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## CARNEGIE HALL presents

Mon, Dec 24, 2007 at 7 PM  
Isaac Stern Auditorium / Ronald O. Perelman Stage

### NEW YORK STRING ORCHESTRA

Jaime Laredo, Conductor  
Yefim Bronfman, Piano

#### WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART (1756-1791)

Symphony No. 1 in E-flat Major, K. 16 (1764-65)

- I. Molto allegro
- II. Andante
- III. Presto

Piano Concerto No. 22 in E-flat Major, K. 482 (1785)

- I. Allegro
- II. Andante
- III. Allegro

Yefim Bronfman, Piano

Symphony No. 35 in D Major, K. 385, "Haffner" (1782)

- I. Allegro con spirito
- II. Andante
- III. Menuetto
- IV. Finale: Presto

**Perspectives:** Yefim Bronfman

*This concert is made possible, in part, by an endowment fund for young artists established by Stella and Robert Jones.*

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New School Concerts expresses sincere gratitude to Mr. Bronfman for his participation in this concert.

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# THE CONCERT

## At a Glance

This evening's all-Mozart program provides a glimpse into Mozart's rapidly maturing compositional powers. The brilliant youth's First Symphony, written before the age of ten, reveals his acute assimilation of the musical styles encountered during his travels across Europe with his father and sister. Symphony No. 35, "Haffner," is the work of a witty musical architect, at ease with the earlier styles of Bach and Haydn and able to please his contemporary cosmopolitan Viennese public. Yet it is in his Piano Concerto No. 22 that we hear the master reaching the height of his powers, creating sound colors and sublime melodies that will inspire later generations of composers, including Beethoven and Brahms.

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# NOTES on the program

BY CODY FRANCHETTI

### WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART *Symphony No. 1 in E-flat Major, K. 16*

Born January 27, 1756, in Salzburg, Austria; died December 5, 1791, in Vienna.

Composed in 1764–65, Mozart's Symphony No. 1 in E-flat Major received its Carnegie Hall premiere on March 30, 1933, with the New York Philharmonic conducted by Arturo Toscanini.

Scoring: 2 oboes, 2 horns, and strings.

Performance time: approximately 13 minutes.

In 1976, in a provocative statement that turned out to be an authentic conviction, Glenn Gould made Mozart's First Symphony notorious by stating that he preferred it to the great G-Minor Symphony, K. 550. The provocation turned out to be beneficial for Mozart's music as attention was drawn to his early output, which—Gould still declared—"had more contrapuntal purity and refinement in texture than all his later music." That K. 16 is "better" than K. 550 might be challenged; but that Mozart at the age of eight showed startling genius is beyond dispute.

Mozart wrote the E-flat Major Symphony while in London during one of the many itinerant trips his father Leopold organized in order to display his children's prodigious talent (Wolfgang's sister Nannerl was also an exceedingly talented pianist). During the festivities for the fourth anniversary of King George III's reign, the Mozart

family was invited to court on February 21, 1765, to play Wolfgang's latest overtures (symphonies), which included K. 16. While in London, Mozart had a chance to meet Johann Christian Bach (the youngest of J. S. Bach's children), who was writing tremendously successful operas. J. C. Bach's influence over Mozart has been long recognized by scholars, and indeed Bach's influence is apparent in the symphony's subdivision into three movements; the clear differentiation between the first and second themes; the use of rondo form in the last movement; and the frequent cadential gestures, typical of Neapolitan opera. A lot of influence, no doubt, but Mozart still achieved much originality.

The rousing initial motive is followed by an answer that is almost triple its size in length, already displaying the asymmetrical phrasing that was to become so idiomatic in Mozart. In the second

movement, we find a glimpse of what was to come: the horns play a motive that is the same as

the opening theme of the last movement of Mozart's "Jupiter" Symphony, K. 551.

### Piano Concerto No. 22 in E-flat Major, K. 482

Composed in 1785, Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 22 received its Carnegie Hall premiere on January 13, 1905, with the People's Symphony Society Orchestra conducted by Franz X. Arens and Wesley Weyman, piano.

Scoring: flute, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, 2 trumpets, timpani, and strings.

Performance time: approximately 34 minutes.

The Concerto in E-flat Major, K. 482, was completed on December 16, 1785, just a few months after the one in C Major, K. 467. The former was a point of arrival; the latter, a new sound world: the Concerto in E-flat is irradiated with colors quite unheard before, which prefigure late Romantic sonorities—even the bronzed orchestral tones of Brahms, where woodwind and horn prevail.

