



QUAD CITY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
MARK RUSSELL SMITH, MUSIC DIRECTOR AND CONDUCTOR

MASTERWORKS I

GRIEG

PIANO CONCERTO

OCT 4 & 5, 2025



STUDENTS @ SYMPHONY

WELCOME

THANK YOU

for JOINING US

Welcome to the opening concert of the Quad City Symphony Orchestra's 2025-2026 season, Vivace! The words "Energy, Connection, Passion" are used to describe this season, and that is exactly what you will experience with this program.

Jen Morton

Music Educator & Content Creator



THE ORCHESTRA

QUAD CITY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Founded in 1915 as the Tri-City Symphony Orchestra

The Quad City Symphony Orchestra string section uses rotating seating. Players behind the named chairs change seats with each concert series and are listed alphabetically in the roster below.

VIOLIN I

Naha Greenholtz,
concertmaster
Emily Nash,
associate concertmaster
Sam Battista
Dortha DeWit+
Marley Haller
Hillary Kingsley
Corina Lobont
Susan Oliverius
Erik Rohde*
Abigail Schneider
Naomi Schrank
Sabrina Tabby+
Rachel Walter
Steven Wilke

VIOLIN II

Madeline Capistran,
acting principal
Charles Abplanalp
Kim Busic +
Alexander Giger
Renee Henley
Peter Miliczky
Alex Norris
Samuel Rudy
Danielle Simandl
Carolyn Van De Velde

VIOLA

Madlen Breckbill,
acting principal
Melissa Snell,
acting principal
Nick Munagian,
associate principal
Bridget Andes
Timothy Hoorelbek
Benjamin Lorentzen
Barrett Stoll
Jenwei Yu

CELLO

Hannah Holman,
principal
Laura Shaw,
associate principal
Yoo-Jung Chang
James Ellis
Derek Handley
Claire Langenberg
Elisabeth Logan+
Amy Phelps
Kevin Price-Brenner
Kate Vos

DOUBLE BASS

David Scholl, principal
Kit Polen,
associate principal
Joe Bauer
David Chapman-Orr
Julia Holst-Kanakares
Brett Lewis
Victor Stahoviak
Michael Van Ryn

FLUTE

Jessica Warren, principal+
Ellen Huntington
Jilene Haas

OBOE

Andrew Parker, principal
Barrett Seals
Ashley Ertz

CLARINET

Karrin Meffert-Nelson,
acting principal
Christine Bellomy
Joe Sanchez,
acting clarinet 3/
bass clarinet

BASSOON

Benjamin Coelho,
principal
Matthew Kowalczyk+
Dana Ransom

HORN

Marc Zyla, principal+
Steve Burian,
assistant principal
Peter Kortenkamp
Joshua Johnson
Allison Tutton

TRUMPET

Matthew Baker,
principal*
Chris Haas, acting
principal
Lindsey Frazier

TROMBONE

Robert Parker, principal
Cole Davis

BASS TROMBONE

Andrew Rózsa

TUBA

Ronald Morton

TIMPANI

Michael Geary, principal

PERCUSSION

Aaron Williams, principal
Gary Ciccotelli
Tony Oliver+

HARP

Lillian Lau, principal

PIANO/CELESTA

Mary Neil

+ Denotes Instructor in the QCSO Private Lesson Program

* denotes a musician who is on a leave of absence for the current season.

FIRST TIMER'S GUIDE



BEFORE

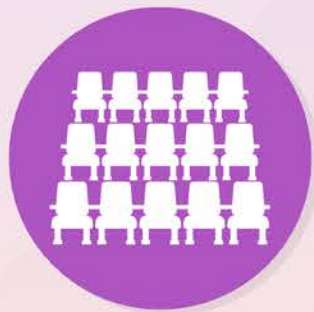
the **CONCERT**



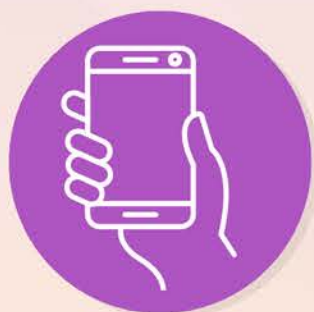
Arrive 20-30 minutes before the start so you have time to find your seat and get comfortable.



Come as you are! You may see some people in evening dresses and others in jeans and a t-shirt. There is no dress code.



Try sitting in different spots each time you attend a concert to find the best spot for you to enjoy the music.



Take a quick selfie.

FIRST TIMER'S GUIDE



DURING

the **CONCERT**



If you arrive late, wait until a piece ends before entering the hall. Ushers can help you figure out the best time to enter, and prevent you from distracting performers and audience members during the performance.



If you are unsure when to clap, it's always safe to assume that a piece is complete when the conductor puts down their arms and faces the audience.



Phones must be silenced.



Pictures may be taken if there is no flash and the screen is dimmed for night mode. We don't want to disturb others or take away from their experience.



Some performances will have short intermissions. This is a great time to stand, stretch, or even make a trip to the restroom. Be quick because time goes fast.

FIRST TIMER'S GUIDE



AFTER

the **CONCERT**



Tag the QCSO in any pictures you share on social media.



Talk about your experience with your family and friends.



@QCSYMPHONY

#qcso #qcsostudent

BEHIND THE SCENES

Q&A

with

JENN SWIFT

*Production Manager & Client
Liaison, Top-Notch Productions*



HOW MANY YEARS HAVE YOU BEEN IN THIS ROLE?

I started just before Masterworks I in 2017, which means I am beginning my 9th season with the QCSO this weekend!

WHAT ARE YOUR DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES?

It's a bit tricky to describe my job - it tends to be very catch-all! On a bike's wheel, there are many spokes that support it. I, to some degree, function as a central hub. I coordinate with the conductor, the performance site, the crew, guest musicians, the librarian, etc. I gather details about all aspects of a concert and then make sure all the pieces fit and work together. Some of that includes building stage plans, scheduling the piano tuner, working with lighting design, and coordinating the movement of large equipment from storage to the concert venue. I coordinate safety for the site, and even make sure the theater is the right temperature for the musicians so the instruments can play well. I am the Stage Manager during shows, which means I'll start the show and organize any movement on and off the stage, call the cues for when the lights go up, and oversee the order of events.

DO YOU PLAY AN INSTRUMENT? IF SO, WERE YOU INVOLVED IN A SCHOOL MUSIC PROGRAM OR LOCAL YOUTH SYMPHONY?

I began playing piano when I was 7 and trained as a singer for many years. I still do both frequently as a performer, but have now been teaching voice and piano for the last 25 years as well. If you had told my middle-school self I would end up teaching piano (I was not a good student) I'd have never believed it. Neither would my piano teacher! I have also been a part of a number of choirs from childhood into adulthood. Nothing else has provided such a broad range of opportunities like music has in my life. I have deep affection for my college choir experiences in particular. A large number of my life-long-friends, and best memories, have come from those years.

