



Doris Stevenson has won lavish praise from critics and public alike in performances around the world. She has soloed with the Boston Pops, played at Carnegie Hall and Alice Tully Hall in New York, the Kennedy Center in Washington D.C., Salle Pleyel in Paris, Sala de Musica Arango in Bogota, and Suntory Hall in Tokyo. Her acute sensitivity and musicianship have made her a sought-after partner with some of the leading lights in string playing. She has performed with Gregor Piatigorsky, Ruggiero Ricci and Paul Tortelier, great players of the past. Early in her career she was invited by Heifetz and Piatigorsky to perform with them in their chamber concerts. She was pianist for the cello master classes of Piatigorsky, who described her as “an artist of the highest order.” The list of distinguished artists she has performed with includes cellists Andre Navarra, Leslie Parnas and Gary Hoffman, violinists Charles Castleman and Elmar Olivera, violists Walter Trampler and Paul Neubauer and singers Kaaren Erickson and Catherine Malfitano. She is a founding member of the Sitka Summer Music Festival in Alaska and has toured throughout that state, playing in many remote Native Alaskan communities. She has participated in many chamber music festivals and has performed in 48 of the 50 states. She recently performed with cellist Zuill Bailey at the Phillips Gallery in Washington D.C., at Bargemusic in New York and at Smith College. She plays a score of outreach concerts each season for the Piatigorsky Foundation in schools, libraries, prisons, and remote communities, bringing live classical music with commentary to people who wouldn’t otherwise hear it.

Doris Stevenson is deeply committed to performing new music. She was the first woman to perform Frederick Rzewski’s masterpiece, *De Profundis* for speaking pianist, which she brought to New York City to perform as a Williams representative in New York concert. Her many recordings include six major works by David Kechley and two by Ileana Velazquez-Perez, the Saint Saens violin sonatas with Andres Cardenes, the complete Mendelssohn cello works with Jeffrey Solow, and the Brahms Sonatas with cellist Nathaniel Rosen. In addition, a CD of Stravinsky “rarities” with violinist Mark Peskanov received a Grammy nomination. Miss Stevenson taught for ten years at the University of Southern California and has been Lyell B. Clay Artist in Residence at Williams College since 1987.



Zachary Wadsworth is a composer of “fresh, deeply felt and strikingly original” music (*Washington Post*), with regular performances and premieres around the world. His compositions have been heard at the Kennedy Center, the Lincoln Center, and Tokyo’s Takinogawa Hall, and they have been performed by such ensembles as the choir of Westminster Abbey, the Yale Philharmonia, the Swedish Chamber Choir, the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, and the Richmond Symphony. As the 2012-13 fellow of the Douglas Moore Foundation for American Opera, Wadsworth was in residence at the Metropolitan Opera and the Santa Fe Opera. 2014 marked his Carnegie Hall debut, and 2015 marked his debut at the National Opera Center. Winner of an international competition chaired by James MacMillan, Wadsworth’s anthem *Out of the South Cometh the Whirlwind* was performed at Westminster Abbey in the presence of Queen Elizabeth II. Other recent honors include awards from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, ASCAP, and the American Composers Forum. Wadsworth’s music is widely broadcast and distributed, with recent publications by Novello, G. Schirmer, and E.C. Schirmer, and airings on NPR, BBC, and CBC. Wadsworth earned graduate degrees from Cornell University (DMA) and Yale University (MM), and is an honors graduate of the Eastman School of Music (BM). Originally from Richmond, Virginia, Wadsworth is now Assistant Professor of Music at Williams College. He previously taught at the Interlochen Center for the Arts and the University of Calgary in Alberta, Canada.

~Program Notes~
Berkshire Symphony Orchestra
March 2nd, 2018

Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)
Sinfonia Concertante

The likely inspiration for this *concertante* was a similar work—though with six solo parts for flute, oboe, bassoon, violin, viola, and cello—by Haydn's pupil, Ignaz Pleyel. That is to say, what probably happened is that Johann Peter Salomon, the violinist and impresario responsible for bringing Haydn to London in 1791 and again three years later, encouraged him to try his hand at the genre with which Pleyel had scored such a success. It seems unlikely that Haydn would have written a work of this type without specific encouragement. Unlike Mozart, he was neither a man of the theater, at least not primarily, nor a virtuoso performer, and he was not much drawn to the composition of concertos. His last had been the D major cello concerto of 1783, and only one more was to follow, the trumpet concerto of 1796. (In 1792 he promised a concerto to the French-Irish violinist Francois Hippolite Barthelemon but never got around to writing it.) Haydn's manuscript looks like something written in a tremendous hurry, and it is not impossible that the *Concertante* was written between February 27, when Pleyel's work appeared on Salomon's program, and March 9, the date of the premiere. At any rate, it pleased, eliciting not quite the rapture nor the encores of his most famous London symphonies, but still, most distinctly, enough to be repeated the following week and again on May 3, as well as being one of the first works up for revival when Haydn returned to England in 1794.

