

University Symphony Orchestra

Wednesday, April 29, 2026 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

Wesley Schulz, *conductor*

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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

Overture to *La forza del destino*Giuseppe Verdi (1813-1901)
Selections from *Carmen*Georges Bizet (1838-1875)
Prélude & Aragonaise
Les Toréadors
Habanera
Danse bohème

INTERMISSION

Pictures at an Exhibition Modest Mussorgsky (1839-1881)
Promenade orch. Maurice Ravel
Gnomus
Promenade
Il vecchio castello
Promenade
Tuileries: Dispute d'enfants après jeux
Bydlo
Promenade
Ballet des poussins dans leurs coques
Samuel Goldenberg and Schumuyë
Limoges – Le Marché
Catacombae (Sepulcrum romanum) – Cum mortuis in lingua mortua
La Cabane sur des pattes de poule (Baba-Yaga)
La grande porte de Kiev

Program Notes

Overture to *La forza del destino*

Verdi was well established as a composer of opera when he accepted a commission from the Imperial Theater in St. Petersburg. The result was *La forza*, based on the Spanish play of the same name by Angel Pérez de Saavedra. The opera premiered in 1862 and was revised in 1869. Although epic in length, the story is rather straight-forward. Don Alvaro accidentally kills the Marquis of Calatrava – the father of the woman he loves, named Leonora. The Marquis' son, Don Carlo, searches for Don Alvaro and Leonora in order to avenge his father's death. In the end Don Alvaro mortally wounds Don Carlo, who has also fatally stabbed his sister Leonora. Don Alvaro curses the fates but when he prays for forgiveness Leonora dies in peace. The overture is one of Verdi's most popular. It features many of the important melodies of the opera, including the relentless destiny motive and the three chords of fate which open the piece.

Selections from *Carmen*

Carmen is an opera comique in four acts with a libretto by Henri Meilhac and Ludovic Halévy, based on the novel by Prosper Mérimée. The premiere took place at the Opéra-Comique in Paris in March of 1875. The first run was considered a failure, but today the opera is unanimously recognized as one of the greatest, and certainly one of the most performed operas ever written. The problems inherent in the premiere likely had to do with the Paris venue. The Opéra-Comique was an opera house that performed light-hearted, bourgeois type works. *Carmen* blurred the distinction between serious and comique opera. Shocking to audiences at the time was the frank, sexual nature of Carmen, women smoking and playing cards on stage, and the on-stage death of Carmen in the last act. The opera is set in Seville, Spain in 1820. The main character, Carmen, is a sensuous gypsy who engages in free love with a fiery temper. She seduces a soldier, Don José, but later loses interest. Don José, still in love with Carmen, rejects his former love, leaves his position as a soldier and joins a band of smugglers. When Carmen turns her attention to the bullfighter Escamillo, in a rage of jealousy, Don José murders Carmen. Fritz Hoffman assembled two orchestral suites from the opera from which today's selections have been chosen. These selections present some of the most memorable and dazzling music Bizet ever wrote.

Pictures at an Exhibition

Vladimir Stasov, a prominent art critic during the late nineteenth century, proposed an exhibition of the work of the late painter and designer Victor Hartmann. Mussorgsky admired Hartmann and was distraught at his untimely death. After attending the exhibition Mussorgsky decided to honor his friend by writing a collection of small works for piano that described Hartmann's work in music. Very few of the works exhibited still exist today and only six of the designs and illustrations related to *Pictures at an Exhibition* survive. Interestingly, despite Hartmann's great talent, Michael Russ, a musicologist, suggests that without Mussorgsky's musical work, he would likely not be remembered today.

Mussorgsky was not a composer of orchestral works. He has only one to his credit: *St. John's Night on Bald Mountain*, which, sadly, is known primarily by Rimsky-Korsakov's orchestration. Thus, it is critical to remember that *Pictures at an Exhibition* was conceived by the composer as a work for piano. Mussorgsky's manner of writing for piano was unique. He dispenses with the forms and extended treatment composers like Mozart and Beethoven brought to their works for the piano. Instead Mussorgsky uses direct expression. He conveys his idea efficiently, without development, yet very musically. Often times his approach to the piano is rough-hewn, making for awkward piano technique. *Catacombs*, for example, is difficult to perform on piano as the music is static with its massive chords. Likewise, the opening of *Great Gates* is chordal in nature with a focus on vertical harmony.

Pictures was not heard in public during Mussorgsky's lifetime and it was not published until five years after his death. By the early twentieth century, however, as the work became more well-known many took it upon themselves to turn it into an orchestral work. Maurice Ravel's transcription for orchestra is the most well-known and performed version today.

