

# GENEVA CONCERTS

presents



## *Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra*

**José Luis Gomez, conductor**

**Vadym Kholodenko, piano**

Gold Medalist, 2013 Van Cliburn Competition



THE CLIBURN

Friday, November 14, 2014 • 7:30 p.m.  
Smith Opera House

# GENEVA CONCERTS, INC.

## 2014-2015 SEASON

Saturday, 20 September 2014, 7:30 p.m.

**Canada's Ballet Jörgen**

*Cinderella*

Friday, 14 November 2014, 7:30 p.m.

**Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra**

José Luis Gomez, conductor

Vadym Kholodenko, piano (2013 Van Cliburn Gold Medalist)

R. Strauss: *Death and Transfiguration*

Prokofiev: Piano Concerto No. 2

Mozart: Symphony No. 41, "Jupiter"

Saturday, 7 February 2015, 7:30 p.m.

**New York Gilbert & Sullivan Players**

*I've Got a Little TWIST*

Friday, 6 March 2015, 7:30 p.m.

**Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra**

Daniel Hege, conductor

Augustin Hadelich, violin

Smetana: Three Dances from *The Bartered Bride*

Dvořák: Violin Concerto

Diamond (100th Anniversary): Symphony No. 4

Copland: *Billy the Kid* Suite

Friday, 1 May 2015, 7:30 p.m.

**Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra**

Christopher Seaman, conductor

Jon Nakamatsu, piano

Elgar: *In the South*

Saint-Saëns: Piano Concerto No. 2

Stravinsky: *Petrushka* (1947)

*Programs subject to change.*

Performed at the Smith Opera House

82 Seneca Street, Geneva, New York

These concerts are made possible by generous underwriting from the Williams Family Foundation and by a continuing subscription from Hobart and William Smith Colleges.

# GENEVA CONCERTS, INC.

Friday, November 14, 2014 at 7:30 p.m.

## Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra

José Luis Gomez, conductor

Vadym Kholodenko, piano

Richard Strauss  
(1864-1949)

*Tod und Verklärung*, Op. 24  
[*Death and Transfiguration*]

Sergei Prokofiev  
(1891-1953)

Concerto No. 2 in G minor for Piano  
and Orchestra, Op. 16

Andantino

Scherzo: Vivace

Moderato

Finale: Allegro tempestoso

Vadym Kholodenko, piano

### INTERMISSION

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart  
(1756-1791)

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

Allegro vivace

Andante cantabile

Allegretto

Molto allegro

Patrons are requested to silence signal watches, pagers, and cell phones.  
The use of cameras and recording equipment is prohibited by law.

Mr. Kholodenko appears by arrangement with the Cliburn.

Travel provided in part by American Airlines.

Tour partially underwritten by BNSF Railway Foundation.

# José Luis Gomez, conductor



The Venezuelan-born, Spanish conductor José Luis Gomez was catapulted to international attention when he won First Prize at the International Sir Georg Solti Conductor's Competition in Frankfurt in September 2010, securing a sensational and rare unanimous decision from the jury.

Gomez's electrifying energy, talent, and creativity earned him immediate acclaim from the Frankfurt Radio Symphony Orchestra where he was appointed to the position of assistant conductor, a post created especially for him by Paavo Järvi and the orchestra directly upon the conclusion of the competition.

Gomez started his musical career as a violinist, and by the age of 11 he was concertmaster of the Youth Orchestra of Zulia State - part of El Sistema de Orquestas Juveniles de Venezuela. He graduated in music and violin from the Manhattan School of Music in New York before embarking on a European orchestral career. Deciding to follow his dream to have more creative input and influence on musical direction, he took conducting lessons from Lu Jia, Muhai Tang, and John Nelson. After just six months of studying conducting, he went on to win the Georg Solti Competition.

Since then he has worked with the RTVE National Symphony Orchestra of Madrid, Houston Symphony Orchestra, National Arts Centre Orchestra of Ottawa, Hamburg Symphony, Basel Sinfonietta, Orchestra of Castilla y Leon, Orquesta Sinfonica do Porto, Grand Rapids Symphony, Macao Symphony, and the Orchestra 1813 Teatro Sociale di Como, with whom he also led performances of Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro* as part of the ASLCIO Opera Association throughout the region of Lombardy, Italy.

Recent symphonic highlights included debuts with Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, Colorado, Vancouver, Edmonton, Pasadena, and National Taiwan Symphony Orchestras as well as reinvitations to Orquesta Sinfonica de Castilla y Leon, Orquesta Sinfonica Brasileira, and Elgin Symphony Orchestra. Gomez also conducted the Frankfurt Radio Symphony Orchestra in their New Year concert and several educational projects.

Opera highlights have included a full run of *La Bohème* at Frankfurt Opera and a new production of Rossini's *La Cenerentola* at Stuttgart Opera, of which he also conducted the revival in the following season. More recently, Gomez has made debuts with Stuttgart Radio, Weimar Staatskapelle, Alabama and Winnipeg Symphony Orchestras, and he closed the 2013/2014 season with a spectacular production of *Cavalleria Rusticana* in Como.

