

DAYTON PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

# VOYAGES

SEASON  
No: 10/11

DAYTON  
PHILHARMONIC

CLASSICAL PASSAGES

CONNECTING FLIGHTS

POPULAR DESTINATIONS

DAY TRIPPERS

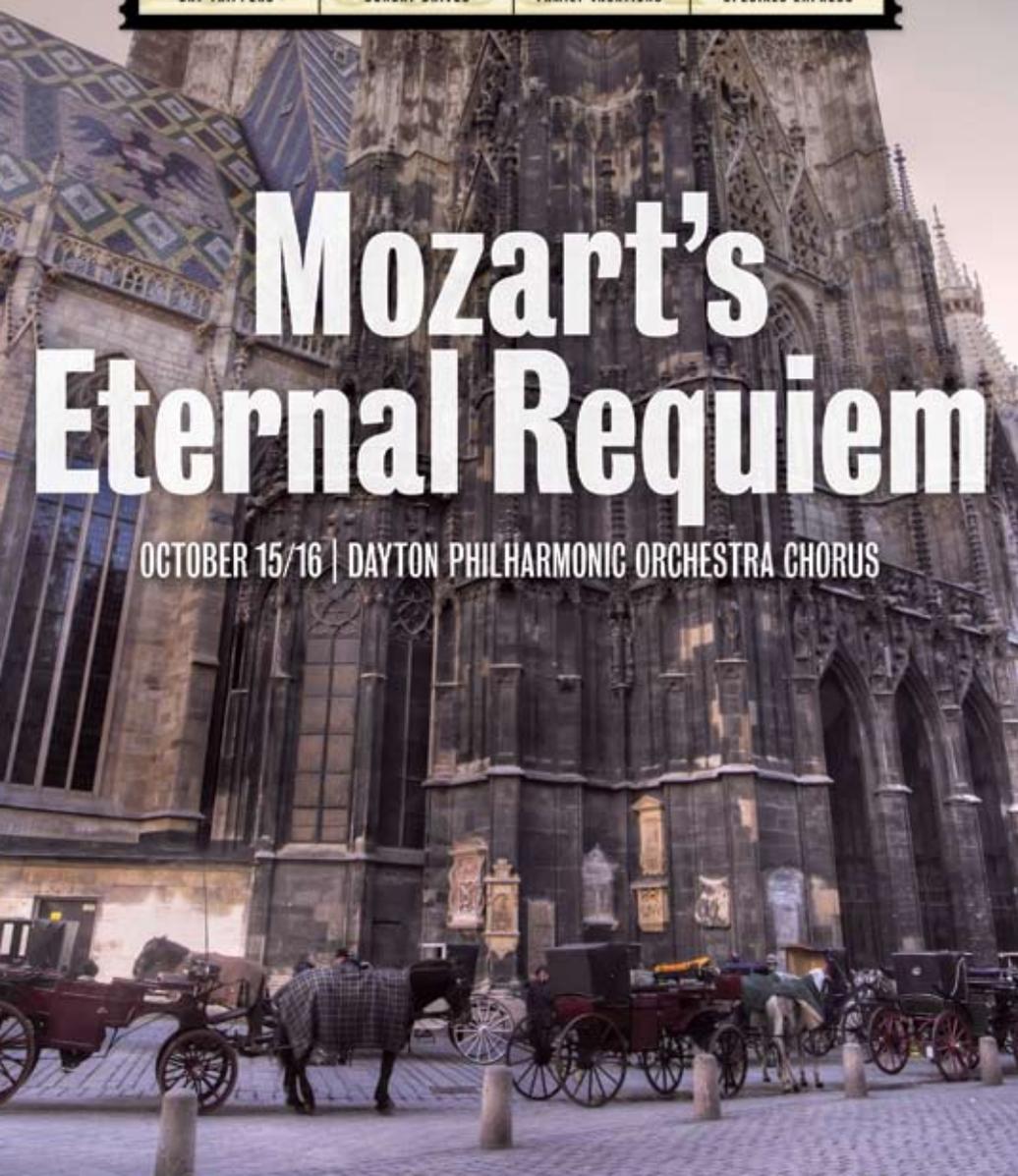
SUNDAY DRIVES

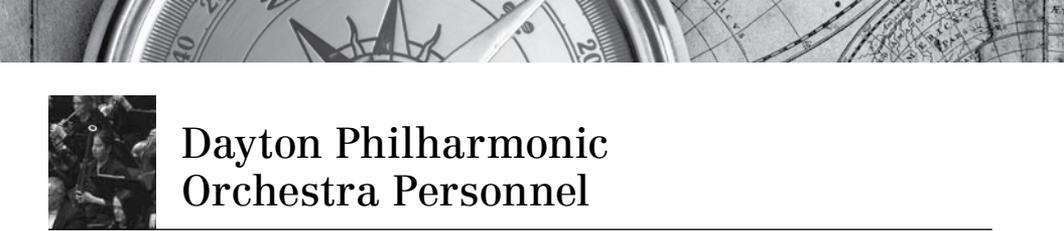
FAMILY VACATIONS

SPECIALS EXPRESS

# Mozart's Eternal Requiem

OCTOBER 15/16 | DAYTON PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA CHORUS





# Dayton Philharmonic Orchestra Personnel

## 1ST VIOLINS

Jessica Hung,  
*Concertmaster*  
J. Ralph Corbett  
Chair  
Aurelian Oprea,  
*Associate*  
*Concertmaster*  
Huffy Foundation  
Chair  
William Manley,  
*Assistant*  
*Concertmaster*  
Sherman  
Standard  
Register  
Foundation Chair  
Elizabeth Hofeldt  
Karlton Taylor  
Mikhail Baranovsky  
Louis Proske  
Nancy Mullins  
Barry Berndt  
Philip Enzweiler  
Dona Nouné-  
Wiedmann  
Janet George  
Rachel Frankenfeld  
John Lardinois

## 2ND VIOLINS

Kirstin Greenlaw,  
*Principal*  
Jesse Philips  
Chair  
Christine Hauptly  
Annin,  
*Assistant Principal*  
Ann Lin  
Gloria Fiore  
Kara Lardinois  
Tom Fetherston  
Lynn Rohr  
Yoshiko Kunimitsu  
William Slusser  
Allyson Michel  
Yen-Ting Wu

## VIOLAS

Sheridan Currie,  
*Principal*  
Mrs. F. Dean  
Schnacke Chair  
in Memory of  
Emma Louise  
Odum  
Colleen Braid,  
*Assistant Principal*  
Karen Johnson  
Grace Counts  
Finch Chair  
Chien-Ju Liao  
Belinda Burge  
Lori LaMattina  
Mark Reis  
Scott Schilling  
