



**Ann Arbor
Symphony Orchestra**

March 21, 2009

Michigan Theater

Arie Lipsky, Conductor
Joel Hastings, Piano

This concert is sponsored by

Campbell Industries

Program

A Midsummer Night's Dream, Op. 21, Op. 61Felix Mendelssohn

- Overture
- Scherzo
- Wedding March

Concerto for Piano, No. 1, in D minor, BWV 1052 J.S. Bach

- Allegro
- Adagio
- Allegro

Joel Hastings, Piano

Intermission

The Wise Virgins: Ballet Suite.....William Walton

- What God hath done, is rightly done – Vivace assai
- Lord, hear my longing – Adagio
- Ah! How ephemeral – Vivace
- Sheep may safely graze – Adagio
- Praise be to God – Moderato

Symphony No. 5 in D minor, Op. 107 "Reformation" Mendelssohn

- Andante; Allegro con fuoco
- Allegro vivace
- Andante
- Andante con moto; Chorale; Allegro vivace; Allegro maestoso

Presentation flowers courtesy of Tom Thompson/Flowers.

*Shar Products Company has sponsored the purchase of tonight's music
for the A²SO's permanent library collection.*

This concert is supported by grants from  Michigan Music Association for
arts and cultural affairs *and*  NATIONAL
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Program Notes

by Edward Yadzinsky

A Midsummer Night's Dream, Op. 21, Op. 61

Felix Mendelssohn

Born February 3, 1809; Hamburg, Germany

Died November 4, 1847; Leipzig



Already 200 years have passed since the birth of Felix Mendelssohn, a celebrated prodigy in his youth, and later, a pioneer of the Romantic Age. Even as a child, Felix was able to compose with an effortless, breezy facility. Moreover, as the grandson of the philosopher Moses Mendelssohn, the wunderkind's earliest years embraced the study of literature, languages, painting and philosophy. By age 12, the young lad struck up a friendship with no less than Goethe, then aged 72, who recognized the extraordinary mind and talent of Hamburg's *enfant cherie*. Just five years later, at the "mature" age of 17, Mendelssohn completed the *Overture to a Midsummer Night's Dream*. No composer in the history of music has produced a finer masterwork at such an early age.

The inspiration for *Incidental Music to A Midsummer Night's Dream* came when Mendelssohn read Shakespeare's 1595 comedy as a teenager with his sister Fanny. But after completing the *Overture*, he did not return to the project until 15 years later, at a request from the King of Prussia. Completed in 1842, the full score comprises 13 numbers, including the very well-known *Scherzo* and *Wedding March*.

As for the storyline, Shakespeare's play is quilted with the capers of mortals and sprites who first blunder then triumph over the caprice of love and life: crossed amours, silly quarrels, forest chases, and magic spells. Among the principal characters are Theseus, the Duke of Athens, and his betrothed, Hippolyta, Queen of the Amazons. Oberon and Titania are the rulers of the forest spirits, who assign the mischievous Puck to manage the magic of state, and who, along the way, gets Bottom to look and bray like a donkey.

About the music, Mendelssohn wrote:

The music follows the play closely in order that the audience will have Shakespeare in mind. I believe it is enough to point out that the fairy rulers, Oberon and Titania, appear throughout the play. At the end, after everything has been satisfactorily settled and the main characters have joyfully left the stage, the elves follow them, bless the house and disappear with the dawn. So ends the play and the music.

After the delightful *Overture*, the curtain opens as Theseus and Hippolyta discuss their coming marriage: “Now, fair Hippolyta, our nuptial hour draws on apace; four happy days bring in another moon;” she replies: “Four nights will quickly dream away the time; And then the moon shall behold the night of our solemnities.”

Indeed, the “dream” is well afoot as the music of the *Scherzo* introduces the first scene of Act II, in which Puck and a woodland fairy are chatting. Puck exclaims: “How now, spirit! wither wander you?” The fairy answers: “Over hill, over dale...I do wander everywhere, swifter than the moon’s sphere.” The brilliant score flutters on the misty wings of night, full of star-sprinkles and fireflies – among the most evocative scenes in all of music. Borrowed from the *Overture*, we can even hear echoes of Donkey – Bottom – braying.

