

University Symphony Orchestra
Heroic Tales

Tuesday, October 24, 2023 at 7:30pm
Lagerquist Concert Hall, Mary Baker Russell Music Center

Pacific Lutheran University
The College of Professional Studies and School of Music, Theatre & Dance present

University Symphony Orchestra
Heroic Tales

Asieh Mahyar, *conductor*

Tuesday, October 24, 2023 at 7:30pm
Lagerquist Concert Hall, Mary Baker Russell Music Center

Welcome to Lagerquist Concert Hall.
Please disable the audible signal on all watches and cellular phones for the duration of the concert.
Use of cameras, recording equipment and all digital devices is not permitted in the concert hall.

PROGRAM

Coriolan Overture, op. 62..... **Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)**

Haunted Topography..... **David T. Little (b. 1978)**

Symphony No. 2 in B Minor.....**Alexander Borodin (1833-1887)**

- I. Allegro moderato*
- II. Scherzo. Molto vivo*
- III. Andante*
- IV. Allegro*

Program Notes

Ludwig van Beethoven *Coriolan Overture, op. 62*

Beethoven's *Coriolan Overture* was inspired, not as one might expect by Shakespeare's tragedy, but by the play *Coriolan* written in 1804 by the Viennese playwright Heinrich Joseph von Collin. Following Shakespeare, von Collin's tragedy concerns the Roman general Gaius Marcius Coriolanus who lived in the 5th century BC. Although revered for his bravery and brilliance as a general Coriolanus fell out with the political establishment in Rome, and was exiled as a consequence. In exile he raised a rebel army with the intention of overthrowing Rome and replacing the corrupt government. Beethoven's overture is essentially a symphonic movement based on two contrasting themes symbolizing different aspects of Coriolanus' character. The first describes him as an ambitious warlike leader bent on victory after bloody conflict. The second is a gentler theme, which shifts its key frequently to suggest doubt and uncertainty in what he is doing.

The overture is very violent in character. It moves on at an unrelenting tempo with some abrupt breaks and many dramatic contrasts of loud and soft. It has often been suggested that Beethoven, though ostensibly writing about a Roman revolutionary, was expressing his own horror about the reign of terror that had followed the French revolution just a few years earlier. Although there is no direct evidence for this it is tempting to think that the opening gesture – a long unison note for the whole orchestra followed by a short dramatic chord – may be a musical depiction of the guillotine. However one interprets it, the overture is a masterpiece of musical invention, and a highly original and groundbreaking piece.

The première took place in March 1807 at a private concert in the home of Prince Franz Joseph von Lobkowitz. The other works premiered at the concert were Beethoven's *Piano Concerto No. 4*, and his *Symphony No. 4*. The overture has been used as a concert opening piece regularly ever since.

– program note by Portobello Orchestra

David T. Little *Haunted Topography*

Haunted Topography is a meditation on a story told to me by Moe Armstrong in the summer of 2011. Moe is the founder of the veteran rehabilitation program Vet2Vet. It was in this capacity that he met a woman whose son had been killed in Vietnam. Even decades after the loss, this mother could not even begin to move past the pain. In speaking with Moe, it came out that, though she had asked, no one had ever shown her a map of where it had happened. She felt that she needed to know this—to see the place where her son had been killed—before her healing process could begin. Moe showed her, and it helped her to begin to heal.

It is a simple story, of course, but it says a lot about the nature of grief, of mortality and of the peculiarities of each individual's needs while engaging with the healing process.

Originally commissioned by Alarm Will Sound, the sinfonietta version of *Haunted Topography* received its world premiere on October 21, 2011 at Roulette as part of the 2011 SONiC Festival. The orchestral version of the work was commissioned by Christopher James Lees, who premiered the work at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, on October 18, 2013.

– David T. Little

Alexander Borodin *Symphony No. 2 in B Minor*

The illegitimate son of a Russian prince, Borodin was registered at birth as the lawful son of one of the prince's serfs. He received an excellent education that included the study of several languages and music lessons on flute, oboe, cello, and piano; at age 23 he graduated with honors from the Academy of Medicine in St. Petersburg with a doctorate in chemistry. He spent his professional life in medicine as a surgeon and chemist.

