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from the editor

Any beginning music student can tell you about the basic elements of music—things like melody, harmony, rhythm or the instruments used in a performance. Another element of much great music is the element of surprise. Master composers tend to be innovators, subverting expectations held by audiences of their day. This may happen on a grand scale, like adding voices to a symphony, as Beethoven did in his Ninth. Or it might be a smaller touch such as startling the audience with a sudden fortissimo chord, like Haydn did in his Symphony No. 94—the Surprise Symphony. Occasionally the entire piece is a surprise, including one featured here in April: Wagner’s Siegfried Idyll, composed as an unexpected gift for his wife Cosima. And sometimes a twist comes in the performance, as Cameron Carpenter shows us this month by playing organ in place of piano in Rachmaninoff’s Paganini Variations.

By the time we hear a classical masterpiece, decades or centuries removed from its premiere, the element of surprise as intended by the composer may be diminished. But whether you’re hearing a piece for the first time or the hundredth, try closing your eyes and opening your ears, and you may be surprised by how those simple elements of music—combinations of just twelve different notes, as that beginning student could explain—can make you feel when in the hands of some of the world’s greatest orchestral musicians, and guests like Joshua Bell, Louis Lortie, Cloud Cult, The Steeles and The King’s Singers, in the superb acoustics of Orchestra Hall. And it’s no surprise that the final element needed for any memorable performance is a great audience—so we thank you for joining us today!

Carl Schroeder, Editor
editor@mnorch.org

about the cover
Principal Bassoon Fei Xie, the Minnesota Orchestra’s newest principal musician, who joined the ensemble in September 2017.

Photo: Travis Anderson

concerts

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## Minnesota Orchestral Association

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<td>Marilyn Carlson Nelson *</td>
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<td>Margaret A. Bracken *</td>
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<td>President and CEO</td>
<td>Kevin Smith *</td>
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<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>Martin R. Lueck *</td>
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### Life Directors

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<tr>
<td>Kathy Cunningham *</td>
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### Directors Emeriti

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<td>Andrew Czajkowsk *</td>
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<td>Jane P. Gregerson *</td>
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### Directors

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<td>Shadra J. Hogan *</td>
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<td>Jay V. Bledenfeld *</td>
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<td>Kate T. Kelly</td>
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<td>Michael Klingensmith *</td>
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<td>Mary G. Lawrence, M.D.</td>
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<td>Anita M. Pampusch</td>
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<td>Lisa Roehl +</td>
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<td>President, Friends of the Minnesota Orchestra</td>
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<td>Michael M. Roos</td>
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<td>Dimitrios P. Smyrnitis</td>
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<td>Mary Summers *</td>
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<td>Timothy Welsh *</td>
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<tr>
<td>* Member of Executive Committee</td>
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<td>+ Ex-Officio</td>
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### Friends of the Minnesota Orchestra

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<tr>
<td>Operations Manager</td>
<td>Andrew Christensen</td>
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### YPSCA – Young People’s Symphony Concert Association

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<tr>
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<td>Mary Ella Pratte</td>
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<td>Operations Manager</td>
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This activity is made possible by the voters of Minnesota through a Minnesota State Arts Board Operating Support grant, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the arts and cultural heritage fund.
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Assistant Conductor

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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. He has led the Orchestra on five major European tours and a historic Cuba tour that was the first by an American orchestra since the thaw in Cuban-American diplomatic relations, as well as numerous tours to communities across Minnesota.

In August 2018 he will lead the Orchestra on its first-ever tour to South Africa, performing concerts in Cape Town, Soweto and other cities. In January 2018, he and the Orchestra undertook a Midwestern U.S. tour, performing on the Chicago Symphony Orchestra’s Symphony Center Presents series and visiting universities and community venues in Illinois and Indiana for residencies and concerts.

Vänskä’s recording projects with the Minnesota Orchestra have met with great success, including a Sibelius symphonies cycle, the second album of which won the 2014 Grammy Award for Best Orchestral Performance. In March 2018 BIS released the Orchestra’s newest album, featuring Mahler’s Sixth Symphony—part of a Mahler series that began with a Grammy-nominated Fifth Symphony recording. Other recent releases include an album of in-concert recordings of Sibelius’ Kullervo and Finlandia and Kortekangas’ Migrations; two albums of Beethoven piano concertos featuring Yevgeny Sudbin; a two-CD Tchaikovsky set featuring pianist Stephen Hough; and a particularly widely-praised Beethoven symphonies cycle, of which individual discs were nominated for a Grammy and a Classic FM Gramophone award.

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, the 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 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, attracting worldwide attention for performances and for award-winning Sibelius recordings on the BIS label.

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 and the Mostly Mozart Festival. This season he plays clarinet in a VocalEssence “Finlandia Forever” program and in a program with the Philadelphia Chamber Music Society.

During the 2017-18 season he debuts with the National Symphony Orchestra in Taipei and the Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra and makes return visits to the San Francisco Symphony, Pittsburgh Symphony, Iceland Symphony Orchestra, Orchestre de Paris, Orchestra National de Lyon, SWR Symphonieorchester Stuttgart, Radio Filharmonisch Orkest in Amsterdam, Helsinki Philharmonic, Seoul Philharmonic Orchestra, and Toronto Symphony Orchestra, among other ensembles. For more information, visit minnesotaorchestra.org.
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- Nicola Benedetti, *violin*  
  Alexei Grynyuk, *piano*  
  Fri, Jan 18 & Sun, Jan 20, 2019

- Joyce DiDonato, *mezzo-soprano*  
  Craig Terry, *piano with jazz trio*  
  Mon, Feb 25, 2019

- Gautier Capuçon, *cello*  
  Yuja Wang, *piano*  
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<tr>
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<td><strong>Julie Stemmner</strong> – Executive Assistant to the President and CEO</td>
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<tr>
<td>Beth Kellar-Long – Vice President of Orchestra Administration</td>
<td>Michael B. Pelton – Artistic Planning Manager and Executive Assistant to the Music Director</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kari Marshall – Director of Artistic Planning</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Kris Arkis – Orchestra Personnel Manager</td>
<td>Eric Sjostrom – Associate Principal Librarian</td>
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<tr>
<td>Casey Collins – Artistic Planning Coordinator</td>
<td>Mele Willis – Artistic Operations Manager</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maureen Conroy – Principal Librarian</td>
<td>Matthew Winiecki – Stage Manager</td>
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<tr>
<td>Don Hughes – Stage Manager</td>
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<tr>
<td>Janelle Lanza – Assistant Orchestra Personnel Manager</td>
<td><strong>DEVELOPMENT</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Valerie Little – Assistant Principal Librarian</td>
<td><strong>Digital Services</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Grant Meachum – Director, Live at Orchestra Hall</td>
<td><strong>Grant Henry</strong> – Director of Digital Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>Joel Mooney – Technical Director</td>
<td><strong>FACILITIES</strong></td>
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<td><strong>HUMAN RESOURCES</strong></td>
<td><strong>Ken Lorenz</strong> – Maintenance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MARKETING, GUEST RELATIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS</strong></td>
<td><strong>Jeff Ottersetter</strong> – Concert Porter/Cleaner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MARKETING</strong></td>
<td><strong>Charles Yarbrough</strong> – Building Services Cleaner</td>
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<td>David D. Sailer-Haugland – Vice President of Marketing and Guest Relations</td>
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<td>Laura Corts – Marketing Manager</td>
<td>Brenda Capek – Senior Staff Accountant</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kelly Dominguez – Manager of Business Analytics</td>
<td><strong>HUMAN RESOURCES</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Kathleen Otto</strong> – Director of Human Resources</td>
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<tr>
<td>Greg Geiger – Interim Director of Facility Sales and Concessions</td>
<td>Angela Haughton – Mail Clerk/Stage Door Receptionist</td>
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<tr>
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<td><strong>Leslie Schroeder</strong> – Senior Benefits/Human Resources Administrator</td>
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<td><strong>Tracy Slepica</strong> – Senior Payroll/Human Resources Administrator</td>
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<td>Jen Keye – Director of Marketing</td>
<td><strong>MARKETING, GUEST RELATIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS</strong></td>
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<td>Lee Bowen-Bradshaw – Marketing Coordinator</td>
<td><strong>David D. Sailer-Haugland</strong> – Director of Website and Creative Services</td>
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<td>Laura Corts – Marketing Manager</td>
<td>Emma Smith – Associate Marketing Manager</td>
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<td>Kelly Dominguez – Manager of Business Analytics</td>
<td>Cassandra A. Swan – Director of House, Ticket and Audiences Services</td>
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<td>Sarah Flack – Events and Facility Sales Manager</td>
<td>Katy Winslow McKevel – Ticketing Data Administrator</td>
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<td>Greg Geiger – Interim Director of Facility Sales and Concessions</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>Isaac Risseau – Social Media and Content Coordinator</td>
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<td>Carl Schroeder – Publications Editor</td>
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<td><strong>Kevin Smith</strong> – President and CEO</td>
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**Note:** This roster includes the Minnesota Orchestra's staff as of the date of publication. It reflects the organization's commitment to a diverse and inclusive workforce. The Minnesota Orchestra is known for its long tradition of excellence and innovation in music-making, featuring guest artists and showcasing the talents of its distinguished musicians. The Orchestra's activities include a wide range of events and initiatives, from classical concerts to educational programs, all aimed at engaging and inspiring audiences across the state of Minnesota and beyond.
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.

decade spotlight: 1960s

- In 1960 the Orchestra welcomed its sixth music director, Polish-born Stanislaw Skrowaczewski, who went on to lead the Orchestra for 19 seasons—matching founding Music Director Emil Oberhoffer for the longest tenure in the position. Under Skrowaczewski’s watch, the Orchestra expanded its concert season from 28 weeks to year-round.

- In 1968 the ensemble changed its name from the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra to the Minnesota Orchestra, reflecting its commitment to the entire state. That same year, the Orchestra performed at the United Nations headquarters in New York City for the 20th anniversary of the Declaration of Human Rights.

- Guest artists debuting during the decade included violinist Itzhak Perlman and violinist-comedian Jack Benny, cellists Mstislav Rostropovich and Jacqueline du Pré, pianists André Watts and Daniel Barenboim, and composer-conductor Aaron Copland.

- In 1965 the Orchestra performed its first collaboration with choreographer-dancer Loyce Houlton and Minnesota Dance Theatre, featuring Houlton’s Nutcracker Fantasy set to Tchaikovsky’s ballet music.

- In 1969 Lea Foli became the 17th person to serve as the Orchestra’s concertmaster—all of whom were male. To date, Foli is the last man to hold the position, as his successors have all been women: Jorja Fleezanis (1989-2009), Sarah Kwak (2009-11 in an acting capacity) and Erin Keefe (2011 to present).
Late-comers will be seated at pauses as determined by the conductor.

Children ages 6 and over are welcome at all concerts when accompanied by an adult. Family events are open to all ages.

Cough drops are available; ask an usher. Water bottles are allowed in the Auditorium.

Restrooms are located on all levels. Family/gender neutral bathroom is on east side, Balcony B.

