

UNCSO

**UNC SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA**  
**TONU KALAM, MUSIC DIRECTOR AND CONDUCTOR**

**WINNERS OF ANNUAL UNC CONCERTO COMPETITION**

*Thursday Evening, February 29, 2024 at 7:30 P.M.*  
*James and Susan Moeser Auditorium, Hill Hall*

**PROGRAM**

Overture to *La forza del destino*

Giuseppe Verdi  
(1813–1901)

Violin Concerto in D major, Op. 61  
I. Allegro ma non troppo

Ludwig van Beethoven  
(1770–1827)

Frances Norton, violin

**INTERMISSION**

Vois sous l'archet frémissant (The Violin Aria), from *Les contes d'Hoffmann* Jacques Offenbach  
(1819–1880)

Près des ramparts de Séville (Seguidilla), from *Carmen*

Georges Bizet  
(1838–1875)

Isabelle Kosempa, mezzo-soprano

Double Bass Concerto No. 1 (2012)  
III. Allegro Obsesivo

Andrés Martín  
(b. 1981)

Cindy Xu, double bass

Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis (1910)

Ralph Vaughan Williams  
(1872–1958)

*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:*

*Grace Anderson (Adjunct Instructor of Cello, Queens University, Charlotte)*

*Sandra Cotton (Instructor of Voice, Duke University, Durham)*

*Annie Jeng (Assistant Professor of Piano, University of North Carolina at Greensboro)*

## **PROGRAM NOTES**

### **Giuseppe Verdi: Overture to *La forza del destino***

*La forza del destino* (The Force of Destiny), the 22<sup>nd</sup> of Verdi's 26 operas, was commissioned by Tsar Alexander II of Russia and was first performed in 1862 in St. Petersburg. In the years following its premiere, Verdi made several revisions both to the plot and the music, and the final version was presented in Milan in 1869. This version included an entirely new overture, the one being played tonight, that is based upon motivic and thematic material associated with the characters and the drama. While the opera itself, with a rather convoluted plot, is performed with some regularity, it has not attained the popularity of Verdi's other masterpieces, such as *Rigoletto*, *La traviata*, *Aida*, *Otello*, and *Falstaff*. The dramatic and brilliant overture, however, has become a standard concert opener for orchestral programs worldwide.

— *Tonu Kalam*

### **Ludwig van Beethoven: Violin Concerto in D major, Op. 61**

Ludwig van Beethoven wrote his violin concerto in only a few weeks and completed it only hours before the first rehearsal, so that the soloist, Franz Clement, had to sight-read it with the orchestra. After Beethoven revised the piece, he remained critical of his work and after its premiere in 1806, it sank into obscurity until the 1840s, when Joseph Joachim revived it. Now it is considered one of the best violin concerti ever written and is widely performed. While some composers write the cadenzas for their concerti, Beethoven has left that task up to the soloist. In his cadenza, Soviet composer Alfred Schnittke makes use of a technique called "pastiche," which means imitating another artist's work in your own. As he expands on the themes from Beethoven's violin concerto, he weaves in quotes from other famous concerti by Dmitry Shostakovich, Béla Bartók, Johannes Brahms, and Alban Berg. In just five pages Schnittke explores many different styles, virtuosic techniques, and time periods, while pairing an elegant, classical concerto with a dissonant postmodernist cadenza.

— *Frances Norton*

### **Jacques Offenbach: *Vois sous l'archet frémissant* (The Violin Aria), from *Les contes d'Hoffmann***

Born in Germany, Jacques Offenbach was a French composer and cellist of the Romantic period. He is known for making the operetta, a lighter type of opera that is typically comedic or satirical, an international sensation. Some of his most notable operettas are *Orphée aux enfers* and *La belle Hélène*. Although he lost popularity due to a shift in musical interest after the Franco-Prussian War, his final work, *Les contes d'Hoffmann*, ended up being his most revolutionary. Offenbach died with the manuscript of *Les contes d'Hoffmann* in his hand and was never able to see it performed in public. With parts of the orchestration left unfinished, composer Ernest Guiraud and stage director Léon Carvalho were tasked with structuring the opera, making cuts, and composing the rest of the orchestration. One of the sections cut by Guiraud and Carvalho before the premiere in 1881 was "Vois sous l'archet frémissant" (The Violin Aria). However, after the manuscript became available in the 1970s, it was orchestrated and eventually made it to new editions of the opera and modern performances. As he describes the beautiful sounds of the violin, Nicklausse, Hoffmann's friend, sings "C'est l'amour vainqueur" ("It is love all-conquering") to persuade Hoffmann to see the importance of artistic love.