BEHIND THE SCENES

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE PART ABOUT YOUR POSITION?

This is difficult to whittle down! I love this job so much, for many reasons. The people are a huge part of it. I also love the problem-solving this job requires. There are many regular, predictable things that occur, but each concert also has unique elements. Last year we had to figure out how to create enough space for 12 dancers to perform, in addition to seating for a full orchestra and a choir. Sometimes I have to rent unique instruments, and need to do some detective work to find them. Last year we did an opera that required special lighting while the orchestral stage shell was set up, which limited the stage lights available. We needed to design the lighting DURING the show on Sunday because we don't get to rehearse in that hall. Lastly, the music! I love getting to hear the music! During rehearsals, I can pick any seat in the theater to sit in and enjoy my own concert.

S111 Masterworks 1 (Adler) - (1st Half)

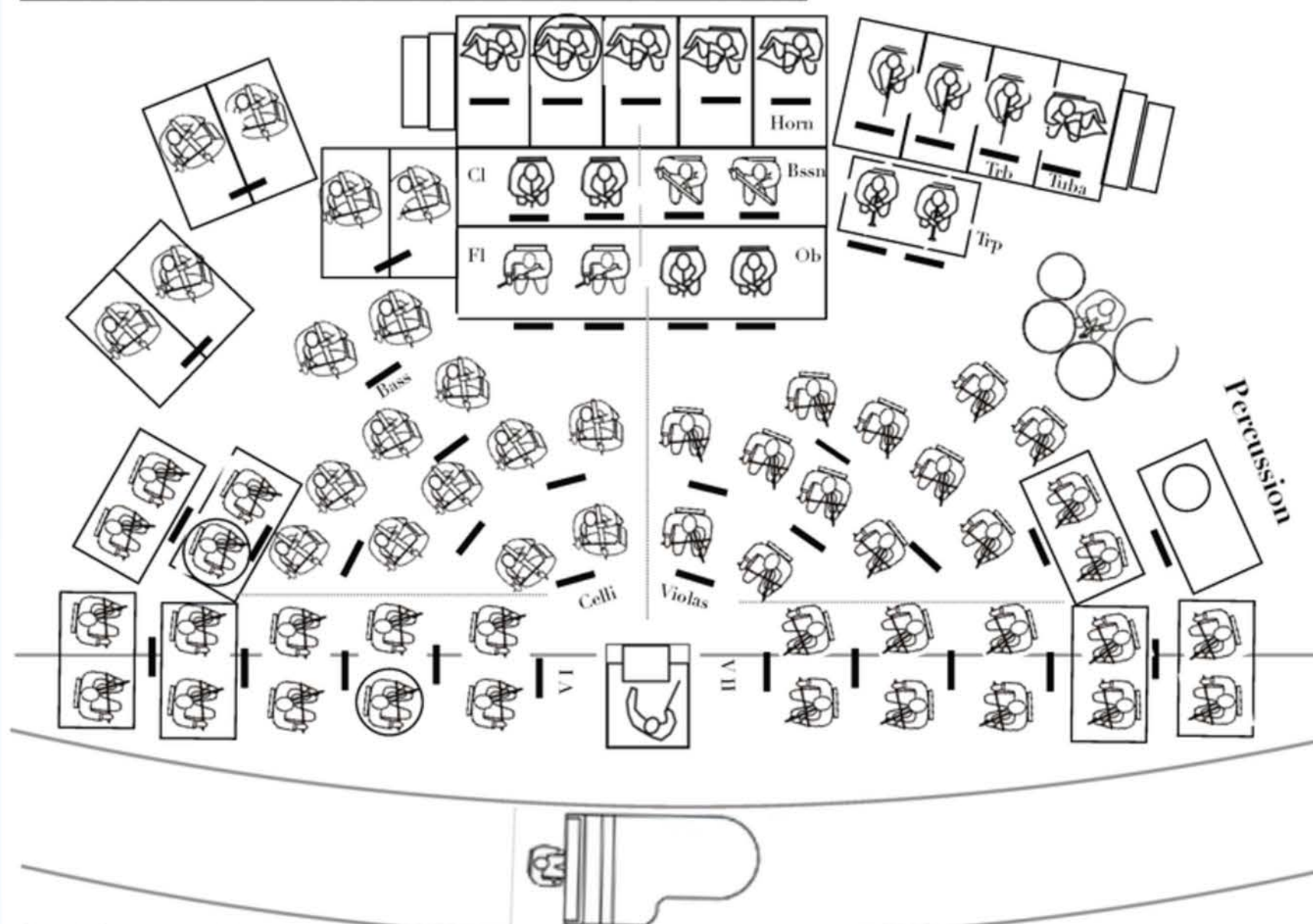


Image: Example of a stage plan.

BEHIND THE SCENES

WHAT WERE SOME STEPS IN YOUR PATH/CAREER THAT LED YOU TO THIS POSITION?

Many seemingly unrelated things have combined to make this job a great fit for me. My parents were both musicians, and I was around stages and performing my whole life. When I was in Middle and High School, I went to the arts school in my hometown of Rochester, NY. I started off studying music, but ended up switching to Tech Theater and Stage Design. I've spent many years both on stages as a performer and behind the scenes supporting the show which gives me an understanding of both worlds, which I'm grateful for. So much of the work is about good communication between the two spaces. For university, I studied to become a pastor, which is another job I currently have. I've spent many years working with all kinds of people from every area of life and have learned so much from each of their stories. I have another job that lets me travel quite a bit, and some of the places I get to go are places where the musicians that the QCSO performs are from! Every experience we have in life matters, and can be used to develop you in unique ways. No job or opportunity is too small. I gained relevant skills, but there have also been personal development opportunities that have informed how I work with others in my current environment.

WHAT IS ONE PIECE OF ADVICE YOU WOULD GIVE TO SOMEONE INTERESTED IN A CAREER IN A "BEHIND-THE-SCENES" MUSIC INDUSTRY?

Everything counts! All the experiences in your life matter. Getting to work behind the scenes draws on all your experience because it is such an "everything" job. Also, be curious and a learner. Approach life with the mentality that you can learn something from what you are doing, or from who you are with. It will never disappoint you.



MASTERWORKS I

GRIEG PIANO CONCERTO

SAT, OCT 4, 2025 7:30 PM
ADLER THEATRE

SUN, OCT 5, 2025, 2:00 PM
CENTENNIAL HALL

MARK RUSSELL SMITH, *conductor*
WEI LOU, *piano*

**JOHN STAFFORD
SMITH**
(1750-1836)

The Star-Spangled Banner*

**PYOTR ILYICH
TCHAIKOVSKY**
(1840-1893)

Polonaise from *Eugene Onegin* [4']

EDVARD GRIEG
(1843-1907)

Piano Concerto in A minor, Op. 16
[30']

- I. Allegro molto moderato
- II. Adagio
- III. Allegro moderato molto e marcato – Quasi presto – Andante maestoso

INTERMISSION

**JOHANNES
BRAHMS**
(1833-1897)

Symphony No. 2 in D Major, Op. 73
[43']

- I. Allegro non troppo
- II. Adagio non troppo
- III. Allegretto grazio (quasi andantino)
- IV. Allegro con spirito

**Out of respect for those fallen in service of our country, we ask that you do not applaud after the playing of the Star-Spangled Banner.*

THANK YOU

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The
Cultural
Trust
CULTURE MATTERS HERE



QUAD
CITY
BANK &
TRUST

TIPS *for* LISTENING



When was the last time you sat still for 40+ minutes and listened to a piece of music?

