

The Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra
William Schrickel, Music Director

Sunday, November 18, 2018—4:00 PM
Saint Philip the Deacon Lutheran Church, Plymouth, Minnesota

William Schrickel, conductor
Paul Schulz, bass clarinet
Todd Goodman, composer

Program

- Franz Joseph Haydn Symphony No. 87 in A major, Hob. I:87
 I. Vivace
 II. Adagio
 III. Menuet—Trio
 IV. Finale. Vivace
- Todd Goodman Concerto for Bass Clarinet (*Twin Cities Premiere*)
 I. Promenade Comique (Funny Walk)
 II. A Berceuse et Rêve (A Lullaby and Dream)

Paul Schulz, bass clarinet

Intermission

- Dmitri Shostakovich Symphony No. 9 in E-flat major, op. 70
 I. Allegro
 II. Moderato
 III. Presto
 IV. Largo
 V. Allegretto—Allegro

The third, fourth and fifth movements are played without a pause.

Program Notes

Franz Joseph Haydn (1732-1809) composed his Symphony No. 87 in 1785. It is one of a group of six symphonies known as the "Paris Symphonies" that were commissioned by French nobleman Claude-Francois-Marie Rigoley, Comte d-Origny, for a new Parisian concert series known as Concert de la Loge Olympique. The Parisian ensemble that performed the work was much larger than the orchestras Haydn was used to writing for; the ensemble included 40 violins and 10 double basses!

Cast in sonata-allegro form, the first movement is propulsive and good-natured, incorporating many sudden changes in dynamics and texture. The development features one of the composer's most inspired musical jokes; as Haydn moves farther and farther away from the movement's home key area of A major, the music seemingly wanders off and becomes lost and stuck in the remote key of G-sharp major, a half-step too low. Everything comes to a full stop until the strings stealthily embark on a new path over six bars to return to the correct key for the recapitulation.

The second movement features the orchestra's winds in delicate and lyrical solo, duo and trio settings, including two written-out cadenzas. The third movement Menuet sports a number of melodic and harmonic accents on the "wrong" beat (the third beat rather than the first) of the bar, and the Trio features the solo oboe singing all the way up to a high E, one indication of the virtuoso abilities of the Parisian players for whom Haydn was writing. The finale is a festive sonata which makes use of only one theme and includes several humorous stops and restarts that lead to unexpected harmonic shifts before the movement comes to its joyful, celebratory end.

Todd Goodman (b. 1977) is the Resident Composer of the Lincoln Park Performing Arts Center in Midland, Pennsylvania, and the Education Director of the Lincoln Park Performing Arts Charter School. He earned degrees from the University of Colorado at Boulder, Duquesne University, and Kent State University. He composed his Concerto for Bass Clarinet on a commission from Bruce Lauffer and the Beaver Valley Philharmonic for the ensemble's 2008-09 season. He wrote the following note in the preface to the concerto's full score:

"The work, in two movements, takes the orchestra and soloist through a passionate journey of the relationship between a child and a parent. The first movement is an argument between the orchestra, acting as the parent, and the soloist, representing the child. The orchestra begins the movement with a strict and serious march, which is constantly interrupted by a jocular bass clarinet. As the march progresses, both the bass clarinet and the orchestra get more and more frustrated with one another, leading

to an explosion of tempers. A repetitious figure is heard pulsing in the orchestra as the soloist sings a subdued lyrical aria in its attempts to calm the angered parent. As the frustration level slowly abates, a variation of the march comes back, yet this time the roles are reversed. The bass clarinet is trying to be serious and the orchestra interrupts with funny gestures from the opening. This culminates with a return to the opening march with the characters playing their appropriate roles.

The second movement reverses the roles of the two characters and tells the story of a parent, this time represented by the bass clarinet, who is trying to put their child, the orchestra, to sleep. The orchestra begins with unrest and mystery and bursts into an extremely energetic figure, which is repeated throughout the movement as a sign of the child's procrastination. In between these energy bursts, the soloist tries to calm the child by singing to it a lyric lullaby. Each time the parent is interrupted, the lullaby becomes more prominent and overcomes the tired orchestra. As the lullaby comes to a close, the child starts to dream wild images of various dances. These dances move throughout the ensemble as its principal members dance with the bass clarinet in soloistic duets, trios and quartets. Hints of the lullaby that are fresh in the head of the child return throughout the dream, which ends with an abrupt simultaneous eruption of all the dances, waking the child. The parent, in one last effort, sings a fraction of the lullaby, ending the piece."

