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*Miller Nichols Chair*  
 Stirling Trent,  
*Acting Associate Concertmaster*  
 Chiafei Lin,  
*Acting Assistant Concertmaster*  
 Anne-Marie Brown  
 Betty Chen  
 Anthony DeMarco  
 Susan Goldenberg\*  
 Tomoko Iguchi  
 Dorris Dai Janssen  
 Filip LazovskiΔ  
 Vladimir Rykov  
 Rachel SandmanΔ  
 Alex Shum\*

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 Kristin Velicer, *Acting Associate Principal*  
 Minhye Helena Choi,  
*Acting Assistant Principal*  
 Nancy Beckmann  
 Mary Garcia Grant  
 Kazato Inouye  
 Rena Ishii  
 Lisa JacksonΔ  
 Stephanie Larsen  
 Francesca Manheim  
 Sarah PetersΔ

**VIOLAS**

Jessica Nance, *Acting Principal*  
 Duke Lee, *Acting Associate Principal*  
 Jesse Yukimura, *Acting Assistant Principal*  
 Matthew Sinno‡, *Associate Principal*  
 Alyssa BeckmannΔ  
 Kent Brauning  
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 Susie Yang, *Associate Principal*  
*Richard Hill Chair*  
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 Nash Tomey  
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*Marylou and John Dodds Turner Chair*  
 Shannon Finney, *Associate Principal*  
 Kayla Burggraf Michal

**PICCOLO**

Kayla Burggraf Michal

**OBOES**

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*Shirley Bush Helzberg Chair*  
 Alison Chung, *Associate Principal*  
 Matthew Lengas

**ENGLISH HORN**

Matthew Lengas

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*Bill and Peggy Lyons Chair*  
 Silvio Guitian, *Associate Principal*  
 John Klinghammer

**E-FLAT CLARINET**

Silvio Guitian

**BASS CLARINET**

John Klinghammer

**BASSOONS**

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*Barton P. and Mary D. Cohen Chair*  
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 Maxwell Pipinich

**CONTRABASSOON**

Thomas DeWitt

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*Landon and Sarah Rowland Chair*  
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 David Gamble  
 Stephen Multer,  
*Associate Principal Emeritus*

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*James B. and Annabel Nutter Chair*  
 Steven Franklin, *Associate Principal*  
 Grant SmileyΔ  
 Brian Rood ‡

**TROMBONES**

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 Porter Wyatt Henderson,  
*Associate Principal*  
 Adam Rainey

**BASS TROMBONE**

Adam Rainey

**TUBA**

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**TIMPANI**

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\* Non-Rotating Musician

‡ On Leave of Absence

Δ One-Year Member

# SLEEPING BEAUTY WITH SIBELIUS' VIOLIN CONCERTO

Friday and Saturday, June 17-18, 2022 at 8:00 p.m.  
 Sunday, June 19, 2022 at 2:00 p.m.

HELZBERG HALL, KAUFFMAN CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

RYAN BANCROFT, *guest conductor*

AUGUSTIN HADELICH, *violin*

**LILI BOULANGER**

*D'un matin de printemps* (Of a Spring Morning)

**JEAN SIBELIUS**

Concerto in D Minor for Violin and Orchestra, op. 47

I. Allegro moderato

II. Adagio di molto

III. Allegro, ma non tanto

Augustin Hadelich, *violin*

**INTERMISSION**

**PIOTR ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY**

Suite from *The Sleeping Beauty*

Prologue

Introduction

Marche de salon

Final

Act I

Walse

Grand pas d'action, "Rose"

Grand pas d'action, Coda

Final

Act II

En'tracte

Colin-maillard

Panorama

Scène du château de sommeil

Scène et final — Le réveil d'Aurore

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## LILI BOULANGER

### *D'un matin de printemps* (Of a Spring Morning) (1917-18)

6 minutes

*Piccolo, 2 flutes, 2 oboes, English horn, 2 clarinets, bass clarinet, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, cymbals, snare drum, triangle, celeste and strings.*