Clearly a gifted musician, the young Borodin pursued chamber music with a passion and began composition lessons with Mily Alexeyevich Balakirev, an established composer who attracted a number of talented young composers to his camp, including Nicolai Rimsky-Korsakov, Modest Petrovich Mussorgsky, and César Cui. The five were eventually dubbed “Moguchaya Kuchka” (literally, the Mighty Heap). Together, they created a truly Russian sound, harvesting the folk music and liturgical traditions of their native soil for inspiration.

Borodin's first serious compositions, such as his *First Symphony*, were heavily influenced by Balakirev, who wrote of the First: "every bar of it was criticized and overhauled by me..." Rimsky-Korsakov, who became Borodin's friend at the time of the completion of that work's first movement, was delighted and bewildered by the sound of it all. Though the symphony was dismissed by the press, the Russian public was enthusiastic at the premiere; it encouraged Borodin to produce a second symphony, as well as other works.

His teacher and friends were scarcely involved in the composition of Borodin's *Symphony No. 2* (1869-76), a work which is one of his most distinctive and original. It was a dismal failure in its 1877 premiere and, at Rimsky-Korsakov's suggestion, Borodin revised it and launched it again in 1879, this time to great acclaim. At the time, Borodin called it his "Heroic Symphony."

The opening statement, which begins and ends the first movement (Allegro), is bold and triumphant, clearly influenced by Russian Orthodox chant (though some writers say that the tune was inspired by forgotten composer Robert Volkmann's *First Symphony*, which created a sensation on its premiere in Moscow in 1864).

The jocular, succinct second movement (Scherzo) shows Borodin's talent for orchestral color. Indeed, as biographer Gerald Abraham said, "in the so-called colouring...produced by orchestral combinations, he has few superiors."

The third movement is ethereal and transparent, at times lyrical and almost sweet, other times bold and brash. Its flowing melodies feature clarinet, horn, and strings. The Finale is exuberant and optimistic, ebbing and flowing like a gigantic celebration, but always informed by the rhythmic vitality and the melodic innocence of Russian folk dance.

Perhaps Sir Henry Hadow best summed up Borodin's legacy: "No musician has ever claimed immortality with so slender an offering. Yet if there be immortalities in music, his claim is incontestable."

– Dave Kopplin, LA Philharmonic

About the Conductor

Passionate about performing music from different cultures, Asieh Mahyar is the interim Director of Orchestral Studies at Pacific Lutheran University where she conducts the PLU Symphony Orchestra. Ms. Mahyar is a candidate in Doctor of Musical Arts in orchestral conducting at Michigan State University, where she studied with Octavio Más-Arocas and Katherine Kilburn. She received her MM in orchestral conducting from University of Massachusetts-Amherst under the mentorship of Morihiko Nakahara, and Kristo Kondakci. Ms. Mahyar obtained her BM degree in choral conducting from Komitas State Conservatory of Yerevan, Armenia with Hovhanness Mirzoyan where she continued further studies in orchestral conducting to learn more from Ruben Asatryan.

Coming from Iran and being one of the very few female conductors from her country, Ms. Mahyar has broad experience working with ensembles at all levels in different countries. At Michigan State University, she was the Assistant Conductor for the MSU Symphony Orchestra, MSU Concert Orchestra, Musique 21 contemporary music ensemble, and the MSU Opera. There she performed with all of the ensembles, including conducting opera productions. Previously, Ms. Mahyar served as Teaching Assistant at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst, where she worked with the UMass Symphony Orchestra and All University Orchestra. She has served as Assistant Conductor of the Tchaikovsky Music College of Yerevan, Armenia, and worked with youth orchestras, including the Warner Middle School Orchestra, MI, National Music Festival Orchestra, MD, and student orchestras at the Eastern Music Festival, NC. Ms. Mahyar's broad conducting experience includes working with professional and community orchestras such as the Grand Rapids Symphony Orchestra, MI, Marquette Symphony Orchestra, MI, and the Jackson Symphony, MI. She works equally with instrumental and vocal ensembles and has conducted choirs, including the MSU Practicum Choir, MI, Komitas State Conservatory Choir, Yerevan, Sorayesh Choir, Iran, and conducts opera productions actively.