— *Isabelle Kosempa*

### **Georges Bizet: Près des remparts de Séville (Seguidilla), from *Carmen***

Georges Bizet was a French composer and pianist of the Romantic period. Although he composed many works, some left unfinished, *Carmen* is Bizet's most successful. Despite this, he spent much of his career struggling to gain popularity and was only celebrated for his monumental work after his death. Based on Prosper Mérimée's novella, *Carmen* has continued to be one of the most beloved works in opera. The confidence and passion of Carmen's character, opéra-comique genre, and Spanish-influenced melodies captivate audiences. The most notable arias from *Carmen* are "L'amour est un oiseau rebelle" (Habanera) and "Près des remparts de Séville" (Seguidilla) with the Habanera having one of the most recognizable melodies in classical music. "Près des remparts de Séville" ("Near the ramparts of Seville") is Carmen's seductive Act I aria. In it, she charms and persuades Don José, a soldier who is holding her captive, to set her free. Although her actions are considered scandalous, Carmen represents the idea of the liberated woman and stands as one of the strongest female heroines in opera.

— *Isabelle Kosempa*

### **Andrés Martín: Double Bass Concerto No. 1**

Andrés Martín is an Argentinian bassist, arranger, and composer of many modern works. His first bass concerto premiered in Tijuana, Mexico in 2012 with the Baja California Orchestra. It immediately gained traction in the double bass world as a new, vibrant concerto filled with rhythmic and emotional depth. His concerto first gained international recognition at the 2017 Bradetich Foundation International Double Bass Competition, and in recent years has become a staple in the double bass repertoire, earning a Composition Recognition Award in 2019 from the International Society of Bassists (ISB). In particular, the third movement, *Allegro Obsesivo*, has become the most widely recognized movement due to its spirited theme and virtuosic flair. Throughout the movement, listeners are able to experience a wide variety of musical ideas, weaving through different moods and textures that offer the audience a thrilling and powerful musical experience.

— *Cindy Xu*

### **Ralph Vaughan Williams: Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis**

Though not a religious person, Ralph Vaughan Williams was asked in 1906 to prepare a new edition of the English Hymnal. In his research he came across the music of the 16<sup>th</sup>-century composer Thomas Tallis, including a psalter melody that carried the text "Why fum'th in fight the Gentiles spite." When in 1910 Vaughan Williams received a commission to write a piece for the famous Three Choirs Festival—an event held every year since 1715 and still in existence today—he took advantage of the resonant acoustics of Gloucester Cathedral to compose an elaborate work for strings based on Tallis' melody. The ensemble consists of a large group labeled Orchestra I, which includes a solo string quartet, as well as a smaller Orchestra II of nine players who are seated apart from the rest of the ensemble. This work was one of Vaughan Williams' earliest successes as a composer, and is still one of his most popular, due to its opulent sonorities and complex textural interplay of the three instrumental groups.

— *Tonu Kalam*

## SOLOISTS

**Frances Norton** is a senior at UNC-Chapel Hill, studying English & Comparative Literature and Music. She is a recipient of the Kenan Music Scholarship and currently studies with Nicholas DiEugenio and Sarah Kim. At UNC, she enjoys playing in chamber groups and orchestra, where she is the concertmaster. When she is not in the music buildings, she leads UNC's Actively Moving Forward (AMF) chapter, a student-led grief support community, where she is co-president. In hopes to merge her love of writing and music, Frances co-writes and performs an original storytelling show, titled *The Spheres [th]at Play*, exploring connections between music and poetry through improvisation, violin duets, and solo works. Additionally, she is a writer and board member of *Subject to Change*, a new initiative with a goal of commissioning, performing, recording, and publishing new works for two violins by women and gender minority composers.

