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from the editor

Though not all pieces of orchestral music tell a story, each piece has a story—and it falls to the program annotator to deliver it. On a surface level, a good program note tells us about the composer and what inspired the work, accounts for its composition and performance history, places the music in its historical and cultural context, explains how it is constructed and what to listen for, and enumerates other factors that make the music unique. An expert annotator does all this and more—with panache, accessibility, genuine passion for the art and a healthy dash of the unexpected.

Few have achieved the pinnacle of this profession with the longevity of Mary Ann Feldman, the Minnesota Orchestra’s program annotator and editor from 1966 to 1999, who passed away on February 18 at age 85. A further tribute to her life and career appears on page 12, along with a salute to the Orchestra’s composer laureate, Dominick Argento, who died just two days after Feldman. The two, longtime friends, are already missed dearly by the Orchestra community.

There are many stories to tell about the music performed this month—some familiar, such as Beethoven’s revoked dedication to Napoleon of his Third Symphony, and others lesser-known, like that of the same composer’s only ballet, The Creatures of Prometheus—told by Feldman herself on page 39. May these program notes add to your enjoyment of the notes on the composer’s score, brought to life by our world-class Orchestra.

Carl Schroeder, Editor
editor@mnorch.org

about the cover

A tuba—the orchestra’s lowest-pitched brass instrument, and one of the last additions to the core symphony orchestra instrumentation—in the hands of Jason Tanksley, one of the Minnesota Orchestra’s two Rosemary and David Good Fellows. Photo: Travis Anderson.

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Many string players participate in a voluntary system of revolving seating. Section string players are listed in alphabetical order.
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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, as well as an August 2018 visit to London’s BBC Proms, and on historic tours to Cuba in 2015 and South Africa in 2018. The Cuba tour was the first by an American orchestra since the thaw in Cuban-American diplomatic relations, while the five-city South Africa tour—the culmination of a Music for Mandela celebration of Nelson Mandela’s centennial—was the first-ever visit to the country by a professional U.S. orchestra. He has also led the Orchestra in appearances at New York’s Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center, Chicago’s Symphony Center and community venues across Minnesota.

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 December 2018 BIS released the Orchestra’s newest album, featuring Mahler’s Second Symphony—part of a Mahler series that includes 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; To Be Certain of the Dawn, composed by Stephen Paulus with libretto by Michael Dennis Browne; 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.

During the 2018-19 season he will conduct American orchestras including the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and Florida’s New World Symphony, and will appear with ensembles abroad such as the China Philharmonic Orchestra, Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, Hangzhou Philharmonic, Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra, Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra, Iceland Symphony Orchestra, Lahti Symphony Orchestra, London Philharmonic Orchestra, Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra and Seoul Philharmonic Orchestra. In December 2018, Vänskä announced he will conclude his tenure as Minnesota Orchestra music director with the end of his current contract at the close of the 2021-22 season. For more information, visit minnesotaorchestra.org.
he 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.

music director spotlight: Sir Neville Marriner

- In fall 1979 the Minnesota Orchestra underwent its first leadership change in two decades when its first British music director, Neville Marriner, accepted the baton from Stanislaw Skrowaczewski.

- A native of Lincoln, England, Marriner began his music career as a violinist, most notably serving as assistant concertmaster of the London Symphony Orchestra. While still in that ensemble, in 1959 he founded London’s Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, a chamber orchestra that specialized in Baroque repertoire and became one of the world’s most frequently-recorded orchestras; he remained its music director until 2011.

- During his seven years in Minnesota, Marriner achieved a number of firsts, among them welcoming co-composers in residence Libby Larsen and Stephen Paulus. He led the Orchestra on its first Southern Hemisphere concerts in Australia in 1985, and brought it to Hong Kong in 1986. One artistic highlight at Orchestra Hall was a televised, star-studded “Tonight Scandinavia” gala concert in 1982 attended by members of several Scandinavian royal families.

- In 1985 Marriner achieved a distinction unique in Minnesota Orchestra annals by becoming its first music director to be knighted, thereafter becoming known as Sir Neville Marriner.

- Marriner led his final concerts at Orchestra Hall in April 2008. He had been scheduled to return in January 2017, but he passed away in October 2016 at age 92. The January 2017 concerts were re-dedicated to his memory, as Courtney Lewis conducted the repertoire Marriner had chosen.
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Minnesota Orchestra announces 2019–20 season

Whether you’re a longtime Minnesota Orchestra subscriber or today is your first time at Orchestra Hall, you’ll find something exciting in our just-unveiled 2019–20 season. In the flagship Classical series, Music Director Osmo Vänskä, the Orchestra and a stellar lineup of conductors and soloists—among them pianists André Watts and Kirill Gerstein, conductor Nathalie Stutzmann and five soloists from the Orchestra—will transport you through four centuries of masterworks, from Mozart’s Jupiter Symphony to Vaughan Williams’ Dona Nobis Pacem to a MusicMakers program of new works by today’s composers. Our Live at Orchestra Hall series brings back Minnesota favorite Cloud Cult and the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra and welcomes Troupe Vertigo, renowned for its circus-dance-theater magic. If film music is your thing, then follow us to Hogwarts, to snow-covered Hoth and on a balloon-lifted house to South America with screenings of Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire, Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back and Disney-Pixar’s Up, as the Orchestra performs the full scores live onstage at Orchestra Hall.

Need something merry for the holidays? Look no further than our musical-theatrical Home for the Holiday performances from the minds of director Peter Rothstein and writer Kevin Kling; Handel’s Messiah; a Holiday Brass program; a screening of It’s a Wonderful Life with the score performed live; and a delightfully eclectic New Year’s program featuring a rarity at Orchestra Hall—analto saxophone soloist. For a break from the light-speed pace of modern life, come to a yoga class with live music, or attend our new Musical Mindfulness series of guided meditation and live music. Bring your child—or inner child—to our relaxed Family Concert and Sensory-Friendly series, designed for audiences of all ages and abilities. Looking for a smaller serving of classical music? Try our hour-long Symphony in 60 at 6 p.m. concerts. Get up close to the music in our intimate Chamber Music series. And join us as we unveil our new concerts with Sam & Sarah—the successor to Inside the Classics—featuring host-violist Sam Bergman and conductor Sarah Hicks in a look at 20th-century Russian music, among other programs.

Visit minnesotaorchestra.org for a full rundown of 2019–20 season programs. You can secure the best seats early by becoming a subscriber—through packages ranging from 3 to 24 concerts—starting March 29 for renewing subscribers, and on April 15 for new subscribers, at minnesotaorchestra.org/subscribe. Select subscription packages include tickets to the 2019 Sommerfest program of Golijov’s La Pasión según San Marcos (see below for details). Single tickets for the 2019–20 season go on sale on August 2.

a special Sommerfest finale: La Pasión según San Marcos

The Minnesota Orchestra’s Latin American-themed 2019 Sommerfest, “Música Juntos” (Music Together), will come to a very special conclusion on August 2 and 3 with the first-ever Minnesota performances of La Pasión según San Marcos (The Passion According to St. Mark) by Argentinian composer Osvaldo Golijov. This extraordinary work, which brings the rich tradition of South American music to the Biblical story of Jesus’ final days on earth, has been hailed by critics as “a work of genius” and “the first indisputably great composition of the 21st century.” The concerts bring together talent from around the globe, as the Orchestra is joined by soloists and choristers of the Schola Cantorum de Venezuela and the Twin Cities ensembles Border CrosSing and the Minnesota Chorale, all under the baton of María Guinand—who conducted the work’s 2000 world premiere that earned a 30-minute standing ovation. Be among the first to get tickets by subscribing to the Orchestra’s 2019–20 season starting on March 29 for renewing subscribers; single tickets for all Sommerfest concerts are available April 12. Visit minnesotaorchestra.org for full details.
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Two beloved members of the Minnesota Orchestra family—and close friends of each other—passed away within a handful of days in February. Below we pay tribute to Mary Ann Feldman and Dominick Argento.

Mary Ann Feldman (1933–2019)

March 13, 1941, proved to be an important day in the history of the Minnesota Orchestra—when a third-grader named Mary Ann Janisch attended her first Young People’s Concert by what is now the Minnesota Orchestra, and the seed was planted for an extraordinary life and career in writing about and sharing enthusiasm for classical music. Twenty-five years later, Mary Ann Feldman (as she became known after her marriage to Harold Feldman in 1957) won the position of the Orchestra’s program annotator, a role she held for 33 years, during which she became famous among music critics nationwide as well as music audiences in the Twin Cities for the excellence of her writing and her speaking. Her zest for life and brilliance as a communicator made her all the more popular, and throughout decades of writing program notes and mesmerizing audiences in pre-concert talks, she was known as the “voice of the Minnesota Orchestra.”

For much of Feldman’s tenure as the Orchestra’s annotator, she also served as editor of Showcase magazine, the publication you’re now holding. She was a fountain of ideas, advising music directors and staff alike, and was the source of the concept of the Orchestra’s long-running Viennese Sommerfest, which she developed with Leonard Slatkin, the festival’s first artistic director. After concluding her tenure as Showcase editor and annotator in 1999, she became the Orchestra’s historian, helping prepare for its centennial season in 2003–04, contributing an essay to its centennial book and leading its Oral Histories interview project.

