

## PROGRAM NOTES BY KEN MELTZER

## ATLANTA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

ROBERT SPANO, MUSIC DIRECTOR

DANIEL HOPE, VIOLIN

DAVID FINCKEL, CELLO

WU HAN, PIANO

Saturday, March 30 at 7 pm  
 6 pm Pre-Concert Talk with Ken Meltzer  
 Lucas Theatre for the Arts

**LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN**  
 (1770–1827)

**Overture to *Egmont*, Opus 84 (1810)**

**Concerto for Piano, Violin, Cello and  
 Orchestra in C Major, Opus 56 ("Triple")**  
 (1804)

I. *Allegro*

II. *Largo*

III. *Rondo alla Polacca*

## INTERMISSION

**ROBERT SCHUMANN (1810-1856)**

**Symphony No. 1 in B-flat Major,  
 Opus 38, "Spring" (1841)**

I. *Andante un poco maestoso*;

*Allegro molto vivace*

II. *Larghetto*

III. *Scherzo. Molto vivace*

IV. *Allegro animato e grazioso*

**Ludwig van Beethoven was baptized in Bonn, Germany, on December 17, 1770, and died in Vienna, Austria, on March 26, 1827.**

**"My hearing has grown steadily weaker"**

By the close of the 18th century, Ludwig van Beethoven had established himself as one of Vienna's foremost pianists and composers. In June of 1801, Beethoven wrote to a friend:

My compositions are bringing in a great deal of money, and indeed I have almost more commissions than I can satisfy. Moreover, for each work I can have six or seven publishers, or even more if I choose to concern myself with the business; they no longer make agreements with me; I state my terms and they pay up...

But in that same letter, Beethoven—then thirty years old—revealed the onset of a condition that would plague him for the remainder of his life: "But now that envious demon, my bad health, has played me a scurvy trick, namely: for the past three years my hearing has grown steadily weaker..."

Beethoven consulted with physicians in a desperate attempt to save his hearing. In April of 1802, on the advice of his doctor, Beethoven relocated to the beautiful country village of Heiligenstadt, where he remained until the early fall. During his stay in Heiligenstadt, it appears Beethoven experienced a further decline in his hearing. Beethoven was forced to confront the possibility, even the likelihood, that he would lose his hearing altogether. It was, of course, the cruelest joke fate could play upon Beethoven. He would soon become a virtuoso pianist unable to perform in public, and a composer unable to hear his own music.

**"A truly miserable existence"**

It is not surprising that Beethoven spent much time contemplating the meaning of his life. One of the products of this soul-searching process was the document known as the "Heiligenstadt

Testament," written in October of 1802.

Addressed to his two brothers, the Testament was found among Beethoven's papers after the composer's death in 1827.

In the "Heiligenstadt Testament," Beethoven confessed:

But how humiliated I have felt if somebody standing beside me heard the sound of a flute in the distance and *I heard nothing*, or if somebody heard a *shepherd sing* and again I heard nothing—Such experiences almost made me despair, and I was on the point of putting an end to my life—The only thing that held me back was *my art*. For indeed it seemed to me impossible to leave this world before I had produced all the works I felt the urge to compose; and thus I have dragged on this miserable existence—a truly miserable existence...


In the decade following the "Heiligenstadt Testament," Beethoven responded with ferocious, unflagging energy and determination. During this extraordinary period, Beethoven composed such masterpieces as the Symphonies Nos. 2-8, the Fourth and Fifth ("Emperor") Piano Concertos, the "Razumovsky" String Quartets, the "Waldstein," "Appassionata," and "Les Adieux" Piano Sonatas, and the composer's only opera, *Fidelio*.

The first half of this concert features two Beethoven compositions from that remarkable post-Heiligenstadt decade.

**Overture to *Egmont*, Opus 84 (1810)**

**The first performances of Beethoven's incidental music to *Egmont* took place at the Burgtheater in Vienna on June 15, 1810. The Overture to *Egmont* is scored for piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, timpani, and strings.**

 Approximate performance time is 9 minutes.

