

# Eastern Connecticut Symphony Orchestra

Toshiyuki Shimada  
Music Director & Conductor

## 2024-25 CONCERT SEASON





# MYSTIC AQUARIUM

***What do an Aquarium and an Orchestra  
have in common?***

## ***Harmony***

Just as every instrument in an orchestra contributes to the overall harmony of a piece, each species in an Aquarium and their wild counterparts play a role in creating a balanced ecosystem.

## ***Diversity***

Orchestras combine an incredible range of instruments to create a unified sound. Similarly, an Aquarium showcases a variety of marine life, representing the diverse nature of our ocean planet.

## ***Education***

While orchestras often introduce audiences to classical music and its rich history, Aquariums educate visitors about marine life and the importance of ocean conservation.

## ***Conservation***

Just as orchestras work to preserve and keep classical music alive for future generations, aquariums play a vital role in conserving marine life and raising awareness about the threats they face.

## ***Community Engagement***

Both institutions serve as cultural and educational pillars in their communities, providing entertainment, knowledge, and outreach programs to engage guests.

***Cheers to ECSO for another fabulous year of making  
music and creating memories! Dive deeper into Mystic  
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[www.mysticaquarium.org/membership](http://www.mysticaquarium.org/membership)



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## A Welcome Message From Toshi

Dear Fellow Music Enthusiasts,

Welcome to the 2024-25 Season with the Eastern Connecticut Symphony Orchestra. This year marks my 15<sup>th</sup> year as Music Director & Conductor of this wonderful orchestra! Looking back on all that we've done together, with our core concert series and all the community events and educational programming, it is even more clear to me that an orchestra cannot exist in isolation – it is the audience that completes the live music experience and brings it to life.



When I begin programming any season, it is with you in mind that I build each concert. I want to make sure that if you only come to one concert, you get an exciting and diverse offering that inspires you. At the same time, for our subscribers and repeat attendees, I strive to ensure that they are going

to hear different moods, musical eras, and an array of fantastic soloists from within our orchestra and from further afield. No one concert this season is like any other, so when you come back, you can be certain that it will be a distinct experience each time.

Of course, I am looking forward to each piece on every program, but in particular there are some highlights. I can't wait to work with Simon Holt as he performs Saint-Saëns' *Symphony No. 3* (Organ). He is a dear musical colleague and well-known in our region for his many artistic activities which you can read about in his bio. In November, we are climbing one of the highest peaks of orchestral repertoire with Mahler's *Symphony No. 3*. Janna Baty will sing the mezzo-soprano part, and we get to hear members of our Chorus a bit early this year as the women join in for this monumental work.

January will showcase the talent that we're always so fortunate to hear in our ensemble at the front of our stage: Stephan Tieszen, our Concertmaster; Erik Andrusyak, our Principal Oboe; and Alex McLaughlin, our Principal Violist are all going to be featured on this program that spans three centuries. February revisits a popular belief of mine that music is integral to peace-



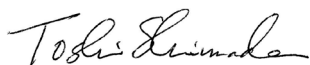
making and will feature a world premiere by an audience-favorite living composer, Polina Nazaykinskaya. We feature Kinga Augustyn on violin in Wieniawski's *Violin Concerto No. 2* and close with Tchaikovsky's exciting and iconic *Symphony No. 4*.

Our Instrumental Competition winner from 2024, Adam Adov, will dazzle you with his interpretation of Prokofiev's *Piano Concerto No. 3* in addition to contemporary works that celebrate life. As we are changing seasons around the time of this concert, I felt Schumann's *Symphony No. 1 (Spring)* would be more than appropriate and incredibly enjoyable.

Finally, April will feature our full Chorus again, in addition to two amazing voices: Sarah Joyce Cooper who will return for her 3<sup>rd</sup> time with us, and tenor Jesus Daniel Hernandez who will make his debut. The works by Verdi and Puccini will showcase the drama and intrigue in operatic programming, and I guarantee that the orchestra's variety of colors will paint a vivid picture in your mind.

Again, we couldn't do any of this without you, so thank you for your attention, time, energy, and for your generous support. It has been my delight to be here for 15 years, and I look forward to even more with this amazing community.

With sincere appreciation and anticipation,



Toshiyuki Shimada  
Music Director and Conductor



# The Eastern Connecticut Symphony Orchestra

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## FIRST VIOLINS

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Kathryn Fausel  
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## PERSONNEL MANAGER

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## Greetings from Caleb, ECSO's Executive Director



From all of us at the ECSO, welcome to another season of orchestral music, our 78<sup>th</sup>, in fact! As you'll notice from the cover of the program, this year is so special as we are celebrating our beloved Music Director & Conductor, Toshiyuki Shimada's 15<sup>th</sup> season as the artistic voice of our organization.

Over the years, Toshi has conducted more than 90 concerts, featured over 150 composers' works, and has brought to our concert stages fantastic soloists from right here in our backyard and also from foreign countries. Perhaps most important of all, he has moved thousands of attendees like you with his passionate interpretations, brought to life by our talented musicians.

Working with Toshi is one of the greatest joys of our Board, staff, and musicians who work day-to-day within this orchestra to bring music to life. As you will see from his conducting, he brings out the best in people, as he leaves space for their voice and vision within the greater whole. This season features works that are only possible to take on due to his dedication and measured approach to artistic growth, which indicates how far we've come as an ensemble.

Combined with you, our faithful audience, and our supporters' giving, we've been able to grow and reach more people in our region through our music, both on this stage and throughout Eastern CT and beyond. That alone is worth celebrating for an entire season, but to also have raised the bar of those performances year after year, is more than worthy of the fanfare that we have in store for you. This celebration couldn't happen with you, so we are so grateful that you are here to experience the many facets of orchestral music.

Thank you again for being here and I hope you enjoy tonight's performance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Caleb Bailey". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping "C" at the beginning.

Caleb Bailey  
Executive Director

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If you have named the ECSO in your will or have plans to, please let us know so we may list you. For more information about planned giving and Robert F. Shannon, please see page 39.

You can also visit our website at [ectsymphony.com/your-support](https://ectsymphony.com/your-support) for all giving options. We appreciate your consideration of any charitable gift that will support our mission.

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To find out more about joining the Friends, see page 69.

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## **Toshiyuki Shimada**

ECSO Music Director & Conductor

Toshiyuki Shimada is currently Music Director and Conductor of the Eastern Connecticut Symphony Orchestra in New London; Music Director and Conductor of the Orchestra of the Southern Finger Lakes; and Music Director and Conductor of the New Britain Symphony Orchestra. Previously held appointments include Music Director of the Yale Symphony Orchestra of Yale University (2005-19), Music Director Laureate of the Portland Symphony Orchestra (Maine) (1986 to 2006), Associate Conductor of the Houston Symphony (1981-86) and since 1998 he has served as Principal Conductor of the Vienna Modern Masters recording label in Austria. Internationally he has often been on the podium of La Orquesta Filarmonica de Jalisco, in Guadalajara, Mexico, and continues close association with Turkish Orchestras, including the Istanbul State Symphony Orchestra, the Borsan Istanbul Philharmonic, the Izmir State Symphony Orchestra, the Bilkent Symphony Orchestra and the Presidential Symphony Orchestra.

He has appeared in Austrian Radio Kulturhaus, in Vienna, with the MUK Symphony Orchestra, and in 2017 he led the Yale Symphony Orchestra on the highly successful Russian Tour, followed by the tours of Brazil, Turkey and Italy. Innumerable guest conducting appearances include the Slovak Philharmonic, NÖ Tonkünstler Orchestra in Vienna, L'Orchestre National de Lille in France, the Lithuanian State Symphony Orchestra, Moravian Philharmonic, Prague Chamber Orchestra, Karlovy Vary Symphony Orchestra and the Royal Scottish National Symphony Orchestra at the Edinburgh Festival.

In 2018, as a peace mission, Maestro Shimada conducted a nationally televised concert at the DMZ, South Korea, with the Lindenbaum Festival Orchestra, and the following summer, he has appeared with the same orchestra in Jeju Island for the commemoration of the Massacre 4.3.

Prestigious collaborations include artists such as Itzhak Perlman, André Watts, Peter Serkin, Emmanuel Ax, Yefim Bronfman, Idil Biret, Janos Starker, Joshua Bell, Hilary Hahn, Cho-Liang Lin, Sir James Galway, Barry Tuckwell, and Dame Evelyn Glennie. He has also collaborated with Willie Nelson, Doc Severinsen and Marvin Hamlisch.

Maestro Shimada has had the good fortune to study with many distinguished conductors of the past and the present, including Leonard Bernstein, Herbert von Karajan, Herbert Blomstedt, Hans Swarovsky, and Michael Tilson Thomas. In 1979 he was a finalist in International Herbert von Karajan conducting competition in Berlin, and a Fellow Conductor in the Los Angeles Philharmonic Institute in 1983. In addition, he was named Ariel

Musician of the Year in 2003 by Ariel Records and received the ASCAP award in 1989. He graduated from California State University, Northridge, studying with David Whitwell and Lawrence Christianson, and attended the University of Music and Dramatic Arts in Vienna, Austria.

Consistently recognized as an integral and beloved member of every community he joins, he has had several state and city holidays named in his honor: Toshiyuki Shimada Day in Houston, TX; Toshiyuki Shimada Week in Portland, Maine; Toshiyuki Shimada Day in the State of Maine; and Toshiyuki Shimada Day in New London. In May 2006 he was awarded an Honorary Doctorate Degree in Fine Arts by Maine College of Arts.

Maestro Shimada records for the Naxos and the Vienna Modern Masters labels, has made fifteen CDs with the Moravian Philharmonic, in Czech Republic. He also records for Capstone Records, Querstand-VKJK (Germany), and Albany Records. His Paul Hindemith CD of the complete piano concerti with the famed Turkish pianist, Idil Biret, was released in 2013. His Music from the Vatican with the Prague Chamber Orchestra and Chorus is available through iTunes and Rhapsody.

A sought after educator he has been Associate Professor of Conducting with Yale School of Music and Department of Music, Director of the Orchestra Activity at Connecticut College, a faculty member of Rice University (Houston), the University of Southern Maine; and served as Artist Faculty at the Houston Institute of Aesthetic Study. He has conducted All State Honor and Regional Honor Orchestras for Connecticut, California, New York, Maine and Massachusetts. He was one of the distinguish speakers at the Chopin Symposium 2010, at Hacettepe University in Ankara, Turkey. He has been teaching at the New York Conducting Workshop, and he has also served as a Board Member of the International Conductors Guild.



# Opening Night Extravaganza

Saturday, October 26, 2024 - 7:30 pm

**Toshiyuki Shimada**  
**Simon Holt**

**Music Director & Conductor**  
**Organ**

Stravinsky

The Star-Spangled Banner

Strauss

Introduction of Also Sprach Zarathustra

Copland

The Tender Land: Suite

*I. Introduction and Love Music*

*II. The Promise of Living*

Strauss

Der Rosenkavalier Suite

Intermission (20')

Saint-Saëns

Symphony No. 3 (Organ)

*Simon Holt, Organ*

*I. Allegro*

*II. Adagio*

*III. Scherzo*

*IV. Presto*



## Simon Holt

### Organ



Born in Birmingham, England, Simon Holt received undergraduate and graduate degrees from The Royal College of Music, London and a postgraduate teaching certificate from Goldsmiths' College, London University. In addition, he was a prizewinner at the Royal College of Organists in London.