Ms. Mahyar has been selected to participate in prestigious conducting workshops and conferences including the Cabrillo Music Festival with Christian Macelaru and Octavio Más-Arocas, the National Music Festival with Richard Rosenberg, Eastern Music Festival with Gerard Schwarz, the Conducting Institute with Miguel Hart-Bedoya, Conductors Retreat at Medomak with Kenneth Kiesler, and the Choral Conducting Workshop with Antanina Kalechytis.

University Symphony Orchestra

Asieh Mahyar, *conductor*

Flute

Katherine Gunter+
Blake Leahy
Kade Levien*
Eva Reutercrona^

Oboe

Ainsley Fuerst+^
Jayden White*

Clarinet

Abigail Caprye
Caitlin Collins*
Jeremy Wuitschick+^

Bass Clarinet

Abigail Caprye

Bassoon

Rorie Millward*
Tyler Woo+^

Horn

Mateo Acuña
Ben Birmingham*
Benjamin Coats
James Gibson+^

Trumpet

Connor Kaczkowski+^
Jess Mason*

Trombone

Joshua Green
Sabien Kinchlow-McConnaughey*+^
Sarah Zundel, *bass trombone*

Tuba

Gabriel Murray+^
Cassidy Stanhope*

Percussion

Evan Nakanishi*
Kyle Gough
Cole Strichertz
Ben Helgeson

Keyboard

Rachel Mower

Harp

Elizabeth Landis**

Violin I

Justin Singh*
Joy Han
Mya Sullivan
Joan Fort
Janelle Barlow
Cora Beeson
Gabriel Casey-Aguinaga

Violin II

Evelina Bozhko+
Lydia Downs
Pablo Arellano Cardenas
Kyra Kehm-Goins
Kyla Rivera
Stan Piddubnyy

Viola

Alyson Rake+
Kindra Gonsalves
Marilyn Willis
Anna Tangedahl

Cello

Ellen Coburn+
Marisa Robbins
Jeffrey Buetow
Kellen Gonsalves
Nathaniel Bratcher
Ralizsa Rosales
Elliot Capron
Noah Montgomery
Joan Coughlan
Bronwyn Poppen-Eagan
Cayla Low

Double Bass

Campian Robert+
Lexi Castillo
Cameron McLennan
Madeline Cline
Declan Long

+ principal on Beethoven/section leader

^ principal on Little

* principal on Borodin/concert master

** PLU faculty

Lexi Castillo, *librarian*

Fall Events

at Pacific Lutheran University

ALL MUSIC EVENTS ARE IN MARY BAKER RUSSELL MUSIC CENTER, LAGERQUIST CONCERT HALL UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED.

SEPTEMBER

- 10 Sunday, 3pm**
Artist Series: Erik Steighner, Saxophone, free admission
- 24 Sunday, 5pm**
High School Woodwind Workshop Showcase, free admission

OCTOBER

- 5 Thursday, 5:15pm**
Andrew Kozar Trumpet Masterclass. Mary Baker Russell Music Center Room 322, free admission
- 5 Thursday, 7:30pm**
Artist Series: Andrew Kozar, Trumpet, free admission
- 9 Monday, 5:30pm**
Corrine Byrne Voice Masterclass. Mary Baker Russell Music Center Room 334, free admission
- 12 Thursday, 7:30pm**
University Jazz Ensemble. Eastvold Auditorium, Karen Hille Phillips Center
- 13 Friday, 12pm**
Orchestra Festival concert, free admission
- 15 Sunday, 3pm**
University Wind Ensemble
- 17 Tuesday and 18 Wednesday, 7:30pm**
Choral Concert
- 22 Sunday, 3pm**
South Sound Saxophone Ensemble, free admission
- 24 Tuesday, 7:30pm**
University Symphony Orchestra

