the work as the composer originally conceived it.

The work is in four movements, scored for a very large orchestra: three flutes including piccolo, three oboes including English horn, two clarinets, bass clarinet, two bassoons, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, bass drum, cymbals (two players), glockenspiel, snare drum, and strings. It is dedicated to composer Alexander Taneyev, with whom Rachmaninoff studied counterpoint. The fruits of Taneyev's instruction can be heard throughout all four movements of the symphony.

The slow, brooding introduction contains the seeds of the entire symphony – a “motto” theme in the low strings, a short musical idea that will generate a great deal of the material throughout the work. It is answered by echoes of that idea in the woodwinds and violins. The sensual, brooding atmosphere of the introduction gives way to a brief English horn solo, which ushers in the main body of the movement, a nervous Allegro moderato, structured in sonata form, including a repeat of the exposition. The movement seems eternally restless, pausing only for brief moments of respite, such as the second theme heard first as a woodwind chorale, answered by ardent strings. The music rises to several impassioned climaxes, but the nervous tension never truly dissipates, and the movement ends like a door slamming in one's face.

The fierce energy of the scherzo (Allegro molto) takes up where the end of the first movement ended, galloping in over a ferocious string ostinato. Several more lyrical episodes contrast with the sinister music of the main body of the scherzo, but here, too, there is little relief from the overall tension, especially in the fugato that breaks out in the middle of the movement. After

all its drama and fireworks, the scherzo dwindles to just a few staccato notes in the low strings before it evaporates into an uneasy silence.

If you are of “a certain age,” you may recall the Adagio’s central theme from Eric Carmen’s use of it for his hit “Never Gonna Fall in Love Again” in 1976. The movement sings lyrically and passionately from its opening clarinet solo, building in an ever-rising crescendo to the earth-shattering (and ear-shattering) climax near the end of the movement in a gorgeous gush of orchestral sound. With its energy spent, the movement looks nostalgically back at its main themes and ends in blissful serenity.

The Allegro vivace boisterously shatters the calm of the slow movement, the surging energy of the music relentlessly pressing forward in joyous abandon. A more lyrical idea, led by the string section, provides contrast with the reckless abandon of the rest of the movement. While a wistful recollection of the slow movement and the sinister scherzo-march that follows it indicate that victory is not yet completely won, the energetically optimistic music of the opening will not be denied, and after one final lyrical outpouring from the full orchestra, the symphony surges to its triumphant conclusion.

— David Cole

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A young girl with blonde hair tied back in two buns is playing a shiny brass saxophone. She is wearing a white t-shirt over a black vest with metal straps. The background is softly blurred, showing what appears to be a music room or rehearsal space.

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Saturday, March 26, 2022, 7:30 p.m.

Peter Rubardt, Conductor

Aaron Copland
(1900 – 1990)

Suite from *Billy the Kid*
I. *The Open Prairie*
II. *Street in a Frontier Town*
III. Mexican Dance & Finale
IV. *Card Game at Night*
V. *Gun Battle*
VI. *Celebration After Billy's Capture*
VII. *Billy's Demise*
VIII. *The Open Prairie (epilogue)*

Edward Kennedy "Duke" Ellington
(1899 – 1974)

Selections from *The River*
I. *Spring*
II. *Meander*
III. *Giggling Rapids*
IV. *Lake*
VII. *Village Virgins*

INTERMISSION

Amy Beach
(1867 – 1944)

Symphony in E Minor, Op. 32, "Gaelic"
I. Allegro con fuoco
II. Alla siciliana – allegro vivace
III. Lento con molto espressione
IV. Allegro di molto

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American Classics

Aaron Copland

Suite from *Billy the Kid*

Aaron Copland was born on November 14, 1900 in Brooklyn, New York and died on December 2, 1990 in New York City. Billy the Kid was first performed on May 24, 1939 with a ballet orchestra conducted by Fritz Kitzinger. The Suite is scored for two flutes and piccolo, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion, piano, harp, and strings.

