



KANSAS CITY
SYMPHONY



**JEFFREY KAHANE PLAYS
BEETHOVEN'S
FOURTH PIANO CONCERTO**

APRIL 19-21, 2024
HELZBERG HALL, KAUFFMAN CENTER
FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

MICHAEL STERN, MUSIC DIRECTOR
AND CONDUCTOR
JEFFREY KAHANE, PIANO

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PROGRAM

JEFFREY KAHANE PLAYS BEETHOVEN'S FOURTH PIANO CONCERTO

Friday and Saturday, April 19-20, 2024 at 8 p.m.
Sunday, April 21, 2024 at 2 p.m.
Helzberg Hall, Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts

MICHAEL STERN, CONDUCTOR
JEFFREY KAHANE, PIANO

RALPH VAUGHAN WILLIAMS

Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN

Concerto No. 4 in G Major for Piano
and Orchestra, op. 58
I. Allegro moderato
II. Andante con moto
III. Rondo: Vivace
Jeffrey Kahane, *piano*

INTERMISSION

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

Serenade No. 10 in B-flat Major,
K. 370a (361), "Gran Partita"
I. Largo — Allegro Molto
II. Menuetto
III. Adagio
IV. Menuetto: Allegretto
V. Romanze: Adagio —
Allegretto — Adagio
VI. Thema mit Variationen
VII. Rondo: Allegro molto

ABOUT MICHAEL STERN



MICHAEL STERN, MUSIC DIRECTOR

Michael Stern's celebrated 19-year tenure as music director of the Kansas City Symphony is remarkable for the orchestra's artistic ascent, organizational development and stability, and the extraordinary growth of its varied audiences. With a determined focus on impeccable musicianship and creative programming, Stern and the orchestra have partnered with Grammy® Award-winning Reference Recordings for an ongoing series of highly praised CDs.

Stern is also music director of the National Repertory Orchestra, a summer music festival in Breckenridge, Colorado, as well as the newly rebranded Orchestra Lumos, formerly the Stamford (CT) Symphony. He was recently named artistic advisor of the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra, one of Canada's foremost orchestral ensembles, and following a 22-year tenure as founding artistic director of Iris Orchestra in Germantown, Tennessee, he now serves the newly reimagined Iris Collective as artistic advisor.

Stern has led orchestras throughout Europe and Asia, including the Budapest and Vienna radio symphonies, the Helsinki, Israel, London, Moscow and Royal Stockholm philharmonics, London Symphony, National Symphony of Taiwan, Orchestre de Paris and Tokyo's NHK Symphony, 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 symphonies, the Cleveland and Philadelphia orchestras and the New York Philharmonic. He has been a regular guest at the Aspen Music Festival and School, where he also worked with students in the American Academy of Conducting at Aspen.

Stern has also held conducting positions with Germany's Saarbrücken Radio Symphony Orchestra as well as France's Orchestre National de Lyon and Orchestre National de Lille.

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 also 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.

ABOUT JEFFREY KAHANE

JEFFREY KAHANE, PIANO

Equally at home at the piano or on the podium, Jeffrey Kahane is recognized around the world for his mastery of a diverse repertoire ranging from Bach and Mozart to the music of our time. He has appeared as soloist with major orchestras such as the New York Philharmonic, Cleveland Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra and the Chicago and San Francisco symphonies among many others and is also a popular artist at all of the major U.S. summer festivals, including Aspen, Blossom, Caramoor and Ravinia.



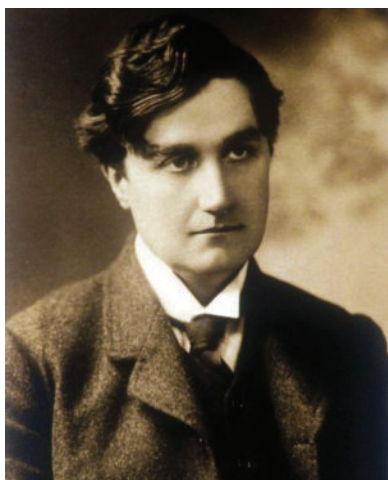
Since making his Carnegie Hall debut in 1983, Kahane has given recitals in many of the nation's major music centers. He made his conducting debut at the Oregon Bach Festival in 1988. Since then, he has guest conducted many of the major U.S. orchestras including the New York and Los Angeles philharmonics, Philadelphia and Cleveland orchestras, and the Chicago, Detroit, St. Louis, Baltimore, Indianapolis and New World symphonies among others. Kahane served as music director of the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra for twenty years and is now the ensemble's conductor laureate. He also served for five years as the music director of the Colorado Symphony and for ten seasons was music director of the Santa Rosa Symphony, where he is now conductor laureate. In August 2016, he was appointed music director of the Sarasota Music Festival.

