



PENINSULA MUSIC FESTIVAL

PROGRAM 1

Tuesday, August 1, 2017, 7:30 p.m.

Victor Yampolsky, Conductor

Jon Kimura Parker, Piano

THREE B'S

SMITH
arr. Mueller

The Star-Spangled Banner

BERLIOZ

*Roman Carnival Overture, Op. 9**

BEETHOVEN

Piano Concerto No. 3 in C minor, Op. 37

Allegro con brio

Largo

Rondo: Allegro

— INTERMISSION —

BRAHMS

Serenade No. 1 in D major, Op. 11

Allegro molto

Scherzo: Allegro non troppo

Adagio non troppo

Menuetto I — Menuetto II — Menuetto I

Scherzo: Allegro

Rondo: Allegro

* first PMF performance

This concert is sponsored by June and Jerome Maeder.

Jon Kimura Parker is performing on the Esther Browning Piano.

Mr. Parker appears by exclusive arrangement with Opus 3 Artists

*Photography and audio recordings of this concert are strictly prohibited.
Please, no cell phones during the concert.*

Program 1

Roman Carnival Overture, Op. 9 **Hector Berlioz (1803-1869)**

Composed in 1843.

Premiered on February 3, 1844 in Paris, conducted by the composer.

The failure of Berlioz's opera *Benvenuto Cellini* at its premiere in September 1838 was nearly complete. Except for the original overture to the opera, everything else, Berlioz reported, "was hissed with admirable energy and unanimity." Five years later, he mined the opera for thematic material for a new overture that he could use either as an independent concert work or as the introduction to the second act of *Benvenuto*. With the flavor of the opera's setting and his own Italian travels as guides, he named it *Roman Carnival*. The *Overture* had a resounding success at its concert premiere in Paris on February 3, 1844, and was encored. It immediately joined the *Symphonie Fantastique* as the most popular of Berlioz's music, and it was the work he programmed most frequently on concerts he conducted.

The *Roman Carnival Overture* borrows two melodies from *Benvenuto Cellini*. The slow theme, presented by the solo English horn, is based on Benvenuto's aria *O Teresa, vous que j'aime* ("O Teresa, whom I adore"), a melody originally composed for the cantata *La Mort de Cléopâtre*, Berlioz's unsuccessful attempt to win the Prix de Rome in 1829. The *Overture's* other theme is a bubbling *saltarello* reminiscent of the folk dances Berlioz heard in Rome. The work is in two large sections, preceded by an introductory flourish based on the *saltarello* melody. The theme of the work's first section is presented by the English horn. As it proceeds and is repeated, this lovely strain is wrapped in Berlioz's characteristic, glowing orchestral fabric. (Note, for example, the shimmering gloss applied to the sound by the tambourine and triangle.) Following this love song, the strains of the *saltarello* launch the *Overture* into a rousing carnival dance. Amid the swirling gaiety of this street festival, the simple strain of the love song from the first section is heard in the rich sonorities of bassoons and trombones. The rollicking exuberance of the *saltarello* soon resumes to close this musical Mardi Gras with some dazzling rhythmic and harmonic surprises.

Piano Concerto No. 3 in C minor, Op. 37 **Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)**

Composed in 1797-1803.

Premiered on April 4, 1803, with the composer as soloist.

By 1803, Emanuel Schickaneder, the colorful character who figured so prominently in the closing pages of Mozart's life as the librettist and producer of *The Magic Flute*, had taken over the management of Vienna's Theater-an-der-Wien. His house was locked in a fierce competitive battle with the court-subsidized Kärntnertheater, run by Baron Peter von Braun. When von Braun hired the distinguished Luigi Cherubini as resident com-

poser, Schickaneder felt obliged to counter with his own music master, and he approached Beethoven with an offer. Beethoven, who had felt the need to write for the stage for some time, accepted gladly — especially since the job carried free lodgings in the theater as part of the compensation. He and Schickaneder dutifully plowed through a small library of possibilities for an operatic subject, but none inspired Beethoven until he took up work on *Fidelio* late in 1803.

In the meantime, Beethoven took advantage of his theatrical connection to put some of his instrumental works on display. Since opera was forbidden in Catholic countries during Lent at that time, the Theater-an-der-Wien was available for concerts in the early spring, and Beethoven scheduled such an event during April 1803. It had been fully three years since he last presented a concert entirely of his own music, and he had several scores that were awaiting their first presentations, including the Second Symphony, the oratorio *Christ on the Mount of Olives* and the Third Piano Concerto. He programmed all of these, and, for good measure, tossed in the First Symphony, which had been premiered at his concert three years earlier.

Beethoven proceeded enthusiastically with plans for the concert, working right up to the last minute putting finishing touches on the new compositions. (His pupil Ferdinand Ries found him in bed writing trombone parts for the oratorio only three hours before the rehearsal began.) He had only a single rehearsal on the concert day for this wealth of unfamiliar music, and, with his less-than-adept players, it is little wonder that it went poorly. The rehearsal began at 8:00 a.m. and, Ries recalled, "It was a terrible one, lasting six and a half hours and leaving Beethoven more or less discontented. [At 2:30, his patron] the Prince Karl Lichnowsky, who had been present from the beginning, ordered large baskets of bread and butter, cold meat and wine to be brought in. He invited in a friendly manner everyone to partake, and all helped themselves with both hands. As a result everybody grew good-humored." The rehearsal was able to continue, and ended only shortly before the concert began at 6:00. The public and critical response to the concert was lukewarm, undoubtedly due in large part to the inadequate performance. Beethoven, however, was delighted to have played his music for the Viennese public, and he was well on his way to becoming recognized more for his ability as a composer than as a pianist.

The Third Concerto's first movement opens with the longest introductory orchestral *tutti* in Beethoven's concertos, virtually a full symphonic exposition in itself. The strings in unison present immediately the main theme, "a group of pregnant figures," assessed the eminent British musicologist Sir Donald Tovey, "which nobody but Beethoven could have invented." The lyrical second theme is sung by violins and clarinet in a contrasting major mode. The closely reasoned development section grows inexorably from thematic fragments heard in the exposition. The recapitulation begins with a forceful restatement of the main theme by the full orchestra.

The second theme and other melodic materials follow, always given a heightened emotional weight over their initial appearances, and lead to a cadenza written by Beethoven that takes on the character of a development section for the soloist. The orchestra re-enters, at first accompanied by quiet, ethereal chords in the piano but soon rising to a stern climax which draws the movement to a close.

The second movement is a nocturne of tender sentiments and quiet moods. Though analysis reveals its form to be a three-part structure (A–B–A), it is in spirit an extended song — a marvelous juxtaposition of hymnal tranquility and sensuous operatic love scene.

The traditional, Classical rondo was a form of simple, high spirits meant to send the audience away in a bubbling mood. Mozart, in his incomparable late concertos, had begun to explore the emotional depth possible with the rondo, and in the Third Concerto Beethoven continued that search. (Mozart's Concerto No. 24 in C minor, K. 491 was an important model for Beethoven's work.) Beethoven incorporated elements of sonata design into the finale to lend it additional weight, even inserting a fugal passage in the second episode. Only in the closing pages is the dark world of C minor abandoned for a vivacious romp through bright C major to close this wonderful work.

Serenade No. 1 in D major, Op. 11 **Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)**

Composed in 1858; revised in 1860.

Premiered in 1858 in Detmold, Germany.

The Principality of Lippe-Detmold, midway between Frankfurt and Hamburg, was one of the leading centers of German 19th-century music. The reigning Prince, Leopold III, had a taste for music, which he was able to gratify by employing a permanent orchestra of 45 players that presented a broad spectrum of works from Mozart through Wagner. A great deal of chamber music was played by the principals of the orchestra, a choir was formed from members of the household and townsfolk, and guest artists were often asked to visit the court to perform with the resident forces. One such visitor was Clara Schumann, who not only performed but also gave piano lessons to one of the Prince's sisters and to the sister of the Court Chamberlain. When Clara moved from Düsseldorf to Berlin in 1857, a year after her husband's death, she recommended that the young composer and pianist Johannes Brahms continue the ladies' lessons. So taken were they with their 24-year-old teacher that they wrangled for him a position at court which included conducting the chorus and orchestra, participating in chamber music and, of course, continuing their instruction. The post was only for the three months of October through December, but the salary was sufficient to sustain Brahms in his modest life style in Hamburg for a full year. He returned again in 1858 and 1859.

Brahms found much to like at Detmold. The rich musical atmosphere was an inspiration to his study of the Classical masters, aided by the performances of Mozart and Haydn that the Prince required from the orchestra. The financial reward left him much time free to compose.

Also of great importance to him were the lovely parks and forests surrounding the palace, where he took long walks to calm himself and ponder his future and his art. In those painful years after Robert Schumann's death, Brahms was not only confronting his grief at the loss of his dear friend and mentor, but was also sorting out his strong personal feelings for Clara. "Passions are not natural to mankind; they are always exceptions or excrescences," he wrote to her. "The ideal, genuine man is calm in joy and calm in pain and sorrow. Passions must quickly pass, or else they must be driven out." He never did drive out his love for her, however, and she remained the most important person in his life for as long as they lived — his death followed hers by only ten months. At Detmold, as throughout his life, he found the antidote to his feelings for Clara in music. When he returned there in autumn 1859 he wrote to his Aunt Auguste, "I felt odd when I saw these beautiful wooded heights again and walked into the marvelous forest. I have not seen such beautiful nature for a whole year... But I was quite ecstatic: I thought only of music. I am in love with music. I love music; I think of nothing but music, and of other things only when they make music more beautiful to me. You just watch: I'm going to write love songs, not to some A or Z, but to music itself. If things go on like this, I am perfectly capable of evaporating into a musical chord and floating away in the air." Brahms' earliest orchestral works date from his Detmold years. The D minor Piano Concerto is the one that most closely reflects his turbulent emotional state, but the two Serenades also show the evolution of an important strain in his artistic personality — the Romantic adaptation of Classical forms. The First Serenade (D major, Op. 11) originated in 1858 as a nonet for flute, two clarinets, bassoon, horn and strings for use at the Detmold concerts. Two years later it was revised for full orchestra. The Second Serenade (A major, Op. 16) was written during 1859.

The D major Serenade seems to have been equally influenced by Detmold's sylvan setting and by the instrumental entertainment music of Mozart, Haydn and the young Beethoven: the forms of the individual movements are disposed in full, Classical molds, while over the whole (but especially noticeable in the fast sections) wafts a hearty rusticity and country-dance bumptiousness. Indeed, much of the opening, sonata-form *Allegro molto* is a musical harbinger of the *Hungarian Dances* that Brahms began issuing a dozen years later. The following *Scherzo* (whose initial motive he may have borrowed for the second movement of his B-flat Piano Concerto of 1881) exudes the sort of gentle melancholy that Brahms' music from throughout his life so masterfully expressed. The *Adagio* is spread over a full sonata structure whose prolixity is ameliorated by three great melodies. There follows something of a music history lesson in the juxtaposition of a pair of quasi-Mozartian minuets with a rambunctious, full-orchestra *Scherzo* whose allusions to Beethoven's essays in the form burst into unashamed quotation (from the "Spring" Sonata for Violin and Piano, Op. 24) in the central trio. The bustling *Rondo* returns the exuberant rhythmic energy and the folk-dance vitality of the opening movement.

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PENINSULA MUSIC FESTIVAL

PROGRAM 2

Thursday, August 3, 2017, 7:30 p.m.

Victor Yampolsky, Conductor
Mark Kosower, Cello
Alexandra Dee, Karen Smuda Emerging Conductor†*

DVOŘÁK AND HIS TIME I

GOLDMARK Overture, *In Springtime*, Op. 36†*

DVOŘÁK Symphony No. 8 in G major, Op. 88
Allegro con brio
Adagio
Allegretto grazioso
Allegro ma non troppo

— INTERMISSION —

DVOŘÁK Cello Concerto in B minor, Op. 104
Allegro
Adagio ma non troppo
Finale: Allegro moderato

* first PMF performance

This concert is sponsored by Janet and Tom Sutter.

Mark Kosower appears by exclusive arrangement with Colbert Artists Management.

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Please, no cell phones during the concert.*

Program 2

Overture, *In Springtime*, Op. 36 Karl Goldmark (1830-1915)

Composed in 1888.

Premiered in 1889 in Mainz.

Had Horatio Alger written a story about a Middle European musician, its hero would have been Karl Goldmark. Goldmark, one of twenty children, was born in 1830 to a poor Jewish cantor in the Hungarian village of Keszthely at the western end of Lake Balaton, about 100 miles southwest of Budapest. When Karl was four, the family moved to Deutsch-Kreuz, a hamlet outside Ödenburg (now Sopron) near the Austrian border, and there he received some elementary violin instruction from one of the local musicians and learned the traditional Hungarian songs and dances, but had little other schooling. His father managed to pay for some lessons for him at a music school in Ödenburg in 1842, and Karl showed enough talent to be accepted as a violin student of Leopold Jansa in Vienna, but after a year or so the money ran out and the lessons stopped. Karl stayed in Vienna, working at odd jobs and teaching himself to play the violin, but he was often reduced to living on hand-outs from friends — he recorded in his memoirs that he survived one winter on a diet of cucumbers and curds. In 1847, he was admitted to the Vienna Conservatory, but his studies of violin (with Joseph Böhm) and theory (with Gottfried Preyer) were curtailed by the political upheavals of the following year. His brother Joseph, a medical student in Vienna, fled to the United States, where his son, Rubin Goldmark (1872-1936), studied with Antonín Dvořák in 1892-1893 at the National Conservatory in New York and enjoyed a fine career as a composer and teacher (of Copland and Gershwin, among many others), but Karl returned to Hungary to play violin in local theater orchestras in Ödenburg and Győr. In Győr, he was arrested by the imperial forces, placed before a firing squad, and only saved at the last minute when someone convinced the soldiers that he was not a revolutionary at all but merely a musician. In 1851, he moved back to Vienna and landed a job in the orchestra of the Josephstadt Theater. To supplement his income, he taught himself to play piano and went into business as a keyboard teacher.

By the mid-1850s, Goldmark was actively composing, and he was able to give a public concert of his works in Vienna in 1858. Critical praise for the concert was so faint, however, that he retreated to Budapest, where he taught piano and immersed himself in study of the music of Mozart, Haydn and Beethoven and textbooks on theory and counterpoint. A second Viennese concert, in 1859, was well enough received for Goldmark to settle again in that city, and he slowly began to build a reputation as a composer while earning a living as a choral conductor, piano teacher and music critic. His String Quartet (Op. 8) of 1860 brought him some notice,

but it was the fine success of his colorful orchestral overture *Sakuntala* in 1865 that won him fame. Goldmark's first opera, *The Queen of Sheba* (1875), elevated him to the highest ranks of Viennese musicians, where his friends included Cornelius, Brüll, Herbeck and even Brahms, with whom he liked to tramp through the hillside woods; in April 1878, he accompanied Brahms on a trip to Italy. He received numerous awards in the later years of his long life, including membership in Vienna's Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde, the *Ritterkreuz* of the Order of Leopold, an honorary doctorate from Budapest University, and an honorary membership in the Accademia di Santa Cecilia, Rome. Goldmark, whose career spanned the Romantic era from Mendelssohn to Debussy, left a substantial body of creative work, typically in a ripe Late Romantic style. The best known among his half-dozen operas is *The Queen of Sheba*, a score rich in musical and scenic values. His orchestral works include two symphonies in addition to the programmatic *Rustic Wedding Symphony*, a violin concerto, eight large concert overtures and several independent pieces. There are also numerous choral, piano and chamber compositions, in addition to nearly fifty songs.

If his overture *In Springtime* is any indication, that season of the year must have been one of exhilaration and reverie for Goldmark. The work opens with a bounding theme marked "*impetuoso*." Expressive and formal contrast is provided by a lyrical melody, almost a waltz, strewn with mock-birdcalls from the woodwinds. A brief development section and the recapitulation of the earlier themes fill out the sonata form that provides the main body of the work before a large coda — lively, then sentimental, then lively again — rounds out this delightful vernal tone poem.

Symphony No. 8 in G major, Op. 88 Antonín Dvořák (1841-1904)

Composed in 1889.