For some of you, this may be the first time, and that is WONDERFUL! This is an excellent choice for your first visit as all three works on this program are a little more programmatic (story-telling) than, say, classical works. Plus, watching a piano soloist is such an exhilarating visual experience, you are sure to be amazed!

However, even for those of you returning to the symphony, it can be a challenge to keep your focus on the same piece of music for an extended amount of time (i.e. longer than a Tik-Tok video). Here are some suggestions for what to do during the performances, but remember: there is no right or wrong way to listen to music!



CLOSE YOUR EYES

- Rely on just the sense of hearing
- Focus on nothing but the music and remove visual distractions



CREATE A STORY IN YOUR HEAD

- Some works are programmatic (they come with a story), and others are not, so be sure to check out the program notes!
- This entire concert features Romantic pieces, so it is very appropriate to create a story to go along with the music.

CONTINUED



TIPS *for* LISTENING



WATCH THE CONDUCTOR

- Does the conductor use a score, or is it memorized?
- During the piano concerto, how do the conductor and soloist communicate?
- If you're able to see the conductor's face, what facial expressions do you see? Is he trying to communicate a specific emotion?



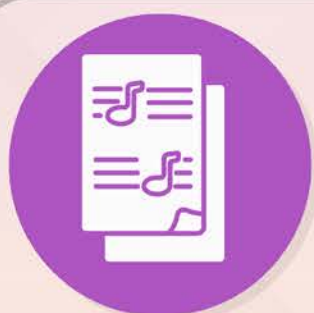
WATCH THE MUSICIANS IN DIFFERENT SECTIONS

- Do they move while they play?
- What do they do when they are counting rests?
- If certain instruments have a duet/trio/quartet in the music, how do those musicians work together?



WATCH THE SOLOIST

- What is Wei Luo wearing?
- How does she seat herself at the piano and prepare for her entrance?
- Does she move with the music?
- What does she do during the orchestral interludes of the concerto?



LOOK AT YOUR INSTRUMENT PART



TCHAIKOVSKY
Polonaise



GRIEG
Piano Concerto



BRAHMS
Symphony No. 2

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM



THE ROMANTIC PERIOD

The Romantic period started around 1827 and ended around 1900, as compositions became increasingly expressive and inventive. Expansive symphonies, virtuosic piano music, dramatic operas, and passionate songs took inspiration from art and literature. Famous Romantic composers include Tchaikovsky, Brahms, Mahler, and Verdi – to name just a few!

The Romantic era is known for its intense energy and passion. The rigid forms of classical music gave way to greater expression, and music grew closer to art, literature and theatre.

Beethoven pioneered Romanticism and expanded previously strict formulas for symphonies and sonatas, and introduced a whole new approach to music, giving his works references to other aspects of life - for example, his 'Pastoral' Symphony No. 6 describes countryside scenes.

As well as symphonies, the tone poem and descriptive overture were popular as pieces of stand-alone orchestral music that evoked anything from a painting or poem to a feeling of nationalistic fervour.

The Romantic era gave birth to the virtuoso. Franz Liszt was one of the greatest of his time, and wrote demanding piano music to show off his own brilliance. Chopin is also among the outstanding composer-performers from this time. In the world of opera, cue the entrance of Verdi in the middle of the Romantic era. He turned Italian opera on its head by introducing new subject material, often

Image: Oil by Hendryk Siemiradzki (1887), depicting the Polish composer Frédéric Chopin playing his works before the aristocratic Polish family Radziwills in 1829.

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

with social, political or nationalistic themes, and combined these with a direct approach to composing.

Germany's Richard Wagner also played a key role in developing the operatic genre. Before Wagner, the action and music in opera was split into short pieces or 'numbers' much like a modern-day musical show. Wagner's operas are written as long, continuous sweeps of music. The characters and ideas are given short signature melodies called leitmotifs.

Wagner's ideas dominated most music, from the large-scale symphonies of Bruckner and Mahler to the heroic tone poems and operas of Richard Strauss, even reaching Italy, where Verdi and Puccini started to produce operas according to many of Wagner's rules.

Ideas and compositions became more and more outlandish and inventive until the musical rules had to be rewritten, and the scene was set for the biggest change in music for centuries - the beginning of Modernism.



Images: John Henry Fuseli, *The Nightmare* (1781), oil on canvas • Caspar David Friedrich, *Wanderer above the Sea of Fog*, 1818 • John William Waterhouse, *The Lady of Shalott*, 1888, after a poem by Tennyson

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

b. May 7, 1840

in Votkinsk, Russia

d. November 6, 1893

in St. Petersburg, Russia



PYOTR ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY

Pyotr (or Peter) Ilyich Tchaikovsky was born in Votkinsk, a town in Russia's Ural Mountains. When he was 8 years old, his family moved to the capital city of St. Petersburg. Even though Tchaikovsky excelled in music as a child, that wasn't considered an "acceptable" profession, so his parents made him study law instead.

