

WUSTL **MUSIC**

Sunday, December 5, 2021 - 7:00 P.M.
E. Desmond Lee Concert Hall, 560 Music Center



Symphony Orchestra Concert

Darwin Aquino, conductor-in-residence

Program

Overture from *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* (1816)

Gioachino Rossini
(1792 - 1868)

Introduction and Allegro, Op. 47 (1905)

Edward Elgar
(1857 - 1934)

John McGrosso, violin
Jane Price, violin
Amy Greenhalgh, viola
Ken Kulosa, cello

Pavane, Op. 50 (1887)

Gabriel Fauré
(1845 - 1924)

Horn Concerto No. 1, Op. 11 (1882)

Richard Strauss
(1864 - 1949)

Thomas Jöstlein, horn

Program Notes

Rossini, Overture from *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* (1816)

When *The Barber of Seville* premiered in February of 1816, Gioachino Rossini was only twenty-four years old but had already completed over a dozen operas. The libretto is based on the first in a trilogy of plays by French playwright Pierre Beaumarchais, which had already served as inspiration for a number of other operas. Two of these were particularly renowned: Italian composer Giovanni Paisiello's *The Barber of Seville* (1782), and Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro* (1786), the latter based on the second part of Beaumarchais' trilogy. Rossini's decision to compose his own version of *Barber* was two-fold. In part, the young composer felt strongly that his *Barber* ought to honor the legacy of these two men he respected, and Paisiello in particular, as a fellow Italian operatic composer. However, it is also worth noting that *Barber* was an emphatic assertion of his success up to this point in his career—an indication that he could position himself alongside the greats of Italian opera.

Rossini's *Barber* was not well received upon its premiere—particularly because members of the audience regarded the new opera as an affront to Paisiello's work despite Rossini's best efforts—but it gained a more positive reputation over the course of Rossini's lifetime. Beethoven once remarked to Rossini that *The Barber of Seville* "will be played as long as Italian opera exists," and indeed, it remains one of the most frequently performed operas and maintains a constant presence in pop culture.

It is perhaps ironic, then, that one of the opera's most well-known features—its overture—did not originate with *Barber*. Rossini used the overture first for two serious operas: his 1813 *dramma serio* entitled *Aureliano in Palmira*, and then for the 1815 opera *Elisabetta*, which portrays the reign of Elizabeth I of England. Only a year later did he attach the overture to *The Barber of Seville*. Consequently, the overture contains no musical material from the opera. The link between the overture and the opera, however, is well-established in the countless invocations of the overture in popular culture portrayals of barbers—perhaps most notably in the Bugs Bunny short, "Rabbit of Seville."

The *Barber of Seville* overture showcases two of Rossini's trademark techniques for composing his overtures. The first technique is the form, which is a variation on the classical sonata form: the piece includes a slow introduction, followed by two contrasting themes, a recapitulation of the themes, and a coda. His chosen structure is in contrast to the more traditional sonata of a Beethoven or Mozart symphony, in which the composer develops and deconstructs the themes for the purpose of building tonal tension and conflict before restating them in the recapitulation. In his more concise version of the form, Rossini instead leans into the excitement of the overture's succinct, catchy themes. The second significant technique is the "Rossini crescendo." Over the course of the recapitulation, every aspect of the orchestra's performance builds in intensity: the number of instruments playing, the rhythms, the articulation, and the sheer volume. The result is a lively and bombastic climax that builds anticipation for an evening of opera.

Elgar, Introduction and Allegro, Op. 47 (1905)

Edward Elgar's *Introduction and Allegro* premiered in March 1905, as part of an all-Elgar concert by the newly-formed London Symphony Orchestra. Elgar composed the piece for the occasion at the encouragement of his friend A. J. Jaeger, with whom he had seen the LSO perform Bach's Brandenburg Concerto No. 3 the previous year. The enthusiastic Jaeger invoked that performance as inspiration, suggesting in a letter that Elgar compose "a thing such as Bach could write," and "[perhaps even] a modern Fugue for Strings, or Strings & Organ!"

