PROGRAM

PRINCETON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2005 4:00 P.M. RICHARDSON AUDITORIUM PRINCETON

MARK LAYCOCK, *Music Director*

PRINCETON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

MARK LAYCOCK, *Conducting*
MICHAEL BORISKIN, *Piano*

PROKOFIEV Symphony No. 1 "Classical"
I. Allegro con brio
II. Larghetto
III. Gavotte: Non troppo allegro
IV. Molto vivace

PERLE Concerto No. 2 for Piano and Orchestra
I. Allegro molto
II. Adagio
III. Allegro
MICHAEL BORISKIN

INTERMISSION

SIBELIUS Symphony No. 2, in D Major
I. Allegretto
II. Tempo andante, ma rubato
III. Vivacissimo
IV. Finale: Allegro moderato

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GLENMEDE

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No one will be admitted during the performance of a piece.

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This program is funded in part by the
New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Dept. of State

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY, MAESTRO!

MARK LAYCOCK - 20TH SEASON

Twenty years ago, the board of trustees of what was then known as the Chamber Symphony of Princeton convened an extraordinary session, confronting the ultimate question of whether the orchestra should, or even could, continue to exist, given the untimely death of its founder and music director, Portia Sonnenfeld. Deciding that the music must not stop, they tapped a rising young conductor to lead the six-year-old ensemble, a decision that has been consistently redeemed over the years as **Mark Laycock opens his 20th season as Music Director of the Princeton Symphony Orchestra**. Under Maestro Laycock's baton, the Princeton Symphony Orchestra has grown from a small chamber orchestra with a three concert season into a full and critically acclaimed symphony orchestra.

At age 21, Laycock made his conducting début with the Philadelphia Orchestra, beginning a relationship that has resulted in his reengagement on numerous occasions over the years. His multiple reengagements also include those with L'Orchestre Symphonique d'Montréal, the Philharmonia Orchestra of London at Royal Festival Hall and the Barbican Centre, and the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra in St. Paul and on tour.

Maestro Laycock holds the distinction of being the first non-Russian ever invited to appear at the Moscow Autumn Festival, conducting a program at the famed Tchaikovsky Hall. He also conducted the inaugural concert at the new Cairo Opera House in 1988, as well as the sold-out first concert of classical music ever made open to the public in Amman, Jordan. This sequence of events was chronicled in "Classical Caravan," an Emmy Award-winning television documentary produced by public television. His début in Mexico City's Palacio de Bellas Artes in 2001 resulted in an invitation to return the following summer to teach a week-long master class to Mexico's regional conductors. In February 2004 he conducted a subscription series with the George Enescu Philharmonic in Bucharest, also resulting in immediate reengagement.

Mark Laycock began conducting at the age of 16, advancing his studies at the St. Louis Conservatory of Music, and from 1975 to 1979 studied as a violist under the tutelage of the Curtis String Quartet in Philadelphia. **As a published composer, his works have been performed** by the Philadelphia Orchestra, New Jersey Symphony Orchestra, Alabama Symphony Orchestra, Canton (OH) Symphony Orchestra and the Princeton Symphony Orchestra, among others. Having conducted more than 1,200 works, Laycock has developed a reputation for being able to step in at the last minute, including being called on very short notice to conduct programs that have included Brahms' 1st and 4th Symphonies, as well as Strauss' monumental *Ein Heldenleben*, without rehearsal and to great acclaim.

Mark Laycock

Maestro Laycock was a Conducting Fellow at the Aspen Music Festival, and the winner of the Leopold Stokowski Memorial Conducting Competition in 1978. As a participant of "Project Uplift," in the Spring of 2005 he traveled to donate his services conducting the Verdi Requiem in Chelyabinsk, and makes his formal Paris debut with the Orchestral Ensemble de Paris in October 2005.

Laycock was also recently appointed Artistic Director of the Lake Placid Sinfonietta, with whom he completed his second season during the summer of 2005. He also served previously as Associate Conductor of the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra and Music Director of Orchestra London Canada.

"**Laycock makes clear with every composition, with every phrase, that his heart is in the music,** that he is not playing it because it is fashionable or that some parts of his audience demand it."