In hearing *Billy the Kid*, a listener might wonder how a skinny, bespectacled Jewish kid from Brooklyn so deftly portrayed the life and career of one the Wild West's most infamous outlaws. About the only real connection between Copland and Henry McCarty, aka William Bonney, aka Billy the Kid, is that they were both native New Yorkers; McCarty/Bonney was born in one of the Irish neighborhoods of the East Side before his family moved to New Mexico. Yet William Bonney's odyssey from New York street urchin to legendary Western desperado has some parallels with Copland's rise to fame as the "most American" of American composers.

Copland's path to becoming "America's Composer" with a distinctly American musical voice was not entirely an easy one. Following his studies in Paris with the legendary pedagogue Nadia Boulanger, the young Copland fully embraced the dissonant Modernist language of Stravinsky and Prokofiev, writing compositions that were uncompromising in their thorny complexity. At the New York premiere of Copland's *Symphony for Organ and Orchestra* in 1925, the conductor Walter Damrosch remarked "If a gifted young man can write a symphony like that at age 23, within five years he will be ready to commit murder!" With the onset of the Great Depression, Copland concerned himself with trying to reach a greater audience through a more "populist" musical language, one founded in the folk and popular music of the Americas. Jazz pervades

the pages of his *Piano Concerto* (1926), and the virtuoso *El Salón México* (1936) dances to the vibrant sounds of Mexican folk and popular music.

Billy the Kid was Copland's first successful synthesis of Modern and American vernacular music. He was approached in 1938 by the young choreographer Lincoln Kirstein, who had just founded his touring company, Ballet Caravan. Copland was not overly enthusiastic about the subject of *Billy the Kid*, but after extensive research into the collections of cowboy tunes that Kirstein had given him, he found the musical possibilities irresistible. The world premiere, in a two-piano version, was given in Chicago in October of 1938, with the orchestral version premiering in New York in May of 1939. The ballet was an immediate hit and has remained one of Copland's most popular works.

Copland's stylistic conversion is obvious from the start of *The Open Prairie*, where simple melodic figures and clear harmonies depict the vast open spaces of the American West. With *Street in a Frontier Town*, Copland paints a vivid picture of a bustling western settlement through his use of familiar folk tunes – *Old Paint*, *The Old Chisolm Trail*, and *Git Along, Little Dogies*, among others. The effect is much like the *Shrovetide Fair* section of Stravinsky's *Petrouchka*, where overlapping folk tunes characterize the action on stage. This segues directly into the *Mexican Dance & Finale*, the former characterized by its asymmetrical meters, the latter by the imaginative quotation of *Old Paint*. *Card Game at Night* is a quiet mediation led by the violins and later by the solo trumpet, underscored with a gentle lilting rhythm in woodwinds and strings. *Gun Battle* erupts in a torrent of percussion, with the shots coming thick and fast in snare drum, bass drum, timpani, and xylophone. The jaunty *Celebration After Billy's Capture*, with its parody of an out-of-tune saloon piano, is followed by *Billy's Demise*, bittersweet and poignant rather than violent. With the human drama at an end, Copland returns us to the timeless vistas of *The Open Prairie*, concluding the ballet in majestic splendor.

Duke Ellington

Selections from *The River*

Edward Kennedy "Duke" Ellington was born on April 29, 1899 in Washington, D.C. and died on May 24, 1974 in New York City. The River was first performed in an incomplete form on June 25, 1970 at Lincoln Center in New York City. The work is scored for two flutes (2nd doubling piccolo), two oboes (2nd doubling English horn), two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion, jazz bass, harp, piano, and strings.

