



Dreams & **TRIUMPHS**



SUNDAY
DEC 10 2023
4:30PM
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HISTORY OF THE ORCHESTRA

In 1939, founding conductor Harry Berman gathered a group of 30 advanced amateur musicians for a first rehearsal; they performed their first concert on April 7, 1941, at Sprague Memorial Hall on the Yale University campus under the name "Philharmonic of New Haven, Connecticut." In its early years, the orchestra's repertoire consisted primarily of light classical selections.

In the 1960s, Gordon Emerson became music director. Under his 40-year leadership, the orchestra expanded its repertoire to include local, state, and world premieres of works by composers such as Charles Ives and Leonard Bernstein. In addition, under its new moniker, the Civic Orchestra of New Haven, it began to feature instrumental soloists and local school choruses.

Christopher James Hisey became music director in the 2000s. Under his baton the orchestra expanded its repertoire, including a memorable performance of Carmina Burana in Norwalk.

In 2018 the Civic Orchestra welcomed rising star Kalena Bovell to the podium. At the time, Maestro Bovell was the only American professional conductor of African-American and Hispanic descent. Her reputation and skill soon led her to a full-time assistant conducting position with the Memphis Symphony Orchestra.

The 2019 season brought music director Matthew Scinto to the Civic Orchestra. During the COVID-19 shut-down Maestro Scinto kept members engaged with on-line discussions of musical topics. In 2022 Maestro Scinto accepted a faculty position at Worcester Polytechnic Institute in Massachusetts.

In 2022, the Civic Orchestra was under the baton of Interim Director Robert "Bobby" Smith, who brought inspiring energy to match his formidable conducting skills.

Now in its 85th season, and after an extensive music director search, the Civic Orchestra of New Haven is proud to present its first concert under the direction of Maestro Samuel Hollister.

PROGRAM

Dreams & TRIUMPHS

Jean Sibelius
1865 – 1957

***Finlandia*, Op. 26**

Max Bruch
1838 – 1920

***Scottish Fantasy in E-flat major*, Op. 46**

Introduction

- I. Scherzo
- II. Andante sostenuto
- III. Finale

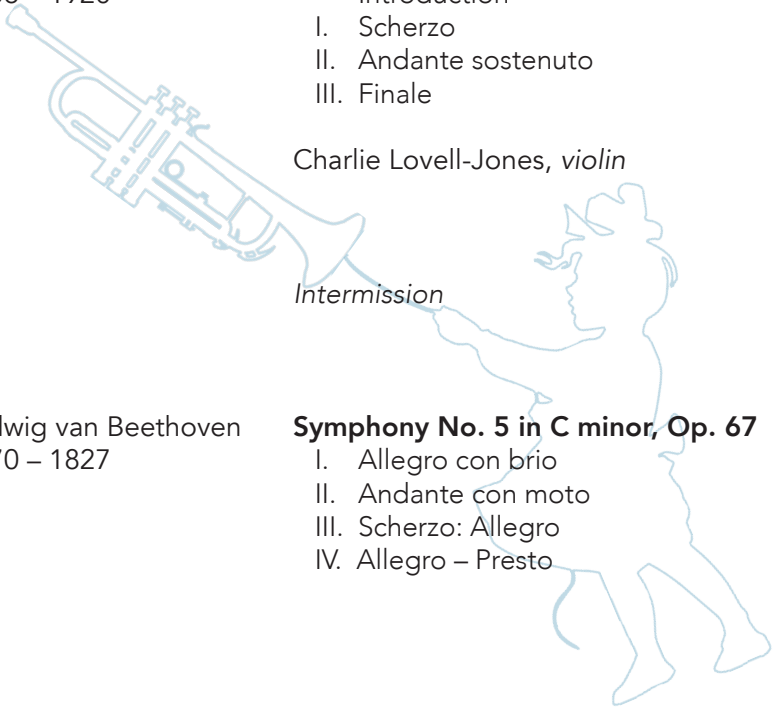
Charlie Lovell-Jones, *violin*

Intermission

Ludwig van Beethoven
1770 – 1827

***Symphony No. 5 in C minor*, Op. 67**

- I. Allegro con brio
- II. Andante con moto
- III. Scherzo: Allegro
- IV. Allegro – Presto



UPCOMING CONCERT



Civic Orchestra of New Haven



the veil of memory

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SAMUEL HOLLISTER, *MUSIC DIRECTOR*

Conductor, pianist, composer, harpsichordist, and theorist Samuel Hollister believes that music tells powerful stories that create and strengthen communities. In 2022 Maestro Hollister joined the faculty of the University of Rhode Island as interim director of orchestral activities. He is also currently pursuing a D.M.A. in orchestral conducting at the Yale School of Music, serving as the Yale Philharmonia's conducting fellow and as the assistant to Peter Oundjian, Carolyn Kuan, Leonard Slatkin, and others. Hollister holds two master's degrees in orchestral conducting and music theory pedagogy from the Peabody Conservatory, where he studied with Marin Alsop.