Johnnia Stigall  
Kimberly Trout\*

## CELLOS

Andra Lunde  
Padrichelli,  
*Principal*  
Edward L. Kohnle  
Chair  
Christina Coletta,  
*Assistant Principal*  
Jane Katsuyama  
Nan Watson  
Mark Hofeldt  
Nadine  
Monchecourt  
Mary Davis  
Fetherston\*  
Ellen Nettleton  
Linda Katz,  
*Principal Emeritus*

## BASSES

Deborah Taylor,  
*Principal*  
Dayton  
Philharmonic  
Volunteer Assn.  
C. David Horine  
Memorial Chair  
Jon Pascolini,  
*Assistant Principal*

Donald Compton  
Stephen Ullery  
Christopher  
Roberts  
James Faulkner  
Bleda Elibal  
Nick Greenberg

## FLUTES

Rebecca Tryon  
Andres,  
*Principal*  
Dayton  
Philharmonic  
Volunteer Assn.  
Chair  
Jennifer Northcut  
Janet van Graas

## PICCOLO

Janet van Graas

## OBOES

Eileen Whalen,  
*Principal*  
Catharine French  
Bieser Chair  
Roger Miller  
Robyn Dixon Costa

## ENGLISH HORN

Robyn Dixon Costa  
J. Colby and  
Nancy Hastings  
King Chair

## CLARINETS

John Kurokawa,  
*Principal*  
Rhea Beerman  
Peal Chair

Robert Gray  
Anthony Costa\*

## BASS CLARINET

Anthony Costa\*

## BASSOONS

Jennifer Kelley  
Speck,  
*Principal*  
Robert and Elaine  
Stein Chair

Kristen Canova  
Bonnie Sherman

## CONTRABASSOON

Bonnie Sherman

## FRENCH HORNS

Robert Johnson,  
*Principal*  
Frank M. Tait  
Memorial Chair  
Aaron Brant,  
*Acting Principal*

Elisa Belck  
Todd Fitter  
Amy Lassiter

## TRUMPETS

Charles Pagnard,  
*Principal*  
John W. Berry  
Family Chair  
Alan Siebert  
Ashley Hall

