

Concert Quick Guide™

Schumann, Strauss & Sibelius

SUN 12/11/22 at 4 PM

Performance #224 Season 8, Concert 13
Peter Norton Symphony Space

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ZACHARY SCHWARTZMAN *conductor*

CONCERT TIMELINE

2 hours



Brief remarks by Hyunjung Song *viola*



Robert Schumann

Born 6/8/1810 in Zwickau, Germany

Died 7/29/1856 at age 46 in Endenich, Bonn, Germany

Genoveva Overture

Written 1847, at age 37

Premiered 6/25/1850 in Leipzig, Germany;
Gewandhaus Orchestra; Schumann *conductor*



- This overture is from the only opera Schumann ever wrote.
- Though the opera is rarely performed, this overture has become a popular concert staple.
- This dramatic work not only encapsulates the intensity of the opera, but also reflects Schumann's troubled personal life.



Richard Strauss

Born 6/11/1864 in Munich

Died 9/8/1949 at age 85 in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany

Four Symphonic Interludes from *Intermezzo*

Reisefieber und Walzerszene (Travel Fever and Waltz Scene) 9 min

Träumerei am Kamin (Dreaming by the Fireside) 7 min

Am Spieltisch (At the Card Table) 4 min

Frölicher Beschluß (Happy Ending) 3 min

Opera Written 1918–23, in Strauss' mid-to-late 50s
Symphonic Suite Compiled 1929, at age 65

Opera Premiered 11/4/1924 at the Dresden Semperoper in Dresden, Germany;
Fritz Busch *conductor*



- Strauss' *Intermezzo* is based on a real-life event in which his wife intercepted a love letter that was sent to him, but that was intended for someone else.
- These interludes perfectly encapsulate the atmosphere of the opera and have become some of Strauss' most celebrated works.

Intermission

MEET & GREET some of the musicians at the back of the theatre

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WIFI Sharp Guest

RESTROOMS located at the back of the theatre

Brief remarks by Zhen Liu *violin*



Jean Sibelius

Born 12/8/1865 in Tavastehus (Hämeenlinna), Finland

Died 9/20/1957 at age 91 in Järvenpää, Finland

Symphony No. 2

Allegretto (moderately fast) *10 min*

Tempo andante, ma rubato (moderately slow, but expressive) *14 min*

Vivacissimo (lively and brisk) *6 min*

Finale: Allegro moderato (moderately fast) *13 min*

Written 1901–02, at age 36

Premiered 3/8/1902 in Helsinki, Finland; Helsinki Philharmonic; Sibelius *conductor*



- Sibelius wrote this symphony while on a respite in Italy that was arranged by a caring friend following the death of Sibelius' two-year-old daughter.
- Sibelius described this work as “the confession of the soul.”
- One can hear the threatening aura of Death throughout the second movement.

All timings are approximate.

Schumann, Strauss & Sibelius

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The Music

ROBERT SCHUMANN'S GENOVEVA OVERTURE

Notes by TÖN clarinetist Colby Bond



The Opera

As he was coming to the end of a period of darkness and depression in his life, Robert Schumann decided to compose his first and only opera, *Genoveva*, which premiered in Leipzig in the summer of 1850. This dramatic and tragic work is based on the German medieval legend of Genevieve of Brabant, in which the title character has to fight off the romantic advances of her husband's servant while her husband is at war. Her

husband hears of the alleged infidelity and orders her to be killed in an act of revenge, until it is revealed that it is his servant who has truly been unfaithful and she is saved at the last moment.

The Overture

Unfortunately, Schumann's opera was not well-received and the first production was only performed three times. Disparaging remarks from Richard Wagner inevitably discouraged Schumann from writing another opera in the last few years of his life. Though this opera is not often performed, the *Genoveva* Overture remains a regular member of the symphonic repertoire as a concert-opener. Opening in a deeply yearning C minor key, the overture progresses through sweeping melodies amongst the strings and winds to foreshadow the drama that is yet to come in the opera. As this drama continues to evolve alongside accompaniment of captivating solo lines in the woodwinds, the horns come in on a resoundingly regal interjection that brings the listener to the grandeur of C major within the orchestra. This transition from the darkness

of minor to the satisfactory elation of major gives the overall essence of how the plot line ahead is going to progress, and also mirrors the roadmap of Ludwig van Beethoven's iconic Fifth Symphony.