While an undergraduate in music and mathematics at Yale, he conducted the Saybrook College Orchestra and concert productions of Mozart's Requiem and Rachmaninoff's All-Night Vigil. He has conducted world premieres of opera and concert music at Yale, Peabody, the University of Rhode Island, with the PHACE ensemble in Vienna, and elsewhere around the world. He conducted and arranged the Peabody Opera's 2020 production of Britten's Turn of the Screw, bringing singers



together virtually even as the world grappled with a pandemic.

Hollister joined the music staff of Opera Saratoga in 2022 as a conductor and pianist and was named a conducting fellow at the Eastern Music Festival in 2019, returning on invitation in 2021. In 2018 he founded Aurora Collaborative, a Rhode Island nonprofit music organization, to provide opportunities for musicians and artists of any age or background to collaborate and communicate their own musical narratives.

CHARLIE LOVELL-JONES, VIOLIN

Welsh violinist Charlie Lovell-Jones has been recognized as one of the most promising international soloists of his generation. Since his sold-out Royal Festival Hall debut at age fifteen, Charlie has appeared as soloist with orchestras across the UK and beyond, including the English Chamber Orchestra, Sendai Philharmonic Orchestra, Noord Nederlands Orkest, and Yamagata Symphony Orchestra, as well as the BBC National Orchestra of Wales and the RTÉ Concert Orchestra. Charlie has appeared live on radio in broadcasts of Franz Waxman's "Carmen" Fantasie (RTÉ Radio), Vaughan Williams's The Lark Ascending (BBC Radio 3), Karl Jenkins's Violin Concerto (BBC Radio 3 and BBC Radio Wales) and his own composition, Cariad Cyntaf (2017), for which he was joined by soprano Rebecca Evans (BBC Radio Wales). He has worked with conductors John Wilson, Edward Gardner, Sir Mark Elder, Ken Takaseki, Moritz Gnnann, Ben Gernon, Grant Llewellyn, Stephen Bell, and Jonathan Mann. Charlie is a Beare's International Violin Society Artist.

Competition successes include The Gregrynnog Young Musician Competition (winner, 2013), BBC Young Musician (Category Finalist, 2016), The Sendai International Music Competition (2019), Shanghai



Isaac Stern International Violin Competition (2020), and the International Joseph Joachim Violin Competition (2021). At 16, Charlie became the youngest person to receive the Under-25 Composers' Medal at the Urdd Eisteddfod in Wales, where he has also won first prize in solo piano, instrumental duo, chamber, orchestral, vocal ensemble, choral, and dramatic competitions.

Charlie was the youngest ever member of the John Wilson Orchestra and has since led Wilson's award-winning Sinfonia of London (SoL) on many occasions. Critical accolades for his work with SoL include praise from *Gramophone* magazine and Classic FM for his solos on their album of works by Ravel.



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SAMUEL HOLLISTER, *MUSIC DIRECTOR*
YIRAN ZHAO, *ASSISTANT CONDUCTOR*



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Stephen Grodzinsky
Hannah Jordan
Reina Maruyama
Mauranda Men
Sue Prasad
Eleanor Schiff
Kirsten Williams

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Jerry Anne Dickel
Yoshiko Maruyama
Mary Mattheis
Catherine Miller
Will Platt
Diana Satkauskas
Sung Eun Wang
Lawrence Zukof

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Mira Debs
Shufan Huo
Margaret Liddell
Ron Moore
Laurie Ongley

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Sarah Alloy
Jonas Mastella
Meg Myers ≠
Jill Polisson
Susan Solomon
Linnea Weiss

