



STRINGS, WINDS AND FIRE. A SYMPHONY OF SECTIONS

Symphonic Split

Sunday January 26th, 2025 – 3:30pm
Beachwood High School Auditorium

Domenico Boyagian, *Conductor*
David Ellis, *Guest Conductor*
McKenna Glorioso, *Violin*



S. BARBER (1910-1981)
McKenna Glorioso, Violin

Violin Concerto, Op. 14 (1939)
I. Allegro

G. HOLST (1874-1934)
David Ellis, Guest Conductor

Suite for Wind Band in F major, Op. 28 No. 2 (1922)
I. March: Morris dance, Swansea Town, Claudy Banks
II. Song Without Words, 'I'll Love My Love'
III. Song of the Blacksmith
IV. Fantasia on the Dargason

- Intermission -

A. DVOŘÁK (1841-1904)

Serenade for Strings in E major, Op. 22 (1875)
I. Moderato
II. Tempo di Valse
III. Scherzo: Vivace
IV. Larghetto
V. Finale: Allegro vivace

M. GLINKA (1804-1857)

Overture to Ruslan and Lyudmila (1842)



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Season 2024-2025

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MUSIC AND ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Domenico Boyagian



Maestro Domenico Boyagian, Music Director of Cleveland Opera Theater and Suburban Symphony Orchestra, has been praised as a “born conductor” by the Cleveland Plain Dealer, and has dedicated himself to symphonic music and opera. Producing performances of compelling artistry and beauty, Boyagian “appears to be a conductor for whom the music is the sole point of standing before musicians.” (The Plain Dealer)

Maestro Boyagian was appointed as Music Director for Suburban Symphony in 2018, and has since celebrated several ambitious seasons of programming. As part of his “Beethoven Cycle” initiative, the SSO will have performed all of Beethoven’s symphonies as of 2025. The

orchestra also presents music from all genres, including musicals, operas, and film scores in addition to notable symphonic standards. The orchestra has performed symphonic standards including Dvorak, Rachmaninoff, Tchaikovsky, Respighi, and Mahler, as well as pieces by more modern composers, including Amy Beach, Nathaniel Stookey, and Ralph Vaughn Williams. The SSO also sponsors a student concerto competition, creating a prestigious opportunity for High School musicians to perform with a full orchestra.



Maestro Boyagian is recognized not only as a conductor, but also as a pianist, a songwriter and as a gifted educator throughout the Cleveland area. He has led performances for Cleveland Opera Theater, Suburban Symphony, Blue Streak Ensemble, Heights Chamber Orchestra, Cleveland Philharmonic, Baldwin Wallace Conservatory, and worked extensively with the Cleveland Institute of Music Orchestra. Boyagian’s 2023 season also included leading the orchestras of Opera Delaware and Opera Baltimore in performances of *La traviata*, and collaborating with the Milwaukee Symphony for Florentine Opera’s performances of *L’elisir d’amore*.

Born and raised in Bologna, Italy, Maestro Boyagian is the proud son of internationally renowned Metropolitan Opera Verdi Baritone, the late Garbis Boyagian, who inspired his son’s innate passion for opera and appreciation for vocal artists. In 2000 Boyagian came to the USA to further his musical studies, after receiving diplomas from Accademia Musicale Chigiana in Siena, Italy, and Conservatorio “G.I. Martini” in Bologna, Italy; and he holds degrees from the Cleveland Institute of Music and California State University, Northridge. In recognition of his burgeoning talent, Boyagian was named “one of 10 most successful Italians in the U.S.” by the Italy-America Chamber of Commerce in New York City, and is a “Most Distinguished Artist” Grant Recipient from the Community Partnership for Arts and Culture in Cleveland, Ohio.



Violin Concerto, Op. 14 (1939) by S. Barber

Notes by Dan Qu

One of the favorite violin concertos of the 20th century had an uneasy birth. Barber was twenty-nine years old when he composed his violin concerto. At the time, he was just starting to be recognized as a promising young composer. Toscanini had just performed his First Essay and Adagio for Strings a year earlier. The violin concerto was Barber's first major commission, funded by Samuel Fels, a soap manufacturer and board member of the Philadelphia Orchestra and Curtis Institute. (Barber later called it "concerto del sapone" or "soap concerto" in private.) It was intended for Fels' protégé Iso Briselli, a former child prodigy and student of Carl Flesch. They agreed in May 1939 that the work would be completed by October 1 for a January premiere. Barber started composing the first two movements in Switzerland in August. He had hoped to complete the entire work in Europe. However, his plan was interrupted by the war. On September 2nd, one day after Germany invaded Poland, Barber sailed home. He continued working on the piece in the Pocono Mountains in Pennsylvania, sending the first two movements to Briselli in mid-October. Briselli was initially happy with what he received, only demanding something more virtuosic in the third movement. However, things went off track after he showed them to his violin coach Albert Meiff, who claimed that "the technical embellishments are very far from the requirements of a modern violinist". Meiff urged Briselli to accept his view and even contacted Fels about the issue. When Briselli received the third movement in late November, he was disappointed to find the expected showpiece was instead a perpetual motion. Briselli ultimately didn't perform it. A private performance was held at the Curtis Institute, followed by its public debut in February 1941, with Albert Spalding and the Philadelphia Orchestra under Eugene Ormandy. The concerto quickly gained popularity, frequently performed and recorded, with its unique structure and lyrical nature endearing it to audiences.

