

encore

ATLANTA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA



SEPTEMBER 2021

Concerts of
Thursday, Sep. 9, 2021
8:00pm
Friday, Sep. 10, 2021
8:00pm
Saturday, Sep. 11, 2021
8:00pm

ROBERT SPANO,
conductor
GARRICK OHLSSON,
piano

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN (1770–1827)
Symphony No. 5 in C Minor, Op. 67 (1808) 34 MINS
I. *Allegro con brio*
II. *Andante con moto*
III. *Scherzo: Allegro (attacca)*
IV. *Allegro*

INTERMISSION 20 MINS

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN (1770–1827)
**Concerto No. 5 in E-Flat Major
for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 73,
“Emperor”** (1811) 39 mins
I. *Allegro*
II. *Adagio un poco mosso (attacca)*
III. *Rondo: Allegro ma non troppo*
Garrick Ohlsson, piano

Symphony No. 5 in C Minor, Op. 67

Symphony No. 5 is scored for three flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, three bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, three trombones, timpani and strings.

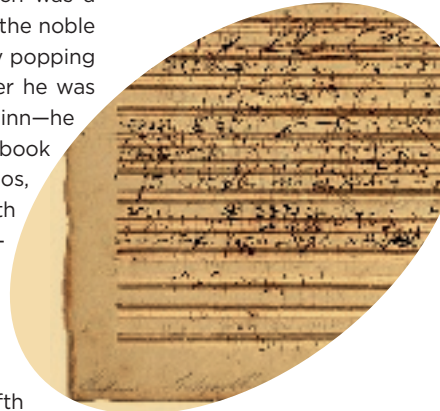
It has one of the most famous openings ever written; a grab-you-by-the-collar idea that transcends nationality, language and time. In World War II, when “V for victory” went viral among Allied peoples, Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony also went viral—that four-note opening spells “V” in Morse code (· - · -). In spite of Beethoven having been German, the French patriot Maurice van Moppes wrote words to Beethoven’s melody, calling it “Chanson de V,” a song which was printed on pamphlets and airdropped into occupied France.

It isn’t often that a musician can light a fire with just four notes. It was a spectacularly successful inspiration that doesn’t just open a symphony, it begets a symphony. It is the brick with which Beethoven fashions the entire building (just for fun, try counting the number of times you hear that rhythmic pattern).

In the early years of the 19th century, Beethoven was a star pianist performing and teaching (mostly) in the noble houses of Vienna. Because ideas were constantly popping into his head, he carried a sketchbook. Whatever he was doing—hiking in the woods, dining at a favorite inn—he would stop to write them down. From one sketchbook dated 1803 and 1804 come the seeds of concertos, his opera *Fidelio* and his Third, Fifth and Sixth Symphonies. It’s no coincidence that the four-note rhythm which gave rise to the raging Fifth is elemental to the sublimely serene Fourth Piano Concerto; the opening music of each appears side-by-side in that sketchbook.

Beethoven would continue to work on the Fifth Symphony off and on until completing the piece in early 1808. If its sheer life force says something about the composer’s spirit, it belies the condition in which he lived. Already, his hearing was beginning to fail; he had suffered from a series of illnesses, and an infection in one of his fingers which interfered with his ability to play the piano.

- First ASO Performance:
- December 17, 1949,
- Henry Sopkin, conductor
- Most Recent
- ASO Performances:
- May 9 and 11, 2019,
- Robert Spano, conductor.



Politically, his hometown of Vienna had suffered under the occupation of Napoleon and his troops. Personally, Beethoven was constantly quarreling with the people who had been his closest allies—not a recipe for happiness.

On a frigid day in December of 1808, Beethoven rented a concert hall and hired a pick-up orchestra and chorus to give “a concert for his own benefit.” The Viennese audience filed into the cavernous, unheated space to witness the premieres of his Fifth and Sixth Symphonies, his Fourth Piano Concerto and his Choral Fantasy, among other works—all were sadly underrehearsed. It was a fiasco. One sympathetic witness wrote: “There we sat, in the most bitter cold, from half past six until half past ten, and confirmed for ourselves the maxim that one may easily have too much of a good thing.” It was an audacious move on Beethoven’s part, a fitting premiere for the Fifth Symphony.

First ASO Performance:

January 22, 1953,

Eugene Istomin, piano,

Henry Sopkin, conductor

Most Recent

ASO Performances:

January 25 and 27, 2018,

Jorge Federico Osorio, piano,

Robert Spano, conductor.

**Concerto No. 5 in E-Flat Major
for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 73, “Emperor”**

In addition to the solo piano, the Concerto No. 5 is scored for two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns two trumpets, timpani and strings.

No one knows how the “Emperor” Concerto got its nickname. It’s a moniker that fits the character of the music perfectly, but it does not fit Beethoven at all. He had little affection for emperors.

