

SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA PRESENTS

HOW DOES MUSIC MOVE US?

FEATURING WORKS BY

FLORENCE PRICE

PYOTR TCHAIKOVSKY

COLERIDGE-TAYLOR PERKINSON

CONDUCTED BY

ANNA WITTSTRUCK



FRIDAY, MARCH 4, 2022

PROGRAM

Symphony Orchestra Anna Wittstruck, conductor

Andante moderato (1929).....Florence Price
Excerpt from String Quartet in G major (1887–1953)

Serenade for Strings in C major, Op. 48 (1880).....Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky
(1840–1893)

- I. Pezzo in forma di sonatina; Andante non troppo – Allegro moderato
- II. Valse: Moderato – Tempo di valse
- III. Élégie: Larghetto elegiac
- IV. Finale (Tema russo): Andante – Allegro con spirito

Intermission

Sinfonietta No. 1 for Strings (1953).....Coleridge-Taylor Perkinson
(1932–2004)

- I. Sonata Allegro
- II. Song Form
- III. Rondo

Audience members are welcome to meet the performers after the concert in the Schneebeck Concert Hall lobby. Social distancing and masking are required.

NOTE FROM THE CONDUCTOR

Welcome, and thank you for attending tonight's program! After two years of pandemic-era pivoting, it is a pleasure and privilege to once again perform alongside these wonderful students!

After our shift to remote learning in spring 2020, the orchestra program maintained an active and vibrant curriculum and community. Online, we interacted with guest speakers and clinicians from across the country, participated in intercollegiate collaborations and recording projects, worked to diversify our repertoire and musical skill sets, and centered conversations around equity and inclusion. The challenges and outcomes that materialized were rich and rewarding, but, for the most part, faced inward. We missed you, our audience! For myself, returning to the stage was additionally delayed by parental leave, as my family welcomed a second daughter into our lives. I am deeply grateful for the excellent work Dr. Anna Edwards undertook last fall as the steward of this ensemble, transitioning our string players back to in-person music-making, and building a terrific-sounding group.

Tonight's concert is the culmination of that pedagogical work from the fall: exploring the string ensemble as a powerful compositional vehicle. This concert, "How Does Music Move Us?," combines rigorously challenging repertoire with questions pertaining to spirituality, classicality, and gesture.

The concert begins with a short (seriously – it's under three minutes!) excerpt from Florence Price's String Quartet in G major, written in 1929. There is no explicit program, but we invite you to experience the music through the lens of Price's religious life – particularly the embodiment of her activities as a biracial American church organist. With its pentatonic melodies and plagal cadences, this hymn-like excerpt can be heard as an inclusive call for gathering and contemplation.

We then move to Pyotr Tchaikovsky's Serenade for Strings, written in 1880. This four-movement work illustrates the Russian Romantic's neoclassical gesturing. It is an homage to the music of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, with direct references to the classical genres of sonatina and serenade. Mozart and Tchaikovsky shared a gift for sensuous melodic writing. This music has a sweeping, kinetic quality to it – particularly felt in the waltz movement. While not originally written for ballet (as opposed to the composer's scores for *The Nutcracker*, *Swan Lake*, and *Sleeping Beauty*), Tchaikovsky's Serenade later inspired choreographer George Balanchine to set the music to dance, culminating in a 1934 production that launched his tenure as a fixture in American culture. Having watched Balanchine's *Serenade* as an orchestra

during the first week of the semester, we are moved, not just by the momentum of bows against strings, but by the terpsichorean imprint of Balanchine's evocative choreography.

After Tchaikovsky, we'll take a short break – both because he packs in a lot of notes, and because the tour-de-force has yet to come. The last piece on the program is Coleridge-Taylor Perkinson's Sinfonietta no. 1 for Strings, which combines austere neoclassical polyphony and lush melodic romanticism with the exhilaration of bebop. Named after Afro-British composer Samuel Coleridge-Taylor (whose music this ensemble performed last semester), Coleridge-Taylor Perkinson engaged in a diverse array of musical activities throughout his life. In addition to being a composer and conductor, he served as the music director for Alvin Ailey Dance Company and Dance Theatre of Harlem, played jazz piano in Max Roach's quartet, and advocated for performance and research activities through administrative roles with the Center for Black Music Research.