Simon has performed organ recitals in Westminster Abbey, St. George's Chapel, Windsor Castle, numerous Cathedrals, and the Royal Albert Hall in London. His discography includes a cassette of solo organ music and three CDs, two as an accompanist and the third conducting the Bristol Cathedral School symphony orchestra. He has also

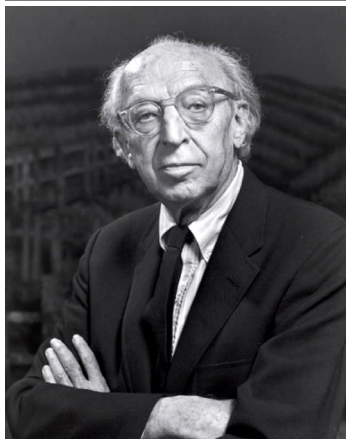
performed several times on national UK radio and television, including a live performance in the Royal Albert Hall while still at The Royal College of Music. He has also toured Europe widely and his performances have included those in Notre-Dame and Sacré Coeur as well as St. Mark's Venice. He has performed in Holland, Austria, Germany, the Czech Republic, Belgium and Switzerland.

In May 1999 Simon and his family moved to Stonington, CT where he became Director of Music at Calvary Church. In September 2000 he became Director of Music at Pine Point School in Stonington and collaborated with Calvary Church in founding Calvary Music School where he was Executive Director until 2010. Also, in 2000 he founded Salt Marsh Opera where he has been Artistic Director for many years. In September 2007 Simon was appointed Director of Music in School at St. Thomas Choir School in New York City.

In 2012, after two years as Chair of the Fine Arts Department and Head of Music at Saint James School in Hagerstown, MD (the oldest Episcopal boarding school in North America) Simon returned to Connecticut to become Executive Director of The United Theatre in Westerly, RI. Currently, Simon is Artistic Director and General Manager of Salt Marsh Opera, Director of Music at the First Congregational Church of Old Lyme, Director of The Anglican Singers in New London and Executive Director at Washington Art Association & Gallery.

## Program Notes

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### Aaron Copland

The Tender Land Suite: Introduction and Love Music, The Promise of Living

Born 1900 in New York, NY

Died 1990 in Sleepy Hollow, NY

The Tender Land Suite calls for three flutes, three oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion and strings.

Aaron Copland's opera *The Tender Land* remains one of the most evocative representations of rural American life in the 20th century, reflecting themes of coming-of age and self-discovery amid the backdrop of the Great Depression. Written in 1954, the opera captures the struggles of Laurie Moss, a young woman torn between her desire for freedom as she graduates high school against her duty to her family's farm. The premiere of *The Tender Land* at New York City Opera was a flop, possibly because it was developed through the NBC Television Opera Workshop, and intended to be seen through the lens of television, where the singers' emotions and individuality are a lot more apparent to the viewer than in a large opera house with its focus on spectacle and large scale performances. Copland went on to make several revisions of the opera to make it more palatable for audiences.

In 1958 Copland produced the orchestral suite from the opera as part of his efforts to make its music more accessible. Copland rewrote passages from the opera to make it fit in the orchestral setting of the Suite. The music here comes from the most crucial emotional scenes of *The Tender Land*, offering audiences a glimpse into the lives of its characters through Copland's evocations of the American Midwest, the people who live there, and its large flat landscapes.

The Suite showcases critical moments in the opera: the first movement opens with the dramatic music from the start of the final act, signaling a climactic moment when Laurie intends to leave her family's rural farmstead behind without her family's knowledge. This segment immediately

establishes a sense of tension and restlessness, reflective of Laurie's internal struggle. The movement then transitions to the love duet between Laurie and the migrant worker Martin, from the first. The movement ends on the sung line from the duet "I love you, I love you, I do."

The second movement of the suite is from the dances in the middle of the opera, where the community celebrates Laurie's high school graduation. This movement, with its energetic rhythms and playful spirit, captures the essence of rural festivities and communal joy. The suite's final movement returns to the close of the first act, drawing from the quintet "The Promise of Living" that closes Act I. This quintet combines the American Christian revivalist song "Zion's Walls" with an original tune by Copland, embodying the opera's central theme of perseverance in the face of strife for the farmers and the land they live on.

- Saadya Chevan



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## Richard Strauss

### Der Rosenkavalier Suite, op. 59



Born 1864 in Munich, Germany  
Died 1949 in Garmisch-Partenkirchen  
Germany

The score of the Rosenkavalier Suite calls for three flutes (third doubling piccolo), three oboes (third doubling English horn), E-flat clarinet, two clarinets, bass clarinet, three bassoons (3rd doubling contrabassoon), four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (triangle,

tambourine, cymbal, ratchet, snare drum, bass drum), celesta, two harps, and strings

Richard Strauss lived a long and productive life, striding across the musical landscape of Europe from teenage success to triumph in old age. He was the son of a prominent musician, one of the world's great horn players, and wrote works in his youth that are still performed and admired. He married a well-respected soprano, had a family who loved him, and enjoyed a warm, stable personal life. But, it is difficult, indeed, to think of a composer more possessed of an overweening ego than that of Richard Strauss (other than that of Wagner, of course). Thankfully, his was not malicious, and was to some degree justified. Strauss is almost unique in that his long life (unlike that of, say, Verdi) spanned remarkable changes in musical style, not to speak of world history. He is known both as a master of late romantic symphonic style in his large tone poems for virtuoso orchestra—the ten composed from 1886 to 1915, and also for his modern, often strikingly dissonant operas of the twentieth century.

He moved gradually away from the composition of tone poems to that of opera, beginning with *Guntram*, first performed in 1894. Strongly derivative of Richard Wagner's style, it was not very successful and enjoyed few performances thereafter. But, with the premiere of his next opera, *Feuersnot*, he hit pay dirt: the salacious nature of the libretto attracted great attention, and it was a box office smash. The theme was simple: make fun of Wagner's obsession with "redemption through love," by writing an opera about "redemption through sex." Well. The way forward was clear, so his next hit was the 1905 sensation, *Salome*, with its sordid lust, incest, decapitation, and

necrophilia. It, too, became an international success, although after the New York premiere in 1907, wealthy patrons caused the cancellation of further scheduled performances. His musical style was all the while becoming less and less lush German romantic, and more and more twentieth-century dissonant. But then, it suited the subject matter much more appropriately. The next opera, *Elektra* (1909), is a difficult tour de force of modernity that, in the depiction of the infamous character is an operatic horror show. And what is the point of this summary of a series of dissonant, controversial operas? Simply to put into context the utter about face of the subsequent opera, *Der Rosenkavalier* of 1911. It is everything that its predecessors were not: a comic story, a sumptuous, a beautiful eighteenth-century set, mellifluous waltzes, gracious characters, and a sparkling, romantic music style that is nonpareil. In other words, gracious, traditional romance writ large.

The score is a masterpiece of virtuoso orchestra writing, from whooping horns to magical, tinkling percussion. The opera was an immediate, enormous success, and it has remained one of the most popular operas, ever. The music was so popular that it was inevitable that concert excerpts should be extracted; but oddly, it was not until 1944 that a suite based upon musical highlights was assembled. The premiere was given by the New York Philharmonic in the October 1944, while Strauss was still ensconced in Austria, a citizen of the Third Reich. The opera is the story of a noble Viennese aristocrat of “a certain age,” who has a young count as a lover. There is a second couple consisting of a coarse older nobleman who has his eye on a young lady—the latter then falls for the older woman’s young lover. They ditch the old guy, and the older woman graciously cedes her lover to the younger woman. It’s a comic, bittersweet, and sophisticated study in the realities of romantic love, played out in the most elegant and polished of music and manners. From the soaring horns of the opening that portray nights of passion, to the delicacy of the presentation of the “Silver Rose” between the young lovers, the music is a constant reflection of the ups and downs of the bittersweet love affair. Romantic infatuation, wistful regret, and musing over age, infidelity, and fate all inform the moods in the suite. And marvelously driving it all are the incomparable Viennese waltzes scored so extravagantly--as only Richard Strauss could have done. --Wm. E. Runyan



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## Camille Saint-Saëns

### Symphony No. 3 (Organ)



Born 1835 in Paris, France

Died 1931 in Algeria

The score calls for two flutes and a piccolo, two oboes, English horn, two clarinets, bass clarinet, two bassoons, contrabassoon, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (bass drum, cymbals, triangle), piano (four-hands), organ, and strings

Camille Saint-Saëns lived a long life and was remarkable for his wide-ranging intellectual interests and abilities. As a child, he was a precocious musical talent, but even then he showed a strong natural interest in almost every academic subject—including, but certainly not restricted to, astronomy, archaeology, mathematics, religion, Latin, and Greek. In addition to a life of musical composition and virtuoso keyboard performance, he also enjoyed success as a music journalist, champion of early music (Handel and Bach), and leadership in encouraging French musical tradition.

His father died when he was an infant, and he grew into middle age extraordinarily devoted to his mother—his marriage at the age of forty to a nineteen-year-old did not last long. He simply left the house one day in 1881 and chose never to see her again; she died in 1950 at the age of ninety-five. Saint-Saëns went on to live an active life, filling an important role in the musical life of France—as performer, composer, author, spokesman, and scholar. He was peripatetic—researching Handel manuscripts in London, conducting concerts in Chicago and Philadelphia, visiting Uruguay and writing a hymn for their national holiday, and vacationing in the Canary Islands. He celebrated seventy-five years of concertizing in August of 1921 in his eighty-sixth year and died a few months later.

Perhaps his most well-known and successful work is his opera *Samson et Dalila*, one of a dozen. However, other works vie for that honor, for he was a most prolific composer, working in almost every genre common at that time. Despite this versatility, he perhaps did his best work in the traditional Classical models—symphonies, concertos, chamber music, and



sonatas. Symphony No. 3 (1886), the so-called “organ” symphony, was his last symphony, but only one of a large number of works for orchestra.

He composed symphonic poems, suites, concertos, marches, and dances—dozens of them. Calling for a large orchestra, including two pianos and a large organ, Symphony No. 3 is heard as two large movements, but really is in four, with the first two and last two movements connected and heard respectively as one. One will clearly hear in this work two of Saint-Saëns’ trademarks: a repetitive rhythm that dominates a movement, and his gift for lovely, sensuous melody.

He was a gifted melodist and compared his talent to the natural fecundity of a fruit tree. This you will hear in the lush second movement (second half of the first continuous section). The initial entry of the organ often surprises listeners, so be prepared. The spectacular sonic combination of the fortissimo organ and the percussive pianos juxtaposed on the large orchestra is particularly felicitous and is a triumph of Romantic orchestral imagination (Richard Strauss wasn’t the only game in town in this regard). All in all, this symphony is characteristic of much of Saint-Saëns’ work: not necessarily profound, but crafted with great skill, innate musicianship, and typically Gallic in its clarity of expression and form. And, it must be said—almost always immensely appealing.

