



TCHAIKOVSKY'S VIOLIN CONCERTO

2018-19 HAL & JEANETTE SEGERSTROM FAMILY FOUNDATION CLASSICAL SERIES

Pacific Symphony
Rune Bergmann, conductor
Philippe Quint, violin

Mozart

OVERTURE TO *DON GIOVANNI*

Tchaikovsky

VIOLIN CONCERTO IN D MAJOR

Allegro moderato

Canzonetta: Andante

Finale: Allegro vivacissimo

Philippe Quint

Intermission

Nielsen

SYMPHONY NO. 4, "THE INEXTINGUISHABLE"

Allegro

Poco allegretto

Poco adagio quasi andante

Allegro

Preview talk with Alan Chapman at 7:00 PM

Thursday, November 15, 2018 @ 8:00 PM

Friday, November 16, 2018 @ 8:00 PM

Saturday, November 17, 2018 @ 8:00 PM

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This concert is being recorded for broadcast on Sunday, February 17, 2019, at 7 p.m. on Classical KUSC.

PROGRAM NOTES

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART: OVERTURE TO *DON GIOVANNI*



The first music we hear in Mozart's *Don Giovanni* is a terrifying spiral into the depths of D minor that portends the hellfire in store for the opera's protagonist,

who will receive the punishment Dante reserved for those who knowingly refuse to reject sin. "Abandon all hope, ye who enter here," Dante warns these willful transgressors at the gates of his *Inferno*. In Michelangelo's vision of *The Last Judgment* in the Sistine Chapel, one image of this despair leaps out from among hundreds: the anguish visible in a face from behind one clutching hand as a damned man confronts Dante's terrible gateway. Yet Mozart follows horror with the joyful abundance of divine creation in all its glory and humor, as the overture shifts gears into affirmative D major and the tempo becomes sprightly. And that's just in the first two minutes!

Michelangelo did not name his primal sinner, but painted him a century before the Spanish monk Tirso de Molina invented Don Giovanni's progenitor, the treacherous Sevillian seducer Don Juan. Still later, in *Don Giovanni*, Mozart—who had traveled extensively in Italy and loved its culture—tipped his hat to these Renaissance masterpieces in one of his own. Mozart chose to call *Don Giovanni* a "dramma giocoso," suggesting both the jocundity of comedy and the seriousness of drama.

In the opera's overture we hear both the seriousness and the fun of the *dramma giocoso* form. In shifting from its grave opening to a brisker, more lighthearted pace, the overture seems to whisk us from street level to a merrier, more detached view—in the modern phrase, "at 30,000 feet." Mozart's overture to *The Magic Flute* is another example of an allegorical tale

introduced by slow, majestic chords that give way to a more rapid and cheerful tempo.

Mozart's contemporaries heard the *Don Giovanni* overture in an era when live performances were rarefied events and recordings did not exist. That's one reason why its sound carried an emotional wallop that Hollywood special effects can't begin to convey more than two centuries later. Here is how the French composer Charles Gounod described the sheer terror he felt upon first hearing this music at age 13: "From the start of the overture I felt myself transported into an absolutely new world by the solemn and majestic chords of the Commandant's final scene, I was seized by a terror which froze me, and as the menacing progression began, with the descending and ascending scales unrolling above it, merciless and implacable as a death sentence, I was overcome by such dread that I buried my face in my mother's shoulder ... enveloped in the twofold embrace of the beautiful and the terrible."

PYOTR ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY: VIOLIN CONCERTO IN D MAJOR



Tchaikovsky began composing his Violin Concerto after his disastrous, self-deluded decision to marry left him emotionally ravaged.

His emotional conflicts seemed only to strengthen the merits of his greatest opera, *Eugene Onegin*, which he composed during the same period, and in correspondence with his patron Nadezhda von Meck, he seemed to take unalloyed pleasure in the prospect of composing the violin concerto, though the reality proved more problematic than the idea. He had

seized upon the idea of composing it after hearing others he liked, particularly the energetic, five-movement *Symphonie espagnole* (a concerto in spite of its title) by Edouard Lalo. "For the first time in my life I have begun to work on a new piece before finishing the one on hand," he wrote to Madame von Meck. "I could not resist the pleasure of sketching out the concerto ..." Composition proceeded swiftly, blessedly free of emotional encumbrance.