The Orchestra family mourned when Feldman passed away peacefully on February 18 at age 85. She will be remembered for her vivacious personality, insightful writing and her passion for making classical music accessible to everyone—and her presence will be felt on these pages for many years to come, through the ongoing use of notes she wrote and edited.

Dominick Argento (1927–2019)

As great composers have done for centuries, Dominick Argento wore many hats: in addition to his career as an internationally-revered composer, he was a longtime professor of composition and music theory at the University of Minnesota, helped found Minnesota Opera and, from 1997 until his death at age 91 on February 20, was the Minnesota Orchestra’s composer laureate—a title unprecedented among U.S. orchestras.

A native of York, Pennsylvania, Argento arrived in Minneapolis in 1958 with his wife, soprano Carolyn Bailey, to join the University of Minnesota’s music faculty. He soon became the state’s most prominent and sought-after classical composer, with commissions coming steadily from major local and national institutions. In 1975 he was recognized with the Pulitzer Prize for Music for his song cycle From the Diary of Virginia Woolf, which premiered at Orchestra Hall. His ties with the Minnesota Orchestra were strong throughout his career. His music has been conducted by each music director since Stanislaw Skrowaczewski in the 1960s, and he wrote six works on commissions from the Orchestra, most notably the orchestral song cycle Casa Guidi, for which he won a Grammy Award in 2003.

Argento leaves two major musical legacies: one through his prolific output as a composer, and another through his work as an educator of students such as composers Libby Larsen and the late Stephen Paulus—co-founders of the American Composers Forum—VocalEssence artistic director and founder Philip Brunelle, and choral conductor-composer Dale Warland. He will be celebrated with an upcoming concert of his music at the University of Minnesota.
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meet a musician: Erich Rieppel

Minnesota Orchestra musician since: 2018
Position: Principal Timpani
Hometown: born in Minneapolis; raised in Marshall, Minnesota
Education: Indiana University

How did you first become involved in music?
My parents are both musicians. My dad attempted to teach me piano when I was very young, but I wasn’t very interested at first. I started drums when I was 10 but didn’t get passionate about it until high school.

When did you decide to focus on timpani?
In my junior year of high school, my father had a sabbatical and took me with him to Vienna for three months. It was there that my curiosity for this art exploded. I wanted to contribute as much as I could, but noticed the very particular role the timpani played in the orchestra. I was 16 at the time, and just knew that I had to pursue this path.

As a native Minnesotan, how were you first connected with the Minnesota Orchestra?
I heard them off and on growing up, but a stand-out memory was when they toured around the state, stopping in Marshall. I was 15 years old. There was a contemporary bass concerto by John Harbison on the program that knocked my socks off. It was my first memory of being moved by an orchestral performance.

What’s the most challenging thing about being a timpanist?
Knowing your role and how to communicate it when playing with the orchestra. It is, acoustically, vastly different from all other instruments, including even other percussion instruments. To communicate clearly, appropriately and beautifully is a particular challenge with this instrument. It is not enough to just know what you want to say, but how it must be communicated in the band. The mere execution is not the difficult part.

How is a timpanist’s role different from that of a percussionist?
A timpanist requires different techniques, maintenance, tools (or mallets), and knowledge of a whole sector of repertoire that percussionists don’t need to worry about. Knowing the repertoire and soundscape needed for it is a unique specialization. I can functionally play percussion and my percussion colleagues can play timpani, but I do not specialize in percussion and vice versa.

Do you play your own timpani, or the Orchestra’s?
I own a set and the Minnesota Orchestra owns timpani as well. We’re actually in the process of purchasing multiple sets. I rotate different sets based on the repertoire, size of the orchestra, time period of the composition, and so on.

What are some of your interests and hobbies outside of music?
Pursuing other styles of music is a hobby! But being a Minnesotan, playing and watching hockey is a major part of my existence.

Is there anything else you’d like to say to the audience?
Performance requires an audience and we are lucky to have such a respectable and passionate audience. Take pride in supporting the arts; it is a noble endeavor. Thank you for your support.

Visit minnesotaorchestra.org/showcase for an extended version of this interview.
#MNorch: social media spotlight

Audience members at the Minnesota Orchestra’s Future Classics concert in January.

The onslaught of snow in February and March didn’t stop audiences from visiting Orchestra Hall and sharing their reactions and photos on social media—of concerts ranging from Mozart’s Double Piano Concerto to the Indigo Girls to a pair of Sensory-Friendly Family Concerts. We invite you to share your concert experiences using #MNorch, and you may see your photos in an upcoming issue of Showcase magazine. While you’re online, stop by the Minnesota Orchestra’s Facebook, Instagram and Twitter pages for online-only features such as an archived Facebook video stream of the Orchestra’s entire March 15 concert, available for viewing through the end of April; insider’s perspectives on viola and harp with Principal Viola Rebecca Albers and Principal Harp Kathy Kienzle; interviews with composers Missy Mazzoli and Mason Bates and program annotator Robert Markow; an essay about the history of American classical music by University of Minnesota Musicology Professor Peter Mercer-Taylor; and much more. We’ll see you online!

The Orchestra’s Associate Concertmaster Felicity James backstage with singer-actress Kristin Chenoweth in January.

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bringing Common Chords home

After eight years of performing Common Chords residencies in Greater Minnesota, the Minnesota Orchestra brought the program home in January, offering its first Twin Cities-area residency in North Minneapolis. The initiative was planned with a committee of Northside leaders who established priorities for the week of events that included supporting North Minneapolis youth music programs and highlighting local talent. Orchestra musicians performed about two dozen different music events and shared the stage with Northside poets, dancers, singers and student musicians. These images share a snapshot of a powerful week.

In day one of the residency, 18 dancers from Asian Media Access participated in a freestyle dance-off that featured music performed live by an Orchestra string quartet. “You guys really moved us,” said cellist Pitnarry Shin to the dancers.

Orchestra musicians visited five Northside schools during the residency, introducing hundreds of students—including this inquisitive learner at Bethune School with flute player Wendy Williams—to the sights, sounds and feel of string and wind instruments.

Violinist Pamela Arnstein coached the string players of Ascension Catholic School who are learning their instruments through MacPhail Center for Music’s school partnerships program. “There is something just beautiful about playing music together,” she said.

Right and above: The threads of the week came together in a North High School concert in which the Orchestra, led by Music Director Osmo Vänskä, performed alongside 40-some Northside artists, including poet Sagirah Shahid and The Steeles. This is a “marvelous testament to what can happen when a community comes together,” said Bishop Richard D. Howell, Jr. of Shiloh Temple International Ministries. At left, the Capri Big Band’s clarinet section packed an extra punch at its January 27 concert at the Capri Theater when guests Osmo Vänskä and Gabriel Campos Zamora, the Orchestra’s principal clarinet, riffed with the ensemble.
critics’ corner: recent concert reviews

“[Steve Heitzeg’s American Nomad] is a kind of musical travelogue...from New York City toward the West and California. The traveler’s reactions are focused in the exuberant, multifaceted writing for solo trumpet, laced with jazzy stylings and suffused with the irrepressible curiosity of the American spirit....Minnesota Orchestra trumpeter Charles Lazarus...performed the work with a familiar mastery, owning its every nook and cranny of expression.”

—Terry Blain, Star Tribune, January 13, 2019

“[Guest conductor Vasily Petrenko] helped shepherd an interpretation of [Beethoven's Fourth Piano Concerto] that boomed and whispered, was both assertive and heart-on-sleeve romantic.... If the Beethoven sounded big, it paled in volume level next to Strauss' 'Ein Heldenleben'...It proved to be an excellent showcase for both the sum and the parts of the orchestra, including the captivating violin solos of concertmaster Erin Keefe, Michael Gast leading the nine(!) French horns in scintillating sonorities, and oboist John Snow singing out at the quietest moments.”

—Rob Hubbard, Pioneer Press, February 9, 2019

“The Indigo Girls are not your average folk singer-songwriters. They are on another level, performing timeless classics that are worthy of the orchestral treatment they received last night.... (the Orchestra) players all seemed to be enjoying themselves as much as the headliners.”

—Kayla Song, The Current, February 16, 2019
YPSCA Concerto Competition: Nita Qiu wins top honors

When we hear great music emanating from the Orchestra Hall stage, it’s usually coming from Minnesota Orchestra musicians. But last February 3, the source was different: nine superb high school-age musicians performing brilliantly as they competed at the Finals of YPSCA’s Concerto Competition. The winner was pianist Nita Qiu, age 16, who delivered a performance of the second and third movements of Chopin’s Second Piano Concerto that brought her the top monetary award, $1,500 from the Edwin and Edith Norberg Fund, and the opportunity to perform as soloist with the Minnesota Orchestra in Young People’s Concerts next season. Nita, who lives in Woodbury, is an 11th-grader at Trinity School at River Ridge in Eagan and studies piano with Dr. Joseph Zins of St. Paul.

