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SYMPHONY

*IsaacStern@100 International Kickoff Event*

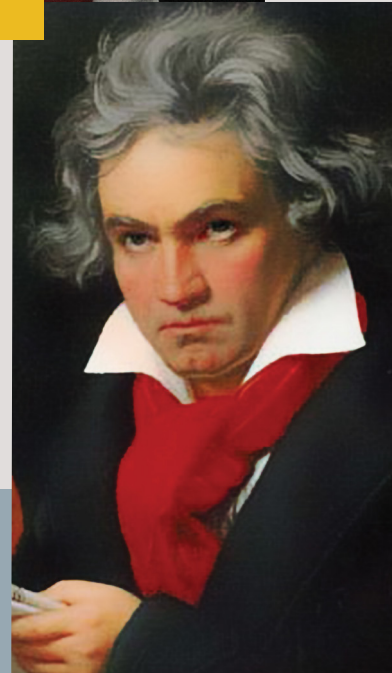
# BEETHOVEN *for the* GENERATIONS

**MONDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2019 at 7:30 P.M.**

Helzberg Hall | Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts

**MICHAEL STERN**, *conductor*

**YO-YO MA**, *cello* | **PAMELA FRANK**, *violin* | **EMANUEL AX**, *piano*



*This concert is made possible by the generous support of Annette Bloch.*

“True art remains imperishable, and the genuine artist feels profound delight in real and great products of genius.”

— LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN



Yo-Yo Ma, Isaac Stern and Emanuel Ax, the Ax-Ma-Stern Trio, bow after a performance at Carnegie Hall, 1987. © Steve J. Sherman

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*To see all of the Kansas City Symphony “A Celebration of Isaac Stern” events, please visit [kcsymphony.org/IsaacStern](https://kcsymphony.org/IsaacStern).*

DEAR FRIENDS,

This past September I began my 15th year as music director here, and I feel honored to have embarked on this special season. With the beginning of 2020, music lovers everywhere are celebrating the 250th anniversary of Beethoven's birth. Also, 2020 marks my father Isaac Stern's centenary year. My family and I are launching IsaacStern@100 — a yearlong global initiative to mark his legacy and make a difference around the world, using music as a force for change and for good. Tonight's kickoff for IsaacStern@100 also launches the Annette Bloch NextGen Venture Fund, created to ensure a meaningful musical future for the next generation of audiences. Thank you to Annette for her supreme generosity. If that were not enough synergy, this very day, December 16, is Beethoven's actual birthday. On hand are three peerless interpreters of Beethoven's music, who were among my father's most cherished musical collaborators and close friends, to honor both him and Beethoven, while supporting our ambition to bring great music to more people. I could not have imagined a more perfect confluence of special celebrations. I am so thankful.

Emanuel Ax, Pamela Frank and Yo-Yo Ma are dear lifelong friends and three of my favorite longtime musical co-conspirators. I've known Manny for 40 years; Pam, longer than that; and Yo-Yo, longer still. The fact they are all here together to remember my father's music-making and influence, to celebrate his friendship and honor his legacy, takes my breath away. I do not take this superstar trio for granted for one moment. These three musical citizens of the world are here in Helzberg Hall on this special date to share their artistry and devotion in such a loving way, and to support so generously our Symphony's aspirations for the future. It is only more evidence of their boundless generosity of spirit.

This is a wonderful moment for the Kansas City Symphony, empowering us to seek more and do more as we look to the future. More than ever, our times demand action and advocacy. My father made that abiding belief central to everything he accomplished in his life, and that deserves to be remembered and celebrated. It is a privilege to be here tonight, on stage with my friends and colleagues in the orchestra, whom

I respect and admire so much, and with all of you, to whom I am so devoted. With your ongoing faith in music and the arts, you continue to make this community a model for our times. I also extend my unlimited thanks to our tireless staff and inspired board. Without them, we could never have made happen what we did or dream about all the possibilities ahead.

As for our three soloists, I am filled with gratitude and love. I have no more words, except to say I think from somewhere else, somehow, my dad knows we are here; and with his glasses perched on his head, a fiddle in one hand and a phone and cigar in the other, he is smiling.



MICHAEL STERN, *Music Director, Kansas City Symphony*



Photo by Todd Rosenberg



Isaac and Michael on the morning of Michael's graduation from the Curtis Institute, May 1986.



*Courtesy of Carnegie Hall Archives/Estate of Isaac Stern*

# REMEMBERING ISAAC

*By Gino Francesconi, Director of the Archives and Rose Museum at Carnegie Hall*

Isaac Stern was born on July 21, 1920, in Kremenets — at the time, a city in Poland, now in today's Ukraine — and immigrated to San Francisco with his family when he was 10 months old. Isaac was not a child prodigy on the violin — in fact, he didn't touch a violin until he was eight, primarily inspired by his best friend who played the instrument. But it was obvious from the start that Isaac had an extraordinary talent. His first public performance was at nine, his recital debut at 11, and at 17 he performed the Brahms Violin

Concerto with the San Francisco Symphony — a concert that was broadcast across the country. At 23, he made his Carnegie Hall debut to rave reviews.