## THE STORY

In 1917, Lili Boulanger was already suffering from the debilitating illness that would end her life the next year at the young age of 24. Throughout the year, she worked on a pair of complementary pieces: the symphonic tone poem *D'un soir triste* (Of a Sad Evening) and the duet *D'un matin de printemps*. Toward the end of the composition process, she could no longer hold her pen to compose on her own, and had to dictate the music to her sister Nadia, the famous composition teacher. *D'un matin de printemps* was originally written as a duet for violin and piano, but went through multiple iterations, including a trio version for violin, cello and piano and another duet for flute and piano. In January 1918, she arranged it for full orchestra. It was to be her last work; she died on March 15. Each of the versions has its own idiosyncrasies; she never intended for one to be merely an arrangement of another, but wanted each to stand on its own.

Much of her work deals with themes of grief and loss, but *D'un matin de printemps* has a fresh, charming character, belying its creator's state. It shows the influence of Claude Debussy, the French impressionist composer, as well as Gabriel Fauré, who was not only one of Lili's teachers but also a close family friend. The orchestral version of the piece received its premiere almost exactly three years after her death, on March 13, 1921, at the Paris Conservatory.

## THE MUSIC

Like Debussy, Boulanger is strikingly colorful in her use of the woodwinds of the orchestra. A solo flute, in its breathy low range, introduces the theme against a tonally ambiguous background of strings and celeste. The melody is passed around the orchestra to different instruments. Multiple changes in harmony, time signature and mood display the ever-shifting nature of spring. Underneath the light surface, darker undercurrents can be heard, perhaps more indicative of the composer's battle with illness. Near the end of the piece, the strings lead several upward crescendos, with the violins restating the theme in a high register. A dramatic trumpet trill leads to a downward glissando on the harp and a strong last chord from the orchestra. **AJH**

*Program notes by Eric T. Williams (ETW) and A.J. Harbison (AJH).*



## LILI BOULANGER (1893-1918)

### Known for:

*Faust et Hélène* (1913)

*Pie Jesu* (1918)

*D'un matin de printemps* (1918)

- There is a profound sense of loss when considering the all-too-brief life of Lili Boulanger. The younger sister of renowned organist and teacher Nadia Boulanger (who taught some of the 20th century's most prominent composers), both benefitted from growing up in a Parisian musical family. Their father, Ernest Boulanger, was a composer who had won the Prix de Rome and their mother, Raïssa Mischetzky, was a noted singer. Lili's talent manifested early; composer and family friend Gabriel Fauré observed that she had perfect pitch when she was two years old. Unfortunately, her health was always precarious as she contended with Crohn's disease, suffering chronic and severe symptoms that eventually led to her death.
- As a very young child, Lili accompanied Nadia to classes at the Paris Conservatory, soaking up the heady musical environment. Tutored at home because of her frail health, her education was somewhat unconventional but broad; she could play four instruments and speak three languages. Despite the limitations caused by her physical infirmity, Lili advanced rapidly, eventually taking a composition class at the Conservatory.
- Nadia competed unsuccessfully for the prestigious Prix de Rome, only winning Second Prize in 1908 and not even making the final round in 1909. She foreswore additional attempts so Lili took up the gauntlet, preparing assiduously for the rigors of the competition. She entered the contest in 1912 but ill health forced her to withdraw. Still, her compositions began to draw public attention and she enjoyed a degree of local renown.
- Fortunately, Lili's health was not a factor in the 1913 competition and her final round cantata, *Faust et Hélène*, revealed superb levels of imagination and craft. The Academie des Beaux-Arts voted overwhelmingly to award Lili the Grand Prize. The 19-year-old composer was the first woman to win the Grand Prize in the 115-year history of the competition and her victory caused a huge stir in Paris as well as the international press.
- Yet again, weakened health delayed Lili's departure for Rome as Grand Prize winner. Once there, she sought to take in the area's culture but the outbreak of World War I put all plans on hold and Lili returned to Paris where she and Nadia worked to help French musicians serving in the military. Lili returned to Rome but she suffered a severe relapse and went back to Paris with a dire diagnosis of only a year or two left to live.
- Despite the downward spiral of her health, Lili continued to compose but eventually she was unable even to write. She dictated her last composition, *Pie Jesu*, to Nadia on her deathbed as German artillery bombarded Paris. She died on March 15, 1918, at the age of 24. **ETW**

## JEAN SIBELIUS

### Violin Concerto in D Minor, op. 47 (1904-05)

35 minutes

Solo violin, 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, timpani and strings.

