

KEYNOTES

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF
THE EVANSTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
LAWRENCE ECKERLING, MUSIC DIRECTOR



Brahms Piano Concerto 1

The ESO's "Music from Many Lands" season concludes with music by a living American, a canonical German, and a Russian who ended his career in the U.S. after a long stay in Paris.

Our American, John Corigliano (b.1938), has been involved in music from his earliest years because his father, also named John Corigliano, was the concertmaster of the New York Philharmonic during its glory years under Leonard Bernstein, and the younger Corigliano assisted on the production of the *Young People's Concerts*. His compositions have won him the Pulitzer Prize, five Grammys, and an Oscar for *The Red Violin*. Our concert will feature one of his most theatrical works, the 1981 *Promenade* Overture. Please read Maestro Eckerling's Behind the Scenes column on the next page for a detailed description of the piece.

Johannes Brahms (1833–1897) may be considered either a German composer, born in Hamburg and resident in Dusseldorf from 1853–1862, or as a Viennese composer as he lived there for the last 25 years of his life. Regardless of locale, the greatest influences on his music and life were his friendship with Robert and Clara Schumann and his deep admiration for Beethoven. The dramatic and arresting opening of his First Piano Concerto in D Minor (1859) combines both influences: it has been suggested that the music represents Robert Schumann's attempted suicide by leaping into the Rhine, but its key and overall power evoke the first movement of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. Neither can be proven, but the strength and virtuoso demands of this concerto cannot be denied. This concerto is possibly the longest in the standard repertoire, depending upon tempi, and it was in this concerto that Leonard Bernstein made headlines by disavowing from the podium the slow tempo which the soloist, Glenn Gould, insisted on using. Ironically, the 1962 Gould performance took 52 minutes, but in 1984 when Bernstein recorded the concerto again, and at *his* tempo, it took 55 minutes!

SUNDAY, MAY 13 — 2:30 PM

BRAHMS PIANO CONCERTO 1

Our season concludes with one of the great orchestral showpieces, the *Firebird* Suite by Igor Stravinsky (1882–1971). The complete *Firebird* ballet (1910) is close to 50 minutes in length and scored for a huge orchestra, so Stravinsky created three different suites, which Maestro Eckerling details in his Behind the Scenes column on the next page. The genesis of this ballet is fascinating and was intimately affected by the artistic and cultural ties between France and Russia. The Russians, particularly the aristocracy in St. Petersburg, always looked to Paris for their artistic guidance; one example was when Nadezhda von Meck, the patroness of Tchaikovsky, needed a piano teacher for her children, she hired a young Frenchman named Claude Debussy, who made piano arrangements of dances from *Swan Lake*. By 1900 ballet had died out in France, its birthplace, and was only viable in Russia. However, there were no "Russian" ballets, so in 1910 the impresario Serge Diaghilev created one by committee, with the music falling to the unknown Igor Stravinsky. *The Firebird* was a huge success artistically and financially, and is still Stravinsky's most popular work, one which will provide a smashing finale to our season.

—David Ellis



MUSICAL INSIGHTS

FRIDAY, MAY 11, 2018
1:30 PM

MEET THOMAS PANDOLFI

1611 CHICAGO AVE., EVANSTON



THE EVANSTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA IS AN ILLINOIS NOT-FOR-PROFIT COMMUNITY ORCHESTRA PROVIDING DIVERSE, ENJOYABLE AND ACCESSIBLE MUSICAL ENTERTAINMENT THAT ENRICHES THE ORCHESTRA, THE AUDIENCE AND THE COMMUNITY. For more information on ESO concerts and events, please contact David Ellis, General Manager, at (847) 864-8804. Write us at Evanston Symphony Orchestra, PO Box 778, Evanston, IL 60204. Email us at esomusic@evanstonsymphony.org. Visit our website evanstonsymphony.org.

BEHIND THE SCENES



I want to briefly talk about two of the works on our final concert. The first is John Corigliano's *Promenade* Overture, a piece whose narrative (or plot) is the REVERSE of that of Haydn's "Farewell" Symphony (No. 45), in whose finale players exit the stage one by one

until there is nobody left on the stage. In Corigliano's overture, which would normally start a concert, the work BEGINS with an almost empty stage. The first notes heard are the last five measures of the Haydn Symphony, but played BACKWARDS! The players gradually enter the stage while simultaneously playing their parts, until you finally have the full orchestra onstage playing the final note! Sometimes, players are required to improvise, and at times play at a different tempo than the time being beat by the conductor. But make no mistake, on top of these hugely entertaining theatrics, this is one really good piece of music!

