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University of Richmond Symphony Orchestra

Department of Music, University of Richmond

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FALL 2018

University of Richmond Symphony Orchestra

Alexander Kordzaia, Artistic Director and Conductor

Wednesday, November 28, 2018

7:30 p.m.

Camp Concert Hall, Booker Hall of Music



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School of Arts & Sciences

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PROGRAM

Overture to *La gazza ladra*
(The Thieving Magpie)

Gioachino Rossini
(1792-1868)

Violin Concerto in D Minor, op. 47
I. *Allegro moderato*

Jean Sibelius
(1865-1957)

Micah Hunter-Chang, violin

Winner of the 2017 Concerto/Aria Competition

Symphony No. 2 in D Major, op. 43
IV. Finale

Sibelius

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

Gioachino Rossini. Overture to *La gazza ladra* (The Thieving Magpie)

Gioachino Rossini's twenty-first opera, *La gazza ladra*, was premiered in Milan at the Teatro alla Scala on 31 May 1817. The libretto, by Giovanni Gherardini, was based on the French play *La pie voleuse* by d'Aubigny and Caigniez. The play, in turn, derived from the true story of a French servant girl who was sentenced and condemned to the gallows for stealing silver cutlery. It was not until after the girl's death that the real culprit, a thieving magpie, was discovered. In Rossini's opera, the tragic story receives a happy ending, for the servant girl, Ninetta, is rescued from her execution in the nick of time. The opera was well received, and it remained in the repertoire at La Scala for many years. The overture also caused a sensation, for it opens in military fashion (*Maestoso marziale*) with three solo snare-drum rolls; the two drums crescendo into a march-like theme that is presented by the entire orchestra. The main *Allegro con brio* section contains two themes: the first, a skittish, triplet-figure in the strings, and the second, a recognizable melody that is stated by the oboe and answered by the flute and violins.

— Notes by Stephanie Poxon

Jean Sibelius. Violin Concerto, op. 47

Sibelius's Violin Concerto, op. 47, is the only concerto the prolific Finnish composer ever wrote. The work was premiered in 1904, but the mediocre performance convinced Sibelius to withhold the score from publication in order to reorchestrate certain sections and simplify the virtuosic violin solo before undertaking a second premiere in 1905. The concerto was written for and originally dedicated to the violinist Willy Burmester, a onetime student of Joseph Joachim. However, after scheduling difficulties prevented Burmester from playing both the first and second premieres, he swore never to perform the work. Sibelius instead dedicated the concerto to Ferenc von Vecsey, a prodigious young violinist who was only thirteen years old when he first performed the piece.

The concerto speaks to the national spirit in the face of Russian occupation, the death of Sibelius's youngest daughter, and perhaps above all, the raw, untamed beauty of Finland. Often described as icy and dark, the first movement opens with a gentle, trembling D-minor chord created by pianissimo violins, furnishing a backdrop upon which the soloist enters. The first theme is stated tremulously by the soloist, stark against the violins, imparting a characteristic frigidity to the melody. The opening theme is taken up by a solo clarinet, and from there the melody slowly begins to build and intensify without losing any of the ferocity or desperation that defines the first theme. After a virtuosic, cadenza-like solo violin passage to close the first theme, the concerto gives way to a heartbreaking warmth, coloring the previously icy orchestration with an affectionate second theme filled with a sense of yearning. The third theme is presented mainly by the orchestra, eventually making way for a substantial cadenza for the soloist. The cadenza takes the place of the development section of the first movement, echoing the ideas presented at the inception of the concerto. Following the cadenza and recapitulation, Sibelius closes out the first movement with an urgent and impactful coda, employing virtuosic flourishes from the soloist and aggressive rhythmic statements from the orchestra.

—Notes by Micah Hunter-Chang

Jean Sibelius. Symphony No. 2 in D Major, op.43

Sibelius started working on his second symphony in Italy, not long after his very successful tone poem, *Finlandia*. Well-known for its energetic, rousing music, the symphony was premiered in 1902 and has been seen as a covert response against the Russian Empire, which annexed Finland in 1809. The Finnish people's desire to be independent from Imperialistic forces had grown in the late 19th century. Sibelius bears his intimate feelings throughout the symphony's four movements, the third and fourth of which are connected without break. As in *Finlandia*, whose

alternate titles include *Happy Feelings at the Awakening of Finnish Spring* and *A Scandinavian Spirit*, Sibelius also foreshadows a happier future for his country in the Finale of his second symphony. A notable hymn-like section in this movement features a melody that has often been cited as traditional Finnish folk music, but, in fact, was composed entirely by Sibelius.

— Notes by Alexander Kordzaia

Alexander Kordzaia accepted the position of Music Director of the University of Richmond Symphony Orchestra in 2007. Formerly Principal Guest Conductor of the Filarmonica Cartagena in Colombia, he is currently Artistic Director of The Festival of the Orchestras in Cartagena.



