

**Mozart's Jupiter**

**Saturday, November 5 – 2 pm**

**Alexander Prior**, conductor

**Luca Buratto**, piano (2015 Honens Prize Laureate)

**Aaron Au**, violin

Sunday Prelude, 1:15 pm on the Upper Circle (Third Level) Lobby with D.T. Baker

Sunday Encore, post-performance in the Main Lobby with Alexander Prior, Luca Buratto & Aaron Au

**STAFYLAKIS**

***Never the Same River*** (11')\*

**COULTHARD**

***The Bird of Dawning Singeth All Night Long*** (6')\*

**PROKOFIEV**

***Piano Concerto No. 3 in C Major, Op.26*** (29')\*

Andante – Allegro

Tema con variazione

Allegro

**INTERMISSION** (20 minutes)

**MOZART**

***Symphony No. 41 in C Major, K.551 "Jupiter"*** (41')\*

Allegro vivace

Andante cantabile

Menuetto: Allegretto

Molto allegro

program subject to change

\*indicates approximate performance duration

***Never the Same River***

**Harry Stafylakis**

(b. Montréal, 1982)

First performed: January 31, 2017 in Winnipeg

This is the ESO premiere of any work by Harry Stafylakis

Program note by the composer:

“No man ever steps in the same river twice, for it's not the same river and he's not the same man.”

- Heraclitus

The above aphorism, attributed to pre-Socratic philosopher Heraclitus of Ephesus (quoted by Plato in the dialogue *Cratylus*), expresses a view of the universe as being in a constant state of change. A musical analogue to this concept of impermanence is the chaconne, a Baroque form wherein a constantly repeating pattern (e.g. harmonic progression, bass line, etc.) provides a foundation for a process of continuous variation, decoration, figuration, and melodic invention.

*Never the Same River* is a texture-based composition that attempts to embody Heraclitus's philosophy of simultaneous constancy and flux. The work is propelled by a 26-note melody that outlines a perpetually-repeating harmonic progression, serving as the chaconne theme. First presented by the harp and percussion, the theme serves as a vehicle for the gradual textural development of the musical surface. The orchestra slowly emerges as captured harmonic resonances of the harp and percussion theme accumulate and gradually take over the texture.

Throughout the work, the instruments of the orchestra act as semi-independent musical streams whose ever-shifting interactions conspire to effectuate a large-scale rhythmic, melodic, articulative, registral, and dynamic intensification. At the peak of this textural crescendo, the music buckles under its own weight and breaks off into disconnected fragments that struggle to rekindle the musical flow in fits and starts. Although the chaconne theme has been looping almost continuously, as the music winds down to its calm conclusion there is a sense of having traversed a great distance.

— HS

The orchestral version of *Never the Same River* was commissioned by the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra, with the support of the Canada Council for the Arts. It is based on a chamber piece for 5 players of the same title, composed in 2013 for the New Music on the Point Festival and members of the International Contemporary Ensemble.

***The Bird of Dawning Singeth All Night Long*** (A Christmas song after Shakespeare's *Hamlet*)

**Jean Coulthard**

(b. Vancouver, 1908 / d. Vancouver, 2000)

First performed: 1964 in Vancouver

Last ESO performance: March 2003

*"Some say that ever 'gainst that season comes  
Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated,  
The bird of dawning singeth all night long...  
And then...  
No fairy takes, nor witch hath power to charm,  
So hallow'd and so gracious is that time."*

This magical evocation is from the first scene of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, and provided the perfect image for this brief, haunting pastorella for violin, harp, and strings. Jean Coulthard was a pioneering figure in Canadian composition – not only as one of the first women to establish a foothold as a composer in Canada, but also as one of the first composers from the west coast to make their voice heard across the country.

Coulthard taught for 26 years at the University of British Columbia, and staunchly refused to conform to composing trends or pressures. She wrote from an honesty and an innate belief in her abilities. *The Bird of Dawning Singeth All Night Long* was written in 1960, a Christmas gift for the composer's grandmother.

***Piano Concerto No. 3 in C Major, Op.26***  
**Sergei Prokofiev**

(b. Sontsovka, 1891 / d. Moscow, 1953)

First performed: December 16, 1921 in Chicago

Last ESO performance: May 2017

Prokofiev's most popular concerto was begun in Russia and finished in France – and the influence of both of these contrasting environments is obvious. Coupled to the Russian folk-flavoured themes that dominate the melodic material, particularly of the two outer movements, is a wit, sparkle, and urbanity that was the hallmark of music in Paris at the time.

Prokofiev's *First Piano Concerto* was a student work, but enough of a *cause celebre* that he re-presented it as his farewell to the Conservatory. By contrast, his icier *Second Concerto*, in which the piano was aggressively to the forefront, proved unsuccessful at its 1913 premiere. His third, therefore, was a bit of a tactical retreat, composed in a conventional three-movement format, and with a much more equal role for the orchestra.

The lyrical opening, on clarinet and strings, is interrupted by the exuberant piano's own take on the opening material. The second theme is much more "modern" less folk-like, with cross-hand piano passages, all leading to an orchestral statement of the opening clarinet theme. The recapitulation involves piano re-statements of both of these main themes, and the movement ends bitingly.

The second movement is a theme followed by five variations and a concluding section. The main theme is presented first as a slow-paced procession in gavotte rhythm, the variations which follow span a gamut of pace and drama, though a sense of cheeky sarcasm seems always present. The finale is, in Prokofiev's own words, "an argument" between the soloist and the orchestra, with an opening orchestral theme in the concerto's home key relative minor, interrupted by a contrasting idea from the piano. A slower idea is also introduced, shunted aside as the "argument" takes over, in increasingly virtuosic piano, building to an extensive and brilliant coda.

***Symphony No. 41 in C Major, K.551 "Jupiter"***

**Wolfgang Amadé Mozart**

(b. Salzburg, 1756 / d. Vienna, 1791)

Composition completed August 10, 1788. It is not known if the work was ever performed during Mozart's lifetime.

Last ESO performance: September 2013

Mozart wrote his last symphony more than three years before he died, and it is highly likely he felt that he would write more. But the fact remains that other projects occupied him until his death seven weeks shy of his 36th birthday, and while it was not Mozart who chose the epithet "Jupiter" for his last symphony, this Olympian work is a worthy final effort.

Mozart both looks back to the past, and anticipates the future in his *41st Symphony*. His use of counterpoint in the opening and final movements is certainly a tribute to composers such as Bach, while his ability to create towering musical structures from minimal musical building blocks is something Beethoven and others picked up on years later.

There are no less than three separate musical ideas in the very opening of the work – quite uncharacteristic of "proper" sonata-allegro form. Similarly, there are three thematic ideas in the Andante cantabile second movement – two serene ones separated by a tense, dramatic emotional one.

A slightly more conventional third movement balances a lyrical Minuet with two starkly contrasting trio subjects. The final movement, rather than a jovial trot to the finish line, is instead a towering musical structure, "...where contrasting themes are lined up, harnessed, and sent galloping down the final stretch in one of the most glorious, tingling, and overwhelming passages in music," wrote longtime *New York Times* critic Harold C. Schoenberg.

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