The Competition, which is open to students in grades 7 through 12 in the Upper Midwest, was a grand success due to the support of many people: the generous donors of awards totaling $7,100; expert judges for both the Finals and the Prelims; the leadership of Co-Chairs Mariellen Jacobson and Julie Haight-Curran; and hard work by many additional individuals. See ypsca.org for more details, and plan to be part of this high-energy event next year!

a new Kinder Konzerts commission

Across four decades, FRIENDS of the Minnesota Orchestra’s beloved Kinder Konzerts have given generations of children a memorable first encounter with classical music and Orchestra Hall. The central element of Kinder Konzerts is the story piece—a newly-composed composition for a chamber group of Minnesota Orchestra musicians, setting spoken narration from a favorite children’s book.

Over the years, FRIENDS has commissioned renowned composers such as Libby Larsen, Stephen Paulus, Steve Heitzeg and Minnesota Orchestra trumpet player Charles Lazarus to create 17 new story compositions. The 18th commission has just been announced: St. Paul–based composer Daniel Nass will write a new work for the 2019–20 Kinder Konzert season setting the children’s book One-Dog Canoe, written by Minnesota author Mary Casanova and illustrated by Ard Hoyt. Nass was selected from a competitive pool of applicants who submitted scores, and his new work will be shared at more than 36 Kinder Konzerts in the Hall, reaching more than 6,000 children.

“I’m incredibly honored to be named this year’s composer for the Kinder Konzerts commission,” says Nass. “Much of my music deals with story-telling in some form, and when I saw this call for composers, I felt like it was a perfect fit for me and my work. I’m very much looking forward to working with FRIENDS of the Minnesota Orchestra, the musicians, and the Mary Casanova book One-Dog Canoe.”

You can support Kinder Konzerts and other FRIENDS programs by attending the organization’s fundraising event on Friday, April 26, 2019, beginning at 11 a.m. in Orchestra Hall’s Target Atrium. The Italian-themed lunch will feature lively entertainment and an array of auction items ranging from leather goods to vacation lodging at villas in Tuscany.

All funds raised will support FRIENDS’ award-winning education and performance programs for children, young musicians and adults. For additional information, visit friendsofminnesotaorchestra.org or call 612-371-5654.
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Stephen Hough Plays Mendelssohn

Minnesota Orchestra
Han-Na Chang, conductor
Stephen Hough, piano

Wednesday, April 3, 2019, 7:30 pm | Orchestra Hall
Thursday, April 4, 2019, 11 am | Orchestra Hall

Sean Shepherd
Silvery Rills
ca. 4'

Felix Mendelssohn
Concerto No. 1 in G minor for Piano and Orchestra
Molto allegro con fuoco
Andante
Presto – Molto allegro e vivace
Stephen Hough, piano
ca. 20'

INTERMISSION
c. 20'

Ludwig van Beethoven
Symphony No. 3 in E-flat major, Opus 55, Eroica
Allegro con brio
Marcia funebre: Adagio assai
Scherzo: Allegro vivace
Finale: Allegro molto
c. 51'

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Concert Preview with Phillip Gainsley, Stephen Hough and Sean Shepherd
Wednesday, April 3, 6:30 pm, Auditorium
Concert Preview with Phillip Gainsley and Sean Shepherd
Thursday, April 4, 10:15 am, Auditorium

The concert on Thursday, April 4 will be broadcast live on stations of Classical Minnesota Public Radio, including KSJN 99.5 FM in the Twin Cities.
Artists

Stephen Hough, piano

Stephen Hough has been a regular guest soloist with the Minnesota Orchestra at Orchestra Hall and on tour since his first performances here in 1996. He has appeared with the BBC, Czech, London, Los Angeles, Netherlands, New York and among other ensembles. He made an acclaimed conducting debut at the BBC Proms in 2014 and held the post of principal guest conductor of the Trondheim Symphony Orchestra from 2013 to 2017. She began her music career as a cellist, soloing with many orchestras worldwide, including the Minnesota Orchestra in 1997 and 2001, and winning awards including the Rostropovich International Cello Competition at age 11. More: harrisonparrott.com.

Han-Na Chang, conductor

Han-Na Chang is the artistic leader and chief conductor of the Trondheim Symphony Orchestra in Norway. She makes her Minnesota Orchestra conducting debut in these performances. Her other guest engagements this season include concerts with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra, Gothenburg Symphony and Naples Philharmonic. She has recently worked with the Philharmonia Orchestra, Oslo Philharmonic, Staatskapelle Dresden, WDR Sinfonieorchester Köln, Bamberg Symphony, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra, Orchestra del Teatro di San Carlo di Napoli, and the symphony orchestras of Cincinnati, St. Louis, Indianapolis, Seattle, Gothenburg, Singapore and Tokyo, Royal philharmonics; the Atlanta, Baltimore, BBC, Boston, Chicago, Houston, Montreal, National, NHK, Pittsburgh, San Francisco, St. Louis and Toronto symphonies; and the Budapest Festival, Cleveland, Philadelphia, Russian National, and Tonhalle Zürich orchestras. This season, he performs individual Beethoven concertos with the Naples Philharmonic, BBC National Orchestra of Wales, Cape Town Philharmonic, Phoenix Symphony and Tokyo Symphony Orchestra, as well as all five Beethoven concertos over two days with the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra, in addition to many other solo engagements. His 60-plus recordings on the Hyperion label—including Tchaikovsky’s piano concertos and Concert Fantasia with the Minnesota Orchestra—have garnered international prizes, including several Grammy nominations and eight Gramophone Magazine Awards. Also a noted writer, he regularly contributes to The New York Times, The Guardian, The Times, Gramophone and BBC Music Magazine, and he wrote a blog for The Telegraph for seven years. His first novel, The Final Retreat, was released in 2018. More: stephenhough.com.

one-minute notes

Shepherd: Silvery Rills
Contemporary composer Sean Shepherd pays tribute to his home state of Nevada in a brief, colorful work that he says reflects “the fast-flowing ice-cold waters that descend from the mountains to the desert.”

Mendelssohn: Piano Concerto No. 1
Urgent gestures and bravura solos fill the opening movement of this work, while the touching Andante is a dreamy song led by piano, cellos and violas. A fanfare launches the dancing finale, which dashes to a show-stopping conclusion.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 3, Eroica
The Eroica Symphony, which Beethoven originally intended to evoke thoughts of Napoleon, opens majestically and turns next to a somber funeral march that speaks of triumph and tragedy. The dazzling variations of the finale build to a powerful Presto coda.
Throughout music history, composers have found inspiration from their home cities, states and countries. The results can range from sublime natural portraits such as the famous Blue Danube waltz of Vienna’s Johann Strauss, Jr., to stirring evocations of nationalism like Sibelius’ Finlandia, to the unabashedly silly shenanigans of Nevada native Eric Whitacre’s Godzilla Eats Las Vegas.

coming home to Nevada

Like Whitacre, composer Sean Shepherd hails from Reno, Nevada. Although Shepherd’s musical studies took him out of the Silver State—to Indiana University, the Juilliard School and Cornell University—his hometown beckoned when the Reno Philharmonic Orchestra named him its first-ever composer in residence from 2010 to 2012. (Shepherd’s original affiliation with that institution had been as a performer, as he had played bassoon in the Reno Philharmonic Youth Orchestra.) During his residency, he composed two new works for the ensemble: Silvery Rills and Desert Garden, both inspired by the state’s natural surroundings, and both premiered in 2011 under the direction of Laura Jackson.

Although Silvery Rills runs just four minutes, it covers a substantial amount of musical terrain, with a wide variety of instrumental textures; an emphasis on short and interconnected musical ideas rather than long melodic lines; and a symmetrical succession of tempo designations, from slow to fast and back. The closing measures are particularly poignant, when a descending solo clarinet and a backdrop of sustained strings are silenced by the toll of a chime.

The composer has provided the following comments on the title, inspiration and content of Silvery Rills:

“The clear question the title of this piece presents is obvious: what exactly is a rill? I understood it from the lyric I pulled from the official state song of Nevada (which is where I and my family come from, going back to the homesteading ranchers and shepherders of four and five generations ago): ‘...out by the Truckee’s silvery rills, out where the sun always shines.’ I think of a rill as the ripple caused during the flowing of a shallow river (the Truckee River flows from Lake Tahoe to Pyramid Lake in northern Nevada) or stream over water-polished smooth stones.

“This short piece, with its nearly constant shifts of character, mood, gesture and scope, is meant as a reflection of the fast-flowing ice-cold waters that descend from the mountains to the desert (as so much of the water in the West does; the Colorado and Rio Grande rivers being other examples). And, as a piece commissioned and premiered by my hometown orchestra, the Reno Philharmonic, it’s also meant as a postcard-sized letter from home; a reminder to myself of that strange, beautiful, sunny place where I no longer live, and of that fresh water in those rills, which grows more precious with each season, surely for the next four or five generations to come.”

a rocketing career

Since the Reno Philharmonic residency, Shepherd’s career as an orchestral composer has continued to ascend, as he has completed a tenure as Daniel R. Lewis Composer Fellow of the Cleveland Orchestra, and has been commissioned by prestigious ensembles such as the New York Philharmonic, National Symphony Orchestra, Boston Symphony Orchestra and Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, the last of which opened its 2018-19 season with the European premiere of his Express Abstractionism.