Isaac toured nearly nonstop, performing more concerts in front of more people than any violinist of his day, creating (as he called it) “a network of friends.” He premiered, commissioned, and recorded more new works than any other violinist in history. In addition to his artistry, the husband and father of three also gave generously and passionately to numerous causes. His agent,

Sol Hurok, complained that when Isaac wasn't on stage, he was on the phone. Conductor George Szell lamented Isaac could have been the greatest violinist after Jascha Heifetz, but he was "wasting" his time on so many worthy causes. And worthy indeed: Isaac was a founding member of the National Council on the Arts, National Endowment for the Arts, and Jerusalem Music Centre; president of the America-Israel Cultural Foundation; a mentor to many young musicians, including Emanuel Ax, Yo-Yo Ma, Midori, Itzhak Perlman, and Pinchas Zukerman; and the instrumental force behind the saving of Carnegie Hall.

Isaac Stern was 39 when he led the successful campaign to save the Hall from demolition in 1960. After convincing the City of New York to purchase the building, Carnegie Hall became the first structure in the city saved for its historical significance. Isaac envisioned that the Hall could serve as a national center for music education and the training of young musicians. The nonprofit Carnegie Hall Corporation was formed, and Isaac was its president for more than 40 years. In 1997, the Main Hall was named in his honor.

The hub of Isaac's activities was his office — a large apartment on Central Park West. Everywhere one looked, a visitor's eyes landed on an achievement:

Grammy Awards on bookshelves; an Emmy on the mantle; an Academy Award on a table; artwork for a recording cover signed by Marc Chagall; dozens of photos on the walls, many autographed by such luminaries as actress Joan Crawford, composer Jean Sibelius, Secretary-General of the United Nations U Thant, and presidents from Kennedy onwards. There were numerous keys to cities, honorary doctorates from schools like Oxford and Juilliard, boxes of medals from the Presidential Medal of Freedom to France's Legion of Honour, stacks of correspondences, and music neatly stored in cabinets and piled on the grand piano. Large filing cabinets filled one bedroom and boxes of files filled other rooms. And the phone lines never stopped ringing: "Mr. Stern, Senator Javits is on line two." Then there was the privilege of seeing the temperature-controlled closet that held the priceless violins and bows, including the Guarneri del Gesù that belonged to the great Eugène Ysaÿe, who had inscribed the inside in French: "This del Gesù was the faithful companion of my life." Isaac said he would add, "Mine, too."

Isaac Stern died on September 22, 2001, at the age of 81. His tombstone in Gaylordsville, Connecticut, is marked simply: "Isaac Stern, Fiddler."

*Originally published in Carnegie Hall's September/October 2019 Playbill. Reprinted with permission.*



Isaac Stern listens to the Carnegie Centennial Choral Fest as Robert Shaw conducts a hall filled with only choirs and singers, 1991. © Steve J. Sherman

## ISAAC STERN — A TIMELINE

**1921:** with parents Clara Jaffe and Solomon Stern, emigrates to United States, settling in San Francisco

**1920:** born in Kremenets, Poland (now Ukraine)

1920



**1928:** begins violin studies with Naoum Blinder

**1930:** makes San Francisco Symphony debut, playing Bach's Double Concerto with Blinder

1930



January 8, 1943. Courtesy of Carnegie Hall Archives/Estate of Isaac Stern

**1943:** debut at Carnegie Hall, New York

**1937:** debut in Town Hall, New York

1940





Courtesy of Carnegie Hall Archives/Estate of Isaac Stern

1950

**1956:** first American artist to tour the Soviet Union as part of a cultural exchange, speaking Russian to the audiences at each concert

**1960:** plays a leading role in saving Carnegie Hall from demolition. Organizes the "Citizen Committee to Save Carnegie Hall" consisting of artists, politicians and business people to galvanize the New York City government into action

1960

**1961:** Istomin-Stern-Rose Trio formed

**1962-1988:** receives 7 Grammy® Awards

**1964:** serves as advisor and chair of the America-Israel Foundation

**1965:** serves as an advisor for the creation of National Endowment for the Arts

**1967:** performs with Leonard Bernstein and the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra at Mont Scopus shortly after the Six-Day War

1970



Isaac Stern with accompanist Alexander Zankin  
Courtesy of Carnegie Hall Archives/Estate of Isaac Stern

**1973:** co-founds Jerusalem Music Centre, a center to identify and nurture the finest musical talent in Israel

**1973:** during the Yom Kippur War, Stern travels to Israel on a humanitarian trip, playing in hospitals while visiting the wounded

**1979:** one year after full diplomatic relations between the United States and China are restored, Stern travels to China to engage in music master classes. Documentary "Mao to Mozart: Isaac Stern in China" is filmed

**1981:** "Mao to Mozart" is awarded an Oscar in the documentary category



Isaac Stern, Emanuel Ax and Yo-Yo Ma perform at Carnegie Hall, 1987. © Steve J. Sherman