He chose the great violinist Leopold Auer as its dedicatee and to play the premiere, and planned to convey the completed manuscript to the virtuoso via their mutual student, Josif Kotek. Kotek has been the subject of scholarly speculation, and we can only imagine Tchaikovsky's distress when Kotek eventually refused the manuscript outright. But having seen the work in progress, Auer had expressed his misgivings with harshness, pronouncing the concerto "unplayable," a judgment that Kotek would have been unwise to ignore.

Finding an alternate soloist for the concerto hardly lifted the cloud hanging over it. Reviewing the premiere performance in Vienna on December 4, 1881, Eduard Hanslick—the dean of the Viennese music critics and one of the era's most influential tastemakers—lambasted it as "music that stinks to the ear," one of the most infamous phrases in the annals of mistaken criticism. With hindsight it's easy to dismiss such invective, but it tormented Tchaikovsky, who reportedly re-read Hanslick's review until he had committed it to memory.

Hanslick's outburst is all the more shocking in light of the characteristically singing melodies in which this concerto abounds. Its first movement, an *allegro moderato* in D major, is all graceful lyricism—seemingly an affectionate description of the scenic charms of Clarens, the Swiss resort town where it was composed. But its virtuosity and vigor seem to delineate

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Born: 1756. Salzburg, Austria

Died: 1791. Vienna, Austria

Overture to *Don Giovanni*

Composed: 1787

World premiere: Oct. 29, 1787, at the Prague Estates Theatre.

Most recent Pacific Symphony performance: Feb. 24, 2013, with Carl St.Clair conducting.

Instrumentation: two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets; timpani; strings

Estimated duration: 7 minutes

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

Born: 1840. Votkinsk, Russia

Died: 1893. St. Petersburg, Russia

Violin Concerto in D Major

Composed: 1878

World premiere: Dec. 4, 1881, in Vienna with Adolph Brodsky as soloist.

Most recent Pacific Symphony performance: Sept. 3, 2016, with Carl St.Clair conducting.

Instrumentation: two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets; timpani; strings, solo violin

Estimated duration: 33 minutes

the existential questions that are always passionately articulated in Tchaikovsky's major works. This emotional intensity reaches a climax in the buildup to the first cadenza. The second movement, a serenely mournful *andante cantabile*, contrasts markedly with the first; the violin's entry is melancholy, and it voices a singing lament that eventually gives way to a happier pastoral melody, like a song of spring. Both moods shadow each other for the duration of the movement, as we alternate between brighter and darker soundscapes. The concerto's final movement follows the second without pause. It is extravagantly marked *allegro vivacissimo* and returns to the opening movement's D major key, recapturing its exuberant energy. This movement also incorporates an energetic Russian dance (Hanslick's reported "whiff of vodka"?) that leaps off the page as the violinist's bow dances along with it. A nostalgic second theme provides an emotional counterpoint to the movement's higher-energy passages, but it is finally eclipsed by a passionate, exuberant finale.

CARL NIELSEN: SYMPHONY NO. 4, "THE INEXTINGUISHABLE"



In Carl Nielsen's sesquicentennial year, 2015, the music journalist and audio producer Brian Wise marked the occasion in a blog for

classical radio station WQXR (New York). In making his case for Nielsen as "the most underrated composer of the 20th century," the evidence got slightly out of hand. It included comments from critics Alex Ross and Kyle Gann; the pianist Lisa Hirsch and

conductor Osmo Vanska; the scholar Daniel Grimley; and most of all, listeners who have discovered this Danish composer's exhilarating music. They are tired of it being neglected or erroneously "lumped" with that of the Finnish master Jean Sibelius, whose mellow, glowing scores contrast markedly with Nielsen's dynamic sound.

