



OREGON
SYMPHONY
CARLOS KALMAR
MUSIC DIRECTOR

PICTURES AT AN EXHIBITION

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2020, 7:30 PM

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2020, 2 PM

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2020, 7:30 PM

Carlos Kalmar, conductor

Augustin Hadelich, violin

Gabriella Smith Bioluminescence Chaconne

Niccolò Paganini Violin Concerto No. 1 in D Major
Allegro maestoso
Adagio
Rondo: Allegro spiritoso
Augustin Hadelich

INTERMISSION

Missy Mazzoli Sinfonia (for Orbiting Spheres)

**Modest Mussorgsky/
Arr. Ravel** Pictures at an Exhibition
Promenade
Gnomus
Promenade
The Old Castle
Promenade
Tuileries (Dispute Between Children at Play)
Bydlo (Cattle)
Promenade
Ballet of the Chicks in Their Shells
“Samuel” Goldenberg and “Schmuyle”
Limoges – The Market (The Big News)
Catacombs: Roman sepulcher—Cum mortuis in lingua mortua
(With the dead in a dead language)
The Hut on Fowl’s Legs
The Great Gate of Kiev

ARLENE SCHNITZER CONCERT HALL

CONCERT CONVERSATION

Conducted one hour before each performance, the Concert Conversation will feature Music Director Carlos Kalmar, composer Gabriella Smith, and Brandi Parisi, host of All Classical Portland. You can also enjoy the Concert Conversation in the comfort of your own home. Visit orsymphony.org/conversations to watch the video on demand.

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Biography



Augustin Hadelich

Augustin Hadelich last appeared with the Oregon Symphony on September 25, 2017, when he performed Beethoven's Violin Concerto with conductor Carlos Kalmar.

Hadelich is one of the great violinists of our time. Often referred to by colleagues as a “musician’s musician,” he was named *Musical America's* 2018 Instrumentalist of the Year.

Hadelich has appeared with over 25 North American orchestras in the 2019/20 Season, including the symphony orchestras of Boston, Cleveland, New York, Montréal, Cincinnati, Pittsburgh, Minnesota, Houston,

Oregon, Seattle, Toronto, and numerous others. International highlights of the season include performances with the Philharmonia Orchestra (London), NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchestra (Hamburg), Danish National Symphony, Oslo Philharmonic, Finnish Radio Orchestra, and the Hong Kong Philharmonic, to name a few. He is also a frequent guest artist with major orchestras in Asia, South America, Mexico, New Zealand, and Australia.

Hadelich is the winner of a 2016 Grammy Award for his recording of Dutilleux's Violin Concerto, *L'Arbre des songes*, with the Seattle Symphony under Ludovic Morlot (Seattle Symphony MEDIA). Recently signed to Warner Classics, his first release on the label – Paganini's 24 Caprices – was released in January 2018. His second recording for Warner Classics, the Brahms Concerto (with Hadelich's own cadenza) and the Ligeti Concerto (with a cadenza composed by Thomas Adès) followed in 2019.

Born in Italy, the son of German parents, 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, including Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, Chicago's Symphony Hall, the Kennedy Center, Wigmore Hall, London, and the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam. Other distinctions include an Avery Fisher Career Grant (2009), a Borletti-Buitoni Trust Fellowship in the UK (2011), and the inaugural Warner Music Prize (2015), as well as an honorary doctorate from the University of Exeter in the UK (2017).

Hadelich plays the 1723 “Ex-Kiesewetter” Stradivari violin, on loan from Clement and Karen Arrison through the Stradivari Society of Chicago. ●

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Program Notes

GABRIELLA SMITH

b. 1991

Bioluminescence Chaconne

(World premiere)

COMPOSED: 2019

FIRST OREGON SYMPHONY PERFORMANCE

INSTRUMENTATION: 3 flutes (1 doubling piccolo), 3 oboes, 3 clarinets, 3 bassoons, contrabassoon, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 2 trombones, bass trombone, tuba, timpani, bass drum, temple bowl, kick drum, toms, crotales, 5 varied metal objects, and strings

ESTIMATED DURATION: 13 minutes

Composer Gabriella Smith is only 27, but she has already made an international name for herself with her music, hailed by the *Philadelphia Inquirer* as “high-voltage and wildly imaginative.” Clive Paget, writing for *Musical America*, declares Smith

possesses “the coolest, most exciting, most inventive new voice I’ve heard in ages.”

Smith’s music has been performed throughout the U.S. and internationally by eighth blackbird, Bang on a Can All-Stars, the Cabrillo Festival Orchestra, the Nashville Symphony, PRISM Quartet, Aizuri Quartet, and yMusic, among others. Recent highlights include the World premiere of a new work for Roomful of Teeth and Dover Quartet at Bravo! Vail Music Festival, and performances of her Tumblebird Contrails by the Los Angeles Philharmonic, conducted by John Adams.

A native of the Bay Area in California, Smith draws inspiration from nature; this lifelong interest is reflected in the titles of many of her works, including tonight’s piece. Smith uses the natural world as a recurring metaphor, and her specific sound world, drawn from minimalism and aleatoric music, uses extended instrumental techniques to propel familiar musical imagery in completely novel ways.