-Wm. Runyan

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# Mahler's Third Symphony: For The Children

Saturday, November 23, 2024 - 7:30 pm

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Toshiyuki Shimada  
Janna Baty

Music Director & Conductor  
Mezzo-Soprano

Mahler

Symphony No. 3

*Janna Baty, Mezzo-Soprano*

*with women from the  
Eastern CT Symphony Chorus*

*I. Kräftig. Entschieden*

Intermission (20')

*II. Tempo di Menuetto*

*III. Comodo*

*IV. Sehr langsam—Misterioso*

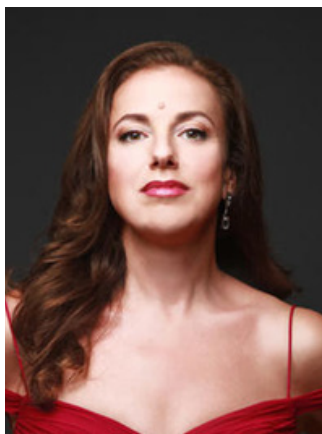
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*VI. Langsam—Ruhevoll—Empfunden*

## Janna Baty

### Mezzo-Soprano

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Praised by the Boston Globe for “a rich, viola-like tone and a rapturous, luminous lyricism,” mezzo-soprano Janna Baty enjoys an exceptionally versatile career as a mezzo soprano and as an educator. She has sung with Boston Symphony, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Daejeon Philharmonic, Hamburgische Staatsoper, L’Orchestre National du Capitole de Toulouse, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Tallahassee Symphony, Tuscaloosa Symphony, South Florida Symphony, Longwood Symphony, Hartford Symphony, the Orquesta Filarmónica de Bogotá, Opera Theatre of St. Louis, Eugene Opera, Opera North, and Boston

Lyric Opera. She has sung under the batons of James Levine, Seiji Ozawa, Michel Plasson, Carl Davis, Robert Spano, Steuart Bedford, Stephen Lord, Stefan Asbury, Gil Rose, David Hoose, and Shinik Hahm, among numerous others. As a soloist, chamber musician, and recitalist, she has performed at festivals worldwide, including the Aldeburgh and Britten Festivals in England, the Varna Festival in Bulgaria, the Semanas Musicales de Frutillar Festival in Chile, and the Tanglewood, Norfolk, Monadnock, and Coastal Carolina festivals in the United States. A noted specialist in contemporary music, Ms. Baty has worked alongside many celebrated composers, including John Harbison, Bernard Rands, Yehudi Wyner, Sydney Hodkinson, Peter Child, Reza Vali, Paul Salerni, and Paul Moravec, on performances of their music.

Ms. Baty is very proud to have enjoyed a long collaboration with conductor Gil Rose and Boston Modern Orchestra Project, and with them has recorded the critically lauded Vali: Folk Songs (sung in Persian); Lukas Foss’ opera Griffelkin; the world-premiere recording of Eric Sawyer’s Civil War-era opera Our American Cousin; and John Harbison’s Mirabai Songs. A BMOP recording, “Reza Vali: Towards That Endless Plain”, on which Ms. Baty is prominently featured, was one of NPR Classical’s 10 Favorite Albums of 2013.

An alumna of Oberlin College and the Yale School of Music, she began her career as a teacher at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, and joined the faculty of the Yale School of Music in 2008.

## Program Notes

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### Gustav Mahler Symphony No. 3

Born 1860 in Bohemia

Died 1911 in Vienna, Austria



This score calls for four flutes, four oboes, four clarinets, E-flat clarinet, four bassoons, eight horns, four trumpets, flügelhorn, four trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (bass drum, chimes, cymbals, glockenspiel, rute, snare drum, suspended cymbals, tam-tam, tambourine, triangle), two harps, strings, women's chorus, children's chorus, and mezzo-soprano soloist

Gustav Mahler's Symphony No. 3 is one of the longest, grandest, most ambitious works in the symphonic repertoire. Clocking in at about 100 to 110 minutes in length, the eclectic six-movement symphony deeply reflects Mahler's philosophy that "A symphony must be like the world, it must contain everything." It is one of the composer's last early symphonies, cementing his position as a key late Romantic composer.

Mahler was born in 1860 to a secular Jewish family from an extremely impoverished background. He grew up in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, in Jihlava, a provincial town about twice the size of New London that is now located in the Czech Republic. Mahler's upbringing was marked by family tragedies, including the deaths of several siblings. Elements of Mahler's childhood appear in his symphonies. For example, each one contains a march, a possible reference to the sounds of marching band music he heard growing up near a military base. The opening of the Symphony No. 3 follows this pattern with a dark and brooding brassy introductory march.

Mahler was educated at the Vienna Conservatory, focusing on piano and music composition studies. However, after finishing school, Mahler could only find work as an opera and orchestra conductor, ultimately finding the most success in this role throughout his life. He went on to hold positions as director of the Vienna Court Opera (now Vienna State Opera) and the New York Philharmonic. However, Mahler's real passion was composing, a task he would ultimately commit himself to every summer during his holidays despite it not being as financially lucrative as conducting.

While Mahler published his Third Symphony without giving the audience any information about the symphony having a particular storyline, earlier drafts of the symphony's score had titles for each of the movements as follows:

Pan Awakes. Summer Comes Marching In (Bacchic Procession).  
What the Flowers in the Meadow Tell Me.  
What the Animals in the Forest Tell Me.  
What Humanity Tells Me.  
What the Angels Tell Me.  
What Love Tells Me.

Although Mahler ultimately wished for us to hear each movement in this symphony without having any of these particular themes in mind, it's undeniable that from the first, dark but strong strains of the opening march, to the sumptuous ending of its finale, these titles still carry weight when it comes to the journey and world building this symphony takes us on. Ultimately, Mahler's Symphony No. 3 explores the totality of existence, blending nature, humanity, and the divine into a profound musical reflection of the world itself.

- Saadya Chevan



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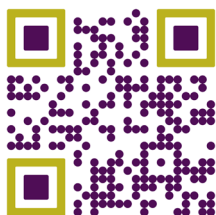
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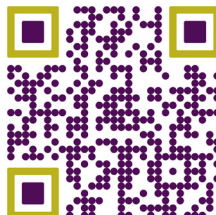


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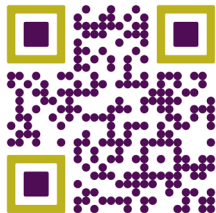
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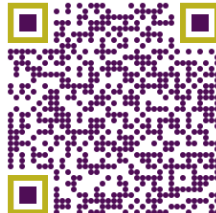
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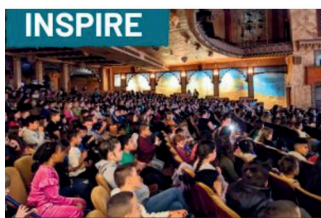
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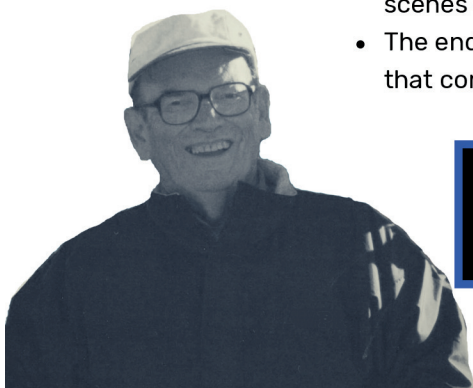


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# Three Centuries: Mozart, Beethoven, & Shaw

Saturday, January 25, 2025 - 7:30 pm

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**Toshiyuki Shimada**

**Erik Andrusyak**

**Alex McLaughlin**

**Stephan Tieszen**

**Music Director & Conductor**

**Oboe**

**Viola**

**Violin**

**Mozart**

**Oboe Concerto**

*Erik Andrusyak, Oboe*

*I. Allegro aperto*

*II. Adagio ma non troppo*

*III. Rondo-Allegro*

**Mozart**

**Sinfonia Concertante for Violin and Viola**

*Alex McLaughlin, Viola*

*Stephan Tieszen, Violin*

*I. Allegro maestoso*

*II. Andante*

*III. Presto*

**Intermission (20')**

**Caroline Shaw**

**And the Swallow**

**Beethoven**

**Symphony No. 8**

*I. Allegro vivace e con brio*

*II. Allegretto scherzando*

*III. Tempo di Menuetto*

*IV. Finale. Allegro vivace*

## Erik Andrusyak

### ECSO Principal Oboe

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Erik Andrusyak was appointed principal oboe of the Eastern Connecticut Symphony Orchestra in 2022. He is also the co-principal oboe of the United States Coast Guard Band and the principal oboe of the Hartford Symphony Orchestra. He was previously the principal oboe of the Elgin Symphony and a member of

the Civic Orchestra of Chicago, a training program under the Chicago Symphony Orchestra directed by Ken-David Masur.

Throughout his career, he has participated in prestigious music festivals including the Pacific Music Festival and the Music Academy of the West. He has been invited to perform as a guest with ensembles such as the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, New World Symphony, New Haven Symphony, Springfield Symphony, Albany Symphony, Illinois Symphony, Chicago's Joffrey Ballet, and the Chicago Philharmonic. Additionally, he has been featured as a soloist with the Connecticut Symphony, Masterworks Festival Orchestra, the Eastern Connecticut Symphony, Yellow River Music Festival, and the Civic Centennial Celebration Bach Marathon, where Yo-Yo Ma served as the creative consultant. This performance was broadcast live on WFMT. He has made solo appearances in Japan, Korea, China, and Russia.

In addition to maintaining his own private studio in Norwich, CT, he currently teaches at the Neighborhood Music School in New Haven and the Thames Valley Music School in New London. He holds a Bachelor of Music degree from DePaul University, where he studied with Alex Klein, former Principal Oboe of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Other mentors include Grace Hong, Joseph Claude, Scott Hostetler, Eugene Izotov, Lora Schaefer, and William Welter.

## Alex McLaughlin

### ECSO Principal Viola

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For Alex McLaughlin, a career in classical music is one that exemplifies variety and a need to perform. This drive has led Alex to seek performances in many different musical settings, from performing at Edinburgh Castle with the Strawberry Hill Fiddlers, to serving as the Acting Principal Violist of the Eastern Connecticut Symphony

Orchestra (ECSO), or to educating children at a small library in Blossburg, PA.

Alex is a graduate of both the Eastman School of Music and the Yale School of Music, receiving the Robert L. Oppelt award from the former and being a featured artist in the Oneppo Chamber Series of the latter. Alex has appeared in several festivals in the United States, including Spoleto Festival USA, the Bowdoin International Music Festival, the Weekend of Chamber Music, and the Endless Mountain Music Festival. In addition to the ECSO, Alex regularly performs with the Greater Newburgh Symphony Orchestra, the New Haven Symphony Orchestra, the Norwalk Symphony Orchestra, and the Woodstock Symphony Orchestra. Alex is also an active chamber musician, being a founding member of the Havenwood String Quartet in New Haven, CT as well as a frequent collaborator with the Beryllium String Quartet in NYC.

Alex has had the honor of working with many masters of the viola in his career, including Emily Schaad, Carol Rodland, Ettore Causa, Masumi Per Rostad, Jeffrey Irvine, and Kim Kashkashian. He currently performs on a 1970 viola by Otto Erdesz.

## Stephen Tieszen

### ECSO Concertmaster

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Stephan Tieszen is celebrating another season as concertmaster of the ECSO this year. He is also concertmaster of Opera Theater Connecticut and Salt Marsh Opera and was Concertmaster for the New Britain Symphony for many years. He is principal second violin of the New Haven Symphony and the Waterbury Symphony and is a member of the Wall Street Chamber Players.

Dr. Tieszen has degrees from Mannes College of Music, the Juilliard School, and Yale School of Music and studied with Sally Thomas, Sydney Harth, Guila Bustabo and Gabriel Banat. He has taught violin at Connecticut College, the University of Connecticut, and Fairfield University and given master classes at the Meadowmount school and Juilliard Precollege. He currently teaches at Mannes College, Tabor Arts Center, and the Southbury Music Studio and coaches orchestral violin for the Norwalk Youth Symphony. He is an active soloist and lectures frequently on music and the violin and does community outreach and education.