Coat check is not available. Private lockers are offered just outside the rear doors of the Auditorium.

Lost and Found
Contact the Stage Door at 612-371-5626.

ATM
Located on the Main Floor Lobby next to the Marquette Ave. entrance.

Cameras and Recording Equipment
Prohibited during the concert. Please turn off all electronic devices.

Beverages
Beverages without ice are allowed in the Auditorium, except coffee, hot chocolate and red wine. Intermission beverages may be pre-ordered before the concert at all bar locations.

Accessibility and Hearing Enhancement System
Let us know if you have a special need and we will be happy to accommodate. Visit the Audience Services Office near the Marquette Ave. entrance for a hearing enhancement system, large print programs and accessible seating options, or to let us know of any other special needs or requests.

First Aid and Security
Emergency and/or security personnel are present at every Orchestra Hall event. Please ask any usher for assistance. Our trained staff have procedures in place for emergency situations. A safe and secure venue is our top priority at Orchestra Hall.
announcing the Minnesota Orchestra’s 2018–19 season

A festival celebrating American music under the baton of Music Director Osmo Vänskä, a special edition of Common Chords held at community venues in north Minneapolis, and appearances by guest artists from Emanuel Ax to Dessa are just a few highlights of the Minnesota Orchestra’s newly-announced 2018–19 season. Spanning September 2018 to June 2019, the season continues numerous favorite traditions while also adding new twists to the Orchestra’s various concert lineups, including the flagship Classical series, Live at Orchestra Hall, Holiday concerts, Inside the Classics, Chamber Music, Jazz, and Young People’s and Family Concerts.

An American music theme runs throughout the season, with the focal point being a three-week American Expressions Festival in January 2019 that comprises five separate programs of works by composers from this country. Also significant is an increased emphasis on music composed by women, most notably symphonies by 20th-century pioneers Amy Beach and Florence Price. The Orchestra will give the world premiere of a work by John Harbison, the season’s Featured Composer, as part of a special program at the University of Minnesota’s Northrop celebrating the restoration of the venue’s pipe organ. Nearly 40 guest conductors and soloists appear during the Classical season, including pianist Stephen Hough and former Music Director Edo de Waart, while six Orchestra musicians are featured as soloists. Continuing a Mahler symphonies project, the Orchestra will perform and record Mahler’s Seventh and Tenth Symphonies.

The Live at Orchestra Hall series, directed by Sarah Hicks, includes film music concerts at which the Orchestra performs the scores to Star Wars, Jurassic Park, Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban and Star Trek Into Darkness while the movies are screened in full. Guest performers on the Live series include Kristin Chenoweth, Indigo Girls, the U.S. Naval Academy Glee Club and virtuoso musician-comedians Igudesman & Joo. Several favorite programs return during the Holiday season in December, such as Home for the Holidays, Merry & Bright and Bach’s Christmas Oratorio. Inside the Classics, hosted by Sam Bergman and conducted by Sarah Hicks, shines a light on Stravinsky’s Petrushka, Amy Beach’s Gaelic Symphony and music by LGBTQ composers. Rounding out the season are four Chamber concerts, three Jazz in the Target Atrium programs, and a varied lineup of Young People’s and Family Concerts. Subscription packages are available now; single tickets go on sale starting August 3. Mark your calendar and join us often next season—visit minnesotaorchestra.org for full information.
Celebrating South Africa at Sommerfest

Recently announced are plans for Sommerfest 2018, running from July 13 to August 1. The Sommerfest theme is “Music for Mandela,” with programs highlighting South Africa and paying tribute to the late statesman, human rights advocate and Nobel Peace Prize winner Nelson Mandela on his centennial year. Following Sommerfest, the Orchestra will travel to South Africa for a five-city tour, making history as the first major American orchestra ever to visit the country.

Sommerfest will include an International Day of Music; the world premiere of composer Bongani Ndodana-Breen's *Harmonia Ubuntu*, which features words from Mandela's writings and speeches; a performance of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony spotlighting South African vocal soloists; a Mandela tribute concert that highlights international music and speakers; a performance by Grammy-winning choral group Ladysmith Black Mambazo; a collaboration with Books for Africa; and additional concerts that explore musical expressions of peace, freedom and reconciliation.

"Music, especially a very vibrant choral tradition, plays a central role in South African culture," says Music Director Osmo Vänskä. "In advance of our South Africa tour, we are excited to celebrate South African performers, music and Nelson Mandela at Sommerfest, as we present an exchange of music and musical traditions at Orchestra Hall."

At all summer concerts from July 13 to August 1, audiences and the general public are invited to enjoy an array of food and beverage options, outside Orchestra Hall and in the lobby, while listening to free live music by local artists. For full Sommerfest details and ticket purchasing information, go to minnesotaorchestra.org.

critics’ corner: recent concert reviews

[Bernard] Labadie's performance of [Fauré's] Requiem was exceptionally successful....he paced the music beautifully, distilling a soothing atmosphere of elegance and quiet intensity from the performers.

The Minnesota Chorale, fastidiously prepared by artistic director Kathy Saltzman Romey, responded with style and sophistication to Labadie's direction."
—Terry Blain, *Star Tribune*, February 10, 2018

“[I]t's never heard the Rachmaninoff Third [Piano Concerto] played better. I don't give out standing ovations liberally, but [Kirill] Gerstein brought me to my feet immediately...along with everyone else in the hall.”
—Rob Hubbard, *Pioneer Press*, March 1, 2018
Celebrating South Africa at Sommerfest

Recently announced are plans for Sommerfest 2018, running from July 13 to August 1. The Sommerfest theme is “Music for Mandela,” with programs highlighting South Africa and paying tribute to the late statesman, human rights advocate and Nobel Peace Prize winner Nelson Mandela on his centennial year. Following Sommerfest, the Orchestra will travel to South Africa for a five-city tour, as the first American orchestra ever to visit the country.

Sommerfest will include an International Day of Music; the world premiere of composer Bongani Ndodana-Breen’s *Harmonia Ubuntu*, which features words from Mandela’s writings and speeches; a performance of Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony spotlighting South African vocal soloists; a Mandela tribute concert that highlights international music and speakers; a performance with the Ladysmith Black Mambazo, a collaboration with Books for Africa; and additional concerts that explore musical expressions of peace, freedom and reconciliation.

“Music, especially a very vibrant choral tradition, plays a central role in South African culture,” says Music Director Osmo Vänskä. “In advance of our South Africa tour, we are excited to celebrate South African performers, music and Nelson Mandela at Sommerfest, as we present an exchange of music and musical traditions at Orchestra Hall.”

At all summer concerts from July 13 to August 1, audiences and the general public are invited to enjoy an array of food and beverage options, outside Orchestra Hall and in the lobby, while listening to free live music by local artists. For full Sommerfest details and ticket purchasing information, go to minnesotaorchestra.org.

Critics' Corner: Recent Concert Reviews

Anna Morris

#MNorch: Social Media Roundup

Audience members at a concert featuring Ben Folds in January.

Minnesota Orchestra audiences are continuing to light up social media with photos and comments about their Orchestra Hall experiences. You can join in the fun too by using the hashtag #MNorch, and you may see your photos shared in an upcoming issue of *Showcase*!

Visit our social media channels as well for exclusive content such as videos of Orchestra musicians and guest performers playing and explaining their favorite passages including Concertmaster Erin Keefe’s take on Weill’s Violin Concerto, a profile of new Assistant Conductor Akiko Fujimoto by writer Dan Wascoe, an interactive “Guide to the Orchestra” series, and video clips and live tweets from select concerts. Especially popular are our “Instagram Takeovers” as Orchestra musicians, guest artists and audience members take charge of the Orchestra’s Instagram story for a day. We’ll see you online!

Concertgoers posing in front of the stage before a *West Side Story* performance.
meet a musician: Fei Xie

Minnesota Orchestra member
since: September 2017
Position: Principal Bassoon
Hometown: Tang Shan, China
Education: Rice University, Oberlin College

Do you come from a musical family?
Yes, my parents are both Peking Opera musicians, and my uncle is a composer who introduced me to classical music when I was three.

How did you choose to play the bassoon?
The bassoon kind of chose me. I started playing piano at age three, and I studied it until I was 12. When I finished elementary school, I wanted to audition for the middle school attached to the Central Conservatory of Music, one of the best music schools in China. After taking a lesson with one of the professors, she told me that I would not be accepted that year as a pianist, but that I should try to audition for the wind department if I really wanted to get into the school. I went to the audition and a very nice lady asked if I would consider learning the bassoon. I had no idea what the bassoon was at that time. It wasn’t until the next day, when I brought my parents to meet the professor, that I first saw and heard the bassoon, and I fell in love with its beautiful sound!

Where did you play before coming to Minnesota?
I always knew that I wanted to play in an orchestra, so I started taking orchestral auditions when I was in college. My very first job was as the principal bassoon of Mansfield Symphony in Ohio, while I was a junior at Oberlin. My second job was as the second bassoon of the Houston Grand Opera. I won that position while I was a graduate student at Rice University. One year after I graduated from Rice University, I won the second bassoon job in Baltimore Symphony, and later won the principal bassoon audition there. After serving five years as principal bassoon in Baltimore, I joined the Minnesota Orchestra.

Which moment in the bassoon’s orchestral repertoire is your favorite?
I love them all! The bassoon doesn’t get as many solos as the other woodwind instruments, so I love it anytime one is written for bassoon. I really have an interest in storytelling, so if I had to pick one, I’d choose the solo from Scheherazade by Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov.

What do you enjoy doing when you aren’t performing?
I love to cook, particularly authentic homestyle Chinese food. I think cooking is so much like making music. Everyone can look at the same notes, but you play it differently. With cooking, everyone is working with the same ingredients and yet the food always comes out a little bit different. I like to apply things I learn while cooking to music-making, and vice versa. I probably would have become a chef or had a cooking show if I weren’t a musician.

Visit minnesotaorchestra.org/showcase for an extended version of this interview.
join us at Symphony Ball!

There’s still time to get your tickets for the Minnesota Orchestra’s 2018 Symphony Ball gala fundraiser on Saturday, May 12, held at Orchestra Hall and the Hilton Hotel. For the first time in the gala’s 62-year history, the Ball will explore the rich tradition of music composed for films, as the “Sounds of the Cinema” theme spotlights the magic and grandeur of Hollywood.

The evening’s activities include dining, auctions, dancing and a performance by the Minnesota Orchestra under Music Director Osmo Vänskä. The concert portion highlights film music from a broad range of genres, including Westerns, foreign films and jazz—plus music by the brilliant master of the blockbuster movie score, John Williams. In addition, the Orchestra will be joined by indie pop singer-songwriter Jeremy Messersmith, who will collaborate with the Orchestra in a special performance of his music. Additional music and entertainment are provided by the Bryan Nichols Trio, Synergy, D. Ander Other and Trivia Mafia. All are welcome Symphony Ball—newcomers and regulars alike—and you can support and join the celebration at multiple price points, whether attending the entire evening’s events or the Partier portion.

