MINNESOTA ORCHESTRA

SHOWCASE | SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER 2021

PLAYBILL

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from the editor

In 2003, former *Star Tribune* and *Pioneer Press* music critic Roy Close, writing in the *Minnesota Orchestra at One Hundred* retrospective book, achieved the orchestral equivalent of Babe Ruth calling a home run shot with this prescient set of questions about the ensemble's new music director, Finnish conductor Osmo Vänskä:

"How will Vänskä transplant to American soil the practices that have brought him such great success in other countries? How will his proven gift for exciting programs influence the repertoire of the Minnesota Orchestra? For how long will Orchestra audiences and musicians have the privilege of his leadership? For five seasons? For ten? For nineteen?"

That very specific last guess proved to be the correct one, as Vänskä will conclude his 19-year leadership tenure at the close of the Minnesota Orchestra's 2021–22 season. The answers to the first two questions are voluminous and still unfinished, and the season will look both back at Vänskä's highlights and forward to his looming legacy.

After 18 months of uncertainty and loss brought by the pandemic, we are thrilled to begin a new season with the doors of Orchestra Hall open to live audiences—though with great care taken for the health and safety of patrons, musicians, staff, volunteers and guest performers. We hope to see you often in this final year of the Vänskä-Minnesota Orchestra partnership for the ages.

Carl Schroeder

Carl Schroeder, Editor
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Music Director Osmo Vänskä outside his ensemble's home of Orchestra Hall in downtown Minneapolis.
Photo: Zoe Prinds-Flash.

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Nov 20-21 **In-Person**

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Photo by Patrick O'Leary, U of M.

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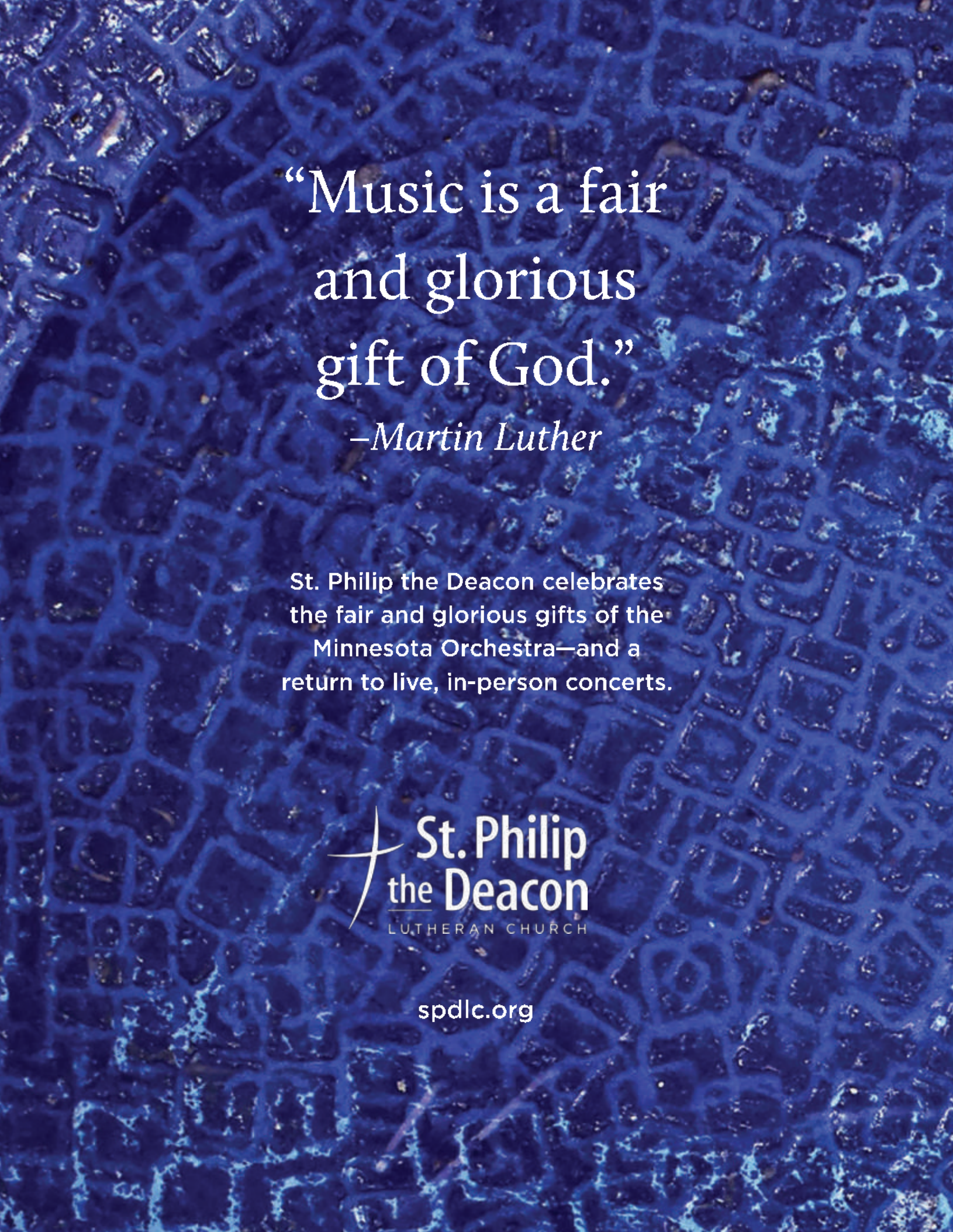
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profile | Osmo Vänskä, music director

Finnish conductor Osmo Vänskä, the Minnesota Orchestra's tenth music director, is renowned internationally for his compelling interpretations of the standard, contemporary and Nordic repertoires. Throughout the 2021–22 season, as Vänskä's 19-year leadership tenure comes to a close, the Orchestra will celebrate his lasting impact through performances of Sibelius symphonies and other signature repertoire, reconnections with favorite guest soloists and the continuation of a project to perform and record all ten Mahler symphonies.

Vänskä has led the Orchestra on five major European tours, as well as a 2018 visit to London's BBC Proms, and on historic tours to Cuba in 2015 and South Africa in 2018. He has also led the Orchestra in appearances at New York's Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center, Chicago's Symphony Center and community venues across Minnesota.

Vänskä's recording projects with the Orchestra have met with great success, including a Sibelius symphonies cycle, one album of which won the 2014 Grammy Award for Best Orchestral Performance. In February 2021 BIS released the Orchestra's newest album, featuring Mahler's Tenth Symphony—part of a Mahler series that includes a Grammy-nominated Fifth Symphony recording. Other recent releases include an album of in-concert recordings of Sibelius' *Kullervo* and *Finlandia* and Kortekangas' *Migrations*; albums of Beethoven and Tchaikovsky piano concertos with Yevgeny Sudbin and Stephen Hough, respectively; *To Be Certain of the Dawn*, composed by Stephen Paulus with libretto by Michael Dennis Browne; and a particularly widely-praised Beethoven symphonies cycle.

As a guest conductor, Vänskä has received extraordinary praise for his work with many of the world's leading orchestras, including the Boston and Chicago symphony orchestras, Philadelphia Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, London Philharmonic, Berlin Philharmonic, Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Vienna Symphony, Hong Kong Philharmonic and Yomiuri Nippon Symphony Orchestra. In January 2020 he became music director of


Travis Anderson

the Seoul Philharmonic Orchestra. In 2014 he became the Iceland Symphony Orchestra's principal guest conductor; since then he has been named the ensemble's honorary conductor. He is also conductor laureate of the Lahti Symphony Orchestra, which, during two decades as music director, he transformed into one of Finland's flagship orchestras.

Vänskä began his music career as a clarinetist, holding major posts with the Helsinki Philharmonic and the Turku Philharmonic. Since taking up the instrument again for Sommerfest 2005 he has performed as clarinetist at Orchestra Hall, other Twin Cities venues, the Grand Teton Festival, the Mostly Mozart Festival, La Jolla Summerfest, the Seattle Chamber Music Festival, and several festivals in Finland. He has recorded Bernhard Henrik Crusell's three Clarinet Quartets and Kalevi Aho's Clarinet Quintet for the BIS label and is in the process of recording several duos for clarinet and violin which he has commissioned with his wife, violinist Erin Keefe.

During the 2021–22 season he is scheduled to conduct ensembles including the Antwerp Symphony Orchestra, Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra, Netherlands Radio Philharmonic, Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra Orchestre National de Lyon, Seoul Philharmonic Orchestra and Tokyo Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra. In addition, he will be in residence at the Curtis Institute, where he will work with conducting fellows across a four-month span. For more information, visit minnesotaorchestra.org.

Minnesota Orchestra profile

The Minnesota Orchestra, led by Music Director Osmo Vänskä, ranks among America's top symphonic ensembles, with a distinguished history of acclaimed performances in its home state and around the world. Founded in 1903, it is known for award-winning recordings as well as for notable radio broadcasts and educational engagement programs, and a commitment to new orchestral repertoire.

music director spotlight:
Emil Oberhoffer

■ The first music director of the Minnesota Orchestra—originally called the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra—was Emil Oberhoffer, who, at age 36, led the ensemble's first-ever performance in November 1903.

■ Born in Munich in 1867, Oberhoffer studied first with his conductor-organist father, and later at the Munich Conservatory and in Paris. He moved to New York in the mid-1880s and arrived in Minnesota about five years later when, according to some sources, his touring Gilbert and Sullivan troupe suddenly disbanded, leaving him stranded in the Twin Cities.

■ In 1896 he was appointed director of Minneapolis' leading chorus, the Apollo Club. Four years later he was hired by the rival Philharmonic Club. He advocated for that Club to establish a permanent orchestra rather than relying on freelancers, and in 1903 the Club's officers consented, forming the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra.

■ In his 19 seasons as the Orchestra's leader, Oberhoffer established the ensemble's national reputation through frequent tours, often funded by the conductor himself. In 1911 he led the Orchestra's first Young People's Concerts.

■ In 1946, 13 years after Oberhoffer's passing, his estate donated his Mason & Hamlin grand piano to the Minneapolis Public Library system. That piano is now located in the soundproof Anna M. Heilmaier Piano Room at the downtown Minneapolis public library, where anyone may reserve time to play it at no cost.

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in memoriam: Judy Dayton (1927–2021)

When Judy Dayton passed away in August at age 94, the Minnesota Orchestra family joined mourners near and far in honoring the life of a generous, visionary and committed patron who supported numerous cultural institutions, served several of them in leadership roles—and was a passionate lover of the arts and great friend to many in the community.

Brian Lesteberg

Judy Dayton at a Minnesota Orchestra concert with her nephew Governor Mark Dayton in 2014, in front of a historic photo of Judy's late husband Ken Dayton.

a shared love

The Orchestra was a shared love in the lives of Judy and her late husband Ken, extending back to their first date at a Minnesota Orchestra concert. Judy and Ken held the same seats at Orchestra Hall since the Hall was built in 1974 and traveled with the Orchestra on its first tour to Europe in 1998, five years before Ken's passing. Their generosity across the arts community was unparalleled. At the Orchestra, they endowed two orchestral chairs, provided cornerstone funding for the creation of Orchestra Hall, made extraordinary gifts to support the Orchestra's greatest artistic initiatives, established the Oakleaf Trust endowment and, with Louise and Douglas Leatherdale, donated the Michael Leiter Bass Violin Collection.

One of that collection's four basses, made by Matteo Goffriller in Venice in 1740, is played by Acting Associate Principal Bass William Schrickel. "I am confident that there is not another bass section in the world that can surpass the visceral power and the elegant beauty of the Minnesota Orchestra's instruments," he stated. "When the basses thunder out the Trio of the third movement of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony on our season opening concert, everyone in the audience should breathe a silent thank you (along with me) to Judy for the stupendous quality of the sound."

stepping forward

Judy served on the Orchestra's Board of Directors from 1967 to 1969 during her tenure as president of YPSCA, the Young People's Symphony Concert Association. She was a longtime member of FRIENDS of the Minnesota Orchestra and served as honorary chair of the 2005 Symphony Ball along with Rosalynd Pflaum. In 2013, during the Orchestra's lockout, she and then-Mayor R.T. Rybak stepped forward to host a celebration of the Orchestra's Grammy nomination, inviting the community to come together around the nomination at a time of strife.

"Judy was gracious, humble and truly extraordinary—and she adored the Minnesota Orchestra," said Music Director Osmo Vänskä, recalling the opening of that 2013 concert. "The plan was for Judy and R.T. to welcome the audience. Judy, who was forever modest and never seeking attention, asked if it was necessary for her to go onstage. After some convincing, she agreed, and I still remember the incredible audience enthusiasm and applause for Judy and R.T., welcoming the entire audience to a rather historic concert."

