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NAUMBURG
ORCHESTRAL CONCERTS

PRESENTS

ENSEMBLE LPR

TUESDAY, JUNE 12, 2018 • 7:30PM

*The Historic Naumburg Bandshell on the Concert Ground of Central Park.
Please visit NAUMBURGCONCERTS.ORG for more information on our series.
Our Next Concerts will be on June 26, 10 & 17 and July 31, 2018*

TUESDAY, JUNE 12, 2018 ▪ 7:30PM

In celebration of 113 years of Free Concerts for the people of
New York City - The oldest continuous free outdoor western classical music
concert series in the world.

*Tonight's concert is being broadcast live on classical WQXR - 105.9 FM -
and via live stream at www.wqxr.org with WQXR host Paul Cavalcante.*

Naumburg Orchestral Concerts Presents

ENSEMBLE LPR

David Handler, Artistic Director

Ankush Bahl, conductor

Tessa Lark, violin

DAVID HANDLER (1980)

Fanfare & Fugue (for a Fish) (2018) World Premiere

THEA MUSGRAVE (1928-)

Aurora (1999) East Coast Premiere

JOHN CORIGLIANO (1938-)

The Red Violin: Suite for Violin and Orchestra (1999) East Coast Premiere

Tessa Lark, *violin*

INTERMISSION

PYTOR ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY (1840-93)

Serenade for Strings in C Major, Op. 48 (1880)

I. Pezzo in Forma di Sonatina: Andante non Troppo – Allegro moderato

II. Valse: Moderato – Tempo di Valse

III. Elegie: Larghetto elegiac

IV. Finale: (Tema Russo): Andante – Allegro con spirito

CLAUDE DEBUSSY (1862-1918)

Clair de Lune (1890), L. 75, (arr. Lipton)

*The performance of Ensemble LPR has been made possible by a generous
grant from the Hess & Helyn Kline Foundation*

PROGRAM NOTES

Fanfare & Fugue (for a Fish), (2108), (World Premiere)

Fanfare & Fugue (for a Fish) is a tribute to Le Poisson Rouge on its tenth anniversary. The piece opens with a bombastic and somewhat warped Fanfare, celebrating the venue's mission to revive the symbiotic relationship between art & revelry. In the second section, which is entered into without pause, two prevalent musical devices in the "classical" canon (and on the LPR stage) are represented in counterpoint with one another.

There is the retrograde fugue, a traditional style of imitative writing in which the music is presented and then reverses direction from a midway point and is played backwards – a mirror of itself. In this instance the material is "atonal" as it suggests no key, and in fact undermines such suggestion deliberately. The fugue is bowed by the strings in the forward portion and plucked (pizzicato) by the same instruments when it runs backwards. In counterpoint with the fugue is a tonal chorale, centered around a major mode/key and played in a percussive, "minimalist" style by the winds, brass, harp & marimba.

The pulsed, diatonic chorale envelopes and eventually swallows whole the fugue, bringing the piece to a resolute but calm close while the oboe and muted trumpet eerily recall the Fanfare song from the beginning.

My faith in music and in listening inspired the founding of LPR, which ultimately led me back out the other side to the life of an artist once again, saving me in the process. – David Handler

Aurora, (1999), (East Coast premiere)

....yonder shines Aurora's harbinger;

At whose approach, ghosts, wandering here and there,
Troop home to churchyards.

Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. III ii line 379

This work was commissioned for students of the Colburn School of Performing Arts, and it seemed to me that *Aurora – Dawn* – or the coming of light, would be an apt title. It would represent the potential and the musical burgeoning of young talent.

The music thus starts mysteriously, even tentatively, with a short melodic theme played by solo viola and accompanied by low soft chords emphasizing the note D. These two elements, in a variety of guises, keys and continuations, build in a gradual crescendo, till after a brief moment of darkness where "ghosts troop home", dawn finally arrives in the shape of a luminous D major chord. The music becomes "full and joyous" and in a brief coda, where the music seems suspended, all clouds dissolve and the D major turns out to be a dominant and on the very last note resolves to a G. – Thea Musgrave

The Red Violin: Suite for Violin and Orchestra, (1999)

John Corigliano was deeply involved in the creation of the film, directed by François Girard. It is the story of a violin, stained by its maker, a 17-century Cremona craftsman, with the blood of his dead wife, as it is passed through the centuries. The task for Corigliano was to evoke [the different] locales and eras while creating a score that had a coherent musical voice.

In the suite he also wanted a coherent musical shape, and though the music is highly atmospheric, he achieved that goal. Corigliano's unabashed Romantic streak is in full voice here.

The suite begins with moody, gestural stirrings in the strings until the solo violin enters with a simple, spacious melody. A chaconne theme breaks in abruptly: a series of thick, pungent chords on the violin that become a recurring link in the piece. [There are] tumultuous, cadenza-like solo flights for the violin...the music is effective. And as always, Corigliano's scoring skills are impressive.

