

## STERN CONDUCTS MUSIC OF COURAGE & RESISTANCE

February 24 & 25\*, 2024 • 7:30 PM / 2:00 PM

\*Sunday Classics presented by The Robbins Foundation

Featuring:

**Michael Stern**, conductor – see bio on page 5.

**Ewald Cheung**, ESO violin – see bio on page 5.

**Julie Hereish**, ESO cello – see bio on page 6.

**June Kim**, ESO oboe – see bio on page 7.

**Bianca Chambul**, ESO bassoon – see bio on page 7.

To read the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra roster, see page 9.

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### MAGNARD

*Hymne à la justice, Op.14*

(14')\*

### HAYDN

*Sinfonia concertante in B-flat Major, Op.84 / Hob.I: 105*

(24')\*

*I - Allegro*

*II - Andante*

*III - Allegro con spirito*

**INTERMISSION** (20 minutes)

### SIBELIUS

*Symphony No. 2 in D Major, Op.43*

(45')\*

*I - Allegretto*

*II - Andante ma rubato*

*III - Vivacissimo*

*IV - Allegro moderato*

*Program subject to change.*

\*indicates approximate performance duration

## ***Hymne à la justice, Op.14***

**Albéric Magnard**

(b. Paris, 1865 / d. Baron, Oise, 1914)

First performed: January 4, 1903, in Nancy

This is the ESO premiere of the piece

The "justice" at the heart of Albéric Magnard's work is the infamous Dreyfus affair – a military and political scandal that rocked France to its core as the 19th century gave way to the 20th. It exposed the hypocrisy and corruption, not to mention the systemic anti-Semitism (Dreyfus was an Alsatian soldier of Jewish descent), in France at the time. Dreyfus was a career soldier falsely convicted of treason – twice – despite overwhelming evidence pointing to another French officer. Sentenced to Devil's Island, Dreyfus saw his case drag on for years, with many of the facts of the case being exposed by the French press. It was for this case that Émile Zola penned his famous open letter, "J'accuse ...!"

The affair polarized French society – you were a supporter of Dreyfus, or you were against him. Magnard was incensed by the miscarriages of justice, and as a musician, sought to express his opinion through his art. *Hymne à la justice* is cast as a single-movement, sonata-form work, dominated by three main thematic ideas, which music scholar Adrian Corleonis describes as, "the first, peremptory, brutal, and swaggering; the second lashing in indignation; the third, rising in even scalar tones in an aspiring, consolatory gesture." The ending has a surprisingly triumphant tone – Dreyfus was finally pardoned in 1899 (four years before the work's premiere), though not fully exonerated until 1906, three years after the piece was first heard.

## ***Sinfonia concertante in B-flat Major, Op.84 / Hob.I: 105***

**Franz Josef Haydn**

(b. Rohrau, Lower Austria, 1732 / d. 1809)

First performed: March 9, 1792, in London

Last ESO performance: June 2004

The history of western art music is strewn with masterpiece after masterpiece, so the notion that works would be written sheerly for their commercial appeal, or to compete with a rival for the public's attention and affection, seems unthinkable – especially for a composer held in the high regard as Franz Josef Haydn. Yet in the case of his unique *Sinfonia concertante*, all of those seemingly crass concepts come into play. Fortunately for us, Haydn was talented enough that even an origin story as pandering as this has yielded a delightful piece.

Late in his career, Haydn enjoyed the life of a celebrated elder statesman, making numerous tours to European centres, where he would conduct his latest works, and enjoy the attention that came his way. When he first visited England at the invitation of impresario Johann Peter Salomon, Haydn's former pupil Ignaz Pleyel (25 years younger than Haydn) was also there, enjoying great success for his works as well. A rivalry sprang up between the promoters of the concerts each composer presented, and while Pleyel and Haydn kept themselves above the sniping of the presenters (they dined together more than once during their stays), Haydn was coaxed into writing a work in the fashionable form of the day, at which Pleyel had enjoyed success: the *sinfonia concertante*.