An Emotional Journey

The beauty and intensity of this Romantic-era work allows the musicians to take you on a dramatic journey in just a few minutes through the vast emotions soon to be encapsulated within the opera. It is no surprise that the music comes across so tragically from the beginning of this overture, and perhaps foreshadows not only the opera but the deep pain and mental illness that Schumann was experiencing in his own life. The several-year period following the composition of this work led to a continued debilitation of Schumann's own mental health and the eventual end of his life in 1856. I find the emotion of this overture to be remarkably palpable and on clear display when paired with the understanding of tragedy occurring in the opera alongside the composer's end of his life.

RICHARD STRAUSS' FOUR SYMPHONIC INTERLUDES FROM *INTERMEZZO*

Notes by TÖN cellist Jihyun Hwang



Matt Dine

The Opera

Richard Strauss' opera *Intermezzo* was completed in the year 1923 and premiered in Dresden a year later. It is the only opera for

which Strauss wrote his own libretto, typically preferring to outsource them to other librettists and writers at the time. This opera is based on real-life events within the Strauss couple's lives. Unknown to Richard, a love letter addressed to him (yet actually intended for a conductor known as Joseph Stransky who had the nickname of "Straussky") had fallen into Pauline Strauss' hands and she was all but ready to file for a divorce. After clarifying what had occurred to his wife, this incident became the basis for Strauss' two-act opera *Intermezzo*. Strauss intended for *Intermezzo* to serve as a "conversation piece," serving much the same purpose as comedy acts making fun of the domestic incidents of everyday life. However, Strauss felt the need for purely instrumental music to take over at times to help flesh out the story and setting of the opera.

The Interludes

The first interlude, titled "Travel Fever and Waltz Scene," describes the conductor Robert Storch (a stand-in for Strauss himself) departing home for a series of performances following a heated argument with his wife. Robert's wife, Christine, decides to attend a party in which she meets a handsome Baron, with whom she later attends a ball. She then opens a love letter she thinks is addressed to her husband, seeking marriage. In a rage, she telegrams her husband, seeking divorce. In the second interlude, "Dreaming by the Fireside," Christine is seen sitting in her living room thinking about the charming Baron, yet her thoughts return to her husband, the man she truly loves despite their occasional spats. The third interlude, "At the Card Table," is the beginning of Act 2 and shows Storch receiving his incensed wife's telegram while playing his favorite card game. In fact, the shuffling of the cards is audible in the movement. Just in the nick of time, Storch is absolved by one of his conductor friends, Stroh, who is sure the

letter she has discovered had actually been intended for him. The fourth interlude shows Storch being vindicated of wrongdoing by his wife and joyfully returning home. These interludes are some of the best music in the opera, and perfectly encapsulate the atmosphere of the piece. They have gone on to be some of Strauss' most celebrated works.

JEAN SIBELIUS' SYMPHONY NO. 2

Notes by TÖN bassist Steven Brijia



Matt Dine

Tragedy and Inspiration

In the year 1900, Jean Sibelius and his wife Aino witnessed their daughter Kirsti die of typhoid at the age of two. This only added to the composer's already severe depression. One of his supporters, however, saw this troubled time in Sibelius' life and raised money for the family to take a trip to Rapallo, Italy. Baron Carelan wrote to Sibelius, "You have been sitting at home for quite a while, Mr. Sibelius, it is high time for you to travel. You will spend the late autumn and the winter in Italy, a country where one learns cantabile, balance and harmony, plasticity and symmetry of lines, a country where everything is beautiful—even the ugly." It was at this beautiful Italian mountain villa that Sibelius began work on his Second Symphony. While many composers before him had been inspired to portray the Italian landscape in music, Sibelius described his work as "the confession of the soul" and refused to give any more detail about his inspiration.