With these concerts, Shepherd is making his return to Orchestra Hall, as he was a participant in the May 2006 Minnesota Orchestra Composer Institute, when his surface tension received a reading under Osmo Vänskä’s direction. Like many other Institute alumni, Shepherd is making waves—not just rills—in the world of new music. This week’s performances offer a brief glimpse at his talent, and Minnesota Orchestra audiences can now join many around the world in anticipating more of his music in the years ahead.

Instrumentation: 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, harp, snare drum, bass drum, antique cymbal, suspended cymbal, castanets, maracas, ratchet, sleigh bells, tambourine, temple blocks, triangle, vibraphone, xylophone, glockenspiel, vibraphone, tubular bell and strings

Program note by Carl Schroeder.
Felix Mendelssohn was the cherished crown prince in his cultured, prosperous and seemingly happy family. It was the blessed lot of such well-to-do young men to be sent on an educational grand tour. Mendelssohn's lasted a year and took him via Munich and Vienna to Italy, Switzerland, Munich for a second time, Paris, London, and home to Berlin.

attending to the ladies—and the concerto
Munich in October 1831 was a round of parties for the attractive young Mendelssohn, but he also found time to play chamber music, give a daily lesson in double counterpoint to a woman he referred to in letters as “little Mademoiselle L.,” and complete the piano concerto he had sketched earlier on his journey, in Rome.

Competing with Mlle. L. for Mendelssohn's attentions was a talented 17-year-old pianist by the name of Delphine von Schauroth. She was well-connected: King Ludwig I himself spoke to Mendelssohn on her behalf, rather to the composer's annoyance. But Mendelssohn liked Delphine, and she received the dedication of the concerto, which became one of her party pieces in her later career.

Mendelssohn, however, played the premiere himself on October 17, at a concert devoted entirely to his own music. Also included were his Symphony No. 1, the astounding Overture he had written at 17 for Shakespeare’s A Midsummer Night’s Dream, and some keyboard improvisations.

a tempestuous beginning
The audience at the Munich Odeon, which included the King, must have been astonished by the way the concerto begins—not just by the tempestuous orchestral crescendo but even more by the entrance of the piano after only seven preparatory bars. In five concertos he had written in his teens, Mendelssohn had provided the full orchestral exposition listeners expected. In the Piano Concerto No. 1, the drastic short-circuiting of formal conventions consorts well with the urgent gestures of this music—Sturm und Drang revisited.

molto allegro con fuoco. The piano enters not just soon and impetuously, but with an imposing display of brawn. Alone, it also begins a lyric second theme, to which the violins add just a touch of delicate commentary. This episode, a brief moment of relaxation, begins in B-flat major, which, as the relative major of the home key, G minor, is normal—although at the same time, Mendelssohn is careful not to stabilize B-flat too much, keeping his melody poised over a dominant pedal. Moreover, he almost immediately repeats its opening phrase in B-flat minor, then uses that change as a hinge to go into D-flat major, and by now he has moved very far away from home. Thunderous octave scales begin the development, which is full of pianistic and harmonic adventure.

andante. After an elegantly tactful introduction by the piano, cellos and violas sing the touching, lightly sentimental song-without-words of the Andante. In the middle comes a lovely opportunity for the pianist to show off his or her skill in filigree, while violas and cellos—each section is divided in two to make a gloriously rich crème caramel of a sound—continue the melodic flow. Finally, with violins adding their shimmer to the orchestral palette, the piano reclaims the melody.

presto–molto allegro vivace. Another fanfare rouses us from these dreams, and, with a more expansive imitation of the concerto's opening—a suspenseful crescendo in the orchestra and a bravura entrance for the soloist—Mendelssohn launches his headlong and glittering finale with its sparkling and dancing themes and decorative counter-themes. For a moment, he relaxes tempo and mood to bring the briefest of recollections of the first movement's lyric theme; then, the pianist having been given this chance to catch his or her breath, he launches his sure-to-bring-the-house-down coda.

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

In May 1803, Beethoven confided to a friend: “I am only a little satisfied with my previous works. From today on I will take a new path.” Over the next six months, he sketched his massive new Third Symphony, a revolutionary work of art that dumbfounded early audiences at private performances and the public premiere on April 7, 1805.

Nearly everyone knows the story of how Beethoven had intended to dedicate the symphony to Napoleon, whose reforms in France had seemed to signal a new age of egalitarian justice. But when the composer learned that Napoleon had proclaimed himself emperor, he tore off the score’s title and angrily blotted out Napoleon’s name. When published in 1806, the title page bore only the cryptic inscription: “Sinfonia eroica—dedicated to the memory of a great man.”

**allegro con brio.** The “new path” of which Beethoven wrote is evident from the first instant. The music explodes to life with two whip-cracks in E-flat major, followed immediately by the main ideas in the cellos. The theme is built on the notes of an E-flat major chord, but it settles on a “wrong” note, C-sharp, and the resulting harmonic complications are resolved only after much violence.

Rather than the duple meter customary in symphonic first movements, Beethoven chose 3/4, the minuet meter, which had been thought lightweight, unworthy of serious music. But this is music of the greatest violence and uncertainty: in it, what Beethoven’s biographer Maynard Solomon has called “hostile energy” is admitted for the first time into what had been the polite world of the classical symphony. This huge movement introduces a variety of themes and develops them with a furious energy; in the powerful coda, the main theme repeats four times, growing more potent on each appearance, and finally it is shouted out in triumph. This truly is a “heroic” movement, raising serious issues and resolving them in music of unparalleled drama and scope.

**marcia funebre: adagio assai.** The second movement brings another surprise—it is a funeral march, something else entirely new in symphonic music. Beethoven moves to dark C minor as violins announce the grieving main idea over growling basses, and the movement makes its somber way on the tread of this dark theme. The C-major central interlude sounds almost bright by comparison—the hero’s memory is ennobled here—but when the opening material and tonality return Beethoven ratchets up tensions by treating his material fugally. At the end, the march theme disintegrates in front of us, and the movement ends on muttering fragments of that theme.

**scherzo: allegro vivace.** Out of this silence, the propulsive scherzo springs to life, then explodes. For all its revolutionary features, the *Eroica* employs what was essentially the Mozart-Haydn orchestra: pairs of winds, plus timpani and strings. Beethoven makes only one change, adding a third horn, which is now featured prominently in the trio section’s hunting-horn calls. That seemingly small alteration is yet another signal of the symphony’s originality: the virtuosic writing for horns, the sweep of their brassy sonority—all these are new in music.

**finale: allegro molto.** The finale is a theme-and-variation movement, an old form that Beethoven transforms into a grand conclusion worthy of a heroic symphony. After an opening flourish, he presents not the theme but the bass line of that theme, played pizzicato, and offers several variations on this line before the melodic theme itself is heard in the woodwinds, now accompanied by the same pizzicato line. Beethoven puts the theme through a series of dazzling variations, including complex fugal treatment, before reaching a moment of poise on a stately slow variation for woodwinds. The music pauses expectantly, and then a powerful *Presto* coda hurls the *Eroica* to its close.

With this symphony, Beethoven made an extraordinary leap to an entirely new conception of what music might be. Freed from the restraint of courtly good manners, he found in the symphony the means to express the most serious and important of human emotions.

It is no surprise that over the next century, composers would make full use of this freedom. Nor is it a surprise to learn that late in life, Beethoven named the *Eroica* as his favorite among the eight symphonies he then had written.

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

*Program note by Eric Bromberger.*
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Minneapolis Orchestra
Ilyich Rivas, conductor
Stefan Jackiw, violin

Friday, April 12, 2019, 8 pm
Orchestra Hall
Sunday, April 14, 2019, 2 pm
Orchestra Hall

Alberto Ginastera
Ballet Suite from Estancia
The Land Workers
Wheat Dance
The Cattlemen
Final Dance (Malambo)

Felix Mendelssohn
Concerto in E minor for Violin and Orchestra, Opus 64
Allegro molto appassionato
Andante
Allegretto non troppo – Allegro molto vivace
Stefan Jackiw, violin

INTERMISSION

ca. 20’

Antonin Dvorak
Symphony No. 8 in G major, Opus 88
Allegro con brio
Adagio
Allegretto grazioso
Allegro ma non troppo

ca. 36’

OH+ Concert Preview and Wine Tasting with hosts Anthony Ross and Valerie Little
Friday, April 12, 7–7:30 pm, N. Bud Grossman Mezzanine

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.
Artists apr 12, 14

Violinist Stefan Jackiw has appeared as soloist with the orchestras of Boston, Chicago, Cleveland, New York, Philadelphia and San Francisco, among numerous other ensembles. This week’s concerts mark his Minnesota Orchestra debut. Highlights of the current season include debut performances with the Dallas Symphony and returns to the Utah Symphony, Omaha Symphony, Kansas City Symphony, Antwerp Symphony Orchestra, Residentie Orkest, Copenhagen Philharmonic, Helsinki Philharmonic, Singapore Symphony, Tasmanian Symphony and KBS Symphony Orchestra. As a chamber musician, he has collaborated with such artists as Jeremy Denk, Steven Isserlis, Yo-Yo Ma and Gil Shaham, and he performs in a trio with Jay Campbell and Conrad Tao. This season he completes a performance series of Ives’ violin sonatas with Jeremy Denk at the Tanglewood Festival, ahead of their upcoming recording of the works for Nonesuch Records. The recipient of an Avery Fischer Career Grant, he also recorded all of Brahms’ violin sonatas at the Aspen Festival for Sony Records, as well as Beethoven’s Triple Concerto with Inon Barnatan, Alisa Weilerstein, Alan Gilbert and the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields. More: stefanjackiw.com.