**1987:** receives Wolf Prize (Israel)

**1987:** receives Lifetime Achievement Grammy

**1987:** receives Emmy for Outstanding Individual Achievement in Classical Music

**1991:** plays Bach (Sarabande from the D-Minor Partita) in the Jerusalem Theater during an air raid for the audience who remained to hear music during tense times

**1992:** receives Presidential Medal of Freedom

**1993:** first chamber music workshop led by Stern and colleagues at Carnegie Hall

**1997:** Carnegie Hall's Main Hall is renamed "Isaac Stern Auditorium"

**1997:** Japanese government conferred on Stern the Third Rank of The Order of the Rising Sun in recognition of his high degree of artistry and passion for educating the next generation

**1999:** co-authors an autobiography with Chaim Potok called "My First 79 Years"

## 1980

**1980:** establishes "Musical Encounters" for chamber musicians, a series of ongoing workshops led by Stern and his esteemed colleagues to coach talented chamber ensembles

**1982:** receives Sonning Award (Denmark)

**1984:** receives Kennedy Center Honor

**1986:** with advocacy and fundraising, full restoration of Carnegie Hall is complete

## 1990

**1990:** receives Commandeur de la Legion d' honneur (France)



**1998:** except for his parents, Isaac Stern lost all of his relatives in the Holocaust and publicly stated he would not feel comfortable performing in Germany. In 1998, he went to visit for the first time, and while he still did not perform, he spent his time coaching young musicians, calling it "communication as healing"

## 2000

**2001:** September 22, 2001, passes away in New York

## ABOUT MICHAEL STERN, *conductor*

### **MUSIC DIRECTOR MICHAEL STERN IS IN HIS 15TH SEASON WITH THE KANSAS CITY SYMPHONY,**

hailed for its remarkable artistic ascent, original programming, organizational development and stability, as well as the extraordinary growth of its varied audiences since his tenure began. Since 2008, Stern and the orchestra have collaborated with Grammy® Award-winning Reference Recordings for an ongoing series of highly praised CDs.



Photo by Tal Wilson

Stern is also the founding artistic director and principal conductor of the IRIS Orchestra in Germantown, Tennessee. Now in its second decade, audiences and critics alike applaud this unique group for its virtuosity and programming as well as its commitment to commissioning and recording new works by American composers.

Stern has led orchestras throughout Europe and Asia, including the London and NHK (Tokyo) symphony orchestras, the Hungarian and Vienna radio symphony orchestras, the Helsinki, Israel, London, Moscow and Royal Stockholm philharmonic orchestras, Orchestre de Paris and National Symphony of Taiwan, among many others. In North America, Stern has conducted the Atlanta, Baltimore, Chicago, Cincinnati, Houston, Indianapolis, National (Washington, D.C.), Montreal, Pittsburgh, St. Louis, Seattle and Toronto symphony orchestras, the Cleveland and Philadelphia orchestras, and the New York Philharmonic. He also appears regularly at the Aspen Music Festival and has served on the faculty of the American Academy of Conducting at Aspen. Passionately committed to education, Stern works with students at the Curtis Institute and a number of festivals,

including the National Repertory Orchestra, National Orchestral Institute, Round Top and others.

Stern received his music degree from the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia, where his major teacher was the noted conductor and scholar Max Rudolf. Stern co-edited the third edition of Rudolf's famous textbook, "The Grammar of Conducting," and edited a new volume of Rudolf's collected writings and correspondence. He is a 1981 graduate of Harvard University, where he earned a degree in American history. ■

## ORCHESTRA ROSTER

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**JASON SEBER**, *David T. Beals III Associate Conductor*

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*Miller Nichols Chair*

Stirling Trent, *Acting Associate Concertmaster*

Chiafei Lin, *Acting Assistant Concertmaster*

Gregory Sandomirsky‡, *Associate Concertmaster Emeritus*

Anne-Marie Brown

Betty Chen

Anthony DeMarco

Susan Goldenberg\*

Tomoko Iguchi

Dorris Dai Janssen

Filip LazovskiΔ

Vladimir Rykov

Rachel SandmanΔ

Alex Shum\*

### SECOND VIOLINS

Tamamo Someya Gibbs, *Principal*

Kristin Velicer, *Acting Associate Principal*

Minhye Helena Choi, *Acting Assistant Principal*

Nancy Beckmann

Kathy Haid Berry ‡

Mary Garcia Grant

Kevin Hao

Kazato Inouye

Rena Ishii

Lisa Jackson^Δ

Stephanie Larsen

Francesca Manheim

Sarah PetersΔ

### VIOLAS

Matthew Sinno, *Acting Principal*

Jessica Nance, *Acting Associate Principal*

Duke Lee, *Acting Assistant Principal*

Kent Brauningner

Sean Brumble

Marvin Gruenbaum

Jenifer Houck

Bohyun Kim^Δ

Jesse Yukimura

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*Robert A. Kipp Chair*

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*Richard Hill Chair*

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Silvio Guitian^, *Associate Principal*

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Silvio Guitian^

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Maxwell Pipinich^

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ISAACSTERN@100 INTERNATIONAL KICKOFF EVENT

# BEETHOVEN for the GENERATIONS

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December 16, 2019 at 7:30 p.m.

