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2024

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2025

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WELCOME TO THE PENSACOLA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

We are glad that you are here, and we look forward to sharing meaningful musical experiences together!

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

OUR TEAM

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Executive Director
Bret Barrow

Administrative & Patron Services Assistant
Brittany Merideth

Advancement & External Relations
Hannah Denaro

Music Education
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Mailing Address: P.O. Box 1752 | Pensacola, FL 32591

Cover Photo by YNOT Images



PETER RUBARDT

Music Director

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 in Mississippi. 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, Lake Placid Sinfonietta, Alabama Symphony, Fort Worth Symphony, and Augusta Symphony, among others.

Now in his 28th 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 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

around the community. 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.

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, and the Louisiana, Rochester, and Las Vegas philharmonic orchestras, The Louisville Orchestra, the 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 Princess Hitachi of Japan), Kansai Philharmonic Orchestra, and Nova Filarmonia Portuguese, 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 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 fur 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 Senturia, and David Lawton. He was selected by the League of American Orchestras to perform in the National Conductor Preview with the Jacksonville Symphony.

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 Dr. Grier Williams School of Music at the University of West Florida, and their two children.

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LETTER FROM OUR MUSIC DIRECTOR

Welcome to the 99th season of the Pensacola Symphony Orchestra! If you are thinking we must already be planning the 100th season, you would be right, but I can assure you we have taken nothing off the table for this season. The next two years promise to be among the most exciting in the orchestra's history.

I recently read a book titled *Time's Echo*, by Jeremy Eichler. It is a deep dive into the music of remembrance related to the Second World War, and the theme of the book is that music can connect us across time to people and events of different eras. As one reviewer put it, music serves as "the memory of culture," uniquely able to carry meaning from the past to our present day. What a powerful message! The orchestral literature is deeply rooted in the historical past, and those connections stir the deep resonance it has in the present day.

As I look over the current season, examples abound: Leonard Bernstein and Sergei Prokofiev sharing inspiration from William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* (October 5); Strauss' very early Wind Serenade and very late Oboe Concerto, reflecting the transformation of Germany across the span of two world wars (March 29); Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, beginning its life as an audacious experiment by a boldly original young composer and evolving into an icon for the entire concept of classical music (January 11). The list could go on.

Nearly every piece of music, be it brand new, like Jim Stephenson's achingly beautiful Second Symphony reflecting on the death of his



Photo by Meg Burke Photography

mother (November 2), or a revered masterpiece like Schubert's sublime C Major Symphony (March 29), takes its place in a great continuum of art, culture, and meaning. By extension, every musical performance is an invitation to embrace our humanity through this richness.

Thank you for joining us this evening! I hope you enjoy and treasure these performances as much as all of us on stage.

Musically yours,

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
Maeanna Callahan
Edward Charity
Burcu Goker
Molly Hollingsworth
Lambert Hsieh
William Jackson
Natasha Marsalli
Tania Moldovan
Zully Morales
Ingrid Roberts
Lee Taylor
Sarah Yen

SECOND VIOLIN

Grace Kim, *Principal*
Iris Bobren
Brian Brown
Kristin Campbell
Juliana Gaviria
Ellen Grant
Danielle Harrelson
Ramel Price
Sara Rodriguez
Miranda Rojas
Megan Sahely
Erika Sciascia
Barbara Withers

VIOLA

Audrey Naffe, *Principal*
Marion Viccars Chair
Victor Andzulis
Amaro Dubois
Courtney Grant
Jim Lichtenberger
Ashley Overby
Daniela Pardo
Dave Rebeck
Allyson Royal
Ana Sofia Suarez

CELLO

Aleksandra Pereverzeva, *Principal*
Helen N. Williams Chair
Andrea Beltran-Landers, *Associate Principal*
Litvak Family Chair
Chun-hsin Chang
Juan Jose Gutierrez
Paul Hanceri
David Ramirez
Ryan Snapp
Zlatina Staykova

BASS

Marcos Machado, *Principal*
Samuel Dahmer
Matheus Ferreira
Tod Leavitt
Max Levesque
David Pellow
Mia Mangano
Sophia Scarano
Jeb Stuart

FLUTE

Stephanie Riegle, *Principal*
Bethany Witter Wood
Gay and Bruce Burrows Chair
Sarah Jane Young
Mary Elizabeth Patterson Chair
Monika Durbin

PICCOLO

Sarah Jane Young, *Principal*
Monika Durbin

OBOE

Matt Fossa, *Principal*
Margaret Cracchiolo
Bobby and Suzanne Kahn Chair
Jillian Camwell

ENGLISH HORN

Margaret Cracchiolo

CLARINET

Richard Jernigan, *Principal*
 Newell Hutchinson
Robert and Roberta Manning Chair
 Kim Whaley
 Melissa Turner
 Rachael Webb
 Marissa Stanfill

B♭ CLARINET

Newell Hutchinson

BASS CLARINET

Melissa Turner
 Kim Whaley

BASSOON

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

CONTRABASSOON

Richard Hopkins

SAXOPHONE

Dave Camwell, *Principal*
 Chris Sacco

HORN

James Baker*
 Josiah Bullach*
 Angela Finley*
 Jodi Graham Wood
 Stuart Kinney
 Tony Chiarito
 Kevin Fails
 Ken Ortlepp

TRUMPET

Dale Riegler, *Principal*
Marea Jo Milner Chair
 Jonathan Martin
Ned and Jan Mayo Chair
 Kyle Mallari
 Mike Huff

TROMBONE

Bret Barrow, *Principal*
Dona and Milton Usry Chair
 Don Snowden
 Charles West

BASS TROMBONE

Wess Hillman

EUPHONIUM

Charles West

TUBA

Mike Mason, *Principal*

TIMPANI

Laura Noah, *Principal*

PERCUSSION

Jordan Wood, *Principal*
 Adam Blackstock
 Matt Greenwood
 Jordan Hale
 Pete Krostag
 Zachary Webb

HARP

Katie Ott, *Principal*
 Rebekah Atkinson

PIANO

Blake Riley, *Principal*

ARTISTIC STAFF

Monika Durbin, *Librarian*
 Dale Riegler, *Personnel Manager*

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 Brittan Braddock, *Producer*
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Hotel Ensemble, 1940

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 was formed, and in 1925, Edwin 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. During 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 in Leipzig, Germany, recognized the need for Pensacola to have an institution of its own that could develop local talent and 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 at New York's Shubert Theatre and Memphis' Orpheum Theatre no doubt gave Borjes the requisite experience and credibility this new venture required. 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 and music director of First Presbyterian Church. He also brought together a group of singers that would later become 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 99th 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.

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SEASON CALENDAR

October 5, 2024 – 7:30 p.m.

Masterworks
Opening Night!

October 13, 2024 – 3 p.m.

Free Community Performance
PSO in the Park
Museum Plaza

October 26, 2024 – 3 p.m.

Music for Families
Peter & the Wolf
First Baptist Church of Pensacola

November 2, 2024 – 7:30 p.m.

Masterworks
American Style: Copland,
Stephenson & Bernstein

November 3, 2024 – 1:30 p.m.

Free Community Performance
Great Gulfcoast Arts Festival
Seville Square

November 8, 2024 – 1 p.m.

Free Community Performance
Classical Sounds at Bayview
Bayview Senior Resource Center

December 12, 2024 – 11 a.m.

Free Community Performance
PSO at the Library
West Florida Public
Libraries – Pensacola Branch

December 31, 2024 – 7 p.m.

Pops!
Celebrate the New Year!

January 11, 2025 – 7:30 p.m.

Masterworks
Beethoven & Blue Jeans

February 8, 2025 – 7:30 p.m.

Chamber Orchestra Concert
Mozart Madness
First Baptist Church of Pensacola

February 15, 2025 – 7:30 p.m.

Pops!
Bond & Beyond

March 8, 2025 – 7:30 p.m.

Add-On Concert
Symphonic Spectacular

March 23, 2025 – 3 p.m.

Free Community Performance
PSO in the Park
Museum Plaza

March 29, 2025 – 7:30 p.m.

Masterworks
Strauss & Schubert

April 6, 2025 – 11 a.m.

Benefit Event
Jazz Brunch
Pensacola Country Club

April 11, 2025 – 11 a.m.

Free Community Performance
PSO at the Library
West Florida Public
Libraries – Bellview Branch

May 3, 2025 – 7:30 p.m.

Masterworks
Season Finale



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.

PROGRAMS FOR YOUTH

MUSIC FOR FAMILIES

Sparking an interest in engaging with music throughout life, our annual Music for Families concert is an event that tells a story through music. This season, we will present *Peter & the Wolf* on October 26, 2024.

FIFTH GRADE CONCERTS

In a tradition that has spanned more than four decades, we welcome fifth-grade students from Escambia and Santa Rosa Counties for special concerts featuring the orchestra. This season, these performances will take place at Olive Baptist Church, which is generously providing the use of their sanctuary.

CLASSROOM SUPPORT

It is our honor to support fine arts and music educators in Escambia, Santa Rosa, and Okaloosa Counties through additional in-class instruction from musicians and help with sectionals for students enrolled in secondary schools. We provide instrument petting zoos and cafeteria concerts for students in primary schools.

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Okaloosa County School District
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Umbrella Academy
West Florida Homeschool Education
Music Association

PROGRAMS AROUND OUR COMMUNITY

ARTEL GALLERY PERFORMANCES

Inspired by the visual art on display, Artel Gallery performances join two art forms. With small ensembles of PSO musicians speaking about artistic connections and creating programs that excite and challenge them, Artel Gallery performances provided a special view into the creative process.

PSO IN THE PARK

During the past several years, hundreds have joined us for outdoor performances. Featuring small ensembles of Pensacola Symphony Orchestra musicians, PSO in the Park is a lovely way to experience live music in a casual setting.

PROGRAMS IN RETIREMENT COMMUNITIES

With performances and conversations with musicians, these programs are a wonderful opportunity to engage residents of retirement communities.

PARTNERS

Arcadia Senior Living, Pace
Azalea Trace
The Beacon at Gulf Breeze
The Camellia at Gulf Breeze
Sodalis Senior Living, Milton

Solaris HealthCare
The Waterford at Creekside
Wesley Haven Villa
Willowbrooke Court at Azalea Trace
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ADDITIONAL PERFORMANCES

From performing for people experiencing homelessness to performing at non-profits' special events, these collaborations around the community allow us to create meaningful connections between people and music. Last season, we had the opportunity to perform for the following organizations:

Alfred-Washburn Center
ARC Gateway
Bayview Senior Resource Center
Children's Theater Company
Gulf Coast Kids House
National Naval Aviation Museum
Naval Air Station Pensacola

Pensacola Museum of Art
Rotary Club of Pensacola
West Florida Public Libraries
WSRE Amazing Kids Day for Children
with Autism

PROGRAMS IN CLINICAL SETTINGS

HOSPICE

Joining with the experienced care teams at in-patient hospice facilities, our musicians help address the social and emotional needs of patients and families by sharing music.

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VITAS Hospice at Ascension Sacred Heart
VITAS Hospice at HCA Florida West Hospital

MEMORY CARE

For people experiencing memory loss, exposure to music can improve cognitive function as well as emotional and behavioral health. As part of our partnership with local memory care facilities, our musicians participate in solo engagements that enhance residents' quality of life by making connections to music that is meaningful to them.

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The Council on Aging
The Residence – VITAS Memory Community

PEDIATRIC CARE

Whether waiting for an appointment or experiencing hospitalization, pediatric patients and their families can connect with music and our musicians to create uplifting moments.

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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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Membership information:
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Gifts to the Annual Fund are an invaluable part of the continuation of the organization's mission, but there are certain gifts that elevate the experience that the orchestra can bring to our community. With a visionary spirit, donors can support the appearance of world-class guest artists on the Saenger stage and special events that expand the reach of the orchestra.

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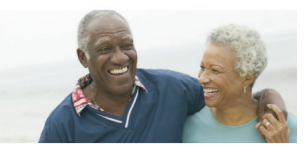
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In the spring of 2024, we hosted the second annual Jazz Brunch, benefiting our Beyond the Stage program for community engagement and education.

The event at Pensacola Country Club featured performances from Ike Sturm, Laila Biali, Sara Caswell, Jesse Lewis, the Pace High School Jazz Ensemble, Stephanie Riegler and Monika Durbin. We extend our sincere gratitude to the people and businesses who made this event a success.

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OPENING NIGHT!

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2024, 7:30 P.M.

Peter Rubardt, Conductor
Joyce Yang, Piano

Sergei Prokofiev
(1891 – 1953)

Selections from *Romeo & Juliet*, Suite No. 2, op. 64b
I. *The Montagues and the Capulets*
II. *Juliet – The Young Girl*
III. *Friar Laurence*
VI. *Dance of the Maids from the Antilles*
VII. *Romeo at Juliet's Grave*

Leonard Bernstein
(1918 – 1990)

Symphonic Dances from *West Side Story*

INTERMISSION

Sergei Rachmaninoff
(1873 – 1943)

Piano Concerto No. 2 in C minor, op. 18
I. Moderato
II. Adagio sostenuto
III. Allegro scherzando

Featuring Joyce Yang, Piano

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JOYCE YANG

Piano



Blessed with “poetic and sensitive pianism” (*Washington Post*) and a “wondrous sense of color” (*San Francisco Classical Voice*), GRAMMY-nominated pianist Joyce Yang captivates audiences with her virtuosity, lyricism, and interpretive sensitivity. She first came to international attention in 2005 when she won the silver medal at the 12th Van Cliburn International Piano Competition. The youngest contestant at nineteen years old, she took home two additional awards: Best Performance of Chamber Music (with the Takács Quartet), and Best Performance of a New Work. In 2006 Yang made her celebrated New York Philharmonic debut alongside Lorin Maazel at Avery Fisher Hall along with the orchestra’s tour of Asia, making a triumphant return to her hometown of Seoul, South Korea. Yang’s subsequent appearances with the New York Philharmonic have included opening night of the 2008 Leonard Bernstein Festival – an appearance

made at the request of Maazel in his final season as music director. *The New York Times* pronounced her performance in Bernstein’s *The Age of Anxiety* a “knockout.”

During the last two decades, Yang has blossomed into an “astonishing artist” (*Neue Zürcher Zeitung*), showcasing her colorful musical personality in solo recitals and collaborations with the world’s top orchestras and chamber musicians through more than 1,000 debuts and re-engagements. She received the 2010 Avery Fisher Career Grant and earned her first GRAMMY nomination (Best Chamber Music/Small Ensemble Performance) for her recording of *Franck, Kurtág, Prokofiev & Schumann* with violinist Augustin Hadelich.

Other notable orchestral engagements have included the Chicago Symphony, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra, San Francisco Symphony, Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, Hong Kong Philharmonic, the BBC Philharmonic, as well as the Toronto, Vancouver, Sydney, Melbourne, and New Zealand symphony orchestras.

Born in Seoul, South Korea, Yang received her first piano lesson from her aunt at the age of four. She quickly took to the instrument, which she received as a birthday present. During the next few years, she won several national piano competitions in her native country. By the age of ten, she had entered the School of Music at the Korea National University of Arts. In 1997, Yang moved to the United States to begin studies at the pre-college division of The Juilliard School with Dr. Yoheved Kaplinsky. She graduated from Juilliard with special honor as the recipient of the school’s 2010 Arthur Rubinstein Prize, and in 2011 she won its 30th Annual William A. Petschek Piano Recital Award. She is a Steinway artist.