— **The Times of Trenton**

"**The sense of self-assurance and belief in one's personal integrity and approach to life as a source of spiritual inspiration and strength** were the elements Laycock chose, creating a musical experience that left listeners moved and thoughtful."

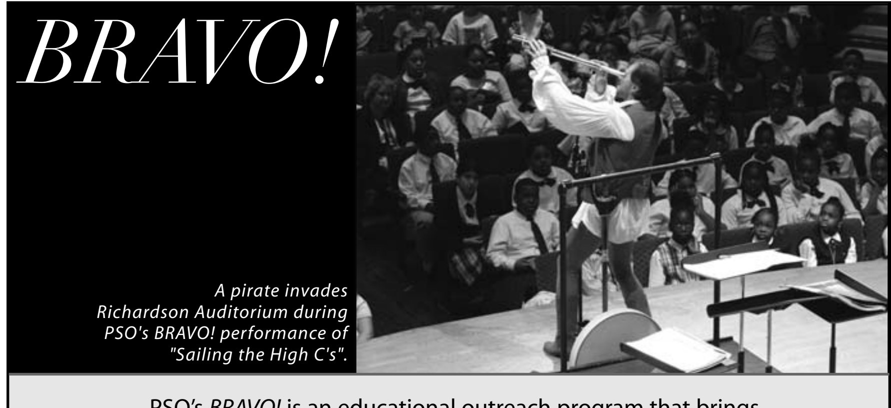
— **Classical New Jersey**

"Last Sunday I heard the Princeton Symphony Orchestra. **It was an experience to savor and to cherish forever.** The performance was musically excellent, and the orchestra managed to keep up with its maestro, Mark Laycock, who was passionate about what he was doing and brought that fervor to every performer...this is one day I'll never forget."

— **Asbury Park Press**

MICHAEL BORISKIN, ***piano*****,** widely hailed as one of the most versatile and dynamic American pianists of his generation, has performed throughout the United States and in over 30 countries. He appears regularly at many of the world's foremost concert venues, including the Kennedy Center, Lincoln Center, Carnegie Hall, BBC in London, Theatre des Champs-Elysées in Paris, and Vienna's Arnold Schoenberg Center. He also performs with leading international orchestras, including the Munich and Polish National Radio Orchestras, San Francisco, Utah, and Seattle Symphonies, UNAM Philharmonic of Mexico, and American Composers Orchestra, and, as a sought-after chamber music collaborator, with the Borromeo, Lark, St. Lawrence, and St. Petersburg String Quartets, Dorian and Arioso Wind Quintets, and New York Philharmonic Ensembles. A prolific recording artist, his discography ranges widely from Brahms and Tchaikovsky to the present on BMG/Conifer, Arabesque, New World, Koch, and many other labels. His innovative National Public Radio series, CENTURYVIEW, was heard regularly for three years on over 200 stations coast-to-coast, and he was Music Director for three seasons of Mikhail Baryshnikov's White Oak Dance Project. His writing has appeared in many publications, and he has served as an artistic advisor or program consultant for the New York Philharmonic, Lincoln Center, Carnegie Hall, and the U.S. State Department. Mr. Boriskin is Artistic and Executive Director of Copland House, the unique creative center for American music based at Aaron Copland's restored, landmark home near New York City.

BRAVO!



A pirate invades Richardson Auditorium during PSO's BRAVO! performance of "Sailing the High C's".

PSO's *BRAVO!* is an educational outreach program that brings musical magic to thousands of area schoolchildren every year.

Wholly self-funded – costing nothing to the schools or the children's families – *BRAVO!* is a miracle made possible by people who believe, as we do, that music matters.

PLEASE SUPPORT THE PRINCETON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA!

MARK LAYCOCK, *Music Director*

Violin I
Basia Danilow, *Concertmaster*
Margaret Banks
Lisa Shihoten
Kevin Tsai
Richard Hsu
Hanfang Zhang
Kiri Murakami
Janey Choi
Omar Guey
Catherine Mandelbaum

Violin II
Denise Huizenga
Michelle Brazier
Carmina Gagliardi
Melanie Clarke
Susan Dominguez
Caleb Burhans
Mariko Komura
Nancy Ronquist

Viola
Stephanie Griffin
Elizabeth Schulze Hostetter
Lisa Hammell
Jacqueline Watson
Clifford Young
Emily Laycock
Kathleen Foster