Visit minnesotaorchestra.org/symphonyball for details and ticket information.

tune in online: Joshua Bell concert webcast

Are you a fan of violinist Joshua Bell, but don’t have tickets for his performance with the Minnesota Orchestra and Music Director Osmo Vänskä on Monday, April 23? We’ve got you covered! Hear Bell’s electrifying rendition of music by Wieniawski and Sarasate by visiting our Facebook page at facebook.com/minnesotaorchestra on the night of the concert to watch a live video webcast of the performance. In addition, the concert will be broadcast on stations of Classical Minnesota Public Radio, including KSJN 99.5 FM in the Twin Cities.

Common Chords: coming to Mankato

April will wrap up with the Orchestra visiting Mankato for the latest edition of Common Chords, the Orchestra’s innovative community engagement program that brings the ensemble to Greater Minnesota cities for weeklong residencies. Follow along at minnesotaorchestra.org and on our social media channels for photos and updates from the road, with activities including small ensemble performances throughout the community, musician visits to schools and student ensembles, and two full-Orchestra performances conducted by Assistant Conductor Akiko Fujimoto: a Symphonic Adventures performance at an area high school, and an evening full-Orchestra concert of music by Ravel, Mozart and Tchaikovsky. Next up for Common Chords is the Orchestra’s first-ever weeklong residency in north Minneapolis, held in January 2019.
play it like Hermès
Our Love Is Here to Stay:
Charles Lazarus and The Steeles
with the Minnesota Orchestra

Roderick Cox, conductor
Charles Lazarus, trumpet | The Steeles, vocalists
Tommy Barbarella, keyboards, arranger and producer | Cory Wong, guitar
Jeff Bailey, bass | David Schmalenberger, drums | Ken Chastain, percussion

Live at Orchestra Hall
Friday, April 6, 2018, 8 pm | Orchestra Hall

With this concert we gratefully recognize Margot and Paul Grangaard for their generous contribution to the Minnesota Orchestra’s Investing in Inspiration campaign.

Tonight’s concert features arrangements of hit music from great songwriters and artists including George Gershwin, Miles Davis, Stevie Wonder, Earth Wind & Fire, Chicago, Curtis Mayfield, The Stylistics, Herb Alpert, Chuck Mangione, Marvin Gaye, Burt Bacharach, Michael Jackson and Prince.

Charles Lazarus, a member of the Minnesota Orchestra’s trumpet section since 2000, has masterminded several original productions with the Orchestra, serving as soloist, composer and bandleader. He has created and starred in three original orchestral shows featuring his jazz ensemble: A Night in the Tropics, American Riffs, and Fly Me to the Moon. In addition, his holiday concert Merry & Bright has been performed annually at Orchestra Hall since 2015. In 2015 he and the Orchestra performed the world premiere of American Nomad, a trumpet concerto composed for him by Steve Heitzeg; Lazarus and the Orchestra will reprise this work in January 2019. Lazarus’ composition A Perfect Square, paired with Michael Hall’s book of the same name, was recently made into a children’s animated short film. His four solo recordings, Solo Settings, Zabava, Merry & Bright and Lovejoy, showcase his wide-ranging talent and feature collaborations with diverse composers, arrangers and performers, including Orchestra musicians. He serves on the trumpet faculty at the University of Minnesota. More: minnesotaorchestra.org or charleslazarus.com.
The Steeles—five siblings J.D., Fred, Jearlyn, Jevetta and Billy—have been singing together since they were children growing up in Gary, Indiana. They performed with the Minnesota Orchestra most recently in a halftime show at the inaugural Minnesota Vikings game at U.S. Bank Stadium in September 2016. They have recorded and performed with Prince as well as super producers Jimmy Jam and Terry Lewis, and they have shared the stage with Donald Fagen, Morgan Freeman, George Clinton, the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, Mavis Staples and the Blind Boys of Alabama, among many others, and performed on A Prairie Home Companion. The family has traveled around the world performing the acclaimed musical The Gospel at Colonus, including a Broadway run at the Lunt Fontanne theatre in 1988. They have also performed for 3M, Target, AMBEV, U.S. Bank, the Make-A-Wish Foundation, Boys and Girls Club of America, Tubman, and the Military Family Tribute at the Minnesota State Capitol. In 2014, the NBA used one of their recordings to promote its basketball season. Their heartfelt, melodic sounds have been shared throughout the U.S. and around the world in Greece, France, England, Scotland, Spain, Italy, Russia, Brazil, India and Austria. The Steeles have also contributed to several soundtracks including the award-winning documentary Hoop Dreams, Graffiti Bridge, Blank Man, In The Meantime on UpTV, and Corrina, Corrina. Collectively they have several Gold and Platinum albums and have earned the Sally Award in Education. More: thesteelesmusic.com.

Multitalented pianist Tommy Barbarella worked extensively with Prince, among many other artists, and arranged Purple Rain for the Minnesota Orchestra's September 2016 performance at the Minnesota Vikings home opener. Cory Wong is the guitar player for the fast-rising funk band Vulfpeck and has played with many artists including Ben Rector, Gene Simmons, Blake Shelton, The Blind Boys of Alabama and Bootsy Collins. Jeff Bailey is active as a bass performer, composer, producer and educator. He has performed with many renowned jazz artists, and he was the bass department head at McNally Smith College of Music. Percussionist David Schmalenberger performs with nationally renowned artists and is active as a clinician. He was the assistant head of the percussion department at McNally Smith College of Music. Ken Chastain scores, sound designs and mixes TV commercials and films as head of audio post production, chief engineer and composer at Pixel Farm. He can be heard performing on records from Switchfoot and Miley Cyrus to Ziggy Marley.

Roderick Cox, now in his second full season as the Minnesota Orchestra's associate conductor after one year as assistant conductor, won critical and audience praise for his subscription performances with the Orchestra in January and October 2017. He regularly conducts the Orchestra in Young People's Concerts, family programs, outdoor community concerts and special performances such as last October's "Send Me Hope" collaboration with church choirs from north Minneapolis and other local performers. Tonight's performance marks his debut on the Live at Orchestra Hall series; in July he will lead two Symphony in 60 concerts. A native of Macon, Georgia, he served as assistant conductor of the Alabama Symphony Orchestra and music director of the Alabama Symphony Youth Orchestra. His other recent honors include winning a Solti Foundation Career Assistance Award and being selected by the League of American Orchestras for the prestigious Bruno Walter National Conducting Preview. In addition, he is one of five conductors from around the globe invited to work with Amsterdam's Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra at its Chief Conductor Danielle Gatti’s annual conducting masterclass in June 2018. More: minnesotaorchestra.org, roderickcox.com.
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Cloud Cult

with the Minnesota Orchestra

Sarah Hicks, conductor
Shannon Frid-Rubin, violin | Jeremy Harvey, percussion | Craig Minowa, guitar, vocals and composer
Shawn Neary, trombone, bass and banjo | Sarah Perbix, piano, trumpet and French horn
Daniel Zamzow, cello | Scott West, live painter | Connie Minowa, live painter | Andy Thompson, arranger

Live at Orchestra Hall

Saturday, April 7, 2018, 8 pm | Orchestra Hall
Sunday, April 8, 2018, 7 pm | Orchestra Hall

Tonight's program will be announced from the stage. There will be one intermission.

Across more than two decades, Cloud Cult has earned critical praise for their performances and ten full-length studio albums, plus a live album with film, a documentary and a series of short films. Their latest studio album and feature-length film The Seeker have been featured on outlets such as NPR’s On Being and Entertainment Weekly. The common thread running through Cloud Cult’s activities as a creative collective is their uplifting message, continual celebration of life and love and catharsis through music.

The band’s environmental efforts are unmatched. Cloud Cult’s founder Craig Minowa and his wife Connie formed Earthology in 1999, a not-for-profit organization focused on providing tools for environmental sustainability to individuals, schools and businesses. Minowa founded the Earthology Records branch to help green the music industry, and co-developed the first 100% postconsumer recycled CD packaging in the U.S. market. The band began zero net greenhouse gas practices for tours long before it was fashionable, and their merchandise is 100% postconsumer recycled or made of certified organic materials. Cloud Cult has also planted several thousand trees to absorb the band’s CO₂ output, their studio is powered by geothermal energy and built partially from reclaimed wood and recycled plastic, and they donate heavily to projects that build wind turbines as revenue generators on Native American reservations.

The band has toured consistently throughout their career, and their shows always feature live painters on stage, a longstanding tradition for the group. Last year they played live along with the film The Seeker, and in 2018 they played a sold out show as part of Lincoln Center’s American Songbook series. For more information, visit cloudcult.com.

Sarah Hicks, the Minnesota Orchestra’s principal conductor of Live at Orchestra Hall, has led a broad range of programs since joining the Orchestra as assistant conductor in 2006. Her upcoming concerts with the Orchestra include performances with Cirque de la Symphonie as well as an Inside the Classics program. Earlier this season she led performances with Ben Folds, Rufus Wainwright, Leslie Odom Jr. and Pink Martini, as well as film music concerts including Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets ™ and La La Land. She also led a new “Home for the Holidays” program conceived and directed by Peter Rothstein and written by Kevin Kling. She debuts this season with the Calgary Symphony and the Danish National Symphony Orchestra. She has recently conducted the San Francisco Symphony, Cincinnati Pops Orchestra and San Diego Symphony, and debuted with the major orchestras in Melbourne, Brisbane, Montreal, Toronto and Lisbon. More: minnesotaorchestra.org.
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Wagner, Liszt and Schumann

Minnesota Orchestra
Markus Stenz, conductor
Louis Lortie, piano

Friday, April 13, 2018, 8 pm | Orchestra Hall
Saturday, April 14, 2018, 8 pm | Orchestra Hall

Richard Wagner
Siegfried Idyll  ca. 17'

Franz Liszt
Concerto No. 1 in E-flat major for Piano and Orchestra
Allegro maestoso
Quasi adagio - Allegretto vivace
Allegro marziale animato
Louis Lortie, piano  ca. 21'

INTERMISSION  ca. 20'

Robert Schumann
Symphony No. 2 in C major, Opus 61
Sostenuto assai - Allegro ma non troppo
Scherzo: Allegro vivace
Adagio espressivo
Allegro molto vivace  ca. 34'

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

Markus Stenz most recently visited the Minnesota Orchestra in 2005, conducting Mahler’s Sixth Symphony. He is now the chief conductor of the Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra, principal guest conductor of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra and conductor in residence of the Seoul Philharmonic Orchestra. He has conducted many of the world’s leading orchestras, and he is known for his vibrant, masterful musical interpretations, and his special passion for German orchestral works. His 2017-18 season includes performances with the St. Louis, Colorado, Utah and San Diego symphonies, as well as international engagements at major halls in Brazil, Britain, Finland, France, Germany, Japan, the Netherlands and South Korea. His previous positions have included general music director of the City of Cologne and Gürzenich-Kapellmeister, principal guest conductor of the Hallé Orchestra, music director of the Montepulciano Festival, principal conductor of the London Sinfonietta, and artistic director and chief conductor of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra.


