

VOLUME 1
2021/2022 SEASON

Northern Sounds

THE MAGAZINE OF THE DULUTH SUPERIOR SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA



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DIRK MEYER

GERMAN CONDUCTOR DIRK MEYER IS MUSIC DIRECTOR OF DULUTH SUPERIOR SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA (DSSO) IN MINNESOTA AND AUGUSTA SYMPHONY IN GEORGIA.

Welcome to the Symphony! It is good to see you! This sentence never rang so true: It is good to see you! After the turbulent events of the past year, we are finally ready to enjoy life, together, once more. What better way to do so, than to experience the power of orchestral music and share this experience – in person – with our friends and fellow music lovers here at Symphony Hall.

The DSSO's 2021/22 season celebrates our return to togetherness. We celebrate our friendships and companionship. We celebrate the shared experience of music!

In doing so, our new season bursts with breathtaking compositions – from the classics to the unknown. Each concert encompasses a wide range of emotions that let us celebrate, but also reflect, find peace, and learn something new.

From the Minnesota premiere of our season opener *Rush* by American composer Jonathan Leshnoff to the final sounds of the season, celebrating our ability to sing *together* again, this season invites us all to find ourselves in music.

Our year begins with two *Sinfoniettas* that couldn't be more different. Poulenc's colorful music gives us a wonderful taste of French harmonies, while Astor Piazzolla leads us into the passionate realm of the Argentinian Tango. Starting with the new year, we are finally able to continue the DSSO's *Beethoven Project*: Symphony No.3 and No.5 are on the docket for this season, bringing our project close to its completion.

Concerto highlights of the season include Tchaikovsky's iconic Piano Concerto No.1, featuring internationally renown pianist Marika Bournaki, as well as Brahms' Violin Concerto with *the* up and coming superstar Geneva Lewis. Geneva's appearance is even more thrilling, as she will perform on the original Stradivarius violin on which this concerto was premiered in 1879.

Finally, I'm excited to welcome our wonderful concertmaster Erin Aldridge to the soloist spot with the unknown, yet dazzling, Violin Concerto by José White, an Afro-Cuban composer of the late 19th century.

I, personally, am very excited for the last two performances of the season: Bruckner's absolutely amazing Symphony No.4 is on the program together with Poulenc's wonderful Concerto for Two Pianos. And for our final concert of the season we created a real showstopper! Williams Dawson was one of the leading black American composers of the 20th century. His *Negro Folk Symphony* is based on spirituals and when you hear this incredible music, you truly hear the orchestra "sing" these emotional tunes. For the second half of the performance our beloved DSSO Chorus finally takes the stage again. And, because we haven't been able to sing together for so long, we simply enjoy our reunification with some of the greatest chorus numbers ever written!

There is much to celebrate in our lives and there is much to celebrate in music. We invite you to be a part of it: Real experiences, real emotions, real friendship. Best enjoyed *in person*!

Dirk Meyer, Music Director
Duluth Superior Symphony Orchestra



BRANDON
VANWAEYENBERGHE

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
WELCOME LETTER

There are several words that could be used to describe the last season, and really the last 18 months. Challenging is an apt one, when we had to program the 2020-21 Season twice in order to accommodate the regulations and protocols placed around our performances. Restricted is another great one as we had to limit the number of musicians on stage to less than half of our traditional compliment and limit audiences to 10% of seating capacity at Symphony Hall.

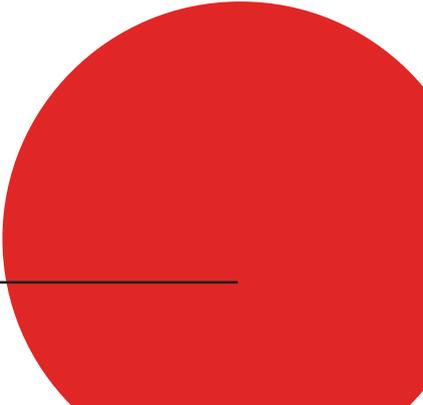
However, this last year can also be described as **transformative**. The DSSO and WDSE partnered to livestream seven concerts via our website, make them available for on-demand viewing, and had them broadcast over the air. The DSSO’s online audience averaged 190 households per livestream and 60+ on-demand views per concert. Each household averaged

2.8 viewers, so we estimate more than 600 viewers for each of our digital concert offerings. Our virtual concerts reached 37 states, with 61% of viewers being from the Duluth-Superior area and 17% from the Twin Cities. We had a total of 557 accounts who viewed at least one DSSO virtual concert this past season. One of the best comments we received was, “I enjoy attending live concerts, but it has become more challenging as my husband uses a wheelchair when we leave our home. Streaming the concerts in our home has been a real gift to us!!”

I would also use the word steadfast to describe our work this past season. We continued to offer Twin Ports’ students’ musical instruction via our all-virtual Youth Orchestras program, reaching more than 100 students. In October 2020, the DSSO was one of, if not the first orchestra in Minnesota to perform to a live audience since the COVID-19 shut down concerts in March 2020. While our audiences were only around 150 for our first few shows, we ended the season with more than 400 in-person attendees for our May 2021 season finale. We have continued to produce musical experiences for our community, providing much needed art and entertainment during these unprecedented times, and doing it all in a fiscally stable manner.

We could not be here without your support as subscribers, single ticket buyers, donors, youth orchestras parents, volunteers, and community music lovers. On behalf of our musicians, we look forward to being able to connect with you on stage through the language of music this season.

