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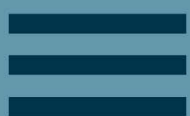
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A NOTE FROM THE CONDUCTOR

Greetings, and welcome to this performance by the Columbus Symphony Orchestra.

Let me ask you a question: Why are you here?

There are many answers to this question, some better than others. (I love music. Good. I was trapped into it by my significant other. Not quite as good, but okay.)

Here are some reasons why we respond to music and, therefore, seek to hear it:


1. Listening to music releases “pleasure chemicals” like dopamine, among others, into a key part of our brain’s reward system. (Why go on? Okay, we will.)
2. Music transcends walls and boundaries with its universal language.
3. Music can help reduce anxiety and depression.
4. Music allows you to experience the full range of human emotions.
5. Music can lighten the mood.
6. Music can stave off fatigue and improve our response to pain.
7. Music can bring back memories.
8. All that and much, much more.

Whatever the reason for your presence at this concert, we are most happy to see you, to play for you, and to help make live orchestral music a meaningful part of your life. Come back soon.

George Del Gobbo,
Music Director & Conductor



Young George was always interested in music. From his earliest years he preferred musical toys. This proclivity remained undefined until the seventh grade when he decided he wanted to play the violin in the school orchestra. This turn down the dark path was sealed when he began studying the violin privately. It was a short step from there to the decision to make music his life, and his fate was sealed when he made the irrevocable choice to become an orchestra conductor. He was fortunate to attend the Eastman School of Music for five years on a four-year scholarship. (To date no statues of him have been erected outside that school.) From there it was on to a stint with the U.S. Army Band in Washington, D.C and simultaneously the graduate school at Catholic University. After leaving the army, it was on to Rome, Italy and the tutelage of Maestro Franco Ferrara at the Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia. After a dozen years working with the Fort Worth Symphony and Ballet, he came to Columbus and discovered the orchestra, the people, and the city that would enrich his life forever.



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ABOUT THE CONCERTMASTER



Kerren Berz's talents span the musical spectrum. She has performed, recorded, and toured with the Atlanta Symphony, the Harlem Festival Orchestra, and the Nashville Chamber Orchestra, whose "music without boundaries" mission produced critically acclaimed performances and recordings of music by Aaron Copland, Conni Ellisor, and John Jorgenson. She performs regularly with the Georgia Symphony, Atlanta Pops, the Pullman Pops, and orchestras in Chattanooga, LaGrange, and throughout the southeast.

Her ensemble Sonic Essence regularly performs multi genre music and interactive performances for concert series and corporate events. Other performances include a national tour with Amy Grant and Vince Gill, and shows with Stevie Wonder, Joni Mitchell, The Eagles, Earth Wind and Fire, and many other iconic artists.

As a music arranger and performer, Kerren Berz has worked with Kristian Bush (Sugarland), and is featured on albums by Outkast, Goodie Mob, Pink, Sinéad O'Connor, and on the hit single "Survivor," by Destiny's Child. Ms. Berz is a voting member of the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences and has served on nominating committees in the Classical categories for the annual Grammy Awards.

She has degrees from Florida State University, where she studied with Eliot Chapo, and the University of Tennessee-Chattanooga, with additional studies at Boston University and with Israeli violinist Yair Kless. She credits her public school music program with giving her the opportunity to play the violin.

As a music educator, Ms. Berz has worked with the Columbus Urban League, TORCH Academy, the Youth Orchestra of Greater Columbus, and strings students throughout the Atlanta area. She is currently on faculty at Georgia Perimeter College, The Atlanta Music Project, and The Lovett School.

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Restrooms are located in the RiverCenter lobby. Ushers can help direct you to the closest restroom.

Smoking and vaping are not allowed inside the building.

Lost and Found: If you lose an item in the theatre, please notify an usher. Items may be turned in to the RiverCenter Security.

Arrive Early: Although there are occasions when arriving later is considered stylish, a concert isn't one of them. Once the music has begun, latecomers will be asked to remain in the lobby until the first performance break.

