

UNCSO

UNC SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
TONU KALAM, MUSIC DIRECTOR AND CONDUCTOR

WINNERS OF ANNUAL UNC CONCERTO COMPETITION

Tuesday Evening, February 28, 2023 at 7:30 P.M.
James and Susan Moeser Auditorium, Hill Hall

PROGRAM

Prelude to *Hansel and Gretel* Engelbert Humperdinck
(1854–1921)

Ain't it a pretty night, from *Susannah* Carlisle Floyd
(1926–2021)

No word from Tom...I go to him, from *The Rake's Progress* Igor Stravinsky
(1882–1971)

Taylor Loyd, soprano

Piano Concerto No. 2 in G minor, Op. 16 Sergey Prokofiev
I. Andantino—Allegretto (1891–1953)

John Kees, piano

INTERMISSION

Vocalise, Op. 34, No. 14 Serge Rachmaninoff
(1873–1943)

Violin Concerto in D major, Op. 77 Johannes Brahms
I. Allegro non troppo (1833–1897)

Siana Wong, violin

The UNC Concerto Competition is held in the fall semester of each year and is open to junior- and senior-year instrumentalists and vocalists who meet the eligibility criteria established by the Department of Music. This year's soloists were chosen by a panel of three distinguished judges:

Marjorie Bagley (Professor of Violin, University of North Carolina at Greensboro)
Michelle Di Russo (Associate Conductor, North Carolina Symphony, Raleigh)
Keiko Sekino (Associate Professor of Piano, East Carolina University, Greenville)

PROGRAM NOTES

Engelbert Humperdinck: Prelude to *Hansel and Gretel*

The German composer Engelbert Humperdinck (whose name was taken as a stage moniker by an English pop singer who gained considerable international fame in the 1960s and 70s) is one of those creators whose reputation rests primarily on a single hugely successful work, the opera *Hansel and Gretel*. Completed in 1893, it premiered in Weimar under the direction of Richard Strauss. Humperdinck's output focused largely on vocal music, including ten operas, numerous choral works, and well over 100 solo songs. He was a friend and assistant to Richard Wagner and a great devotee of Wagner's music. *Hansel and Gretel* manages to combine the simplicity of German folksong influences with Wagnerian harmony and orchestration in an effective synthesis, which is appreciably demonstrated in the prelude presented on tonight's program.

— Tonu Kalam

Carlisle Floyd: Ain't it a pretty night, from *Susannah*

Carlisle Floyd was an American composer, librettist, and music professor. He is best known for his operas, *Susannah* being the most famous. *Susannah* is based on the apocryphal bible story of Susannah and the Elders, and premiered at Florida State University in February 1955. The English-language opera is set around the 1940s in New Hope Valley, Tennessee, following the adolescent Susannah Polk and the challenges arising from her church community. The opera opens to a square dance and women of the church displaying jealousy over Susannah's captivating beauty. The new Reverend, Olin Blitch, is introduced. The night ends with Susannah and her friend, Little Bat McLean, in solitude as Susannah sings the aria "Ain't it a pretty night." The next day she is discovered innocently bathing in a stream by Elders who shun her and force her to make a public confession in church. She runs away, followed by Reverend Blitch, who offers to pray for her before assaulting her. Susannah's brother Sam retaliates by killing Blitch with his shotgun—the same shotgun Susannah holds while guarding herself and her home as the curtain falls.

— Taylor Loyd

Igor Stravinsky: No word from Tom...I go to him, from *The Rake's Progress*

Igor Stravinsky was a Russian-born composer and pianist known for his contributions to modernist music. His most famous works include *The Rite of Spring*, his Symphony in C, and *The Rake's Progress*, the opera from which "No word from Tom...I go to him" is excerpted. The English-language opera with libretto by W. H. Auden premiered in Venice in 1951 and is loosely based on a series of engravings of the same name by artist William Hogarth. *The Rake's Progress* is set in 18th-century England and follows Tom Rakewell, who abandons his fiancée Anne Trulove for London when he learns of an inheritance. He takes on a servant, Nick Shadow, who is revealed to be the Devil after Tom bets his soul in a game of cards. Anne remains faithful and tries to help save Tom's life, but to no avail. Tom loses his life, spiraling into madness, in the insane asylum Bedlam. The scene "No word from Tom" is sung by Anne at the conclusion of Act 1, wherein she is prompted to find Tom after he fled.

— Taylor Loyd

Sergey Prokofiev: Piano Concerto No. 2 in G minor, Op. 16

Sergey Prokofiev was a Russian composer and virtuoso well-known for his caustic, absurdist, and sardonic musical style (and personality). His Opus 16 Concerto in its current form was rewritten in 1923, after the original 1913 manuscript was destroyed in a fire following the Russian Revolution. It is dedicated to the memory of Maximilian Schmidthof, a friend and classmate of Prokofiev, who was one of the first to hear the composer play through the concerto, and who committed suicide shortly after it was completed. A powerfully emotionally charged and dissonant work, the Second Concerto is notorious for its technical difficulty, particularly the catastrophic five-minute-long piano cadenza which forms the core of the first movement.

— John Kees

Serge Rachmaninoff: Vocalise, Op. 34, No. 14

The Oxford Dictionary of Music defines a vocalise as “A textless vocal exercise or concert piece to be sung to one or more vowels.” The famous Vocalise by Rachmaninoff dates from 1915 and was originally written for voice with piano accompaniment, as the final piece in his Opus 34 set of 14 songs. A few years later he arranged it for a modest size orchestra, transposing it from its original key of C sharp minor to the more instrumentally practical E minor, and assigning the solo vocal line to the entire first violin section, which takes on the collective role of “singer.” Rachmaninoff himself conducted the Philadelphia Orchestra in a recording of the piece in 1929.