NICCOLÒ PAGANINI

1782–1840

Violin Concerto No. 1 in D Major, Op. 6

COMPOSED: 1816–18

MOST RECENT OREGON SYMPHONY

PERFORMANCE: October 8, 1991; James DePreist, conductor; Sarah Chang, violin

INSTRUMENTATION: solo violin, 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons (1 doubling contrabassoon), 2 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, timpani, bass drum, cymbals, and strings

ESTIMATED DURATION: 35 minutes

Nineteenth-century Romanticism gave composers the freedom to create music that reflected their individual experiences. This emphasis on personal expression also gave rise to an entirely new type of performer: the superstar virtuoso. Of all the outstanding instrumentalists who

PICTURES AT AN EXHIBITION

emerged in the 19th century, none could match the sheer technical brilliance or the commanding ego of Niccolò Paganini, the first of this new breed.

There were other great violinists before Paganini, but the musical and artistic aesthetics of their time limited their ability for self-expression. Before Paganini, performers, no matter how skilled, played in the service of their music. They were merely the interpreters; it was music that occupied center stage.

From his debut at age 11, Paganini exploded the idea that the performer should take a back seat to the music they played. For more than 30 years, Paganini cultivated a new kind of musician: a superstar with a devoted following who came to hear him play, regardless of repertoire. Everything Paganini did in performance – his penchant for performing all in black, his carefully disheveled hair and clothes, and especially his over-the-top stage mannerisms – was deliberately planned so as to achieve a certain effect: the creation of Paganini the Romantic artist. He was one of the first artists to craft a cult of personality and mystery as a complement to his virtuoso technique.

Today, superstars are common enough in both music and art, and some trade on their charisma to cover up less-than-first-rate skill. Manufactured mystique notwithstanding, Paganini lived up to his own hype. There seemed no limit to his facility on the violin, nothing too difficult or technically unconventional that he could not master. Paganini became known for his left-handed pizzicato notes and a technique he called the “ricochet,” where he bounced the bow quickly across the strings. Most dazzling of all, Paganini executed flawless runs of double-stop harmonics at lightning speed, a skill that left other violinists shaking their heads in admiration.

After Paganini exhausted all the suitably virtuoso works in his repertoire – and after a request for a piece by Berlioz resulted in *Harold in Italy*, which Paganini deemed insufficiently virtuosic

for his style of playing – Paganini began composing music himself as a vehicle to showcase his skills. The Violin Concerto No. 1, originally written in E-flat major, required the soloist to tune their violin up a half step. The higher pitch allowed for a more brilliant tone, but over time, most musicians and orchestras have chosen to perform it in D major, a more natural key for the violin (and easier to keep in tune).

This violin concerto supplies everything a virtuoso needs: plenty of dazzling runs and other lightning-fast tricks, and a clear emphasis on the soloist, with the orchestra providing accompaniment. In the *Adagio*, Paganini gave himself (and subsequent performers) ample opportunity to demonstrate lyricism and refined tone. Paganini wanted to dazzle his audience, but he also wanted to move them. He succeeded with Schubert, who, having heard Paganini in Vienna, described his playing as “the singing of an angel.”

MISSY MAZZOLI

b. 1980

Sinfonia (for Orbiting Spheres)

COMPOSED: 2014, rev. 2016

FIRST OREGON SYMPHONY PERFORMANCE

INSTRUMENTATION: 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons (both doubling harmonica), 2 horns (both doubling harmonica), 2 trumpets (both doubling harmonica), 2 trombones (both doubling harmonica), tuba, boombox, glockenspiel, lion's roar, marimba, melodica, opera gong, snare drum, spring coil, suspended cymbal, vibraphone, piano (doubling synthesizer: organ sound), and strings

ESTIMATED DURATION: 12 minutes

Grammy-nominated composer Missy Mazzoli was recently hailed as “one of the more consistently inventive, surprising composers now working in New York” (*New York Times*), and “Brooklyn’s post-millennial Mozart” (*Time Out New York*). Mazzoli is currently the Mead

Composer-in-Residence at the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and her music has been performed all over the world by the Kronos Quartet, pianist Emanuel Ax, Opera Philadelphia, Scottish Opera, LA Opera, Cincinnati Opera, New York City Opera, Chicago Fringe Opera, the Detroit Symphony, the LA Philharmonic, and the Minnesota Orchestra, among many others. In 2018, Mazzoli made history when she became one of the two first women (along with composer Jeanine Tesori) to be commissioned by the Metropolitan Opera. That year she was also nominated for a Grammy in the category of Best Classical Composition for *Vespers for Violin*, recorded by violinist Olivia De Prato.

Mazzoli writes, “*Sinfonia* (for *Orbiting Spheres*) is music in the shape of a solar system, a collection of rococo loops that twist around each other within a larger orbit. The word ‘sinfonia’ refers to Baroque works for chamber orchestra but also to the old Italian term for a hurdy-gurdy, a medieval stringed instrument with constant, wheezing drones that are cranked out under melodies played on an attached keyboard. It’s a piece that churns and roils, that inches close to the listener only to leap away at breakneck speed, in the process transforming the ensemble turns into a makeshift hurdy-gurdy, flung recklessly into space.” John Adams led the Los Angeles Philharmonic in the premiere on April 14, 2014.