“A concert genre of the late 18th and early 19th centuries for solo instruments – usually two, three, or four ... with orchestra.” So says the *Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* of the *sinfonia concertante*. Haydn was not a concertante specialist – he wrote concertos, but they were not what he wrote best. Nevertheless, it says something that Pleyel’s many contributions to the genre are less well known than Haydn’s reluctant foray; even in its day, the work was received well enough that Salomon had Haydn present it again the following year. Scored for violin, cello, oboe, and bassoon soloists, the work is in the three-movement form of a standard concerto, but Haydn cleverly plays with the convention, introducing each of the soloists in the repeat of the second subject – straying from the very sonata form which he developed. There is a very congenial aura of playfulness in the opening Allegro – Haydn’s sense of humour was well known – and he seemed to understand exactly the line to draw between grace, charm, and the very strange limitations dictated by the *sinfonia concertante* form.

Among the challenges in any work such as this is the expectation that each solo instrument will get a chance to shine, that the solo instruments will combine in various ways – and that there is an orchestra that must do more than decorate the background. Haydn opens the second movement, for example, by creating a duet, first for violin and bassoon, then for oboe and cello together – before all kinds of permutations are added in to a charming and measured Andante. The abruptly bumptious opening to the Allegro con spirito final movement is interrupted by a quick pair of solo violin recitatives, ushering in the lighthearted vigour that has helped leave many a Pleyel example in the margins of the musical canon.

## ***Symphony No. 2 in D Major, Op.43***

**Jean Sibelius**

(b. Tavastehus, 1865 / d. Järvenpää, 1957)

First performed: March 8, 1902, in Helsinki

Last ESO performance: March 2019

It was while on vacation with his family in Italy in 1901 that Jean Sibelius sketched out the following scenario for a musical composition: “Don Juan. Sit in the twilight in my palace, a guest (the Stone Guest) comes in. I ask more than once who he is – no answer. I try to amuse him. He remains silent. Finally, the stranger starts to sing. Then Don Juan recognizes who he is – Death.”

What was originally conceived as part of an intended work based on the Don Juan legend instead became the main theme for the second movement of Sibelius’ *Second Symphony*. His *First Symphony* had been reasonably well received, if compared a little too often to Tchaikovsky for his liking. “I know that I have much in common with that man,” Sibelius wrote home to his wife, Aino, “but nothing can be done about that.” And yet, with each symphony, Sibelius moved significantly forward in crafting his own symphonic voice, and the *Second* begins that process.

The plan was to have it ready for a concert at the end of 1901. That proved a little optimistic, and its triumphant premiere took place the following March. The symphony has become, along with the *Fifth*, Sibelius’ most often-performed symphony. Serenity and majesty dominate the opening moments, with a pulsing figure contrasted against a noble horn melody. Fragments like this seem to come and go, confounding a clearly discernible Sonata form. But Sibelius constructs something marvellously integral from these pieces, and he once remarked of this

movement, “It is as if the Almighty had thrown down the pieces of a mosaic for heaven’s floor and asked me to put them together.”

Pizzicato basses and cellos usher in the second movement, until bassoons in octaves first present the Don Juan “death” theme that first inspired him. The Andante pacing gradually increases to Poco allegro, nudged along by insistent timpani, until the violins present what sounds like a cold, brief motif. The music swirls up to a climax, followed by the violin motif, now unveiled as the heart of a beautiful secondary theme – another idea from Sibelius’ days in Italy.

The third movement is in a Scherzo and Trio design. It scurries in, quietly but energetically, until its frantic pacing is halted by five sharp beats on the timpani, yielding to the Lento Trio section introduced in a pastoral passage for winds. Both the Scherzo and Trio sections repeat, and without a pause, an extended bridge welds the third movement to the finale, returning us to D Major from the previous movement’s B-flat.