## TROMBONES

Timothy Anderson,  
*Principal*  
John Reger  
Memorial Chair

Richard Begel

## BASS TROMBONE

Chad Arnow

## TUBA

Timothy Northcut,  
*Principal*  
Zachary, Rachel  
and Natalie  
Denka Chair

## TIMPANI

Donald Donnett,  
*Principal*  
Rosenthal Family  
Chair in Memory  
of Miriam  
Rosenthal

## PERCUSSION

Michael LaMattina,  
*Principal*  
Miriam Rosenthal  
Chair  
Jeffrey Luft  
Richard A. and  
Mary T. Whitney  
Chair  
Gerald Noble

## KEYBOARD

Joshua Nemith,  
*Principal*  
Demirjian Family  
Chair

## HARP

Leslie Stratton  
Norris,  
*Principal*  
Daisy Talbott  
Greene Chair

\**Leave of Absence*

Neal Gittleman,  
*Music Director*

Patrick Reynolds,  
*Assistant*  
*Conductor and*  
*Conductor, DPO*

Hank Dahlman,  
*Chorus Director*

Jane Varella,  
*Personnel*  
*Manager*

William Slusser,  
*Orchestra*  
*Librarian*

Elizabeth Hofeldt,  
*Junior String*  
*Orchestra Director*



## Neal's Notes

### "Homecoming"

**I**t's nice to be back!

Funny, I guess, to say that as we start our 2010-2011 "Voyages" season!

But it *is* nice to be back.

For the last five years—ever since economics forced us to eliminate our summer concerts at the Frazee Pavilion—the Dayton Philharmonic has been silent between Memorial Day and Labor Day. I miss the summer concerts—they were a lot of fun to do. And I know our musicians miss the extra work.

But there's an accidental upside to not performing during the summer: it's that much nicer to start up again in September!

Returning to the concert season is a gradual process for me. It usually starts in August, with regular visits to Bill Slusser up in the DPO Library. There are scores to examine, parts to check, cue sheets to deliver. These trips, along with saying "Hey!" to the security staff at the Stage Door, tell my internal clock that a new year of concerts is right around the corner.

Sometimes I hit the Library on the way to or from the DPO Office. That gives me the chance to take one of my favorite short-cuts: via the backstage staircases and crossing right through Row A of the Mead Theatre loge. Ever since high school Drama Club, I have loved the experience of being in an empty theater. (Well, of course, I love being in a *full* theater, too, but you know what I mean!) There's nothing quite like the peace, quiet, and possibility of being alone in a vast, magical space like the Schuster Center. Maybe it's empty, or maybe I can hear stagehands at work in the wings. Either way, it reminds me of the excitement that's ahead!

Just before the season starts comes my annual vacation. At the end of the summer I like to hide out for a couple of weeks by a tiny lake in Door County, Wisconsin to recharge my batteries. These vacations aren't *just* biking, walking, playing golf, eating fish boils, and getting caught up on the stack of unread *New Yorkers*. I bring a bunch of scores with me and spend a few hours each day studying. I know, that sounds more like work than vacation. But believe me, there's something very restful about sitting down with Beethoven or Debussy or Gershwin and immersing myself in the music.

By the time that vacation ends, I'm rarin' to go!

The final stage in returning to a new concert season is the start of rehearsals. It's always fun to reconnect

with my colleagues in the orchestra after a summer off. Absence really *does* make the heart grow fonder. Coming back to work in the fall reminds me of everything that I love about my job—great music, great musicians, a great place to play.

And, of course, great audiences to play for.

We have a wonderful season of music ahead of us this year—a wonderful series of musical voyages. There's Beethoven, Sibelius, and Debussy on our opening Classical Series weekend. There's Marilyn McCoo and Billy Davis, Jr. kicking off the SuperPops season. And Classical Mystery Tour inaugurating our new Rockin' Orchestra series. And Beethoven's *Fidelio*, Bach's *Musical Offering*, Rodgers & Hammerstein at the Movies, the Celtic Tenors, *Ein Heldenleben*, Bernstein's *MASS*, and much, much more. Gets me fired up just thinking about it. I hope it fires you up, too!

With all that great music ahead of us, it's hard to single out one highlight above all the others. But as I write this, one thing I'm really excited about is Debussy's *La mer*, on our September classical program.