The neo-Baroque style of the *Introduction and Allegro* is apparent throughout the piece, particularly through the distinction between the solo string quartet and the supporting string ensemble; this formation evokes the Baroque concerto grosso, in which an orchestra plays underneath a small number of soloists, rather than an individual.

The first notes of the introduction, too, are reminiscent of Baroque keyboard music, with a descending flourish evocative of the virtuosic opening passages in toccatas and fantasias. However, Elgar then introduces the first of two themes in the introduction—a major-mode pastoral theme which nonetheless conveys hints of discord. This theme will also function as the primary theme in the *Allegro's* sonata-form structure, which begins to orient the piece away from the Baroque. This interplay between Baroque techniques and English folk tunes introduces a tension that permeates the *Introduction and Allegro*, juxtaposing the imagined complexity and seriousness of the Baroque with the idealized simplicity of the British countryside. In this contrast, Elgar wrestles with his listeners' relationship between music and memory.

This tension emerges more clearly through the wistful second theme, which appears first on the solo viola before circulating throughout the ensemble. Known among Elgar scholars as the "Welsh Tune," this theme first made an impression on the composer when he was traveling in Wales and overheard a local singing the tune. The Welsh Tune reappears three times throughout the *Introduction and Allegro*, but primarily in snippets and without resolution. Consequently, musicologist James Hepokoski regards both the tune and the piece as—ultimately—a push and pull of nostalgia and the unattainable.

In the *Allegro* itself, the Welsh Tune does not take its likely place as the secondary theme—instead, roiling sixteenth notes contrast with the pastoral first theme. When we do hear the Welsh Tune, its appearance is brief, quickly disappearing within the ensemble. Elgar then evokes the Baroque era once more, subverting the expectation for a more traditional development section which would elaborate upon the main themes of the exposition. Instead, the ensemble erupts into an elaborate fugue, which explores the G minor key area of the introduction but otherwise has little relationship with material that came before.

Following the fugue, Elgar must provide a satisfying conclusion to both the sonata form and the evasive Welsh Tune. And indeed, the recapitulation restates both themes of the exposition before, at last, Elgar revisits the Welsh Tune in a triumphant apotheosis, finally presenting it as a full, choral theme. However, the hints of longing and unattainability still linger, so that it's the primary theme of the sonata with which Elgar concludes the piece.

Strauss, Horn Concerto No. 1, Op. 11 (1882)

Richard Strauss fostered a love for the horn throughout his life, nurtured most of all by his father, Franz Strauss—a virtuosic horn player and a composer in his own right. When he composed his first horn concerto at the age of 18, the young Strauss dedicated the orchestral score to the horn player Oscar Franz, but he dedicated the piano reduction to Franz Strauss. (Sixty years later, Strauss completed his second horn concerto, dedicating it this time to his father's memory.) The composer also included a nod to his father by indicating that the first horn concerto should be played on the valveless horn, which the elder Strauss favored for his own playing. Ironically, it proved feasible to perform the concerto only on the more modern valved F horn. It is possible that the note was intended as a shared joke with his father, but scholars have also speculated that Strauss intended it to emphasize that the soloist's performance should be reminiscent of a hunting horn.

The horn concerto has three movements and follows the same basic tempo and tonal structure as the standard classical major-key concerto: a fast movement in the major mode, followed by a lyrical, slow movement (here, in minor), and a fast finale which returns to major once again. However, the three movements are far more interconnected than a traditional concerto. The movements flow together, accompanimental and melodic material linking the first movement to movements two and three. This three-movements-in-one approach was popularized in the nineteenth century by composers such as Liszt, and this piece was the first of several in which Strauss employed the technique.

