



We celebrate Beethoven's 250th birthday
& Isaac Stern's centennial in 2020.

A Celebration of Isaac Stern
BEETHOVEN'S FOURTH SYMPHONY
MIDORI PLAYS DVOŘÁK

This program is gratefully dedicated to Robert A. Kipp in recognition of his exemplary service to our community and the Kansas City Symphony.

Friday and Saturday, April 3-4, 2020 at 8 p.m.

Sunday, April 5, 2020 at 2 p.m.

HELZBERG HALL, KAUFFMAN CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

MICHAEL STERN, *conductor*

MIDORI, *violin*

ANNA CLYNE

This Midnight Hour

DVOŘÁK

Concerto in A Minor for Violin and Orchestra,
op. 53

I. Allegro, ma non troppo

II. Adagio, ma non troppo

III. Finale: Allegro giocoso, ma non troppo

Midori, *violin*

INTERMISSION

BEETHOVEN

Symphony No. 4 in B-flat Major, op. 60

I. Adagio — Allegro vivace

II. Adagio

III. Allegro vivace

IV. Allegro ma non troppo

The 2019/20 season is generously sponsored by
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ANNA CLYNE (b. 1980)

***This Midnight Hour* (2015) 12 minutes**

Piccolo, 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 2 tenor trombones, bass trombone, tuba, timpani, bass drum, vibraphone, crotales, tam-tam, suspended cymbals, tam-tam, vibraphone and strings.

English composer Anna Clyne's orchestral work, *This Midnight Hour*, premiered at the Théâtre Espace Coluche in Plaisir, France, on November 13, 2015. Enrique Mazzola conducted the Orchestre national d'Île de France. The composer provides the following commentary:

The opening to *This Midnight Hour* is inspired by the character and power of the lower strings of l'Orchestre national d'Île de France. From here, it draws inspiration from two poems [Juan Ramón Jiménez's *La música* and Charles Baudelaire's *Harmonie du soir*]. Whilst it is not intended to depict a specific narrative, my intention is that it will evoke a visual journey for the listener.

—Anna Clyne



In *This Midnight Hour*, English composer Anna Clyne draws inspiration from two poems on nocturnal subjects.

ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK (1841-1904)

***Concerto in A Minor for Violin and Orchestra, op. 53* (1880) 31 minutes**

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

On New Year's Day, 1879, in Leipzig, Johannes Brahms conducted the world premiere of his glorious Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, op. 77. The soloist was the work's dedicatee, the eminent Austro-Hungarian violinist Joseph Joachim. That same year, Joachim requested Brahms' friend, Czech composer Antonín Dvořák, to write a new violin concerto for him. Dvořák penned the initial version of the concerto



A brilliant virtuoso work, Dvořák's Violin Concerto showcases the Czech composer's characteristic melodic genius, irrepressible energy and affection for the folk music of his homeland.

during summer 1879. The composer dedicated his concerto to Joachim and forwarded the score to the violinist in November.

Joachim, an expert technician and a composer in his own right, was never shy about suggesting corrections or modifications to a colleague's score. In fact, Joachim had offered invaluable assistance to Brahms and Max Bruch concerning their violin concertos. In April 1880, Dvořák visited Joachim in Berlin, and afterwards, penned extensive changes to his Violin Concerto. As promised, Dvořák forwarded the revised score to Joachim for his further study and advice.

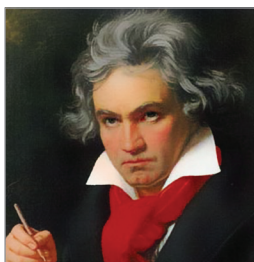
Two years passed, and in August of 1882, Dvořák received correspondence from Joachim, inviting the composer to review the score again with him. Dvořák accepted Joachim's invitation and journeyed to Berlin that autumn. In November, Joachim performed the work for Dvořák at a private rehearsal. These collaborations led to Dvořák's final revisions to the concerto, but Joachim never played it at a public concert. The young Czech violinist František Ondříček was the soloist for the world premiere on October 14, 1883 at the National Theater in Prague.

Dvořák once commented, "I myself have gone to the simple, half-forgotten tunes of the Bohemian peasants for hints in my most serious works. Only in this way can a musician express the true sentiment of his people." His Violin Concerto is a marvelous example of Dvořák incorporating the spirit of his homeland into a concert work that has charmed violinists and audiences around the world.

The concerto is in three movements. The first opens with a bold orchestral fanfare, representing the first half of the movement's

PROGRAM NOTES By Ken Meltzer

central theme. The soloist enters with the theme's graceful second portion. Throughout the movement, this theme alternates with various episodes. An introspective passage serves as a bridge to the second movement, which follows without pause. The soloist introduces the flowing *espressivo* principal melody. A contrasting episode features bravura passages for the solo violin. Among the concerto's three movements, the finale most overtly reflects the spirit of Czech folk music. The soloist, accompanied by the violins, sings the principal theme, in the style of the *furiant*, a vigorous Czech dance. An orchestral proclamation of the central theme, a concluding flourish for the soloist, and four emphatic chords bring the concerto to its vibrant conclusion.