Louis Lortie, piano

French Canadian pianist Louis Lortie has appeared with the Minnesota Orchestra several times since his Orchestra Hall debut in 1989. He is currently the artist in residence at the Shanghai Symphony, with which he performs four different programs throughout this season. His other engagements in the 2017-18 season include performances with the Chicago, BBC, Dallas and Adelaide symphony orchestras, and at the annual Liszt Festival in Raiding, Austria. He also performs two recitals at London’s Wigmore Hall and embarks on an extensive recital tour in Italy. He has made more than 45 recordings for the Chandos label, covering repertoire from Mozart to Stravinsky, including a set of the complete Beethoven sonatas and the complete Liszt Années de Pèlerinage, which was named one of the ten best recordings of 2012 by The New Yorker. His current recording projects include Poulenc works for piano and orchestra with the BBC Philharmonic and music by Fauré and Scriabin. More: seldycramerartists.com, louislortie.com.

Wagner: Siegfried Idyll

The Siegfried Idyll, one of Wagner’s few purely instrumental works, is lovely, warm and melodic music. Conceived as a love token from the composer to his wife Cosima, it was premiered as a surprise to her on Christmas morning, with the musicians performing on the staircase to her bedroom.

Liszt: Piano Concerto No. 1

The powerful main theme of Liszt’s First Piano Concerto, punctuated each time by winds and brass, finds key moments to recur throughout the work’s four movements, which are played without pause. Among the musical highlights are the cascading notes in the piano cadenzas, the poetic Quasi adagio second movement and the unusually prominent use of the triangle.

Schumann: Symphony No. 2

Echoing Schumann’s own mental strife, the Second Symphony opens in a troubled, shadowy landscape, with many of its melodies wandering or melancholic. As it progresses, the music grows in confidence and concludes with emotional, triumphant gestures.
An understanding of Wagner’s lovely *Siegfried Idyll* requires some knowledge of the details of that composer’s irregular personal life. In 1864, at the age of 51, Wagner began an affair with 27-year-old Cosima von Bülow, the daughter of Franz Liszt and wife of pianist-conductor Hans von Bülow. Wagner and Cosima’s daughter Isolde was born the following April, on the same day Bülow conducted the first rehearsal of *Tristan and Isolde*. All concerned agreed to keep details of the situation a secret, and the infant’s birth certificate listed Bülow as the father, Wagner as the godfather. Cosima bore Wagner two more children, a daughter Eva in 1867 and a son Siegfried in 1869, and moved in with him in 1868. Finally, in 1870—after a six-year relationship and three children—the couple was married.

A Christmas surprise

That fall, Cosima became aware that Wagner was working on a project he would not describe to her, and for good reason: it was to be one of the best surprises in the history of music. On Christmas morning, Cosima, asleep with 18-month-old Siegfried, awoke to the sound of music. Her husband had secretly composed and rehearsed a piece for small orchestra, and now that orchestra, arranged on the staircase leading to Cosima’s bedroom, gave this music its most unusual premiere.

This music was not just a token of love and a Christmas present, but also a birthday present: Cosima had turned 33 a few weeks earlier. It is based on themes from Wagner’s (at that time still unperformed) opera *Siegfried*, but it also uses a child’s cradle song and other themes with personal meaning for Wagner and Cosima. Their private title for the piece was *Tribschen Idyll*: they were living at Tribschen on Lake Lucerne in Switzerland at the time, and Cosima felt that the music was an embodiment of their life and love in these years. When in 1878, pressed for cash, Wagner had the music published under the now-familiar title *Siegfried Idyll*, Cosima confessed in her diary: “My secret treasure is becoming common property; may the joy it will give mankind be commensurate with the sacrifice I am making.”

As good love music should be, the *Siegfried Idyll* is gentle, warm, and melodic. Listeners familiar with the opera *Siegfried* will recognize some of the themes, all associated with the young hero Siegfried: his horn call, the bird call from the *Forest Murmurs* sequence, and others. Wagner also quotes, in the oboe near the beginning, the old cradle song “Sleep, Little Child, Sleep.” At its premiere, this music was performed on Cosima’s staircase by an orchestra of 15 players, though the bass player was around a corner and could not see Wagner conduct.

**Instrumentation:** flute, oboe, 2 clarinets, bassoon, 2 horns, trumpet and strings

Program note by Eric Bromberger.
Concerto’s two opening measures: “Das versteht ihr alle nicht—haha!” (The German words conform to the rhythm, though the English translation does not: “None of you understand this—ha-ha!”)

The story sounds believable. Certainly Bülow never passed up an opportunity to express his sense of superiority. I cannot say what exactly he and Liszt had in mind. It is easy to be dazzled by the flying octaves in this concerto (after all, that is what they are for) and to take note of the unusual prominence accorded the triangle (and for some to take umbrage as well), and perhaps the point that Liszt and Bülow were trying to make, even if they were only talking to each other, is that there is more to the E-flat Concerto than that—more invention, more wit and more poetry. Liszt may have been one of the 19th century’s most exasperating underachievers, to say nothing of committing the unforgivable sin of success on a staggering scale, but he was a genius.

**the music: ambiguous harmony, passion and drama**

**allegro maestoso.** “Das versteht ihr alle nicht”—as goes Liszt and Bülow’s lyric—is a simple and powerful phrase for strings in octaves; “haha!” is a firm punctuation mark added by woodwinds and brass. Liszt repeats the phrase a step lower, leading to a startlingly different harmony. At this point, widening the harmonic horizons still further, the pianist makes his presence known in an imposing cadenza. There, in essence, is Liszt’s method for this astonishing movement, which is filled with harmonic ambiguity. Again and again he returns to his opening phrase; and each time it leads to something new, to a recitative, to a lyric melody, to thundering octaves, and finally to weightlessly glittering passagework that ends the movement in a puff of smoke.

**quasi adagio–allegretto vivace–allegro marziale animato.** Liszt connects the second, third and fourth movements together without pause. He does not specify *attacca* in the transition from the first movement to the second, but it is clear that this is what he means. The strings lead off and suggest a melody that the piano then sings for us in full. This is one of Liszt’s most beautiful inspirations, full of passion and poetry.

When the passions have calmed, woodwind soloists present a new idea against a decorative background provided by piano and strings. But when the clarinet offers to bring back the great melody from the beginning of the movement, there is an interruption: silence, the ping of a triangle, and the dancing reply of plucked strings. Berlioz, on the podium at the concerto’s premiere, must have been delighted by this bow to his Faustian goblins.

Liszt breaks off this scherzo for a cadenza. The pianist recalls the beginning of the concerto, and suddenly those pages loom large again in a dramatic and developing restatement, which in turn opens the way for the martial finale.

**Instrumentation:** solo piano with orchestra comprising 2 flutes, piccolo, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, timpani, cymbals, triangle and strings

Program note excerpted from the late Michael Steinberg’s The Concerto: A Listener’s Guide (Oxford University Press, 1998), used with permission.

**Robert Schumann**

*Born:* June 8, 1810, Zwickau, Germany  
*Died:* July 29, 1856, Endenich (near Bonn), Germany

**Symphony No. 2 in C major**,  
**Opus 61**  
**Premiered:** November 5, 1846

As Robert Schumann entered his 30s, he had established himself as a family man; thanks to an honorary degree from the University of Jena he was now Herr Doktor Schumann; and, no doubt with plenty of urging from his wife Clara, he was eager to prove himself in the more ambitious calling of the larger forms of the symphony, the string quartet and the oratorio.

Here we encounter the influence of Beethoven, as we will almost anywhere in a study of 19th-century instrumental music. In Schumann’s Symphony No. 1, the *Spring* Symphony, the debt to Beethoven is less direct, but more than once we hear echoes of Beethoven’s Fourth. In his great Symphony No. 2, Schumann confronted Beethoven the symphonist head-on. Like Beethoven’s Fifth, Schumann’s Second traces a course from adversity to triumph that most listeners in the day had no difficulty in recognizing. Schumann’s boldness was rewarded: This became the greatest of his symphonies, a judgment about which most mid-19th-century listeners found themselves in ready agreement.

The symphony’s premiere, however, was not a happy event. Felix Mendelssohn conducted the first performance at the Gewandhaus in Leipzig on November 5, 1846. The concert’s first half consisted of excerpts from Weber’s *Euryanthe* and Rossini’s *William Tell*, and Schumann’s symphony was performed by a tired orchestra and conductor to an audience too tired to absorb this difficult new work. Moreover, the *William Tell* Overture had been encored, and Schumann’s rancorous supporters accused those who had demanded the encore—and even Mendelssohn—of sabotaging his symphony.

**music from convalescence**

Schumann’s Symphony No. 2 is music written in convalescence. The composer began work on it in the latter part of 1845 and
completed it the following year. He had suffered his first bout of what was then called “melancholia” in 1828, and more such sieges, many of them accompanied by frighteningly concrete suicide fantasies, followed in 1830, 1831, 1833, 1837, 1838, 1839 and 1842. His breakdown in August 1844, with trembling, tinnitus and phobias (especially with regard to heights and sharp metallic objects) was the worst of any. Several years after this misery, he wrote to D. G. Otten, a conductor in Hamburg, that he feared the “semi-invalid state [could] be divined from the music [of the Second Symphony]. I began to feel more myself when I wrote the last movement and was certainly much better when I finished the whole work. All the same, it reminds me of dark days.”

the music: beautiful and enigmatic, with nods to the past sostenuto assai–allegro ma non troppo. The Second Symphony starts with a slow introduction—not one that exudes assurance, but one that is troubled. Brass instruments sound a summons, but the music of the wandering strings casts strange shadows across it. The summons itself, the keynote and fifth note of the scale, is so simple as to be virtually a cliché. The Allegro, which this dark exordium struggles to find, is a jagged thing, pierced even on its last pages by the summons of the first measures.

This is an interestingly eccentric movement. The first theme is sharply rhythmic, with biting accents on the second of the three beats in each measure. The harmonies veer far to the flat side before settling in the dominant, G major, with a new theme, smooth in outline, urgent in expression. The exposition is very short, and the development, mostly concerned with material from the later part of the exposition, is about two and a half times as long. Schumann, I suspect, had been studying Beethoven’s Eroica. Similarly, the coda is extraordinarily and powerfully expansive.

scherzo: allegro vivace. To offset the intensity of the first Allegro, Schumann brings not the slow movement we expect, but a Scherzo. Like the one in the Spring Symphony, it has two trios. The first one here is rustic, while the other offers a touching blend of the dreamy and the learned.

The second trio also presents, first shyly, then with growing confidence, the name BACH (B-flat/A/C/B-natural, if you use the German names for the notes). Schumann had spent the recuperative months of 1845 in an intensive study of Bach, which he felt had greatly contributed to his recovery, and his two sets of fugues, Opus 72 and Opus 60 (the latter also on the name BACH), date from that time. On the Scherzo’s last page, the fanfare rings out in triumph. The Scherzo itself is the only out-and-out virtuoso piece among Schumann’s symphonies. In all probability, every violinist in every major orchestra today has had to play its opening page at his or her audition.

**adagio espressivo.** Neither of the two Schumann symphonies that preceded this one (the Spring and the first version of what we now know as No. 4) had a true slow movement; here Schumann gives us one of heart-stopping beauty.

