
McLennan Community Orchestra

Peter Olson, conductor
Joseph A. Taylor, choreography
Sierra Martinez, horn

Friday, April 26, 2024, 7:30 PM
Ball Performing Arts Center

Repertoire

Overture to <i>Egmont</i> , op. 84	Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827)
Berceuse and Finale from <i>The Firebird</i> *	Igor Stravinsky (1882–1971)
<i>Allegro maestoso</i> from Horn Concerto No. 4 in E-flat, K. 495	Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791)
<i>Sierra Martinez, horn</i>	
Selections from <i>Swan Lake</i> , op. 20	Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840–1893)
<i>Scene</i>	
<i>Hungarian Dance (Czardas)</i>	
<i>Waltz*</i>	
<i>Finale</i>	
Overture to <i>The Barber of Seville</i>	Gioachino Rossini (1792–1868)
“March to the Scaffold” from <i>Symphonie fantastique</i> , op. 14	Hector Berlioz (1803–1869)
“Danse bacchanale” from <i>Samson et Dalila</i> *	Camille Saint-Saëns (1835–1921)

*Featuring choreography by Joseph A. Taylor

A special thanks to Joy’s School of Dance for providing rehearsal space for the dancers.

Program Notes

Beethoven composed his **Egmont Overture** to accompany a play by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. In the play, the Dutch Count Egmont fights for the independence of his homeland from Spanish rulers. Egmont does not give up his call for liberty and justice even as he dies for his cause. The themes of the play certainly resonated with Beethoven, as much of Europe, including Vienna, was under Napoleon's rule at the time. The overture starts in a dramatic minor mode and ends in a triumphant major. It is often compared to Beethoven's Fifth Symphony for its overall mood, and it even shares some motives, or small melodic patterns, with the symphony.

Stravinsky was not a well-known composer in 1909 when Sergei Diaghilev approached him about composing the music for a new ballet based on the figure of a Firebird from Russian folklore. The resulting ballet, **The Firebird**, along with subsequent collaborations on *Petrushka* and *The Rite of Spring*, helped launch Stravinsky's international career. Stravinsky later arranged portions of the ballet into orchestral suites, with the Berceuse (Lullaby) and Finale the final two movements of the 1919 suite. The firebird's tranquil lullaby accompanies the sleep of the evil king, while the Finale ushers in a new day after his death, growing to a triumphant celebration.

Mozart was known for composing in nearly all genres of music of his time. His keen awareness of the drama in the daily life of ordinary people brought a relatable liveliness to his operas, and this sense of drama infused all his non-operatic works as well. In his many concertos, the soloist and orchestra seem to be contrasting characters in a drama that plays out much as an opera would. Mozart composed his **Fourth Horn Concerto**, as well as his three other horn concertos, for his close friend, the virtuoso hornist Joseph Leutgeb, and it remains one of the most popular horn concertos today.

Although **Swan Lake** was Tchaikovsky's first attempt at composing ballet, it was a great success and "redefined the place of music in classical ballet" (*Grove Music Online*). It is also Tchaikovsky's earliest orchestral work that is still commonly performed today. In the ballet, Odette has been transformed into a swan by an evil sorcerer. Prince Siegfried falls in love with her and tries to break the spell. The Swan Theme that is introduced in this Scene becomes a major part of the Finale to the ballet as Siegfried battles the sorcerer. There are several different versions of the ending, some happy and some tragic, but in the most common version, Siegfried and Odette leap to their death to break the spell, and they are seen together rising above the lake in the closing apotheosis.

Program Notes

Rossini's **Overture to *The Barber of Seville*** will likely be instantly recognized by many not for its original context, but for accompanying Bugs Bunny as he gives Elmer Fudd a shave and a haircut (or rather builds a salad on his head in place of the haircut). Although not its intended purpose, the somewhat melodramatic and highly comedic music fit the cartoon perfectly, and it has remained a classic in its repurposed setting. The music is no less effective in its original purpose as the introduction to Rossini's comic opera *The Barber of Seville*, often considered one of the greatest examples of comedy in music.

