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42nd Season 259th Concert

Saturday, June 14, 7:00pm The Hertell Gardens, 241 E. Dudley Ave., Westfield

Mozart in the Garden

David Wroe, Conductor

Pre-concert lecture by Dr. Yifei Xu

Dances of Galánta ZOLTÁN KODÁLY

Introduction and Allegro for Strings, Op. 47 EDWARD ELGAR

INTERMISSION

Symphony No. 38 in D major, K. 504 "Prague"

.....WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

I. Adagio - Allegro

II. Andante in G major

III. Presto (Finale)

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DAVID WROE

Music Director & Conductor

Mr. Wroe is Music Director of the **New Jersey Festival Orchestra**, Principal Conductor at **Phoenicia International Festival of the Voice in New York**, and a regular conductor of **L'Orchestre Régional de Normandie** in France. From 2000–2014 he was a regular conductor with **New York City Opera**, leading and assisting in numerous productions. Orchestras conducted include the **Boston Symphony Orchestra**, **Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra**, **Royal Scottish National Orchestra**, **L'Orchestre National de Lille**, **New Jersey Symphony L'Ensemble de Paris**, **Symphony Nova Scotia**, **Kansas City Symphony**, **Santa Fe Symphony**, **New York City Ballet**, **Neue Brandenburg Symphony**, **L'Orchestra Lamoureux** with cellist **Mstislav Rostropovitch**, **Opera de Toulon**, **Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra**, **Das Loh-Orchester Sondershausen**, **Philharmonische Orchester der Stadt Heidelberg**, **Delaware**, **Harrisburg**, **Huntsville**, **De Moines Symphony**, and numerous tours of Western Austria with **Vorarlberg Symphony** and at the **Bregenz Frühlings Festival**. Maestro Wroe is a preferred conductor in Asia, having directed the **Taiwan National Symphony**, **Pusan Philharmonic**, **Macau**, **Shenzhen**, **Nanjing**, **Wuhan**, **Guiyang**, and **Taipei Symphony Orchestras**. He was Music Director of **Music on the Mountain: Garrett Lakes Arts Summer Festival** in Maryland from 2000 – 2006, and Music Director and Founder of the **Kansas City Camerata** from 1990–1996.

Maestro Wroe was **Seiji Ozawa's** Assistant Conductor at the **Boston Symphony Orchestra**, leading the Orchestra in **Tanglewood (with Joshua Bell)** and in **Boston's Symphony Hall (with Horacio Gutierrez)**, and touring Europe with the **Boston Symphony Orchestra Chamber Players**. 2007 marked Maestro Wroe's recording debuts with **L'Orchestre National de Lille** on the TransArt label with pianist **Bruno Fontaine**, and broadcast recordings, through **Austrian Broadcasting Authority (ORF)**, with the **Vorarlberg Symphony**.

In addition to his residency at **New York City Opera**, Maestro Wroe was **Resident Conductor at Oper der Stadt Heidelberg** (1998–2002), Principal Conductor at **Opera Delaware** (2000

– 2005), and directed the summer **'Opera Under the Stars'** series at the 7000 seater **Garden State Arts Center in NJ**. From 2005–10 he was Music Director of **Opera Teatro Gratticielo** in NY, opened for the newly formed **Fresno International Grand Opera**, and served as Judge with **Anna Moffo** for the **Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions**.

Maestro Wroe, through the NJ Festival Orchestra, has diverse experience in cross-over genres, having collaborated with **Kristin Chenoweth**, **Mannheim Steamrollers**, **The 3 Irish Tenors**, **Natalie Merchant**, **Joan Rivers**, **Don Rickles**, **Bob Newhart**, **Jackie Evancho** and **Celtic Thunder**, and a return guest at **Ocean City Pops Orchestra**, to name but a few.