Recent and upcoming engagements include dual soloist/conducting programs with the New York Philharmonic as well as with the Houston, Indianapolis, Vancouver, Milwaukee, Colorado, and San Diego symphonies; concerto appearances with the Toronto, Cincinnati, New World, New Jersey, Oregon, Kansas City and Utah symphonies; and appearances at the Aspen, Britt, Oregon Bach and Tippet Rise festivals as well as with the Chicago Symphony at Ravinia. During the 2021/22 season, Kahane and the Kansas City Symphony performed the world premiere of a new concerto titled *Heirloom*, written for him by his son, Gabriel Kahane.

A native of Los Angeles and a graduate of the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, Kahane's early piano studies were with Howard Weisel and Jakob Gimpel. First prize winner at the 1983 Rubinstein Competition and a finalist at the 1981 Van Cliburn Competition, he was also the recipient of a 1983 Avery Fisher Career Grant. An avid linguist who reads widely in a number of ancient and modern languages, Kahane received a master's degree in classics from the University of Colorado at Boulder in 2011. He is currently a Professor of Keyboard Studies at the University of Southern California Thornton School of Music.

Kahane resides in Los Angeles with his wife, Martha, a clinical psychologist. They have two children — Gabriel, a composer, pianist and singer/songwriter, and Annie, a dancer and poet.

PROGRAM NOTES



RALPH VAUGHAN WILLIAMS (1872-1958)

Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis (1910, rev. 1913, 1919)
15 minutes

Solo string quartet and double string orchestra.

THE STORY

At the turn of the 20th century, English musicians and audiences were busily rediscovering their heritage. Works by Henry Purcell, William Byrd, Thomas Morley and others were heard again, sometimes after centuries of neglect. It was in that milieu that 32-year-old Ralph Vaughan Williams was engaged as editor of a new

hymnal in 1904. The work was expected to take two months; it took two years before *The English Hymnal* was published in 1906. During that time, Vaughan Williams considered reams of tunes, many from Tudor composers, including Thomas Tallis (1505?-1585).

Tallis served as a composer for Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary I and Elizabeth I, and despite remaining a staunch Roman Catholic, managed to avoid religious controversy. Elizabeth I even granted Tallis and William Byrd an exclusive 21-year patent and monopoly on printing part music, including music manuscript paper. In 1567, Tallis contributed nine melodies to a collection compiled by Archbishop Matthew Parker and it is the third of those tunes that Vaughan Williams turned to when presented with a commission to write a work for the Three Choirs Festival at Gloucester Cathedral in 1910. Cast in Phrygian mode (similar to minor but with a flattened second scale step), the tune offered Vaughan Williams the perfect opportunity for episodic treatment, also borrowing the venerable fantasia format from his musical forebears. Perhaps inspired by his relatively brief study with Maurice Ravel in 1908, Vaughan Williams expanded the range of string textures and colors by using a double string orchestra. Also, in a nod to antiphonal works of the past and the potential for that effect in Gloucester Cathedral, Vaughan Williams included a solo string quartet, often placed separately from the main ensemble to create a musical halo.

The work was completed in June 1910 and Vaughan Williams conducted the London Symphony at the premiere on September 6, 1910. In his review of the concert for *The Times*, critic J. A. Fuller Maitland noted:

Throughout its course one is never quite sure whether one is listening to something very old or very new ... But that is just what makes this *Fantasia* so delightful to listen to; it cannot be assigned to a time or a school, but it is full of the visions which have haunted the seers of all times.

PROGRAM NOTES

Vaughan Williams revised the piece twice, in 1913 and 1919, trimming it slightly, bringing it to its present form. Audiences quickly embraced the work's hauntingly beautiful sounds and over time, a plethora of recordings sought to capture its elusive acoustic magic.

THE MUSIC

The opening notes gently shimmer, inviting you to leave the cares of your day and enter a magnificent space where time is suspended and sound reverberates off chiseled stone. The music ebbs and flows as waves of sound crest before receding into the distance. A small ensemble responds with prayerful meditation to entreaties from the larger group. A solo viola offers a chant, soon taken up by a solo violin, their lines intertwining, inviting others to join. The melodious conversation builds, reaching a stunning climax. The energy gradually subsides and from this momentary calm, the solo violin and viola sing a duet of exquisite beauty. The full ensemble responds with a loving benediction.