Phones: Flash photography and noise disturbances are strictly prohibited. We love engaging with our audience on social media so feel free to check-in on Facebook and take selfies and photos PRIOR to the performance. Before the concert starts, be sure to silence your phone and turn down those brightness settings.

Quiet Company: Unless the concert is deemed a "sing-a-long", you will want to leave the music making to the ensemble... even if you really do know the whole first movement of Beethoven's Seventh. The people around you probably know it too and would rather hear the orchestra's rendition. Silence all cell phones, alarms, or other audible devices before the concert begins.

Applause: Don't know when to clap and cheer? We can make it easy! In classical music concerts, applause is usually held until the conductor faces the audience. Some pieces contain several movements and there will be a brief applause-less pause between them. If you ever feel the overwhelming need to clap and cheer between movements... the orchestra won't mind the appreciation!

Enjoy Each Note: You may simply want to avoid the crowd by leaving five minutes early, but the musicians may mistake that as a sign of disapproval. Sit back, relax, and enjoy every last note!



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Musicians employed in this production are represented by the American Federation of Musicians of the United States and Canada.

The CSO uses the revolving seating method for section string players who are listed alphabetically in the roster.

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COLUMBUS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
George Del Gobbo, Music Director & Conductor
The Dr. & Mrs. Steven Leichter Chair

Friday, April 11, 2025 | 7:30 PM

PROGRAM

Ludwig van Beethoven

Coriolanus Overture, Op. 62

Franz Liszt

Piano Concerto in E-Flat Major, S. 124

I. Allegro maestoso

II. Quasi Adagio

III. Allegretto vivace. Allegro animato

IV. Allegro marziale animato

Henry Kramer, piano

-Intermission-

Ludwig van Beethoven

Symphony No. 7 in A Major, Op. 92

I. Poco sostenuto - Vivace

II. Allegretto

III. Presto

IV. Allegro con brio

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Henry Kramer, piano

Praised by The Cleveland Classical Review for his “astonishingly confident technique” and The New York Times for “thrilling [and] triumphant” performances, pianist Henry Kramer is developing a reputation as a musician of rare sensitivity who combines stylish programming with insightful and exuberant interpretations. In 2016, he garnered international recognition with a Second Prize win in the Queen Elisabeth Competition in Brussels. Most recently, he was awarded a 2019 Avery Fisher Career Grant by Lincoln Center – one of the most coveted honors bestowed on young American soloists.

Kramer began playing piano at the relatively late age of 11 in his hometown of Cape Elizabeth, Maine. One day, he found himself entranced by the sound of film melodies as a friend played them on the piano, inspiring him to teach himself on his family’s old upright. His parents enrolled him in lessons shortly thereafter, and within weeks, he was playing Chopin and Mozart.

Henry emerged as a winner in the National Chopin Competition in 2010, the Montreal International Competition in 2011 and the China Shanghai International Piano Competition in 2012. In 2014 he was added to the roster of Astral Artists, an organization that annually selects a handful of rising stars among strings, piano, woodwinds and voice candidates. The following year, he earned a top prize in the Honens International Piano Competition.

Kramer has performed “stunning” solo recital debuts, most notably at Alice Tully Hall as the recipient of the Juilliard School’s William Petschek Award, as well as at Amsterdam’s Concertgebouw. At his Philadelphia debut, Peter Dobrin of The Philadelphia Inquirer remarked, “the 31-year-old pianist personalized interpretations to such a degree that works emerged anew. He is a big personality.”

A versatile performer, Kramer has been featured as soloist with orchestras around the world, including the Bilkent Symphony Orchestra, Belgian National Orchestra, Shanghai Philharmonic Orchestra, Hartford Symphony, Indianapolis Symphony and the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestras, among many others, collaborating with conductors such as Marin Alsop, Gerard Schwarz, Stéphane Denève, Jan Pascal Tortelier and Hans Graf. He has also performed recitals in cities such as Washington (Phillips Collection), Durham (St. Stephens), Hilton Head (BravoPiano! festival), and Seattle (Emerald City Music and the Seattle Series) and made summer appearances at the Anchorage, Lakes Area, Rockport, and Vivo music festivals. Appearances in the 2022-23 season include a debut with New York’s Salon Séance, recitals with Newport Classical, Ravinia, Toronto’s Koerner Hall, Vancouver Chamber Music Society, and additional appearances in Seattle, Chicago, Detroit, Ithaca, and Montreal. Highlights of the current season include performances with the Adrian Symphony and Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia, a return to the Phillips Collection, further appearances with Salon Séance, and recital debuts with Cecilia Concerts in Halifax, Chapelle Historique du Bon-Pasteur in Montréal, Bargemusic, Northwestern Universi-