 SMF performance history: SMF premiere

Beethoven maintained a lifelong admiration for the immortal German poet Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832). In February of 1811, Beethoven wrote to a friend: “If you write to Goethe about me, try to find all the words that will assure him of my deepest respect and admiration...who can ever give enough thanks to a great poet, the most precious jewel a nation can possess?” Beethoven composed several works inspired by the writings of Goethe, including songs, the incidental music to the play *Egmont* (1810), and the cantata for chorus and orchestra, *Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage* (1815).

Beethoven composed his *Egmont* incidental music for a production of Goethe’s 1788 play at the Vienna Burgtheater. The story of *Egmont* greatly appealed to Beethoven, a tireless champion of political freedom. *Egmont* takes place in the 16th century, and concerns the oppression of the Netherlands at the hands of the Spanish dictator, the Duke of Alva. Count Egmont, a Dutch patriot, is imprisoned by the Duke, and sentenced to death. Egmont’s heroic martyrdom serves as a rallying cry for the Dutch people to defeat the Spanish invaders.

The *Egmont* Overture begins with a slow-tempo introduction (*Sostenuto ma non troppo*). A powerful orchestral chord yields to an imposing statement by the strings, to which the winds offer a subdued response. After a repeat of this sequence, the first violins quietly introduce a descending motif. This motif launches the ensuing *Allegro*, and serves as the basis for the first principal theme, played by the cellos. The theme undergoes a powerful transformation by the orchestra. The second principal theme is in the form of an exchange between the strings and winds—a descendant of the slow-tempo introduction’s opening measures. The brief development section focuses upon a portion of the cello theme. The cellos once again play that theme to launch the recapitulation. The momentum is abruptly halted by the violins’ two-note descending figure, and a brief silence. The music resumes in the quietest fashion, but soon generates tremendous energy (*Allegro con brio*), culminating in the triumphant final bars.

### Concerto for Piano, Violin, Cello and Orchestra in C Major, Opus 56 (“Triple”) (1804)

In addition to the solo piano, violin, and cello, the “Triple” Concerto is scored for flute, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, timpani, and strings.

🕒 *Approximate performance time is 36 minutes.*

📅 *SMF performance history: SMF premiere*

Beethoven began composition of his Concerto for Piano, Violin, Cello and Orchestra in late 1803, completing the work in the summer of 1804. Beethoven composed the piano part of the “Triple” Concerto for Archduke Rudolph (1788–1831), the youngest son of Emperor Leopold II. Rudolph, a longtime pupil, friend and patron of Beethoven, was the dedicatee of such pieces as the Fourth and “Emperor” Piano Concertos, the “Archduke” Piano Trio, the Piano Sonatas Opus 90 (“Les Adieux”), 106 (“Hammerklavier”), and 111, the great choral work, the *Missa solemnis*, and the *Grosse Fuge* for string quartet.

The fact that Beethoven composed the keyboard parts of both the Triple Concerto and the “Archduke” Trio for Rudolph is testament to his considerable talents as a pianist. Beethoven dedicated the “Triple” Concerto to another of his patrons, Prince Joseph Franz von Lobkowitz. The first public performance of the “Triple” Concerto took place in Vienna, in May of 1808.

I. *Allegro*—Beethoven composed the “Triple” Concerto around the same time as his path-breaking “Eroica” Symphony, Opus 55 (1803). However, the Concerto displays a far more genial and lyrical side of Beethoven’s craft. The work opens with the traditional orchestral exposition of the movement’s principal themes. The cellos and basses immediately present the first theme, building to the orchestra’s *fortissimo* proclamation. The succeeding themes incorporate the first’s dotted rhythm. The solo cello enters with a *dolce* version of the opening theme. The violin and piano soon join their counterpart. The soloists offer elaborate versions of the principal themes, often in tandem with each other. A series of trills by the soloists yields to the orchestra’s *fortissimo* close of the exposition. The solo cello inaugurates the development section. The exchanges between the trio are by turns intense and tender. The

soloists’ vibrant ascending and descending passages lead to the orchestra’s *fortissimo* start of the recapitulation. The trio’s brilliant flourishes, punctuated by the orchestra, bring the opening movement to a stirring close (*Più allegro*).