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* *principal*
≠ *on leave*

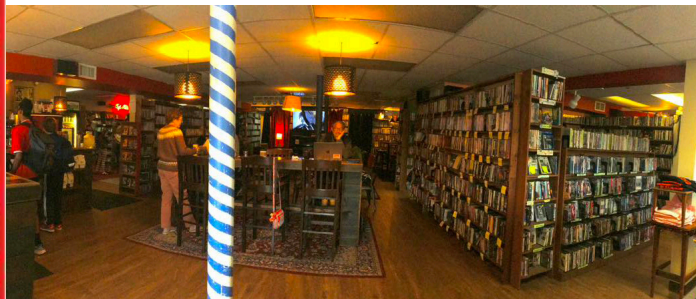
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PROGRAM NOTES

Finlandia

Jean Sibelius (1865–1957)

Jean Sibelius's 1899 tone poem *Finlandia* is a proud statement of Finnish identity and resolute defiance toward Russian censorship. Originally titled "Impromptu" among other veiled monikers (in order to avoid blatantly advertising its Finnish-nationalist feelings amid Russian rule), the piece has since grown to represent a famous expression of Finnish pride.

The turbulent music that sets the piece in motion, depicting the struggles of the Finnish people, eventually gives way to one of the more famous melodies in the classical repertoire, the so-called "Finlandia Hymn." Although the established national anthem of Finland, "Maamme," long predates the composition, many have suggested subsequently that Sibelius's "Finlandia Hymn" serves as an alternative national anthem. The hymn has had a global influence: settings with various texts have appeared as Christian hymns around the world, and the hymn was even the national anthem of Biafra, an African nation that separated from Nigeria for three brief years.

Scottish Fantasy

Max Bruch (1838–1920)

In Bruch's *Scottish Fantasy* (1880), folk tradition meets concerto virtuosity in a captivating and popular crossover. Four Scottish folk melodies respectively pervade each of the four movements of Bruch's *Scottish Fantasy*:

"Through the Wood Laddie," "The Dusty Miller," "I'm A' Doun for Lack O' Johnnie," and "Scots Wha Hae." The last of these, which peppers the fourth movement, has served as yet another unofficial national anthem, this one rooted in centuries-old traditions in Scotland. Its main melody, per legend, was played by King Robert I of Scotland's army at the Battle of Bannockburn in 1314, where the Scottish army trounced that of Edward II of England in the critical turning point toward Scottish independence 14 years later.

Remarkably, Bruch did not visit Scotland himself until after the composition and premiere of the *Scottish Fantasy*. Attesting to the strength of the language of music, Bruch's composition, amounting to a dream of another home, nevertheless captures much of the essential nature of Scottish musical tradition, including the importance of the harp in addition to the traditional folk

tunes. Indeed, the ominous and lonely landscape at the piece's outset dissolves to the uplifting and jaunty folk tunes of the rest of the piece in a way that suggests a heartfelt, personal, fervent, and contagious passion for a culture, a people, and a homeland that, remarkably, Bruch had not known.

Symphony No. 5

Ludwig van Beethoven
(1770–1827)

On December 22nd, 1808, a 38-year-old, half-deaf Beethoven dragged a miserable, freezing-cold audience of Viennese elite through more than four hours of under-rehearsed, poorly performed music. The ad-hoc, ragtag orchestra, dwindling in number thanks to competing engagements and Christmastime double-bookings, contained many amateurs in a desperate attempt to fill out a passably sized ensemble. As conductor and pianist, Beethoven attempted to lead the ensemble in the world premieres of an unwieldy pantheon of now-ubiquitous works: his Fifth Symphony, Sixth Symphony, Fourth Piano Concerto, Choral Fantasy, and an improvised solo piano fantasia, interspersed with short vocal and choral movements

from preexisting works. But the orchestra didn't much care for his conducting, and the concert suffered laughably.

Shortly into the Choral Fantasy, for instance, the rough performance broke down, and Beethoven, confronted with few alternatives, opted to restart the piece. In the words of one of Beethoven's most ardent supporters, Johann Reichardt, who was in attendance: "There we sat, in the most bitter cold, from half past six until half past ten, and confirmed for ourselves the maxim that one may easily have too much of a good thing."

