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University of Richmond Symphony Orchestra

Department of Music, University of Richmond

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The Department of Music
Presents in Concert

**University of Richmond
Symphony Orchestra**

Alexander Kordzaia, Artistic Director and Conductor
Charles Staples, pianist

Wednesday, April 6, 2016
7:30 p.m.

Camp Concert Hall, Booker Hall of Music

MUSIC.RICHMOND.EDU

PROGRAM

Piano Concerto in A Minor, Op. 16

Edvard Grieg
(1843 - 1907)

- I. *Allegro molto moderato*
- II. *Adagio*
- III. *Allegro moderato molto e marcato*

Charles Staples, pianist

~ INTERMISSION ~

Symphony No. 8 in B Minor, D. 759 ("Unfinished")

Franz Schubert
(1797 - 1828)

- I. *Allegro moderato*
- II. *Andante con moto*

Symphony No. 2 in C Major, Op. 61

Robert Schumann
(1810 - 1856)

- IV. *Allegro molto vivace*

Please silence cell phones, digital watches, and paging devices before the concert.

PROGRAM NOTES

Piano Concerto in A minor, Op. 16

This work is the only concerto completed by Edvard Grieg, and remains one of the most popular concertos in pianists' repertoire. It opens with a suspenseful timpani roll, followed by a cascade of dramatic, descending chords in the piano. The brief second movement is notable for its reflective lyricism and moments of intense poignancy, and serves as an effective transition into the vivacious third movement. That this work meant a lot to Grieg is evidenced by the fact that he continually made revisions to it, resulting in over 300 changes to the original orchestration. The influence of Norwegian folk music is seen throughout the concerto, and the work ends with a short *Andante maestoso* coda, based on the third movement's lyrical second theme.

Symphony No. 8 in B Minor, D. 759 ("Unfinished")

While musicologists continue to speculate why Schubert wrote only two movements for this work, hence the title "Unfinished," the eighth symphony remains one of the cornerstones of symphonic literature, and is often considered to be the first Romantic symphony due to its expressive melodic writing and harmonies, as well as emphasis upon orchestral tone color. The first movement begins very quietly in the cello and bass sections, followed by a passage of beautiful melodic writing for the oboes and clarinets. As the drama of the movement unfolds, the well-known second theme makes its appearance, first in the cello section, and then in the violins. Later in the movement, following a short development section, the theme reappears but with a new accompaniment of flutes and clarinets. The second movement continues the lyrical quality of the first, alternating two contrasting themes. While there is no development section, there is an extended coda. Considered to be one of Schubert's most beautiful instrumental works, music critic Eduard Hanslick gave an account of the symphony at its premiere in 1865: "And everywhere the same warmth, the same golden sunshine that makes buds grow! The *Andante* unfolds itself broadly and [even] more majestically [than the opening *Allegro*]. Sounds of lament or anger rarely enter this song full of intimate, quiet happiness, clouds of a musical thunderstorm reflecting musical effect rather than dangerous passion . . . The sonorous beauty of both movements is enchanting."

Continued ...

Symphony No. 2 in C Major, Op. 61

The fourth movement of this work was chosen to close tonight's program because of its uplifting, brilliant spirit. There is also a connection between Schumann and Grieg; the latter was greatly influenced by the former, and comparisons are often drawn between the composers' piano concertos, both in the key of a minor. Schumann's second symphony is often seen as a triumph over adversity; it was written in 1845 - 1846 at a time when the composer was struggling with illness: "I was in bad shape physically when I began the work, and was afraid my semi-invalid state could be detected in the music. However, I began to feel more myself when I finished the whole work." The second symphony, with its dramatic musical progression to a concluding victorious finale, finds precedence in the fifth and ninth symphonies of Beethoven, whom Schumann deeply revered.