"the best friend"

Principal Cello Anthony Ross is among many in the Orchestra who formed a close bond with Judy, noting: "She was the best friend any orchestra could ever have. Not only was she a passionate and steadfast audience member, she was a beacon for philanthropy in the arts, knowing that the arts promote thriving communities. As a musician and friend, I will miss her support, curiosity and her gracious, down to earth personality. She was a true Minnesota treasure."

Paula DeCosse, a longtime patron of the Orchestra, current Board member and friend of Judy, reflected on Judy's commitment to the Orchestra as a concertgoer: "When my husband Cy and I attended Orchestra concerts with Judy, she always insisted that we sit in 'her' seats—the four in Balcony A that Ken had chosen when Orchestra Hall was being built, after an extensive investigation of the acoustics in the new auditorium. Whether the program included new music or old favorites, Judy always listened with rapt attention. She often remarked about how lucky she felt to have had a professor at Connecticut College who made classical music so engaging she could still hum the opening passages of recordings he'd played and identify themes he'd pointed out."

celebrating a legacy

"There are not words to adequately describe all that Judy has meant to the Minnesota Orchestra," said President and CEO Michelle Miller Burns. "Judy was a person of exceptional taste, lively humor and great integrity. She did not seek the spotlight for herself or her contributions, but her love for the arts and sense of social responsibility has indelibly influenced our city. And we recognize that the Orchestra plays at the highest level, is known on the world stage, and performs in one of the country's best orchestral venues because of the extraordinary contributions of Judy and Ken Dayton. The Orchestra shares its condolences with the Dayton family, and we will celebrate Judy's extraordinary generosity and great legacy with the ensemble for many years to come."

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Virtuoso Jazz Guitarist

OCT 12

Charles Lloyd & Kindred Spirits

Jazz Saxophone Titan

NOV 2–3

Max Weinberg's Jukebox

Legendary E Street Band Drummer

OCT 21

Jon McLaughlin & Friends

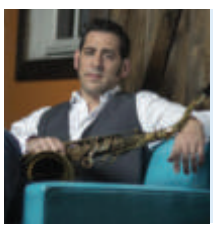
Holiday Tour

NOV 11

Spyro Gyra

Contemporary Jazz Icons

OCT 24



Steve Cole

Contemporary Jazz and R&B

NOV 12

Altan

Traditional Celtic Masters

NOV 1

Windham Hill's Winter Solstice

35th Anniversary of the Multi-platinum Albums

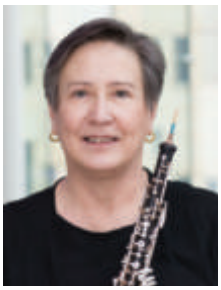
NOV 28

– UPCOMING –

10/12	Graham Parker
10/17	JD Simo & GA-20
10/18	Jane Bunnett & Maqueque
10/20	Josh Rouse
10/22	Lori Dokken Presents: I Am Woman—Hear Me Roar
10/23	Bob Schneider
10/26	Jimmie Vaughan
10/28	Sierra Hull + Dead Horses
11/5	Patty Peterson Presents Memories–The Music of Barbara Streisand
11/6	Peter Rowan & Los Texmaniacs
11/7-8	Rodney Crowell
11/10	Sonny Landreth
11/15	Mathew Whitaker
11/16	Joe Louis Walker
11/17	Quinteto Astor Piazzolla

celebrating our retiring musicians

In the 18 months since *Showcase* magazine was last published, the Minnesota Orchestra has bid farewell to five retiring musicians, with a sixth joining their ranks on October 2. Please join us in applauding these extraordinary musicians—whose collective service to the Orchestra totals 142 years—as we wish them all a happy retirement!



Although **Kathryn Greenbank**'s tenure with the Minnesota Orchestra was a brief three years—one as acting associate principal oboe and two in the permanent post—it marked the culmination of a long career in the Twin Cities music scene. She had previously served for 36 years as principal oboe of the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, where highlights of her tenure included performing the world premiere of Jennifer Higdon's Oboe Concerto. "I love the great music-making and the positive culture that exists here, and I feel support from everyone," Greenbank commented in a 2018 interview about her transition to Orchestra Hall. Among the key moments of her time with the Minnesota Orchestra were performances of chamber works by Sergei Prokofiev and Samuel Barber during the Orchestra's small-ensemble performances in Peavey Plaza in August 2020 that marked the return to live music-making in the pandemic era. Her last appearance on an Orchestra program came in the December 2020 Midwinter Gathering concert.

When Principal Harp **Kathy Kienzle** retired in August 2020 after 27 years with the Orchestra, a live send-off wasn't possible—so in a modern twist, she passed the torch to her successor Marguerite Lynn Williams with recorded-from-home harp duos shared online. In more conventional times, Kienzle was a frequent concerto soloist with the Orchestra, most notably performing two world premieres: Lowell Liebermann's Concerto for Flute and Harp with Sir James Galway in 1995 and Einojuhani Rautavaara's Harp Concerto in 2000. The latter premiere was the first work ever conducted by Osmo Vänskä at Orchestra Hall, during his sole appearance as a guest conductor before being designated music director. Kienzle was also a fixture of the Orchestra's chamber concerts, has had a long career as an educator, and collaborated with flutist Michele Antonello Frisch on several recordings as the Bell' Alma Duo. In 2008, when donors Georgia and Jim Thompson underwrote the purchase of a new harp for the Orchestra, Kienzle and Georgia Thompson traveled to Illinois and selected a top-of-the-line Lyon & Healy harp that Kienzle said "will bring great returns for our audiences and musicians for 40 or 50 years." We may yet see more of her on the Orchestra Hall stage, as she has already returned to the Orchestra as a substitute player.

Marcia Peck, who on October 2 plays her final concert as a member of the Orchestra's cello section, holds the distinction of being the longest-tenured musician in the ensemble's history—with a remarkable 50-year career that began three years before Orchestra Hall was built, when only 11 women were in the Orchestra. In addition to playing frequent chamber music concerts at the Hall—including a memorable 1996 Sommerfest performance of the Tchaikovsky Sextet with Joshua Bell and Pamela Frank—she performed the American premiere of the entire Shostakovich quartet cycle with the Bakken Quartet, and she plays at the Grand Teton Music Festival each summer. She is also an award-winning fiction writer whose novel *Water Music* was named as runner-up for the William Faulkner—William Wisdom Award. In 2003 she wrote the introduction for the Orchestra's centennial retrospective book, in which she foresaw this moment, writing: "What I didn't realize was this: that I had been granted a life with great music as my constant companion and that the masterpieces of our repertoire would have more to say to me after all these years. Not less. That year after year I would reach into the scores, go deeper and find more to open my heart and enlarge my spirit. And how hard it will be one day to relinquish my beloved chair."

In January 2021, midway through his last season as the Orchestra's principal oboe, **John Snow** was featured in one final concerto—but he wasn't alone at center stage, instead sharing the spotlight in a Bach Double Concerto with his good friend, Principal Second Violin Peter McGuire. That spirit of camaraderie was a thread through Snow's 22-year Minnesota Orchestra career, which concluded with four years as principal. Snow collaborated with colleagues in many chamber performances both at Orchestra Hall and with the Musical Offering, among other groups, and he commissioned and premiered several works, including concertos by Laura Kaminsky and Dan Welcher. An avid educator, he fostered a new generation of performers as leader of the oboe studio at the University of Minnesota's School of Music for two decades. Snow, who reports that he is happy to share a name with a popular *Game of Thrones* character, has in recent years accomplished an impressive non-musical feat: building a cabin—and matching outhouse—north of Hinckley. In his retirement, he plans to "travel a lot, cook and bake a lot, throw pots, write poetry and stories, dabble in watercolor painting, and just generally see what John Snow is all about without an oboe reed in his mouth."

Story continues on page 14.

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celebrating our retiring musicians

The final night of 2020 was also violist **Thomas Turner**'s last night performing with the Orchestra, as the concert—with no in-person audience—concluded with his colleagues stomping and cheering in recognition of his 26-year tenure, which included 23 years as principal viola and another three in the core of the section. During his tenure he was featured many times as soloist, including the 1998 U.S. premiere of the Britten Double Concerto with then-Concertmaster Jorja Fleezanis, and the 2005 world premiere of Wolfgang Rihm's Concerto for Viola and Clarinet with then-Principal Clarinet Burt Hara. Other career highlights included performing the Béla Bartók Viola Concerto and a recording of Kalevi Aho's chamber music with Osmo Vänskä and Orchestra colleagues for an album on the BIS label. In a 2005 interview, Turner already noticed something special about the Vänskä relationship, stating: "I consider Minnesota lucky to have Osmo Vänskä. I think we have a terrific partnership with him, and he's made the Orchestra even better." In his retirement, Turner is returning to Berlin—not his native city, but the site of his first major professional post as principal viola of the Berlin Radio Symphony.

Associate Principal Horn **Herbert Winslow** retired at the end of August 2021, concluding a Minnesota Orchestra tenure that officially began in December 2005—following 12 years in which he had served as acting associate principal horn in Sommerfest concerts and tours. As a soloist with the Orchestra, he performed Mozart's Second Horn Concerto and Sinfonia concertante, and as a chamber musician he played numerous works, including the Brahms Horn Trio with David Brubaker and Andrew Litton. Before joining the Orchestra, he was the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra's principal horn for 25 years, and served three seasons as principal horn for the Santa Fe Opera. Like many of his Orchestra colleagues, he has a passion for education, teaching at both the University of Minnesota School of Music and St. Olaf College in Northfield. For three years he was artistic director of the Twin Cities Horn Club. Apart from his musical career, he has volunteered for Courage Kenny and coached power wheelchair soccer. Upon retirement, he stated: "I can't express what a privilege and joy it has been to perform with Osmo and my incredibly talented colleagues and friends in this amazing orchestra."

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Good Fellows update

Esther Seitz

Lovrick Gary

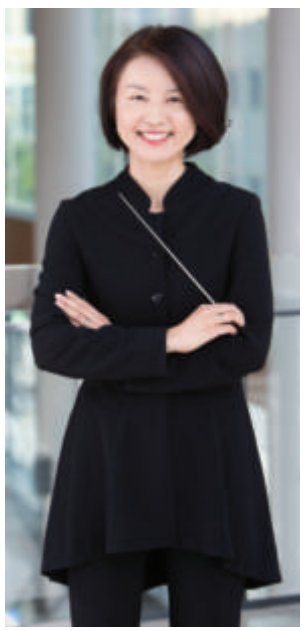
As the Minnesota Orchestra launches its new season this fall, two of the newest additions on the Orchestra Hall stage are cellist Esther Seitz and bass trombone player Lovrick Gary—both of whom have won two-year appointments as the Orchestra's next Rosemary and David Good Fellows. The fellowship, founded in 2017, is designed to encourage greater diversity in the orchestral field by supporting the career development of outstanding young musicians of African American, Latin American and Native American descent as they embark on professional orchestral careers.

Over the course of the fellowship, Seitz and Gary will observe and participate in Minnesota Orchestra rehearsals; perform within the Orchestra at selected concerts; study with Orchestra musicians; and train and prepare for auditions. Rosemary and David Good Fellows receive mentoring from Minnesota Orchestra musicians and work with Minnesota students on a variety of initiatives through the Orchestra's Education and Community Engagement department.

The Rosemary and David Good Fellowship initiative grew from the Orchestra's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee, which comprises board, musicians and staff. The first fellowship positions were awarded in 2017 to tuba player Jason Tanksley and trombone player Myles Blakemore. Flutist Emilio Rutllant was selected in 2018, and bassoonist Kai Rocke won the position in 2019. Rocke completed his two-year fellowship this past summer and has been awarded a one-year position with the Oregon Symphony. To learn more about the Good Fellowship and our newest fellows, visit minnesotaorchestra.org.

farewell to Akiko Fujimoto

Since the last issue of *Showcase* was published in March 2020, conductor Akiko Fujimoto completed her tenure with the Minnesota Orchestra after one season as assistant conductor and two as associate conductor. Between 2017 and 2020 she led the Orchestra in 66 concerts across a variety of series, including Young People's and Family Concerts, Symphonic Adventures concerts at area high schools and Symphony for the Cities outdoor concerts in the community. High points of her time with the Orchestra include leading a "Celebrating the Americas" program as part of the Música Juntos Sommerfest, a "Fly Me to the Moon" concert starring Orchestra trumpeter Charles Lazarus, a "Holiday Brass" program at two Twin Cities churches, and the first full-Orchestra Sensory-Friendly Family Concert. Fujimoto is continuing to serve as music director of the Mid-Texas Symphony and maintains a blog on her website, akikofujimoto.com. From the North Star State to the Lone Star State, we wish her the best!