## THE STORY

Jean Sibelius' Violin Concerto, the only concerto he wrote for any instrument, had a rather turbulent beginning. The composer originally dedicated the piece to German violinist Willy Burmester, who planned to premiere it in Berlin. Sibelius, however, scheduled the premiere for a performance in Helsinki, and Burmester was not available to travel to Finland. Sibelius chose Victor Nováček instead, who was a noted violin teacher but had no reputation as a performer. The score was barely finished in time, and Nováček, who would have had trouble playing the fiendishly difficult solo part in the best of circumstances, had very little time to prepare. The premiere in February 1904 was a disaster.

Sibelius withdrew the concerto from its planned publication and made substantial revisions, shortening the piece and mitigating some of its most difficult challenges for the soloist. The premiere of the reworked piece was scheduled for October 1905 in Berlin. Burmester was again unavailable for the date, but Sibelius decided to go ahead with the performance anyway, with the solo part played by the orchestra's concertmaster. Burmester was deeply offended and swore he would never play the concerto. Sibelius eventually rededicated the piece to the Hungarian violin prodigy Ferenc von Vecsey (who was only 12 years old at the time). Despite the success of the Berlin performance and Vecsey's advocacy, the concerto was slow to gain acceptance. Jascha Heifetz made the first recording in 1935, and since that time it has become a staple in the instrument's concerto repertoire.

## THE MUSIC

Michael Steinberg wrote of the opening, "In no violin concerto is the soloist's first note — delicately dissonant and off the beat — more beautiful." The statement of the theme leads to virtuosic passages on the violin, and eventually the introduction of a second theme by forceful strings. The violin is silent during the orchestra's exposition of the second theme, but enters with a leap spanning the instrument's range to begin the cadenza, a virtuosic display for the soloist alone. Typically a cadenza is a showy diversion near the end of the first movement, but in Sibelius' concerto the cadenza serves as the development section and is integral to the movement's structure.

The second movement features a theme that is one of the most beautiful melodies Sibelius ever wrote. When the orchestra takes up the theme toward the end, the violin plays soft but very difficult embellishments and figurations above, below and around it.

The third movement is perhaps most famous for Donald Tovey's description of it as "a polonaise for polar bears." He meant it in the best way, though, adding, "I have not met with a more original, a more masterly, and a more exhilarating work than the Sibelius violin concerto." Violin pyrotechnics are in no short supply, with a fast, syncopated melody, blistering scales and arpeggios and plenty of double- and triple-stops (playing on two or three strings at once). The virtuosity becomes more and more frenzied (and more and more impressive) right up to the concerto's triumphant finish. *AJH*



## JEAN SIBELIUS (1865-1957)

Known for:

*Finlandia* (1899)

Symphony No. 2 (1901)

Violin Concerto (1904)

