



KEYNOTES

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF
THE EVANSTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

LAWRENCE ECKERLING, MUSIC DIRECTOR

The Virtuoso Trumpet

The ESO's 73rd season is titled "Virtuosos" in recognition of the diversity of local performers represented in our subscription series. Our third concert is also diverse in its compositions, with an Austrian trumpet concerto, a Norwegian suite for string orchestra, and three full orchestra works with an Italian theme.

Our program opens with one of the greatest opera overtures by Giuseppe Verdi (1813–1901), that to *I Vespri Siciliani* (1855). This was the 19th of Verdi's 26 operas, but his first for the Paris Opera, one of the most prestigious (and grandest) of all opera houses. A performance at the Paris Opera assumed five acts of music, including a ballet, and an overture. Verdi supplied all of these, and the overture is generally considered to rank with that of *La Forza del Destino* as his finest. The opera's title refers to the ringing of the vespers bells which announced an uprising in 1282 by the Sicilians against (ironically) their French oppressors.

Edvard Grieg (1843–1907) is Norway's most renowned composer, and is best known for his nationalistic pieces such as *Peer Gynt*. However, the next work on our program is an example of neoclassicism titled *From Holberg's Time: Suite in the Olden Style*. Grieg wrote this in 1884 as a piano suite to celebrate the 200th birthday of a playwright named Ludvig Holberg, and then transcribed it for string orchestra the following year. It consists of five short movements in the style of a Baroque dance suite.

This will be followed by one of the best-known concertos for a brass instrument, the Trumpet Concerto of Franz Joseph Haydn (1732–1809). Haydn composed this concerto in 1796 for a friend named August Weidinger, who had developed a type of trumpet using keys in an attempt to expand the notes playable on the instrument. Weidinger's efforts failed; the trumpets used by today's orchestras were first developed around 1830. However, this short three movement concerto has been a great success since its earliest performances. See Maestro Eckerling's column on the next page for more about the issues in performing Haydn.

SUNDAY, MARCH 17 — 2:30 PM

THE VIRTUOSO TRUMPET

The second half of the program returns to Italy with a work based on one of the best-known Italian opera overtures, but with a composer from England named Gordon Jacob (1895–1982). Jacob was a skilled orchestrator and arranger who taught at the Royal College of Music. His orchestration of Ralph Vaughan Williams' *English Folk Song Suite* (originally for military band) was heard at our concert of March 2018. Jacob composed his "overture," *The Barber of Seville Goes to the Devil*, in 1960 for the BBC Concert Orchestra. This four minute romp is a "devilish" parody of Rossini's original overture.

Our Italian finale is the middle tone poem of Ottorino Respighi's (1879–1936) "Roman trilogy" — *The Pines of Rome* (1924). Its four sections, totaling about 20 minutes, trace a sequence from late afternoon through evening to deepest night and climaxing in a sunrise representing the Roman legions marching in triumph down the Appian Way. An already large orchestra will be augmented by an additional four trumpets and two trombones stationed above the orchestra to deliver a stunning conclusion to our concert. 🎶

—David Ellis



MUSICAL INSIGHTS

FRIDAY, MARCH 15, 2019
1:30 PM

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BEHIND THE SCENES



Performing Haydn's Music

Performing Haydn's music, such as the Trumpet Concerto to be performed at this concert, should seem easy, just like any other composer, right? The music tells you what notes to play, how fast or slow to play them, and how loud or soft to play them. Right? Well, not quite.

There is also the matter of the articulation of each note. That means, is each note legato (smooth and connected)? Or staccato (short)? Are different notes grouped together? And if so, in what combination? (Meaning, two notes legato followed by two notes staccato, or some other combination). Also, should they be the same for all instruments? And once you make those decisions, should it remain consistent through the whole piece? Or are variations or contrasts acceptable? Or even desired?

Editors spend time (sometimes a great deal of time, but sometimes apparently very little, if any, time) making those sorts of decisions in their work. Even when using a so-called "urtext" score (meaning a score that shows EXACTLY what the composer wrote in his original manuscript), only helps if the composer himself was very particular and exacting in what he/she wanted and wrote it down in the score. I have found recently that in the case of Haydn, he wasn't very specific at all. He would start something one way, and then

fail to continue it through the duration of a movement. Or he would write it one way for one instrument, but not write it the same way for a different instrument, even though both instruments are playing the same notes at the same time!

I have a theory about this. Haydn wrote LOTS of music. For example, 104 numbered symphonies, compared to Mozart's 41 and only nine for Beethoven and Schubert. As well as 83 string quartets, 47 piano sonatas, 31 piano trios and 14 masses. So I think Haydn relied on his copyists... A LOT! He expected them to fill in the gaps and make things consistent.