Brandon VanWaeyenberghe, Executive Director
Duluth Superior Symphony Orchestra





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TO DISCOVER

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 CLAUDIA WHITE, FLUTE

LESHNOFF

*Rush** 8'

MOZART

Flute Concerto No. 1 in G Major, K.313 25'

Allegro maestoso
 Adagio ma non troppo
 Rondo: Tempo di Menuetto
 Claudia White

INTERMISSION

BEETHOVEN

Symphony No. 10 in E-flat Major 15'

Andante-Allegro-Andante

POULENC

Sinfonietta 27'

Allegro con fuoco
 Molto vivace
 Andante cantabile
 Finale: Très vite et très gai



Erika Hammerschmidt, horn, Brighton Beach

*MINNESOTA PREMIERE



CLAUDIA WHITE

Claudia White has been the Principal Flutist of the DSSO for over 20 years.

In 2019 she won the audition for Second Flute/Piccolo with the Orlando Philharmonic, having performed as a substitute musician with them for 13 seasons. In addition, she has performed with the Mill City Summer Opera, The Minnesota Orchestra, the Sarasota Opera Orchestra, The Florida Orchestra, and The Sarasota Orchestra. She is a founding member of Music Saint Croix, one of Minnesota's premier chamber music ensembles. She maintains an active freelance career including performances with Yo-Yo Ma, John Williams, Andrea Bocelli, and many recording and performance projects at Walt Disney World.

Originally from Kansas City, Missouri she has degrees from Wichita State University and Northwestern University. When not performing, Claudia enjoys hiking and backpacking in the mountains and has a cooking website - idiotskitchen.com. Claudia is passionate about her job as the Director (aka Chief Kitten Pusher) of First Ladies Farm & Sanctuary, a non-profit cat and domestic poultry rescue near her home in Tampa, Florida.

CLAUDIA WHITE ALSO PERFORMED CARL NIELSEN'S FLUTE CONCERTO WITH THE ORCHESTRA ON NOVEMBER 15, 2008.



JONATHAN LESHNOFF

RUSH
JONATHAN LESHNOFF:

BORN: September 8, 1973, in New Brunswick, New Jersey

WORK COMPOSED: 2008

WORLD PREMIERE: January 31, 2009, in Germantown, Tennessee; Iris Orchestra, Michael Stern, conducting

INSTRUMENTATION: Two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, two trombones, timpani, percussion (snare drum, crotales, vibraphone, suspended cymbal), harp and strings.

DURATION: 8 minutes

Jeremiah German, a retired economics professor and long-time patron of Leshnoff's work, asked Leshnoff to write several brief pieces for solo piano, each to last under two minutes. German was pleased with the result and later asked Leshnoff to incorporate a select group of the themes into an orchestral work. The completion of *Rush* marks the first of Leshnoff's growing number of shorter orchestral works adding to a current oeuvre of over 35 compositions for all variety of ensembles.

ALL FOUR WORKS ON TONIGHT'S CONCERT ARE BEING PLAYED FOR THE FIRST TIME BY THE DSSO.

The opening measures of *Rush* present the core motive, which is furiously developed by each instrument group. Out of the frenzied propulsion an atmospheric clarinet solo rises over a foundation of shimmering strings. The orchestra returns, but its climax is thwarted by a harp solo. A final exclamation from the orchestra closes the work.

Rush is dedicated to David DePeters, a percussionist and the Iris Director of Institutional Initiatives. Iris Orchestra was founded in September 2000 by conductor Michael Stern as an ensemble for the 21st century and named after the state flower of Tennessee. The orchestra roster is assembled with some of the finest musicians culled from the country's greatest orchestras and their guest artist list reads like a "Who's Who" of the classical world, including: pianists Garrick Ohlsson and Emanuel Ax; cellist Yo-Yo Ma; and violinists Itzhak Perlman, Joshua Bell and Pinchas Zukerman.

Flute Concerto No. 1
WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART:

BORN: January 27, 1756, in Salzburg, Austria

DIED: December 5, 1791, in Vienna

WORK COMPOSED: 1778

WORLD PREMIERE: Undocumented, but most likely early 1778 in Mannheim

INSTRUMENTATION: Two flutes (second movement only), two oboes, two horns, strings and solo flute.

DURATION: 25 minutes

Mozart and his mother set off from Salzburg on September 23, 1777, bound for Mannheim. Mozart and his father had just been dismissed from their positions and the goal was for Wolfgang to secure employment in Mannheim, which Leopold had described in a letter dated November 13, 1777, as 'that famous court, whose rays, like those of the sun, illuminate the whole of Germany.' Once employment could be found, then Leopold would join them and reunite the family. After arriving in Mannheim (no record exists as to their arrival date) Wolfgang befriended the concertmaster, Christian Cannabich, the music leader, Ignaz Holzbauer, and the flautist Johann Baptist Wendling. Although he was unable to secure employment, Mozart composed two keyboard sonatas, a flute quartet, five accompanied sonatas and two arias during this short time.

Wendling, the principal flutist in Mannheim, introduced



WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

Mozart to Dr. Ferdinand Dejean (1731-1797), who worked as a surgeon for ten years on Dutch East India Company ships. Dejean, who was an amateur flutist, asked Mozart to compose three flute concertos and two flute quartets. Mozart wrote his father in December 1777 about this commission indicating that he was determined to complete the work in a couple of months. He also mentioned that he was promised a payment of 200 gulden (a sizable sum at that time). However, Mozart procrastinated and ultimately only completed about half of the commission. Even more damning was that he reworked an earlier oboe concerto (K. 314/285d) into the second flute concerto. Dejean paid him a little less than half of the promised 200 gulden, 96 gulden. He wrote an excuse to his father for not finishing the commission: "I never have a single quiet hour here. I can only compose at night. . . Besides, one is not always in the mood for working. I could, to be sure, scribble off things the whole day long, but a composition of this kind goes out into the world." Another widely quoted reason he gave is: "You know that I become quite powerless whenever I am obliged to write for an instrument which I cannot bear." Hard to imagine that Mozart could write such beautiful music for an instrument he disliked. Nevertheless, this G major concerto is a bargain at any price. It shows off the virtuosity of the player and the melodic atmosphere is delectable and elegant.