- Few composers are as closely identified with their homeland as Finnish composer Jean Sibelius. Finland had long been subject to Swedish rule before being ceded to Russia in the 19th century. Thus, it should not be surprising that Sibelius grew up in a Swedish-speaking family and didn't learn Finnish until his later school years. It was at that point he discovered the *Kalevala*, the Finnish national epic, which would provide him with tremendous compositional inspiration over the years. At the age of 14, he began studying violin with a local bandmaster but subsequently entered the University of Helsinki to study law. Following a long tradition of composers abandoning legal studies in favor of music, Sibelius launched headlong into serious violin studies, spending two years in the cosmopolitan atmosphere of Berlin and Vienna. Influenced greatly by the music of Beethoven, Wagner, Richard Strauss and Bruckner, he returned to Finland in 1891 and began to enjoy success with early compositions. He reluctantly gave up his aspiration to be a concert violinist, having started his studies so late.
- In 1892, Sibelius and Aino Järnefelt married; the couple was together 65 years despite a number of relationship difficulties. They had six daughters, one of whom died from typhoid as a toddler. Despite his rising star, Sibelius did not lead a placid life, often going on alcoholic binges and spending beyond his means as he disappeared for days on end.
- Teaching duties at the Helsinki Music Institute (now the Sibelius Academy) limited his time for composing so he welcomed a grant in 1898 that allowed him to focus on composition. His First Symphony premiered in 1899, its overt patriotic spirit stoking nationalist sentiment and making Sibelius a Finnish hero in the midst of Russian subjugation. Other works such as *Finlandia* and *The Swan of Tuonela* burnished his reputation among the Finnish people and began enhancing his status internationally.
- In 1904, the Sibeliuses built a new home near Lake Tuusula, north of Helsinki, which would be their refuge for the rest of their lives. Sibelius began facing a number of health concerns, including surgery for throat cancer. An increasingly pronounced hand tremor interfered with composition and a spate of headaches was also problematic. He became convinced of his early death but the scare also served to renew his musical endeavors and several major works resulted.
- By the 1920s, Sibelius was composing relatively little music; his Seventh Symphony (1924), incidental music for *The Tempest* (1925), and *Tapiola* (1926) essentially served as final bookends on his career. During the last 30 years of his life, he enjoyed the countryside and many visitors but wrote nothing of consequence. He struggled for years composing an eighth symphony but according to various sources, he burned the manuscript and all drafts. He settled in to enjoy a lengthy retirement, dying at the age of 91. *ETW*



**AUGUSTIN HADELICH, VIOLIN**

Augustin Hadelich is one of the great violinists of our time. From Bach to Brahms, from Bartók to Adès, he has mastered a wide-ranging and adventurous repertoire. Named Musical America’s 2018 Instrumentalist of the Year, he is consistently cited worldwide for his phenomenal technique, soulful approach, and insightful interpretations.

Hadelich’s 2020/21 season culminated in performances of the Brahms Violin Concerto with the San Francisco Symphony conducted by Esa-Pekka Salonen. Starting off the 2021/22 season was his debut with the Berlin Philharmonic, playing Prokofiev’s Violin Concerto No. 2 with Gustavo

Gimeno on the podium. Shortly thereafter, he performed with the South Netherlands Symphony Orchestra the premiere of a new violin concerto written for him by Irish composer Donnacha Dennehy.

Augustin Hadelich has appeared with every major orchestra in North America, including the Boston Symphony, Chicago Symphony, Cleveland Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic, New York Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra and San Francisco Symphony. His worldwide presence has been rapidly rising, with recent appearances with the Bavarian Radio Orchestra/ Munich, Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, Hamburg Elbphilharmonie, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, London Philharmonic, Danish National Symphony, Orquesta Nacional de España, Oslo Philharmonic, São Paulo Symphony, the radio orchestras of Finland, Frankfurt, Saarbrücken, Stuttgart, and Cologne, and the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields. Engagements in the Far East include the Hong Kong Philharmonic, Seoul Philharmonic, Singapore Symphony and NHK Symphony (Tokyo), plus a tour with the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra.

In recognition of his artistry, Hadelich won the 2016 Grammy® Award for Best Classical Instrumental Solo for his recording of Henri Dutilleux’s *L’arbre des songes* violin concerto with the Seattle Symphony under Ludovic Morlot. A Warner Classics Artist, his most recent release is a double CD of the six solo sonatas and partitas of Johann Sebastian Bach. Other recordings for Warner Classics include Paganini’s 24 Caprices (2018); the Brahms and Ligeti violin concertos with the Norwegian Radio Orchestra under Miguel Harth-Bedoya (2019); and “Bohemian Tales,” including the Dvořák Violin Concerto with the Bavarian Radio Orchestra conducted by Jakub Hrůša (2020).

