

## Program Notes

**John Tartaglia** (1932-2018) was the associate principal violist of the Minnesota Orchestra from 1968 to 1999. He studied at Rome's Conservatory of Santa Cecilia and earned a degree in humanities from the University of Florida. He was a faculty member of the University of Minnesota and Oberlin Conservatory of Music. At the time of his death, he had been married to composer Carol Barnett for thirty-three years. He composed *Pavane* in 2003 on a commission from the Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra, and he revised the work in 2012. The score bears the following dedication: "In memory of Ken Dayton, for his love and support of the Minnesota Orchestra." The MSO has presented seven performances of John Tartaglia's music since 2002, and William Schrickel will share memories of John Tartaglia following this afternoon's performance of *Pavane*.

**Cécile Chaminade** (1857-1944) was born in Paris into an upper middle-class family. Both her parents were musicians, and she started taking piano lessons from her mother at an early age and began composing piano works when she was seven. The following year, she played some of her music for Georges Bizet, who recommended that the young girl receive the best possible music education. At the age of ten, a piano professor at the Paris Conservatory accepted her into his class at the school, but her father refused to allow her to enroll, saying that it would be "improper" for a young woman of her social class to attend the music school. He did, however, allow her to study privately with the Conservatory's piano, violin, and composition professors. She gave her first public piano recital at the age of eighteen, leading to multiple tours throughout Europe and England and, in 1908, to the United States, where she performed her Concertstück with the Philadelphia Orchestra. She recorded seven of her piano pieces in 1901 as one of the first artists to make gramophone recordings, and in 1913 she was the first female composer to be awarded France's Legion of Honor.

Chaminade premiered her Concertstück in 1888 in Antwerp, Belgium, performing as soloist on a program that also included *Les Amazones*, her choral/orchestral dramatic symphony. The fifteen-minute-long Concertstück reflects the stylistic influences of Wagner (reflections of *The Flying Dutchman* in the introduction) and Liszt (multiple bravura passages in the piano), and there are pre-echoes of Rachmaninoff's harmonic language in two of the work's four themes. The strength of the orchestral accompaniment and the brilliance of the writing for the piano affirm the assessment of Chaminade made by French composer Ambroise Thomas (1811-1896): "This is not a woman who composes, but a composer who is a woman."

**Carol Barnett** (b. 1949) was born in Dubuque, Iowa and attended the University of Minnesota, where she earned a master's degree in composition as a student of Dominick Argento and Paul Fetler. She was the composer-in-residence for the Dale Warland Singers from 1991-2001 and taught as an adjunct instructor in theory and composition at Augsburg College from 2000-2015. She is a charter member of the American Composer's Forum. She composed *Will's Ladies* for mezzo-soprano Clara Osowski on a commission from the Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra, and she will discuss the work from the stage prior to this afternoon's premiere performance.

**Pyotr Tchaikovsky** (1840-1893) was born in the small Russian town of Votinsk. He began to take piano lessons at the age of five, and though he was a precocious student, his parents sent him to a boarding school at the age of 10 to prepare him for a 7-year training program to become a civil servant. At age 19, Tchaikovsky began his 3-year career with the Ministry of Justice. But when the St. Petersburg Conservatory opened in 1862, Tchaikovsky enrolled in its premiere class, studying harmony, counterpoint, instrumentation, and composition. In 1865 he was offered a position as a Professor of Music Theory at the Moscow Conservatory.

In 1869, at the instigation of and under the direction of composer Mili Balakirev, Tchaikovsky composed *Romeo and Juliet*, which he termed a "Fantasy Overture." Inspired by the Shakespeare tragedy of the same name, written 275 years earlier, Tchaikovsky's composition was a failure at its Moscow premiere in 1870. The composer immediately made major revisions (again, at the insistence of Balakirev), completely rewriting the introduction and creating the somber chorale melody that has come to be associated with the character of Friar Laurence. More revisions were made in 1880, and it is this final version that has come to be known as one of Tchaikovsky's genuine masterpieces. Though *Romeo and Juliet* flirts with the compositional elements of traditional sonata form, it is essentially a fantasia on three theme groups: the quasi-religious material of the introduction, the fierce battle music depicting the clashes of the warring Montagues and Capulets, and the love music of the young title characters, starting softly and sweetly in the violas and english horn and becoming more ardent as the young couple consummate their secret marriage. Tchaikovsky alternately aligns and contrasts these three musical ideas, and the brilliant symphonic maelstrom builds in intensity until the characters' uncontrollable passions bring about the story's inevitable catastrophic climax. The work's closing mirrors the epilogue delivered at the end of Shakespeare's play by Prince Escalus; Tchaikovsky transforms Romeo and Juliet's love theme into a grieving, heartbroken lament, bringing down the musical curtain with repeated chords that decisively portray the oppressive and tragic hand of Fate.

## Artist 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.

**Darin Tysdal** has been the keyboard player of the Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra for more than twenty years. A four-time winner of the MSO's Concerto Competition, he studied with Gary Sipes at Minneapolis' MacPhail School of Music for fifteen years. He has appeared as piano soloist with the Bloomington Symphony Orchestra and the Dakota Valley Symphony, and he is an active composer, having acquired degrees in music composition from Minnesota State University Moorhead and Northwestern University. He was a semi-finalist in the Van Cliburn Competition for Outstanding Amateurs, and he is the Assistant Music Director at Christ the King Lutheran Church in Bloomington.

Mezzo-soprano **Clara Osowski** became the first American prize winner when she placed second at Thomas Quasthoff's International Das Lied Competition in Heidelberg, Germany. Her recent debuts include a recital with Julius Drake at Wigmore Hall in London, soloist debut with Handel and Haydn Society of Boston, and her Minnesota Opera debut in their filmed production of Britten's *Albert Herring*. She participates in several ensembles, including Lumina Women's Ensemble, Lorelei Ensemble, and Seraphic Fire. In addition to performing, Clara is the artistic director of Source Song Festival, a week-long festival dedicated to the traditions and creation of art song. She received a 2018-2019 McKnight Artist Fellowship for Musicians. Active as an educator, she has presented masterclasses and led convocations at Syracuse University, Seattle University, Concordia College at Moorhead, and North Dakota State University. This afternoon's world premiere performance of Carol Barnett's *Will's Ladies* is her fourth appearance as a soloist with the Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra.

**Christina Baldwin** is the Artistic Director of the Jungle Theater in Minneapolis. She is a director, writer, singer, and actor who has engaged audiences both on the stage and in the concert hall. Her frequent Guthrie Theater collaborations range from multiple Shakespeare works and contemporary plays to musical theater and operetta. She's served as Artistic Associate, Music Director, and performer with The Moving Company and was a collaborator with Theatre de la Jeune Lune for nearly 10 years. A recording artist and frequent soloist with the Minnesota Orchestra, she has also performed with Playwrights' Center, Park Square Theater, Great American History Theater, Skylark Opera, Minnesota Opera, The Schubert Club, and VocalEssence.

You will find the biography of **Carol Barnett** in William Schrickel's Program Notes.