OPENING NIGHT!

Sergei Prokofiev *Romeo and Juliet*, Suite No. 2, op. 64b

Sergei Prokofiev was born in Sontsovka, Ekaterinoslav district, Ukraine, on April 23, 1891, and died in Moscow, on March 5, 1953. His *Romeo & Juliet*, Suite No. 2 is scored for two flutes, piccolo, two oboes, English horn, two clarinets, bass clarinet, tenor saxophone, two bassoons, contrabassoon, four horns, two trumpets, cornet, three trombones, tuba, timpani, snare drum, cymbals, suspended cymbal, bass drum, glockenspiel, triangle, tambourine, maracas, harp, piano doubling celesta, and strings.

Sergei Prokofiev had already achieved considerable success in Paris as a ballet composer, but it took some time after strengthening ties to his native Russia in 1932 and making Moscow his primary residence in 1936 for his first Soviet ballet to be produced. The composer, quite matter-of-factly and without complaint, recounted the severe trials and tribulations that beset *Romeo and Juliet* in his autobiography. The ballet was conceived in 1934 for the Kirov Theater (then Leningrad opera house), but the theater backed out of the production. The Bolshoi Theater then took

on the commission but rejected the work in 1935 as too difficult, and the Leningrad Ballet School broke their contract to perform it in 1937. At last the Brno Opera (in former Czechoslovakia) agreed to stage *Romeo and Juliet*, and the premiere took place there in December 1939. The Kirov did perform the ballet in 1940, and the Bolshoi mounted a new production in 1946 that became widely known in the West, owing to their 1956 tour. Numerous other productions followed, and *Romeo and Juliet* finally took its place among the great full-length ballets.

The composer also reported the fuss over his and his choreographers' attempts to give *Romeo and Juliet* a happy ending—purely practical because, as he said, “living people can dance, the dying cannot.” He marveled that whereas the idea of a happy ending “was received quite calmly in London, our own Shakespeare scholars proved more papal than the pope and rushed to the defense of Shakespeare.” He was eventually convinced to write a tragic ending when someone suggested to him that the music he had already written “does not express any real joy at the end.” Wrote Prokofiev, “That was quite true. After several conferences with

the choreographers, it was found that the tragic ending could be expressed in the dance, and in due time the music for that ending was written."

Prokofiev went on to describe his first two orchestral suites from the ballet, each consisting of seven parts: "They do not follow each other consecutively; both suites develop parallel to each other. Some numbers were taken directly from the ballet without alteration, others were compiled from diverse other material. These two suites do not cover the entire music, and I shall perhaps be able to make a third [which he did in 1941]. . . . The suites were performed before the ballet was produced."

The premiere of the First Suite took place in Moscow on November 24, 1936, conducted by N. S. Golovanov; Prokofiev himself conducted the United States premiere with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra on January 21, 1937. The Second Suite followed soon on its heels, first performed in Leningrad on April 15, 1937, with numerous other performances ensuing in Paris, Prague, London, and Boston, where the composer himself led the United States premiere on March 25, 1938. Thus the music had already gained an enthusiastic audience before the full ballet had its first performance in Brno that December.

Suite No. 2 begins with *The Montagues and the Capulets*—a composite movement drawn from the slow introduction from Act I in which the Duke forbids further

fight between the two families, the ballroom scene (Act I, Scene 2) in which the heavy-footed "Dance of the [Capulet] Knights" theme dominates (arpeggiated ascents and descents in heavy dotted rhythms), and a contrasting middle section in which Juliet is represented by solo flute.

Juliet—The Young Girl, from Act I, Scene 2, reflects Juliet's kaleidoscopic thoughts on her impending marriage and on the ball that evening—nervous excitement, elegance, innocence, and introspection surface in rapid succession.

The Friar Laurence music occurs in Act II as Romeo awaits Juliet's arrival for their marriage, the ecclesiastical atmosphere heightened by the solemn "Russian" theme of the bassoon and tuba, followed by the miraculously warm music of the divided cellos. *The Dance of the Maids from the Antilles* is based on the *Dance of the Girls with Lilies* from Act III, Scene 8. On the morning of Juliet's wedding to Paris, the girls dance a ritual dance, unaware that Juliet has taken the potion to simulate death; the entire scene is scored delicately as if in fear of awakening the sleeping Juliet. Suite No. 2 concludes with *Romeo at Juliet's Grave*, taken from the final scene of the ballet, which depicts Juliet's funeral procession coming into view, Romeo's arrival, and his anguish on finding her "dead," though at this point she has only taken a death-simulating potion.

Leonard Bernstein

Symphonic Dances from *West Side Story*

Leonard Bernstein was born in Lawrence, Massachusetts, on August 25, 1918, and died in New York City, on October 14, 1990. His *Symphonic Dances from West Side Story* is scored for three flutes, third flute doubling piccolo, two oboes, English horn, two clarinets, E-flat clarinet, bass clarinet, two bassoons, contrabassoon, alto saxophone, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, vibraphone, timbales, congas, bass drum, tom-tom, drum set, cymbals, tambourine, wood block, triangle, tam-tam, xylophone, glockenspiel, chimes, tenor drum, four pitched drums, two snare drums, finger cymbals, two pairs of maracas, three cowbells, police whistle, three bongos, two suspended cymbals, guiro, harp, celesta, piano, and strings.

Leonard Bernstein's *West Side Story* shares the central theme of New York City with many of the composer's previous stage works: *Fancy Free*, *On the Town*, *On the Waterfront*, and *Wonderful Town*. This work differs from its predecessors, however, in that it presented the composer with the intriguing challenge of writing a serious musical. The idea of adapting the plot of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* to a modern environment was first suggested by Jerome Robbins when he was choreographing Bernstein's *The Age of Anxiety* in 1949–50. Robbins and Bernstein originally thought the work might be called *East Side*

Story, in which the lovers would come from different religious creeds. By the time the choreographer and composer emerged from other projects in the mid-1950s, race hatred and adolescent violence had become more prominent as issues. So the title became *West Side Story*, with lovers Tony and Maria belonging to rival teenage gangs, the Jets and the Sharks. Along with Bernstein's music and Robbins' choreography, Arthur Laurents was engaged to write the book and Stephen Sondheim the lyrics. The show opened on Broadway in 1957, ran for 973 performances, and gained even more popularity when made into a film.

The musical score contains a masterful blend of various jazz elements, Latin rhythms, and romantic popular ballads. It also incorporates the kind of character identification that we associate with Wagner's leitmotifs. In 1961, in order to make an orchestral concert work from the musical, Sid Ramin and Irwin Kostal chose a list of numbers, which they submitted to Bernstein, who chose the order. Having previously re-scored the original show somewhat for the movie, they were already familiar with its symphonic conception. They did an admirable job keeping Bernstein's music intact and retaining the composer's brilliant orchestral effects. It was composer Jack Gottlieb, Bernstein's assistant, who suggested using the haunting flute solo "I Had a Love" for the finale. Like the musical, the suite ends questioningly on a chord incorporating the unsettling interval of a tritone, which had played a role in other sections of the drama.

The work was first performed on February 13, 1961, by the New York Philharmonic conducted by Lukas Foss. Its nine episodes, played without pause, follow the plot's chronology, as summarized by Jack Gottlieb in the preface to the score:

Prologue (Allegro moderato)—The growing rivalry between the two teenage gangs, the Jets and the Sharks

"Somewhere" (Adagio)—In a visionary dance sequence, the two gangs are united in friendship

Scherzo (Vivace leggiero)—In the same dream, they break through the city walls, and suddenly find themselves in a world of space, air, and sun

Mambo (Presto)—Reality again; competitive dance between the gangs

Cha-Cha (Andantino con grazia)—The star-crossed lovers see each other for the first time and dance together

Meeting Scene (Meno mosso)—Music accompanies their first spoken words

"Cool," Fugue (Allegretto)—An elaborate dance sequence in which the Jets practice controlling their hostility

Rumble (Molto allegro)—Climactic gang battle during which the two gang leaders are killed

Finale (Adagio)—Love music developing into a [funeral] procession, which recalls, in tragic reality, the vision of "Somewhere"

Sergei Rachmaninoff

Piano Concerto No. 2 in C minor, op. 18

Sergei Rachmaninoff was born in Semyonovo, Russia, on April 1, 1873, and died in Beverly Hills, California, on March 28, 1943. His Piano Concerto No. 2 in C minor is scored for two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, bass drum, cymbals, and strings.

What more spectacular result of a psychiatrist's cure can be imagined than Sergei Rachmaninoff's Second Piano Concerto! Following the disastrous failure of his First Symphony in 1897, Rachmaninoff sank into depression. He began to doubt his ability to compose and the worth of making music in any way. In the grip, not of mere malaise, but of a deep clinical depression, Rachmaninoff thought his First Piano Concerto not good enough to play with the London Philharmonic Orchestra who had engaged him, yet he was totally incapable of beginning work on a new piano concerto. An influential friend arranged for him to visit Leo Tolstoy, but far from helping, that visit brought Rachmaninoff the realization that his "god" was "a very disagreeable man." Finally the Satins, Rachmaninoff's relations, convinced him to see Dr. Nicolai Dahl, who had been specializing for some years in a method that involved his patients learning a kind of self-hypnosis (which in the early 1930s became known as the Coué method).

Dahl had asked what kind of composition [my relations] desired and had received the answer, “a piano concerto,” for this is what I had promised the people in London and had given it up in despair. Consequently, I heard the same hypnotic formula repeated day after day, while I lay half asleep in an armchair in Dahl’s study. “You will begin to write your concerto. . . . You will work with great facility. . . . The concerto will be of excellent quality. . . .” It was always the same, without interruption.

Although it may sound incredible, this cure really helped me. Already at the beginning of the summer I began to compose. The material grew in bulk, and new musical ideas began to stir in me—far more than I needed for my concerto. By the autumn I had finished two movements of the concerto: the *Andante* [his generic term for any slow movement, in this case the *Adagio sostenuto*] and the *finale*—and a sketch of a suite for two pianos.

Rachmaninoff saw Dr. Dahl daily from January to April 1900. Whether Dr. Dahl’s method worked, or whether the fact that Dahl was also an amateur musician illuminated their conversations, or whether Rachmaninoff’s trip to Italy that summer provided resolve, the composer completed the second and third movements of the Concerto by autumn and was persuaded to premiere them on December 2, 1900. Encouraged by their success, he added the first movement, performing the entire Concerto at a Moscow Philharmonic

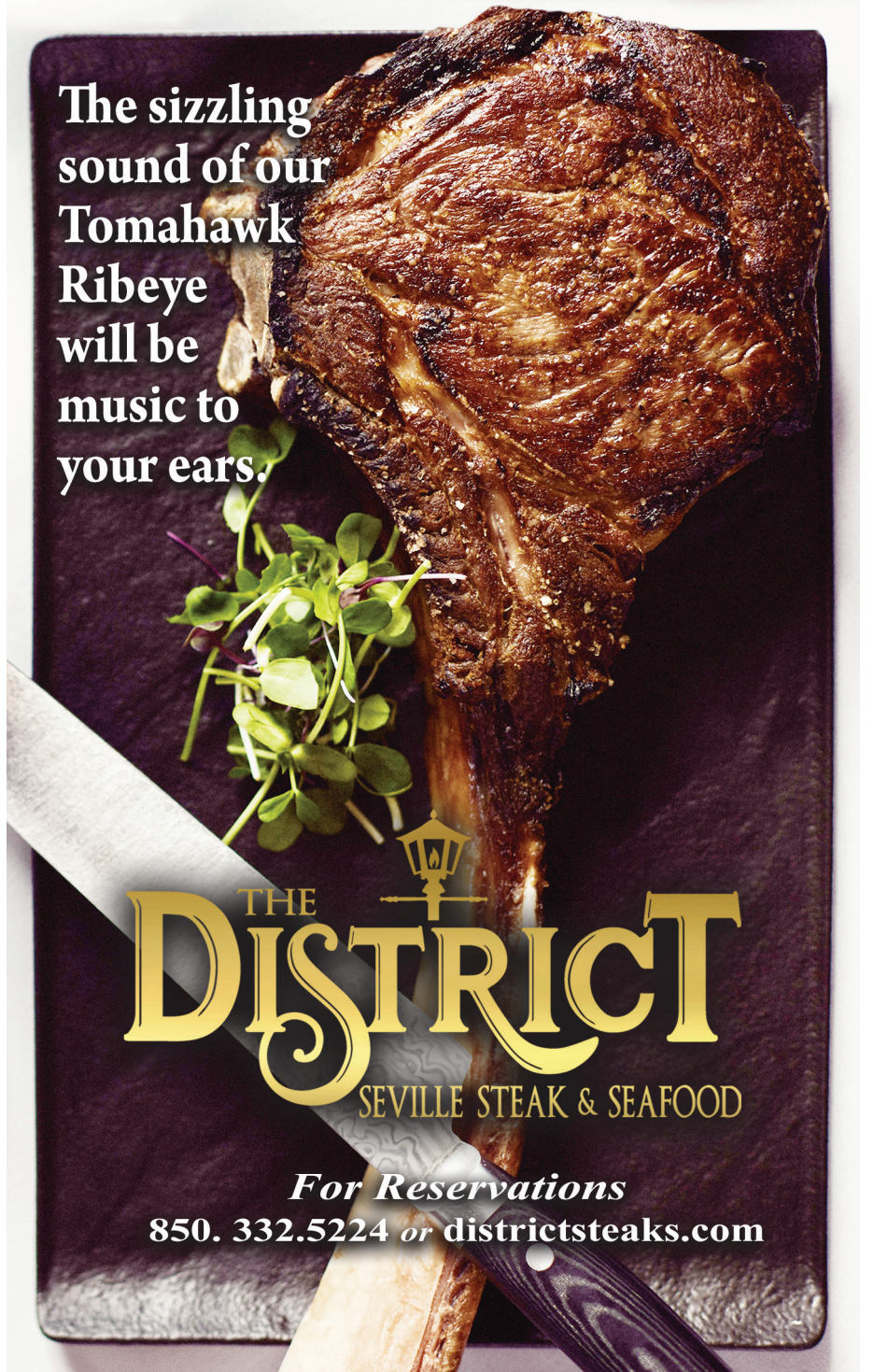
Society Concert on October 27, 1901. He dedicated the Concerto to Dr. Dahl, to whom he remained eternally grateful. Dr. Dahl was at least once acknowledged publicly for his contribution when in 1928 he was known to be playing viola in the orchestra of the American University of Beirut in Lebanon and was encouraged by the audience to take a bow after the performance of the Concerto.

The Concerto is a captivatingly beautiful piece, fully deserving the remarkable popularity it has achieved. Each movement opens with a passage that starts in a key removed from the main tonality, attaining it in each case with the movement’s principal theme. In the case of the first movement, it is the piano that begins with dark chords characteristic of Rachmaninoff, linked by several commentators to the age-old Russian love of the sound of enormous bells. In a favored technique of Romantic composers, the entry of the recapitulation is embellished, here by the piano’s brilliant counterfigure.