The finale is in Sonata form, its principal theme announced at the outset – majestic, grand, sweeping – strings answered by warm, rich brass. There is certainly still something of Tchaikovsky’s overt romanticism here, but the way the theme is used throughout the Development is certainly Sibelius’ own. The quiet beginning of the Development is finally overwhelmed by the resoundingly powerful final moments. Some over-eager Finnish critics, while effusive in their praise of the work, hastened to hear in it the Finnish struggle against the increasingly stifling grip of Russian rule. Surely, they felt, the composer of *Finlandia* must have meant that. But Sibelius rejected any such patriotic extra-musical associations.

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## Biographies

### Michael Stern

Conductor

Conductor Michael Stern is Music Director of the Kansas City Symphony and the Stamford Symphony, Founding Artistic Director, and Principal Conductor of the IRIS Orchestra, and recently named Music Director of the National Repertory Orchestra where he begins his tenure in the summer of 2021.

Michael Stern and Kansas City have been hailed for their remarkable artistic ascent, original programming, organizational development and stability, and the extraordinary growth of its varied audiences since his tenure began. Stern and the orchestra have partnered with Grammy® Award-winning Reference Recordings for a series of very well-received CDs, including a new recording of works by American composer Adam Schoenberg, Gustav Holst's "The Planets," and albums of Elgar, Sibelius, and Saint-Saens.

IRIS Orchestra in Germantown, Tennessee is known for the virtuosity of its playing, and the depth and variety of its programming, with special emphasis on American contemporary music. Under Stern's direction, IRIS has commissioned and premiered works by William Bolcom, Chris Brubeck, Richard Danielpour, Stephen Hartke, Edgar Meyer, Jonathan Leshnoff, Ned Rorem, Huang Ruo, amongst others, and has released recordings on the Naxos and Arabesque labels.

Recent guest engagements have included the Boston Symphony at Tanglewood, the Chicago Symphony at Ravinia, the Atlanta Symphony, the Minnesota Orchestra, the New York Philharmonic in the film score to *The Red Violin* with Joshua Bell as soloist; also, with the Philadelphia Orchestra at the Saratoga Performing Arts Center, the National Arts Centre in Ottawa, Ravinia, and the Napa Valley Festival del Sole, as well as concerts at the Stern Violin Competition in Shanghai.

Annually he conducts the Guangzhou Symphony Orchestra as part of the Youth Music Culture Guangdong with Yo-Yo Ma and regularly appears at the Aspen Music Festival and School. He has led the major orchestras in London, Stockholm, Paris, Helsinki, Budapest, Israel, and Moscow, Taiwan, and Tokyo, et al. Stern has been Chief Conductor of Germany's Saarbrücken Radio Symphony Orchestra (the first American chief conductor in the orchestra's history), Permanent Guest Conductor of the Orchestre National de Lyon in France, and Principal Guest Conductor of the Orchestre National de Lille, France.

### Ewald Cheung

ESO Violin

Violinist Ewald Cheung has performed as soloist with orchestras around Canada, including the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra and the Orchestre Symphonique de Quebec. He has also performed in recital series in Trois-Rivieres, CAMMAC, Edmonton and Muzewest with pianists Philip Chiu, Henry Mokken, and Michael Massey. In 2015, Ewald and pianist Philip Chiu were featured in a 34-concert tour with Jeunesses Musicales Canada and also recorded their album,

“A Tribute to Fritz Kreisler.” He is currently a member of the first violin section of the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra.

Ewald is the recipient of the 2010 Golden Violin Award from McGill University, where he also received his Bachelor of Music and Artist Diploma. He recently obtained his Masters’ degree from The Juilliard School. His teachers include Daniel Phillips, Felicia Moye, André Roy, Jonathan Crow, James Keene and Valeria Kalinak. Other awards include First Prize in the Shean Strings Competition in 2009, First Prize in the Trois-Rivières Competition in 2010 and Second Prize in the Standard Life OSM Competition in 2007. Ewald gratefully has been supported by the Anne Burrows Foundation, the Winspear Fund and the Victoria Foundation throughout his studies.