It's no secret that Debussy is one of my favorite composers, or that his three-movement suite of "symphonic sketches" about the sea is one of my favorite Debussy works. I have many warm memories of this magnificent work. In my twenties: getting to a Paris movie house an hour early by mistake and being rewarded with *La mer* piped in through the theater sound system. In my thirties: studying the score sitting on the rocks above the pounding waves at Schoodic Point in downeast Maine's Acadia National Park. In my forties: conducting it for the first time with my own orchestra, right here in Dayton.

Now I'm in my fifties, and it's time to do *La mer* for the first time in the Schuster Center. We are blessed with a concert hall that's perfect for Debussy. The warmth of the Mead Theatre gives the music a beautiful glow while the clarity of the hall's acoustics lets the thousands of intricate details in Debussy's score come through with gleaming precision. And we're blessed with a perfect Debussy orchestra, too.

Can you tell that I'm excited about the "Voyages" we'll experience together this year?

I am. But even more so...

It's nice to be back!



Thursday

Miami Valley and Good Samaritan Hospitals  
**CLASSICAL SERIES**  
Dayton Philharmonic Orchestra  
Neal Gittleman, Music Director

Sept. 23,  
2010  
8:00 PM  
Schuster Center

**FIRE & OCEAN**  
Vadim Gluzman, violinist

Saturday

Sept. 25,  
2010  
8:00 PM  
Schuster Center

The performance of Saturday evening, September 25, 2010 is the 2010-2011 season William S. Anderson Endowed Concert

**Ludwig van Beethoven**  
(1770-1827)

*Fidelio* Overture

**Jean Sibelius**  
(1865-1957)

**Violin Concerto in D Minor, Op. 47**

- I. Allegro moderato
- II. Adagio di molto
- III. Allegro, ma non tanto

*Mr. Gluzman*

- INTERMISSION -

**Claude Debussy**  
(1862 -1918)

*La mer*

- 1. From dawn to noon on the sea
- 2. Play of the waves
- 3. Dialogue of the wind and the sea

**Ludwig van Beethoven**  
(1770-1827)

*Leonore* Overture No. 3

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Miami Valley Hospital  
Good Samaritan Hospital  
Premier Health Partners



Official Automobile Dealership  
of the Dayton Philharmonic Orchestra



Official Hotel of the  
Dayton Philharmonic Orchestra

Season Media Partners:



Concert Broadcast on Saturday,  
October 2, 2010, at 10 a.m.





## Vadim Gluzman, Violinist

### Biography

Israeli violinist Vadim Gluzman, in technique and sensibility, harkens back to the Golden Age of violinists of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, while possessing the passion and energy of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Lauded by both critics and audiences as a performer of great depth, virtuosity and technical brilliance, he has appeared throughout the world as a soloist and in a duo setting with his wife, pianist Angela Yoffe. Early in his career Gluzman enjoyed the encouragement and support of Isaac Stern, and in 1994 he received the prestigious Henryk Szeryng Foundation Career Award. Gluzman plays the extraordinary 1690 ex-Leopold Auer Stradivarius, on extended loan to him through the generosity of the Stradivari Society of Chicago.

Vadim Gluzman has appeared with many of the world's finest orchestras including the London Philharmonic, Israel Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony, San Francisco Symphony, Minnesota Orchestra, Seattle Symphony, Royal Scottish National Orchestra, Deutsches Symphonie Orchester Berlin, the Munich, Dresden and Czech philharmonic orchestras, the Stuttgart Radio Orchestra, NHK and KBS orchestras, and many others. He has collaborated with world's most prominent conductors such as the late Yehudi Menuhin, Neeme Järvi, Andrew Litton, Marek Janowski, Itzhak Perlman, Peter Oundjian, Dmitri Kitaenko, Paavo Järvi, Jesús López-Cobos, Yan Pascal Tortelier, and Claus

Peter Flor. Gluzman has also performed at important festivals, including Verbier, Ravinia, Lockenhaus, Pablo Casals, Colmar, Jerusalem, Schwetzingen Festspiele, and Festival de Radio France.

Future seasons will find Gluzman making his downtown Orchestra Hall debut with the Chicago Symphony, under Paavo Järvi; appearing for the first time in recital in London's Wigmore Hall; touring the US with the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, including a concert in New York's Carnegie Hall; and performing with numerous orchestras in the US, Europe and Australia.