Cello
Jodi Beder
Elizabeth Loughran
Elizabeth Thompson
Talia Schiff
Stephen Framil
John Enz
Katherine Cherbas

Bass
Joanne Bates
Daniel Hudson
Ben Tedoff
Stephen Groat

Flute
Jasmine Choi
Amy Wolfe

Oboe
James Button
Erin Gustafson

Clarinet
David Hattner
Sherry Hartman Apgar

Bassoon
Roe Goodman
Seth Baer

Horn
Douglas Lundeen
Ian Zook
Paul Rosenberg
Jan Lewis

Trumpet
Joseph Reardon
Gerald Serfass
Thomas Cook

Trombone
Brendan Hartz
Lars Wendt

Bass Trombone
Jonathan Schubert

Tuba
Gary Cattley

Timpani
Adrienne Ostrander

Percussion
Phyllis Bitow
Greg Giannascoli

PRINCETON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

www.princetonsymphony.org

PSO POPS

Holiday Concert

Saturday (note new day!), December 17, 2005, 4:00 pm
Richardson Auditorium
Stuart Neill, *tenor;* **Princeton High School Choir**

Circle PSO's holiday concert date on your calendar, when the magic of music weaves together an entire community in holiday warmth and friendship. Open your first present of the holidays when the Princeton Symphony Orchestra strikes up a perfect afternoon of holiday favorites, great symphonic classics, and the annual sing-along. Bring yourself, bring the kids, bring the grandfolks!

Adults, $30 Children, $18

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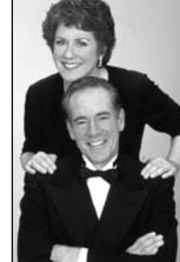

...PSO POPS PLAYS BROADWAY

He Said, She Said

Starring Judy Kaye and Mark Jacoby

Saturday, February 4, 2006, 8:00 pm
Richardson Auditorium

PSO's second smash season of Broadway pops pairs Tony winner **Judy Kaye** (*Phantom of the Opera, Mama Mia!, On the Twentieth Century, Ragtime,* NYC Opera, NY Philharmonic, Boston Pops) with Tony nominee **Mark Jacoby** (*Phantom, Nine, Showboat, Sweet Charity*), in a good-natured battle-royale of the sexes! You'll swing and you'll swoon to the hit songs from Broadway's legendary shows by Sondheim, Bernstein, Rogers, Berlin, Porter, Lerner, Weill and more.

$60, 48, 33, 15

FOR TICKETS CALL
(609) 497-0020

ELIZABETH SCHULZE HOSTETTER, ***viola,*** completed her studies at Indiana University under the tutelage of Kim Kashkashian and Csaba Erdelyi. She has extensive experience as a chamber musician, orchestral musician, soloist and teacher, and currently maintains a private teaching studio.

Ms. Hostetter is a member of the Princeton Symphony Orchestra as well as principal viola with the New Jersey Opera Theatre. She has previously performed as principal viola of the Plainfield Symphony and the Zephyr Ensemble, as well as assistant principal of the Teatro Massimo Bellini in Italy. She has appeared as a soloist with the Plainfield Symphony and the New Jersey Youth Symphony, performed as a member of the Madison String Quartet and given recitals throughout the New York Metropolitan area.

Ms. Hostetter is Assistant Director, and Coordinator of the string program of Drew Summer Music based at Drew University where she is also an Affiliate Artist. She conducts the string orchestra Camerata of the Greater Princeton Youth Orchestra.

Mrs. Schulze Hostetter made her New York debut at Weill Recital Hall on May 22, 2003, presented by Artists International. She resides in Union, NJ with her husband, conductor, Paul Hostetter.

TALIA SCHIFF, ***cello,*** completed her undergraduate studies at Boston University under Leslie Parnas, where she was the recipient of the Edwin E. Stein Award for Excellence in Musical Studies. As winner of the 1982 Austrian-American Society Mozarteum Scholarship Competition she was awarded a summer of study in Salzburg with legendary cellist Antonio Janigro. She later attended the Peabody Institute in Baltimore, earning her Master's degree in the studios of concert cellists Stephen Kates and Yehuda Hanani. Ms. Schiff subsequently went on to help found the Castalia String Trio, semifinalists in the 1987 Fischoff International Chamber Music Competition.