Perkinson's creative, multifaceted approach to music-making is evident here. Written in 1953, this concise, three-movement work is a dazzling distillation of musical styles, scaffolded through the classical forms of sonata, song, and rondo. You'll hear echoes of composers who dominated much of the American classical music scene in the twentieth century – Igor Stravinsky, Aaron Copland, and Samuel Barber – but also the influence of Perkinson's ventures in jazz, modern dance, and popular music.

I am grateful to the Chicago Sinfonietta and their advocacy of Perkinson's music, which resulted in the Sinfonietta no. 1 being recorded in 2000 under the direction of Paul Freeman. Through this recording, Perkinson's orchestral works are now more widely accessible. I want to acknowledge the sustained work the Chicago Sinfonietta has undertaken in diversifying repertoire and representation within classical music, and thank their current CEO, Blake-Anthony Johnson, for sharing his vision for that continued work over a Zoom conversation with our orchestra last year.

We hope you enjoy tonight's concert, and that you'll return on Saturday, April 30th for our season closer. We happily anticipate the return of our wind and percussion players for this performance, as well as the opportunity to perform with Cuban composer-pianist Aldo López-Gavilán.

–Anna Wittstruck

CONDUCTOR

ANNA WITTSTRUCK joined the University of Puget Sound School of Music in 2017 as assistant professor, director of orchestra. Before that she spent two years at Stanford University as acting assistant professor, serving as interim music director and conductor of the Stanford Symphony Orchestra and Stanford Philharmonia. In 2019 she was appointed music director of the West Seattle Symphony Orchestra.

Wittstruck has conducted concerts across the United States, in Latin America, Europe and in Asia. She has served as a guest conductor with the Harbin Symphony in China and as the 2017 and 2018 conducting fellow with the Eastern Sierra Symphony. She conducted concerts at Palacio de Bellas Artes in Mexico City and Teatro Nacional de Cuba in Havana, where she performed with Liza Alfonso Dance Cuba and the Chamber Orchestra of Havana. She conducted the first-ever symphonic concert on Catalina Island, and returned with her touring ensemble the following three seasons. She has conducted concerts at the Rudolfinum in Prague and the Musikzentrum Augarten (home of the Vienna Boys' Choir) in Vienna, as well as concerts in Berlin, Bad Elster, and Teplice.

Wittstruck is also an active orchestral musician whose performances as a cellist span from the Beijing Modern Music Festival to the 2011 YouTube Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Michael Tilson Thomas. Her string quartet gave a concert tour of Thailand sponsored by the Yonok and American-Thai Foundations, in honor of HRH Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn's sixtieth birthday celebrations. She won a blind audition at the age of fourteen to become the youngest contracted member of the Asheville Symphony Orchestra, and has participated in orchestra festivals such as Tanglewood, Round Top, and the National Symphony/Kennedy Center Institute. She has appeared as a soloist with the Charlotte and Hendersonville Symphonies, on the Public Radio International show, "From the Top," and with the Stanford Symphony Orchestra.

Wittstruck appears regularly as a judge and clinician for WorldStrides Heritage Festival. She served on the jury of the 2014 Alice and Eleonore Schoenfeld International String Competition in Harbin, China.

She received her Bachelor of Arts in music from Princeton University with certificates in orchestral conducting and creative writing, and her Ph.D. in musicology from Stanford University. While a graduate student, she conducted the Summer Stanford Symphony Orchestra for six consecutive seasons, served as assistant conductor of Stanford's orchestral studies program, and directed the Stanford Wind Symphony, the Stanford New

Ensemble, and the Stanford Chinese Ensemble. She also helped create the Stanford Youth Orchestra, an international program for advanced high school students, and taught courses through Stanford Pre-Collegiate Studies. At Princeton, she spent two years as assistant conductor of the Princeton University Orchestra and as associate conductor of the Princeton Sinfonia.