Henry Kramer, piano (continued)

ty's Winter Chamber Music Festival, and Music Mountain Summer Festival together with the Borromeo String Quartet.

His love for the chamber music repertoire began early in his studies while a young teenager. A sought-after collaborator, he has appeared in recitals at the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, the Mainly Mozart Festival, the Mostly Mozart Festival, and La Jolla Music Society's Summerfest. His recording with violinist Jiyeon Lee on the Champs Hill label received four stars from BBC Music Magazine. This year, Gramophone UK praised Kramer's performance on a recording collaboration (Cedille Records) with violist Matthew Lipman for "exemplary flexible partnership." Henry has also performed alongside Emmanuel Pahud, the Calidore and Pacifica Quartets, Miriam Fried, as well as members of the Berlin Philharmonic and Orchestra of St. Luke's.

Teaching ranks among his greatest joys. In the fall of 2022, Kramer joined the music faculty of Université de Montréal. Previously, he served as the L. Rexford Whiddon Distinguished Chair in Piano at the Schwob School of Music at Columbus State University in Columbus, Georgia. Throughout his multifaceted career, he also held positions at Smith College and the University of Missouri Kansas City Conservatory of Dance and Music.

Kramer graduated from the Juilliard School, where he worked with Julian Martin and Robert McDonald. He received his Doctorate of Musical Arts from the Yale School of Music under the guidance of Boris Berman. His teachers trace a pedagogical lineage extending back to Beethoven, Chopin and Busoni. Kramer is a Steinway Artist.

PROGRAM NOTES

Coriolanus Overture, Op. 62

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

German composer Ludwig Beethoven was born to a family of court musicians in Bonn, Germany in 1770. From a young age, Beethoven demonstrated a talent for composition as well as playing the piano, organ, violin, and viola. By age eighteen, he had replaced his father in many of his courtly musician duties. Beethoven later moved to Vienna at age twenty-two where he studied briefly with Franz Joseph Haydn and afterward established himself as a piano virtuoso and rising composer.

In his late twenties, Beethoven was unfortunately plagued by increasing deafness. He revealed his deep inner turmoil in the Heiligenstadt Testament in 1802, a letter juxtaposing his suicidal thoughts with the determination to continue writing music. Choosing to live, he went on to pave the way for Romanticism and produce concertos, chamber, vocal, and symphonic works that are landmarks in the classical music repertoire.

Beethoven's *Coriolanus Overture* was composed in 1807 as incidental music for a revival of Heinrich Joseph von Collin's tragedy *Coriolan*—a play based on Shakespeare's original work *Coriolanus*. The drama traces the life of Roman general Gaius Marcius Coriolanus in a plot rife with greed, vengeance, and corruption. Beethoven's musical introduction stands as one of his most compelling overtures and a true immersion into the stormy psychological world of the main character.

The opening mood of the piece is dark and aggressive as driving chords in the strings and lower instruments evoke Coriolanus's steely resolve and unyielding pride. Later, Beethoven introduces a tender, pleading second theme—often interpreted as the voice of Coriolanus's mother, Volumnia, who begs her son to abandon a destructive path of revenge. Ultimately, the overture closes quietly, even bleakly—a rare ending in Beethoven's orchestral music. This musical conclusion mirrors the tragic end of the play, in which Coriolanus, torn between duty and emotion, chooses death over compromise.