Premiered on February 2, 1890 in Prague, conducted by the composer.

You would probably have liked Dvořák. He was born a simple (in the best sense) man of the soil who retained a love of country, nature and peasant ways all his life. In his later years he wrote, "In spite of the fact that I have moved about in the great world of music, I shall remain what I have always been — a simple Czech musician." Few passions ruffled his life — music, of course; the rustic pleasures of country life; the company of old friends; caring for his pigeons; and a child-like fascination with railroads. When he was in Prague during the winters, he took daily walks to the Franz Josef Station to gaze in awe at the great iron wagons. The timetables were as ingrained in his thinking as were the chord progressions of his music, and he knew all the specifications of the engines that puffed through Prague. When his students returned from a journey, he would pester them until they recalled exactly which locomotive had pulled their train. Milton Cross sketched him thus: "To the end of his

days he remained shy, uncomfortable in the presence of those he regarded as his social superiors, and frequently remiss in his social behavior. He was never completely at ease in large cities, with the demands they made on him. Actually he had a pathological fear of city streets and would be loath to cross a busy thoroughfare if a friend was not with him. He was happiest when he was close to the soil, raising pigeons, taking long, solitary walks in the hills and forests of the Bohemia he loved so deeply. Yet he was by no means a recluse. In the company of his intimate friends, particularly after a few beers, he was voluble, gregarious, expansive and good-humored.” His music reflected his salubrious nature, and former *New York Times* critic Harold Schonberg concluded, “He remained throughout his entire creative span the happiest and least neurotic of the late Romantics.... With Handel and Haydn, he is the healthiest of all composers.”

Dvořák was nearing fifty when he wrote his Eighth Symphony, when his early years of struggle and poverty were being ameliorated by the honors that were coming his way. The Symphony was dedicated to the Austrian Emperor Franz Josef, the official sponsor of an Academy encouraging the arts in Bohemia with that most powerful of all stimuli — money. The stipend Dvořák received as part of an award (the Austrian Iron Cross, Third Order) allowed him to concentrate on composing and disseminating his works without the distractions of other duties. In December 1889, Dvořák, his faithful wife in tow, boarded a train for the official recognition ceremonies in Vienna. More than a little apprehensive about the disparity between his humble background and the opulent extravagance of Vienna, he made it, palpitations aplenty, through his interview with the charming Franz Josef, who showed a sincere interest in the composer and the musical situation out in the provinces of Bohemia.

Only a few months later, Dvořák was awarded an honorary doctorate by Cambridge University as a result of his enormous popularity in Britain. (He was the first musical god in England since the demise of Mendelssohn nearly half a century earlier.) His own account of the event gives an indication how he viewed such rituals, whether in the hushed groves of academe or the glittering halls of the Habsburg palace: “It was all frighteningly solemn, nothing but ceremonies and deans, all solemn-faced and apparently incapable of speaking anything but Latin. When it dawned upon me that they were talking about me, I felt as if I were drowning in hot water, so ashamed was I that I could not understand them.” The picture of him as merely a shuffling country bumpkin, however, unaware of his special gift and of his international notoriety, is dispelled by his next sentence: “However, when all is said and done, that *Stabat Mater* of mine [performed as part of the investiture ceremony] is more than just Latin.” Wisdom and modesty have seldom found a happier marriage in a great man.

The Symphony is the most overtly nationalistic of the nine Dvořák composed, and displays its flood of folk-derived themes with directness and candor. This characteristic is enhanced by the new direction that he pursued in the structural foundations of the work. It departed from the carefully integrated, fully developed musical architecture that had underlain the previous

symphonies, a preoccupation that reached its apogee in the magnificent, brooding Symphony No. 7 in D minor. The Eighth Symphony is based unashamedly on its beautiful melodies, with little true development. In this, the work recalls the symphonies of that greatest of melodists, Franz Schubert, and in mood and technique it is a true heir to that hallowed tradition. Hermann Kretschmar even thought that the work should not be classed with Dvořák’s symphonies at all, but rather belonged to the category of the symphonic poems and *Slavonic Dances*.

Dvořák was absolutely profligate with themes in the opening movement. In the exposition, which comprises the first 126 measures of the work, there are no fewer than eight separate melodies which are tossed out with an ease and speed reminiscent of Mozart’s fecundity. The first theme is presented without preamble in the rich hues of trombones, low strings and low woodwinds in the dark coloring of G minor. This tonality soon yields to the chirruping G major of the flute melody, but much of the movement shifts effortlessly between major and minor keys, lending a certain air of nostalgia to the work. The opening melody is recalled to initiate both the development and the recapitulation. In the former, it reappears in its original guise and even, surprisingly, in its original key. The recapitulation begins as this theme is hurled forth by the trumpets in a stentorian setting greatly heightened in emotional weight from its former presentations. The coda is invested with the rhythm and high good spirits of an energetic country dance to bring the movement to its rousing close.

The second movement is one of the most original formal conceptions in late-19th-century symphonic music. It comprises two kinds of music, one hesitant and somewhat lachrymose, the other stately and smoothly flowing. Some have interpreted these strains as tonal pictures of a crumbling ruin (the opening section resembles “The Old Castle” movement of the *Poetic Tone Pictures* for Piano, Op. 85) and a peasant wedding. That may be. But looked at in the abstract, as pure music, the movement also points forward to the interest of many 20th-century composers in creating a work from disparate types of music. The compositions of Mahler, Ives and Stravinsky, among others, are filled with instances of what seems to be two different pieces pushed up against each other for the dramatic effect their juxtaposition creates. In this movement, Dvořák built two blocks of music that are different not just in key and melody, but in their total conception. The first is indefinite in tonality, rhythm and cadence; its theme is a collection of fragments; its texture is sparse. The following section is greatly contrasted: its key is unambiguous; its rhythm and cadence points are clear; its melody is a long, continuous span. The form of this movement is created as much by texture and sonority as by the traditional means of melody and tonality. It is a daring and prophetic type of music-making from a composer who is usually regarded as an arch conservative, as the critic for *The New York Times* recognized in 1892. “The music of the symphony,” he wrote following the New York premiere on March 12th, “is certainly modern and strange enough to meet the demands of the most modern extremists.”

The third movement is a lilting essay much in the style

of the Austrian folk dance, the *Ländler*. Like the beginning of the Symphony, it opens in G minor with a mood of sweet melancholy, but gives way to a languid melody in G major for the central trio. Following the repeat of the scherzo, a vivacious coda in faster tempo paves the way to the finale.

The trumpets herald the start of the finale, a theme and variations with a central section resembling a development in character. The bustling second variation returns as a sort of formal mile-marker — it introduces the “development” and begins the coda. (One point of good fun in this variation: note how the horns, pulling the low woodwinds along with them, ascend to their upper register and blow forth an excited trill generated by the pure joy of the surrounding music.) This wonderful Symphony ends swiftly and resoundingly amid a burst of high spirits and warm-hearted good feelings.

Cello Concerto in B minor, Op. 104

Antonín Dvořák

Composed in 1894-1895.

Premiered March 19, 1896 in London, conducted by the composer with Leo Stern as soloist.

During the three years that Dvořák was teaching at the National Conservatory of Music in New York City, he was subject to the same emotions as most other travelers away from home for a long time: invigoration and homesickness. America served to stir his creative energies, and during his stay from 1892 to 1895 he composed some of his greatest scores: the “New World” Symphony, Op. 96 String Quartet (“American”), E-flat major String Quintet and Cello Concerto. He was keenly aware of the new musical experiences to be discovered in the land far from his beloved Bohemian home when he wrote, “The musician must prick up his ears for music. When he walks he should listen to every whistling boy, every street singer or organ grinder. I myself am often so fascinated by these people that I can scarcely tear myself away.” But he missed his home and, while he was composing the Cello Concerto, looked eagerly forward to returning. He opened his heart in a letter to a friend in Prague: “Now I am finishing the finale of the Violoncello Concerto. If I could work as free from cares as at Vysoká [site of his country home], it would have been finished long ago. Oh, if only I were in Vysoká again!” The Concerto might just as well have been written in a Czech café as in an East 17th Street apartment.

Elements of both Dvořák’s American experiences and his longing for home found their way into the Cello Concerto, the last of his works composed in this country. The inspiration to begin what became one of the greatest concertos in the literature was a performance by the New York Philharmonic in March 1894 at which Victor Herbert (*the* Victor Herbert of operetta fame, who was then also teaching at the National Conservatory) played his own Second Cello Concerto. That work convinced Dvořák that the cello was a viable solo instrument, something about which he had been unsure despite the assurances of Hanuš Wihan, cello professor at the Prague Conservatory, who had long been urging his fellow faculty member to write a piece for the instru-

ment. (Apparently Brahms, Dvořák’s friend and mentor, had a similar mistrust of the cello as a solo instrument. When he first saw Dvořák’s score he wondered, “Why on earth didn’t I know that one can write a violoncello concerto like this? If I had only known, I would have written one long ago!”) Dvořák had tried to mollify Wihan in 1891 with two recital numbers — the Rondo in G minor and *Silent Woods*, an arrangement of a piano piece from 1884 — but the cellist continued to pester him for a full-scale concerto until his request finally bore fruit four years later. Dvořák asked Wihan for his comments on the score (which Dvořák largely ignored) and they read through the piece together privately in September 1895, soon after Dvořák had returned home, but Wihan, despite the composer’s pleading, was unable to give either the work’s world or Prague premiere because of already-scheduled conflicts. Those privileges fell instead to the young English virtuoso Leo Stern, who introduced the work on March 19, 1896 with the London Philharmonic and gave its first performance in Dvořák’s home city three weeks later with the Czech Philharmonic, both conducted by the composer. Wihan first played the Concerto publicly at The Hague in January 1899 and regularly thereafter, including a performance in Budapest under the composer’s direction on December 20, 1899.

With its wealth of melodic ideas, its glowing orchestration and its emotional immediacy, Dvořák’s Cello Concerto occupies the pinnacle of the solo literature for the instrument. The opening movement is in sonata form, with both themes presented by the orchestra before the entry of the soloist. The first theme, heard immediately in the clarinets, not only contains the principal melody but also serves to establish the importance given to the wind instruments throughout the work, their tone colors serving as an excellent foil to the rich sonorities of the cello. “One of the most beautiful melodies ever composed for the horn” is how Sir Donald Tovey described the second theme. The cello’s entrance points up the virtuosic yet songful character of the solo part. The effect of the music for the soloist is enhanced by the use of the instrument’s burnished upper register, a technique Dvořák had learned from Victor Herbert’s Concerto.

Otakar Šourek, the composer’s biographer, described the second movement as a “hymn of deepest spirituality and amazing beauty.” It is in three-part form (A–B–A). A poignant bit of autobiography is attached to the composition of this movement. While working on its middle section, Dvořák received news that his beloved sister-in-law, Josefina Kaunitzová, who had aroused in him a secret passion early in his life, was seriously ill. He showed his concern by using one of Josefina’s favorite pieces as the theme for the central portion of this *Adagio* — his own song, *Let Me Wander Alone with My Dreams*, Op. 82, No. 1. She died a month after he returned to Prague in April 1895, so he revised the finale to include another reference to the same song in the autumnal slow section just before the end of the work. The finale is a dance-like rondo. Following the second reprise of the theme, an *Andante* section recalls both the first theme of the opening movement and Josefina’s melody from the second. A brief, rousing restatement of the rondo theme led by the brass closes this majestic Concerto.

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PENINSULA MUSIC FESTIVAL

PROGRAM 3

Saturday, August 5, 2017, 7:30 p.m.

Victor Yampolsky, Conductor

Terry Everson, Trumpet

ARTHUR FIEDLER & THE BOSTON POPS

GRIEG Suite No. 1 from the Incidental Music to Ibsen's *Peer Gynt*, Op. 46*

Morning Mood: Allegretto pastorale

The Death of Åse: Andante doloroso

Anitra's Dance: Tempo di Mazurka

In the Hall of the Mountain King: Alla marcia e molto marcato

OFFENBACH Overture to *Orpheus in the Underworld*

OSKAR BÖHME Movement I (Allegro moderato)
from Trumpet Concerto in E minor, Op. 18*

RICHARD LANE Song for Trumpet and String Orchestra*
THOMAS H. ROLLINSON *Islington Polka* for Trumpet and Orchestra*

— INTERMISSION —

GERSHWIN *Cuban Overture**

LOEWE Selections from *My Fair Lady*
arr. Bennett Get Me To The Church On Time — I Could Have Danced All Night —
I've Grown Accustomed To Her Face — On Street Where You Live —
With A Little Bit Of Luck — Wouldn't It Be Lovely

MASCAGNI Intermezzo from *Cavalleria rusticana**

ANDERSON *Belle of the Ball**
*Jazz Pizzicato**
*Syncopated Clock**
Bugler's Holiday

GOULD *American Salute, Variations on When Johnny Comes Marching Home**

* first PMF performance

This concert is sponsored by Joan and Robert Schaupp.

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Program 3

Suite No. 1 from the Incidental Music to Ibsen's *Peer Gynt*, Op. 46

Edvard Grieg (1843-1907)

Composed in 1874-1875.

Premiered on February 24, 1876 in Oslo, conducted by Johan Hennum.

In January 1874, Grieg received a letter from the playwright Henrik Ibsen asking him to provide incidental music for a revival in Oslo of *Peer Gynt*, a philosophical fantasy with moralistic overtones to which the composer was not immediately attracted. Grieg was, however, rather badly in need of money at the time, and Ibsen's offer of a sizeable share of the proceeds from the production proved irresistible. Grieg thought at first that he would need compose no more than a few short sections of music, but he failed to take into account the contemporary Norwegian taste in theatrical productions, which demanded an entertainment not unlike a modern musical comedy, with extended musical selections separated by spoken dialogue. Ibsen accordingly shortened the text of the original 1867 version of the play to accommodate the new music. As it turned out, Grieg's score contained some 23 separate numbers and cost him nearly two years of work. His effort bore fruit. The music for *Peer Gynt*, in the form of two orchestral suites, won him international fame and personal economic security, and raised him to the highest position in Scandinavian music.

Peer Gynt (George Bernard Shaw suggested that "Pare Yoont" is about as close to the Norwegian pronunciation as it was possible to come in English) is the central character of Ibsen's play. The work is ostensibly a fantasy, but Ibsen used the genre as a thinly veiled essay on the apathy and vacillation that he felt were characteristic of the Norwegian people. Grieg at first disagreed with Ibsen's thesis — the main reason for his initial reluctance to become involved with the project — but he later changed his opinion. "How shockingly true to life the poet sketched our national character," he wrote after Ibsen's death. Most of the play's characters assume allegorical functions: they are more Jungian archetypes than true individuals. The death of Åse, Peer's mother, for example, represents not just the loss of a loved one but, on Ibsen's allegorical plane, also evokes "the dying of nature in the autumn, far up in the North — the disappearance of the sun for months, leaving this globe in a ruddy darkness," according to Henry T. Finck.

Grieg summarized the plot: "Peer Gynt, the only son of poor peasants, is drawn by the poet as a character of morbidly developed fancy and a prey to megalomania. In his youth, he has many wild adventures — comes, for instance, to a peasants' wedding where he carries the bride up to the mountain peaks. There he leaves her so that he may roam about with wild cowherd girls. He then enters the land of the Mountain King, whose daughter falls in love with him and dances for him. But he laughs

at the dance and its droll music, whereupon the enraged mountain folk wish to kill him. But he succeeds in escaping and wanders to foreign countries, among others to Morocco, where he appears as a prophet and is greeted by Arab girls. After many wonderful guidings of Fate, he at last returns as an old man, after suffering shipwreck on his way to his home, which is as poor as he left it. There the sweetheart of his youth, Solvejg, who has stayed true to him for all these years, meets him, and his weary head at last finds rest in her lap."

For concert use, Grieg revised and reorchestrated four excerpts from the complete score of *Peer Gynt* in 1888 as the Suite No. 1; three years later, he created the Suite No. 2 from four additional numbers. The First Suite opens with *Morning Mood*, one of the most famous evocations of dawn in the entire orchestral repertory. The music occurs not at the beginning of the play, however, but in Act IV, when Peer is in Africa. The *Death of Åse* serves as the poignant background for the passing of Peer's mother. *Anitra's Dance* is a lithe number performed for Peer during his adventures in Morocco by the daughter of a Bedouin chief. *In the Hall of the Mountain King* accompanies Peer's terrified escape from the abode of the most fearsome of Norway's trolls.