Duke Ellington's legacy as a composer rests largely on those immortal tunes that he wrote to be performed with his big band, covering roughly the two decades between 1930 and 1950. Songs like *Mood Indigo*, *Sophisticated Lady*, *It Don't Mean a Thing if it Ain't Got That Swing*, and *Don't Get Around Much Anymore* earned a permanent place in the Great American Songbook, that compendium of the best of American popular song. The polish and sophistication of Ellington's big band was legendary, as was the distinctive timbre of the band, which could go from a mellow smoothness to a joyous stomp and still sound like the Ellington band. It was a different sound than every other big band of the time, and yet always evolving. Ellington had a particular knack for showcasing the talents of his band members, with subtle changes in sound as his personnel changed over the years.

For most composers, this output (estimated at nearly 2,000 songs) would be enough for a career, but Ellington was seeking connections between jazz and other musical genres and even other art forms. Over the course of a career that spanned seven decades, he wrote jazz suites for his band intended as concert music, not just for dancing. He produced film scores, jazz reworkings of classical music (like Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker Suite*), ballet music, incidental music, sacred music, music for jazz ensemble with symphony

orchestra, and music for orchestra alone, all with roots in blues, jazz, and gospel. Through works like *Harlem; Black, Brown, and Beige; Three Black Kings*; and *New World a Comin'*; Ellington spoke eloquently through his music about the African-American experience in the United States during a time of racism and segregation.

In 1970, Ellington joined with legendary choreographer Alvin Ailey and his American Ballet Theatre on a ballet entitled *The River*. Initially suggested by ABT director Lucia Chase, the ballet project was greeted with enthusiasm by both composer and choreographer. Ellington took to studying other composer's scores written about water – Handel's *Water Music*, Britten's *Peter Grimes*, Smetana's *The Moldau*, and Debussy's *La Mer*.

Ellington's working methods were far from conventional, probably from necessity, as he was writing the ballet while on tour with his band. The music started life as a piano solo, which Ellington then handed to his arrangers, and then Ellington and his band would create several different versions of each piece. It didn't take long before Alvin Ailey was driven to distraction by Ellington's unorthodox methods of composition. He wrote later:

"The music was just beautiful, but it was driving me out of my mind... I talked to people who worked with him. They said, 'Well, that's the way he works. You're just going to have to learn how to work with him like that. He'll take 16 bars into a studio, eight bars of this and two bars of that, and come out four hours later with eight fantastic pieces. That's just the nature of the way he works.' He wrote with the orchestra - the orchestra was his instrument. He composed in the recording studio; his band was his Stradivarius."

While Ellington produced 12 pieces for the ballet, Ailey choreographed only seven, which were presented at the first performance in Lincoln Center as "Seven Dances From a Work in Progress Entitled *The River*." The orchestral versions, taken

American Classics

from Ellington's big band originals, were created by Canadian composer Ron Collier, who had arranged music for Ellington on several previous occasions.

The New York Times' music critic Clive Barnes included a concise synopsis of the work in his review of the first performance:

"Ellington's score is a tone poem, a suite that traces the meandering river's course and speed from birth as a spring, through rapids, over falls, spinning into whirlpools, subsiding into lakes, passing by cities, ending in the sea. It is a musical allegory in the course of which the river from spring to sea parallels the course of life from birth to death, a cycle, according to Ellington, of 'heavenly anticipation of rebirth.' The music is itself like a river, constantly flowing, changing speed and shape, instantly accessible melodically."

Throughout the ever-changing kaleidoscope of styles and orchestral colors of *The River*, Ellington's voice manages to speak of the flow of water and the flow of life, singing of both in music of immense richness and beauty.

Amy Beach

Symphony in E Minor, Op. 32, "Gaelic"

Amy Marcy Cheney Beach was born on September 5, 1867 in Henniker, New Hampshire and died on December 27, 1944 in Boston. The Symphony No. 2 was first performed on October 30, 1896 by the Boston Symphony conducted by Emil Paur. The symphony is scored for piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, English horn, two clarinets, bass clarinet, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, triangle, and strings.

Imagine a young musician whose talented manifested itself in the following ways:

- By the age of 1, they could sing 40 melodies from memory.

