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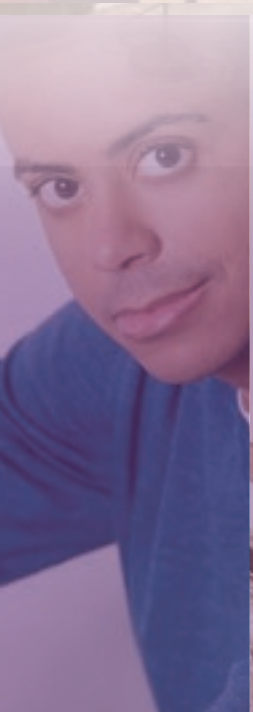

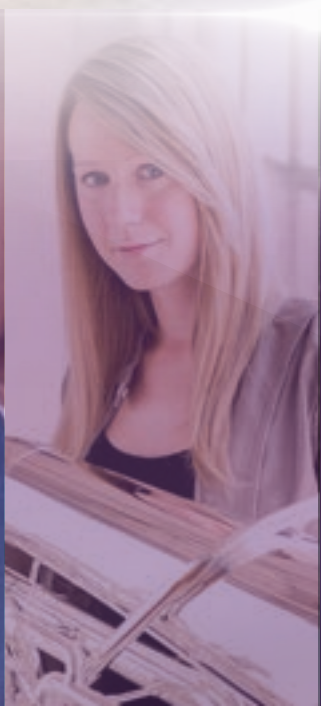

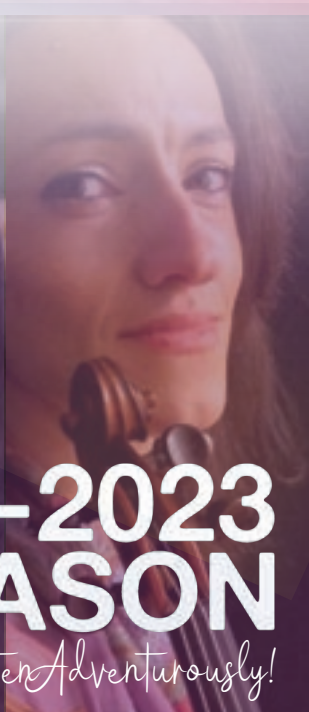

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WELCOME

Dear friends,

Welcome! Our 2022-2023 season is a thrilling musical journey featuring beloved classic masterworks, beautiful lesser-heard gems, and exciting new works by some of today's most impressive creative artists. Our ability to make and share great music like this is made possible by our patrons, donors and friends like you. Thank you!

In October, we open our season with Pytor Ilyich Tchaikovsky's glorious Fifth Symphony; Joel Thompson's *An Act of Resistance*, his cry for peace; and the Albany Symphony debut of pianist Stewart Goodyear.

In November, tuba phenom Carol Jantsch performs a concerto by the great John Williams, one of America's leading living composers, on a program with Sergei Rachmaninoff's deeply personal valedictory masterpiece *Symphonic Dances* and Duke Ellington's suite from *The River*, a large-scale work commissioned by American Ballet Theatre.

And in December, we celebrate the season with a pair of holiday treats: the return of our favorite annual tradition for all ages, The Magic of Christmas, and a weekend of symphonic classics including J.S. Bach's Double Violin Concerto featuring our very own Funda Cizmecioglu and Mitsuko Suzuki, a Bach Christmas Cantata featuring singers from the Bard Graduate Vocal Arts Program, a sinfonietta by Coleridge-Taylor Perkinson, and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's joyous Symphony No. 39.

In our concert halls and in our community, we are continuing Convergence, our exploration of Black American music and culture. Join us throughout the season for our free workshops and events led by our nationally renowned Convergence Curating Artists Marc Bamuthi Joseph (VP of Social Impact, Kennedy Center), Regina Carter (multi-genre violinist and NEA Jazz Master), Adia Tamar Whitaker (Afro-Haitian choreographer and dancer) and our incredible local Artist Ambassadors, Carol Daggs, Jordan Taylor Hill, and Barbara Howard. You will want to mark your calendar now for our Convergence American Music Festival (June 8–11, 2023), which features these artists and our community partners.

On behalf of our Board, staff, and musicians, thank you for being a part of the Albany Symphony community. To learn more about future performances, Convergence events, and how you can play your part in making all of our activities possible and enabling us to share our music with our entire community, visit **albanysymphony.com**.

Enjoy the performance!

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Music Director

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DAVID ALAN MILLER

Heinrich Medicus Music Director

Two-time Grammy Award–winning conductor David Alan Miller has established a reputation as one of the leading American conductors of his generation. As music director of the Albany Symphony since 1992, Mr. Miller has proven himself a creative and compelling orchestra builder. Through exploration of unusual repertoire, educational programming, community outreach, and recording initiatives, he has reaffirmed the Albany Symphony's reputation as the nation's leading champion of American symphonic music and one of its most innovative orchestras. He and the orchestra have twice appeared at "Spring For Music," an annual festival of America's most creative orchestras at New York City's Carnegie Hall, and at the SHIFT Festival at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. Other accolades Mr. Miller has received include Columbia University's 2003 Ditson Conductor's Award, the oldest award honoring conductors for their commitment to American music; the 2001 ASCAP Morton Gould Award for Innovative Programming; and in 1999, ASCAP's first-ever Leonard Bernstein Award for Outstanding Educational Programming.

