

Program

Sixty-Second Season
Second Subscription Concert

John Nakamatsu Plays Rachmaninoff

Thursday, November 7, 2024
Waco Hall, 7:30 p.m.

LAWRENCE LOH, MUSIC DIRECTOR

Inspiration! - Festive OvertureQuinn Mason
(b.1996)

Piano Concerto No. 2, op. 18 in C minor Sergei Rachmaninoff
(1873–1943)

John Nakamatsu, piano

INTERMISSION

Symphony No. 3, op. 55 in E-flat major “Eroica”Ludwig van Beethoven
(1770–1827)

- I. Allegro con brio
- II. Marcia funebre: Adagio assai
- III. Scherzo: Allegro vivace
- IV. Finale: Allegro molto

Special thanks to staff of Waco Hall for their help and to Seventh & James Baptist Church for the use of their parking lot during Waco Symphony concerts.

Bus transportation provided by Waco Transit System. Hotel partner is Cambria Hotel. Piano partner is Yes Piano! / Metroplex Piano Group.

The Waco Symphony Orchestra is a member of the League of American Orchestras.

Quinn Mason is represented by Cadenza Artists International.

Inspiration! – Festive Overture

Quinn Mason (b. 1996)

Duration: approximately 7'

Dallas native Quinn Mason is an up-and-coming superstar who has established himself as a composer and conductor of international stature. His compositions for orchestra, chamber ensemble, solo performer, and wind ensemble have been commissioned and performed by top-flight ensembles and soloists around the world. Mason has multiple “youngest ever” distinctions to his credit. For example, he was the Houston Ballet Orchestra’s youngest ever guest conductor and the youngest composer to serve as the Detroit Symphony Orchestra’s Classical Roots composer in residence (2022). He has received numerous awards and in 2020 was honored by the *Dallas Morning News* as a finalist for Texan of the Year.



Photo: TheMaddyUllman

The work we will hear tonight was commissioned by the University of Texas at Arlington Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Dr. Clifton Evans, who premiered it at the TMEA convention on 10 February 2023. Its joyous high spirits celebrate the power of inspiration.

Concerto No. 2 in C Minor, Op. 18

Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873–1943)

Duration: approximately 33'

Rachmaninoff was the last of the great Russian Romantics. He studied music at the St. Petersburg and Moscow Conservatories, where he distinguished himself as a composer and pianist of notable talent. By April of 1900, he had completed what would become the second and third movements of his Second Piano Concerto. He premiered those movements in Moscow in December of 1900, completed the

first movement shortly thereafter, and gave the first complete performance in October 1901.

The years between the Second Piano Concerto and the Bolshevik Revolution were Rachmaninoff’s most productive. By the time he and his wife and two daughters fled from Russia in 1917, he had completed 39 of his 45 opus numbers. Taking only the meagerest of belongings, they went first to Switzerland and then to the United States. Beginning in the mid-1920s the family also spent periods in Dresden, Switzerland, and Paris but fled once again to the United States during the political upheavals of the late 1930s. In his last years, Rachmaninoff showed increasing signs of exhaustion from maintaining three careers of international scope—as composer, conductor, and performer. He died of cancer at his home in Beverly Hills on March 28 of 1943, leaving behind a valuable body of works that included piano music, choral works, works for piano and orchestra, chamber music, operas, symphonic poems, and songs.

As a composer, Rachmaninoff enjoyed the favor of audiences wherever he went, but for many years he was disregarded by academic musicians. His sin, in their view, was indifference to the avant-garde developments of his day. Though he lived far into the twentieth century, he remained a nineteenth-century Romantic throughout his life. Tonight’s selection is probably his most popular composition, and certainly one of the most loved of all concert works.

Symphony No. 3 in E-flat Major, Op. 55 (Eroica)

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827)

Duration: approximately 47'

The compositions of Ludwig van Beethoven constitute an artistic accomplishment that is without parallel in human history. After Beethoven, nothing was ever the same again. He transformed every musical genre he touched, setting in motion forces that inspired (and intimidated) composers for generations. Beethoven changed forever the way people think about music itself and its role

Program Notes

in human activity. Before Beethoven music was a commodity to be bought and used but then discarded when the occasion for which it was produced had passed. Mozart and Haydn harbored no ambitions of producing “great art.” They were craftsmen (however supremely gifted) who gave little thought to their impact on future generations. Not so with Beethoven. He composed for the ages.

Beethoven was exactly the artist the nineteenth century was waiting for, the consummate Romantic hero who suffered for his art. In the posthumously discovered “Heiligenstadt Testament,” a letter to his brothers Carl and Johann (1802), he asked the forgiveness of humanity for his apparent misanthropy, attributing his self-imposed exile to incurable deafness. The turning inward that Beethoven’s deafness forced upon him resonated with the nineteenth century’s conception of music as an expression of deep personal feeling brought forth through struggle. Add to this the idea that Beethoven’s music was a milestone in human evolution, that he took up and hurled forward the torch of genius bequeathed to him by Mozart and Haydn, and the Beethoven myth was fully formed.