**allegro molto vivace.** The finale is an original and extraordinary conception in expression and structure, and, I would say, a sign of marvelous mental health. It begins with a fierce rush of energy—to be specific, a scale followed by four chords—which clears the path for an athletic, jolly and perhaps surprisingly neutral first theme.

Next, the melody of the Adagio is revisited at high speed. The first theme returns briefly, after which the initial scale, followed now by six chords, provides fuel for a vigorous development, in which remembrances from the first and third movements also have a part to play.

This driving music sings to a quiet, spacious close in C minor. What follows is one of the most tenderly poetic moments in the whole symphonic literature. It turns out that the oboe had listened carefully, as we perhaps did not, to the way the four chords of the opening gesture turned into six. At any rate, it now transforms those macho chords into a lyric melody of the most poignant sweetness, the sense of distance and mystery being enhanced by the strangeness in this context of the key, E-flat major.

After a tremendous building over rolling drums and rushing scales, the melody appears in the strings as an all but literal quotation from Beethoven’s song cycle An die ferne Geliebte (To the Distant Beloved). This song had poignant significance in Schumann’s personal life. He had cited the same phrase in the glorious Piano Fantasy of 1836—a year of enforced physical separation from Clara. Now, in the mid-1840s, they were together as husband and wife, as parents of four children. But in some painful way, there was still a void between Lover and Beloved.

Nevertheless, the tender melancholy of this allusion is swept aside by gestures of triumph, by the sound of the C-major summons with which this beautiful and enigmatic symphony began. It might be some time before you realize that, while the opening four measure flourish assumed greater and greater significance throughout the finale, the “official” first and second themes had vanished from circulation altogether.

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

*Program note excerpted from the late Michael Steinberg’s The Symphony: A Listener’s Guide (Oxford University Press, 1996), used with permission.*
The King’s Singers GOLD

Patrick Dunachie, countertenor | Timothy Wayne-Wright, countertenor
Julian Gregory, tenor | Christopher Bruerton, baritone
Christopher Gabbitas, baritone | Jonathan Howard, bass

Live at Orchestra Hall
Sunday, April 15, 2018, 2 pm | Orchestra Hall

GREAT MUSIC MUST SHINE.
We want to take you on a new musical adventure to celebrate The King’s Singers’ 50th birthday. It’s an adventure that gives thanks for all the music that’s defined our first 50 years, inspired by the unique maverick spirit that guided the original six King’s Singers to keep every performance as fresh and varied as possible. We still share their mission today: the future of music deserves to shine as brightly as it can. This is about savoring the amazing diversity of music and musicians in our world today, holding up composers, songwriters and singers of all kinds side by side to create something truly special. Come and join us for the ride.

THIS IS GOLD.

THE FAMILY
Henry Ley
Bob Chilcott
The Prayer of King Henry VI
We are*

THE JOY OF THE RENAISSANCE
Juan Vásquez
Orlando Lassus
Lagrimas de mi Consuelo
Dessus le marché d’Arras

THE NEWCOMER
Toby Hession
Master of Music*

THE BEAUTY OF THE ROMANTIC ERA
Franz Schubert
Josef Rheinberger
Die Nacht
Abendlied

THE PHILOSOPHER
Tôru Takemitsu
Handmade Proverbs

THE ROMANCE OF FOLKSONG
Traditional/arr. Bob Chilcott
Traditional/arr. Goff Richards
Shenandoah
Lamorna

THE ENTERTAINER
Joanna and Alexander L’Estrange
Quintessentially*

INTERMISSION ca. 20’
The King’s Singers were officially born on May 1, 1968, formed by six recently-graduated choral scholars from King’s College, Cambridge. Their vocal line-up was two countertenors, a tenor, two baritones and a bass, and the group has never wavered from this formation. 2018 marks the 50th birthday of the group, and to celebrate, The King’s Singers are presenting their anniversary season: GOLD. Throughout its history, the group has been welcomed on the world’s great stages, from London’s Royal Albert Hall to the Opera House in Sydney and New York’s Carnegie Hall. Two Grammy® Awards, an Emmy® Award, and a place in Gramophone magazine’s inaugural Hall of Fame are among their numerous accolades.

A love of diversity has always fueled The King’s Singers’ commitment to creating new music. They have commissioned works by many of the supreme composers of our times, including Sir John Tavener, Tōru Takemitsu, John Rutter, Luciano Berio, Nico Muhly, György Ligeti and Eric Whitacre. The group is determined to spread the joy of ensemble singing, and leads workshops and residential courses all over the world each season. More: kingsingers.com.
Chamber Music with
Members of the Minnesota Orchestra

Sunday, April 15, 2018, 4:30 pm | Target Atrium, Orchestra Hall

With this concert we gratefully recognize Dr. Jennine and John Speier for their generous contribution to the Minnesota Orchestra’s Investing in Inspiration campaign.

Felix Mendelssohn
String Quartet No. 2 in A major, Opus 13
Adagio – Allegro vivace
Adagio non lento
Intermezzo: Allegretto con moto – Allegro di molto
Presto – Adagio non lento
   Susie Park, violin | Milana Elise Reiche, violin
   Rebecca Albers, viola | Pitnarry Shin, cello

Wilhelm Fitzenhagen
Concert Waltzes for Four Cellos, Opus 31
   Silver Ainomäe, cello | Anthony Ross, cello
   Pitnarry Shin, cello | Arek Tesarczyk, cello

Igor Stravinsky
Pulcinella Suite for Four Cellos
   Introduzione
   Serenata
   Finale
   Silver Ainomäe, cello | Katja Linfield, cello
   Anthony Ross, cello | Arek Tesarczyk, cello

Astor Piazzolla/
arr. Evan Orman
Two Tangos for Five Cellos and Bandoneon
   Adios Nonino
   Libertango
   Silver Ainomäe, cello | Marcia Peck, cello | Beth Rapier, cello
   Anthony Ross, cello | Pitnarry Shin, cello | Evan Orman, bandoneon

INTERMISSION

ca. 15’

Wolfgang Amadè Mozart
String Quintet No. 4 in G minor, K. 516
   Allegro
   Menuetto and Trio: Allegretto
   Adagio ma non troppo
   Adagio – Allegro
   Rebecca Carruccini, violin | Cecilia Belcher, violin
   Sam Bergman, viola | Megan Tam, viola | Beth Rapier, cello

Profiles of today’s performers are provided in an insert.
Cameron Carpenter Plays Rachmaninoff

**Minnesota Orchestra**

Klaus Mäkelä, conductor
Cameron Carpenter, organ

Friday, April 20, 2018, 8 pm | Orchestra Hall
Saturday, April 21, 2018, 8 pm | Orchestra Hall

**Modest Mussorgsky**/orch.
Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov

**Prelude to Khovanshchina**
ca. 5’

**Sergei Rachmaninoff**/arr.
Cameron Carpenter

**Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini, Opus 23,**
arranged for Organ and Orchestra
Cameron Carpenter, organ
ca. 23’

**INTERMISSION**
ca. 20’

**Dmitri Shostakovich**

**Symphony No. 5 in D minor, Opus 47**
Moderato
Allegretto
Largo
Allegro non troppo
ca. 48’

Please join us onstage following the Saturday evening concert for a reception with Minnesota Orchestra musicians.

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

Finnish conductor and cellist Klaus Mäkelä makes his Minnesota Orchestra debut in these concerts. He has already made a significant impact on the Finnish musical landscape and is now making major debuts across Europe, Scandinavia, the U.S., Canada and Japan. In the 2018-19 season, Mäkelä will be principal guest conductor with the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra and artist in association with Tapiola Sinfonietta. This season he also debuts with the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra, Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra, National Arts Centre Orchestra (Ottawa), Tokyo Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra, NDR Radiophilharmonie, Orchestre National du Capitole de Toulouse and Iceland Symphony Orchestra. He has conducted many Finnish orchestras and appears regularly with the Helsinki Philharmonic, Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra, Tampere Philharmonic, Turku Philharmonic, Tapiola Sinfonietta and Ostrobothnian Chamber Orchestra. More: harrisonparrott.com, klausmakela.com.

Cameron Carpenter, organ

Cameron Carpenter is the world's most visible organist, and the first ever nominated for a Grammy Award for a solo album. A virtuoso composer-performer, he is known for breaking down the stereotypes of organists, organ music and classical music. He has performed at top venues including Royal Albert Hall and the Leipzig Gewandhaus, and he performs regularly with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, San Francisco Symphony, Berlin Philharmonic and National Symphony Orchestra. His first major work for organ and orchestra, The Scandal, was commissioned by the Cologne Philharmonic and premiered in 2011 by the Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie under the direction of Alexander Shelley. His newest album, All You Need Is Bach, was released by SONY and topped the Billboard Classical charts at #1 in both the U.S. and Europe. He travels and performs on his International Touring Organ (ITO), the world's first truly artistic digital organ. Turn to the Rachmaninoff program note beginning on page 34 for additional information. More: camimusic.com, cameroncarpenter.com.

Mussorgsky: Prelude to Khovanshchina
Delicate harmonies, sweet folk tunes and morning church bells animate this exquisite tone poem, extracted from an unfinished Russian nationalist opera, that depicts dawn on the Moscow River.

Rachmaninoff/Carpenter: Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini
A twisting Paganini melody is the basis for Rachmaninoff’s ingenious set of 24 variations. The famous 18th variation turns Paganini’s theme upside down, transforming it into a gorgeous, moonlit love song. Rachmaninoff wrote the solo part for piano, but tonight it is played on organ in an exciting new version that arranger-performer Cameron Carpenter calls “Rachmaninoff on steroids.”

Shostakovich: Symphony No. 5
Shostakovich’s Fifth, the most frequently performed of his 15 symphonies, is forceful and questioning. It imitates the form of a classical symphony until its icy third movement, scored without brass, as gorgeous melodies rise and fall. Dueling critics have interpreted the finale as either triumphant or bitingly sarcastic.
The most original voice among the “Mighty Handful” of five 19th-century Russian composers was that of Mussorgsky, who was both the genius of the group and its most unstable personality. When he died from the effects of alcoholism at age 42, he left several of his most important compositions unfinished, including the opera *Khovanshchina*, to which Rimsky-Korsakov then put his hand. While Mussorgsky’s *Boris Godunov* has become one of the most well-known Russian operas, *Khovanshchina* has held the stage far less often. In the meantime we must make do with the attractive orchestral episodes that have carved a place in the concert hall.

*a prolonged project, rescued by Rimsky-Korsakov*

As we know from *Boris Godunov* and *Pictures at an Exhibition*, Mussorgsky was an avid Russian nationalist. His most eloquent expression of the national soul was in songs and operas, while his purely orchestral efforts were minimal. In 1872 he began to collect historical and musical materials for *Khovanshchina*. The work dealt with the political disturbances under the regency which preceded Peter the Great’s full accession to the throne, probing the collision between the old feudalism and the czarist reforms, a crucial time in late 17th-century Russian history.

