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*Independence
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2016-2017 Season



Sunday, April 30, 2017
Congregation Or Hadash
The Independence Sinfonia and
Daniel Matsukawa, Guest Conductor

Violin Concerto

in D Major, Op. 61

1. Allegro ma non troppo
2. Larghetto
3. Rondo: Allegro

Ludwig Van Beethoven

(1770-1827)

with violin soloist Juliette Kang

— Intermission —

Symphony No. 2

in D Major, Op. 73

1. Allegro non troppo
2. Adagio non troppo
3. Allegretto grazioso (Quasi Andantino)
4. Allegro con spirito

Johannes Brahms

(1833-1897)

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First Associate Concertmaster of the Philadelphia Orchestra, violinist **Julienne Kang** enjoys an active and varied career. Previously Assistant Concertmaster of the Boston Symphony and member of the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, Ms. Kang's solo engagements have included the San Francisco Symphony, l'Orchestre National de France, the Baltimore Symphony, the Boston Pops, the Omaha Symphony, the Syracuse Symphony, and every major orchestra in her native Canada. Internationally she has performed with the Czech Philharmonic, the Vienna Chamber Orchestra, the

Singapore Symphony, the Hong Kong Philharmonic, and the KBS Symphony in Seoul. She has given recitals in Philadelphia, Paris, Tokyo, and Boston. As gold medalist of the 1994 International Violin Competition of Indianapolis, she was presented at New York's Carnegie Hall in a recital that was recorded live and released on CD. She has also recorded the Schumann and Wieniawski Violin Concertos with the Vancouver Symphony for CBC Records.

Ms. Kang was also a featured soloist in the Carnegie Hall debut of her hometown orchestra, the Edmonton Symphony, and she made her Philadelphia Orchestra solo subscription debut with conductor Gianandrea Noseda. Her next solo appearance with the Fabulous Philadelphians will be in January of 2018, conducted by music director Yannick Nezet-Seguin.

Ms. Kang has been involved with chamber music since studying at the Curtis Institute of Music. Festivals she has participated in include Bravo! Vail Valley, Bridgehampton (Long Island, NY), Kingston (RI), Marlboro, Moab (UT), Skaneateles (NY), and Spoleto USA. In New York City she has performed with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, at the Mostly Mozart Festival with her husband, cellist Thomas Kraines, and at the Bard Music Festival. With Mr. Kraines, Philadelphia Orchestra colleague violist Che Hung Chen, and pianist Natalie Zhu, she is a member of the Clarosa Quartet, dedicated to exploring and enriching the piano quartet repertoire. After receiving a Bachelor of Music degree from Curtis as a student of Jascha Brodsky, where she entered the school at age nine, she earned a Master of Music degree at the Juilliard School under the tutelage of Dorothy Delay and Robert Mann. She was a winner of the 1989 Young Concert Artists Auditions, and she subsequently received first prize at the Menuhin Violin Competition of Paris in 1992. She serves on the Central Board of trustees at Philadelphia's Settlement Music School, one of the oldest and largest community schools of the arts in the country, founded in 1908 and having served more than 300,000 students since.

re-entry, this time in a 3/8 variation. Brahms yet again diverts the movement back into its principal tempo and then quietly to a close.

Busy-sounding (but quiet) strings begin the final "Allegro con spirito" (cheerful with spirit), again in sonata form. A loud section breaks in unexpectedly in bar 23 with the full orchestra. As the excitement appears to fade away, violins introduce a new subject in A major marked largamente (to be played broadly). The wind instruments repeat this until it develops into a climax. The movement repeats the symphony's first subject again, but instead of the joyful outburst heard earlier, Brahms introduces the movement's development section. A mid-movement tranquillo section elaborates earlier material and slows down the movement to allow a buildup of energy into the recapitulation. The first theme comes in again and the familiar orchestral forte is played. The second theme also reappears in the tonic key. Towards the end of the symphony, descending chords and a mazy run of notes by various instruments of the orchestra sound out the second theme again but this time drowned out in a blaze of brass instruments as the symphony ends in a triumphant mood.

– Adapted from Wikipedia, "Symphony No. 2 (Brahms)."

Brahms Second Symphony

Brahms composed his Symphony No. 2 in D major, Op. 73, in the summer of 1877, during a visit to Pörtlach am Wörthersee, a town in the Austrian province of Carinthia. Its composition was brief in comparison with the 21 years it took Brahms to complete his First Symphony. The cheery and almost pastoral mood of the symphony often invites comparisons with Beethoven's Sixth Symphony. With seeming irony, Brahms wrote to his publisher on November 22, 1877, that the symphony "is so melancholy that you will not be able to bear it. I have never written anything so sad, and the score must come out in mourning."