At the beginning of Act V, the famous *Wedding March* celebrates the union of all the rightly paired lovers and the marriage of Theseus and Hippolyta, who then defer to Puck: “If we shadows have offended, Think but this, and all is mended, That you have but slumber’d here, While these visions did appear.”

Events of 1842 (*Midsummer Night’s Dream* Composed)

- Detroit Public School system organized
- Copper mining operations begin near Keweenaw Point
- Oregon Trail established by Fremont
- Science of biochemistry established
- Anesthesia discovered using ether
- Notre Dame University and Villanova University founded
- *Mort D’Artur* and *Sir Gallahad* written by Tennyson
- Verdi’s opera *Nabucco* premieres in Milan
- New York Philharmonic established
- Air-conditioning introduced
- Vienna has 1500 coffee houses

Concerto for Piano, No. 1, in D minor, BWV 1052

Johann Sebastian Bach

Born March 21, 1685; Eisenach, Germany

Died 1750; Leipzig



When it comes to spiritual expression and the blend of science and art, the music of Johann Sebastian Bach is without parallel. Bach's lofty themes and searching harmonies are at once unearthly and human (he used many folk tunes, even in his liturgical scores), with counterpoint guided by heavenly geometry and rhythms calibrated to a mystical clock.

Bach's "all-for-glory" manner flourished during the Late Baroque, a period marked by ornateness of style. The term Baroque derives from the Italian word *barocco*, used by philosophers during the Middle Ages to denote any expressive idea – often intricate, at times bizarre – which departed from the normal rules of logic and proportion. In fact the Late Baroque coincided with the Enlightenment, an era marked by a tremendous change in religion, politics, and especially science. And after Copernicus, Galileo, and Newton came the realization that both science and religion were in pursuit of infinite ideas, all more alike than different.

As for J.S. Bach, the composer had a double identity – one of faith and theology, the other of logic and theory. He was truly a musical scientist who introduced the "well-tempered scale" and the essential rules of harmony and modulation from one key center to any other. Moreover, Johann Sebastian was a recreational mathematician, and he took frequent delight in using melodies and harmonies which contained numerical or letter-name codes like B-A-C-H (the letter H in German stands for B \flat). He was a descendant of the Pythagoreans from Greek antiquity, who applied numerology and geometric symbols to represent scale tones and chords, all as symbols of human experience.

Today, Bach is best known for the power of his sacred oratorios and cantatas. But his catalog otherwise contains a wealth of secular music – concertos, sonatas, partitas, etc. of which his *Concerto for Piano in D minor* is exemplary. The work was composed originally for harpsichord and strings in about 1730 at Leipzig, most likely for Bach's own use as a soloist. As a man of science and discovery, the composer would have doubtless welcomed the sonorities of our modern grand pianos, balanced by the fact that all of the string instruments of the Baroque period (yes – all those made by Stradivarius, Guarnerius, etc.) have been "upgraded" with new finger boards and heavier strings to add greater resonance to the sound of the instrument.

Overall, Bach's concerto follows the Italian scheme of three movements, fast-slow-fast, the use of singular themes, a harmonic flow with brief but cryptic modulations, and a virtuoso role for the soloist. The outer movements in D minor are a showcase of great tunes on the wing, with florid developments replete with verve and eternal spin. But for all the Baroque formality of BWV 1052, listeners often perceive a decidedly romantic touch, in particular in the poetic reverie of the central *Adagio* in G minor.

As an aside, we note that Johann Sebastian was a great "borrower" of themes from everywhere, including himself. Traces from his *Piano Concerto in D minor* can also be found in the instrumental interludes of his *Cantata No. 146 (Wir müssen durch viel Trübsal)* and *Cantata No. 188 (Ich habe meine Zuversicht)*, as well as in a variety of other pieces, some by other composers. Musicologists have long made a sport of finding the many threads and links. And as for the art of pilfering, the practice continues today. Igor Stravinsky noted: "A great composer never borrows – he steals..!"

