



Colonel Jason K. Fettig, Director

MARINE CHAMBER ORCHESTRA
Sunday, April 3, 2022 at 2:00 P.M.
Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center
Northern Virginia Community College
Alexandria Campus
First Lieutenant Darren Y. Lin, conducting

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–91)

Overture to *Don Giovanni*, K. 527

Felix Mendelssohn (1809–47)

Allegro molto appassionato from
Violin Concerto in E minor, Opus 64

Henry Auxenfans, guest soloist

Winner of the 2022 Marine Band Concerto Competition

Stefan Freund (b. 1974)

Unremixed (2005, rev. 2008)

INTERMISSION

John Corigliano (b. 1938)

Voyage (1976)

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–91)

Symphony No. 29 in A, K. 201 (186a)

Allegro moderato
Andante
Menuetto
Allegro con spirito

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PROGRAM NOTES

Overture to *Don Giovanni*, K. 527

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–91)

The more than 600 works composed by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart during his thirty-five years of life included virtually every popular genre of the era. But despite his vast catalogue of symphonies, concerti, and chamber music, Mozart loved opera above all else. Not only was opera considered the very pinnacle of musical achievement in the Classical period; it spoke directly to Mozart's ideals as an artist. He adored the fantasy, drama, and humor afforded by the stage and found it a perfect vehicle to feed his creative imagination and constantly expand the boundaries of his musical language. Opera also produced the most lucrative commissions, and Mozart's overall financial health weighed heavily upon the demand, or lack thereof, for his operas. Mozart wrote twenty-two works that could be classified as operas during his lifetime, and the first was written when the composer was only eleven years old. He continued to write opera at a steady pace from that point forward, each work becoming increasingly more sophisticated. By the mid-1780s, he was one of the highest paid musicians in Europe. Known to be quite particular about the texts he used, Mozart developed a reputation for bullying librettists into shaping plots and characters according to his wishes. In 1785, this difficult process was completely dissolved when he met former priest-turned-librettist Lorenzo da Ponte. Their partnership resulted in three of his greatest operas: *The Marriage of Figaro*, *Don Giovanni*, and *Così fan tutte*.

Although Mozart and da Ponte were in creative lockstep during the writing of their first opera, the première of *The Marriage of Figaro* had not gone well, as powerful government officials disapproved of its subject-matter satirizing the aristocracy. The opera's initial run lasted only nine performances, and the damage done to Mozart's reputation and finances worsened when Austria went to war with the Ottoman Empire in 1786. Larger commissions dried up, and Mozart soon found himself accruing large amounts of debt and struggling to survive. Although his fortunes had taken a severe turn for the worse in Vienna, Mozart had long been held in the highest regard in Prague, and a more successful production of *The Marriage of Figaro* mounted in Prague in December of 1786 led to the commission of a second work with da Ponte. *Don Giovanni* premièred in Prague in 1787 and is widely considered to be Mozart and da Ponte's greatest collaboration.

The plot of the opera centers on the young nobleman Don Giovanni, who has led a life of amorous pursuits. After many conquests, he finds himself the object of vengeance for three of his more abhorrent actions. First, he deserts his lover Donna Elvira. Then he attempts to rape Donna Anna, the fiancée of Don Ottavio, and in the process, kills her father, Il Commendatore. Lastly, he attempts to lure the lovely peasant girl Zerlina from her fiancée, Masetto. At the end of the opera, Don Giovanni enters hell for his sins by way of the spirit of Il Commendatore, embodied by his imposing statue in the cemetery.

The overture to the opera opens with a thundering cadence in D minor, which is followed by a brief and mysterious introduction that hints at the darker undercurrents of the story. However, this episode soon gives way to a brilliant and effervescent Allegro that represents some of the composer's best thematic work.

Violin Concerto in E minor, Opus 64

Felix Mendelssohn (1809–47)

Felix Mendelssohn began taking piano lessons from his mother at age six before studying with Marie Bigot of Paris. Arguably his most influential teacher was Carl Friedrich Zelter, with whom he began his studies in 1817. Zelter introduced Mendelssohn to the German writer Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, who became a dear friend and a tremendous influence on the young composer. Deeply influenced by the music of Johann Sebastian Bach, Mendelssohn was largely responsible for the revival of Bach's music after it had fallen into near obscurity. When he was only twenty, Mendelssohn arranged and conducted a performance in Berlin of Bach's St. Matthew Passion, BWV 244, the first performance of this work since Bach's death in 1750. In 1835, Mendelssohn was appointed conductor of the Gewandhaus Orchestra in Leipzig and eventually founded the Leipzig Conservatory. In his final years he suffered from ill health and died shortly after suffering a series of strokes.

Not long after Mendelssohn had taken the position as director of the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, he appointed his childhood friend Ferdinand David as the concertmaster for whom he intended to write his Violin Concerto in E minor, Opus 64. He conceived the work in 1838, and wrote to David, "I would probably also like to write for you a violin concerto for next winter; one in E minor is stuck in my head, and its beginning allows me no peace." It took another six years before the work was completed for publication. During that time, Mendelssohn communicated regularly with David, who offered feedback. The concerto was eventually premiered by David in 1845. Although this is a Romantic concerto, Mendelssohn was known for being true to the traditional forms of the Classical period. But even with that in mind, the work has some unique characteristics. Instead of the longer introductions typical of concerti at that time, the soloist enters immediately in the opening bars. Additionally, Mendelssohn inserted a cadenza, which he wrote out, in the first movement just before the recapitulation rather than toward the end of the movement. These innovative ideas likely influenced Johannes Brahms and Jean Sibelius and contributed to this work becoming one of the great cornerstones of the violin literature.

