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**SERIES V**

# LIVELY HORNS & STRINGS

SARAH VIEJOU, HORN  
& THE LETHBRIDGE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

**MARCH 18TH, 2024**

**7:30 PM**

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# Programme Order

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Petite Symphonie

- I. Adagio et Allegretto
- II. Andante cantabile
- III. Scherzo: Allegro moderato
- IV. Finale: Allegretto

Charles Gounod  
(1818-1893)

Horn Concerto No. 1 in E-flat Major, Op. 11

- I. Allegro
- II. Andante
- III. Allegro

Richard Strauss  
(1864-1949)

Sarah Viejou, horn

## INTERMISSION

Symphony No. 7 in A Major, Op. 92

- I. Poco sostenuto – Vivace
- II. Allegretto
- III. Presto
- IV. Allegro con brio

Ludwig van Beethoven  
(1770-1827)

### For Everyone's Enjoyment

Please remove all hats to preserve sightlines.

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Absolutely no audio or video recording without prior permission.

Latecomers are seated at a suitable break.

No outside food or drinks - Water is available in the lobby.

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# About the Special Guest

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## Sarah Viejou, horn



Sarah Viejou first experienced the joy of collaborative music-making during grade six band classes in her hometown of Rocky Mountain House, Alberta. She played the flute in that first year but felt drawn to the beauty and range of the horn and made the switch soon after. More than twenty years later, Sarah is deeply grateful to two incredible band teachers whose encouragement and enthusiasm shaped her passion for music and set her on the path that has led to this exciting performance.

Sarah received her Bachelor and Master of Music degrees from the University of Lethbridge, studying horn with Dr. Thomas Staples. Highlights of her study of the horn thus far include participating in masterclasses with internationally renowned horn players Frøydis Ree Wekre and Radovan Vlatković, playing with the National Youth Band of Canada, performing as a finalist in the Lethbridge Symphony Orchestra's Young Artist Competition, and performing Robert Schumann's *Konzertstück* for Four Horns and Orchestra with the Lethbridge Symphony Orchestra. She has played with the LSO since 2008 and now enjoys teaching and performing throughout southern Alberta.

Sarah is thrilled to be marking the sixteenth anniversary of her first Lethbridge Symphony Orchestra concert with the opportunity to perform as a featured artist this evening.



# Orchestra Roster

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## SYMPHONY SERIES V

### Lively Horns & Strings

March 18, 2024

#### VIOLIN I

Norbert Boehm ≠

Peter Visentin §

Alina Khvatova

Alayna McNeil

Connor Clark

Oluwaseun Soneye

Maria Geppert

Eva Muranyi+

#### VIOLIN II

Airdrie Ignas\*

John Gilliat^

Stephanie Soltice+

Bethany Robinson

Elizabeth Wilde

Kelsey Jespersen

Allison Metzler

#### VIOLA

Gabriel Kastelic\*

Mark Kadijk^

Marja Mijsbergh

Sophie Strong

Lily Hilgersom

#### CELLO

Mark Rodgers \*

Sarabeth Baldry^

Lynn Gilliat

Julie Amundsen

George Fowler

Bonnie Wilde

Brenna Le May

Ava Baldry

#### BASS

Catherine McLaughlin \*

Keely Evanoff

Ross Lemon+

≠ concertmaster

§ assistant concertmaster

\* principal

^ assistant principal

+ non-resident musician

#### FLUTE

Jodi Groenheide\*

Myla Krippel

#### OBOE

Jennifer Dosso\*

Joelle Strang

#### CLARINET

Joan Rogers\*

Dawn Leite

#### BASSOON

Robert George\*

Tim Janzen

#### HORN - Gounod & Strauss

Thomas Staples\*

Karly Lewis

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Ashlee Dowdle\*

Karly Lewis^

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# Programme Notes

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## **Richard Strauss (1864-1949): Horn Concerto No. I in E-flat Major, Op. 11**

Richard Strauss' Horn Concerto in E-flat major, opus 11, stands at the very beginning of his career as a composer. It is one of his first accomplished works, written in 1882 to 1883 when he was only nineteen. As such it represents an early milestone in his artistic development.

Born into a very musical family in Munich (Strauss' father played first horn in the Munich Court Orchestra) Strauss began composing when he was only six. By his late teens he had produced an impressive number of works in chamber and orchestral music and songs. At this time in the nineteenth century, the European musical world was divided between the avant-garde camp of Wagner and Liszt and the more conservative camp led by the admirers of Brahms. Strauss' father was firmly in the conservative camp and thus Strauss was exposed to only the works of conservative Romantic composers such as Mendelssohn and Brahms. As a result, many of the types of orchestral music Strauss wrote early on in his career were in well-established classical forms such as symphonies, concertos and overtures.

A year or so after composing the E-flat Horn Concerto, however, Strauss was converted to the musical innovations of Wagner and Liszt and began to compose in the two main genres for which he would become famous—post-Wagnerian opera, based on the Leitmotiv, or “leading motive” work of Wagner and the tone poem, a one-movement orchestral work that expressed an idea beyond pure music. Here Strauss continued the development of the ideas behind Liszt's symphonic poems.

The E-flat Horn Concerto is cast in the typical three-movement classical concerto form consisting of a fast opening movement (*Allegro*), a middle slow movement (*Andante*) and a sprightly Rondo finale (*Allegro*). There are certain characteristics of the work, however, that look forward to his later tone poems. In particular, the movements are shorter than normal and move from one into the other without a break, thus suggesting an overall one-movement form that is also highly integrated thematically and motivically, as in a tone poem.