Born in Italy, the son of German parents, Augustin Hadelich is now an American citizen. He holds an Artist Diploma from the Juilliard School, where he was a student of Joel Smirnoff. After winning the Gold Medal at the 2006 International Violin Competition of Indianapolis, concerto and recital appearances on many of the world’s top stages quickly followed. He has recently been appointed to the violin faculty at Yale University.

Augustin Hadelich plays the 1744 *Leduc, ex-Szerjnyg* violin by Giuseppe Guarneri del Gesù, generously loaned by a patron through the Tarisio Trust.



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## PIOTR ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY

### Suite from *The Sleeping Beauty* (1889)

52 minutes

*Piccolo, 2 flutes, 2 oboes, English horn, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 2 cornets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, bass drum, cymbals, glockenspiel, snare drum, tam-tam, tambourine, triangle, harp and strings.*

## THE STORY

It had been 12 years since Tchaikovsky had composed a ballet — *Swan Lake* — before he returned to the genre with *The Sleeping Beauty*. Ivan Vsevolozhsky, the Director of Imperial Theatres for St. Petersburg, had been in contact with Tchaikovsky in 1885 about composing an opera and he suggested a ballet in 1886 but nothing happened until 1888 when he commissioned *The Sleeping Beauty* based on a fairy tale from a 1697 collection by Charles Perrault. Tchaikovsky was enthusiastic about the wildly fantastic scenario Vsevolozhsky had concocted which was an agglomeration of Perrault’s tale, elements from a version by the Brothers Grimm, and a mixed assortment of characters from other stories, including Little Red Riding Hood, Cinderella and Tom Thumb.

Beginning in November 1888, Tchaikovsky met numerous times with choreographer Marius Petipa to go over detailed plans for the ballet. He was obsessed with the ballet and worked intensively in order to have the piece ready by the winter season. He estimated it took him “only about 40 days” to complete a rehearsal score, commenting “I admit that I love to work within a time limit, I love the excitement, the urgency. And this does not reflect at all on the quality of my works. *The Sleeping Beauty* may be the best of all my compositions, and yet I wrote it improbably quickly.”

The premiere took place at the Imperial Mariinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg on January 15, 1890. The ballet was warmly received, in contrast to *Swan Lake*, and Tchaikovsky’s thoughts turned almost immediately to excerpting a concert suite. He was uncertain what numbers to include but adamant about the musical integrity: “It is not necessary to change a single note. What goes for a symphony is the same for a ballet! Of course the Waltz will go in, but there are many other numbers suitable for concert performance.” He deferred selection to his friend, conductor Alexander Siloti, but a suite was not published until 1899, six years after Tchaikovsky’s death.

## THE MUSIC

With its seeming inexhaustible supply of beautiful melodies, Tchaikovsky’s music for *The Sleeping Beauty* ballet clocks in at nearly four hours. The 1899 concert suite included only five numbers so Maestro Ryan Bancroft has crafted his own suite encompassing much of the ballet.

The Introduction is heroic and joyous, befitting a grand celebration for the christening of Princess Aurora and setting the stage for the music to come. Marche de salon depicts the entrance of King Florestan and his royal court with suitably regal sounds. The prologue’s Final picks up the story with the arrival of Carabosse, the Fairy of Darkness, and her curse on Princess Aurora, diminished by the Lilac Fairy’s intercession. Tchaikovsky compactly conveys the drama in music that mirrors the rapid unfolding of the tale.

The famous Waltz from Act I is brilliantly festive, much in keeping with a 16th birthday celebration for a princess. The spirited music glitters with youthful exuberance. The Grand pas d’action “Rose” or “Rose Adagio” is the music when the four suitors for Princess Aurora each hand her a rose and she dances with them to decide whom she wishes to marry. The dancing is recapped in a Grand pas d’action Coda with Aurora enchanting the assemblage. The Final of Act I vividly portrays Princess Aurora’s collapse after pricking her finger on the

spindle, fulfilling Carabosse’s evil curse, but also the Lilac Fairy’s loving intervention as all are placed in a deep sleep. Tchaikovsky evokes these contrasting moods effortlessly.

