

GRIFFIN CONCERT HALL / UNIVERSITY CENTER FOR THE ARTS

CSU UNIVERSITY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA PRESENTS

... CONDUCTED BY WES KENNEY ...

Ghostakovich RETURNS

→ featuring Symphony No. 1



FEBRUARY 8, 2017

Colorado State University

SCHOOL OF MUSIC, THEATRE AND DANCE

CSU UNIVERSITY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Shostakovich Returns

WES KENNEY, Conductor

With Special Guest **JOHN CARLO PIERCE**, Tenor

DARIUS MILHAUD

(1892-1974)

Suite provençale, op. 152d (1936)

- I. Anime
- II. Tres modere – Vif
- III. Modere
- IV. Vif
- V. Modere
- VI. Vif
- VII. Lent
- VIII. Vif

FRANZ JOSEPH HAYDN

(1732-1809)

The Creation, Hob. XXI:2 (1799)

“And God created Man ... In native worth”

FELIX MENDELSSOHN

(1809-1847)

Elijah, op. 70 (1846)

“Ye people rend your hearts ... If with all your hearts”

GEORGE FREDERICK HANDEL

(1685-1759)

Saul, HWV 53 (1739)

“Birth and fortune I despise”

John Carlo Pierce

INTERMISSION

DMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH

(1906-1975)

Symphony no. 1 in F Minor, Op. 10 (1926)

- I. Allegretto
 - II. Allegro
 - III. Lento
 - IV. Allegro molto; Lento; Allegro molto; Largo; Presto
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PROGRAM NOTES

***Suite provençale, op. 152d (1936)* Darius Milhaud (1892-1974)**

Darius Milhaud is known for his keen sense of balance — his ability to infuse his experimental tendencies with an appropriate measure of restraint. Likewise, his playful, post-Dada persona finds a partial foil in the composer's devout Jewish identity. Such balance plays out in his compositional output as well: often, as an exercise in compositional discipline, he would compose a technically demanding, detailed chamber work on the heels of a lyrically ambitious vocal or operatic work. In this regard, Milhaud's *Suite provençale* serves as a microcosm of the composer's style and oeuvre. Its eight movements alternate rousing marches and fanfares with more somber and introspective themes, creating a work that, though characteristically austere and emotionally somewhat disengaged in its individual moments, creates a dramatic framework in which emotions held at arm's length nonetheless draw in the listener and focus one's sensibilities.

The work takes inspiration from eighteenth century Provençal themes, several of which are woven into the textures of the various movements. Among these are themes by André Campra, a French composer active in the late 1600s and early 1700s who, like Milhaud, hailed from Aix-en-Provence. Though this work draws on numerous historical topics and sounds, it would be only partially accurate to call it neoclassical. Here, Milhaud does utilize familiar musical ideas, but employs them for their immediately evocative properties, not simply for their referential possibilities.

The fanfare that begins the work ("Animé") is surprisingly rousing, the polytonal resistance between the upper and lower brass adding a dramatic edge rather than the sneer of pastiche. This partitioning is realized in the rhythms too, with some instruments following a straightforward beat while others anxiously leap forward with continual syncopations.

The pensive strings and winds of the second movement ("Trés modéré") recall the opening strains of Milhaud's *La Création du Monde*. Its cadential resolutions are heightened by familiar, but still effective, techniques. As the cadence approaches, polytonal distances increase. Likewise, resolutions to tonic chords are often punctuated further by the employment of two leading tones, both a lowered and a raised seventh, which combine in shimmering dissonance before resolving to the tonic root.

Similar textural and temporal juxtapositions characterize the rest of the work. Gestures are sometimes exaggerated, as in the absent downbeats and overheavy upbeats that drive some of the subsequent march materials, but never to the point of grotesquerie. Rather, such intentionally awkward structures have a propulsive effect, one that is enhanced by Milhaud's innovative and extensive use of percussion instruments. Likewise, the last movement juxtaposes harmonically meandering contrapuntal materials with a clearly evocative fife and drum texture, whose familiar surface is moiréd with grumbling dissonances in the bass and stuttering offset rhythms.

Still, one doesn't get a sense of parody or self-effacement from this music, but a sense of multidimensionality, where uncommon harmonic and rhythmic practices are employed to highlight those points that traditional rhythmic and harmonic structures tend to emphasize. Neoclassic shapes are retained while their edges and surfaces are ornamented with modern musical language.