Josh Kohanek

on the way: more broadcasts and streaming

The Minnesota Orchestra's recently completed 2020–21 concert season was truly a season like no other. Because of the incredible generosity of our donor community, a digital concert season was formed—bringing the beautiful music of the Orchestra into the homes of music lovers around the world through our *This Is Minnesota Orchestra* digital series for television, radio and online streaming.

During the 2021–22 season, *This Is Minnesota Orchestra*—produced with our partners from Twin Cities PBS (TPT) and YourClassical Minnesota Public Radio—will continue to reach audiences across Minnesota and worldwide for select performances; more details will be announced at minnesotaorchestra.org and in future issues of *Showcase*.

Following is a sampling of comments from our *This Is Minnesota Orchestra* livestream audiences during the 2020–21 season:

- "Thank you for the beautiful, uplifting, creative, innovative, adapted-for-COVID programming. So moving to have these concerts to bring light to our lives during tough times!"

- "Thank you for the beauty you bring to our lives. Your determination to provide inspiring concerts during these challenging times is heartening."

- "The Minnesota Orchestra is a lifeline of humanity and beauty for me. Tuning in allows me to feel connected again to the Orchestra, and to the incredible musicians who are giving so much to our community!"

- "These concerts saved me during the pandemic and made me realize how much the Orchestra improves my quality of life. I knew it but didn't 'feel' it like I did watching and listening to the concerts."

join the Young People's Concerto Competition

For 64 years, YPSCA—the Young People's Symphony Concert Association—has held a Young People's Concerto Competition for advanced student musicians in grades 7 to 12. The winner of the top prize is invited to perform with the Minnesota Orchestra in a set of Young People's Concerts. Earlier this year, that top prize was awarded to 15-year-old cellist Dennis Eum, who will perform with the Minnesota Orchestra at a series of Young People's Concerts in the 2022–23 season.

Each Concerto Competition contestant prepares a portion of a major work, such as a concerto movement, to perform from memory. Performances are judged by professional musicians specializing in strings, woodwinds, brass, percussion and keyboard. For the Finals, held on the Orchestra Hall stage, YPSCA welcomes members of the public to attend and to witness the riveting performances of these extraordinary young musicians.

The 2022 Young People's Concerto Competition will be a hybrid live and virtual event. The preliminary round will run virtually: students will submit video performances, and judges will adjudicate remotely. The final round will be in person at Orchestra Hall on Sunday, February 27, 2022. Details about the Competition, guidelines for students, deadlines, the application form, and historical information can be found online at minnesotaorchestra.org/ypcc.

Minnesota Orchestra
YPSCA
Young People's Symphony Concert Association

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Minnesota Orchestra

Osmo Vänskä, conductor | **Joshua Bell,** violin

Thursday, September 23, 2021, 7:30 pm | Orchestra Hall
Friday, September 24, 2021, 8 pm | Orchestra Hall

John Stafford Smith/arr. Stanislaw Skrowaczewski
The Star-Spangled Banner — ca. 2′

Kalevi Aho
Minea: Concertante Music for Orchestra — ca. 18′

Max Bruch
Scottish Fantasy for Violin and Orchestra, Opus 46 — ca. 28′
Prelude: Grave
Adagio cantabile
Allegro
Andante sostenuto
Finale: Allegro guerriero
Joshua Bell, violin

I N T E R M I S S I O N — ca. 20′

Jessie Montgomery
Banner — ca. 8′

Ludwig van Beethoven
Symphony No. 5 in C minor, Opus 67 — ca. 36′
Allegro con brio
Andante con moto
Allegro
Allegro
[There is no pause before the last movement.]

pre-concert

Concert Preview with Phillip Gainsley, Sam Bergman, Natsuki Kumagai and Sophia Mockler
Thursday, September 23, 6:45 pm, Target Atrium
Friday, September 24, 7:15 pm, N. Bud Grossman Mezzanine

Minnesota Orchestra concerts are broadcast live on Friday evenings on stations of YourClassical Minnesota Public Radio, including KSJN 99.5 FM in the Twin Cities.

Osmo Vänskä, conductor

Profile appears on page 8.

Joshua Bell, violin

With a career spanning almost four decades, Grammy Award-winning violinist Joshua Bell is one of the most celebrated classical artists of his era. Having performed with virtually every major orchestra in the world, Bell continues to maintain engagements as a soloist, recitalist, chamber musician, conductor and music director of the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields. Highlights of his 2021-22 season include leading the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields at the 2021 BBC Proms, throughout Europe, and in the U.S. on tour; returning to the Philadelphia Orchestra for a play/conduct program, and to the Verbier Festival and the New York Philharmonic; and tours with the Israel Philharmonic and NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchestra as soloist. Bell was named 2010 "Instrumentalist of the Year" by Musical America and a 2007 "Young Global Leader" by the World Economic Forum, has been nominated for six Grammy Awards, and received the 2007 Avery Fisher Prize. He has also received the 2003 Indiana Governor's Arts Award and a 1991 Distinguished Alumni Service Award from the Jacobs School of Music. In 2000, he was named an "Indiana Living Legend."

Joshua Bell appears by arrangement with Park Avenue Artists and Primo Artists. He records exclusively for Sony Classical—a MASTERWORKS label. More: parkavenueartists.com, primoartists.com, joshuabell.com.

one-minute notes

Aho: *Minea*

In this concert opener premiered by the Minnesota Orchestra in 2009, scored for large orchestra with an expanded percussion section, each instrument is given a chance to shine as volume and tempo increase throughout.

Bruch: *Scottish Fantasy*

Although he was German, Max Bruch was attracted to the folksongs of Scotland and Wales. His *Scottish Fantasy*, while not technically a violin concerto, spotlights the solo violin in a prelude and four movements—played without pause—ranging from a solemn prelude to a heroic, virtuoso close, and incorporating a variety of folk tunes.

Montgomery: *Banner*

In *Banner*, Jessie Montgomery asks us: "What does an anthem for the 21st century sound like in today's multi-cultural environment?" Her answer includes individual voices interacting with a unified ensemble through fragments of music from *The Star-Spangled Banner*, the Mexican national anthem, protest songs, Puerto Rican melodies, folk songs and more, blending together the musical icons of a diversified world.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 5

The narrative of the Fifth Symphony is a classic example of progress from turbulence to victory. The four notes of the familiar opening are heard throughout the first movement. The *Andante* brings variations on a lovely, arching melody; the third movement seems ghostly and threatening. Beethoven then tunnels through the darkness, drums thudding, into bright C-major light.

Kalevi Aho

Born: March 9, 1949, Forssa, Finland

Minea: Concertante Music for Orchestra

Premiered: November 5, 2009

Kalevi Aho and Osmo Vänskä first met in 1989, when Vänskä conducted two of Aho's works in a recording with the Lahti Symphony Orchestra in their native Finland. Since then, Vänskä has led premieres of some two dozen compositions by Aho, and has played an active role in commissioning many of them. He has earned a reputation as an authoritative interpreter of Aho's music, and has conducted six of Aho's works at Orchestra Hall since becoming the Minnesota Orchestra's music director in 2003. In April 2020 Vänskä was scheduled to lead the Orchestra in a seventh Aho work, the percussion concerto *Sieidi*, in a program that was canceled early in the pandemic.

Widely regarded as Finland's most distinguished symphonist since Sibelius, Aho studied with Einojuhani Rautavaara at the Sibelius Academy. He has become a major figure in European musical circles and has worked as a freelance composer since 1994.

made for Minnesota

Minea marked a bit of a departure for Aho, who is best known for multi-movement, large-scale works. "It was Osmo's idea that I compose a shorter piece for the Minnesota Orchestra," Aho recalled at the time of the premiere here in 2009. "We discussed the prospect in 2005 when the Orchestra played my Seventh Symphony. Osmo's proposal was a piece about 16 to 20 minutes, for a large orchestra, about 100 musicians. He wanted every musician of the Minnesota Orchestra to have an opportunity to shine."

That last specification yielded the subtitle, Concertante Music. "This piece really highlights the virtuosity of the Minnesota Orchestra," says Aho. "It also has some major solos for individual players, for example a very demanding contrabassoon solo toward the middle of the piece." As for the title: *Minea* is a play on Minneapolis. "When I finished composing, the work had no name. I began to twist the city name to find a title. I wondered about *Minnea,* then took away one 'n' and got *Minea.*"

The form was left to Aho's discretion. He chose a free structure in several sections with a forward trajectory of tempi and volume. *Minea* opens *Tranquillo*, then steadily accelerates to *Allegro*, *Furioso*, and finally *Presto*. "The idea is simply that the music becomes faster and faster toward the end," he explains. "It is like a single huge accelerando and crescendo."

music of many cultures

Aho has long had an interest in non-Western music. *Minea* is one of several works in which he has expanded his musical vocabulary. "I have sought a new, fresh relation to tonality by using scales from other musical cultures," he explains. "I find rhythm in Western music less interesting than in African, Arabian or Indian music. In *Minea,* I have tried to enrich the rhythmic element by using percussion, metric influences and patterns from musical cultures" beyond the traditional classical style.

Minea's score specifies a large percussion battery that requires four players. One instrument Aho includes is *darabukka*, a goblet-shaped drum prominent in North African and Middle Eastern music. "I really like the sound of a good *darabukka,*" declares Aho. A typical phenomenon in Arabian music is rhythmical patterns that repeat through the whole piece. Those patterns can be long and complicated. *"Minea* also has complex rhythmic patterns, which are repeated dozens of times before they change," he continues.

"*Minea*'s form is also connected to classical Northern Indian music, which generally begins with a slow section lacking a clear pulse. Eventually a pulse is established, normally with a *tabla* player drumming. The tempo becomes faster and faster. At the end, the virtuosity and speed of the music increase to a maximum."

Aho compares the *Tranquillo* section that opens *Minea* to the opening of an Indian *raga*, which designates a particular scale pattern, patterns of rising and falling pitches, and mood. The ensuing *Allegro, Furioso* and *Presto* sections correspond to the more rhythmic sections of an Indian composition; however, he has added inflections from Arabian music. "And at the beginning," he notes, "you might also hear a little Japanese flavor."

Instrumentation: 3 flutes, piccolo, 3 oboes, English horn, 3 clarinets, bass clarinet, 3 bassoons, contrabassoon, 6 horns, 4 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, tenor drum, bass drum, large suspended cymbal, 2 small suspended cymbals, 2 bongos, chains, 2 congas, darabukka, tamtam, 4 tom-toms, glockenspiel, vibraphone, chimes, harp, piano and strings

Program notes by ***Laurie Shulman*** *©2017.*
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Max Bruch

Born: January 6, 1838, Cologne, Germany
Died: October 2, 1920, Friedenau, Germany

Scottish Fantasy for Violin and Orchestra, Opus 46

Premiered: September 1880

It may seem strange that so thoroughly German a composer as Max Bruch should have written a *Scottish Fantasy*, but in fact Bruch was quite familiar with the British Isles and their folk music. He served for two years as director of the Liverpool Philharmonic Society, traveled widely through England and Scotland, and loved the novels of Sir Walter Scott. All of these interests made themselves felt in Bruch's music: he composed *Twelve Scottish Folk Songs* in 1863 and an *Adagio on Celtic Melodies* for cello and piano in 1891. He was proud that he had found those themes on his travels, rather than taking them from books.

not quite a concerto

By far the most famous of Bruch's uses of folk music is his *Scottish Fantasy*, composed in Cologne in 1879-80. Though Bruch consulted with the great German violinist Joseph Joachim about the violin part, he dedicated the piece to the Spanish virtuoso Pablo de Sarasate, who gave the first performance at the Bach Festival in Hamburg in September 1880. Bruch remained uncertain about the form of his piece, and in a letter to his publisher shortly after premiere he said: "Fantasy is too general and usually leads one to expect a shorter piece rather than a work with several movements. On the other hand, it cannot be called a concerto (which is also Joachim's opinion) since the form of the entire work is very free, and also because folk melodies are used."

Though Bruch sometimes referred to this piece as a "concerto," perhaps his subtitle is most accurate: "Fantasy for violin with orchestra and harp, freely treating Scottish folk melodies." It was important to him to note the central role played by the harp in this music: Bruch identified the violin and the harp as the principal instruments of Scottish folk music.

"the glorious times of old"

The *Scottish Fantasy* falls into a prelude and four movements, played without break.

It is in the prelude, marked ***Grave***, that one senses most clearly the influence of Sir Walter Scott's novels; many years after composing this music, Bruch told a friend that the opening depicts "an old bard, who contemplates a ruined castle, and laments the glorious times of old." Solemn brass chords establish this atmosphere, and Bruch marks the violin's soaring entrance *Quasi recitativo*.

This leads on a trill into the main section of the opening movement, marked ***Adagio cantabile***. The harp takes a central role, preparing the way for the entrance of the violin on the folk-tune "Auld Rob Morris."

