

The Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra
William Schrickel, Music Director

Sunday, April 3, 2022—4:00 PM
St. Andrew's Lutheran Church, Mahtomedi, Minnesota

William Schrickel, conductor
Polina Nazaykinskaya, composer

Program

This afternoon's concert opens with *Ukraine Has Not Yet Perished*, the Ukrainian national anthem. The Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra dedicates today's performance to the people of Ukraine.

Mykhailo Verbytsky & Pavlo Chubynsky	<i>State Anthem of Ukraine</i>
Samuel Coleridge-Taylor	<i>African Dance</i> from <i>African Suite</i> , op. 35
Gioachino Rossini	Overture to <i>La Gazza Ladra</i> (<i>The Thieving Magpie</i>)
Polina Nazaykinskaya	<i>Fenix</i> (World Premiere of Large Orchestra Version)

Intermission

Ludwig van Beethoven	Symphony No. 5 in C minor, op. 67 I. Allegro con brio II. Andante con moto III. Allegro IV. Allegro
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The 3rd & 4th movements are played without a pause.

Biographies

William Schrickel has been the Music Director of the MSO since 2000. A former Assistant Conductor of the Minnesota Orchestra, he was also Music Director of the St. Cloud Symphony Orchestra from 2002-2008 and received a prestigious Award for Adventurous Programming from ASCAP and the League of American Orchestras in 2006.

Schrickel's programs with the MSO survey a huge range of orchestral repertoire, from music of Vivaldi through works composed by some of today's finest composers, including Dominick Argento, John Corigliano, Osvaldo Golijov, Christopher Rouse, and Michael Daugherty. He studied conducting with Thomas Trimborn. He has led performances of the Minnesota Orchestra, the Bloomington Symphony Orchestra, the Kenwood Symphony, The Chamber Music Society of Minnesota, and The Musical Offering, and he has conducted four MSO programs featuring the Minnesota Chorale.

Schrickel was twenty years old when he won an audition to become a member of the double bass section of the Minnesota Orchestra. A bass student of Joseph Guastafeste, he attended Northwestern University for three years before joining the Minnesota Orchestra in 1976. He became the orchestra's assistant principal bassist in 1995. He has appeared as soloist with the Minnesota Orchestra three times under the direction of Leonard Slatkin and Andrew Litton, performing music of Giovanni Bottesini and John Tartaglia.

An active chamber musician, Schrickel has been a member of the Hill House Chamber Players in Saint Paul and was a founding member of the Minneapolis Artists Ensemble (MAE), a chamber music group that performed at the Walker Art Center and commissioned seventeen new works over seven seasons. Schrickel has recorded chamber music of Mozart, Hummel, Stanislaw Skrowaczewski, Libby Larsen, John Tartaglia, Frank Proto, Charles Ives, Michael J. Aubart, Amaral Vieira, David Canfield, and Astor Piazzolla for the GM, Innova, Ten Thousand Lakes, Paulus, and Ars Antiqua labels. He participated in the Minnesota Orchestra's *Adopt-A-School* music education program from 1993 to 2012, performing for and speaking to elementary school students to prepare them to attend their first live orchestra concert.

Polina Nazaykinskaya was born in Togliatti, Russia in 1987 and became an American citizen in 2017. She began studying music at the age of four and composed her first large-scale work at fourteen. She has written music for both chamber and full orchestras, as well as art songs, film music, musical theater works, and an opera. She is the recipient of national and international awards, including the Charles Ives Scholarship from The American Academy of Arts and Letters.

Nazaykinskaya's music has been performed by the Russian National Orchestra, the Minnesota Orchestra, the Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra, the Yale Philharmonia Orchestra, the Youth Symphony Orchestra of Russia, and the Florida Orchestra. She has collaborated with top conductors, including Osmo Vänskä, Teodor Currentzis, and Hannu Lintu. In March of 2022, her composition *The Rising* was choreographed and premiered by the San Francisco Ballet.

Nazaykinskaya received her musical education both in Russia and the United States. She graduated from the Tchaikovsky Conservatory College in Moscow, with concentrations in both composition (under Konstantin Batashov) and violin. She continued her studies in composition at the Yale School of Music with Christopher Theofanidis and Ezra Laderman, graduated with honors, and completed her Doctorate in Composition at the CUNY Graduate Center, studying with Tania León. She is currently a Lecturer of Composition at Brooklyn College Conservatory and conducts the Greater Connecticut Youth Orchestra. She will discuss *Fenix* with William Schrickel from the stage prior to this afternoon's performance.