Whereas a traditional Classical era concerto would postpone the entrance of the soloist, Strauss follows the Romantic convention of showcasing the soloist almost at once: after an opening chord from the ensemble, the solo horn plays without accompaniment. This interplay between the orchestra and the soloist shapes the moment and establishes the significance of contrasts throughout the piece. The concerto transitions into the *Andante* second movement *attacca* (without pause), structured in ABA form around a thoughtful, somber theme which is reflective of the Romantic focus on extreme subjectivity and pathos. In the final *Allegro* movement, Strauss revisits the theme from the first movement, this time lurking within the accompaniment to the horn soloist's new theme. While this link between movements is a nineteenth-century approach, Strauss follows classical conventions by composing his finale as a rondo. This form builds upon the repetition of a melody, interrupted by contrasting episodes. The result is a lively conclusion for both soloist and orchestra as they return to the lively refrain again and again.

-Program notes by Rachel Jones

Symphony Orchestra

Flute

Emily Angstreich
Maria Schmeer
Elizabeth Chen
Cynthia Yan

Piccolo

Maria Schmeer

Oboe

Mia Phutrakul
Ethan Penn

Clarinet

Peter Kotecki
Finley Li

Bassoon

Donita Bauer**
Jeff Panhorst**

French Horn

Thomas McGrath
Tricia Jöstlein**

Trumpet

Gabbi Grasso
Anais Beauvais

Timpani

Becky Sun

Violin I

Caroline Chou
Charlie Wheelock
Charles McGrath
Yoo-Jin Ahn
Nora Navid
Jiawei Hu
Meredith Levin
Caroline Kaplan
Matthew Du
Eva Markowitz
Tatiana Flores
David Decker
Jerry Sun
Ann Zhang
Jevon Bonner
Caroline Ferry
Kate Blythe
Esther Merczynski
Rebecca Sears
Silvian Iticovici*

Violin 2

John Geogiades
Noah Kennedy
Matthew Forman
Mahtab Chaudry
Eric Kwon
Irene Wang
Gabris Ni
Sabrina Baggstrom
Eric Lei
Frank Jiang
Zichen Yuan
Frankie Lynch
Ciara Cunningham
Carly Ramacher
Eric Montufar-Morales
Jane Price*

Viola

MacKenzie Larkin
John Christian
Junyi Su
Anne Bedford
Megha Prasad
Geoffrey Lien
Henry Kessler
Micah Benson
Vincent Xu
Sneha Manikandan
Haley Rhodes
Amy Greenhalgh*

Cello

Maria Crusey
Katie Lund
Eric Liu
Chloe Hughlett
Jordan Thomson
Colette Wicks
Elaine Choy
Nathalie Morton
Jeremy Lin
Wonsang Lee
Spencer Linenberg
Toni Taylor
Matthew Kim
Ken Kulosa*

Bass

Karen Tarman
Gabe Hamburg
Taraneh Atri
Serene Tomaszewski

*Music Faculty

**Community Member

Conductor-in-Residence



Dominican conductor and composer Darwin Aquino appears internationally and is regarded as among the most accomplished Caribbean artists of his generation in both symphonic and operatic fields.

Having recently conducted Vincenzo Bellini's monumental opera *Norma*, the St. Louis Post-Dispatch remarked, "Darwin had the orchestra sounding great from the first measures of the overture and maintained a good balance between stage and pit. He has a fine feel for the nuances of the bel canto style, and knows to breathe with the singers."

A sought-after guest conductor known for his "moving, absorbing and robust performances," Darwin enjoys regular engagements around the world, including the Philharmonisches Staatsorchester Mainz, Saarländisches Staatsorchester, National Symphony Orchestra of Costa Rica, ADCA Symphony Orchestra Filarmónica Boca del Rio, Palm Beach Symphony Orchestra, Alfredo Saint Malo Festival Orchestra in Panama, FIU Symphony Orchestra in Miami, and the Youth Orchestra of the Americas, among others. Aquino was also selected as Music Director by the world acclaimed Italian tenors Il Volo, for concert tours in Mexico and the Dominican Republic.