Pictures opens with a Promenade which represents Mussorgsky walking around an exhibit of Hartmann's paintings. The Promenade occurs five times in the original version for piano (but only four in Ravel's transcription, he omits the fifth version) separating several of the movements. The Promenades disappear as the work unfolds but listen closely in the final movement as the Promenade theme is incorporated into the theme of *Great Gates of Kiev*. It is as if Mussorgsky went from being an observer of Hartmann's pictures to being a part of them.

Stasov gave the following commentary about *Pictures* in the first published edition of the original piano version:

The introduction is headed “Promenade”

No. 1 “Gnomus”. The drawing shows a tiny gnome clumsily waddling on bow legs.

No. 2 “Il vecchio castello”. A medieval castle, in front of which a troubadour is singing.

No. 3 “Tuileries. Dispute d’enfants après jeux”. Avenue in the Tuileries Gardens, with many children and governesses.

No. 4 “Bydlo”. A Polish farm cart on huge wheels, drawn by oxen.

No. 5 “The ballet of the unhatched chicks”. An illustration by Hartmann for the performance of a picturesque scene from the ballet “Trilbi.”

No. 6 “Two Polish Jews, one rich, one poor”.

No. 7 “Limoges. Le Marché”. French women arguing furiously in the market square.

No. 8 “Catacombae”. The picture shows Hartmann himself looking at the Paris catacombs by the light of a lantern.

No. 9 “The hut on hen’s legs”. This drawing by Hartmann depicts a clock in the form of a witch’s hut on hen’s legs. Mussorgsky added the ride of Baba-Yaga (the witch) on the mortar.

No. 10 “The Bogatyr Gate in Kiev”. Hartmann’s drawing is the design for a city gate in Kiev, in the old-Russian massive style, with a dome in the form of a Slav helmet.

– Program notes by Wesley Schulz

About the Conductor

Wesley Schulz is Music Director and Conductor of the Auburn Symphony Orchestra (WA) and was formerly the Associate Conductor of the North Carolina Symphony. As a guest conductor, Schulz has appeared with the Seattle, Utah, Austin, Tallahassee, Canton, Williamsburg, Greenville, Richmond (IN), Waco, and Bozeman Symphony Orchestras, among many others. Additionally, Schulz is Principal Guest Conductor at the Pacific Northwest Ballet having led productions such as Prokofiev’s *Romeo and Juliet* as well as annual performances of Tchaikovsky’s *The Nutcracker*. Schulz has collaborated with some of the most dynamic musical artists of our time including Tessa Lark, Leslie Odom Jr, John Williams, Philippe Quint, Bella Hristova, Rachel Lee Priday, Richard Lin, Pink Martini, Randall Goosby, Cirque de la Symphonie, Amos Lee, and many more. When not on the podium, Schulz enjoys spending time with his partner, Cameron, doing CrossFit, snowboarding, cooking, and playing endless fetch with their two dogs, Chewbacca and Han Solo.

University Symphony Orchestra

Wesley Schulz, *conductor*

Flute

Katherine Gunter++
Kade Levien++
Raynah Brown, *piccolo*

Oboe

Jayden White++
Sara Atwood, *English horn*++
Gabrielle Guerrero, *English Horn*

Clarinet

Meaghan Austin-Cortez
Bethani Juarez
Abi Caprye, *bass clarinet*

Bassoon

Syd Thayer-O'Brien++
Rameses Unat-Almanza
Thomas Tafoya, *contrabassoon*++

Saxophone

Conor Beach

Horn

James Gibson++
Benjamin Coats++
Max Kiger
Ciel Simpson
Micaiah Tinkler

Trumpet

Devin Bianchi-Rivera+
Clay Chabot
Kurtis Sacksteder

Trombone

Sabien Kinchlow-McConnaughey+
Joshua Green
Sophia Okan, *bass trombone*

Tuba

Cassidy Stanhope

Percussion

Evan Nakanishi+
Laura Bahrt
Brandon Liukkonen
Makayla Lu
Cadence Philbeck
Ronin Schoolcraft

Violin I

Janelle Barlow*
Pablo Arellano Cárdenas**
Adelaide Waite
Kyra Kehm-Goins
Kira Miyamoto
Rebekah Doll©

Violin II

Dominic Pollio+
Claire Raymond^
Kaitlynn Koehn
Ana Navas

Viola

Kindra Gonsalves+
Linnea Phillips^
Cas Hedtke
Natalie Story
Sof Topete©

Cello

Jeffrey Buetow+
Marisa Robbins^
Kellen Gonsalves
Cayla Low
Ralizsa Rosales
Soren Bostrom