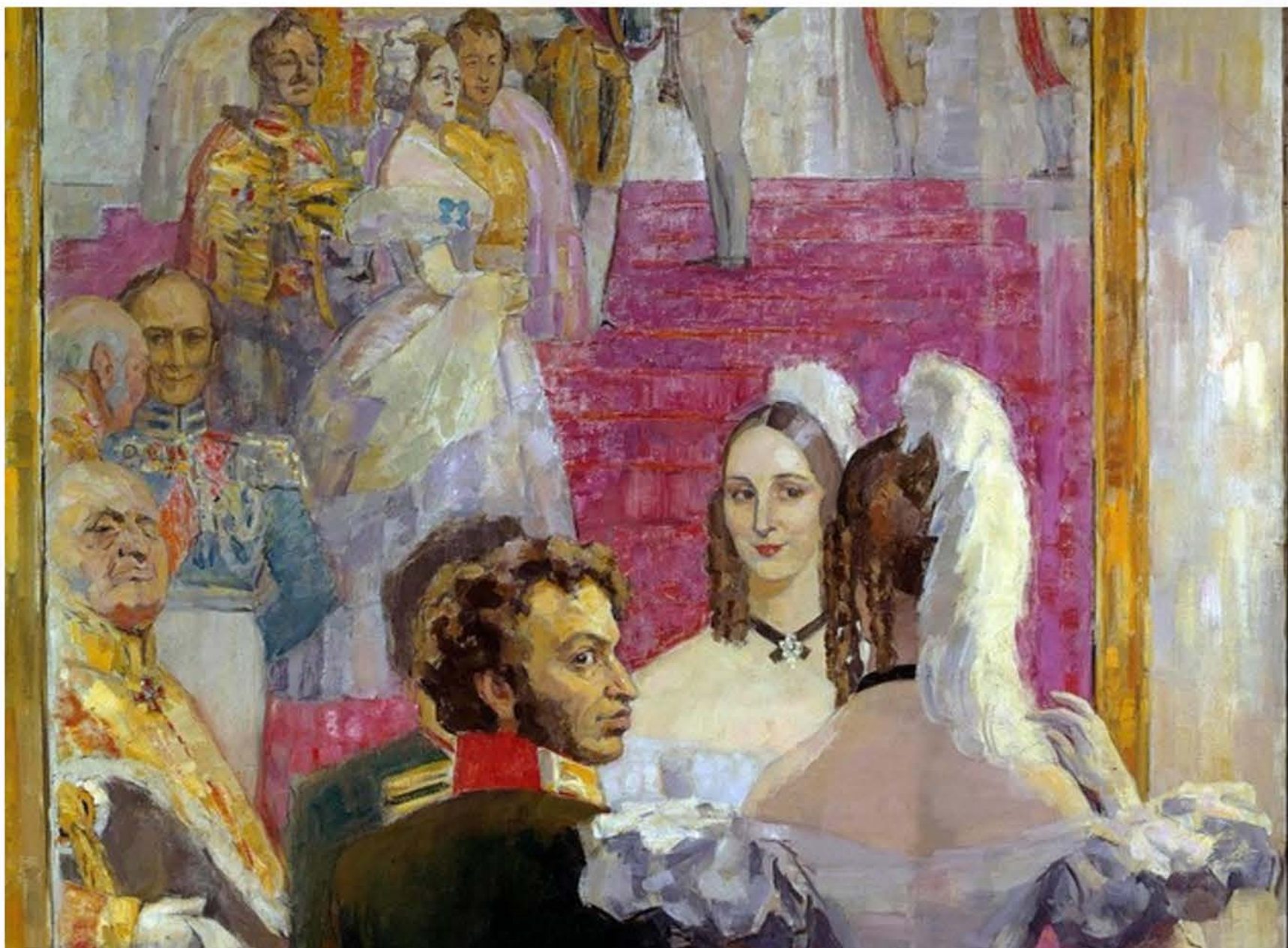
But even in law school, Tchaikovsky continued to study music. Eventually, he gave up his legal job and went to the St. Petersburg Conservatory. After he graduated, he moved to Moscow to teach at the new conservatory there. It's now named for him.

For years, Tchaikovsky had a patroness named Nadezhda von Meck, a wealthy widow who was a big fan of Tchaikovsky's music. She regularly sent him money so that he could concentrate on composing without having to worry about making a living. But Nadezhda von Meck didn't want to meet Tchaikovsky. For 14 years, they only communicated by writing letters to each other. Tchaikovsky dedicated his Fourth Symphony to his patroness.

Tchaikovsky traveled all over Europe for performances of his music. In 1891, he even came to America for the opening of Carnegie Hall, where he was invited to conduct his music.

Tchaikovsky is best remembered for his ballets, particularly *Swan Lake*, *The Sleeping Beauty*, and *The Nutcracker*. He's also renowned for his symphonies, including Nos. 4, 5, and 6 (*Pathétique*), as well as his concertos, such as the *Violin Concerto* and *Piano Concerto No. 1*. Additionally, his *1812 Overture* and *Romeo and Juliet Fantasy Overture* are widely recognized and loved.

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM



Polonaise from Eugene Onegin [4']

Russia's most famous poet, Alexander Pushkin (1799-1837) is best known for his masterpiece *Eugeny Onegin*, which blends social commentary with the Romantic ideals of the time. His short stories, verse novels, history plays and fairy tales were the basis for a number of famous operas, from Glinka's *Ruslan and Lyudmila* and Mussorgsky's *Boris Godunov*.

In 1877, the Russian soprano Yelizaveta Lavrovskaya approached Pyotr Tchaikovsky with a (literally) novel proposal: turn Alexander Pushkin's classic tome, *Eugeny Onegin*, into an opera. Initially, Tchaikovsky dismissed the idea as "wild," pointing out that the appeal of Pushkin's tale lay in the way it was told rather than the story itself.

The idea stuck with the composer, though, and after mulling it for a while he decided to undertake the project. He constructed the libretto (script of the opera) using text straight from the book, and completed the whole opera in early 1878. The plot of *Eugene Onegin* is indeed pretty simple: a plain young country woman falls in love with Onegin, a sophisticated city gentleman; but he rejects her. Several years later, at a ball at a palace in St. Petersburg, Onegin sees the woman again; now she has transformed into an elegant princess.

Image: Russian Poet Alexander Pushkin and His Wife Natalia Gontcharova at the Anichkov Palace Ball by Nikolai Pavlovich Ulyanov

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM



A polonaise is a rhythm characterized by a moderate tempo and triple meter (3/4 time), which you hear introduced at the beginning of this movement in the trumpets. Onegin, having gone off on a long wandering abroad following his murder of his close friend Lensky in a duel, finds himself at a Petersburg society ball where he will come face to face with Tatyana, now the wife of Prince Gremin, an aristocratic retired general. The brilliance of the fanfares is appropriately offset by melancholy in the cello theme of the central, contrasting sequence.



Voice of Tchaikovsky & Anton Rubinstein

recording in 1890 on an Edison Cylinder



Image: Alexander Pushkin with his wife at the ball by Nikolai Pavlovich Ulyanov.

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM



LISTEN TO OTHER WORKS *by*
PYOTR ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY



SWAN LAKE

Berliner Philharmoniker



THE NUTCRACKER

Berliner Philharmoniker



1812 OVERTURE

Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra



NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

b. June 15, 1843

in Bergen, Norway

d. September 4, 1907

in Bergen, Norway



EDVARD GRIEG

Edvard Grieg was born in Bergen, Norway on June 15, 1843. For most of Grieg's life Norway struggled to be its own nation separate from unions with other countries. It was his music that helped give Norway its own identity. For his contribution, he came to be regarded as a hero to the people of Norway. Many of his works include Norwegian folksongs which paint a musical picture of the landscape of the beautiful countryside.

Edvard's first music lessons were with his mother, and he began writing music at the age of nine. Encouraged by a famous Norwegian violinist, Edvard enrolled in Leipzig Conservatory at the age of fifteen and graduated four years later as a talented pianist and composer.

For a number of years Grieg and his wife lived in Copenhagen, Denmark and toured Europe performing his music. Then in 1885 they returned to his beloved Norway to build a cabin in a villa called Troldhaugen which means "Hill of the Mountain Men". From this cabin that overlooked the mountains and a fjord, Grieg wrote some of his greatest compositions.