Frequently in demand as a guest conductor, Mr. Miller has worked with most of America's major orchestras, including the orchestras of Baltimore, Chicago, Cleveland, Detroit, Houston, Indianapolis, Los Angeles, New York, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and San Francisco, as well as the New World Symphony, the Boston Pops, and the New York City Ballet. In addition, he has appeared frequently throughout Europe, the UK, Australia, and the Far East as guest conductor. Since 2019, Mr. Miller has served as Artistic Advisor to the Little Orchestra Society in New York City, and, from 2006 to 2012, served as Artistic Director of "New Paths in Music," a festival of new music from around the world, also in New York City.

Mr. Miller received his most recent Grammy Award in 2021 for his recording of Christopher Theofanidis' Viola Concerto, with Richard O'Neill and the Albany Symphony, and his first Grammy in 2014 for his Naxos recording of John Corigliano's "Conjurer," with the Albany Symphony and Dame Evelyn Glennie.

His extensive discography also includes recordings of the works of Todd Levin with the London Symphony Orchestra for Deutsche Grammophon, as well as music by Michael Daugherty, Kamran Ince, Michael Torke (London/Decca), Luis Tinoco, and Christopher Rouse (Naxos). His recordings with the Albany Symphony include discs devoted to the music of John Harbison, Roy Harris, Morton Gould, Don Gillis, Aaron J. Kernis, Peter Mennin, and Vincent Persichetti on the Albany Records label. He has also conducted the National Orchestral Institute Philharmonic in three acclaimed recordings on Naxos.

A native of Los Angeles, David Alan Miller holds a bachelor's degree from the University of California, Berkeley and a master's degree in orchestral conducting from The Juilliard School. Prior to his appointment in Albany, Mr. Miller was associate conductor of the Los Angeles Philharmonic. From 1982 to 1988, he was music director of the New York Youth Symphony, earning considerable acclaim for his work with that ensemble. Mr. Miller lives in Slingerlands, New York, a rural suburb of Albany.

MISSION STATEMENT: **The Albany Symphony Orchestra celebrates our living musical heritage. Through brilliant live performances, innovative educational programming, and engaging cultural events, the Albany Symphony enriches a broad and diverse regional community. By creating, recording, and disseminating the music of our time, the Albany Symphony is establishing an enduring artistic legacy that is reshaping the nation's musical future.**

ORCHESTRA PERSONNEL

DAVID ALAN MILLER
Heinrich Medicus Music Director

The Albany Symphony Orchestra's string sections use revolving seating.
Players behind the stationary chairs change seats systematically and are listed alphabetically.

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Mitsuko Suzuki
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL SECOND VIOLIN
Barbara Lapidus ^
ENDOWED BY MARISA AND ALLAN EISEMANN
Gabriela Rengel ^+
Brigitte Brodwin
Ouisa Fohrhaltz
Heather Frank-Olsen
Emily Frederick
Rowan Harvey
Margret E. Hickey
Christine Kim
Sooyeon Kim +
Aleksandra Labinska
Kae Nakano
Yinbin Qian
Harriet Dearden Welther

VIOLA
Noriko Futagami
PRINCIPAL
ENDOWED IN PERPETUITY BY THE ESTATE OF ALLAN F. NICKERSON
Sharon Bielik
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL
Daniel Brye^
Carla Bellosa
Ting-Ying Chang-Chien
Anna Griffis
Hannah Levinson

CELLO
Susan Ruzow Debronsky
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Erica Pickhardt
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL
Kevin Bellosa
Marie-Thérèse Dugré
Catherine Hackert
Hikaru Tamaki

BASS
Bradley Aikman
PRINCIPAL
Philip R. Helm
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL
Michael Fittipaldi ^
Luke Baker
James Caiello

FLUTE
Ji Weon Ryu+
PRINCIPAL
Mathew Ross

OBOE
Karen Hosmer
PRINCIPAL
Grace Shryock

ENGLISH HORN
VACANT

CLARINET
Weixiong Wang
PRINCIPAL
IN MEMORY OF F.S. DEBEER, JR. -ELSA DEBEER
IN MEMORY OF JUSTINE R.B. PERRY -DAVID A. PERRY
Bixby Kennedy

BASSOON
William Hestand
PRINCIPAL
ENDOWED IN PERPETUITY BY THE ESTATE OF RICHARD SALISBURY
VACANT

HORN
William J. Hughes
PRINCIPAL
Joseph Demko
Alan Parshley
Victor Sungarian

TRUMPET
Eric M. Berlin
PRINCIPAL
Eric J. Latini

TROMBONE
Greg Spiridopoulos
PRINCIPAL
Karna Millen

BASS TROMBONE
Charles Morris

TUBA
Derek Fenstermacher
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ALBANY SYMPHONY

OPENING NIGHT: TCHAIKOVSKY'S FIFTH

SATURDAY | OCTOBER 8, 2022 | 7:30 PM

PALACE THEATRE

DAVID ALAN MILLER, CONDUCTOR
STEWART GOODYEAR, PIANO

Joel Thompson
(1988-)

An Act of Resistance

Edvard Grieg
(1843-1907)

Piano Concerto in A minor, Op. 16
Stewart Goodyear, piano

I. Allegro moderato
II. Adagio
III. Allegro moderato molto e marcato

INTERMISSION

P.I. Tchaikovsky
(1840-1893)

Symphony No. 5

I. Andante: Allegro con anima
II. Andante cantabile con alcuna licenza
III. Valse: Allegro moderato
IV. Finale: Andante maestoso–Allegro vivace

All programs and artists are subject to change. During the performance, please silence mobile devices. Recording and photographing any part of the performance is strictly prohibited.