In fact, in 1803, he was elated by rumors of a great liberator sweeping across Europe. He thought Napoleon would be that liberator and dedicated a “Bonaparte Symphony” to him, until Napoleon placed a crown upon his own head. Beethoven destroyed the dedication and retitled the piece “Eroica.”

Beethoven’s own emperor was alarmed by the abolition of the French monarchy. Upon his coronation in 1792, Franz II, Holy Roman Emperor, declared war on France and dispatched spies around Vienna to suppress rumblings of liberty and democracy.

In 1805, the two emperors spoiled Beethoven’s efforts to launch his only opera; Franz’s censors pulled *Fidelio* for having seditious overtones. And then, just as Beethoven prepared to premiere a revised version, Napoleon invaded

Vienna and scattered the opera audience. *Fidelio* was a box office disaster.

The Fifth Piano Concerto was composed during Napoleon's second occupation of Vienna. Starting in May of 1809, the French laid siege to the city and pounded the perimeter with howitzers. Quickly, the nobility and the army got out of town, leaving the rest of the citizenry to feed, house and otherwise submit to the French soldiers.

"What a destructive and disorderly life I see and hear around me," Beethoven wrote, "nothing but drums, cannons and human misery in every form." At one point, the composer is said to have taken shelter in his brother's basement, pressing pillows to his head to preserve what was left of his hearing. He wrote the Fifth Concerto that same summer.

Beethoven was a new breed of musician. The piano, invented around 1700, had only recently become widespread, and he was the first generation to come of age on the instrument. Realizing its dramatic potential, he wrote concertos to show off his skills as a player, but sadly ran out of time with this last concerto. The first known public performance took place in Leipzig, two years after he wrote it, and featured another player—Beethoven's hearing was too far gone. When the piece made its way home to Vienna in 1812, an unconfirmed report claims that a French soldier was so moved by its scope and its grandeur, he shouted "C'est l'Empereur!"



HORACE VERNET PUBLIC DOMAIN

GARRICK OHLSSON, PIANO

Pianist Garrick Ohlsson has established himself worldwide as a musician of magisterial interpretive and technical prowess. Ohlsson commands an enormous repertoire ranging over the entire piano literature, and he has come to be noted for his masterly performances of the works of Mozart, Beethoven and Schubert, as well as the Romantic repertoire. To date, he has at his command more than 80 concertos.

In 2018/19 season, he launched an ambitious project exploring the complete solo piano works of Brahms to be heard in New York, San Francisco, Montreal, Los Angeles, London. A frequent guest with orchestras in Australia, he accomplished a seven-city recital tour across Australia just prior to the closure of the concert world due to COVID-19. Since that time, and as a faculty member of San Francisco Conservatory of Music, he has been able to contribute to keeping music alive for a number of organizations with live or recorded recital streams.

An avid chamber musician, Ohlsson has collaborated with the Cleveland, Emerson, Tokyo and Takacs string quartets, including most recently Boston Chamber Players on tour in Europe. Together with violinist Jorja Fleezanis and cellist Michael Grebanier, he is a founding member of the FOG Trio. Passionate about singing and singers, Ohlsson has appeared in recital with such legendary artists as Magda Olivero, Jessye Norman, and Ewa Podleś. Ohlsson can be heard on the Arabesque, RCA Victor Red Seal, Angel, BMG, Delos, Hänssler, Nonesuch, Telarc, Hyperion and Virgin Classics labels.



Concerts of Friday, Sep. 17, 2021 8:00pm	RICHARD STRAUSS (1864–1949) <i>Don Juan, Op. 20</i> (1889)	18 MINS
	CONRAD TAO (b. 1994) Violin Concerto (2021) Stefan Jackiw, violin	26 MINS
Saturday, Sep. 18, 2021, 8:00pm	INTERMISSION	20 MINS
	ALVIN SINGLETON (b. 1940) <i>Different River</i> (2012)	25 MINS
	RICHARD STRAUSS (1864–1949) <i>Till Eulenspiegels lustige Streiche, Op. 28</i> (1895)	16 MINS

ROBERT SPANO,
conductor

STEFAN JACKIW,
violin

by Noel Morris

Program Annotator

Don Juan, Op. 20

***Don Juan* is scored for three flutes, three oboes, two clarinets, three bassoons, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion, harp and strings.**

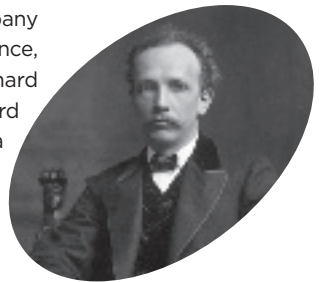
My father was “vehement, irascible, tyrannical.” Thus spoke Richard Strauss. For over 40 years, Franz Strauss played horn in the Bavarian Court Orchestra. His footprint in the musical life of young Richard, and of Germany, was considerable. He was an ardent musical conservative, a classicist who “worshipped the trinity of Mozart (above the others), Haydn and Beethoven,” said Richard.