A highly acclaimed recording artist, Gluzman's recordings are released exclusively on BIS Records. His recent albums include the Glazunov and Tchaikovsky violin concertos with Andrew Litton conducting the Bergen Philharmonic, which won ClassicFM Magazine's coveted Disc of the Month, as well as the Selection of the Month by the Strad Magazine; and Fireworks!, a collection of virtuoso violin show pieces.

Born in 1973 in the Ukraine, Vadim Gluzman began studying the violin at the age of seven. Before moving to Israel in 1990, he studied under Zakhar Bron and later under Yair Kless in Tel Aviv. He also studied in the United States under Arkady Fomin and at The Juilliard School under the late Dorothy DeLay and Masao Kawasaki.



## Ludwig van Beethoven

### Biography

In the world of European Art Music (commonly called "classical music,") **Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)**, is a towering giant. No other composer has captured the imagination of so many people in so many different ways, and certainly, no other composer has garnered as much written scrutiny, though Mozart is a close second. Outside of music, Beethoven has inspired paintings, sculptures, novels (e.g. works of Milan Kundera and Anthony Burgess), and films. One could argue that no other figure looms as large in modern Western civilization in both the artistic and intellectual realms.

When considering Beethoven's life, it is important, but difficult, to separate fact from myth. Even while he was alive, authors began to write "definitive" accounts of his life, including many that spread misinformation or interesting conjecture, such as the notion that Beethoven was the illegitimate son of the Prussian King. From the time of his death to the present, countless scholars have devoted years, even careers living with Beethoven's biography, attempting to unlock the mystery of his genius. It is also important to remember that Beethoven was a living, breathing human being, given to bouts of irrational behavior. He was often opportunistic in his career, and at times, rather cruel to other people. To complicate matters, he possessed only a rudimentary education in general subjects, was incapable of basic math, and was limited in his written literacy. This certainly does not diminish his genius; it merely makes it hard to penetrate the true inner workings of his mind. If, as Voltaire said, "History is a pack of tricks the living play on the dead," we also tend to see Beethoven through the perspective of what we wish him to be, not what he may have been.

The basic outline of his life is without dispute. Born in Bonn to a musical family, he was close to his mother but had a

complicated relationship with his father, a mediocre singer who possessed a violent temper and propensity for alcohol. In 1784, he began official employment as a musician in the Elector's court, and enjoyed a growing regional reputation as a piano virtuoso. Beethoven traveled to Vienna in 1789, where he played for Mozart, but news of his mother's ill health forced him to return to Bonn after only two weeks. He moved to Vienna in 1792, where he developed a wide network of friends among leading intellectuals and musicians, cultivated relationships with wealthy patrons, and soaked in the culture of the thriving German Enlightenment period. During this decade, he also studied with Haydn, Albrechtsberger, and Salieri. His fame as a composer and pianist began to blossom during this period, and exploded in subsequent decades.

The dawning of a new century brought about revolutionary changes in both Beethoven's life and music. He famously wrestled with hearing loss, overcoming suicidal thoughts and emerging as the most revolutionary and original composer of all time despite near total deafness that was a constant challenge until his death. His Symphony No. 3, *Eroica* was the dawning of a new era in his life and music. Beethoven continued to compose pieces that would change music forever, especially his symphonies, string quartets, and piano sonatas. Personal difficulties, including (evidently) unrequited love for a woman and family troubles slowed his pace somewhat, but the works of his "late" period are truly some of the greatest ever conceived. He died in Vienna in 1827, leaving a powerful legacy of music and a life we are still trying to understand today.

*-Christopher Chaffee,  
Associate Professor of Music,  
Wright State University*



## Jean Sibelius

### Biography

**Jean Sibelius (1865-1957)** was the first composer from Finland to achieve international fame. He is still a hero and icon of national identity. We often label his music “Finnish Nationalism,” which is a complicated notion. The nation of Finland itself was a product of 20<sup>th</sup> century European nationalism. From the 12<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> century, it was part of Sweden, and Swedish language and customs remained in use by the upper classes and educated elite after Finland came under the control of Russia in 1809. Jean Sibelius, son of a prosperous military physician, grew up speaking and writing Swedish. By the time Finland declared independence in 1917, Sibelius was fully engaged in the tide of Finnish nationalism, embracing the language, traditions, and customs of his “new” country. There was no singular “Finnish” musical identity at the time. Sibelius, along with many others, drew inspiration from a variety of sources and forged a new broadly defined identity. In the words of David Hurwitz, “Finnish Music in the twentieth century...is not something monochrome...but a mosaic, full of bright colors and varied textures.”