He has been crucial to the ECSO's collaboration with the Block Island Chamber of Commerce to put on an annual chamber music concert to raise funds for music education efforts on Block Island. In most years, he has acted as violin soloist, Concertmaster, and conductor with the ensemble, as well as putting together the repertoire in consultation with Toshi, ECSO staff, and the leadership of the Block Island Chamber of Commerce.





## Program Notes

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### Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart Oboe Concerto

Born 1756 in Salzburg, Austria

Died 1791 in Vienna, Austria

This piece is orchestrated for a standard string section, two oboes, and two horns.

After his incomparable operas, Mozart's twenty-seven piano concertos must take pride of place in posterity's estimation. In addition to those masterpieces, which he largely composed for his own use, he also wrote concertos for other instruments. The latter group consists of five violin concertos, four for horn, two for flute, and one each for oboe, clarinet, and bassoon. And while the works in that group of concertos generally do not possess the gravitas of the works for piano, they are, of course, fine works by the master, nevertheless. Even though all of these concertos have long been established as part of the standard repertoire of those instruments, that for the oboe stands apart. Mozart mentioned the work several times in his letters, but the work was believed lost, and thus, unknown, until its "discovery" in the twentieth century. It quickly became one of the most important concertos for that instrument. Not that the music itself was totally unknown, for it had long existed in the form of a concerto for flute (transposed up a step).

By the information gleaned from Mozart's letters of 1777, we know that he had written an oboe concerto that year for the oboist, Giuseppe Ferlendis. Mozart's employer in Salzburg, Archbishop Hieronymous Colloredo, had recently hired the virtuoso for the Salzburg Hofkappelle orchestra, and it is a safe presumption that Mozart wrote the oboe concerto for him sometime before the young composer left in September of that year on his well-known journey to Mannheim and Paris. Apparently, the next year, while still on the journey, and quite busy, in order to conveniently satisfy a commission for a flute concerto, Mozart decided to make life easy by taking the oboe concerto, transposing it from the "oboe key" of C major to the traditional flute key of D major, altering several passages along the way to accommodate the instrument, and voilà!—mission accomplished without much effort.

It was in that state that the work was known and performed on flute for the next century and a half. In the meantime, the oboe concerto version dropped

from view. It must be said that, based upon various evidence, music scholars had long suspected that the “oboe concerto” and the “flute concerto” were related compositions—but the manuscript proof was just not there. Finally, by the middle of the twentieth century, archival evidence sustained the first publication of the original oboe concerto. Although, there remained some musicological tussling over differences between the flute and oboe versions, by today, there is largely a consensus on the accuracy of the version that most oboists now perform. They, and the musical world, are now happy to have the original work for oboe.

Composed when Mozart was twenty-one, it is a delightful, untroubled, and relatively straightforward composition, cast in the usual three movements. The opening movement, as is common in these things, begins with the orchestra laying out the main ideas before the entrance of the soloist. An ingratiating series of lighthearted, cheerful motives leads to the oboe’s entrance, but, the witty composer withholds the main theme from the soloist, and gives it to the orchestra, while the soloist enters with a rapid ascending scale ending on a long-held high C (four bars worth). This little trick is borrowed from opera, and is a common vocal ploy designed to impress. The solo oboe throughout the movement entertains with a delightful variety of virtuosic figurations, and after a brief, almost perfunctory, middle “developmental” section, regales us with a cadenza. After which the movement quickly moves through familiar themes to the end.

The second movement is an earnest, expressive aria for oboe—in the best vocal Italian style that German composers had long cultivated in instrumental works—not the least of which was J. S. Bach. By the time of the oboe concerto, the young Mozart had already written almost a dozen operas, and his mastery of the style is evident here, and familiar to all who love his works for the dramatic stage. The composer’s penchant for chromaticism to engender a *serioso* tone is on full display throughout.

As one may expect, the last movement is a charming romp of a rondo. The bubbling little main theme must have pleased the composer, for it shows up five years later as an aria in the composer’s lighthearted opera, *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*. In this final movement there are several short, contrasting diversions in various keys, but it’s always easy to spot the return of the chief idea. Flautists may have enjoyed claim to this delightful little concerto for well over a century, but it is a pleasure to hear in its original guise—borne in the voice of the effervescent, wry oboe.

--Wm. E. Runyan

# Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

## Sinfonia Concertante for Violin, Viola, and Orchestra

This work is scored for solo violin, solo viola, two oboes, two horns, and strings.

Mozart wrote the Sinfonia Concertante in E-flat for violin and viola in 1779 after returning from his unsuccessful trip to Paris. It was likely first performed for Archbishop Colloredo with Mozart playing the solo viola rather than the violin part. During this period of his employment, Mozart was occasionally called on to perform with other court musicians, and he often did so as a violinist, a role he detested. Therefore, it makes sense that Mozart would express himself in a different manner through playing the viola.

The viola part is written in the key of D-major a half-step below the work's key of E-flat-major. This requires the viola soloist to tune the strings of their instrument a semitone above normal tuning, a practice known as scordatura. The viola can then produce a more brilliant tone, and the soloist has an easier time playing the correct fingerings.

The first movement shows the influence of Mozart's recent stays in Mannheim. The opening fanfare sounds similar to the openings of the symphonies of Carl Stamitz, a composer who had grown up in Mannheim and been a violinist in its Court Orchestra. The movement concludes with a powerful crescendo, an effect that the court orchestra of Mannheim was renowned for producing. The second movement, which is in the relative key of C minor, an unusual touch for Mozart, focuses mainly on a beautiful lengthy dialogue between violin and viola. The third movement is in a traditional rondo form, and provides an energetic conclusion to the work.

- Saadya Chevan

## Caroline Shaw

### And the Swallow

Born 1982 in Greenville, North Carolina

The piece calls for strings.

A setting of Psalm 84 written for chamber choir, this 2017 work is performed in an arrangement for strings by Julian Azkoul. Shaw spoke of how she was thinking of the Syrian refugee crisis as she composed and the swallow: “There’s a yearning for a home that feels very relevant today. The second verse is ‘The sparrow found a house and the swallow her nest, where she may place her young,’ which is just a beautiful image of a bird trying to keep her children safe—people trying to keep their family safe.”



Caroline Shaw is a musician who moves among roles, genres, and mediums, trying to imagine a world of sound that has never been heard before but has always existed. She works often in collaboration with others, as producer, composer, violinist, and vocalist. Shaw is the recipient of the Pulitzer Prize in Music, an honorary doctorate from Yale, four Grammys, and a Thomas J. Watson Fellowship. She has written and produced for iconic artists and ensembles across the musical spectrum, including Rosalía, Renée Fleming, Yo-Yo Ma, Tiler Peck, Nas, Kanye West, the LA Phil, the NY Phil, and others. Recent TV/film/stage scoring projects include “Leonardo Da Vinci” (Ken Burns/PBS), “Julie Keeps Quiet (Leonardo Van Dijn), “Fleishman is in Trouble” (FX/Hulu), “The Sky Is Everywhere” (Josephine Decker/A24), vocal work with Rosalía (MOTOMAMI), “The Crucible” (Lyndsey Turner/National Theatre), “Partita” (Justin Peck/NYC Ballet), “Moby Dick” (Wu Tsang), and “LIFE” (Gandini Juggling/Merce Cunningham Trust). Current touring projects include shows with Sō Percussion, Ringdown, Attacca Quartet, Roomful of Teeth, Graveyards & Gardens, Gabriel Kahane, and Kamus Quartet. Her favorite color is yellow, and her favorite smell is rosemary.



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# Ludwig van Beethoven

## Symphony No. 8

Born 1770 in Bonn, Germany

Died 1827, Vienna, Austria

The score calls for two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, timpani, and strings.



It is commonplace, of course, for scholars to think of Beethoven's musical life in three great periods—the last one being the time of compositions that “challenge” comprehension and appreciation. The fecund middle period, roughly the first decade of the nineteenth century, is the time of dozens of the magnificent works that came to define the composer and establish his eternal reputation, and his eighth symphony stands pretty much near the end of that time. Written mostly during 1811 and finished by early 1812, it—like its mate, the seventh symphony--is a without doubt a complete reflection of the happy times and optimistic personal attitude of the composer at that time in his life—both professionally and personally. We are all familiar with the struggles and depressive moments in his emotionally up and down life, but times were good about then. The beloved “Pastoral” symphony was finished in 1808, and he had then busied himself with important works, among them, the “Emperor” piano concerto and the music for Egmont. Sketches for both the seventh and the eighth symphonies were all part of his activity during this time.

He had already suffered health problems by early 1811, and traveled to the spa in the Bohemian town of Teplice, where work on the symphonies went on during that summer. Both symphonies were finished the next year, and together they more or less demark the end of an era. From that time on, until the end of his life in 1827, Beethoven the man, and his musical works underwent significant changes. His health underwent further deterioration, with debilitating family squabbles and failures in personal relationships all contributing to the change. While there were great works still to be written, the flow of inspiration attenuated, his social isolation increased, and the style of his composition took on a new, abstract quality. So, the Symphony No. 8 in many ways roughly marks the end of the major creative period of the composer's life—what lay ahead were works that often tested his audiences in significant ways; they still do.

As noted above, the second movement is not the usual slow movement but a fairly rapid exercise in what many generations have thought of as some kind of parody on a metronome or a clock. It's not proven, and you can draw your own conclusions, but it goes from the first to the last bar with almost unremitting sixteenth note "tick-tocks" in the woodwinds—it doesn't vary a whit in tempo, even during the "stutter stops." More Beethoven humor, it would seem –what else could it be?

Not many serious moments so far, and the third movement—usually a brisk, and often dramatic "scherzo" in Beethoven—is a throwback to the old minuet of Haydn and Mozart, but with a major difference. This is not a gentle, stately dance of old. In Beethoven's hands, this one is nothing less than a bit weird in rhythm, and full unusual accents that would make it a challenge to dance to for even Fred and Ginger. It's as if the composer deliberately set out to confuse us as to what this is, and he succeeds famously at continuing the unusual nature of this symphony with yet another bit of eccentricity. Most will find the horn and clarinet solos in the middle section ingratiating and a rather smooth diversion from the outer sections.

The last movement is a run for the money. Taking off at blistering speed, there is a shower of machine gun-like notes that occasionally pause, followed by an enigmatic loud note that seems from some other key. We hear a main section that returns on regular basis, with contrasting ones and a bit of a development, as the movement explores a variety of unusual and entertaining keys that surprise and delight. But, it's a relatively short affair—rather like the first movement—for Beethoven more or less zips through the form almost perfunctorily to indulge himself in a coda of literally unprecedented length. Along the way, the unexpectedly loud "wrong" notes continue to be heard—but now in a context that rather explains them. The rustic humor continues in the funny, thumping octave jumps in the bassoons and timpani. This whole amusing symphony ends with what seems to be another poke at convention: tonic chords are repeated, repeated, and repeated to nail the conclusion. It's almost a self-parody of the "long hair" Beethovenian emphatic ending. This is a delightful work, and constantly surprises those who are more familiar with all of the other "big" symphonies, and it is well deserving of the composer's documented pride in it.