Ilyich Rivas, conductor

Venezuelan-American conductor Ilyich Rivas made his professional debut at the age of 16 in front of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, and he has subsequently led many major orchestras including the London Philharmonic, Swedish Radio Symphony, Royal Stockholm Philharmonic, Gothenburg Symphony, Stuttgart Radio Symphony, Frankfurt Radio Symphony, NDR Radiophilharmonie Hanover, Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, Orquesta Sinfonica de Castilla y Leon and Orquesta Sinfonica de Galicia. In addition, he has conducted the Verbier Festival Orchestra, London’s Royal College of Music Orchestra, the Australian National Academy of Music Orchestra, the Youth Orchestra of the Americas and the Youth Orchestra of Bahia, Brazil. This week’s performances mark his Minnesota Orchestra debut. Highlights of his recent schedule include conducting debuts with the Tonkuenstler Orchestra, Gothenburg Symphony, Orchestre National de Lyon, Auckland Philharmonic, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic and Deutsche Radio Philharmonie Saarbrücken Kaiserslautern, as well as performances at the Schleswig-Holstein Music Festival, and return visits to the Swedish Radio Symphony, Stuttgart Radio Symphony and Orchestre de la Suisse Romande. More: imgartists.com.

Stefan Jackiw, violin

Violinist Stefan Jackiw has appeared as soloist with the orchestras of Boston, Chicago, Cleveland, New York, Philadelphia and San Francisco, among numerous other ensembles. This week’s concerts mark his Minnesota Orchestra debut. Highlights of the current season include debut performances with the Dallas Symphony and returns to the Utah Symphony, Omaha Symphony, Kansas City Symphony, Antwerp Symphony Orchestra, Residentie Orkest, Copenhagen Philharmonic, Helsinki Philharmonic, Singapore Symphony, Tasmanian Symphony and KBS Symphony Orchestra. As a chamber musician, he has collaborated with such artists as Jeremy Denk, Steven Isserlis, Yo-Yo Ma and Gil Shaham, and he performs in a trio with Jay Campbell and Conrad Tao. This season he completes a performance series of Ives’ violin sonatas with Jeremy Denk at the Tanglewood Festival, ahead of their upcoming recording of the works for Nonesuch Records. The recipient of an Avery Fischer Career Grant, he also recorded all of Brahms’ violin sonatas at the Aspen Festival for Sony Records, as well as Beethoven’s Triple Concerto with Inon Barnatan, Alisa Weilerstein, Alan Gilbert and the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields. More: stefanjackiw.com.

one-minute notes

Ginastera: Ballet Suite from Estancia
Ginastera’s colorful suite brings to life four scenes on an Argentine estancia, or cattle ranch. Pungent harmonies, jagged rhythms and dancelike impulses prevail, with percussion adding vigor to an exhilarating final dance.

Mendelssohn: Violin Concerto
Mendelssohn’s exquisite concerto maintains the transparent textures of a Mozart-Haydn orchestra, but it rings out with a splendor the earlier composers never dreamed possible. The solo violinist’s soaring lines, both graceful and impassioned, conclude in an exultant three-octave leap.

Dvořák: Symphony No. 8
Dvořák’s Eighth is full of luminous melodies and unexpected harmonic shifts. The second movement alludes to the funeral march of Beethoven’s Eroica Symphony, but lighter elements prevail in a whirlwind finale that is delightfully Czech.
Alberto Ginastera, Argentina’s most renowned classical composer, was heavily involved with promoting Argentine music and in developing the musical life of his country. Many of his early works, such as Panambi and Estancia, are representative of what he called his “objective nationalism” style—music that deliberately and overtly employed the rhythms and melodies of native Argentine folksongs and dances.

Estancia was commissioned in 1941 by Lincoln Kirstein for his American Ballet Caravan, which was touring South America at the time. But before the score could be premiered, Kirstein’s company disbanded. A staging of Estancia had to wait until 1952, when it was given at the Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires. As many composers have done with their ballet scores, Ginastera extracted a suite for orchestral concerts. It was in this form that the world first heard Estancia, as the suite was performed by the Teatro Colón Orchestra on May 12, 1943.

colorful and exhilarating
The half-hour ballet score is rarely heard in its entirety, unaccountably so in view of its consistently fine music. But the suite of four dances we hear tonight has become almost a repertory staple. Pungent harmonies, jagged rhythms and dancelike impulses prevail. The orchestration is especially colorful, particularly in the prominent use of percussion, including piano, xylophone and castanets, which contribute to one of the most exhilarating conclusions in all music.

The following note (slightly edited) is found as a preface to the score: “The deep and bare beauty of the land, its richness and natural strength, constitute the basis of Argentine life. This ballet presents various aspects of the activities on an ‘estancia’ [cattle ranch] in the course of a day, from dawn to dawn, with a symbolic sense of continuity. The plot shows a country girl who despises the man of the city. She finally admires him when he proves that he can perform the roughest and most difficult tasks in the land.”

Instrumentation: flute, piccolo (1 flute also doubling piccolo), 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, timpani, military drum, tenor drum, bass drum, cymbals, castanets, tambourine, tamtam, triangle, xylophone, piano and strings

Program note by Robert Markow.

Felix Mendelssohn

Born: February 3, 1809,
Hamburg, Germany
Died: November 4, 1847,
Leipzig, Germany

Concerto in E minor for Violin and Orchestra, Opus 64
Premiered: March 13, 1845

Mendelssohn’s Violin Concerto seems so polished, so effortless in its easy flow, that this music feels as if it must have appeared in one sustained stroke of his pen. Yet it took seven years to write. Normally a fast worker, Mendelssohn proceeded very carefully on this concerto, revising, polishing and consulting with David, his concertmaster at the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, at every step of its composition. He completed the score while on vacation in Soden, near Frankfurt, during the summer of 1844, and David gave the premiere in Leipzig on March 13, 1845. Mendelssohn was ill at the time and could not conduct, so his assistant, the Danish composer Niels Gade, led the first performance.

originality and endless beauty
We do not normally think of Mendelssohn as an innovator, but his Violin Concerto is as remarkable for its originality as for its endless beauty. It is deftly scored: he writes for what is essentially the Mozart-Haydn orchestra, and he keeps textures transparent and the soloist audible throughout. But he can also make that orchestra ring out with a splendor that Mozart and Haydn never dreamed of.

allegro molto appassionato. The innovations begin in the first instant. Mendelssohn does away with the standard orchestral exposition and has the violin enter in the second bar with its famous theme, marked Allegro molto appassionato and played entirely on the violin’s E-string; this soaring idea immediately establishes the movement’s singing yet impassioned character. Other themes follow in turn: a transitional figure for the orchestra and the true second subject, a chorale-like tune first given out by the woodwinds.

The quiet timpani strokes in the first few seconds, which subtly energize the orchestra’s swirling textures, show the hand of a master. Another innovation: Mendelssohn sets the cadenza where we do not expect it, at the end of the development rather than just...
Program Notes

before the coda. That cadenza—a terrific compilation of trills, harmonics and arpeggios—appears to have been largely the creation of David, who fashioned it from Mendelssohn's themes. The return of the orchestra is a masterstroke: it is the orchestra that brings back the movement's main theme as the violinist accompanies the orchestra with dancing arpeggios.

andante. Mendelssohn hated applause between movements, and he tried to guard against it here by tying the first two movements together with a single bassoon note. The two themes of the Andante might by themselves define the term “romanticism.” There is a sweetness about this music that could, in other hands, turn cloying, but Mendelssohn skirts that danger gracefully. The writing for violin in this movement, full of double-stopping and fingered octaves, is a great deal more difficult than it sounds.

allegretto non troppo–allegro molto vivace. Mendelssohn joins the second and third movements with an anticipatory bridge passage that subtly takes its shape from the concerto's opening theme. Resounding fanfares from the orchestra lead directly to the soloist's entrance on an effervescent, dancing melody so full of easy grace that we seem suddenly in the fairyland atmosphere of Mendelssohn's own incidental music to A Midsummer Night's Dream. Several other themes appear along the way, some combined in ingenious ways. But it is the sprightly opening melody that dominates as the music seems to fly through the sparkling coda to the violin's exultant three-octave leap at the very end.

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

Program note by Eric Bromberger.

Antonín Dvořák
Born: September 8, 1841, Mělník, Bohemia
Died: May 1, 1904, Prague

Symphony No. 8 in G major, Opus 88
Premiered: February 2, 1890

In the summer of 1889, Antonín Dvořák took his family to their summer retreat at Vysoka in the countryside south of Prague. There, amid the rolling fields and forests of his homeland, he could escape the pressures of the concert season, enjoy the company of his wife and children, and indulge one of his favorite pastimes: raising pigeons.