Wittstruck has attended the Pierre Monteux School of Conducting in Hancock, Maine, where she studied with Michael Jinbo, and the Conductor's Retreat at Medomak, where she studied with Kenneth Kiesler. Other conducting teachers include Michael Pratt, Ruth Ochs, Stephen Sano, Jindong Cai, and Edwin Outwater.

SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Anna Wittstruck, conductor

First Violin

Jules Tan '23 and
Eli Chenevert '22, concertmaster
Ela Escobar '24
Owen White '24
Eli Connolly '25
Katie Hayhurst '24
Silvana Byram '25

Second Violin

Eli Chenevert '22 and
Jules Tan '23, principal
Else Mayo '24
Christina Nguyen '23
Nikki Hindman '25
Mackenzie Johnson '22
Liv Hauge '25

Viola

Charlotte Saric '23, principal
Rai Chernyavsky '25
Kianna Davis '25
Evelyn Martin '22
Deniz Kelemet '24
Joyce Ramee, faculty

Cello

Sophie Paul '22, principal
Avi Graf '25
Connor Adams '25
Jordan Anderson '22
Seren Hawtrey '24
Aimee Baldwin '25
Angela Ronces Cortes '24
Isabella Brady '24
Jordan Verkh-Haskell '25
Mandy Ausman '24
Aiden Higgins '24

Double bass

Chris East '23, principal

UPCOMING SCHOOL OF MUSIC EVENTS

All events are free unless noted otherwise. R.S.V.P. required for free events for audience health and safety. Proof of vaccination and masks are required for in-person attendance. Performances are broadcast at PUGETSOUND.EDU/SCHNEEBECKLIVE

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 16

Wind Ensemble (CBDNA conference opening concert)

Gerard Morris, conductor
Schneebeck Concert Hall, 7:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 23

School of Music Noon Convocation

Student Recital Performances
Schneebeck Concert Hall, Noon

FRIDAY, MARCH 25

Organ at Noon Series

Wyatt Smith, organist
Kilworth Memorial Chapel, Noon

THURSDAY, MARCH 24

Workshop: Turning academic work into public-facing media

Julian Saporiti (No-No Boy)
Thomas Hall, Tahoma Room, 6:30 p.m.

FRIDAY, MARCH 25

Jacobsen Series: No-No Boy

Julian Saporiti, songwriter and historian
Schneebeck Concert Hall, 7:30 p.m.
Tickets required: tickets.pugetsound.edu
Free for Puget Sound and K-12 students

SUNDAY, MARCH 27

Adelphian Concert Choir

Steven Zopfi, conductor
Schneebeck Concert Hall, 4 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 30

Student Solo Recital

Bennett Baynham '22, piano
Schneebeck Concert Hall, 6:30 p.m.

UPCOMING SCHOOL OF MUSIC EVENTS (CONT.)

FRIDAY, APRIL 1

Jacobsen Series: Faculty Recital

Alistair MacRae, cello

Kilworth Memorial Chapel, 7:30 p.m.

Tickets required: tickets.pugetsound.edu

Free for Puget Sound and K-12 students

THURSDAY, APRIL 7 THROUGH SUNDAY, APRIL 10

School of Music Opera Theater: *The Pirates of Penzance*

Schneebeck Concert Hall, various times

Tickets required: tickets.pugetsound.edu

THURSDAY, APRIL 14

Puget Sound Jazz Orchestra

Tracy Knoop, director

Schneebeck Concert Hall, 7:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 20

School of Music Noon Convocation

Student Recital Performances

Schneebeck Concert Hall, Noon

SATURDAY, APRIL 23

Chamber Music I

Alistair MacRae, director

Schneebeck Concert Hall, 7:30 p.m.

SUNDAY, APRIL 24

Chamber Music II

Alistair MacRae, director

Schneebeck Concert Hall, 2 p.m.

*For a complete list and to R.S.V.P. for in-person attendance, visit
pugetsound.edu/mymusic.*

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Community Music, a division of the School of Music, welcomes people of all ages and skill levels to participate in music lessons and classes throughout the year.

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