— Notes by Alexander Kordzaia

ALEXANDER KORDZAIA



Alexander Kordzaia accepted the position of Music Director of the University of Richmond Symphony Orchestra in 2007. In 2012 he was appointed to two positions in Cartagena, Colombia: Principal Guest Conductor of the Filarmónica Cartagena, and Artistic Director of the Festival of Orchestras and Youth. Under his leadership, nine students from the University of Richmond Symphony Orchestra participated in the 2013 festival.

A conductor and pianist, Maestro Kordzaia is a native of Tbilisi, the Republic of Georgia. Born into a musical family, he demonstrated great musical ability at an early age. At the age of seven, he began serious study of the piano and composition in Georgia's premiere music school. By the age of 12, he was performing as a soloist with orchestras and was considered a child prodigy as a composer. Soon it was evident to his teachers that he also had talent and a desire for conducting. By the time Kordzaia graduated from the Tbilisi Conservatory of Music, he was appointed as the Music Director and Conductor of the Georgia State Cappella and assistant conductor at the Tbilisi Opera House, the two most prestigious

musical ensembles in the nation. Kordzaia led both of these groups on triumphant tours of the former U.S.S.R.

He came to the United States in 1991 to further his studies in New York at the Mannes College of Music and the Juilliard School of Music. Since his arrival in the United States, Kordzaia has performed as pianist and conducted orchestras to critical acclaim. He has conducted Cincinnati Symphony musicians at the American Harp Society National Conference, the Cincinnati Symphonietta, Shenandoah Conservatory Symphony Orchestra, the Okanogan Symphony in Spokane, Washington, the Charlotte Civic Orchestra, Central Regional Orchestra of Virginia (2009 and 2012), South Central Virginia Senior Regional Orchestra, and the 2012 All-State Virginia Orchestra. He appeared as an opera conductor with CPCC Opera Company in Charlotte, North Carolina, and served as Assistant Conductor of the Richmond Philharmonic Orchestra from 1999-2001, Music Director of the Richmond Philharmonic Orchestra from 2001-2003, Music Director of the Charlotte Civic Orchestra from 2003-2006, and Conductor Emeritus of the Charlotte Civic Orchestra from 2006-2007.

Kordzaia has organized numerous international tours with the American Youth Harp Ensemble, as co-director and guest conductor. The critically-acclaimed ensemble has travelled to the Netherlands, England, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Italy, and the Czech Republic. He has led them in performances at Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center's Alice Tully Hall, and the White House.

An active chamber musician, recent concerts have been in Washington, D.C., Maryland, New York, Vienna, Austria, and Cartagena, Colombia. Kordzaia is an active teacher/educator and classical music advocate throughout the mid-Atlantic states, and is frequently invited as an adjudicator, music coach and master class clinician in schools and with youth music organizations throughout the country. He also has continued to be a frequent guest conductor and pianist in the United States, France, Austria, Eastern Europe, South America, Georgia and Russia.

CHARLES STAPLES

A native of Alabama and an honors graduate of the Alabama School of Fine Arts, Charles Staples entered Cincinnati's College-Conservatory of Music after winning the Van Cliburn full-tuition scholarship, and began his studies with internationally acclaimed pianist David Bar-Illan.

Continued ...

While in Cincinnati, he played with the CCM Concert Orchestra twice, the Congress of Strings under Milton Katims, and the North Carolina Symphony. Staples was awarded prizes in the MTNA Southern Division Competition and the Bryan Young Artist Competition, and has made several appearances as soloist and chamber musician on Cincinnati's public radio station, WGUC.