“melodies pour out of me”
Dvořák also composed a great deal that summer. On August 10 he completed his Piano Quartet in E-flat major, writing to a friend that “melodies pour out of me,” and lamenting: “If only one could write them down straight away! But there—I must go slowly, only keep pace with my hand, and may God give the rest.”

A few weeks later, on August 25, he made the first sketches for a new symphony, and once again the melodies poured out: he began the actual composition on September 6, and on the 13th the first movement was done. The second movement took three days, the third a single day, and by September 23 the entire symphony had been sketched. The orchestration was completed on November 8, and Dvořák himself led the triumphant premiere of his Eighth Symphony in Prague on February 2, 1890. From the time Dvořák had sat down before a sheet of blank paper to the completion of the full score, only 75 days had passed.

allegro con brio. “Symphony in G major,” says the title page, but the beginning of this work is firmly in the “wrong” key of G minor, and this is only the first of many harmonic surprises. It is also a gorgeous beginning, with the cellos singing their long wistful melody. But—another surprise—this theme will have little to do with the actual progress of the first movement. We soon arrive at what appears to be the true first subject, a flute theme of an almost pastoral innocence (commentators appear unable to resist describing this theme as “birdlike”), and suddenly we have slipped into G major. There follows a wealth of themes; one observer counted six separate ideas in the opening minutes of this symphony. Dvořák develops these across the span of the opening movement, and the cellos’ somber opening melody returns at key moments, beginning the development quietly and then being blazed out triumphantly by the trumpets at the stirring climax.
**Program Notes**

**adagio.** The two middle movements are just as free. The *Adagio* is apparently in C minor, but it begins in E-flat major with dark and halting string phrases; the middle section flows easily on a relaxed woodwind tune in C major in which some have heard the sound of cimbalom and a village band. A violin solo leads to a surprisingly violent climax before the movement falls away to its quiet close.

**allegretto grazioso.** The third movement opens with a soaring waltz in G minor that dances nimbly along its 3/8 meter; the charming center section also whirls in 3/8 time, but here its dotted rhythms produce a distinctive lilt. The movement concludes with nice surprises: a blistering coda, *Molto vivace*, whips along a variant of the lilting center section tune, but Dvořák has now transformed its triple meter into a propulsive 2/4. The movement rushes on chattering woodwinds right up to its close, where it concludes suddenly with a hushed string chord.

**allegro ma non troppo.** The finale is a variation movement—sort of. It opens with a stinging trumpet fanfare, an afterthought on Dvořák’s part, added after the rest of the movement was complete. Cellos announce the noble central theme (itself derived from the flute theme of the first movement), and a series of variations follows, including a spirited episode for solo flute. But suddenly the variations vanish: Dvořák throws in an exotic Turkish march full of rhythmic energy, a completely separate episode that rises to a great climax based on the ringing trumpet fanfare from the opening. Gradually things calm down, and the variations resume as if this turbulent storm had never blown through. Near the end comes lovely writing for strings, and a raucous, joyous coda—a final variation of the main theme—propels this symphony to its rousing close.

**Instrumentation:** 2 flutes (1 doubling piccolo), 2 oboes (1 doubling English horn), 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani and strings

*Program note by Eric Bromberger.*

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Minnesota Orchestra audiences first heard **Ginastera’s Ballet Suite from Estancia** on January 30, 1955, at Northrop Memorial Auditorium, with Antal Dorati conducting. This performance came two months after Dorati and the Orchestra recorded a different Ginastera work, *Variaciones concertantes*—which the Orchestra is performing at its upcoming 2019 Sommerfest celebrating Latin American music.

The Orchestra added **Mendelssohn’s Violin Concerto** to its repertoire on February 19, 1906, at the Minneapolis Auditorium, with founding Music Director Emil Oberhoffer conducting and French violinist Émile Sauret as soloist. This was the only appearance with the Orchestra by Sauret, a former child prodigy and student of Henri Vieuxtemps and Henryk Wieniawski who performed piano sonatas with Franz Liszt, and is best known for writing a famous cadenza for the first movement of Paganini’s First Violin Concerto.

The Orchestra first performed **Dvořák’s Eighth Symphony** on January 23, 1942, at Northrop Memorial Auditorium, under the direction of Dimitri Mitropoulos. The star attraction at that concert was pianist Anton Rubinstein, who performed Tchaikovsky’s First Piano Concerto. Three days after that performance, a milestone was reached in World War II as American troops arrived in the European theatre of operations for the first time, disembarking in Northern Ireland.
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Minnesota Orchestra
Sarah Hicks, conductor  |  Sam Bergman, host and viola

Inside the Classics
Saturday, April 13, 2019, 8 pm  |  Orchestra Hall

Tonight’s performance delves into the legacy of composer-pianist Amy Cheney Beach (1867-1944), whose 1894 *Gaelic* Symphony was the first major orchestral work to be published by an American woman. In addition to excerpts from Beach’s symphony, the orchestra will play music by Antonín Dvořák, Ludwig van Beethoven, Gustav Mahler, Rebecca Clarke, William Schuman, Florence Price and George Whitefield Chadwick. On the second half of the program, the Orchestra will perform Beach’s *Gaelic* Symphony in full.

Amy Beach  
*Gaelic* Symphony, Opus 32  
ca. 40’

Allegro con fuoco
Alla Siciliana
Lento con molto espressione
Allegro di molto

The program page from Amy Beach’s sole appearance with the Minnesota Orchestra—then known as the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra—on December 14, 1917, at the Minneapolis Auditorium, with Emil Oberhoffer conducting. Billed as “Mrs. H. H. A. Beach,” she was the soloist in her own Piano Concerto in the concert’s second half, while her *Gaelic* Symphony was performed before intermission.

Meet the Musicians Onstage: Following tonight’s concert, the audience is invited to join Minnesota Orchestra musicians onstage for conversation and beverages after the stage is cleared.
Sam Bergman, host and viola

Sam Bergman joined the Minnesota Orchestra in 2000. In addition to performing as violist, he serves as host and writer for the Orchestra’s Inside the Classics concert series, and he also hosts the Orchestra’s Symphonic Adventures programs for high school audiences. In recent years he has performed as a guest or substitute musician with ensembles including the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, IRIS Orchestra, New York Philharmonic and Philadelphia Orchestra. He has appeared in many Minnesota Orchestra chamber music concerts, including a performance in February of Bacewicz’s Piano Quintet No. 1. He has also written frequently for the Orchestra’s website, including a series of posts about the historic Cuba tour in 2015. More: minnesotaorchestra.org.

Sarah Hicks, conductor

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. During the 2019 Sommerfest and 2019-20 season, she leads the Orchestra in performances with Cloud Cult and a tribute to Frank Sinatra and Ella Fitzgerald featuring Capathia Jenkins and Tony DeSare; Home for the Holidays and A Musical Feast performances; the Inside the Classics and Sam & Sarah series; and live performances of movie scores as complete films are shown on a large screen, including Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back, Up and It’s a Wonderful Life. Away from Orchestra Hall, she conducted concerts this season with the Antwerp Symphony, Pittsburgh Symphony, Sarasota Orchestra, Toronto Symphony, Dallas Symphony and the Virginia Symphony Orchestra. More: minnesotaorchestra.org.
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Minnesota Orchestra
Osmo Vänskä, conductor
Timothy Zavadil, bass clarinet
Víkingur Ólafsson, piano

Thursday, April 25, 2019, 11 am | Orchestra Hall
Friday, April 26, 2019, 8 pm | Orchestra Hall
Saturday, April 27, 2019, 8 pm | Orchestra Hall

With these concerts we gratefully recognize Kita McVay and Jim Johnson for their generous contribution to the Minnesota Orchestra’s Investing in Inspiration campaign.

Ludwig van Beethoven
Overture to The Creatures of Prometheus, Opus 43
ca. 5’

Geoffrey Gordon
Prometheus, Concerto for Bass Clarinet and Orchestra
(after the treatment by Franz Kafka) *
[in four untitled movements]
Timothy Zavadil, bass clarinet
ca. 24’

Haukur Tómasson
Concerto No. 2 for Piano and Orchestra
[in one movement]
Víkingur Ólafsson, piano
ca. 17’

Jean Sibelius
Tapiola, Opus 112
ca. 19’

* North American premiere; co-commissioned by the Philharmonia Orchestra, Malmö Symphony Orchestra and Minnesota Orchestra

Concert Preview with Phillip Gainsley and Timothy Zavadil
Thursday, April 25, 10 am, Auditorium
Friday, April 26, 7 pm, Auditorium
Saturday, April 27, 7 pm, Auditorium

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.
Víkingur Ólafsson, piano

Icelandic pianist Víkingur Ólafsson, who makes his Minnesota Orchestra debut in these concerts, has won all the major prizes in his native country, including four Musician of the Year prizes at the Icelandic Music Awards and the Icelandic Optimism Prize. In September 2018 he released his new album on Deutsche Grammophon, Johann Sebastian Bach, featuring an eclectic selection of the composer's keyboard works. His 2018-19 season includes a return to the Los Angeles Philharmonic at the Hollywood Bowl, and performances with the Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra, Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra, Orchestre National de Lille, Detroit Symphony Orchestra and London's Philharmonia Orchestra, as well as collaborations with composer Philip Glass for performances of his works at the Philharmonie de Paris in May 2019. He also gives recitals across Japan, the U.S. and in Europe. He is the artistic director of Vinterfest in Sweden and the award-winning Reykjavík Midsummer Music, of which he is also the founder. More: harrisonparrott.com.

one-minute notes

Beethoven: Overture to The Creatures of Prometheus
The overture to Beethoven's only full-length ballet begins solemnly and expressively before it builds to a brisk and energetic main theme.