The slow movement’s introductory passage modulates from C minor, the key of the first movement’s close, to the distant new key of E major for the main theme. The more rapid middle section of the movement might be seen as a foreshadowing of the Third Piano Concerto, in which the slow movement contains a scherzo-like contrasting middle section. The exquisitely glowing close of the movement especially touched Rachmaninoff’s teacher Sergei Taneyev, who upon hearing it in rehearsal uttered the word “genius”—a word he did not use lightly.

The finale's introduction begins in the slow movement's key (E major), moving eventually to the home key (C minor). The composer hints at first movement materials both in the orchestral introduction and in the piano's entry—interesting in light of the order of composition of these movements. Several times in this movement the soloist erupts in cadential flourishes—evidence perhaps of the fact that Rachmaninoff's confidence had returned. Rachmaninoff's lyrical gift has caused his melodies to be appropriated by many songwriters. A case in point is the almost too familiar but still alluring second theme, first played by the oboe and viola. Like the first movement, the finale contains a concealed recapitulation. The movement ends in a blaze of pianistic glory and orchestral resolve.

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Peter Rubardt, Conductor
James M. Stephenson, Guest Composer
Elissa Lee Koljonen, Violin

Aaron Copland *Appalachian Spring Suite*
(1900 – 1990)

James M. Stephenson *Symphony No. 2, "Voices"*
(b. 1969) I. Prelude: *Of Passion*
 II. *Shouts and Murmurs*
 III. *Of One*

INTERMISSION

Leonard Bernstein *Serenade (after Plato's Symposium)*
(1918 – 1990) I. *Phaedrus; Pausanias* (Lento; Allegro marcato)
 II. *Aristophanes* (Allegretto)
 III. *Eryximachus* (Presto)
 IV. *Agathon* (Adagio)
 V. *Socrates; Alcibiades* (Molto tenuto; Allegro molto vivace)

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ELISSA LEE KOLJONEN

Violin



Photo by J. Henry Fair

Recognized as one of the most celebrated violinists of her generation, Elissa Lee Koljonen has thrilled audiences and critics in more than one hundred cities throughout the world. Koljonen received international acclaim when she became the first recipient of the prestigious Henryk Szeryng Foundation Award and the silver medalist of the Carl Flesch International Violin Competition. Her playing has been hailed by the *Helsingin Sanomat* (Helsinki) as “sparkling, sensual and personal,” and the *Chicago Tribune* has said she displays “boundless technique and musicianship.”

Koljonen has performed with such orchestras as the Boston Pops, the Minnesota Orchestra, the Philadelphia Orchestra, and the Royal Philharmonic, as well as the symphony orchestras of

Bilbao, Baltimore, Cincinnati, Dallas, Detroit, Oregon, Pittsburgh, Helsinki, and Seoul. She garnered critical acclaim for her appearance with the Orchestre Philharmonique de Monte-Carlo in a special concert celebrating the 700th anniversary of the Grimaldi Dynasty. She has collaborated with such noted conductors as Matthias Bamert, Dirk Brossé, JoAnn Falletta, Lawrence Foster, Miguel Harth-Bedoya, Neeme Järvi, James Judd, Andrew Litton, José-Luis Novo, the late James DePreist, and the late Bryden Thomson.

Koljonen has performed in some of the world's most venerated concert venues, including the Musikverein in Vienna, the Mozarteum in Salzburg, the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, the Barbican Centre and Queen Elizabeth Hall in London, Konzerthaus Berlin, the Seoul Arts Center, Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall in New York City, Symphony Hall in Boston, and the Academy of Music and Kimmel Center in Philadelphia. An avid chamber musician, Koljonen appears regularly at festivals throughout North America, Europe, and Asia.

Koljonen is a protégée of the late Aaron Rosand, with whom she studied at the Curtis Institute of Music. Incorporating his influence, she carries on the legacy and tradition of Leopold Auer and his legendary school of violin playing.

JAMES M. STEPHENSON

Composer



Jim Stephenson's music has been described as "astonishingly inventive" (*Musical America*). Foremost in his style is the ability to create music that resonates with musicians and audiences alike. Since becoming a full-time composer in 2007, he has enjoyed premieres in all walks of the musical landscape, including The Chicago Symphony (*Muti*), San Francisco Ballet, Boston Pops, and "The President's Own" US Marine Band. The latter premiered his "Fanfare for Democracy" at the Inauguration of President Joe Biden.

Other orchestras remiering Stephenson's works include the Minnesota Orchestra, St. Louis Symphony, Houston Symphony, Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music, and many others. The one-act comedy opera, *Cáraboo*—"the true story of a false princess"—premiered in June 2023, marking his first foray into the world of opera. Upcoming projects include his fifth symphony, and a new ballet scored for The Joffrey Ballet.

His award-winning catalog currently contains four symphonies (the second being performed more than fifty times around the world), and concertos and sonatas written for nearly every instrument, with premieres having been presented by renowned musicians across the globe. Using music to tell a story is a foremost and recent passion, fueling his growing catalog in opera and ballet. His educational work for young audiences, *Once Upon a Symphony*, is also indicative of that, having received nearly four hundred performances worldwide.

A conductor as well, Stephenson has led orchestras such as the Traverse City Philharmonic, the Chattanooga Symphony, Boston Pro Arte, and symphonies of Modesto, Southwest Florida, Bozeman, among others. He recently had his conducting debuts at the New England Conservatory (his alma mater), and the Oregon Ballet Theatre.

Stephenson resides with his wife, Sally, in the Chicago area, and is the proud father of four beautiful children. He spends his non-composing time traveling, doing athletic activity of almost any kind, sometimes mowing the lawn, sometimes shoveling snow, and sampling good wine with good friends.

This week's visit represents his debut working with the Pensacola Symphony Orchestra.

American Style: Copland, Stephenson & Bernstein

Aaron Copland *Appalachian Spring* Suite

Aaron Copland was born in Brooklyn, New York, on November 14, 1900, and died in North Tarrytown, New York, on December 2, 1990. His *Appalachian Spring Suite* is scored for two flutes, second doubling piccolo, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, two trombones, timpani, bass drum, suspended cymbal, snare drum, tabor, triangle, glockenspiel, xylophone, wood block, claves, harp, piano, and strings.

Aaron Copland composed one of his most popular, quintessentially American pieces in 1943–44 on commission from Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge for a ballet to be choreographed and danced by Martha Graham. He initially called his work simply “Ballet for Martha”

until she chose the title *Appalachian Spring* after a poem by Hart Crane. The ballet, bearing no relation to the poem’s text, celebrates a young farm couple beginning their life together in the Pennsylvania hills in the early nineteenth century. Graham and her troupe first performed *Appalachian Spring* in its original version for a small chamber orchestra of thirteen instruments in the tiny Whittall Auditorium of the Library of Congress, Washington, DC, on October 30, 1944. After their performance in New York the following May, the work received both the Pulitzer Prize for Music and the Music Critics Circle of New York Award for the outstanding theatrical composition of the 1944–45 season.

Well aware of its concert-hall potential, Copland arranged the ballet as a suite for large orchestra (1945), then made a large orchestra version of the complete ballet (1954) and was

finally persuaded by new-music impresario Lawrence Morton to arrange the suite for the original thirteen instruments (1970), with permission for added strings. The New York Philharmonic, conducted by Artur Rodzinski, first performed the full-orchestra suite version in Carnegie Hall on October 4, 1945; this is the version presented here.

The Suite follows the order of the ballet's scenario closely except for the omission of a section that Copland thought was of purely choreographic interest, which interrupts the famous variations on the Shaker hymn "Simple Gifts." His signature music evoking wide open spaces provides a framework for contrasting sections of hesitation, tenderness, liveliness, harshness, and quiet strength. For the first performance of the Suite in 1945, Copland provided the following notes:

The Suite arranged from the ballet contains the following sections, played without interruption:

1. Very slowly. Introduction of the characters, one by one, in a suffused light.
2. Fast. Sudden burst of unison strings in A-major arpeggios start the action. A sentiment both elated and religious gives the keynote to this scene.
3. Moderate. Duo for the Bride and her Intended—scene of tenderness and passion.
4. Quite fast. The Revivalist and his flock. Folksy feelings—suggestions of square dances and country fiddlers.

5. Still faster. Solo dance of the Bride—presentiment of motherhood. Extremes of joy and fear and wonder.

6. Very slowly (as at first). Transition scene to music reminiscent of the introduction.

7. Calm and flowing. Scenes of daily activity for the Bride and her Farmer-husband. There are five variations on a Shaker theme. The theme, sung by a solo clarinet, was taken from a collection of Shaker melodies compiled by Edward D. Andrews, and published under the title *The Gift to Be Simple*. The melody I borrowed and used almost literally, is called 'Simple Gifts.' It has this text:

'Tis the gift to be simple,
 'Tis the gift to be free,
 'Tis the gift to come down
 Where we ought to be.
 And when we find ourselves
 In the place just right,
 'Twill be in the valley
 Of love and delight.
 When true simplicity is gain'd,
 To bow and to bend we
 shan't be asham'd.
 To turn, turn will be our delight,
 'Til by turning, turning
 we come round right.

8. Moderate. Coda. The Bride takes her place among her neighbors. At the end the couple are left "quiet and strong in their new house." Muted strings intone a hushed, prayerlike passage. The close is reminiscent of the opening music.

James M. Stephenson

Symphony No. 2, "Voices"

James M. Stephenson was born in Joliet, Illinois, on February 4, 1969. His *Symphony No. 2, "Voices"* is scored for mezzo-soprano, two flutes, piccolo, two oboes, English horn, three clarinets, second doubling E-flat clarinet, third doubling bass clarinet, two bassoons, contrabassoon, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, marimba, triangle, snare drum, xylophone, tambourine, crotales, suspended cymbal, vibraphone, cymbals, glockenspiel, wood block, tam-tam, bass drum, slapstick, djembe, ride cymbal, piano doubling celesta, harp, and strings.

Active as a composer, arranger, conductor, and trumpet player based in Chicago, Jim Stephenson graduated from the New England Conservatory with a degree in trumpet performance. While playing for seventeen years in the Naples (Florida) Philharmonic, he taught himself the art of composing and arranging with such success that it has become his main occupation since 2007. One of his earliest works, *Compose Yourself!* (2000), designed for young audiences, has now received more than 300 performances.

Stephenson's huge body of close to 400 compositions in myriad genres is especially rich in band and chamber music and—with a proclivity rivaling Vivaldi's—in concertos for nearly every symphonic instrument, mostly on commission from principal players of such major orchestras as Chicago, Boston, New York, and Philadelphia.

Among the genres Stephenson has added more recently to his catalog are symphony—three to date—as well as ballet and opera. His ballet *Wooden Dimes*, commissioned by the San Francisco Ballet, premiered via streamed video in March 2021, and his one-act opera *Cáraboo*, "the true story of a false princess," premiered in June 2023 under the composer's direction in Lake Forest, Illinois.

"The President's Own" United States Marine Band commissioned Stephenson's three-movement *Symphony No. 2, "Voices,"* and gave the premiere to great acclaim under the direction of Col. Jason Fettig at the renowned Midwest Clinic in 2016. It went on to receive the two most coveted concert band awards: the National Band Association's Revelli Award in 2017 and the American Bandmasters Association's Sousa/Ostwald award in 2018. While it continues to be performed worldwide in that version, Stephenson arranged the work for orchestra on a commission from the Texas State Symphony Orchestra with additional support from the University of South Carolina Symphony. The Texas State Symphony Orchestra, led by Jacob Harrison, premiered the symphonic version on November 18, 2023.

Stephenson wrote program notes for the band version that spoke of his inspiration for the work with reference to the universal language of laughter as experienced in an international airport. That led him to think of the myriad facets of the human voice:

They come in so many forms. Some high, some low. Extremely loud, or extremely soft. Some are menacing, or angelic. A voice is completely unique to each individual, and instantly recognizable to a close friend or

relative. As a verb, it is used to express or vocalize an opinion. Used together, voices can express opposition, or unification. . . . The Symphony No. 2 is an exploration of as many voices as I could formalize, resulting in a kind of concerto for wind ensemble. The culmination of the symphony is one of a unified voice, bringing together all of the different “cultures” and “individual voices” of the wind ensemble to express an amassed vision of hope and love; a vision I believe to be shared throughout all the world, yet disrupted continually by misguided and empowered individuals.

Yet there was a deeper impetus that Stephenson said was too painful to reveal at the time, but which he divulged two years later:

On April 23, 2016, my mother, Shirley S. Stephenson, passed away at the age of seventy-four. It was the first time anyone that close to me had died, and I honestly didn't know how to respond. As this new piece—the symphony—was the next major work on my plate, I thought the music would come pouring forth, as one would imagine in the movies or in a novel. However, the opposite happened, and I was stuck, not knowing how to cope, and not knowing what to write.

Eventually, after a month or so, I sat at the piano, and pounded a low E-flat octave, followed by an anguished chord answer. I did this three times, with three new response-chords, essentially recreating how I felt. This became the opening of the symphony, with emphasis on the bass trombone, who gets the loudest low E-flat. I vowed I wouldn't return to E-flat (major) until the end of the piece, thus setting forth a compositional and emotional goal all at once: an

E-flat to E-flat sustaining of long-term tension, technically speaking, and the final arrival at E-flat major (letter I, 3rd movement) being a cathartic and powerful personal moment, when I finally would come to terms with the loss of my mother. The voice in the piece is that of my mother, an untrained alto, which is why I ask for it without vibrato. In the end, she finally sings once last time, conveying to me that “all will be ok.”

I think it is the most difficult times we endure that force us, inspire us, to dig deeper than we could ever imagine. On the one hand, I am, of course, deeply saddened by the loss of my mother; but on the other, I will always have this piece—which is the most personal to me—to in essence keep her alive in my heart. I always tear up at letter I. Always. But they are tears of joy and treasured memories of seventy-four years with my mother.

For the orchestra version Stephenson added:

Orchestra is my first love. I started playing in an orchestra when I was ten years old, and I was immediately hooked. I was always under the assumption that I would perform in an orchestra my entire life, but, as they say, life had other plans. My parents always supported whatever musical direction my life took.

I think it is poetic that I ended up doing an orchestral version of this symphony, as it has taken me back to my roots, which never would have started without my parents' initial nudges. It is nice to think that whenever this piece is played, whether by wind ensemble, or now, by symphony orchestra, my mother's “voice” will always be a part of it.

Leonard Bernstein

Serenade (after Plato's *Symposium*)

Leonard Bernstein was born in Lawrence, Massachusetts, on August 25, 1918, and died in New York City, on October 14, 1990. His *Serenade* (after Plato's *Symposium*) is scored for timpani, tambourine, xylophone, suspended cymbal, chimes, triangle, snare drum, tenor drum, two Chinese blocks, two bass drums, harp, and strings.

Leonard Bernstein sometimes said that he regarded the *Serenade* as his most satisfying composition. The work's unique subject matter, inspired by the characters and dialogues in Plato's *Symposium*, unfolds in a novel structure in which each movement evolves from elements in the preceding one. The prominent role of the solo violin, amid orchestral strings, harp, and percussion, led Bernstein to refer to the piece casually as a concerto. He emphasizes the instrument's lyrical rather than pyrotechnic capabilities, as in the opening theme that generates much of the work.

