



UNC SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
TONU KALAM, MUSIC DIRECTOR AND CONDUCTOR

Wednesday, October 25, 2023 at 7:30 P.M.
Beasley-Curtis Auditorium, Memorial Hall

PROGRAM

Andante festivo (1938)

Jean Sibelius
(1865–1957)

Symphony No. 3 in A minor, Op. 44 (1936)

Lento—Allegro moderato
Adagio ma non troppo—Allegro vivace—Tempo come prima
Allegro

Sergei Rachmaninoff
(1873–1943)

(performed in commemoration of the 150th anniversary year of the composer's birth)

PROGRAM NOTES

BY TONU KALAM

Jean Sibelius: Andante festivo

Sergei Rachmaninoff: Symphony No. 3 in A minor, Op. 44

Tonight's program consists of two pieces that, at first glance, could hardly be more contrasting: the brief, simple *Andante festivo* by Sibelius, scored only for strings, with timpani added for the final few measures – followed by the complex, expansive Third Symphony by Rachmaninoff, which enlists the full dynamic and textural resources of a large modern orchestra. Despite the instrumental and stylistic differences, these works share a common historical bond. Both pieces were premiered in the 1930s, and both were developed towards the end of their creators' compositional careers. Perhaps a more striking connection is that for many decades following the deaths of Sibelius and Rachmaninoff, their music was considered old-fashioned, passé, and stylistically irrelevant, compared to the musical innovations of the early 20th century by composers such as Igor Stravinsky and Arnold Schoenberg. However, the passage of time has brought a deeper understanding and appreciation of their respective musical and structural achievements.

Jean Sibelius' *Andante festivo* has a curious genesis, having originally been conceived in 1922 for string quartet to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the Säynätsalo sawmills in Finland. It was then revised as a string octet for the 1929 wedding of Sibelius' niece, before the current version for string orchestra and timpani appeared in 1938. Sibelius conducted this last version in a recording with the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra, which was broadcast as Finland's trans-Atlantic greeting to the World's Fair held in New York in 1939 – and which remains the only existing recording of Sibelius conducting his own music. The piece comprises only a couple of simple melodic kernels and is rooted in one key throughout, with slight rhythmic and dynamic variations to create subtle contrasts. But in its singlemindedness it possesses a warmth and depth that is instantly attractive and memorable.

As a performer, Sergei Rachmaninoff is considered one of the greatest pianists of the 20th century. As a composer, his reputation once rested largely on the popularity of his Second and Third Piano Concertos and his Second Symphony, all of which were written prior to his departure from Russia in 1917. After settling in the United States, he resided first in New York and later in Beverly Hills, spending summers at his villa on Lake Lucerne in Switzerland. Due to the rigorous demands of constant touring and performing as a pianist, he had limited time to compose, and he wrote only a handful of major works in the 1920s and 1930s. Nonetheless, the quality of these later pieces contributes greatly to the more recent reassessment of his stature as a highly original and important composer. The Third Symphony was completed in 1936 and premiered by Leopold Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra, Rachmaninoff's favorite orchestra. And it was with that ensemble that Rachmaninoff himself conducted the very first recording of the piece in 1939, which remains a remarkably beautiful performance. We are delighted tonight to commemorate the 150th anniversary year of Rachmaninoff's birth by presenting this imaginative and dynamic musical canvas that is now receiving the respect and admiration it deserves.

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VIOLIN I

Frances Norton, *concertmaster*
Stella Chen
Tony Feng
Gilda Ferrie
Sharayu Gugnani
Martha-Grace Jackson
Woody Livesay
Maria Manning
Karyn Ostrom
Nidhi Pandrangi
Ameer Qaqish
Shanna Swaringen, DO
Siana Wong
Henry Woodburn
Alanna Zhang
Amber Zhen

VIOLIN II

Anant Malpani, *principal*
Nicolas Asanov
Avanish Bharadwaj
Luke Bleuel
Lauren E. Burris
Nathan Butler
Olivia Coyne
Daphne Davis
Delphine Liu
Hope Lusby
Mani Pourfazli
Nicole Razhanskiy
Lilliana Soucaze
Emmy Tang
Perry Tseng
Alice Zhong

VIOLA

Lauren Southwell, *principal*
Jacob Bandy
Abigail Benzinger
William Jackson
Andrew Jensen
Broderick Merz
Charlotte T. Spurr
Maria Workman

CELLO

David Kim, *principal*
Shudy Du
Olivia Fults
Cameron Hayward
Arush Narang
George Nielsen
Aaron Osborne
Marion Rambler
Ellie Rogers
Vidur Shah

BASS

Matt Gimbel, *principal*
Catie Banks
Benjamin F. Burch
Julien Cox
Olivia Jones
Katherine Ropp
Cindy Xu

FLUTE AND PICCOLO

Hylton Baker, *principal*
Emily Qiu
Abigail Poirier, *piccolo*

OBOE AND ENGLISH HORN

Emily Harmon, *principal*
Anna Lassiter
Stephen Litt, *English horn*

CLARINET AND BASS

CLARINET
Kevin Chen, *principal*
Garrett Sapp
Jillian Z. Diaz, *bass*

BASSOON AND CONTRABASSOON

Bartley Meinke, *principal*
Sam Brunetz
J Suddreth, *contra*

HORN

Monet Jowers, *principal*
Thayer Hicks
Neha Bharadwaj
Harrison L. Dixon

TRUMPET

Mia Sabin, *principal*
Naomi Major
Emma Wrenn

TROMBONE

Andrew Kuntz, *principal*
Derek Y. Yao
Ian Matthies, *bass*

TUBA

Daniel Horn

TIMPANI

Ben Frens

PERCUSSION

Elijah Collingwood
Trevor Du
Umaesh Kumaran
Joey Padow
Nikolai Sbityakov

HARP

Jocelyn Bowns

CELESTA

Eli Ehrlich

STAGE MANAGER

Katherine Gu

String players are listed alphabetically following the principals in each section