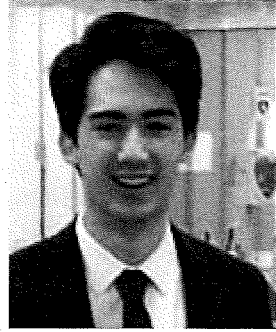
A conductor and pianist, Mr. Kordzaia is a native of Tbilisi, Republic of Georgia. Born into a musical family, he demonstrated great musical ability at an early age. At the age of seven, he began serious study of the piano and composition in Georgia's premiere music school. By the age of 12, he was performing as a soloist with orchestras and was considered a child prodigy as a composer. Soon it was evident to his teachers that Mr. Kordzaia also had great talent and desire for conducting. By the time he graduated from the Tbilisi Conservatory of Music, he was 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. Mr. Kordzaia led both of these groups on triumphant tours of the former U.S.S.R. engagements have included the Colombia, Cartagena Festival of The Orchestras; performances with the American Youth Harp Ensemble at New York's Carnegie Hall and Alice Tully Hall, as well as at the White House; the Shenandoah Conservatory Symphony Orchestra; with

Cincinnati Symphony musicians for the American Harp Society National Conference; the Cincinnati Symphonietta; the Okanogan Symphony in Spokane, Washington; a European tour with the American Youth Harp Ensemble; the Charlotte Civic Orchestra in Charlotte, North Carolina; the Richmond Philharmonic Orchestra; the Richmond Symphony Youth Orchestra; the Virginia Central Regional Orchestra (2009 and 2012); the South Central Virginia Senior Regional Orchestra; and the 2012 All-State Virginia Orchestra.

Mr. Kordzaia appeared as an opera conductor with CPCC Opera Company in Charlotte, North Carolina. He also 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. As a guest conductor, Mr. Kordzaia traveled with the American Youth Harp Ensemble to many European countries, including the Netherlands, England, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Italy, and the Czech Republic.

An active chamber musician, Mr. Kordzaia has recently given concerts in Washington, DC; Maryland; New York; Vienna, Austria; and Cartagena, Colombia. He is an active teacher/educator and classical music advocate throughout the Mid-Atlantic states. He is frequently invited as an adjudicator and music coach, and to give masterclasses in schools and with youth music organizations throughout the U.S. Mr. Kordzaia has also continued to be a frequent guest conductor and pianist in the U.S., France, Austria, Eastern Europe, South America, Georgia, and Russia.

Micah Hunter-Chang is a junior at the University of Richmond, studying biology, leadership studies, and chemistry. Raised in Charlottesville, Virginia, he began studying the violin at the age of eight under the tutelage of Julie Wilkinson. By the time he was in high school, Micah began working through more renowned repertoire, learning the Bruch and



Mendelssohn concertos, as well as select sonatas and partitas from Bach's works for solo violin, and finishing his senior year with a performance of the first movement of Tchaikovsky's iconic Violin Concerto in D Major. During this time, he also performed Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* at the Paramount Theater in Charlottesville, participated in regional and state orchestras, attended Virginia's summer residential Governor's School for the Visual and Performing Arts, and earned numerous prizes and distinctions on a local level. Micah's violin teacher at the University of Richmond is Susy Yim, a member of the Richmond Symphony. With Ms. Yim he has studied the first and third movements of the Saint-Saëns Violin Concerto No. 3, Rachmaninoff's Piano Trio *élégiacque* No. 1 in G Minor, Debussy's Violin Sonata, and most recently the first movement of the Sibelius Violin Concerto. Micah hopes that by bringing sincerity and intensity to performances, he will instill a lasting appetite for classical music in his listeners.

University of Richmond Symphony Orchestra

1st Violins

Micah Hunter-Chang,
concertmaster
Lillian Hughes, assistant
concertmaster
Mathew Robinson
Mandy Zhou
Ju Hye Kim
Donovan Williams
Brian Sun
Michael Robinson
Karen Titus*
Lani Wisner*
John Turner*
Dhilan Kamani*

2nd Violins

Makayla Clemmer*, principal
Lindsay White
Adam Birce*
Brooke Siever
Amanda Perez
William Hunt*
Abigail Schofield
Randy Allen*
Ananya Shah*
Eileen Downey**
Lauren Campbell*
Mark Arceo-Hamill*

Viola

Mimi Laws, principal
Katie Baker*
Hannah VanHuss
Katy Stenner
Nicole D'Onofrio
Lowell Schipper
Kitty Moyer*
John Bander*

Cello

John Cavaliere, principal
Colette Creamer
Francy Cabrera Paz
Marisa Dougherty
Douglas Kellner*
Sidney Whitlock*
Hannah Sjovold
Molly Kreider
Michael Knowles*

Bass

Michael Stumpf*, principal
Isabelle McNulty

Flute

Rachel Lantz, principal
Tomi Jegede***, flute/ piccolo
Chloe Lubin-Kirchner***

Oboe

Bryant Keeling, Oboe/English
Horn, principal
Sam Cunde*, Oboe/English Horn

Clarinet

Michael Goldberg*, principal
Doug Hurt*, bass clarinet

Bassoon

Arnold Wexler*, principal
Tom Baise*

Horn

Gretchen Georgas*, principal
Michael Hartsough*
Roxanne Williams*
Don Spaulding*

Trumpet

Thomas McCarty*, principal
Allison Walters
Tony Scida*

Trombone

Rebecca Buffington**
Ross Wright*
John Carroll*

Tuba

Russ Wolz*

Timpani

John Hubbard**

Percussion

David Chung*
Jonathan Gandara
Steven Barton*

Orchestra Librarian and Conductor's Assistant

Azalea Ginete

Community Musicians' Coordinator/Personnel Manager

Gretchen Georgas*

* Community musician

** University of Richmond faculty/staff

*** University of Richmond alumni

Thank you to:

The University of Richmond Music Department and its
Chair, Dr. Jeffrey Riehl

The Modlin Center for the Arts

Dr. Joanne Kong, for coaching our soloist

Eighth Blackbird, UR's Ensemble-in-Residence, for coaching
orchestra students

Sean Farrell and his crew, for helping with the stage, lights,
and logistics

Linda Smalley, for helping the University of Richmond
Symphony Orchestra to operate

Dr. Linda Fairtile, for helping with program notes

All the community musicians who make music with our
students!



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