--Wm. E. Runyan

# A Call For Peace

Saturday, February 22, 2025 – 7:30 pm

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Toshiyuki Shimada  
Kinga Augustyn

Music Director & Conductor  
Violin

Polina  
Nazaykinskaya

Elegy XXII  
*World Premiere*

Wieniawski

Violin Concerto No. 2  
*Kinga Augustyn, Violin*

*I. Allegro moderato*  
*II. Andante non troppo*  
*III. Allegro con fuoco*

Intermission

Tchaikovsky

Symphony No. 4

*I. Andante sostenuto – Moderato con anima*  
*II. Andantino in modo di canzone*  
*III. Scherzo. Pizzicato ostinato. Allegro*  
*IV. Finale. Allegro con fuoco*



# Kinga Augustyn

## Violin

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Polish-American Kinga Augustyn is a versatile New York City-based virtuoso concert violinist and recording artist. “Stylish and vibrant” (The Strad Magazine), and “beyond amazing, one hell of a violinist!” (The Fanfare Magazine), Ms. Augustyn has performed as a soloist with orchestras in North and South America, Europe and Asia, and they include the Roanoke Symphony Orchestra, Queens Symphony Orchestra, Catskill Symphony Orchestra, Riverside Symphonia, Western Piedmont Symphony, Deutsches Kammerorchester Berlin, Magdeburg Philharmonic

Orchestra, Chamber Orchestra Leopoldinum, Wrocław Philharmonic Orchestra, the MAV Symphony Orchestra of Budapest, and the Orquesta Sinfónica Universidad Mayor. She has toured China and performed at China’s most prestigious venues such as Beijing Poly Theater and Shanghai Oriental Art Center. As a recitalist and chamber musician Kinga has appeared at the Stern Auditorium and the Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall, Alice Tully Hall, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Aspen Music Festival, the Chicago Cultural Center, Teatro Ristori (Verona, Italy), Gran Teatro La Fenice (Venice, Italy), Teatro dal Verme (Milano, Italy), and Teatro Municipal de Las Condes (Santiago, Chile). In addition to concerti with orchestras and recitals with piano, Ms. Augustyn frequently performs unaccompanied solo violin recitals and she also plays baroque violin.

Kinga Augustyn studied at The Juilliard School with Cho-Liang Lin and Naoko Tanaka, and earned there both the Bachelor and the Master degrees as a full tuition scholarship recipient. She holds a doctorate from the Stony Brook University, where she was also awarded a full-tuition scholarship and assistantship and worked with Phil Setzer and Pamela Frank.

Kinga Augustyn is often praised for her musical interpretations, profundity, deft phrasing, beautiful tone, mastery of the bow, perfect intonation, and for unique programming ideas.

## Program Notes



### **Polina Nazaykinskaya**

**Elegy XXII: World Premiere**

Born 1987

This score calls for two flutes and piccolo, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, triangle, cymbals, bass drum, and strings.

In the 2024-2025 concert season, Polina's orchestral music will be performed by the Utah Symphony, Portland Youth Philharmonic, Eastern Connecticut Symphony Orchestra, The Syracuse Orchestra, and the Atlanta Symphony. In May 2025, Polina's new ballet for MorDance will be premiered in New York. In May 2025, Polina's chamber opera, "Her New Home" will be performed at the Garth Newel Center. Recent concert seasons highlights included the premiere of two new ballets, "The Rising" and "Emily," performed by the San Francisco Ballet and MorDance in New York City.

Polina's collaborators include internationally renowned choreographers Pascal Rioult, Yuri Possokhov, Jonah Bokaer, Morgan McEwen, and Ulyana Bochernikova. Polina works closely with the world's leading conductors, such as Osmo Vänskä, Teodor Currentzis, Aziz Shokhakimov, Sarah Hicks, Toshiyuki Shimada, Lawrence Loh, Hannu Lintu and David Hattner. Polina's compositions are actively performed by internationally acclaimed soloists such as trombonist R. Douglas Wright, violinist Elena Korzhenevich, and pianist Anton Nel. With her larger chamber music works, Polina frequently turns to the tragedy of humanity's collective history, in particular, the Holocaust. Her work "Haim" is performed annually around the world and has become an important ensemble composition.

Between 2021 and 2024, Polina was the Philharmonic Orchestra Conductor of the Greater Connecticut Youth Orchestras. Before her work with the GCTYO, she led the British Youth Music Theatre, RIOULT Dance NY, the University of Southern Mississippi Orchestra, and the Russian Youth Symphony Orchestra. Over the past decade, Polina formed a creative alliance with an award-winning pianist and librettist, Konstantin Soukhovetski, with whom they have premiered many works of diverse genres, from solo piano to ballets. Currently, they are working on an opera commissioned by Opera Mississippi to commemorate the company's 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary and to be premiered in 2025.

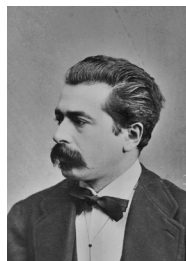
# Henryk Wieniawski

## Violin Concerto No. 2

Born 1835 in Lublin, Poland

Died 1880 in Moscow, Russia

This piece's score calls for two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion, and strings.



Henryk Wieniawski's Violin Concerto No. 2 in D Minor, Op. 22, composed in 1862, is considered one of the greatest tests of a violinist's skill and virtuosity in the violin repertoire. Wieniawski, a major 19th Century virtuoso violinist, was born in Lublin, Poland, in 1835. As a child, he demonstrated exceptional skill playing the violin, and at age 8 he was admitted to the Paris Conservatory under a special exception due to his being underage and not French. As a composer, Wieniawski wrote music for himself and other violinists as soloists, utilizing his deep knowledge and talent with the instrument to create music that blends brilliance and emotional depth from the violin. This concerto presents challenges for the violin soloist to perform but allows the soloist to put a lot of expression in the performance, making it a standout work in the varied violin solo repertoire. The first movement, *Allegro moderato* (moderately fast in tempo), opens dramatically, featuring bold orchestral themes before the solo violinist enters, and performs a series of demanding technical virtuosic flourishes to the music. The second movement, *Romance*, is particularly beloved for its heartfelt violin solo theme that permeates throughout. The final movement, *Allegro con fuoco* (fast and with fiery energy), brings the piece to a thrilling conclusion, incorporating elements of Gypsy-styled music with dazzling technical passages that force the violinist to blaze out notes in rapid succession and showcase their and their instrument's capabilities.

The Concerto premiered in 1862 in St. Petersburg with Wienawski as soloist and his friend Anton Rubinstein conducting. That Wieniawski wrote the concerto for himself makes his position as a virtuoso performer clear throughout the work. It has been performed by some of the greatest violinists, including Jascha Heifetz and Itzhak Perlman, and its continued significance is impressive considering it comes from the mid-Nineteenth Century, a time when many well-remembered violinists lived and performed many of the great concertos remaining in the repertoire. The concerto's blend of lyrical beauty and technical brilliance continues to captivate audiences and challenge performers, securing its place as a critical part of the violin repertoire.

-Saadya Chevan

# Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

## Symphony No. 4



Born 1942 in Votkinsk, Russia

Died 1893 in Saint Petersburg, Russia

The score of Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 4 calls for two flutes and piccolo, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, triangle, cymbals, bass drum, and strings.

Of his six symphonies, the Fourth is the only one for which Tchaikovsky revealed a deep underlying meaning. He admitted that Fate was the predominant element at work in this symphony, no doubt engendered by the suffering and pain he experienced in his personal life. The completion of the sketch for the Fourth Symphony occurred in 1877 at the same time as the composer's engagement to Antonina Milyukova, a music student at the Moscow Conservatory where Tchaikovsky taught. It might be thought that this would be a time of great joy and happiness for him, but such was not the case. Tchaikovsky had no real interest in the girl and was goaded into marriage only because she threatened suicide if he refused. The hapless union lasted only a short time, with Tchaikovsky finally leaving his new wife after he suffered a complete nervous breakdown.

He mentioned this tragedy in a letter to the other woman in his life, his patroness, Nedejda von Meck, whom he never met. Tchaikovsky wrote, "We cannot escape our fate, and there was something fatalistic about my meeting this girl." The symphony was finally completed while Tchaikovsky was convalescing in Switzerland. Then in a long confidential letter to Mme. Von Meck he poured out his soul in an impassioned word-picture of the F Minor Symphony: "There is a program for our symphony definite enough to be expressed in words and to you alone I communicate its general meaning as well as the intent of its separate sections. The Introduction is the germ of the entire symphony." (Tchaikovsky then quoted the opening fanfare of the symphony.)

This is fate: this is that fateful force which prevents the impulse to happiness from attaining its goal, which jealously ensures that peace and happiness shall not be complete and unclouded, which hangs above the head like the sword of Damocles, unwaveringly, constantly poisoning the soul. An invincible force that can never be overcome—merely endured, miserably.

The gloomy and hopeless feelings become more inflamed and intense. Is it not better to escape from reality and to take refuge in dreams: O joy! Out of nowhere a sweet and gentle day-dream appears. Some blissful, radiant human image hurries by and beckons us away: How wonderful! How distant now sounds the obsessive first theme of the allegro! Gradually the soul is enveloped by daydreams. Everything gloomy and joyless is forgotten. There it is, there it is—happiness! But no; it was only a dream, for Fate awakens us again... The waves buffet us incessantly until the sea engulfs us. This is approximately, the program of the first movement.

“The second movement expresses another aspect of suffering... We are somewhat weary of life and are content to refresh ourselves merely with recollections. There is much for us to remember – moments of joy... also moments of sorrow, irreparable losses – but they are so far away. In the third movement, no definite feelings find expression. We have here only the capricious arabesques, the intangible forms which flit through one’s head. Free reign is given the imagination, which draws the strangest designs... They are no part of the real world; they are disjointed, wild and bizarre.

“The fourth movement. If there is no joy in you, seek it in others. Go to the people. See how well they give themselves up to rejoicing and festivity. A peasant festival is depicted. Scarcely have you forgotten your own sorrow in the merriment of others, when inexorable Fate once more makes you mindful of his presence. The others are indifferent to you. They do not glance at you, do not notice your loneliness and sorrow. Oh! How happy they are! Their emotions are simple and immediate... Happiness must be simple and unspoiled. Rejoice in the happiness of others. This will make life bearable.

“My dear friend, this is all I can tell you about the Symphony. My description is, of course, neither clear nor complete. The peculiarity of instrumental music is that meaning is incapable of analysis.” –Paul E. Shannon, DMD



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# Fanfare For Life & Spring

Saturday, March 29, 2025 – 7:30 pm

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**Toshiyuki Shimada**  
**Adam Adov**

**Music Director & Conductor**  
**Piano**

John Kimo Williams    Fanfare for Life

Missy Mazzoli            These Worlds In Us

Barber                    Adagio For Strings

Prokofiev                Piano Concerto No. 3  
                                 *Adam Adov, Piano*

*I. Andante – Allegro*  
*II. Tema con variazioni*  
*III. Allegro, ma non troppo*

Intermission (20')

Schumann              Symphony No. 1 (Spring)

*I. Andante un poco maestoso –*  
*Allegro molto vivace*  
*II. Larghetto*  
*III. Scherzo: Molto vivace*  
*– Trio I: Molto piu vivace – Trio II*  
*IV. Allegro animato e grazioso*



## Adam Adov

Piano, 2024 Instrumental Competition Winner

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Adam Adov was born in Sydney, Australia. He studies with Michael Lewin at the Boston Conservatory at Berklee, winning the 2023 Churchill Scholarship. From age 10 he studied with Natalya Andreeva in the Sydney Conservatorium of Music's "Rising Stars" program, achieving diplomas AMUS (2015) and LUMS (2019.) He also studied in Moscow with Mikhail Petukhov. He won first prize in the Eastern Connecticut Symphony Orchestra's Instrumental

Competition, first prize in the New York's International Music Competition (2022), Special Liszt prize in Carles and Sofia Piano Competition (2023) and 2nd prize in the Badura-Skoda International Piano Competition (2023).