HELZBERG HALL, KAUFFMAN CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

MICHAEL STERN, *conductor*

EMANUEL AX, *piano*

PAMELA FRANK, *violin*

YO-YO MA, *cello*

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## BEETHOVEN

### Piano Trio in E-flat Major, op. 70 No. 2

I. Poco sostenuto — Allegro ma non troppo

II. Allegretto

III. Allegretto ma non troppo

IV. Finale: Allegro

EMANUEL AX, *piano*

PAMELA FRANK, *violin*

YO-YO MA, *cello*

### Overture to *Egmont*, op. 84

### Concerto in C Major for Piano, Violin, Cello and Orchestra, op. 56, “Triple Concerto”

I. Allegro

II. Largo

III. Rondo alla polacca

EMANUEL AX, *piano*

PAMELA FRANK, *violin*

YO-YO MA, *cello*

THIS EVENING'S CONCERT WILL BE PERFORMED WITHOUT INTERMISSION.

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*This concert is made possible by the generous support of Annette Bloch.*

Concert proceeds will launch the Kansas City Symphony's all-new Annette Bloch NextGen Venture Fund to engage future generations of music lovers and concertgoers.

## LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN (1770-1827)

How best to describe Ludwig van Beethoven? Revolutionary, difficult, genius, cantankerous, virtuoso, hot-tempered, giant, temperamental, superstar, volatile, brilliant, irritable, visionary ... most certainly a fascinating and very complicated man.

Born in Bonn, Germany, in 1770, probably on December 16, Ludwig was named after his Kapellmeister (court music director) grandfather. Ludwig's father, Johann van Beethoven, was a court musician who hoped to garner fame and fortune by touring young Ludwig as a Mozartean child prodigy. Although talented as a young pianist, Ludwig's rough instruction by his father and difficult family circumstances precluded the realization of Johann's dreams for his son.

The Beethoven household was not serene. Johann was an alcoholic and the chaos of his disease took a toll on the growing family. Of the seven children born to Johann and Maria Magdalena Keverich, only the second-born Ludwig and two younger brothers, Kaspar Anton Karl and Nikolaus Johann, survived infancy. Malnutrition and chronic illness were increasingly common companions to the harsh treatment Ludwig received at the hands of his father.

Ludwig's early keyboard, violin and viola studies led to instruction by court organist Christian Gottlob Neefe. This spurred an interest in composition, resulting in Beethoven's first published work, a set of keyboard variations. He became an unpaid assistant organist to Neefe at age 11 and began receiving a wage at age 13. Neefe wrote, "If he continues in the same manner he started, he is sure to become a second Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart."

Bonn's Elector Maximilian Francis encouraged and subsidized Beethoven's ambitions by underwriting travel to Vienna where the young composer hoped to study with Mozart, though there is scant and likely apocryphal evidence the two musicians ever met. Beethoven's sojourn was cut short in May 1787 when news of his mother's illness reached him and he quickly returned to Bonn. Her death in July 1787 caused his father's drinking to further spiral out of control, and the teenage Ludwig was forced to assume duties as head of the household.

The ensuing five years in Bonn were a time of tremendous growth and developing maturity for Beethoven. He composed a substantial number of works (unpublished and listed without opus numbers) that reflected his advancing abilities and range. His keyboard skills rapidly evolved, establishing the foundation for his formidable improvisational capability. It is likely that he met Franz Joseph Haydn in 1790 as Haydn stopped in Bonn on his way to London. Mozart's death in 1791 sealed the end of Beethoven's youthful ambition to study with his erstwhile role model. When Haydn returned to Vienna in 1792, it seems certain that arrangements were made then for Beethoven to study with the eminent composer.

The Elector again granted Beethoven leave to go to Vienna and provided him with a scholarship. Beethoven left Bonn in



November 1792, never to return. The youth immersed himself in studies with Haydn, violin instruction with Ignaz Schuppanzigh, and even occasional lessons in vocal composition with Antonio Salieri. At this heady time, Beethoven was making his reputation as a piano virtuoso, playing in the salons of the nobility and building renown for his ability to improvise.

Beethoven continued composing during these early years in Vienna but waited until 1795 to issue his opus 1, a set of three piano trios. They were a commercial and artistic success, encouraging the headstrong young musician to follow his muse. A steady stream of music followed: cello sonatas, violin sonatas, piano sonatas, trios, piano concerti, his first symphony and more.

Amid these triumphs rose the specter of incipient deafness. In the famous Heiligenstadt Testament, a letter Beethoven wrote to his brothers in 1802 but never sent (it was discovered among his papers at his death in 1827), he detailed the anguish of his affliction and how he resolved to continue living solely because of music. The ironic tragedy of a composer going deaf is not unique (William Boyce, Bedřich Smetana, Gabriel Fauré and Ralph Vaughan Williams all suffered profound hearing loss), but Beethoven's calamity has held a special place in the public imagination for two centuries. His conversation books, where visitors wrote their side of the conversation to which Beethoven replied aloud, are distinctive evidence of the reluctant accommodation necessary in his situation.