The elder Strauss couldn't bear the musical shockwave issuing from the pens of Liszt and Wagner—though he played the premieres of several Wagner operas. So cantankerous was he, when Wagner died, he refused to stand in observance with his fellow musicians. “Strauss is a detestable fellow,” Wagner had quipped, “but when he plays the horn, you can't be angry with him.”

Even as Franz championed the past, there was a modernist giant developing underneath his own roof. He had trained young Richard to ably sit at the piano and accompany him in the Mozart concertos; but when he had the chance, the younger Strauss stole peeks at the scores of Richard Wagner. In honor of his high school graduation, Richard persuaded his father to take him to Bayreuth to see a production of *Parsifal*.

In 1885, Richard, then 21 years old, began working as an assistant to the esteemed Wagnerian conductor Hans von Bülow, the music director of the Meiningen Court Orchestra. Within a few months, Bülow took another post; the youth took his place. By this time, Strauss had written two symphonies, a violin concerto, a mass and dozens of other works, all fitting into traditional classical forms and rarely played today. In 1886, a trip to Italy inspired something different: a symphonic poem depicting four Italian landscapes. Strauss' *Aus Italien* paints vivid scenes in the style of Franz Liszt—a composer he would arguably eclipse.

First ASO Performance:
March 16, 1954,
Henry Sopkin, conductor.
Most Recent
ASO Performances:
April 27 and 29, 2017,
Vasily Petrenko, conductor



Immediately, Richard Strauss set to work on his second tone poem, *Macbeth*. Still not completely abandoning his classical upbringing, he labored to tell Shakespeare's tale in sonata form, a structure favored by composers a hundred years before. Working with one foot in the past and one in the future, Strauss struggled over *Macbeth*; classical models weren't working for him. Both Hans van Bülow and the elder Strauss urged the young composer to make revisions, but Richard was already at work on his sizzling showpiece *Don Juan*.

For his source material, young Strauss (he was only 24) looked to a dramatic poem on the subject by the Nikolaus Lenau, who had left the play unfinished at his death. Strauss included quotes from Lenau's work in his score. From it, we get a different version of the legendary lover: where Mozart's *Don Giovanni* (known to Strauss through his conducting), lived to seduce as many women as possible, Lenau's Don Juan is driven by the pursuit of the ideal woman. Frustrated, bored and disinterested in life, Lenau's Don Juan allows himself to be killed in a duel. "The fuel is all consumed and the hearth is cold and dark," reads the Lenau quote in Strauss's score. And thus ends the tone poem.

On November 11, 1889, Richard Strauss conducted the premiere of *Don Juan* in Weimar; it launched his career as a composer and is widely considered a masterpiece.

Violin Concerto (World Premiere)

Violin Concerto is scored for two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, trombone, timpani, percussion, harp and strings.

Conrad Tao has appeared worldwide as a pianist and composer. He is the recipient of the prestigious Avery Fisher Career Grant and was named a Gilmore Young Artist—an honor awarded every two years highlighting the most promising American pianists of the new generation. As a composer, he was also the recipient of a 2019 New York Dance and Performance "Bessie" Award, for Outstanding Sound Design / Music Composition, for his work on *More Forever*, his collaboration with dancer and choreographer Caleb Teicher.

Conrad Tao has recently appeared as soloist with the Los

Angeles Philharmonic, Cleveland Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, and Boston Symphony. As a composer, his work has been performed by orchestras throughout the US; his first large scale orchestral work, *Everything Must Go*, was premiered by the New York Philharmonic in 18-19, and will be premiered in Europe by the Antwerp Symphony in 21-22. He will also make his London solo recital debut at the Wigmore Hall, and will appear in recital throughout North America, including Boston, New York, Washington and Seattle. Tao's Bessie Award-winning dance work with Caleb Teicher, *More Forever*, will continue to tour North America, including performances at Cal Performances in Berkeley and Fall for Dance North in Toronto. Other collaborations include his duo work *Counterpoint*, also with Caleb Teicher, and a multi-city tour with violinist Stefan Jackiw and cellist Jay Campbell, as a member of the Junction Trio.

Tao was born in Urbana, Illinois in 1994. He has studied piano with Emilio del Rosario in Chicago and Yoheved Kaplinsky in New York, and composition with Christopher Theofanidis.

FROM THE COMPOSER:

While I was working on writing this piece, I was thinking about the experience of being online during the first several months of the pandemic. Streams of information and misinformation overlapping, competing for our distracted attention. Connecting through a screen as the primary means of staying socially nourished. Struggling to find internal peace in the chaos. Like many, I found calm in time spent outdoors. Focusing on the ebb and flow of the Hudson River, listening intently to traffic noise and leaves commingling in the wind, finding a shore of mysteriously stacked stones while walking north along the water—it all kept me in the present, in my body, and in my life.