The following ***Allegro*** is based on the tune "The Dusty Miller," which the violin sings over a bagpipe-like drone.

A slow transition that recalls "Auld Rob Morris" then leads into the ***Andante sostenuto***, based on the love song "I'm Down for a Lack of Johnnie." The phrases of this touching song conclude with the "Scotch snap": each phrase ricochets off its last note to land on another note.

The movement draws to a quiet close, and the ***Allegro guerriero*** finale bursts to life. Here the violin's chords sound the principal melody, "Scots wha hae," believed to have been sung by the troops of Robert the Bruce as they routed the English cavalry at the Battle of Bannockburn in 1314. That war-cry becomes the basis for some virtuoso fiddling, and the *Scottish Fantasy* powers its way to a heroic close on "Scots wha hae."

Instrumentation: solo violin with orchestra comprising 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, bass drum, cymbals, harp and strings

Program note by ***Eric Bromberger****.*

Jessie Montgomery

Born: 1981,
New York City

Banner

Premiered: September 2014

Debates over *The Star-Spangled Banner*'s suitability as a national anthem have been going on nearly since the ink dried on Francis Scott Key's lyrics, penned after a battle in the War of 1812. (The melody originated decades earlier across the Atlantic, beginning its life in London as a gentlemen's club song.) Key, a power player from a wealthy slave-owning family in Maryland, was a slave owner himself, a fact which led Abolitionists to mock Key for the hypocrisy of his line "the land of the free." For these and other reasons, complex feelings about *The Star-Spangled Banner* have existed for generations, and it only became our national anthem in 1931.

addressing the paradoxes

Necessarily, anyone who engages with the national anthem is engaging with more than just a piece of music: we're also engaging with what it means to be an American, and what it means to be free. This is especially true in our time and place, 16 months after George Floyd was murdered by police on a street corner ten minutes away from Orchestra Hall.

The Sphinx Organization commissioned *Banner* from American composer Jessie Montgomery upon the 2014 bicentennial of Key's poem. In *Banner*, Montgomery addresses the paradoxes raised by the anthem in a direct and powerful way. As she writes in her composer's notes, "For most Americans, the song represents a paradigm of liberty and solidarity against fierce odds, and for others it implies a contradiction between the ideals of freedom and the realities of injustice and oppression....I've made an attempt to answer the question: 'What does an anthem for the 21st century sound like in today's multi-cultural environment?'"

That answer employs symbolic instrumentation: a string quartet set against an orchestra, representing individuals interacting with a larger whole. Throughout the piece these two ensembles play off each other constantly. Sometimes they support each other; sometimes they drown each other out; sometimes they come into outright, cacophonous conflict.

meaningful melodies and ideals

Banner opens with a burst of trills. The string quartet enters with a seemingly battered (albeit resolute) version of *The Star-Spangled Banner*. Then the first violin steps forward to offer a clear-eyed rendition of the Mexican national anthem. This new music energizes the orchestra and sets off a cascade of fleet-fingered notes in the violins and flutes.

Suddenly the piece enters an otherworldly interlude. The flutists bend pitches downward and the string players make clacking sounds using the wood of their bows. The low tom and kick drum start quietly pounding. Soon the string players are actually stomping their feet and drumming on their instruments. The orchestra has been transformed into a quintessentially American ensemble, the marching band.

The finale begins with four snappy chords from the string quartet. Here Montgomery layers scraps of meaningful melodies on top of each other: excerpts from protest songs, folk songs, Puerto Rican melodies and, yes, even *The Star-Spangled Banner* itself. At one point, a full seven of these pieces sound simultaneously. Heard together, they paint a dazzling portrait of what might happen when Americans' identities collide with, complement, and shape who we are and who we ought to be. In Montgomery's words, a modern tribute to the national anthem requires no less than "acknowledging the contradictions, leaps and bounds, and milestones that allow us to celebrate and maintain the tradition of our ideals."

Instrumentation: 2 flutes (1 doubling piccolo), oboe, clarinet, bassoon, horn, trumpet, timpani, snare drum, kick drum, low tom-tom and strings

Program note by ***Emily Hogstad****.*

Ludwig van Beethoven

Born: December 16, 1770, Bonn, Germany
Died: March 26, 1827, Vienna, Austria

Symphony No. 5 in C minor, Opus 67

Premiered: December 22, 1808

The opening measures of Ludwig van Beethoven's Fifth Symphony feature the most well-known notes in classical music, and Beethoven's Fifth is certainly the most famous symphony ever written. Music so white-hot in intensity, so universal in appeal, cries out for interpretation. To some, it is Fate knocking at the door. Others see it as the triumph of reason over chaos and evil. But engaging as such interpretations are, they tell us more about the people who make them than about the music itself. The sad truth is that this music is so over-familiar that we have lost the capacity to listen to it purely as music, to comprehend it as the astonishing and original musical achievement that it is.

the music

allegro con brio. The opening of the first movement is both very simple and charged with volcanic fury: it is an assaultive beginning, as Goethe instinctively recognized. The seemingly simple four-note figure that saturates this movement will reappear in many forms throughout the symphony, shaping the main theme, generating the rhythms and pulsing insistently in the background. It even becomes the horn fanfare that announces the second theme. The torrent unleashed at the beginning is unrelenting, and this brief movement hammers to a close with the issues it has raised still unresolved.

andante con moto. Next comes a variation-form movement based on two separate themes. Violas and cellos sing the broad opening melody in A-flat major; Beethoven reportedly made eleven different versions of this theme before achieving what he wanted. The second subject, in heroic C major, blazes out in the brass, and Beethoven then alternates these two themes, varying each as the movement proceeds.

allegro. The third movement returns to the C-minor urgency of the beginning. Lower strings introduce the sinuous opening idea that curls up out of the depths, and we are back in the darkness of the first movement. But horns quickly ring out the symphony's opening motto, and this scherzo, pitched between darkness and light, never fully recovers its equilibrium. The trio, with its blistering fugal entries in the strings, subtly incorporates the symphony's opening rhythm as it proceeds. At just the point where one anticipates a return to the opening of the scherzo comes one of the most famous—and most original—moments in music.

allegro. Instead of going back, Beethoven pushes ahead. Bits of the scherzo flit quietly over an ominous pedal, and we seem to be gliding over a dark landscape as muted sunlight flickers around us through the clouds. Suddenly the final movement, a triumphant march in C major, bursts across that darkness like a shaft of golden light. At this same instant Beethoven widens his tonal palette, introducing three trombones (their first appearance ever in a symphony), contrabassoon and piccolo. The lower instruments add impressive heft to the orchestral sound, while the piccolo's slashing, silvery runs enliven much of this finale.

Near the middle of this movement Beethoven brings back some of the scherzo. It reminds us of the darkness surrounding this journey and briefly slows progress before the triumphant march bursts out again to drive the symphony to its close. The coda itself is extremely long, and the final cadence—extended almost beyond reason—is overpowering. No matter how familiar this music is, no matter how overlain it has become with extra-musical associations, the Fifth Symphony remains extraordinary music. Heard for itself, free of cultural baggage, it is as original and exciting and furious today as when it burst upon an unsuspecting audience on that cold winter night in Vienna two centuries ago.

Instrumentation: 2 flutes, piccolo, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, contrabassoon, 2 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, timpani and strings

*Program note by **Eric Bromberger**.*

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Minnesota Orchestra

Osmo Vänskä, conductor | **Kari Kriikku,** clarinet

Thursday, September 30, 2021, 11 am | Orchestra Hall
Friday, October 1, 2021, 8 pm | Orchestra Hall
Saturday, October 2, 2021, 8 pm | Orchestra Hall

Valerie Coleman
Umoja, Anthem of Unity for Orchestra — ca. 11'

Anders Hillborg
Through Lost Landscapes — ca. 13'

Kaija Saariaho
D'OM LE VRAI SENS for Clarinet and Orchestra — ca. 35'
- L'Ouïe (Hearing)
- La Vue (Sight)
- L'Odorat (Touch)
- Le Toucher (Smell)
- Le Goût (Taste)
- A mon seul désir (To my only desire)

Kari Kriikku, clarinet

I N T E R M I S S I O N — ca. 15'

Sergei Prokofiev
Selections from *Romeo and Juliet,* Ballet Music, Opus 64 — ca. 37'
- Introduction
- The Duke's Decree
- The Young Girl Juliet
- Masks
- The Knights' Dance
- The People Make Merry
- The Duel: Tybalt and Mercutio Fight
- Romeo Resolves to Avenge Mercutio's Death
- Tybalt's Funeral Cortège
- Juliet's Bedroom
- Juliet's Funeral and Death of Romeo
- The Death of Juliet

Minnesota Orchestra concerts are broadcast live on Friday evenings on stations of YourClassical Minnesota Public Radio, including KSJN 99.5 FM in the Twin Cities. The October 1 concert will also be broadcast live on Twin Cities PBS (TPT-2) and available for streaming on minnesotaorchestra.org and social media.

Osmo Vänskä, conductor

Profile appears on page 8.

Kari Kriikku, clarinet

A champion of contemporary music, Finnish clarinetist Kari Kriikku is renowned for his interpretation of virtuosic new works written for him by composers such as Michel van der Aa, Unsuk Chin, Magnus Lindberg, Kimmo Hakola, Kaija Saariaho and Jukka Tiensuu. His recent scheduled engagements include performances with the BBC Scottish Symphony, Real Orquesta Sinfonica de Sevilla, Kristiansand Symphony Orchestra and Arctic Philharmonic. In addition to touring with the Avanti! Chamber Orchestra, he takes his "Bizarre Bazaar" performances, featuring arrangements for solo clarinet and chamber orchestra of folk music ranging from Klezmer tunes to Portuguese fado and Hungarian dance, to Finland, Slovakia and Serbia. His musical inventiveness and fresh attitude towards traditional performances not only as a soloist and commissioner but also as artistic director of Avanti! Chamber Orchestra were recognized in 2009, when he was announced recipient of the prestigious Nordic Council Music Prize. More: karikriikku.com.

Sarah Hicks, host and writer

For the concert on Friday, October 1, Sarah Hicks serves as host of the Twin Cities PBS broadcast and online livestream, *This Is Minnesota Orchestra*, a role she has played over the last year. She also serves as the Minnesota Orchestra's principal conductor of Live at Orchestra Hall and has led a broad range of programs since joining the Orchestra as assistant conductor in 2006. Her notable projects here have included co-creating the Inside the Classics and Sam & Sarah series with Orchestra violist Sam Bergman; conducting a live-in-concert recording with singer-rapper Dessa; and leading many original Orchestra programs and Movies & Music concerts. More: minnesotaorchestra.org.

one-minute notes

Coleman: *Umoja*

Coleman's *Umoja*, which exists in several versions for vocal and instrumental ensembles, is a stirring anthem that draws its title from the Swahili word for "unity." The composer states: "Now more than ever, *Umoja* has to ring as a strong and beautiful anthem for the world we live in today."

Hillborg: *Through Lost Landscapes*

Hillborg's *Through Lost Landscapes* alludes to the disaster-struck state of the planet today. Its greatly varied scoring includes dense tone clusters, jazz-style piano, solo passages for soprano saxophone and haunting imitations of bird calls.

Saariaho: *D'OM LE VRAI SENS*

Saariaho's unique six-movement clarinet concerto, dedicated to this week's soloist Kari Kriikku, explores the five well-known senses and a mysterious sixth sense—possibly emotion or love—as the soloist traverses the hall in a variety of locations on and offstage.

Prokofiev: Selections from *Romeo and Juliet*

These *Romeo and Juliet* selections from Prokofiev's ballet, chosen by Osmo Vänskä in the story's chronological order rather than in one of Prokofiev's more standard concerts suites, summon vivid images, from a masked ball to a violent duel to a blissful wedding night. The somber closing music reflects the star-crossed lovers' tragic end.

Valerie Coleman

Born: 1970,
Louisville, Kentucky

Umoja, Anthem of Unity for Orchestra

Premiered: September 19, 2019

born and raised in Louisville, Kentucky, in the same neighborhood as Muhammad Ali, Valerie Coleman was introduced to classical music by her mother very early—in fact, before her birth. (Coleman's mother would often play classical music, especially Beethoven's Sixth Symphony, for her unborn child.)

By her teenage years, Coleman was composing complete symphonies and studying flute performance. Today, she is Grammy Award-nominated, was named the 2020 Classical Woman of the Year by the radio program *Performance Today* and was named one of the "Top 35 Female Composers in Classical Music" by the *Washington Post*. She has performed with numerous orchestras, is the founder of the highly influential Imani Winds ensemble, and is active as a composer, arranger, performer, educator and adjudicator. She is also the creator of the Imani Winds Chamber Festival, an annual event in New York City that brings artists from around the world together for chamber music training and performances.

a signature work with many versions

Coleman's *Umoja* first began as a work for women's choir, composed in 1997, and then revised for woodwind quintet in 1999, becoming one of the Imani Winds' signature works over the last two decades. A few years ago the Philadelphia Orchestra commissioned Coleman to expand and re-orchestrate *Umoja* for a full symphonic ensemble; the work as you hear it this weekend was premiered just two years ago on September 19, 2019.