Sibelius had early training on piano and violin. He began studying law in Helsinki in 1885, but soon defected to full-time study at the newly opened Helsinki Music Institute. His early compositions, most of which he never published, were derivative student works. After graduation, he received government funding to study in both Berlin and Vienna. Much has been made of the German influence on his music, but his mature works owe more to the Russians, including Tchaikovsky. By the late 1890s, Sibelius had established himself as a leading composer in his homeland. His symphonic works, including seven symphonies, numerous tone poems, and incidental music are true masterpieces. Numerous recordings and radio broadcasts spread his fame. The music of Sibelius fell out of favor in the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, but has seen a resurgence in the last three decades as academic composers lost their stranglehold on musical taste.

*-Christopher Chaffee,  
Associate Professor of Music,  
Wright State University*



## Claude Debussy

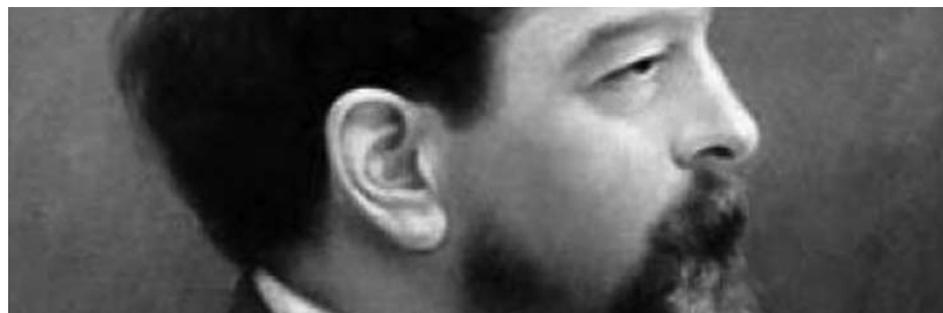
### Biography

**Claude Debussy (1862-1918)** is widely considered one of the most iconoclastic and original composers of the Modern Era. We often categorize his music as the first significant step from the Romantic to the Modern. In a period drenched in “isms,” commentators also, then and now, consider him one of the leading composers of the movement called Impressionism, linking him with the paintings of Monet, Manet, Renoir, and others. Debussy loathed this idea. He considered himself an adherent of the Symbolist movement in poetry. Luminaries of this movement like Baudelaire and Mallarme inspired some of his most important works. Often truculent in his conversations and correspondence, Debussy once wrote (about *Images*, the piece we hear part of today) this startling sentence, “I am attempting to achieve something different—a kind of reality what some imbeciles call impressionism.” Defiance of convention was an essential part of Debussy’s nature. He spent his childhood in near poverty, but he was able to start piano lessons at age seven. His prodigious gifts were immediately clear, and by age ten, he enrolled in the Paris Conservatoire. His years at this famous institution were rife with rebellion as he was often bored with the repetitious instruction and conservative style of teaching.

When asked why he selected such unique (and incorrect!) harmonies on a class assignment, he replied “for my pleasure.” This rebellious attitude towards authority even continued when he earned the coveted Prix de Rome in 1884. He spent most of his required years in Rome complaining about the accommodations, ignoring his assigned compositions, and yearning to return to his beloved Paris.

Part of this was youthful rebellion, but part of this was Debussy’s earliest attempts at forging a brand new musical identity.

Once he returned to Paris, he stuck to his own path, happily living as a bohemian while writing enigmatic new pieces of music. Unlike other artists ahead of their time, Debussy did earn widespread fame and recognition during his lifetime. He also earned a great deal of notoriety for his torrid love affairs, some with married women. One of these affairs even created a scandal that drove him from Paris for a brief period as one of his spurned lovers allegedly attempted suicide. When he died of cancer on March 25, 1918, the Germans were aggressively bombing Paris, but all of France still mourned his loss.





## Jean Sibelius: Violin Concerto

**Instrumentation:** 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 French horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, timpani, strings

The DPO last performed this piece in April 2005 with Neal Gittleman conducting and Lucas Aleman as guest violinist.