Edvard Grieg died on September 4, 1907 in his hometown of Bergen, Norway. He is best known for his Piano Concerto in A Minor and his music for Henrik Ibsen's stage play *Peer Gynt* which includes two of his best known works: *Morning Mood* and *In the Hall of the Mountain King*.

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM



Piano Concerto in A minor, Op. 16 [30']

Edvard Grieg's beloved Piano Concerto was the product of a particularly happy period in the Norwegian composer's life. In 1867, Grieg and his wife, Nina, were married. The following April, their daughter, Alexandra, was born (Alexandra died in 1869 from meningitis). In the summer of 1868, Edvard, Nina and Alexandra Grieg traveled to Søllerød, located near Copenhagen. There, Grieg composed his Piano Concerto in A-minor.

The premiere of the Concerto, which took place in Copenhagen on April 3, 1869, was generally well received by the Norwegian press. One critic viewed the work, which incorporated Norwegian folk idioms, as presenting "all Norway in its infinite variety and unity," and compared the second movement to "a lonely mountain-girt tarn that lies dreaming of infinity."

In early 1870 in Rome, Grieg met the great Hungarian pianist and composer, Franz Liszt. During one visit, Grieg presented the score of his piano concerto to Liszt, who played through the work, often shouting his approval. The story goes as told by Grieg: "Finally, (Liszt) said in a strange, emotional way: 'Keep on, I tell you. You have what is needed, and don't let them frighten you.'" Liszt did suggest some changes to the score, finally published in 1872. However, Grieg was never totally satisfied with the Concerto, and continued to write revisions until the time of his death. Despite the composer's misgivings, this piece remains one of the most popular piano concertos.

Photo: Edvard Grieg's home at Troldhaugen - now a museum and concert venue.

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

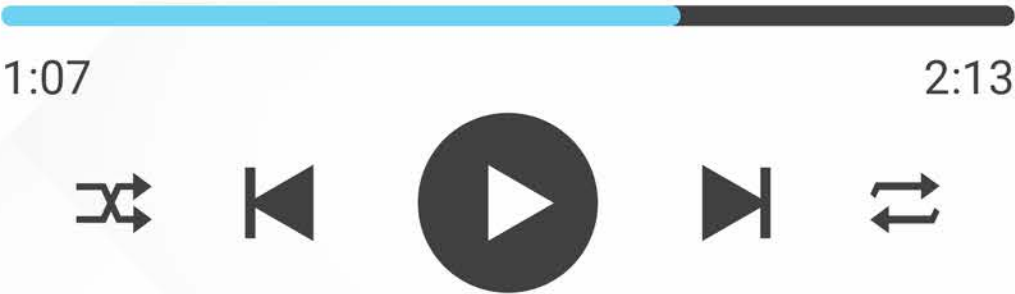
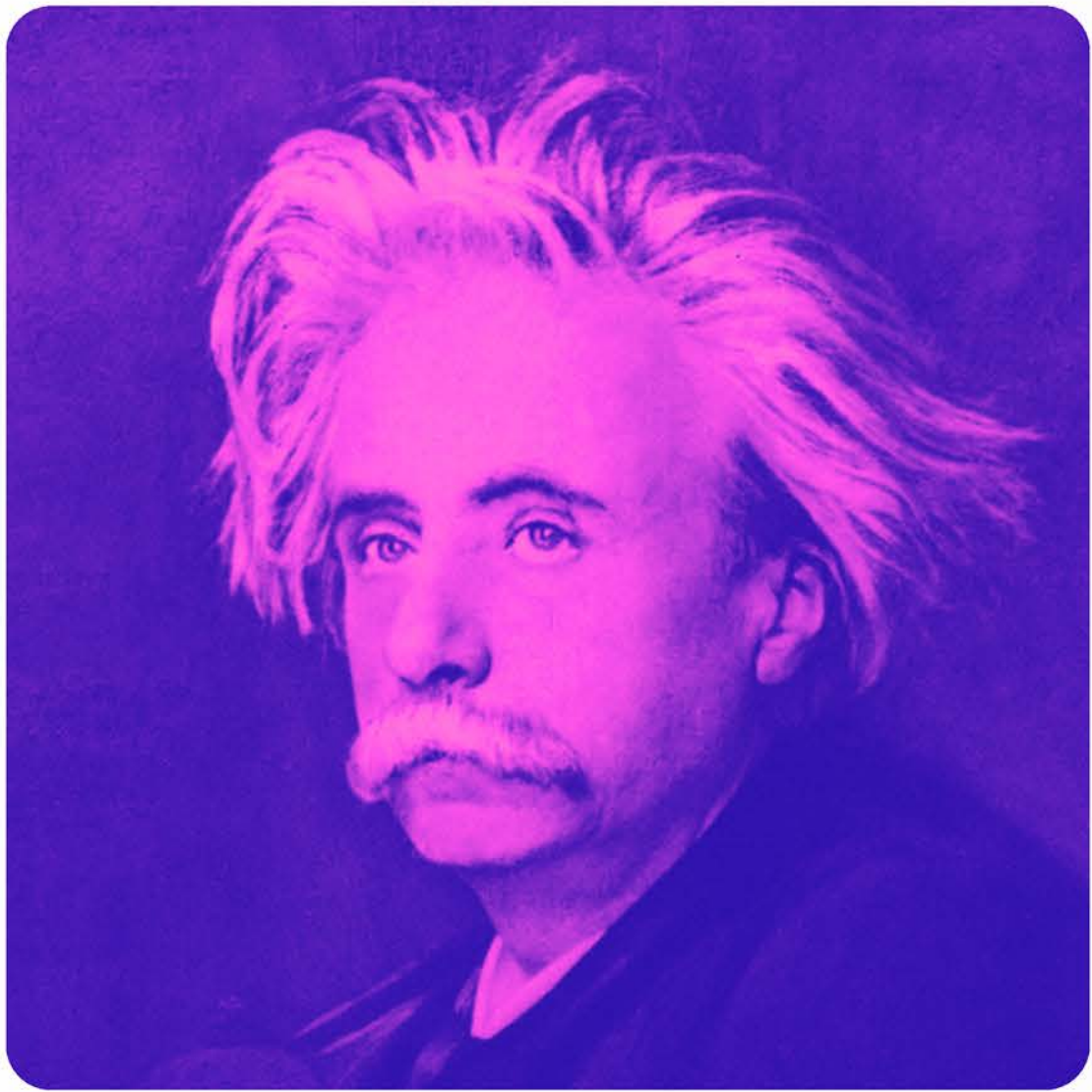
The Concerto is in three movements:

- The first (Allegro moderato) features one of concert music's most famous and dramatic openings.
- The second movement (Adagio) opens with an extended introduction spotlighting the muted strings. Then enters the soloist in the foreground for the remainder of this brief, tender slow-tempo movement. It stands in contrast with the third movement in its lyricism and heartrending moments
- The finale (Allegro moderato molto e marcato) begins with a short introduction that precedes the soloist's presentation of the main theme: a lively, rhythmic passage based on a Norwegian folk dance known as the halling. The flute initiates a lovely contrasting interlude, but the spirited halling motif soon returns. After another virtuoso cadenza by the soloist, the principal dance theme is transformed from the duple-time halling to a triple-time springdances. The ending brass fanfare highlights the orchestra's majestic transformation of the interlude, accompanied by the soloist's grand flourishes.