Coleman's musical visions often stem from inspiration she finds in poetry, paintings, and biographies about unique individuals and cultures throughout history. *Umoja*, a Swahili word meaning "unity," is also the first principle of Kwanzaa—encouraging people to strive for and maintain unity in family, community, nation and race. Coleman explains: "This work is through a traditional call-and-response, and the call-and-response tradition was a way of passing on history, messages, stories, whatever it may be. As a composer, I'm a storyteller, so *Umoja* is going to take the listener on a story about unity."

Coleman's introductory note in the *Umoja* score also includes the following lyrics:

Listen my people,
Children of ALL
It's time for Unity
Hear the Winds call.

Oh a-hum, a-hum Nkosi ah.
Oh a-hum, a-hum Nkosi ah.

"the meaning of freedom and unity"

What started as a short, yet mighty anthem for choir has been expanded into a 10-minute orchestral poem that grows beautifully out of a sustained, songful introduction. Vivid patterns and rhythms dance throughout the winds and strings, and aggressive musical gestures represent conflict and clashes of injustice, racism and hate throughout history and into our modern day. Woven throughout the piece is the constant reminder of the value of unity, through gentle brass chorales and shared melodies across the ensemble.

With the orchestral arrangement, Coleman shares that this music "...honors the simple melody that ever was, but is now a full exploration into the meaning of freedom and unity. Now more than ever, *Umoja* has to ring as a strong and beautiful anthem for the world we live in today."

Instrumentation: piccolo, 2 flutes, 2 oboes, English horn, 2 clarinets, bass clarinet, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, 2 trumpets, trombone, bass trombone, tuba, timpani, snare drum, bass drum, cymbals, ride cymbal, suspended cymbal, tambourine, temple blocks, triangle, glockenspiel, vibraphone, xylophone, marimba, harp, piano and strings

Program note by ***Emma Plehal****.*

Anders Hillborg

Born: May 31, 1954, Sollentuna, Sweden

Through Lost Landscapes

Premiered: February 7, 2020

The music of Anders Hillborg, one of the leading Swedish classical composers working today, first arrived at Orchestra Hall in 2014, when Minnesota Orchestra audiences heard soprano Renée Fleming perform Hillborg's *The Strand Settings*. In September 2017 the Orchestra performed the American premiere of Hillborg's Second Violin Concerto, which was commissioned by a consortium that includes the Minnesota Orchestra. This week brings another U.S. premiere of a Hillborg work co-commissioned by the Minnesota Orchestra: *Through Lost Landscapes*.

a leading creative voice

Born in 1954 in Sollentuna, Sweden, and educated at the Royal College of Music in Stockholm, Hillborg has produced a large and varied compositional catalog across four decades that includes works for orchestra, choir and chamber combinations, as well as film scores and pop music. His music is regularly commissioned and performed by major orchestras around the world. Among the conductors he has been closely associated with is Esa-Pekka Salonen, who has conducted and commissioned a number of his works, including *Sirens*, which was jointly commissioned by the Los Angeles Philharmonic and Chicago Symphony Orchestra. In recent years Hillborg has twice been honored with the Swedish Gramophone Award for Best Classical CD of the Year for albums featuring his music.

Many of Hillborg's works bear intriguing and sometimes enigmatic titles; among his most recent works are *Sound Atlas* (2018) for orchestra, *The Breathing of the World* (2019) for choir, soprano saxophone and cello, and *Through Lost Landscapes* (2019) for orchestra. In addition, the last two years have brought concertos for cello and viola. Virtuosic parts are a calling card of his music, and some of his earlier works were at first deemed unplayable before musicians rose to the challenge.

speaking to the moment

The title *Through Lost Landscapes* has, sadly, become increasingly apt since Hillborg composed the 13-minute work two years ago. Each day seems to bring new images of desolation around the world brought by fires, floods and other natural and manmade disasters. Although this music does not follow a specific extramusical program, it alludes to the state of the planet today both through its title and its recurring haunting bird calls, among other special effects.

Through Lost Landscapes was commissioned jointly by the Minnesota Orchestra, Orquesta Sinfónica de Castilla y León, BBC Radio 3, Royal Stockholm Philharmonic and Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra, and received its world premiere in Spain in February 7, 2020, with the Orquesta Sinfónica de Castilla y Leóna performing mere weeks before COVID-19 was declared a global pandemic. It is scored for a fairly large orchestra, with the standard layout augmented by larger-than-usual wind complements, soprano saxophone and percussion instruments such as congas, guiro and two large vibraslaps.

the music in brief

The composer has endorsed program annotator Martin Anderson's summary of *Through Lost Landscapes*:

"The piece opens with what must be the grandest yet of Hillborg's clusters, supported with three huge chords, the third marked *Ecstatic*. That unleashes a hectic chase, a jazzy piano prominent in the texture. The texture begins to shimmer, with waves of color from piano and celesta in particular. Another series of massive chords, linked by rolling melodic lines, suggests the image of the forest, with tree-trunks of cathedral grandeur holding up a vast carpet of vegetation; a solo soprano saxophone emerges in a rare island of calm.

"Another chase (an echo of the monkeys in Koechlin's symphonic poem *Les bandar-log*?) initiates a never-ending downwards glissando, initiating the idea that will underlie most of the rest of the piece. A series of woodwind patterns suggests some treetop activity, an idea that becomes hard to resist when, two pages later in the score, Hillborg marks them as 'imitating bird calls.' (Whether by accident or design, these calls sound very like those of the Greater Bird-of-Paradise, *Paradisaea apoda*.) Under the cover of another glissando, the bird calls are transformed into a swift pulse, but it soon falls silent, leaving room for another passage of noisy bird calls. The shimmering waves of piano and celesta return, slowing down to allow another grandiose chord to envelope the orchestra. The Birds-of-Paradise are heard again, twice, and the music sinks gently to rest."

Instrumentation: 3 flutes (all doubling piccolo), 3 oboes, 3 clarinets, soprano saxophone, 2 bassoons, contrabassoon, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, bass drum, 3 congas, large guiro, 4 tom-toms, triangle, 2 vibraslaps, glockenspiel, crotales, chimes, piano, celesta and strings

Program note by ***Carl Schroeder****.*

Kaija Saariaho

Born: October 14, 1952, Helsinki, Finland

D'OM LE VRAI SENS for Clarinet and Orchestra

Premiered: September 8, 2010

This week's program includes not one but two works by renowned contemporary Nordic composers born in the 1950s, the latter of whom, Kaija Saariaho, is featured on a Minnesota Orchestra classical concert for the first time. (Her *Asteroid 4179: Toutatis* was part of the Orchestra's Symphony Ball in 2019.)

Saariaho has recently drawn wide acclaim, including highly favorable notices in *The New Yorker* and *The New York Times*, for the world premiere this past July of her newest opera, *Innocence*—one of the first premieres of an opera by a major composer in the COVID-19 pandemic era. It premiered at the Festival International d'Art Lyrique d'Aix-en-Provence in southern France, and future stagings are planned by the Metropolitan Opera and San Francisco Opera.

Born in 1952 in Helsinki, Saariaho studied composition in Helsinki, Freiburg and Paris, where she has lived since 1982. Although many of her works are for chamber ensembles, in the past three decades she has produced several works for larger forces, including the operas *L'Amour de Loin*, *Adriana Mater*, *Emilie* and *Only The Sound Remains*, as well as the oratorio *La Passion de Simone*, portraying the life and death of the philosopher Simone Weil. In 2003 she was awarded one of the highest honors for classical composers, the Grawemeyer Award, one of her many honors. She is also an active educator, including a recent residency at the University of California, Berkeley.

a note from the composer

The first thing to note about Saariaho's six-movement clarinet concerto, which was composed for tonight's soloist Kari Kriikku, is its unusual name: *D'OM LE VRAI SENS*. It is the composer's only composition title that is rendered in all-capital letters, and one that comes from medieval French, translating as "Man's True Sense," a phrase that has multiple meanings. Wordplay is at work here, specifically the rearranged letters of an anagram, and the composition's inspiration is complex and fascinating.

Saariaho describes her composition in this detailed program note:

"The idea of a clarinet concerto for Kari Kriikku had been going round in my mind for some years. While I was composing my second opera (*Adriana Mater*, 2006) the clarinet part began to be increasingly soloistic, and I found the instrument was speaking to me in a new way. I set about planning a concerto but did not begin actually composing it until autumn 2009.

"The form was inspired by six medieval tapestries, *The Lady and the Unicorn*, in which each tapestry depicts, with rich symbolism, the five senses and a 'sixth sense'—whatever that is (emotion? love?). I had already seen the tapestries in the Musée national du Moyen Age (the Medieval Museum) in Paris while seeking material for my first opera, *L'amour de loin*, and their richness also inspired the exhibition La Dame à Licorne I held with Raija Malka the artist in 1993.

"The tapestries are named after the five senses, and I have titled the movements of my concerto accordingly: *L'Ouïe* (Hearing), *La Vue* (Sight), *Le Toucher* (Touch), *L'Odorat* (Smell), *Le Goût* (Taste) and the ambiguous *A mon seul Désir*, which could be translated as "To my only desire." The name and subject matter of the sixth tapestry have been widely interpreted and examined. What interested me in particular was an article about the meanings hidden in the letters of the name of the sixth tapestry. One of these [an anagram of *A mon seul Désir* from a time when u and v were the same letter] is D'OM LE VRAI SENS. This is medieval French and alludes both to the senses and to the true meaning of humankind.

"All this was, of course, just the initial impetus for composition. Using the names of the different senses as the headings for the movements gave me ideas for how to handle the musical material and for the overall drama. In the first movement (***Hearing***) the calmly breathing orchestra is interrupted by a call from the clarinet. ***Sight*** opens up a more mobile landscape in which the orchestra gets into position behind the solo instrument to develop the musical motifs this supplies. ***Smell*** is color music. I associate the harmony with scent; it is immediately recognizable intuitively and the impression is too quick for thought. The clarinet languidly spreads its color over the orchestra, where it hovers, transforming as it passes from one instrument to another.

"In ***Touch*** the soloist arouses each instrumental section in turn from the pulseless, slightly dreamy state of the previous movement. This is the concerto's liveliest movement, and the most virtuosic in the traditional sense, and the clarinet and orchestra engage in a dialogical relationship. The fifth movement (***Taste***) is dominated by rough surfaces, tremolos and trills, which the clarinet serves to the orchestra around it.

"While composing the last movement [***A mon seul désir***] I experienced a sense of entering a new, intimate and timeless dimensionality. The end of a work is always the last chance to discover its quintessence. I often approach it by stripping the music down to its most ascetic elements. Here, too.

"It came as a surprise even to me that the work began to come alive in its space, and that the clarinet—itself a unicorn—plays only some of its music in the soloist's position. This appropriation of space became an inherent element of the work at the composition stage.

"D'OM LE VRAI SENS is dedicated to Kari Kriikku, whose vast experience and frequent consultations were invaluable to me in composing the solo part."

throughout the hall

Saariaho's score further directs that the solo clarinetist is to play each movement at a different position in the concert hall, with a general description to be adapted for each specific space. In the opening movement, the clarinetist "is somewhere in the hall, among the audience or behind it, not to be seen, only heard." In the second movement the clarinetist approaches the stage, while in the third, the soloist plays behind the orchestra, optionally on a podium. The fourth movement calls for the clarinetist to continue playing behind the orchestra, then approach the stage. The penultimate movement calls for the soloist to sit in the middle of the orchestra or in front, while the final movement directs the clarinetist to stand in front of the orchestra, then leave the stage. Saariaho notes that "the violin parts have also been written so that the musicians can leave their places, if wanted."