2022 United States Marine Band Concerto Competition Winner Henry Auxenfans, violin

The United States Marine Band's annual Concerto Competition for high school musicians has identified a number of up-and-coming musicians since its inception in 2008, many of whom have been featured on NPR's *From the Top* program and have gone on to perform with world-class ensembles. The winning student, selected by a rigorous audition process that includes a pre-recorded preliminary round and in-person final performance round for a live audience in Sousa Hall, receives a \$2,500 scholarship supported by the Marine Corps Heritage Foundation, as well as the opportunity to perform the solo with "The President's Own." This year marks the inaugural competition for stringed instruments.

Henry Auxenfans is a freshman at the University of Chicago Laboratory Schools and has played violin for ten years. Henry is currently concertmaster of the Chicago Youth Symphony Orchestra and an active member of the Plymouth Quartet. He is also a student of Frank Almond, former concertmaster of the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra. In 2022, Henry won first place in the United States Marine Band's Concerto Competition for High School Musicians, the Chicago

Lakeview Orchestra's Young Artist Competition, and the Chicago Youth Symphony Orchestra's Concerto Competition. In 2021 he was featured on Chicago classical music radio station WFMT in an hour-long broadcast, and was selected for a second time to attend the prestigious and exclusive Morningside Music Bridge Camp. At age twelve, Henry was the youngest national finalist (Junior, Strings Category) of the 2019-2020 Music Teachers National Association Competition, and was a finalist once again in the 2021-2022 competition. In 2020, he became the youngest string prize winner of the Chicago Symphony Young Artist Competition, and placed second in the International Arthur Grumiaux Violin Competition for Young Violinists in Brussels, Belgium. At age ten, Henry made his Carnegie Hall debut as a result of winning the American Protégé International Competition.

***Unremixed* (2005, rev. 2008)**

Stefan Freund (b. 1974)

Alarm Will Sound is a twenty-member chamber orchestra that specializes in wide-ranging, contemporary classical music; from avant-garde to pop-influenced. They have premiered many works by contemporary composers such as Steve Reich, John Adams, and Augusta Read Thomas and have also appeared in concert with Medeski Martin & Wood and Björk.

Unremixed was written by Alarm Will Sound's cellist, Stefan Freund, as a finale for the group's Lincoln Center Festival inaugural performance in 2005. The concert was a complete presentation of Alarm Will Sound's album, *Acoustica*, which features acoustic arrangements of electronic pieces by Richard D. James, otherwise known as Aphex Twin. The composer offered the following notes regarding *Unremixed*:

The work is divided into four sections. The first features the descent from *Gwely Mernans* presented in various ratios against a consistent quarter note pulse divided into sixteenths. A lick similar to the pentatonic figures found in *Cliffs* emerges, played in different meters against the pulse.

A bombastic percussion solo leads to the second section which places a firm 5/4 pulse against a tune formed from two phrases of 10/16 that change their division of the meter. Though not directly taken from the music of Aphex Twin, the tune is reminiscent of many modal funk grooves found in electronic dance music. Eventually it is placed against the descent from the previous section.

The third section attempts to capture the industrial sound of electronica. The tune from *Meltphace 6* emerges over a 7/8 groove whose working title was "Sick Machine." Various layers are added to the texture to grow towards a giant climax.

The final section is a simple dance party featuring techno drum tracks that grow increasingly complex and a sped up presentation of the mixed meter dance tune from the second section. The performers are encouraged to get a little rowdy towards the end.

***Voyage* (1976)**
John Corigliano (b. 1938)

John Corigliano's *Voyage* for String Orchestra was originally composed for a *capella* choir in 1971. It is based on Pulitzer Prize-winner Richard Wilbur's translation of Charles Beaudelaire's "L'Invitation au voyage." The composer was inspired by "Wilbur's poignant setting [which] pictures a world of obsessive imagination." The work proved so effective that Corigliano rescored it for various combinations of instruments, including this version for strings. The composer wrote, "The lyrical seamless vocal lines translated themselves naturally to strings, and the burnished imagery of the poetry finds a happy companion in the richness of the instrumental choir...The music echoes the quality of the repeated refrain found in this lush translation: There, there is nothing else but grace and measure, / Richness, quietness, and pleasure." The poem provides insight into both the imagery Corigliano sought to depict as well as the structure of the music

Symphony No. 29 in A, K. 201 (186a)
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–91)

It is unclear among scholars exactly when Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart became a fully mature composer and wrote with a voice that was completely authentic to himself. Most of the debate focuses on either his Symphony No. 25 in G Minor, K. 183, or his Symphony No. 29 in A Major, K. 201 as the turning point. However, these two compositions can be traced back to the summer and fall of 1773, which Mozart spent in Vienna with his father, Leopold. The purpose of the trip was to find employment for eighteen-year-old composer.

While the young Mozart left Vienna without work, the trip was still meaningful in that he had heard a great amount of new music. Most noteworthy were the six Opus 20 quartets and new symphonies written by his friend and idol, Joseph Haydn. The combination of invigorating new music and the bustling city of Vienna may have helped Mozart's musical voice reach its final state of maturity. Mozart completed his twenty-ninth symphony the following April.

The symphony begins softly with an octave drop, a small motif that repeats; ascending in tone before the oboes and horns join in. A second theme, introduced by the first violins, is marked by recurring trills. The second movement is a gorgeous serenade for muted violins that is reminiscent of Rococo-court music. An energetic third-movement minuet dances with dotted rhythms and abrupt *fortissimos* before transitioning into a calm trio section. The finale is Mozart's take on the "hunting" horn calls that were popular at the time, and perhaps a tribute to his idol, Haydn, who popularized the trend. Horn calls and one last blistering violin scale mark the end of Mozart's symphonic masterwork.