Writing for *San Francisco Classical Voice*, Tysen Dauer reviewed a 2018 performance of *Sinfonia* at the Cabrillo Music Festival. “With Mazzoli’s profound ability to create lush textures using her characteristic stacks of unusually juxtaposed triads, these unexpected timbres induced a distancing effect, which, together with a quasi-filmic use of widely spaced drones, made me feel like I was afloat on the music’s orbits. At just under ten minutes, Mazzoli’s piece must be the most concise composition on the theme of the solar system, and it begs for multiple listenings, especially after experiencing Mazzoli’s awe-inspiring fade out in the final moments of the piece.”

PICTURES AT AN EXHIBITION

MODEST MUSSORGSKY/ ARR. MAURICE RAVEL

1839–81/1875–1937

Pictures at an Exhibition

COMPOSED: 1874/1922

MOST RECENT OREGON SYMPHONY

PERFORMANCE: April 16, 2012; Carlos Miguel Prieto, conductor

INSTRUMENTATION: 3 flutes

(1 doubling piccolo), 3 oboes

(1 doubling English horn),

2 clarinets, bass clarinet, 2 bassoons,

contrabassoon, alto saxophone,

4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones,

tuba, timpani, side drum, bass drum,

rattle, cymbals, tam-tam, whip,

triangle, xylophone, glockenspiel, bells,

celesta, 2 harps, and strings

ESTIMATED DURATION: 33 minutes

Modest Mussorgsky's most popular composition owes its reputation to its orchestrator, Maurice Ravel. Before Ravel arranged this obscure piano suite for orchestra in 1922, it was virtually unknown outside piano circles.

Pictures at an Exhibition is Mussorgsky's musical portrayal of a memorial exhibit of artwork by Victor Hartmann, an artist, designer, architect, and close friend. In the spring of 1874, Russian critic Vladimir Stasov organized an exhibition of Hartmann's work in St. Petersburg, which Mussorgsky attended. By June 22 of that year, Mussorgsky transformed ten of Hartmann's works into music as a further tribute to his friend. Mussorgsky also inserted his own presence into Pictures via the *Promenade*, which recurs periodically throughout.

The *Promenade*'s irregular rhythm portrays Mussorgsky, a man of considerable size, ambling through the exhibit, sometimes pausing before a particular picture that caught his interest. It leads directly to the first picture, *Gnomus* (Gnome), Hartmann's design for a nutcracker. Unlike the princely nutcracker of Tchaikovsky, however, Hartmann's nutcracker is a macabre, wizened creature. The return of the *Promenade*, in shortened form, brings us to *The Old Castle*, which Stasov says depicts a troubadour singing and

strumming a guitar in front of a medieval castle. Ravel's mournful saxophone sounds the troubadour's song. The *Promenade* returns with the majestic brasses and winds of the opening, but stops abruptly in front of the next picture, *Tuileries* (*Dispute Between Children at Play*). Here in the famous Tuileries Gardens in Paris, children attended by nannies sing out the universal childhood taunt, "Nyah-nyah."

Bydlo (*Cattle*) portrays plodding oxen drawing a heavy cart. A brief *Promenade* leads us to the oddly named *Ballet of the Chicks in Their Shells*. Hartmann's costume designs for a ballet called *Trilby* inspired this whimsical music, in which child dancers wear egg costumes with their legs sticking out. In "*Samuel*" *Goldenberg* and "*Schmuyle*," Mussorgsky combined two of Hartmann's pictures of Jews in the Sandomierz ghetto of Poland. Samuel Goldenberg is a rich, self-important man (represented by measured phrases of the strings), while Schmuyle, (characterized by insistent bleatings of a muted trumpet) is portrayed as a whining, cowering beggar. However, Mussorgsky's title suggests the two men are really the same person (Samuel is the Germanized form of the Yiddish Schmuyle), and the movement has been generally viewed as an anti-Semitic stereotype. In *Limoges – The Market* (*The Big News*), market-women share the latest gossip. Abruptly, we are plunged into the *Catacombs: Roman sepulcher*. This watercolor shows Hartmann and several others inspecting the Parisian catacombs by lantern light, which illuminates a cage full of skulls. Mussorgsky wrote of this piece, "The creative genius of Hartmann leads me to the skulls and invokes them; the skulls begin to glow." *Con mortuis in lingua morta* (*With the dead in a dead language*) follows, a mournful, eerie reworking of the *Promenade*. The ominous music of *The Hut on Fowls' Legs* depicts the witch Baba Yaga of Russian folklore, whose house stood on chicken's feet. In the final movement, Ravel and Mussorgsky capture the grandeur of *The Great Gate of Kiev*, Hartmann's design for the reconstruction of the ancient stone gates of Kiev. Although the actual gates were never built, *The Great Gate of Kiev* stands as a permanent musical tribute to the city and its rich history. ●

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