Music of Threes

The opening theme introduces a three-note rising pattern. Listen for this theme throughout the piece, it will return often. Sibelius continues to introduce small patterns and ideas throughout the first movement, with frequent moments of silence between. The second movement opens with a triple-meter walking pattern in the double basses, and later joined by a haunting melody played by the bassoons. On the back of the manuscript containing sketches for this melody, Sibelius wrote, "Don Juan. Sitting in the twilight in my castle, a guest enters. I ask many times who he is.—No answer. I make an effort to entertain him. He remains mute. Eventually he starts singing. At this time, Don Juan notices who he is—Death." Sibelius denied any programmatic nature of the movement, but we can hear the threatening aura of Death throughout the movement.

A lively Scherzo opens the third movement, followed by a lyrical trio featuring the oboe. This theme consists of nine repeated B-flats in a row before continuing, giving the listener a glimpse of the hardship that Sibelius was enduring at this time. I imagine this is the point where he mourned the loss of his daughter in the midst of political conflict. The Scherzo returns, reminding us that danger is still present before returning to the weeping sound of the oboe once more. The Finale is introduced by a sequence of rising three-note scales at the end of the third movement. Remember the opening theme? This transition is our guide into the Finale where it becomes the prominent melodic figure. Twice the fanfare is interrupted by rolling scales in the low strings, reminding us that all is not well. The coda is introduced by a pizzicato soli in the low strings, after which the orchestra proclaims the theme once more, insisting that the symphony end with joyful passion. Perhaps a passion for his home country, or a victory for his mental health.

The Artists

ZACHARY SCHWARTZMAN *conductor*



conductor in their VOX series, and has been associate/assistant conductor for fifteen productions at Glimmerglass Opera, where he conducted performances of *Carmen* and the world premiere of Jeanine Tesori's *A Blizzard on Marblehead Neck*.

Mr. Schwartzman's credits as assistant conductor include recordings for Albany Records, Bridge Records, Naxos Records, Hyperion Records, and a Grammy-nominated world-premiere recording for Chandos Records. He had a twelve-year tenure as music director of the Blue Hill Troupe and has been assistant conductor for the American Symphony Orchestra since 2012. He has appeared as both assistant conductor and conductor at Bard SummerScape and the Bard Music Festival at The Richard B. Fisher Center for the Performing Arts. He is currently resident conductor of The Orchestra Now (TÖN) and music director of the Bard College Community Orchestra. In addition to degrees in Piano Performance and Orchestral Conducting, he earned a B.A. in East Asian Studies from Oberlin College.

Zachary Schwartzman has conducted around the United States, in Brazil, England, Bosnia, and Mexico. His orchestral performances have been featured on NPR, including a national broadcast on "Performance Today." A recipient of the career development grant from the Bruno Walter Memorial Foundation, he has served as assistant conductor for the Deutsche Oper Berlin, Opera Atelier (Toronto), Berkshire Opera Festival, Opéra Français de New York, L'Ensemble orchestral de Paris, Gotham Chamber Opera, Oakland East Bay Symphony, Connecticut Grand Opera, and Opera Omaha, among others. He was associate conductor for two seasons with New York City Opera, as well as

Matt Dine

THE ORCHESTRA NOW



David DeNee

The Orchestra Now (TÖN) is a group of vibrant young musicians from across the globe who are making orchestral music relevant to 21st-century audiences by sharing their unique personal insights in a welcoming environment. Hand-picked from the world's leading conservatories—including the Yale School of Music, Shanghai Conservatory of Music, Royal Academy of Music, and the New England Conservatory of Music—the members of TÖN are enlightening curious minds by giving on-stage introductions and demonstrations, writing concert notes from the musicians' perspective, and having one-on-one discussions with patrons during intermissions.

Conductor, educator, and music historian Leon Botstein, whom *The New York Times* said "draws rich, expressive playing from the orchestra," founded TÖN in 2015 as a graduate program at Bard College, where he is also president. TÖN offers both a three-year master's degree in Curatorial, Critical, and Performance Studies and a two-year advanced certificate in Orchestra Studies. The orchestra's home base is the Frank Gehry-designed Fisher Center at Bard, where it performs multiple concerts each season and takes part in the annual Bard Music Festival. It also performs regularly at the finest venues in New York, including Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, and others across NYC and beyond. *HuffPost*, who has called TÖN's

performances "dramatic and intense," praises these concerts as "an opportunity to see talented musicians early in their careers."