In 1989 Ms. Schiff continued to pursue her love of chamber music by becoming a founding member of the Tenor Clef Dwellers: a cello quartet. For the next decade she devoted much of her artistic energy to developing the performance and repertoire of the cello quartet ensemble. In Spring of 2001, a collection of music she had transcribed for the Tenor Clef Dwellers' performances was published by Musicelli Publications.

A member of the Delaware Symphony for many years, Ms. Schiff currently performs with the Princeton Symphony Orchestra. She is also principal cellist with the Pottstown Symphony, and a substitute cellist with the Philadelphia Opera Company orchestra, the Pennsylvania Ballet orchestra, the Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia, Philly Pops and the Philadelphia Orchestra. Her diverse activities include performing the solo cello part in the July, 2002 world premier of the Ben Steinberg work *Psalm of Thanksgiving* in Philadelphia's Verizon Hall.

Symphony No. 1, "Classical"

SERGEY PROKOFIEV (1891 – 1953)

"The 'Classical' Symphony is an enchantment; a sort of unpublished Mozart, it possesses all his grace, fluidity and divine perfection; and the orchestration streams out in crystal jets..." - Florent Schmitt, *La Revue de France, 1927*

Peter and the Wolf joins with the "Classical" Symphony in remaining Prokofiev's most popular compositions; charming and readily accessible, these 20th century gems appeal to children and music-lovers of all ages. Chronologically, the symphony is Prokofiev's twenty-fifth in order of creation (1916-1917); *Peter*, his sixty-seventh (1936). In the decade from the time of his opus No.1, *Piano Sonata in F minor* (1907) until the "Classical" Symphony, Prokofiev realized substantial compositional achievements, with *Sinfonietta*, First and Second Piano Concerti, a Stravinsky-inspired *Scythian Suite*, First Violin Concerto, a ballet, *Chout* ("The Buffoon"), and he was progressing on his opera, *The Gambler.* Why would Prokofiev, a published and recognized composer, reach back into the "classical" period of music, and the style of Josef Haydn (1732-1809), in choosing the design for *his* first symphony?

Thankfully we can turn to the composer's own words on the matter:

> "…I deliberately did not take my piano with me, for I wished to try composing without it. Until this time I had always composed at the piano, but I noticed that thematic material composed without the piano was often better. (…) I had been toying with the idea of writing a whole symphony without the piano; I believed the orchestra would sound more natural. (…) So this is how the project of writing a symphony in the style of Haydn came about – Haydn's technique had become particularly clear to me after working with Tcherepnin and it seemed it would be easier to dive into the deep waters of writing without the piano if I worked in a familiar setting. If Haydn had lived in our era, I thought he would have retained his compositional style but would also have absorbed something from what was new. That's the kind of symphony I wanted to compose: a symphony in the classical style. Then, when it started to come together, I renamed it as the 'Classical Symphony.' I called it that for several reasons: first of all, because it was easier that way; secondly, out of naughtiness and a desire to 'tease the geese, secretly hoping that in the end I would have my way if the title 'Classical' stuck."

Surely, we're reasonable in asking if this "Classical" Symphony was, perhaps, a necessary step in establishing Prokofiev's mastery of the "old form" before risking a launch into the production of his brand of a "modern" 20th century Symphony? Or, that by paying homage to the great and revered 18th century masters he had earned his right to be different – and to seize an opportunity for well-intentioned humor and parody? Or, that immersing himself into a project looking back into another time offered "a welcome escape from ugly political realities" plaguing his existence? "I was in the streets of Petrograd while the fighting was going on, hiding behind house corners when the shooting came too close…" penned the composer in February, 1917.

Whatever and whichever answers may or may not fit, Prokofiev, in composing this work, stimulated an already simmering longing within the western musical community to revisit the worlds of Haydn and Mozart; 20th century neo-classicism remains alive and well.