— *Eric T. Williams*

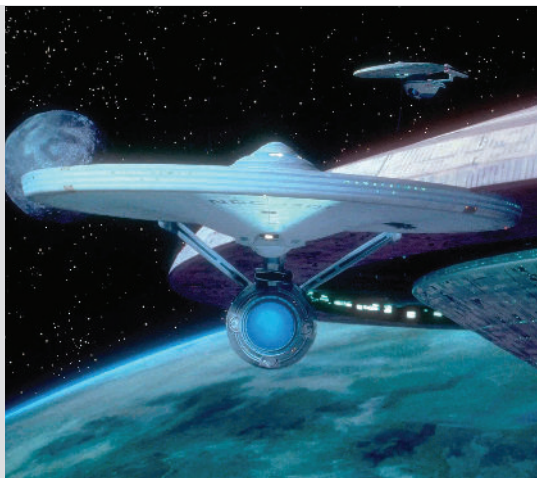
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PROGRAM NOTES



LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN

Concerto No. 4 in G Major for Piano and Orchestra, op. 58
(1806)

34 minutes

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

THE STORY

During the “middle period” of Beethoven’s career, from about 1802 to 1812, the composer and pianist had multiple income streams, including performer fees, patronage from wealthy friends, commissions, and royalties from performances and publication of

his compositions. Despite this, he was never comfortable financially, and sometimes took his efforts to make money to extremes. One of these extremes was the now-infamous benefit concert (he was the beneficiary) he organized at the Theater an der Wien on December 22, 1808. The program consisted entirely of his works:

- Symphony No. 6 (public premiere)
- “Ah! Perfido!” (concert aria for soprano solo and orchestra)
- “Gloria” from the Mass in C Major
- Piano Concerto No. 4 (public premiere)
- (Intermission)
- Symphony No. 5 (public premiere)
- “Sanctus” from the Mass in C Major
- Improvised fantasia for solo piano
- *Choral Fantasy* for piano soloist, vocal soloists, chorus and orchestra (public premiere)

The concert began at 6:30 p.m. and lasted for four (some say four and a half) hours. There was no heating in the concert hall and it was bitterly cold. The orchestra was sorely underprepared; by some accounts, the musicians refused to rehearse with Beethoven as the conductor, due to his prickly personality. Even in the best of circumstances, it would have been difficult to take in, as one contemporary reviewer wrote: “To judge all these pieces after only one hearing, especially considering the language of Beethoven’s works, in that so many were performed one after the other, and that most of them are so grand and long, is downright impossible.”

Beethoven was the piano soloist for the concert, including for the premiere of his Fourth Piano Concerto. It was to be his last public performance as a pianist with orchestra, due to his increasing deafness. The concerto was hailed as “the most admirable, singular, artistic and complex Beethoven concerto ever” by *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, a leading music journal of the time. But, perhaps lost in the mass of music from the concert, it was not performed again until 1836, when it was revived by Felix Mendelssohn.

PROGRAM NOTES

THE MUSIC

The concerto's opening is unusual in several ways. The piano starts, rather than the orchestra, with a subdued theme played quietly instead of the bombastic beginnings of many concertos. Then the orchestra echoes the theme, but in B major, which has little in common with the G major of the piano's phrase. After a few bars with shifting tonality, however, the orchestra returns to G and the movement proper begins. This first movement is longer than the other two movements combined, and much of it is built on the same da-da-da-dum rhythm that begins the Fifth Symphony (which Beethoven was composing at the same time). This rhythm, heroic and even brash in the symphony, takes on a gentle, lyrical character in the concerto, which is often called the most poetic of the five Beethoven wrote.

The second movement, in E minor, was described colorfully by Beethoven's 1859 biographer A.B. Marx as the Greek myth of Orpheus, the supernaturally gifted musician (represented by the piano), taming the Furies, the goddesses of vengeance (represented by the strings), at the gates of Hades. The piano's quiet, unadorned passages gradually win over the strings' furious outbursts, which grow softer and gentler until the final measures, when only the cellos and basses mutter an echo of their first music — to this writer, perhaps the sound of Cerberus, Hades' three-headed guard dog, giving a final low growl as he lays down at Orpheus' feet.

The third movement follows the second without a pause. The pianistic fireworks that have mostly been restrained in the first two movements are very much in evidence here — though even here they are often played quietly, shimmering and sparkling rather than loud and flashy. The movement is in the form of a rondo: listen for several sections that come back multiple times. A series of piano trills leads out of the soloist's cadenza; moments later, another series of trills commences the final dash to the end, through several passages across the full dynamic spectrum to the decisive cadence.

— *AJ Harbison*

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PROGRAM NOTES

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

Serenade No. 10 in B-flat Major, K. 370a (361), “Gran Partita”
(1781-84)

44 minutes

2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 basset horns, 2 bassoons, 4 horns and double bass.

THE STORY

There is much we don't know about Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's Serenade No. 10. We don't know exactly when it was written, why Mozart chose this instrumentation, who added the nickname “Gran Partita” (roughly translated as “grand suite”) to the manuscript, and if it was ever performed in its entirety during Mozart's lifetime. What we do know is that it richly displays Mozart's melodic genius and inventiveness.