José Luis Gomez is the principal conductor of the orchestral season of the Teatro Sociale di Como. This is his first performance with the RPO.

# Vadym Kholodenko, piano

In June 2013 Vadym Kholodenko became the recipient of the Nancy Lee and Perry R. Bass Gold Medal at the Fourteenth Van Cliburn International Piano Competition. Since then it has been a busy and exciting time for the young pianist with extensive touring throughout Europe, Asia, and the USA to great critical acclaim. His recent debut with the Philadelphia Orchestra led to Daniel Webster of the *Philadelphia Enquirer* praising Kholodenko's "absorbing melodic shadings, glittering passage work, and a sense of sound that erased any fears about the stereotype of the competition winner."



Not restricted to solo recitals and playing as a soloist with orchestra, Kholodenko is a dedicated performer of chamber music and, in addition to the Cliburn's Gold Medal, he won the competition's prize for best chamber music performance with César Franck's Piano Quintet. Kholodenko wowed the Cliburn audience and jury with his impressive cadenzas to Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 21, written especially for his competition performance, which were described by Scott Cantrell, music critic of the *Dallas News*, as "replete with witty side-steps of melody and harmony."

Kholodenko's gifts for arranging music can be heard in his work with pianist Andrey Gugnin. Since 2007 he has been collaborating with Gugnin, subsequently founding the duet iDuo, touring throughout Europe and Russia, and recording together. Kholodenko has also made many other CD recordings, featuring works by Schubert, Chopin, Rachmaninoff, Medtner, and various contemporary composers. The 2013/2014 season saw the release of two solo CDs: his first CD for Harmonia Mundi, featuring Stravinsky's *Trois Mouvements de Petrouchka* and Liszt's *Transcendental Études*, and his latest CD for Delos, featuring works by Rachmaninoff and Medtner's *Night Wind Sonata*.

Kholodenko was born in 1986 in Kiev, Ukraine. The first musician in his family, in 1994 he enrolled at Kiev's Mykola Lysenko Special Music School under Prof. Natalia Grydneva and Prof. Borys Fedorov. At the age of just 13, Kholodenko made his first appearances in the USA, China, Hungary, and Croatia. In 2004 Kholodenko was awarded the Russian Youth National Prize "Triumph" and in 2005 moved to Moscow to study at the Moscow State Conservatory under the tutelage of the Honoured Artist of the USSR, Professor Vera Gornostaeva.

# Program Notes

## RICHARD STRAUSS

### ***Death and Transfiguration, Op. 24***

b. June 11, 1864; Munich, Germany

d. September 8, 1949, Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany

First performed by the RPO: October 23, 1924; Eugene Goossens, conductor

Last performed: May 27, 2006; Christopher Seaman, conductor

Shortly after Strauss completed *Don Juan*, his second tone poem and the first to win success, he set to work on a third such piece, *Death and Transfiguration*. He completed it in November 1889 and conducted the premiere in Eisenach the following June.

Five years later, he revealed his inspiration for it in a letter to a friend: "The idea came to me to write a tone poem describing the last hours of a man who has striven for the highest ideals, presumably an artist. The sick man lies in bed breathing heavily and irregularly in his sleep. Friendly dreams bring a smile to the face of the sufferer; his sleep grows lighter; he awakens. Fearful pains begin once more to torture him, fever shakes his body. When the attack is over and the pain recedes, he recalls his past life; his childhood passes before his eyes; his youth with its striving and passions and then, while the pains return, there appears to him the goal of his life's journey, the ideal, the ideal which he attempts to embody in his art, but which he was unable to perfect because such perfection can be achieved by no man. The fatal hour arrives. The soul leaves the body, to discover in the eternal cosmos the magnificent realization of the ideal which could not be fulfilled here below."

*Death and Transfiguration* is a purely imaginary work, the 25-year-old composer not having undergone any life-threatening experiences by that point in his life. It displayed remarkable maturity for one so young in terms of philosophical ambition, leading listeners on a Beethoven-like journey from darkness to light. As Strauss lay on his deathbed, he whispered to his daughter-in-law, "Dying is just as I composed it in *Death and Transfiguration*."

## SERGEI PROKOFIEV

### **Piano Concerto No. 2 in G Minor, Op. 16**

b. April 27, 1891; Sontsovka, Ukraine

d. March 5, 1953; Moscow, Russia

First performed by the RPO: March 11, 1954; Erich Leinsdorf, conductor, Jorge Bolet, soloist

Last performed: May 12, 1984; David Zinman, conductor, Horacio Gutierrez, soloist

Prokofiev composed Piano Concerto No. 2 during the summer of 1913. He played the premiere himself, in Pavlovsk on September 5, at a fancy party on the lawn at Tsar Paul's elaborate, English-style palace. Naturally this bold, saucy music appalled the audience, who were accustomed to hearing familiar, non-threatening background music as they dined.

Twice as long as the First Concerto, No. 2 was Prokofiev's biggest, most ambitious work to date. Just how much creative progress it represents is impossible to judge. He left the manuscript score behind when he departed from Russia in 1918 and it has yet to reappear. In 1923, the much more experienced composer (he had already written the assured and enormously popular Concerto No. 3) created a reconstructed and revised version. This is the form in which it has been known ever since.