As an avid chamber musician, Ewald was a founding member of the Roddick String Quartet and Geistrio. With the Roddick String Quartet, he competed at the London International String Quartet Competition and performed at the Montreal Chamber Music Festival. Ewald, additionally has competed at the Fischhoff National Chamber Competition and performed at the Canadian Opera Company’s Free Concert Series with Geistrio. He has also collaborated with many prominent musicians including Robert Uchida, Rafael Hoekman, Axel Strauss, Patricia Tao and Peter Wiley. Ewald has previously attended the McGill International String Quartet Academy, studying with members of the Alban Berg, Cleveland and Guarneri String Quartets.

## **Julie Hereish**

ESO Assistant Principal Cello

Julie Hereish joined the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra as Assistant Principal Cello in the Fall of 2019. Previously, she held the same position in the Québec Symphony Orchestra. During her time in Québec City, she co-founded the piano quartet Quatuor Philanthros and the cello octet Élément 8.

Born in Montreal, Julie pursued her studies in her hometown, and then in Vienna, Austria. She also participated in courses in Canada (Domaine Forget, Orford Arts Centre, Banff Centre for the Arts), in Germany (Schleswig-Holstein Music Festival), and in Austria (Vienna Music Seminar).

Her chamber music performances have taken her across Canada, where she’s toured with Debut Atlantic and Jeunesses Musicales du Canada. Julie has been invited to perform in chamber music festivals throughout North America, such as Music by the Sea, Rendez-vous Musical de Laterrière, Rosebud Chamber Music Festival, Festival Bach de Montréal and Rockport Music Festival. As a guest, Julie has joined the Grammy Award-winning ARC Ensemble in performance in Toronto and the Canadian Opera Company as a guest continuo cellist. Julie has performed extensively with the chamber orchestra Violons du Roy in Québec City and throughout Europe and North America.

Together with actor Pierre Mayer, Julie created Charlot et Mlle Cello, a theatrical concert experience for children based on Charlie Chaplin’s famous character. The show has been presented in its symphonic version with the Québec Symphony Orchestra and with the Geneva Chamber Orchestra in Switzerland.

Julie is a co-founder and member of the Edmonton based High Level Trio, comprised of members of the ESO. Alongside her husband, ESO Principal violist Keith Hamm, she founded The New Cohort at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. The duet will be on tour in the Maritimes with Debut Atlantic in September 2022. Julie is currently on maternity leave and will return for the 2022/23 season.

## **June Kim**

ESO Principal Oboe

June Kim joined the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra as Principal Oboe in 2020. Previously, she served as Principal Oboe of Symphony Nova Scotia for the 2016-2017 season.

June has appeared as guest Principal Oboe with the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra and the Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra. She has performed with numerous orchestras in North America, including the National Arts Centre Orchestra, Toronto Symphony Orchestra, and the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra.

In addition to her orchestral career, June is a passionate chamber musician. She is the oboist in the woodwind quintet with her fellow colleagues from the orchestra and has been the oboist in Midic Winds since 2012. Her quintet was the bronze medalist in the senior wind division of the 2013 Fischhoff National Chamber Music Competition. They were featured as concerto soloists with the Eastman Wind Ensemble, performing Robert Russell Bennett's Concerto Grosso.

In 2020, June received an Artist Diploma from The Glenn Gould School studying under the tutelage of Sarah Jeffrey. She earned her Bachelor of Music Degree and the prestigious Performer's Certificate from the Eastman School of Music and received her master's degree from Shepherd School of Music at Rice University. Her former teachers include Robert Atherholt, Richard Killmer, and Jean Landa.

## **Bianca Chambul**

ESO Principal Bassoon

Born in Toronto, Bianca Chambul was appointed Principal Bassoon of the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra in June 2019. In addition to her orchestral duties, she has enjoyed performing chamber music with ESO musicians at the Art Gallery of Alberta. During the pandemic, Bianca developed a love for editing films on iMovie to contribute to the ESO's YouTube channel.