Because of this past reliance on copyists, it often is of little help to perform from the "urtext" score, (which portrays exactly what was in the manuscript). Instead, what is needed is a really good editor who can do all of the fixing up. The problem is, different editors "fix" things differently. Ultimately then, it is up to the conductor to perform the final clean-up and make many editorial decisions. There was much work to be done regarding articulation in the Haydn Trumpet Concerto, particularly in the final movement. Most interesting was that in every published edition I have seen, the articulation in the solo trumpet part is often different than the articulation in the orchestra. I have done my best to make them as consistent as possible. 🎵

—Lawrence Eckerling

Music Director, Evanston Symphony Orchestra

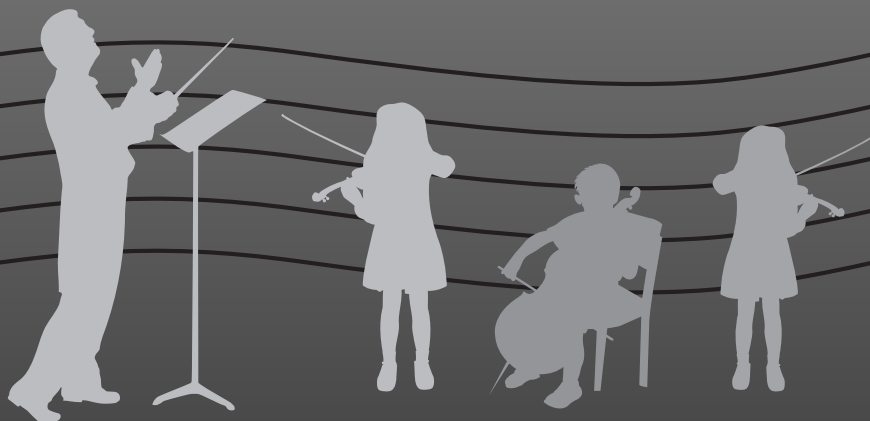
YOUNG PERSONS' CONCERT

MAY 19, 2019 • ONE HOUR CONCERT

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ADMISSION IS FREE AND ALL ARE WELCOME • DONATIONS REQUESTED

Music by Rossini, Rodríguez, Vivaldi, Williams followed by Farandole by Bizet plus Music from *Pirates of the Caribbean* performed by Evanston District 65 orchestra students playing side-by-side with Evanston Symphony musicians.



Meet Tage Larsen



Tage Larsen says he was drawn to the trumpet by its clarion quality — or maybe, he added with a grin, because it was a way of making himself heard at home! Not surprising in a household with ten siblings, six of whom, like Tage, were adopted and all of whom

have Scandinavian names because of their father's Norwegian heritage. (It's pronounced "TAH-geh" and was inspired by his parents' admiration for Swedish Democratic Socialist Prime Minister Tage Erlander.)

After his father completed an MBA at Harvard, Tage's parents decided that they wanted to stay in Cambridge and, because they had always wanted a large family, they bought a 13-bedroom house, which they proceeded to fill. His parents first adopted Tage, who heads up a parade that includes a Native American brother, a Vietnamese sister, an El Salvadoran brother, a Cambodian sister, and a Vietnamese-African American brother, all interspersed with four of his parents' biological children.

Tage has a strong memory of the first piece of music that "grabbed" him. The family was on vacation on Nantucket Island and his father had brought along some CDs. One of these was the Sibelius Second Symphony, and Tage fell in love with it, especially the ending. He was nine years old, had just started trumpet lessons, and found himself drawn more and more toward music, inspired in part by the popularity and musicianship of trumpeter Wynton Marsalis. Tage's interest was such that his parents decided to find a private teacher for him at the end of his first year of group lessons in school. And so it began!

Tage says that he liked the discipline of an instrument and enjoyed practicing; his mother reports that he spent hours in his room with his trumpet. He also enjoyed the experience of playing in a group and during high school did it all — orchestra, band, jazz band, and chorus. On the more unconventional side, a friend of his father had a saxophone choir that, strangely enough, included two trumpets. Tage was one of them.

After high school, Tage earned a bachelor's degree in music from Michigan State followed by a master's from Eastman. He spent the year after Eastman with the Dallas Brass, a group that toured the country by bus and gave concerts in various locations. Toward the end of his time with the Dallas Brass, Tage auditioned for a position he knew would be a boost to his career. His audition was successful and Tage was thus transformed into newly-minted Staff Sergeant Tage Larsen, United States Marine Band, one of "The President's Own."

Established by Act of Congress on July 11, 1798, the U.S. Marine Band is the oldest of the United States military bands and the oldest professional musical organization in the country. The band's association with the Chief Executive began when President John Adams asked the musicians to play in the newly-built White House on New Year's Day in 1801.

Later that year Thomas Jefferson requested the band to play at his presidential inauguration; the Marine Band has played at every United States presidential inauguration since. Jefferson himself dubbed them "The President's Own," a title they still hold 218 years later.

The U.S. Marine Band is also unique in that it is the only military band whose recruits are exempt from basic training. They are all professional musicians and, unlike their counterparts in the other military bands, cannot be called up for combat. Their job is to inspire the country through music. Period. However, they are indeed a military unit and must present a disciplined military appearance. This discipline is the job of the Drum Major, a career Marine selected from the Marine Corps field bands who is responsible for the military development of the band's members.