Todd Goodman will discuss his Concerto for Bass Clarinet from the stage before this afternoon's performance.

Dmitri Shostakovich (1906-1975) had composed two large-scale symphonies, his seventh and eighth, in the four years prior to the 1945 Leningrad premiere of his Symphony No. 9. Both of the earlier works were long and programmatic; the Seventh depicted the 900-day Nazi siege of Leningrad during WW II, and the Eighth dealt with the supremely tragic consequences of the prolonged fighting and the war's incalculable legacy of death and destruction. In *Testimony* (the composer's purported memoir, as related to Solomon Volkov), Shostakovich said, "They wanted me to write a majestic ninth symphony. Everyone praised Stalin, and now I was supposed to join in this unholy affair." Instead, Shostakovich penned a non-programmatic symphony, short and in some ways modeled on the symphonies of Haydn, whose music he had been studying. It exists completely outside the realm of the valedictory ninth symphonies of Beethoven, Schubert, Bruckner, Dvorak and Mahler. Stalin was offended that the work didn't bear a dedication to him, and while Shostakovich's Ninth initially received critical acclaim, within a year it was denounced for its failure to "reflect the true spirit of the people of the Soviet Union,"

and it was banned from further performances in that country until after Stalin's death in 1953.

Shostakovich's Ninth is cast in five movements, the last three played without pause. It is written for a smaller complement of instruments than his Seventh and Eighth, and the opening movement, cast in traditional sonata-allegro form (complete with a full repeat of the exposition,) bears the most obvious formal connection to the symphonies of Haydn. Violins immediately introduce the jaunty first theme, with a raucous solo trombone opening the way to the piccolo's presentation of the perky march-like second theme. Following the repeat, the humor turns darker and ironic in the development, and in the recapitulation, the trombone makes no fewer than six "wrong" attempts to reintroduce the second theme before finally "getting it right."

The second movement, in an elegiac B-minor, opens with a lyrical solo clarinet sparsely supported by pizzicato lower strings. A subsequent *valse triste* appears in the muted strings, and these two alternating musical ideas occupy the whole of the movement until a long, held F-sharp in the piccolo brings the music to a close.

The third movement starts as a jocular scherzo in 6/8, but the initial apparent playfulness devolves into a manic, threatening temperament, replete with a central self-important bravado trumpet solo. But the movement loses harmonic direction and rhythmic steam as it winds down, and it is rudely interrupted by a brutal and angry unison declamation by the trombones and tuba that marks the start of the fourth movement. A plaintively expressive and melancholy cadenza for solo bassoon (related to one of the cello/bass recitatives in the finale of Beethoven's Ninth) is interrupted by the bellicose lower brass. But the bassoon resumes its sad soliloquy (this time quoting music of Mahler) that leads directly into the final movement, quietly introducing a sly tune that, unknown to Stalin and the Soviet leadership, is in fact an irreverent Jewish song. Rudolf Barshai, a Russian conductor and a friend of the composer, eloquently describes the path of the finale; "In the Ninth, Shostakovich mocked Stalin. It was also a work that relates to Stalin's anti-Semitism. Shostakovich himself was not Jewish, but he wrote this symphony in protest: a protest against anti-Semitism and not only against Stalin himself. The final movement used a Jewish dance song. He used that theme in the coda. The tune is played on the tuba and trombone, creating the effect that the stomping boots of the Red Army Ensemble are dancing to this Jewish melody—a particularly sarcastic melody at that. Of course, it was only by chance that Stalin did not understand this. It was a very dangerous thing to have done."

The symphony's peroration consists of the Jewish tune, shattered into short fragments and played very fast, very softly, and with mounting urgency in a berserk, circus-like manner, careening into an 8-bar block of A-major harmony (tonally as far removed as possible from the work's

home key of E-flat major) before a psychedelic 8-bar sprint to the final unison E-flat.

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