Instrumentation: 2 flutes (1 doubling piccolo and 1 doubling alto flute), 2 oboes (1 doubling English horn), 2 clarinets (1 doubling E-flat clarinet), bass clarinet, bassoon (doubling contrabassoon), 4 horns, trumpet, timpani (with cymbal), tenor drum, bass drum, 4 suspended cymbals, frame drum, guiro, mark tree, tamtam, 3 tom-toms, triangle, marimba, glockenspiel, crotales, vibraphone, chimes, glass chimes, shell chimes, wood chimes, harp, celesta and strings

Program note by ***Carl Schroeder****.*

Sergei Prokofiev

Born: April 23, 1891, Sontsovka, Russia
Died: March 5, 1953, Moscow, Russia

Selections from Romeo and Juliet, Ballet Music, Opus 64

Premiered: December 30, 1938 (complete ballet)

Late in 1934 the Kirov Theater in Leningrad approached Sergei Prokofiev with the proposal that they collaborate on a ballet based on Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. Prokofiev completed the massive score by the end of the summer of 1935, but the project came to seem nearly as star-crossed as Shakespeare's young lovers. The Kirov Ballet backed out, and the Bolshoi Theatre of Moscow took over the project. Prokofiev's first plan had been to give the story a happy ending in which Romeo would rescue Juliet before her suicide—because, as he explained, "living people can dance, the dying cannot." Fortunately, this idea was scrapped, but when the Bolshoi finally saw Prokofiev's score, they called it "undanceable" and refused to produce it.

While *Romeo and Juliet* languished in limbo, Prokofiev transformed excerpts from the ballet's 52 numbers into a series of orchestral suites. The first two suites were premiered in 1936 and 1937—thus much of the music from the ballet was familiar to audiences long before it was produced on the stage. The third suite was compiled in 1946.

a tale of woe?

The premiere of the ballet itself took place not in Russia but in Brno in 1938. Preparations for the first Russian performance brought more trouble, including a fight between Prokofiev and the choreographer, disputes with the dancers and a threatened walk-out by the orchestra. When the Russian premiere finally took place in Leningrad on January 11, 1940, it was a triumph for all involved. Still, ballerina Galina Ulanova, who danced the part of Juliet, touched on the ballet's difficult birth when she paraphrased the play's final lines in her toast to the composer after the opening performance:

> Never was a tale of greater woe,
> Than Prokofiev's music to Romeo.

For these concerts, Osmo Vänskä has opted to create his own suite rather than present one of the three assembled by Prokofiev,

because they do not follow the chronological order of the story. The 12 movements Vänskä has selected from the ballet show the plot as it unfolds—conjuring in sound, to magical effect, the characters, actions and moods of the drama.

music tender and dramatic

The ***Introduction***, set in the early morning on the quiet streets of Verona, pulls us into this tale of young love and tragedy with themes that hint at what is to come. ***The Duke's Decree***, commanding the Montagues and Capulets to put down their swords and live in peace, is expressed in grinding dissonances that alternate with quiet but eerie string chords. ***The Young Girl Juliet*** captures the girl's sprightly energy with racing violins and teasing motifs, though wistful interludes also suggest a depth to her character.

In the witty ***Masks***, Mercutio and Benvolio have talked Romeo, a fellow Montague, into crashing the ball at the Capulets, and this music accompanies their stealthy entrance. ***Dance of the Knights*** (often titled *The Montagues and the Capulets*) is one of the most famous excerpts from the ballet, forging ahead powerfully as it depicts the swagger of the rival families; its quiet central episode features several striking sounds, including a tenor saxophone solo and wispy glissandos for muted violas. ***The People Make Merry*** (also familiar as *Dance*) accompanies a scene from the ball. The violence that triggers the concluding tragedy explodes in the next three movements: Romeo and Mercutio encounter Tybalt, a Capulet, on the street; Tybalt kills Mercutio, and Romeo, once the voice of calm, becomes furious and kills Tybalt. These excerpts offer some of the most dramatic and most often heard music from the ballet. ***The Duel*** between Tybalt and Mercutio, marked *Precipitato*, is full of tense, driven music. ***Romeo Resolves to Avenge Mercutio's Death*** brings the terrific swordfight between Romeo and Tybalt, which rips along a furious perpetual motion from the violins. In ***Tybalt's Funeral Cortege***, cellos and horns sing the funeral song above rolling drums.

With ***Juliet's Bedroom*** (also known as *Romeo and Juliet before Parting*), Prokofiev depicts in extraordinarily moving music the final meeting of the young lovers, before Romeo, because he killed Tybalt, must flee Verona. When the young couple's plan goes awry, Romeo, believing Juliet dead, kills himself, represented in the soaring, intense music of ***Juliet's Funeral and Death of Romeo***, marked *Adagio funebre*. In the final scene, ***The Death of Juliet***, the heroine finds her lover dead, and distraught, she kills herself with a dagger. In the aftermath of all this tragedy, the rival families pledge to live in peace.

Instrumentation: 2 flutes, piccolo, 2 oboes, English horn, 2 clarinets, bass clarinet, tenor saxophone, 2 bassoons, contrabassoon, 6 horns, 3 trumpets, cornet, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, snare drum, bass drum, cymbals, tambourine, triangle, xylophone, chimes, 2 harps, piano (doubling celesta) and strings

Program note by ***Eric Bromberger****.*

Minnesota Orchestra

Edo de Waart, conductor | **Anthony Ross,** cello

Thursday, October 14, 2021, 11 am Orchestra Hall
Friday, October 15, 2021, 8 pm Orchestra Hall

John Adams
Tromba Lontana (Fanfare for Houston) ca. 4'

Joseph Haydn
Concerto in D major for Cello and Orchestra, H. VIIb:2 (Opus 101)* ca. 26'
- Allegro moderato
- Adagio
- Allegro

Anthony Ross, cello

I N T E R M I S S I O N ca. 20'

Antonín Dvořák
Symphony No. 8 in G major, Opus 88 ca. 36'
- Allegro con brio
- Adagio
- Allegretto grazioso
- Allegro ma non troppo

* Cadenzas composed by Jessie Montgomery, Leonard Rose and Anthony Ross.

Minnesota Orchestra concerts are broadcast live on Friday evenings on stations of YourClassical Minnesota Public Radio, including KSJN 99.5 FM in the Twin Cities.

Edo de Waart, conductor

Edo de Waart, who celebrates his 80th birthday in 2021, was the Minnesota Orchestra's music director from 1986 to 1995. He is currently the principal guest conductor of the San Diego Symphony Orchestra and recently concluded his tenure as music director of the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra, where he is now conductor laureate. In addition, he serves as the music director laureate of the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, and conductor laureate of the Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra and Antwerp Symphony Orchestra. De Waart's extensive catalogue encompasses releases for Philips, Virgin, EMI, Telarc and RCA. Recent recordings include Henderickx's Symphony No.1 and Oboe Concerto, Mahler's Symphony No.1 and Elgar's *Dream of Gerontius*, all with the Royal Flemish Philharmonic. A renowned trainer of orchestral players, he has been involved with projects working with talented young musicians at the Juilliard School, Colburn School and Music Academy of the West. More: harrisonparrott.com.

Anthony Ross, cello

Anthony Ross, now in his 34th year as a Minnesota Orchestra member, assumed the principal cello post in 1991. He has been a soloist many times with the Orchestra, performing works by Tchaikovsky, Dvořák, Walton, Brahms, Herbert, MacMillan, Beethoven, Saint-Saëns, Elgar and Shostakovich, as well as many chamber works. In 2015, he performed Schumann's Cello Concerto under the direction of the late Stanislaw Skrowaczewski—thereby becoming the final musician to perform a concerto under Skrowaczewski's baton at Orchestra Hall. An avid chamber musician, Ross is a member of Accordo, an ensemble composed of principal string players from the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra and Minnesota Orchestra. He also plays regularly with the Chamber Music Society of Minnesota and with ensembles of his Orchestra colleagues. He has performed at music festivals in the U.S. and Europe and has been a faculty member at the Grand Teton, Aspen, Madeline Island and Indiana University festivals. More: minnesotaorchestra.org.

one-minute notes

Adams: *Tromba Lontana*

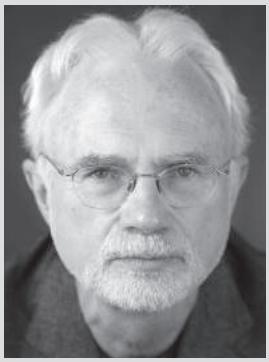
Adams grounds this fanfare in slowly-changing harmony and insistently pulsating rhythms, creating an ethereal, contemplative fanfare, not a blazing one.

Haydn: Cello Concerto in D major

Composed intentionally to showcase the tone and technique of its soloist, Haydn's Cello Concerto in D major is classic in style and leisurely to listen to, even while the cello part is exceedingly difficult and truly virtuosic.

Dvořák: Symphony No. 8

Dvořák's Eighth is full of luminous melodies and unexpected harmonic shifts. The second movement alludes to the funeral march of Beethoven's *Eroica* Symphony, but lighter elements prevail in a whirlwind finale that is delightfully Czech.



John Adams

Born: February 15, 1947, Worcester, Massachusetts

Tromba Lontana (Fanfare for Houston)

Premiered: April 4, 1986

Though he was born in New England and educated at Harvard, John Adams has made his career on the West Coast. He moved to California at age 24 and has since been affiliated with several of the state's major music institutions, teaching for ten years at the San Francisco Conservatory, serving as composer in residence with the San Francisco Symphony and, since 2009, holding the position of Creative Chair with the Los Angeles Philharmonic. He raised his family there and does much of his composing at an isolated retreat on the Pacific slope surrounded by redwoods.

a subdued fanfare

In 1986, while Adams was at work on one of his most famous compositions, the opera *Nixon in China*, he was invited to participate in the Houston Symphony Orchestra's project to commission composers from around the country to write fanfares in celebration of the Texas Sesquicentennial. For the most part, these fanfares were what we expect of celebration music: festive, upbeat and very loud.

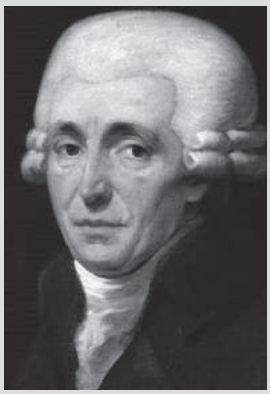
But the music Adams wrote was so completely different that it might almost be called an anti-fanfare. Adams' performance marking is *Tranquillo*, and the dynamic remains subdued throughout, rarely rising above *mezzo forte*. This fanfare is less a jumbo, Texas-size eruption of sound than it is a message from a gossamer place.

Adams titled this music *Tromba Lontana* (Italian for "A Distant Trumpet"), though actually there are two trumpets here, set at opposite sides of the stage. Against the backdrop of the orchestra's sparkling, flickering textures, these two trumpets sound a series of delicate, distant calls. These arc up and fall back, and sometimes—sounding antiphonally across the stage—they interweave precisely. Adams creates the very particular sound of this music by writing for an unusual orchestra. He eliminates a number of low instruments—bassoons, trombones, tuba and timpani—to emphasize the sound of instruments that are high, light and clear: glockenspiel, flutes, piccolos, oboes, piano and harp.

Tromba Lontana makes us re-consider the entire conception of a fanfare, as—over its four-minute span—the distant trumpeters dance lightly above these glistening sounds and finally fade into silence.

Instrumentation: 2 flutes, 2 piccolos, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, suspended cymbal, crotales, glockenspiel, vibraphone, harp, piano and strings

Program note by ***Eric Bromberger****.*



Joseph Haydn

Born: March 31, 1732, Rohrau, Austria
Died: May 31, 1809, Vienna, Austria

Concerto in D major for Cello and Orchestra, H. VIIb:2 (Opus 101)

Composed: 1783

Imagine the frustration of residing not much further from Vienna than Forest Lake is from Minneapolis, but seldom being able to get to the big city, especially when Mozart was making music there. That was Joseph Haydn's plight across the many years, beginning in 1761, that he served the princely Esterházy family.

These noblemen of Esterházy, mad for waterfowl hunting as well as for music, maintained a palatial estate near the shallow lakes and wetlands to the southeast of Vienna. What today is only an hour's drive or so was a back-crunching journey by coach in Haydn's time, and though he was hardly a complainer, Haydn lamented his distance from the musical capital. Trips to Vienna were all too infrequent for this great progenitor of the Viennese Classical style. But the castle at Esterházy and its industrious Kapellmeister had something any composer would covet—a musical establishment which functioned as a laboratory for his works, with many fine players to perform them and a resident audience to applaud.

the composer's pupil

The cellist for whom Haydn composed his D-major Cello Concerto in 1783 possessed a formidable technique. He was Anton Kraft (1752-1820), son of a Czech brewer. Haydn himself had appointed him to his chair in the Esterházy orchestra. Kraft was also a gifted composer and pupil of Haydn, until he showed so much zest for his composition lessons that he began to neglect

his instrument. At that point, Haydn called a halt to the studies, declaring that Kraft already knew enough.

Kraft's intonation on cello was so precise, and his playing so expressive, that Haydn would not risk losing him from the orchestra. That Kraft had full command of the difficult upper registers is certain from the terrain into which the D-major concerto written for him continually soars. It is one of three extant Haydn cello concertos. Sad to say, Haydn probably wrote six or seven, but some are lost.