As the years went by, Beethoven's deafness and thorny personality caused ever-growing isolation. His overall compositional output dwindled, but he labored over massive works, including the *Missa solemnis*, *Diabelli Variations*, "Hammerklavier" Sonata, and most notably

his Ninth Symphony, which premiered to wild approval in Vienna on May 7, 1824.

Violinist Joseph Böhm noted:

Beethoven himself conducted, that is, he stood in front of a conductor's stand and threw himself back and forth like a madman. At one moment he stretched to his full height, at the next he crouched down to the floor, he flailed about with his hands and feet as though he wanted to play all the instruments and sing all the chorus parts.

Fortunately, the musicians had been cautioned beforehand to follow the beat provided by Michael Umlauf, the concertmaster. When the audience applauded, Beethoven couldn't hear the ovation and stood with his back to the crowd. Famously, the alto soloist Caroline Unger turned Beethoven to the audience so he could see the massive acclaim for his music.

Beethoven's already poor health declined as he composed his famous late string quartets. An open coach ride in December 1826 brought on a case of pneumonia that eventually led to his death on March 26, 1827.

By some accounts, 20,000 mourners were in attendance at Beethoven's funeral. Austrian poet and dramatist Franz Grillparzer wrote the funeral oration, which recounts Beethoven's heroic status:

He was an artist indeed, and who can stand out beside him? As the Behemoth storms through the seas, he sped through the boundaries of his art ... he traversed everything, grasped everything. Whoever comes after him will not follow in his footsteps, he must begin anew, for this innovator has finished his life's work at the limits of art. ■

## PROGRAM NOTES BY ERIC WILLIAMS

### PIANO TRIO IN E-FLAT MAJOR, OP. 70 NO. 2 (1808) 30 MINUTES

Piano, violin and cello.

Ludwig van Beethoven did not invent the piano trio; the development of that form was led by Franz Joseph Haydn and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. Haydn composed 45 piano trios, including 14 written during the 1790s when Beethoven would have been most influenced by the master. How could he not have absorbed the lessons of Haydn's playfulness with key, tempo, meter and the like? Beethoven's opus 1 was a set of three piano trios published in 1795, but aside from a 1797 trio scored for piano, clarinet or violin and cello, he did not return to the form until 1808.

Despite creative successes, the early 1800s were a period of uncertainty in Beethoven's life. The 1805 premiere of his opera *Fidelio* was a fiasco and its 1806 revisions also drew criticism. His plans for a concert for his own benefit in 1807 were quashed and he was open to the possibility of leaving Vienna. The offer of a post in Kassel was enticing and he made plans to depart. Countess Anna Maria von Erdödy, a skillful pianist celebrated for her musical patronage, intervened and helped persuade Archduke Rudolph, Prince Lobkowitz and Prince Kinsky to provide Beethoven with an annuity to retain his presence in Vienna.

Writing with complete assurance and mastery, Beethoven composed the two marvelous trios of opus 70 and dedicated them to the Countess in gratitude for her advocacy. The first, better known as the "Ghost," utilized some sketches Beethoven made for the witches' scene in a projected

opera based on Shakespeare's "Macbeth." Although the opera was never realized, the resultant trio is splendid, tending to overshadow its companion work.

Built in four movements, the op. 70 No. 2 trio opens with gossamer sounds in an extended prelude that merely suggests melody. Once established, the movement rolls along, filled with charm and vigor.

It is often said that Beethoven never wrote a slow movement for his symphonies, and the same applies to this trio. The gracious second movement alternates deliciously between major and minor tonalities with several stylish variations on the melodic material.

Beethoven's ingenuity is frequently displayed in scherzo movements, abundantly so in this trio. Alternating between the gracious opening theme punctuated by a slightly off-kilter descending scale in the piano and a hushed chorale parsed first by strings followed by piano, this intriguing movement is wonderfully refreshing.

The trio concludes vibrantly, with many opportunities for each instrument to shine within the essential ensemble context. It is as if Beethoven transcribed a lively conversation among friends. Stormy late string quartets may be ahead, but this trio is sunny Beethoven. ■

## OVERTURE TO *EGMONT*, OP. 84 (1810) 9 MINUTES

Piccolo, 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, timpani and strings.

The great literary figure Johann Wolfgang von Goethe exerted a tremendous influence on the artistic milieu of his era. Beethoven held him in high esteem and was much taken with his 1788 play “Egmont,” which relates the story of Dutch nobleman Count Egmont and his principled stand against the forces of Spanish despotism. Sentenced to die by the brutal Duke of Alva, Count Egmont accepts his fate while envisioning eventual triumph for the forces of liberty.