The Koussevitzky Music Foundation—an outgrowth of the legendary promotion of contemporary works by its namesake—commissioned the *Serenade*, which Bernstein premiered with Isaac Stern and the Israel Philharmonic at the Teatro La Fenice (Venice), on September 12, 1954. Bernstein once wrote that every work he wrote “for whatever medium, is really theater music in some way.” This quality has drawn many choreographers to the *Serenade*, beginning with Herbert Ross for a production by the American Ballet Theater at the 1959 Spoleto Festival.

On August 8, 1954, the day after completing his score, Bernstein described the *Serenade* in his typical eloquent fashion. Published as the preface to the score, his guidelines read just as effectively seventy years later: “There is no literal program for the *Serenade*, despite the fact that it resulted from a re-reading of Plato's charming dialogue *The Symposium*. The music, like the dialogue, is a series of related statements in praise of love, and generally follows the Platonic form through the succession of speakers at the banquet. The ‘relatedness’ of the movements does not depend on common thematic material but rather on a system whereby each movement evolves out of elements in the preceding one.

For the benefit of those interested in literary allusion, I might suggest the following points as guideposts:

I. *Phaedrus*; *Pausanias* (Lento; Allegro marcato). *Phaedrus* opens the symposium with a lyrical oration in praise of Eros, the god of love. (Fugato, begun by the solo violin.) *Pausanias* continues by describing the duality of lover and beloved. This is expressed in a Classical sonata-allegro, based on the material of the opening fugato.

II. *Aristophanes* (Allegretto). *Aristophanes* does not play the role of clown in this dialogue, but instead that of the bedtime storyteller, invoking the fairy-tale mythology of love.

III. *Erixymachus* (Presto). The physician speaks of bodily harmony as a scientific model for the workings of love patterns. This is an extremely short fugato scherzo, born of a blend of mystery and humor.

IV. *Agathon* (Adagio). Perhaps the most moving speech in the dialogue, Agathon's panegyric embraces all aspects of love's powers, charms, and functions. This movement is a simple three-part song.

V. *Socrates*; *Alcibiades* (Molto tenuto; Allegro molto vivace). Socrates describes his visit to the seer Diotima, quoting her speech on the demonology of love. This is a slow introduction of greater weight than any of the preceding movements; and serves as a highly developed reprise of the middle section of the Agathon movement, thus suggesting a hidden sonata form. The famous interruption by Alcibiades and his band of drunken revelers ushers in the Allegro, which is an extended rondo ranging in spirit from agitation through jig-like dance music to joyful celebration. If there is a hint of jazz in the celebration, I hope it will not be taken as anachronistic Greek party music, but rather the natural expression of a contemporary American composer imbued with the spirit of that timeless dinner party.

What Bernstein does not mention are the autobiographical elements that naturally crept into his work, among them quotations from some of his *Anniversaries* for solo piano, written as birthday or memorial tributes for close friends (Elizabeth Rudolf, Lukas Foss, Elizabeth B. Ehrman, and Sandy Gellhorn). Bernstein's biographer Humphrey Burton goes so far as to posit a self-portrait of the composer: "grand and noble in the first movement, childlike in the second, boisterous and playful in the third, serenely calm and tender in the fourth, a doom-laden prophet and then a jazzy iconoclast in the finale."

Bernstein's astute use of the term *serenade* certainly suggests entertainment music, as it had for centuries—a lover's song outside a beloved's window or an ensemble piece to amuse dinner guests or pay tribute. But the composer, known especially for his entertaining music on Broadway, also wanted to be taken seriously in the classical arena—hence the *Serenade's* literary emphasis, the use of classical forms, and the emphasis on a novel evolutionary structure. His blend of "seriousness" and "entertainment" resulted in some of the finest music he ever produced for the concert hall.

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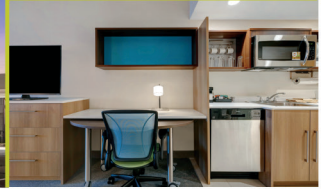
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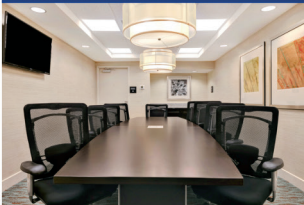
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Byron Stripling, Trumpet & Vocals
Sydney McSweeney, Vocals

Irving Berlin
Arr. Tyzik

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Arr. Robinson

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Jerome Kern & B. G. Sylva
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George Gershwin & Ira Gershwin
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Always

George Gershwin & Ira Gershwin
Arr. Riddle

I Got Rhythm

George Gershwin & Ira Gershwin
Arr. Riddle

But Not for Me

Ben Bernie, Maceo Pinkard, & Kenneth Casey
Arr. Mackrel

Sweet Georgia Brown

INTERMISSION

Vincent Youmans & Irving Caesar

I Want to Be Happy

Scott Joplin

Maple Leaf Rag

Traditional

*This Little Light of Mine/
His Eye Is on the Sparrow*

George Gershwin & Ira Gershwin
Arr. Springfield

S'Wonderful

George Gershwin & Ira Gershwin
Arr. Grimes

The Man I Love

Isham Jones & Gus Kahn
Arr. Grimes

It Had to Be You

George Gershwin & Ira Gershwin
Arr. Cook

Oh, Lady Be Good!

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BYRON STRIPLING

Trumpet & Vocals



With a contagious smile and captivating charm, conductor, trumpet virtuoso, singer, and actor Byron Stripling ignites audiences across the globe. In 2020, Stripling was named Principal Pops Conductor of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, and in 2024, he was named Principal Pops Conductor of the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra. He also currently serves as Artistic Director and Conductor of the highly acclaimed Columbus Jazz Orchestra. Stripling's baton has led countless orchestras throughout the United States and Canada, including the Boston Symphony Orchestra at Tanglewood and the orchestras of San Diego, St. Louis, Virginia, Toronto, Baltimore, Milwaukee, Fort Worth, Rochester, Buffalo, Florida, Portland, and Sarasota, to name a few.

As a soloist with the Boston Pops, Stripling has performed frequently under the baton of Keith Lockhart, as well as being the featured soloist on the PBS television special, *Evening at Pops*, with conductors John Williams and Lockhart.

SYDNEY MCSWEENEY

Vocals



Since his Carnegie Hall debut with Skitch Henderson and the New York Pops, Stripling has become a pops orchestra favorite throughout the country, soloing with more than 100 orchestras around the world, including the Boston Pops, National Symphony, Pittsburgh Symphony, Dallas Symphony, Cincinnati Pops, Seattle Symphony, Baltimore Symphony, Minnesota Orchestra, St. Louis Symphony, Vancouver Symphony, Toronto Symphony, and orchestras throughout Europe and Asia. He has been a featured soloist at the Hollywood Bowl and performs at festivals around the world.

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, Louie Bellson, and Buck Clayton, in addition to Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra, The Carnegie Hall Jazz Band, and The GRP All-Star Big Band.

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 Alexis, a former dancer, writer, and poet, and their beautiful daughters.

Sydney McSweeney's distinctive jazz, gospel, and pop vocal stylings have made her one of the country's hottest young vocalists. Her dynamic performances with the Columbus Jazz Orchestra have been described as "stunningly beautiful," and her standing room-only night club performances have become favorites for audiences across the country. Although her schedule is jam packed with recording sessions and performances, as a devoted teacher, she still carves out time to nurture the talents of her many students.

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Beethoven & Blue Jeans

SATURDAY, JANUARY 11, 2025, 7:30 P.M.

Laura Jackson, Guest Conductor
Ray Ushikubo, Piano & Violin

Gioachino Rossini Overture to *Il barbiere di Siviglia* (*The Barber of Seville*)
(1792 – 1868)

Jimmy López Bellido *Fiesta! Four Pop Dances for Orchestra*
(b. 1978)
I. *Trance 1*
II. *Countertime*
III. *Trance 2*
IV. *Techno*

Fiesta! for symphony orchestra by Jimmy López Bellido is published by FILARMONIKA Music Publishing. Used with permission.

Felix Mendelssohn Piano Concerto No. 1 in G minor, op. 25
(1809 – 1847)
I. Molto allegro con fuoco
II. Andante
III. Presto – Molto Allegro e vivace

Featuring Ray Ushikubo, Piano

The movements are played without pause.

INTERMISSION

Camille Saint-Saëns *Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso*, op. 28
(1835 – 1921)

Featuring Ray Ushikubo, Violin

Ludwig van Beethoven Symphony No. 5 in C minor, op. 67
(1770 – 1827)
I. Allegro con brio
II. Andante con moto
III. Scherzo. Allegro – Trio
IV. Allegro

The final two movements are performed without pause.

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LAURA JACKSON

Guest Conductor



Laura Jackson serves as music director and conductor of Nevada's Reno Philharmonic Orchestra. She wins praise for her passionate artistry, creative leadership, and commitment to community engagement. Jackson is known nationally and internationally for both her innovative composer-in-residence projects and vibrant performances of traditional repertoire. She has cemented the Reno Philharmonic's place in the hearts of northern Nevadans while also raising the institution to new musical heights and national visibility.

In addition to concerts with the Reno Philharmonic, Jackson guest conducts nationally and internationally. She has performed with the symphonies of Alabama, Atlanta, Baltimore, Berkeley,

Charlottesville, Detroit, Hartford, Hawaii, Orlando, the Philippines, Phoenix, Richmond, San Antonio, Toledo, Toronto, Windsor, and Winnipeg in addition to concerts with the Philly Pops and L'Orchestre symphonique de Bretagne in France.

Jackson recorded Michael Daugherty's *Time Cycle* on Naxos with the Bournemouth Symphony in partnership with Marin Alsop and served as the first American to guest conduct the Algerian National Orchestra in 2013.

Jackson served as the first female assistant conductor of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra from 2004-07. Prior to her appointment in Atlanta, she studied conducting at the University of Michigan and spent summers as the Seiji Ozawa Conducting Fellow at the Boston Symphony Orchestra's Tanglewood Music Center in 2002 and 2003. Jackson spent her early childhood in Virginia and Pennsylvania before moving at age eleven to Plattsburgh, New York, where she grew up waterskiing, swimming, and sailing on Lake Champlain. She fell in love with the violin in public school, later attending the North Carolina School for the Arts to finish high school. She pursued an undergraduate degree at Indiana University where she studied both violin and conducting before moving to Boston in 1990 to freelance as a violinist and teach at Phillips Exeter Academy in New Hampshire.

RAY USHIKUBO

Piano & Violin



Known for his “disciplined focus and clarity... and marvelous dynamic nuance,” (*Arts Knoxville*) Ray Ushikubo is a twenty-one-year-old Japanese-American pianist and violinist who has performed on the stages of Carnegie Hall and Walt Disney Concert Hall and appeared on NBC’s *The Tonight Show* with Jay Leno. Ushikubo made his orchestral debut at age ten with the Young Musicians Foundation Orchestra in Los Angeles’s Dorothy Chandler Pavilion with Beethoven’s Piano Concerto No. 1 alongside conductor Teddy Abrams. A recipient of the prestigious Davidson Fellow Laureate Award in 2014, Ushikubo was named a Young Steinway Artist, winning the 2017 Hilton Head International Piano Competition and the 2016 Piano Concerto Competition at the Aspen Music Festival and School. He was featured as a Young Artist-in-Residence of the national radio broadcast *Performance Today* with host Fred Child,

and he has been featured on NPR’s *From the Top*, where he was named a Jack Kent Cooke Young Artist.

His recent engagements include performances with The Florida Orchestra as well as the Hilton Head, Kansas City, Oregon, Pasadena, San Diego, and Winston Salem Symphony Orchestras. Ushikubo has worked with renowned conductors, including Paolo Bortolameolli, Laura Jackson, Jeffrey Kahane, Wes Kenney, David Lockington, Sameer Patel, and John Morris Russell. In 2013, Ushikubo performed and conducted from the piano Bach’s Keyboard Concerto No. 1 with the Academy Virtuosi Orchestra at the Colburn School.

Ushikubo has collaborated with pianist Lang Lang in Orange County’s Segerstrom Concert Hall and with pianist Jean-Yves Thibaudet on the international radio broadcast *Radio France*. He performed as piano soloist at the Los Angeles Japanese American Cultural and Community Center (JACCC) for a peace ceremony honoring victims of the Hiroshima atomic bomb.

Ushikubo received his bachelor’s degrees at the Curtis Institute of Music, where he studied piano with Gary Graffman and Robert McDonald and violin with Shmuel Ashkenasi and Pamela Frank. Currently, he is enrolled at the Colburn Conservatory of Music pursuing a master of music degree, and he studies piano with Fabio Bidini and violin with Robert Lipsett.

BEETHOVEN & BLUE JEANS

Gioachino Rossini Overture to *Il barbiere di Siviglia* (*The Barber of Seville*)

Gioachino Rossini was born in Pesaro, Italy, on February 29, 1792, and died in Paris, on November 13, 1868. His Overture to *Il barbiere di Siviglia* is scored for flute, piccolo, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, three trombones, timpani, bass drum, cymbals, and strings.

Rossini had no qualms about reusing his own material for different occasions. He originally wrote the overture now connected with *The Barber of Seville* for *Aureliano in Palmira* (1813), a serious work unlike the comic style of *The Barber*, and recycled it for another serious opera, *Elisabetta, regina d’Inghilterra* (1815)—both performed in Milan. Soon after, he composed *The Barber of Seville* for Rome, but somehow the overture got lost in transit from Bologna. *Aureliano’s/Elisabetta’s* overture came to the rescue and has introduced *The Barber* ever since.

Giovanni Paisiello had already composed a *Barber of Seville* (1782), still popular with Roman opera

audiences, so Rossini’s new opera premiered as *Almaviva*, or *The Useless Precaution*. Even so, the premiere on February 20, 1816, met with jeering and catcalls, organized by loyal “Paisiellisti.” The entire audience embraced the second performance, but Rossini had stayed home.

The Overture’s famous main theme sounds perfectly apt for bickering, laughter, or scurrying—characteristic activities in comic opera—but had made equal sense as restlessness or agitation in a serious context. It’s safer, then, to discuss abstract elements, which conform to Rossini’s “magic formula” for an overture—a short, slow introduction, a quick sonata-form main section with two contrasting themes (strings then winds), and a brief transition rather than full development between exposition and recapitulation.

The signature “Rossini crescendo,” heard twice, generates its excitement not only by an increase in volume, but by the composer’s careful compilation of harmonic, melodic, rhythmic, and textural phrases coupled with deft orchestration. Rossini closes his celebrated curtain-raiser by inserting unexpected harmonies into its energetic cadential phrases.

Jimmy López

Bellido

Fiesta! Four Pop Dances for Orchestra

Jimmy López Bellido was born in Lima, Peru, on October 21, 1978. His *Fiesta! Four Pop Dances for Orchestra* is scored for two flutes, second flute doubling piccolo, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, bass drum, bongos, congas, cymbals, and strings.

Internationally recognized composer Jimmy López studied at the National Conservatory in Lima, then at Helsinki's famous Sibelius Academy (2000–07) and received his doctorate in 2012 from the University of California, Berkeley. His works have been performed across the United States and abroad by orchestras ranging from the Chicago and Boston symphonies to the Helsinki Philharmonic and National Symphony Orchestra of Peru and at such venues as Carnegie Hall, the Sydney Opera House, Vienna's Musikverein, and Amsterdam's Concertgebouw.

