The Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra William Schrickel, Music Director

Sunday, October 9, 2016—4:00 PM St. Andrew's Lutheran Church, Mahtomedi, Minnesota

> William Schrickel, conductor Takako Seimiya Senn, trumpet

Program

Franz Joseph Haydn Symphony No. 102 in B-flat major, Hob. I:102

(The Miracle)

I. Largo-Vivace

II. Adagio

III. Menuetto & Trio: Allegro

IV. Finale: Presto

Eric Ewazen Concerto No. 1 for Trumpet and Orchestra

(Orchestrated by Philip Norris after the

Sonata for Trumpet and Piano)

I. Lento-Allegro Molto

II. Allegretto

III. Allegro con Fuoco

Takako Seimiya Senn, trumpet

Intermission

Modest Mussorgsky Introduction to Act I of Khovantschina

(Orchestrated by Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakoff)

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky Solemn Overture 1812, op. 49

Program Notes

Franz Joseph Haydn (1732-1809) composed his Symphony No. 102 (popularly known as *The Miracle*) in 1794, and he led the premiere at the King's Theatre in London on February 2, 1795. Much of the audience had left their seats in the center of the hall's main floor to stand closer to the stage in order to better observe the 62-year-old composer, seated onstage at the pianoforte, conduct the performance when a large chandelier broke loose from the ceiling and fell to the floor. Moments after the terrifying crash, when the audience realized that no one had been injured and at least thirty people would have been killed if the patrons had been seated in their chairs at the time of the accident, cries of "Miracle! It's a miracle!" were heard throughout the hall. Haydn's new symphony was immediately anointed with its lasting nickname.

Haydn is regarded as the chief architect of the 4-movement symphonic form as we now know it, and his Symphony No. 102 qualifies as one of his wittiest, most inventive works in the genre. The Miracle opens with a slow introduction, beginning on a unison B-flat pitch and moving through a dark, haunting harmonic sequence that morphs from B-flat major to B-flat minor. The darkness of mood is shattered by the opening *Vivace* (in sonata-allegro form), with the violins ripping out a joyful, boisterous first theme (back in B-flat major) whose progression to the second thematic group (in F major) is interrupted several times by loud, unexpected unison notes from the full ensemble. The development of the two themes and the surprising unison motive is lively and complex and wends back to what seems like the recapitulation of the first theme, led by the solo flute. But wait—this recapitulation is a fake! The flute is in C major—the wrong key for a recapitulation. Haydn is toying with the sonata form that he himself was primarily responsible for standardizing. This is no recap—the development storms on for another 42 bars, and the true recapitulation is ushered in with a startling crescendoing drum roll in the timpani. Even the movement's closing comes with a joke—it sounds like the ensemble runs out of steam when the violins and flute peter out, seemingly unable to finish the final statement of the theme. But the lower strings burst back in and energetically lead the movement to its rambunctious close.

Haydn borrows from himself for the beautiful and dramatic slow movement, a sequence of free variations on a lyrical, ornamented theme played throughout by the first violins. This music was originally composed the previous year for his Piano Trio in F-sharp minor, but Haydn employs some of his most ingenious techniques of orchestration—a solo cello to balance the delicate violins, muted trumpets and timpani—to make this movement sound like it could only have been conceived for full orchestra.

The third movement *Menuetto* is brisk and brusque, a dance incorporating playful contrasts between *fortissimo* outbursts and *piano* responses. Haydn

humorously interrupts the second strain with a portentous hold in the middle of the melodic phrase, seemingly setting the stage for something particularly bombastic to follow, only to wink at the listener with a quiet, cheeky, 4-bar interjection. The contrasting *Trio*, featuring solo oboe and bassoon, is all delicate, placid song.

The sparkling rondo/finale begins softly, led by the first violins who engage in a playful dialogue with the winds and horns and play phrases that often sport one extra bar (yet another of Haydn's musical jokes). The composer writes a huge *fortissimo* outburst for the full orchestra, only to abruptly and comically halt it before immediately introducing a short fugato in the strings and an extended passage that seems to foreshadow the music of Rossini, a composer whose first opera would not be performed until the year after Haydn's death. The movement barrels on through several fake endings and myriad humorous compositional pranks, both subtle and obvious, to its joyful, spirited conclusion.