JOEL THOMPSON

Joel Thompson (b.1988) is an Atlanta-based composer, conductor, pianist, and educator best known for the choral work *Seven Last Words of the Unarmed*, which was premiered November 2015 by the University of Michigan Men's Glee Club and Dr. Eugene Rogers and won the 2018 American Prize for Choral Composition. His pieces have been performed by the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, Tallahassee Symphony Orchestra, Atlanta Master Chorale, Los Angeles Master Chorale, EXIGENCE, and the San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus. Currently a student at the Yale School of Music, Thompson was also a 2017 post-graduate fellow in Arizona State University's Ensemble Lab/Projecting All Voices Initiative and a composition fellow at the 2017 Aspen Music Festival and School, where he studied with composers Stephen Hartke and Christopher Theofanidis and won the 2017 Hermitage Prize. Thompson taught at Holy Innocents' Episcopal School in Atlanta 2015-2017, and also served as Director of Choral Studies and Assistant Professor of Music at Andrew College 2013-2015. Thompson is a proud Emory alum, graduating with a B.A. in Music in 2010, and an M.M. in Choral Conducting in 2013.


JOEL THOMPSON

An Act of Resistance
FROM THE COMPOSER

"If you don't use it, you'll lose it." Many consider this oft-used saying to be true as it relates to physical fitness, artistic skills, and even mental fortitude. Given the ubiquitous divisiveness and turmoil in the world over the last few years, it seems that this adage may also have other applications. Maybe I am naive, but I think our current condition can be diagnosed as a severe deficiency in empathy — our world is lacking the strength to love. We haven't been using it, so we've lost it.

This dearth in empathy is so pervasive that is now the new norm. People pride themselves in their rigid opposition of even listening to someone of differing viewpoints in a spirit of openness. So I decided to write a piece that would help me, and hopefully others, rebuild the strength necessary to love deeply, genuinely, and passionately.

This piece is essentially a battle between selfishness and empathy—pride v. love—and because one is easier than the other, the victor is clear towards the end of the piece. It is important that the decision to perform the music that follows "the end" remains a choice for each individual member of the ensemble.

Asking orchestral musicians to put down their instruments and stand up and sing is risky. The act requires a certain vulnerability. It can be perceived as cheesy; It can elicit negative reactions. Only a few people may choose to do it, and therefore be lonely. It can be uncomfortable. But such is the love that is required to truly change our current circumstance.

STEWART GOODYEAR

Proclaimed "a phenomenon" by the *Los Angeles Times* and "one of the best pianists of his generation" by the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, Stewart Goodyear is an accomplished concert pianist, improviser and composer. He has performed with, and has been commissioned by, many of the major


STEWART GOODYEAR

orchestras and chamber music organizations around the world.

Last year, Orchid Classics released Goodyear's recording of his suite for piano and orchestra, *Callaloo*, and his piano sonata. His recent commissions include a Piano Quintet for the Penderecki String Quartet, and a piano work for the Honens Piano Competition.

Goodyear's discography includes the complete sonatas and piano concertos of Beethoven, as well as concertos by Tchaikovsky, Grieg and Rachmaninoff, an album of Ravel piano works, and an album entitled *For Glenn Gould*, which combines repertoire from Gould's US and Montreal debuts. His Rachmaninoff recording received a Juno nomination for Best Classical Album for Soloist and Large Ensemble Accompaniment. Goodyear's recording of his own transcription of Tchaikovsky's *The Nutcracker (Complete Ballet)* was chosen by *The New York Times* as one of the best classical music recordings of 2015. His discography is released on the Marquis Classics, Orchid Classics, and Steinway and Sons labels. His new album, entitled *Phoenix*, will be released on the Bright Shiny Things label in October 2021, and will include Mussorgsky's Pictures at an Exhibition.

Highlights last season included his debut with Orchestra of St. Luke's, return engagements at the Baltimore Symphony, the Nashville Symphony, and the Colorado Symphony, and a North American and European tour with the Chineke! Orchestra.

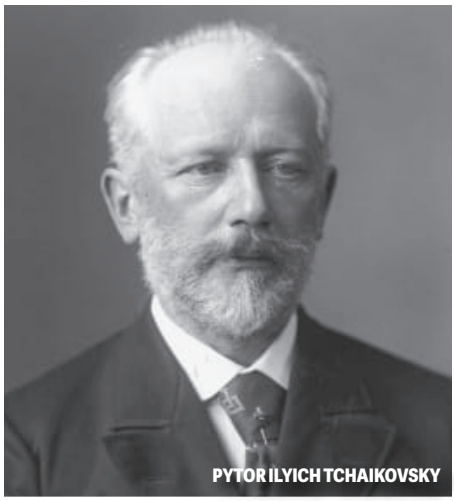
PYTOR ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY

Russian composer Pyotr (Peter) Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893) wrote successfully in all genres: symphony, concerto, opera, chamber music, ballet, and song. For his efforts he received an honorary degree from Cambridge in 1893, but he seemed never to have been completely confident of his gifts and creations. As Wilson Strutte notes, "The real tragedy of Tchaikovsky is that he spent a great part of his life under the shadow of imaginary horrors created by his own sensitive and tortured nature."

Events surrounding the composition and early history of the Symphony No. 5 bear out Strutte's view. In April 1888, in new and beautiful surroundings in Froklovskoye with four symphonies behind him, he wrote to his friend Madame von Meck, "I am dreadfully anxious to prove, not only to others but to myself, that I am not yet played out as a composer." (Far from it!) He finished the symphony by August, saying, "Thank God, no worse than the others."

Unfortunately, the first few performances of the new work were not well received by the critics. Only later, in Hamburg, did the piece get enthusiastic notices, at which point the tender-hearted composer said that maybe it was not so bad atter all.

This story is just one more to add to the list of poignant Tchaikovsky anecdotes. It reminds those of us who are not creative artists that there is no romance in any form of acute emotional distress. The miracle of creation is that it manages to keep demons at bay long enough for the work to get done.