- By age 2, they could improvise countermelodies on the spot to any melody sung or played.
- At age 3, they taught themselves to read.
- At age 4, they wrote their first piano compositions – without the aid of a piano.
- At age 6, they began piano study, their first recitals of classical works and their own pieces following soon thereafter.
- At age 14, they received a few months' study of harmony and counterpoint. This was their only formal training in composition. They also translated Berlioz's *Treatise on Orchestration* into English.
- At age 16, they were a piano soloist with the Boston Symphony.

You would probably be inclined to ask, "Who was this amazing young person? They must have gone on to a brilliant international career as a pianist or a composer! I'm sure it must have been Mozart, or Brahms, or Stravinsky, or..."

The composer in question was Amy Cheney, known after her marriage as Mrs. H.H.A. Beach, and after her husband's death as Amy Beach. She composed a sizeable amount of solo piano music, art songs, choral music, chamber music, a single chamber opera, a virtuoso piano concerto, and the "Gaelic" Symphony, the first symphony composed and published by an American woman.

Amy Beach's life circumstances, typical for a woman of her time, point to why her music is only recently returning to the concert hall. In 1885, Amy married Dr. Henry Harris Aubrey Beach, a prominent Boston physician who was 24 years her senior. Dr. Beach insisted that his new wife give up performing in public for money, as he felt it would cast doubts in society upon his ability to provide for her. He limited her to two public recitals per year, with all proceeds

being given to charity. Despite her husband's constraints, the marriage was a happy one by all accounts, cut short by Dr. Beach's death in 1910.

While her husband repressed her performance career, he encouraged her to compose, and with his social connections, she rarely lacked an audience for her works. After the success of her Mass in E♭ of 1892, she embarked upon the "Gaelic" Symphony, completing it in 1894. Two years later, it was performed by the Boston Symphony under the baton of Emil Paur. Under the prevailing social constraints of the time, her name appeared in the program as "Mrs. H.H.A. Beach."

The critical reaction to the performance was a mixture of enthusiasm and condescension. The critic for the *Boston Musical Courier* was typical for the time, harping on Beach's gender for any perceived defects in her work:

"In its efforts to be Gaelic and masculine, [Mrs. Beach] ends in being monotonous and spasmodic... Of grace and delicacies there are evidences [in the middle movements] and here she is at her best, 'But yet a woman'..."

Yet others, including her fellow New England composers like George Chadwick, soon to be Director of the New England Conservatory, expressed their admiration for the symphony. One critic wrote that the symphony was "a genuine symphony – a real, soulful masterpiece" and another that the symphony was "no less full of intellect than of vocative power." For a decade after the premiere, the work was heard frequently in both the United States and Europe.

The symphony is cast in the traditional four movements. The "Gaelic" element comes both from the use of Irish folk music in the second and third movements, and the quotation of Beach's own art songs in the first and final movements (much as Mahler did in his first four symphonies). The first movement opens with ominous rumblings in the low strings, introducing a movement in classical

sonata form. The two main themes are derived from the art song *Dark is the Night* from 1890. These two themes are contrasted with a third idea, sounding very much like a Celtic bagpipe tune. The second movement quotes the folk tune *The Little Field of Barley*, heard as a lilting *siciliana* rhythm in the slower outer sections, and as a rambunctious scherzo in the quicksilver central episode, like an Irish relative to Mendelssohn's *Midsummer Night's Dream* music. *Cushlamachree* and *Which Way Did She Go?* provide the primary melodic material for the Lento, introduced by the solo violin and cello. The movement's melancholy is temporarily interrupted by a passionate outburst from the orchestra before returning to the yearning of the opening melody. The finale, like the first movement, follows classical sonata form. It leaps to life full of Romantic verve, with more than a sideways glance at Beethoven. The contrasting second theme is a songful, yearning tune, swept away in a flurry of string counterpoint. It is this contrapuntal energy that dominates the movement, surging forward into the coda and ending this dynamic symphony in a blaze of brass fanfares and brilliant orchestral energy.