During his four years as one of "The President's Own," Tage was cornet soloist and performed at a number of official functions, including the second Clinton inauguration, state dinners at the White House for foreign dignitaries and U.S. Olympians, a G7 event, concert tours, and military funerals, in addition to the band's regular Wednesday night concerts.

With four years of solid professional experience under his belt, Tage left the Marine Band in 1999 at age 29 and set a goal of landing an orchestral position by the time he was 30. He won a spot with the St. Louis Symphony but, because the job didn't start until the following year, stayed in the DC area and played with several orchestras, including the Philadelphia Orchestra; he was also principal trumpet with the Annapolis Symphony.

Tage played with the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra for two years as second trumpet. Then, in 2002, he successfully auditioned for his current position with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, where he is the first and, to date, only permanent African-American member of the orchestra. ("No issues," Tage says. "It's always first and foremost about the music.") His position is that of "fourth trumpet/utility," the "utility" portion meaning that he does all of the extras such as doubling a part or filling in for someone who's absent. He enjoys the variety of musical experiences the position affords him and loves being part of a good team.

With respect to the Haydn Trumpet Concerto, Tage says that it's a fabulous piece of music, and adds that it was originally written for a keyed bugle. Notes on bugles are controlled only by the player's mouth, making it a difficult instrument to play well. Adding the keys, however, allowed the musician to play chromatically — a necessity for this piece!

Tage lives in Evanston and is the father of two sons, Zachary, 17, and Ethan, 16, who are students at New Trier. He teaches applied trumpet at the DePaul University School of Music.

Several years ago, Tage won an audition for the position of assistant principal at the Cleveland Orchestra, but, luckily for us, turned it down to stay with the CSO. We are delighted to welcome Tage Larsen, talented trumpeter — and fellow Evanstonian — to our stage! 🎶

—Kelly Brest van Kempen




Introducing violins to preschoolers

Evanston Symphony Orchestra is committed to bringing music to all in our community and that starts with the very young. For twelve years ESO has brought an excellent music education program called *Music In Your World* to low income preschoolers at Head Start and Pre-K. The students sing songs and learn musical language. This program also includes one week a year when members of the orchestra introduce the children to violins, to listen to them being played, and to play the violins themselves. ESO is grateful to Seman Violins for the loan of 1/4 and 1/8 sized violins for this special week and to First Bank & Trust/Byline Bank for financial support of this program.



This year ESO also brought *Music In Your World* classes to Evanston's Early Head Start program. Children in Early Head Start and also families in the home-visiting program come together three times a month to learn to sing songs and to handle musical



instruments — little percussion instruments, shakers, drums and more. Parents love to sing with their children and singing together builds bonds as well as teaching language and pre-literacy skills. ESO is delighted to partner with District 65 on both these programs. ESO thanks Evanston Community Foundation, and the Kiwanis Club of Evanston for their financial support of these classes in Early Head Start. 




Celebrate the Evanston Symphony Orchestra in its 73rd Season with your gift to the 2019 Annual Fund!

ESO was named Community Orchestra of the Year in 2017 by the Illinois Council of Orchestras for our commitment to quality performance, engagement with community partners and outreach to Evanston's youngest, most vulnerable students and seniors. We make live classical concerts accessible to all and enrich people's lives with music! The ESO continues to perform exciting concerts like this one in March with Tage Larsen from the Chicago Symphony. We welcomed another Chicago Symphony Orchestra star, John Bruce Yeh, who played *Liquid Melancholy* by Lake Forest composer, James Stephenson. Our Holiday concert is a glorious celebration of community with six diverse arts groups on stage joyously uniting 350 performers and an audience of 1,100.

Of course, the ESO does much more than perform concerts. We bring music into the lives of Evanston preschoolers in Head Start and Pre-K At Risk programs with Music In Your World. This special program, developed by the ESO at the request of School District 65 and now in its tenth year, uses the power of music to teach critical concepts like opposites and sequencing, plus school readiness skills, including taking turns and following instructions. We are now expanding this program to Early Head Start, reaching children from 6 weeks to 36 months. Singing and clapping helps language develop early, increasing vocabulary and learning letters, colors and numbers through repeated songs.

Once again this year—on May 19, ESO will perform a special free Young Persons' concert at Evanston Township High School. For the final piece, ESO musicians will perform side-by-side with students studying string instruments in D65 middle schools. This new initiative helps address inequities in music training and support for students whose families cannot afford private lessons to achieve the technical proficiency of their more affluent peers.

The ESO is a true community orchestra that touches the hearts and minds of people from 2 to 102! We reach out to our audience with Musical Insights, our pre-concert programs on Friday afternoons before each concert that are free to all. Musical Insights expands patrons' musical understanding and enriches their concert experience. We hope that you share our pride in the many contributions our orchestra has made to our community. Please consider a tax-deductible gift to the Evanston Symphony Orchestra's 2019 Annual Fund.

Thank you! 

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