The first movement's relaxed form permits the discursive splendor of the orchestra's exposition: by simplifying his themes, basing them on simple triadic motives, Mozart achieves a glowing sonority that stresses the E-flat major tonality. In contrast, the solo enters with new ideas of its own, which have not been presented in the orchestral exposition. This device is characteristic of Mozart, but in K. 482 the soloist's entry is a genuine preface consisting of 17 measures of thematic material that is never reused in the movement. "The effect," observes the scholar Leon Plantinga, "is a little like the beginning of a dramatic scene that introduces a lead character who has not yet been firmly

drawn into central action." In the context of the concerto, where the opposition of the solo and tutti sections is the outstanding dramatic element, such a device is very successful indeed—so much so that Beethoven used it in his first two piano concertos.

In the recapitulation, Mozart's lyrical vein is so complete that he dares to bring the music to a virtual standstill before sounding the second theme, which is introduced by the clarinets and horns out of the stunning silence.

The second movement, in C minor, belongs to Mozart's supreme, elegiac slow movements in the same key (Concerto in E-flat Major, K. 271; *Sinfonia concertante*, K. 364). Here, too, coloristic interests are apparent, especially in the two major sections, and the movement is permeated by the distinctly Mozartian combination of deep tragedy and sensuousness.

The final rondo is one of Mozart's most cherished finales. It boasts a slow section in A-flat major—a simple lied theme whose purity of sound is of unreal beauty. One

can tell Mozart was at work on *Le nozze di Figaro*, for this section's heart-swelling humor is akin to the opera's finale "Contessa

Perdono," where the Count Almaviva begs the amenable Countess for forgiveness over his reproachable conduct.

### Symphony No. 35 in D Major, K. 385, "Haffner"

Composed in Vienna in July 1782, Mozart's "Haffner" Symphony received its Carnegie Hall premiere on February 15, 1923, with the New York Symphony Orchestra conducted by Bruno Walter in his US debut.

Scoring: 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, 2 trumpets, timpani, and strings.

Performance time: approximately 18 minutes.

In 1782, inspired by his acquaintance with the compositions of Handel and J. S. Bach, Mozart underwent a fundamental stylistic transformation. His compositions during this period display the influence of the old masters by a thickening of contrapuntal writing and a return to older forms. At first, Mozart measured himself against his predecessors by writing a few preludes, fugues, fantasias, and even a suite. The latter (K. 399), which remains unfinished and is regrettably little known, attests to Mozart's complete assimilation of the *stile antico*.

Another important influence was Vienna. In fact, by July 1782, Mozart had been living there for a year and was about to fulfill his first imperial commission with the *Abduction from the Seraglio*. By then, Mozart had had a chance to absorb the decorously cosmopolitan milieu of the Hapsburg capital. A case in point is his rondo for piano and orchestra K. 382, which flaunts all the Viennese gallantries that the contemporary public appreciated and expected.

From the unconstrained fusion of urbanity and severity sprang the "Haffner" Symphony. The symphony was originally a serenade commissioned by Mozart's protector from Salzburg, Siegmund Haffner, for whom the composer had previously written the famous "Haffner" Serenade, K. 250. Clearly, Mozart greatly esteemed his patron, since he presented him with this new "Haffnermusik" despite the burden of completing the *Abduction*. A year later, Mozart produced the work for a concert at the Vienna Academy; for the performance he suppressed the introductory march and one of the minuets. The symphony has thus survived in a "legitimate" four-movement form.

The unusual first movement is one of the very few monothematic sonata forms Mozart ever wrote. (A monothematic exposition is one where the main theme is repeated in the dominant—often in a different permutation—in place of the more customary lyrical second theme.) This technique was widely employed by Haydn,

whose expositions tend to have less thematic wealth than Mozart's.

The rousing initial gesture is a two-octave leap on the tonic played in unison by the whole orchestra followed by a dotted descent to an identical leap on the leading tone. After the first phrase, a short canon at the octave in the theme manifests the composition's pronounced polyphony and serves as a modulating passage to the second group. The main theme is the pervasive element of the entire first movement: its rhythmic and melodic features recur over and over again in ingeniously devised variations.

During the development, another series of canonic variations ensues before the compressed

recapitulation and a short coda that shares a striking similarity with one of the motives of the last movement of Mozart's last symphony, K. 551. The second movement, also in sonata form, is notable for its placid theme, which is enlivened by a series of playful trills, acciaccaturas, and other typical Viennese charms.

The stately minuet and the liederlike trio also have a distinctly Haynesque stamp, though the latter is mostly felt in the original finale. In it, Mozart pays homage to the older composer by using the most typical of Haydn's formal procedures: a false recapitulation in the development. The last movement is taxing for the strings and requires a virtuosity for which the Viennese players were renowned.

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