The premiere was given in Vienna on December 30, 1877 by the Vienna Philharmonic under the direction of Hans Richter. Walter Frisch notes that it had originally been scheduled for December 9, but "in one of those little ironies of music history, it had to be postponed [because] the players were so preoccupied with learning *Das Rheingold* by Richard Wagner."

In the Second Symphony, Brahms preserved the structural principles of the classical symphony, in which two lively outer movements frame a slow second movement and a third movement scherzo.

The cellos and double-basses start the first-movement sonata form by introducing the first phrase of the principal theme, which is continued by the horns. The woodwinds develop the section and other instruments join in gradually progressing to a full-bodied forte. Then, the cellos and violas introduce a new theme in F-sharp minor, which eventually moves to A major. After a development section based mostly on motives of the principal theme group, the recapitulation begins of the first theme followed by the second theme. Towards the conclusion of the movement, Brahms marks "in tempo, sempre tranquillo" (the same tempo, always quiet), and it is this mood which pervades the remainder of the movement as it closes in the home key of D major.

A brooding theme introduced by the cellos, with a counter-melody in the bassoons, begins the second movement (also in sonata form). A second theme, marked "L'istesso tempo, ma grazioso" (the same tempo, but graceful) then appears. After a brief development section, the recapitulation is highly modified. The movement finishes with a coda-like section in which the main theme is reintroduced in the end.

The third movement scherzo opens with pizzicato cellos accompanying a lilting oboe melody in G major. A contrasting section in 2/4 time marked "Presto ma non assai" (fast but not too fast) begins in the strings, and this theme is soon taken over by the full orchestra (minus trumpets). The movement then returns to the main tempo and gentle mood, but the idyll setting is again disrupted in bar 126 when the earlier Presto marking makes a



Daniel Matsukawa studied conducting privately with Otto Werner Mueller, who was the head of the Conducting Department at the Curtis Institute of Music.

His orchestral conducting debut took place in Japan in 2009, at the Pacific Music Festival, which is comprised of musicians from around the world and was founded by Leonard Bernstein. Mr. Matsukawa conducted in the festival's 20th anniversary garnering famous conductor Maestro Christoph Eschenbach's appraisal of Matsukawa as a new "conducting star."

Since then, he has been invited back to conduct in Japan every year including a tour of concerts in Sapporo, Hamamatsu and Tokyo receiving glowing reviews. He regularly conducts the PMF Link Up Concerts, based on the partnership program with Carnegie Hall, as well as memorial concerts for Leonard Bernstein. He has also conducted a number of concerts at the Curtis Institute of Music and made his professional conducting debut in the U.S.A. with the Virginia Symphony Orchestra in the 2016-17 season.

Mr. Matsukawa has been principal bassoon of The Philadelphia Orchestra since 2000. Born in Argentina to Japanese parents, he moved with his family to New York City at age three and began studying the bassoon at age 13. The following year he won his first competition and was featured as a soloist performing the Mozart Bassoon Concerto with a professional orchestra in New York. He was a scholarship student of the pre-college division of both the Juilliard School and the Manhattan School of Music, where he studied with Harold Goltzer and Alan Futterman. Mr. Matsukawa went on to study at Juilliard for two years before attending the Curtis Institute of Music, where he was a pupil of retired Philadelphia Orchestra Principal Bassoon Bernard Garfield.

Mr. Matsukawa has been a recipient of numerous awards and prizes, including a solo concerto debut in Carnegie Hall at the age of 18. He was also featured in a Young Artist's Showcase on New York's WQXR classical radio station. Since then he has appeared as soloist with several other orchestras, including The Philadelphia Orchestra, the National Symphony, the New York String Orchestra under Alexander Schneider, the Curtis Symphony, the Virginia Symphony, the Auckland (New Zealand) Philharmonic, and the Sapporo Symphony in Japan.

Mr. Matsukawa is an active chamber musician and has performed and toured with the Marlboro Festival. The Philadelphia Inquirer praised him for “his lyrical gifts, expressive range, and refined sense of ensemble” in a performance at Marlboro. He was also hailed by the Washington Post in a review of a solo concerto: “As an orchestral player, Matsukawa can be relied on for a burst of rich maroon and dark crimson in the collective sound. His playing is elastic and agile and thankfully accurate. The same goes for his gentle, songlike account of the Weber Bassoon Concerto. His soft tones were full and even, his passage work liquid and delicate, his second movement like an aria and his last movement filled with a calm modesty in its virtuoso romp. He is an invaluable asset to the orchestra.”