He is also the winner of the 2024 Boston Conservatory Concerto Competition and performed with the Boston Conservatory Orchestra at Jordan Hall. He recorded works of Bach for Fine Music FM National Radio and was featured in the Medici TV documentary on the XV International Tchaikovsky Competition. Masterclasses include Roberto Plano, Dimitri Toufexis, Boaz Sharon and Lucinda Carver.

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## Program Notes

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### James Kimo Williams

#### Fanfare for Life

Born 1950 in Amityville, New York

This piece was composed for four French horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion and strings.

Fanfare For Life was commissioned by AT&T and composed as a direct result of the gang violence in Chicago during the summer of 1994.



A 14-year-old girl, Shavon Dean, was shot and killed by 11-year-old gang member Robert Sandifer. Robert was then hunted down and killed by two members of his gang, a 14-year-old boy and his 16-year-old brother. Robert was shot twice in the head. That same summer 5-year-old Eric Morse was dropped to his death from the 14th floor of a public housing high-rise by a 10-year-old boy and an 11-year-old boy, because Eric would not steal candy for them.

With Fanfare For Life, the beauty of life is presented with an orchestra fanfare. In the second part the lives of these children are symbolized by two distinct pentatonic melodies. These melodies are cut short as were the young lives that never developed. The third part (brass tutti) is a variation of the two “child” melodies, symbolizing the families that now only have memories of those lost lives. The last part is a repeat of the initial fanfare again emphasizing the beauty of life and the need to cherish it.

Fanfare For Life is dedicated to the memories of Shavon Dean, Robert Sandifer, and Eric Morse. Prepared by Carol Williams and Kimo Williams.

## Missy Mazzoli

### These Worlds In Us



Born 1980 in Pennsylvania

This score calls for two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, two trombone, tuba, percussion and strings.

The title *These Worlds In Us* comes from James Tate's poem *The Lost Pilot*, a meditation on his father's death in World War II:

(excerpt)

My head cocked towards the sky,  
I cannot get off the ground,  
and you, passing over again,

fast, perfect and unwilling  
to tell me that you are doing  
well, or that it was a mistake

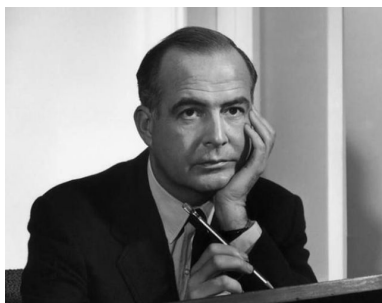
that placed you in that world,  
and me in this; or that misfortune  
placed these worlds in us.

This piece is dedicated to my father, who was a soldier during the Vietnam War. In talking to him it occurred to me that, as we grow older, we accumulate worlds of intense memory within us, and that grief is often not far from joy. I like the idea that music can reflect painful and blissful sentiments in a single note or gesture, and sought to create a sound palette that I hope is at once completely new and strangely familiar to the listener. The theme of this work, a mournful line first played by the violins, collapses into glissandos almost immediately after it appears, giving the impression that the piece has been submerged under water or played on a turntable that is grinding to a halt. The melodic (mouth organs) played by the percussionists in the opening and final gestures mimic the wheeze of a broken accordion, lending a particular vulnerability to the bookends of the work. The rhythmic structures and cyclical nature of the piece are inspired by the unique tension and logic of Balinese music, and the march-like figures in the percussion bring to mind the militaristic inspiration for the work as well as the relentless energy of electronica drum beats.

— Missy Mazzoli

## Samuel Barber

### Adagio for Strings



Born 1910 in West Chester, PA  
Died 1981 in Manhattan, NY

This piece calls for strings.

If any composer may truly be considered our national composer, Samuel Barber should surely be in the running.

Notwithstanding the adulation of Aaron Copland's populist music from the 1930s and 40s, most of the latter composer's compositions in other musical styles are not well received by the American public--too dissonant and modern! On the other hand, no major American composer of the twentieth century was a more ardent and eloquent champion of a lyrical, accessible, yet modern idiom, than Samuel Barber. His musical style is founded in the romantic traditions of the nineteenth century, whose harmonic language and formal structures were his point of departure. Unlike so many of his peers, he was not powerfully swayed by the modernism emanating from Europe after World War I, but pursued his own path.

Consistently lyrical throughout his career, it is telling that his songs constitute about two-thirds of his compositions in number. His vocal works include two major operas, *Vanessa* (1956), and *Antony and Cleopatra* (1966), the latter composed for the opening of the Metropolitan Opera House in Lincoln Center. But, he also composed at least one work for almost every musical genre, and unlike most composers, he was a recognized and published composer from his student days. At the age of twenty-one his overture to *The School for Scandal* was an instant success, was forthwith published, and remains in the standard repertoire.

Though his choral music and solo vocal music are concert mainstays, the *Adagio for Strings* is undoubtedly his most well known work. It is the second movement of his String Quartet, arranged for string orchestra. In 1936, when he was twenty-six years old, he and his life's partner, the equally distinguished Italian composer, Gian Carlo Menotti, were living in Europe for the summer, and the quartet was written there. The quartet has only three movements, and apparently the composer knew from the beginning that the slow middle movement was something special. The quartet received its premiere in Rome in late 1936, but Barber revised the last movement the

next year before its first performance in the U.S. Even before all this, it is apparent that Barber had recognized the gold of the middle movement, and extracted the movement, arranging it for string orchestra right away in 1936. In this full, lush guise the composer sent the full score to Toscanini in early 1938, and soon received it back with no comment. That was a bit irksome, and Barber felt slightly offended, but soon all was put right, as the legendary conductor soon informed Barber that he had memorized the complete score, and sent it back as a courtesy. Toscanini conducted the premiere of the string orchestra version in November of 1938 in a live radio broadcast (a recording was made) from Rockefeller Center, and the rest is history, so to speak. It went on to take its place as a very special composition in the American psyche, and like the “Nimrod” variation from Elgar’s *Enigma Variations* in Great Britain, a performance of the *Adagio for Strings* is almost mandatory for moments of great national reflection and grief.

It is a relatively simple work, like much great art, but concomitantly is also the stunning application of genius and inspiration in its creation. A straightforward melody enters after a unison low Bb in the violins and a rich response from the low strings. Composed of a searching three-note figure and a descending scale and return, this idea is passed around the orchestra in a dialogue of string voices. Beneath it all, a rich bed of ever-shifting harmonies sustains. Barber makes much of the homogeneous timbre of the string section—like great, unaccompanied vocal choruses—to “sneak” remarkable dissonance and its resolution into the texture. And of course, it is this very commonplace of music that produces much of what has always been perceived as beauty, in this case, wrenching beauty. Expressive upward leaps in the melodic line, resolving to ever-shifting harmonies, mostly complete the picture, as the instruments—and the tension—climb higher and higher. An ever-changing pulse contributes to the unease, as the soaring climax is reached. A few dramatic chords, a pause, and Barber returns to a brief restatement of the beginning. As it ends impossibly softly, there is no traditional harmonic resolution, but concludes with a “hanging” chord, with no real sense of finality. It could not better mirror the irresolution of existence, grief, and human lives

--Wm. E. Runyan



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## Sergei Prokofiev

### Piano Concerto No. 3



Born 1891 in Sontsivka, Ukraine  
Died 1953 in Moscow, Russia

In addition to a solo piano, this piece is scored for flute, piccolo, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, timpani, percussion and strings.

Prokofiev and Dmitri Shostakovich are the two composers who stood above the rest of those who labored during the years of the Soviet Union. Unlike Shostakovich, however, Prokofiev enjoyed part of his career living and composing in the West, returning to the USSR in 1936 voluntarily. Like his compatriot, he must be counted as one of the great composers of the twentieth century, although unlike Shostakovich, his direct influence on composers outside of the Soviet sphere was minimal. He was a virtuoso pianist, but who also composed from the beginning, graduating from the St. Petersburg shortly before World War I. His musical style was based in the Russian romantic tradition, but he established early on a personal idiom that was characterized by pungent dissonance, soaring lyrical melodies, a facile manipulation of motoric rhythms, and kaleidoscopic harmonic changes. Part and parcel of his musical personality was an acerbic appreciation of satire, parody, and even the grotesque.

Prokofiev, in addition to his education as a composer, trained as a concert pianist, and early on began supplying himself with compositions. Among his early piano works he wrote two piano concertos—the first he played for his final student examinations at the St. Petersburg Conservatory in 1914. He witnessed (and supported) the Revolution in 1917, but it is noteworthy that in May 1918 he left Russia and the struggles of the proletariat, and travelled all the way across Russia through Siberia to Tokyo, and then on to New York. You might say that he sneaked out the backdoor. His goal was obviously to enrich himself through solo piano touring in the US, like his acquaintance and competitor Rachmaninov. Prokofiev struggled somewhat more than did Rachmaninov during these years, for the latter was much more amenable to playing a popular program of more accessible music than was Prokofiev. In any case, in 1921, in contemplation of another American season ahead of him, Prokofiev completed the third piano concerto while vacationing in Brittany.

It was not all completely new, for many of the ideas and sketches went back a few years. The work contains all of the pungent, vigorous, rhythm-driven characteristics of Prokofiev. Nevertheless, some of its clarity and melodic directness may reflect his anticipation of conservative American audiences. He gave the première with the Chicago Symphony in December of 1921. While not an immediate success—that came after its European début—the concerto went on to become the most popular of his five piano concertos.

The orchestra takes an important role throughout the work, and participates as equal—not only in announcing the musical material, but in its development as well. Two clarinets open the slow introduction, and not long after a whirlwind in the strings leads into a look at that material by the energetic soloist. Later, contrasting ideas are heard first in the oboe (with castanets!), followed yet again by a re-interpretation by the soloist. The middle “working out” is a kick, and features the famous driving octaves of the pianist, ripping up and down the scale. Naturally, Prokofiev provides a suitable, brilliant ending to the affair. The middle movement consists of a theme with five variations, each with a distinct character. It opens almost demurely, with a dignified, moderate dance-like theme, played by the solo flute and then clarinet—almost “classical.” Then, “boom”—the first variation takes off like mad. Other variations—they’re short and you’ll be able to count them easily—go through a variety of moods and character. Much of Prokofiev’s complicated personal character comes to the fore, but you’re never quite sure what’s authentic and what’s sarcastic. Listen for the theme played by the flute amidst the bustle of the last variation. It all ends suspiciously serenely, though.

The last movement opens with bassoons and strings, playing the main idea of the movement, a rather lurching march, but in three beats to the bar. The piano joins in the intense parade, and after a bit, a new section ensues that displays the composer’s famed gift for soaring lyrical melody, in the best of heartthrob Russian romanticism. The musical war resumes, however, and the soloist and the orchestra go the full ten rounds—each finding resourceful and virtuoso “ammunition” as they maniacally drive to the end. It’s all breathtakingly entertaining, and ample evidence of all of the aspects of the composer’s inimitable style that have led to his immense popularity ever since. But, in the midst of all of the crackling wit, sparkling style, and supercharged performance, we are still left wondering how much of Prokofiev, himself, the composer has allowed us to hear.

