

jun 1, 2

Park and Ainomäe Play Brahms

Minnesota Orchestra
Andrew Manze, conductor
Susie Park, violin | Silver Ainomäe, cello

Thursday, June 1, 2023, 11 am | Orchestra Hall
Friday, June 2, 2023, 8 pm | Orchestra Hall

Johannes Brahms

Concerto in A minor for Violin, Cello and Orchestra
Opus 102 (Double Concerto)
Allegro
Andante
Vivace non troppo
Susie Park, violin
Silver Ainomäe, cello

ca. 31'

I N T E R M I S S I O N

ca. 20'

Eleanor Alberga

Tower

ca. 10'

Dmitri Shostakovich

Symphony No. 1 in F minor, Opus 10
Allegretto – Allegro non troppo
Allegro
Lento
Allegro molto – Lento
[There is no pause before the final movement.]

ca. 28'

pre-concert

Concert Preview with Phillip Gainsley and guests
Thursday, June 1, 10:15 am, Auditorium
Friday, June 2, 7:15 pm, Target Atrium

thank you

This concert is co-sponsored by Trudi Anderson and Joseph Green and Margee and Will Bracken.

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.





Andrew Manze, conductor

Andrew Manze—welcomed for his debut with the Minnesota Orchestra in these concerts—is widely celebrated as one of the most stimulating and inspirational conductors of his generation. He has been chief conductor of the NDR Radio-philharmonie in Hanover, Germany, since 2014, and this season takes the ensemble on a tour to Japan. Since 2018 he has been principal guest conductor of the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic. A leading specialist of historical performance practice, Manze became associate director of the Academy of Ancient Music in 1996 and from 2003 to 2007 served as artistic director of the English Concert. From 2006 to 2014 he was principal conductor and artistic director of the Helsingborg Symphony Orchestra; he is now its honorary conductor. As a guest conductor, he has long-standing relationships with many leading orchestras and is a regular guest at the Mostly Mozart Festival in New York City. Highlights of his 2022-23 schedule include his operatic debut with the Bayerische Staatsoper in Munich, conducting performances of Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* alongside Schoenberg's *Erwartung*, as well as engagements with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra, Dresden Philharmonic and Atlanta Symphony. His numerous recordings as both a violinist and conductor have garnered acclaim. More: intermusica.com, andrewmanze.com.



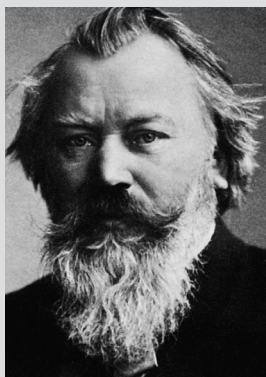
Susie Park, violin

Australian-born Susie Park became the Minnesota Orchestra's first associate concertmaster in 2015. Since her appointment, she has been featured as soloist with the Orchestra in Bach's Brandenburg Concertos No. 2 and 4, Barber's Violin Concerto and at numerous Young People's Concerts. She has performed solos around the world with European orchestras such as the Vienna Symphony, Orchestre de Lille and Royal Philharmonic; with American orchestras including the Pittsburgh, San Francisco, Indianapolis and Memphis symphony orchestras and the Orchestra of St. Luke's; the major symphony orchestras of Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, Tasmania, Canberra and Perth; Korea's KBS Orchestra; and Orchestra Wellington in New Zealand. A dedicated chamber musician, Park was the violinist of the Eroica Trio from 2006 to 2012, touring internationally and recording the ensemble's eighth album featuring all-American repertoire that was nominated for a Grammy. She is also a founding member of ECCO, the East Coast Chamber Orchestra. In addition to her numerous awards, Park has won top honors at some of the world's most prestigious violin competitions including the International Violin Competition of Indianapolis, the Wieniawski Competition in Poland and the Yehudi Menuhin International Competition in France. More: minnesotaorchestra.org.