Program Notes

Samuel Coleridge-Taylor (1875-1912) was born in Holburn, a suburb of London. His father, Dr. Daniel Taylor, an African-born surgeon, left his wife, Alice Martin, and returned to Sierra Leone before their child was born, and the boy (referred to as Coleridge by his family) was raised by Alice and her father, Benjamin Holmans, who was a blacksmith and played the violin. Taylor studied the violin with Joseph Beckwith, an orchestral musician from Croydon, for six years, and he also sang in two church choirs for a five-year period before being admitted to the Royal College of Music on a violin scholarship at the age of fifteen. He changed his major to composition the following year, becoming a student of Charles Stanford and a classmate of Ralph Vaughan Williams and Gustav Holst. In 1898, the 41-year-old Edward Elgar described Taylor as "far and away the cleverest fellow amongst the young men."

African Dance is the finale of Coleridge-Taylor's 4-movement *African Suite*, a work originally written for solo piano in 1898 and orchestrated by the composer shortly thereafter. Cast in a modified sonata-allegro form, the movement opens with a repeated exposition featuring two complementary themes, both of them ebullient and replete with rhythmic energy. The central development section departs from the traditional sonata design by introducing a new third theme, sweetly lyrical and sentimental. The recapitulation of the themes also stakes new formal territory, dispensing completely with the second theme and replacing it with another statement of the sentimental melody before the dance races to its joyful conclusion.

Gioachino Rossini (1792-1868) was born in Pesaro, Italy and grew up in a musical family; his mother was a seamstress and a singer, and his father played the trumpet and horn. When he was ten, Rossini's family moved to Lugo, and he began to study music with a priest, Giuseppe Malerbe, who possessed a large library of music and introduced his student to the works of Haydn and Mozart. Rossini was a true compositional prodigy, producing six charming and virtuosic sonatas for strings when he was only twelve years old. Two years later, he was admitted to the Liceo Musicale in Bologna, where he studied cello, voice, and piano as well as composition. Rossini composed his first opera, *Demetrio e Polibio*, when he was sixteen years old, and went on to write a total of thirty-nine operas before his fortieth birthday. Though he lived to be seventy-six, he never penned another opera after *William Tell*, premiered at the Paris Opera in 1829.

La Gazza Ladra (*The Thieving Magpie*), a melodrama in two acts, was premiered at La Scala in Milan in 1817. The overture (more *buffa* in character than the semi-serious plot of the drama that follows) begins with two snare drums signaling one another from opposite sides of the orchestra. They usher in an introductory military march, pompous in nature and virtuosic in its writing for solo winds, that concludes with yet another short snare drum tattoo. A brief modulatory link leads to the brilliant presentation and working out of several musical ideas that will appear in the opera proper: a fast, nervous, quasi-mysterious minor-key tune in the violins, a mock-heroic fanfare in the trombone and lower strings, a humorous, lyrical near-waltz (associated with the opera's titular bird) first played by the oboe, and a characteristic long "Rossini crescendo" that sports a repeating and motoric bass line. The overture closes with a sparkling coda showcasing the first violins rushing headlong to the final celebratory chord.

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1826) completed his Symphony No. 5 in 1808, though sketches of the work appear in his notebooks from as far back as 1800. The opening 4-note theme is the most famous in all of music, and its distinctive rhythmic profile of three short notes followed by a long one recurs in each of the symphony's subsequent movements. Beethoven balances the drama and struggle of the C-minor first movement with a lyrical second movement, a theme and variations in a reposeful A-flat major. The third movement, a mysterious, shadowy scherzo, returns to the opening movement's C-minor tonality and features a virtuoso central trio section showcasing the celli and basses. The scherzo is linked to the finale by a haunting transitional passage wherein the timpanist plays the 4-note rhythmic motto over a sustained pianissimo chord in the strings. Beethoven increases the size and scope of the orchestra for the celebratory C-major last movement, introducing three trombones, piccolo and contra-bassoon into the texture, and the *presto* coda brings the symphony's journey from darkness into light to a jubilant conclusion.