The world premiere of the "Classical" Symphony took place on April 21st, 1918, in Petrograd, the composer conducting, the dedication to Prokofiev's schoolmate, Boris Assafieff; by that December 11th, when he led the Russian Symphony Society in the symphony's American premiere at Carnegie Hall, Prokofiev had already left Russia, not to resettle for nearly twenty years. Travel to America and western Europe during this self-imposed exile provided Prokofiev with opportunities that did not, and likely would not, exist in "the new" Russia – creative freedoms, publication privileges and generous remuneration. His urge to leave Russia, amid the turmoil and dangers of revolution and counter-revolution, must have been powerful; Prokofiev chose the safer, but hardly shorter, route out – across the expanse of Siberia by rail, then by ship from Japan to America.

In California, once cleared of charges suspecting he was a Bolshevik spy, Prokofiev boarded a train for New York and, for this wandering Russian, a conducting and recital career to mixed critical review. His *Love for Three Oranges* was composed and produced here. Marriage to soprano Lina Llubera was followed by a restlessness and trips back and forth to Europe; Prokofiev moved to Paris in 1923. Finally settled back in Moscow in 1936, Prokofiev remained in his native Russia, except for concerts and appearances once again in America and in western Europe. A periodic victim of Josef Stalin's crackdowns on the creative arts, Prokofiev survived them all – some, all too close for comfort.

Felled by a stroke on March 5, 1953, Prokofiev's passing was universally mourned. His contributions to 20th century music are legion; in opera, ballet, symphonies, concertos, chamber repertoire, instrumental and memorable film scores - all reaching even wider audiences year after year. Not so Josef Stalin, Prokofiev's nemesis, who died less than an hour later, from the same cause; that event sadly diminishing the official mourning afforded Russia's 20th century musical giant.

On the occasion of his fiftieth birthday in 1941, Prokofiev outlined, not necessarily in any order, the "five lines of development" that guided his composition:

1. Classical; i.e., traditional (his mother and first piano teacher, Maria Grigorevna, played Mozart and Haydn sonatas for Sergey from earliest childhood. These works helped form his musical fundamentals);
2. Innovatory; new harmonics (Prokofiev's original and distinctive modern melodies and development);
3. Toccata; rapid, rhythmically precise motion (from Robert Schumann's *Toccata* for piano, a brilliantly fiery and demanding challenge);
4. Lyrical; (found in abundance among Prokofiev's works, especially the popular *Peter and the Wolf, Romeo and Juliet,* Symphony No. 5, "Classical" Symphony and *Alexander Nevsky* film score); and

5. Scherzo; comic (readily apparent in *The Love for Three Oranges, Lt. Kije Suite* and *Le Pas d'acier).*

Prokofiev's "Classical" Symphony is cast in the typical four movements, with "intentional irregularities" designed to inject wit, humor and playful subtleties. From his son, Oleg, this observation: "My father first writes music and then 'Prokofievizes' it."

I. Allegro con brio

Following a "short" introduction (the whole symphony is only fifteen minutes long), the main theme appears: Could this be Haydn? Not really. For one example, rather than repeating the theme a step higher on the musical scale, usual in a truly "classical" work, Prokofiev reverses the tactic by sending the repeat a step lower on the scale – clearly not Haydnesque.

II. Larghetto

Scoring the violins to play that far up in their register, as we hear just seconds into the movement, is a "Prokofievism," a technique Haydn would not have implemented, nor would he have employed some of the unusual rhythms also found in this slow section. A "near beer," but not the real thing.

III. Gavotte: Non troppo allegro

Third movements in classical period symphonies were often *minuet* in style; Prokofiev here substitutes the *gavotte* (originally a *danse grave,* requiring the dancers to lift their feet from the floor, as opposed to shuffling their feet about the floor), a sixteenth century court dance which evolved into "the dignified, pompous and chaste dance of Haydn's day with low bows and curtsies" – the composer poking fun, albeit brief and amusing itself, in ninety seconds.

IV. Molto vivace

In closing the work Prokofiev imparts to this movement a rapid-fire "effervescence," featuring a variety of "Prokofievisms" with clever and surprising twists and turns - delicious parody, all in affection and reverence to that "classical" age gone by.

Piano Concerto No. 2

GEORGE PERLE (1915 –)

PSO is proud to bring together George Perle's *Piano Concerto No. 2* (1992) and renowned pianist Michael Boriskin, for whom the work was written.

Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven and Schubert were the main players in the musical tradition that proclaimed Vienna their capital of "classical" and "early-romantic" activity, from mid-18th century through the first third of the 19th. These seminal figures had no way of knowing that they were the "first Viennese School of Music;" the "Second" school was not founded until the first decade of the last century by Arnold Schoenberg, and continued, later, by his disciples, Anton Webern and Alban Berg.