"YOU KNOW THAT I BECOME QUITE POWERLESS WHENEVER I AM OBLIGED TO WRITE FOR AN INSTRUMENT WHICH I CANNOT BEAR."

Symphony No. 10 LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN/BARRY COOPER:

BAPTIZED: December 17, 1770, in Bonn, Germany

DIED: March 26, 1827, in Vienna, Austria

WORK COMPOSED: Assembled from fragments by Cooper in 1988

WORLD PREMIERE: Unknown

INSTRUMENTATION: Two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, timpani and strings.

DURATION: 16 minutes

One of the most frequent questions I am asked is how I approach writing these program notes. It's a rather easy process, once I get past my chronic procrastination. I research the composer and the work in different sources, one being the indispensable Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians. I also use Wikipedia (always verifying everything I read there), books from my own library, information from recordings and as many program notes as I can find. Listening to many different recordings of the work is another helpful tool. For the most part there is a plethora of information about different pieces of music. Then there is this work...

Beethoven completed his Ninth Symphony in 1824. After that he devoted his energies largely to composing his late string quartets, although there are references to him working on another symphony. Barry Cooper (b. 1949), an English musicologist and Beethoven scholar, claimed that he found over 250 measures of sketches for the first movement. From this he wove together a complete movement, keeping as close as he could to Beethoven's style.

In *The Guardian* article by Tom Service, he writes of reading *Memories of Beethoven* by Gerhard von Breuning. "There's an account of Beethoven talking with von Breuning's father, who was a close friend of the composer, about pieces he was planning to write near the end of his life. ...especially the form that he should give the 10th symphony he had in mind." Beethoven said that it would be without chorus, but would create in it a "new gravitational force." Just imagine, every symphony Beethoven composed went to where no composer had gone before; it makes one wonder what could be next? We can get a sense of Beethoven's future ideas by listening to his last string quartets. As I write this I am listening to his *Grosse Fuge*, Op. 133. There are hints of his Ninth Symphony here, but more modern and exploratory than



LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN

one might expect at that time. There is a feeling that Beethoven is reaching up, grabbing for something that is unreachable and the effect is quite unsettling. In my opinion, Beethoven is so amazing because he constantly challenges us to listen closely and allow ourselves to be drawn into his world. If we go along for the ride, we will eventually discover even more about ourselves than we do about Beethoven.

Cooper's challenge is to take fragments of sketches and complete something that is representative of Beethoven.

However, as many musicologists have pointed out, Beethoven's sketches hardly ever matched his final product. Cooper writes in his notes for the Wyn Morris recording: "The result is obviously not exactly what Beethoven would have written, and many questions still remain, but the reconstruction does provide at least a rough impression of what he intended..." Beethoven wrote some of his symphonies in pairs, such as the Fifth and Sixth, which present differing expressions at the same stage of his life. Cooper suggests that Beethoven "intended his Tenth Symphony to be introspective and personal (which may explain the apparent allusion to a theme from his *Pathétique* Sonata). In this respect it is diametrically opposite to the all-embracing Ninth, with which it was clearly meant to form a contrasting pair."

There are two recordings I have found of Cooper's realization: Wyn Morris conducting the London Symphony Orchestra and Walter Weller conducting the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. Morris' recording clocks in at around twenty minutes and Weller's at about sixteen minutes. In comparison (in my opinion), Weller brings out a lively performance that is reminiscent of a Beethoven symphony and the slower approach by Morris results in a lackluster performance.

So... is it Beethoven? I think it is a very interesting piece of music and the realization is done very well. What do you think?

SINFONIETTA
FRANCIS POULENC:

BORN: January 7, 1899, in Paris, France

DIED: January 30, 1963, in Paris

WORK COMPOSED: 1947-48

WORLD PREMIERE: October 24, 1948, in London, BBC Third Programme broadcast by the Philharmonia Orchestra, Roger Désormière conducting

INSTRUMENTATION: Two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, timpani, harp and strings.

DURATION: 29 minutes



FRANCIS POULENC

Poulenc, the only son of Émile and Jenny Poulenc, was born in the 8th arrondissement of Paris (if you've been to Paris, this district is where the Champs-Élysées, Place de la Concorde, Arc de Triomphe and Élysée Palace (residence of the president of France) are located). Émile was joint owner, with his brother Gaston, of the successful manufacturer of pharmaceuticals, Poulenc Frères, later Rhône-Poulenc. Francis grew up in a musical household. His mother, a capable pianist, had a wide repertoire ranging from classical to lesser works, which he said gave him a lifelong taste for "adorable bad music." He started piano lessons at the age of five and he was fascinated by the originality of the sound of Debussy's music when he heard it for the first time at age eight. Although his inclination was to continue music at the conservatory, his father insisted that he have a more conventional education by attending the Lycée Condorcet, the most prestigious of the four oldest high schools in Paris. The intent was that Francis would follow his father in the family business. His life took a major change with his parents' early deaths (his mother died when he was 16, his father when he was 18).

From 1914 to 1917 Poulenc was a pupil of the Spanish pianist Ricardo Viñes (1875-1943). Viñes, who had magnificent technique and an extensive repertoire, performed the premieres of works by Ravel, Debussy, Satie, Falla and Albéniz. Poulenc would later say of Viñes:

"I admired him madly, because, at this time, in 1914, he was the only virtuoso who played Debussy and Ravel. That meeting with Viñes was paramount in my life: I owe him everything. ... In reality it is to Viñes that I owe my fledgling efforts in music and everything I know about the piano. Viñes was a delightful character, some kind of strange Hidalgo with an enormous moustache, a brown sombrero in true Barcelona style, and button boots with which he used to kick me in the shins whenever I was clumsy at the pedals. No one could teach the art of using the pedals, an essential feature of modern piano music, better than Viñes. He somehow managed to extract clarity precisely from the ambiguities of the pedals. His staccato playing was equally remarkable. Marcelle Meyer, his most brilliant pupil, declared that he made even *Petrushka* seem easy."