Silver Ainomäe, cello

Silver Ainomäe has been the Minnesota Orchestra's associate principal cello since 2016, following seven seasons as principal cello of the Colorado Symphony. He has also appeared as guest principal with the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Baltimore Symphony, Philharmonia Orchestra, Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra and Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra. He has performed in more than 30 countries as a soloist, chamber and orchestral musician; his solo debut came in 2000 with the Estonian National Symphony Orchestra. He has since performed concertos with Finnish Radio Orchestra, Zürich Chamber Orchestra, Tallinn Chamber Orchestra, Polish Radio Orchestra, Tapiola Sinfonietta and Colorado Symphony under conductors such as Paavo Järvi, Andrew Litton, Marin Alsop and Claus-Peter Flor. An active chamber musician and educator, he has performed and taught at the most prominent festivals in Finland, Estonia, Switzerland, Greece, Germany and the United Kingdom. Ainomäe was born in Tallinn, Estonia, and in 1990 his family migrated from Estonia to Finland. At the age of 12, he was accepted to the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki and then went on to attend London's Guildhall School of Music and Drama and Razumovsky Academy. He has been awarded multiple prizes and awards at competitions worldwide including the Isang Yun, Lutosławski and Paulo competitions. More: minnesotaorchestra.org.



Johannes Brahms

Born: May 7, 1833,
Hamburg, Germany

Died: April 7, 1897,
Vienna, Austria

Concerto for Violin and Cello in A minor, Opus 102 (Double Concerto)

Premiered: September 23, 1887 (private premiere); October 18, 1887 (public premiere)

“I have had the amusing idea of writing a concerto for violin and cello...If it is at all successful, it might give us some fun,” wrote Johannes Brahms to Clara Schumann in the summer of 1887. The lighthearted tone of Brahms’ letter notwithstanding, the genesis of the Double Concerto for Violin and Cello grew from a painful loss: Brahms’ years-long estrangement from his longtime friend and colleague, violinist Joseph Joachim. At the time Brahms wrote this letter to Clara, he and Joachim had not spoken for seven years, ever since Joachim’s messy and public divorce from his wife Amalie in 1880. At the time, Brahms sided with Amalie, testifying on her behalf in court. Stung, Joachim severed all contact.

a vital friendship

Without Joachim, Brahms’ life, both musically and personally, would have been vastly different, and likely far less successful. The two men met in Hanover in 1853, when Brahms was an unknown 20-year-old from Hamburg. It was Joachim who

introduced Brahms to Robert Schumann; he also facilitated the first meeting between Brahms and Franz Liszt, who became an important musical influence on the young composer.

Today, Joachim is primarily remembered for his accomplishments as a violinist and violin pedagogue, but during his lifetime he was equally well known as a conductor and composer. It was Joachim who gave the premiere of Brahms’ Violin Concerto (Brahms consulted with Joachim on certain technical aspects of violin playing during the course of its composition), and he also conducted the premiere of Brahms’ first piano concerto, among other works.

music for reconciliation

Brahms felt the loss of Joachim’s friendship keenly, and through this concerto sought to repair their relationship. Less clear are his reasons for writing a double concerto for violin and cello, rather than a standard violin concerto, although he may simply have been interested in the musical possibilities of pairing violin and cello in a concerto format. Not coincidentally, Brahms had great admiration for cellist Robert Hausmann, for whom he had already composed a sonata. Adding a solo cello to the concerto mix gave Brahms another opportunity to showcase Hausmann’s virtuosity.

Brahms wrote the Double Concerto in the summer of 1887 for Joachim and Hausmann and dedicated it to Joachim with the inscription, “To him for whom it was written.” Joachim and Hausmann presented a private concert in Baden-Baden on September 23, 1887, with Brahms conducting; the three men also gave the first public performance on October 18, 1887, in Cologne. After the public premiere, Brahms told a friend, “Now

one-minute notes

Brahms: Double Concerto for Violin, Cello and Orchestra

Late in life, Johannes Brahms wrote a concerto as a way of reconciling with one of his most valued friends—the violinist Joseph Joachim—and added a cello to the mix, unlocking new sonic possibilities. Its rhapsodic melodies and grand sweeping phrases show the composer’s affection for its dedicatee Joachim, who reunited with Brahms and premiered the work.

Alberga: *Tower*

Eleanor Alberga pays tribute to a late friend, violinist David E. Angel, in a musical portrait full of passion that brings to life aspects of Angel’s personality including humor, generosity, kindness, and shyness and a tendency to have the last word.