Beethoven’s works sent nineteenth-century listeners searching for meaning in music, even purely abstract music, and certainly no composer’s oeuvre has inspired more interpretive commentary. When Berlioz wrote that Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony conveys the composer’s “secret sorrows, he was expressing the widely held assumption that

music (especially Beethoven’s music) conveys emotions and philosophies and even religious truths that words and pictures cannot. And Beethoven’s music meant many things to many people. So great was the breadth of his expression that composers as different in temperament and technique as Brahms and Wagner could claim him as mentor, and both speak truthfully.

Beethoven composed the third of his nine symphonies, the *Eroica*, during 1803 and early 1804. It was first performed privately the following June at the palace of Prince Lobkowitz, one of Beethoven’s Viennese patrons. The work was originally to have been dedicated to Napoleon Bonaparte, for reasons that include Beethoven’s hope of traveling to the French capital, new symphony in hand. At the same time, Beethoven’s patron Prince Lobkowitz wanted exclusive rights to the work for six months and was willing to pay 400 ducats for the privilege. For such a handsome fee he would naturally have insisted that the work be published with a dedication to himself. Loath to forgo Lobkowitz’s offer, Beethoven devised a twofer: He titled the symphony *Buonaparte*. This would enable him to dedicate the work to Lobkowitz (and receive the 400 ducats) and also to present it in Paris, should his planned trip materialize. When Beethoven learned that Napoleon had proclaimed himself emperor in May 1804, he effaced the title but later reinstated it, at least temporarily. We know this because when he offered the work to the publisher Breitkopf and Härtel in August

Opening Notes Pre-Concert Talks

6:40 p.m.–7:10 p.m.

Before each classical Season Concert

6:10 p.m.–6:40 p.m.

Before *Jurassic Park* in Concert

Learn interesting insights about the music you’ll hear at Opening Notes, a free pre-concert talk led by Maestro Lawrence Loh. Featured soloists and special guests may make an appearance.

Location is in Recital Hall II within Waco Hall.

Sponsor: Virginia DuPuy



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1804, he wrote that “the title of the symphony is really *Bonaparte*.” Moreover, the title page of Beethoven’s own score of the work includes the words *Geschrieben auf Bonaparte*, written in his own hand. But when the work was first performed in public at the Theater an der Wien on 7 April 1805, there was no mention of Napoleon, and the orchestral parts published in 1806 carry only an inscription in Italian: *Sinfonia eroica, composta per festeggiare il sovvenire di un grand uomo* (“Heroic symphony composed to celebrate the memory of a great man”). Hence the circuitous route that led to the nickname *Eroica*.

In 1802 Beethoven had declared that he would henceforth follow a “new way,” by which he meant that he would depart from the path established by Haydn and Mozart. In the *Eroica* we hear the “new way” unfolding in all its glory. The *Eroica* breaks the bonds of convention. It is a hugely expansive work—almost twice as long as anything before it. The conventional form associated with each movement is vastly

expanded. In each movement Beethoven explores a remarkably broad range of colors (using a modest orchestra) and pushes eighteenth-century principles of tonality and thematic development to the limit. The second movement, a funeral march, is a large rondo (rare in symphonic second movements) in which a dirge in C minor contrasts with lighter sections in C major and a fugato in F minor. The third movement is Beethoven’s first use of a full-fledged scherzo in place of the traditional minuet. In the fourth movement, a sonata-rondo, Beethoven employs a theme he used in three other works.

Although the *Eroica* at first perplexed (even offended) audiences, especially because of its length, it soon gained the recognition it deserved. The *Eroica*, like all of Beethoven’s best music, expresses something deeper and more personal than mere themes and harmonies and musical forms. It speaks to the heart.

Seeking Support of Baylor-WSO Student Interns

You can join forces with us to keep the WSO strong by sponsoring a student intern playing in the orchestra. Sponsorship opportunities start at \$300.

Recognizing that the Waco Symphony Orchestra benefits from Baylor University services including rehearsal/concert venues and a shared music library, the Baylor-WSO Intern Scholarship Program was established in 1999 as a joint effort of the Waco Symphony and the Dallas Fort Worth Professional Musicians Association, AFM Local 72-147. Student interns audition for a position in the symphony, where they are mentored by seasoned musicians as they gain valuable professional orchestral experience. This program provides experiential learning, mentorship opportunities, and prepares students for professional music careers. To the best of our knowledge, this program is the only one of its kind.

Underwriting helps fund up to 20 Baylor-WSO Student Interns each year. The WSO is seeking to increase support for its interns. If you are interested in becoming a sponsor, scan the QR code below or contact WSA Executive Director Carolyn Bess at 254-754-1035.

See page 27 for a list of WSO Musicians and Baylor-WSO Student Interns.