Overture to *Orpheus in the Underworld*

Jacques Offenbach (1819-1880)

Composed in 1858.

Premiered on October 21, 1858 in Paris.

In 1855, Jacques Offenbach opened a little theater in the Champs-Élysées for the presentation of one-act musical farces using a small orchestra and a handful of singers. He managed to keep the venture afloat, but by 1858 he had amassed enough debts to put the future of the operation in doubt. To raise the money needed to pay his bills, he created a riotous musical satire based on the exploits of the ancient gods, notably those told in the legend of Orpheus and Euridice — *Orpheus in the Underworld*. The work, the first in which his famous *Can-Can* melody appears, did not have much success until the review of critic Jules Janin appeared. When Janin described *Orpheus* as "a profanation of holy and glorious antiquity in a spirit of irreverence that bordered on blasphemy," the Parisians rushed to see for themselves what outrages Offenbach had committed. The highly profitable run ended after 227 consecutive performances only when the cast pleaded exhaustion. The Overture distills the operetta's riotous insouciance.

Movement I from Trumpet Concerto in E minor, Op. 18 **Oskar Böhme (1870-1938)**

Published in 1899.

Composer and trumpeter Oskar Böhme was born in Dresden on February 24, 1870 and studied the instrument with his father, a music teacher, to such good effect that he toured Europe as a trumpet virtuoso while still in his teens. From 1894 to 1896, Böhme played in

the orchestra of the Royal Hungarian Opera House in Budapest and then spent the next two years studying composition at the Leipzig Conservatory. He emigrated to St. Petersburg in 1897 to join the Mariinsky Theater Orchestra, where he served as principal trumpet until 1921. He went on to teach and perform as a free-lance trumpeter in the city until 1930, when he joined the orchestra of the Leningrad Drama Theater. The German-born Böhme's distinguished career came to a sad end, when he was caught up in the xenophobic mania of Stalin's purges in 1936 and sent to Orenburg. Little is known of his life there, though recent research has established that he died in Orenburg in October 1938, perhaps by firing squad.

All of Böhme's works are for trumpet and brass instruments and are stylistically aligned with the Mendelssohnian models he learned while studying at the Leipzig Conservatory. In addition to a sizeable body of pedagogical studies and recital pieces for trumpet and piano, Böhme published a Trumpet Concerto in 1899, the first such work since Hummel's in 1803 and the only one from the Romantic era, and a large-scale Brass Sextet in 1906. The Concerto was dedicated to Ferdinand Weinschenk, the distinguished German performer and teacher who was the long-time principal trumpet of the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra and one of the first modern players to brave the stratospheric trumpet parts of the Baroque repertory, most famously in Bach's *Brandenburg Concerto No. 2*. The opening sonata-form movement of Böhme's Concerto is built around a main theme that reflects a certain Russian melancholy and a songful subsidiary subject in a brighter key. Ample opportunity is offered for technical display in the development section, a solo cadenza and the rapid-fire coda based on the main theme.

Song for Trumpet and String Orchestra **Richard Lane (1933-2004)**

Composed in 1972.

Richard Lane was born in 1933 in the New York suburb of Paterson, New Jersey, studied composition with Louis Mennini, Wayne Barlow and Bernard Rogers and piano with Jose Echaniz and Armand Basile at the Eastman School of Music, held Ford Foundation residencies with the public schools in Rochester, New York and Lexington, Kentucky, and largely devoted his career to private teaching, composing and accompanying in his native northern New Jersey. His many works, for chorus, piano, chamber ensembles, voice, band and orchestra, have been performed throughout the United States, Europe, Africa, Australia, Mexico and Russia. Lane composed his Song for Cornet (or Trumpet) and String Orchestra in 1972 for British virtuoso Derek Smith, whose son, Philip, served as principal trumpet of the New York Philharmonic for 35 years. The composer wrote that the Song for Cornet "is in a romantic style, exploring the lyrical quality of the solo instrument. The melodic material is laced with lush sonorities which, in their ebb and flow, create an arc. After a brief cadenza, the piece recaptures the thematic material from the beginning before fading into silence."

Islington Polka for Trumpet and Orchestra **Thomas H. Rollinson (1844-1928)**

Published in 1884.

In the days before recordings, broadcasts and regular public concerts made music a ubiquitous part of our daily lives, the town band was the center of musical life in many American communities. Thomas H. Rollinson — cornetist, conductor, composer, arranger, teacher, publisher — was a central figure in that movement. Rollinson was born in 1844 in the central Massachusetts town of Ware, where his father, a wool merchant, had moved from his native England around 1830 to get in on the town's nascent textile industry. Seven years later the family moved to Willimantic, Connecticut, one of the country's leading manufacturing centers for thread, and there young Thomas discovered a talent for music. He studied with such local teachers as were available and then took more rigorous training in cornet, piano, organ and composition at the music school in Providence run by Dr. Eben Tourjee, a dedicated educator who was to found the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston in 1867. Rollinson wrote his first composition for band in 1868, toured around New England for a few years playing for concerts, theaters and social engagements, and in 1872 established the Willimantic Brass Band. His work with that ensemble led to his appointment in 1883 as director of the Waltham Watch Company Band in suburban Boston, which he made into a nationally known model of musicianship and organization. (Rollinson gained a reputation during those years for playing his cornet while leading the band from horseback on their parades.) In 1888 he was hired by Oliver Ditson, one of America's leading music publishers in the late 19th century, to supervise its band and orchestra departments. He remained with the company until his death forty years later, producing nearly 500 original overtures, galops, polkas, quadrilles, marches, and other light compositions, some 1,500 arrangements for band, orchestra, piano and soloists, method books for virtually every instrument, and even a *New and Improved Constitution and By-Laws for the Bands of the United States and Canada*. His *Islington Polka* (1884) is a delightful souvenir of the Sunday-afternoon-in-the-park band concert that Rollinson helped to nurture as a focal point of community and musical life in turn-of-the-20th-century America.

Cuban Overture **George Gershwin (1898-1937)**

Composed in 1932.

Premiered on August 16, 1932, conducted by Albert Coates.

When Aaron Copland returned from the sun-baked visit south of the border that inspired *El Salón México*, he wrote, "Other tourists will pull out their snapshots to show you what a country looks like, but a composer wants to show you what a country *sounds* like." Only the year before, in 1932, George Gershwin left the frantic bustle of his beloved New York City for a holiday in Havana and, like Copland, returned home with his own musical postcard. Gershwin planned to swim and play tennis and visit the gaming halls to relax from the pres-

tures attendant upon the Broadway successes of *Strike Up the Band*, *Girl Crazy* and *Of Thee I Sing* and the composition of such orchestral works as *An American in Paris* and the *Second Rhapsody*, but his fame preceded him, and he was showered with constant attention from the Cubans, including a moonlight serenade by a sixteen-piece rumba band beneath the window of his Almdaress Hotel suite.

Before Gershwin left Havana, the idea for an orchestral work based on Cuban music was spawned. He acquired a number of native percussion instruments for the score and had them shipped back to New York, since his immediate plan was to continue on to Europe. However, the death of his father on May 14th forced him to return home, where work on the *Cuban Overture* gave him an outlet for his grief. Like most musical works, however, this one gives little clue to its creator's immediate feelings, and there is no touch of sorrow in the finished product. The score was originally named *Rumba*, but Gershwin changed it after the premiere because, he wrote, "When people read *Rumba* they expect the *Peanut Vendor* or a like piece of music. *Cuban Overture* gives a more just idea of the character and intent of the music."

The *Cuban Overture* opens with a brilliant flourish and a heady rhythmic vitality. A number of themes are presented — sometimes successively, sometimes simultaneously — in one of Gershwin's richest displays of texture, melodic invention and orchestration. A clarinet cadenza serves as transition to the work's central section, a languid dance based on the habanera that brings visions of a sensual Latin *señorita* charming the handsome, young American visitor. The music reaches a climax with a held note and a quick rhythmic punctuation which usher in the return of the themes and rhythmic vitality of the opening section. A brief coda of pyramiding chords draws this orchestral travelogue to a close.

Selections from *My Fair Lady*

Frederick Loewe (1901-1988)

Arranged by Robert Russell Bennett (1894-1981)

Composed in 1955-1956.

Premiered on March 15, 1956 at the Mark Hellinger Theatre in New York City.

Though George Bernard Shaw forbade the musical adaptation of *Pygmalion* during his lifetime, the Hungarian movie producer Gabriel Pascal, the only man ever to win permission from Shaw to film his plays, received rights from the Shaw estate for such a project following the author's death in 1950. Pascal approached many distinguished theater people to undertake the musical — Noël Coward, Cole Porter, Leonard Bernstein, Schwartz and Dietz, Rodgers and Hammerstein — but he was refused by them all. In 1952, he offered *Pygmalion* to Lerner and Loewe, but they could not agree on how to adapt such a precisely honed drama into a musical. Librettist and composer worked on separate projects for the next two years before solving *Pygmalion's* essential problem, which, according to Lerner, "was how to enlarge the play into a big musical without hurting content. It was a big surprise — we hardly had to enlarge the plot at all. We just added what Shaw had happening

offstage." The premiere of *My Fair Lady* on March 15, 1956 was, wrote critic William Hawkins, "a legendary evening." In the story, Eliza, the Cockney flower-girl who is transformed into a great lady by mending her diction under the disciplinarian guidance of the patrician Professor Higgins, triumphs at the ball that was the first test of her new elocutional skills. The present arrangement of several of the most memorable tunes from *My Fair Lady* is by Robert Russell Bennett, the dean of Broadway arrangers, who orchestrated the score of the original show.

Intermezzo from *Cavalleria rusticana* ("*Rustic Chivalry*") **Pietro Mascagni (1863-1945)**

Composed in 1890.

Premiered on May 17, 1890 in Rome, conducted by Leopoldo Mugnone.

Mascagni's *Cavalleria rusticana* created a sensation when it was premiered on May 17, 1890 in Rome. The progenitor of an Italian operatic sub-species known as *verismo* ("realism"), it was one of the first modern operas to depict contemporary settings and characters on stage, and was produced with immediate and enormous success across Europe and in the United States. The one-act story is set in the square of a Sicilian village on Easter morning. Turiddu returns from the army to find that his former sweetheart, Lola, has married Alfio. With Lola unavailable, Turiddu consoles himself with the charms of the peasant girl, Santuzza. She falls in love with Turiddu, and is infuriated when he returns to Lola for an adulterous affair. Santuzza confronts Turiddu on the steps of the church when he arrives to attend Mass, but he refuses to submit to her jealousy. Lola enters, singing a lighthearted ditty, grasps the situation at a glance, and exchanges bitter words with Santuzza. Turiddu, furious at the scene, hurls Santuzza to the ground, and escorts Lola into church. At this tense moment, Alfio enters, and Santuzza reveals to him his wife's illicit love for Turiddu. Alfio swears vengeance and leaves. A crowd fills the square after the Easter service ends. Turiddu proposes a toast to the villagers, but Alfio spurns the glass of wine offered to him. Insulted, Turiddu challenges him to a duel, and the two leave. The villagers rush back into the square with the news that Turiddu has been killed.

The *Intermezzo* occurs at the crucial moment in the drama when Alfio has just learned of his wife's infidelity and determines to confront her lover. The serenity of the music, played while the stage is empty for the Easter service, evokes the solemn worship in the church and also acts as a foil for the intense tragedy of the scenes surrounding it.

Four Selections

Leroy Anderson (1908-1975)

Leroy Anderson earned undergraduate and master's degrees in music from Harvard University, taught briefly at Radcliffe College, and in 1931 became music director and arranger of the Harvard University Band. In 1936, George Judd, manager of the Boston Symphony, asked Anderson to make a symphonic setting of some traditional Harvard songs for the 25th reunion of Mr. Judd's class and to conduct the number at a special perfor-

mance of the Boston Pops. Arthur Fiedler, music director of the Pops, was impressed with Anderson's work, and he encouraged him to write some original compositions for the orchestra. The first of those pieces, *Jazz Pizzicato*, was an immediate hit when it was premiered in 1937, and Anderson was appointed chief arranger and pianist for the Boston Pops, a position he held for the next quarter-century.

Belle of the Ball (1951) lends a distinctly American flavor to Europe's beloved waltz.

Anderson scored a career-defining hit with *Jazz Pizzicato*, composed as an encore for the Boston Pops concert of May 23, 1938. Arthur Fiedler, the Pops' Music Director, liked the piece well enough to program it regularly on his concerts, record it in June 1939, and arrange to have the score published, the first of Anderson's works to appear in print. "That's how I got started," the composer recalled. Though the recording was intended to help establish Anderson's reputation, it was actually somewhat delayed: since *Jazz Pizzicato* only filled about half of one side of a 78-rpm disc, Anderson wrote a companion piece of similar length and complementary character — *Jazz Legato* — to complete the project.

While Anderson was still working for the military at the Pentagon during the last weeks of World War II, Fiedler asked him to compose a new piece for the Boston Pops' Army Night on May 28, 1945. Anderson wrote his upbeat *Promenade* for the occasion, and then had an idea for another piece. "It occurred to me," he remembered, "that hundreds of composers have written music imitating or suggesting clocks, but that all these clocks were ordinary ones that beat in a regular rhythm. No one had described a 'syncopated' clock and this idea seemed to present the opportunity to write something different." Anderson finished both works quickly, got a three-day pass, and conducted the premieres of both *Promenade* and *Syncopated Clock* in uniform.

Anderson composed *Bugler's Holiday* in 1954 to show off the trumpet section of the Boston Pops, which premiered the piece on Memorial Day that year.

American Salute, Variations on When Johnny Comes Marching Home

Morton Gould (1913-1996)

Composed in 1942.

Premiered in November 1942 over the CBS Radio network conducted by the composer.

Morton Gould, composer, conductor, pianist, arranger and administrator, was born on December 10, 1913 in New York City. By the age of four, he was playing the piano and composing; at six, he had one of his first compositions published (a waltz called, appropriately, *Just Six*); by the time he was eight, he had played piano on broadcasts of WOR Radio in New York. In 1932, when he was nineteen, he became staff pianist at Radio City Music Hall. After a brief stint with NBC, Gould was engaged as composer, arranger and conductor by WOR, where he did a weekly broadcast; from 1942 to 1945, he performed the same duties for the *Cresta Blanca Carnival* and *Chrysler Hour* programs on CBS. In addition to his light compositions for radio, Gould wrote for

film (*Windjammer*), television (the *World War I* series, *Holocaust* and *Celebration*), ballet (*Fall River Legend*), Broadway (*Billion Dollar Baby* and *Arms and the Girl*), orchestra, symphonic band, chamber ensembles and chorus. Among the last of his over 1,000 compositions was a piece for saxophone written for and presented to President Bill Clinton in January 1996. Gould was also widely known as a conductor, having won a Grammy Award for his recording of the music of Charles Ives with the Chicago Symphony. His other honors included twelve additional Grammy nominations, 1983 Gold Baton Award from the American Symphony Orchestra League, 1985 Medal of Honor for Music from the National Arts Club, National Music Council's Golden Eagle Award and membership in the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters (1986). In 1994, he was one of five recipients of the Kennedy Center Honors, the highest award given by the United States to its artists. The following year he received the Pulitzer Prize for his *Stringmusic*. In addition to his careers as composer, performer, arranger and conductor, Morton Gould was also president of ASCAP (American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers) from 1986 to 1994. He died on February 21, 1996, while in Orlando to conduct seminars at the Disney Institute.

When Johnny Comes Marching Home is, with *The Battle Hymn of the Republic*, the most famous musical souvenir of the American Civil War. *When Johnny Comes Marching Home* was introduced by the band of the renowned Union bandmaster Patrick S. Gilmore, and published in 1863 with its words and music credited to one Louis Lambert. Gilmore later admitted that he had written the words but said that he had adapted the melody from a traditional Negro folksong while he was bandmaster for the Federal Army in New Orleans, though further research has indicated that the music's source may actually have been an Irish jig that was then popular with the Union soldiers. (Gilmore was born in Ireland in 1829.) The song became a favorite during the Civil War, and was fitted with verses titled *To Bales* by a Confederate author parodying an unsuccessful attempt by Union soldiers to capture bales of cotton. *When Johnny Comes Marching Home* renewed its popularity during the Spanish-American War, and was given modern dress as a fox-trot during World War I.