My violin concerto is all about line. It opens with a series of dyads played by the solo violinist, followed by a descending gesture played by the clarinet. These first bars set in motion the main engines for the piece, the space between the violin's initial notes articulating a line that carves through the entire piece, interacting variously with



colliding harmonies and layered rhythms in the orchestra. The music then condenses into a simple song in B Major—I knew I was writing this piece for Stefan, and I knew I wanted to give him a melody to really sing through—before the finale, which begins spaciously, rapid and airy solo violin lines interacting with sparse interjections from the surrounding environment. The clarinet’s opening gesture, which has been compressing over the course of the piece’s three movements, helps move the music through several key areas, getting ever more anxious, before soloist and orchestra both burst out into a sustained and shared ecstatic release.

First ASO Performances:

May 10, 11, and 12, 2012,

Robert Spano, conductor

(world premiere)

Most Recent

ASO Performances:

April 7 and 8, 2016,

Robert Spano, conductor

Different River

***Different River* is scored for three flutes, three oboes, three clarinets, three bassoons, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion, harp and strings.**

Alvin Singleton was born in Brooklyn, New York, in 1940. His unique musical voice is the product of his richly diverse educational and cultural background. Singleton studied at New York University, Yale University, and, as a Fulbright scholar, with Goffredo Petrassi at the Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia in Rome. Numerous and varied styles of music influenced his works. Growing up, he was fascinated by such artists as the Beatles, John Coltrane, James Brown and Mahalia Jackson. Singleton was also profoundly influenced by the gospels and spirituals that resounded in his family’s church.

Singleton served as Resident Composer at Spelman College (1988–91), as UNISYS Composer-in-Residence with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra (1996–97), and Composer-in-Residence with the Ritz Chamber Players of Jacksonville, Florida (2002–03). In addition, he has served as Visiting Professor of Composition at the Yale University School of Music. In 2004, Singleton joined the American Composers Orchestra as “Music Alive” Composer-in-Residence and Artistic Advisor for the IMPROVISE! Festival, and in 2008, he served as Composer-in-Residence in Tirana, Albania.

Singleton’s compositions have been performed by major orchestras worldwide. International festivals that have

programmed his music include Chamber Music Northwest in Portland, Tanglewood, Aspen, Bravo! Colorado, Music from Angel Fire in New Mexico, Cincinnati May Festival, Cabrillo Music Festival, Bang on a Can, the National Black Arts Festival in Atlanta, Other Minds in San Francisco, Festival Miami, the Vienna Summer Festival, Pro Musica Nova in Bremen, the Styrian Autumn Festival in Graz, Nuova Consonanza Festival in Rome, the Brussels ISCM World Music Days and IRCAM in Paris.

After his studies in Rome, Singleton remained in Europe for 14 years, where he received numerous awards for his works. While in Paris, he met Robert Shaw, then the Music director of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra. This meeting ultimately led to Singleton's appointment as Composer-in-Residence for the ASO, a post he held from 1985-88.

Different River

For a century or more the trend for so many composers of creative music has been to put the emphasis of their work on self-expression with ever-less regard for listeners, even sophisticated ones. Certain composers have even boasted that they don't want their works understood; or as one said, he writes for his colleagues.

Alvin Singleton, on the other hand, has typically achieved the distinct accomplishment of writing music that is both attractive to hear and intellectually challenging in a way that also invites listeners to join him in some sonic and/or structural guessing game.

Different River is certainly a case in point.

Scored for full orchestra with extra percussion, this one-movement work lasts about 25 minutes. Of the title the composer writes: it is "about an ever-changing perspective on a river that is always moving...Each time you step in you're at a different place."

Are we in this river or observing it? And of what is it made (composed)? Strange objects float by. Intensely themselves, they may be the mystical-though-annunciatory percussion utterance that opens *Different River*. Or the galloping 16th notes from mallet instruments that follows, or the contrasting long, long tones of strings and woodwinds, or a brass fanfare, the sweet mumblings of solo harp, and then

a stretch of silence. Unlike in many of his works, Singleton here seems not to favor any of these as the “theme” that wins out in the end. Each element that enters and passes is bright, clear, and strong. There are moments when elements gather, crash together, and suggest “climax.” But the true theme of *Different River* is the listener’s experiencing the rolling by of disparate musical passages. River-like, each impresses (intrigues?) us, and like the river of life, all passes on. — *Notes by Carman Moore*

First ASO Performance: : ***Till Eulenspiegels lustige Streiche, Op. 28***

March 31, 1951,
Henry Sopkin, conductor

Most Recent

ASO Performances:
January 23 and 25, 2020,
James Gaffigan, conductor

***Till Eulenspiegels lustige Streiche* is scored for four flutes, four oboes, four clarinets, four bassoons, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion and strings.**

There is a 1915 National Geographic photograph of a square in the Lower Saxon town of Brunswick with half-timbered buildings and a quirky bronze fountain in front. The fountain’s subject is not an imposing war hero, but the scrawny Till Eulenspiegel grinning at a gathering of owls and monkeys. With his sleeves rolled up and a shoe dangling off the toes, the fountain memorializes the insouciant prankster, right at the entrance to a bakery that, until 1944, served rolls in the shape of owls and monkeys. Most of those buildings fell in World War II, but the Till Eulenspiegel Fountain survived.