II. *Largo*—The brief slow-tempo movement begins with a passage for strings, including muted violins. The solo cello enters with a leisurely presentation of the *Largo*’s beautiful

principal theme (*molto cantabile*). The theme serves as the basis for a series of tender exchanges by the soloists. A brief, vibrant passage for the solo cello serves as a bridge to the finale, which follows without pause.

III. *Rondo alla Polacca*—The solo cello introduces the central theme of the *Rondo* finale, based upon a *polonaise*, a sparkling Polish dance in triple meter. The dance returns throughout a movement notable for its high spirits and brilliant passagework for the soloists. Toward the close of the finale, Beethoven converts the *polonaise* into a vibrant dance in duple meter (*Allegro*). A final reprise of the 3/4 *polonaise* (*Tempo I*) brings the “Triple” Concerto to a rousing conclusion.

### Symphony No. 1 in B-flat Major, Opus 38, “Spring” (1841)

Robert Schumann was born in Zwickau, Germany, on June 8, 1810, and died in Endenich, Germany, on July 29, 1856. The first performance took place at the Gewandhaus in Leipzig, Germany, on March 31, 1841, with Felix Mendelssohn conducting. The Symphony No. 1 is scored for two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, timpani, triangle, and strings.

🕒 *Approximate performance time is 31 minutes.*

📅 *SMF performance history: SMF premiere*

#### Robert and Clara

The early 1840s were glorious years for Robert Schumann. On September 12, 1840, the German composer wed his beloved Carla Wieck (1819–1896). The courtship had been a long and stressful one, as Clara’s father, Friedrich Wieck, vehemently opposed any union between his daughter and Robert. But, the day after the wedding (which was also Clara’s birthday), Robert

was able to write the following in the couple's joint diary:

My most beloved young wife! Let me greet you with a tender kiss on this special day, the first of your womanhood, the first of your twenty-first year. The little book which I open herewith has a very particular, intimate meaning; it is to record everything that affects us together in our household and married life, our wishes, our hopes...your fair hopes and mine—may heaven bless them; your anxieties and mine...in short, all our hopes and sorrows...

Robert's union with Clara—a gifted pianist and composer—seemed to inspire his creative powers. In the year of their marriage, Robert Schumann wrote some 150 songs, including the glorious cycles *Frauenliebe und -leben* (*A Woman's Love and Life*) and *Dichterliebe* (*A Poet's Love*).

In 1841, Robert Schumann focused his energies upon orchestral music. In the early portion of that year, Schumann completed his joyous "Spring" Symphony (No. 1 in B-flat Major). Schumann then composed his *Overture, Scherzo and Finale*. In May, Schumann penned a single-movement *Fantasy in A minor* for piano and orchestra (four years later, Schumann added an *Intermezzo* and *Allegro vivace*, transforming that *Fantasy* into the magnificent three-movement A minor Piano Concerto). In that same productive year of 1841, Schumann composed the original version of his Symphony No. 4 in D minor.

#### "Under the urge of spring"

Clara Schumann was a constant source of comfort and inspiration for her husband. But, the composition of the Symphony No. 1 was the product of some additional stimuli. On November 23, 1842, Schumann wrote to his friend, composer Ludwig Spohr: "I composed the symphony, so to speak, under the urge of spring which every year comes over men anew, even in full maturity."

On January 25, 1841, Clara wrote in the joint diary: "Today, Monday, Robert has nearly finished his Symphony. It was composed chiefly at night—for some nights my poor Robert has not slept on account of it. He calls it 'Spring Symphony.' A poem about Spring...was the first inspiration for

this composition." The poem in question, written by Adolf Böttger, concludes with the following lines:

"O wende, wende deinen Lauf,  
—Im Tale blühet Frühling auf!"  
"O turn, turn aside your course,  
—Spring is blossoming in the vale!"

Schumann sketched his "Spring" Symphony in the span of just four days, from January 23 to January 26, 1841, using, according to the composer, a steel pen that he found near Beethoven's grave in Vienna. Schumann completed the orchestration on February 20. Originally, the composer provided titles for each of the Symphony's four movements: "(1) Spring's Awakening," "(2) Evening," "(3) Happy Playfellows" and "(4) Spring's Farewell." Schumann later discarded those titles.

The premiere of the "Spring" Symphony took place at the Leipzig Gewandhaus on March 31, 1841. Felix Mendelssohn led the performance (Clara also performed on the piano at the concert). It was a fine success, with the Symphony receiving a glowing reception from the audience.