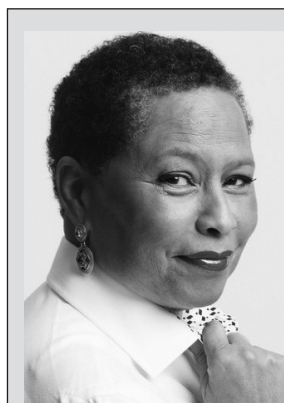
Shostakovich: *Symphony No. 1*

The young Shostakovich, not yet 20 years old, announced his presence to the world with a First Symphony notable for its maturity and surprising flourishes, from the opening’s muted trumpet to the final movement’s slow close. Already present is the sardonic wit that would later get the composer in trouble with Stalin’s regime.

I know what it is that's been missing in my life for the past few years...it was the sound of Joachim's violin."

Critics did not warm to the work; even Brahms' long-time champion Eduard Hanslick wrote, "I do not know of a less important work of our good friend," and Clara wrote in her journal, "I do not believe the concerto has any future...nowhere has it the warmth and freshness which are so often found in his works." Such opinions notwithstanding, Brahms' Double Concerto remains in the orchestral repertoire and is beloved by audiences today. It may be true that in compositional terms, the concerto breaks no new ground, but that was not Brahms' intent in this work. Instead, the concerto's rhapsodic melodies and grand sweeping phrases evoke a mood of reconciliation as they pay affectionate homage to a cherished longtime friend.

Instrumentation: solo violin and solo cello with orchestra comprising 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, timpani and strings



Eleanor Alberga

Born: September 30, 1949,
Kingston, Jamaica

Tower

Premiered: October 29, 2017

At the age of 5, Eleanor Alberga decided she would be a concert pianist. Five years later, she was composing works for the piano. Born in Jamaica, Alberga is now an acclaimed British composer who has been commissioned by institutions ranging from the BBC Proms to the Royal Opera at Covent Garden. She has composed for a wide variety of genres ranging from solo instrumental works to full-scale symphonic works and operas, and her music is performed around the world.

from Jamaica to London

In 1968, at the age of 19, Alberga won the biennial Royal Schools of Music Scholarship for the West Indies; in 1970, she left Jamaica and began her studies in piano and singing at the Royal Academy of Music in London. In 1978, she began working with the London Contemporary Dance Theatre (LCDT). Under the inspirational leadership of its artistic director, Robert Cohan, Alberga became one of very few pianists with a deep understanding of modern dance, and her company class improvisations became greatly

renowned. These in turn led to works commissioned and conceived for dance by the company. Alberga eventually became the company's music director—a role in which she conducted, composed and played on LCDT's many tours.

After she left the LCDT in 1988, Alberga focused exclusively on composition; over time, interest in her music has grown in the U.K. and internationally. In 2015, Alberga was commissioned to write a piece for the opening of the Last Night of the BBC Proms. This work, *Arise, Athena!*, was seen and heard by millions and cemented Alberga's reputation as a composer of originality and consummate skill.

Alberga has earned a number of awards, most notably a NESTA fellowship in 2000 and a Paul Hamlyn Award in 2019. In 2020 she was elected a Fellow of the Royal Academy of Music, and in 2021 she was awarded an Order of the British Empire in the Queen's Birthday Honors for her services to British music.

portrait for a late friend

On April 10, 2017, violinist David E. Angel died suddenly at the age of 62. He was the second violinist in the Maggini Quartet, and a member of several larger ensembles, including the London Mozart Players and the London Chamber Orchestra. Alberga, a close friend of Angel's, was commissioned by Francis Hornak to write a musical portrait in his memory for the London Mozart Players and the Maggini Quartet. The resulting work, *Tower*, composed the year Angel died, is her personal homage to him (the title refers to a "tower of strength"). The dedication to Angel refers to him as "a consummate musician, hilarious companion, and much missed most cherished friend."

Alberga explains, "I knew this person very well, and I wanted to give a sense of his big heart, which I do in a slow section with more tonal harmonies, and of his sense of humor, which I did with some jaunty music, and also the bigness and generosity of his personality, and how kind he was to everyone; I think just the fact that it's a big orchestral piece helps to depict that. Also, David seemed to be quite shy sometimes, although he was full of stories and anecdotes, but somehow he always managed to get the last word, and so at the end of the piece, that's David having the last word....Even though this is a specific dedication to this dear friend of mine, it can also be approached as a 'normal' piece of music....It has all the things musicians should expect: passion, loud passages, soft passages, gentle passages....It is a piece of music on its own."