Piano Concerto in E-Flat Major, S. 124

Franz Liszt (1811-1886)

Premiered on February 17, 1855 in Weimar with conductor Hector Berlioz and soloist Franz Liszt

Franz Liszt was one of the most electrifying figures of the 19th century—a virtuoso pianist, innovative composer, and magnetic personality who expanded the boundaries of music and performance. Born in Hungary in 1811, Liszt became a touring prodigy in his teens and captivated Europe with his dazzling technique and stage presence. As his career matured, he turned increasingly to composition and conducting, eventually settling in Weimar, where he championed new music and developed his own visionary style.

Liszt's *Piano Concerto No. 1 in E-flat Major* reflects both his virtuosity and his compositional inventiveness. Though he began sketching ideas in the 1830s, Liszt didn't complete and premiere the work until 1855, after years of refinement and revision. The concerto is notable for its groundbreaking structure—four interconnected movements played without pause—and its thematic unity, with motifs recurring and transforming throughout. The work remains one of the great Romantic concertos, a true test of a pianist's fire and finesse.

The first movement begins with a bold orchestral statement of the main theme that will underpin the entire work. The piano enters with grand and powerful octaves followed by a series of rubato interludes and a tender, melodic section. The main theme makes a fiery return but fades away beneath delicate flourishes in the piano. A long upward chromatic scale in the piano signals the finish.

Without pause, the second movement begins with a mournful melody in the low strings followed by a luscious and achingly beautiful piano solo. As

the orchestra returns, the passion and intensity grows with moving lines in the piano before dissipating into another touching solo. The movement dies away with delicate orchestral solos accompanied by quiet trills in the piano.

The third movement begins with the tickling sounds of triangle and string pizzicato, continuing in a playful and energetic dialogue between the piano and orchestra. In a sudden shift to a darker mood, the main theme from the first movement reappears in the lower register of the piano. A revisitation of the opening octaves in the piano and a fiery climax creates a grand segue to the final movement.

The fourth movement bursts with fiery energy and triumphant spirit, showcasing Liszt's flair for dazzling virtuosity and dramatic flair. Themes from earlier movements return, now transformed into bold declarations, unifying the concerto's structure. The piano blazes through rapid octaves, sweeping arpeggios, and brilliant runs, driving the music toward a thrilling, electrifying conclusion.

Symphony No. 7 in A Major, Op. 92

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

Premiered on December 8, 1813 in Vienna by the Universitätssaale
Orchestra with Beethoven conducting

By the time Beethoven composed his Seventh Symphony, he had already revolutionized the symphonic form. His first two symphonies followed the Classical model of Haydn and Mozart, but with greater energy and scope. Then came the landmark Third Symphony (*Eroica*), which expanded the emotional and structural possibilities of the symphony. From there, Beethoven's symphonic writing became increasingly bold and personal, blending dramatic tension with profound lyricism and rhythmic innovation. Each of his nine symphonies carries its own distinct voice, and the Seventh stands out for its sheer vitality and rhythmic brilliance.

Composed in 1811-1812 while Beethoven was staying at a health resort in the Bohemian town of Teplice, the Seventh Symphony emerged during a time of personal struggle and political upheaval. Despite his worsening deafness and declining health, Beethoven produced a work overflowing with life, movement, and infectious energy. The symphony premiered in Vienna in 1813 at a benefit concert for soldiers wounded in the Napoleonic Wars and was met with enormous enthusiasm—especially the second movement, which was so popular it had to be repeated. The entire symphony is often seen as a celebration of rhythm, prompting Richard Wagner to famously call it “the apotheosis of the dance.”

The first movement opens with a slow introduction—one of Beethoven's longest—before bursting into a lively and joyous main section. Driven by a relentless dotted rhythm, the music pulses with unstoppable momentum and dance-like vitality. Beethoven's playful manipulation of syncopation, dynamics, and orchestral color gives the movement a kind of joyous

unpredictability—always moving, always surprising.

The second movement opens with a solemn, almost funereal rhythm in the lower strings that gradually unfolds into a series of variations. This hypnotic, walking pulse becomes the backbone of the entire movement, over which Beethoven layers poignant harmonies and expressive counterpoint. The Allegretto's somber beauty made it an immediate favorite with audiences, and it's often performed independently of the full symphony.