The oratorio originated at the beginning of the seventeenth century, running parallel to the development of opera. The genres are similar, in that they are both large-scale works for orchestra, chorus, and soloists, but the oratorio was meant to be presented as a concert piece.

***The Creation*, Hob. XXI:2 (1799)** “And God created Man ... In native worth”
Franz Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)

While traveling in London in the 1790s, Joseph Haydn heard performances of Handel's oratorios and was inspired to compose such works in his own style. In *The Creation*, the traditional story from the Book of Genesis is combined with passages from the Psalms and Milton's *Paradise Lost*. “And God created Man... In native worth and honor clad” describes the sixth day of creation. Musically, Man is portrayed with a fanfare-like rhythm, while Woman is a graceful figure.

***Elijah*, op. 70 (1846)** “Ye people rend your hearts ... If with all your hearts”
Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

Elijah demonstrates Felix Mendelssohn's admiration for the music of Handel and Bach, but filtered through the lens of German Romanticism. The choice to set events from the life of a mystical Old Testament prophet recognizes a prevailing interest in subjects of the natural and supernatural worlds. At the opening of the oratorio, *Elijah* brings drought upon the land. As the Israelites cry for help, Obadiah tells them to return to God in “Ye people rend your hearts ... If with all your hearts.”

***Saul*, HWV 53 (1739)** “Birth and fortune I despise”
George Frederick Handel (1685-1759)

George Frederick Handel is credited with inventing the English oratorio, which blends elements of Italian Baroque opera and English choral music, and employs stories from mythology, early Christian history, and the Bible. The aria “Birth and Fortune I despise” from *Saul* is cast in da capo form; the two primary sections contrast in tempo, mode, and emotion. Jonathan first refuses the privileges of noble birth, then swears devotion to David.

— program notes by John Carlo Pierce

Symphony no. 1 in F Minor, Op. 10 (1926) **Dmitri Shostakovich (1906-1975)**

Born in 1906, Dmitri Dmitriyevich Shostakovich was a prodigious child as both pianist and composer. Starting piano lessons with his mother when he was eight, he was writing a Pushkin-inspired opera by the age of nine. But this relatively comfortable middle-class childhood would not last long. After the 1917 Revolution, Shostakovich's bourgeois family background proved a distinct disadvantage in the new social order that ensued. The unexpected death of his father in 1922 only made matters worse. His well-educated mother had to work thirteen-hour days as a cashier and Shostakovich was forced to spend many after-school hours as a silent-movie pianist to help the family cope with the hardships of the post-Revolutionary economy. And yet, despite suffering from malnutrition and tuberculosis, there are also stories of him losing his job for laughing too much at the Buster Keaton and Charlie Chaplin films he was employed to accompany. This apparent contradiction was a personality trait that would stay with him his whole life, and the sometimes juddering juxtaposition of the lighted-hearted with the profound marked his compositions from the very beginning.

Written at the age of eighteen, Shostakovich's *First Symphony* was the graduation piece that completed his studies at the Leningrad Conservatory. It has been likened to the opening chapter of a novel, setting the tone for all that follows. The composer's trade-mark musical gestures are all immediately obvious. Nervous tension and sarcastic wit, passion and intelligence, contemplation and action, nobility and banality – all expressed with an economy of means that is simultaneously subtle and direct.

The symphony opens with a virtuosic brilliance heavily influenced by Stravinsky's *Petrushka*. But perhaps it was not only that work's orchestration, with its soloistic piano part, that fascinated the student composer. Like Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire*, another piece he admired, the disconcerting idea of human beings as puppets, with their actions manipulated by unseen string-pullers from on high, was one that stayed with the composer right the way through to his final symphony, written almost fifty years later.

After composing the first two movements, Shostakovich wrote to a friend that it would be more fitting to call the work a 'symphony-grotesque'. But the style was about to change. 'I am in a terrible mood,' he continued. 'Sometimes I just want to shout. To cry out in terror. Doubts and problems. All this darkness suffocates me. From sheer misery, I've started to compose the finale of the symphony. It's turning out pretty gloomy.' The second half of the piece is certainly much more tragic in vein. Now the influences are more old-fashioned than contemporary, with Mahlerian string sonorities and Tchaikovsky-like descriptions of fate and death.