Commissioned by the Lyric Opera of Chicago, López's opera *Bel canto*, based on Ann Patchett's award-winning novel, became the Lyric's best-selling opera of the 2015–16 season and was broadcast nationwide PBS's *Great Performances*. More recently, in 2019, his oratorio *Dreamers*, written in collaboration with Pulitzer Prize winner Nilo Cruz, was premiered in Berkeley by soprano Ana María Martínez and the Philharmonia Orchestra of London led by Esa-Pekka Salonen.

López served as the Houston Symphony's composer-in-residence from 2017 to 2020, and their recording of his *Aurora* with violinist Leticia Moreno conducted by Andrès Orozco-Estrada on their album *Aurora & Ad astra* received a 2022 Latin Grammy nomination for Best Classical Contemporary Composition.

López's totally engaging *Fiesta!*, which he describes as “four pop dances for orchestra,” exists in two versions. He composed the first, for chamber orchestra, in 2007 on a commission from Miguel Harth-Bedoya to mark the 100th anniversary of the Lima Philharmonic Society. After giving a preview performance with students at Texas Christian University on October 13, 2007, Harth-Bedoya and the Caminos del Inka Chamber Orchestra officially premiered *Fiesta!* exactly one week later in Lima. To give this exciting work greater exposure, Harth-Bedoya sought the present version for full orchestra, which he premiered with the Baltimore Symphony in May 2008. The popular piece has since been performed by more than one hundred orchestras worldwide.

The composer writes of his tantalizingly brief four-movement piece:

Fiesta! draws influences from today's pop music. It utilizes elaborate developmental techniques while keeping the primeval driving forces still latent in popular culture. Movements one (*Trance 1*) and three (*Trance 2*) are connected to each other in spirit and form. They both feature slow passages and open

ends, whereas movements two (*Countertime*) and four (*Techno*) are conclusive in character and keep high levels of energy all the way through. Latin rhythms also play an essential part in this piece; therefore, the percussion section rises to prominence on several passages.

The kaleidoscopic opening, in which fleeting fragments dart throughout the orchestra before coalescing into a climax, shows the kind of sophistication that makes López's artistic renderings several steps removed from "pop dances." The wistful introspection that follows creates a wonderful atmosphere for the eruption of the second movement. Though high energy reigns indeed, it is thrown into relief by the few moments in which quiet plays an important role.

The opening of the third movement gives the percussion soloistic prominence, introducing a rhythmic motive that permeates the driven first part of the movement. Also memorable is the horn solo that arises out of the quiet murmurs of the second section. The opening of the finale with its rising brass fragments and punctuating chords creates the same effect that Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky achieved in his famous First Piano Concerto, but here leads to popular rhythmic patterns more akin to Bernstein's Latin-inspired *Mambo*. Tumbling and rising cascades create great expectation, and the swirling strings seem inspired by a passage that heralds the challenging trumpet leap in Strauss's famous *Also sprach Zarathustra*. The effect here, however, is altogether different as the propulsive rhythms blaze to a close that leaves us wanting more.

Felix Mendelssohn

Piano Concerto No. 1 in G minor, op. 25

Felix Mendelssohn was born in Hamburg, Germany, on February 3, 1809, and died in Leipzig, Germany, on November 4, 1847. His Piano Concerto No. 1 in G minor is scored for two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, timpani, and strings.

Felix Mendelssohn wrote concertos during all periods of his short life—in all, three piano concertos, two concertos for two pianos, two violin concertos, and one concerto for violin and piano. The G minor Concerto was not his first attempt at a piano concerto but the first that he published in this genre. It is strikingly different from the piano concertos of the Mozart-Beethoven tradition in that Mendelssohn omitted the previously obligatory orchestral exposition of the first movement themes. His three published piano concertos are all, in fact, single-exposition concertos. That is not to say that W. A. Mozart and Ludwig van Beethoven never let the soloist begin—Mozart had in his K. 271 Concerto and Beethoven in his Fourth and Fifth concertos—but in those works, after a brief solo introduction, the orchestral tutti (ensemble section) takes over as usual.

Other innovations by Mendelssohn included cyclic procedures—the first movement's second theme is recalled in the finale, and the bridge between the first and second movements is reused to introduce the third movement. In addition he omitted other

orchestral tutti and joined all three movements; Beethoven had previously joined only a concerto slow movement to a finale.

Mendelssohn, in fact, referred to this work in 1832 as his "*Münchner Konzertstück*" (Munich concert piece), a phrase not to be taken lightly. It points to his Romantic rather than Classical orientation and shows a link with Weber's *Konzertstück* (typically a *Konzertstück* had no break between "movements"). The G minor Concerto is technically and stylistically similar to Weber's piece, which Mendelssohn often performed with great success. A particularly Romantic touch is Mendelssohn's orchestration of his E major slow movement, in which the top line of a divided cello section carries the melody, a "song without words," with the violas below them. Oboes, clarinets, trumpets, timpani, second bassoon, and second horn are tacet (silent) throughout; the four-part violins enter only at the end, and the flutes make only a small contribution to the transparent texture.

Mendelssohn sketched parts of the G minor Concerto as early as November 1830 in Rome during part of his European "grand tour," on which his parents sent him to finish off his education. After leaving the work aside—at least on paper—for almost a year, he completed it in October 1831 for a Munich performance to benefit the poor, appearing as conductor, composer, and piano virtuoso.

He had been warmly welcomed into Munich's high society and became acquainted with Delphine von Schuaroth, a beautiful and gifted young pianist. He spent much time with her and it was to Schuaroth that he dedicated his

Concerto; he was greatly annoyed when the king told him he ought to marry her, as he apparently had nothing serious in mind. He wrote his sister Fanny that Schuaroth had even "composed a passage for my G minor Concerto which makes a startling effect." How interesting it would be to know which passage!

Despite Schuaroth's ability to play the Concerto beautifully (as attested to by Fanny), it was really for himself that Mendelssohn wrote the piece. He needed a solo vehicle to establish himself both as pianist and composer, and with this Concerto he had immediate success, a success that was repeated every time he played it. His formal innovations occasioned much comment, but none of it censorious, indicating perhaps that these changes were long overdue. The Concerto's popularity with pianists and audiences alike has continued, Berlioz's humorous account notwithstanding. He tells in *Evenings with the Orchestra* of a piano that begins to play the Concerto itself as if possessed, after the work had been played on it by at least thirty budding pianist competitors. Removing the keyboard or hacking it with an axe could not stop it, only throwing it in the fire of a forge could put an end to the G minor Concerto!

Camille Saint-Saëns

Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso, op. 28

Camille Saint-Saëns was born in Paris, on October 9, 1835, and died in Algiers, on December 16, 1921. His *Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso* is scored for two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, timpani, and strings.

By the time Camille Saint-Saëns met him, Pablo de Sarasate was already an established violin virtuoso, though he was only fifteen years old. Saint-Saëns wrote:

It is a long time ago now since I first saw Pablo de Sarasate call at my house. Fresh and young as spring itself, the faint shadow of a mustache scarcely visible on his upper lip, he was already a famous virtuoso. As if it were the easiest thing in the world, he had come quite simply to ask me to write a concerto for him. Flattered and charmed to the highest degree I promised I would, and I kept my word with the Concerto in A major.

The First Violin Concerto, written in 1859, was only the beginning of their long artistic relationship. In 1863 Saint-Saëns wrote the present *Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso* for Sarasate, who for unknown reasons did not give the first performance until April 4, 1867; the composer waited until 1870 to publish the piece, but meanwhile Sarasate performed it throughout Europe and in the United States. In 1880 Saint-Saëns honored him again with the Third Violin Concerto.

These works were ideally suited to Sarasate's style of playing—technically perfect, with an unusually sweet and pure tone and a wider vibrato than was common at the time—all of which he reportedly achieved without practicing scales or exercises. The *Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso* is a brilliant showpiece and perhaps the most famous of Saint-Saëns's lighter compositions. Frequent performances were facilitated by Georges Bizet, who made the violin and piano arrangement, and Claude Debussy, who made a version for two pianos.

In Sarasate's honor, Saint-Saëns gave the one-movement work a pronounced Spanish flavor. The rhapsodic violin passages of the *Introduction* are accompanied by pizzicato strings, suggesting a guitar. The *Rondo* theme with its "Spanish" syncopations alternates with contrasting episodes guaranteed to show off the violinist's virtuosity. The work ends with a whirlwind coda that dazzles with its pyrotechnical display of scales and arpeggios.

Ludwig van Beethoven

Symphony No. 5 in C minor, op. 67

Ludwig van Beethoven was born in Bonn, Germany, and baptized on December 17, 1770. He died in Vienna, on March 26, 1827. His Symphony No. 5 in C minor is scored for two flutes, piccolo, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, contrabassoon, two horns, two trumpets, three trombones, timpani, and strings.

The immense popularity of Ludwig van Beethoven's Fifth Symphony has dulled our senses to the boldness and originality of the work, which initially caused a certain resistance. The great Johann Wolfgang von Goethe could not appreciate it, remarking that "it is merely astonishing and grandiose." Even in 1843, thirty-five years after its premiere, a critic wrote of the celebrated transition from the scherzo to the finale: "There is a strange melody, which, combined with an even stranger harmony of a double pedal point in the bass on G and C, produces a sort of odious meowing, and discords to shatter the least sensitive ear." Equally astonishing were the "oboe cadenza" in the first movement, the addition of piccolo, contrabassoon, and three trombones to the finale, and the return of the scherzo in the finale.

Many features have contributed to the eventual superstar status of "the Fifth." The opening motive, which Beethoven reportedly explained to his friend and biographer Anton Schindler as "Thus Fate knocks at the door," has provided dramatic associations

to generations of listeners. In World War II, for example, it was used as a symbol of resistance to fascism. Though Beethoven left no programmatic explanations linking his Symphony to political events of the early nineteenth century, the work is a product of his heroic style—his patriotic and anti-Napoleonic sentiments had reached their height at this time. The patriotism expressed in his music resonated within people of many different historical periods and nations, even the very forces Beethoven saw as the oppressor. A veteran of Napoleon's army hearing the work in 1828 is said to have exclaimed at the beginning of the finale: "*Mais c'est l'Empereur!*" (But it's the Emperor!)

The Fifth has also aroused certain unnamed terrors in its listeners, an aspect already sensed by Goethe and Romantic writer E.T.A. Hoffmann. Robert Schumann reported that a child whose hand he was holding during a performance of the Fifth whispered "*J'ai peur*" (I'm afraid) at the chilling transition from the scherzo to the finale. Hector Berlioz commented on the "stunning" effect of this transition saying it would be impossible to surpass it in what follows. Yet the allaying of the terrors by the triumph of the C major finale has gained the Symphony almost as many admirers as the opening motive.

Like many of Beethoven's works, the Fifth had a long gestation period: sketches from early 1804 appear amid those for the Fourth Piano Concerto and the first act of *Leonore* (later titled *Fidelio*); more sketches appeared later in 1804, and by 1806 advanced sketches for all the movements took shape near those for the Violin Concerto

and Cello Sonata in A major. Beethoven then interrupted work on the Fifth for another symphony, the Fourth, commissioned by Count Oppersdorff. The Fifth occupied the composer in 1807, and he finally completed it in the spring of 1808. Count Oppersdorff apparently expected this dedication too, but Beethoven dedicated the Fifth to two other patrons, Prince Lobkowitz and Count Razumovsky.

The Fifth Symphony was first performed on that historic, more-than-four-hour concert at the Theater-an-der-Wien on December 22, 1808—an all-Beethoven program consisting mainly of newly composed works: the Fifth and Sixth symphonies conducted by the composer, the Fourth Piano Concerto in which Beethoven performed the solo part, the aria “Ah! perfido” (1795–96), three numbers from his Mass in C major, op. 86, his own improvisations, and the quickly composed Choral Fantasy, op. 80. By all accounts the preparations for this concert had been extremely problematic, Beethoven himself contributing a large share of the difficulties; the concert consequently produced mixed results.

The Fifth Symphony has been performed countless times since then, and its influence cannot be underestimated. But no matter how many times we may have heard the work, it continues to surprise and delight. The first movement is remarkable for its concentrated rhythmic development, based on the opening rhythm, short-short-short-long:



This rhythm appears in more than half of the movement's measures, with captivating, ingenious transformations. Beethoven unified the entire Symphony with further developments of the same rhythm. We hear it in the second theme of the slow movement and in the fortissimo horn call that answers the haunted opening of the scherzo. It recurs in the further development of the “call,” including its insistence in the famous transition to the last movement and reappears in the finale's development section and the ensuing recall of the scherzo.

The slow movement provides a certain relaxation from the heroic style, but even here the dotted rhythms can sound martial, and the ending of the first phrase receives a heroic stress. Even more striking is the valiant blaze of C major into which Beethoven has modulated during the course of the second theme. The double variation form—two alternating sections, each varied, plus coda—is remarkable for its move from literal variation to a free, more improvisatory style of variation.

The scherzo contains the aforementioned stealthy and heroic elements in its first section, followed by an energetic trio in fugato (imitative) style and a shadowy, abbreviated return to the scherzo section. After the suspense of the transition, the finale bursts forth triumphantly. Beethoven had originally intended for the trio and scherzo to be repeated as in the

Fourth Symphony (scherzo-trio-scherzo-trio-scherzo) rather than to follow the conventional scherzo-trio-scherzo layout, but scholars have concluded that the latter represents his “final version,” perhaps justified in the larger scheme by the formal integration with the last movement.

The addition of piccolo, contrabassoon, and trombones—for the first time in symphonic history—contributes to the triumphal character of the finale. The use of sonata form here shows Beethoven’s continued concern for giving his last movement equal weight with his first. The unexpected return of the scherzo in this movement gives Beethoven another chance to show transcendence over adversity, symbolized by the recapitulation grandly banishing the stealthy strains. Further it gave him a good reason—that of balance—to include a prolonged affirmation of the major home key in the coda. Symphonic thought had entered a new era.

—©Jane Vial Jaffe

Bond & Beyond

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2025, 7:30 P.M.

Peter Rubardt, Conductor

Chloe Lowery, Vocals

Ron Bohmer, Vocals

Arr. Calvin Custer

Themes from 007

John Barry

Goldfinger

John Barry

Thunderball

David Arnold and David McAlmont

Surrender

Bernard Herrmann

North by Northwest

Bill Conti & Mick Leeson

For Your Eyes Only

John Barry

From Russia with Love

Sam Smith & Jimmy Napes

The Writing's on the Wall

P. F. Sloan & Steve Barri

Secret Agent Man

Quincy Jones

Soul Bossa Nova

INTERMISSION

Michael Giacchino

The Incredibles

John Barry

Diamonds are Forever

David Arnold

You Know My Name

Henry Mancini

Peter Gunn

Henry Mancini

The Pink Panther

Burt Bacharach & Hal David

The Look of Love

George Martin

Live and Let Die

Marvin Hamlisch

Nobody Does It Better

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Shaft

Jim Steinman

Total Eclipse of the Heart

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CHLOE LOWERY

Vocals



Chloe Lowery is an American singer, dancer, actress, and songwriter born in Largo, Florida. By the age of nine, she was performing professionally at corporate events, and by age twelve, she was signed to RCA Records. She was featured on two movie soundtracks during that time, *Boys and Girls* and *Joe Somebody*.