**Isabelle Kosempa**, mezzo-soprano, is a senior Music major and English minor from Durham, North Carolina. She has participated in several ensembles at UNC, including Carolina Choir, UNC Opera, and the UNC Baroque Ensemble. A dedicated performer, Isabelle has sung many roles with UNC Opera, including Ottone in Monteverdi's *L'incoronazione di Poppea* and the Gingerbread Witch in Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel*. She will perform her final role with UNC Opera this spring as Fidalma in Cimarosa's *Il matrimonio segreto*. During her time at UNC, Isabelle has participated in several National Association of Teachers of Singing (NATS) competitions and won first place in the NATS National Competition held in Chicago in the summer of 2022. She has also performed as a soloist in Dr. C. Leonard Raybon's *The Mending Sampler* and Javier Farias' *La Voz de Monica*, two new music works that were premiered at UNC. Outside of UNC, she spent two months at the Brevard Music Center in 2023 as a member of the prestigious Janiec Opera Company. There, she performed on stage with Patti LuPone, sang in the chorus of Verdi's *La traviata*, and performed as Cinderella's Mother, Granny, and the Giant in Sondheim's *Into the Woods*. This summer, Isabelle is looking forward to returning to the Janiec Opera Company to perform as the Stewardess in Jonathan Dove's *Flight*, in the chorus of Puccini's *La bohème*, and as the Coaxer in Weill's *The Threepenny Opera*. She hopes to pursue a graduate degree in opera performance and is thankful for the guidance and support she has received through the UNC music program.

**Cindy Xu** is a junior from Baton Rouge, Louisiana, pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Information Science and a Bachelor of Arts in Music. Starting in her freshman year of high school, Cindy began her double bass studies under Yung-chiao Wei, a Professor of Double Bass at Louisiana State University. During her studies, Cindy attended numerous competitions and festivals, including Interlochen Arts Camp, Master Players Festival, and the LMEA State Solo Assessment. At UNC, Cindy has been active in the music department, participating in the UNC Symphony Orchestra, University Chamber Players, and the Baroque Ensemble. Outside of her music studies, Cindy is an active member of UNC Flying Silk, a traditional Chinese dance group on campus. Cindy cannot express enough thanks towards her professor, Leonid Finkelshteyn, for his unwavering support, and for pushing her to be a better musician. She would also like to express her endless gratitude to Professor Wei and her family, as without their initial push and guidance, Cindy would have never even considered music as an option in university. Lastly, Cindy would like to express her deepest appreciation to the Kenan Music Scholars program, as without their aid, none of this would have been possible.

# UNC SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

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## **VIOLIN I**

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

## **VIOLIN II**

Anant Malpani, *principal*  
Nicolas Asanov  
Avanish Bharadwaj  
Lauren E. Burris  
Nathan Butler  
Olivia Coyne  
Daphne Davis\*  
Hope Lusby  
Mani Pourfazli  
Nicole Razhanskiy  
Chloe Robinson  
Lilliana Soucaze  
Krista Telford  
Perry Tseng  
Kaley Wong\*  
Alice Zhong

## **VIOLA**

Lauren Southwell, *principal*  
Jacob Bandy\*  
Abigail Benzinger  
Natalie Druffner\*  
Garrett Haynes  
William Jackson  
Andrew Jensen  
Broderick Merz  
Charlotte T. Spurr

## **CELLO**

David Kim, *principal*  
Katherine Chay  
Olivia Fults  
Cameron Hayward  
Jiyeon Moon  
Arush Narang\*  
George Nielsen  
Marion Rambler\*  
Ellie Rogers  
Vidur Shah  
Claire Warr

## **BASS**

Matt Gimbel, *principal*  
Benjamin F. Burch  
Julien Cox  
Olivia Jones  
Nora O'Donnell  
Katherine Ropp\*

## **FLUTE AND PICCOLO**

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

## **OBOE**

Emily Harmon, *principal*  
Stephen Litt, *co-principal*  
Anna Lassiter

## **CLARINET AND BASS**

### **CLARINET**

Kevin Chen, *principal*  
Garrett Sapp, *co-principal*  
Jillian Z. Diaz

### **BASSOON**

Bartley Meinke, *principal*  
Sam Brunetz, *co-principal*  
J Suddreth

## **HORN**

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

## **TRUMPET**

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

## **TROMBONE**

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

## **TUBA**

Daniel Horn

## **TIMPANI**

Ben Frens

## **PERCUSSION**

Trevor Du  
Joey Padow

## **HARP**

Matthew Gillespie

## **STAGE MANAGER**

Katherine Gu

*\*Vaughan Williams Orchestra II Member*

*String players are listed alphabetically following the principals in each section*

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