"A new composition from HAYDN combined with all the excellencies of music," wrote the reviewer for the *Morning Herald*. "It was profound, airy, affecting, and original, and the performance was in unison with the merit of the composition." The *Morning Chronicle* reported that the new work was performed "with admirable effect, the solo parts were finely contrasted with the 'full tide of harmony' of the other instruments, and they were ably sustained by the respective performers." The violin solo is *primus inter pares*, and Salomon came in for praise as having "particularly exerted himself." Mr. Menel, the cellist, one suspects, may have had trouble: a few of his perilously high-flying measures in the finale are struck out (as are the corresponding measures in the violin part), though Haydn, perhaps hoping to find a more secure player on another occasion, left these places untouched in his autograph score. The *Concertante* was one of the Haydn pieces that went underground in the nineteenth century, and when a miniature score was published in 1922—a very corrupt one, incidentally—it had been pretty well forgotten and came out as a remarkable novelty. A recording that Charles Munch made in Paris in the 1930s first brought the *Concertante* to general attention, while the assumption of the work into the standard repertory was, as the Boston Symphony's own performance history indicates, a development of the post-war years.

As eighteenth-century composers use the term, a "*sinfonia concertante*" (or however you would like to spell it) might be a concerto with more than one solo instrument, for example, Mozart's very well-known *Sinfonia concertante* in E-flat, K.364, for violin and viola, or something closer to what the name actually suggests, a symphony that behaves in the manner of a concerto. Haydn's *Concertante* tends toward the latter idea. His various "*principale*" and "*obbligato*" parts are demanding and grateful; nevertheless, they are not as unambiguously soloistic as the cello and trumpet parts in Haydn's most famous concertos, nor even as much as

the violin and viola lines of Mozart's K.364. The layout of Haydn's autograph makes his intention quite clear. In the fashion of the day, he puts brass and drums at the top of the page and then proceeds in the following order: flute, oboe I obbligato, oboe II, bassoon obbligato, "violino principale," "violino I ripieno" (meaning the section as distinct from solo), violin II, viola, violoncello obbligato, and "bassi continui" (including the cellos other than the soloist and a keyboard instrument). In other words, the soloists are grouped among their colleagues, except of course the bassoonist, who has none. This is one aspect of the piece that modern editions have tended to obscure, most of them adding an extra ripieno bassoon. Only the Eulenburg miniature score edited by Christa Landon (1968) gets it absolutely right.

The Concertante begins with an understated beginning that is almost *in medias res*. The solo quartet emerges unexpectedly early, to recede quickly into the orchestral texture once more. The development, going through a considerable chain of minor keys, is a serious matter indeed. The cadenza is Haydn's own and is fixed in the autograph. In the Andante, Haydn gives us something close to chamber music, the accompanying orchestra having next to no independent action and being reduced to flute, oboe, the two horns, and strings. Haydn had confidence in Mr. Holmes's top register, for in the third measure he sends the bassoon to high B-flat. The finale, too, begins as though one had suddenly switched it on. Just as suddenly, it interrupts itself to make way for the violinist in the guise of an operatic diva under full *recitativo* sail. (Haydn's Symphony No. 7, *Le Midi*, has a similar excursion into operatic gesture.) The recitative makes its presence known once more before the spirited Allegro sweeps all before it.

—Michael Steinberg

Zachary Wadsworth (b. 1983) **Piano Concerto**

Concertos are often framed as struggles between an individual (the soloist) and their society (the orchestra). But in this Piano Concerto, I wanted to explore less fraught emotions and relationships; here, the instruments variously work together, cajole each other, teach each other, and even make gentle fun of each other. The first movement, a slow "Invocation," summons sound from the lowest registers of the piano and orchestra, gradually assembling a melody from these turbulent fragments. The second, a Scherzo, takes a far more positive turn: bright, quick music in the piano and orchestra are occasionally interrupted by the insect buzzing and biting sounds that the title, "Tarantella," suggests. The middle movement, "Cosmogony," is slow, as brass and a cello solo lay out a rich bed of sound that contrasts with bright, soft music in the strings, flutes, and percussion. This movement includes the piano's only real cadenza, as its emotional turbulence gives way to star-like brightness. The fourth movement is a funeral march that begins and ends steadily but lashes out in a violent outburst in its central section. Then, the piece ends with a "Burlesque" Rondo, moving through energetic and sometimes bawdy music to a crashing conclusion.