In 1809, Vienna’s Burgtheater planned a revival of the play and asked Beethoven to compose incidental music for the production. Perhaps he felt a special kinship to the dramatized history given his Flemish heritage. Maybe he was motivated by the siege and occupation of Vienna by Napoleon’s troops. Nonetheless, he eagerly undertook the commission as the play’s subject matter aligned with his sociopolitical views. Of the 10 pieces Beethoven composed for the production, the Overture is now a staple of the orchestral repertoire while the other nine have faded into obscurity.

Beethoven made arrangements to send Goethe a copy of the incidental music to “Egmont,” writing the author in 1811:

You will soon receive the music to Egmont from Leipzig through Breitkopf and Härtel, this glorious Egmont which I read so ardently, thought over and experienced again and gave out in music — I would greatly like to have your judgment on it and your blame, too ... will be

beneficial to me and my art, and be accepted as gladly as the highest praise.

Your Excellency’s Great admirer  
*Ludwig van Beethoven*

Goethe commented of Beethoven’s music, “He entered into my intentions with an admirable stroke of genius,” and hoped they would meet. The two finally met in July 1812 at Teplitz, the Bohemian spa resort. Surely Beethoven’s deafness complicated communication but they spent much time together over several days. In various correspondence, each assessed the other with mixed admiration and censure. The urbane and celebrated Goethe commented, “His talent astounded me; nevertheless, he unfortunately has an utterly untamed personality, not completely wrong in thinking the world detestable, but hardly making it more pleasant for himself or others by his attitude.” In turn, Beethoven observed, “Goethe delights in the court atmosphere far more than is becoming to a poet. Is there any point in talking about absurdities of virtuosos, when poets, who should be regarded as the nation’s first teachers, forget everything for the sake of this glitter?”

Characterized by urgency and resolve, Beethoven’s music vividly depicts the drama of Egmont’s story with stentorian chords, plaintive cries and roiling melody. The heroic and stirring conclusion is among Beethoven’s most brilliant writing, now casting a long shadow over Goethe’s once-famous play. ■

## PROGRAM NOTES BY ERIC WILLIAMS

### **CONCERTO IN C MAJOR FOR PIANO, VIOLIN, CELLO AND ORCHESTRA, OP. 56, “TRIPLE CONCERTO” (1804) 34 MINUTES**

Solo piano, violin and cello, flute, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, 2 trumpets, timpani and strings.

Beethoven's Concerto in C Major for Piano, Violin, Cello and Orchestra, commonly known as the “Triple Concerto,” is something of a rarity. Various concerti for three instruments by J.S. Bach, Vivaldi and Telemann had been around for the better part of a century when Beethoven took up the genre. While earlier composers had written generally for three of the same instrument, Beethoven explored uncharted territory by using a piano trio (piano, violin and cello) as the soloists in his composition. Beethoven sketched his first attempt in 1802 and abandoned that effort. He began the Triple Concerto in early 1804 and finished it in May or June of that year, but it did not receive its public premiere until 1808.

As Beethoven noted in an August 26, 1804, letter to his publisher, the Triple Concerto “is really something new.” The concerto presented a logistical challenge: how to handle three instruments of very different volume and showcase each in a solo capacity as well as a featured ensemble. Beethoven solved the volume challenge by frequently giving the initial statements of melodic material to the cello, thus allowing it to be heard unimpeded by the thicker texture of a trio. He also exploited the full range of combinations available with a trio and orchestra. While each solo instrument has its bravura turn, Beethoven deftly groups the soloists and crafts a work filled with richly satisfying duet and trio moments.

The concerto, presented in a traditional arrangement of three movements, opens softly in the bass register. The orchestra unfolds the thematic material, marked with warmth and grace. By the time the solo cello enters, the appealing melody is well-situated in our ears. A thorough development of the thematic material ensues. The solo parts make virtuosic demands, even without traditional cadenzas as vehicles for showmanship.

The brief and intensely lyrical second movement is nothing short of sublime. The solo cello again takes the lead, spinning a beautiful melody from one exquisite moment to another. The enchantment builds as the piano and violin add their lustrous tones. All too soon, the orchestra nudges the trio from their reverie. A series of insistent repeated notes create a bridge to the finale, a lively rondo alla polacca — a rondo in the manner of a polonaise, the French term for a dance of Polish origin.

The rondo offers a celebratory conclusion to this impressive concerto. Swept along on themes richly conducive to Beethoven's imaginative variations, the alternating sections are wonderfully complementary. Joyous melodies and engaging dance rhythms combine for an irrepressibly jubilant ending to a work that “is really something new.” ■

## ABOUT EMANUEL AX, *piano*

Born in modern-day Lvov, Poland, Emanuel Ax moved to Winnipeg, Canada with his family when he was a young boy. Ax made his New York debut in the Young Concert Artists Series and in 1974 won the first Arthur Rubinstein International Piano Master Competition in Tel Aviv. In 1975, he won the Michaels Award from Young Concert Artists, followed four years later by the Avery Fisher Prize.