The third movement is a whirlwind scherzo full of exuberance and sharp dynamic contrasts. The main theme, light and fleet, dashes forward with irrepressible energy, while the contrasting Trio section features a more grounded, pastoral character rooted in the woodwinds and horns. The return of the scherzo brings the infectious rhythm back into the spotlight, rounding off the movement with playful flair.

The fourth movement unleashes a torrent of energy that pushes the symphony to its ecstatic conclusion. Powered by pounding rhythms and driving motifs, the music seems barely able to contain itself, surging forward with unstoppable momentum. Beethoven combines the rhythmic obsession of the earlier movements with a blazing sense of triumph, culminating in a breathless and jubilant final.

Program Notes Compiled and Written by Leah Eckstrom

GLOSSARY OF MUSICAL TERMS

Cadenza (It. Cadenza): an improvised or written-out decorative passage performed by a soloist, with accompaniment, usually near the end of a concerto movement.

Concerto (fr. Lat. Concertare, to contend): a composition for featured instrument(s) and orchestra often cast in three movements marked fast-slow-fast. The contrast in sound between the soloist(s) and the large ensemble is the principal characteristic of the genre.

Concerto grosso (It. large concerto): a type of concerto common to the Baroque era in which a small group of solo instruments (concertino) is contrasted to the large ensemble (ripieno)

Finale (Lat. Finalis, to end): the name sometimes given to the last movement of a longer composition.

Minuet: a stately court dance in three-four time which is often used as the third movement of the classical symphony. It was replaced in the nineteenth century by the scherzo and other dance-like movements.

Movement: an independent section of a larger work, usually separated by a brief pause.

Opus (Lat. Opus, work): a number assigned to a musical composition either by the composer or by the work's publisher (abbreviated as Op.)

Orchestra: the generic name for an ensemble of diverse instruments. The modern orchestra includes instruments from the four major groups: strings, woodwinds, brass, and percussion.

Rondo: a musical form in which a theme recurs three or more times with each occurrence separated by a contrasting episode.

Scherzo (It. Scherzo, joke): a fast moving piece, usually in triple meter. Scherzos became common with the symphonies of Beethoven and eventually replaced the Minuet.

Suite: a succession of related movements, often dance inspired, sometimes extracted from larger works.

Symphony (Gr. Symphonia, sounding together): an elaborate musical composition for full orchestra, typically in four movements

Tempo: Many words are used to designate the speed and/or character of a piece of music. Here are some of the most commonly encountered terms for tempo and style modifiers:

Adagio: on the slow side

Allegretto: a fairly brisk tempo

Allegro: "lively," the most common indication for a fast tempo

Andante: "to walk or go," interpreted as moderately slow.

Andantino: a bit faster than Andante

Cantabile: in a singing fashion

con brio: with spirit and vivacity

con fuoco: with fire

con moto: with movement

Grave: more a style than speed, but often interpreted as slow and serious

Grazioso: graceful

Largo: broad or large, usually taken in a slow and dignified style

Lento: slow

Maestoso: majestically

meno: less

molto: much

mosso: moved

non troppo: not too much

piu: more

poco: little

Presto: very fast, sometimes modified as Prestissimo, meaning as fast as possible.

Scherzando: lightheartedly

Sostenuto: in a sustained manner

Vivace: "vivacious," a lively and brisk manner

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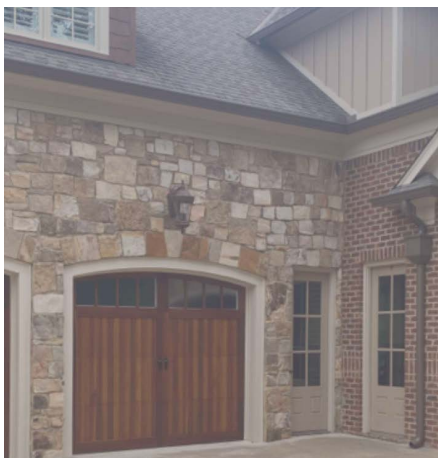
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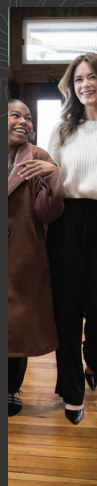
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