In today's performance, you will hear the first movement of the concerto. The solo violin opens the movement without orchestral introduction, like a sudden lift of the curtain on stage. The clarinet introduces an idyllic and lively second theme, which is passed on to the solo violin. The two themes then alternate in different keys, at different tempos, and with various interplays between the orchestra and solo violin. At moments, rapid notes on the solo violin rush frantically to a climax, clashing with the orchestra. Intense agony intermingles with noble and elegant lyricism throughout the movement, only to return to serenity at the end.

Suite for Wind Band in F major, Op. 28 No. 2 (1922), by G. Holst

Notes by David Ellis

Gustav Holst's Second Suite in F for Military Band, Op. 28, No. 2 is considered one of the great standard works for concert band. The Suite, written in 1911, consists of four movements, and features several traditional English folk tunes, common sources of inspiration for British composers at this time. As a result, this work straddles the formality and pomp of band music, and the rustic familiarity which comes from Holst's choice of tunes.

The first movement, a "March", incorporates three tunes within a da capo, or ABA, form. The A section features a cheerful Morris dance and the tune "Swansea Town", first played by a solo euphonium and then by the band as a whole. For the B section, Holst changes time signatures from a strict 2/4 to a rollicking 6/8 for the tune "Claudy Banks".

The second movement, which serves as the slow movement of the Suite, is a literal "Song without Words" featuring the tune "I'll Love my Love". It is a short but beautiful movement, notable for its simplicity and relative intimacy next to its surrounding movements.

The third movement, "Song of the Blacksmith", is also short but of a very different character to the lyrical second movement. Played loud and boisterously, the music contains a rough and undefined rhythmic pulse, due to consistently changing time signatures and constant syncopation in the brass. Appropriately, this movement concludes with a prominent solo for the anvil, played by a very lucky percussionist.

The fourth and final movement, "Fantasia on the Dargason" features the famous tune "Dargason" alongside the ever popular "Greensleeves". This movement, which Holst later arranged for strings for his St. Paul Suite, Op. 29, No. 2, stands out in that the tunes are not presented as isolated ideas as in the other movements. Instead, after establishing the "Dargason" in several varied repetitions, Holst layers



"Greensleeves" on top (or below, depending on voicing) the "Dargason" tune. The listener swims in constantly changing and conflicting pulses which somehow still fit together in a very satisfying way. This effect occurs twice: once in the middle, and once grandly near the end. After the restatement of "Greensleeves", the movement concludes with an amusing duet for piccolo and tuba, both of which seemingly cannot decide who will have the last word. The band as a whole, impatient with this little game, definitively ends the piece with a crash.

Serenade for Strings in E major, Op. 22 (1875), by A. Dvořák

Notes by Abbey Koehl

Antonín Dvořák (1841-1904) was a Czech composer and one of the most prominent composers of the late Romantic period. Known for blending Czech folk melodies with the formal structures of Western classical music, Dvořák became a central figure in both Czech nationalism and European concert music. Dvořák's music is known for its lyrical qualities, emotional depth, and the way he draws from Czech folk tunes, yet also effortlessly integrated the broader European musical tradition.

Composed in 1875, the Serenade for Strings in E major, Op. 22 is one of Dvořák's early masterpieces, and it reflects both his innate ability to create melody and his growing maturity as a composer. The work was written during a period when Dvořák was finding his own voice and beginning to attract the attention of major musical figures in Prague. It was first performed in 1876 and received immediate acclaim, establishing Dvořák as a composer of significant promise. The Serenade for Strings is a joyous, melodic work composed for a chamber orchestra consisting of strings—first and second violins, violas, cellos, and double basses. Although it's labeled as a serenade, a genre often associated with light, courtly music, Dvořák's work demonstrates depth and complexity, offering much more than mere background music for social gatherings. The piece is vibrant, full of contrast, and showcases Dvořák's talent for orchestration, particularly his sensitivity to the different tonal colors that strings can produce.

Dvořák's Serenade for Strings remains one of his most beloved works, showcasing his distinctive voice early in his career. Through its vibrant themes and intricate orchestration, it offers a perfect balance of lyrical beauty and rhythmic vitality, with each movement highlighting different aspects of string playing. Whether you are drawn to the joyful exuberance of the "Polka," the contemplative calm of the "Andante con moto," or the charming elegance of the "Minuetto," Dvořák's Serenade remains a quintessential example of his rich musical imagination and deep connection to his Czech roots.