Instead of drafting a cogent scenario, Mussorgsky assembled fragments of a libretto, being carried away by the historical sources into which he delved. By 1873 he began to create the music, which occupied him intermittently until the summer of 1880. Noting his obsessive drinking, his friends worried about the future of the opera. Their fears were not unfounded, and *Khovanshchina* loomed importantly in the pile of unpublished manuscripts left at his death in 1881. It was the first work to be rescued by Rimsky-Korsakov. Once completed and orchestrated, the opera was produced by an amateur group in St. Petersburg on February 21, 1886. Rimsky-Korsakov omitted some passages that were subsequently orchestrated by Ravel and Stravinsky; Shostakovich also produced his own version and orchestration of the opera.

**Instrumentation:** 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, timpani, tamtam, harp and strings

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**Modest Mussorgsky**

*Born:* March 21, 1839, Karevo, Russia  
* Died:* March 28, 1881, St. Petersburg, Russia  

**Prelude to Khovanshchina**

*Premiered:* February 21, 1886

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**Sergei Rachmaninoff**

*Born:* April 1, 1873, Oneg, Novgorod, Russia  
* Died:* March 28, 1943, Beverly Hills, California  

**Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini, Opus 23, arranged for Organ and Orchestra by Cameron Carpenter**

*Premiered:* November 7, 1934 (original version); July 17, 2015 (Cameron Carpenter arrangement)

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In the spring of 1934 Rachmaninoff, then 61, and his wife moved into a villa they had just built on Lake Lucerne in Switzerland. They were delighted by the house, its opulent size and its view across the beautiful lake. Rachmaninoff was especially touched to find a surprise waiting for him there: the Steinway Company of New York had delivered a brand new piano to the villa.

**a tune that beckons composers**

Rachmaninoff spent the summer gardening and landscaping, and he also composed. Between July 3 and August 24 he wrote a set of variations for piano and orchestra on what is undoubtably the most varied theme in the history of music, the last of Niccolo Paganini’s Twenty-Four Caprices for Solo Violin. Paganini had written that devilish tune, full of rhythmic spring and chromatic tension, in 1820, and he himself had followed it with 12 variations. That same theme has haunted composers through each century since—resulting in variations on it by Liszt (*Transcendental Etudes*), Schumann (12 Concert Études) and Brahms (the two sets of Paganini Variations) in the 19th century.
followed in the 20th century by Witold Lutosławski, Boris Blacher and George Rochberg. And there may be more to come.

After considering several titles for his new work, the composer settled on Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini, a title that places the focus on melody and somewhat disguises the ingenious variation-technique at the center of this music. The first performance, with the composer as soloist, took place in Baltimore on November 7, 1934, with Leopold Stokowski conducting the Philadelphia Orchestra. Pleased and somewhat surprised by the work's reception, Rachmaninoff observed dryly: “It somehow looks suspicious that the Rhapsody has had such an immediate success with everybody.”

**bravura solos, brilliant contrasts**

The Rhapsody has a surprising beginning: a brief orchestral flourish containing hints of the theme leads to the first variation, which is presented before the theme itself is heard. This gruff and hard-edged variation, which Rachmaninoff marks *Précédente*, is in fact the bass line for Paganini’s theme, which is then presented in its original form by both violin sections in unison. Some of the variations last a matter of minutes, while others whip past almost before we know it (several are as short as 19 seconds). The 24 variations contrast sharply in both character and tempo, and the fun of this music lies not just in the bravura writing for keyboard but in hearing Paganini’s theme sound so different in each variation. In three of them, Rachmaninoff incorporates the old plainsong tune *Dies Irae* (Day of Wrath) used by Berlioz, Saint-Saëns and many others, including Rachmaninoff, for whom this grim theme was a virtual obsession. Here it appears in the solo part in the seventh and tenth variations, and eventually it drives the work to its climax.

Perhaps the most famous of Rachmaninoff’s variations, though, is the 18th, in which Paganini’s theme is inverted and transformed into a moonlit lovesong. The soloist states this variation in its simplest form, and then strings take it up and turn it into a soaring nocturne. The 18th variation has haunted many Hollywood composers, and Rachmaninoff himself noted wryly that he had written it specifically as a gift “for my agent.”

From here on, the tempo picks up, and the final six variations accelerate to a monumental climax. The excitement builds, the *Dies Irae* is stamped out by the full orchestra, and suddenly, like a puff of smoke, the Rhapsody vanishes before us on two quick strokes of sound.

**“Rachmaninoff on steroids”**

Today’s performance of the Paganini Rhapsody is unlike any ever heard at Orchestra Hall: Cameron Carpenter will perform his own version of the solo piano part on the International Touring Organ (ITO), a one-of-a-kind instrument built for Carpenter by digital organ pioneers Marshall & Ogletree. The ITO is billed as the world’s first truly artistic digital organ, with sophisticated technology that reproduces the sounds of the finest historical organs, providing Carpenter with great flexibility in performances spaces and in his concert repertoire.

Unveiled by Carpenter in a 2014 performance at New York’s Lincoln Center, the ITO features a modular five-keyboard console;
hostakovich's Fifth is at once the most popular symphony since Mahler and the most enigmatic. It was composed in the aftermath of the savage January 1936 attack by Pravda on Shostakovich's opera Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District, which probably had been ordered by Stalin himself. Before that, Shostakovich had been the bright young star of Soviet music, hailed as a product of that system and acclaimed around the world for his witty, sardonic music. Now, virtually overnight, he found himself in disgrace, his career in ruins and he himself perhaps ticketed for a labor camp.

After a great deal of soul searching, Shostakovich composed his Fifth Symphony very quickly (between April 18 and July 20, 1937), and its triumphant premiere in Leningrad on November 21 of that year signaled his artistic and political rehabilitation. One of the most striking features of this music is Shostakovich's return to classical form, a move that has signaled capitulation to some Western critics. But it may well be that Shostakovich felt that there was justice in the Pravda description of his music as "fidgety, screaming, neurotic," and that his music did need greater balance, restraint and stability.

There is a great deal of superb music in the Fifth Symphony. This is an intensely dramatic score, so powerful that it is easy to overlook the control and unity of Shostakovich's writing.

In transcribing Rachmaninoff's great exploration of Paganini's theme, I haven't changed one note or phrase of the orchestral material. That is fortunate, since Rachmaninoff's writing is incredibly economical, lacking any extra notes or gestures. In the piano part, many interior melodies, figures and other events are given greater tonal contrast on the organ than is possible in the piano, and the organ's much larger dynamic range—obvious in any comparison between the piano in general with any large organ, but even more extreme in the case of the International Touring Organ—is exploited to the maximum.

When performing this work on the organ, I think of it as a kind of darkly theatrical, sinister magnification of the original that exaggerates its dynamic and emotional heights and depths to even more extreme degrees, while emphasizing the music's prolific counterpoint in a way that makes it clearer and more structurally obvious than in the original. It is intended to be Rachmaninoff on steroids: the organ's powers of perspective and contrast, its ability to indefinitely sustain tone, and to crescendo, tremulate and otherwise alter held tones, afford many technical capabilities of which no piano or pianist is capable; and these are utilized to the full. Rooted in the Dies Irae, a natural match for the organ's usual imagery, this version strives at moments to invoke a pall of mythic doom, while its sensuous moments should be supercharged with unheard-of horsepower.

Instrumentation: solo organ with orchestra comprising 2 flutes, piccolo, 2 oboes, English horn, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, snare drum, bass drum, cymbals, triangle, glockenspiel, harp and strings

Program note by Eric Bromberger.

Dmitri Shostakovich
Born: September 25, 1906, St. Petersburg, Russia
Died: August 9, 1975, Moscow, Russia

Symphony No. 5 in D minor, Opus 47
Premiered: November 21, 1937

Shostakovich's Fifth is at once the most popular symphony since Mahler and the most enigmatic. It was composed in the aftermath of the savage January 1936 attack by Pravda on Shostakovich's opera Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District, which probably had been ordered by Stalin himself. Before that, Shostakovich had been the bright young star of Soviet music, hailed as a product of that system and acclaimed around the world for his witty, sardonic music. Now, virtually overnight, he found himself in disgrace, his career in ruins and he himself perhaps ticketed for a labor camp.

After a great deal of soul searching, Shostakovich composed his Fifth Symphony very quickly (between April 18 and July 20, 1937), and its triumphant premiere in Leningrad on November 21 of that year signaled his artistic and political rehabilitation. One of the most striking features of this music is Shostakovich's return to classical form, a move that has signaled capitulation to some Western critics. But it may well be that Shostakovich felt that there was justice in the Pravda description of his music as “fidgety, screaming, neurotic,” and that his music did need greater balance, restraint and stability.

A symphony of intense drama
There is a great deal of superb music in the Fifth Symphony. This is an intensely dramatic score, so powerful that it is easy to overlook the control and unity of Shostakovich's writing.

Moderato. The first movement opens with ominous canonic exchanges between string sections, and these give way to the violins' quietly twisting main theme. Almost incidentally, Shostakovich introduces the simple rhythmic motif (short-short-long) that will saturate and unify the entire symphony. There follows a beautiful episode: over string accompaniment that pulses along on the rhythmic motif, first violins sing a melody full of wide leaps. But the wonder is that this peaceful theme, which sounds completely new, is actually a subtle transformation of the powerful canonic introduction to the Symphony. This sort of ingenious transformation of material marks the entire Fifth Symphony.
The entrance of the piano signals the beginning of the development. It has been said that in this symphony Shostakovich does not so much develop his material as brutalize it, and now themes that had been peaceful at their introduction are made shrill, almost hysterical in their intensity. The movement reaches a climax on a furious tamtam stroke as brass stamp out the rhythm motif. After all this fury, Shostakovich resolves the tensions beautifully: the themes now return peacefully and, with its energy spent, the movement ends quietly.

**allegretto.** Many have felt the influence of Mahler in the bittersweet second movement that waltzes past in quickstep time. Much of the fun here lies in the instrumental color—the sardonic solo clarinet, the solo violin’s slides in the trio and the rattling sound of the xylophone.

**largo.** The third movement is more complex. Its scoring is unique: Shostakovich eliminates the brass, divides the strings into eight parts, and gives a prominent role to the harp, piano and celesta. He wrote this movement in one great arc, and the Largo features lean textures, an icy sound and some of his most beautiful melodies. It rises to a great climax, then falls away to end quietly on the spooky sound of harp harmonics.

**allegro non troppo.** Out of this quiet, the finale rips to life with pounding timpani, ringing brass and boundless energy; an angular second subject arrives in the solo trumpet over whirring strings. The militaristic bombast of this movement has bothered some listeners, but Shostakovich rescues it by his stunning transformation of this bluff beginning. Gradually these themes are made to slow down and sing, and material that had been strident on its first appearance yields unsuspected melodic riches in the subdued center section. Shostakovich gathers his forces and drives the symphony to a triumphant, if somewhat raucous, close in D major.

**interpreting the music**

Music this dramatic cries out for interpretation, and ideological critics on both sides of the Iron Curtain have been happy to supply violently divergent explanations of its “meaning.” Prompted by authorities to provide a politically correct program, Shostakovich obliged: “The theme of my symphony is the stabilization of a personality. In the center of this composition—conceived lyrically from beginning to end—I saw a man with all his experiences. The finale resolves the tragically tense impulses of the earlier movements into optimism and the joy of living.” So existential an explanation even led to this symphony’s being labeled the Hamlet Symphony in some Soviet circles.