While honing her crafts at prestigious music and acting schools in Boston and New York City, she toured with Big Brother and the Holding Company, filling Janis Joplin's shoes. Lowery simultaneously worked closely with world-renowned producer, Ric Wake, leading to her collaboration with Yanni. Lowery lent her vocals and songwriting talents to the 2009 Yanni Voices Project, produced by the Disney Pearl Imprint.

She was featured on PBS as a featured artist in *Yanni Voices Live from Acapulco*. Her most successful performance/release, *Change*, quickly became a fan favorite. After United States and Mexico tours with Yanni, she was signed to Disney/Hollywood Records as a solo artist. Lowery has since been featured as a vocalist and songwriter on Yanni's 2013, 2014, and 2016 releases: *Truth of Touch*, *Inspirato*, and *Sensuous Chill*.

In the spring of 2010, Lowery joined multi-platinum selling rock band, Trans-Siberian Orchestra, performing as Theresa on their *Beethoven's Last Night* Tours. Lowery has since had the privilege of touring with Chris Botti, performing with the New York City Ballet as a featured vocalist, and contributing her songwriting talents for artists such as Everclear.

In 2018, Lowery made her Broadway debut in *Rocktopia*, leading the show with the likes of Pat Monahan (Train), Dee Snider (Twister Sister), and Robin Zander (Cheap Trick). She continued to tour the with the project and appeared in the acclaimed PBS special.

Lowery is also an active concert soloist with orchestras all over the world, including recent and upcoming performances with orchestras in Arkansas, Calgary, Charleston, Charlotte, Colorado, Columbus, Florida, Harrisburg, Houston, Reno, and Youngstown, among others. She was also a featured soloist at the International Music Festival in Český Krumlov, Czech Republic.

RON BOHMER

Vocals



In a career spanning more than twenty years in Broadway productions, on national tours, and with symphony orchestras, Ron Bohmer has starred as the Phantom in *The Phantom Of The Opera*, Joe Gillis in *Sunset Boulevard* (Jefferson Award nomination), Alex in *Aspects Of Love* (LA Robby Award), Enjolras in *Les Miserables*, Fyedka in *Fiddler on the Roof*, Coach Bolton in the cultural phenomenon *Disney's High School Musical*, Sir Percival Glyde in *The Woman in White*, and as the title role in *The Scarlet Pimpernel* (National Broadway Theatre Award nomination). His most recent Broadway roles include Father in the Tony-nominated revival of *Ragtime* and Frid in the Tony-nominated revival of *A Little Night Music* with Bernadette Peters and Elaine Stritch.

Off-Broadway roles include El Gallo in the world's longest-running musical *The Fantasticks*, many ridiculous characters in New York's long-running comedy hit *Forbidden Broadway* (Drama Desk Award) and the tenth anniversary cast of *I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change*.

Regional starring roles include Dr. Givings in the sold-out *In the Next Room (or The Vibrator Play)* for The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis, the title role in *Floyd Collins* at the Actors Theatre of Louisville, Volodya in *Bed & Sofa* at the Wilma Theatre in Philadelphia (Barrmore Award Best Actor nomination), the title role in the United States premiere of *Dracula – A Chamber Musical* at North Shore Musical Theatre, and El Gallo in *The Fantasticks* for the Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park (Acclaim Award Best Actor). Most recently, he starred as George in *Sunday in the Park With George* for The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis, Phileas Fogg in *Around the World in 80 Days* for the Pittsburgh Public Theatre, and as himself in the Bucks County Playhouse production of *A Grand Night for Singing*, directed by Lonny Price.

On television, Bohmer has guest starred on *Law & Order SVU*, *Rescue Me*, *Ryan's Hope*, *One Life to Live*, and *As the World Turns*. As a concert soloist, he has appeared at Radio City Music Hall, Lincoln Center, The Kennedy Center, and New York City's Town Hall.

Bohmer is married to actress, author, and teacher Sandra Joseph. He is the father of two daughters, Cassidy and Austin.



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SATURDAY, MARCH 8, 2025, 7:30 P.M.

Peter Rubardt, Conductor

UWF Singers

Peter Steenblik, University of West Florida Director of Choral Activities

Claude Debussy

(1862 – 1918)

Arr. Bernardino Molinari

L'isle joyeuse (The Joyful Island)

James Lee III

(b. 1975)

Sukkot Through Orion's Nebula

INTERMISSION

Gustav Holst

(1874 – 1934)

The Planets, op. 32

I. *Mars, the Bringer of War*

II. *Venus, the Bringer of Peace*

III. *Mercury, the Winged Messenger*

IV. *Jupiter, the Bringer of Jollity*

V. *Saturn, the Bringer of Old Age*

VI. *Uranus, the Magician*

VII. *Neptune, the Mystic*

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SYMPHONIC SPECTACULAR

Claude Debussy

L'isle joyeuse

Claude Debussy was born in St. Germain-en-Laye, France, on August 22, 1862, and died in Paris, March 25, 1918. His *L'isle joyeuse* is scored for three flutes, third doubling piccolo, two oboes, English horn, three clarinets, bass clarinet, three bassoons, third doubling contrabassoon, four horns, four trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, cymbals, tambourine, triangle, xylophone, two harps, celesta, and strings.

In June 1904, Claude Debussy abandoned his wife of five years and spent the summer months with his lover, Emma Bardac, first in Jersey then in Dieppe. It was in Jersey that he began one of his most celebrated piano pieces, *L'isle joyeuse*, drawing some amusement out of the parallel between the “joyful island” of his title and the less fanciful island of Jersey, where he was ecstatic to be with Bardac. The piece is said to have been inspired by Jean-Antoine Watteau’s originally untitled famous painting *Embarkation* for [or “from” as some scholars now think] *the Island of Cythera*, a graceful “light-and-air” depiction of young lovers near the statue of Aphrodite before leaving for or from Cythera, Aphrodite’s birthplace.

Debussy also composed *Masques* during this idyll, which he intended as the first in a triptych for which *L'isle joyeuse* would form the conclusion. Instead he published these two pieces separately in 1904. Ricardo Viñes, that indefatigable first interpreter of many of the works of Debussy and Maurice Ravel, gave the premiere of both on February 18, 1905, at the Société Nationale where they were enthusiastically received.

L'isle joyeuse contains a bit of everything we associate with Debussy—chromatic and whole-tone elements, exoticism, sophisticated pedal techniques, surging melody, toccata techniques, Impressionist splashes of water—all wrapped up in a piece of utmost virtuosity. Debussy wrote to his publisher Durand: “Heavens! how difficult it is to play. . . . This piece seems to embrace every possible manner of treating the piano, combining as it does strength and grace . . . if I may presume to say so.”

When under time pressure, Debussy often called on others to help orchestrate pieces under his supervision. In the case of *L'isle joyeuse* he told Italian conductor Bernardino Molinari of his intent to orchestrate the piano piece, a goal Molinari eventually fulfilled in 1917 based on Debussy’s indications. Molinari premiered the orchestral version in the Concerts Colonne in Paris on November 11, 1923.

The overall shape of *L'isle joyeuse* consists of a cadenza-like opening, an exciting dance section, a voluptuous slower section with lyrical melody over arpeggiated accompaniment with evocations of the sea. (Debussy marks one passage “undulating and expressive”), and a ringing denouement. Some have quarreled with the notion of the painting as the source of inspiration in view of the “unbridled dash” of the Debussy as compared with the graceful “minuet” world of the Watteau. Those who uphold the correspondence, however, find that there is indeed passion in the Watteau just as there is grace—including many quiet sections—in the Debussy.

James Lee III

Sukkot Through Orion's Nebula

James Lee III was born in St. Joseph, Michigan, on November 26, 1975. His *Sukkot Through Orion's Nebula* is scored for two flutes, piccolo, two oboes, English horn, three clarinets, second doubling on E-flat clarinet, third doubling on bass clarinet, two bassoons, contrabassoon, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, suspended cymbal, snare drum, bass drum, xylophone, cymbals, marimba, triangle, tam-tam, vibraphone, glockenspiel, tom-toms, thunder sheet with 1/2" superball, temple blocks, glass wind chimes, tambourine, wood block, piano doubling celesta, harp, and strings.

James Lee III is in such demand as a composer that the 2023–24 season alone saw: premieres of his

piano concerto *Shades of Unbroken Dreams* with pianist Alexandra Dariescu and the Detroit Symphony led by Fabien Gabel and its further premieres by co-commissioners the BBC and Orlando Philharmonics, the premiere of his concerto *Courageous Lights* with English horn soloist Darci Gamerl and the Augusta Symphony led by Dirk Meyer and its further premieres by co-commissioners the Duluth Superior Symphony Orchestra and the Lincoln's Symphony Orchestra (Nebraska), and the premiere of *Captivating Personas* by the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra led by Jonathon Heyward. Many other organizations are performing his *Sukkot Through Orion's Nebula* (2011), which has become his most frequently performed work.

Lee began studying piano at the “late” age of twelve when his father signed him up for piano lessons. He earned his doctorate in composition from the University of Michigan studying with renowned composers Michael Daugherty, William Bolcom, and Bright Sheng, and he furthered his studies at Tanglewood and as a Fulbright Scholar in Brazil. Among many honors, he has received the prestigious Charles Ives Scholarship and the Wladimir and Rhoda Lakond Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. In addition to the orchestras mentioned above, his works have been commissioned by the National Symphony Orchestra, the New World Symphony Orchestra, the Philadelphia Orchestra, and the St. Louis Symphony, among many others. His works also have been premiered and performed across the globe, from Argentina to Russia. Lee serves as a professor at Morgan State University in Baltimore.

Sukkot Through Orion's Nebula is the stellar result of a Sphinx Commissioning Consortium of seven orchestras, premiered on October 15, 2011, by the New World Symphony conducted by Michael Tilson Thomas. The work celebrates the harvest festival of the Jewish tradition in which temporary shelters or sukkahs are used for eating, praying, and sometimes sleeping—the festival is one of several holidays taken over by Seventh-Day Adventists from the Old Testament which are said to prefigure the Second Coming of Jesus. Lee was raised in the church, which was founded in 1863 near his birthplace.

The composer writes:

Sukkot Through Orion's Nebula is a festive work for orchestra. Sukkot is a Hebrew word for the "Feast of Tabernacles." In biblical days, this holiday was celebrated on the 15th day of the month of Tishrei (late September to late October). It was the most joyous of the fall festivals that God mandated the Hebrews to observe. It was also a thanksgiving celebration for the blessings of the fall harvest. "Orion's Nebula" refers to a nebula seen in the Orion constellation, visible to us in the fall and winter. The nebula forms a roughly spherical cloud that peaks in density near the core. The cloud displays a range of velocities and turbulence, particularly around the core region.

This work is loosely constructed in . . . a ternary form of seven small sections. It is a musical commentary on the

eschatological application of the antitypical "day of atonement" (Yom Kippur) and the "feast of tabernacles" (Sukkot). The seven sections are briefly summarized below:

1. Reminiscences of the Feast of Trumpets (Rosh Hashanah) and the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur) by forceful percussive sounds of the snare and bass drums open the work. This is further enhanced by the horns, which imitate the calls of the shofar (a horn used for Jewish religious purposes).
2. The full orchestra continues to a cadence foreshadowing the grand advent of God.
3. The woodwinds follow with joyful passages of flourishes and dancelike celebrations, which imitate the people's reception of the Messiah. As this music continues, the motives pass to the percussion section, piano, harp, and eventually the strings.
4. Previous melodies and motives are developed and transformed among the orchestra. This section is a musical commentary celebrating the Second Coming of God.
5. The Orion constellation is the one constellation mentioned specifically in the Old Testament. . . . The muted brass, singing violins, percussion instruments, and woodwinds evoke celestial images of the Messiah, redeemed saints, and New Jerusalem coming down out of heaven through the Orion constellation.

6. The bass and snare drums provide a reprise of the shofar theme. This continues with orchestral exclamations of joy.

7. There are passages of call-and-response among the ensemble in the final celebration. The work ends with an explosion of sound.

Gustav Holst

The Planets, op. 32

Gustav Holst was born in Cheltenham, England, on September 21, 1874, and died in London, on May 25, 1934. The Planets is scored for hidden women's chorus, four flutes, third doubling piccolo, fourth doubling alto flute and piccolo, three oboes, third doubling bass oboe and English horn, three clarinets, bass clarinet, three bassoons, third doubling contrabassoon, six horns, four trumpets, three trombones, tuba, tenor tuba, two sets of timpani, glockenspiel, xylophone, tam-tam, chimes, snare drum, tambourine, bass drum, triangle, cymbals, two harps, celesta, organ, and strings.

"As a rule I only study things that suggest music to me. That's why I worried at Sanskrit. Then recently the character of each planet suggested lots to me, and I have been studying astrology fairly closely," wrote Gustav Holst in 1914. Clifford Bax, brother of composer Arnold Bax, had been impressed by Holst's settings of the *Rig Veda*, and it was he who introduced Holst to astrology in 1913, furthering the mystical leanings Holst showed throughout his life. Telling horoscopes, Holst admitted, was his "pet vice,"

and he stressed the astrological character of each planet, rather than its associations with myth. Equally important that year was Holst's exposure to the new sounds, particularly rhythms and ostinatos, in the music of Igor Stravinsky, whose *Petrushka* and *Rite of Spring* were presented in London in June and July, respectively.

Though thoughts of *The Planets* had occupied Holst for some time, actual composing began in May 1914 on *Mars, the Bringer of War*. Holst's daughter Imogene steadfastly maintained that he had already completed the sketch before the First World War broke out on August 4, thus it should be viewed more as a prophetic vision than a comment on the War. Further work on *The Planets* had to be fit in among Holst's teaching commitments at St. Paul's Girls' School, hence its lengthy gestation period of two years. *Venus* and *Jupiter* were composed that fall, and in 1915 he worked on *Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune*. *Mercury* was the last of *The Planets* to be written, and the task of orchestrating the suite took place during 1916. Because of wartime conditions there seemed little hope of an orchestral performance of his enormous work, and he had to be content with various two-piano airings.

Unfit for service, Holst got his chance to contribute to the war effort in 1918 when he was sent to the Middle East as music organizer for the YMCA's army educational work. He was overwhelmed when Henry Balfour Gardiner gave him a parting

gift of a private professional performance of *The Planets*. This miraculous event took place with the Queen's Hall Orchestra conducted by the young Holst enthusiast Adrian Boult on September 29. The audience of Holst's friends, colleagues, and pupils was awestruck by the power of this novel music. As a result of the performance several Philharmonic Society officials wanted to engage Boult in the coming season and arrange for a public performance of *The Planets*. That performance did take place on February 27, 1919, but it was probably just as well the composer could not be present, for the work was performed without *Venus* and *Neptune*.

The popularity of *The Planets* and public recognition of Holst as a composer turned his life upside down, much to his displeasure. He once said, "Every artist ought to pray that he may not be a 'success.' If he's a failure he stands a good chance of concentrating upon the best work of which he's capable." It was to his relief then that in about 1925 he found himself no longer a popular composer. He had moved beyond *The Planets*, but the public did not want to follow.

Mars, the Bringer of War, said novelist Henry Williamson, was the music of a man who knew what war was about. Its elemental power arises from the opening relentless rhythmic ostinato in 5/4 meter. There is almost no lightness or reprieve in Holst's vision. The final statement of the original ostinato is shattering.