PYTOR ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY

SYMPHONY NO. 5

Pay attention to the opening notes in the clarinets; they're the last ones you'll hear about 50 minutes later, and you'll have heard them many times throughout this brooding work.

The first tempo of the first movement is marked andante, but it feels like a funeral march; the melody touches on almost every note of the E minor scale. The meter then changes from 4/4 to 6/8, but the slight swing in the step is merely ironic because the dark colors still dominate. This second tune, announced by the clarinets and bassoons, provides much of the material for the rest of the movement. A beautiful string bridge connects this slightly martial section to one that is suddenly light and mercurial, then absolutely passionate. The strings soar, and all forces join in for a thoroughly rhapsodic scene. As for the rest of the movement, Edward Downes refers to it as "a battlefield of rhythms and sonorities." The movement concludes quietly, but uneasily, in the lower strings.

If the opening melody of the second movement is ravishing, consider why: It is sung by the melancholy solo horn, over strings, then the oboe delivers the lovely second theme. Soon this passionate tune is passed to the strings, with echoes from other instruments. The wind section animates the proceedings with yet a third melody. The mood is suddenly broken by the trumpets, however, restating the first movement's opening motto! Brass, and a fierce kettledrum, briefly hold sway. The struggle now appears to be between the yearning forces that began the movement and these harsh interlopers. Volatile swings in dynamics increase the tension: which mood shall prevail? When all is said and done, it's the quiet, tender one.

The third movement is a grand waltz built around two themes. The first is expansive—a lush melody in the strings, with colorful touches by the winds. The second theme is a busy, brisk section whose ¾ meter seems blurred because the rhythmic emphases come in unusual spots. Tchaikovsky soon brings back the first theme, briefly overlapping the second. And then, quite remarkably, at the end of the movement, the clarinets trot out those ominous opening notes of the symphony.

How splendid is the beginning of the last movement! Taking up that signature motto once more, the orchestra parades it past our ears with great nobility, and less menace than before. E major, not E minor! An intense drum roll leads into an allegro vivace section, inexorable in its forward motion. Listen for this new jaunty tune and a second with an ornamental turn because they are the warp and woof of this movement. Brass reclaim the stage with a punctuated rendition of the melody while the strings swirl. Tchaikovsky paces the proceedings superbly, slowing for certain stretches, chugging along elsewhere, then charging ahead. At times the orchestration is remarkably transparent, with woodwinds prominent; at other times all forces are on board. The piece builds naturally to a full-throttled, confident re-statement of the familiar tune in the strings. The brass have another go at it, and the coda is a strut to the end.

The piece premiered on November 17, 1888, in Moscow, with Tchaikovsky conducting.

Program notes by Paul Lamar

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ALBANY SYMPHONY

RAVISHING RACHMANINOFF

SATURDAY | NOVEMBER 12, 2022 | 7:30 PM
PALACE THEATRE

DAVID ALAN MILLER, CONDUCTOR
CAROL JANTSCH, TUBA

Duke Ellington
(1899-1974)

Suite from *The River*

John Williams
(1932-)

Tuba Concerto
Carol Jantsch, tuba

INTERMISSION

Sergei Rachmaninoff
(1873-1943)

Symphonic Dances

I. Non Allegro
II. Andante con moto: Tempo di Valse
III. Lento assai: Allegro Vivace

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DUKE ELLINGTON

"Bestowed posthumously on Edward Kennedy 'Duke' Ellington, commemorating the centennial year of his birth, in recognition of his musical genius, which evoked aesthetically the principles of democracy through the medium of jazz and thus made an indelible contribution to art and culture."

So reads the special citation by the Pulitzer Prize committee in 1999. Let's break it down: "Posthumously." Ellington died in 1974, but before this citation he had received numerous other honors, including honorary degrees from Yale and Berklee College of Music, a Lifetime Achievement Grammy Award, and the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

"Musical genius." In his book *The Swing Era*, composer Gunther Schuller wrote, "Ellington composed incessantly to the very last days of his life. Music was indeed his mistress; it was his total life and his commitment to it was incomparable and unalterable. In jazz he was a giant among giants. And in twentieth century music, he may yet one day be recognized as one of the half-dozen greatest masters of our time." These sentiments have been echoed by many critics and music historians.

"Principles of democracy." From the nightclubs of Harlem to international stages (he was a Jazz Ambassador for the State Department) to movies, he brought the sounds of swing with his famed band. Pieces like "Black and Tan Fantasy" and "Black, Brown and Beige," by their very titles, celebrated African American life. According to an article by Michelle R. Scott and Earl Brooks, Ellington included a clause in his contracts in 1961 and beyond stating that he would not play before segregated audiences, having suffered for many years the racism accorded to traveling entertainers looking for dining or overnight accommodations.

"Medium of jazz." It goes without saying, but check out all the Grammys in that category he won.


DUKE ELLINGTON

"Indelible contribution to art and culture." See: "Caravan," "Jump for Joy," "Honeysuckle Rose," "Take the 'A' Train," and, perhaps a philosophy for living, "It Don't Mean a Thing If It Ain't Got That Swing."

SUITE FROM *THE RIVER*

Smetana had his Moldau; Strauss had his Danube. Ellington had—well, probably the mighty Mississippi. This suite is generic enough in its depictions of what happens to water from source to sea that, as with the others, it could apply to any river. The origins in the spring are evoked (drip, drip—the gentle flute and harp); the wandering stream is not particularly lazy but rather sassy (nice brass work). Rapids? Sure, perky, big band sound. And then things quiet down in a lake, where quiet instruments like flute, clarinet, and oboe flourish. The snare drum and syncopation add to the driving music of the fifth episode: vortex. The falls are suggested by rushing music—an incessant triangle and a descending harp. (Gravity rules!)