Overture to Ruslan and Lyudmila (1842), by M. Glinka

Notes by Abbey Koehl

Mikhail Glinka (1804-1857) is often regarded as the father of Russian classical music. Glinka's work bridged the gap between the traditional Western European classical tradition and the burgeoning Russian nationalist movement in music. His compositions marked a pivotal turning point in Russian music, influencing composers like Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky and Nicolai Rimsky-Korsakov. Glinka's works often drew on Russian folk melodies and themes, blending them with European musical forms. *Ruslan and Lyudmila* was Glinka's final opera, composed between 1837 and 1842, and based on the epic poem by Alexander Pushkin. The overture is one of the most vibrant and exciting parts of the opera, and it was quickly embraced by audiences for its energy and captivating orchestration.

The overture begins with a lively, almost fantastical theme, full of bright brass fanfares and sweeping strings. The rhythm is crisp, and the mood is jubilant, setting the tone for the magical and heroic tale that follows in the opera. The music is full of energy, creating an atmosphere of excitement and anticipation. As the overture progresses, Glinka shifts from bold, vigorous sections to more lyrical and mysterious passages. Listen for the contrast between the heroic brass and the softer, more melodic string sections, which hint at the opera's romantic and adventurous themes. Toward the end of the overture, the music builds to a thrilling climax. The energy surges forward as the various musical themes come together in a final, triumphant statement. It's a rousing finish that leaves the listener with a sense of exhilaration!

Ruslan and Lyudmila is widely appreciated not only for its vivid, evocative sound but also for its accessibility. Whether you're a seasoned concertgoer or new to classical music, its catchy melodies and exciting rhythms will keep you on the edge of your seat.



SSO Spotlight!

MCKENNA GLORIOSO, VIOLIN

McKenna Glorioso is a musician, educator, and arts administrator based in Cleveland. As a performer, McKenna is a violinist in the Akron Symphony Orchestra, Concertmaster of the Suburban Symphony, and plays violin and sings in the Cleveland-based dreampop band Wish Queen. McKenna founded and manages Ensemble Mercury, a string quartet that plays for events and produces immersive concert experiences around Northeast Ohio. She also plays frequently with the Canton Symphony Orchestra, Blue Water Chamber Orchestra, and the Cleveland Pops Orchestra. In 2023, McKenna joined the national tour for "Our Planet: Live in Concert," performing over 50 shows and traveling to over 30 states in just three months.



McKenna was a resident Teaching Artist at Rainey Institute from 2018 – 2022, which fostered a belief in accessible music education for all and a deep connection to the Cleveland community. In 2023 she joined the Suzuki faculty at The Music Settlement, where she teaches violin and viola, leads group classes, and assists with outreach events.

McKenna made their debut as a composer and producer in 2023 through Maelstrom Collaborative Arts' Cadre showcase. Along with their collaborators, they curated, presented, and performed in the work "Human/Nature," an interactive art, music, and dance installation.

McKenna has two degrees in Violin Performance: a Bachelor of Music from McGill University and a Master's Degree from the Cleveland Institute of Music. They studied Suzuki Pedagogy with Kimberly Meier-Sims at the Cleveland Institute of Music. Although their primary instrument is violin, McKenna enjoys playing many instruments including the viola, piano, electric bass, and theremin.

As an administrator, McKenna has supported several arts organizations in Development, Marketing, and Outreach roles. McKenna's artistic ability combined with a keen understanding of administrative systems makes her an innovator and leader in the arts world. She is currently Development Manager at Preterm Cleveland.

DAVID ELLIS, GUEST CONDUCTOR

A conductor, cellist, and viola da gambist, David B. Ellis has performed repertoire ranging from Renaissance to Contemporary. He received a Bachelor's of Music degree in Cello performance, a Master's of Music degree in Historical Performance, and a Master's of Music degree in Orchestra Conducting, all from the Oberlin Conservatory of Music. While at Oberlin, David studied with professors Raphael Jimenez, Tim Weiss, and Catharina Meints, and assembled and directed the Oberlin Baroque Orchestra. As a viola da gambist and baroque cellist, David has performed in many ensembles in Ohio and throughout the United States, including The Newberry Consort, Catacoustic, Les Délices, Three Notch'd Road, Apollo's Fire, Burning River Baroque, and the Atlanta Baroque Orchestra.



As a modern cellist, David has played in ensembles featuring a wide range of genres, including but not limited to the Akron Symphony and Cleveland Chamber Symphony. As a conductor, David has served as director of the CWRU Case Camerata Chamber Orchestra and Executive and Artistic Director for Earth and Air: String Orchestra. David is a passionate teacher, and in addition to maintaining a small private studio of cellists and viola da gambists, he has taught classes on numerous topics and served as a faculty member at the Viola da Gamba Society of America's annual Conclave. David is a native of Solon, Ohio, and currently resides in Cleveland.



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