Image: Edvard and Nina Grieg, 1898, by Peder Severin Krøyer (1851-1909) – Grieg composed the Piano Concerto the year their daughter Alexandra was born

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM



LISTEN TO OTHER WORKS *by* EDVARD GRIEG



PEER GYNT SUITE NO.1, OP. 46

Berliner Philharmoniker



LYRIC PIECES

Alice Sara Ott, *piano* & Symphonieorchester
des Bayerischen Rundfunks

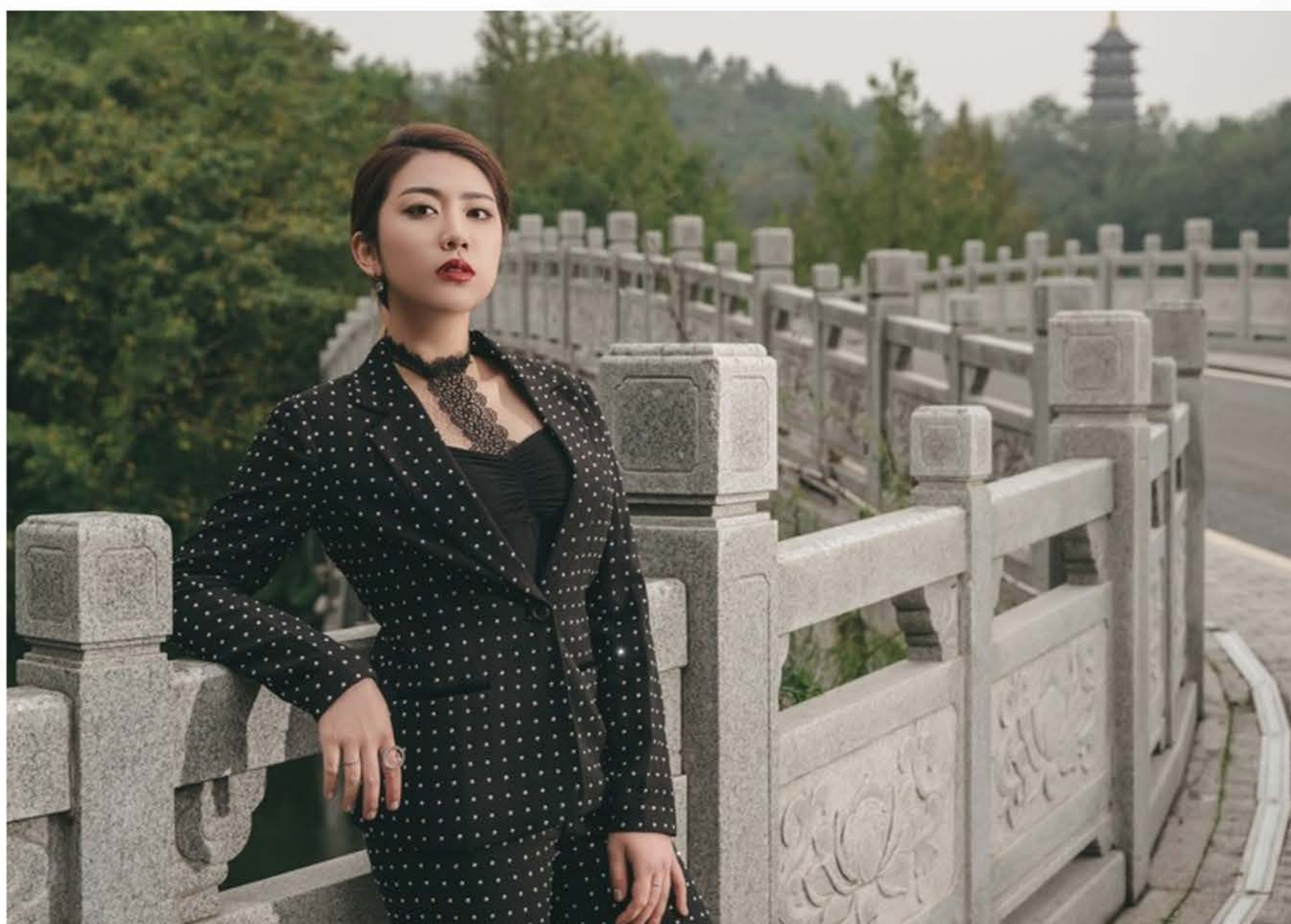


HOLBERG SUITE, OP. 40

Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra



MEET THE ARTIST



WEI LUO, *piano*



Born 1998 in Shenzhen, China

Wei Luo is recognized as one of the most significant pianists of her generation. Already in her young career she has performed on many of the world's leading stages. In 2019 her self-titled debut album was released on Universal Music Group's Decca Gold label. The album was featured by Gramophone Magazine as one of the most exciting new releases. San Diego Union Tribune said: "This recording reveals a dazzling artist with an astonishing range of colors at her disposal, put to the service of a confident young soul whose musicality suggests the experience of someone two decades older."

Wei has given solo tours of more than 40 concerts throughout China's major cities and venues including Shanghai Concert Hall, Beijing National Center of Performing Art, Guangzhou Opera House, Shenzhen, Harbin, Chongqing among others. Her solo album "Gazing" won the top 100 releases on Apple Music 2023 (one of the only two classical albums) and QQ music top chart.