Gordon: Prometheus
Sailing from low to high and through all varieties of dynamic expression, the complex character of Geoffrey Gordon's Prometheus is perfectly suited to the unexpected versatility of the bass clarinet.

Tómasson: Piano Concerto No. 2
Dedicated to Víkingur Ólafsson, the piano soloist on this program, Tómasson's Second Piano Concerto weaves an imaginative tale through one single movement that traverses a glistening, unpredictable sound world.

Sibelius: Tapiola
Tapiola, Sibelius' last major composition, and a high point among his symphonic poems, evokes the beauty, mystery and magic of the Scandinavian forest. It provided a magnificent capstone to Sibelius' composing career—though he went on to live another three decades.
When Beethoven collaborated with the Italian Salvatore Vigano in providing an overture and a chain of sixteen short pieces for the ballet *The Creatures of Prometheus*, Vigano was at the height of his fame as a dancer, and he was emerging as a major choreographer. Vigano intended the new ballet as a tribute to the Empress Maria Theresa, a gesture that could only win extra favor for him and his Spaniard wife, fellow dancer Maria Medina—and as court ballet master, he didn’t hesitate to request that the commission for the ballet’s music be awarded to Beethoven.

This was an opportunity that the young Beethoven had been seeking—a chance to write for the theater, and for a handsome fee at that. Moreover, the mighty hero of the title appealed to him: in Greek mythology, it was the titan Prometheus who brought enlightenment to mankind by stealing the sacred fire from Olympus.

Not much is known about the hastily-assembled production, which debuted on March 28, 1801. While hardly a triumph, it was successful enough to be repeated fourteen times and revived in the following season. The program announced the work as “The Creatures of Prometheus, a heroic ballet, allegorical in two acts, from the ingenuity and interpretation of Herr Salvatore Vigano.” Only after the synopsis was Beethoven credited—perhaps an understandable slight, as the 30-year-old was not yet at the peak of his powers, and had just one symphony to his credit.

In the ballet, Prometheus implants the new force into two “creatures” (danced by Vigano and his wife, the Spaniard Maria Medina) sculpted from clay. They come to life, but neither feel nor understand, whereupon he escorts them to Parnassus, where their teachers include Euterpe, muse of lyric poetry, who uses the power of harmony to awaken them to human passion, and Orpheus, who instructs them in music.

When performed with the complete ballet, the Overture was linked with a stormy introduction and the subsequent numbers. It begins in solemn, stately terms, enhanced by a rich orchestral texture as it gives out an expressive theme. This leads to a swiftly bouncing tune, full of verve as it is briskly announced by the violins. Floating upward in the woodwinds, the contrasting theme is equally buoyant. The form is conventional, culminating in a substantial coda that further develops the main idea.

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

Program note by Mary Ann Feldman.

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**Ludwig van Beethoven**

**Born:** December 16, 1770, Bonn, Germany  
**Died:** March 25, 1827, Vienna, Austria

**Overture to The Creatures of Prometheus, Opus 43**

**Premiered:** March 28, 1801

**Geoffrey Gordon**

**Born:** August 26, 1968, Flint, Michigan; now living in New York City

**Prometheus, Concerto for Bass Clarinet and Orchestra (after the treatment by Franz Kafka)**

**Premiered:** January 19, 2019

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There is something quite unfair about the distribution of concertos by instrument. The vast majority are written for only two instruments: piano or violin (cello comes in a distant third). Thereafter, concerto opportunities for other instruments diminish sharply. We have, of course, a few distinguished examples for clarinet—Mozart’s being the jewel of the bunch, and others including Copland’s and Artie Shaw’s, both of which were performed earlier this year by the Minnesota Orchestra’s Principal Clarinet Gabriel Campos Zamora. There are, though, almost none for the bass clarinet—which makes Geoffrey Gordon’s *Prometheus* all the more unique, and attractive. *Prometheus*, which receives its North American premiere at these concerts, is not just a depiction of the famous Greek myth, it is also that rarest of things: a concerto for bass clarinet and orchestra.

In Greek mythology, Prometheus revolted against the rule of Zeus and gave man the gift of fire, only to face a horrifying punishment. The Prometheus myth has been retold by many artists over the centuries: it was the subject of a play by Aeschylus, a poetic drama by Shelley, a tone poem by Scriabin and a ballet by Beethoven, the overture to which is also featured on this week’s program. Franz Kafka turned to that myth in the years immediately after World War I, and his short story—which appears in full on the following page—became the inspiration for Gordon’s new work *Prometheus*. The concerto was premiered by London’s Philharmonia Orchestra in January of this year, with Martyn Brabbins conducting and Laurent Ben Slimane as soloist.
**Program Notes**

**a note from the publisher**

According to the composer, the concerto’s architecture is not literally dictated by Franz Kafka’s story, but is instead intended to capture the essence of the Kafka treatment. Gordon’s publisher has made available the following introduction to *Prometheus*, which has been lightly edited:

“The concerto is in four movements, which generally follow the sections of the short story by Franz Kafka treating the legend of Prometheus, the Greek mythological hero who is punished for helping man by giving him fire, hitherto known only to the Gods.

“Kafka divided the story into four parables. In the first, Prometheus’ punishment is set: being chained to a cliff as eagles are sent to devour his liver, which re-grows incessantly. In the second, the eagles continue to devour, and to escape torture, Prometheus tries to hide in the rock, interlocked and merged with it. In the third, the Gods forget their hatred and leave Prometheus. In the fourth, the torture is ended, the whole story having become forgotten, obscure and meaningless. And finally, there remains the inexplicable mass of rock.

“Within this structure, Gordon has created a highly dramatic musical response to the Kafka treatment, describing, considering and retelling the four parables and the obscure ending. So much is clear thematically that from the opening movement, listening becomes as seeing. The listener quickly comes to know the place, the characters and their story in the opening movement. The solo bass clarinet identifies as Prometheus, the falling second heard in the orchestra as the Rock, the orchestra’s rhythmic punctuation the Gods and the piercing trumpet figures the eagles. This readily expounds what unfolds. For example, in the second movement, the listener is immediately led to imagine the gigantic creatures descending on flesh, pecking savagely, and the pain of Prometheus’ torture. Gordon treats this in such a way that there is a sense of experiencing through textures, instrumentation and motif, not just the perspective of the hero, in random glimpses of terrorizing feathers coming, through eyes, half shut of a deep agony, screaming pain, but also that of the Gods overseeing all and also that of the audience itself.”

**the soloist’s view**

The soloist at these performances of *Prometheus* is bass clarinetist Timothy Zavadil, who has been a member of the Minnesota Orchestra since 2007. He offers these insights into what it is like to perform *Prometheus*:

“I am thrilled to be sharing Geoffrey Gordon’s bass clarinet concerto *Prometheus* with our Minnesota Orchestra audience in its North American premiere. The piece is a joint commission between the Minnesota Orchestra, Philharmonia Orchestra (London) and Malmö Symphony Orchestra (Sweden), and is based on Franz Kafka’s reflection on the myth of Prometheus.

“Kafka explores four ‘versions’ of the myth, hence this concerto is in four movements. To me, one of the most wonderful aspects of the bass clarinet is its wide range of expressive components, and Geoffrey Gordon utilizes these fully throughout the four movements. The piece goes from the lowest notes on the instrument and sails into the upper register three and a half octaves higher. This concerto also showcases the bass clarinet’s ability to play a wide dynamic range, asking the instrument to play everything from *ppp* (very, very soft) to *molto f* (very loud!). The character of Prometheus is a complicated one, and the bass clarinet is a wonderful choice to depict him in all of his complexities. I look forward to giving our audiences the opportunity to hear how versatile and expressive this instrument can be.”

**Instrumentation:** solo bass clarinet with orchestra comprising 2 flutes, piccolo, 2 oboes, English horn, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, contrabassoon, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, bass drum, bell plate, bell tree, bongos, crotales, 2 Chinese cymbals, 3 suspended cymbals, gong, marimba, 4 tamtams, temple blocks, 2 triangles, vibraphone, chimes, harp, piano and strings.

*Program note by Eric Bromberger.*

**PROMETHEUS**

There are four legends concerning Prometheus:

According to the first, he was clamped to a rock in the Caucasus for betraying the secrets of the gods to men, and the gods sent eagles to feed on his liver, which was perpetually renewed.

According to the second, Prometheus, goaded by the pain of the tearing beaks, pressed himself deeper and deeper into the rock until he became one with it.

According to the third, his treachery was forgotten in the course of thousands of years, the gods forgotten, the eagles, he himself forgotten.

According to the fourth, every one grew weary of the meaningless affair. The gods grew weary, the eagles grew weary, the wound closed wearily.