The Sibelius Violin Concerto was the most recorded violin concerto of the twentieth century. This would have been hard to imagine at the first performance in early 1904. By all accounts, the premier was a flop. The audience was bewildered by the unusual form and scope of the piece. Viktor Novacek, the soloist, was a mediocre performer. He did not have the ability to play the piece and his attempt did not do justice to what would become one of the great virtuoso standards in the violin repertoire. Sibelius quickly withdrew the work, but did not give up—a newer version premiered to acclaim a year later. By 1906, the Concerto appeared on concert programs around the world, including here in the United States.

Why would Sibelius, a skilled violinist in his own right, hand over his first and only large-scale violin work to such a second-rate performer? He wrote the concerto for Wilhelm Burmester, a self-proclaimed virtuoso he met in Berlin. Burmester pushed Sibelius to compose the piece for him, but when it was nearing completion, he kept claiming he was too busy to travel to Helsinki to play it. Sibelius was probably relieved to find another performer, as Burmester's skills did not match his ego. He asked

a colleague at the Helsinki Music Institute instead. This was a compromise driven by timing and politics. When Sibelius had the opportunity to have the revised work performed on a concert conducted by Richard Strauss, he did not hesitate to take advantage. Burmester was “unavailable” again, but was upset when Sibelius asked another violinist to play. Burmester was probably avoiding the piece, as he knew it was beyond his skills. We should be grateful for his dithering as a second lackluster performance might have caused Sibelius to destroy the piece and we would never have had the chance to know it.

The entire Concerto is full of the brooding, lyrical style that could only be Sibelius. The themes are rife with what some commentators have dubbed “Nordic Melancholy.” Sibelius thought the form of a typical late nineteenth century concerto was a bit hackneyed, especially the alternation between soloist and orchestra with a long and showy cadenza tacked on near the end. In the Violin Concerto, he abandons this idea and the violin rarely stops playing, weaving the solo line throughout the rich texture of the orchestra. The first movement cadenza is not an afterthought merely there as a showoff moment for the soloist, it is right at the center of the movement and it develops and varies the main themes already introduced.

-Christopher Chaffee,  
Associate Professor of Music,  
Wright State University



## Ludwig van Beethoven: *Leonore* Overture No. 3 *Fidelio* Overture

Beethoven only wrote one opera, *Fidelio*, but his lack of production in this genre does not imply lack of interest in it. Beethoven certainly sought to be original, but he also sought to be popular, at least with that part of the public that had some understanding of music. And operas were very popular indeed with the Viennese public of his era.

Beethoven had begun composing an opera in 1803, using a libretto entitled *Vestas Feuer* (“Vesta’s Fire”), but work proceeded slowly and then ground to a halt when he came across J.-N. Bouilly’s libretto, *Léonore, ou L’amour conjugal*. Bouilly’s libretto, the story of a faithful wife’s efforts to rescue her unjustly imprisoned husband, caught Beethoven’s attention first for its story. But Bouilly’s work also attracted Beethoven’s interest because the librettist had collaborated with the famous opera composer, Luigi Cherubini. Cherubini, though born in Italy, had settled in France where he achieved great notoriety. (Cherubini also deserves recognition for a political acumen that let him successfully negotiate both political and artistic straits as France moved from a royalist to a republican form of government and then back again.) Cherubini’s work enjoyed equal success in Vienna and his work was performed frequently. Beethoven appears to have shared the public’s enthusiasm for the composer and a chance to work with the successful composer’s librettist was too good to pass up. Beethoven dropped his previous operatic endeavors to focus his attention completely on this new project.

Beethoven finally finished the opera—now entitled *Fidelio* over his objections—

in the summer of 1805, but problems with the authorities postponed its premier until November of that year. The pointless delay was irritating enough but worse was to come since the work premiered as Napoleon’s troops were invading the city. Beethoven’s audience thus consisted largely of French officers who surely could not have appreciated the implied opera’s implied message about unjust oppression, and *Fidelio* sank from public view with little fanfare.

Yet Beethoven believed in his opera. Working from the suggestion that *Fidelio* failed, not because of international politics, but because it was too long, he trimmed the opera substantially, cutting it from three to two acts, and writing a new overture for it. This new version, which opened in 1806, received enthusiastic reviews, but Beethoven fought with the managers of the theater where *Fidelio* was showing, and the ill-fated work again closed shortly after it opened. The opera then rested on Beethoven’s work bench until 1814, when it was finally reintroduced to the public, much more successfully.