And then finally, "Two Cities," a sort of anthem, with brass and sweeping strings. The music was written for Alvin Ailey and his dance company in 1970. About the last episode that Hubert Saal wrote in his review for *Newsweek*, "In `Two Cities,' a white girl (Sallie Wilson) and a black boy (Keith

Lee), each bathed in a spotlight, dance a blues adagio, expressing yearning and loneliness. Gradually the spotlights unite them, and their pas de deux, touching in the complexity of intertwined limbs and intricate lifts, makes a wordless comment that lays waste racial distinctions."

Note: Ellington's son Mercer Ellington suggested that by 1970 his father's spiritual view of things made him consider the river a metaphor for the pathway of life. Sounds good, too.

CAROL JANTSCH

Praised by *The Philadelphia Inquirer* as having "a sound as clear and sure as it [is] luxurious," Carol Jantsch has been principal tuba of The Philadelphia Orchestra since 2006. She earned the position during her senior year at the University of Michigan, becoming the first female tuba player in a major symphony orchestra.

In addition to her duties in the Philadelphia Orchestra, Jantsch is a renowned tuba soloist. She gives solo recitals regularly, and has appeared as a concerto soloist with various ensembles, including the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Columbus Symphony, the St. Petersburg Symphony in Russia, the Henry Mancini Institute Orchestra, and the United States Marine Band.

She has performed in Carnegie's Zankel Hall with the Musical Olympus Festival, and has appeared on the radio on NPR's series *From the Top* and Interlochen Public Radio's *Live From Studio A*.

In 2009 she was honored with a "Best of Philly" award from *Philadelphia* magazine. She has also won prizes in several international solo tuba competitions, and alumni awards from both Interlochen Arts Academy and the University of Michigan.


CAROL JANTSCH

Jantsch is in increasing demand as a teacher worldwide, having given master classes in Europe, Asia, and North America. She enjoys working with young musicians, and has been a featured artist at various brass festivals in Finland, Germany, Canada, and the United States. She is on the faculty at the Yale University School of Music and Temple University's Boyer College of Music.

JOHN WILLIAMS

In a career that spans five decades, John Williams has become one of America's most accomplished and successful composers for film and for the concert stage. He has served as music director and laureate conductor of one of the country's treasured musical institutions, the Boston Pops Orchestra, and he maintains thriving artistic relationships with many of the world's great orchestras, including the Boston Symphony Orchestra, the New York Philharmonic, the Chicago Symphony and the Los Angeles Philharmonic. Williams has received a variety of prestigious awards, including the National Medal of Arts, the Kennedy Center Honor, the Olympic Order, and numerous Academy Awards, Grammy Awards, Emmy Awards and Golden Globe Awards.

Williams has composed the music and


JOHN WILLIAMS

served as music director for more than 100 films. His 40-year artistic partnership with director Steven Spielberg has resulted in many of Hollywood's most acclaimed and successful films, including *Schindler's List*, *E.T.: The Extra-Terrestrial*, *Jaws*, *Jurassic Park*, *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, four *Indiana Jones* films, *Saving Private Ryan*, *Amistad*, *Munich*, *Hook*, *Catch Me If You Can*, *Minority Report*, *A.I.: Artificial Intelligence*, *Empire of the Sun*, *The Adventures of TinTin* and *War Horse*. Williams has composed the scores for Star Wars, the first three Harry Potter films, *Superman: The Movie*, *JFK*, *Born on the Fourth of July*, *Memoirs of a Geisha*, *Far and Away*, *The Accidental Tourist*, *Home Alone*, *Nixon*, *The Patriot*, *Angela's Ashes*, *Seven Years in Tibet*, *The Witches of Eastwick*, *Rosewood*, *Sleepers*, *Sabrina*, *Presumed Innocent*, *The Cowboys* and *The Reivers*, among many others. In addition to his activity in film and television, Williams has composed numerous works for the concert stage, among them two symphonies and concertos for flute, violin, clarinet, viola, oboe and tuba.

TUBA CONCERTO

The tuba rarely gets the spotlight. It most often plays a supporting role in the depths of the orchestra—musically and literally. In this concerto, however, the popular film composer John Williams places the tuba front and center. Its lyricism, agility and wit make one wonder why composers have not more often given the tuba a chance to shine.

Beyond his more than 80 film scores, Williams has also composed dozens of concert works. His Tuba Concerto was a centennial commission from the Boston Pops in 1985.

"I really don't know why I wrote it—just an urge and an instinct," Williams has said. "I've always liked the tuba and even used to play it a little. I wrote a big tuba solo for a Dick Van Dyke movie called *Fitzwilly* and ever since I've kept composing for it—it's such an agile instrument, like a huge cornet. I've also put passages in for some of my pets in the orchestra: solos for the flute and English horn, for the horn quartet and a trio of trumpets. It's light and tuneful and I hope it has enough events in it to make it fun."

The concerto is cast in the traditional three movements, which are played without pause. The highly syncopated first movement has barely begun before the tuba is off to the races. For the soloist, scampering phrases alternate with short lyrical motifs. There's considerable breezy dialogue between soloist and orchestra. The introspective second movement evokes an atmosphere of mystery, with an English horn solo followed by an exchange between the tuba soloist and flute. The short, propulsive finale features breathlessly paced passages for the tuba soloist against the boisterously syncopated orchestra. Jazzy outbursts bring the concerto to a rousing conclusion.

Adapted from program notes by Paul Hyde for the Greenville Symphony; used with permission.