With music that is as enticing and life-affirming as its subject, the "Spring" Symphony remains one of Robert Schumann's most beloved compositions.

I. *Andante un poco maestoso; Allegro molto vivace*—The Symphony opens with a fanfare for trumpets and horns. In a letter to conductor Karl Gottfried Wilhelm Taubert, Schumann directed: "I should like the very first trumpet call to sound as though it came up from on high, like a call to wake up." The eight-note fanfare is based upon the final line of Böttger's poem, reproduced below. The added bold type corresponds to the musical emphasis Schumann suggests in his score:

"Im **Ta**-le blü-het **Früh-ling** auf!"

The orchestra repeats the fanfare motif. The slow-tempo introduction (*Andante un poco maestoso*) gathers momentum, leading to the principal *Allegro molto vivace*. Its opening theme is a lively figure, again based upon the fanfare. A more restrained, *dolce* motif, introduced by the

clarinets and bassoons, serves as the second principal theme. The spirited development section concludes with a reprise of the opening fanfare. After a varied recapitulation, there is an extended coda, whose moments of repose are finally dispelled by a vibrant dash to the finish.

II. *Larghetto*—Divided first violins sing the radiant central melody of this slow-tempo movement. The melody returns in various guises, alternating with more agitated episodes. A brief coda, featuring a trombone chorale, serves as the transition to the ensuing *Scherzo*, which follows without pause.

III. *Scherzo. Molto vivace*—The *Scherzo* is based upon a brusque melody, introduced by the strings. There are two intervening *Trio* sections. The first (*Molto più vivace*) features a dialogue between strings and winds. The second *Trio* is a *perpetuum mobile* in triple time. After a final reprise of the *Scherzo*, a mysterious coda leads directly to the final movement.

IV. *Allegro animato e grazioso*—The finale begins with a grand ascending passage that recalls the Symphony's opening fanfare. After a dramatic pause, the first violins offer the finale's impish first theme. The broad second theme is based upon an eight-note figure that, again, bears a kinship to the opening fanfare. The development section concludes with a sentinel passage for horns, followed by a cheerful flute cadenza that launches the recapitulation. A stirring coda brings the "Spring" Symphony to a bracing conclusion.

