

CARNEGIE HALL

Wednesday, December 24, 2003, at 7 PM

Isaac Stern Auditorium

CARNEGIE HALL and New School Concerts Present

NEW YORK STRING ORCHESTRA

JAIME LAREDO, *Conductor*

LEON FLEISHER, *Piano*

- WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART (1756-1791) Overture to *The Impresario*, K.486 (1786)
- WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART Piano Concerto No. 12 in A Major, K.414 (1782)
I. Allegro
II. Andante
III. Allegretto
LEON FLEISHER, *Piano*
- WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART (1788) Symphony No. 41 in C Major, K.551, "Jupiter"
I. Allegro vivace
II. Andante cantabile
III. Menuetto: Allegretto—Trio
IV. Molto allegro

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New School Concerts expresses sincere gratitude to Leon Fleisher for his participation in this concert.

For more information on the New York String Orchestra Seminar:
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Mr. Fleisher records for Sony Classical, CBS Masterworks,
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THE CONCERT

At a Glance

Tonight's concert brings together three jubilant works by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, each showing his mastery of a particular genre. Mozart's greatest operas—such as *The Marriage of Figaro*, *Don Giovanni*, and *The Magic Flute*—have been box-office favorites for centuries, but tonight we hear the curtain raiser of a lesser-known opera, *The Impresario*, a trifling work dramatically, though Mozart's genius and wit sparkle throughout its brilliant overture. Leon Fleisher joins the New York String Orchestra for the Piano Concerto No. 12 in A Major, K.414—a remarkably mature and inventive piece, all the more extraordinary coming from a composer in his very early 20s. The program concludes with Mozart's final symphony, popularly known as the "Jupiter," whose finale demonstrates perfection of the classical sonata form and mastery of the older contrapuntal methods.

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Wolfgang Sawallisch, Conductor

BRUCKNER Symphony No. 5

Notes ON THE PROGRAM

BY CODY FRANCHETTI

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was born January 27, 1756, in Salzburg, Austria, and died on December 5, 1791, in Vienna.

Overture to *The Impresario*, K.486

Mozart completed *The Impresario* (*Der Schauspieldirektor*) on February 3, 1786, and it was first performed on February 7, in the Orangery of Schönbrunn Palace in Vienna. The Overture to *The Impresario* is scored for 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, 2 trumpets, timpani, and strings. Performance time is approximately 5 minutes.

The US premiere of the Overture to *The Impresario* took place at Carnegie Hall on December 18, 1904, with the New York Symphony Orchestra conducted by Walter Damrosch.

In the weeks following the last performance of the *Abduction from the Seraglio* (*Entführung aus dem Serail*), Mozart's irrepressible desire for composing operas showed no signs of waning. As his letters from this period show, he flooded theater directors with proposals and inducements to pursue new operatic productions. In these revealing letters, Mozart wrangled with administrators about the importance of preserving German opera as a national fixture. But it was a losing battle. And the directors' objections to German opera companies were not without foundation. Mediocre productions, substandard artistic merit, and internal quarrels exasperated them and undermined the survival of the *Singspiel*—that operatic hybrid, popular in Germany and Austria, in which songs and choruses alternate with spoken dialogue. In fact, by the end of the 1781–82 theatrical season, the German opera guild was suppressed. In the following years, periodic attempts of revival

proved unsuccessful; it seemed as if Italian opera had triumphed over its native rival in the struggle for operatic dominance in Vienna.

Despite the success of the *Abduction*, Mozart was not commissioned to write another opera for four years. The command finally came in early 1786 while Mozart was already working on *The Marriage of Figaro* with Lorenzo Da Ponte. The occasion was a party at the Orangery of Schönbrunn Palace on February 7, 1786, given by Emperor Joseph II in honor of his brother-in-law, Prince Albert of Saxony, whom the emperor greatly liked. The Orangery—with its orange trees disposed in ample rows (in strict imitation of those ordered by Louis XIV at Versailles) and its plump fruits in the tart winter air—made a sensually disciplined setting for the royal beneficence.

Entertainment consisted of a sort of match between Italian and German opera. Salieri, the victorious defender

of Italianate style, was to compose the music of a work by the librettist Giovanni Battista Casti, Da Ponte's arch-rival. The Teutonic contender would be *The Impresario* (*Der Schauspieldirektor*), with music by Mozart and words by Gottlieb Stephanie Jr., the librettist for *The Abduction*. It is ironic that the title of Salieri's opera—*Prima la musica e poi le parole* ("First the music, then the words")—was a summary of the very issue that a generation before had been at the center of a vitriolic polemic in France in which the supporters of French music condemned Italian opera for its literary mindlessness, while the French defenders of Italian music extolled its Mediterranean spontaneity and melodic ease.