Poulenc's initial attempts at composition found their demise in the fireplace, but soon he made the acquaintance of Erik Satie (1866-1925). Under his tutelage he became a member of the group of young composers known as *Les Six* (Georges Auric, Louis Durey, Arthur Honegger, Darius Milhaud, Germaine Tailleferre, and Poulenc). Satie was originally a member, but in September 1918 he withdrew from the group with no explanation.

After composing the one-act ballet *Les biches* on a commission from Sergei Diaghilev, Poulenc found his fame. The ballet was an immediate success and remains one of Poulenc's best-known scores. Poulenc's new celebrity garnered him fame and substantial commissions. In 1947 the BBC commissioned a work for orchestra and he was asked to 'avoid heavy topics.' He wrote to Milhaud in the summer of 1947, "Now I'm about to write a Sinfonietta for orchestra for the BBC Third Programme (the classical music station that often commissioned new works). One might call this delightful piece a parody on the classical symphonic forms of Mozart and Haydn." He was careful to call it a Sinfonietta, a little symphony, not because of its brevity but rather to describe its lack of gravitas and weightiness. It was performed numerous times during Poulenc's first concert tour of the United States, further boosting his international reputation. It's a delightful work that is full of his charm and wit, a gem of mid-20th century French music that can be easily appreciated.



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 DIRK MEYER, MUSIC DIRECTOR

Casual Concert

2:00 pm

Main Performance

7:00 pm

Offenbach

Can-Can from *Orpheus in the Underworld*

Webber/Custer

Phantom of the Opera

Mussorgsky

Night on Bald Mountain

Dukas

The Sorcerer's Apprentice

Wagner

Ride of the Valkyries

Williams

Flying Theme from *E.T.*

INTERMISSION

Williams

Shark Theme from *Jaws*

Saint-Saëns

Danse Macabre

Schwartz/Ricketts

Highlights from *Wicked*

Elfman/Bartek

Batman Theme

Parker/Holcombe

Ghostbusters!

Jackson/Holcombe

Thriller

Williams

Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone
 Hedwig's Theme
 Harry's Wonderous World



Michael Dayton, Principal oboe; Moon

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DIRK MEYER, MUSIC DIRECTOR
 JIJI, GUITAR

ROSSINI

L'italiana in Algeri Overture 9'

MENDELSSOHN

Hebrides Overture, Op. 26 (Fingal's Cave) 10'

PIAZZOLLA

Sinfonietta 17'

Dramatico: Allegro marcato

Sombrío: Andantino

Jubiloso: Vivace

INTERMISSION

RODRIGO

Concierto de Aranjuez 21'

Allegro con spirito

Adagio

Allegro gentile

Jiji

RAVEL

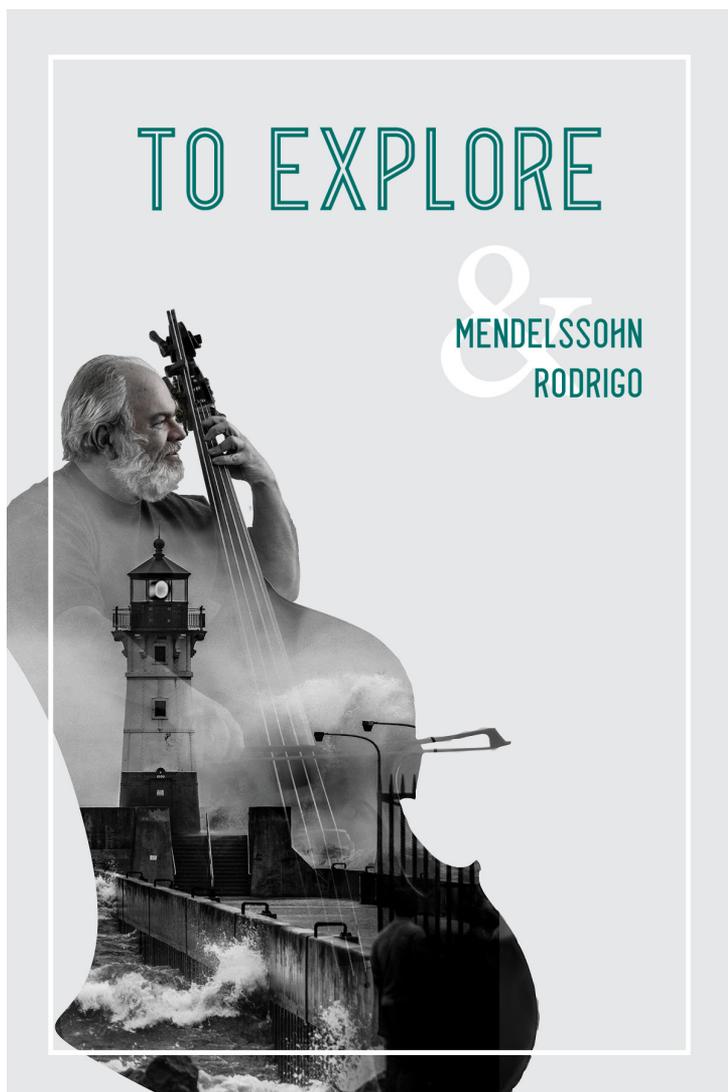
Le Tombeau de Couperin 17'

Prélude

Fugue

Menuet

Rigaudon



Vincent Osborn, Assistant Principal double bass, Canal Park Lighthouse



JJI

JJI IS CURRENTLY BASED IN TEMPE, ARIZONA WHERE SHE HOLDS THE POST OF ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF GUITAR AT ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY.