Eons separate these two musical disciplines. The "Second School" was born in Schoenberg's head during a time of spectacular changes; Einstein advanced his "Theory of Relativity," Sigmund Freud began interpreting dreams, Max Planck promoted his "quantum theory" and, in Kitty Hawk, the Wright brothers demonstrated powered flight. Schoenberg's concept was to abandon "tonality" in music, adopting instead "non-tonality, or "atonality" as the constructive foundation of music composition.

George Perle has succeeded in developing his own principles of music creativity, although "owing much to the thinking of Schoenberg, Bartok, Berg and Stravinsky," yet, avoiding "serialism and most post-Schoenbergian practice."

George Perle has enjoyed outstanding recognition and appreciation for his work. He was awarded the 1986 Pulitzer Prize in music (for his Fourth Wind Quintet) and won a MacArthur Fellowship that very same year. A native of Bayonne, New Jersey, Dr. Perle received his Ph.D. from New York University and his early musical education in Chicago. His move to New York City followed his service in World War II. Much heralded, also, as teacher and author, most recently of *The Listening Composer*, George Perle is Professor Emeritus at the City University of New York, has held the visiting Ernst Bloch Professorship of Music at U.C. Berkley, has been three-time composer-in-residence at the Tanglewood Music Center (where his music has been frequently performed), has been active as guest composer and lecturer both here and abroad, and is a world's authority on the music of Alban Berg.

Recordings of Dr. Perle's substantial compositional achievements are to be found on the CRI, Nonesuch and New World Records labels and cover these genres: Orchestral, including concerti for cello, piano and winds and percussion, a short symphony, two sinfoniettas; concert band, large chamber ensembles, three Serenades and his *Critical Moments*; wind and string quartets and quintets; instrumental duets; numerous keyboard, wind and string solos; works for voice and piano, chorus and his *The Birds*, incidental music based on the work of Aristophanes.

Music critic Andrew Porter writes, "Perle's renown as an analyst and scholar may have diverted some of the attention that should be given to his merits as a composer…what matters to listeners is his achievement; the vivid melodic gestures, the lively rhythmic sense, the clarity and shapeliness of his discourse and, quite simply, the chief grace of his utterance."

George Perle, in his impact upon 20th and now 21st century musical thought and outlook, has brought honor and respect to himself and to his American roots; the world-wide music community gives thanks for his intellect, his energy, his warmth and passion.

Notes by Michael Boriskin:

Over the past half-century, George Perle has worked toward nothing less than the creation of what he has called "a new kind of tonal music," a coherent, comprehensive musical language "that did the same things music had always done, [through] harmonic direction, phrases, cadences, and such – in short, the things that make tonal music comprehensive."

The highly evolved post-tonal harmonic vocabulary, called "12-tone tonality," has as much to do with certain common procedures utilized by such seemingly disparate composers as Berg, Bartók, Stravinsky, Scriabin, Debussy, and Varèse as with *Schoenbergian* serial composition. Perle's innovative work has clearly revealed an embryonic common practice amongst these composers, once thought unrelated and even artistically antagonistic.

Perle's extensive keyboard catalogue, including two works for solo piano with large chamber ensembles, grew out of his lifelong love of the instrument, and represents a vital contribution to the modern repertoire. Only in 1990, however, did he attend to the piano concerto, at which point he produced not one but two substantial works. The second concerto, a Koussevitzky Music Foundation commission written for and dedicated to this pianist in 1992, exhibits a propulsive energy, quick wit, and scintillating *Mozartean* lucidity. The instrumental forces maintain Perle's characteristic chamber music ideal, and work collectively toward a common goal; soloist and orchestra cooperate, rather than compete. As always, Perle's sophisticated harmonic language yields remarkably rich chordal writing and felicitous, euphonious textures.