## FIRST VIOLIN

**David Coucheron**  
*Concertmaster*  
The Mr. and Mrs. Howard R.  
Peevy Chair

**Justin Bruns**  
*Associate Concertmaster*  
The Charles McKenzie Taylor  
Chair

Vacant  
*Assistant Concertmaster*

**Jun-Ching Lin**  
*Assistant Concertmaster*

**Anastasia Agapova**  
*Acting Assistant*  
*Concertmaster*

**Carolyn Toll Hancock**  
*The Wells Fargo Chair*

**John Meisner**

**Christopher Pulgram**

**Carol Ramírez**

**Juan R. Ramírez Hernández**

**Olga Shpitko**

**Kenn Wagner**

**Lisa Wiedman Yancich**

**Sissi Yuqing Zhang**

## SECTION VIOLIN \*

**Judith Cox**

**Raymond Leung**  
The Carolyn McClatchey  
Chair

**Sanford Salzinger**

## SECOND VIOLIN

**Julianne Lee**  
*Principal*  
The Atlanta Symphony  
Associates Chair

**Sou-Chun Su**  
*Associate Principal*  
The Frances Cheney Boggs  
Chair

**Jay Christy**  
*Assistant Principal*

**Sharon Berenson**

**David Braitberg**

**Noriko Konno Clift**

**David Dillard**

**Eleanor Kosek**

**Ruth Ann Little**

**Thomas O'Donnell**

**Ronda Respass**

**Frank Walton**

## VIOLA

Vacant  
*Principal*  
The Edus H. and Harriet H.  
Warren Chair

**Paul Murphy**  
*Acting/Associate Principal*  
The Mary and Lawrence  
Gellerstedt Chair

**Catherine Lynn**  
*Assistant Principal*

**Marian Kent**

**Yang-Yoon Kim**

**Yiyin Li**

**Lachlan McBane**

**Jessica Oudin**

**Madeline Sharp**

## CELLO

Vacant  
*Principal*  
The Miriam and John Conant  
Chair

**Daniel Laufer**  
*Acting/Associate Principal*  
The Livingston Foundation  
Chair

**Karen Freer**  
*Acting Associate/Assistant*  
*Principal*

**Dona Vellek**  
*Assistant Principal Emeritus*

**Thomas Carpenter**

**Joel Dallow**  
The UPS Foundation Chair

**Larry LeMaster**

**Brad Ritchie**

**Paul Warner**

## BASS

**Joseph McFadden**  
*Principal*  
The Marcia and John Donnell  
Chair

**Gloria Jones Allgood**  
*Associate Principal*  
The Lucy R. & Gary Lee Jr.  
Chair

**Karl Fenner**

**Sharif Ibrahim**

**Michael Kenady**  
The Jane Little Chair

**Michael Kurth**

**Daniel Tosky**

## FLUTE

**Christina Smith**  
*Principal*  
The Jill Hertz Chair

**Robert Cronin**  
*Associate Principal*

**C. Todd Skitch**

**Gina Hughes**

## PICCOLO

**Gina Hughes**

## OBOE

**Elizabeth Koch Tiscione**  
*Principal*  
The George M. and Corrie  
Hoyt Brown Chair

Vacant  
*Associate Principal*  
The Kendeda Fund Chair

**Samuel Nemec**  
*Acting Associate Principal*

**Emily Brebach**

**Xiaodi Liu**

## ENGLISH HORN

**Emily Brebach**

## CLARINET

**Laura Ardan**  
*Principal*  
The Robert Shaw Chair  
The Mabel Dorn Reeder  
Honorary Chair

**Ted Gurch**  
*Associate Principal*

**Marci Gurnow**  
*Alcides Rodriguez*

## E-FLAT CLARINET

**Ted Gurch**

## BASS CLARINET

**Alcides Rodriguez**

## BASSOON

**Andrew Brady**  
*Principal*  
The Abraham J. & Phyllis  
Katz Foundation Chair

**Anthony Georgeson**  
*Associate Principal*

**Laura Najarian**

**Juan de Gomar**

## CONTRA-BASSOON

**Juan de Gomar**

## HORN

**Brice Andrus**  
*Principal*  
The Betty Sands Fuller Chair

**Susan Welty**  
*Associate Principal*

**Kimberly Gilman**

**Chelsea McFarland**

**Bruce Kenney**

**Jaclyn Rainey**

## TRUMPET

**Stuart Stephenson**  
*Principal*  
The Madeline and Howell  
Adams Chair

**Michael Tiscione**  
*Associate Principal*

**Mark Maliniak**

## TROMBONE

Vacant  
*Principal*  
The Terence L. Neal Chair,  
Honoring his dedication  
and service to the Atlanta  
Symphony Orchestra

**Nathan Zgonc**  
*Acting/Associate Principal*

**Jason Patrick Robins**

**Brian Hecht**

## BASS TROMBONE

**Brian Hecht**  
The Home Depot Veterans  
Chair

## TUBA

**Michael Moore**  
*Principal*  
The Delta Air Lines Chair

## TIMPANI

**Mark Yancich**  
*Principal*  
The Walter H. Bunzl Chair

**William Wilder**  
*Assistant Principal*

## PERCUSSION

**Joseph Petrasek**  
*Principal*  
The Julie and Arthur  
Montgomery Chair

**William Wilder**  
*Assistant Principal*  
The William A. Schwartz  
Chair

Vacant  
The Connie and Merrell  
Calhoun Chair

**Michael Stubbart**

## HARP

**Elisabeth Remy Johnson**  
*Principal*  
The Sally and Carl Gable  
Chair

## KEYBOARD

The Hugh and Jessie  
Hodgson Memorial Chair

**Peter Marshall**

**Sharon Berenson**

## LIBRARY

**Nicole Jordan**  
*Principal*  
The Marianna & Solon  
Patterson Chair

**Holly Matthews**  
*Assistant Principal Librarian*

**Hannah Davis**  
*ASYO/Assistant Librarian*

\* Rotate between sections

\* Leave of absence

\* Regularly engaged musician

• New this season