As a freelance bassoonist and contrabassoonist, Bianca has performed with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Hamilton Philharmonic, Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony, and Toronto's Tapestry Opera. She has appeared as a concerto competition winner with the Rice University Chamber Orchestra (2019), the University of Toronto Symphony Orchestra (2013), and the Toronto Symphony Youth Orchestra (2011).

As a soloist, Bianca performed for John Weinzweig's Centenary Celebration (2013) and with the University of Toronto Contemporary Ensemble (2015).



Bianca has participated in several summer music festivals, including the National Youth Orchestra of Canada (2012, 2013) and the National Academy Orchestra (2015, 2016). While attending the Music Academy of the West in Santa Barbara in 2019, she was awarded a residency fellowship with the London Symphony Orchestra, and will be performing with them in England in June 2022.

In April 2019, Bianca completed one year of her Master's degree at Rice University's Shepherd School of Music in Houston, Texas under the tutelage of Professor Benjamin Kamins. She obtained her performance undergraduate degree in 2016 at the University of Toronto, studying with Eric Hall, Principal Bassoon of the Grant Park Orchestra and Canadian Opera Company. Bianca received the William and Phyllis Waters Graduating Award, and was on the University of Toronto music faculty as a sessional bassoon instructor for the 2017 winter term.

One of her favourite bassoonists is Sergio Azzolini, especially his Vivaldi CDs with the ensemble L'Aura Soave Cremona on period instruments. His work has served as inspiration for Bianca to learn to play historical bassoons.



## Meet the Musicians

**Michael Stern**, Artistic Advisor

**Cosette Justo Valdés**, Resident Conductor and Community Ambassador

**William Eddins**, Music Director Emeritus, Conductor

### Violin I

Robert Uchida, Concertmaster

*The John & Barbara Poole Family Concertmaster Chair*

Eric Buchmann, Associate Concertmaster

Broderick Olson

Ewald Cheung

Joanna Ciapka-Sangster

Laura Veeze

Anna Kozak

Aiyana Anderson-Howatt

Anita Walsh

### Violin II

Dianne New – Principal

Susan Flook – Assistant Principal

Heather Bergen

Yue Deng

Danielle Greene

Buon Park

Yeeun Ha

Zoë Sellers (on leave)

### Viola

Keith Hamm – Principal

Ethan Filner – Assistant Principal

Clayton Leung

Rhonda Henshaw

Stefan Jungkind

### Cello

Rafael Hoekman – Principal

*The Stuart & Winona Davis Principal Cello Chair*

Julie Hereish – Assistant Principal

Ronda Metzies

Meran Currie-Roberts

Victor Pipkin

### Bass

Hilda Cowie – Principal

Chris Jones – Acting Assistant Principal

Janice Quinn

Rob Aldridge

Chantel Leung

Douglas Ohashi (on leave)

*The ESO works in proud partnership with the AF of M  
(American Federation of Musicians of the United States  
and Canada) Local 390.*

### Flute

Elizabeth Koch – Principal

Sarah Pollard – Assistant Principal

### Oboe

June Kim – Principal

Paul Schieman – Assistant Principal

*The Steven & Day LePoole Assistant Principal Oboe Chair*

### Clarinet

Julianne Scott – Principal

David Quinn – Assistant Principal

### Bassoon

Bianca Chambul – Principal

Edith Stacey – Assistant Principal

### Horn

Allene Hackleman – Principal

Megan Evans – Assistant Principal

Ryan Garbett – Assistant Principal

Donald Plumb – Assistant Principal

### Trumpet

Robin Doyon – Principal

Frédéric Payant – Assistant Principal

### Trombone

John McPherson – Principal

Kathryn Macintosh – Assistant Principal

### Bass Trombone

Tyler Cairns – Principal

### Tuba

Scott Whetham – Principal

### Timpani

Barry Nemish – Principal

### Percussion

Martin Bui – Principal

### Harp

Nora Bumanis – Principal