Upon graduating *magna cum laude*, he was given an assistantship to study piano with Martin Canin at Stony Brook University in New York and received his master's and doctoral degrees there, winning prizes in the Five Towns and Sunwood competitions. He also represented Stony Brook on WQXR radio in a series on New York's top-five music schools. After graduation, he was chosen to open the 1984 Select Debut Series in New York City's historic Town Hall. Since coming to Richmond, he has played numerous recitals, appeared in chamber and orchestral concerts, performed over public radio on WCVE, and was sponsored by the Alabama School of Fine Arts in a solo recital in Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall in New York. He has also held the position of visiting assistant professor of music at the University of Richmond and currently teaches at Virginia Commonwealth University. Staples has held teaching and church music positions in Alabama, New York and Texas and is currently director of music ministries at Trinity United Methodist Church in Richmond, Virginia. When not practicing piano, he enjoys cooking and skiing, and has earned his black belt in Tae Kwon Do. Staples has performed as soloist with both the Richmond Symphony in Liszt's *Totentanz* and 4 times with the Richmond Philharmonic in concerti by Beethoven, Rachmaninoff and Tchaikovsky.

After his first recital in Richmond, *Richmond News-Leader* music critic Francis Church wrote that Staples "is a pianist of prodigious talent, fire and thunder, blood and guts . . . this was no metronomic key-banging. It was piano playing that reached to the listeners' emotional jugular veins!" *Richmond Times-Dispatch* reviewer Clarke Bustard has described Charles Staples' playing as "forceful . . . but unforced, as natural as breathing."

PERFORMERS

1st Violin:

Daniel Yoo, Concertmaster
Dagny Barone, Assistant Concertmaster
Hannah Sullivan
Rebecca Robinson
Darah Rathi
Michael Robinson
Lillian Hughes
Shiv Toolsidass
James Noel*
Grace Leng
Jonathan Lingerfelt*
Randy Allen*

2nd Violin:

John Seo, Principal
Khuela Sanchez, Assistant Principal
Anna Saakian*
Brighton Payne*
Robert Costanzo
Jennifer Kuo
Annabelle Pham
Eileen Downey**
Carolyn Thurber*
Eric Campbell*
Lauren Campbell*

Viola:

Sara Cloonan, Principal
Alicia Jiggetts
Nicole D'Onofrio
Bobby Kania*

Cello:

Catherine Edwards, Principal
John Cavaliere
Andrew Jordan*
Yesaie Saakian*
Marilyn Kern*
Sidney Whitlock*
Douglas Kellner*
Michael Knowles*

Bass:

Michael Stumpf, Principal*
Jake McHugh*

Flute:

Marie Fernandez, Principal
Kehinde Jegede
Chloe Lubin-Kirchner
Rachel Lantz

Oboe:

Erin Vidlak, Principal
Elise Favia, English Horn
Benedict Romer

Clarinet:

Michael Goldberg, Principal*
Doug Hurt*
Sam Frazier, Bass Clarinet*

Bassoon:

Conor Lemmon, Principal
Arnold Wexler, Principal*
Tom Baise, Contra Bassoon*

French Horn:

Ryan Smout, Principal***
Gretchen Georgas*
Jenn Myers*
Dale Dean *

Trumpet:

Thomas McCarty, Principal*
Randy Abernathy*
Bill Torres*

Trombone:

Rebecca Buffington, Principal***
Ross Wright*
Russ Wolz*

Continued ...

Tuba:

Russ Wolz*

Timpani:

John Hubbard**

Librarian:

Erin Vidlak

Assistant to the conductor:

John Seo

* Community Musician

** University of Richmond faculty

*** University of Richmond alumnus

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

University of Richmond student and community musicians

Eighth Blackbird, University of Richmond Ensemble-in-Residence

Dr. Joanne Kong, Department of Music Director of Accompaniment and
Coordinator of Chamber Ensembles

Dr. Jeffrey Riehl, Associate Professor of Music and Chairman,
Department of Music

Dr. Linda Fairtile, Head, Parsons Music Library

Modlin Center for the Arts Staff: Sean Farrell, Rob Richards
and Patrick Kraehenbuehl

Linda Smalley, Department of Music Administrative Coordinator

The orchestral parts and conductor's score for the Grieg concerto were
purchased and generously donated by Douglas Kellner, who performs
cello in the orchestra as a community musician.



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