More recently, the Fifth Symphony has become the locus classicus of what might be called “The Great Shostakovich Debate” between two groups: those who regard this symphony as sincere and consciously heroic, and those Western critics who wish to rescue Shostakovich from his past and are unwilling to accept the proposition that great music might have been composed under the Soviet system. These critics have been able to accept this symphony only by declaring the entire piece ironic. Its triumph, they say, is hollow, a conscious nose-thumbing at a political regime that insisted on happy endings from its artists.

To such extremes have ideological critics been driven by their politics—and it is clear that the Cold War lives on in the minds of those engaged in this debate. Perhaps, in this century, it may be possible to approach Shostakovich’s symphony as it should be understood: as music. Heard for itself, it remains an exciting work, satisfying both emotionally and artistically. Far from being a capitulation, Shostakovich’s Fifth Symphony marks a refinement of his musical language and an engagement with those classical principles that would energize his music for the next 40 years.

**Instrumentation:**

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**Program note by Eric Bromberger.**

The Minnesota Orchestra first performed Mussorgsky’s Prelude to Khovanshchina on October 29, 1925, at the St. Paul Auditorium Theater, with Henri Verbruggen conducting. The Orchestra has made three commercial recordings of music from Khovanshchina: one in 1928 under Verbruggen’s direction, another in 1959 led by Antal Dorati, and the last in 1998 with Eiji Oue conducting.

The Orchestra added Rachmaninoff’s Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini to its repertoire on November 29, 1935, at Northrop Memorial Auditorium under the baton of Eugene Ormandy, with a very special guest performer at the piano—the composer himself, Sergei Rachmaninoff. This performance came only a year after Rachmaninoff premiered the work with the Philadelphia Orchestra in November 1934.

Orchestra audiences first heard Shostakovich’s Symphony No. 5 on February 28, 1941, at Northrop Memorial Auditorium, with Dimitri Mitropoulos conducting. Later that year Mitropoulos led the Orchestra in a costumed “period” performance of Haydn’s Farewell Symphony for which he and the musicians donned 18th-century-style velvet breeches and powdered wigs.
American Voices
Copland, Bernstein and Barber
May 3–5
Osmo Vänskä, conductor
Sharon Bezaly, flute / Susie Park, violin
Two soloists grace this all-American tour-de-force program: Sharon Bezaly offering the U.S. premiere of a Flute Concerto by House of Cards composer Jeff Beal and the Orchestra’s own Susie Park performing Barber’s soulful Violin Concerto.

Britten and Schumann
May 10–11
Michael Francis, conductor / Daniel Müller-Schott, cello
Schumann painted the human soul at its most noble and lyrical in his beautiful Cello Concerto, while a century later during World War II, Britten created his touching Sinfonia as an impassioned cry for peace.

Bernstein and Walton
Andrew Litton and the Minnesota Chorale
Jun 1–2
Andrew Litton, conductor
Christopher Maltman, baritone / Minnesota Chorale
A huge success at its 1930s premiere and beloved by orchestras and choirs since, Belshazzar’s Feast tells the ancient Hebrew story of lamentation and liberation.

Beethoven and Berlioz
Jun 8–9
Jun Märkl, conductor / Augustin Hadelich, violin
Augustin Hadelich brings his crystalline tone to Beethoven’s Violin Concerto, then Orchestra Hall lights up with Berlioz’s brilliant Symphonie fantastique.

Season Finale
Vänskä Conducts
Mahler’s Fourth
Jun 14–16
Osmo Vänskä, conductor / Carolyn Sampson, soprano
The luminous soprano Carolyn Sampson joins us to perform Mahler’s Fourth—a quiet version of heaven where a child’s every dream comes true.

612-371-5656 / minnesotaorchestra.org / Orchestra Hall
Minnesota Orchestra

Osmo Vänskä, conductor
Joshua Bell, violin

Monday, April 23, 2018, 7:30 pm | Orchestra Hall

Jean Sibelius
En Saga, Opus 9 ca. 17'

Henri Wieniawski
Concerto No. 2 in D minor for Violin and Orchestra, Opus 22
Allegro moderato
Romance
Allegro con fuoco – Allegro moderato (à la zingara)
Joshua Bell, violin

Pablo de Sarasate
Zigeunerweisen (Gypsy Airs) for Violin and Orchestra, Opus 20
Joshua Bell, violin ca. 9'

INTERMISSION ca. 20'

Ludwig van Beethoven
Symphony No. 7 in A major, Opus 92
Poco sostenuto – Vivace
Allegretto
Presto
Allegro con brio ca. 42'

This Minnesota Orchestra performance is broadcast live on stations of Classical Minnesota Public Radio, including KSJN 99.5 FM in the Twin Cities.
Osmo Vänskä, conductor
Profile appears on page 6.

Joshua Bell, violin
With a career spanning more than 30 years as a soloist, chamber musician, recording artist and conductor, Joshua Bell is one of today's most celebrated violinists. He was most recently heard with the Minnesota Orchestra in season opening concerts in September 2016, performing Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto. An exclusive Sony Classical artist, Bell has recorded more than 40 albums garnering Grammy, Mercury and Gramophone awards, and he is a recipient of the Avery Fisher Prize. Named the music director of the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields in 2011, he is the only person to hold this post since 1958 when Sir Neville Marriner formed the orchestra.

In 2018, Bell tours with the Academy to the United Kingdom, Germany, the U.S. and Asia. He performs recitals in Europe and America with pianist Sam Haywood, and he recently reunited with pianist Jeremy Denk for a Carnegie Hall recital broadcast live. His additional season highlights include dates with the Philadelphia Orchestra and Danish National Symphony, and an all-Beethoven program with the Orchestre National de Lyon. His most recent release is Joshua Bell – The Classical Collection, a 14-CD set of albums of classical repertoire; slated for May 2018 is a recording with the Academy of Bruch's Scottish Fantasy and G-minor Concerto.

Convinced of the value of music as an educational tool, Bell is a member of Turnaround Arts and Education Through Music, which provide arts education to low-performing elementary and middle schools. Bell performs on the 1713 Huberman Stradivarius violin. More: joshuabell.com.

one-minute notes

Sibelius: En Saga
Hypnotic rhythms and dark orchestral coloring permeate this tone poem, which conveys the sense of a primordial adventure, fiercely urgent, and tragic as well as exhilarating.

Wieniawski: Violin Concerto No. 2
Wieniawski's show-stopping Second Violin Concerto is rich in Polish tradition, featuring Gypsy rhythms and fiery fiddling. The work is dedicated to Wieniawski's friend and fellow violinist, Pablo de Sarasate, whose own work follows this one on tonight's program.

Sarasate: Zigeunerweisen (Gypsy Airs)
A riveting lament, embellished with an array of trills and dramatic ornamentation, leads to a furious, brilliant and breathtaking conclusion.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 7
Beethoven's lively Seventh Symphony, famously called "the apotheosis of the dance" by Wagner, builds a series of astonishing musical moments from short, simple figures. The second movement, based on a repeating rhythm, has been an audience favorite since its premiere two centuries ago.
n his mid-20s Sibelius studied for a year in Berlin, and then for another year in Vienna. He had at first intended to be a violinist, but in Berlin he heard the Aino Symphony of his senior compatriot Robert Kajanus, which was all the impetus he needed for giving a higher priority to composing, and to turn his own creative effort toward the furtherance of Finnish nationalism. Aino is one of the heroines of the Finnish national epic, the Kalevala; Sibelius’ wife was one of the numerous Finnish women named for her. Early in 1892 in Vienna, Sibelius completed the first of his own several works based on the Kalevala: the vast five-part symphony Kullervo, in which solo singers and a male chorus depict episodes in the life of the eponymous tragic hero. Kajanus saw to it that the Kullervo Symphony was performed in Helsinki that April, and its success prompted him to ask Sibelius for a shorter piece that could be performed more frequently. Sibelius responded, at about the time of his wedding, in June of that year, with En Saga, in which he recycled material from an octet for winds and strings he had composed in Berlin.

The new piece was not a success when the composer conducted the premiere in Helsinki, on February 16, 1893, but nine years later, when Ferruccio Busoni invited him to present En Saga in Berlin, he subjected the score to a major revision, which made such a positive impression when he introduced it in Helsinki on November 2, 1902, that it immediately took its place in the general repertory. (Kajanus, for his part, eventually gave up composing in order to devote himself to conducting Sibelius’ works; in his last years he went to London to make the premiere recordings of several of them.)

It was not until four decades later still, when he had written the last of his works and the world had celebrated his 75th birthday, that Sibelius said anything at all about the extra-musical significance of this work. At that time (the early 1940s) he remarked, “En Saga is the expression of a state of mind. I had undergone a number of painful experiences at the time, and in no other work have I revealed myself so completely. It is for this reason that I find all literary explanations quite alien.” Still later, according to his most distinguished biographer, Erik Tawaststjerna, Sibelius “answered an inquiry from abroad by saying that if one

had to find a literary or folkloristic source for En Saga the atmosphere of the piece was far closer to the [Icelandic] Eddas than to the Kalevala.”

**elemental forces**

As Sibelius’ early symphonies show traces of Tchaikovsky and Borodin, En Saga might be said to owe something to such Russian works as Balakirev’s Tamara and Rimsky-Korsakov’s Skazka. (The latter title, in fact, has a meaning similar to that of En Saga, but with less fearsome connotations: “A Tale,” or “Legend,” or in some cases “A Fairy Tale.”) The freedom Sibelius gained by not attempting to tell a specific story or paint a specific picture, though, gives En Saga a universality and directness altogether beyond the scope of those charming and colorful works. This music may not actually make us “want to wrestle a polar bear,” as the enthusiastic Sibelian Olin Downes suggested on hearing En Saga in the 1930s. But it is powerfully evocative in a more general sense, and it may touch us on deeper levels—may convey a sense of some primordial adventure—involving elemental forces rather than individuals, and both tragic and exhilarating in its fierce urgency.

The themes, strong and persistent, seem to grow directly out of one another, in the nature of metamorphoses. The rhythms are hypnotic, the darkish orchestral coloring (with a bass drum replacing, rather than augmenting, the timpani) as deftly achieved as anything from Rimsky-Korsakov, Strauss or Ravel. The overall effect is one of striking originality, a style as unlikely to be successfully imitated or duplicated as it is to be mistaken for that of anyone but Sibelius himself.

**Instrumentation:** 2 flutes (1 doubling piccolo), 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, bass drum, cymbals, triangle and strings

Program note by Richard Freed.
most of the violin heroes from Paganini, who was born in 1782, to Adolf Busch, who died in 1952, were composers of considerable competence. It is different today, when a violinist such as Joshua Bell, daring to write his own cadenza for the Brahms concerto and doing so with flair and originality, is very much an exception among his colleagues.