Events of 1730 (*Piano Concerto No. 1* Composed)

- Benjamin Franklin opens first library
- Canaletto paints *Marriage of Venice to the Adriatic*
- *The Dancer LaCamargo* painted by Lancret
- Marivaux writes *Game of Love and Chance*
- Vivaldi composes opera *Argippo*
- Death of Pope Benedict XIII
- German drinking song published: *Gaudeamus Igitur*
- Scientific farming begins in England

The Wise Virgins: Ballet Suite

Sir William Walton

Born March 29, 1902; Oldham, England

Died March 8, 1983; Ischia, Italy



As variety is the spice of life, the output of Sir William Walton is a smorgasbord of musical offerings. Through a long and distinguished career he contributed to nearly all genres of serious music – symphonies, concertos, music for the stage, a wealth of choral and chamber music, many songs, and several superb soundtracks for the films of Sir Laurence Olivier, including *Richard III*, *Henry V* and *Hamlet*.

For his part, Walton was once a rather so-so student who even suffered the embarrassment of failing his final exam for his bachelor's degree in music

from Oxford University. Though largely self-taught, he managed to attract attention from important figures on the classical music scene – including Ernest Ansermet and Ferruccio Busoni.

In 1940, the finest ballet company in England was the Sadler Wells (which later became The Royal Ballet at Covent Garden). Despite the ravages of WW II, the company survived under the brilliant direction of the Ninette de Valois, who presented dozens of productions for the benefit of England's burgeoning armed forces under Churchill.

Ever in pursuit of symbolic themes, Sadler Wells' choreographer Frederick Ashton conceived the idea of a ballet based on the biblical parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins, with scenes modeled after revered canvases from the Italian Renaissance. For his ballet score, Ashton sought advice from the company's conductor, Constant Lambert, who provided preliminary orchestrations of selected works by J.S. Bach. In turn, William Walton rescored the Bach originals for full orchestra with a dedication to Dame Edith Sitwell. The successful premiere of *The Wise Virgins* took place on April 24, 1940, and featured the legendary Margot Fonteyn and Michael Somes in the leading roles.

While Walton's complete ballet score is presumed lost, his selected concert suite happily made it through the war. The craft of Walton's settings reveal the modern composer's commitment to merely add the colors of the full orchestral palette to Bach's originals, which of course were scored for a much smaller Baroque ensemble. With modern timbres at his disposal, Walton is able to highlight Bach's alluring phrases with a piquant trace of the 20th century.

For reference, *The Parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins* appears in the gospel of Matthew (25:1-13) – where five maidens are rewarded for their foresight, and five are turned away. Five of Walton's six movements are performed on this A²SO concert. Derived from Bach's cantatas and instrumental settings, the formal titles are:

1. Was Gott tut das ist wohlgetan, BWV 99 – What God hath done is rightly done
2. Herzlich tut mich verlangen, BWV 727 – Lord, hear my longing
3. Ich bin ein guter Hirt, BWV 85 – See, what his love can do
4. Ach wie flüchtig, ach wie nichtig, BWV 26 – Ah! How ephemeral
5. Was mir behagt, BWV 208 – Sheep may safely graze
6. Gelobet sei der Herr, BWV 129 – Praise be to God

Events of 1940 (*The Wise Virgins* Composed)

- F.D. Roosevelt reelected; Churchill becomes prime minister
- France, Belgium, Holland, Denmark, Norway fall to Nazis
- Italy and Japan joins Nazi axis
- Michigan National Guard mobilized for active service duty
- Contract for first union shop in a major auto plant: Hudson Motor Company
- Peace Carillon dedicated on Belle Isle
- Ford Motor Company completed its 28,000,000th automobile
- First Social Security checks are mailed
- First electron microscope
- Lascaux cave paintings discovered after 16,000 years
- Color TV introduced
- Disney film *Fantasia* is box office hit

Symphony No. 5 in D minor, Op. 107 “Reformation”

Felix Mendelssohn

2009 marks the bicentennial of Mendelssohn’s birth. The composer was born in 1809, at the dawn of a new age in music, i.e. in the near-neighborhood of Berlioz – 1803, Chopin – 1810, Schumann – 1810, Liszt – 1811, and Wagner – 1813. But more than any other, Felix Mendelssohn was vaulted from the chrysalis of the Classical period into the winds of the Romantic Age.