The final work of the concert is Stravinsky's *Firebird* Suite in the version of 1945. The original ballet, from 1910, is for a huge orchestra including three harps and an on-stage brass band. He made a suite in 1911 using the same forces as the original ballet, but it is almost never performed today because it omits the ballet's overwhelming finale. He then created a suite in 1919, which is the version most commonly performed today, which added back the finale but reduced the oversized orchestra to that of merely a large orchestra. And then he created another suite in 1945 which uses a slightly smaller orchestra still, but incorporates more of the music from the original than either the 1911 or the 1919 suites. This restored music includes the Pas de deux between the Firebird and Ivan Tsarevich and also the Dance of the Princesses (scherzo). Stravinsky himself recorded and conducted the 1945 version for his live performances.

I ultimately chose the 1945 version, not because it was Stravinsky's "final definitive version," but simply because it contains music that I happen to adore that is only otherwise heard in the complete ballet, and I wanted to share it with you, our listeners.

—Lawrence Eckerling

Music Director, Evanston Symphony Orchestra

BEHIND THE SCENES: FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER

THANK YOU TO CHUCK FRIEGL!

There are many logistical issues involved presenting a concert with approximately 100 musicians, and one of the most challenging is transporting our timpani from their storage space at ETHS to Pick-Staiger Hall for the Tuesday night rehearsal, the Saturday rehearsal and the Sunday concert. This transport frequently also includes large percussion instruments such as bass drum and gong. And everything has to be returned to ETHS on Tuesday evening after 10PM and also on Sunday afternoon after the concert.

For at least ten years now this role has been faithfully and masterfully filled by Evanston resident Chuck Friedl.

Chuck is a retired insurance analyst and NU graduate, married with 2 grown sons. Musically trained on piano and high school choir, he now prefers to listen to classic rock. A life-long do-it-yourselfer, he enjoys working odd jobs and playing poker and tennis year round. He also spent time working for ESO's Frank Sacks as a tennis instructor. Chuck grew up in Brookfield and follows all the Chicago sports teams, but especially the White Sox.

The ESO wishes to acknowledge Chuck's contributions to our concerts!

—David Ellis

General Manager, Evanston Symphony Orchestra

ESO plays first Young Persons' Concert

ESO was delighted to partner with Evanston School District 65 to present our first ever Young Persons' Concert. Over 500 people attended this free one hour concert, held at Evanston Township High School. Maestro Eckerling was joined again by Henry Fogel, as narrator for Britten's *Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra*. In a grand finale to this fun new concert, more than 140 young students from District 65 joined ESO musicians on stage to play *Great Gate of Kiev* from *Pictures*

at an *Exhibition* by Mussorgsky. Christine Huber, Orchestra Teacher from Nichols Middle School, told the ESO, 'I know all my students thought it was such a "cool" event — being able to perform with talented adult musicians.' ESO thanks all the sponsors and donors who made this concert possible and raised money to help D65 Orchestra Teachers find quality scholarship instruments for their students.

Vince Flood Awarded "Board President of the Year 2018"

The Illinois Council of Orchestras has just announced that our Board President of the past four years, Vincent (Vince) has been named their Board President of the Year for 2018.

If current plans materialize, the ICO will present this award at the beginning of the May 13 concert.





Meet the May Soloist, Thomas Pandolfi

When young Thomas Pandolfi heard a classical piece, he would run to the piano and try to match the notes and the rhythm of the music he was hearing — and did a pretty good job of it for someone who was not quite five. That's when his parents realized their child might have a talent to be taken seriously.

Thomas's first teacher was his father, who soon determined that his son needed more formal structure with a professional instructor. By ten Thomas was performing in public and was also the accompanist for his school's chorus. The latter came about because he hatched a plan to get out of having to sing in the chorus: he presented himself to the chorus teacher and announced that he wanted to be the accompanist. She was understandably skeptical, but decided to try him out. She had him sit down at a piano, then handed him a stack of music he had never seen before and asked him to sight read it. He got the job.

After high school, Thomas went to Juilliard on scholarship, where he studied with Sasha Gorodnitzki and Adele Marcus. He describes his experience there, especially with Adele Marcus, as his transition "from proficient child to young adult. My time with her was a revelation; I learned so much in a short period of time." He also got the chance to delve into some music that was new to him: Gershwin. His last teacher before Juilliard was Polish and very old school. She had studied with Rudolf Serkin, and insisted Thomas concentrate on the classical masters. As Thomas put it, "*lots of Chopin, no Gershwin!*" During his first year at Juilliard, however, the piece for the annual piano competition was *New York Rhapsody*, one of Gershwin's lesser known works. As this would be his first major foray into a Gershwin piece, Thomas was hesitant to enter the competition, but was encouraged to give it a try. He tackled the piece head on — and won.