The story goes that it was at that bakery that Till impersonated a baker. When his boss left him with bread dough and ordered him to get busy, the imposter said, “What do I do with it?”

“Make owls and monkeys,” snapped the baker. That night, instead of producing loaves of bread, Till Eulenspiegel turned out baskets full of owls and monkeys. The next day, the baker fired him. But the swindler got the last laugh, selling his critter-shaped buns to happy townspeople.

A jester, a con artist and a practical joker, the legend of Till Eulenspiegel entered the hearts of the German people through a new popular pastime: literature. It was in the early 16th century that literacy expanded following the advent of the printing press. Packed with potty humor,



this picaresque comedy delighted that new, less-refined audience. By the mid-16th century, the legend jumped the English Channel with the phrase, “Here beginneth a merye Jest of a man that was called Howleglas” (Eulenspiegel translates into a compound word: owl + mirror). Till’s legend became the subject of an 1867 novel by Charles de Coster and, as recently as 2014, inspired a TV movie.

One cannot overstate the facility with which Richard Strauss turned personalities and pictures into music. From busybody music critics to a knight’s battle with windmills, the physical world was a great source of inspiration. Initially, the composer wanted to write an opera about the naughty Till, but confessed, “The figure of Master Till Eulenspiegel does not quite appear before my eyes.” In 1894, he produced the exuberant symphonic poem, *Till Eulenspiegel’s Merry Pranks*, after the *Old Rogue’s Tale*, Set in Rondo Form for Large Orchestra, but resisted providing specifics: “Any words into which I might put the thoughts that the several incidents suggested to me would hardly suffice; they might even offend.”

Eventually, Strauss did offer more details, acknowledging he had envisioned a series of episodes: Till charging on horseback through a crowded market, Till impersonating a priest and flirting with a pretty girl, a spat with academics, and his trial and execution.

Accounts of the historical and elusive Till Eulenspiegel, born in 1300, vary widely. In some versions, he paid for his misdeeds with his life (if he lived at all), yet there survives an early account of a tombstone in Mölln stating he succumbed to the Black Death in 1350.

According to tradition, Till’s victims included a king, the clergy, doctors, tradesmen and peasants. It often became necessary for him to get out of town quickly, which pushed his reputation—and his exploits—to cities across Europe.

Strauss’ tone poem opens with a little introductory music, as if to say, “Once upon a time.” There follows one of Strauss’ famous themes ever written for French horn, a whimsical tune representing the title character. A second tune sounding in the clarinet, a faster version of the ‘Once upon a time’ music, represents Till’s laughter.

Strauss wove these themes throughout the piece, and changed them constantly to suggest a quick-witted, ever-changing character. In the end, a furious drum roll and a thundering denunciation by the low brass signal Till's meeting with the gallows. He lets out a shriek in the clarinet before falling silent.

According to legend, Till Eulenspiegel left a few pranks to be played from beyond the grave. In Strauss's score, the 'Once upon a time' theme follows the execution, and the immutable Till roars back to deliver an orchestral kick in the pants.

fig. 1

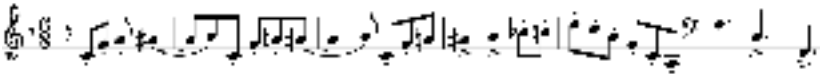


fig. 2



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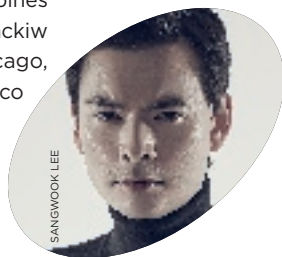
STEFAN JACKIW, VIOLIN

Stefan Jackiw is one of America's foremost violinists, captivating audiences with playing that combines poetry and purity with an impeccable technique. Jackiw has appeared as soloist with the Boston, Chicago, Cleveland, New York, Philadelphia, and San Francisco symphony orchestras, among others.

In Summer 2021, Jackiw returned to the Cleveland Orchestra with Rafael Payare, the Boston Symphony with Alan Gilbert, and the Aspen Music Festival performing the Beethoven Triple Concerto, alongside Alisa Weilerstein and Inon Barnatan.

Before the outbreak of COVID-19, Jackiw was scheduled to appear with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra, Vancouver Symphony, Konzerthausorchester Berlin, Royal Scottish National Orchestra, and Antwerp Symphony, among others. In the 2021-2022 season, highlights include performances with the NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchestra and Alan Gilbert, and with Orchestre National de Lyon under Nikolaj Znaider. In July 2020, he launched Stefan's Sessions, a virtual masterclass series exploring major works with up-and-coming violinists. Jackiw also tours frequently with his musical partners, pianist Conrad Tao and cellist Jay Campbell, as part of the Junction Trio.