For many years the authenticity of this concerto was in doubt, for it had been erroneously ascribed to Kraft himself. The myth was perpetuated by Kraft's son Nicolaus, also a virtuoso and a member of the quartet, patronized by Prince Lichnowsky, that played the first performances of many Beethoven works. The rediscovery of Haydn's original manuscript in Vienna in 1961 removed all doubts about the concerto's authorship.

the music

allegro moderato. A consummate example of high Classicism, the opening *Allegro moderato* reflects the mutual influences between Haydn and Mozart. It also sets the tone of the work: depth without emotional self-indulgence, grace without frills. The tutti—in which all voices sound together—introduces mellifluous themes that stride with confidence. Once on the scene, the soloist takes charge, uncontested.

adagio. Cello and first violins unite in the mellow thirds of the *Adagio*, whose disarmingly simple theme is impeccable in its proportions.

rondo (allegro). Again with the violins as partners, the solo cello delivers the genial tune of the rondo finale, cast in gigue-time but dancing with more elegance than snap.

Many eminent cellists have provided cadenzas for this concerto, among them Emanuel Feuermann, and contemporary players often concoct their own. At these performances, the Minnesota Orchestra's Principal Cello Anthony Ross plays cadenzas by Jessie Montgomery in the first two movements, plus a cadenza in the final movement that combines material from Leonard Rose and Ross himself.

Instrumentation: solo cello with orchestra comprising 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 horns and strings

*Program note by **Mary Ann Feldman**.*

Antonín Dvořák

Born: September 8, 1841, Nelahozeves, Bohemia (now Czechia)
Died: May 1, 1904, Prague

Symphony No. 8 in G major, Opus 88

Premiered: February 2, 1890

In the summer of 1889, Antonín Dvořák took his family to their summer retreat at Vysoka in the countryside south of Prague. There, amid the rolling fields and forests of his homeland, he could escape the pressures of the concert season, enjoy the company of his wife and children, and indulge one of his favorite pastimes: raising pigeons.

"melodies pour out of me"

Dvořák also composed a great deal that summer. On August 10 he completed his Piano Quartet in E-flat major, writing to a friend that "melodies pour out of me," and lamenting: "If only one could write them down straight away! But there—I must go slowly, only keep pace with my hand, and may God give the rest."

A few weeks later, on August 25, he made the first sketches for a new symphony, and once again the melodies poured out: he began the actual composition on September 6, and on the 13th the first movement was done. The second movement took three days, the third a single day, and by September 23 the entire symphony had been sketched. The orchestration was completed on November 8, and Dvořák himself led the triumphant premiere of his Eighth Symphony in Prague on February 2, 1890. From the time Dvořák had sat down before a sheet of blank paper to the completion of the full score, only 75 days had passed.

the music

allegro con brio. "Symphony in G major," says the title page, but the beginning of this work is firmly in the "wrong" key of G minor, and this is only the first of many harmonic surprises. It is also a gorgeous beginning, with the cellos singing their long wistful melody. But—another surprise—this theme will have little to do with the actual progress of the first movement. We soon arrive at what appears to be the true first subject, a flute theme of an almost pastoral innocence (commentators appear unable to resist describing this theme as "birdlike"), and suddenly we have slipped into G major. There follows a wealth of themes; one observer counted six separate ideas in the opening minutes of this

symphony. Dvořák develops these across the span of the opening movement, and the cellos' somber opening melody returns at key moments, beginning the development quietly and then being blazed out triumphantly by the trumpets at the stirring climax.

adagio. The two middle movements are just as free. The *Adagio* is apparently in C minor, but it begins in E-flat major with dark and halting string phrases; the middle section flows easily on a relaxed woodwind tune in C major in which some have heard the sound of cimbalom and a village band. A violin solo leads to a surprisingly violent climax before the movement falls away to its quiet close.

allegretto grazioso. The third movement opens with a soaring waltz in G minor that dances nimbly along its 3/8 meter; the charming center section also whirls in 3/8 time, but here its dotted rhythms produce a distinctive lilt. The movement concludes with nice surprises: a blistering coda, *Molto vivace*, whips along a variant of the lilting center section tune, but Dvořák has now transformed its triple meter into a propulsive 2/4. The movement rushes on chattering woodwinds right up to its close, where it concludes suddenly with a hushed string chord.

allegro ma non troppo. The finale is a variation movement—sort of. It opens with a stinging trumpet fanfare, an afterthought on Dvořák's part, added after the rest of the movement was complete. Cellos announce the noble central theme (itself derived from the flute theme of the first movement), and a series of variations follows, including a spirited episode for solo flute. But suddenly the variations vanish: Dvořák throws in an exotic Turkish march full of rhythmic energy, a completely separate episode that rises to a great climax based on the ringing trumpet fanfare from the opening. Gradually things calm down, and the variations resume as if this turbulent storm had never blown through. Near the end comes lovely writing for strings, and a raucous, joyous coda—a final variation of the main theme—propels this symphony to its rousing close.

Instrumentation: 2 flutes (1 doubling piccolo), 2 oboes (1 doubling English horn), 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani and strings

*Program note by **Eric Bromberger**.*

November Concerts

MINNESOTA ORCHESTRA

Osmo Vänskä // MUSIC DIRECTOR

MARVEL STUDIOS' BLACK PANTHER WITH THE MINNESOTA ORCHESTRA

NOV 5-6

Sarah Hicks, conductor

SLOBODENIOUK CONDUCTS BRAHMS

NOV 12-13

Dima Slobodeniouk, conductor
Sasha Cooke, mezzo

VALČUHA CONDUCTS BEETHOVEN'S NINTH

NOV 18-20

Juraj Valčuha, conductor
Melody Moore, soprano
Kelley O'Connor, mezzo
Sean Panikkar, tenor
Mark S. Doss, bass-baritone
Minnesota Chorale

DISNEY AND PIXAR'S TOY STORY IN CONCERT WITH THE MINNESOTA ORCHESTRA

NOV 27-28

Sarah Hicks, conductor

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Minnesota Orchestra

Osmo Vänskä, conductor **| Lisa Batiashvili,** violin

Thursday, October 21, 2021, 11 am | Orchestra Hall
Friday, October 22, 2021, 8 pm | Orchestra Hall

Donghoon Shin
The Hunter's Funeral — ca. 10'
[in two untitled movements]

Karol Szymanowski
Concerto No. 1 for Violin and Orchestra, Opus 35 — ca. 25'
[in one movement]
Lisa Batiashvili, violin

I N T E R M I S S I O N — ca. 20'

Carl Nielsen
Symphony No. 4, Opus 29, *The Inextinguishable* — ca. 36'
[in one movement]

Minnesota Orchestra concerts are broadcast live on Friday evenings on stations of YourClassical Minnesota Public Radio, including KSJN 99.5 FM in the Twin Cities.

Osmo Vänskä, conductor

Profile appears on page 8.

Lisa Batiashvili, violin

Georgian-born German violinist Lisa Batiashvili is the artistic director of Audi Summer Concerts in Ingolstadt, Germany. For the 2020 season, she originally designed a program to celebrate the festival's 30th anniversary year, as well as Beethoven's 250th birthday under the motto "Lights of Europe." Due to the global pandemic, an adjusted version with streamed concerts under the motto "Together for Music" featured Batiashvili and other leading musicians, sending out a strong message of solidarity and adaptability. Batiashvili regularly appears on stage with orchestras including the Berlin Philharmonic, London Symphony Orchestra, Vienna Philharmonic, New York Philharmonic, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Symphonieorchester des Bayerischen Rundfunks, Staatskapelle Dresden, Orchestra dell'Accademia Nazionale di Santa and Boston Symphony Orchestra, among others. Recording exclusively for Deutsche Grammophon, her latest album *City Lights* was released in June 2020. The project marks a musical journey that takes listeners around the world to eleven cities with an autobiographical connection and music ranging from Bach to Morricone, and Dvořák to Charlie Chaplin. More: harrisonparrott.com.

one-minute notes

Shin: *The Hunter's Funeral*

This contemporary work was inspired by an 1890 woodcut of animals carrying the coffin of a hunter. The music gradually changes color from bright to dark, with the dance-like opening full of energy before the emergence of a slower funeral march in which, by the end, melodies become obsolete amid undulating, vanishing strings.

Szymanowski: Violin Concerto No. 1

The First Violin Concerto of Szymanowski is a work of passion and lyricism. Its single movement opens with brilliant flashes of sound, then continues with hints of humor and extended passages of joyful, carefree song.

Nielsen: Symphony No. 4, *The Inextinguishable*

Nielsen's Fourth Symphony captures the essence of the human spirit and its capacity for endurance and resilience in a single movement that moves through plaintive melodies, turbulent storms and brilliant light.

Donghoon Shin

Born: 1983, Seoul, South Korea

The Hunter's Funeral

Premiered: June 21, 2017

The history of creative arts is rich with cross-pollination: composers, poets, dancers, painters and creators in other disciplines often find inspiration from one another's works. In the subset of orchestral music inspired by visual arts, the most well-known example may be Maurice Ravel's orchestration of Modest Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*, whose movements are based on the drawings and watercolors of Viktor Hartmann.

A less common but intriguing scenario arises when a single work of visual art inspires multiple composers to create their own very different musical responses, sometimes across generations and genres. Van Gogh's famous painting *The Starry Night* provoked orchestral works by classical composers Henri Dutilleux and Einojuhani Rautavaara as well as the song *Vincent (Starry Starry Night)* from folk-rock singer-songwriter Don McLean, showing that there can be multiple ways to "hear" a work of visual art. Today's program showcases another example (possibly) along these lines with the U.S. premiere of *The Hunter's Funeral* by contemporary London-based South Korean composer Donghoon Shin—who was inspired by a 19th-century woodcut that may also have caught the eye of Gustav Mahler over a century ago.

a fast-rising career

Shin, who was recently named winner of the prestigious Claudio Abbado Prize, has developed a close rapport with Minnesota Orchestra Music Director Osmo Vänskä, who this week brings Shin's music to Orchestra Hall for the first time. Vänskä is also music director of the Seoul Philharmonic Orchestra, and he has conducted Shin's music with that ensemble as well as with the Helsinki Philharmonic.

Although Shin is still pursuing his Ph.D. studying with Sir George Benjamin at the King's College London, his international career is already flourishing, with commissions and performances coming from the London Symphony Orchestra, Philharmonia Orchestra, Helsinki Philharmonic, Karajan Academy of the Berlin Philharmonic and Spanish National Orchestra. His upcoming projects including a co-commission from the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Seoul Philharmonic Orchestra and Bamberg Symphony Orchestra, slated for its initial performances in 2022 and 2023. In May 2022 his Concerto for Cello and Orchestra will be premiered at a gala concert to mark the 50th anniversary of the Karajan Academy of the Berlin Philharmonic.

Shin pursued his earlier studies in composition at Seoul National University with Sukhi Kang and Uzong Choe, and with Julian Anderson at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. His other mentors have included Peter Eötvös and Unsuk Chin, the latter of whom will have two works performed by the Minnesota Orchestra this season: *subito con forza* in October and *Frontispiece* next February.

Shin's recent works include *Of Rats and Men* for chamber orchestra, commissioned and premiered by the Karajan Academy of the Berliner Philharmoniker under the direction of Peter Eötvös, and *Kafka's Dream* for the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by François-Xavier Roth.

notes from the composer

The Hunter's Funeral is another fairly recent composition of Shin's, receiving its premiere performance on June 21, 2017, with Patrick Bailey conducting the Philharmonia Orchestra at Royal Festival Hall in London. Spanning ten minutes, it is scored for 12 players: two winds, two brass, harp, piano, an array of percussion instruments (including the special effect of crotales played on timpani); and one representative from each of the orchestra's five string sections. Shin offers the following comments on the composition's origins, form and connections to other works of art:

"For a long time, I have been fascinated by different types of funeral march music in diverse cultures. What intrigues me is the irony in this specific genre. Melody and harmony in minor keys express sorrow and remorse while a rhythmic feature repeats itself underneath, evoking slow dance music. Many composers were interested in this irony. For instance, in the third movement of Gustav Mahler's Symphony No. 1, what starts as funeral music turns into a sarcastic dance. According to the Mahler scholar Constantin Floros, Moritz von Schwind's woodcut 'The Hunter's Funeral' (1890) was possibly the inspiration for this music.

"*The Hunter's Funeral*, scored for 12 players, is my response to the same woodcut. It depicts animals carrying a coffin of a hunter in a solemn march. This paradoxical scene gave me a strong inspiration for the piece. It starts with a very simple and rather mundane pitch cell, C-D-E-F. The harmony structure and the melodies in the piece are all derived from the simple pitch cell, which gradually changes colour from bright to dark.