Can we expect the then-audience to have appreciated these mammoth premieres under such adverse conditions? Would we, in their position, have felt anything other than overwhelming displeasure on all fronts? Thus did Beethoven's Fifth apologize its way into sheepish existence, and for another two years, nobody seemed to care. Finally, in 1810, only after the publication of the score, an anonymous author (now known to be the composer and critic E. T. A. Hoffmann) gave the Fifth its proper introduction to the world in the leading German-language musical periodical. "Radiant beams," he wrote, "shoot through

PROGRAM NOTES

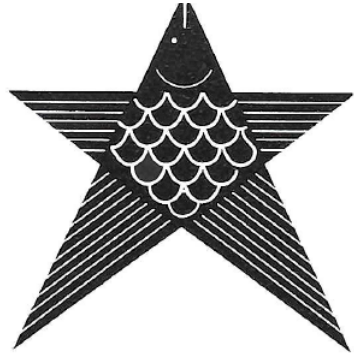
this region's deep night, and we become aware of gigantic shadows which, rocking back and forth, close in on us and destroy everything within us except the pain of endless longing...which...tries to burst our breasts with full-voiced harmonies of all the passions." Hoffmann rightly senses that this work upended the symphonic tradition through its unparalleled drama and large-scale narrative of form. In short, this is not music for music's sake: this is a narrated utterance of a troubled soul struggling for redemption in the face of merciless demons—and we are that soul.

Immediately from the famous first four notes, we understand the gravity that Hoffmann felt. The Fifth is a symphony about fate: that fate is C minor, Beethoven's stormiest key, and we are gripped and trapped by its power from the very first notes. The task is simple: we must salvage some hope of a major key from the grips of this fateful C minor—we must convert our torment into our strength and our freedom. In the first movement, we desperately attempt to break free from the bonds of that fateful C minor force. The second theme, heralded by the horns, announces a possible antidote to this C minor plague: E♭ major—

but this solution is quickly lost as the development of the first movement grinds the antidote motive into a paste until only a single note, repeated powerlessly and pathetically, is left in its stead. The recapitulation reasserts the dominance of C minor over this wasteland. One final attempt of the antidote, now desperately croaked in bassoons, tries for C major instead—but in the very moment of C major's victory, we realize that the antidote that got us there, that secondary theme from the horns and now bassoons, was based all along on the same "short-short-short-long" motive as the opening fateful motive. The antidote is thus like a Trojan horse, and in this moment of victory, we lose control: the antidote begins to multiply like a virus, and the "fate" motive hidden inside spills outward into a coda overwhelmed by the might and momentum of an angry C minor, cockily inflated by its conniving trickery. Thus ends the first movement: we are more desperately lost and plagued by our oppressor, and more deflated by the awareness of our own gullibility, than when we began. Here lies one of the pivotal innovations of Beethoven's Fifth: the second movement, facing the bleak and empty demise of the first movement, must carry the narrative forward.

The narrative arc of the symphony ties together the movements.

Since our attempts at an uplifting E♭ major and a bright C major both failed to neutralize C minor in the first movement, we try a new approach in the second movement: the round, deep, and syrupy A♭ major. The theme, first introduced in violas and cellos, represents a new hero whom we have nominated to find and establish, from their unique vantage point, the ultimate C major that we desperately need. Three times, this proud and poised theme produces a dramatic C major cadence, and each time, we, the orchestra, confirm that C major with all the support we can muster: fanfare trumpets, heraldic woodwinds, timpani rolls. But each time, the C major victory proves hollow, and the music dissolves back into a deep and dark world, where our only hope is to summon our A♭ major hero for another attempt. After the third go-around, we have lost steam, and we suspect that this path — approaching C major from below in this way — may not be our ultimate solution. With nothing but the most heart-felt affection and appreciation, we return to our A♭ major hero, offer a warm embrace and our deepest gratitude, and return to the drawing board.



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In movement three, C minor has morphed into the form of a calculating cat prowling for prey. The fate-cat lurks in the shadows, and only when we least expect it, it pounces and attacks us, slashing and gnashing as we duck for cover. Each pounce bears the very same “short-short-short-long” motive we learned to fear in movement one, and each time, we retreat, the cat furiously announcing its superiority. After a middle section exploring an imagined world where we overwhelm the cat with a contrapuntal C major fugato, we reawaken to acknowledge that the C minor cat is here to stay, and we are not safe. With light, careful, pizzicato

PROGRAM NOTES

footsteps, we hide ourselves away one final time, retreating to the most remote corner we can find. We resign, helpless, and tuck ourselves away in one final, powerless attempt at safety.