— Zachary Wadsworth

Charles Gounod (1818-1893)

Faust: Ballet Music

Perhaps next to Shakespeare, Goethe's *Faust* is one of the literary works most frequently set to music. Out of these multiple settings - including the Schubert songs, Schumann's oratorio, Berlioz's dramatic "La damnation de Faust," and the second section of Mahler's Symphony No. 8 - perhaps the most popular has been Gounod's opera. Premiered in Paris in 1859, the opera is actually a setting of a French libretto by Jules Barbier and Michel Carré based on Part One of Goethe's *Faust*. The work has a fraught history - originally rejected by the Paris Opera in 1858, the opera's original production was not well received. The opera gained popularity in the following years, however, and ultimately was revived in 1862 and again in 1869, this time at the Paris Opera. The ballet music on this program was added for the 1869 production to accompany Faust's journey through the Hartz Mountains to witness the "Witch's Night."

Gounod's opera has been enduringly popular - it was even the first opera to be performed at the Metropolitan Opera on opening night of the company's first season, and has since become one of the most frequently performed operas in their repertory. The ballet music, however, is frequently omitted from productions of the opera, and is mostly heard only in concert settings.

— Leonard Bopp

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

Symphony No. 6 "Pastorale"

The delight that Beethoven took in the world of nature is attested by countless stories from many periods of his life. When in Vienna he never failed to take his daily walk around the ramparts (which would then have afforded a much more rural view than the same walk does today), and during his summers spent outside of town he would be out-of-doors most of the day. The notion of treating the natural world in music seems to have occurred to him as early as 1803, when he wrote down in one of his sketchbooks a musical fragment in 12/8 time (the same meter used in the *Pastoral Symphony* for the "Scene at the brook") with a note: "Murmur of the brook." Underneath the sketch he added, "The more water the deeper the tone." Other musical ideas later to end up in the Sixth Symphony appear in Beethoven's sketchbooks sporadically in 1804 and during the winter of 1806-07, when he worked out much of the thematic material for all the movements but the second. But it wasn't until the fall of 1807 and the spring of 1808 that he concentrated seriously on the elaboration of those sketches into a finished work; the piece was apparently finished by the summer of 1808, since on September 14 he reached an agreement with the publisher Breitkopf & Hartel for the sale of this symphony along with four other major works.

One thing that aroused extended discussion of the new symphony—a discussion that lasted for decades—was the fact that Beethoven provided each movement of the work with a program, or literary guide to its meaning. His titles are really brief images, just enough to suggest a specific setting:

- I. Awakening of happy feelings upon reaching the countryside.
- II. Scene at the brook.
- III. Cheerful gathering of the country folk.

IV. Thunderstorm.

V. Shepherd's song. Happy, grateful feelings after the storm.

But much more important for an understanding of Beethoven's view than the headings of the individual movements is the overall heading that Beethoven caused to be printed in the program of the first performance: "Pastoral Symphony, more an expression of feeling than painting." He never intended, then, that the symphony be considered an attempt to represent events in the real world, an objective narrative, in musical guise. Rather, this symphony provided yet again what all of his symphonies had offered: subjective moods and impressions captured in harmony, melody, color, and the structured passage of time.

Beethoven's sketchbooks reveal that he was working on his Fifth and Sixth symphonies at the same time; they were finished virtually together, given consecutive opus numbers (67 and 68), and premiered on the same concert (where they were actually reversed in numbering—the *Pastoral* Symphony, given first on the program, was identified as "No. 5"). Yet no two symphonies are less likely to be confused, even by the most casual listener—the Fifth, with its demonic energy, tense harmonies, and powerful dramatic climaxes on the one hand, and the Sixth, with its smiling and sunny air of relaxation and joy on the other. Nothing shows more clearly the range of Beethoven's work than these two masterpieces, twins in their gestation, but not identical—rather, fraternal twins of strongly differentiated characters. Popular biographies of Beethoven tend to emphasize the heaven-storming, heroic works of the middle period—the *Eroica* and the Fifth symphonies, the *Egmont* Overture, the *Emperor* Concerto, the *Razumovsky* string quartets, the *Waldstein* and *Appassionata* sonatas—at the expense of other aspects of his art. On the other hand, some critics of a "neo-classical" orientation claim to find the even-numbered symphonies including the Pastoral to be more successful than the overtly dramatic works. Both views are equally one-sided and give a blinkered representation of Beethoven—his art embraces both elements and more, as is clear from the intertwining conception and composition of the Fifth and Sixth symphonies.