No greater contrast could be imagined than the following *Venus, the Bringer of Peace*, begun Adagio with its calm horn solo answered by winds, and its central Andante containing a warm violin solo. The glockenspiel, harps, and celesta add an unearthly orchestral color. The opening bars are identical to those of his song "A Vigil of Pentecost," written about the same time.

Mercury, the Winged Messenger is represented by a fleet scherzo, given impetus by the rapid exchanges between the winds and muted strings. Holst keeps the orchestration clear and light throughout. This movement is also noteworthy as the composer's first experiment with bitonality (music simultaneously in two keys).

Jupiter, the Bringer of Jollity, bears out Holst's love of folk song and dance. The charwomen at the first private performance at Queen's Hall were said to have put down their scrub brushes and danced during this movement. Stravinsky's *Petrushka* and "Infernal Dance" from *The Firebird* may have inspired the opening bustle and syncopated rhythms, respectively. The famous melody played by strings and horns *andante maestoso* was later used for the patriotic song "I Vow to Thee, My Country," to Holst's annoyance.

Saturn, the Bringer of Old Age was Holst's favorite movement, and he was disappointed that some of the early critics hadn't liked it. He borrowed from himself

again in this movement, in this case from his *Dirge and Hymeneal* for female voices on words by Thomas Lovell Beddoes. One of Holst's techniques for showing the passage of time is the alternation of two unresolved chords in a kind of ostinato (repeating pattern). A pupil of his also reported that Holst may have associated the tolling chords with old age, from watching two very old men ring the bells at the Durham Cathedral.

The peace of *Saturn* is shattered by the four-note brass "incantation" that summons *Uranus, the Magician*. Several commentators have likened this movement to Paul Dukas' *Sorcerer's Apprentice* due to its depiction of wizardly pranks and spells. It is clear that Uranus is no all-powerful magician, but something of a fumbler as the humorous touches show. One occasionally glimpses, however, a certain magic beyond anything the Magician can produce. All disappears as in a puff of smoke as the movement suddenly ends ppp (triple piano).

In *Neptune, the Mystic*, Holst achieved a truly miraculous kind of stasis, something paralleled later in the music of Olivier Messiaen. Since Neptune, in Holst's day was the furthest known planet in the solar system, Holst strove to evoke the mystery and remoteness of the vast reaches of outer space in his music. This he achieved by several means: the instruction for the orchestra to play pianissimo throughout, and with "dead tone" (excepting a clarinet solo and a passage for violins); the use of harps and celesta to provide ethereal colors; undulating patterns and oscillation between two chords; the use of a wordless chorus; and the final silence, which is arrived at by the repetition of the last bar by the chorus "until the sound is lost in the distance."

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Strauss & Schubert

SATURDAY, MARCH 29, 2025, 7:30 P.M.

Peter Rubardt, Conductor

Titus Underwood, Oboe

Richard Strauss
(1864 – 1949)

Wind Serenade in E-flat major, op. 7

Oboe Concerto
I. Allegro moderato
II. Andante
III. Vivace - Allegro

Featuring Titus Underwood, Oboe

The movements are performed without pause.

INTERMISSION

Franz Schubert
(1797 – 1828)

Symphony No. 9 in C major, D. 944, "The Great"
I. Andante – Allegro, ma non troppo
II. Andante con moto
III. Scherzo. Allegro vivace – Trio
IV. Allegro vivace

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TITUS UNDERWOOD

Oboe



Photo by YNC Images

Oboist Titus Underwood has an international reputation as an orchestral performer, recitalist, pedagogue, creator, and social activist. Since 2017, he is the principal oboist of the Nashville Symphony, Gateways Music Festival, and co-principal of the Chineke! Orchestra. Widely known for his rich sound and powerful musicianship, he has been a guest performer with many of the nation's top orchestras, including the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Pittsburgh Symphony, Utah Symphony, and San Diego Symphony. Underwood has recently premiered new works for oboe by Julia Adolphe (*Paw, Plume, and Prowl*), Michael Daugherty (*Six Riffs After Ovid*), and James Lee III (*Principal Brothers No. 2*).

In 2021, Underwood was named Associate Professor of Oboe at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music. He engages his students with thoughtful pedagogy to prepare them for the highest levels of professional musicianship and responsibility. With his guidance,

the CCM oboe studio is redefining the contemporary musical environment, nurturing community, and creating new pathways for success. In addition, Underwood is a faculty artist at the Aspen Music Festival and the National Youth Orchestras at Carnegie Hall.

Underwood is a fierce advocate for amplifying voices of the historically underrepresented. He co-founded the Black Orchestral Network (BON) and Sphinx Orchestral Partners Auditions (SOPA) to help create tangible means for Black and Brown youth to have equal opportunities in the orchestral field. His personal endeavors in digital media have led to several releases, notably the short film *A Tale of Two Tails*. In 2020, Underwood was awarded the Sphinx Organization's highest honor, the Sphinx Medal of Excellence, for demonstrating "artistic excellence, outstanding work ethic, a spirit of determination, and an ongoing commitment to leadership and community." He received a Midsouth Regional Emmy® Award in 2021 for executive producing "We Are Nashville" with the Nashville Symphony. Most recently, Underwood is a Sphinx MPower Artist Grant recipient. Underwood is currently developing *Life as Music*, a television series for children about music, storytelling, and unique voices.

Underwood is a graduate of The Juilliard School, The Colburn School, and the Cleveland Institute of Music. In 2021, he was honored by CIM with the prestigious Alumni Achievement Award and was elected to the CIM Board of Trustees in 2022. Underwood lives in Nashville, Tennessee, with his wife Dr. Amanda Onalaja-Underwood and their dog "Whiskey."

STRAUSS & SCHUBERT

Richard Strauss

Wind Serenade in E-flat major, op. 7

Richard Strauss was born in Munich, on June 11, 1864, and died in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Bavaria, on September 8, 1949. His Wind Serenade in E-flat major is scored for two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, contrabassoon (or tuba or double bass), and four horns.

The seventeen-year-old Richard Strauss composed his one-movement Wind Serenade in 1881, dedicating it to Friedrich Wilhelm Meyer, who had taught him music theory from 1875 to 1880. The work received its first performance by the Dresden Court Orchestra conducted by Franz Wüllner on November 27, 1882. Eugen Spitzweg, whose company, Joseph Aibl, published Strauss's early works, sent a copy of the Serenade to his friend Hans von Bülow, influential conductor of the Meiningen Court Orchestra. It so impressed Bülow that he put the piece in the orchestra's touring repertoire. The conductor wrote to impresario Hermann Wolff, "An uncommonly gifted young man, by far the most striking personality since Brahms."

While Strauss was in Berlin the following winter his Serenade was performed several times by the Konzerthaus Orchestra and by the Meiningen Orchestra, conducted

this time by Franz Mannstädt. Bülow, who had conducted the Serenade in rehearsal, asked the young Strauss for another work for the same instrumentation, resulting in Strauss' Suite, op. 4, which Bülow invited the composer to conduct. (The Suite was assigned the earlier opus number to replace a D minor symphony originally intended as op. 4, but which had not been published.) Bülow subsequently asked Strauss to become his assistant conductor, thus he helped launch Strauss as both a composer and conductor.

Strauss adopted sonata form for his Serenade, but he supplanted the development section, which was not his strong point, with a central section in the remote key of B minor. He related this episode to his exposition and recapitulation by featuring a rising figure derived from the piece's second theme. The figure helps the section build to an impassioned climax, followed by a descent over a sustained low pedal tone to prepare the entry of the recapitulation. Evidence of the young Strauss's mastery of wind sonorities is abundant, including the imaginative redistribution of materials among the different instruments to vary the recapitulation.

Richard Strauss

Oboe Concerto

Richard Strauss was born in Munich, on June 11, 1864, and died in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Bavaria, on September 8, 1949. His Oboe Concerto is scored for two flutes, English horn, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, and strings.

Richard Strauss composed his Oboe Concerto in 1945 in Switzerland where he had gone to escape the problems of post-war Germany. The idea of writing an oboe concerto had been planted during the visit of one of the many American G.I.s who had come to see him in Garmisch before he obtained permission to leave for Switzerland. That G.I. was John de Lancie, in peacetime an oboe player in the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, later principal of the Philadelphia Orchestra, then director of the Curtis Institute of Music. De Lancie, who spent many hours conversing with Strauss in French about music, current affairs, and literature, recalled in 1979:

During one of my visits with Strauss, I asked him if, in view of the numerous beautiful solos for oboe in almost all of his works, he had ever considered writing a concerto for oboe. He answered, "NO," and there was no more conversation on the subject. He later told a fellow musician friend of mine (Alfred Mann) that the idea had taken hold as a result of that remark.

The Concerto is dedicated, not to de Lancie or to Marcel Saillet, the oboist who premiered it, but to conductor Volkmar Andreae

and the Tonhalle Orchestra who participated in the premiere in Zurich on February 26, 1946. Strauss requested that his publisher offer de Lancie the first American performance, but as the new assistant principal oboe to Marcel Tabuteau in Philadelphia, de Lancie was not about to be offered a solo with the orchestra. The work was first heard in America on a 1948 CBS broadcast concert with oboist Mitchell Miller and the Columbia Concert Orchestra. De Lancie did not perform the Concerto until August 30, 1964, with Eugene Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra at Interlochen, Michigan, in a celebration of Strauss' centenary.

Strauss was pleased with the Oboe Concerto, which contrasted markedly with the sorrow of *Metamorphosen*, written just before it. He knew well how to exploit the oboe and the orchestra (whose small wind complement contains an English horn but no oboes), to achieve delicate colors and shimmering brilliance.

The three movements are not only seamlessly linked, but also are related thematically. The opening four notes in the cellos provide much of the later thematic material. The sonata-form first movement is based on two main themes, one lyrical, perhaps pastoral, and the other more lighthearted, almost comic, suggesting something of *Till Eulenspiegel*. During the course of the movement the solo oboe participates in charming exchanges with the other winds, particularly the clarinet.

The autumnal slow movement begins unobtrusively, joined to the first by the four-note motive of the Concerto's opening. Unfolding in traditional ternary form, the Andante contains other reminiscences of the first movement before the opening theme returns. A cadenza for the oboe leads without pause to the finale.

One of the best features of the closing rondo is the lovely slower section in 6/8 meter just after the cadenza where one might expect the coda. Strauss' exhilarating waltz-time coda, which follows this pastoral episode, includes a fifty-measure addition made between the work's first performance and its publication in 1948. The Concerto ends joyfully with an inverted relative of the opening four-note motive.

Franz Schubert

Symphony No. 9 in C major, D. 944, "The Great"

Franz Schubert was born in Vienna, January 31, 1797, and died in Vienna, on November 19, 1828. His Symphony No. 9 in C major is scored for two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, three trombones, timpani, and strings.

Robert Schumann's enthusiasm upon discovering Franz Schubert's neglected "Great" C major Symphony inspired one of the most famous reports in the history of music. In the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, he described being shown numerous manuscripts

while visiting Schubert's brother Ferdinand on New Year's Day, 1839:

The sight of this hoard of riches thrilled me with joy! . . . Among other things he directed my attention to the scores of several symphonies, many of which have never as yet been heard. . . . Who knows how long the symphony of which we are speaking might have lain buried in dust and darkness, had I not at once arranged with Ferdinand Schubert to send it to the directorate of the Gewandhaus Concerts in Leipzig, or rather to the conducting artist himself [Felix Mendelssohn].

Schumann thus instigated the first performance of the Symphony, conducted by Mendelssohn with the Gewandhaus orchestra on March 21, 1839. Despite Schumann's famous positive description of its "heavenly length" and despite Mendelssohn's enthusiasm, the work had to be given in a heavily cut version, because the orchestra musicians rebelled against its difficulties. These included the seemingly endless repetition of tiny motives in a fast tempo as part of a grand scheme—incomprehensible to those accustomed to traditional orchestral practice of the time.

The success of the Leipzig performance proved no gateway to instant acceptance; projected performances in Paris and London were aborted because again the players refused to master the Symphony's challenges of technique and stamina. Resistance to the work, now considered one of the few great symphonies of the first half of the nineteenth century,

continued into the twentieth century—a writer in the 1920s was still complaining of its “dreary passage-work.” Its acceptance and eventual “enshrinement” as perhaps Schubert’s greatest work, then, is relatively recent, though it has had its supporters ever since Schumann and Mendelssohn recognized its merits—Hector Berlioz, Anton Bruckner, and Antonín Dvořák, for example, all wrote in superlatives about the work.

Research by John Reed, Otto Biba, and Robert Winter in the 1970s and ’80s cleared up several nagging problems regarding the history of “The Great” Symphony. Supposed to have been composed in 1828 and long considered Schubert’s last symphony, “The Great” was actually begun in 1825 and completed in 1826; furthermore, the supposedly lost “Gmunden-Gastein” symphony of 1825 was shown to be none other than this one. In regard to the oft-mentioned lack of sketches for the work, Schubert scholar Brian Newbould has boldly hypothesized that Schubert may not have made any preliminary sketches before composing “The Great” in full score.

Letters had been passing among Schubert’s circle during the summer of 1825 about his work on a symphony while on holiday in Gmunden and Gastein in upper Austria. The work seems to have been well advanced by August 1825, judging from a reply by painter Moritz von Schwind to Schubert about the composer’s hopes for having it performed. Nothing came of this, and in October 1826, Schubert dedicated

the work to Vienna’s Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde hoping for a performance. Though he received 100 guilders and the orchestral parts were copied, a performance never materialized. According to undocumented tradition it was put aside “because of its length and difficulty,” though it has been argued that an official public performance was never planned by the Gesellschaft.

As to the glorious music itself, one of the most salient features is the main theme of the Andante introduction, announced by unison horns at the outset. Schubert ingeniously reworks this theme in the exposition and recalls it for the climax at the end of the Allegro. Thus the Andante serves not only as an introduction to the main Allegro, but it permeates the entire movement to such an extent that it redesigns the entire concept of the sonata form—Schubert takes Ludwig van Beethoven a step further. What’s more, the introduction provides the basis for many of the key relationships and juxtapositions of unequal phrase lengths in the whole work. The manuscript shows that Schubert apparently made certain large-scale structural revisions in the first movement as afterthoughts. Addition and subtraction of bars in the coda, for example, resulted in a net gain of approximately forty bars, augmenting the dramatic strength of the movement’s conclusion.

The Andante con moto, one of Schubert’s most memorable slow movements, projects a fatalistic atmosphere with its steady march rhythm, which eventually

works up to a shattering climax, a dramatic pause, and tragic reflection. Schumann refrained from describing the Symphony in detail but could not help from commenting on the passage leading to the recapitulation, in which “a horn, as though calling from afar, seems to come from another world. The instruments stop to listen, a heavenly spirit is passing through the orchestra.”

The Scherzo shows inexhaustible rhythmic inventiveness. Its quintessentially Viennese trio (middle section) seems to have cost Schubert more trouble than its relaxed lilt lets on: The manuscript shows that after the entire Symphony was drafted Schubert apparently recomposed almost the entire second section of the trio.

The Finale is particularly remarkable for its thematic development and its driving momentum. The triplet figure that pervades the entire movement is already present in the main theme. Not only does it provide propulsion as the accompaniment to the second theme, but it also accompanies the famous four repeated “warning” notes that come to dominate the movement. The Finale also possesses one of the great codas of all time, fulfilling the listener’s hope for some of Schubert’s tonal excursions.