Applauded by the *Calgary Herald* as “...talented, sensitive...brilliant,” Jiji is an adventurous artist on both acoustic and electric guitar, playing an extensive range of music from traditional and contemporary classical music to free improvisation. Her impeccable musicianship combined with compelling stage presence and fascinating repertoire earned the Korean guitarist First Prize at the 2016 Concert Artists Guild International Competition.

The *Kansas City Star* described Jiji as “A graceful and nuanced player,” adding that “...she presented an intimate, captivating performance.” Career highlights include a wide array of venues, including Carnegie Hall, 92ndStreet Y, Festival Napa Valley, Krannert Center, Purdue Convocations, Virginia Arts Festival, National Sawdust, Miller Theater, Mass MOCA, Subculture NYC, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Princeton Sound Kitchen, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Her past 20-21 season highlights included performances at the Green Music Center, Market Square Concerts, University of Delaware and concerto performances with the Richmond Symphony and Sinfonietta Riga in Latvia.

A passionate advocate of new music, Jiji has premiered a duo piece *Talking Guitars* by renowned composer, Paul Lansky, released on Bridge Records. She has premiered works by numerous emerging composers, including Nina C. Young, Gabriella Smith, Riho Maimets, Kristis Auznieks, Gulli Björnsson, Andrew McIntosh, and Farnood HaghaniPour. She also performs her own compositions, incorporating electronic media and acoustic music. Her music is influenced by her regular activities as a DJ, where she highlights the electronic dance styles of happy hardcore and Berlin experimental electronica. As a chamber musician, she performed with members of Eighth Blackbird, Bang on a Can All-Stars, wild Up, and the Aizuri Quartet. Her performances have been featured on PBS, NPR’s *From the Top*, WHYY-TV, FOX 4-TV, *Munchies*, *The Not So Late Show*, and Hong Kong broadcast station RTHK’s *The Works*.

Jiji is currently based in Tempe, Arizona where she holds the post of Assistant Professor of Guitar at Arizona State University. She is sponsored by D’Addario Strings.

Overture to *L'italiana in Algeri*
GIOACHINO ROSSINI:

BORN: February 29, 1792, in Pesaro, Italy

DIED: November 13, 1868, in Passy, Paris

WORK COMPOSED: 1813

WORLD PREMIERE: (Full Opera) May 22, 1813,
 at Teatro San Benedetto, Venice

PERFORMANCE HISTORY: The DSSO has performed this overture three times previously on the Masterworks Series: in 1968, 1976, and on October 11, 1991.

INSTRUMENTATION: Flute (piccolo), two oboes, two clarinets, bassoon, two horns, two trumpets, timpani and strings.

DURATION: 9 minutes

The Italian composer Gioachino Rossini gained enormous fame for his 39 operas. He set the standard for both comic and serious opera before retiring from large-scale compositions while still in his thirties and at the height of his popularity.

Rossini's parents were musicians. His father played trumpet and his mother was a singer, and he began to compose by the age of 12. His education was at the music school in Bologna. By the age of 18, in 1810, he had his first opera performed in Venice. Only five years later, in 1815, he was engaged to write operas and manage theaters in Naples. From 1810 to 1823 he wrote 34 operas for the Italian stage that were performed in Venice, Milan, Ferrara, Naples and elsewhere. This level of productivity necessitated a formulaic approach for some of the components, such as overtures, and also a certain amount of self-borrowing. Some of his most famous works come from this period, including: *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, *La Cenerentola* and *L'italiana in Algeri*. The Opéra in Paris contracted him to produce an opera, *Il viaggio a Reims*, to celebrate the coronation of Charles X. He later reworked that opera into his first opera in French, *Le comte Ory*. His last opera was *Guillaume Tell* written in 1829.

Why Rossini chose to retire from composing operas at only 37-38 years old is a bit of a mystery. Factors that may have contributed to that decision were: ill-health, the wealth his success had brought him, and the rise of grand opera through which he may have realized his own short-comings. He left Paris in the early 1830s and based himself in Bologna until he returned to Paris



GIOACHINO ROSSINI

in 1855. During this period he wrote relatively little and his early retirement probably led to a boring life. His health and *joie de vivre* greatly improved after his return to Paris. Rossini became renowned for hosting Saturday music recitals (salons), which were regularly attended by musicians, artists and the fashionista of Paris. Attendees included Franz Liszt, Anton Rubinstein, Giuseppe Verdi, Joseph Joachim and Meyerbeer. He wrote the set of entertaining pieces *Péchés de vieillesse* (*Sins of Old Age*) for these performances. Most likely one of those 'sins' was his proclivity to enjoy the rich foods of Paris. The dish, *Tournedos Rossini*, is named for him. Apparently he was a militant connoisseur and his postulation about food might even reflect his view of music:

I know of no more admirable occupation than eating, that is really eating. Appetite is for the stomach what love is for the heart. The stomach is the conductor, who rules the grand orchestra of our passions, and rouses it to action. The bassoon or the piccolo, grumbling its discontent or shrilling its longing, personify the empty stomach for me. The stomach, replete, on the other hand, is the triangle of enjoyment or the kettledrum of joy. As for love, I regard her as the prima donna par excellence, the goddess who sings cavatinas to the brain, intoxicates the ear, and delights the heart. Eating, loving, singing and digesting are, in truth, the four acts of the comic opera known as life, and they pass like the bubbles of a bottle of champagne. Whoever lets them break without having enjoyed them is a complete fool.

Rossini died on November 13, 1868, at the age of seventy-six. He had accumulated great wealth during his lifetime and his will provided for the establishment of a home in Paris for retired opera singers. His estate in Italy was eventually given to the Commune of Pesaro (his birthplace) for the establishment of a music conservatory.