Eric Ewazen (b. 1954) has been on the composition faculty at the Juilliard School in New York since 1980. Born in Cleveland, he earned degrees from the Eastman School of Music and Juilliard, studying composition with Samuel Adler, Joseph Schwantner and Gunther Schuller. A prolific composer of music for brass instruments, he wrote his Sonata No. 1 for Trumpet and Piano in 1995 on a commission from the International Trumpet Guild. Philip Norris, who teaches trumpet, music theory and music history at University of Northwestern–St. Paul, orchestrated the sonata's piano part for full symphony orchestra, and in that version the work is known as Concerto No. 1 for Trumpet and Orchestra.

The concerto's opening movement, in traditional sonata form, begins with a brief slow introduction that leads into the lyrical first theme, initially played by the solo trumpet in the key of E-flat minor. The contrasting second theme, in C major, showcases the soloist playing a motive incorporating rapid repeated 16th notes. The orchestra performs in a primarily supportive role throughout the development and recapitulation of the introduction and two theme groups, and the movement comes to a quiet close in the restful but structurally "incorrect" key of G major.

The second movement is pastoral in mood, with a gently rocking trumpet melody in F-sharp major in its two outer section and a more harmonically ambiguous central section. The finale equalizes the musical importance of the solo trumpet and the accompanying ensemble. Brimming with brilliant, virtuosic writing for the trumpet and with stormy melodic and rhythmic demands made on the orchestra, the rondo/fantasia is a musical tour de force that concludes with a mass *prestissimo* descending flourish.

Modest Mussorgsky (1839-1881) worked on writing the libretto and composing

the music for his 5-act opera *Khovantschina* (*The Khovansky Affair*) for eight years (1872-1880) while living in St. Petersburg, but died in 1881 without having finished it. The opera, based on a turbulent period in Russian history that ended with the ascent to power of Czar Peter the Great, was completed, revised and orchestrated by Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakoff (1844-1908) in the two years following Mussorgsky's death, and the work was premiered in Rimsky's version in 1886 in St. Petersburg. Rimsky had made extensive cuts and recomposed a good deal of Mussorgsky's music, and in 1913 Igor Stravinsky and Maurice Ravel collaborated on a new version (now forgotten, except for Stravinsky's orchestration of the final scene) that Sergei Diaghilev prepared for a production at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in Paris. In 1959, Dmitri Shostakovich orchestrated the opera, working from Mussorgsky's unfinished piano score, and it is his version of the full work that is most often performed today.

The brief, beautiful Introduction to Act 1 (performed this afternoon in Rimsky's orchestration) is a depiction of dawn along the banks of the Moscow River. Cocks crow (solo clarinet and solo oboe), early morning church bells ring (horns, harp and double basses), and the activities of the day quietly begin in Red Square.

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893) composed his Solemn Overture 1812 to be performed at the 1882 Moscow Exhibition of Arts and Crafts. The festive work was written to commemorate the 70th anniversary of Russia's ultimate victory over Napoleon's invading French troops. The overture depicts the Russian defeat at the Battle of Borodino on September 7, 1812 (possibly the single bloodiest day of battle in human history, with over 70,000 total casualties in less than 24 hours) as well as the Russians' expulsion of the French from a burning Moscow on December 12, 1812. La Marseillaise and God Save the Czar figure prominently in the battle music, though neither piece was in use during the actual year of the battle.

Tchaikovsky's work calls for a large orchestra and a military brass band with bells and cannon. 1812 opens with celli and violas intoning the prayerful Russian hymn Save, O God, Thy People, includes two references to a Russian children's song in the quieter sections between battle scenes (the tune is thought to represent the innocent children at play in the streets of Moscow, unaware of the impending French attack on their city), climactically reprises the opening hymn with massed brass and bells, and concludes with a full orchestral setting of God Save the Czar, replete with 11 rounds of cannon fire, performed in this afternoon's concert by a battery of bass drums.