It opens with its dreamiest, most relaxed movement. The first theme has a melancholy, folk-like quality. Its nature may reflect Prokofiev's declared admiration for Serge Rachmaninoff's Second Concerto, then just 12 years old. His treatment of the theme, however, especially in a substantial, bristling solo cadenza, lies far from Rachmaninoff's lush, late-Romantic world.

Next, Prokofiev adds an extra section to traditional three-movement concerto form by way of a compact, propulsive scherzo. In the ensuing Intermezzo, the soloist leads the orchestra on a moderately paced stroll. The pell-mell opening of the finale promises further hi-jinks, but a more reflective section akin to the first movement arrives to offer repose. The music eventually regains its momentum and charges robustly forward.

## **WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART**

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

b. January 27, 1756; Salzburg, Austria

d. December 5, 1791; Vienna, Austria

First performed by the RPO: October 31, 1923; Eugene Goossens, conductor

Last performed: July 15, 2009; Christopher Seaman, conductor

Mozart could not have known that the symphonies he composed in the summer of 1788 would be his last. It is fitting that his career as a symphonist should end with three such masterpieces. They are quite different from each other: No. 39 in E-flat Major is one of his most elegant creations, its successor in G Minor perhaps his most pathetic. And appropriately, No. 41 is the grandest and most joyous of all his symphonies.

A number of mysteries surround these works. No commission that would have inspired their creation has come down to us. Some writers speculate that he composed them strictly for his own pleasure. Others, such as the noted scholar Neal Zaslaw, feel otherwise: "The very idea that Mozart would have written three such symphonies, unprecedented in length, complexity,

and seriousness, merely to please himself or because he was ‘inspired,’ flies in the face of his known attitudes to music and life and the financial straits in which he then found himself.”

Uncertainty also exists regarding their performance during Mozart’s lifetime. Circumstantial evidence points to one or more of them being played at a series of subscription concerts at the Vienna Casino later in 1788. They may also have been performed during Mozart’s tours of Germany in 1788 and 1789, or in Vienna, conducted by Antonio Salieri, in April 1791. The identity of the person who gave No. 41 the nickname ‘Jupiter’ has been lost, but this subtitle, linking it with the most powerful of the gods of ancient Rome, seems altogether appropriate.

Mozart plunges us immediately into the joyous energy with which the opening movement abounds. For all its trumpet-and-drums brilliance, it still retains an unforced elegance. He drops the trumpets and drums for the slow movement. His tempo indication, *cantabile* (“singing”), describes this restful idyll perfectly. The minuet is truly symphonic in scale and bearing, with a quieter trio section at its heart. The finale looks not only to the future – through its increased expressive weight – but also the past, specifically to the Baroque world of Bach and Handel, by incorporating elements of fugal writing. Learnedness and joy here join hands to conclude Mozart’s career as a symphonist in a burst of creative brilliance.

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# Geneva Concerts' Outreach Events

Geneva Concerts has brought live music and dance to the community since the 1940s, especially encouraging young people to attend through the Sponsor-A-Student program and educational outreach programs brought to the schools.

On Monday, November 3, 2014, Wassa Pan Afrika, a dance/drumming/singing ensemble from Ghana, Africa, led by Nana Anim performed four educational assembly performances in the Geneva Public Schools. Mr. Anim has been in residence in Ithaca, New York since 2007. The rest of the ensemble traveled here from Ghana especially for a three-month tour of the Finger Lakes.

Mr. Anim, four percussionists, and eight dancers, male and female, performed a lecture/demonstration for all 600 Geneva High School students in the morning in the GHS gym. The high energy, virtuosic, multi-rhythm patterns set by the percussionists immediately got the attention and approval of the students. The dancers added interpretive dancing to the rhythm patterns. Mr. Anim explained about the tradition of "call and response" in Africa and had the students respond. At the end of the session, a large number of students were invited to do interpretive dancing individually and in small groups. The students responded with great enthusiasm and seemed to gain a lot from the experience.

Following the assembly, a master class for 40 students took place in the high school mini-gym. African drums were provided and a group of students were taught some basic drumming techniques. Then, while the drumming group played, Mr. Anim and his dancers taught dance movements to a group of 30 students. He also showed how a complicated dance performance includes a series of shorter segments, much like the choreography in a ballet. Again, the students were totally involved and enthusiastic about this experience.

In the afternoon, Mr. Anim and company performed two separate programs at West Street School, one for Head Start students, ages 3, 4, and 5, and a second for all the students in kindergarten and grades 1 and 2. Mr. Anim taught the call and response technique using singing and clapping, and involved the students in dancing and movement activities. The importance of dancing, drumming, and singing was emphasized as part of African culture.

Funding for these educational outreach programs is being provided by the Wyckoff Family Foundation, with additional support from the Geneva Rotary Club. For more information on this program contact Geneva Concerts' Vice-President for Education and Outreach, Tom McClure, at (315) 789-6283.

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