In all, Mendelssohn composed five symphonies, of which the last three are widely performed: No. 3 (the “Scottish”) – performed by the A²SO in 2001, No. 4 (the “Italian”) – performed by the A²SO in 1994, and Symphony No. 5 (the “Reformation”) – last performed by the A²SO in 1978. While the symphonies were numbered according to their publication dates (a normal practice during the time), in fact the “Reformation” was the lead bird, completed in 1830 when the composer was just 20 years old. An unusual detail of its creation was that, as a personal challenge, Mendelssohn decided to work out every detail of the piece in his head and to notate it entirely from memory, without revisions or corrections, exactly in the workday manner of Mozart.

The “Reformation” subtitle of *Symphony No. 5* derives from the composer’s wish to commemorate the “Augsburg Confession” (the 1530 document which inaugurated the Reformation), although the caption was not attached to the work until its publication after the composer’s death.

Very much in the manner of Haydn, the music begins with a slow and solemn introduction, including a brief passage known as the “Dresden Amen” (a

choral motif of five ascending notes also used by Wagner in *Parsifal*). The “Amen” is quoted twice: in the rising pianissimo strings at the very end of the introduction, and just after the fanfare-like summation in the brass. The *Allegro con fuoco* which follows is a fine sonata-allegro development on a thematic fragment in D minor (some listeners detect here a youthful tribute to the opening movement of Beethoven’s epic ninth symphony: same key, same jagged rhythm, same interval structure).

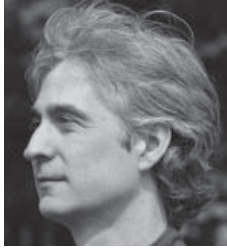
Although Mendelssohn did not refer to the second movement as a scherzo, it serves a similar purpose for musical balance – light in timbre and tempo, joyful in spirit. Quite unusual is the dramatic nature of the third movement *Andante* in G minor, where the first violins intone an aria which serves as a lyrical transition into the main theme of the fourth movement, heard initially in the solo flute in G major. The tune was crafted by Martin Luther himself, *Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott!* (*A Mighty Fortress is our God!*). The famous melody had otherwise already received attention from high places, e.g., set by Bach as a chorale in his *Cantata No. 80* by the same name. Mendelssohn then invests the melody with an expansive development, featuring some fine fugal interpolation as the orchestra approaches a big D major triumph at the close, in the manner of a symphonic oratorio.

Events of 1830 (*Reformation Symphony* Composed)

- First city temperance society organized in Michigan
- First railroad charter in Michigan granted Detroit and Pontiac Railroad
- Microscope invented
- Chicago is founded
- Railway service in major expansion
- *Philadelphia Inquirer* is founded
- *Mary had a Little Lamb* written by Sarah Josepha Buell Hale
- *Birds of America* published by Audubon
- Premiere of Chopin’s *Piano Concertos Nos. 1 and 2*
- First bananas arrive in New York

Joel Hastings

Canadian-born Joel Hastings was the winner of the 2006 Eighth International Web Concert Hall Competition and the 1993 International Bach Competition at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C.



After delivering a stunning performance at the tenth Van Cliburn International Piano Competition in Fort Worth, Texas, one reporter designated Mr. Hastings the “audience favorite” while another declared, “the kinetic fingers of this young Canadian reminded me strongly of his late countryman, Glenn Gould.” In a *Newsweek* review he “pulled the audience to their feet after a wild performance of Franz Liszt’s *Totentanz*.” Reviewers have described his playing as passionate, mesmerizing, hypnotic, and transcendental.

A Steinway Artist, Mr. Hastings has performed solo recitals across Canada and the U.S., while his orchestral engagements have included the Toronto Philharmonic; the Oakville, Okanagan, Windsor, Kamloops, Niagara, Racine, Timmins and the U-M Symphonies; the Kitchener-Waterloo and Michigan Chamber Orchestras; and the Huntsville Festival Orchestra. This coming season he will perform at the American Liszt Society National Festival held at the University of Kansas.

Mr. Hastings has toured internationally accompanying vocal ensembles, performing in such venues as the Vatican and St. Paul’s Cathedral in London, and he has recorded with the Cranbrook Singers of Michigan and the U-M Symphony Band. This past season he was a guest soloist and collaborative pianist at the Niagara International Chamber Music Festival in Ontario.