The directors of the conservatory excited by the genius they felt they had nurtured and arranged for the symphony to be performed by Nikolai Malko and the Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra. The première, on 12th May 1926, was an enormous success, and it was not long before the work gained worldwide recognition. Walter, Toscanini, and Klemperer all performed it. Alban Berg was even moved to write a flattering letter of appreciation. Shostakovich himself called the première his 'second birth'. The Soviet Union had discovered its first international star, the first to be trained solely under the new system rather than old imperialist Russia, and the authorities proclaimed him as an exaltation of the new at the expense of the old. In time, this much repeated role would become as much a burden to him as it was a saving grace.

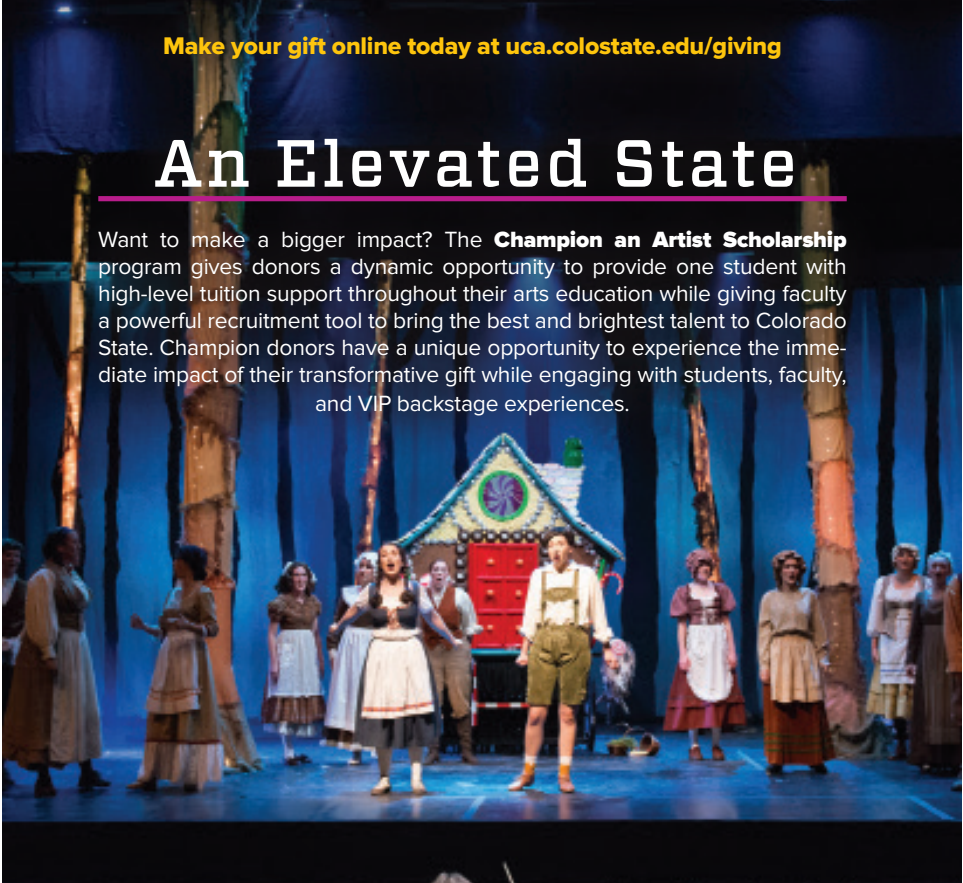
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WES KENNEY, Conductor

JEREMY CUEBAS, Graduate Teaching Assistant

VIOLIN 1

Frangel López Ceseña, Concertmaster
Paola Zamario, Asst. Concertmaster
Casey Donohue
Katie Gardner
Daiki Kimizuka
Kadin Kostelic
Lily Lu
Josh Steinbecker
Graeson Van Anne

VIOLIN 2

Lydia Oates, Principal
Jeremy Cuebas, Asst. Principal
Dmitri Ascarrunz
Steven Hsu
Rawan Jarrar
Tori Weingarten
Ryan Wessel
Trey Yu

VIOLA

Sarah Chicoine, Principal
Ben Roth, Asst. Principal
Chealsea Bernhardt
Garret Durie
Kadi Horn
Hailey Moy
Xareny Polanco

CELLO

Julius Hochmuth, Principal
Jessie Salas, Asst. Principal
Tavon Boaman
Joshua Greiner

CELLO (cont.)