Prior to his post with The Philadelphia Orchestra, Mr. Matsukawa served as principal bassoon with the National Symphony in Washington D.C., the Saint Louis Symphony, the Virginia Symphony, and the Memphis Symphony. In 1998 he performed and recorded Shostakovich’s Symphony No. 7 as acting principal bassoon with the New York Philharmonic under Kurt Masur. Mr. Matsukawa is a regular member of the faculties at both the Curtis Institute of Music and the Boyer College of Music at Temple University.

Beethoven Violin Concerto

How does Beethoven begin his Violin Concerto in D Major, Op. 61, one of the most lyrical and well-known concertos in the classical repertoire? Why, with a timpani solo, of course! And what motif does the timpani play? Repeated D quarter notes!!! Only Beethoven could create one of the most enduring masterpieces of Western music out of a figure so banal, and then have the audacity to introduce that figure on the timpani, the instrument in Beethoven’s orchestra arguably the most distant from the solo violin.

The Violin Concerto highlights Beethoven’s gift for creating something so very special out of seeming nothingness. His works are full of examples – the slow movement of his Seventh Symphony whose other-worldly melody relentlessly repeats one note (brought so movingly to life the movie *The King’s Speech*); the sparse, haunting melody of his *Moonlight Sonata*, which begins with slow, recurring G-sharps above a triplet accompanying figure; the murmuring open fifths at the beginning of the Ninth Symphony reminiscent of the Book of Genesis before the Earth is fully formed; or the simple, childlike themes of rising half steps in his late string quartets and *Grosse Fugue*, which Beethoven develops in odd and almost subversive ways.

As you listen to the Concerto, take note of how many times those repeated quarter notes (sometimes written in the score as eighth notes followed by eighth-note rests) occur throughout the first movement. Nearly every instrument, including the solo violin, gets the chance to play them. The

repeated notes serve many purposes. They function as melody, as rhythm, as bridge between first and second themes, as an accompaniment to the solo violin’s virtuosic ornamentations, as familiar friends in the movement’s development section when the work meanders through distant keys before returning to the recapitulation, and as joyous ringing declarations in the orchestral tutti sections.

After the long, heroic first movement, the Concerto’s second movement opens more conservatively, with muted strings playing *pianissimo* and laying down a soft, lush carpet for the solo violin’s entrance. The movement’s structure is a set of variations on this still and placid theme, which describes the soft and tender nature of the music and the (mostly) simple way Beethoven harmonizes the G-major theme. After the lyrical slow movement, the Concerto’s third movement bursts in without pause, a device Beethoven used with similar effect in “The Emperor,” his last, great Piano Concerto No. 5 composed a few years later. As typical in the classical period, the third movement is essentially in Rondo form – which means it starts with a theme, followed by a contrasting section, followed by the theme again, then contrasting section, etc. – but also innovatively has elements of Sonata form traditionally reserved for more weighty first movements – that is, theme one in the tonic or home key, followed by theme two in the dominant or fifth above the tonic, followed by development of one or both themes, followed by recapitulation with both themes in the tonic.

This Concerto, roughly from Beethoven’s “Middle Period,” shares elements of other works written during the same intensely-creative period, including the “Eroica” Symphony (1804 - Opus 55), the Triple Concerto (1803 - Opus 56), the “Appassionata” Sonata (1804-05, Opus 57), and the “Rasumovsky” String Quartets (1806 - Opus 59). From the bold opening of the Concerto (a simple motif introduced with solo timpani) to the form of the final movement (a not-quite pure Rondo, which was the traditional form of a final movement Classical period work), the Violin Concerto provides yet another example of Beethoven’s tinkering with tradition. He was not content to compose strictly in the traditional Classical style and idiom of Haydn and Mozart, but he has not yet so jettisoned that tradition – as he did in many of “Late Period” compositions – to render the Classical structure of the piece nearly unrecognizable.

For those of you interested in Beethoven’s compositional progression, I highly recommend the Curtis Institute of Music’s internet video course taught by Jonathan Biss entitled “Exploring Beethoven’s Piano Sonatas,” available at no charge on the Coursera website or smartphone app. A thorough background in music theory is not required to enjoy Mr. Biss’s journey through selected sonatas in Beethoven’s Early, Middle and Late Periods, including some of his most popular (the “Moonlight” and “Appassionata”) and some less well-known but equally great (Op. 7).

– by Kim Dolan