As with virtually all operatic works of the era, both the 1805 and 1806 versions of *Fidelio* opened with an overture, a musical introduction that might feature some tunes from the work to follow, or simply serve to introduce the work and set the mood. The 1805 version was premiered with an overture now called *Leonore Overture No. 2*, while the 1806 version is called *Leonore Overture No. 3*. (Given this numbering one might be expected to ask, “Where is *Leonore Overture No. 1*?” And indeed there is such a creature, not often played. It is called No. 1 because it has

## Ludwig van Beethoven: Leonore Overture No. 3 and Fidelio Overture Continued

been generally, and perhaps mistakenly, assumed to be the first version of the overtures.)

The second setting of this story was opened with the so-called *Leonore Overture No. 3*, itself a revision of the overture to the original 1805 opera. Both of these overtures are notable for the use of off-stage trumpet which plays a kind of fanfare. This fanfare is an anticipation of the music that will usher in a key character in the opera, a minister who will provide the resolution of the drama.

*Leonore Overture No. 3* is a powerful work, written in Beethoven's best heroic style. A slow introduction, which features a reference to one of the hero's arias, leads into an allegro marked by a syncopated tune. The development section features the two brief offstage

tattoos by solo trumpet, and the work concludes with a furious presto. This last section is so striking that some critics feel that it overwhelms the opera that follows. Richard Wagner, for instance, said of this overture: "It is not the overture to the drama; it is the drama itself."

Wagner's characterization of *Leonore Overture No. 3* surely must owe something to Beethoven's own apparent attitude to the work. When he set about revamping *Fidelio* once more for its 1814 appearance he had considerably cut down the overture. He removed all references to tunes from the opera and excised as well the trumpet solo. This overture also is much shorter, and while grand enough in style, is not so spectacular as to overshadow the quiet, domestic scene that makes up the opening of *Fidelio*.



## Claude Debussy: *La mer*

Debussy began work on *La mer* in 1903, at a time when he was firmly established as not just a composer and critic, but as a force to be reckoned with in French musical society. When the piece was given its first performance in 1905, we might expect that the acclaim would have been general, but the reception was indifferent. Some historians have argued that this lukewarm response could be due to the lackadaisical performance of the piece at that premier. But Debussy's public stock had taken a serious hit due to a very public and scandalous divorce. Whatever the quality of the performance, the public was not feeling very friendly to the composer. But, whatever its initial reception may have been, *La mer's* subsequent history has been very successful and it is a mainstay of the orchestral literature.

*La mer*, given that its title means "the sea," obviously is intended to evoke water, a consistent theme throughout Debussy's career. His collection of piano pieces, *Images*, contains the work "Reflections in the water"; his preludes feature works entitled "Undine" and "The golden fish"; and several other compositions—like "The Sunken Cathedral" or "The Joyous Islands"—have similar watery associations. Debussy explained this constant aquatic interest in a letter to a friend by referring back to a childish ambition. "You're unaware, maybe, that I was intended for the noble career of a sailor and have only deviated from that path thanks to the quirks of fate. Even so, I've retained a sincere devotion to the sea."

*La mer* consists of three movements which Debussy subtitled "symphonic sketches for orchestra." The first

piece, whose title might be translated "From dawn to noon on the sea," has a quiet opening that leads into several clearly demarcated sections, as though the movement were providing discrete snapshots of individual hours of the day. Debussy entitled the second movement "The play of the waves" and imbued the piece with a playful, rushing quality. The third movement, "The dialogue of the wind and the sea," seems to be the most symphonic of the three movements, actually taking a theme and treating it to something like a development.

Debussy has been praised for his evocation of the sea in this work. Music critics have heard in *La mer* everything from a general sense of the oceanic to the individual drops of water. And it may be that some listeners will hear those same elements as well. But it is worth noting that Debussy claimed no such specificity for his score. In the same letter quoted above, he argues that he should not be thought of as a painter, standing on the cliff side over the ocean, and putting what he actually sees down on canvas, but rather someone who had a vivid impression of the sea. He recorded in *La mer* not what he saw but what he felt and remembered—and those feelings and memories are what count. As he says "I have innumerable memories, and those, in my view, are worth more than a reality which, charming as it may be, tends to weigh too heavily on the imagination."

So, listeners who hear something different in this music, something maritime or otherwise, may take comfort in knowing that their impressions are, at least partly, sanctioned by the composer himself.

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- 4 times more likely to participate in a math and science fair
- 3 times more likely to win an award for school attendance
- 4 times more likely to win an award for writing an essay or poem