Chis Lewis
Abigail Nelson
Jaclyn Rising
Jacob Schafer
Sarah Souders
Paul Walcott
Lauren Wearsch
Emily Workman

BASS

Jordan Asker, Principal
Zuri Kargbo, Asst. Principal
Danny Irwin
Alexis Messnick
Stephen Morrison
Daniel Probasco
Michael Rinko

FLUTE

Theresa Bunger, Principal
SierraMarie Whigham

PICCOLO

Emma Stark

OBOE

Mylie Payne, Principal
Kyle Howe

ENGLISH HORN

Maggie Korbek

CLARINET

Becca Stapfer, Principal
Lara Neuss

BASSOON

Tony Federico, Principal
Mikayla Baker

HORN

Ayo Derbyshire, Principal
Rachel Artley
Nicholas Gledhill
Emelie Pfaff
Andrew Meyers, Asst.
Isabel Waterbury

TRUMPET

Nik Valinsky, Principal
Jacob Caballero
Matthew Charlynn

TROMBONE

Will Gamache, Principal
Jon Hanlon
Peter McCarty

TUBA

Connor Challey

PERCUSSION

Chris Nadeau, Principal
Sarah Foss
Chris Hewitt
Natasha Miller
Tim Sanchez

PIANO

Lily Cai

BIOGRAPHIES



WES KENNEY is now in his fourteenth year as Professor of Music and Director of Orchestras at Colorado State University. He conducts the CSU Symphony and Chamber Orchestra as well as CSU Opera productions, and teaches graduate conducting. Mr. Kenney has led the orchestra to many new milestones, including first ever at CSU performances of Mahler Symphonies *No. 1* and *No. 5*, two Strauss tone poems, the Bartok *Concerto for Orchestra*, and the Bruckner *Symphony No. 5*. In 2014 he was named music director of the Denver Young Artists Orchestra—the premier youth orchestra in the state of Colorado—and has taken that orchestra on tour through Italy, France, and Spain. Last June Mr. Kenney took DYAO to New York City for that orchestra's Carnegie Hall debut.

Mr. Kenney is also currently in his fourteenth season as music director of the fully professional Fort Collins Symphony. In the summer of 2004 he was named to an additional post of music director of Opera Fort Collins, helping that organization establish a full season of three productions a year. Mr. Kenney was named the 2009 Outstanding Teacher by the Colorado American String Teachers Association. He was also awarded the Grand Prize in the summer 2007 Varna (Bulgaria) International Conducting Competition. He traveled back to Bulgaria in 2008 for concerts in Vidin and to conduct *La Traviata* in Stara Zagora.

Mr. Kenney is a frequent guest conductor of professional and educational ensembles. Recent appearances include the Colorado Symphony, Colorado Music Festival, Lafayette Symphony (Ind.), and the Acadiana Symphony (La.). He has conducted New Mexico All-State, Virginia All-State, Alabama All-State, and next spring travels to N.H. for their All-State Orchestra. He also has credits that include concerts with orchestras in Europe and Asia. In Jan. 2018, Mr. Kenney will travel to Vietnam to conduct the Hanoi Philharmonic. He has given orchestra clinics in all corners of Colorado and is sought after for sessions at the Colorado Music Educators Association Conference. Mr. Kenney is a former president of the Conductors Guild and serves currently on their advisory board.

Mr. Kenney is also in demand as a conducting pedagogue. He recently taught alongside Jorge Mester in a Conductors Guild sponsored workshop at CSU. In the summer of 2011 he was a guest lecturer at the Conductor's Institute held at Bard College in upstate New York, teaching alongside founder Harold Farberman and American Symphony Orchestra Music Director Leon Botstein. He is also one of the founders of the CSU Summer Master's Degree program in conducting, designed to allow music educators the opportunity to earn a graduate degree while furthering their conducting studies and remaining in their current position.



American tenor **JOHN CARLO PIERCE** enjoys an international reputation for beautiful sound and incisive acting. He has held contracted positions with the opera theaters in the German cities of Cologne, Mainz, and Giessen. He has appeared as a guest with the Spoleto Festival in Italy, the Bavarian State Opera in Munich, the Aargau Festival in Switzerland, and in Darmstadt, Dortmund, Düsseldorf, Freiburg, Halle, Heidelberg, Kassel, Nuremberg, Schwerin, and Trier. Dr. Pierce's repertoire features major roles in operas by Mozart, Rossini, and Donizetti, and stretches from the Baroque (Handel, *Saul*; Telemann, *Emma und Eginhard*) to new works (Bryars, *G.*; Pinkham, *The Cask of Amontillado*). He has sung major sacred works by Bach, Handel, Mozart, and Mendelssohn. Dr. Pierce has

appeared on European television and radio, and can be heard on the EMI recording of Zemlinsky's *Der Traumgörge*, conducted by James Conlon.