"The music is divided into two movements with no gap in

between. The first movement has a fast and rhythmic feature like dance music—groovy, sharp and energetic. The tempo of the dance music gets slower and a funeral march emerges in the second movement. Over the repetitive rhythm of the strings, the melodies in the woodwinds and the brass dominate the movement. In the final section, the melodies become heterophonic and eventually obsolete."

Instrumentation: flute (doubling piccolo), clarinet, horn, trumpet, snare drum, bass drum, suspended cymbal, 2 bongo drums, 2 congas, hi-hat, glockenspiel, vibraphone, marimba, crotales on timpani, harp, piano, 2 violins, viola, cello and bass

Program note by ***Carl Schroeder****.*

Karol Szymanowski

Born: October 3, 1882, Tymoszówka, Ukraine
Died: March 29, 1937, Lausanne, Switzerland

Concerto No. 1 for Violin and Orchestra, Opus 35

Premiered: November 1, 1922

If Edward Elgar's Violin Concerto is in spirit the last of the great 19th-century examples of the genre (its actual calendar date is 1910), Karol Szymanowski's Violin Concerto No. 1, written in 1915-16, is the first in an amazing series of truly 20th-century violin concertos that would, over the next 25 years, come to include masterpieces by Stravinsky, Berg, Prokofiev, Sessions, Schoenberg, Bartók, Bloch, Barber, Britten, Hindemith, Piston, Walton and Hartmann among others—not to forget Szymanowski's own Second Violin Concerto of 1932.

The voice behind Szymanowski's two concertos is that of Paweł Kochański, fiery and sweet-toned virtuoso, and one of the most admired violinists in a brilliant time. The plan was for Kochański, who wrote the cadenza for Szymanowski's First Violin Concerto and to whom the work is dedicated, to give the first performance in St. Petersburg at the end of 1917, but the Russian Revolution got in the way. The premiere finally took place in Warsaw on November 1, 1922, with Józef Ozimiński as soloist and Grzegorz Fitelberg conducting.

Szymanowski was a member of an interestingly lively and talent-filled family. He studied first with his father, who played cello and piano, and with another musical relative, Gustav Neuhaus, but it was really in the course of travel, independent study and quite simply experience that his true education began. He had been brought up on the three B's plus Chopin and, surprisingly for so conservative an environment, Scriabin. Now his horizons expanded to embrace Wagner, Strauss and Reger, then Debussy and Ravel, eventually and crucially Stravinsky, whose *Firebird* and *Petrushka* he saw in their original productions by Sergei Diaghilev, about whom he wrote the first serious articles in Polish, and who became a friend as well.

a language all his own

Szymanowski's music moved away from German Romanticism to become—what? To say "more French" would be both true but also too limiting, for what he wrote, in words as well as music, more and more reflected his contacts with cultures removed in time and place from 20th-century Europe. He had made long journeys through Sicily, with its evocative remnants of the Greek and Byzantine worlds, and through North Africa. He read the Greek classics, Plato and histories of the Byzantine, Islamic, Roman and early Christian worlds. Admiring Bartók and what he was doing for and with Hungarian music, Szymanowski began to study and imaginatively to utilize Polish folk music.

In sum, Szymanowski drew on many sources, but fused them into a colorful, malleable language all his own. The *Myths, Songs of a Fairy Tale Princess, The Song of the Night* (Symphony No. 3), the Violin Concerto No. 1, the opera *King Roger* and the *Stabat Mater*, to name just a handful of the most important scores, amount to a legacy of unusual diversity, imposing originality and expressive strength.

the concerto: a poem

Szymanowski cast his First Violin Concerto as a single movement of about 23 minutes' duration. The analytical ear and eye readily enough distinguish different sections and the recurrences of certain ideas, but what the spontaneous listening ear responds to is the seamless, self-generating flow. (In what might seem paradoxical, violinist and conductor must be fully aware of the former in order to create the impression of the latter.)

The dominant impression is that of an intensely lyric, enchantingly colorful music that is in constant flux. The work is as much a poem as it is a concerto, being in fact based on a rhapsody, *Summer Night*, by one of the composer's literary contemporaries, Tadeusz Miciński. *Summer Night* is a feast of fantastical images—donkeys in crowns settled majestically on the grass, fireflies kissing the wild rose, and many birds—and it is not surprising that the sounds often come close to those in Bartók's haunting "night musics," such as we find in works from the piano suite *Out of Doors* to the Third Piano Concerto.

Christopher Palmer has vividly described the opening in his Szymanowski monograph for the *BBC Music Guides*: "Its fantastic little dashes and flashes of sound, bitonally propelled, fluttering and dancing like a thousand tiny fires, suggest endless parallels, musical and otherwise: a distant fireworks display; a *pointillist* canvas; an imperial Fabergé jewel aglitter with sequins; César Franck's wonderful definition of the nervous appeal of Debussy's music as 'de la musique sur la pointe des aiguilles,' music on needlepoints."

When Szymanowski first actually heard this music in rehearsal in Warsaw he was thrilled and wrote to Kochański: "The sound is so magical that people here were completely transfixed. And just imagine, Paweleczka, *the violin is continually on top*." With the magic of the fireflies goes the ecstasy of lyric song. The concerto is a work of white-hot passion, set in a magical landscape inhabited by, among others, the figure of Pan, part humorous, part threatening, whom Szymanowski invokes so wonderfully in the third of the Myths. Szymanowski said that the true national music of his country was not "the stiffened ghost of the polonaise or mazurka, nor a fugue on the *Chmielu wedding* song…but the solitary, joyful, carefree song of the nightingale in a fragrant night in Poland." In this concerto, he set that ecstatic song down for us to share.

Instrumentation: solo violin with orchestra comprising 3 flutes (1 doubling piccolo), 3 oboes (1 doubling English horn), 3 clarinets (1 doubling E-flat clarinet), bass clarinet, 3 bassoons (1 doubling contrabassoon), 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, bass tuba, timpani, triangle, tambourine, snare drum, cymbals, bass drum, glockenspiel, celesta, piano, two harps and strings

Excerpted from a program note by the late ***Michael Steinberg****, used with permission.*

Carl Nielsen

Born: June 9, 1865, Sortelung, Denmark
Died: October 3, 1931, Copenhagen, Denmark

Symphony No. 4, Opus 29, *The Inextinguishable*

Premiered: February 1, 1916

Although Carl Nielsen composed in nearly every form, including opera and chamber music, he was first and foremost a symphonist. In 1914 he stepped down from his post as conductor of the Royal Opera in Copenhagen. As he continued to teach and assist in the governance of the Copenhagen Conservatory, he also applied himself to a new symphony, his fourth, which he called *Det Undslukkelige* (The Inextinguishable).

The Fourth Symphony's subject is the human spirit, and what he deals with is the human capacity for endurance, for survival. As he began to draft a work intended to flow in one great movement—"in a single stream," he stressed, when he spoke of his concept: "I have an idea for a new work, which has no program, but will express what we understand as zest for life or expressions of life; that is, everything that moves, that desires life, which can be called neither good nor bad, high nor low, big nor small, but only 'that which is life' or 'that which desires life'…"

a disintegrating world

The Fourth Symphony evolved between 1914 and 1916, turbulent years in which, Nielsen observed, "the whole world is disintegrating," and "national feeling, which hitherto was regarded as something lofty and beautiful, has become like a spiritual syphilis that has devoured the brains, and it grins out through the empty eye sockets with moronic hate."

It was a time of inexorable change. The world would never be the same, and the Romanticism of the nineteenth century disintegrated. Such turmoil in the atmosphere bred Nielsen's boldest work, a score reflecting both political tensions and his own personal strife. He had just resigned from his conducting post, unable to deal with the administrative harassment that spoiled his love for his work. But also his marriage to the sculptor Anne Marie Brodersen seemed to be falling apart, though their union was salvaged after all. In such stressful times—and you will sense their impact as the symphony gets underway—he managed to complete his Opus 29 by January 14, 1916.

Born the seventh son of a house painter and village fiddler, Nielsen absorbed the local folk tunes and dances, and by age 14 he became a bugler in the local regimental band. The mature Nielsen was faithful to melody as he tried to function within the conservatism of his time and place. It was a struggle, for his impulses were those of a modernist and highly independent artist, and while his efforts ultimately were rewarded with laurels from his country, he remarked in a 65th birthday interview that if he had to do it all over again, he would have sold butter and eggs instead.

Like Sibelius, the aging Nielsen witnessed in some bewilderment the rapid disintegration of the old systems. However, his belief in the viability of the symphony in this century never wavered and he implicitly delivers this credo in the Symphony No. 4 in a grandly original way. He proceeds like a born symphonist who once had been under the spell of Brahms, for he constructs his mighty work from concise motifs, the traditional building blocks of the musical architect. The symphony is technically in one uninterrupted movement, but the four large sections of this cyclical score are linked dramatically as well as thematically, as they unravel a tonal destiny which proceeds from the starting point of D minor to the triumphant E major of the close.

the music: not a moment to waste

At the *Allegro*'s start, not a moment is wasted in plunging us into the fray. The symphony seems to start right in the middle of things, with a plaintive motive from the winds centered around D, while the strings hold fast to their own subject, with C at its core. A combative spirit drives the symphony to a swift crescendo. Countering this violence, a second group of themes, of a lyric cast, brings an outpouring of melody. Chief among these attractive themes is a strain calmly flowing from the clarinets. Mark it well, for this subject, in constant permutations, makes a resplendent return before the close.

From early on, the timpani asserts itself with threatening force, prophetic of the stellar role it will play in the finale. A substantial development gathers momentum to unleash a violent storm. In the long stretch to the reprise the dissonant clouds seem to recede. The second theme group returns in even grander terms, and in the twilight moments of the opening section first violins forge a link to the next, underlaid by the rhythmic beating of the timpani.

A quiet, more rational interlude focuses on two chief ideas: first a low-keyed dance tune, genial rather than exuberant, and later a sudden cry from the violins, whose arioso, drawn in a long, taut line, is underlaid by the throbbing timpani. The contrapuntal texture of Nielsen's most austere thoughts grows increasingly dense, and a mighty crescendo absorbs the entire orchestra. After quieter gestures, the violins suddenly spin to life in a brilliant passage that makes way for the final *Allegro*.

Dealing with the complex subject of tonal structure in Nielsen symphonies, Harald Krebs points out that the most astonishing example of final resolution in his works occurs in the Fourth Symphony. The composer's basic strategy is to introduce ever more obvious references to material from the beginning of the work, but outside the chosen final key of E; ultimately he resolves these reminiscences, as well as the finale's own subjects, in the predestined key of E.

High drama reigns in this finale, as an angry theme shatters its grandeur and a formidable presence intrudes—a second pair of timpani. In a footnote, Nielsen instructs both timpanists to project a menacing tone, not only in the hail of their salvos but even when they are playing quietly. Impending chaos intensifies the core of the movement, whose fate, however, turns out to be triumph after all, compressed into the great lyric theme that has never strayed far.

Writing for the London *Times*, a reviewer summed up the impact of this work after Nielsen led a Queen's Hall performance in 1923: "The whole frame of the symphony quivers with a vigor which propels it from the beginning to the end of a vast and impassioned musical sentence."

Instrumentation: 3 flutes (1 doubling piccolo), 3 oboes, 3 clarinets, 3 bassoons (1 doubling contrabassoon), 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, 2 sets of timpani and strings

Program note by ***Mary Ann Feldman****.*

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WELCOME BACK!

Welcome back, everyone, and an especially warm greeting to the generous Minnesota Orchestra donors who made all the difference in this past "season like no other." Because of you, the community of listeners and viewers expanded with large new audiences buoyed during the pandemic by the broadcast, livestream and on-demand concerts. Thank you!

The Orchestra and Osmo Vänskä are set this season to take you to several musical mountaintops–the January Sibelius Festival and two Mahler symphonies, to name a few. The vistas will be thrilling, further evidence of the uniquely powerful accomplishments of these artists.

At the start of this history-making season, Osmo's final as Music Director, we have exciting news to share. **Longtime supporter Louise Leatherdale has pledged $1 million to celebrate Osmo's legacy and to support the spectacular concerts, guest artists and special projects in his final season. The Minnesota Orchestra is launching a $1 million campaign with the goal of matching Louise's generous lead gift with contributions from the community to build a total of $2 million to honor Osmo.**

You can play a part! Join donors everywhere in making a tribute gift to honor and support Osmo in his final season as Music Director. Every audience member, any amount – we're looking for an outpouring of community-wide support in gratitude and recognition of Osmo's visionary leadership. **Make your gift at minnesotaorchestra.org/donate.**

Also, throughout the season, we will seek and share your memories of the outstanding Osmo-led concerts you've enjoyed. And look forward to Osmo's successor, whom we anticipate announcing in mid-2022.

Thank you!

Brian Newhouse
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