His funeral service, at the church of Sainte-Trinité in Paris, was attended by more than four thousand people.

Rossini composed *L'italiana in Algeri* (*The Italian Girl in Algiers*) in less than a month when he was 21 years old. The overture reflects the light-hearted mood of the comic opera and has characteristics of Haydn's *Surprise Symphony*. Any number of great composers have produced overtures that entertain and bring sparkle to a symphony concert, but Rossini's wit and vivacity have hardly ever been excelled.

***The Hebrides, Op. 26 (Fingal's Cave)*
FELIX MENDELSSOHN:**

BORN: February 3, 1809, in Hamburg, Germany

DIED: November 4, 1847, in Leipzig

WORK COMPOSED: Begun on August 7, 1829 with the first version completed in December 1831. Mendelssohn would continue to revise the work until the full score was published in 1834.

WORLD PREMIERE: May 14, 1832, in London, London Philharmonic Orchestra, Thomas Attwood conducting

PERFORMANCE HISTORY: Tonight marks the Orchestra's sixth Masterworks Series performance of this concert overture. It was also heard in 1946, 1950, 1967, 1974, and on April 25, 2009.

INSTRUMENTATION: Two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, timpani and strings.

DURATION: 10 minutes

Mendelssohn once remarked, "It is in pictures, ruins, and natural surroundings that I find the most music." He enjoyed traveling around Europe and the walking tour of Scotland with his friend, Karl Klingemann, was no exception. Off the west coast of Scotland are a group of islands known as The Hebrides. One of the smallest is Staffa; the Vikings named it for its columnar basalt that reminded them of their houses, which were built from vertically placed logs. Staffa's most famous feature is Fingal's Cave, a large sea cave located near the southern tip of the island. It is about sixty-six yards high and seventy-six yards deep formed in cliffs of hexagonal basalt columns. From the early 19th century to current times Staffa and Fingal's Cave draw visitors from around the world.

After seeing the incredible scenery in The Hebrides, Mendelssohn sketched out the opening bars of this overture, which he sent to his sister Fanny. He included a short note, "In order to make you understand how extraordinarily The Hebrides affected me, I send you the following, which came into my head there." The following day he and Klingemann rowed there in a skiff and sat at the mouth of the sea-level basalt formations and marveled at their awesomeness. Mendelssohn was extremely seasick from the journey, but that did not interfere with his appreciation of the experience.

The concept of concert overtures existed in 17th and 18th century compositions. However, their function was to introduce a theatrical event and served mostly to get the audience's attention, to get them to quiet down and prepare for the performance. There was a reinvention of the concert overture that expanded its function to serve as a stand-alone work in the 19th century, initially by Beethoven and Carl Maria von Weber (1786-1826), followed by Mendelssohn and Hector Berlioz (1803-1869). Mendelssohn was the first leading composer to produce a series of concert overtures.

Although Mendelssohn began work on *The Hebrides* in 1829, he continued working on it during his trip to Italy a year later, and finished the first version on December 11, 1831, which he titled *Overture to the Lonely Island*. Five days later, another version with several adjustments was completed and was titled: *Die Hebriden (The Hebrides)*. He is thought to have presented yet another version on June 6, 1832, to the Philharmonic Society of London



FELIX MENDELSSOHN

and this one was called *Overture to the Isles of Fingal*. When the overture was finally published in 1834 it was called *Fingal's Cave* (although the orchestra parts were all labeled *The Hebrides*).

When it premiered in London *The Hebrides* was triumphantly received. A critic writing for the music magazine *Harmonicon* noted: "The idea of this work was suggested to the author while he was in the most northern part of Scotland, on a wild, desolate coast, where nothing is heard but the howling of the wind and roaring of the waves; and nothing living seen, except the sea-bird, whose reign is there undisturbed by human intruder. So far as music is capable of imitating, the composer has succeeded in his design." Richard Wagner, who was no fan of Mendelssohn, said that the work showed "wonderful imagination and delicate feeling, presented with consummate art." *The Hebrides*, or *Fingal's Cave*, is a great example of musical scene painting. It starts with gently rolling waves and then throws the listener into the sea's swirling waters. Careful you don't get seasick. Mendelssohn's finely crafted work continues to enjoy widespread popularity.

Sinfonietta
ASTOR PIAZZOLLA:

BORN: March 11, 1921, in Mar del Plata, Argentina

DIED: July 5, 1992, in Buenos Aires

WORK COMPOSED: 1953

WORLD PREMIERE: Undocumented

PERFORMANCE HISTORY: Tonight's performance of this work is the first by the DSSO.

INSTRUMENTATION: Flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, horn, harp, piano, percussion (snare drum, xylophone, suspended cymbal) and strings.

DURATION: 14 minutes

Piazzolla studied with Alberto Ginastera (1916-1983) for five years beginning in 1941. During that time he mastered orchestration, which he later considered one of his strong points. At Ginastera's urging, on August 16, 1953, Piazzolla entered his *Buenos Aires Symphony in Three Movements* in the Fabien Sevitzky (a nephew of Serge Koussevitzky and conductor of the Indianapolis Symphony) Award competition. A fight broke out among members of the audience at the end of the concert.



ASTOR PIAZZOLLA

Some audience members were offended by the inclusion of two bandoneons in a traditional symphony orchestra. Nevertheless, Piazzolla's composition won him a grant from the French government to study in Paris with the legendary composition teacher Nadia Boulanger at the Fontainebleau conservatory.