Morton Gould explained the background of the brilliant orchestral treatment of the song he did for the CBS Radio show *Cresta Blanca Carnival* in 1942: "Shortly before World War II, I conducted a number of government-sponsored programs in which I often had to play the songs characteristic of and particular to our allied countries. When we did programs representing our own United States, I found that at that time there were few, and in some instances, no orchestral settings of many of our most traditional tunes. *When Johnny Comes Marching Home* always excited me the way it has countless others as a unique, vital and stimulating melody with an irresistible built-in rhythmic surge. I therefore used this tune for a short, direct orchestral transcription of the material, the intent of which is summed up by the title I gave the work, *American Salute*."

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PENINSULA MUSIC FESTIVAL

PROGRAM 4

Tuesday, August 8, 2017, 7:30 p.m.

Victor Yampolsky, Conductor
Alexandria Hoffman, Piccolo
Amy Sims, Violin
Paul Ledwon, Cello
Christi Zuniga, Piano
Joan DerHovsepian, Viola

PMF SHOWCASE

VIVALDI Piccolo Concerto in C major, R. 443
 Allegro
 Largo
 Allegro molto

BEETHOVEN Concerto for Violin, Cello, Piano and Orchestra
 in C major, Op. 56, "Triple Concerto"
 Allegro
 Largo —
 Rondo alla Polacca

— INTERMISSION —

HUGO WOLF *Italian Serenade* in G major

STRAUSS *Der Bürger als Edelmann (Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme)*, Op. 60
 Overture to Act I (Jourdain — the Bourgeois)
 Minuet
 The Fencing Master
 Entrance and Dance of the Tailors
 The Minuet of Lully
 Courante
 Entrance of Cleonte (after Lully)
 Prelude to Act II (Intermezzo — Dorantes and Dorimene,
 Count and Marquise)
 The Dinner (Table Music and Dance of the Kitchen Boy)

This concert is sponsored by Friends of PMF:
Chris Risch, Rob Davis, Connie and Mike Glowacki, Jerry Smuda, Hedy Heise.

*Photography and audio recordings of this concert are strictly prohibited.
Please, no cell phones during the concert.*

Program 4

Piccolo Concerto in C major, R. 443 **Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741)**

Vivaldi wrote some sixteen concertos for flute, three of them for “flautino,” probably indicating a soprano recorder; they are usually played today on the modern piccolo. The Concerto in C major (R. 443) is one of the most openly virtuosic and purely delightful of all Vivaldi’s works, ingeniously displaying the lustrous pipings of the solo instrument in its highest register. The opening *Allegro* is built around a bounding orchestral *ritornello* (“return”) that surrounds the sparsely accompanied solo sections, which are principally composed of flashing arpeggios whose demands bespeak the extraordinary technical accomplishments of Vivaldi’s Venetian musicians. A touching lament, encompassing long flights of doleful melody supported by a pulsing bass line, occupies the central movement of the Concerto. The finale grows largely from the jolly, swinging orchestral paragraph given in the movement’s first measures, though the music touches on some darkly expressive harmonies in its solo episodes.

Concerto for Violin, Cello, Piano and Orchestra in C major, Op. 56, “Triple Concerto” **Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)**

Composed in 1803-1804.

Premiered in 1805 or 1806 in Vienna, with violinist Carl August Seidler, cellist Anton Kraft and pianist the Archduke Rudolph as soloists.

“Everyone likes flattery; and when you come to Royalty you should lay it on with a trowel,” counseled the 19th-century British statesman Benjamin Disraeli. He would have gotten no argument from Beethoven on that point. When Rudolph, Archduke of Austria and titled scion of the Habsburg line, turned up among Beethoven’s Viennese pupils, the young composer realized that he had tapped the highest echelon of European society. Beethoven gave instruction in both piano performance and composition to Rudolph, who had a genuine if limited talent for music. Concerning flattery, the most important manner in which 19th-century composers could praise royalty was by dedicating one of their compositions to a noble personage. Rudolph, who eventually became Archbishop Cardinal of Austria and remained a life-long friend and patron of Beethoven, received the dedication of such important works as the Fourth and Fifth Piano Concertos, the “Lebewohl” and “Hammerklavier” Sonatas, the Op. 96 Violin Sonata, the “Archduke” Trio, the *Missa Solemnis* and the *Grosse Fuge*. While Rudolph was still a boy of sixteen, however, his teacher wrote for him his very own composition, a piece that made a grand noise and showed off his piano skills in a sympathetic setting in collaboration with showy solo parts for violin and cello.

The “Triple” Concerto’s first movement is a modi-

fied sonata-allegro design with a lengthy exposition and recapitulation necessitated by the many thematic repetitions. After a hushed and halting opening in the strings, the full orchestra takes up the main thematic material of the movement. The soloists enter, led, as usual throughout this Concerto, by the cello with the main theme. The second theme begins, again in the cello, with a snappy triad. Much of the remainder of the movement is given over to repetitions and figuration rather than to true motivic development. A sudden quickening of the tempo charges the concluding measures of the movement with flashing energy. The second movement is a peaceful song for the solo strings with elaborate embroidery for the piano. The movement is not long, and soon leads into the finale without a break. The closing movement is a strutting Rondo alla Polacca in the style of the Polish polonaise.

The second movement is a peaceful song for the solo strings with elaborate embroidery from the piano. The movement is not long, and soon leads into the finale without a break. The closing movement is a strutting *Rondo alla Polacca* in the style of the Polish polonaise, which Chopin was to immortalize in his keyboard works. The cello again is the first to seize the dance-like theme, sharing it with the other participants in turn. There is an almost constant buzz of rhythmic filigree that gives this movement a happy propulsion which eventually erupts into a truly fine frenzy when the meter changes from triple to duple near the end. The triple meter and the rondo tune return to bring the Concerto to a rousing conclusion.

Italian Serenade

Hugo Wolf (1860-1903)

Composed for string quartet in May 1887; arranged for chamber orchestra in 1892.

Both versions premiered in January 1904 in Vienna.

The inspiration for the *Italian Serenade* seems to have come to Wolf from the novella *Aus dem Leben eines Taugenichts* (“From the Life of a Ne’er-Do-Well”) by the German Romantic writer Joseph Eichendorff. The *Serenade* was composed for string quartet in the space of only three days (May 2-4, 1887), during a time when Wolf was immersed in setting a number of Eichendorff’s verses for voice and piano, and bears a thematic resemblance to the first of the songs, *Der Soldat I*, about the love of a soldier for a lady who lives in a castle. “The Eichendorff novella has that same theme,” explained Eric Sams. “Central to its plot is an Italian serenade played by a small orchestra.... Its hero is a young musician, a violinist, who leaves his country home and his grumbling father to seek his fortune. He soon charms everyone with his gifts, or antagonizes them with his inconstancy. Wolf could hardly have found a more congenial or compelling self-portrait in all German literature.”

Wolf originally called his work simply *Serenade* in G major, but around 1890 he began referring to it as his “*Italian Serenade*.” In 1893 he made sketches for a slow movement in G minor, but, already suffering from the

emotional turmoil brought on by his impulsive personality and by the syphilis that would send him to an asylum in 1897, could not bring it to completion. If two of his letters from 1894 are to be taken at face value, he did finish another movement early that year, but that score has never been recovered and only 45 measures of it survive in sketches. The last notations he made for this ultimately unrealized project were a few pages of a *Tarantella* he jotted down in 1897, shortly before he was committed. Though thoughts of the suite based on the *Italian Serenade* were in his mind for the last decade of his life, he died in 1903 having finished no more of this proposed work than the first movement, written some fifteen years before.

“The essence of the delicious *Italian Serenade* is its antithesis of romantic sentiment and mocking wit,” wrote Robert W. Gutman. The work’s several sections, joined in a loose rondo structure, allow for the depiction of various moods and characters — the gossamer strains of the lilting serenade serve as the background and foil for the ardent entreaties of the suitor (in instrumental recitative) and the coquettish replies of the lady. The joining together of these contrasts representing the two stylistic poles of Wolf’s musical speech within a single piece marks the pinnacle of his success as an instrumental composer, and it is much to be regretted that his short life and his sad last years deprived him of the chance to provide the musical world with further such works as this masterful miniature.

***Der Bürger als Edelmann (Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme)*
 (“*The Would-Be Nobleman*”), Op. 60
Richard Strauss (1864-1949)**

Composed in 1911-1912.

Premiered on October 25, 1912 in Stuttgart.

In March 1911, Hugo Hofmannsthal, the librettist for Strauss’ *Der Rosenkavalier*, which had been a phenomenal success at its premiere two months earlier in Dresden, hit upon the idea of a new piece based on *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme* (“*The Would-Be Gentleman*”) by Jean Baptiste Molière, one of the chief jewels of French culture during the reign of Louis XIV. The play’s plot was outlined by Arthur M. Abell in *The Musical Courier*: “One Jourdain, a bourgeois of unusually common origin, after making a fortune in trade, has installed himself in a sumptuous home and is surrounded by a host of servants and all the external evidences of wealth. The boorish but good-hearted simpleton longs for the polished manners and the allures of the aristocracy. He takes lessons in dancing, singing, fencing and philosophy. Jourdain is in love with the Marquise Dorimene, a charming widow, and he gives a dinner in her honor. For the entertainment of his guests, after the dinner, Jourdain has engaged a troupe of singers who are to present the opera *Ariadne auf Naxos*.”

Hofmannsthal proposed an elaborate two-part production based on the play, the first for actors with copious incidental music by Strauss, the second a chamber opera newly composed around Molière’s characters. The premiere, in Dresden on October 25, 1912, with its curi-

ous mix of theatrical genres, was not a success. “The play-going public had no wish to listen to opera, and vice-versa,” lamented Strauss. “The proper soil for this pretty hybrid was lacking.” In 1916, Hofmannsthal and Strauss fitted *Ariadne auf Naxos*, the divertissement that formed the conclusion of *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*, with a new preface, and presented it in Vienna on October 4, 1916 as an independent opera.

Strauss, reluctant to let the fine incidental music he had created for the spoken portion of the original production languish unheard, chose from the complete score for *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme* a suite of nine movements, which he introduced on his 1920 New Year’s Day concert in Vienna under the German title *Der Bürger als Edelmann*. He preserved the chamber scoring of the original version for the orchestral suite, as he had in making the operatic revision of *Ariadne auf Naxos*. In the suite (known under both its French and German titles), Strauss transmuted the sparkling wit and crackling stage mannerisms of Molière’s brilliant comedy into music variously gay and satirical while being ingeniously redolent of 17th-century French society and artistic conventions.

The *Overture*, subtitled “Jourdain — the Bourgeois,” balances the swaggering depiction of the would-be aristocrat with a tender song, initiated by the oboe, drawn from *Ariadne*. There follows a wonderful caricature of a *Minuet* musically describing Jourdain’s bumbling attempts at dancing, which finds a vigorous counterpart in his wild lunges and parries under the bemused eye of *The Fencing Master*. In the next scene, Jourdain is dressed as “a person of consequence” during the balletic *Entrance and Dance of the Tailors*. The fifth movement is Strauss’ arrangement of what he described to Hofmannsthal as “the charming, famous Minuet by Lully,” Louis XIV’s principal composer and the uncontested autocrat of 17th-century French music. The following *Courante*, entirely by Strauss, lends musical brilliance to the ball scene of the comedy. *The Entrance of Cleonte* again draws on the music of Lully to create a piece of elegant demeanor and quiet expression. The *Prelude to Act II (Intermezzo, Dorantes and Dorimene — Count and Marquise)* is a portrait in musical pastels of the noble couple. The finale, *The Dinner (Table Music and Dance of the Kitchen Boy)*, is one of Strauss’ most ingenious programmatic essays. In addition to the pompous entrance of the assembled company (to a distorted version of the “Coronation March” from Meyerbeer’s *Le Prophète*) and the various antics of the waiters, Strauss has represented each of the food courses of the repast with a different serving of music, some of which are quotations from familiar pieces: the “Salmon from the Rhine” is offered with a snippet of the waltz music from *Das Rheingold*, the “Leg of Mutton à l’italien” is accompanied by the bleating-sheep episode from his own *Don Quixote*, and the “little dish of thrushes and larks” by the avian warblings from *Der Rosenkavalier*. *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*, rich in sentiment, humor and allusion, is music which deserves the self-praise given by its creator: “It is a real masterpiece of a score. You won’t find another like it soon.”

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PENINSULA MUSIC FESTIVAL

PROGRAM 5

Thursday, August 10, 2017, 7:30 p.m.

Victor Yampolsky, Conductor
Anna Lee, Violin
Jiannan Cheng, Karen Smuda Emerging Conductor†

DVOŘÁK AND HIS TIME II

SUPPÉ Overture to *Poet and Peasant*†*

DVOŘÁK Violin Concerto in A minor, Op. 53
Allegro ma non troppo —
Adagio ma non troppo
Finale: Rondo giocoso, ma non troppo

— INTERMISSION —

DVOŘÁK Symphony No. 7 in D minor, Op. 70
Allegro maestoso
Poco adagio
Scherzo: Vivace
Finale: Allegro

* first PMF performance

This concert is sponsored by Prilla and Tony Beadell.

*Photography and audio recordings of this concert are strictly prohibited.
Please, no cell phones during the concert.*

Program 5

Overture to *Poet and Peasant*

Franz von Suppé (1819-1895)

Composed in 1846.

Premiered on August 24, 1846 in Vienna.

Just as Jacques Offenbach, the great innovator of French comic opera, was an immigrant from Germany, so one of the seminal figures in the development of Viennese operetta came from what is now Croatia. Francesco Suppé Demelli was born in 1819 on a ship off the Adriatic coast city of Spalato, Dalmatia (now Split, Croatia) to Austrian parents, sent to Italy to study law, and moved with his mother after his father's death in 1835 to Vienna, where he became Franz von Suppé and took up music in earnest as a student of Ignaz Seyfried. Seyfried helped him get a job — initially unpaid — as Third Kapellmeister at the Josefstadt Theater, where his first stage work appeared in 1841. More than twenty theater scores followed in the next five years. He moved on to other, more lucrative, positions in Vienna's light-opera theaters, and continued to conduct until 1883, all the while turning out a steady stream of well-received musical farces. *Das Pensionat* of 1860, the first successful Viennese response to the growing local popularity of Offenbach's Parisian operettas, established the form with which Johann Strauss, Franz Lehár and others were to charm the world in later decades. Suppé's *Poet and Peasant Overture*, composed in 1846 as part of the incidental music for Karl Elmar's forgotten comedy *Dichter und Bauer*, may be Suppé's most familiar music — a catalog from the 1950s listed some 59 transcriptions then in print for virtually every conceivable ensemble.

Violin Concerto in A minor, Op. 53

Antonín Dvořák (1841-1904)

Composed in 1879; revised in 1880 and 1882.

Premiered on October 14, 1883 in Prague, with František Ondříček as soloist and Moric Anger conducting.

When the popularity of his 1878 *Slavonic Dances* rocketed Dvořák to international fame, he suddenly found himself welcome in the most august musical company. Liszt, the renowned critic Hanslick, Brahms — who had recommended the young composer to his publisher Simrock — and the violinist Joseph Joachim were among his new friends. Joachim premiered Brahms' Violin Concerto in January 1879, and Dvořák, perhaps under its influence and certainly spurred on by Simrock, decided to try a similar composition of his own. As a trial for the larger work, he composed the short *Mazurek*, Op. 49 for solo violin and orchestra in February 1879. He brought the Concerto to his desk in July, and by September, he was able to send the first version of the score to Joachim for his criticism.