Though he is known as a 20th-century composer, Nielsen's life straddled the turn of the century, and his compositions make the transition from their origins in Romanticism to the chromatic and occasionally dissonant harmonies that came later. We hear all of these in his fourth symphony. One of his most admired works, it is an ardent expression—almost a manifesto—of his belief in music itself. While many composers have written tributes to music, Nielsen praises it not merely as consolation (as in Schubert's *An die Musik*), but as the divine force of life itself (as in Handel's *Ode for St. Cecilia's Day*). But where Handel's cantata is disciplined and orderly, Nielsen's music makes the sparks fly. This symphony is the definitive embodiment of Nielsen's essential compositional thinking about music. Writing about this piece himself, Nielsen explained what it meant to him, and what it was supposed to achieve. It's worth quoting in full:

"Music is Life. As soon as even a single note sounds in the air or through space, it is result of life and movement; that is why music (and the dance) are the more immediate expressions of the will to life.

"The symphony evokes the most primal sources of life and the wellspring of the life-feeling; that is, what lies behind all human, animal and plant life, as we perceive or live it. It is not a musical, programme-like account of the development of a life within a limited stretch of time and space, but an un-programme-like dip right down to

the layers of the emotional life that are still half-chaotic and wholly elementary. In other words the opposite of all programme music, despite the fact that this sounds like a programme.

"The symphony is not something with a thought-content, except insofar as the structuring of the various sections and the ordering of the musical material are the fruit of deliberation by the composer in the same way as when an engineer sets up dykes and sluices for the water during a flood. It is in a way a completely thoughtless expression of what make the birds cry, the animals roar, bleat, run and fight, and humans moan, groan exult and shout without any explanation. The symphony does not describe all this, but the basic emotion that lies beneath all this. Music can do just this, it is its most profound quality, its true domain ... because, by simply being itself, it has performed its task.

"For it is life, whereas the other arts only represent and paraphrase life. Life is indomitable and inextinguishable; the struggle, the wrestling, the generation and the wasting away go on today as yesterday, tomorrow as today, and everything returns. Once more: music is life, and like it inextinguishable."

- Carl Nielsen

Michael Clive is a cultural reporter living in the Litchfield Hills of Connecticut. He is program annotator for Pacific Symphony and Louisiana Philharmonic, and editor-in-chief for The Santa Fe Opera.

Carl Nielsen

Born: 1865. Nørre Lyndelse, Denmark

Died: 1931. Copenhagen, Denmark

Symphony No. 4, "The Inextinguishable"

Composed: 1916

World premiere: Feb. 1, 1916.

Most recent Pacific Symphony performance: April 22, 1993, with Kenneth Schermerhorn conducting.

Instrumentation: three flutes (one doubling piccolo), three oboes, three clarinets, three bassoons (one doubling contrabassoon), four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, one tuba; two timpani; strings

Estimated duration: 36 minutes



RUNE BERGMANN

An energetic and compelling figure on the podium, Norwegian conductor Rune Bergmann is a dynamic, versatile conductor with an extensive classical, romantic, operatic and contemporary repertoire. Considered among today's most talented young Scandinavian conductors, his elegant interpretations and reputation as an inspiring and profound musician continue to attract the attention of orchestras throughout the world.

Bergmann has served as music director of Canada's Calgary Philharmonic and as artistic director and chief conductor of Poland's Szczecin Philharmonic since the 2017-18 and 2016-17 seasons, respectively. His work with the Calgary Philharmonic in the 2018-19 season features several highlights, including a Verdi *Requiem*, a gala evening with Renée Fleming, and exploration of symphonies by such diverse composers as Haydn, Mahler, Mozart and Tchaikovsky, among others, while the fall of 2018 will see the release of Maestro Bergmann's first recording with the Szczecin Philharmonic, including the "Resurrection" Symphony in E minor by Mieczysław Karłowicz.

He has also been artistic director of Norway's innovative Fjord Cadenza Festival since its inception in 2010, and he regularly conducts a wide range of distinguished orchestras and opera houses around the world, including such auspices as the Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra, Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra, Münchner Symphoniker, Norwegian National Opera, Mainfranken Theater Würzburg, Philharmonie Südwestfalen, Staatskapelle Halle and the Wrocław Philharmonic,

as well as the symphony orchestras of Malmö, Helsingborg, Bergen, Kristiansand, Stavanger, Trondheim, Karlskrona, and Odense, and Lisbon's Orquestra Sinfónica Portuguesa.