The En’tracte to Act II takes you on a royal hunt with Prince Desiré and his companions. It’s a high-spirited adventure and while some are searching for game, others prefer playing games! Colin-maillard, perhaps better known as blind man’s buff, amuses the party. In the Panorama, the Lilac Fairy leads Prince Desiré to the enchanted palace where Princess Aurora lies sleeping. They float along, gliding with the gentle music. In the Scène du château de sommeil, Prince Desiré arrives at the castle and sees everyone in a deep slumber; he dashes back and forth, confused. Faint echoes swirl around him and as he sees Princess Aurora, the Lilac Fairy encourages him to think what might awaken her. He kisses the sleeping beauty and in the Scène et final — Le réveil d’Aurore, she and everyone in the palace are restored as the curse is broken. **ETW**

## THE SLEEPING BEAUTY SYNOPSIS

### PROLOGUE: THE CHRISTENING

Once upon a time, a princess named Aurora is born. The king and queen arrange a grand celebration for her christening. At the celebration, the fairies of the kingdom each bestow their gifts on the princess but Carabosse, the Fairy of Darkness, had not been invited and she arrives in a blaze of fury at being omitted. Before the Lilac Fairy can bestow her gift, Carabosse issues a curse: Princess Aurora will prick her finger on a spindle and die. The Lilac Fairy cannot remove this curse but she places a counter spell: the princess will fall into a deep sleep instead of dying. After 100 years, she can be awakened by a kiss from a prince who truly loves her, breaking the spell. The enraged Carabosse disappears. The king thanks the Lilac Fairy and henceforth banishes all spindles and sharp objects from the kingdom.

### ACT I: THE SPELL

The kingdom is celebrating Princess Aurora’s 16th birthday. The king and queen present four suitors to their daughter and each offers her a rose from their respective kingdoms. At the party’s height, an old woman approaches the princess and presents a unique gift in a floral bouquet: a spindle. Aurora is delighted at the strange object and plays with it, pricking her finger. She collapses and the old woman triumphantly reveals herself as Carabosse, the Fairy of Darkness. She laughs wickedly and disappears. The Lilac Fairy returns and weaves her spell, putting all in a deep sleep as a forest magically covers the palace.

### ACT II: THE VISION

A century has passed. Prince Desiré is out hunting with his courtiers but he soon leaves the group, engrossed in his favorite book of fairy tales. He is melancholy, wishing for love but fearful that he will never find it. The Lilac Fairy suddenly appears and shows him an image of the sleeping Princess Aurora. The woodland nymphs call forth Aurora’s spirit to dance for the prince. He is smitten and begs the Lilac Fairy to take him to the princess. She leads him to the hidden palace and the prince awakens Aurora with a kiss. They fall in love instantly and Aurora offers Desiré a rose. The spell is broken and the whole court awakens.

### ACT III: THE WEDDING

The wedding of Princess Aurora and Prince Desiré is a jubilant occasion. The king and queen emulate Louis XIV, the Sun King of France, by giving a stunning masked ball. Prince Desiré’s companions attend, costumed as fairytale characters. The fairies bring Princess Aurora extravagant wedding gifts of gold, silver, sapphire, and diamond. The Lilac Fairy blesses the marriage to ensure that everyone will live happily ever after. **ETW**



### PIOTR ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY (1840-1893)

#### Known for:

*The Nutcracker* (1892)

*1812 Overture* (1880)

*Swan Lake* (1876)

*Symphony No. 6, "Pathétique"* (1893)

- Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky was born in Votkinsk, Russia, about 700 miles east of Moscow and 1,200 miles east of St. Petersburg. His father was an engineer and manager of an ironworks; his mother was the descendant of French emigrés. An adept pupil, Tchaikovsky began piano lessons at age 5 and was fluent in French and German by age 6.
- For reasons of practicality Tchaikovsky's parents decided to prepare him for a civil service career. At age 10 he was sent away to boarding school and two years later was admitted to the Imperial School of Jurisprudence in St. Petersburg. All told, he spent nine years studying law, economics, philosophy and finance.
- Tchaikovsky's mother died of cholera in 1854 and he was devastated at the loss. Shortly thereafter he wrote a waltz in her memory, one of his earliest efforts at composition.
- Upon graduation at age 19, Tchaikovsky entered civil service and rapidly advanced. The siren call of music could not be ignored, however, and he began taking music classes in 1861. He resigned from his clerkship at the Ministry of Justice and entered the new St. Petersburg Conservatory in 1862. Following his graduation in 1865, Tchaikovsky embarked on a teaching career at the Moscow Conservatory.
- Dealing with societal rejection of his sexual orientation, Tchaikovsky sought acceptance by marrying 28-year-old Antonina Milyukova, one of his former conservatory students. It was completely disastrous and a nervous breakdown ensued. Weeks later, he fled the marriage and went abroad, writing his brother Anatoly, "Only now, especially after the tale of my marriage, have I finally begun to understand that there is nothing more fruitless than not wanting to be that which I am by nature."
- Tchaikovsky entered a most unusual relationship with Nadezhda von Meck, the wealthy widow of a railway tycoon. She became interested in Tchaikovsky's music and agreed to provide him an annual stipend of 6,000 rubles. This support allowed Tchaikovsky to quit teaching and devote all of his time to composition. The two agreed never to meet but corresponded extensively, exchanging more than 1,000 letters over the course of 14 years, constituting a rich historical record. Facing financial ruin, von Meck ended her support of Tchaikovsky late in 1890. He was extremely angry over the rejection and anguished over the cessation of their correspondence.
- Tchaikovsky began conducting more frequently and even made a triumphant appearance conducting his Coronation March at the dedication of New York's Carnegie Hall in 1891. In October 1893, he conducted the premiere of his Sixth Symphony, "Pathétique", to a lukewarm response. He fell ill a few days later and died, aged 53, never knowing the eventual brilliant success of the work. His death has been attributed to cholera contracted from drinking contaminated water, but persistent rumor over the years has insinuated suicide. The question is unlikely ever to be answered definitively. *ETW*



### RYAN BANCROFT, GUEST CONDUCTOR

Ryan Bancroft grew up in Los Angeles and first came to international attention in April 2018 when he won both First Prize and Audience Prize at the prestigious Malko Competition for Young Conductors in Copenhagen. In September 2019 it was announced that Bancroft had been appointed principal conductor of the BBC National Orchestra of Wales. This role began in the 2020/21 season. Following his first visit to work with the Tapiola Sinfonietta in Finland, Bancroft was invited to become their Artist in Association starting with the 2021/22 season.

Since winning the Malko Competition, Bancroft has made debuts with a number of international orchestras including the BBC Symphony, Royal Stockholm Philharmonic, Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra, Danish National Symphony, Rotterdam Philharmonic, RAI Torino and Norwegian National Opera orchestras. In North America he has been invited by the Toronto Symphony, Atlanta Symphony, Seattle Symphony and Cincinnati Symphony among others. Forthcoming debuts include those with the City of Birmingham Symphony, Gothenburg Symphony, Baltimore Symphony, Kansas City Symphony and Iceland Symphony. In 2021, Bancroft was announced as chief conductor designate of the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra.

Bancroft has a passion for contemporary music and has performed with Amsterdam's acclaimed Nieuw Ensemble, assisted Pierre Boulez in a performance of his *Sur Incises* in Los Angeles, premiered works by Sofia Gubaidulina, John Cage, James Tenney and Anne LeBaron, and has worked closely with improvisers such as Wadada Leo Smith and Charlie Haden. In the 2021/22 season he will make his debut with the Ensemble Intercontemporain in Paris.

Bancroft studied trumpet at the California Institute of the Arts, alongside additional studies in harp, flute, cello and Ghanaian music and dance. He went on to receive a master's degree in orchestral conducting from the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. While studying in Scotland he played trumpet with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra on many occasions. He continued his conducting studies in the Netherlands and is a graduate of the prestigious Nationale Master Orkestdirectie run jointly by the Conservatorium van Amsterdam and the Royal Conservatoire of The Hague. As a student, his main mentors were Edward Carroll, Kenneth Montgomery, Ed Spanjaard and Jac van Steen.