Sounds Triumphant

Saturday, April 30, 2022, 7:30 p.m.

Peter Rubardt, Conductor

Libby Larsen, Composer and Concert Curator

Ottorino Respighi

(1879 – 1936)

Fountains of Rome

- I. *Fountain of Valle Giulia at Dawn*
- II. *Triton Fountain in the Morning*
- III. *Trevi Fountain at Noon*
- IV. *Villa Medici at Sunset*

The movements are played without pause.

Libby Larsen

(b. 1950)

Symphony: Water Music (Symphony No. 1)

- I. *Fresh Breeze*
- II. *Hot, Still*
- III. *Wafting*
- IV. *Gale*

INTERMISSION

Jean Sibelius

(1865 – 1957)

Symphony No. 2 in D Major, Op. 43

- I. *Allegretto*
- II. *Tempo andante, ma rubato*
- III. *Vivacissimo*
- IV. *Finale: Allegro moderato*

The third and fourth movements are performed without pause.

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Libby Larsen

Composer

Libby Larsen, born in 1950 in Wilmington, Delaware, is one of America's most performed living composers. She has composed more than 500 works, including orchestra, opera, vocal, and chamber music, symphonic winds, and band. Her work is widely recorded.

An advocate for the music and musicians of our time, Larsen co-founded the Minnesota Composers Forum in 1973. It is now known as the American Composer's Forum. Grammy Award-winner and former holder of the Papamarkou Chair at John W. Kluge Center of the Library of Congress, Larsen has also held residencies with the Minnesota Orchestra, the Charlotte Symphony, and the Colorado Symphony. As Artistic Director of the John Duffy Institute for New Opera, she guides a faculty of practicing professional artists in nurturing and production of new opera by American composers. Larsen's 2017 biography, *Libby Larsen: Composing an American Life*, Denise Von Glahn, author, is available from the University Illinois Press.



Photo by Ann Marsden

Sounds Triumphant

Ottorino Respighi

Fountains of Rome

Ottorino Respighi was born in 1879 in Bologna, Italy and died in 1936 in Rome. *Fountains of Rome* was written in 1915 – 16 and given its first performance at the Teatro Augusteo in Rome on March 11, 1917, conducted by Antonio Guarnieri. The work is written for two flutes and piccolo, two oboes and English horn, two clarinets and bass clarinet, two bassoons, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion, two harps, celesta, piano, organ, and strings.

Many composers have drawn inspiration from their urban surroundings. The music of Francis Poulenc and Erik Satie exude the perfume of Paris, from its churches to its cabarets. Both George Gershwin and Leonard Bernstein distilled the freewheeling and frenetic energy of New York into their music, whether it be Gershwin's carefree melodies for Tin Pan Alley, or the gritty inner-city realism of Bernstein's *West Side Story*. Yet it would be difficult to find three more heartfelt musical urban love letters than the three symphonic poems Ottorino Respighi wrote to commemorate Rome: *Fountains of Rome* (1916), *Pines of Rome* (1924), and *Roman Festivals* (1928).

Like Bernstein in New York, Respighi was an adopted son of the Eternal City, but he arrived there by a somewhat circuitous route. Early in his career, Respighi left Italy for St. Petersburg, where he took the position of principal violinist in the orchestra of the Russian Imperial Theater. He struck up an acquaintance with Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov, with whom he studied for five months, gaining valuable insight into the Russian master's approach to orchestration. Returning home to Italy, he held down a number of jobs before his appointment to the faculty of the Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia as professor of composition in 1913 finally allowed him to settle down – Respighi retained

the professorship for the rest of his life and became an eternal resident of the Eternal City.