A multi-talented musician who also plays trumpet, piano, and violin/viola, Bergmann studied choral and orchestral conducting under Anders Eby, Jin Wang and Jorma Panula at Sweden's Royal College of Music. He graduated with high honors from the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki, Finland, where he studied conducting under Chief Conductor Emeritus of the Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra/former principal conductor of the Vienna Radio, Finnish Radio, and Danish National symphony orchestras, Leif Segerstam. Honors include the 2010 Kjell Holm Foundation Culture Prize, the 2009 SMP Press culture award, and second prize in Helsingborg's 2002 Nordic Conducting Competition. Maestro Bergmann's former posts include deputy-general music director with the Augsburger Philharmoniker and Theater Augsburg in Germany.



PHILIPPE QUINT

Multi-Grammy Award nominee violinist Philippe Quint has established himself as one of the leading violinists of his generation. Constantly in demand, he regularly appears at venues ranging from the Gewandhaus in Leipzig to Carnegie Hall in New York and at the most prestigious music festivals such as Verbier, Colmar, Hollywood Bowl and Dresden Festspiele. "Truly phenomenal" is how *BBC Music Magazine* recently described him.

Named artist-in-association for the 2018-19 season by Utah Symphony, which will include two weeks of performances with

the orchestra and a recording for Hyperion label, other highlights of Quint's forthcoming season will include a special release of new arrangements of works by Charlie Chaplin for Warner Classics Label, debut with Bilbao Orkestra Sinfonikoa, Moscow debut with the National Philharmonic of Russia conducted by Maestro Vladimir Spivakov and taking the Chaplin Project on tour with recitals in Los Angeles, New York, Washington, Boston, Pittsburgh, Berlin, London, Utrecht and Bilbao.

In addition to his award-winning discography, the celebrated American violinist of Russian heritage has won worldwide acclaim playing with the world's leading orchestras and conductors. Quint's appearances in recent seasons have taken him to the London Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony, Seattle Symphony, Detroit Symphony, Indianapolis Symphony, New Jersey Symphony, Minnesota Orchestra, Bournemouth Symphony, Weimar Staatskapelle, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, China National Symphony, Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, Berlin Komische Oper Orchestra, Leipzig's MDR performing under the batons of such renowned conductors as the late Kurt Masur, Edo De Waart, Andrew Litton, Tugan Sokhiev, Ludovic Morlot, James Gaffigan, Carl St. Clair, Michael Stern, Vladimir Spivakov, Cristian Macelaru, Kristian Jarvi, Jorge Mester, Jahja Ling, Krzysztof Urbanski, Carlos Miguel Prieto, Tugan Sokhiev, Tito Munoz, Steven Sloane and Bramwell Tovey.

In the 2016-17 season at the invitation of Maestro Vladimir Spivakov, Quint opened the 28th edition of the Colmar Festival dedicated to Jascha Heifetz with Tugan Sokhiev conducting Orchestre National du Capitole de Toulouse in a performance of Korngold's Violin Concerto. He will make his Moscow debut with National Philharmonic of Russia in March 2019 with Maestro Spivakov conducting Brahms' Violin Concerto.

Born in Leningrad, Soviet Union (now St. Petersburg, Russia), Quint studied at Moscow's Special Music School for the Gifted with the famed Russian violinist Andrei Korsakov. After moving to the United States from the Soviet Union in 1991, he earned both Bachelor's and Master's degrees from The Juilliard School. His distinguished pedagogues and mentors included Dorothy Delay, Cho-Liang Lin, Masao Kawasaki, Isaac Stern, Itzhak Perlman, Arnold Steinhardt and Felix Galimir. Quint plays the magnificent 1708 "Ruby" Antonio Stradivari violin on loan to him through the generous efforts of The Stradivari Society.



CARL ST. CLAIR

The 2018-19 season marks Music Director Carl St. Clair's 29th year leading Pacific Symphony. He is one of the longest-tenured conductors of the major American orchestras. St. Clair's lengthy history solidifies the strong relationship he has forged with the musicians and the community. His continuing role also lends stability to the organization and continuity to his vision for the Symphony's future. Few orchestras can claim such rapid artistic development as Pacific Symphony—the largest-budgeted orchestra formed in the United States in the last 50 years—due in large part to St. Clair's leadership.

