

GRAND JUNCTION SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Kirk Gustafson

music director

Pathétique

Tuesday, March 6, 2012

7:30pm

GJHS Auditorium

Kirk Gustafson conductor

Linda Wang, violin

Overture to the Bartered Bride

Bedřich Smetana

Through the Meadows

Melissa Elías
Arr. Clark Gault

Violin Concerto, Op 14

Allegro

Andante

Presto in moto perpetuo

Samuel Barber

Linda Wang, violin

INTERMISSION

Symphony No. 6 in B minor (Pathétique)

Adagio; Allegro non troppo

Allegro con grazia

Allegro molto vivace

Finale: Adagio lamentoso

Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

This concert underwritten in part by:

Chuck & Robbie Breaux

Linda Wang

Linda Wang is among the premier violinists of her generation, consistently praised for her artistry, warm, singing tone and charismatic performances.

Since her debut with Zubin Mehta and the New York Philharmonic at the age of nine, Linda Wang has performed concerti throughout the United States with orchestras in California, Arizona, Texas, Alaska, Georgia, Idaho, Wisconsin, Iowa, Missouri, Colorado, Montana, Oregon, South Carolina, New York, Massachusetts, Virginia and West Virginia, collaborating as soloist with such conductors as Sir Georg Solti, Jorge Mester, JoAnn Falletta, Grant Cooper, Christian Tiemeyer, Peter Jaffe, Daryll One, Allen Scott, Steve Lipsett, Lawrence Leighton Smith, Andrew Sewell, and Stephen Gunzenhauser. In recital she has performed in over 40 states and her concerto performances abroad include the Schleswig-Holstein Musik Festival Orchestra, Salzburg Chamber Orchestra, Paris Sinfonietta, Germany's Sächsische Kammerphilharmonie, Dresden and Philharmonisches Orchester des Vogtland and The Czech Republic's Southern Bohemian Chamber Philharmonic Orchestra, with whom she toured. In Asia, her appearances have included an enthusiastically received debut in Taipei, and performances in China and with the Philippines Philharmonic Orchestra.

Linda Wang's solo engagements have taken her to Carnegie Hall, Amsterdam's Beurs van Berlage and the Berlin Schauspielhaus. Festivals where she has taught or performed include those of Aspen, Norfolk, Savannah, Rocky Ridge, Montecito, Fairbanks, Canada's Orford Centre d'Arts, Mexico's San Miguel de Allende, Italy's Festival of Two Worlds (Spoleto), Japan's Okhust, England's Aldeburgh Festival, the Holland Music Sessions and Austria's Salzburg Festival.

Domestic and international audiences have seen Linda Wang's televised performances on PBS, Arts and Entertainment, Germany's ZDF and Japan's NHK, while radio broadcasts include NPR's "Performance Today", WQXR (New York City), WFMT (Chicago), KMozart, KKGGO (Los Angeles), MDR (Germany), Leipzig Rundfunk and Deutschland Radio, Berlin. Numerous first prizes include the International Markneukirchen Instrumental Competition in Germany, the National Federation of Music Young Artists Auditions, the International Kingsville Competition and the Waldo Mayo Award honoring New York's best young performer.

A native of New York City, Linda Wang has studied at The Juilliard School the Colburn School and the University of Southern California. Awarded a Fulbright Scholarship, she pursued advanced studies at the famed Salzburg Mozarteum. Her principal teachers have been Dorothy DeLay, Hyo Kang, Alice Schoenfeld and Ruggiero Ricci.

A dedicated teacher herself, Linda Wang is Associate Professor of Violin at University of Denver's Lamont School of Music and is currently on the Fulbright Specialists Roster for

teaching at overseas institutions. She has been a Touring Artist of the California Arts Council and as a master class clinician she has taught at universities, high schools and music schools throughout the US, Iceland and in Asia.

Linda Wang currently performs on a 1767 J.B. Guadagnini, and has recorded for Centaur, MGS Productions and Beauport Classical. Additional information can be found on her website, www.lindawang.com

Bartered Bride Overture: Bedřich Smetana

Place of birth – Litomyšl, March 2, 1824

Place of death – Prague, May 12, 1884

Smetana came from a relatively prosperous family, but his father discouraged Bedřich's musical studies. In spite of this, he continued playing and composing string quartets from an early age and at the age of 18 moved to Prague to study piano and music theory, supporting himself as a music teacher for an aristocratic household.

Smetana developed some success as a concert pianist, but his compositions were viewed with indifference. In 1856 he found more success in Sweden as he was appointed conductor of the Göteborg Philharmonic Society. In 1860, after Bohemia achieved some independence from Austria, Smetana was invited to return to Prague to help establish a national theatre and opera company. Here he launched his masterpiece, *The Bartered Bride*. One of eight operas Smetana composed, it enjoyed more than a hundred performances during his lifetime.