Joseph Joachim, perhaps the most distinguished violinist of the time in Europe and, in that age of fustian virtuosi, one of the few dedicated to the highest musical standards, had been performing Dvořák's recent

chamber music with his ensemble. His advocacy of the Sextet (Op. 48) and the E-flat Quartet (Op. 51) did much to establish the composer's reputation in Vienna and elsewhere. Joachim had been of inestimable help to Brahms during the composition of his Violin Concerto in 1878, and he offered similar assistance to Dvořák. Though Dvořák had studied the violin and performed in the orchestra of the Czech National Theater from 1866 to 1873, he welcomed Joachim's advice on the finer points of string technique and concerto composition. Unfortunately, Joachim could not generate much enthusiasm for the new work, and he invited Dvořák to Berlin to discuss his suggestions for its improvement. After Dvořák made the journey, he wrote to Simrock on May 9, 1880, "At Mr. Joachim's suggestion I have revised the whole Concerto, leaving not a single bar untouched. I have kept the main themes and added a few new ones, but the whole conception of the work is different; harmonies, rhythms, orchestration are all changed."

The revision was dutifully dispatched to Joachim, who, reluctant to again express his disappointment, did not mention the Concerto for two full years. Finally, on August 14, 1882, he sent Dvořák a letter of lukewarm praise in which he wrote that, though he (Joachim) had made the solo part more practicable, he still considered the work not ready for public performance. Once more, he asked the composer to come to Berlin for a conference. This second evaluation included a run-through of the score by Joachim and the student orchestra of the Berlin Hochschule für Musik, following which Dvořák made a large cut in the finale and, again, retouched the solo part.

Joachim was still dissatisfied. In the Concerto's structure, Dvořák had joined together the first two movements. Joachim thought that they should be separated, but the composer remained adamant on the work's form. The score was completed with the intention that Joachim would give the premiere in November, but he did not play it on that occasion or any other. The honor of the first performance fell instead to František Ondříček the following year, when Dvořák's intuition about the work's form and content were proven correct. The Concerto was immediately successful and has remained one of his most popular scores.

In this Concerto, Dvořák was influenced by several facets of the Czech personality — the blending of sadness and determination in the first movement, the tenderness of the second, and the boisterous peasant joy of the finale. The main theme group of the Concerto's first movement comprises a bold, almost tragic, opening statement, a lamenting phrase with a prominent triplet rhythm presented by the soloist, and (after a repetition of the first two motives) a lyrical woodwind strain above a simple string accompaniment. These three motives are treated at some length before the smoothly flowing second theme is introduced as a duet for oboe and solo violin. The development section is a challenging exercise in broken chords for the soloist. The recapitulation is greatly truncated, and brings back only the lamenting

theme from the exposition. A delicate woodwind chorale leads without pause to the second movement, a song of sweet nostalgia sung by the soloist. The bucolic mood is twice interrupted by stern proclamations from the orchestra. The finale is a scintillating rondo whose main theme is reminiscent of the fiery Czech dance, the *furiant*.

Symphony No. 7 in D minor, Op. 7

Antonín Dvořák

Composed in 1884-1885.

Premiered on April 22, 1885 in London, conducted by the composer.

When Dvořák attended the premiere of the Third Symphony of his friend and mentor Johannes Brahms on December 2, 1883, he was already familiar with the work from a preview Brahms had given him at the piano shortly before. The effect on Dvořák of Brahms' magnificent creation, with its inexorable formal logic and its powerful shifting moods, was profound. Dvořák considered it, quite simply, the greatest symphony of the time, and it served as one of the two emotional seeds from which his D minor Symphony grew. The other, which followed less than two weeks after the premiere of the Third Symphony, was the death of his mother.

Brahms not only encouraged Dvořák in his work, but also convinced his publisher, Simrock, to take on the music of the once little-known Czech composer. Dvořák always respected and was grateful to his benefactor, and when Brahms' Third Symphony appeared he looked upon it as a challenge presented to him to put forth a surpassing effort in his next work in the form. With Brahms' Symphony as the inspiration, and his grief at his mother's passing as the soul, the idea of a new symphony grew within him. He poured some of his sadness into the Piano Trio in F minor, Op. 65, composed early in 1884, but the spark that ignited the actual composition of the Seventh Symphony was not struck until the following summer. Dvořák had been garnering an international success with his music during the preceding years, and his popularity was especially strong in England. As one of the stops on his busy conducting tours through northern Europe, he visited Britain for the first time in the spring of 1884, and on June 13th he was elected an honorary member of the Philharmonic Society and simultaneously requested to provide a new symphony for that organization. It gave him the reason to put the gestating Symphony to paper. Following another English foray in the fall that was even more successful than the earlier one, he set to work on the Symphony in December.

With thoughts of his mother still fresh in his mind and with the example of Brahms always before him ("It must be something respectable for I don't want to let Brahms down," he wrote to Simrock), Dvořák determined to compose a work that would solidify his international reputation and be worthy of those who inspired it. In his study of the composer's work, Otakar Šourek wrote, "Dvořák worked at the D minor Symphony with passionate concentration and in the conscious endeavor to create a work of noble proportions and content, which should surpass not only what he had so far produced in

the field of symphonic composition, but which was also designed to occupy an important place in world music." On December 22nd, Dvořák wrote to his friend Antonín Rus, "I am now busy with the new Symphony (for London) and wherever I go I have no thought for anything but my work, which must be such as to move the world — well, God grant that it may be so!" He was so pleased with progress on the piece, even during the busy holiday season, that on New Year's Eve he told another friend, Alois Göbl, "I am again as happy and contented in my work as I have always been up to now and, God grant, I always shall be." The orchestration was undertaken during the winter and the score finished in March, only a month before its premiere in London.

The Symphony begins with an ominous rumble deep in the basses reminiscent of both the introductory measures of Bruckner's symphonies and the beginning of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, another work in D minor and coincidentally also commissioned by the London Philharmonic Society. The haunting main theme is introduced by the violas and cellos, then echoed by the clarinets. Almost immediately, the possibilities for development built into the theme are explored, and the music rapidly grows in intensity until a climax is achieved when the main theme bursts forth in dark splendor from the full orchestra. The tension subsides to allow the flute and clarinet to present the lyrical second theme. The development, woven from the thematic components of the exposition, is compact and concentrated. The recapitulation is swept in on an enormous wave of sound that is capped by the re-entry of the timpani. The main theme is abandoned quickly, and the repeat of the flowing second theme is entrusted to two clarinets in a rich setting. The main theme returns, at times with considerable vehemence, to form the coda to this magnificent movement.

The second movement opens with a chorale of an almost otherworldly serenity that had been little portrayed in music since the late works of Beethoven. A complementary thematic idea with wide leaps of pathetic beauty is heard from the strings. The unusual form of the movement, part variations, part sonata, is perhaps best heard as the struggle between the beatific grace of the opening and the various states of musical and emotional tension that militate against it. It is likely that Dvořák intended this expressive music as the heart of the Symphony, as a cathartic portrayal of the feelings that had troubled him since the death of his mother.

The *Scherzo* is the greatest dance movement in Dvořák's symphonies, at once graceful and compelling, airy and forceful. Its bounding syncopations give it an irresistible vivacity set in a glowing, burnished orchestral sonority. Though the trio is more lyrical, it has an incessant rhythmic background in the strings that lends it an unsettled quality.

The finale, which continues the brooding mood of the preceding movements, is large in scale and assured in expression. Unlike many minor-mode symphonies of the 19th century, this one does not end in an apotheosis of optimism, but, wrote Otakar Šourek, "rises to a glorious climax of manly, honorable and triumphant resolve." It is a moving climax to one of Dvořák's greatest creations.

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PENINSULA MUSIC FESTIVAL

PROGRAM 6

Saturday, August 12, 2017, 7:30 p.m.

Victor Yampolsky, Conductor
Eric Olson, Oboe
Conner Ray, Clarinet
Richard Britsch, Horn
Philip Pandolfi, Bassoon

MOZART'S GREATEST HITS

MOZART *Eine kleine Nachtmusik* (Serenade No. 13 in G major), K. 525
Allegro
Romanza: Andante
Menuetto: Allegretto
Rondo: Allegro

MOZART Sinfonia Concertante for Oboe, Clarinet, Bassoon, Horn
and Orchestra in E-flat major, K. 297b (K. Anh. 9)
Allegro
Adagio
Andantino con Variazioni

— INTERMISSION —

MOZART Symphony No. 40 in G minor, K. 550
Molto allegro
Andante
Menuetto: Allegretto
Allegro assai

This concert is sponsored by the Ralph and Genevieve B. Horween Foundation
in memory of Marion Horween Chase.

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Please, no cell phones during the concert.*

Program 6

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)***Eine kleine Nachtmusik* (Serenade No. 13 in G major), K. 525***Composed in 1787.*

Eine kleine Nachtmusik is at once one of the most familiar yet one of the most mysterious of Mozart's works. He dated the completed manuscript on August 10, 1787, the day on which he entered it into his catalog of compositions as "*Eine kleine Nachtmusik, bestehend in einem [consisting of an] Allegro, Menuett und Trio — Romance, Menuett und Trio, Finale. 2 Violini, Viola e Bassi.*" There is no other contemporary record of the work's provenance, composition or performance. It was the first work of the serenade type he had written since the magnificent C minor Wind Octet (K. 388) of 1782, and it seems unlikely that, at a time when he was increasingly mired in debt, he would have returned to the genre without some promise of payment. Indeed, he had to set aside his furious preparations for the October premiere of *Don Giovanni* in Prague to compose the piece. (The eventful year 1787 also saw Mozart's meeting with Beethoven — "He will soon make a noise in the world," Mozart prophesied — as well as the aborted plans to move to England with his friends, the Storaces and Michael Kelly, and the death of his father.) The simple, transparent style of *Eine kleine Nachtmusik*, reminiscent of the music of Mozart's Salzburg years and so different from the rich expression of all his later music except for the dances he wrote for the Habsburg court balls, suggests that it was designed for amateur performance, perhaps at the request of some aristocratic Viennese player of limited musical ability. The word "bassi" in the catalog entry implies that it was conceived for a quintet of strings (in its 18th-century context, "bassi" meant cellos doubled by basses) or for a small string orchestra, but there is not a scrap of further evidence concerning the piece, and Mozart's exact intentions as to its performing forces will probably remain forever unknown.

Eine kleine Nachtmusik is an enigma, a wonderful, isolated chronological and stylistic aberration of Mozart's mature years that raises to perfection the simple musical gestures of his boyhood. Was it a piece, like the courtly dances, that he tossed off so quickly he did not have time to invest it with any complexities? Did his patron (Mozart never composed any other of his serenades without a definite commission) require something without the incipient Romanticisms that were the composer's growing obsession? Was it some kind of nostalgic tonal reminiscence of the bright days of his youth — a kind of memorial to his father, dead only three months? Unanswerable questions, these, yet not without some bearing on the perception of this familiar music. Though sunny and cheerful throughout, when seen in the light of its immediate musical companions of 1787 — *Don Giovanni*, the A major Violin Sonata (K. 526) and the C major and

G minor String Quintets (K. 515 and 516) — *Eine kleine Nachtmusik* takes on an added depth of expression as much for what it eschews as for what it contains.

Sinfonia Concertante for Oboe, Clarinet, Bassoon, Horn and Orchestra in E-flat major, K. 297b (K. Anh. 9)*Composed in 1778.*

Mozart arrived in Paris, chaperoned by his mother, on March 23, 1778, hoping that the music lovers of the French capital would recognize his genius and reward him with an appropriate position. With the help of Baron Friedrich Grimm, whom he had met on his first trip to Paris as a *Wunderkind* of seven in 1763, he was introduced to several of the aristocracy, though his treatment at their hands was something less than he had hoped for — his letters home often complain of being kept waiting in drafty anterooms and of having to perform on wretched harpsichords. In May, it appeared that Mozart's foray into Parisian culture might be rewarded. He reported to his father that he had been offered the post of organist at Versailles, a job with light duties, six months leave per year and proximity to the royal family. However, his longing was for the opera house (and for a sweetheart, Aloysia Weber, whom he had met on a stop in Mannheim while journeying to Paris), and he refused the post. "After all, 2,000 *livres* is not such a big sum," he rationalized to his furious father. Mozart's stay in Paris grew sad. His mother fell ill in June, and died the following month. He lingered in Paris, sorrowful and alone, until September 26th, when, without the position he sought or the commissions he hoped to receive, he returned to Salzburg.

The musical highlight of Mozart's Parisian venture was his association with the illustrious series of orchestral programs given by the Concert Spirituel under the direction of Jean Le Gros. Le Gros commissioned him to write a symphony (No. 31 in D major, K. 297/K. 300a, "Paris"), several substitute movements for a choral *Miserere* by the Mannheim composer Ignaz Holzbauer (K. 297a, lost), and something in the *sinfonia concertante* form that was then popular with Parisian audiences. On April 5, 1778, Mozart announced in a letter to his father that he planned to write a *sinfonia concertante* for three Mannheim wind virtuosos then visiting Paris: Johann Baptist Wendling, flute; Friedrich Ramm, oboe; and Georg Wenzel Ritter, bassoon. Jan Vaclav Stich, better known by his assumed Italian name of Giovanni Punto (assumed when he bolted illegally from the service of a Bohemian nobleman to undertake a career as a touring musician), the greatest horn player of the day (Beethoven wrote his Horn Sonata, Op. 17 for Punto), was also in Paris at the time, and so Mozart included a part for him in the score, as well. The resulting *Sinfonia Concertante* for Flute, Oboe, Bassoon, Horn and Orchestra was composed quickly later that month, and scheduled for performance by Le Gros. Mozart continued the tale in a letter dated May 1st: "The four soloists were, and still are, completely in love with [the work]. Le Gros had the score for four days for copying. But still I found it lying in the same place. Finally, the day before

[the concert], I didn't see it, but searched in a pile of music and found it hidden.... Two days later, when it should have been performed, I went to the concert. Ramm and Punto came to me in great heat and asked why my *Sinfonia Concertante* was not being performed.... Ramm fell into a great rage and denounced Le Gros right there in the green room — in French — saying that it was ugly of him, and so on.” Mozart was convinced (probably with cause) that Giovanni Cambini, who was dispensing *sinfonia concertante* literally by the dozens to the Parisian musical *haute monde*, had intrigued to stop the performance of his new piece: one of Cambini's specimens replaced Mozart's on the program. At any rate, Mozart's work was not performed in Paris in 1778, and he sold the only copy of the score to Le Gros when he left for home in the fall. He mentioned in a letter of October 3rd that he could reproduce the work from memory whenever he wished, but there is no record that he ever did so, and the *Sinfonia Concertante* for Winds was assumed lost for the next century.

It was not until a posthumous edition of Otto Jahn's monumental biography of Mozart appeared in 1905 that further light was thrown on the *Sinfonia Concertante*, when Hermann Deiters, editor of that edition, located among Jahn's papers a copy of a score for a *Sinfonia Concertante*. Its style was Mozartian enough not to preclude its being the 1778 Paris piece, but the scoring was not for the specified *flute*, oboe, bassoon and horn, but rather for *clarinet*, oboe, bassoon and horn. Since Jahn left no mention of the source of his score, its authenticity has been open to question ever since it was discovered, though most Mozart scholars agree that the work as it has survived is basically authentic; a “computer-assisted” study by Robert D. Levin and Daniel N. Leeson in the early 1980s convinced those researchers that the work was genuine. (Levin also made a “reconstruction” for the original instrumentation, and documented his endeavor in a book: *Mozart's Sinfonia Concertante for Winds. Authenticity, Origin, and Reconstruction*. Pendragon Press, 1987.) Jahn's score was tentatively accepted into the Mozart canon, and has enjoyed a fine success ever since, though the mystery of its provenance may never be solved.

Though nominally the *sinfonia concertante* bridges the genres of symphony and concerto, this example, as do Mozart's other works in the form (the Flute and Harp Concerto, Two Piano Concerto and *Sinfonia Concertante* for Violin and Viola, all dating from 1778-1779), stands closer in style and form to the latter than to the former. Each of its three movements remains in the tonic key of E-flat major, a result both of Mozart's recognition of the Parisian taste for harmonic simplicity (Le Gros asked him to write a substitute slow movement for the “Paris” Symphony because the impresario claimed the rich chordal peregrinations of the original confused his audience) and the inability of the wind instruments of the time to easily negotiate all but rudimentary chromaticism. The opening *Allegro* follows the traditional first-movement concerto form: orchestral introduction — presentation of the soloists — thematic elaboration — recapitulation of earlier themes. Its abundance of melodic materials, suavity of gesture and gliding grace would seem to dispel any

doubts concerning its authenticity. The following *Adagio* is a sweet song shared by the wind quartet lightly supported by orchestra, a sort of slow, wordless madrigal updated into 18th-century style. The closing movement is a set of ten variations on a theme of opera-buffa jocularity that exploits both the soloistic and conversational characteristics of the little clan of winds.