Hilary Davan Wetton led the London Mozart Players and Maggini Quartet in the premiere on October 29, 2017, at St. John the Evangelist Church in London. The Minnesota Orchestra has a notable role in the piece's history: in October 2021 it made the

first professional recording of the work at a reading session led by Scott Yoo as part of the Orchestra's ongoing Listening Project. It is the second work from that project to be programmed on the ensemble's classical subscription series.

Instrumentation: solo string quartet, 2 flutes (1 doubling piccolo), 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, 2 trumpets, timpani, tambourine and strings



Dmitri Shostakovich

Born: September 25, 1906,
St. Petersburg, Russia

Died: August 9, 1975,
Moscow, Russia

Symphony No. 1 in F minor, Opus 10

Premiered: May 12, 1926

dmitri Shostakovich grew up surrounded by music. Both his parents and his older sister Mariya were talented musicians, and Shostakovich himself began studying piano at age 9, although he was more interested in improvising than traditional lessons. At 13 he entered the Petrograd Conservatory, where he excelled. In 1956 he recalled his roots in a musical family: "My mother, Sophia Vasilievna, studied at the Conservatory for some years and was a good pianist. My father, Dmitri Boleslavovich, was a great lover of music and sang well. There were many music-lovers among the friends and acquaintances of the family, all of whom took part in our musical evenings. I also remember the strains of music that came from the neighboring apartment of an engineer who was an excellent cellist and passionately fond of chamber music. With a group of his friends he often played quartets and trios by Mozart, Haydn, Beethoven, Borodin and Tchaikovsky. I used to go out into the hallway and sit there for hours, the better to hear the music. In our apartment, too, we held amateur musical evenings. All this impressed itself on my musical memory and played a certain part in my future work as a composer."

a graduation symphony

In this context, the emergence of Shostakovich's Symphony No. 1, which he completed in 1925 as a graduation exercise from the Leningrad Conservatory, is more comprehensible, if no less remarkable. The symphony, his first large orchestral work, announced the then 19-year-old composer as a major new voice in Soviet music; audiences and critics alike received it with great enthusiasm.

Overall, this symphony is infused with a restless uneasiness that both reflected the instability of the Soviet Union after the October Revolution, and also foreshadowed the terrors of World War II and the repressive realities of life under Stalin. Additionally, Shostakovich's Symphony No. 1 contains all the qualities of his mature sound: tongue-in-cheek humor and moments of savage mockery cheek-by-jowl with more intimate passages; an extraordinary facility for orchestration unusual in such a young composer; and a total command of his own compositional voice. Shostakovich's technical mastery and youthful self-confidence permeate all four movements, making the Symphony No. 1 sound like the product of a mature composer, rather than a 19-year-old's graduation thesis.

the music: belying expectations

allegretto-allegro non troppo; allegro. The *Allegretto* opens with a cheeky comment from a muted trumpet, to which the bassoon galumphingly responds. A bold restatement for solo clarinet follows, and Shostakovich reiterates this quirky scrap of an idea as he also develops and expands on it. Shostakovich's sardonic inclinations, heard particularly in his lightning-fast phrases for winds and brasses, are liberally sprinkled throughout. At the close of the second movement scherzo, the frenetic pace is cut short by three strong chords in the piano, echoed a few measures later by the full orchestra.

lento. In the *Lento*, Shostakovich presents a brooding musical soundscape. The solo oboe's melancholy statement is repeated by solo violin, then elaborated by solo cello. This interlude reveals a more intimate, serious aspect of the young composer. The full orchestra, led by strings and horns, continues inexorably into the heart of the movement, which at times evokes the expansiveness of a Mahler or Tchaikovsky symphony. Such intensity is perhaps expected of an adolescent composer, but the depth with which Shostakovich exploits textures and timbres belie his years.

allegro molto-lento. A quiet roll from the snare drum grows in volume and menace, linking the third and fourth movements. The closing *Allegro molto* begins sedately but quickly escalates, combining the concentrated passion of the third movement with flashes of the mockery heard in the first two movements. A hair-raising brass fanfare and a rare solo appearance by the timpani signal the symphony's unexpected *Lento* conclusion.

Instrumentation: 3 flutes (2 doubling piccolo), 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, alto trumpet, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, snare drum, bass drum, cymbals, tam-tam, triangle, glockenspiel, piano and strings

Program notes by **Elizabeth Schwartz** © 2023.