Maestro Wroe devotes considerable time to aspiring musicians. In 2014 he held a residency at **Brown University Symphony Orchestra (Rhode Island)** as its Interim Music Director, was Principal Conductor at **N.Y. University Symphony Orchestra** (2008–2011), and Director of Orchestras at **Montclair State University, NJ** (2000–2005). He led the **Boston Symphony Orchestra Youth Concerts**, the **Taipei Symphony Orchestra Summer Youth Festival**, and has taught and given master-classes at **New England Conservatory**, **Harvard University**, **Rutgers University** and **University of Alabama**. He has served as Judge for the **Music Assistance Fund** administered by the **League of American Orchestras**, and was the Chairman of the Jury of the **New Jersey MTA State Concerto Competition**.

Awards are numerous, including the **Seiji Ozawa Fellowship** at **Tanglewood**, a citation in **United States Congress** for community commitment, and finalist in the **1st Bernstein International Conducting Competition**. He attended **Lancing College**, has a **BMus** from **Manchester University (England)**, a **MM** from **Northwestern (Chicago)**, and studied with **Gustav Meier** and **Victor Yamposky**.



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PROGRAM NOTES BY MATTHEW ARMBRUSTER

ZOLTÁN KODÁLY - Dances of Galánta (1933)

When Zoltán Kodály (1882–1967) composed Dances of Galánta, he wasn't simply paying homage to his childhood or writing a colorful concert piece, but was engaging in a larger dialogue about music's cultural identity. The early 20th century saw a blossoming of nationalist musical expression across Europe where composers sought to showcase folk and indigenous music from the veneer of Austro-Germanic formalism. Kodály and Béla Bartók were at the forefront of this movement in Hungary, gathering and notating folk music from the countryside, and often recording it themselves using Edison phonographs. But while Bartók often translated these raw materials into angular, modernist structures, Kodály approached folk music with a more lyrical and accessible sensibility.

Dances of Galánta was commissioned in 1933 by the Budapest Philharmonic Society to celebrate its 80th anniversary. Kodály chose to draw on the musical traditions of Galánta, a town that had been part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire that now lies in modern Slovakia. During Kodály's childhood, Galánta was known for a renowned Romani (Gypsy) band whose music was the first "orchestral" sonority he encountered, leaving a lasting impression on him. Rather than quote folk songs directly, Kodály used traditional dance types and idiomatic gestures to evoke these past traditions.

The musical language of Dances of Galánta is steeped in the verbunkos style, a genre of Hungarian dance music characterized by contrasting slow (lassú) and fast (friss) sections, virtuosic runs, dramatic rubato, and the prominent use of the clarinet, reflecting the role of the single-reed tárogató in Hungarian folk music. Kodály masterfully orchestrates these gestures into a somewhat rhapsodic structure, beginning with an evocative, slow introduction that segues into increasingly vibrant and fiery dance episodes. The clarinet takes on a starring role, offering cadenza-like flourishes that evokes the dazzling improvisations of Romani performers. The work ends in a blaze of energy, but not before passing through moments

of reflection, whimsy, and exuberant showmanship.

What distinguishes Dances of Galánta is its balance between indigenous Hungarian roots and classical refinement. Kodály didn't simply seek to preserve folk traditions; he elevated them into the concert hall while maintaining their nationalist spirit.

EDWARD ELGAR – Introduction and Allegro for Strings, Op. 47 (1905)

At the turn of the 20th century, British music was experiencing somewhat of a revival focused on showcasing its folk traditions. Edward Elgar established himself as one of the primary voices of this movement following the premiere of his Enigma Variations in 1899, deeming himself a composer of serious orchestral weight.

Elgar's Introduction and Allegro was composed at the request of the newly founded London Symphony Orchestra to commemorate its founding and to showcase Elgar's work. It was Elgar's dear friend August Jaeger, Nimrod from the Enigma Variations, who suggested writing a "brilliant, quick scherzo" to showcase the virtuosity of the new ensemble. The piece, scored for string quartet and string orchestra, draws inspiration from the Baroque concerto grosso, in which a small group of soloists (the concertino) contrasts with the full ensemble (the ripieno).