SERGEI RACHMANINOFF
SYMPHONIC DANCES

Sergei Rachmaninoff left Russia during the Revolution of 1917 at the age of 44 and never

returned. For the next 26 years he resided in the United States, where he concertized as pianist and conductor, composed, enjoyed family life with his wife and two children, and became wealthy.

Audiences know his concertos for piano and orchestra nos. 2 and 3 and his Symphony No. 2 well. Advanced pianists wrestle with his sonatas and etudes tableaux. His cello sonata occasionally shows up on a chamber music program. Tonight's piece, which was last played by this orchestra in 2004, was his final composition (1941) and is a masterpiece.

It's interesting that the work begins with a series of repeated notes in the strings—no tune, just movement, rhythm. And while there are, to be sure, the kinds of beautiful tunes we've come to expect from Rachmaninoff, it's the emphases, the syncopation, and the rhythmic punctuation that often capture our attention. Everything drives forward. Dances, after all.

An English horn then announces a quiet section, echoed by the clarinet. A melancholy saxophone delivers a melancholy melody. A piano? In a symphonic work? Yes, for color, followed, naturally, by a big string tune. A return to the energy of the first part of the movement is inevitable—those insistent pulses—but the movement ends tranquilly, the chugging subdued by a restrained chord.

The middle movement is a weird waltz. Muted trumpets blat eerily. The violin that takes center stage is also off-putting. The waltz kicks off with yet a third spooky sound, the English horn. When, exactly, is this dance taking place? If we consult Rachmaninoff's original names for the three movements—"Noon," "Twilight," and "Midnight"—this one is "Twilight." Half light. Charming, but uneasy. The orchestral colors and the crooked melody belie the customarily attractive ¾ time.


SERGEI RACHMANINOFF

The final movement in ⁶⁄₈ begins dramatically, and after a brief episode, replete with tambourine and xylophone effects, the movement settles down to a pulsing, syncopated passage containing the "Dies Irae" (Day of Judgment) motif, which Rachmaninoff and other composers were so fond of embedding in their pieces. (It's a four-note phrase, usually starting on F, dropping to E, returning to F, and dropping to D.) The dark melody, probably from the 13th century, is now included in the Roman Catholic mass for the dead.

A slightly ethereal section follows; then a bass clarinet makes the transition to the most ravishing part of the entire work. The harp helps. Echoes of the strange waltz from the second movement return, but the moment belongs to an elegant waltz, one unspoiled.

The coda is announced by the oboes. What—snatches of the "Dies Irae"? Is the conclusion to be grim? But music historian Michael Steinberg has noted that on Rachmaninoff's manuscript the word "Alleluia" appears and that the coda uses material from a Russian chant, material that appeared in Rachmaninoff's profoundly religious All-Night Vigil. Perhaps, then, death does not have the last word; God does.

Ellington and Rachmaninoff program notes by Paul Lamar.

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BARD GRADUATE VOCAL ARTS PROGRAM

Coleridge-Taylor Perkinson
(1932-2004)

Sinfonietta No. 1

I. Sonata Allegro
II. Song Form: Largo
III. Rondo: Allegro furioso

Johann Sebastian Bach
(1685-1750)

Christmas Cantata No. 6
Bard Graduate Vocal Arts Program

INTERMISSION

Johann Sebastian Bach
(1685-1750)

Double Violin Concerto in D minor
Funda Cizmecioglu, violin
Mitsuko Suzuki, violin
I. Sonata Allegro
II. Song Form: Largo
III. Rondo: Allegro furioso

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
(1756-1791)

Symphony No. 39

I. Adagio: Allegro
II. Andante con moto
III. Menuetto e Trio
IV. Allegro

All programs and artists are subject to change. During the performance, please silence mobile devices. Recording and photographing any part of the performance is strictly prohibited.

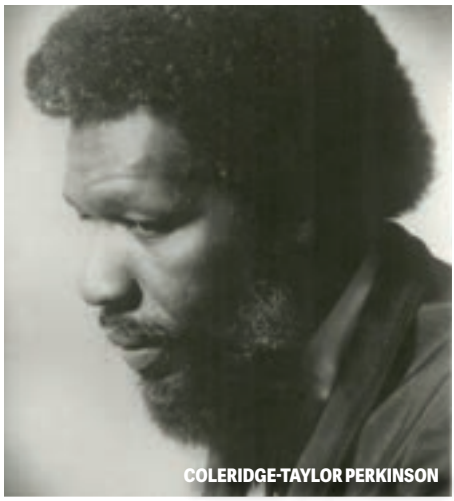
COLERIDGE-TAYLOR PERKINSON

Named by his musical mother for the mixed race British composer Samuel Coleridge-Taylor (1875-1912), Coleridge-Taylor Perkinson was born in New York City in 1932, achieved compositional success at the High School for Music and Art, studied music at NYU, and earned two degrees from the Manhattan School of Music.

His career was varied, in large part because of his interest in conducting, piano playing, teaching, and, of course, composing, for movies and dance companies in addition to traditional ensembles of all sizes.

But there was this aspect, too, about opportunities for people of color in mainstream American classical music, as revealed in a conversation he had with musicologist Johann Buis, as reported on the Chicago Symphony website: "I could not really explain to Dean Dixon (American conductor) that no orchestra, no ensemble, no opportunities would come my way in the United States. The phone rang, and it was Max Roach (drummer) on the line: 'Perk, I'm booked for a tour to Japan, and I need a pianist. Would you come?' His phone call came when I was broke and I needed to eat, and I went on this tour. The fact was that I did not or could not make headway in the United States and when opportunities did come my way, and they discovered that I was Black, these opportunities were withdrawn or modified."