Mr. Hastings earned his ARCT diplomas in piano and organ from the Royal Conservatory of Music, receiving a gold medal for the highest score in the country. He holds degrees in both instruments from the U-M. He has given master classes across North America, adjudicated competitions and festivals, and taught as a visiting faculty member at the University of Windsor, Ontario. The Canadian Council for the Performing Arts has awarded him multiple grants.

His discography includes Liszt’s song and operatic transcriptions, Chopin’s 24 *Etudes*, and selections of works by Prokofiev, Rachmaninoff, Mendelssohn, and Scriabin. His latest CD, *Songs and Dances*, includes works by Grieg and Respighi with transcriptions of music by Bach, Schubert, Wagner and Gershwin. His recordings have been featured on CBC national radio.

This marks Joel Hastings’ first appearance with the A²SO.

Orchestra for March 21

Violin I

Aaron Berofsky, Concertmaster
Stephen B. Shipps Concertmaster Chair

Karen Zobel
Ruth Merigian Adams Chair

Linda Etter
Linda Etter Violin Chair

Trina Stoneham
Sarah and Jack Adelson Violin Chair

Antony Verner
Tom and Mary Steffek Blaske Violin Chair

Wendy Zohar
Kim, Darlene and Taylor Eagle Violin Chair

Priscilla Johnson

Elaine Sargous

Kathryn Stepulla

Paul Lundin

Violin II

Barbara Sturgis-Everett*
The A² Principal Second Violin Chair
Honoring Anne Gates and Annie Rudisill

David Lamse
Abraham Weiser Violin Chair

Alice Culin-Ellison

Anne Ogren
Brian K. Etter Memorial Violin Chair

Sharon Meyers

Cyril Zilka

Denice Turck

Yanina Nagorny

Viola

Kathleen Grimes*
Tim and Leah Adams Principal Viola Chair

Barbara Zmich

Alex Applegate

Juliann Zinn

Carolyn Tarzia

Joanna Myers

Cello

Sarah Cleveland*
SUNDELSON ENDOWED PRINCIPAL
CELLO CHAIR

Vladimir Babin+

Alicia Rowe
Bill and Ilah Weiblen Cello Chair

Eric Amidon
Marijean Quigley-Young Cello Chair

Daniel Thomas
National City Bank Cello Chair

Sharon Homeyer

Bass

Gregg Emerson Powell*
Mercantile Bank of Michigan
Principal Bass Chair

Erin Zurbuchen
J. & J. Socha Bass Chair

Jonathan Reed

Brenna Speiser

Flute

Penelope Fischer*
Penelope Fischer Principal Flute Chair

Lori Newman, Piccolo

Oboe

Andrew Parker*
Gilbert Omenn Principal Oboe Chair

Kristy Meretta, English Horn
Bill and Jan Maxbauer Oboe Chair

Clarinet

Brian Bowman*
JIM AND MILLIE IRWIN ENDOWED
PRINCIPAL CLARINET CHAIR

Elliott Ross
Amy and Jim Byrne Clarinet Chair

Bassoon

Nathaniel Zeisler*

*E. Daniel Long Principal Bassoon
Chair*

Melissa Kritzer

Susan Nelson, Contrabassoon

Horn

Andrew Pelletier*

*Sherman and Sylvia Funk Principal
Horn Chair*

Melanie Hellick

Kit Weber

Denise Root Pierce

Tamara Kosinski

Trumpet

William Campbell*

*David S. Evans III Principal Trumpet
Chair*

Jason Bergman

Mitchell Wechsler

Trombone

Donald Babcock*

Scott Hartley

*Mark and Susan Orringer Family
Trombone Chair*

Christopher Hernacki

Tuba

Fritz Kaenzig*

*Charles J. Gabrion Principal Tuba
Chair*

Timpani

James Lancioni*

*A. Michael and Remedios Montalbo
Young Principal Timpani Chair*

Percussion

John Dorsey*

Harp

Amy Ley*

*Don and Judy Dow Rumelhart
Principal Harp Chair*

Librarian

Kit Weber

Operations Manager

Jim Wright

Personnel Manager

Gregg Emerson Powell

* Principal

+ Coprincipal