Eight days before the film's opening in New York, the enterprising Eos Orchestra and Bell, with the conductor Jonathan Sheffer, gave the premiere. – Anthony Tommasini, *The New York Times*, 07/06/1999

Serenade for Strings in C Major, Op. 48, (1880)

Restrained though it is—made so in part, of course, by the restricted instrumentation—the serenade is nonetheless full of unmistakable Tchaikovskian melancholy (magically illuminated by George Balanchine in his great ballet *Serenade* of 1934), and many of the rhetorical devices and the techniques whereby they are achieved are familiar from Tchaikovsky’s big symphonies. The introduction, particularly its dramatic and unexpected reappearance at the end of the first movement, even more its interruption of the Finale, is a good example. Characteristic too, and extremely difficult to bring off in performance, is the end of the introduction, with its repeated and ever-slower cadence preparing the allegro. The link is elegantly made in that the repeated D-E of the melody is carried over to become the bass of the allegro.

The second movement is one of the most gracious of Tchaikovsky’s many waltzes, very happily thought out for string orchestra, never more so than when the melody moves into inner voices while the first violins create an almost balletic embroidery above. The Elegy’s softly dissonant beginning is very beautiful, and throughout, Tchaikovsky’s ear for string sonorities is at its most imaginative. The Finale is marked “Tema russo,” and both the melancholy violin tune in the introduction (a Volga boat-hauling song) and the first dance-like theme of the allegro con spirito are folk material.

– Michael Steinberg

Clair de Lune (1890), L. 75, (arr. Lipton)

Debussy started work on the Suite Bergamasque around 1890. It is a piano suite of four movements, of which the third – “Clair de Lune” – is by far the most popular and most often programmed, here orchestrated by Bob Lipton.

Though music dictionaries trace the term “bergamasque” to rustic dances from the Italian town of Bergamo, the sound of “Clair de Lune” is anything but rustic. Its sound is elegant and luminous. Moonlight has been an irresistible subject for composers, and this movement is one of its most famous evocations – along with Beethoven’s “Moonlight” sonata for piano and the melody from Rachmaninoff’s second piano concerto which became the pop song “Full Moon and Empty Arms.” What we hear in these four beautiful minutes seems to suspend time and movement – hardly the stuff of dance. It remains rooted in its opening key, budging only for an unexpected modulation into E major – distant in harmonic terms, but very close on the scale. – Program Note from Utah Symphony

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NAUMBURG ORCHESTRAL CONCERTS

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MUSIC PAVILION

In 1859 Jacob Wrey Mould, an amateur musician and the architect who designed many of the original structures in Central Park, persuaded his wealthy friends to pay for free band concerts at a temporary bandstand in the Ramble, and he arranged their musical programs. The first concert, on July 13, included the Festival March from *Tannhäuser*, Mendelssohn's song, "I would that my Love," selections from *La Traviata* and Strauss's Sorgenbrecher Waltz. In the summer of 1860 concerts were transferred to the Mall, and *The New York Herald* reported that the September 22 concert attracted "at least five thousand persons gathered around the performers, while outside of these were stationed an immense number of carriages...filled with the beauty and fashion of New York." The overwhelming popularity of the concerts prompted Central Park's board to finance them and to build a permanent Music Pavilion on the west side of the Mall near the Terrace. Mould designed the elaborately painted and brightly gilded Moorish-style wooden and cast-iron structure, completed in 1862. The Parks Department razed the Music Pavilion in 1923.

The Naumburg Bandshell, a gift of Elkan Naumburg 'to the City of New York and its Music Lovers', replaced in purpose the former structure. Though the Naumburg Bandshell opened on September 29th 1923, the Art Commission of New York had approved of the change in 1912 and the design of the Bandshell in 1916. "On the Mall", composed by Edwin F. Goldman in 1923, to honor Elkan Naumburg, was premiered that September afternoon, conducted by Franz Kaltenborn. Astonishingly, during that summer, 959 concerts were presented on the Concert Ground, over 400 of which were underwritten by the Parks Department. It was a popular place, providing a well-like activity.