Perkinson helped pay it forward when he served on the founding committee of the Symphony of the New World, an orchestra in NYC that played from 1965-78. Its stated mission was to provide performing opportunities for Black musicians and to take classical music into underserved neighborhoods of the city. (Note: The



COLERIDGE-TAYLOR PERKINSON

conversation about Black musicians in American orchestras is ongoing. In July 2020, *New York Times* music critic Anthony Tommasini wrote an article questioning the practice of conducting blind auditions for places in an orchestra, suggesting that a more proactive stance be taken to be inclusive of people of color. His comments sparked a debate, which you can follow by Googling his name.)

Perkinson died in Chicago in 2004.

SINFONIETTA NO. 1

Composed between 1954 and 1955, this youthful 15-minute work is a pleasure to hear and a clever opening to an evening that includes two Bach works. Why? In his liner notes for a collection of Perkinson's pieces, Gregory Weinstein suggests that the first movement employs the counterpoint favored by the gentleman from Leipzig. It's a busy atmosphere, with everybody moving canonically; that is, one section lays down a tune subsequently imitated by another. Jaunty? Yes. And in the midst of this activity, you can hear the slow lower voices laying down what could be a chorale tune.

Weinstein further suggests that the second

movement has earmarks of Samuel Barber's famous "Adagio for Strings," and that's not an unreasonable connection. The young Perkinson certainly knew Barber's String Quartet and probably experimented with the atmospheric nature of such writing. There's a deliberateness to the development of the melody; the low voices evoke grief, and there is an apotheosis on the highest pitch and in the loudest moment. Not a knock-off, of course. It satisfies in a 1950s harmonic sort of way; that is, it's perhaps thornier than the Barber, but with a similar emotional interest.

The last movement is in rondo form, meaning that a little motif built around a rising fourth reappears between episodes of new music. Underneath it all is an ostinato, a repeated note that drives the movement forward. Other attractive features are syncopation, pizzicato, and fugal gestures. Generally, the feel is D minor.

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750) enjoyed a long stay in one place: Leipzig, from 1723-1750, as organist and music director at the Church of St. Thomas. It was the nature of Bach's employment that led him to compose particular works—and so many works. For example, he wrote cantatas to satisfy the musical needs of that Lutheran church, whose services typically ran for four hours. He also wrote organ pieces, masses, keyboard compositions, and numerous works for soloist and orchestra.

He seems to have taken the constant requests for new pieces as an opportunity to grow artistically. Perhaps it was a matter of pride that he did so; certainly it must have been the joy and the intellectual stimulation he got from trying his hand at the next assignment. But, as one writer has observed,


JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

it was definitely because "every note he wrote celebrated the glory of God."

DOUBLE VIOLIN CONCERTO IN D MINOR

Before his tenure in Leipzig, Bach served at the court of Prince Leopold of Anhalt-Kothen from 1717-1723, and, as he did subsequently at St. Thomas, he wrote for the needs of his employer. In this case, he composed much secular music, taking advantage of Leopold's interest in, and facility with, the violin. This concerto comes from that period.

No surcease of sound! From the opening melody on a rising D minor scale to the last note three-and-a-half minutes later, the ear is stuffed with the sweet voices of strings.

Out of this tune emerge the soloists, while the ensemble gives modest support. One soloist presents a line, which the second repeats, thus forming a canon (recall the Perkinson allegro). Their spun single lines, overlapping, create stunning harmonies. The first tune returns; then the soloists play tag again, ending on a D major cadence, known as the Picardy third: the D minor feel is dispelled.

The second movement (largo, 12/8) is as restrained as the first is unfettered. Canonical principles hold sway. It's the longest of the three movements, but because of its shimmering beauty, that's just fine.

The shape of this allegro in ¾ is like that of the first, with the ensemble generally playing a supporting role to the soloists. Rhythmic vitality and a section of tight harmonies looking for resolution capture our attention before the machine slows to a D minor conclusion.

FUNDA CIZMECIOGLU


FUNDA CIZMECIOGLU

Funda Cizmecioglu performs across a broad musical spectrum and maintains extensive collaborations in the classical and interdisciplinary experimental music scenes in New York City. She frequently performs in both pop-up style non-traditional concert venues and renowned traditional concert halls such as Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, and the Feldstein Immersion Room at the Avery Fisher Center for Music and Media. Recent projects involving 2019 USA premier of Hafliði Hallgrímsson's 7 Epigrams for violin and cello and 2021 World premier of Magnus Martensson's Mar Del for violin and piano. She currently holds the position of Principal Second Violin of the Albany Symphony Orchestra, Assistant Concertmaster position of Mid America Productions' Carnegie Hall series And Composers Concordance. Crossing over into the rock, pop and dance world, she has toured with Pink Martini, Peter Gabriel, Gloria Gaynor, Kishi Bashi, Frank Sinatra Jr., Johnny Mathis, Kanye West, Suzanne Vega, and Max Pollak. Cizmecioglu holds a Master of Music degree and a Professional Studies Diploma in Violin Performance from Mannes College of The New School University in New York City. She earned her Bachelor of Music in Violin Performance from the State Conservatory of Mimar Sinan University in Istanbul, Turkey and a Performance Diploma from the International Academy at Mozarteum University in Salzburg, Austria. Cizmecioglu is an avid swimmer, managing to fit miles of swimming into her everyday routine in New York City.

MITSUKO SUZUKI

Mitsuko Suzuki's passion for the violin has taken her across the globe.

A native of Japan, Suzuki studied music at Tokyo College of Music, and later at the Royal Academy of Music in London. While in the UK, she won the Rowsby Woof Prize and the Winifred Small Solo Violin Prize, and became a member of the Royal Academy Soloists, the institute's celebrated ensemble that toured concert halls at festivals throughout England. After graduating the Academy, Suzuki moved to the United States to pursue her Master's degree at the Manhattan School of Music, and her contemporary music ensemble was featured on NBC's *Today*.