An opera conductor regarded for his "passionate and precise baton," Darwin has received outstanding reviews and public praise for his interpretations of Verdi's *Il Trovatore*, Bizet's *Carmen*, Rossini's *L'Italiana in Algeri*, Donizetti's *Elisir D'Amore* and Bizet's *Pearl Fishers*. He served as Music Director for Winter Opera St. Louis for the 2017-18 and 2018-19 seasons. Early in his career he was appointed Cover Conductor at the Florida Grand Opera (*Don Pasquale*, *Carmen*, *Norma*, *Barber of Seville*), Opera Naples (*La Boheme*), the Palm Beach Symphony Orchestra, and the Florida International University Symphony Orchestra. He conducted the Dominican premiere of Anton Bruckner's Symphony No. 7 with the Música Sacra Philharmonic to great acclaim and received the prestigious Premio Soberano as Successful Dominican Artist Abroad.

As a passionate advocate of social change through classical music, Darwin worked closely for many years with Gustavo Dudamel in Venezuela and previously held posts as Artistic Director of *El Sistema*, Director of the National Conservatory of Music and Music Director of the National Youth Symphony Orchestra, in his homeland the Dominican Republic. Maestro Jose Antonio Abreu, founder of the world-known Venezuelan *Sistema*, referred to Darwin as "a great conductor, excellent composer, and eminent violinist. A pioneer for classical music." Darwin was awarded for his service to the youth with the Hildegard Behrens Young Artist Prize and the Arts Advocacy Award, both in the United States.

Currently, he serves as Music Director for the Música Sacra concert series in Santo Domingo, Music Director of the Gateway Festival Orchestra, Director of Orchestral Studies at the University of Missouri-St. Louis, Conductor-in-Residence for the Washington University Symphony Orchestra, and Cover Conductor for the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra and St. Louis Youth Symphony Orchestra.

Darwin's principal teachers were Grzegorz Nowak and Ramon Tebar, with additional studies and masterclasses from Benjamin Zander, Colin Metters, Jose Serebrier, Carlos Miguel Prieto and James Judd. He holds a Master's in Music in Orchestral Conducting from the Florida International University, where he received the Graduate Performer Award for his conducting of E. Chabrier opera *L'Etoile*.

Guest Soloist



Thomas Jöstlein, associate Principal Horn of the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra since 2010, is passionate about helping students achieve success. Applying his innovative “singing success mechanism,” several of his students have played in All-state orchestras and have won solo competitions.

As a performer, Thomas has been the New York Philharmonic's assistant Principal Horn under Lorin Maazel, playing three major tours, including the historic live broadcast from North Korea (2008). In 2019, Thomas toured China, Taiwan, and Japan with the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra and pianist Nobu Tsujii, recording the Ravel G-Major and Beethoven second concerti. He has also held positions with the Honolulu, Omaha, Richmond, and Kansas City Symphony Orchestras, and performed in the Napa Valley, Classical Tahoe, Britt, and Eastern Music Festivals, among others.

Jöstlein loves spreading the lessons of his mentors: Arnold Jacobs, Roger Rocco, and William VerMeulen. He was assistant Professor of Horn at the University of Illinois, taught several times at Indiana University, and has held adjunct positions at Saint Louis University, the University of Hawaii and at Virginia Commonwealth University.

As a soloist, Jöstlein won first prize in the professional division of the American Horn Competition (2003), and the grand prize at the Hugo Kauder Music Competition at Yale University (2005), earning a recital at Merkin Concert Hall in NYC. He has appeared with the SLSO as a soloist on several occasions, playing Schumann's Concertstück for Four Horns and Orchestra and the Vivaldi Double Concerto with Chris Dwyer under Nicholas McGegan.

He appears on several recordings, notably Tony Bennett's Duets II album, along with his sister, Barbara Jöstlein Currie, Fourth Horn of the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra. On the natural (classical) horn, he has performed the Haydn D-Major concerto and the Brahms Trio with Stephanie Chase and Brian Connelly, and with the Boulder Bach Festival.

Jöstlein performs on a triple horn by J. Patterson, on natural horns by R. Seraphinoff and L.J. Raoux (ca. 1820), and on a Vanon alphorn. His music is published by Kölbl Edition (Munich), Faust Music, Cimmaron Music Press, and Cherry Classics. He lives in University City, MO, with wife and fellow horn player, Tricia, and sons, Klaus and Max.

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