Similar to Glinka's *Overture to Ruslan and Ludmila*, the *Overture to the Bartered Bride* is in a whirlwind tempo throughout. The opening unison theme gives way to more fragmented writing in the strings' lower register. A dramatic crescendo introduces a second melody, a rather syncopated theme suggesting a dance which continues into a gleeful close.

Violin Concerto: Samuel Barber

Place of birth – West Chester, Pennsylvania, March 9, 1910

Place of death – New York, January 23, 1981

One of the most popular composers of the twentieth century, Samuel Barber remained true to his more romantic musical style in spite of the changing musical world around him. He began composing songs at the age of 7, and entered the Curtis Institute in Philadelphia at 14. He composed three concertos, two symphonies, numerous songs and two operas. He was awarded the famed Pulitzer Prize twice along with numerous other awards.

Near the close of 1928, Barber received his first major commission from Samuel Fels, the manufacturing magnate of Fels Naphtha Soap, which was to compose a violin

concerto for Fels's adopted son, the Russian-born violinist, Iso Briselli. The most popular violin concerto by an American composer, it was premiered by the Philadelphia Orchestra on February 7, 1941 with Eugene Ormandy conducting and Albert Spalding, violinist.

The composer provided the following description of the concerto:

The Concerto ... is lyric and rather intimate in character and a moderate-sized orchestra is used. The first movement begins with a lyrical first subject announced at once by the solo violin, without any orchestral introduction. This movement as a whole has perhaps more the character of a sonata than concerto form.

The second movement is introduced by an extended oboe solo. The violin enters with a contrasting and rhapsodic theme, after which it repeats the oboe melody of the beginning. The last movement, a perpetual motion, exploits the brilliant and virtuoso characteristics of the violin.

Symphony No. 6: Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

Place of birth – Votinsk, Russia, April 25/May 7 1840

Place of death – St. Petersburg, October 25/November 6 1893

First GJSO Performance – 1998, Kirk Gustafson, conductor

Although Tchaikovsky began a "sixth" symphony (in Eb) in the fall of 1892, he was wholly dissatisfied with this work and started working on a new symphony in B minor on February 4, 1893. He sketched the first movement in only five days. This was during a period of extensive traveling for Tchaikovsky, and although it was marked with public success, it was also a time of deepening inner gloom. He conducted in Warsaw, saw Mahler in Hamburg, traveled to Paris and accepted an honorary doctorate in Cambridge. The genesis of the symphony is described in a letter he wrote to his nephew Vladimir Davidov, to whom the *Pathétique* is dedicated:

During the journey the idea for a new symphony occurred to me, this time a program-symphony but with a program that shall remain an enigma to all---they may guess as they please but the symphony will be called simply "Program Symphony" (No. 6). This program is deeply subjective and while composing it in my mind during my journey, I often wept bitterly. On my return I set to work on the sketches, and things progressed with such fervor and speed that in less than four days I had completely finished the first movement and had already clearly outlined the other movements in my mind. Half of the third movement is already completed. There will be much that is new as regards form in this symphony and, among other things, the finale will not be a loud Allegro but, on the contrary, a most protracted Adagio. You cannot imagine how delighted I feel now that I've

convinced myself that my time is not yet spent and that I'm still capable of work. Of course, it is possible that I am mistaken, but I don't think so.

Tchaikovsky continued to travel but returned to his home at Klin and had the symphony completely finished in sketch form by the 24th of March. The orchestration took more time. Another letter to Davidov dated August 3rd relates:

The symphony (which I had intended to dedicate to you but am now reconsidering by way of punishment for your not having written for so long) is making progress. I am very pleased with its content but dissatisfied, or rather not completely satisfied, with its instrumentation...But I definitely consider it the very best, and, especially, the most sincere of all my works. I love it as I have never loved any one of my other musical offspring.

The origin of the symphony's title is revealed by Tchaikovsky's brother in his biography of Piotr. After the first performance, he found the composer trying to decide on a title.

He did not want to leave it simply with a number, neither did he want to call it "Program Symphony" as he had originally intended. "How can I call it Program Symphony when I don't want to reveal the program!" I suggested that it should be called "Tragic Symphony," but he did not like this. I went out to the room, still leaving Piotr Ilyich in a quandary. Then the title "Pathétique" suddenly came into my head. I returned, and, I remember as if it were only yesterday, standing in the doorway pronounced this work. "Excellent, Modya, bravo, Pathétique!" and in my presence he wrote on the score the name that it will always bear.

The unspecified program which has caused wide speculation will in all probability remain an enigma, although something autobiographical is suspected where the movements may have depicted Youth, Love, Disappointment and Death.

The first public performance of the symphony was given in St. Petersburg on October 16, 1893 with the composer conducting and although there was some show of enthusiasm on the part of the audience, Tchaikovsky was disappointed in the guarded reception it received. Eight days after the premiere, Tchaikovsky died suddenly of cholera after drinking some contaminated water, possibly on purpose.