Double Bass

Cameron McLennan+
Nolan Eastwood©
Deborah McCoy©

Harp

Sarah Harker

* Concertmaster

** Associate Concertmaster

+ Principal

++ Co-Principal

^ Assistant Principal

© Community Member

Dominic Pollio, *librarian*

Kindra Gonsalves, *stage manager*

FEBRUARY

- 7 Sunday, 7:30pm**
Faculty Recital: Justin Lader with Guest David Helfand: Celtic Harp, Viola, and More, free admission
- 8 Sunday, 3pm**
Richard D. Moe Organ Recital Series: Justin J. Murphy-Mancini, University Organist
- 12 Thursday, 7:30pm**
Choir of the West Tour Homecoming Concert
- 15 Sunday, 3pm**
Faculty Recital: Jennifer Rhyne and Friends, free admission
- 28 Saturday, 2pm**
Guitar Orchestra & Guitar Ensemble, free admission
- 28 Saturday, 5:30pm**
Guitar Faculty Recital, free admission

MARCH

- 5 Thursday, 1:45pm**
Nicholas May Saxophone Masterclass, free admission
- 5 Thursday, 7:30pm**
Guest Artist Recital: Nicholas May, Saxophone. Jennie Lee Hansen Recital Hall, free admission
- 8 Sunday, 3pm**
Choral Union
- 10 Tuesday, 7:30pm**
Faculty Recital: Craig Rine, Clarinet, free admission
- 15 Sunday, 3pm**
University Wind Ensemble
- 17 Tuesday, 7:30pm**
Anat Cohen with the Pacific Lutheran University Jazz Ensemble. Eastvold Auditorium, Karen Hille Phillips Center
- 19 Thursday, 7:30pm**
University Symphony Orchestra: Student Showcase
- 21 Saturday**
Pacific NW Trombone Symposium 2026, Mary Baker Russell Music Center
- 22 Sunday, 1pm**
Rhythm Celebration concert. Eastvold Auditorium, Karen Hille Phillips Center, free admission

APRIL

- 8 Wednesday, 4pm**
Christopher Theofanidis Composition Masterclass and Seattle Symphony Rehearsal Observation, Benaroya Hall, Seattle (**by invitation only – contact baldwin.giang@plu.edu*)
- 9 Thursday, 12:30pm**
Sandbox Percussion Lecture and Masterclass, free admission
- 11 Saturday, 10:30am**
Mehrddad Gholami Flute Masterclass, Mary Baker Russell Music Center Room 334, free admission
- 15 Wednesday, 7:30pm**
Keyboard Students Recital, free admission
- 19 Sunday, 3pm**
Richard D. Moe Organ Recital Series: Stephen Price, Organist
- 21 Tuesday, 7:30pm**
Steel Band, free admission
- 22 Wednesday, 7:30pm**
Percussion Ensemble, free admission
- 26 Sunday, 3pm**
University Singers & Knights Chorus
- 28 Tuesday, 7:30pm**
University Chorale
- 29 Wednesday, 7:30pm**
University Symphony Orchestra
- 30 Thursday, 7:30pm**
Choir of the West

MAY

- 1 Friday, 3:30pm**
Kayo Iwama Voice Masterclass. Jennie Lee Hansen Recital Hall, free admission
- 1 Friday, 7:30pm**
Sølvvinden Flute Ensemble, free admission
- 2 Saturday, 7:30pm**
Guitar Orchestra & Guitar Ensemble, free admission
- 3 Sunday, 3pm**
University Wind Ensemble
- 5 Tuesday, 6pm**
Saxophone Quartets & Jazz Combos. The Cave, Anderson University Center, free admission
- 7 Thursday, 7:30pm**
Composers Forum, free admission
- 8-9 Friday-Saturday, 7:30pm and 10 Sunday, 2pm**
Spotlight Series: *The Light in the Piazza the Musical*. Eastvold Auditorium, Karen Hille Phillips Center
- 9 Saturday, 3pm**
Woodwind Students Recital, free admission
- 9 Saturday, 4:30pm**
Brass Students Recital, free admission
- 11 Tuesday, 7:30pm**
PLUtonic/Gold Rush. The Cave, Anderson University Center, free admission
- 12 Tuesday, 7:30pm**
University Concert Band
- 13 Wednesday, 7:30pm**
University Jazz Ensemble. Eastvold Auditorium, Karen Hille Phillips Center
- 14 Thursday, 6pm**
Chamber Music Kaleidoscope, free admission
- 14 Thursday, 7:30pm**
String Kaleidoscope, free admission
- 16 Saturday, 3pm**
Mariachi del Pacifico. Eastvold Auditorium, Karen Hille Phillips Center
- 16 Saturday, 7:30pm**
Choral Union