In this very moment, locked away in our lowest, most forsaken, and most hopeless moment so far, comes the most singularly supernatural moment in the history of music. The still air becomes electrified. In the final pizzicato cadence at the end of the third movement, the moment where our desperate, tiptoed, pianissimo retreat is to be completed, we expect the final harmony to be the home key of the movement: C minor. Instead, as if by error, the final hushed harmony is off by one half-step in one note. The tiny deviation, almost like a mistake, changes the C minor harmony to A \flat major, now sustained, pianississimo, for no fewer than eighteen dead-still measures, as if to explore and understand the provenance of the mistake. A \flat major is not just any mistake, though — this is none other than the key of our second movement hero, the one who tried and tried to establish C major to no avail, the one we sent off fondly and gratefully nevertheless. It is as if, from the dusty closet where we have tucked ourselves away

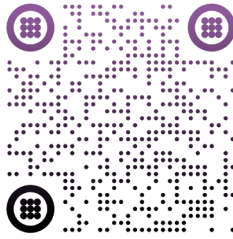
from the menacing C minor fate-cat, we see, through a small, foggy window, the distant outline of a figure, the figure of that A \flat major hero we knew and loved. The hero is running toward us, a speck in the distance still a thousand feet away. The significance of this suspended, whispered deceptive cadence on the course of music history cannot be overstated: composers of all styles and backgrounds have spent these two centuries attempting to access and recreate the soft-spoken yet unnerving mystery of this transition. Beethoven has suspended time, called into question everything we thought we knew about where we were, pulled a character from the previous movement into the picture, and prepared the most dramatic movement-to-movement transition yet attempted in the symphonic genre.

Slowly but surely, in our state of suspended and hushed bewilderment, we see the sprinting speck get nearer and nearer. In one final rush, as our hero finally arrives in a dramatic and history-changing crescendo, we understand: they are not alone. In the epitome of musical *deus ex machina*, our hero has summoned the cavalry. The fourth movement has arrived: for the fourth time (after their first three attempts

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in movement two), our A♭ major hero has summoned C major. But this time, the victory is inevitable. Beethoven, appropriately, begins the fourth movement with the first entrance of the orchestral cavalry: the trombones, contra-bassoon, and piccolo join for their very first notes of the entire symphony. Together, the augmented orchestra shouts the fourth movement's C major theme, beginning unmistakably with the rising C major notes of C—E—G, which construct and establish the new C major world order. We wade through memory space (including direct quotations of the third movement) to reframe and neutralize the villains and oppressions of days past. Together, we relearn confidence where we had before succumbed to fear, and we reestablish, once and for all, our agency over the illusion of our fate.

To listen to Beethoven's Fifth is to attempt to absorb a cinematic microcosm of the entirety of human experience in a short 35 minutes. To grasp its fullness, even without the remarkably uncomfortable and challenging conditions its first audience endured, is about as tall an order as is the existential task, contained within, of conquering our most evil enemy. I invite you to forget the car commercials and the clichés, forget the toys and the radio jingles and the movie montages — in short, forget everything you thought you knew about this piece. Open the door anew, and watch, in E. T. A. Hoffmann's words, as "radiant beams shoot through this region's deep night."

Notes by Samuel Hollister

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IN MEMORIAM: STEVEN ISAAC CRAWFORD

Saying goodbye to someone is never easy. Tonight, the Civic Orchestra of New Haven bids a sad and heartfelt farewell and pays tribute to long-time friend, Battell Chapel sexton Steven Isaac Crawford, who passed away in September.

For more than thirty years, the orchestra was honored to consider Steve an indispensable member of the CONH family as he calmly worked behind the scenes in order to make sure that our annual holiday and spring dress rehearsals and concerts went off without a hitch. Anything that was needed, whether it be

chairs, extra music stands, moving the piano, access to the Battell basement to get risers – anything, Steve was always there to make it happen. He was the first person we would see at each of our rehearsals and concerts and the last person we saw at the close of each event, always saying, "*another great concert – you guys were awesome.*"

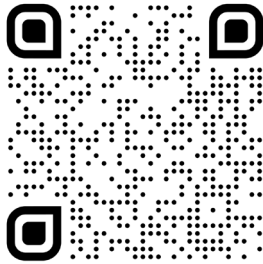
We will miss our dear friend very much and it is now our turn to say: "*You were awesome.*"

Goodbye, Steve. May you rest in peace.



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