NOVEMBER

- 2 Thursday, 1:45pm**
Covert Ensemble Saxophone Masterclass. Mary Baker Russell Music Center Room 334, free admission
- 4 Saturday, 7:30pm**
PLU Opera Gala. Tickets: \$40 adult; \$35 senior citizen (60+), military, alumni, PLU faculty/staff (limit 2); \$25 PLU students (limit 1); \$20 children under 12
- 10 Friday, 7:30pm**
Choral Union
- 11 Saturday, 5pm**
Artist Series: PLU Faculty Brass Showcase
- 12 Sunday, 3pm**
Angela Meade Vocal Competition, free admission
- 12 Sunday, 7:30pm**
PLUtonic/Gold Rush, free admission
- 15 Wednesday, 7:30pm**
Keyboard Students Recital, free admission
- 17 Friday, 7:30pm**
University Jazz Ensemble. Eastvold Auditorium, Karen Hille Phillips Center
- 18 Saturday, 3pm**
Woodwind Students Recital, free admission
- 18 Saturday, 4:30pm**
Brass Students Recital, free admission
- 18 Saturday, 7:30pm**
Percussion Ensemble, free admission
- 19 Sunday, 12pm**
Artist Series: Camas Woodwind Quintet. Jennie Lee Hansen Recital Hall, free admission
- 19 Sunday, 3pm**
University Wind Ensemble & University Concert Band
- 19 Sunday, 7:30pm**
Guitar Orchestra & Guitar Ensemble, free admission
- 21 Tuesday, 7:30pm**
Steel Band. Eastvold Auditorium, Karen Hille Phillips Center, free admission
- 28 Tuesday, 5:30pm**
Saxophone Quartets & Jazz Combos. The Cave, Anderson University Center, free admission

NOVEMBER, Cont.

- 29 Wednesday, 7:30pm**
Piano Ensemble, free admission

DECEMBER

Light, A PLU Christmas Concert

Tickets go on sale Tuesday, November 1

Saturday, December 2, at 7:30pm - Lagerquist Concert Hall
Sunday, December 3, at 2pm - Lagerquist Concert Hall
Monday, December 4, at 7:30pm - Benaroya Hall, Seattle
Saturday, December 9, at 7:30pm - Lagerquist Concert Hall
Sunday, December 10, at 2pm - Lagerquist Concert Hall

- 3 Sunday, 7:30pm**
PLU Ringers, free admission
- 5 Tuesday, 6pm**
Chamber Music Kaleidoscope, free admission
- 5 Tuesday, 7:30pm**
String Kaleidoscope, free admission
- 6 Wednesday, 7:30pm**
Sølvvinden Flute Ensemble, free admission
- 7 Thursday, 7:30pm**
Sounds of Christmas, featuring University Singers and Knights Chorus
- 10 Sunday, 7:30pm**
Composers Forum. Jennie Lee Hansen Recital Hall, free admission

JANUARY

- 6 Saturday, 5 and 6:30pm**
Northwest High School Honor Band, free admission
- 14 Sunday, 5pm**
PLU Honor Orchestra for Strings, free admission

To Order Tickets:

On Line: www.plu.edu/music/tickets

At the Concert: Lobby Desk in Mary Baker Russell Music Center or Karen Hille Phillips Center (depending on performance location)

CONCERTS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

All ticket sales are final - no refunds

MUSIC EVENT TICKET PRICES: \$16 GENERAL PUBLIC; \$12 PLU FACULTY/STAFF, ALUMNI, MILITARY, SENIORS (60+); \$8 IMMEDIATE FAMILY OF PERFORMERS, PATRONS UNDER 18; FREE TO PLU STUDENTS WITH STUDENT ID. CONCERTS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE AND SOME CONCERTS MAY BE ADDED AFTER PUBLICATION. www.plu.edu/music/calendar (updated October 2, 2023)