The first movement is launched by a riveting chord for the full

# Programme Notes

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orchestra followed by a bright horn call for the soloist, which is then taken up and developed by the full orchestra. This horn call, in fact, is the basic germ cell of the work and defines the essentially optimistic, open character of the E-flat Concerto as a whole. In the first movement it is followed by two more beautifully crafted melodies featuring the horn. A transition ending in the opening motive of the horn call then leads into the more subdued *Andante* movement in A♭ minor. Here the horn's long lyrical melodic line dominates in darker music of regret. But this sudden turning from the sunlight of the first movement is swept aside by the excitement of the finale, which erupts with the opening horn call, now transformed into the finale's playful main theme, and ends with a brilliant and technically demanding coda highlighting rapid melodic passage work for the horn

## **Charles Gounod (1818-1893): *Petite Symphonie pour vents***

Charles Gounod was one of the leading figures in French opera during the nineteenth century. He is associated above all with a genre, sometimes referred to as lyric opera, which was centred on the Théâtre Lyrique in Paris where the epitome of such operas, Gounod's *Faust*, was first produced in 1859 finally bringing its creator undeniable success as an opera composer. Gounod however, was a multi-faceted individual who also produced a large corpus of religious music, art songs or *mélodies* and admittedly a much smaller body of orchestral and chamber music. (He was also a talented artist and a friend of the great portraitist Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, among other luminaries in Paris of that period).

Gounod's *Petite Symphonie* comes from the latter half of his career. It was composed in 1885 to a commission from another important figure in French music, Claude-Paul Taffanel. Taffanel is considered the founder of the modern French school of flute playing. A brilliant flautist, he was able to show in his playing the emotional depth and expressivity of his instrument. In 1879 he founded his *Société de musique de chambre pour instruments à vent* in order to promote chamber music for winds through commissions and performances.

Gounod's *Petite Symphonie* is essentially a symphony in four movements for a wind ensemble of two oboes, two clarinets, two French horns, two bassoons and one flute. The ensemble is essentially

# Programme Notes

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the standard late classical wind octet or *Harmonie* with the addition of a flute. In its balance, clarity, wit and charm the *Symphonie* looks both backwards to the late classical style of this type of music and forward to the revival of such qualities in music in the neo-classical movement of the 1920's and 30's in Paris.

The first movement begins with a lyrical slow introduction, typical of the high classical symphony. The opening melodic idea of the introduction is then transformed into the warm and inviting main theme of the ensuing Allegro. For the slow movement, Andante, Gounod calls upon the flute as the main melodic soloist in a nod to Taffanel's expressive style. The exciting Scherzo that follows seems to suggest a hunt at times, especially those passages that highlight the French horns in pairs. A good-humoured finale then brings the work to a satisfyingly happy conclusion filled with lively exchanges between all of the instruments.

## **Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827): Symphony No. 7 in A Major, Op. 92**

The Seventh Symphony is one of Beethoven's most uplifting and exuberant creations. Warmly received at its premiere in December of 1813, it quickly became a favourite with Viennese audiences and has maintained its popularity to this day. Much of its appeal lies in its rhythmic vitality which elicited from Wagner his famous characterization of the Symphony as "the apotheosis of the dance."

Yet the period in which the symphony was created (from the fall of 1811 to the spring of 1812) was one in which Beethoven experienced repeated bouts of ill health, driving him to take summer retreats in both years at the popular spa of Teplitz, in the present-day Czech Republic. By this time also his hearing had so seriously deteriorated that it profoundly affected his public performances. This tragic situation can be seen in Ludwig Spohr's description of Beethoven's conducting at the dress rehearsal before the Symphony's premiere. "At *piano* he crouched down lower and lower as he desired the degree of softness. If a *crescendo* then entered, he gradually rose up again and at the entrance of the *forte* jumped into the air. Sometimes, too he unconsciously shouted to strengthen the *forte*..."

# Programme Notes

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Despite the difficulties facing the composer at the time, his Seventh Symphony exudes an optimism and excitement that continue to inspire its listeners. It begins with a long and noble introduction to the first movement which seems to gradually crystallize into the characteristic dotted 6/8 rhythm of the ensuing main movement, marked *Vivace*. The effect is magical, as if we were experiencing the very act of creation. The *Vivace* itself is permeated with this rhythm of unbridled joy, reaching an ecstatic climax at the beginning of the recapitulation when the dotted figure is taken up by the full orchestra as a powerful accompaniment to the main theme.

The second movement, *Allegretto*, is also based upon a pervasive rhythm, here the dactylic long-short-short pattern of a quarter and two eighth notes which gives the music a march-like character. This figure appears first as the basic rhythm of the funereal first theme, which expands outwards from the strings to a passionate statement for the full orchestra. The same rhythm then forms a quiet background to the comforting second theme in A major. The lyrical intensity of the *Allegretto* partly explains why it was the most popular of the Symphony's movements in Beethoven's day—so popular, in fact, that it was occasionally pressed into service as the slow movement of other symphonies.

For the high-spirited Scherzo Beethoven resorted to a favourite joke which he would try out again in a number of later scherzos. Instead of simply repeating the scherzo after the trio, Beethoven repeats the scherzo and the trio then the scherzo again and even threatens yet another return of the trio before he abruptly cuts off the movement. The finale has the same irrepressible energy as the Scherzo. Particularly impressive is its imposing coda with its deep whirring bass (involving yet another repeated rhythmic figure) suggesting the workings of some great cosmic machine.

***Programme notes courtesy of Dr. Brian Black***



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