The competition prize was the chance to play the piece again, this time in Lincoln Center with orchestra. The day after the performance, Juilliard got a call asking that the young man who had played the Gershwin come to ASCAP (American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers), which was very close to the school, and go to the president's office. The president at the time was none other than Morton Gould, who had been a close friend of the Gershwins and had recorded the *New York Rhapsody* with Oscar Levant. Thomas was stunned. Gould was very complimentary about Thomas's performance and asked him whether he had played much Gershwin. When Thomas replied that he was just beginning to play Gershwin's music, Gould told him he had a real affinity for it and should play it more. High praise indeed!

Thomas took Gould's advice. In addition to receiving enthusiastic reviews for his performances of the classical repertoire, Thomas is known for his presentations of more modern works, including a program of Gershwin and Hamlisch. In addition to being in great demand by larger, established symphony orchestras, Thomas is an enthusiastic supporter of small community orchestras around the country and believes in bringing piano performance to places where classical musicians are rare. In addition to performing, Thomas likes to talk to his audiences about the music, demonstrating variations of themes and so forth. He also regularly schedules outreach programs in schools in the communities where he performs and has a number of innovative techniques for engaging children in music.

One reviewer said of Thomas: "An unusual pianist because of the youth and intensity, technical brilliance and clarity of his playing. Don't miss him." We agree! You can learn more at www.thomaspandolfi.com.

—Kelly Brest van Kempen

This concert is generously sponsored by Presbyterian Homes.

We appreciate their continuing support. Please read about what Westminster Place has to offer.

Composing an Outdoor Lifestyle

For many older adults enjoying the outdoors often takes a back seat to the demands of career and family — until retirement that is. Gardening is a great way to get out in the fresh air and sunshine and opens the door to a healthier lifestyle. In fact, it may even help improve depression symptoms. And not only does gardening give us something to do; it paves the way for physical activity, social opportunities, and overall well-being.

Gardening has many health and calming benefits for older adults. It's a conscious activity that engages your senses. When you are planting, watering, weeding and harvesting your senses are fully involved in the sights, sounds, smells, tastes and physical sensations of your garden.

Some gardening benefits for older adults include:

- A form of low-impact exercise
- Increased levels of mobility and flexibility
- Reduced stress levels and promotes relaxation
- Stimulation and interest in nature and the outdoors
- A source of fresh, healthy produce

At Westminster Place, our Townhomes not only offer opportunities to surround yourself with beautiful landscaping, comfortable homes and thoughtful amenities, you can also find ways to live well like gardening in our Centennial Garden or maintaining your own plantings. There are many ways to live well at Westminster Place. We invite you to browse our website and schedule your appointment or drop by and visit us today for your personal tour!

Taking a healthy approach to aging is part of the culture at Westminster Place. To learn more, call **(847) 561-3422** or visit us at www.presbyterianhomes.org.



EVANSTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

presents our

2018–2019 CONCERT SERIES

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EVANSTON SYMPHONY HOLIDAY CONCERT (December 2, 2018)

____ Adult \$25/\$40* ____ Child \$10/\$15* ____ Family Pack \$70/\$110* = \$ _____

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Mail form to: Evanston Symphony Orchestra, PO Box 778, Evanston, IL 60204

The ESO thanks you for your support. All contributions are tax deductible and will be listed in the concert program.



EVANSTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Lawrence Eckerling, Music Director

2018–2019 CONCERT SERIES

VIRTUOSOS

OCTOBER 21, 2018

THE VIRTUOSO CLARINET

SMETANA

Three Dances from
The Bartered Bride

STEPHENSON

Liquid Melancholy

John Bruce Yeh, clarinet

DVOŘÁK

Symphony No. 9 in E Minor
“From The New World”

FEBRUARY 3, 2019

THE VIRTUOSO PIANO

MENDELSSOHN

Ruy Blas Overture

SCHUMANN

Piano Concerto in A Minor

Adam Neiman, piano

BRAHMS

Symphony No. 1 in C Minor

MARCH 17, 2019

THE VIRTUOSO TRUMPET

VERDI

I Vespi Siciliani Overture

GRIEG

Holberg Suite

HAYDN

Trumpet Concerto in E Flat

Tage Larsen, trumpet

JACOB

The Barber of Seville
Goes To The Devil

RESPIGHI

Pines of Rome

MAY 12, 2019

VIRTUOSO VOICES

WILLIAMS

For New York

(*To Lenny! To Lenny!*)

BERNSTEIN

“Glitter and Be Gay”

from *Candide*

Michelle Arezyaga, Soprano

BERNSTEIN

Chichester Psalms

Boy Soprano TBA

North Shore Chorale Society

ORFF

Carmina Burana

Michelle Arezyaga, Soprano

Tenor, TBA

Baritone, TBA

North Shore Choral Society