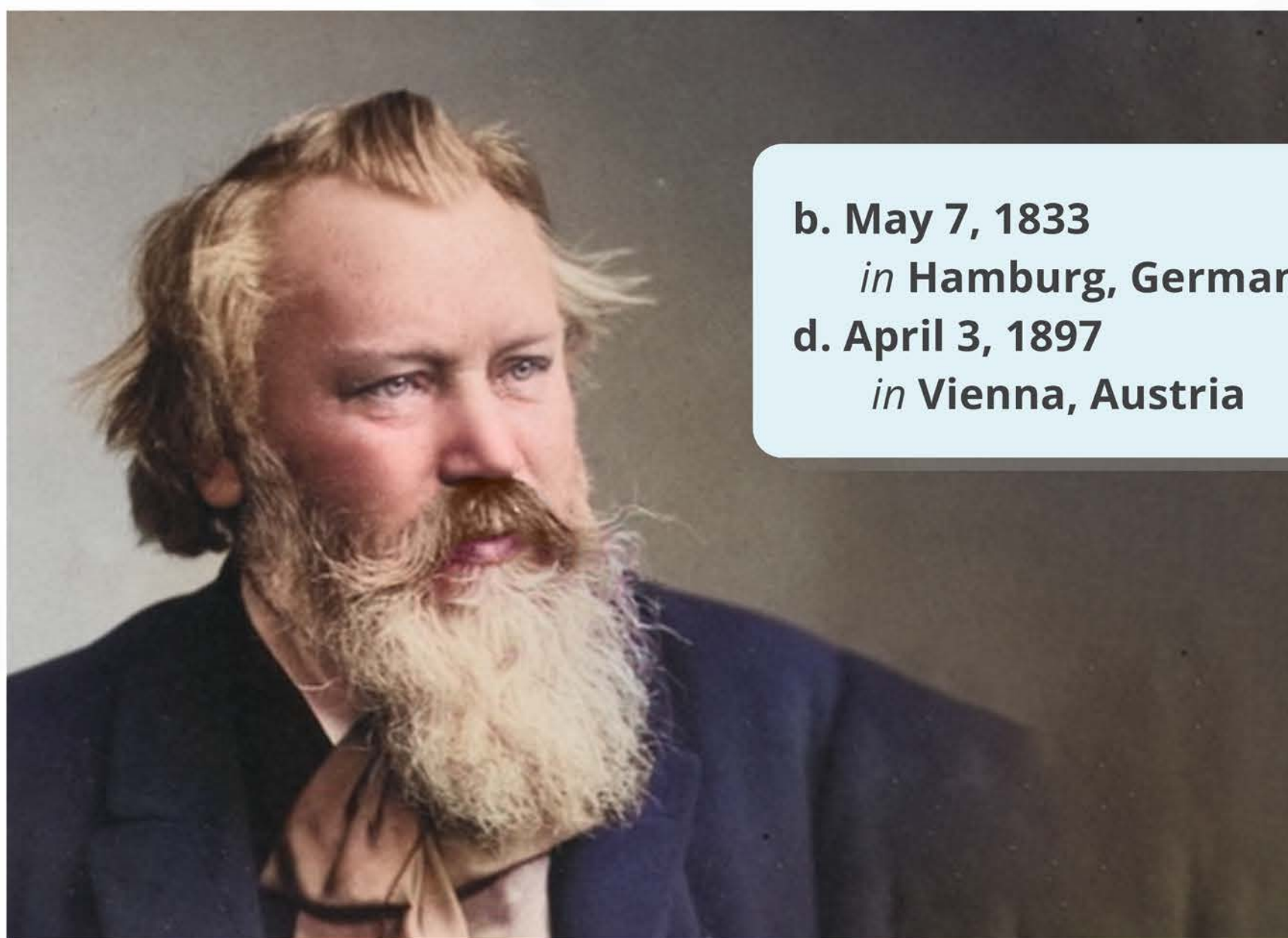
Prior to the pandemic, Wei made her United States debut with the San Diego Symphony, Jahja Ling conducting. In recent seasons, she performed Rachmaninoff Piano Concerto No. 3 with our own Quad City Symphony Orchestra, Prokofiev's Piano Concerto No. 3 with the Kansas City Symphony and Michael Stern, and Mendelssohn's Piano Concerto in G minor with the Denver Philharmonic.

MEET THE ARTIST

Born in Shenzhen, China, Wei showed great interest in music and began piano lessons at age five. She gave her debut recital in Hong Kong at age six. She made her orchestra debut at age 11 with the Shanghai Philharmonic where she performed Prokofiev's Concerto No. 3 at the Shanghai Oriental Art Center. Wei also claimed first prize in the 11th Chopin International Competition for Young Pianists in Poland and the 2nd Rachmaninov International Piano Competition for Young Pianists in Frankfurt, both in 2010. In 2012, at age thirteen, Wei was accepted to the prestigious Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia where she studied with Gary Graffman and Robert McDonald. Wei received her bachelor's degree in 2022.



NOTES ON THE PROGRAM



b. May 7, 1833
in Hamburg, Germany
d. April 3, 1897
in Vienna, Austria

JOHANNES BRAHMS

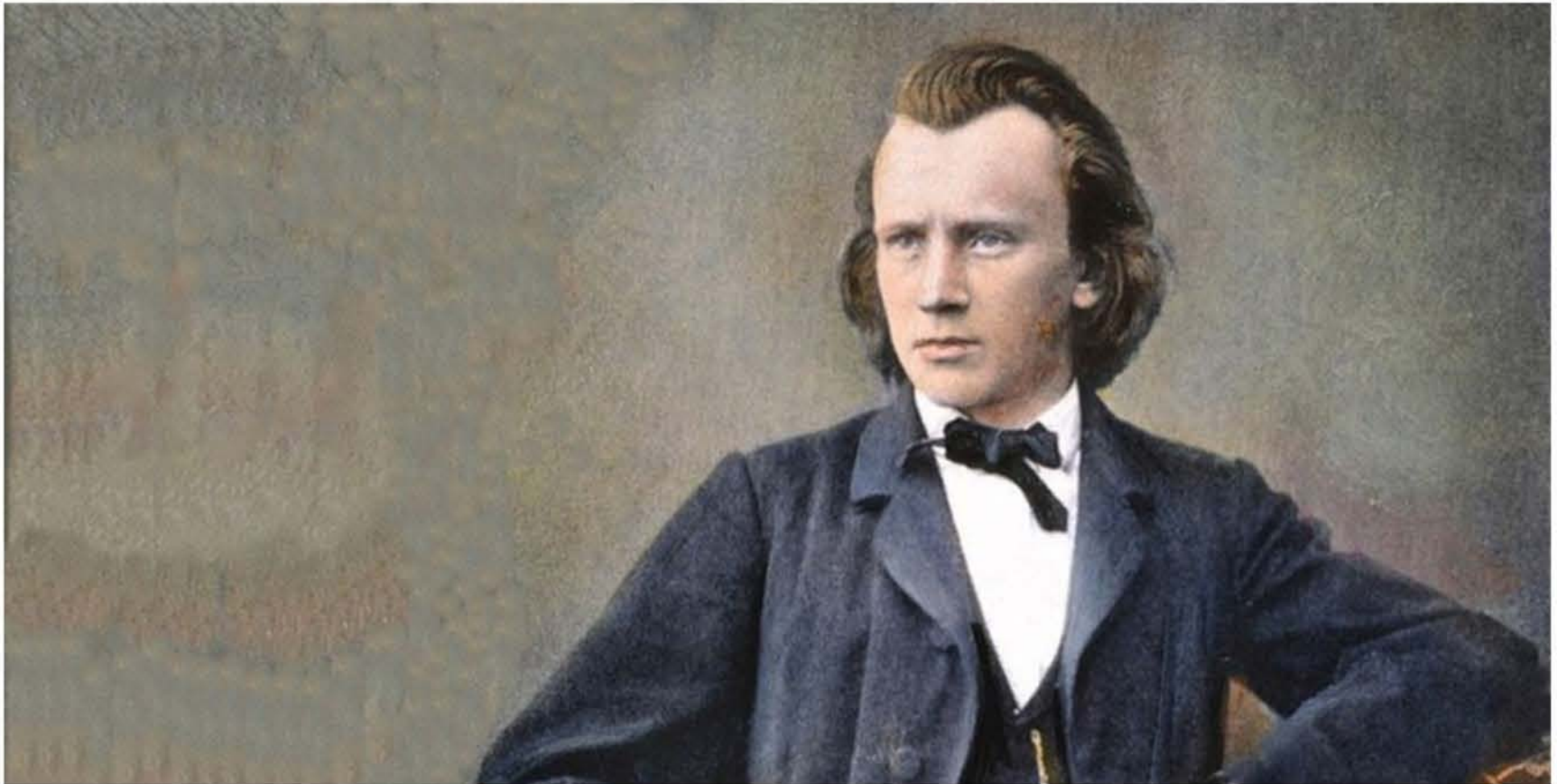
Johannes Brahms was born in 1833 in the German city of Hamburg. His father was a musician who played several instruments. By the time Brahms was six, he'd invented his own system for writing notes down on a page. Of course, he took instrument lessons, learning to play cello, horn, and piano. By the time he was ten, he was such a good pianist that he performed in public, as part of a chamber music concert. Brahms also loved books and read everything he could find including novels, poetry, and folk tales.