Berlioz's *Symphony Fantastique* is generally considered the prime example of programmatic symphonic music. Rather than composing a symphony and leaving the interpretation open to the audience, Berlioz provided a detailed and semi-autobiographical description of each of the movements. The symphony broadly follows a "young artist" who finds himself madly in love with a woman. The woman is musically represented by a particular theme, which Berlioz called an *idée fixe*, or a fixation of the mind, and which appears in each of the movements. Berlioz calls the fourth movement the ***March to the Scaffold*** and explains:

Having grown sure that his love is unappreciated, the artist poisons himself with opium. The dose of the narcotic, too small to kill him, plunges him into a sleep accompanied by the most horrible visions. He dreams that he has killed the one he loved, that he is condemned, that he is being led to execution, and that he is witnessing his own guillotining. The procession advances to the sounds of a march sometimes dark and fierce, sometimes brilliant and solemn, in which a muffled sound of heavy footsteps follows without transition the loudest outbursts. At the end of the march, the first four bars of the *idée fixe* reappear like a last thought of love interrupted by the fatal blow.

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Symphonie_fantastique)

Saint-Saëns was a major figure in French music in the second half of the nineteenth century. Like Mozart—to whom he was often compared—he composed in nearly every genre of his day. Although he wrote several operas, only *Samson et Dalila* is commonly performed today. The opera is based on the Biblical story of Samson as he is distracted by Delilah from leading the Hebrews to battle against the Philistines. The ***Bacchanale*** is a wild dance of the priests of Dagon as they celebrate their victory over Samson and the Hebrews, although shortly afterward Samson pulls down the pillars of the temple to kill himself as well as his enemies.

Personnel

Dancers

Hannah Requa

Claire Harris

Cora Zika

Sydney Johns

Violin I

Melinda Coogan

Ashleigh Dao

Michael Gallagher

Skylar Hunt*

Kailea Kuecker⁺

Hannah Porcare⁺

Violin II

Morning Alexander*

Becca Cassady

Veronica Espinosa

Kristen Manley

Viola

Katie James

Katie Kilmer

Gana Leggett

Olivia Madison⁺

Brooke Smith*

Cello

Lydia Gravagne*

Laura Hubbard

Jessica Kincaid

Bass

Edgar Carrillo⁺

Marcela Colmenares

Victor Leggett*

Flute

Karen Brown

Jamie Espen*

Rita Huie

Galilea Olguin⁺

Oboe

Franklin Allbright*

Brently Bartlett

Clarinet

Donna Flowers*

David Hooten

Mary Lampert

Bassoon

Tristen Collinsworth

Lillian Lowe

Mark Stansel*

Emma Stofferahn

Horn

Evelyn Cardenas*

Johnny Harper⁺

Phillip Lowe

David Rice

Trumpet

Spencer Childers

Joe Hooten

Rachel Kincaid

Hailee Yip*

Trombone

Jayland Brown

Roland Huie*

Ainsley McDaniel⁺

Tuba

Mark Hays*

Aidan O'Shields⁺

Timpani

Jonathan Vela⁺

Percussion

Victor Boswell

Ricardo Forester

Jennifer Sitton*

Harp

Kate Cockle*

*Principal

⁺MCC Student

The McLennan Community Orchestra is a student and volunteer orchestra sponsored by McLennan Community College. The orchestra is made up of students, teachers, and other community members of diverse professions and ages who love to gather and make music together. The orchestra provides accessible performances of great orchestral works—both familiar and unfamiliar—to the community.

The MCO welcomes all string players and includes a limited number of winds and percussion. The group rehearses Thursday evenings during the school year. Full-time MCC students who play in the orchestra are eligible for scholarship. Interested players should contact Peter Olson at polson@mclennan.edu for more information.

Donations to the McLennan Community Orchestra may be made through the MCC Foundation (indicate the donation is for the orchestra): www.mclennan.edu/foundation.

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Timothy Owner, trombone
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Mark Schubert, trumpet

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Peter Olson, bass

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Edgar Sierra

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