At some point in 1953 Piazzolla composed his *Sinfonietta* (small symphony), not to be confused with the previously mentioned *Buenos Aires Symphony in Three Movements*. The genesis of the *Sinfonietta* may have come from Piazzolla wanting to present a sample of his work that would reflect his studies with Ginastera to Boulanger. Unlike the wild *Buenos Aires Symphony* (which is very influenced by Stravinsky), the *Sinfonietta* is more subdued. It does not use the bandoneon and the tango feel, while very present, is subtle and suggestive.

The *Sinfonietta* has three movements: *Dramatico*, *Sobrio* and *Jubiloso*. *Dramatico* has a simple, rhythmic ostinato that provides the driving pulse throughout. Building on top of the ostinato is a somber melody that is interrupted with punctuated, Stravinsky-like rhythms by the xylophone and other instruments of the orchestra. The second movement, *Sobrio*, commences with a gloomy melody and fantastic contrapuntal writing that is more evocative of the writing of Roy Harris (1898-1979) or William Schuman (1910-1992) than of Piazzolla. *Jubiloso* opens with a dynamic *z* in the strings, joined soon by the winds. Hints of his tango writing provide for the Argentinian characteristic, but the jubilant mood has dark undertones. Piazzolla's *Sinfonietta* has to be approached

with an open mind; any preconceived notions of his music need to be set aside. This is a great opportunity to hear a whole different side of this influential musician and composer.



JOAQUÍN RODRIGO

***Concierto de Aranjuez*
JOAQUÍN RODRIGO:**

BORN: November 22, 1901, in Sagunto (Valencia), Spain

DIED: July 6, 1999, in Madrid

WORK COMPOSED: 1939

WORLD PREMIERE: November 9, 1940, at the Palau de la Música Catalana, in Barcelona, soloist Regino Sainz de la Maza with the Orquesta Filarmónica de Barcelona, César Mendoza Lasalle conducting

PERFORMANCE HISTORY: There have been three previous DSSO performances of this concerto, the only guitar concerto every performed by our Orchestra. In 1973 Javier Calderon was the soloist and in both 2002 and on January 21, 2012, Sharon Isbin soloed. The latter concert date was conducted by DSSO Music Director candidate David Danzmayr.

INSTRUMENTATION: Two flutes (one doubling piccolo), two oboes (one doubling English horn), two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, strings and solo guitar.

DURATION: 21 minutes

Joaquín Rodrigo Vidre (Rodrigo is the paternal surname and Vidre the maternal family name) was born in Sagunto on the feast day of Saint Cecilia (patron saint of musicians). Sagunto is a little north of Valencia and on the coast of the Gulf of Valencia in Eastern Spain. Rodrigo lost his sight at the age of three after contracting ophthalmic diphtheria. He began to study solfège (do-re-mi), piano and violin at the age of eight. From the age of sixteen he studied harmony and composition with Francisco Antich (1860-1926), organist of Saint Catalina Church in Valencia. He wrote his compositions in Braille, then dictated them, note by note, bar by bar, alteration by alteration, to a copyist, and then revised them. His output was so prolific and much of his music so complex that his achievement can truly be considered unparalleled in classical music.

The evolution of the classical guitar spans over four centuries. In Spain, the guitar evolved mostly from the *vihuela de mano*, an instrument from the 15th century which had five or six double-strings (pairs of strings with the same pitch). It was tuned identically to the contemporary Renaissance lute with Perfect 4ths and Major 3rds, similar to the modern guitar. A modern guitar is tuned E A D G B E with the 3rd between the 5th and 6th strings. The six-course (a paired set of equally tuned strings, similar to modern 12-string guitars) *vihuela de mano* was tuned either G C F A D G or C F B-flat D G C. The 3rd falls between the 3rd and 4th strings (interestingly this is also the pattern of tuning for the six-string violone, which was the predecessor of the modern double bass.) The *vihuela* was chromatically fretted, as is a guitar, but with moveable, tied-on gut frets. It has a bright sound, is rich in overtones and because of the double strings, has a unique sound texture. Unlike the *lute*, the *vihuela* was also shaped like the modern guitar.

In 1927 Rodrigo studied with Paul Dukas (1865-1935) at the École Normale de Musique in Paris and after a short return to Spain, moved back to Paris in 1933 to study at the Conservatoire and the Sorbonne. He lived and worked in France and Germany during the Spanish Civil War (1936-39) and finally returned to Madrid in 1939. The Spanish guitarist, Regino Sainz (1896-1981), sat down with his fellow countryman Rodrigo at a Parisian restaurant in 1938 and after explaining that the last significant guitar concerto had been composed over a century before, begged Rodrigo to bring the classical guitar concerto into the 20th century. He accepted the challenge and completed *Concierto de Aranjuez* in 1939.

For many the *Concierto* has become synonymous with the guitar and Spain. It was inspired by the gardens at Palacio Real de Aranjuez, the spring resort palace and gardens built by Philip II in the last half of the 16th century, rebuilt in the middle of the 18th century by Ferdinand VI. Rodrigo provided these comments: the first movement is “animated by a rhythmic spirit and vigor without either of the two themes... interrupting its relentless pace.” The last movement “recalls a courtly dance in which the combination of double and triple time maintains a taut tempo right to the closing bar.” For many years Rodrigo and his wife Victoria remained silent about the inspiration for the second movement. During the winter of 1938-39 Victoria learned that she was pregnant. Two months before her due date she suffered a miscarriage and was hospitalized for several days. Joaquín was devastated and a friend stayed over to ‘keep an eye on him.’ She remembered him spending the nights playing melodies on the piano, themes so sad they gave her the chills. The theme evolved into the slow movement of the *Concierto*. After returning to Madrid, life became better for the Rodrigos and in the last months of 1940 they celebrated the premiere of the *Concierto de Aranjuez* in Barcelona and the birth of their first child. In 1983, Rodrigo was awarded the *Premio Nacional de Música*, Spain’s highest award for composition. King Juan Carlos I raised Rodrigo into the Spanish nobility at the end of 1991 with the hereditary title of Marquess of the Gardens of Aranjuez, and in 1996 he received the prestigious Prince of Asturias Award, Spain’s highest civilian honor. Victoria, his wife of 64 years, passed away

in 1997 at the age of 92. Rodrigo died two years later at the age of 97. They are both buried in Aranjuez.