Highlights of the 2019/20 season include a European summer festivals tour with the Vienna Philharmonic and long-time collaborative partner Bernard Haitink, an Asian tour with the London Symphony and Sir Simon Rattle, and U.S. concerts with the Rotterdam Philharmonic and Lahav Shani, plus three concerts with regular partners Leonidas Kavakos and Yo-Yo Ma at Carnegie Hall. Further participation in Carnegie Hall's celebration of Beethoven's 250th birthday will culminate in a solo recital in May preceded by recitals in Madison, Santa Barbara, Orange County, Washington, Las Vegas and Colorado Springs. With orchestra, he can be heard in Houston, Baltimore, Atlanta, San Diego, San Francisco, Los Angeles, New York, Montreal, Kansas City, Philadelphia, Cincinnati and Indianapolis. Internationally, he can be heard with orchestras in London, Frankfurt, Berlin, Rome, Zurich, Rotterdam and Tel Aviv.

Ax has been a Sony Classical exclusive recording artist since 1987. He has received Grammy® Awards for the second and third volumes of his cycle of Haydn's piano sonatas. He also has made a series



of Grammy Award-winning recordings with cellist Yo-Yo Ma of the Beethoven and Brahms sonatas for cello and piano. In the 2004/05 season, Ax contributed to an International Emmy® Award-winning BBC documentary commemorating the Holocaust that aired on the 60th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz. In 2013, Ax's recording "Variations" received the Echo Klassik Award for Solo Recording of the Year (19th Century Music/Piano).

Ax is a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and holds honorary doctorates of music from Skidmore College, Yale University and Columbia University. For more information about Ax, please visit [emanuelax.com](http://emanuelax.com). ■

## ABOUT PAMELA FRANK, *violin*

Pamela Frank has established an outstanding international reputation across an unusually varied range of performing activity. As a soloist, she has performed with leading orchestras including the New York Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony, San Francisco Symphony, Academy of St. Martin in the Fields, Berlin Philharmonic and St. Petersburg Philharmonic. She has performed regularly with the Zurich Tonhalle Orchestra, recording the complete Mozart violin concertos with them under David Zinman. She also has recorded a Schubert album and the Beethoven sonata cycle, both with her father Claude Frank. She is a sought-after chamber musician and has performed at many international festivals including Aldeburgh, Verbier, Edinburgh, Salzburg, Tanglewood, Marlboro and Ravinia.

Aside from her devotion to works of the standard repertory, Frank has performed and recorded a number of contemporary works. Her accomplishments were recognized in 1999 with the prestigious Avery Fisher Prize. She is professor of violin at the Curtis Institute of Music, and she also teaches and coaches annually at the Tanglewood, Ravinia and Verbier festivals. Since 2008, she has been the artistic director of the Evnin Rising Stars, a mentoring program for young artists at Caramoor Center for the Arts. Her newest venture is the formation of Fit as a Fiddle Inc., a collaboration with physical therapist Howard Nelson for musician injury prevention and treatment. ■



Pam with Isaac during a lunch break in the Isaac Stern Chamber Music Workshop at Carnegie Hall, May 26, 1997. © Steve J. Sherman

## ABOUT YO-YO MA, *cello*

Yo-Yo Ma's multi-faceted career is a testament to his enduring belief in culture's power to generate trust and understanding. Whether performing new and familiar works from the cello repertoire, collaborating with communities and institutions to explore culture's role in society, or engaging unexpected musical forms, Ma strives to foster connections that stimulate the imagination and reinforce our humanity.

With partners from around the world and across disciplines, he creates programs that stretch the boundaries of genre and tradition to explore music-making not only as a means to share and express meaning, but also as a model for the cultural collaboration he considers essential to a strong society. It was this belief that inspired him to establish Silkroad, a collective of artists from around the world who create music that engages their many traditions.

In August 2018, Ma began a new journey, setting out to perform Johann Sebastian Bach's six suites for solo cello in one sitting in 36 locations around the world, iconic venues that encompass our cultural heritage, our current creativity, and the challenges of peace and understanding that will shape our future. Each concert will be an example of culture's power to create moments of shared understanding, as well as an invitation to a larger conversation about culture, society, and the themes that connect us all.

Ma was born in 1955 to Chinese parents living in Paris. He began to study the cello with his father at age 4 and three years later moved with his family to New York City, where he continued his cello studies with Leonard Rose



at the Juilliard School. After his conservatory training, he sought out a liberal arts education, graduating from Harvard University with a degree in anthropology in 1976. He has received numerous awards, including the Avery Fisher Prize (1978), Glenn Gould Prize (1999), National Medal of the Arts (2001), Dan David Prize (2006), World Economic Forum's Crystal Award (2008), Presidential Medal of Freedom (2010), Kennedy Center Honors (2011), Polar Music Prize (2012) and J. Paul Getty Medal Award (2016). He has performed for eight American presidents, most recently at the invitation of President Obama on the occasion of the 56th Inaugural Ceremony.