The orchestra has performed with many distinguished guest conductors and soloists, including Leonard Slatkin, Neeme Järvi, Gil Shaham, Fabio Luisi, Vadim Repin, Hans Graf, Peter Serkin, Gerard Schwarz, Tan Dun, and JoAnn Falletta. Recordings featuring The Orchestra Now include two albums of piano concertos with Piers Lane on Hyperion Records, and a Sorel Classics concert recording of pianist Anna Shelest performing works by Anton Rubinstein with TÖN and conductor Neeme Järvi. *Buried Alive* with baritone Michael Nagy, released on Bridge Records in August 2020, includes the first recording in almost 60 years—and only the second recording ever—of Othmar Schoeck's song-cycle *Lebendig begraben*. Recent releases include *Classics of American Romanticism*—featuring the first-ever complete recording of Bristow's *Arcadian Symphony*—and an album of piano concertos with Orion Weiss, both on Bridge Records, and the soundtrack to the motion picture *Forte*. Recordings of TÖN's live concerts from the Fisher Center can be heard on Classical WMHT-FM and WWMF The Classical Network, and are featured regularly on Performance Today, broadcast nationwide.

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Felix Ko*

Harp

Cheng Wei (Ashley) Lim

Piano

Ji Hea Hwang

¹ Schumann

² Strauss

³ Sibelius

*not performing in this concert

HYUNJUNG SONG *viola*



Matt Dine

@hyunjung5406

Hyunjung will talk briefly about Schumann's *Genoveva* Overture and R. Strauss' Four Symphonic Interludes from *Intermezzo* on stage before the performances.

Hometown: Seoul, Korea

Alma maters: Peabody Institute of The Johns Hopkins University, M.M., Graduate Performance Diploma

Appearances: York Symphony Orchestra, substitute; Aspen Music Festival, 2015, 2017; Festival Napa Valley Blackburn Music Academy, 2018; American Institute of Musical Studies, Graz, Austria, 2019

What is your earliest memory of classical music? When I was about 9 years old, I remember playing violin with a large group of other kids at a Suzuki violin academy.

When did you realize you wanted to pursue music as a career? I used to play music as a hobby. When my music teacher suggested I should consider becoming a professional musician, the idea got me really excited and kept me up at night. After a week, I somehow knew I wanted to become a musician.

Who is your biggest inspiration? Victoria Chiang. She was my professor while I was at the Peabody Conservatory. She was the one who inspired me to study abroad here in the U.S., and she made the experience meaningful.

What is your favorite piece of music and why do you love it? J.S. Bach's *Schafe*

können sicher weiden. Listening to this piece calms me and makes me happy.

What has been your favorite experience as a musician? When I was a college student, my friends and I together made an ensemble entirely made of violists. We organized concerts, and they were successful and popular.

What is some advice you would give to your younger self? Do more scale practice, and do technique exercises please.

Favorite non-classical musician or band: Lauv, Norah Jones, Bruno Major

ZHEN LIU *violin*



Matt Dine

@zhen_violin

Zhen will talk briefly about Sibelius' Symphony No. 2 on stage before the performance.

Hometown: Chifeng, Inner Mongolia, China

Alma maters: The Orchestra Now, M.M., 2022; Bard College Conservatory of Music, B.M. & B.A. in Violin Performance and Asian Studies, 2014-19; The Music School Attached to The Central Conservatory of Music, Beijing, China, 2009-14

Awards/Competitions: 2nd prize, 2011 Hong Kong International Violin Competition; 3rd prize, 2014 Canada Calgary Morning-side Music Bridge Chamber Competition; Winner, 2017 Bard College Conservatory Concerto Competition; Participant, 2012 Menuhin

International Violin Competition, Beijing, China; Participant, 2018 Menuhin International Violin Competition, Geneva, Switzerland; Participant, 2018 Stern International Violin Competition, Shanghai, China

Appearances: Princeton Symphony Orchestra, Principal 2nd Violin, 2022; Albany Symphony Orchestra, Substitute Violin, 2023; Suzhou Symphony Orchestra, substitute, 2019; Heifetz International Music Institute Festival, 2018; Keshet Eilon Master-course Music Festival, 2017; The First Lian Du International Music Festival, 2016; Canada Calgary Morning-side Music Bridge, 2012–14; The First Beijing International Music Festival, 2009

What is your favorite piece of music and why do you love it? Beethoven's music—all of the accidents from his music are surprising to me; I enjoyed them a lot. Those kinds of dynamics show the character of Beethoven.