Ultimately, the premiere in 1905 was met with lukewarm reception due to the lack of adequate rehearsal leading up to the performance. However, it later established itself as one of the paragons of the string orchestra repertoire.

The opening dramatic fanfare in the full strings gives way to a lush, lyrical theme introduced by the solo viola, a melody which Elgar claimed to have heard sung by Welsh fishermen during a vacation in Cardiganshire. Following the introduction of the thematic material, Elgar replaces the expected development with a tightly constructed fugue based on this pastoral Welsh theme, showing his deep reverence for Bach, while also infusing it with a distinctly Romantic sensibility.

PROGRAM NOTES

The final coda showcasing a glorious statement of the Welsh theme by the entire orchestra and a celebration of English folk music.

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART – Symphony No. 38 in D major, K. 504 "Prague" (1786)

By the mid-1780s, Wolfgang Adadeus Mozart (1756–1791) had settled in Vienna, no longer in the service of the Archbishop of Salzburg, and determined to succeed as a freelance composer.

But the Viennese public, while initially receptive, grew increasingly fickle. Fortunately, in Prague, a city Mozart visited several times, his music was received enthusiastically. His opera Le Nozze di Figaro, which had met with mixed reactions in Vienna, was embraced in Prague with an enthusiasm that surprised even the composer. "Here they talk about nothing but Figaro," he wrote. "Nothing is played, sung or whistled but Figaro."

It was likely this reception that inspired Mozart to compose a new symphony to present during his visit to Prague in January 1787. The resulting work, known as the "Prague" Symphony, is both a gesture of thanks and a stunning demonstration of his command of large-scale orchestral form.

Structurally, the Prague is unique among Mozart's late symphonies in that it lacks a minuet. It opens with an elaborate, slow introduction, harmonically rich and suggestive of drama. This Adagio is not merely an introduction, but integral to the work's emotional trajectory. From the very beginning, Mozart creates a sense of tension and expectation, using chromaticism and silence to dramatic effect. When the Allegro finally arrives, it does so with operatic vigor, full of contrapuntal interplay and dynamic contrasts.

Throughout the symphony, one hears the influence of Mozart's operatic writing, particularly Figaro. The development sections teem with characters and gestures that seem lifted from the stage: rapid-fire exchanges,

moments of lyrical reflection, sudden changes in mood. But far from feeling theatrical in a superficial sense, the music is dramatic in a deeply structural way. The themes evolve, converse with one another, and transform over time.

The second movement, Andante, is marked by an almost conversational grace that is intimate, refined, and filled with subtleties of phrasing. It feels like a chamber work expanded to symphonic scale, full of playful invention and poetic nuance.

The final movement is a tour de force of compositional ingenuity. Built on rapid-fire rhythms and bubbling motifs, it showcases Mozart's flair for counterpoint and variation. But beneath the sparkling surface lies a sense of urgency and momentum, as if the composer were propelling us toward a conclusion that is both inevitable and exhilarating.

In the Prague Symphony, Mozart showcases the entirety of his musical language in the realm of opera, chamber music, and symphonic form. It is music of gratitude, certainly, but also music of mastery. Composed by a man at the height of his fame, he was eager to remind his audience that he was not simply a servant of musical fashion, but a master of symphonic form and innovation.

MATTHEW ARMBRUSTER

Matthew Armbruster is a cellist, educator and concert producer in Austin, TX. He is a member of the Austin Symphony Orchestra and performs regularly with many Austin concert series and festivals, including Texas Performing Arts, ACL, SXSW, The Butler School of Music, Austin Camerata, Density 512, among many others. Matt specializes in the performance of new music and has been responsible for the commission of over 30 works and the premiere performances of countless others. He serves as a mentor for both young performers and composers through his work as a teaching artist with the Austin Symphony Orchestra, Golden Hornet, and Austin Chamber Music Center. In his free time, Matthew enjoys distance running and wilderness backpacking.



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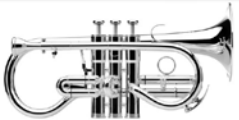
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