Ma and his wife have two children. He plays three instruments: a 2003 instrument made by Moes & Moes, a 1733 Montagnana cello from Venice, and the 1712 "Davidoff" Stradivarius. ■

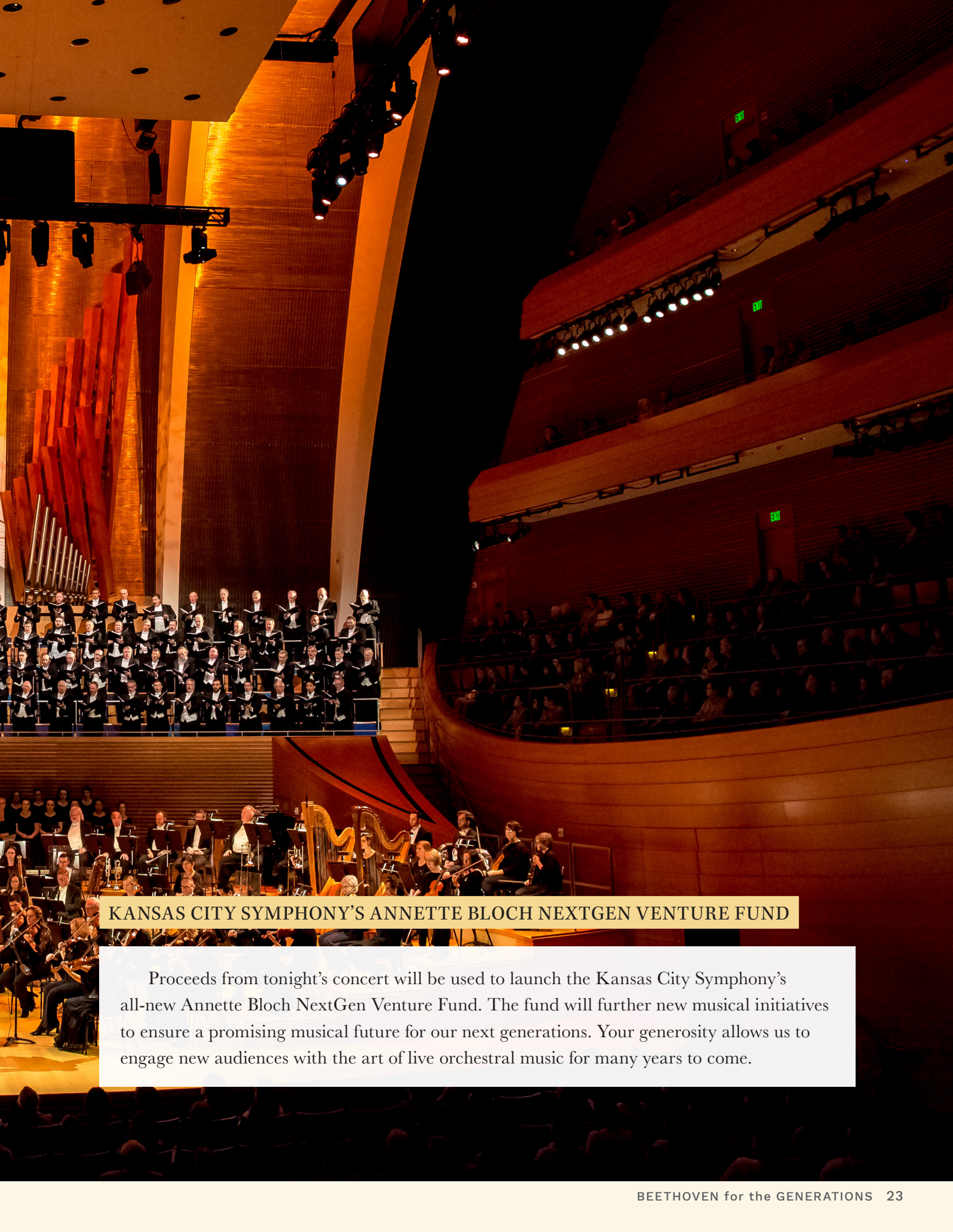
## ABOUT THE KANSAS CITY SYMPHONY

The Kansas City Symphony is a major force in the cultural life of the community. Praised for performances of uncompromising standard, the orchestra is the largest in the region and enjoys a national reputation under the artistic leadership of Music Director Michael Stern.

Founded in 1982, the Kansas City Symphony serves a metropolitan population of 2.1 million people. The orchestra's 80 full-time musicians are area residents and vital contributors to the artistic life of Kansas City. Presenting more than 130 programs annually in a 42-week season, the Symphony performs an impressive variety of classical, pops, family, holiday, educational, touring and outreach concerts. In addition, the Symphony performs for the Kansas City Ballet and the Lyric Opera of Kansas City. For more information or tickets, please visit [kcsymphony.org](http://kcsymphony.org) or call (816) 471-0400.



Photo by Eric Williams



## KANSAS CITY SYMPHONY'S ANNETTE BLOCH NEXTGEN VENTURE FUND

Proceeds from tonight's concert will be used to launch the Kansas City Symphony's all-new Annette Bloch NextGen Venture Fund. The fund will further new musical initiatives to ensure a promising musical future for our next generations. Your generosity allows us to engage new audiences with the art of live orchestral music for many years to come.

“When you believe in something,  
you can move mountains.”

— ISAAC STERN

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