--Wm. E. Runyan



## Robert Schumann

### Symphony No. 1 in Bb, op. 38 “Spring”



Born 1810 in Zwickau, Germany  
Died 1856 in Eendenich, Germany

The score calls for two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, timpani, triangle, and strings.

Schumann made important contributions to chamber and symphonic music, and his four symphonies are respected contributions to orchestral literature. He turned his talents to the genre—at Clara’s enthusiastic encouragement--the very next year after the remarkable production of *Lieder* in 1840. His first two symphonies—No. 1 in Bb Major “Spring” and No. 4 in D Minor (it’s complicated—don’t ask) were the result, and the first is an especially exuberant celebration of the joy and optimism of that period—not at all prescient of the dark and tragic end to his life.

One of the misleading aspects of the popularity of many classic and romantic works is the proclivity of fans to bestow nicknames on them of dubious authenticity or even appropriateness. Probably no composer has suffered more in this respect than, say, Haydn, but there are many others. But in the case of Schumann’s first symphony, the composer himself is the source of the appellation, “Spring.” As a great composer of *Lieder*, he knew much poetry, and a poem is the inspiration for Schumann’s communicated thoughts on the mood and nature of the symphony so named.

Schumann composed the work quickly during late January and February of 1841, and its premiere took place the next month. The poetic inspiration of “spring” is generally taken to be by Adolf Böttger, entitled *Frühlingsgedicht* (poem of spring) and full of inspiring, energetic paeans to the season. Indeed, the first movement opens with a dramatic fanfare by the trumpets summoning spring’s awakening. And that interpretation is on record by the composer. Schumann also wrote that, later in the introduction, the music should suggest the greening of the world and butterflies in the air.

The ensuing allegro he said should depict spring coming alive. Well, that's pretty specific, and fits the music fine. After the dramatic, slow introduction, the main theme of the allegro is easily discerned, as is the somewhat more relaxed subordinate theme. In the development, the latter is completely absent, the composer choosing to work over the first one, alone. The recapitulation is announced by the dramatic fanfare of the opening, and interesting enough, Schumann introduces a completely new theme at the very end of the work, near the end of the coda—a striking bit of originality by a true German romantic!

The second movement (originally entitled “Evening,” but later withdrawn) is simple in form, and perhaps best heard simply as an extended song for orchestra. Schumann was one of the giants of German Lieder, who had just finished his “wonder year” of song composition, and the metaphor is completely apt. Schumann’s gift for melody and rich romantic harmonies comes strongly to the fore here. Of interest are the numerous trills in the orchestral parts—a bit unusual, and more typical of the piano music of the time—think Chopin. Schumann, of course, was a gifted pianist and composer of piano music, so, it shouldn’t surprise. Finally, noteworthy is the short solo for the trombone section at the very end. It seems to come out of nowhere, and its rather dark chromaticism casts an ambiguous tone to the mood. It eerily foretells a similar use of the instruments in his third symphony. But more specifically, it anticipates the main theme of the following scherzo.

The third movement is the usual dance-like diversion, but Schumann extends the form with two trios instead of the usual single diversion in the middle. Furthermore, all of the main sections are divided into two contrasting segments—so, there’s a lot of different ideas to keep track of. But it’s not necessary to “keep track,” anyway. A few interesting points, though: the first section starts with a vigorous, somewhat syncopated affair in the minor mode, followed by a more cheerful response. The following Trio I is a nothing more than an active call-and-response, antiphonal dance in two—not the traditional three beats. Schumann builds it out of the shortest of ideas—essentially two notes! After a return of the opening, Trio II kicks even more vigorously, built on simple scales and displaced accents. Finally, after an abbreviated recap of the opening, there is a rather curious coda that ends it all with in a most tranquil, peaceful mood, but with a little zippy tag worthy of Berlioz. The race to the end is exuberant, and its vivacity is completely characteristic of Schumann at the peak of his happiness—both in his artistry and his marriage. Nowhere is a hint of his forthcoming tragic days. It is indeed spring.

-Wm. E. Runyan

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## Dr. Daniel McDavitt

Eastern Connecticut Symphony Chorus Director

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Dr. Daniel McDavitt is Director of Cadet Vocal Music at the United States Coast Guard Academy, where he oversees a vocal music program that includes four choral ensembles, a robust touring schedule, and a yearly musical production. He was also recently appointed Director of the Eastern Connecticut Symphony Chorus, an ensemble specializing in the performance of major choral works of both historical and modern

composers. Previous to these appointments, he was associate professor of music and director of the Goucher College Choirs and Orchestra, director of choral studies at Loyola University Maryland, and acting director of choirs at Knox College.

An award-winning composer and educator, Dr. McDavitt's compositions and arrangements have been performed and broadcast throughout the United States and abroad. His music is published by Walton Music, E. C. Schirmer Publishing, Gentry Publications, and Jackman Music, along with a number of self-published works. He has received a commission from the Barlow Endowment for Music Composition, won first prize in the Magnum Opus Composition Competition, and regularly accepts commissions from community, university, and school choral ensembles from around the country. He has also received numerous grants for music research and to promote new works by living composers. In 2017, he was honored with the Excellence in Teaching Award at Goucher College, and has presented his research multiple times at the Oxford Conducting Institute at St. Anne's College at the University of Oxford (UK).

Born and raised in Missouri, he holds a bachelor of arts degree in music and humanities and a master of music degree in choral conducting from Brigham Young University, and a doctor of musical arts degree in choral conducting and literature, with a minor in theory/composition, from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Dr. McDavitt is a member of the American Choral Directors Association and the National Collegiate Choral Organization, where he serves on the national board, as well as the College Music Society, and the American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers (ASCAP).

He lives in Old Lyme, Connecticut, with his wife, writer and photographer Jenika Beck McDavitt, and their two children.

# The Eastern Connecticut Symphony Chorus

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## Soprano

Kia Baird  
Rebecca Ballesteros  
Jennifer Bolles  
Susanne Diana  
Jane Falivene  
Jennifer Finlayson  
Jill Foster  
Hilary Gaudreau  
Karen Graf  
Katelyn Haley  
Alison Guinness  
Rebecca Harris  
Amy Holmberg  
Bethany Jensen  
Minnie Madden  
Rebekah Martin  
Marty Minich  
Dianne Potochniak  
Annabel Powers  
Lynne Reuber  
Lindsey Rusnock  
Nicole Scout  
Kathy Walburn

## Alto

Dianne Bachmanský  
Evelyn Bamford  
Joyce Daubar  
Nicole Marion Doyle  
Janine Geida  
Maureen Gressler  
Betsy Farrugia  
Tara Haglund  
Zaya Haglund  
Mary Harris  
Carolyn Hartsfield  
Debbie Kimball  
Ginny Lewis  
Jana Noyes  
Sarah Perez  
Judy Spitz

Joyce Wallace

Jessica Weber

Clare Wurm

## Tenor

Jamie Garrison  
Bill Hathaway  
Toni Leland  
Alec Leshy  
Linda Mariani  
David (PJ) Pettyjohn  
John Reinschmidt  
David Rinzler  
Benjamin Rutherford  
Brett Terry  
Derrick Williams

## Bass

John Charland  
James Conover  
Kit Foster  
Marc Goldsmith  
Ray Grady  
Ben Hayes  
Lee Howard  
Peter Jenkins  
Robert Keltner  
David Morschhauser  
Jacob Stewart  
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Michael Wiseman

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# Love and Hope, Italian Style

Saturday, April 26, 2024 - 7:30 pm

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**Toshiyuki Shimada**

**Music Director & Conductor**

**Dr. Daniel McDavitt**

**Eastern Connecticut Symphony**

**Chorus Director**

**Sarah Joyce Cooper**

**Soprano**

**Jesus Daniel Hernandez**

**Tenor**

**Eastern Connecticut Symphony Chorus**

Verdi                      La Forza del Destino Overture

Verdi                      Vapensiero from *Nabucco*

Puccini                      Intermezzo from *Manon Lescaut*

Puccini                      Humming Chorus from *Madama Butterfly*

Puccini                      Madama Butterfly

Intermission (20')

Verdi                      Overture to *Luisa Miller*

Verdi                      Vedi! Le Foscche Notturmo Spoglie from *Il Trovatore*

Verdi                      Noi Siamo Zingarelle from *La Traviata*

Puccini                      Si, mi chiamano Mimi – Oh Soave Fanciulla from  
*La Bohème*

Verdi                      Triumphal March from *Aida*

Okoye                      Inside is What Remains for Soprano and Chorus

Verdi                      Libiamo, ne' lieti calici from *La Traviata*

## Sarah Joyce Cooper

Soprano



Soprano Sarah Joyce Cooper has been hailed for her “meltingly beautiful” (Opera News) singing and “passionate power” (Parterre Box). Upcoming performances include the role of Gretel in an abridged production of Humperdinck’s *Hansel and Gretel* with Boston Lyric Opera, a New England Conservatory-sponsored recital celebrating the 70th anniversary of Coretta Scott King’s graduation from the school,

and a debut with Seattle Opera as Minnie in Tazewell Thompson’s *Jubilee* in October 2024. Ms. Cooper also looks forward to performing as the soprano soloist in a performance of Haydn’s *Lord Nelson Mass* in the spring.

Recent concert performances include her Carnegie Hall debut as the soloist in Poulenc’s *Gloria* with the New England Symphonic Ensemble, *Eva and Gabriel* in Haydn’s *Creation* with the MIT Concert Choir and Handel and Haydn Society Chamber Choir, and soloist with the Eastern Connecticut Symphony Orchestra in Brahms’ *Ein Deutsches Requiem*. Recent operatic performances include *Adina* in *L’Elisir d’amore* (Geneva Light Opera), *Clorinda* in *La Cenerentola* (Syracuse Opera), *La Charmeuse* in *Thaïs* (Maryland Lyric Opera), *Juliette* in *Roméo et Juliette* (Opera Western Reserve), *Violetta* in *La Traviata* (MassOpera), *Mimì* in *La Bohème* (Opera Theater of Cape Cod/ Boston Opera Collaborative), *Micaëla* in *Carmen* (Prelude to Performance), *Zerlina* in *Don Giovanni* (Boston Opera Collaborative), *Pamina* in *Die Zauberflöte*, and *Countess* in *Le Nozze di Figaro* (Savannah Voice Festival). Also at home on the musical theater stage, Ms. Cooper performed the role of *Maggie Porter* in Tazewell Thompson’s *Jubilee* with the Alabama Shakespeare Festival. In concert, Ms. Cooper has appeared as a soloist with the Boston Youth Symphony Orchestra, the Rochester Oratorio Society, and the Radcliffe Choral Society at Harvard University. In 2019, she was invited to perform as a soloist with the Du Bois Orchestra in the historic world premiere of Florence Price’s long-lost cantata, *Abraham Lincoln Walks at Midnight*.


As a competition winner, Ms. Cooper received first place in The American Prize Competition for Opera and Operetta and second place for Art Song. Most notably, Ms. Cooper has received encouragement awards from the George London Foundation and Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions and was nominated for a study grant from the Sarah Tucker



Foundation. Most recently, she advanced to Round Two of the 2023 BBC Cardiff Singer of World Competition.