— *Tonu Kalam*

Johannes Brahms: Violin Concerto in D major, Op. 77

Johannes Brahms was a German composer, pianist, and conductor of the Romantic period. Brahms only composed one violin concerto, which was completed in 1878 and premiered in 1879, with Brahms conducting and Joseph Joachim as the soloist. Joseph Joachim, a violin virtuoso and composer, became one of Brahms’ closest friends through their close collaboration on the violin concerto, where Joachim offered his advice with respect to the violinistic aspects of the piece. Brahms incorporated many of these suggestions into the final form of the work, even granting Joachim the liberty to compose the first movement cadenza. Opening with a majestic orchestral introduction, this violin concerto encompasses a full range of emotions, from heartfelt lyricism to fiery moments of impassioned energy, giving the piece a captivating spirit.

— *Siana Wong*

SOLOISTS

Taylor Loyd, soprano, is a senior Psychology and Music (Classical Voice) double major from Mooresville, North Carolina. She plans to pursue a graduate degree and career in mental health counseling. Taylor studies under Dr. LaToya Lain at UNC and has participated in the National Association of Teachers of Singing (NATS) auditions, consistently earning top placements. At UNC, Taylor has served as Co-Director of the Music Ambassadors, Vice-President of Recruitment for the Panhellenic Executive Council, is an active member of Kappa Kappa Gamma, and has participated in Carolina Choir, Chamber Singers, and UNC Opera. She is also the founder of Healing Hearts Through the Arts, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization aiming to provide music and art resources, education, and advocacy as a tool for mental health and wellbeing. Her performance credits include Mabel in *The Pirates of Penzance* (2022) and Phoebe in *The Yeomen of the Guard* (April 2023.) Taylor also holds the title of Miss Statesville, a preliminary title in the Miss America Organization, which has provided countless scholarship and performance opportunities. Endless gratitude to all who have supported me in my musical and professional journey.

John Kees is a junior from Jackson, Mississippi, pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Biology, a Bachelor of Arts in Music, and a minor in Mathematics. He has studied piano for twelve years, currently at UNC–Chapel Hill with Dr. Clara Yang. He has won or placed in a number of state-level piano competitions in Mississippi, including the Music Teachers’ National Association and Mississippi Music Teachers’ Association finals, and he attended the Brevard Music Festival in Brevard, North Carolina in 2019. He owes much to his music teachers, especially Jane Fox, Lynn Raley, Rachel Heard, Mimi Solomon, and Clara Yang. He would also like to thank Anton Nel and Jean-Frédéric Neuburger for their excellent comments on this concerto during masterclasses, and his family and friends for their contributions and support.

Siana Wong is a junior from Greensboro, North Carolina, pursuing a Bachelor of Music and a Bachelor of Science in Biology. Since beginning her violin studies with Professor Nicholas DiEugenio, Siana has participated in summer festivals such as the Luby Violin Symposium and the Instrumental Program at Chautauqua Institution. At UNC, Siana serves as concertmaster of both the UNC Symphony and Baroque Ensemble and is involved in chamber music. Siana is grateful for the unwavering support and guidance of both Professor DiEugenio and Professor Kalam, as well as her family and friends.

UNC SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

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VIOLIN I

Frances Norton, *concertmaster*
Ayman Bejjani
Evan Canavan
Tony Feng
Gilda Ferrie
Sharayu Gugnani
Martha-Grace Jackson
Hannah Lee
Michael Lee
Karyn Ostrom
Ameer Qaqish
Andrew Withrow
Alanna Zhang
Amber Zhen

VIOLIN II

Anant Malpani, *principal*
Lauren E. Burris
Christopher Cooper
Charlsie Doan
Michael Dolschenko
Woody Livesay
Hope Lusby
Ellis Murphy
Sophie Shan
Lilliana Soucaze
Krista Wiese Telford
Perry Tseng
Caroline Vo
Henry Woodburn

VIOLA

Tate Jones, *principal*
Jacob Bandy
Abbey Benzinger
Natalie Druffner
Alexandra Love
Annagabriela Redding
Lauren Southwell
Kinza Syeda Subzwari

CELLO

Kevin Agner, *principal*
Noor Bejjani
Katherine Chay
Shudy Du
Olivia Fults
David Daehyun Kim
Henry Nachman
Arush Narang
George Nielsen
Aaron Osborne
Ellie Rogers
Gracelynn Whitaker
Jenny Zhang

BASS

Cindy Xu, *principal*
Benjamin Burch
Julien Cox
Olivia Jones
Christopher Law, Jr.
Lydia Nusbaum

FLUTE AND PICCOLO

Hylton Baker, *principal*
Emily Qiu, *co-principal*
Abigail Poirier

OBOE AND ENGLISH HORN

Emily Harmon, *principal*
Stephen Litt

CLARINET

Ryan Phillips, *principal*
Ivan Wang, *co-principal*

BASSOON

J Suddreth, *principal*
Marni Weinreb, *co-principal*

HORN

Monet Jowers, *principal*
Thayer Hicks, *co-principal*
Blayne Owens, *co-principal*
Harrison L. Dixon
Adele Micheleen Williams,
assistant

TRUMPET

Nico McLaurin, *principal*
Mia Sabin, *co-principal*
Naomi Major

TROMBONE

Jordan Shirtz, *principal*
Derek Yao
Andrew Kuntz, *bass*

TUBA

Daniel Horn

TIMPANI

Ben Frens

PERCUSSION

Trevor Du
Nikolai Sbityakov

STAGE MANAGER

Kinza Syeda Subzwari

String players are listed alphabetically following the principals in each section