The design of the Bandshell has historic precedents in the Pantheon of Rome, or more closely, the Imperial Russian pleasure park's pavilion at Gatchina Palace, by Vincenzo Brenna, his 'Eagle Pavilion' of the 1790's, and the later work of the architect F.G.P. Poccianti, his 'Cisternone' at Livorno of 1829-42. It has historic precedents for its function in the outdoor theatres and pavilions of Versailles, for example, or the temples and 'eye-catchers' found in park-like gardens of British country houses such as Stourhead and Stowe. The use of European park architecture as a model for what to insert in Central Park was in keeping with Olmsted's design sources and methods of nearly 60 years earlier. The Naumburg Bandshell was set into the Manhattan schist hillside, which nestles it, to prevent views being blocked across the Mall and Concert Ground which caused an earlier proposal of Carrère & Hastings to be found wanting by city and park officials. Thoughtfully, the design also stands centered between the two projecting pergola viewing points, and it admirably reflects the architect William G. Tachau's (nephew of Elkan Naumburg) own Ecole des Beaux-Arts classicist and historicist training. The result was Central Park's only Neo-Classical building. For Central Park, it is also a singular and excellent example of the 'City Beautiful Movement' in architecture, widely popular across America when it was designed.



THE MALL, CENTRAL PARK

Saturday, May 23, 1874

The double rows of American Elms, planted fourteen years earlier, create a green tunnel. Sunlight filters through the canopy of new leaves and throws dappled patterns of light and shade on the gravel walk. It is a beautiful day, the Mall is crowded: ladies in voluminous skirts and colorful hats; Irish nurses in bonnets and white aprons, pushing baby carriages; gentlemen in frock coats and top hats; a few young clerks in stylish broadcloth suits; the children in a variety of dress, miniature versions of their parents. It is a decorous crowd; tomorrow - Sunday - is when working people have a holiday and attendance will be even larger.

At the north end of the Mall, on the west side, is the bandstand. Mould has pulled out all the stops for this design. The raised platform is covered by a Moorish-style cupola, dark blue and covered with gilt stars. It is topped by a sculpture of a lyre. The roof is supported by crimson cast-iron columns. The bandstand is unoccupied - the Saturday-afternoon concerts start next month. The annual summer series is so popular - **up to forty-five thousand people attend** - that the park board has provided extra seating and has taken the unprecedented step of allowing listeners to sit on the grass. Not everyone admires these free concerts. "The barriers and hedges of society for the time being are let down," sniffs the Times, "unfortunately also a few of its decencies are forgotten."

The barriers of society are not altogether absent. Across the Mall from the bandstand is a broad concourse where the wealthy park their carriages and, separated from the lower orders by a long wisteria arbor, listen to the music in comfortable isolation. Beside the concourse stands a large one-story building with a swooping tiled roof and deep overhanging eaves. Originally the Ladies Refreshment Stand, it has recently been converted into a restaurant called the Casino.

—An excerpt from Witold Rybczynski—*A Clearing in the Distance*, pp.317-18 in which a letter of Frederick Law Olmsted—a principal designer of Central Park is quoted

THE NAUMBURG BANDSHELL AND MUSICAL CONCERTS AT THIS SITE

Central Park has hosted outdoor concerts on the Concert Ground since the park opened in the mid-nineteenth century. The site's design offers great natural beauty and tranquility for those who attend its live musical performances.

This free musical series was established by Elkan Naumburg, a philanthropist and ardent supporter of classical music, for the purpose of encouraging and stimulating the public's interest in symphonic and semi-classical music. Our outdoor summer performances, begun in 1905, are the oldest classical music series of its type in the world. The events now feature promising new classical music talent, with many performers being young and often New York based. The concerts also promote the professional development of young composers and conductors, featuring newly commissioned music, and new arrangements.

We welcome your support, contributions and suggestions. We would also like to enlarge our financial reserves so that we can both improve and expand our own concert schedule. So, please feel free to speak to one of us at a concert, or write to the [Contacts] on the Naumburg Orchestral Concerts website, **naumburgconcerts.org**

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updated 4 June 2018 - please do contact us with any corrections.

FROM E.B. WHITE'S *HERE IS NEW YORK*, 1949

Another hot night I stop off at the band concert in the Mall in Central Park. The people seated on the benches fanned out in front of the band shell are attentive, appreciative. In the trees the night wind sings, bringing leaves to life, endowing them with speech; the electric lights illuminate the green branches from the under side, translating them into a new language. On a bench directly in front of me, a boy sits with his arm around his girl; they are proud of each other and are swathed in music. The cornetist steps forward for a solo, begins, "Drink to me only with thine eyes..." In the wide, warm night the horn is startlingly pure and magical. Then from the North River another horn solo begins-the "Queen Mary" announcing her intentions. She is not on key; she is a half tone off. The trumpeter in the bandstand never flinches. The horns quarrel savagely, but no one minds having the intimation of travel injected into the pledge of love. "I leave," sobs Mary. "And I will pledge with mine," sighs the trumpeter. Along the asphalt paths strollers pass to and fro: they behave considerately, respecting the musical atmosphere. Popsicles are moving well. In the warm grass beyond the fence, forms wriggle in the shadows, and the skirts of girls approaching on the Mall are ballooned by the breeze, and their bare shoulders catch the lamplight. "Drink to me only with thine eyes." It is a magical occasion, and it's all free.

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