Robert Schumann characterized Beethoven's Fourth Symphony as "a slender Greek maiden between two huge Nordic giants" (the "Eroica" and Fifth symphonies).

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN (1770-1827)

Symphony No. 4 in B-flat Major, op. 60 (1806) 32 minutes

Flute, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 horns,
2 trumpets, timpani and strings.

During the summer of 1806, Ludwig van Beethoven visited his friend and patron, Prince Karl Lichnowsky, who owned a Silesian country estate in what is now the Czech Republic. During that visit, Lichnowsky introduced Beethoven to Count Franz von Oppersdorf, whose castle was located nearby. Oppersdorf, an avid music-lover, greeted Beethoven with a performance of the composer's Second Symphony played by the count's own court orchestra.

It was on that occasion that Count Oppersdorf commissioned Beethoven to write a new symphony. Beethoven had already begun work on what would become his Symphony No. 5. However, he temporarily put that work aside, in order to compose the B-flat Major Symphony for the count. Beethoven composed his Fourth Symphony during the months of September and October 1806, while residing at Prince Lichnowsky's estate. The Symphony probably received its premiere in March of the following year at the Vienna Palais Lobkowitz.

It was Robert Schumann who characterized Beethoven's Fourth Symphony as "a slender Greek maiden between two huge Nordic giants." It is certainly true that the Fourth does not present the epic struggles found in the "Eroica" and Fifth symphonies. Nevertheless, there is plenty of drama in the Beethoven Fourth as well as humor. The latter is a characteristic not often associated with a man who, through genius and force of will, overcame the greatest obstacles, including deafness.

Still, we know from contemporary accounts that Beethoven did, indeed, possess a robust sense of humor. And, we also should bear in mind that in his early years, Beethoven was a student of the greatest of all symphonic humorists, Franz Joseph Haydn. In listening to the Fourth, it is appropriate to recall what Haydn wrote of his young pupil in 1793: “Beethoven will in time become one of the greatest musical artists in Europe, and I shall be proud to call myself his teacher.”

The symphony is in four movements. The first opens with an extended and mysterious slow-tempo introduction. A crescendo leads to a whiplash motif in the strings, the springboard to the skipping principal motif of the Allegro vivace section. The slow-tempo second movement begins with a repeated figure in the second violins. This serves as the accompaniment for the lovely opening theme, played by the first violins, and later repeated by the winds. The third movement is a vigorous scherzo, based upon an ascending and descending theme. The principal scherzo portion alternates with the more pastoral trio section. A brief horn call heralds the concluding fortissimo chord. The finale opens with a perpetual motion figure in the strings, establishing the playful mood that predominates throughout. The coda seems destined to achieve a quiet resolution. But suddenly, a raucous exclamation brings the piece to a bold conclusion.

MIDORI IS A VISIONARY ARTIST, ACTIVIST AND EDUCATOR

whose career has transcended traditional boundaries by connecting music and the human experience. Never at rest, Midori brings the same innovation and insight that has made her a prominent concert violinist to her roles as a noted global cultural ambassador and dedicated music educator.

A leading concert violinist for more than 30 years, Midori regularly transfixes audiences through her graceful precision and intimate expression. She has performed with major orchestras across the globe and collaborated with outstanding musicians such as Claudio Abbado, Leonard Bernstein, Christoph Eschenbach, Mariss Jansons, Paavo Järvi, Yo-Yo Ma, Susanna Mälkki, Menahem Pressler and Mstislav Rostropovich, among others.



Midori goes beyond the concert hall to areas where music access is most needed. Two of her non-profits celebrated 25th anniversaries in 2017: Midori & Friends, which brings high-quality music education to New York City youth, and Music Sharing, a Japan-based program providing access to both Western classical and Japanese music traditions.

As an advocate of cultural diplomacy, Midori has been invited to speak at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies in Washington, D.C., as well as other venues. She also has been honored for her activism. UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon named Midori a Messenger of Peace in 2007, and she received the Crystal Award from the World Economic Forum in Davos in 2012.

Prior to joining the Curtis Institute of Music faculty in 2018, Midori spent 14 years working with violin students at the University of Southern California's Thornton School of Music. She continues to be a visiting artist at USC and the Peabody Institute of Johns Hopkins University.

Born in 1971 in Japan, Midori began studying violin with her mother, Setsu Goto, after displaying a strong musical aptitude at an early age. In 1982, conductor Zubin Mehta invited the then 11-year-old to perform in the New York Philharmonic's New Year's Eve concert. The standing ovation following her debut spurred Midori to pursue music as her career.

Midori plays the 1734 Guarnerius del Gesù "ex-Huberman." She uses four bows — two by Dominique Peccatte, one by François Peccatte and one by Paul Siefried.