Symphony No. 40 in G minor, K. 550 *Composed in 1788.*

At no time was the separation between Mozart's personal life and his transcendent music more apparent than in the summer of 1788, when, at the age of 32, he had only three years to live. His wife was ill and his own health was beginning to fail; his six-month-old daughter died on July 29th; *Don Giovanni* received a disappointing reception at its Viennese premiere on May 7th; he had small prospect of participating in any important concerts; and he was so impoverished and indebted that he would not answer a knock on the door for fear of finding a creditor there. Yet, amid all these difficulties, he produced, in less than two months, the three crowning jewels of his orchestral output, the Symphonies Nos. 39, 40 and 41. The G minor alone of the last three symphonies may reflect the composer's distressed emotional state at the time. It is among those great works of Mozart that look forward to the passionately charged music of the 19th century while epitomizing the structural elegance of the waning Classical era.

The Symphony's pervading mood of tragic restlessness is established immediately at the outset by a simple, arpeggiated figure in the violas above which the violins play the agitated main theme. This melody is repeated with added woodwind chords to lead through a stormy transition to the second theme. After a moment of silence, a contrasting, lyrical melody is shared by strings and winds. The respite from the movement's driving energy provided by the dulcet second theme is brief, however, and tension soon mounts again. The wondrous development section gives prominence to the fragmented main theme. The recapitulation returns the earlier themes in heightened settings.

The *Andante*, in sonata form, uses rich chromatic harmonies and melodic half-steps to create a mood of brooding intensity and portentous asceticism. Because of its somber minor-key harmonies, powerful irregular phrasing and dense texture, the *Minuet* was judged by Arturo Toscanini to be one of the most darkly tragic pieces ever written. The character of the *Minuet* is emphasized by its contrast with the central trio, the only untroubled portion of the entire work.

The finale opens with a rocket theme that revives the insistent rhythmic energy of the first movement. The gentler second theme, with a full share of piquant chromatic inflections, slows the hurtling motion only briefly. The development section exhibits a contrapuntal ingenuity that few late-18th-century composers could match in technique and none surpass in musicianship. The recapitulation maintains the Symphony's tragic mood to the close.

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PENINSULA MUSIC FESTIVAL

PROGRAM 7

Tuesday, August 15, 2017, 7:30 p.m.

Guy Victor Bordo, Guest Conductor
Desirée Ruhstrat & Dmitri Pogorelov, Violins

SUMMERS IN SPAIN

FALLA Suite No. 2 from *The Three-Cornered Hat*
The Neighbor's Dance: Allegro ma non troppo
The Miller's Dance: Moderato assai, molto ritmico e pesante
Final Dance: Allegro ritmico, molto moderato e pesante

XAVIER ZOGHBI Concerto for Two Violins and Orchestra*
Allegro Moderato
Adagio
Presto

— INTERMISSION —

RIMSKY-KORSAKOV *Capriccio espagnol*, Op. 34
Alborada: Vivo e strepitoso —
Variations: Andante con moto —
Alborada: Vivo e strepitoso —
Scena e canto gitano: Allegretto
Fandango asturiano

MASSENET Ballet Music from *Le Cid**
Castillane
Andalouse
Aragonaise
Aubade
Catalane
Madrilène
Navarraise

* first PMF performance

This concert is sponsored by Linda and Tom Weisensel.

Desirée Ruhstrat appears by exclusive arrangement with Great Lakes Performing Artists Associates.

*Photography and audio recordings of this concert are strictly prohibited.
Please, no cell phones during the concert.*

Program 7

Suite No. 2 from *The Three-Cornered Hat* Manuel de Falla (1876-1946)

Composed in 1917 and 1919.

Premiered on July 22, 1919 in London, conducted by Ernest Ansermet.

The dazzling Parisian success of Sergei Diaghilev's Ballet Russe that began in 1909 came to an abrupt halt when the Guns of August tore across Belgium and France to begin World War I in 1914. Diaghilev, Leonide Massine and some of the company took refuge in Switzerland and Spain, while Nijinsky and others fled to America. Diaghilev arranged a season in Spain for 1917, and, always on the prowl for new talent, he took the opportunity to look up a musician Stravinsky had met in Paris in 1910. Stravinsky described his Spanish colleague as "even smaller than myself, and as modest and withdrawn as an oyster... unpitiously religious, and the shyest man I have ever met." His name was Manuel de Falla.

Falla, a meticulous worker who composed slowly, had completed only a small number of works by 1917 — most notably *Nights in the Gardens of Spain*, the opera *La Vida Breve* ("The Brief Life") and the ballet *El Amor Brujo* ("Lover, the Magician") — and he was little known outside his homeland. When Diaghilev and Massine introduced themselves to him in Barcelona, he took them to see a one-act farce set in the early 19th century about the attempted seduction of a miller's wife by the local governor for which he had provided the music, *El corregidor y la molinera* ("The Corregidor and the Miller's Wife"). The script for this "pantomime" was by Gregorio Martinez Sierra, who based it on a short novel by Pedro de Alarcon published in 1874 as *El sombrero de tres picos*. Alarcon was said to have heard the story in turn from an old goatherd who hired himself out as an entertainer for local weddings and feasts. Of Falla's score, Massine wrote that it "seemed to us very exciting, and its blend of violence and passion was similar to much of the music of the local folk-dances. Both Diaghilev and I felt that the story and the music offered us the potentials of a full-length ballet." Falla accepted Diaghilev's proposal to revise and extend his score for production when the war was over, but gave the provision that he be allowed enough time to study Spanish folk music and dance styles to assure the correct atmosphere for the finished work.

It was not until World War I ended that the production of *The Three-Cornered Hat* could be staged as part of the 1919 London season of the Ballet Russe. Diaghilev commissioned Pablo Picasso to design the decor; it was the great painter's first ballet assignment. Massine choreographed the work with the help of the Spanish dancer Felix, who was brought to London to train the company for the premiere. (Sadly, the pressures of artistic life in a big city were more than the man could bear, and he lost his reason soon after he arrived, lingering in a British asylum until his death, in 1941.) The first performance,

on July 22, 1919 at London's Alhambra Theater conducted by Ernest Ansermet, was a great success (Spanish dance schools sprang up all around London within weeks), and *The Three-Cornered Hat* was an important milestone in establishing Falla's international reputation.

The Three-Cornered Hat concerns a village miller and his pretty wife. The Corregidor (mayor) is attracted to the miller's wife, and makes his advances. She tells her husband to watch as she spurns the old man's attempts at love. The Corregidor chases her, but becomes aware of the teasing intrigue between husband and wife, and departs. That evening the village festivities are interrupted by the local constabulary, who have come to arrest the miller on a charge trumped up by the Corregidor to get him out of the way. The Corregidor appears as the miller is led away, but falls into the millstream as he is pursuing the girl. She runs off in search of her husband while the Corregidor removes his sodden clothes, including his three-cornered hat — symbol of his office — hangs them on a chair outside the mill, and jumps into the absent girl's bed to ward off a chill. Meanwhile, the miller has escaped and returned home. He sees the Corregidor's discarded clothes and believes himself betrayed by his wife. Vowing to get even, he exchanges his garments for those of the official, scribbles on the wall "The wife of the Corregidor is also very pretty," and runs off in search of his conquest. The Corregidor emerges to find only the miller's clothes. He puts them on just in time for the police, hunting their escaped prisoner, to arrest him by mistake. The miller's wife returns, followed by the miller, and the two are happily reconciled.

Falla derived two orchestral suites from the complete score for *The Three-Cornered Hat*. They parallel the action of the ballet, but omit some of the connecting tissue. The Second Suite comprises *The Neighbor's Dance* (initiated by an ethereal melody high in the strings), *The Miller's Dance* (prefaced by solo horn) and the energetic *Final Dance*.

Concerto for Two Violins and Orchestra Xavier Zoghbi (born in 1954)

Composed in 1994.

Premiered on March 31, 1995 by the Symphony Orchestra of Gran Canaria, Canary Islands, conducted by Victor Yampolsky, with Anatol Romanov and Mikhail Vostokov as soloists.

Teacher, composer and conductor Xavier Zoghbi is a leading figure in the musical life of the Canaries, the subtropical Spanish islands sixty miles off the coast of Morocco. Zoghbi was born in 1954 into a multi-cultural family in Las Palmas, the capital city of Gran Canaria, the second most populous of the Canaries after Tenerife, and raised in his parents' blended Lebanese and Spanish heritage. Music played an important role in his upbringing, and he went on to study at the conservatory in his native Las Palmas as well as at the University of La Laguna in Tenerife; he undertook advanced studies with composer, writer and music theorist Josep Soler in Barcelona, conductor Juan José Olives in Tenerife, and

composer Francisco Guerrero in Madrid. Since 1987, Zoghbi has taught at the Music Conservatory of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria. He is also a founding member of PROMUSCAN, an association promoting the music of Canarian composers, and composer of numerous chamber, orchestral and piano works that often reflect his Spanish heritage, most notably two symphonies and the Concerto for Two Violins.

Zoghbi's Concerto for Two Violins and Orchestra was composed in 1994 and premiered on March 31, 1995 by the Symphony Orchestra of Gran Canaria under the direction of Victor Yampolsky; the soloists were the Russian violinists Anatol Romanov and Mikhail Vostokov. Maestro Yampolsky has kindly provided the following description of the work: "The first movement, a bristling *Allegro Moderato*, places rough rhythmic outbursts against a backdrop of highly chromatic sixteenth-note runs that pass throughout the orchestra. When the soloists enter in their highest register, they echo and pursue each other in close canon, like two exotic birds calling back and forth. The highly rhythmic and syncopated writing seems to pay homage to J.S. Bach's Concerto for Two Violins, but its harmonic and orchestral surroundings are quite different, with moments that suggest a fiery Spanish dance. The scoring is dense, with lots of ferocious activity in the orchestra, as the soloists sing out their ardent duet. For a brief moment, the orchestra is silent and the soloists 'chase' each other in close canon; eventually, this rising action bubbles over into a joyous rhythmic unison in triplets. The movement ends with the soloists climbing to their greatest height; it is a moment of unexpected transparency and lyricism.

"The second movement (*Adagio*) places the soloists in a spare texture, with harps and vibraphone creating an ethereal atmosphere; a few more solo string players eventually join the delicate dance. Zoghbi's sighing, lyrical lines are highly decorated, with each violinist tumbling and soaring like an acrobat. The duet grows more impassioned and eventually, agitated; the dark expressiveness here recalls the tumultuous first movement.

"The final movement (*Presto*) finds the piano and percussion at center stage with swirling *ostinato* patterns. Eventually, the soloists join in, taking up this perpetual motion with insistent, chromatic, repeated figures, often accentuated by the triangle. Late in the movement, there is a 'cadenza' moment, leaving the violinists alone for barely a moment before the percussion and strings sneak in. The movement reveals a sense of humor and romance; its relentless repeated figures eventually drive the piece to a breathless conclusion."

Capriccio espagnol, Op. 34

Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov (1844-1908)

Composed in 1887.

Premiered on October 31, 1887 in St. Petersburg, conducted by the composer.

Rimsky-Korsakov visited Spain only once: while on a training cruise around the world as a naval cadet, he spent three days in the Mediterranean port of Cádiz in December 1864. The sun and sweet scents of Iberia left a lasting impression on him, however, just as they had on the earlier Russian composer Mikhail Glinka, who was

inspired to compose the *Jota Aragonesa* and *A Night in Madrid* on Spanish themes. Both of those colorful works by his Russian predecessor were strong influences on Rimsky-Korsakov when he came to compose his own Spanish piece in 1887.

Rimsky-Korsakov's principal project during the summer of 1887 was the orchestration of the opera *Prince Igor* by his compatriot Alexander Borodin, who had died the preceding winter. Rimsky installed himself at Nikolskoe on the shore of Lake Nelai in a rented villa, and made good progress with the opera, one of many completions and revisions he undertook of the music of his fellow Russian composers. Things went well enough that he felt able to interrupt that project for several weeks to work on his piece on Spanish themes, originally intended for solo violin and orchestra but which he recast for full orchestra as the brilliant *Capriccio espagnol*.

The *Capriccio espagnol* comprises five brief, attached movements. It opens with a rousing *Alborada* or "morning-song," marked *vivo e strepitoso* — "lively and noisy." The solo violin figures prominently here and throughout the work, a reminder of the virtuosic origin of the *Capriccio* as a concerted piece for that instrument. A tiny set of variations on a languid theme presented by the horns follows. The *Alborada* returns in new instrumental coloring that features a sparkling solo by the clarinet. The fourth movement, *Scena e canto gitano* ("Scene and Gypsy Song"), begins with a string of cadenzas: horns and trumpets, violin, flute, clarinet and harp. The swaying *Gypsy Song* gathers up the instruments of the orchestra to build to a dazzling climax leading without pause to the finale, *Fandango asturiano*. The trombones present the theme of this section, based on the rhythm of a traditional dance of Andalusia. The final pages of the *Capriccio* recall the *Alborada* theme to bring this brilliant orchestral showpiece to an exhilarating close.

Ballet Music from Le Cid

Jules Massenet (1842-1912)

Composed in 1884-1885.

Premiered on November 30, 1885 in Paris.

El Cid (*Le Cid*, in French) — "The Conqueror," from the Spanish Arabic *al-sid* ("lord" or "chief") — was a seminal figure in Spanish history and literature. Born Rodrigo Díaz de Vivar around 1043 near Burgos, in north-central Spain, he was the son of a courtier to Sancho II of Castile, who had him educated and trained in warfare at court out of appreciation for his father's services. When Sancho's father, King Ferdinand I, died in 1065, he divided his vast dominions, according to the Spanish custom, among his three sons and two daughters. Sancho inherited Castile but thought that, as eldest son, he should have been his father's sole heir. He appointed Rodrigo Díaz commander of his troops and wrested control of León and Galicia from his brothers, Alfonso and García, and of Toro from his sister Urraca, but lost his life in 1072 when he laid siege to his sister Elvira's city of Zamora. Learning of Sancho's death, Alfonso set out from his exile in Toledo to claim his brother's holdings, including the allegiance of Rodrigo, which he tried to win by bestowing upon him his niece Jimena in marriage in 1074. Rodrigo would not cede his own ambitions for

power to the new king, however, and Alfonso finally banished him from his court in 1081, whereupon Rodrigo, by then regarded as Spain's greatest warrior, offered his services to the Moorish dynasty of al-Mu'tamin at Zaragoza in northeastern Spain. Rodrigo — by now, El Cid — defeated al-Mu'tamin's Moorish and Christian rivals in a series of battles until Alfonso put aside his enmity in 1087 and asked for his help in defeating the invading Almoravids from North Africa, who threatened to bring all of Iberia under Muslim rule. El Cid met with Alfonso but refused to fight again for him and returned at Zaragoza, from where he embarked on a complicated military and political strategy to take control of the rich kingdom of Valencia, which he did, after much bloodshed and a protracted siege, in May 1094. El Cid ordered that Valencia's principal mosque become a Christian cathedral two years later and he admitted a large influx of Christian colonists into his domain, one of the few regions of southern Spain that was not then under Almoravid rule. He ruled Valencia until his death in 1099; the Almoravids occupied the city three years later and retained control of it for more than a century. El Cid's remains were moved several times, and only found their definitive resting place at the Burgos Cathedral in 1921.