Even in works of such contrasting character, Beethoven's concern for balance and for carefully articulated musical architecture remains evident, though the means by which he achieves these ends are quite different. The Fifth Symphony deals in harmonic tensions—dissonant diminished-seventh and augmented-sixth chords color the mood almost throughout. The harmonic character of the Sixth Symphony is altogether more relaxed. Beethoven builds his extensive musical plan on the very simplest harmonies, on the chord relations that harmony students learn in the first few days of the course—tonic, dominant, and subdominant. The symphony revels in major triads from the very beginning, and the dissonant diminished-seventh chord is withheld until the thunderstorm of the fourth movement. As in the Fifth Symphony, the melodic material of the first movement is derived from the very beginning of the work, but rather than piling up in urgent search of a climactic goal, the thematic motives that arise from the opening measures of the *Pastoral* Symphony—there are at least four of them—are repeated often in a leisurely way that implies no hurry to get anywhere. Still, for all the apparent ease of passage, our course through the first movement is perfectly balanced with slow swings from tonic to dominant and back or lengthy phrases reiterating a single chord, then jumping to another, rather distant chord for more repetition. The fact that all this sheer repetition does not lead to fatigue or exasperation on the listener's part is tribute to Beethoven's carefully planned and varied orchestral color and textures. Indeed, George Grove remarked in his study of this symphony that Beethoven "is steeped in Nature itself; and when the sameness of fields, woods, and streams can be distasteful, then will the *Pastoral* Symphony weary its hearers."

One idea that does not appear at the very beginning but grows in importance throughout is a little figure of repeated notes in triplets first heard as a punctuation in clarinets and bassoons. As the movement progresses, that triplet rhythm insinuates itself more and more into the musical fabric until, by the beginning of the recapitulation, it is running along in counterpoint to the themes heard at the outset, and just before the close of the movement, the solo clarinet takes off on triplet arpeggios in what is virtually a cadenza.

The second movement is richly but delicately scored, with two muted solo cellos providing a background murmur along with second violins and violas, while the first violins and the woodwinds embellish the melodic flow with a rich array of turns and trills. No one familiar with traditional means of musical expression in western music can fail to recognize the bucolic leisure of this *Andante*, even if Beethoven had never provided a title for the movement. The gentle running of water, bird song, soft breezes, and rustling leaves are all implicit in this music. At the same time, the richness of material is most satisfying; Beethoven is in no hurry to get through it, and his sense of architectural balance remains engaged. Even the one explicitly "programmatic" passage—the song of nightingale, quail, and cuckoo labeled as such in the flute, oboe, and clarinet just before the end of the movement—fits perfectly well as a purely musical passage (how many real birds sing in classical four-measure phrases?).

Only twice in Beethoven's symphonic writing did he link the movements of a symphony so that they would be performed without a break. It is significant that it happened in two symphonies composed almost simultaneously—the Fifth and the Sixth. In the Fifth Symphony, the scherzo is connected to the finale by an extended, harmonically tense passage demanding resolution in the bright C major of the closing movement. Much the same thing happens in the *Pastoral* Symphony, although the level of tension is not nearly so high, and the linking passage has grown to a full movement itself. But here again we see that the supposedly romantic, form-breaking elements of the *Pastoral* Symphony do not depend on the composer's program to make sense; there is no question about the tense musical link between movements in the Fifth Symphony, just as there should not be about the *Pastoral* if Beethoven's program were suddenly to disappear. The scherzo, a real dance movement in F major, is interrupted just at its last chord by a dramatic *Allegro* in F minor. The violence of that extended passage gradually dies down and returns to the major mode for the final passage of rustic simplicity, a release from the tension of the *Allegro* whether or not one thinks of it as "grateful feelings after the storm."

All three movements are filled with felicitous touches. The dance has a delightfully quirky offbeat strain for solo oboe, with the occasional appearance of a bassoon accompaniment consisting of three notes; this is supposed to be an intentional caricature of a village band that Beethoven encountered at a tavern near Modling. The storm is imaginatively and picturesquely scored, providing a veritable quarry of techniques that were mined by composers for decades. Berlioz spoke with the greatest admiration of Beethoven's orchestration here and helped himself to such devices as the thick, "stormy" sound produced by double basses running up a four-note fragment of the scale in the same time that the cellos run up a five-note fragment, so that they are together only on the very first note, and the remainder produces atmospheric dissonance. Beethoven withheld his big orchestral guns to this point. The trumpets had not played in the symphony until the middle of the third movement. Now trombones and timpani appear for the first time (the timpani, in fact, play only here), and the piccolo joins in at the height of the storm. As the storm ends, a *ranz des vaches* or Swiss herdsman's song introduces the final major key movement and the "hymn of thanksgiving." The *ranz des vaches*, a melody borrowed by Beethoven for this spot, unmistakably identifies the setting in the world of pastoral simplicity. Its use here was an afterthought on the composer's

part, but it was a highly appropriate one, since the first theme of the movement proper (heard in the violins) is part of the same family group—an arpeggiation of the major triad in a different position. Thus, once more, an element that might be labeled "programmatic" can be seen to nestle snugly and fittingly into what Tovey has called "a perfect classical symphony."

—Steven Ledbetter