



UNC SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
TONU KALAM, MUSIC DIRECTOR AND CONDUCTOR

Thursday, October 13, 2022 at 7:30 P.M.
Beasley-Curtis Auditorium, Memorial Hall

PROGRAM

Prelude to Act II from *Saul and David* (1902)

Carl Nielsen
(1865–1931)

This Midnight Hour (2015)

Anna Clyne
(b. 1980)

INTERMISSION

Piano Concerto No. 2 in B flat major, Op. 83 (1881)

Johannes Brahms
(1833–1897)

Allegro non troppo
Allegro appassionato
Andante
Allegretto grazioso

Clara Yang, piano

SOLOIST

Praised by critics for her sensitivity, intelligence, and excitement in her playing, Chinese-American pianist **Clara Yang** has performed in notable venues such as Weill Hall at Carnegie Hall, the Forbidden City Concert Hall (Beijing), Auditorio Nacional de Música (Madrid), the Seymour Centre (Sydney), Kodak Hall at the Eastman Theatre (Rochester), the Sunset Center (Carmel), Memorial Hall (Chapel Hill), Meymandi Concert Hall (Raleigh), and on major series such as Carolina Performing Arts and Dame Myra Hess in the Chicago Cultural Center. She is currently Associate Professor of Piano and Head of Keyboard Studies at UNC-Chapel Hill.

As a concerto soloist, she has collaborated with renowned conductors such as Vladimir Ashkenazy, Long Yu, Carl St. Clair, Josep Caballe Domenech, Grant Llewellyn, Tonu Kalam, Laura Jackson, Jeff Tyzik, and George Jackson, among others. In addition, she also frequently collaborates with living composers. She performed alongside Philip Glass in the *Glass at 80* festival. She performed the world premiere of renowned composer Chen Yi's piano concerto with the top orchestra in China, the China Philharmonic Orchestra, in the Forbidden City Concert Hall in Beijing. She also performed the U.S. premiere of the concerto on the Carolina Performing Arts series. Dr. Yang has served on the artistic panel for *New Music USA*.

Her solo album, *Folding Time* (*Albany Records*), won a Global Music Awards Gold Medal, and it was selected as one of the Best of 2016 by *American Record Guide*. She has been interviewed by distinguished publications in China. Her performances were broadcast on major radio stations in the U.S. and abroad. She studied with Nelita True at the Eastman School of Music (DMA), Claude Frank at the Yale School of Music (MM, Artist Diploma), and John Perry at USC Thornton School of Music (BM). Her principal teachers in her pre-college years include Hans Boepple, Guangren Zhou, and Huili Li.

PROGRAM NOTES

Nielsen: Prelude to Act II from *Saul and David*

Carl Nielsen was the pre-eminent Danish composer of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, comparable in stature and musical originality to other significant Nordic creators such as the Norwegian Edvard Grieg, the Swedish Franz Berwald, and the Finnish Jean Sibelius. Flutists and clarinetists are familiar with Nielsen through his innovative and challenging concerti for those instruments, and many music lovers have experienced the imagination and power of his six symphonies, which were enthusiastically championed by Leonard Bernstein beginning in the 1960s and 70s.

Saul and David, based on the Biblical story in the Book of Samuel, was the first of Nielsen's two operas, premiering in 1902 in Copenhagen. While initially well received, it has not entered the standard operatic repertory, due to its somewhat episodic nature and its staging challenges. Nonetheless, it contains a great deal of beautiful music, particularly the stirring and lyrical Prelude to Act II, which showcases Nielsen's harmonic originality and mastery of orchestration.

— Tonu Kalam

Clyne: This Midnight Hour

English composer Anna Clyne, who has resided in New York for the past 20 years, is currently listed among the 50 most-performed living composers in the world. She has held posts as composer-in-residence with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, as well as Associate Composer with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra. Her output includes a wide range of music in many genres, including a Grammy-nominated concerto for two violins, and her works have been commissioned by numerous prominent musical organizations such as the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the London Sinfonietta, the Houston Ballet, BBC Radio 3, the Curtis Institute of Music, and Carnegie Hall.

This Midnight Hour is a strikingly dramatic and evocative short tone poem, jointly commissioned by the Orchestre national d'Île-de-France and the Seattle Symphony. Since its composition and premiere in 2015, it has received over 100 performances worldwide. The composer's program note follows:

The opening to This Midnight Hour is inspired by the character and power of the lower strings of L'Orchestre national d'Île de France. From here, it draws inspiration from two poems. Whilst it is not intended to depict a specific narrative, my intention is that it will evoke a visual journey for the listener.