The Impresario is a satire based on the comic struggles between an impresario and his second-rate prima donnas as he tries to form a touring company. The uninspired, facile plot makes this

a decidedly minor work, but Mozart's music rises above the limitations of his libretto. The overture is in sound sonata-allegro form. Its common harmonic scheme and placid thematic composure have been defined by the noted Mozart scholar Hermann Abert as parodistic. In fact, the exaggerated cadenza before the second theme and the generally straightforward conduct of the whole recall caricatured methods Mozart used in his *Musical Joke*, K.522. The *Impresario* Overture's reverberant theme, played in unison by the woodwinds and violins, and the stereotypical succession of *forte* and *piano*, almost seem to deride the musical practices of the day.

A series of legato-staccato figurations in the second group provide a jocosity that again seems to lean toward mockery although they are resolved by a tender, animated closing theme. This is subtle humor meant to delight the nimble-witted.

Piano Concerto No. 12 in A Major, K.414

Mozart composed his Piano Concerto No. 12 in 1782. In addition to solo piano, the score calls for 2 oboes, 2 horns, and strings. Performance time is approximately 25 minutes.

The earliest performance at Carnegie Hall of a Mozart piano concerto in A major that is clearly identified as No. 12, K.414, took place on January 8, 1967, with pianist Fou Ts'ong and the Zurich Chamber Orchestra conducted by Edmond De Stoutz.

The Concerto for Piano in A Major, K.414, is the second of three piano concertos that Mozart wrote in 1782. Five years earlier, in 1777, he had apparently finished with the piano concerto genre after writing the definitive Concerto in E-flat Major, K.271. Like the "Little" G-Minor Symphony, the Piano

Concerto K.271 expresses Mozart's assimilation of the *Sturm und Drang* aesthetic; but rather than a new beginning, it proved to be a fine end.

The new set of concertos (K.413, 414, and 415) brought a newfound perfection to the medium. They are now classics of the repertoire,

which makes it difficult for the modern listener to recognize their experimental nature, yet it is necessary to stress that Mozart is re-inventing the medium. Through the exhaustive application of the new possibilities of sonority, technique, and form that arose from the interdependent roles of piano and orchestra, Mozart created a grand symphonic sonata form based on the spectacular contrast between the individual and the multitude.

The Piano Concerto in A Major is gallant and lyrical and broad. Its wealth of thematic invention is astounding. Despite the relative lack of thematic elaboration or motivic juxtaposition that will characterize the later concertos, the A-Major Concerto is still dramatic. "Mozart uses melodies at once so complex and so complete that they do not bear the weight of development," Charles Rosen has observed. "...Yet

Symphony No. 41 in C Major, K.551, "Jupiter"

Mozart completed his *Symphony No. 41* on August, 10, 1788. The score calls for flute, 2 oboes, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, 2 trumpets, timpani, and strings. Performance time is approximately 29 minutes.

The Carnegie Hall premiere of the "Jupiter" Symphony took place on February 26, 1900, with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra conducted by Victor Herbert.

The C-Major Symphony, K.551, represents a summation of 18th-century music. Mozart brings together the older contrapuntal techniques of his predecessors in the scope of the classical sonata form. Mozart's acquaintance with the music of Bach and Handel dates from 1782, when Baron van Swieten—an otherwise unlikely character—gave Mozart a number

there is no feeling of squareness or monotony, and no lack of continuity: the transitions are masterly, and the sense of the weight of each melody and its place in the succession cannot be faulted."

Mozart's suggestion that these concertos could be played *a quattro* (that is, with a string quartet rather than a full orchestra) is supported by this concerto's chamber-like texture. This feeling of intimacy is most apparent in the second movement's theme, which closely resembles that of his Piano Quartet in G Minor, K.478. The instrumental character of the theme soon changes to an ample *cantabile* with the sweep of the great arias of opera seria. The final movement's limpid theme is dramatized by virtue of its pre-romantic pauses (a device further exploited in the next concerto), which give the rondo form a rhapsodic vein.

of scores by the older masters. Mozart's surprise on reading through these works was such that he immediately wrote a suite—which remains unfinished—and a series of fugues. These imitative attempts chronicle his assimilation of the older style. Mozart demonstrated his success in the formidable Mass in C Minor, K.427, which is a compendium of all musical currents

of the 18th century, including opera seria, opera buffa, fugue, concerto, concerto grosso, the Neapolitan school, and the north German school. Mozart, however, was to go beyond the mastery of an impressive variety of musical trends; he would synthesize them in his own inimitable style.