The arduous, virtually non-stop solo part begins each movement, introduces every significant musical event, and includes two substantial *cadenzas*. The first movement, in a kind of hybrid *sonata-allegro* and *rondo* form, is dominated by two distinctive ideas: a jaunty yet resolute tune heard at the outset in the piano, and a skipping figure of triplets and chords, shared by soloist and orchestra. The ensuing middle section elaborates upon these; starting somewhat hesitantly above an insistent viola trill, the music bursts into a headlong dialogue between piano and orchestra, which eventually culminates in a return to the opening music. A varied recapitulation follows, into which is inserted the soloist's eventful *cadenza*, encapsulating the movement's main material. The snare drum, which helped open the concerto, prematurely intrudes, signaling the orchestra's imminent return; the formal restatement of material heard earlier resumes, bringing the movement to its somewhat unexpected conclusion.

The *adagio* opens with the piano's sighing, plaintive figure, which will eventually reappear twice in the orchestra, to punctuate the musical narrative. Phrases and gestures seem to strive for goals that remain unfulfilled by this delicate movement's end. The music is, at times, pared down to a few soft tones, barely clinging to the edge of audibility. A fluid pulse, several pronounced silences, and the blossoming of aphoristic gestures into expansive, drawn-out phrases create a sense of spaciousness and suspended time.

The brash *finale*, in a sort of modified *sonata-allegro* form, is launched by a spirited triplet flourish in the piano; though never heard again just this way, it contains elements from which the movement evolves. The pianist soon turns accompanist, first virtuosically partnering a meandering horn solo, then supporting in octaves a soaring string chorale. The distinctive triplets return in another of the rapid-fire colloquies that characterized the work's outer movements. While the recurrence of the horn solo appears to herald a conventional restatement of the previous material, the piano abruptly takes over in a wide-ranging *cadenza*. The horn

reasserts itself briefly, before the reappearance of the strings' chorale and a final reference to the triplets guide the work to its vigorous closing chords.

Symphony No. 2 in D Major, Opus 43

JEAN SIBELIUS (1865 – 1957)

Gustav Mahler's *Symphony No. 5*, in that splendid performance which opened the Princeton Symphony Orchestra's season, was composed during the same time frame, 1901-1902, as this Sibelius *Symphony No. 2*.

Imagine listening in on a conversation between Gustav Mahler (1860 -1910) and Jean Sibelius (1865-1957) discussing the "nature of the symphony."

Imagine no longer. In 1907, during his conducting tour of Finland, Mahler met with Sibelius and had that very conversation, and we owe it to the latter for memorializing the event.

Sibelius recalled, "Mahler's grave heart trouble forced him to lead an ascetic life, and he was not fond of dinners and banquets; contact was established between us in some walks. When our conversation touched on the essence of the symphony, I said that I admired its severity and style and the profound logic that created an inner connection between all the motifs…"

"Mahler's opinion was just the reverse, "*Nein, die Symphonie muss sein wie die Welt. Sie muss alles umfassen."* ("No, the symphony must be like the world. It must embrace everything.")

"My response was," Sibelius continued, "if we understood the world, we would realize that there is a logic of harmony underlying its manifold apparent dissonances."

Every aspect of melody has a "definite logical meaning" in the music of Sibelius. Robert Kajanus, then conductor of the Helsinki Philharmonic and a foremost interpreter of these symphonies, explained that his success with them was due to his understanding of Sibelius' mind as well as his music. Whenever Sibelius would rehearse the orchestra Kajanus tried to slip into the hall unnoticed. On one occasion Sibelius spotted him and asked why he was intruding. Kajanus answered, "I wanted to see your mind in the process of thinking."

Relatively fewer early works, mostly instrumental, from ages sixteen through twenty-four, illustrate Sibelius' struggle to pursue a study in music against family pressures to enter the law (a very similar situation in Tchaikovsky's life) until he at last prevailed. Beginning in 1890 this "late bloomer" expanded into orchestral composition; from his popular *En Saga* and works expounding musically on his fascination with Finnish mythology, it would be until 1898, at age 33, that Sibelius produced his first symphony.

Witnessed during the next twenty-seven years would be an outpouring of creative forces nearly fifty compositions strong: Six symphonies, the violin concerto, cantatas for chorus and orchestra, suites and numerous tone poems - a mélange of popularly-received works

including, from 1900, Sibelius' best-known score, *Finlandia*, at once a very political and personal "Declaration of Independence." Long under the control of Czarist Russia, Finland finally won its freedom in 1917.