El Cid was given almost legendary status by the anonymous 12th-century epic poem *El Cantar de Mio Cid* ("The Song of The Cid"), the earliest monument of Spanish literature, and by the account in *La Crónica General ó Estoria [History] de España* by the remarkable King Alfonso the Wise of Castile and León (1221-1284), poet, composer, scholar, social and political reformer, patron of the arts and sciences, and founder of a chair of music at the University of Salamanca in 1254. These early accounts of El Cid provided the material and inspiration for the plays *Las Mocedades [Youth] del Cid* and *Las Hazañas [Exploits] del Cid*, published together in 1618 by the Valencian poet and dramatist Guillen de Castro y Bellvis (1569-1631), which in turn became the basis of Pierre Corneille's masterpiece of 1637, the tragedy *Le Cid*. The subject of El Cid entered the operatic repertory with Francesco Gasparini's *Il Gran Cid*, premiered in Naples in 1717, and received another dozen treatments in Italy through the 1770s. Giovanni Pacini composed *Il Cid* for Milan's La Scala in 1853, Peter Cornelius wrote *Der Cid* for Weimar in 1865, and both Bizet (*Don Rodrigue*, 1873, his last work before *Carmen*) and Debussy (*Rodrigue et Chimène*, 1890-1892) began El Cid operas that they never completed. The most successful opera derived from the tales of Spain's iconic hero was Jules Massenet's grand opéra *Le Cid* of 1885.

Massenet wrote in *My Recollections* that after putting the finishing touches on *Manon* in the autumn of 1883, "I began to plague my publisher, Georges Hartmann, for a new subject [for an opera]. I had hardly finished my plaint, to which he listened in silence with a smile on his lips, when he went to his desk and took out a manuscript on the yellow paper which is well known to copyists. It was *Le Cid*, an opera [libretto] by Louis Gallet and Edouard Blau. [Hartmann knew] I was bound to be pleased at writing a work based on the great Corneille's masterpiece." Gallet and Blau were both busy Parisian writers in a variety of genres, not least opera librettos, and Massenet had worked with them both on the unfin-

ished *La Coupe du Roi de Thulé* in 1866 and with Gallet on the operetta *L'adorable bel'-Boul* (1874) and the five-act opera *Le Roi de Lahore* (1877); he would collaborate with Blau again on *Esclarmonde* (1889) and *Werther* (1892) and with Gallet on *Thaïs* (1894). (Gallet and Blau also supplied the libretto for Bizet's unfinished El Cid opera, *Don Rodrigue*.) Massenet supplemented Gallet and Blau's book with two scenes by the playwright Adolphe d'Ennery, and composed the score over the next two years as he traveled across France for performances of *Manon*, *Hérodiade* and other of his works. The ballet music for Act II was composed in Marseilles. "I was very comfortably established in my room at the Hotel Beauveau there," Massenet explained, "with its long latticed windows which looked out on the old port. The prospect was actually fairylike. This room was decorated with remarkable panels and mirrors, and when I expressed my astonishment at seeing them so well preserved, the proprietor told me that the room was an object of special care because Paganini, Alfred de Musset and George Sand had all stayed there once upon a time. The cult of memories sometimes reaches the point of fetishism." *Le Cid* was premiered at the Paris Opéra on November 30, 1885 to great acclaim and remained in the French repertory until the outbreak of World War I; it has been little revived since, however, except for its excellent ballet music and a few of its arias.

When the curtain rises on *Le Cid*, Rodrigo is about to be made a Knight of St. James and also to receive the blessing of the Count de Gormas to wed his daughter, Chimene. Following the knighthood ceremony, the King tells Don Diego, Rodrigo's father, that he, Diego, has been chosen as the guardian of the young Prince. Gormas, furious that he has not been selected for the honor, insults Diego. Rodrigo returns and Diego implores his son to defend his honor. Only after he has agreed to this plea does Rodrigo learn that he will have to duel with the father of his beloved. Gormas is mortally wounded in the confrontation. Chimene asks the King to serve justice on the murderer, but he is convinced instead by Diego to allow Rodrigo to lead the Spanish forces against the invading Moors. Rodrigo pledges to return to accept whatever sentence the King deems appropriate. Still in love with Chimene, Rodrigo goes to her chamber to bid her farewell, and finds that she is torn between her feelings for him and her duty to her father. He tells her that he fears he will be killed in the upcoming battle, but she bids him to return safely to her. In his tent the night before the battle, Rodrigo has a prophetic vision of St. James promising him victory. The Moors are indeed defeated, and Rodrigo returns to the King, who tells Chimene that she must decide his sentence. She instead proclaims her love for him, saying that her father would not condone the condemnation of so great a soldier, and the opera ends amid general rejoicing.

The ballet music occurs during the ball scene that opens Act II, before Chimene has confronted the King with news of her father's death. Massenet brilliantly captured the color and spirit of the opera's setting with his versions of several characteristic Spanish dances: *Castillane*, *Andalouse*, *Aragonaise*, *Aubade*, *Catalane*, *Madrilène* and *Navarraise*.

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PENINSULA MUSIC FESTIVAL

PROGRAM 8

Thursday, August 17, 2017, 7:30 p.m.

Victor Yampolsky, Conductor

Vassily Primakov, Piano

Taichi Fukumura, Karen Smuda Emerging Conductors†

DVOŘÁK AND HIS TIME III

JOSEF SUK Meditation on the Old Bohemian Chorale *Saint Wenceslas*
for Strings, Op. 35a†*

DVOŘÁK Piano Concerto in G minor, Op. 33
Allegro agitato
Andante sostenuto
Finale: Allegro con fuoco

— INTERMISSION —

DVOŘÁK Symphony No. 9 in E minor, Op. 95, “From the New World”
Adagio — Allegro molto
Largo
Scherzo: Molto vivace
Allegro con fuoco

* first PMF performance

This concert is sponsored by the Egan Family and the Little Rapids Corp. —
Egan Family Foundation in memory of Peg Egan.

Vassily Primakov is performing on the Esther Browning Piano.

*Photography and audio recordings of this concert are strictly prohibited.
Please, no cell phones during the concert.*

Program 8

Meditation on the Old Bohemian Chorale *Saint Wenceslas* for Strings, Op. 35a**Josef Suk (1874-1935)***Composed in 1914.*

Josef Suk, internationally renowned as a composer and violinist, was one of the most prominent musical personalities of the early 20th century. Suk was born into a musical family and entered the Prague Conservatory at the age of eleven to study theory, composition and performance. He began composing seriously three years later, and, in 1891, he became the prize pupil of a new member of the Conservatory faculty — Antonín Dvořák. Following his graduation in 1892, Suk founded the Czech Quartet, which won the enthusiastic approval of Brahms and Hanslick at its Viennese debut a year later, and with which he was to perform over 4,000 concerts before retiring in 1933. He was deeply influenced in his compositional style by the music of Dvořák, and his relationship with his teacher was cemented when he married that composer's daughter, Otilie, in 1898. His works of those years include the lovely *Serenade for Strings*, *Symphony in E*, tone poem *Prague*, and other compositions for orchestra, chamber ensembles and solo piano. "In his early works," wrote Václav Štěpán, "his expression is based on Dvořák, though there is a greater gentleness, a softer sentiment and a richer rhythm." The "gentleness" in Suk's music and life was purged by the deaths of Dvořák in 1904 and of his own young wife only fourteen months later, a double tragedy that left him brooding and morose. His personal loss was reflected in his music, which became more modernistic and complex in its texture, harmony, rhythmic construction and form, and more sophisticated in its instrumental technique. The works of his later years — most notably the symphony dedicated to the memories of Dvořák and Otilie titled *Asrael* ("*Angel of Death*") and the symphonic poem *The Ripening* — show a concentrated emotional power through which Suk sought "to embrace the sterner problems of humanity," according to Otakar Šourek. Much of the last decade of his life was devoted to teaching composition at the Prague Conservatory, where he served four terms as Rector and taught many important Czech musicians of the next generation, including Bohuslav Martinů. His grandson, also named Josef (1929-2011), was one of the leading violinists of his generation.

The start of World War I had the dual effect of preventing Suk and the Czech Quartet from traveling abroad and of focusing his personal sympathies for his homeland. In the summer of 1914, he addressed both concerns with a *Meditation* for quartet (or string orchestra) that took as its subject an ancient Bohemian hymn about St. Wenceslas, the country's patron saint. Suk made unambiguous the music's ardent plea for peace by inscribing in the score the powerful words of one phrase each time it occurred: *Oh, save us and future generations from perishing.*

Piano Concerto in G minor, Op. 33**Antonín Dvořák (1841-1904)***Composed in 1876.**Premiered on March 28, 1878 in Prague, conducted by Adolf Čech with Karel von Slavovsky as soloist.*

In 1874, Antonín Dvořák was a little-known Prague musician whose income from his compositions and as organist at St. Adalbert's Church was so meager that the city officials certified his poverty. That same year he submitted some of his work for consideration to a committee in Vienna awarding government grants to struggling artists whose members were a most distinguished lot — Johann Herbeck, Director of the Court Opera, the renowned critic Eduard Hanslick and that titan of Viennese music himself, Johannes Brahms. Their report noted that Dvořák possessed "genuine and original gifts" and that his works displayed "an undoubted talent, but in a way which as yet remains formless and unbridled." They deemed his work worthy of encouragement, however, and, on their recommendation, the Minister of Culture, Karl Stremayer, awarded the young musician 400 gulden, the highest stipend bestowed under the program. The distinction represented Dvořák's first recognition outside his homeland and his initial contact with Brahms and Hanslick, who both were to prove powerful influences on his career through their example, artistic guidance and professional help. An excited burst of compositional activity followed during the months after Dvořák learned of the award in February 1875: G major String Quintet, *Moravian Duets* for Soprano and Tenor, B-flat Piano Trio, D major Piano Quartet, Fifth Symphony and *Serenade for Strings* all appeared with inspired speed.

During that great rush of creativity, Dvořák was urged to undertake a concerto for piano by Karel von Slavovsky (1845-1919), recently the founder of a school of piano playing in Prague and an active soloist, chamber musician and promoter of native composers throughout Bohemia. Dvořák accepted Slavovsky's proposal, and chose as inspiration and models for the new work the concertos of Beethoven and the D minor Concerto of his recent benefactor, Johannes Brahms. The piece, his earliest work in the genre, evidently caused Dvořák much trouble during its composition in the late summer months of 1876: the manuscript shows many corrections and changes; whole pages were re-written and pasted into the score; numerous solo passages were re-worked time and again. The Concerto was politely rather than enthusiastically received at its premiere on March 28, 1878 in Prague by Slavovsky and conductor Adolf Čech. No local publisher evinced any interest in issuing the score, and the work gained little attention until it was published by the German firm of Hainauer in Breslau in 1883, after Dvořák had become internationally famous as author of the *Slavonic Dances*.

Pianists have often cited the awkwardness of Dvořák's keyboard writing in his original version of this Concerto. The composer himself may have felt somewhat uncomfortable with the intricacies of virtuoso

keyboard technique, since his principal instruments were violin and viola rather than piano. (He made his living for his first eleven years in Prague as a violist in the orchestra of the National Theater.) The distinguished English pianist Harriet Cohen noted, “Not only are some of the technical passages ungainly, but the composer almost continuously throughout the work wrote the same passages for the left and right hand. This sort of piano writing is all very well now and again, but, as can be imagined, there are moments of appalling difficulty, because a passage that might suit the right hand working from the thumb to the little finger may be practically impossible for the left hand, in this case working from the little finger to the thumb.” (One wag suggested that this music was best suited to a player with two right hands.) Dvořák frequently told his son-in-law, the composer and violinist Josef Suk, that he wished to revise the solo part, but he never got around to it. Others — Vilem Kurz, a professor at the Prague Conservatory, and the pianists Franz Reizenstein and Rudolf Firkusny — have made their own revisions of the music, and many performances today emend Dvořák’s original version with the alterations of these later editors.

The first movement shares its somber mood with the *Stabat Mater*, written at the same time as the Concerto to help assuage Dvořák’s grief over the recent loss of his eldest child. It is said that he was particularly fond of the theme that opens the large sonata form of this movement. He worked this sad melody out at some length before allowing the strings to introduce the second theme, a countrified, major-tonality strain of almost Mozartian simplicity. A prolix development of the main theme leads to a recapitulation of the earlier material; the ending is abrupt and grave. The *Andante* is nostalgic in feeling and lyrically rhapsodic in treatment. The finale is built from three themes: the stabbing motive initiated by the solo piano; a phrase of skipping rhythms first played by the piano and then taken over by the violins; and a broad melody decorated with triplet figurations. The movement’s structure blends sonata and rondo forms, and ends with a bright, G major flourish incorporating all three themes.

Symphony No. 9 in E minor, Op. 95, “From the New World” Antonín Dvořák

Composed in 1892-1893.

Premiered on December 16, 1893 in New York, conducted by Anton Seidl.

When Antonín Dvořák, aged 51, arrived in New York on September 27, 1892 to direct the new National Conservatory of Music, both he and the institution’s founder, Mrs. Jeanette Thurber, expected that he would help to foster an American school of composition. He was clear and specific in his assessment: “I am convinced that the future music of this country must be founded on what are called Negro melodies. They can be the foundation of a serious and original school of composition to be developed in the United States.... There is nothing in the whole range of composition that cannot find a thematic source here.” Dvořák’s knowledge of this music came from Henry Thacker Burleigh, an African-American song writer and student of his who sang the traditional melo-

dies to the enthralled composer. Burleigh later recalled, “There is no doubt that Dr. Dvořák was very deeply impressed by the Negro spirituals from the old plantation. He just saturated himself in the spirit of those old tunes, and then invented his own themes.”

The “New World” Symphony was not only Dvořák’s way of pointing toward a truly American musical idiom but also a reflection of his feelings about his own country. “I should never have written the Symphony as I have,” he said, “if I hadn’t seen America,” but he added in a later letter that it was “genuine Bohemian music.” There is actually a reconciliation between these two seemingly contradictory statements, since the characteristics that Dvořák found in Burleigh’s indigenous American music — pentatonic (five-note) scales, modal minor keys with a lowered seventh degree, rhythmic syncopations, frequent returns to the central key note — are common to much folk music throughout the world, including that of his native Bohemia. Because his themes for the “New World” Symphony drew upon these cross-cultural qualities, to Americans, they sound American; to Czechs, they sound Czech.

The Symphony is unified by the use of a motto theme that occurs in all four movements. This bold, striding phrase, with its arching contour, is played by the horns as the main theme of the sonata-form opening movement, having been foreshadowed (also by the horns) in the slow introduction. Two other themes are used in the first movement: a sad melody for flute and oboe that exhibits folk characteristics, and a brighter tune, with a resemblance to *Swing Low, Sweet Chariot*, for flute.

Many years before coming to America, Dvořák had encountered Longfellow’s epic poem *The Song of Hiawatha*, which he read in a Czech translation. The great tale remained in his mind, and he considered making an opera of it during his time in New York. That project came to nothing, but *Hiawatha* did have an influence on the “New World” Symphony: the second movement was inspired by the forest funeral of Minnehaha; the third, by the dance of the Indians at the feast. That the music of these movements has more in common with the old plantation songs than with those of native Americans is due to Dvořák’s mistaken belief that African-American and Indian music were virtually identical.

The second movement is a three-part form (A–B–A), with a haunting English horn melody (later fitted with words by William Arms Fisher to become the folksong-spiritual *Goin’ Home*) heard in the first and last sections. The recurring motto here is pronounced by the trombones just before the return of the main theme in the closing section. The third movement is a tempestuous scherzo with two gentle, intervening trios providing contrast. The motto theme, played by the horns, dominates the coda. The finale employs a sturdy motive introduced by the horns and trumpets after a few introductory measures in the strings. In the Symphony’s closing pages, the motto theme, *Goin’ Home* and the scherzo melody are all gathered up and combined with the principal subject of the finale to produce a marvelous synthesis of the entire work — a look back across the sweeping vista of Dvořák’s musical tribute to America.

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PENINSULA MUSIC FESTIVAL

PROGRAM 9

Saturday, August 19, 2017, 7:30 p.m.