—©Jane Vial Jaffe

Season Finale

SATURDAY, MAY 3, 2025, 7:30 P.M.

Peter Rubardt, Conductor
Maxim Lando, Piano

Hector Berlioz
(1803 – 1869)

Le corsaire, op. 21

Camille Saint-Saëns
(1835 – 1921)

Piano Concerto No. 2 in G minor, op. 22
I. Andante sostenuto
II. Allegro scherzando
III. Presto

Featuring Maxim Lando, Piano

INTERMISSION

Antonín Dvořák
(1841 – 1904)

Symphony No. 6 in D major, op. 60
I. Allegro non tanto
II. Adagio
III. Scherzo (Furiant). Presto
IV. *Finale*. Allegro con spirito

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MAXIM LANDO

Piano



Photo by Chris McGuire

American pianist Maxim Lando has been described as a “dazzling fire-eater” (*ART San Francisco*) and as “a total musical being” (*The New Criterion*). He was lauded by Anthony Tommasini in the *New York Times* as displaying “brilliance and infectious exuberance” combined with “impressive delicacy” and a “wild-eyed-danger.”

Lando first made international headlines performing together with Lang Lang, Chick Corea, and the Philadelphia Orchestra led by Yannick Nézet-Séguin at Carnegie Hall’s 2017 Opening Night Gala. Since then, he has performed with major orchestras around the world, including the Pittsburgh Symphony, Toronto Symphony, Israel Philharmonic, Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, Mariinsky Theater Orchestra, Vancouver Symphony, Zurich Chamber Orchestra, Moscow Philharmonic, St. Petersburg Symphony, Memphis Symphony, Charleston Symphony, Czech National Symphony Orchestra, and many others.

A recipient of the Gilmore Young Artist Award and named *Musical America’s* New Artist of the Month, Lando was also awarded the 2022 Vendome Grand Prize. That same year, he won First Prize in the New York Franz Liszt International Competition and returned to Carnegie Hall’s Stern Auditorium to perform with the Orchestra of St. Luke’s led by Gabor Hollerung. He made his Alice Tully Hall debut with the Juilliard Orchestra led by Xian Zhang as a winner of the Juilliard Concerto Competition in 2021. Maxim’s burgeoning career was fully launched after winning First Prize at the Young Concert Artists Susan Wadsworth International Auditions at the age of 16. His following sold-out recital debuts at Carnegie Hall’s Zankel Hall and The Kennedy Center’s Terrace Theater included Liszt’s complete *Transcendental Études* and were hailed by *The New York Times* as concerts “You Won’t Want to Miss!”

A frequent guest artist on the music festival scene, Lando has recently appeared at The Gilmore, Aspen, Caramoor, Dresden Music Festival, Kissinger Sommer, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern Festival, Stars and Rising Stars Munich, Musical Olympus International Festival in Russia, Vilnius Piano Festival, Gower Festival in Wales, and Lednice-Valtice Music Festival in Czech Republic. Dedicated to making classical music accessible to his own generation, Lando has been featured on CNN’s *Best of Quest*, NPR, BBC Radio, WQXR, Bavarian Radio, Israel’s *Intermezzo with Arik*, and Russia’s TV Kultura.

Lando is an alumnus of the Lang Lang International Music Foundation and has been the Laureate of the Artemisia Foundation since 2019. He studies with long-time mentor Hung-Kuan Chen at The Juilliard School.

SEASON FINALE

Hector Berlioz

Le corsaire, op. 21

Hector Berlioz was born in La Côte-St.-André, Isère, on December 11, 1803, and died in Paris, on March 8, 1869. His *Le corsaire* is scored for two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, four bassoons [two real parts], four horns, two trumpets, two cornets, three trombones, ophicleide [or tuba], timpani, and strings.

Following his arduous labors in connection with the 1844 Grand Festival de l'Industrie, Hector Berlioz was sent to Nice by his doctor who had diagnosed him with typhoid. There he sketched an orchestral piece, which he called *La tour de Nice* (The tower of Nice), referring to the ruin he had admired and visited during his 1831 recuperation from a broken heart. Camille Moke, his fiancé at the time, had married someone else, but Berlioz's despair must have been short-lived for he later referred to that time in Nice as "the twenty happiest days of my existence."

Berlioz conducted the premiere of *La tour de Nice* on January 19, 1845, on one of his festival concerts in the Cirque Olympique. He later changed the title to *Le corsaire rouge* (The Red Corsair) and eventually just *Le corsaire* when he revised and published it in 1852. He performed this revised version in Dresden on April 8, 1854. He conducted *Le corsaire* relatively few times in comparison with his other famous overtures, *Benvenuto Cellini* and *Le carnaval romain*, but the equally splendid piece soon established itself in the repertoire.

His second title, *Le corsaire rouge*, alludes to James Fenimore Cooper's sea novel *The Red Rover*; Cooper's landmark on a rocky coast may well have been associated with the tower of Nice in Berlioz's mind. He was, nonetheless, quite familiar with Byron's *Corsair* and Byronic elements may also have crept into his overture. Because his music did not portray Cooper's *Red Rover* literally, Berlioz shortened the title to *Le corsaire*. Berlioz scholar Jacques Barzun has suggested that a stormy voyage to Livorno, Italy, and a Venetian corsair-like character he met on that trip may have also factored into the piece. Further, the reference to Cooper's novel may simply have been commemorative, since Cooper died in 1851 as Berlioz was revisiting his overture.

Structurally it matters little what his inspirations were. The piece conforms to the pattern he had established with *Benvenuto Cellini* and reused in all his later overtures: a brief allegro sometimes called a "false introduction," followed by a slow section (introduction "proper"), leading to a main allegro section. In *Le corsaire* the slow, expressive introduction returns in the main Allegro with the note values doubled so as not to impair the lyrical quality in the fast tempo. It requires little effort to associate images of seafaring adventure with Berlioz's brilliant music, particularly in the upward rushing string scales and brass perorations toward the end. Berlioz's closing cadence ingeniously brings the keys of the slow and the fast sections into close proximity.

Camille Saint-Saëns

Piano Concerto No. 2 in
G minor, op. 22

Camille Saint-Saëns was born in Paris, on October 9, 1835, and died in Algiers, on December 16, 1921. His Piano Concerto No. 2 in G minor is scored for two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, timpani, cymbals (optional), harp, and strings.

A child prodigy whose natural musical abilities rivaled W. A. Mozart's, Camille Saint-Saëns possessed a score-reading facility and digital dexterity at the keyboard that dazzled those who came into contact with him throughout his life. Nevertheless he opted for the life of a composer rather than that of a concert pianist, limiting his public performances almost exclusively to his own works. He premiered all five of his piano concertos at the keyboard.

Saint-Saëns composed his Second Piano Concerto in only seventeen days in 1868 as part of a program to display Anton Rubinstein as a conductor to the Parisian public, who knew him as a virtuoso pianist of Franz Liszt's stature. Saint-Saëns, who played the piano part, wrote of the May 13 premiere in the Salle Pleyel, "Not having had the time to practice it sufficiently for performance I played very badly, and, except for the scherzo, which was an immediate success, it did not go well. The general opinion was that the first part lacked coherence and the finale was a complete failure."

Despite the initial reaction, the Concerto has become Saint-Saëns's most popular and widely acclaimed work in this genre. Liszt wrote a detailed critique to Saint-Saëns saying that the work as a whole "pleases me singularly," and regretted that as "an old disabled pianist" he could not appear himself in Paris.

Saint-Saëns's deviation from the conventional fast-slow-fast sequence of movements is one of the work's most striking features. The first movement, much admired by Liszt, opens with a piano cadenza—Bach-like at first—that initiates a fantasia-like movement rather than a traditional sonata-form movement. The tranquil theme that follows the long introduction was derived from Gabriel Fauré's *Tantum ergo* for voice and organ, which Fauré had shown to his teacher Saint-Saëns in the midst of working on the Concerto. Of course the movement does not "lack coherence," as is evident by tracing various thematic transformations, but the first audience's reaction may have reflected the composer's non-Classical manipulation of these themes. The return of certain material, for example, appears only in the closing cadenza.

Instead of a slow movement, Saint-Saëns placed a "scherzo" second, the rhythm of which Liszt found "piquant," and which owes much of its fairyland quality and form to Felix Mendelssohn. Several prominent timpani passages offer a glimpse of Saint-Saëns's orchestral prowess.

The closing movement is an irresistible tarantella, more Classical in form than the preceding movements. Bravura and technical skill are combined with inspiration. The driving triplets and trilling piano patterns against a chorale-like background create novel effects, and the whole builds to one of the repertoire's most dazzling finishes.

Antonín Dvořák

Symphony No. 6 in D major, op. 60

Antonín Dvořák was born in Nelahozeves, near Kralupy, on September 8, 1841, and died in Prague, on May 1, 1904. His Symphony No. 6 in D major is scored for two flutes, second doubling piccolo, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, and strings.

The international recognition of Czech composer Antonín Dvořák that took place in the 1880s is owed almost exclusively to the early generosity of Johannes Brahms. In 1874 Brahms had been a judge for the annual Austrian State stipendium, for which Dvořák had submitted fifteen compositions. (Dvořák won it again in 1876 and 1877.) Brahms was so impressed that he arranged for the publication of Dvořák's *Moravian Duets*, opp. 29 and 32, with Simrock, his own publishing firm, which then commissioned Dvořák's *Slavonic Dances*, op. 46, and continued to publish much of his orchestral and chamber music.

Dvořák is said to have acknowledged his debt to Brahms with the writing of his Sixth Symphony, composed between August 27 and October 15, 1880. Indeed, there are many outward similarities between it and Brahms' Second Symphony, completed just two years before: the D major key, the 3/4 meter of both first movements, and the 2/2 meter and whispered introduction of both last movements. Furthermore, the fluidity of the thematic material and integration of folklike elements suggest Brahms. The overall effect, however, is wholly Dvořák, in his first Czech nationalist phase.

Unfolding in a carefully constructed sonata form, the first movement contains several dramatic strokes: the bare and mysterious passage that opens the development section, and the lead-in to the recapitulation in which the strings, suddenly left alone, march to a super-remote key area before swerving into the home key. There is some controversy over whether to repeat the exposition. Those who insist upon the repetition point out the rather extended first ending or assert that the effectiveness of the aforementioned opening of the development would be lost. Yet there is apparently a marginal note in Dvořák's own hand in the manuscript score that translates: "once and for all, without repeats."

The opening and coda of the slow movement are often likened to the slow movement of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, though the likeness amounts to reverence rather than specific modeling.

The opening melody, with its characteristic interval of a fourth, meanders through the movement improvisationally. The intervening episodes diverge from it and lead back to it rather than provide sharp contrast.

Dvořák's nationalist leanings come to the fore in the Scherzo, labeled "Furiant." The *furiant*, one of the most characteristic and rhythmically vivacious of Czech dances, was also stylized in the music of Bedřich Smetana; the present movement marks its first use in a symphony. As with Brahms, Dvořák invented his own "folk" material rather than lifting it directly from the folk tradition. The charming trio humors the piccolo.

The Finale, a full-fledged sonata form, is perhaps the crowning glory of the predominantly cheerful Symphony. From its hushed string opening to its dazzling presto coda, it is one of Dvořák's most successfully constructed finales.

The Sixth Symphony is dedicated to the great conductor Hans Richter, who had asked Dvořák to write a new symphony for the Vienna Philharmonic after being impressed by his *Slavonic Rhapsody*. Richter was delighted with the Symphony and proud to accept the dedication, yet because of various political problems he disappointed Dvořák in his promise to premiere the work in the near future. Thus the honor of the premiere went to Adolf Čech on March 25, 1881, in Prague, where the Symphony proved an immediate success and the Scherzo had to be encored.

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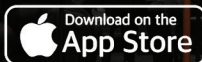
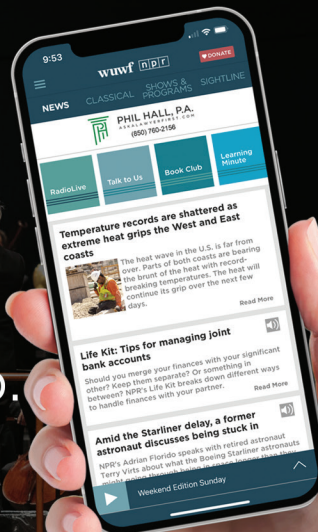
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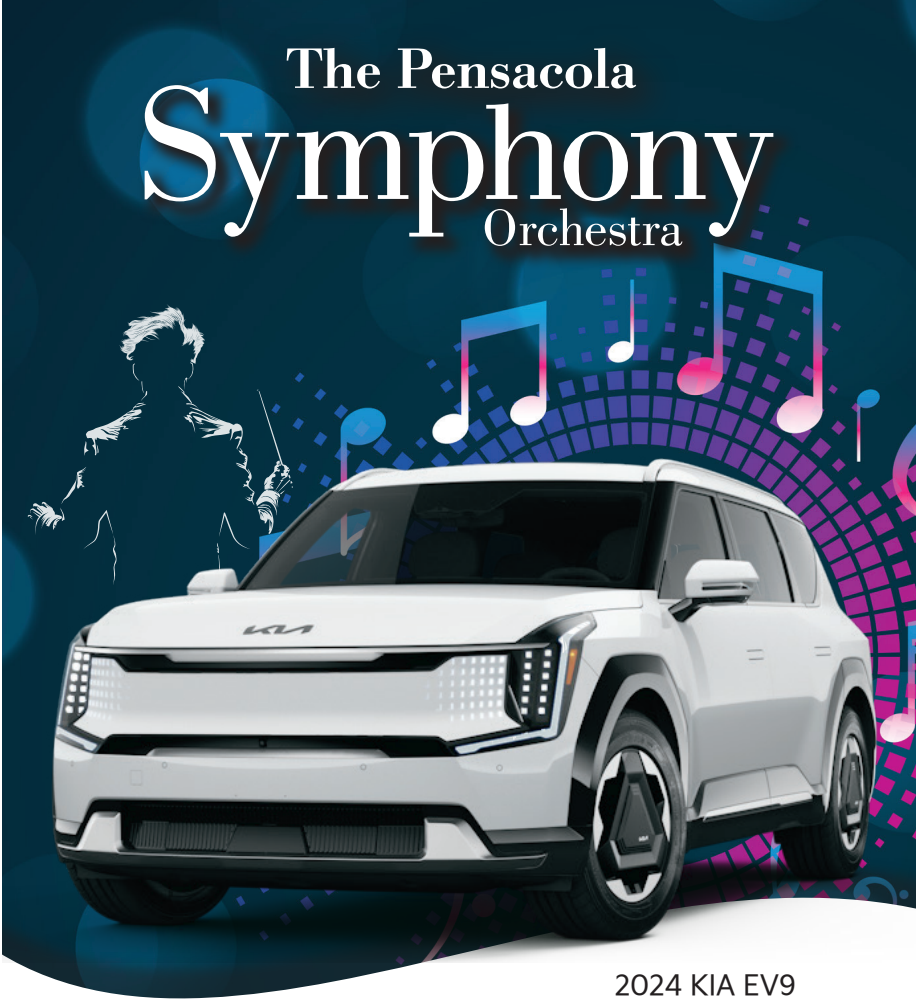
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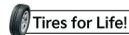


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