The C-Major Symphony is the culmination of this process. The first movement's vigorous opening announces the conceptual breadth of this symphony. The opening theme's energetic roll, played by all the sections in unison, and its quiet answer in the violins, constitute most of the movement. The motives are arranged in endless concatenations throughout the exposition. Near the end of the exposition, an abrupt move to the tonic minor leads to the closing section, whose theme is now decidedly planted in the key of the dominant. In the development section, the opening military motive is played in the most distant keys.

We may refer to the *Andante cantabile's* sublime motive as purified mannerism, a sublimation of the 18th-century "stile galante," which Mozart both cites and recollects in this movement. The movement is in sonata form with a development that is a textbook example of harmonic and rhythmic intensification. The next

movement's most striking feature is that the trio foreshadows the last movement's celebrated theme in a harshly dissonant harmonization.

The last movement clearly demonstrates what the Italian musicologist Massimo Mila called "the resplendent architectures of the 'Jupiter' symphony." It is a contrapuntal tour de force and a formal quest. Fugal techniques are applied to such a degree that this symphony was named "Symphony in C Major with a fugue." This view is erroneous, however, as Mozart's magisterial counterpoint is just one aspect of the movement. The amalgamation of sonata form and fugue is the extraordinary feature of the finale. Amazingly, the fugue's purpose is not merely referential, as it functions specifically in the movement's structure. After the cadenza at the end of the first theme in the exposition, Mozart inserts a five-part stretto (overlappings of the fugal subject) and uses it like a bridge to the second theme. At the recapitulation there is a Beethovenian intensification and climax after the re-statement of the first theme, while the stretto resurfaces at the coda in inversion before leading into a fanfare-like finale.

Mozart's active utilization of fugue shows him to be the last exponent of the contrapuntal old masters. After him, attempts to resurrect the fugue are to be seen as archaeological.

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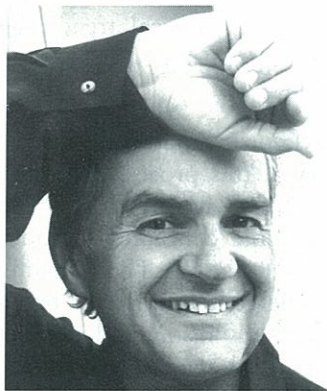
THE Artists

JAIME LAREDO

In more than 40 years before the public, Jaime Laredo has excelled in the multiple roles of soloist, conductor, recitalist, and chamber musician. His San Francisco Symphony debut at age 11 inspired one critic to write: "In the 1920s it was Yehudi Menuhin; in the 1930s it was Isaac Stern; and last night it was Jaime Laredo." At age 17, Jaime Laredo won the prestigious Queen Elisabeth of Belgium Competition, launching his rise to international prominence.

The Kalichstein-Laredo-Robinson Trio, of which he is a member, won *Musical America's* 2002 Ensemble of the Year. Laredo has been engaged and re-engaged by all of America's major orchestras, including those in Boston, Chicago, Cleveland, New York, and Philadelphia, with such conductors as Barenboim, Mehta, Ozawa, Slatkin, and Colin Davis, as well as great conductors of the past, such as Ormandy, Leinsdorf, Stokowski, and Szell. Abroad, Mr. Laredo has performed as soloist and/or conductor with the London Symphony, the BBC Symphony, the English Chamber Orchestra, the Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, the Royal Philharmonic, and the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, which he led on two American tours and in its Hong Kong Festival debut.

Mr. Laredo has recorded close to 100 discs. He has received the Deutsche Schallplatten Prize and a Grammy Award, as well as seven Grammy



nominations. This fall saw a Koch International release of Zwilich Concertos with Mr. Laredo, Sharon Robinson, and Joseph Kalichstein as the soloists; an Arabesque release of Volume 1 of a two-volume, four-CD all-Beethoven collection; and the premiere recording of Richard Danielpour's *In the Arms of the Beloved*, a concerto for violin and cello written for Jaime Laredo and Sharon Robinson in honor of their 25th anniversary.

As Artistic Director of New York's renowned Chamber Music at the Y series, Mr. Laredo has created an important forum for chamber music performances. He has led the New York String Orchestra Seminar for the past ten seasons and also leads the International Violin Competition of Indianapolis, both beloved educational pillars of the music community. Born in Bolivia, Jaime Laredo, together with Sharon Robinson, resides in Vermont. He is Artistic Director of the Vermont Symphony.



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