The *Concierto* was tepidly received at its premiere in 1940. However, it has since taken in more royalties than any other Spanish work, surpassing Falla’s immensely popular *El Amor Brujo*. The middle movement, which for many is the defining moment of the piece, has been arranged by and for nearly everyone such as Miles Davis (*Sketches of Spain* album arranged by Gil Evans), Chick Corea (Spain), Plácido Domingo, Jose Carreras, the Swingle Singers, and many others. It was also one of the pieces the astronauts took to the moon in 1969. It is interesting to note that while he never mastered the guitar, Rodrigo is distinguished for elevating the Spanish guitar to dignity as a concert instrument. He composed over 100 works for various ensembles including six guitar concertos and 22 works for solo guitar. Rodrigo’s *Concierto de Aranjuez* continues to enchant audiences in its performances around the world.

Le Tombeau de Couperin

MAURICE RAVEL:

BORN: March 7, 1875, in Ciboure, Basses-Pyrénées, France

DIED: December 28, 1937, in Paris

WORK COMPOSED: Ravel began to write what he originally called a *Suite française* for piano in July 1914. World War I interrupted his work, and he did not return to this project, now titled *Le Tombeau de Couperin*, until June 1917. He completed the work that November. Ravel orchestrated four movements of *Le Tombeau de Couperin* in 1919, after the piano version premiere.

WORLD PREMIERE: The four-movement orchestral version was first played on February 28, 1920, with Rhené-Baton conducting the Padeloup Orchestra of Paris

PERFORMANCE HISTORY: The DSSO has only performed this piece twice. The first was on April 7, 1978, and the second two days later on a Family Concert at the University of Wisconsin – Superior. The late Taavo Virkhaus conducted.

INSTRUMENTATION: Two flutes (one doubling piccolo), two oboes (one doubling English horn), two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, trumpet, harp and strings.

DURATION: 17 minutes



MAURICE RAVEL

François Couperin (1668-1733) was an icon of the distinctive tradition of French music. During the reign of Louis XIV he held the title of Organiste du roi (King's Organist) and in 1717, two years after that monarch's death, he was elevated to Musician-in-Ordinary as Harpsichordist for the King's Chamber Music, at which point the king was the seven-year old Louis XV. Couperin is most famous for his harpsichord oeuvre, which comprises some 230 pieces, and an instructional treatise. Couperin's writing is marked by fanciful imagination, meticulous craftsmanship and clarity - all of which might describe Ravel's keyboard works.

Le Tombeau de Couperin is a suite for solo piano that Ravel composed between 1914 and 1917. It's the most substantial of his works from that period. The word *tombeau* in the title is used as a musical term commonly used in the 17th century, meaning "a piece written as a memorial." Ravel stated that his intention was to pay homage more generally to the sensibilities of the Baroque French keyboard suite and not to necessarily imitate or pay tribute to Couperin himself. Based on a traditional Baroque suite, the piece is in six movements.

Ravel was considered too small and delicate (63 inches tall and weighed only 108 pounds) for military service, but when his brother Edouard enlisted, Ravel wanted to do his part. In October 1914, at the age of thirty-nine, he managed to be accepted as a nurse's aide. In March 1915, he became a truck driver for the 13th Artillery Regiment (he named the truck Adélaïde and signed his letters Chauffeur Ravel). This was a dangerous assignment and his health suffered. Life and death were more pressing than composing music during this time. He was dealt a terrible blow when his mother died in early 1917, which contributed to his physical and mental decline. The army discharged him a few months later. The experiences of the war had a huge influence on Ravel. A symphonic poem, *Vien*, meant to be light and free, became the bitter *La Valse*. And the piano suite that he envisioned to be a genial bit of nationalism now carried the heavy weight of tragedy. With each movement dedicated to a friend who died during the war, the work became a gentle tribute not to Couperin, but to victims of World War I. Ravel himself designed the title page for the score, which included a draped funerary urn. When faced with criticism that the work is light-hearted rather than somber, Ravel replied, "The dead are sad enough, in their eternal silence."

THE FULL SIX MOVEMENTS ARE:

- I. **Prélude - in memory of First Lieutenant Jacques Charlot (who transcribed *Ma mère l'oye* for solo piano)**
- II. **Fugue - in memory of Second Lieutenant Jean Cruppi (to whose mother, Louise Cruppi, Ravel had dedicated *L'heure espagnole*)**
- III. **Forlane - in memory of First Lieutenant Gabriel Deluc (a Basque painter from Saint-Jean-de-Luz)**
- IV. **Rigaudon - in memory of Pierre and Pascal Gaudin (two brothers and childhood friends who were killed on the first day of their service by the same shell in November 1914)**
- V. **Menuet - in memory of Jean Dreyfus (the stepson of one of his friends and at whose home Ravel recuperated after he was discharged)**
- VI. **Toccata - in memory of Captain Joseph de Marliave (musicologist and husband of Marguerite Long, who gave the premiere of the piano version of *Le Tombeau*)**

When Ravel orchestrated the work in 1919 he omitted two of the original movements. The four movements are, in performance order: Prélude, Forlane, Menuet and Rigaudon. Even through the depressing times of World War I, Ravel produced a work of such beauty that in it we experience peace and serenity.

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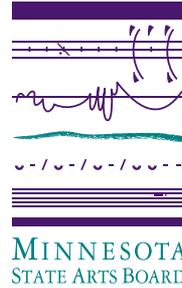
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