Victor Yampolsky, Conductor
James Ehnes, Violin

FESTIVAL FINALE

AUGUSTA REED THOMAS

*Aureole**

PROKOFIEV

Symphony No. 7, Op. 131*

Moderato
Allegretto
Andante espressivo
Vivace

— INTERMISSION —

SHOSTAKOVICH

Violin Concerto No. 1 in A minor, Op. 77 (Op. 99)

Nocturne: Moderato
Scherzo: Allegro — Poco più mosso — Allegro — Poco più mosso
Passacaglia: Andante — Cadenza —
Burlesca: Allegro con brio

* first PMF performance

This concert is sponsored by Gail Fischer in memory of Emil Fischer.

James Ehnes appears by exclusive arrangement with Intermusica Artists Management Limited.

*Photography and audio recordings of this concert are strictly prohibited.
Please, no cell phones during the concert.*

Program 9

Aureole

Augusta Read Thomas (born in 1964)

Composed in 2013.

Premiered on May 29, 2013 at Orchestra Hall in Chicago by the DePaul University Orchestra, conducted by Cliff Colnot.

Augusta Read Thomas admits a virtual predestination to compose: "I've always had an obsession with music. It was my retreat, my friend when I was younger, and my parents nurtured it." She started to learn the piano when she was "about four year old," and first tried composing a couple of years later: "I was always writing music. The pieces were terrible, of course, but I never stopped. The first thing I wrote that I felt was respectable enough — it was a terrible piece because I was very young — was for two trumpets and piano and band, and we performed it in my school when I was in eighth grade. [She had also taken up trumpet.] I'd written many things prior to that, but that was the first 'big' performance that I received." Thomas did her undergraduate work in composition at Northwestern University on full scholarship, and undertook her advanced studies at Yale. In 1989, she received a fellowship from Rotary International to study at the Royal Academy of Music in London, from which she received an Advanced Course Diploma in 1989. Her composition teachers have included Jacob Druckman, M. William Karlins and Alan Stout. Thomas taught at the Eastman School of Music from 1993 to 2001, was Wyatt Professor of Music at Northwestern University from 2001 until 2006, and in July 2011 became University Professor of Composition at the University of Chicago, a position selected for internationally recognized eminence; she is one of just seven UC faculty currently holding the title of University Professor.

Thomas' works have been performed by the world's leading orchestras, ensembles and soloists, and she has received fellowships, grants and awards from the L'Ecole Normale of Fontainebleau (France), ASCAP, BMI, Tanglewood Music Center, Aspen Music Festival, June in Buffalo Composers Conference, Gaudeamus Foundation (The Netherlands), Harvard University, American Academy of Arts and Letters, National Endowment for the Arts, Columbia University, Chamber Music America and many other noted institutions and organizations; in 2009 she was elected to membership in the American Academy of Arts and Letters. From 1997 to 2006, Thomas was the Mead Composer-in-Residence with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, which commissioned seven major compositions from her, the last of which, *Astral Canticle*, a double concerto for flute, violin and orchestra, was one of two finalists for the 2007 Pulitzer Prize in Music. In 2016, she received the Lancaster Symphony Orchestra Composer's Award, the oldest award of its kind in the country honoring contemporary composers.

Augusta Read Thomas is one of the most passionate, dedicated and prolific creative figures in American music

today. Though recent years have brought added responsibilities as a teacher and even as an international personality, she still approaches her creative work with the same almost visionary quality that she described when she was living in Boston in the early 1990s. "I start at 9:00 a.m. and suddenly discover it's 2:00 a.m.," she said at that time. "Time sort of flies. I discover things about myself and about the piece. And then there are times you spend three days in a sort of trance, composing — then wake up and throw everything out. It's really exciting when the piece insists on itself. It *tells* you what to do, and you just have to do it." This quality of being rapt out of time seems to translate itself into Thomas' music, which frequently excites the sense of distant vistas and grand emotions enticingly but incompletely glimpsed. Hers is music that eschews reference to pop or rock or folk or minimalism, instead embracing the abstract elements of traditional concert music — line, color, texture, harmony — to create structures that are both dazzling in their opulent sound and arresting in their bold expression. "Next to her extraordinary skill, the most exciting thing about Thomas' music is its sheer passion," wrote Bernard Jacobson in the notes for the premiere of *Glass Moon* by the Philadelphia Orchestra in December 1990. "She goes out on limbs. She does not play safe. The result for the listener is an experience intermittently jolting, like a ride on a state-of-the-art roller coaster, but never tedious. It is refreshing indeed to encounter a young entrant on the symphonic stage who does not feel the need to guard against emotional bruising by assuming a blasé manner. Thomas is sure enough of herself to risk engagement with an expressive world that evokes the outsize feelings and equally outsize gestures of a Mahler, and to articulate such feelings and gestures in a manner that is uncompromisingly modern and at the same time unregenerately romantic."

Aureole was commissioned by the DePaul University School of Music in honor of its centennial and premiered on May 29, 2013 at Chicago's Orchestra Hall by the DePaul University Orchestra, conducted by Cliff Colnot. For that occasion, DePaul School of Music faculty member Michael Lewanski supplied the following information for the work, which the composer included in her web site:

"Augusta Read Thomas' *Aureole* was conceived to precede a performance of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. Her respect for her compositional predecessor is obvious from her explanation of the title: '*Aureole* refers to an encircling ring of light; radiance surrounding the head or the whole figure in the representation of a sacred personage or saint; a halo of concentric circles of light seen around a luminous body, especially around the sun or moon. *Aureole* alludes tangentially to certain fundamental tonal centers of Beethoven's Symphony Number 9 in D minor.'

"Surely the sacred personage in this situation is Beethoven himself. Thomas' use both of tonal centers and intervals crucial to the Ninth Symphony is a musical 'aureole' around the earlier composer's work.

"The work opens with a single pitch, the note D, the

tonal center of Beethoven's Symphony. Fanfare-like repeated notes in the trumpets and violins, marked 'blazing,' add the pitch A shortly thereafter, creating the interval of a fifth — the open-sounding sonority heard at the beginning of Beethoven's Symphony. The fanfares continue in ever-changing rhythms, moving around the orchestra and creating the composer's desired 'shimmering' effect. The winds and brass land on a chord centered around the pitch B-flat (the other important structural pitch in Beethoven's Symphony) to close the introduction.

"The strings immediately jump in, turning the introduction's repeated notes into a driving rhythmic ostinato centered on B-flat; the marking is 'animated and sparkling.' The melodic line explodes, hurling fast-moving sixteenth notes up and down the orchestral register and around the ensemble. The tempo slows a bit for a section marked 'energized,' and sustained notes make a reappearance, with murmuring triplets underneath. The driving sixteenth notes return just as vigorously as before and are only stopped by a reminiscence of the introduction's fifths. 'Lively and playful' flute and clarinet solos give way to an 'incandescent' section made up of sustained harmonies whose ever-changing orchestrations give it a dynamic, fluid character. A rhapsodic trombone solo leads to a return of the shimmering repeated notes and the re-emergence of the introduction's fanfares. The frenzied melodic activity of the earlier fast section is recalled but interrupted by the final return of the stark, bright fifths. Harmonies built from this interval comprise a short but luminous coda. The final chord of the work is, again, from fifths: D, A and E — the very first and very last notes of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. An 'encircling ring of light,' indeed."

Symphony No. 7, Op. 131

Sergei Prokofiev (1891-1953)

Composed in 1952.

Premiered on October 11, 1952 in Moscow, conducted by Samuil Samosud.

Prokofiev's feverish activity during the years after the Second World War belie the alarming state of his health. He suffered the first of a series of heart attacks in 1941, and a fall early in 1945 resulted in a severe concussion with several painful and continuing complications. Despite his nearly debilitated condition, in 1946 and 1947 alone he was able to compose the Sixth Symphony, arrange three extensive suites of the music from *Cinderella*, revise the Fourth Symphony, write a cantata for the 30th anniversary of the Russian Revolution and a separate orchestral piece on the same subject, produce a sonata for unaccompanied violins, and devise suites of symphonic excerpts from several of his stage works. He was only able to complete these projects because he persevered with the punctual and concentrated work habits of his earlier years, though at a less intense level. His friend the composer Dmitri Kabalevsky wrote, "His whole existence, all his energies, his entire mode of life were directed to the one aim, of saving for his work all the strength he had left. At times it seemed as if he knew his malady would defeat him in the end and he was deliberately hurrying to get all his ideas down on pa-

per before it was too late." During his frequent hospital stays, for example, he was forbidden to work at all. One friend reported, however, that Prokofiev stationed him at his hospital door during a visit so that he could warn the composer of any approaching nurses. While the coast was clear, Prokofiev scribbled a few notes on the pad he kept hidden beneath his pillow.

Late in 1951, Prokofiev projected a whole series of works — sonatas for piano and for cello, a sixth piano concerto, extensive revisions of earlier scores — that he intended to complete in the near future. Among those plans, he told the press, was one for a "simple symphony," intended for young listeners, perhaps to be broadcast by the Children's Division of the national radio. He set to work on the symphony immediately; the short score was finished by March 20, 1952, and the orchestration was done by July 5th. (It was to be the only one of those late projected works that he completed.) The new Symphony, however, his seventh in the genre, had grown beyond his original conception to a full concert hall specimen, though it retained a pronounced simplicity of form, texture and thematic substance. The piece stirred considerable interest even before it was publicly premiered on October 11, 1952 in Moscow: the pianist Anatoly Vedernikov made a four-hand arrangement of the score, which was enthusiastically received at a private concert given for the Composer's Union; Kabalevsky extolled the Symphony in the press; Shostakovich called it "joyful, lyrical and delightful." When the piece was finally heard, the critics and public joined in the praise, making the premiere a virtual farewell to the ailing composer. It was the last time he attended a public performance of his own music; he died of a stroke just five months later. The Symphony was posthumously awarded the Lenin Prize in 1957.

The Seventh Symphony, along with such other works as *Romeo and Juliet*, *Peter and the Wolf*, *Alexander Nevsky* and the Second Violin Concerto that Prokofiev wrote after returning to Russia from the West in 1933, is richly lyrical and immediately ingratiating, the style deemed appropriate by the government to inspire the Soviet masses. "It is the duty of the composer, like the poet, the sculptor or the painter, to serve his fellow men, to beautify human life and show the way to a radiant future," he wrote in his 1946 *Autobiography*. The technical means toward this goal was, to him, obvious: "To achieve a more simple and melodic expression is the inevitable direction for the musical art of the future." This Symphony, his last important completed score, not only made those words manifest, but also showed that Prokofiev was able to create music of surpassing quality under the tightest ideological strictures.

Rather than being dramatic or heroic, the Symphony's opening movement is quiet, lyrical and somewhat nostalgic in expression, a formal technique Prokofiev may have borrowed from Shostakovich. The movement contains three themes: a sad, simple melody initiated by the violins; a sweeping phrase of balletic mien; and a slight, sardonic motive in metronomic rhythm. The compact development section treats each of the three themes before they are fully recapitulated to round out the movement. The second movement is a waltz in the

Russian tradition of such pieces by Tchaikovsky, Glinka and Glazunov. There follows an *Andante*, effusively melodious and one of the most unabashedly sentimental pieces that Prokofiev ever created. The finale is fast, excited and joyous, but pauses to recall the first movement's second and third themes in its closing pages.

"The Seventh Symphony is one of those works which are difficult to describe in words," wrote Israel Nestyev in his biography of Prokofiev. "It is so classically simple, so transparent, so finely worked out and so artistically perfect that the workmanship as such is imperceptible."

**Violin Concerto No. 1 in A minor, Op. 77 (Op. 99)
Dmitri Shostakovich (1906-1975)**

Composed in 1947-1948.

Premiered on October 29, 1955 in Leningrad, conducted by Yevgeny Mravinsky with David Oistrakh as soloist.

In 1948, Shostakovich, Prokofiev and many other important Soviet composers were condemned for threatening the political and emotional stability of the nation with their "formalistic" music. Through Andrei Zhdanov, head of the Soviet Composers' Union and the official mouthpiece for the government, it was made known that any experimental or modern or abstract or difficult music was no longer acceptable for consumption by the Russian peoples. Only simplistic music glorifying the state, the land and the people would be performed. In other words, symphonies, operas, chamber music — anything involving too concentrated an intellectual effort or critical thought — were out; movie music, folk song settings and patriotic cantatas were in.

Shostakovich saw the iron figure of Joseph Stalin behind the purge of 1948, as he was convinced it had been for an earlier one in 1936. After the 1936 debacle, Shostakovich responded with the Fifth Symphony, and kept composing through the years of World War II, even becoming an international figure representing the courage of the Russian people with the lightning success of his Seventh Symphony ("Leningrad") in 1941. The 1948 censure was, however, almost more than Shostakovich could bear. He determined that he would go along with the Party prerogative for pap, and withhold all of his substantial works until the time when they would be given a fair hearing — when Stalin was dead. About the only music that Shostakovich made public between 1948 and 1953 was that for films, most of which had to do with episodes in Soviet history (*The Fall of Berlin*, *The Memorable Year 1919*) and some jingoistic vocal works (*The Sun Shines Over Our Motherland*). The only significant works he released during that half-decade were the *24 Preludes and Fugues* for Piano, Op. 34. The other works of that time — the First Violin Concerto, *Songs on Jewish Folk Poetry*, Fourth and Fifth String Quartets — were all withheld until later years. The Violin Concerto, composed for David Oistrakh in 1947-1948 as Op. 77, was not heard in public until 1955, when it was re-numbered as Op. 99.

In his purported memoirs, *Testimony*, Shostakovich revealed the inspiration behind the First Violin Concerto: "Jewish folk music has made a most powerful impression on me. I never tire of delighting in it; it's multifaceted, it can appear to be happy while it is tragic. It's

almost always laughter through tears.... [But] this is not purely a musical issue, this is also a moral issue. The Jews became the most persecuted and defenseless people of Europe [during World War II]. It was a return to the Middle Ages. Jews became a symbol for me. All of man's defenselessness was concentrated in them. After the war, I tried to convey that feeling in my music. Despite all the Jews who perished in the camps, all I heard people saying was, 'They went to Tashkent to fight.' And if they saw a Jew with military decorations, they called after him, 'Hey, where did you buy the medals?' That's when I wrote the Violin Concerto, the *Jewish* cycle, and the Fourth Quartet." After he premiered the work, David Oistrakh, who helped in the preparation of the score and was probably privy to the composer's thoughts, wrote, "In the Violin Concerto, as in many other of Shostakovich's works, I am attracted by the amazing seriousness and profundity of the idea, the truly symphonic thinking. There is nothing accidental in the score of the Concerto, nothing that is used for its outward effect and is not supported by the inner logic, by the development of the material. Behind Shostakovich's symphonic thinking you can always sense the profoundest meditation on life, on the fate of mankind."

Shostakovich likened the First Violin Concerto to "a symphony for solo violin and orchestra," and, with its four-movement structure, gravity of expression and fully developed musical argument, it bears little resemblance to the traditional virtuoso concerto. A personal touch is woven into the fabric of the music by the recurring notes of Shostakovich's musical signature: D-E-flat-C-B, a motive that also occurs in the Tenth Symphony and the Eighth Quartet. (The note D represents Shostakovich's initial. In German transliteration, the composer's name begins "Sch": S [ess] in German notation equals E-flat, C is C, and H equals B-natural.)

The brooding opening movement, titled *Nocturne*, is an extended, accompanied soliloquy for the violin that grows continuously from the plaintive melody presented at the beginning by the low strings. The movement, without clear structural divisions, takes the shape of a huge arch, quiet at beginning and end, intense in its central portion. The second movement, a raucous *Scherzo* whose theme resembles that of the comparable movement in the Tenth Symphony, provides the utmost contrast to the introspective music of the preceding *Nocturne*. The expressive heart of the Concerto lies in its third movement, the darkly hued and deeply emotional *Passacaglia*. The passacaglia is an ancient musical form, serious in expression, built on a short invariable melody to which are added elaborating lines on each repetition. The Soviet musicologist and critic Vasily Kukharsky wrote of this music, "In the *Passacaglia*, there is philosophic meditation, there is sorrow and sad lyricism, and there is courage.... It may be said that Shostakovich has never achieved such magnificent simplicity, such an inspiration of melodic thinking." A massive cadenza for the soloist, almost a separate movement in itself, links the pensive end of the third movement to the surging energy of the finale, a brilliant, whirling *Burlesca* that recalls in its closing pages themes from earlier movements.

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