Dr. Pierce holds a Master of Music degree from the Eastman School of Music and Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the University of Connecticut. He is currently Assistant Professor of Voice at Colorado State University, where he teaches lyric diction and opera history in addition to applied voice. As Assistant Professor and Director of Opera at New Mexico State University, he directed productions of *Dido and Aeneas*, *Trial by Jury*, *Seerse*, *Orphée aux enfers*, and *Suor Angelica*.

APPLIED FACULTY

Violin

Ron Francois
Leslie Stewart

Viola

Margaret Miller

Cello

Barbara Thiem

Bass

Forest Greenough

Flute

Michelle Stanley

Oboe

Andrew Jacobson

Clarinet

Wesley Ferreira

Bassoon

Gary Moody

Horn

John McGuire

Trumpet

Caleb Hudson

Saxophone

Peter Sommer

Trombone

Christopher Van Hof

Tuba / EUPHONIUM

Stephen Dombrowski

Percussion

Eric Hollenbeck

Harp

Courtney Hershey Bress

Piano

Janet Landreth

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Tiffany Blake
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Chris Reed
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U P C O M I N G P E R F O R M A N C E S

MUSIC PERFORMANCES

<i>Virtuoso Series Concert</i> / Gary Moody, Bassoon	February 13, 7:30 p.m.	ORH, UCA
Guest Artist Concert / Trebuchet Wind Trio / FREE	February 14, 7:30 p.m.	ORH, UCA
Guest Artist Concert / Vendryes-Thompson, Viola/Piano / FREE	February 15, 6 p.m.	ORH, UCA
<i>Virtuoso Series Concert</i> / Mendelssohn Trio	February 20, 7:30 p.m.	ORH, UCA
Jazz Ensembles Invitational Concert / Fort Collins High School	February 22, 7:30 p.m.	GCH, UCA
Wind Symphony Concert	February 24, 7:30 p.m.	GCH, UCA
Singer of the Year Competition / FREE	February 25, 7:30 p.m.	ORH, UCA
<i>Virtuoso Series Concert</i> / John Carlo Pierce, Voice	February 27, 7:30 p.m.	ORH, UCA
Symphonic Band Concert	February 28, 7:30 p.m.	GCH, UCA
Classical Convergence Concert / Third Coast Percussion	March 1, 7:30 p.m.	GCH, UCA
Chamber Choir and Concert Choir Concert	March 3, 7:30 p.m.	GCH, UCA

RALPH OPERA PROGRAM PERFORMANCES

<i>A Little Night Music</i> by Stephen Sondheim	March 30, 31, April 1, 7:30 p.m.	GCH, UCA
<i>A Little Night Music</i> by Stephen Sondheim	April 2, 2 p.m.	GCH, UCA
Aria Workshop Concert / FREE	May 5, 7:30 p.m.	RH, UCA

DANCE PERFORMANCES

Spring Dance Concert	April 21, 22, 7:30 p.m.	UDT, UCA
Spring Dance Concert	April 22, 2 p.m.	UDT, UCA
Spring Dance Capstone Concert	May 5, 6, 7:30 p.m.	UDT, UCA
Spring Dance Capstone Concert	May 6, 2 p.m.	UDT, UCA

THEATRE PERFORMANCES

<i>The Resistable Rise of Arturo Ui</i> by Bertolt Brecht	March 3, 4, 9, 10, 11, 7:30 p.m.	ST, UCA
<i>The Resistable Rise of Arturo Ui</i> by Bertolt Brecht	March 5 and 11, 2 p.m.	ST, UCA
<i>Little Shop of Horrors the Musical</i>	April 28, 29, May 4, 5, 6, 7:30 p.m.	UT, UCA
<i>Little Shop of Horrors the Musical</i>	April 30, May 7, 2 p.m.	UT, UCA
Rockband Project Concert / FREE	May 11, 6:30 p.m.	UT, UCA