Fountains of Rome is in four sections played without pause. It can also be seen as four miniature symphonic poems, each a musical snapshot of one of Rome's fountains. Respighi uses both the large orchestra at his disposal and the orchestration lessons gleaned from his studies with Rimsky-Korsakov to create vivid portraits in sound of these four beautiful fountains.

Respighi provided this programmatic description of *Fountains of Rome*:

"In this symphonic poem the composer has endeavored to give expression to the sentiments and visions suggested to him by four of Rome's fountains, contemplated at the hour when their characters are most in harmony with the surrounding landscape, or at which their beauty is most impressive to the observer.

The first part of the poem, inspired by the fountain of Valle Giulia, depicts a pastoral landscape: droves of cattle pass and disappear in the fresh, damp mists of the Roman dawn.

A sudden loud and insistent blast of horns above the trills of the whole orchestra introduces the second part, The Triton Fountain. It is like a joyous call, summoning troops of naiads and tritons, who come running up, pursuing each other and mingling in a frenzied dance between the jets of water.

Next there appears a solemn theme borne on the undulations of the orchestra. It is the fountain of Trevi at midday. The solemn theme, passing from the woodwind to the brass instruments, assumes a triumphal character. Trumpets peal: Across the radiant surface of the water there passes Neptune's chariot drawn by seahorses and followed by a train of sirens and tritons. The procession vanishes while faint trumpet blasts resound in the distance.

The fourth part, the Fountain at the Villa Medici, is announced by a sad theme which rises above the subdued warbling. It is the nostalgic hour of sunset. The air is full of the sound of tolling bells, the twittering of birds, the rustling of leaves. Then all dies peacefully into the silence of the night.”

Libby Larsen

Symphony: Water Music, (Symphony No. 1)

Libby Larsen was born in 1950 in Wilmington, Delaware. Her Symphony No. 1 (Water Music) was completed in 1984 and first performed by the Minnesota Orchestra under the direction of Neville Marriner on January 30, 1985. The symphony is written for piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, bass clarinet, three bassoons, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion, harp, piano, celeste, and strings.

Composer Libby Larsen had this to say about her *Symphony: Water Music*:

“*Symphony: Water Music* is a poetic symphony in four movements (fast-slow-presto-finale) which create a quartet of water studies. The tempo for each is indicated only by metronome marking, but the score bears many instructions to the performers suggesting how to enhance the expression and the mood (i.e., ‘fleetingly-like a shadow’). There is a deliberate homage to Handel in the first movement. However, the opening, *Fresh Breeze*, like the succeeding movements, depends less on motive than on texture and gesture. For instance, the first quiet chord, emerging from the strings, is a stack of thirds pulsing in 6/8 time. It attempts to capture the fresh, oscillating, crystalline vibrancy of water moved by constant wind. The gestures move about the orchestra almost kaleidoscopically, pin-pointing here a quartet of horns and harp glissando, there trilling high in the winds or sandwiched in the violas; often vibrations of percussion are suspended weightlessly in the air.

The motion is constant as the colorful images dart across the immensity of the full orchestra.

A phrase small as a summer breeze wafts from a solo flute above hushed chimes and from a single high note in the violins to establish the fundamental image of the second movement, *Hot, Still*. Quick figurations flicker among the woodwinds as if gently ruffling the surface of a lake in August, but the underlying pulse is a slow 6/4, the beat hazed with lots of ties over the bar lines, as if the waters are reluctant to stir. To underline the lethargy of a lake on a hot, humid day, pedal tones in trombones, tuba, cellos, basses, and other heavy instruments keep the flow as sustained as possible, until at midpoint, the bass clarinet and other wind instruments seem to stir the breezes. A long pause divides the two halves of the symphony.

Wafting suggests the tiny scatter squalls and cat's paws created by puffs on still water just before a front moves in. Muted horns and trumpets echoing back and forth in a complex rhythmic pattern establish the head-long pace and Queen Mab-like texture of the scherzo.