There remained the inexplicable mass of rock. – The legend tried to explain the inexplicable. As it came out of a substratum of truth it had in turn to end in the inexplicable.

– *Franz Kafka* (1917)
Icelandic composer Haukur Tómasson, whose music is heard for the first time at Orchestra Hall this week, began his studies at the Reykjavik College of Music, then went on to the U.S. for graduate work. He received a master's in composition from the University of California, San Diego, in 1990, and has since been based in his native Iceland. He has written for the stage, for orchestra, for a variety of chamber ensembles, for keyboard and for the voice. In his compositions, Tómasson has sometimes made use of native Icelandic music and myth, and perhaps his best-known work is his chamber opera Guðrún's Fourth Song of 1996. Based on Norse legends from the old Icelandic Ædda, it tells of Guðrún's harrowing revenge on the man who murdered her husband. Widely performed and recorded, it was in 2004 awarded the Nordic Council Music Prize, the most distinguished award for Nordic composers.

Tómasson's Second Piano Concerto was commissioned jointly by the Los Angeles Philharmonic and the NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchester. Composed in 2016, it was premiered in Hamburg on February 10, 2017, with Víkingur Ólafsson as soloist and Esa-Pekka Salonen conducting. The American premiere took place two months later in Los Angeles, when once again Ólafsson (who is also today's soloist) and Salonen were the principals. Tómasson dedicated the concerto to Ólafsson, who recorded it with the Iceland Symphony Orchestra last year.

The Second Piano Concerto is original in many ways, and one of its most striking features is its unusual form. Instead of writing in the three movements of the traditional concerto, Tómasson casts this concerto in one continuous movement that spans only 17 minutes. Further, he does away with the conflict and resolution commonly employed in the concerto form, and in their place the composer creates an evolving musical narrative over those 17 minutes: certain basic ideas are stated at the beginning and evolve constantly across the span of the concerto.

Just as striking as this concerto's form is the sound-world Tómasson generates. He writes for a huge orchestra, but then uses that orchestra in the most sparing and economic fashion. Almost never does he unleash the full power of the orchestra at once—there are no big, lush tunes for the massed string sections, for example, and during much of this concerto the piano soloist is interacting with only a handful of instruments from the orchestra. Beyond this, Tómasson creates a very particular sound in this music—it is sparkling, pointillistic, glittering, crystalline, ringing. Some of this comes from the lean writing for piano, but much of it comes from his imaginative writing for percussion, and the silvery sound of the vibraphone is an important part of this concerto's distinctive sonority.

The writing for piano soloist is just as unusual as the orchestral sonority. The piano line is not chordal but linear in the extreme: often the two hands will have lines that are completely unharmonized and exist as two separate, almost skeletal statements. Some have suggested that at the beginning of this concerto, Tómasson is invoking the old Icelandic folk tradition of tvisöngur, or “twin-singing.” Early Icelandic folk music was not harmonized with the full chords of Western classical music but instead consisted of two lines set a fifth apart (it is for this reason sometimes called “Quint-song”). The exceptionally spare writing for the piano soloist at the beginning of this concerto recalls that tradition (though the two hands are not always exactly a fifth apart). To be sure, there are moments of full chordal textures for both soloist and orchestra here, but one comes away from this concerto most struck by its glistening sound and the leanness of its textures.

**the concerto in brief**

The beginning of the concerto is deceptively simple: the piano lays out the principal idea in individual notes from each hand, encased in the most subtle of orchestra textures, mere flickers of sound around the piano’s bell-like sonority. Gradually textures and dynamics intensify, and after what might be described as a first climax, the piano resumes its lonely journey, once again accompanied by lean orchestral accompaniment: sometimes this is the sound of solo winds or solo strings, sometimes it is the glisten of percussive sound from such instruments as xylophone or Almglocken, and sometimes the soloist’s right hand has extended passages by itself. The music gradually builds to another climax, rushing ahead as it goes. Then—the climax over—the music seems to collapse into fragments, wisps of unusual sound such as flutter-tongued flutes or the pianist’s left hand, half-pedaled. All the energy of that climax now falls away, the piano part rises into its highest register, and suddenly the music vanishes delicately into silence.

**Instrumentation:** solo piano with orchestra comprising 3 flutes (1 doubling piccolo), 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons (1 doubling contrabassoon), 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, Almglocken, bass drum, crotale, flexatone, tuned gongs, handbells, tamtam, triangle, xylophone, marimba, vibraphone, chimes and strings

Program note by Eric Bromberger.
Jean Sibelius

Born: December 8, 1865, Tavastehus, Finland
Died: September 20, 1957, Järvenpää, Finland

Tapiola, Opus 112
Premiere: December 26, 1926

One of Sibelius’ most powerful and original compositions, Tapiola was also his last major work. Sibelius composed it during the summer of 1926, then lapsed into the silence that marked the final 30 years of his life. But Tapiola is a masterpiece, a magnificent conclusion to Sibelius’ career as a composer.

Spirit of the forests

In Finnish mythology, Tapio was the god or spirit of the vast forests of the north. With his wife Mielikki, Tapio presided over those forests, inhabiting the woodlands, protecting animals, and receiving the prayers of hunters. The title Tapiola has generally been understood to mean “the realm of Tapio,” and in the score Sibelius prefaced the music with these four lines:

Within them dwells the forest’s mighty God,
Ancient, mysterious, brooding savage dreams;
Widespread they stand, the Northland’s dusky forests,
And wood-sprites in the gloom weave magic secrets.

Tapiola is not a musical depiction of “the realm of Tapio”—it is not scene-painting—but is instead a powerful evocation of the mystery, magic, beauty and strength of those deep forests. The concentration of this music is remarkable: the entire piece grows out of its opening two measures, and that opening is simplicity itself: the timpani sounds a stark call to order, and strings stamp out a powerful chorale-like statement. This is the fundamental gesture of Tapiola, and over the next 20 minutes it will be repeated, fragmented, elongated and concentrated. It will move between sections of the orchestra, colored differently and heard at different speeds at the same time. Sometimes this theme builds up to moments of overwhelming tension, sometimes it sings, sometimes it dances, sometimes it turns playful. Sibelius was 61 when he wrote Tapiola, he had completed all seven of his symphonies, and now, at the end of his composing career, he wrote with the hand of a master.

Endlessly ingenious music

Everyone who hears Tapiola feels that this is evocative music, and it is easy to seem to sense the darkness and mystery of the deep forests, to “feel” snow whipping past, to detect the “wood-sprites” fitting about in the darkness. The English musicologist Donald Francis Tovey offers audiences the best possible approach to Tapiola: just “listen to it.” Don’t search for musical structures here (there are none), and don’t search for precise musical scene-painting (there is none). Instead, listen for Sibelius’ endlessly ingenious expansion of that opening figure, the many shades of color he creates, his sudden evolutions of mood and atmosphere. Some listeners have made out a gradual building-up to a great storm, with pine forests pitching in the snow and wind, but that must remain speculation, and it is a tribute to Sibelius’ writing that different listeners can sense so many different things here before the music fades into a mysterious silence fully worthy of the vast woodlands whose spirit it set out to evoke.

Tapiola was commissioned by the American conductor Walter Damrosch, who led the premiere with the New York Philharmonic Society on December 26, 1926. It was one of the few premieres of his music that Sibelius did not hear or conduct himself. When he wrote Tapiola, Sibelius had no idea that it would be his final major work. He was not ready to give up composing, and he did go on to write a few small pieces. He apparently made some progress on what would have been his Eighth Symphony, though that work—if it ever existed—vanished completely. But following these efforts, Sibelius lapsed into the silence that would span 30 years, until his death at almost 92 in 1957. But in its beauty, concentration, and evocative power, Tapiola makes a fitting and magnificent conclusion to his career as a composer.

Instrumentation: 3 flutes (1 doubling piccolo), 2 oboes, English horn, 2 clarinets, bass clarinet, 2 bassoons, contrabassoon, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, timpani and strings

Program note by Eric Bromberger.
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Seriously talented and seriously funny, Igudesman and Joo return to the Minnesota Orchestra for a one-of-a-kind madcap musical satire.

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Verdi Requiem
Fri May 17 & Sat May 18 8pm
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Thu May 30 11am / Fri May 31 8pm
Andrey Boreyko, conductor / Orion Weiss, piano
A pair of symphonic poems, an audacious piano concerto and a folkloric work by Polish composer Witold Lutosławski combine to create the perfect musical menu for late spring: lush, impressionistic and shimmering.

612-371-5656 / minnesotaorchestra.org / Orchestra Hall
PHOTOS Keefe: Travis Anderson Photo; Minnesota Chorale: Greg Helgeson; Weiss: Jacob Blickenstaff
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Trio for Oboe, Bassoon and Piano
Presto
Andante
Rondo
John Snow, oboe | Fei Xie, bassoon
Susan Billmeyer, piano
c. 14’

Johannes Brahms
Quintet in B minor for Clarinet and Strings, Opus 115
Allegro
Adagio
Andantino
Con moto
Gabriel Campos Zamora, clarinet | Susie Park, violin
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ca. 38’

Profiles of today’s performers are provided in an insert.
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