During the latter part of the 18th century, composers — great and lesser alike — wrote a substantial number of works for various combinations of instruments, all intended for casual entertainment and titled generically as divertimentos, serenades, cassations or nocturnes. Often containing four to seven movements in different dance forms, these works were a staple in the musical diet of the era and Mozart certainly wrote his share.

Ever enthusiastic about music, Habsburg Emperor Joseph II formed a wind band in 1782 for his entertainment, led by renowned clarinetist Anton Stadler who was Mozart's friend. The ensemble, dubbed *harmonie*, consisted of pairs of oboes, clarinets, bassoons and horns. *Harmoniemusik* became all the rage in Vienna and Mozart sought royal favor — and to meet the sudden widespread aristocratic demand — by composing music for wind octet.

Whether by grand design or flight of fancy, the “Gran Partita” was written during this timeframe. An analysis of the paper and ink used for the serenade suggests that it was written between 1781 and February 1784 when he began keeping a thematic catalog of his new compositions. Mozart enlarged the standard ensemble by adding another pair of horns, two basset horns (a lower-pitched relative of the clarinet) and a double bass. This enhanced sonority in the middle and lower registers is a key feature of the piece, one that Mozart exploits most skillfully.

We know of only one performance of four movements excerpted from the “Gran Partita” during Mozart's lifetime. A Viennese newspaper advertisement in March 1784 gave notice of the concert:

Herr Stadler, senior, in actual service of His Majesty the Emperor, will hold a musical concert for his benefit at the Imperial and Royal National Court Theatre, at which will be given, among other well-chosen pieces, a great wind piece of a rare and special type composed by Herr Mozart.

Critic Johann Friedrich Schink offered a rave review, writing, “Oh, what an effect it made — glorious and grand, excellent and sublime.”

PROGRAM NOTES

THE MUSIC

Mozart's craftsmanship is admirable. Whether writing for the entire ensemble, myriad smaller groupings or solo instruments, he moves adroitly through the realm of possibilities, shaping timbres and textures to suit his melodic inspiration.

I. Largo — Allegro molto

The slow introduction is regal and sonorous. Once the formalities have been observed, the music becomes far more light-hearted, almost irrepressibly cheerful. Mozart's thematic development is playful and he extends the movement with a brief coda.

II. Menuetto

Minuets, elegantly set in triple meter, had been popular for more than a century when Mozart penned this lovely dance. The melody is graceful and inviting, leading to a contrasting trio section, so named because 17th-century practice was to score it for three instruments. In this case, Mozart writes for the clarinets and basset horns, creating a silken texture from which certain emphasized notes suddenly glisten. The minuet returns but where the movement might typically end, Mozart adds another contrasting trio section, this time for the entire ensemble. His audience would have been quite familiar with the expected structure, the second trio providing a nice surprise. Running notes push the music along before the minuet returns conclusively.

III. Adagio

While an underlying pulse moves forward inexorably, overarching lines soar, gently blooming and then fading, much as clouds float and merge on a lazy summer day. Fans of the 1984 movie "Amadeus" will instantly recognize this music.

IV. Menuetto

After the pastoral adagio, a charming and quite forthright minuet restores a more festive atmosphere. The trio uses the entire ensemble, exploring minor tonality before returning to the sunlight of the minuet. Again, Mozart gives his listeners a pleasant surprise with a second trio section. It is simplicity exemplified — a flowing line accompanied by offbeats and sustained tones. The minuet concludes the movement most agreeably.

V. Romance

Sustained lines and a slow tempo create an unhurried atmosphere filled with abundant beauty. Contrast is the order of the day, though, so Mozart launches into a vigorous new section with a particularly athletic bassoon line (later joined by the double bass) underpinning an energetic C minor melody. Unsurprisingly, the opening section returns to finish this movement.

VI. Theme and Variations

A pleasant straightforward theme provides Mozart with a suitable basis to venture forth into six imaginative variations. Just as a chef might vary spices or sauces to complement the base ingredient, each variation offers a different flavor, all delicious and quite satisfying.

PROGRAM NOTES

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART *continued*

VII. Finale

Mozart knew his audience would love a rousing finish and this one is sure to please. For many complicated reasons, Turkish styles and aesthetics were in vogue across much of Europe in the latter half of the 18th century, and Mozart seized on their popularity for his opera, *The Abduction from the Seraglio*, as well as the conclusion of the “Gran Partita.” Although lacking Janissary percussion here (triangle, cymbals and bass drum), the exuberant music ably captures the spirit associated with Turkish style.

— Eric T. Williams

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