Gale, the final movement, takes its cue from the sudden, violent storms of summer. The goal of the music is not to portray the storm, but to dwell in its force, expressing the feelings aroused by such violence rather than fury, assaulted from all sides by strong, tonal images.”

— Libby Larsen, 1985

Sounds Triumphant

Jean Sibelius

Symphony No. 2 in D Major, Op. 43

Jean Sibelius was born in 1865 in Hämeenlinna, Finland, and died in 1957 in Järvenpää, Finland. He wrote the Symphony No. 2 in 1901 - 02 and the work was first performed in Helsinki on March 8, 1902 with the composer conducting the Helsinki Philharmonic. The symphony is written for two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, timpani, and strings.

At the turn of the 20th century, Jean Sibelius had established himself both as a distinctive musical voice, and as a patriotic symbol for Finland's struggle to free itself from the grip of Imperial Russia. From his earliest large-scale work, *Kullervo*, through the *Karelia Suite*, *Finlandia*, *Four Legends from the Kalevala* and onwards through his final work, *Tapiola*, Sibelius drew his inspiration from the folk legends of his native land. It is also tempting to ascribe some of the bleak, stark qualities of his music to the inspiration of the silence of the great Finnish forests and the harsh conditions of the northern tundra.

Yet to see Sibelius as primarily a nationalist composer and to limit his inspiration to his home country is to sell him short as a composer. While the programmatic titles of his works give the listener an entry into his musical world, Sibelius was, first and foremost, a composer keenly aware of musical architecture and worked throughout his career to revise and refine his musical techniques. This makes his music no less expressive, but gives it an inevitable and organic quality that reimagines the workings of standard European musical tradition.

The difference in approach might be summarized by Sibelius' diary entry after meeting the great Austrian composer Gustav Mahler in 1907. The

subject of symphonies came up, and Sibelius found his opinion at odds with Mahler's:

"When our conversation touched on the essence of symphony, I said that I admired its severity and style and the profound logic that created an inner connection between all the motives. This was the experience I had come to in composing. Mahler's opinion was just the reverse. "Nein, die Symphonie muss sein wie die Welt. Sie muss alles umfassen. (No, the symphony must be like the world. It must embrace everything.)"

To further dispel the idea that composers are entirely influenced by their environment, most of the Second was written while Sibelius and his family were visiting Italy, thanks to the generosity of one of Sibelius's most ardent supporters. He wrote a large portion of the Second in the coastal town of Rapallo, finishing the work when he returned to Finland. His original intentions were to write a work based on Dante's *Divine Comedy*, though he later turned his thoughts towards the Don Juan legend. Both of those projects were abandoned, but in all likelihood some of the music ended up in the Second Symphony.

The first movement of the Second Symphony seems to stand the traditional ideas of Classical form on their head. Instead of presenting entire melodic ideas in the opening section, Sibelius gives us hints and fragments. As the movement progresses, the fragments grow in length and combine with other ideas into larger melodic structures, giving the work a cumulative impact. At the end, Sibelius splits his ideas back into their original forms all the way to the quiet conclusion.

The second movement opens with the steady tread of the bass section, over which the bassoons sing their tragic lament. This movement is kaleidoscopic in nature, with different episodes succeeding each other, but tied together by the small melodic fragments that are transformed on each subsequent appearance.

The scherzo is a quicksilver dance, punctuated by brusque string interjections. The contrasting trio section's calm pastorale is led by the oboe, whose emphasis on one note is reminiscent of the opening of the entire symphony. The scherzo returns, but instead of ending it with a short coda, Sibelius composes a magical transition of swirling woodwinds, over which the strings and woodwinds overlap yearning phrases that stretch like a plant towards sunlight. At the climax point, Sibelius brings us into the finale, where all doubt is gone and the strings sing heroically over punctuations by brass and timpani. A mysterious passage that sounds much like a Finnish blizzard attempts to overwhelm the hard-won victory, but in the end, a blazing hymn of triumph brings the work to an affirmative conclusion.

— David Cole



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