During his tenure, St. Clair has become widely recognized for his musically distinguished performances, his commitment to building outstanding educational programs and his innovative approaches to programming. In April 2018, St. Clair led Pacific Symphony in its Carnegie Hall debut, as the finale to the Hall's yearlong celebration of pre-eminent composer Philip Glass' 80th birthday. He led Pacific Symphony on its first tour to China in May 2018, the orchestra's first international tour since touring Europe in 2006. The orchestra made its national PBS debut in June 2018 on "Great Performances" with Peter Boyer's *Ellis Island: The Dream*

of America, conducted by St. Clair. Among St. Clair's many creative endeavors are the highly acclaimed American Composers Festival, which began in 2000; and the opera initiative, "Symphonic Voices," which continues for the eighth season in 2018-19 with Puccini's *Madame Butterfly*, following the concert-opera productions of *The Magic Flute*, *Aida*, *Turandot*, *Carmen*, *La Traviata*, *Tosca* and *La Bohème* in previous seasons.

St. Clair's commitment to the development and performance of new works by composers is evident in the wealth of commissions and recordings by the Symphony. The 2016-17 season featured commissions by pianist/composer Conrad Tao and composer-in-residence Narong Prangcharoen, a follow-up to the recent slate of recordings of works commissioned and performed by the Symphony in recent years. These include William Bolcom's *Songs of Lorca* and *Prometheus* (2015-16), Elliot Goldenthal's *Symphony in G-sharp Minor* (2014-15), Richard Danielpour's *Toward a Season of Peace* (2013-14), Philip Glass' *The Passion of Ramakrishna* (2012-13), and Michael Daugherty's *Mount Rushmore* and *The Gospel According to Sister Aimee* (2012-13). St. Clair has led the orchestra in other critically acclaimed albums including two piano concertos

of Lukas Foss; Danielpour's *An American Requiem* and Goldenthal's *Fire Water Paper: A Vietnam Oratorio* with cellist Yo-Yo Ma. Other commissioned composers include James Newton Howard, Zhou Long, Tobias Picker, Frank Ticheli, Chen Yi, Curt Cacioppo, Stephen Scott, Jim Self (Pacific Symphony's principal tubist) and Christopher Theofanidis.

In 2006-07, St. Clair led the orchestra's historic move into its home in the Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall at Segerstrom Center for the Arts. The move came on the heels of the landmark 2005-06 season that included St. Clair leading the Symphony on its first European tour—nine cities in three countries playing before capacity houses and receiving extraordinary responses and reviews.

From 2008-10, St. Clair was general music director for the Komische Oper in Berlin, where he led successful new productions such as *La Traviata* (directed by Hans Neuenfels). He also served as general music director and chief conductor of the German National Theater and Staatskapelle (GNTS) in Weimar, Germany, where he led Wagner's *Ring Cycle* to critical acclaim. He was the first non-European to hold his position at the GNTS; the role also gave him the distinction of simultaneously leading one of the newest orchestras in America and one of the oldest in Europe.

In 2014, St. Clair became the music director of the National Symphony Orchestra in Costa Rica. His international career also has him conducting abroad several months a year, and he has appeared with orchestras throughout the world. He was the principal guest conductor of the Radio Sinfonieorchester Stuttgart from 1998-2004, where he completed a three-year recording project of the Villa-Lobos symphonies. He has also appeared with orchestras in Israel, Hong Kong, Japan, Australia, New Zealand and South America, and summer festivals worldwide.

In North America, St. Clair has led the Boston Symphony Orchestra (where he served as assistant conductor for several years), New York Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic and the San Francisco, Seattle, Detroit, Atlanta, Houston, Indianapolis, Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver symphonies, among many. A strong advocate of music education for all ages, St. Clair has been essential to the creation and implementation of the Symphony's education and community engagement programs including Pacific Symphony Youth Ensembles, Heartstrings, Sunday Matinéés, OC Can You Play With Us?, *arts-X-press* and *Class Act*.