As a premed, Ms. Cooper completed her Bachelor's Degree in French at Princeton University, where she first began to develop the foundation for her "mastery of French style" (Opera News) while conducting research for her undergraduate thesis on sacred themes in the mélodies, romances, and cantiques of Gabriel Fauré. She earned her Master of Music Degree in Vocal Performance and Pedagogy from Westminster Choir College, where she received the Gwynn Moose Cornell Endowed Award, given to the student who shows the most promise for a career in vocal performance.

In addition to performing, Ms. Cooper serves as volunteer Executive Assistant for Help!ComeHome!, a nonprofit dedicated to meeting the needs of under-served communities throughout the US in Jesus' Name. Ms. Cooper is a regular volunteer with the organization, offering both her musical and administrative skills to further its mission. In June 2018, she planned, programmed, and performed in A Nod to Our Neighbors, a benefit concert and the first major fundraiser for Help!ComeHome! In her free time, Ms. Cooper enjoys gardening, playing cello, and being active outdoors. A former competitive gymnast, she was awarded top prizes at the annual Massachusetts State Championship meet while competing for the Gymnastics Academy of Boston.



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# Jesus Daniel Hernandez

Tenor



Tenor Jesús Daniel Hernández was born and raised in the lovely town of Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua, México. As a child, his biggest dream was to be a singer. He wanted to sing like Pedro Infante and Jorge Negrete, two big idols of Mexico. It was very common to hear young Jesús singing around the halls of his middle school in Juárez, Mexico. It was during that time that he saw on TV the concert with the Three Tenors, and his interest in classical music was born.

After hearing that concert, he would try to imitate his new idols, providing new kinds of headaches to his family with his higher singing notes. He bought his first guitar at the age of 14, a wonderful companion that has lasted until this moment. On this instrument, he learned how to accompany himself. When he was 16 years old, he immigrated to the United States, where he finished his high school and, for a brief moment, sang with a mariachi band.

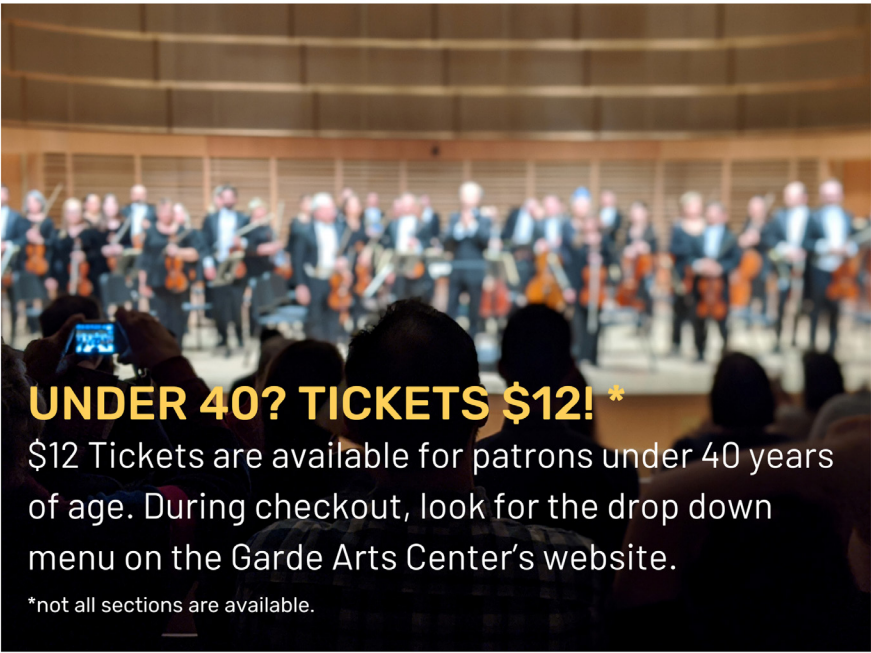
Even though life took him down different paths, taking different types of jobs to sustain his family, his dream to be a singer never disappeared from his mind. In 2003, Jesús enlisted in the U.S. Army. At the end of that same year, he volunteered to go to Iraq to serve in OIF (Operation Iraqi Freedom). One night outside of the military camp of Taji while in Iraq, the tenor remembered his dreams of being an opera singer while reading *The Alchemist* by Paulo Coelho.

Even though he enjoyed his job as a soldier, he felt that something was missing in his life, and that was his desire to sing. In 2007, while stationed in Texas, the tenor learned that one of his childhood idols was going to perform in San Antonio, TX. Upon seeing the price of the tickets, he wrote an email to the then director of the San Antonio Opera, Mark Richter, asking him if they offered a military discount so he could see his idol Plácido Domingo. The opera director graciously told him not to worry about it, that the ticket was free for him for serving his country.

At the end of the concert, the young tenor went backstage to ask his idol for an autograph. While Maestro Domingo was signing his program, he asked the young tenor if he liked his concert and his music, to which the

young soldier responded that he always wanted to sing like him. Maestro Domingo invited him to sing for him in his dressing room in an impromptu audition, and after listening to the young tenor, Maestro Domingo invited him to be part of his prestigious Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program in Washington, DC, in 2008.

While in the program, Jesús participated in different concerts and operas with Plácido Domingo. Since then, tenor Jesús Daniel Hernández has been dedicated to singing to all kinds of audiences with his beautiful, sweet, and powerful voice all over the world, all thanks to a dream of a young boy, which he pursued until his dream became reality.



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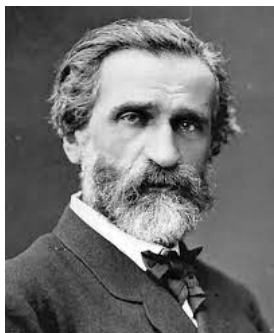
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## Program Notes

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### Giuseppe Verdi

Born 1813 in Parma, Italy

Died 1901 in Milan, Italy

Giuseppe Verdi's music embodies the soul of Nineteenth-Century Italian opera, merging his genius as a composer with his role as a symbol of Italian culture. Verdi began composing operas while bel canto operas (a term meaning beautiful singing in Italian) dominated the Italian stage. Bel canto operas, as promulgated by the likes of Giacomo Rossini (who wrote *The Barber of Seville*), tended to prioritize the beauty of the human voice and push the limits of its range and stamina. The opera *Nabucco* (the Italian name of Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar who is the protagonist of the opera) was Verdi's first major success in 1842. In line with the bel canto style, it makes immense demands on the singers playing the four lead roles to sing their finest, but the opera is most famous for the chorus "Va, Pensiero," based on Psalm 137, which here is depicted as a sorrowful yet somewhat hopeful lament of Hebrew slaves forced into captivity by the Babylonians.

Premiered eleven years after *Nabucco* in 1853 *Il Trovatore* (The Troubadour) is probably the last major bel canto opera written and marks the transition from Verdi's early operas into his middle period where he wrote some of his most well-known and mature operas. *Il Trovatore* is a raw and dark story filled with royal intrigue, rivalry between lost siblings, and a touch of fate pulling the strings towards the inevitable tragedy that occurs. The Anvil Chorus from the beginning of Act II, portrays a group of Spanish gypsies striking their anvils at dawn to begin the workday, and celebrate the simplicity but joy of their lives.

*Il Trovatore* was followed two months later by the premiere of the opera *La Traviata* (The Fallen Woman), which tells the story of the doomed love between courtesan Violetta Valéry and the young bourgeois man Alfredo Germont. One of its most famous numbers is the duet "Libiamo ne' lieti calici," which occurs less than ten minutes into the opera. It is a brindisi, framed in the opera's story as a public toast by Alfredo to Violetta, with Alfredo praising a concept of committed love for a single person, while

Violetta praises the idea of hedonistically taking on a new lover each day in her role as a courtesan reflecting the tensions caused by their eventual relationship with each other among themselves and their peers.

Verdi's opera *La Forza del Destino* (The Force of Destiny) reflects his later style, marked by even more intense drama and themes of fate. Premiered in 1862 the overture sets the dark and fortune-driven story with a dark and emotionally charged brassy, brooding orchestration. In contrast, the *Triumphal March* from his 1871 opera *Aida* (the opera is named after its protagonist, an Ethiopian princess enslaved in Ancient Egypt) demonstrates Verdi's ability to evoke grand spectacle, combining pomp and a militaristic fanfare to celebrate an Ancient Egyptian military victory portrayed in the opera. The spectacle of the military and chorus scenes from the opera *Aida* demonstrates how by the end of his career Verdi was setting standards for Italian music, and still composing tunes that would be remembered for generations to come.

-Saadya Chevan



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# Giacomo Puccini

Born 1858 in Lucca, Italy  
Died 1924 in Brussels, Belgium



La

Giacomo Puccini's operas contain some of the most vivid and passionate depictions of love ever set to music. Through his early operas including *Manon Lescaut*, *Bohème*, and *Madama Butterfly*, Puccini explores many dimensions of love—capturing both beauty and heartbreak through vividly passionate music. The “Intermezzo” from *Manon Lescaut* serves as an emotional centerpiece to the opera's second act, providing a moment of reflection as the titular character, Manon, is sent to the port of Le Havre in France to be transported into exile in Louisiana. This orchestral interlude conveys the tragedy and inevitability of her fate, evoking a profound sense of loss. *Manon Lescaut* premiered in 1893 and was Puccini's first major success, putting him on the road to becoming a great and successful opera composer.

In *La Bohème*, the duet between the protagonists, Rodolfo and Mimì at the end of Act I fires up the beginning of the doomed relationship. They confess their love at first sight to each other with heartfelt sincerity. Puccini masterfully intertwines their voices reflecting the passion and novelty they see in their love for each other. Here, Puccini's gift for realism shines, making the audience feel as if they are witnessing a private moment of intimacy.

The relationship between the protagonists of *Madama Butterfly*, U.S. Navy Lieutenant B.F. Pinkerton and Japanese geisha Cio-Cio-San (“Butterfly”) is darker and much more one-sided as Pinkerton marries her out of convenience and for the thrill while he is stationed in Japan. Butterfly does not understand the relationship has a time limit, and is convinced he will be faithful and return to her. The love duet between them ending Act I sets up the tragedy, we know Pinkerton, the tenor, does not fully have his heart bent towards being in love with Butterfly, the soprano, who sings from a state of rapture, as they gradually prepare to go to bed on the first night of their marriage. The “Humming Chorus,” which occurs later in the opera years after Pinkerton leaves Japan just before a pause in the second act, creates a relaxed ephemeral atmosphere as Butterfly, having sighted his ship returning to the harbor of Nagasaki, Japan, vigilantly awaits his appearance on their doorstep.

- Saadya Chevan

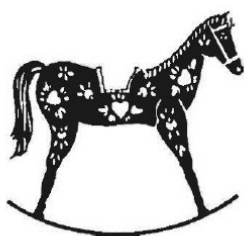
## Nkeiru Okoye

Inside is what remains

Born 1972 in New York, NY

Nkeiru Okoye's "Inside is what remains" features not only an original text (by the composer) but also an affecting lyricism. Brief, colorful jaunts to unexpected chords (and keys) are coupled with extraordinary episodes of vocalise that capture the essence of improvised

stylings and soulful pitch inflections that signal a veritable nod to Black vernacular musical emblems. The all-embracing, quasi-tonal setting of this aspirational message and the formal return of the text, "Kindness is the answer; Kindness is the key," at the final modulation almost invites a congregationally sung response.



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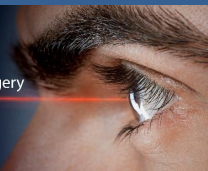
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