Henri Wieniawski, born a half-century after Paganini, was one of the most esteemed Romantic violinist-composers. His mother, Regina Wolff, was an able pianist, and his uncle, Edouard Wolff, quite a celebrated one, as well as an active composer. At the age of eight, when Henri had already been playing the violin for some years, he was admitted to the Paris Conservatory, where he soon entered the class of Lambert Massart, one of the pedagogic eminences of the day. By the time he was 13, Wieniawski was a busy performer, usually with his younger brother Jósef at the piano, but in 1849 he returned to Paris in order to take up the serious study of composition.

always on the road

The violinist Leopold Auer recalled running into Wieniawski at the gambling tables at Wiesbaden, Germany. On tour with the great Anton Rubinstein, Wieniawski thought he had figured out a way to beat the system and bankrupt the casino; when that happened, he told Auer, he would give up concertizing, play only for his pleasure, and concentrate on composing. That happy day never arrived, and Wieniawski's life was that of a traveling virtuoso. He lived in Saint Petersburg, where he was a ubiquitous presence on the musical scene, but his career constantly took him all over Europe. In 1872 he began a two-year tour of the United States, giving 215 concerts with Rubinstein in the first year alone, then continuing on almost as exhausting a schedule with the soprano Pauline Lucca.

Wieniawski returned to Europe with shattered health and a lot of money. He settled in Brussels, succeeding Henri Vieuxtemps at the Paris Conservatory. But being the sort of man who spent whatever he earned as soon as he could, he was under continuing pressure to stay on the road and play. A heart condition gave him ever more trouble. In November 1878 he collapsed during a performance in Berlin of his Concerto No. 2. His colleague Joseph Joachim was in the audience, and Wieniawski asked him to finish the concert for him. A month later, in Moscow, he was obliged to break off a performance of the Kreutzer Sonata after the first movement. Undeterred, he was soon off and running again, this time with soprano Désirée Artôt, who had once briefly been engaged to a young Tchaikovsky. Once again, though, the tour had to be called off so that Wieniawski could enter hospital in Odessa. When he died he was not yet 45.

For all his physical tribulations, Wieniawski was a cheerful sort and delightful company, a man who could never resist a pun and was a captivating raconteur. His marriage to an Irishwoman, Isabella Hampton, brought him much happiness. Accounts of Wieniawski's playing invariably take note of its technical brilliance but remark even more on its fire and ardor. His compositions of course demand these qualities.

the concerto in brief

Wieniawski composed his Second Violin Concerto in 1862 and gave the first performance on November 27 of that year in Saint Petersburg, with Nikolai Rubinstein conducting. The score is dedicated to a fellow violinist-composer, Pablo de Sarasate, whose Zigeunerweisen (Gypsy Airs) follows the Wieniawski concerto on tonight's program. The Concerto No. 2 is the only one of Wieniawski's larger works to have taken a firm hold in the repertory, though a few modern violinists, notably Midori, have made a persuasive case for the Concerto No. 1, which is more pyrotechnical than the Second, but with less soul.

allegro moderato. The first of the Second Concerto's three movements is an Allegro moderato, more lyric that excited, and Auer recalled that Wieniawski himself used to play it “rather quietly, more moderato than allegro.” There is, of course, enough brilliant passagework to constitute a barrier to all but the most secure fiddlers. For years, having come to know this concerto through Heifetz's wonderfully played 1935 recording, I had no idea that Wieniawski had begun the movement with an extended orchestral exposition that introduces the main themes and that midway through there is a similarly broad passage for orchestra alone: Heifetz cut all that out and came straight to what he conceived to be the point, namely Himself. But these passages do attest to the seriousness of Wieniawski's intentions and to his sense of proportion, and they are not badly carried out. He is not quite as adventurous, fluid and skilled as his older contemporary Henri Vieuxtemps, but he is streets ahead of such predecessors as Paganini and Heinrich Wilhelm Ernst.

romance. A shapely and spacious phrase for clarinet alone makes a bridge into the second movement, a Romance. Here Wieniawski
is at his most likeable and touching best. The melody is lovely, and the accompaniment imaginative and euphonious.

allegro con fuoco–allegro moderato (à la zingara). The finale is designed to bring the house down, and for this purpose the soloist regales us with flying 16th-notes, a reprise of a wonderfully soulful theme from the first movement, and an absolutely irresistible spell of gypsy-fiddling abandon.

Instrumentation: solo violin with orchestra comprising 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, timpani and strings

Program note by the late Michael Steinberg, used with permission.

Pablo de Sarasate
Born: March 10, 1844, Pamplona, Spain
Died: September 20, 1908, Biarritz, France

Zigeunerweisen (Gypsy Airs) for Violin and Orchestra, Opus 20
Premiered: ca. November 1878

As a parting gift on tonight’s program, Joshua Bell delivers a second virtuoso showpiece by a Romantic-era violinist-composer: Spaniard Pablo de Sarasate’s Zigeunerweisen (Gypsy Airs). Sarasate was known in his day primarily as a performer, but he punched above his weight as a composer, rising to fame in the generation just after Paganini. His music, Zigeunerweisen in particular, is yet more evidence that the composers who have written most intelligently and virtuosically for violin have also been violinists—Vivaldi, Mozart, Sibelius, Bruch and Paganini easily come to mind. So, too, does Wieniawski, whose Second Violin Concerto (dedicated to none other than Sarasate) precedes Zigeunerweisen on tonight’s program.

Program note by Michael Adams.

unmatched technique that won not only ardent fans, but major competitions in Europe as well. This launched an international touring career that brought him to America twice and regularly to London, where he took audiences by storm. Not since Paganini had a fiddler caused this kind of sensation. He inspired a number of important composers to write pieces for him: among them Bruch, Lalo and Saint-Saëns.

Early in his career, Sarasate began to perform his own works: extended, virtuosic fantasies based on themes from popular operas of the day. His fantasies on Bizet’s Carmen and Gounod’s Faust are bravura pieces that only the most gifted virtuosos need attempt. Regarding Sarasate’s idiomatic writing for the violin, the playwright and music critic George Bernard Shaw may have said it best when he declared that though there were many composers of music for the violin, there were but few composers of violin music.

a dash for the finish line

Perhaps Sarasate’s best-known work is Zigeunerweisen (Gypsy Airs), evoking the Gypsy fire of Romany life. Written in 1878 and recorded by every major violin virtuoso since, it has become a staple for violinists, often as a concert encore. Zigeunerweisen begins with about seven minutes of slow, soulful melodies, leading into a spectacular two-minute dash for the finish line—extremely demanding of the performer—that leaves audiences breathless.

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

Program note by Michael Adams.

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

Symphony No. 7 in A major, Opus 92
Premiered: December 8, 1813

Beethoven turned 40 in December 1810, and things were going very well. True, his hearing had deteriorated to the point where he was virtually deaf, but he was still riding that white-hot explosion of creativity that has become known, for better or worse, as his “heroic” style.
re-imagining music

Over the decade-long span of that style, 1803 to 1813, Beethoven essentially re-imagined music and its possibilities. The works that crystallized the heroic style—the Eroica and the Fifth Symphony—unleashed a level of violence and darkness previously unknown in music and then triumphed over them. In these symphonies, music became a matter not of polite discourse but of conflict, struggle and resolution.

In the fall of 1811, Beethoven began a new symphony, his Seventh, which would differ sharply from those two famous predecessors. Gone is the sense of cataclysmic struggle and hard-won victory. Instead, this music is infused from its first instant with a mood of pure celebration.

Such a spirit has inevitably produced interpretations as to what this symphony is “about”: Berlioz heard in it a peasants’ dance, Wagner called it “the apotheosis of the dance,” and more recently Maynard Solomon has suggested that the Seventh is the musical representation of a festival, a brief moment of pure spiritual liberation.

But it may be safest to leave the issue of meaning aside and instead listen to the Seventh simply as music. There had never been music like this before, nor has there been since: this symphony contains more energy than any other piece of music ever written. Much has been made (correctly) of Beethoven’s ability to transform small bits of theme into massive symphonic structures, but here he begins not so much with theme as with rhythm: tiny figures, almost scraps of rhythm. Gradually he releases the energy locked up in these small figures and from them creates one of the mightiest symphonies ever written.

the symphony: small ideas transformed

poco sostenuto–vivace. The first movement opens with a slow introduction so long that it almost becomes a separate movement of its own. Tremendous chords punctuate the slow beginning, which gives way to a poised duet for oboes. The real effect of this long Poco sostenuto, however, is to coi the energy that will be unleashed in the true first movement, and Beethoven conveys this rhythmically: the meter of the introduction is a rock-solid (even square) 4/4, but the main body of the movement, marked Vivace, transforms this into a light-footed 6/8. This Vivace begins in what seems a most unpromising manner, however, as woodwinds toot out a simple dotted 6/8 rhythm and the solo flute announces the first theme. This simple dotted rhythm saturates virtually every measure of the movement, as theme, as accompaniment, as motor rhythm, always hammering into our consciousness. At the climax, horns sail majestically to the close as the orchestra thunders out that rhythm one final time.

allegretto. The second movement, in A minor, is one of Beethoven’s most famous slow movements, but the debate continues as to whether it really is a slow movement. Beethoven could not decide whether to mark it Andante, a walking tempo, or Allegretto, a moderately fast pace. He finally decided on the latter, though the actual pulse is somewhere between those two. This movement too is built on a short rhythmic pattern, in this case the first five notes: long-short-short-long—and this pattern repeats here almost as obsessively as the pattern of the first movement. The opening sounds like a series of static chords—the theme itself occurs quietly inside those chords—and Beethoven simply repeats this theme, varying it as it proceeds. The central episode in A major moves gracefully along smoothly-flowing triplets before a little fugato on the opening rhythms builds to a great climax. The movement winds down on the woodwinds’ almost skeletal reprise of the fundamental rhythm.

presto. The scherzo explodes to life on a theme full of grace notes, powerful accents, flying staccatos and timpani explosions. This alternates with a trio section for winds reportedly based on an old pilgrims’ hymn, though no one, it seems, has been able to identify that hymn exactly. Beethoven offers a second repeat of the trio, then seems about to offer a third before five abrupt chords drive the movement to its close.

allegro con brio. These chords set the stage for the finale, again built on the near-obsessive treatment of a short rhythmic pattern, in this case the movement’s opening four-note fanfare. This pattern punctuates the entire movement: it shapes the beginning of the main theme, and its stinging accents thrust the music forward continuously as this movement almost boils over with energy. The ending is remarkable: above growling cellos and basses (which rock along on a two-note ostinato for 28 measures), the opening theme drives to a climax that Beethoven marks fff, a dynamic marking he almost never used. This conclusion is virtually Bacchanalian in its wild power. No matter how many times we’ve heard it, it remains one of the most exciting moments in all of music. Beethoven led the first performance of the Seventh Symphony in Vienna on December 8, 1813—a huge success, with the audience demanding that the second movement be repeated.

Instrumentation: 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, 2 trumpets, timpani and strings

Program notes by Eric Bromberger.
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These listings are current as of February 27, 2018. Every effort has been made to ensure their accuracy. If your name has been inadvertently omitted or incorrectly listed, please accept our apology and contact the Development department at 612-371-5600 or at support@mnorch.org.

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