At age 64 in 1929, Jean Sibelius ceased composing, never again to "put ink to music paper;" he had nothing important more to say. Unlike Rossini, whose early retirement (his 39th and final opera, *William Tell*, was composed when he was 37) would find him a wealthy and naughty *bon vivant,* Finland's most famous composer enjoyed his cigars and bottles of claret (sadly, a few too many), watching the world go by, suggesting, "Let no one imagine that composing grows easier with the years if the composer takes his art seriously. The older the artist, the greater the demands he imposes upon himself…One is always faced with fresh problems."

His international popularity reached its zenith in the 1930s and 1940s, as shown in an excerpt from a 1947 volume on orchestral compositions, regarding the *Second Symphony,* "In fact, no symphony since Tchaikovsky's *Pathetique* has won such popularity in America. It has entered the household word class, and its most conspicuous theme is as familiar as "Home Sweet Home." Indeed, it is now far oftener whistled and hummed." (Isn't the "coming home" theme from Dvorak's *New World Symphony* worthy for that list?)

Finland's physical presence, its mountains and forests and proximity to the sea, blended with its relative isolation (particularly before the airplane), rugged climate and intensely difficult language, out of the European mainstream (but similar somewhat to Hungarian), understandably colored Sibelius' musical personality.

Travel, first to Berlin, then on to Vienna and Italy, offered Jean an opportunity to study with conductors Hans Richter and Karl Goldmark, to observe the European musical scene and its varied cast, experience the turmoil of big-city life and reject the contemporary, especially Viennese, music. Only in returning to his native environment was Sibelius refreshed and energized once again. In his mid-twenties by now, the composition of the tone poem *Kullervo* was a sensational success; he had "arrived." Marriage to Aino Jarnefelt, daughter to a Finnish General, found the couple honeymooning on the Karelian Isthmus, an ideal location at which to study "the aboriginal language of music," the ancient folks songs of his precious native land.

In his *Second Symphony,* Sibelius ushers in a change of style, still utilizing the traditional four part construction but now reversing the inner process in the first two movements, labeled "…a veritable revolution…the introduction of an entirely new principle into symphonic form." Within most symphonic movements of the day, the theme is presented in the exposition, then variously fragmented for obligatory analysis in the following development section, then re-assembled back into the original theme in the recapitulation, and final phase.

In the "reverse process," as suggested in Alexander Borodin's *Second Symphony* (1876), believed by one musicologist to be the model for Sibelius, it is seemingly unrelated fragments that are first presented (exposition); then synthesized (combining different elements into the whole) in stages, emerging into the full theme (development) and, finally, re-fragmented, returned to its various and different elements (recapitulation).

Author Henry Thomas describes this process (in 1940 parlance), "Before our ears the seed develops into the flower, the flower absorbs the rain and the dew, and then the entire plant is dissolved into dust while the new seeds take up the process all over again."

If this work's first movement, as Georg Schneevoigt, a close friend of Sibelius' claims, depicts the "quiet, pastoral life of the Finnish people," with its folksong-like endearments, then the second may be the melancholy felt in the "presence of Russian 'occupiers' on Finnish soil." In length, the greatest of all four, this movement calls upon timpani rolls and mournful bassoons among various instrumental techniques in its palpable display of utter sadness.

"The awakening of national resistance" motif is realized immediately as the third movement energetically dashes off in exchanges between woodwinds and strings with reinforcing brass bursts, then momentarily finding a calm that's quickly broken into a re-energization, itself short-lived, as plans develop to introduce the theme that blends itself into the last movement, "The triumph over foreign rule" motif.

Memorable, both in its melodious grandeur and in the welling, thrilling and heartfelt presentation, this fourth movement soars with triumphant trumpet calls and brass chorales, joining with swirling woodwinds, pleading strings and pulse-pounding timpani in rising to its majestic hymn of hope.

Once, while Robert Kajanus was rehearsing the second symphony with only two trumpets – the third having succumbed to influenza – Sibelius interrupted him and departed abruptly, "I can only hear the trumpet which isn't there," he explained, "and I can't stand it any longer."

Sibelius rarely invited musicians to his home. "They talk of nothing but money and jobs. Give me businessmen every time" he said. "They really are interested in music and art."

"Never pay attention to what the critics say," he warned a pupil. "Remember, a statue has never been set up in honor of a critic!"

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