La musica;
– mujer desnuda,
corriendo loca por la noche pura! –

— *Juan Ramón Jiménez*

Harmonie du soir

Voici venir les temps où vibrant sur sa tige
Chaque fleur s'évapore ainsi qu'un encensoir;
Les sons et les parfums tournent dans l'air du soir;
Valse mélancolique et langoureux vertige!

Chaque fleur s'évapore ainsi qu'un encensoir;
Le violon frémit comme un coeur qu'on afflige;
Valse mélancolique et langoureux vertige!
Le ciel est triste et beau comme un grand reposoir.

Le violon frémit comme un coeur qu'on afflige,
Un coeur tendre, qui hait le néant vaste et noir!
Le ciel est triste et beau comme un grand reposoir;
Le soleil s'est noyé dans son sang qui se fige.

Un coeur tendre, qui hait le néant vaste et noir,
Du passé lumineux recueille tout vestige!
Le soleil s'est noyé dans son sang qui se fige...
Ton souvenir en moi luit comme un ostensor!

— *Charles Baudelaire*

Brahms: Piano Concerto No. 2 in B flat major, Op. 83

Johannes Brahms wrote to the great pianist and friend Clara Schumann: “I want to tell you that I have written a very small piano concerto with a very small and pretty scherzo.” Ironically, he was describing one of the most monumental and technically challenging works for piano and orchestra. The work was dedicated to his teacher Eduard Marxsen. Brahms premiered it himself with the Budapest Philharmonic Orchestra in Budapest, and later he performed it numerous times across Europe.

Different from many typical piano concerti in which the orchestral part is “accompanying” the solo piano, this work integrates the soloist and the orchestra to create a symphonic drama. The first movement starts with the main theme played by a single French horn with the piano’s commentary. We embark on this epic journey, experiencing a broad range of emotions. Following this movement is an intense and impassioned scherzo in a sonata form. The third movement features a beautiful solo cello, which is the soul of the movement. In many ways, the third and the last movements inspire the texture and environment of chamber music. One of my favorite moments of this movement is the *Più adagio* section towards the end of the movement: the clarinets and the piano create a feeling that time stands still. This perhaps is one of the rare moments in the piano concerto repertoire in which such atmosphere was created. Instead of writing a grand last movement, Brahms concludes the piece with a lighthearted and beautiful *Allegretto grazioso* with some surprisingly intricate technical passage work. Perhaps this way, the equilibrium of tension and release is preserved. This concerto is very dear to my heart. It is particularly special for me to collaborate on this piece with Prof. Tonu Kalam and our wonderful UNC Symphony Orchestra.

— *Clara Yang*

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VIOLIN I

Siana Wong, *concertmaster*
Ayman Bejjani
Tony Feng
Gilda Ferrie
Sharayu Gugnani
Martha-Grace Jackson
Christopher Kim
Hannah Lee
Michael Lee
Maria Manning
Frances Norton
Karyn Ostrom
Ameer Qaqish
Alanna Zhang
Amber Zhen

VIOLIN II

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

VIOLA

Tate Jones, *principal*
Jacob Bandy
Abbey Benzinger
Natalie Druffner
Dana Lee
Alexandra Love

Monica Macharios
Annagabriela Redding
Lauren Southwell
Kinza Syeda Subzwari

CELLO

Kevin Agner, *principal*
Katherine Chay
Shudy Du
Olivia Fults
David Daehyun Kim
Arush Narang
George Nielsen
Aaron Osborne
Ellie Rogers
Claire Warr

BASS

Matthew Gimbel, Jr., *principal*
Benjamin Burch
Julien Cox
Olivia Jones
Katherine Ropp
Cindy Xu

FLUTE AND PICCOLO

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

OBOE

Emily Harmon, *principal*
Stephen Litt

CLARINET

Matthew Svec, *principal*
Andrew Byerle, *co-principal*

BASSOON

Jenna Suddreth, *principal*
Marni Weinreb

HORN

Thayer Hicks, *co-principal*
Monet Jowers, *co-principal*
Blayne Owens, *co-principal*
Harrison L. Dixon

TRUMPET

Nico McLaurin, *principal*
Naomi Major
Mia Sabin

TROMBONE

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

TUBA

Daniel Horn

TIMPANI

Ben Frens

PERCUSSION

Joey Padow
Nikolai Sbityakov

STAGE MANAGER

Kinza Syeda Subzwari

String players are listed alphabetically following the principals in each section

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