Born to physicist parents of Korean and German descent, Jackiw began playing the violin at the age of four. His teachers have included Zinaida Gilels, Michèle Auclair, and Donald Weilerstein. He holds a Bachelor of Arts from Harvard University, as well as an Artist Diploma from the New England Conservatory, and is the recipient of a prestigious Avery Fisher Career Grant. Jackiw plays a violin made in 1750 in Milan by G.B. Guadagnini, on generous loan from a private collection.



Concerts of
Thursday, Sep. 23, 2021
8:00pm

Saturday, Sep. 25, 2021
8:00pm

SHIYEON SUNG,
conductor

JOSEPH MCFADDEN,
double bass

JOSEPH HAYDN (1732–1809)

Symphony No. 102 in B-Flat Major,

Hob. I:102 (1795)

26 MINS

- I. *Largo — Vivace*
- II. *Adagio*
- III. *Menuetto — Trio, Allegro*
- IV. *Finale, Presto*

JOHANN BAPTIST VANHAL (1739–1813)

Double Bass Concerto

24 MINS

- I. *Allegro moderato*
- II. *Adagio*
- III. *Allegro*

Joseph McFadden, double bass

INTERMISSION

20 MINS

JOHANNES BRAHMS (1833–1897)

Serenade No. 2 in A Major, Op. 16 (1860)

29 MINS

- I. *Allegro moderato*
- II. *Scherzo, Vivace – Trio*
- III. *Adagio non troppo*
- IV. *Quasi menuetto – Trio*
- V. *Rondo, Allegro*

Symphony No. 102 in B-Flat Major, Hob. I:102

Symphony No. 102 is scored for two flutes, two oboes, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, timpani and strings.

In 1761, Franz Joseph Haydn must have been giddy about his new job with the powerful Esterházy family. He had been a country boy, born to a poor family. When he won a spot in the famed Vienna Boys' Choir in 1750, he got a free ride—schooling, room and board—although he often complained of hunger. After his voice changed, he was on his own. A job with the Esterházy's was his ticket to stability—and so much more.

This new appointment would become one of music's great marriages between genius and circumstance: Haydn donned a servant's uniform and followed his prince to various palaces, but he worked primarily at a sprawling estate called Esterháza, just inside the Hungarian border.

In those years, Esterháza served as a destination for Europe's most powerful people—and a veritable laboratory for music. The prince provided Haydn with singers, an orchestra, an opera house and a puppet theater; and Haydn created. He wrote hundreds of works, dozens of symphonies and conducted over a thousand operas.

By the end of 1789, after almost three decades with the Esterházy's, Haydn was among the most famous composers in the world, yet remained, for all intents and purposes, the exclusive property of his prince. And it seems Haydn was feeling some burnout.

After having spent a joyous Christmas season in Vienna, where he hustled between concerts, quartet parties and holiday festivities, he bemoaned his return to the Hungarian estate. "Well, here I sit in my wilderness," he wrote, "forsaken, like some poor orphan." Little did he know, his life was about to change forever.

On September 28, Prince Nikolaus died, leaving his title and estate to his son, a man who was not a music lover. The new prince released Haydn and his orchestra. With a decent pension in his pocket, Haydn packed up his music and went home to Vienna. Enter Johann Peter Salomon.

First ASO Performance:
April 26, 1973,
Robert Shaw, conductor.
Most Recent
ASO Performances:
November 5, 6, and 7, 1992,
Yoel Levi, conductor.

Salomon was a violinist and composer from Bonn, a man coincidentally born at 515 Bongasse, the same house in which Beethoven was born. Although Salomon was by all accounts a fine musician, he's best remembered as the impresario who paid Haydn to go to London.

On January 1, 1791, Haydn stepped onto English soil and into one of the happiest periods of his life. It seems he found love, wrote some 250 compositions, including twelve symphonies, made a lot of money and became acquainted with the royal family.

His Symphony No. 102 was first performed at the King's Theatre on February 2, 1795, a historic occasion that has been somewhat muddled over the years. Haydn's biographer Albert Christoph Dies wrote the following account describing an event which took place in London four years before:

"When Haydn appeared in the orchestra and sat down at the pianoforte to conduct a symphony himself, the curious audience in the parterre left their seats and crowded towards the orchestra, the better to see the famous Haydn quite close. The seats in the middle of the floor were thus empty, and hardly were they emptied when the great chandelier crashed down and broke into bits, throwing the numerous gathering into great consternation!"

An event which could have killed a couple dozen people, caused only minor injuries, prompting history to name the Symphony No. 96 (ostensibly the piece that was being played at that fateful moment) "The Miracle"—except there exists a newspaper article describing the incident as having happened on February 3, 1795, the morning after the premiere of the Symphony No. 102. Today, people still refer to the Symphony No. 96 as the "The Miracle" Symphony, but with a nod to No. 102.

