

Penn State Abington

Presents



Gabriel Gordon, Conductor
Rebecca Carr, Soprano Soloist

Sunday, February 27, 2005
Sutherland Auditorium

Program Notes

Symphony #1 "Classical"—Serge Prokofiev (1891–1953)

"We need a simpler more tuneful sort of music, a more direct and tonal appeal, something less complex."

So mused Prokofiev about his own ideal as a mature composer. During his student days at the St. Petersburg Conservatory, Serge developed an appreciation for the orchestral music of Haydn and Mozart. To these influences and the fascination it wrought on young Prokofiev's mind we may owe the creation of the 'Classical Symphony.' In choosing to emulate this style Prokofiev later said that he was attempting to "catch the spirit of Mozart and put down that which, if he were living now, Mozart might put into his scores." The symphony is in three movements.

The first movement (*allegro con brio*) is in sonata form complete with exposition, development, and coda. The second movement (*andante*) begins with a shimmering violin line over a repeating pattern which becomes more agitated rising with a climax. It then subsides and ends quietly. The third movement (*gavotte*) is a jaunty dance of Breton origin. The last movement (*finale*) is again in sonata form, and wings briskly to an exhilarating finish.

Motette: Exsultate, jubilate—W. A. Mozart (1756–1791)

Mozart was already a much-traveled virtuoso and a celebrated composer when, at the age of 16, he and his father made their third and final Italian journey in October, 1772. He had been commissioned during an earlier trip to compose an opera—*Lucio Silla*—for performance in Milan. Mozart wrote the present work for performance by Rauzzini (a *castrato*) in January of 1773, but later revised it for a performance by a female soprano in Salzburg, in 1780. The motet is in three movements (with an interpolated recitative), and could almost be seen as a concerto for voice and orchestra. The second movement flows without pause into the ecstatic concluding "Alleluia."

Symphony #8—Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827)

"I alter some things, eliminate and try again until I am satisfied. Then begins the mental working out of this material in its breadth, its narrowness, its height and depth."

Perhaps no other composer so agonized over and reworked his musical ideas as did Beethoven. In the company of his nine symphonies what place does the Eighth occupy? On the surface it seems to be conservative, even including a minuet in preference to the characteristic scherzo. The first movement is in the traditional sonata form; it is very muscular, exhibiting Beethoven's dynamism until its breathtakingly novel ending. The second movement, instead of the expected slow tempo, is an allegretto, and as conveyed by the indication scherzando (in a playful mood), it is an example of Beethoven's hearty sense of humor. He writes a lovely passage for the horns and clarinet in the trio, but again with humor; the clarinet must end with the highest pitch of which it was then capable. The finale, in sonata-rondo form, fits the model of "classical," but only in name, not in its immense substance. Fugues, forays into remote keys—all of these are on display in the race to the final cadence.

—Program Notes: *Forrest Rowland*

Acknowledgments

The Independence Sinfonia expresses thanks to Dean Karen Wiley Sandler and the Penn State Abington administration for their support in the presentation of today's concert. The orchestra is especially grateful to Pamela Smith, Community Events Coordinator, Terrie Smith, Publications Specialist, and Pat Parkhill of the Development Office, for their help and cooperation.

PROGRAM

Today's concert is respectfully dedicated to the memory of Sally Reinitz (1950–2004) of Penn State Abington's Office of Development and Alumni Relations. Sally was a friend and advocate of The Independence Sinfonia. She helped make possible the very first concerts presented by the orchestra on the Abington campus. For her kindness and support, she will be remembered.

Classical Symphony Serge Prokofiev (1891-1953)

Allegro con brio

Larghetto

Gavotte

Vivace

Motette: Exsultate, jubilate W. A. Mozart (1756-1791)

Rebecca Carr, Soprano Soloist

Exsultate

Recitativo

Tu virginum corona

Alleluja

—INTERMISSION—

Symphony No. 8 F Major op. 93 Ludwig von Beethoven (1770–1827)

Allegro Vivace e con brio

Allegretto scherzando

Minuetto

Allegro Vivace

A gift to Penn State Abington's Endowment for the cultural arts assures that the college's programming—open to all in our community—will continue to enrich the life of this region. For additional information, please contact Penn State Abington's Office of Development & Alumni Relations, 215-881-7378, or e-mail David Miller (dam22@psu.edu).

The Independence Sinfonia

Gabriel Gordon, Music Director

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TRUMPET

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Assistant Conductor: Jeff Bradbury; Music Librarian: Kim Dolan; Posters: Margot Cohn; Concert Coordinator: Lila Finck
Rehearsal space for the orchestra is graciously provided by All Hallows Episcopal Church, Wyncote, PA.

Rebecca Carr, soprano soloist began her musical education in her hometown of Auburn, New York. She earned degrees in Vocal Performance from Ithaca College (B.M.) and The University of North Carolina at Greensboro (M.M.) and was led ultimately, to the prestigious Academy of Vocal Arts. Philadelphia audiences have heard her often in oratorio performances and in concert and recital, but it is Ms. Carr's operatic performances that have led her across this country and abroad. She has sung the leading soprano roles in *Elektra*, *La Traviata*, *Susannah*, *Don Giovanni*, *Die Fledermaus*, *Così fan tutte*, and *Madama Butterfly* among others. Ms. Carr continues to expand her repertoire, studying the early operas of Verdi with renowned soprano, Renata Scotto.

Gabriel Gordon is now in his fourth year as music director of *The Independence Sinfonia*. He also directs several youth, community, and professional orchestras in the tri-state area, including The Greater Newark Youth Orchestra and the Old York Road Symphony. Mr. Gordon has conducted the Atlanta Symphony and later this year, will lead the New Jersey Symphony in a side-by-side concert with the Greater Newark Youth Orchestra. As a guest conductor, Mr. Gordon has also led The Orchestra Society of Philadelphia and ensembles in New York, New Jersey, and Israel.

"Watching his conducting is a treat in itself," as one reviewer described it. "Every gesture has a clear purpose, is significantly nuanced, and is explicitly observed by the musicians."