What has been your favorite experience as a musician? The failed experiences, like failed competitions or juries.

Favorite non-classical musician or band: The film star Mr. Sylvester Stallone

If you weren't a musician, what would you be doing? Cooking, being a professional chef

Piece of advice for a young classical musician: Never give up.

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Bard College

Founded in 1860, Bard College is a four-year, residential college of the liberal arts and sciences located 90 miles north of New York City. With the addition of the adjoining Montgomery Place estate, Bard’s campus consists of nearly 1,000 parklike acres in the Hudson River Valley. It offers bachelor of arts, bachelor of science, and bachelor of music degrees, with majors in nearly 50 academic programs; graduate degrees in 11 programs; nine early colleges; and numerous dual-degree programs nationally and internationally. Building on its 162-year history as a competitive and innovative undergraduate institution, Bard College has expanded its mission as a private institution acting in the public interest across the country and around the world to meet broader student needs and increase access to liberal arts education. The undergraduate program at the main campus in the Hudson Valley has a reputation for scholarly excellence, a focus on the arts, and civic engagement. Bard is committed to enriching culture, public life, and democratic discourse by training tomorrow’s thought leaders. For more information about Bard College, visit bard.edu.

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

The Bard College music community celebrates its wide-ranging approaches to musical studies by emphasizing creative expression and the development of each individual’s artistic voice. Our programs include:

- The Undergraduate Music Program (classical instrumental and voice, composition, electronic music, ethnomusicology, history, jazz, theory)
- The Conservatory of Music (composition, conducting, instrumental, US-China, voice)
- The Orchestra Now

Historically, classical music education has foregrounded European practices of the 17th through 20th centuries. As we become accountable for discriminations relating to that narrow focus, we affirm our intention to break down those boundaries of exclusion. Actionable steps towards equity include: the long term cultivation of a diverse faculty, staff, and student body that is inclusive of a diverse range of races, ethnicities, genders, and LGBTQ+ identities; the practice of respectful listening and communication within and between our programs; the regular review of curricula and their successful inclusion of multiple perspectives; the presentation of diverse musical programming that features and furthers collaborations across the Bard campus; and the forging of initiatives that engage with underserved communities and underrepresented populations. As we pursue these goals, we remain committed to taking actions that combat discrimination and racism in order to create a more diverse, equitable and inclusive program.



THE ORCHESTRANOW®
Bard's Orchestral Masters

Upcoming Events

SIGHT & SOUND

Haydn, Brahms & The Manufactured Classical Ideal

FEB 19

SUNDAY AT 2 PM

at The Metropolitan Museum of Art

Leon Botstein *conductor*

Haydn Symphony No. 38, *Prague*

Brahms Variations on a Theme of Haydn

Artwork from the exhibition

Chroma: Ancient Sculpture in Color

Before & After Soviet Communism

MAY 4

THURSDAY AT 7 PM

at Carnegie Hall

Leon Botstein *conductor*

Sun-Ly Pierce VAP '19 *soprano*

Luosha Fang '10 *violin*

Rosemary Nelis '17 *viola*

Karol Szymanowski Songs of the
Infatuated Muezzin

György Kurtág ...concertante...

Boris Tishchenko Symphony No. 5

SIGHT & SOUND

Art & Music in Nineteenth-Century Denmark

APR 16

SUNDAY AT 2 PM

at The Metropolitan Museum of Art

Leon Botstein *conductor*

Niels Gade Symphony No. 1,

On Sjøland's Fair Plains

Artwork from the exhibition

*Beyond the Light: Identity and Place in
Nineteenth-Century Danish Art*

The Sorcerer's Apprentice

MAY 14

SUNDAY AT 4 PM

at Peter Norton Symphony Space in NYC

Zachary Schwartzman *conductor*

Katherine Lerner Lee VAP '23 *soprano*

Paul Dukas *The Sorcerer's Apprentice*

Olivier Messiaen *Poèmes pour Mi*

Henri Dutilleux Symphony No. 1

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