Double Bass Concerto

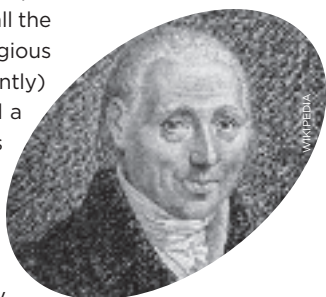
These are ASO premiere : **In addition to the solo double bass, this concerto is**
performances. : **scored for two oboes, bassoon, two horns, harpsicord**
and strings.

History books are packed with stories about the private lives of kings, queens and emperors. Serfs and peasants—not so much. Based on scant



information, it seems Jan Křtitel Vanhal (or in German, Johann Baptist Wanhal) was born into servitude in a remote village in Bohemia, a kingdom under Hapsburg rule.

Subject to the emperor in Vienna, Czech territories were the staging ground for numerous conflicts in Europe, including the War of Austrian Succession. In spite of all the tumult, Vanhal's parents recognized the boy's prodigious talent and got him lessons in music, and (importantly) the German language. By the age of thirteen, he had a job as an organist and choirmaster. After a while, his reputation and compositions attracted the attention of a Silesian noblewoman who sponsored his move to Vienna around 1760. Now in the musical capital of the empire, Vanhal took lessons from Carl Ditters von Dittersdorf (who was the same age), and eventually landed a post at the Burgtheater.



It seems Vanhal had been on track to win a major appointment in Vienna, possibly from Emperor Joseph II, but he withdrew from the Viennese musical scene for some time. Some historians have suspected mental illness, but this is unconfirmed. He did spend some time in Italy, and eventually, settled in Vienna as a freelancer (a new niche for musicians), writing music that he could sell to amateur pianists and chamber musicians in the growing middle class.

Vanhal's name comes up in an account that surfaced in 1826 after the death of the Irish tenor Michael Kelly: Kelly left behind a journal describing a 1784 party at the home of the English composer Stephen Storace. According to Kelly, four of the guests sat down to play string quartets together: Franz Joseph Haydn and Carl Ditters von Dittersdorf on violin, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart on viola, and Johann Vanhal on cello.

"A greater treat or a more remarkable one cannot be imagined," wrote Kelly.

Vanhal's Double Bass Concerto is widely considered the finest of the classical era. Alas, the original manuscript is lost, and so the piece comes to us from the music library of a Vanhal contemporary named J. M. Sperger. With the cadenzas notated in Sperger's own hand, the piece is written for 18th-century Viennese bass players. Significantly, their instruments were tuned differently

than today's double bass (the intervals between strings is different). As a result, soloists have a decision to make: they can either retune the bass to match the original (which takes some getting used to), or play the piece in one of several keys, including C major, D major, E major or the original E-flat major—all different solutions to the challenges posed by modern tuning.

First ASO Performance: :
January 30, 1954,
Henry Sopkin, conductor.
Most Recent
ASO Performance:
April 11, 2021,
Robert Spano, conductor.

Serenade No. 2 in A Major, Op. 16

Serenade No. 2 is scored for three flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns and strings.

Beethoven was a giant to 19th-century composers. He kicked off the Romantic age with a set of nine watershed symphonies which became the gold standard for orchestral writing. And he got into people's heads. People kept anointing this composer and that composer the "heir to Beethoven." Gustav Mahler, a superstitious man, gave his ninth symphonic effort a fancy title (*Das Lied von der Erde*) rather than naming it "Symphony No. 9," because he was afraid he'd die if he completed as many symphonies as Beethoven had. (After *Das Lied*, he did write a Ninth Symphony—and then died.) Brahms reacted in a different way. It seems he suffered from imposter syndrome, famously saying, "You have no idea what it's like to hear the footsteps of a giant like that behind you."

Johannes Brahms was born into a working-class neighborhood along the seaport of Hamburg. A teenager when the 1848 revolutions swept across Europe, he witnessed a flood of refugees, all hoping to board a ship to the New World. Hungarians arrived by the thousands. And the people of Hamburg developed a taste for their music.

From the age of fourteen, Brahms helped support his parents by playing piano in dive bars. With long, blonde hair, piercing blue eyes and an almost feminine beauty, he cut an unlikely figure among the sailors and exiles, but one of those, the young violinist Eduard Reményi, found in him a brilliant recital partner.

Reményi introduced Brahms to the community of Hungarians, exposing him to the wild, whirling fiddle music of the Roma—a sound that would inhabit Brahms's music

from that point on. Soon, he worked up some feverish piano parts to accompany his friend, and the two boys went on the road. The friendship didn't last, but Reményi did introduce him to someone who would change his life: the prominent Hungarian violinist Joseph Joachim.