Now based in the Capital Region, Suzuki performs numerous orchestral and chamber music engagements throughout the Northeastern US, as well as touring Broadway productions coming through the Proctor's Theater in Schenectady. In the last few years, she has also ventured into the contemporary


MITSUKO SUZUKI

jazz local scene as a member of the Red Canna Trio.

Suzuki currently serves as Assistant Concertmaster of both the Catskill Symphony and the Berkshire Opera Festival, as well as Assistant Principal Violin of the Albany Symphony. She is also a member of the Springfield Symphony and the Hudson Valley Philharmonic. In between professional engagements, she devotes her time to teaching young violin and viola students, and learning the game of tennis.

CHRISTMAS CANTATA NO. 6

This piece is the last of six that comprise the Christmas Oratorio. Each of the six cantatas was premiered at Leipzig's St. Thomas Church or St. Nicholas Church through the Christmas season of 1734-35. In all, they tell the story of Jesus' birth through, in this cantata, the arrival of the Magi: Epiphany.

The text for number six comes from the Bible and Bach's friend Christian Friedrich Henrici. The music derives from cantatas that Bach had previously written (stealing from oneself was originally known as "parodying," without the satirical aspect that "parody" now suggests) and, in the case of two movements, the chorale tunes from Lutheran hymns (sections six and 11).

The story: the Magi are instructed by King Herod to find out where this baby is, so he can pay his respects: a lie, of course. The Magi arrive, deliver their gifts, stand awed, and decide to return to their homeland instead of betraying the infant to Herod. The last few movements shift from the telling of the biblical story to its relevance for the churchgoer.

"What sort of enemy could do me harm? You Jesus, are, and remain, my friend."

The music, of course, reflects the sentiments of the words. The opening movement is a statement of faith, and the confidence is reflected in the sound of the trumpet. In the fourth movement the lightness of the music and the abrupt pauses paint the words "Just a wave of your hand," underscoring baby Jesus' ability to smite adult foes. The heart of the cantata is number 6—"I stand here at your crib"—in which the chorus sings with hushed amazement at the divine child and the implications for salvation.

The final section is joyful, with the trumpets blaring and the other instruments burbling along: "Death, Devil, Sin and Hell are weakened once and for all." A creed for these Christians to live by as the new year begins.

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WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

The New Grove Dictionary of Music organizes Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's biography in sections that identify the numerous places to which he traveled: Paris/London, 1763-1766; Vienna/Italy, 1766-1771; Italian journeys, 1771-1773, and so on.

This approach to Mozart is, of course, completely apt. Leopold Mozart, Wolfgang's enterprising father, took the boy and his talented older sister Nannerl (the only two of seven to survive infancy) on their first concert trip when Wolfgang was just shy of his sixth birthday. In June of 1763, the entire family set off on a three-and-a-half year tour of Europe, including Germany, France, England, Holland, Belgium, and Switzerland.

Mozart was a public figure for all of his brief life (1756-1791), and the relationships among composition, performance, and economics were established at an early age. Music was the means by which Leopold's family, and then the married Wolfgang's family, made a living. His musical genius was tapped out of need: he tapped it because he needed a piece to play in a concert or a piece to give a patron for a specific event.

Mozart spent the last 10 years of his life based in Vienna, during which time he hoped to find a balance between productivity and

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

financial security. He toured when it was necessary. He looked for appointments. At the end of his life, he fell into financial difficulties, so much so that his widow, Constanze, and family had to depend on the kindness of others to provide for their well-being. He died just as his opera, *The Magic Flute*, sparked a dramatic resurgence of interest in his music.

SYMPHONY NO. 39

In the summer of 1788 Mozart's six-month-old daughter, Theresia Constanzia, died. His financial situation was more than sketchy, so the family had to move to less expensive digs elsewhere in Vienna. And he borrowed money from fellow Mason Michael Puchberg. Yet he produced in the space of two months his last three symphonies, each greater than the previous: the cheerful E-flat, the tragic G-minor, and the glorious C-major, known as the Jupiter.

The symphony opens with a series of dramatic E-flat major chords, in dotted rhythm. The scale work of the strings keeps the listener in suspense: where is Mozart going? Something seems to be held back.

Ah. About two minutes in, a lighter, more

lyrical passage in three (outlining an E-flat major chord) follows and the movement takes on a truly allegro quality. A second theme, a little louder and more vigorous, complements the first. Of course, the structure is in the standard sonata-allegro form: the two themes are repeated, given a brief development (during which Mozart alters them by breaking them apart and changing from major to minor), recapitulates them in basically original form, and ties everything up with a coda.

The second movement opens with a charming little dotted rhythm in the strings. Partway through this andante the mode becomes minor and the sweetness is dispelled by a dramatic outburst. But this mood doesn't last long. Listen for the lovely woodwind passage (bassoon prominent) that serves as a bridge to the movement's opening material. Once again, however, the dramatic outburst appears, followed, naturally by the more tender theme. In short, the movement looks like ABABA.

The minuet of the third movement chugs along in ¾ time. The trio section features a lyrical clarinet solo, sounding, with the oom-pah-pah underneath, for all the world like a little town band. The minuet returns.

The strings thread the air with a light stitchery in the finale, and that figure becomes the stuff of the entire movement, the shortest of the four. Every section takes it up at one time or another, through major and minor moments. Like fireflies: Wherever you listen, there it is again! And the symphony, which began so austerely, playfully evaporates into thin air.

Perkinson, Bach, and Mozart program notes by Paul Lamar.

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