When Brahms was older, he toured as an accompanist, playing piano for a Hungarian violinist. That music, alongside the gypsy bands Brahms heard later on when he traveled to Hungary, inspired his Hungarian Dances, which were a hit with the public. He wrote 21 dances in all, the most famous of which is the Hungarian Dance No. 5.

Many people considered Brahms to be the successor to Beethoven. For a long time, he didn't want to write a symphony, because he was afraid his work would not be as good as Beethoven's. Brahms ended up writing four symphonies, plus pieces in every musical form except opera. You may know one of his most famous pieces, the Lullaby.

In fact, Brahms became so famous, he is now known as one of the 3 B's — Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms — of classical music.

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM



Symphony No. 2 in D Major, Op. 73 [43']

Brahms composed his Second Symphony during the summer of 1877 at the village of Pörtlach on the Wörthersee, a picturesque Austrian lakeside retreat. The other notable work to emerge from this sabbatical was the dark, tortured motet, “Why Is the Light Given to the Wretched?” Surprisingly, a bit of this darkness lurks beneath the surface of the symphony as well, something that Brahms explained to an admirer who asked the composer about “the rumbling timpani” and “the gloomy, lugubrious tones of the trombones” in the first movement, especially during its otherwise peaceful ending. Brahms provided this explanation:

“I have to confess that I am a severely melancholic person, that black wings are constantly flapping above us, and that in my output—perhaps not entirely by chance—that symphony [the Second] is followed by a little essay about the great ‘Why.’ If you don’t know this, I will send it to you. It casts the necessary shadow on the serene symphony and perhaps accounts for those timpani and trombones.”

Allegro non troppo: the symphony opens serenely enough, as Brahms gives horns, winds, and finally strings a melody that certainly qualifies as tranquil. This melody grows out of three notes sounded by the basses and cellos, three notes that are the thematic foundation for the entire symphony, restated in variations throughout the symphony. If you listen closely, there are moments where Brahms seems to quote his famous Lullaby. The melody is followed by a muffled drumroll and a three-note dirge from the trombones and tuba—the storm already threatening Brahms’ pastoral landscape.

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

Adagio non troppo: the second movement opens with one of the most beautiful melodies Brahms ever composed, played by the cellos. The movement is remarkable for its passages of overwhelming despair, made possible by the tonal instability of the cello theme. Brahms plays on this instability, taking full advantage of the movement between major and minor modes—and the consequent contrast between repose and turmoil—it allows.

Alegretto grazioso: the oboe theme that begins this movement is a transformation of those first three notes from the first movement, and it forms the basis of the A sections of this A-B-A-B-A movement. The B sections, marked at double the tempo of the Allegretto grazioso, provide a rambunctious rhythmic contrast to the country waltz flavor of the surrounding A sections.

Allegro con spirito: in the sonata-form finale, Brahms withholds the trombones until the recapitulation, when they make their appearance bathed in light, united with the rest of the orchestra in sounding the movement's exultant theme and then playing the finale's final chords in their highest register.



Photo: Johannes Brahms statue, Karlsplatz, Vienna

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM



1:07

2:13



LISTEN TO OTHER WORKS *by*
JOHANNES BRAHMS



**ACADEMIC FESTIVAL
OVERTURE, OP. 80**

Chicago Symphony Orchestra



**HUNGARIAN DANCE
NO. 5**

Isaac Stern, violin *with*
Columbia Symphony Orchestra



**SYMPHONY NO. 3
*in F Major, Op. 90***

Berliner Philharmoniker



FROM VIBES to VIRTUOSO



Dear youths attending this performance:

Are you uncertain of how to converse with those older than you about Masterworks I? Try the following slanguage translations to flex at intermission. It is my sincere hope this translation guide gives you ick, but helps give you main character energy and major aura in your conversations. Who knows, it may also help your overall rizz.

Sincerely,

A cheugy millennial

GEN ALPHA

BOOMBERS, GEN-X & MILLENNIAL

"Wei Luo is the GOAT, no cap."



"Wei Luo is an amazing pianist, no lie!"

"Brahms is my new brain rot."



"I'm now obsessed with Brahms!"

"Bruh. That concert was high key giving utterly immaculate vibes."



"Whoa, this concert was amazing, out-of-this-world."

"Lock in, chat."



"Please listen and focus on the concert."

"That second movement was a mood."



"Wei Luo is an amazing pianist, no lie!"

"That Polonaise was a bop!"



"Wei Luo is an amazing pianist, no lie!"

"The QCSO ate and left no crumbs."



"The QCSO performed incredibly well, I don't think this concert could have been better!"

UPCOMING EVENTS



COMING UP *at the* **QCSO**

JURASSIC PARK IN CONCERT



SAT, OCT 25 @ 7:30 PM

The action-packed adventure pits man against prehistoric predators in the ultimate battle for survival. Featuring visually stunning imagery and groundbreaking special effects, this epic film is sheer movie magic 65 million years in the making.

Now audiences can experience Jurassic Park as never before: projected in HD with the Quad City Symphony Orchestra performing John Williams' iconic score live to picture.

Welcome... to *Jurassic Park*!

MASTERWORKS II **DIASPORA**



SAT, MAY 3 @ 7:30 PM

Immerse yourself in vivid storytelling and orchestral brilliance! Strauss's dramatic Don Juan pulses with energy, Billy Childs' saxophone concerto Diaspora explores powerful jazz-inspired narratives, and Ravel's Daphnis et Chloé, Suite No. 2 dazzles with captivating rhythms and lush, colorful harmonies.