Glomming onto the gifted youth, Joachim, who was only a couple years older, secured for Brahms an audience with composers Franz Liszt and Robert Schumann, as well as George V, King of Hanover. The blind king dubbed the twenty-year-old Brahms "Little Beethoven," and Joachim became Brahms's primary resource for all things violin.

It was Robert Schumann, editor of a music journal, who published an article about Brahms, introducing him to the world:

"I thought... that someone would suddenly come along... one whose mastery would not gradually unfold but, like Minerva, would spring fully armed from the head of Jupiter. And now he has arrived, a young blood, at whose cradle graces and heroes kept watch. His name is Johannes Brahms."

It was high praise for a youth who had written a few piano pieces. From that point on, Brahms was burdened by Schumann's prophesy. Not long after the article was published, he got it in his head that he needed write a symphony, and thus began a long series of frustrated attempts, one of which evolved into his Piano Concerto No. 1 in 1858.

He had his first real taste of the orchestra while serving as the director of Court Concerts and Choral Society for the Prince of Lippe-Detmold. A cushy job for a 21-year-old, he played piano, directed a fine orchestra, a women's chorus and gave lessons. With the ensemble as his laboratory, Brahms began writing a serenade for wind instruments in July of 1858. He soon added strings and toyed with the idea of expanding it into a symphony.

"I need the [staff] paper," he wrote to Joachim, "to change my first serenade, now and finally into a symphony." But that didn't stick—the piece would remain a serenade. That same year, he began working on the five-movement Serenade No. 2, this time scoring it for orchestra minus the violins. He finished his Second Serenade in 1859.

Symphony vs. Serenade

Generally speaking, a symphony in Brahms's day was a dramatic, (usually) four-movement work for full orchestra. Already, the word 'serenade' conjures a different image, perhaps of a young lover strumming his lute beneath a girl's window. When Mozart wrote serenades, the essence was the same: a suite of light pieces to be enjoyed outdoors at night (at garden parties, etc.). Using the Mozart model, young Brahms found a way to try his hand in the orchestral medium without stepping into Beethoven's arena. For that, the world would have to wait another sixteen years.



SHIYEON SUNG, CONDUCTOR

Conductor Shiyeon Sung is the first female conductor out of South Korea to make the leap to the podium of internationally renowned orchestras, including the Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Konzerthaus Orchestra Berlin, the Bamberg and the Nuremberg Symphony. When she was appointed assistant conductor at the Boston Symphony Orchestra in 2007, her reputation as one of the most exciting emerging talents on the international music circuit was already secure: shortly before, Sung had won the International Conductors' Competition Sir Georg Solti and the Gustav Mahler Conductors' Competition. During her tenure in Boston, she began a close collaboration with the Seoul Philharmonic Orchestra and conducted their season-opening concert in 2007. In 2009, the orchestra established an associate conductor's position for her, which she held until 2013.

She was chief conductor of the Gyeonggi Philharmonic Orchestra from 2014 until 2017, during which time she led the orchestra to international success. Following a performance at the Philharmonie Berlin, in 2017 Sung and her orchestra were the first Asian orchestra to be invited for a guest appearance at the renowned Musikfest Berlin. Their recording of Mahler's Symphony No. 5 for Decca documents Sung's outstanding work with the group of predominantly young orchestral musicians, for which she was awarded the Musical Performance Prize 2017 from the Daewon Cultural Foundation. After her departure from Gyeonggi, Sung relocated to Berlin, but remains a popular guest in her home country and regularly returns to the Korea National Opera and the Seoul Philharmonic Orchestra.



JOSEPH MCFADDEN, PRINCIPAL BASS

Joseph McFadden joined the bass section of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra (ASO) in September 2011 and won the Principal Bass position in 2017.

Prior to his arrival at the ASO, he was Principal Bass of the Alabama Symphony Orchestra. McFadden has also performed with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, New York Philharmonic, Minnesota Orchestra, Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra and the Nashville Symphony. During his time with the Alabama Symphony, McFadden performed Bottesini's Double Bass Concerto No. 2 as a featured soloist. During the summer he is a member of the Orchestra for the Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music. McFadden performs chamber music regularly with the Riverside Chamber Players here in Atlanta and has also performed with the Highlands-Cashiers Chamber Music Festival.

A native of Los Angeles, McFadden received his bachelor's degree from California State University, Northridge, where he studied with Oscar Meza. He completed his master's degree at Indiana University under the instruction of Bruce Bransby. While in Indiana, he served as Principal Bass of both the Indiana University Chamber Orchestra and Symphony Orchestra. He currently serves on the faculty of Kennesaw State University.

McFadden is a two-time fellowship recipient at the Aspen Music Festival and School, where he studied with Chris Hanulik and Bruce Bransby and performed throughout the summer with the Aspen Chamber Symphony. McFadden plays on a bass he commissioned from Chris Threlkeld, which was finished for him in October of 2009.

