



HOPKINS CENTER

presents

Dartmouth Symphony Orchestra
Anthony Princiotti *conductor*

featuring

Jennifer Crist '07 *oboe*

Aaron Levy '07 *violin*

This performance is made possible in part by generous support from the William D. 1905 and Besse M. Blatner Fund #1; the Arthur R. Virgin 1900 Fund #1 for the Advancement of Music; and the Roesch Family Fund in Support of Instrumental Ensembles.

Saturday, November 18, 2006 • 8 pm
Spaulding Auditorium • Dartmouth College

PROGRAM

Concerto for Oboe and Violin in C minor, BWV 1060

Johann Sebastian Bach
(1685-1750)

Allegro
Adagio
Allegro

Jennifer Crist '07 *oboe*; Aaron Levy '07 *violin*

• **INTERMISSION** •

Symphony No. 5 in D minor, Op. 47

Dmitri Shostakovich (1906-1975)

Moderato
Allegro
Largo
Allegro non troppo

A reception will follow the concert in the Courtyard Café.

Special thanks to Marcia Cassidy, Jennifer Crist, Edward Kim, Stephen Langley, Alex Ogle, Leslie Sonder and all the fine folks down at Mussolini's Pizzeria and Attack-Dog Supply Center, where they "put a touch of fascism in every bite."

PROGRAM NOTES

Johann Sebastian Bach

Concerto for Oboe and Violin in C minor, BWV 1060

The music of Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750) represents the highest summit of achievement in the history of Western classical music. The sheer breadth of his output is staggering; with the exception of opera, he composed prolifically in every significant form and genre of his time. The craftsmanship and intellectual power of his work reveals one of human history's greatest minds. Yet it is perhaps Bach's ability to combine this aptitude with a seemingly inexhaustible gift for expressing the deepest, most essential qualities of the human soul that has made him revered by musicians and music lovers for more than two centuries.

In spite of his place in the pantheon of great composers, Bach's professional career was relatively unevent-

ful. His reputation was mostly limited to Germany, where he was known as an accomplished organist and composer of works that reflected a high level of technical erudition. By the time he took the position of Music Director of Leipzig and Cantor of the Church of St. Thomas, making him a person of significance in the Lutheran world, his music was considered by many to be anachronistic, overly dense and stuffy. After his death in 1750, his works languished in obscurity for more than 75 years before they were "re-discovered" by another great Leipzig musician, Felix Mendelssohn.

Like most musicians of his day, Bach's music reflects the professional circumstances within which it was written. The *Concerto for Oboe and Violin* dates from the early years of Bach's tenure (1717-1723) as Music Director at the court of Prince Leopold of Anhalt-Cöthen. Leopold was a Calvinist, and thus was not

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inclined to have music included in worship services at his court. As a result, the bulk of Bach's music from the Cöthen years was instrumental music written for entertainment and instruction. In this regard, the timing of his move to Cöthen was propitious. The complete technical mastery we see and hear in Bach's extant compositions can obscure the fact that his musical education was decidedly non-systematic. Since he came from a family of accomplished musicians, it is generally assumed (and in some respects documented) that he received much of his training at home. When he embarked on a professional career, it was principally as an organist; his initial attempts at composition were tentative and clumsy. Nonetheless, his improvisatory skill at the keyboard would become a catalyst and an inspiration for his music. In order to find coherent ways of organizing and expressing the ideas that flowed from his fingers, Bach followed a practice common to composers of his day: he copied and transcribed the works of great masters and contemporary composers whose music appealed to him. Of particular importance was Bach's discovery of Vivaldi's *Concerti*, which enjoyed enormous popularity in Germany in the early 18th century. From Vivaldi, Bach learned the art of writing clearly defined melodies, the organization of instrumental movements in relation to a harmonic outline and the art of creating variety while reinforcing a work's formal structure through the deployment of instrumental forces of differing sizes and timbres. Thus his appointment to the Cöthen court provided Bach with a timely opportunity to implement what he had learned from the works of the Venetian master.

Although the *Concerto for Oboe and Violin* is one of Bach's most beloved works, it is actually a reconstruction of a concerto whose existence is only a logical assumption. This in itself is not unusual; there are literally dozens of works by Bach for which there is no extant manuscript, first copy or authorized first edition, yet whose existence is indicated by various types of documentary evidence. In 1738 and 1739,

Bach produced a series of harpsichord concerti that are transcriptions of earlier works that have been lost. The *Concerto for Oboe and Violin* is thus a retranscription of a *Concerto for Two Harpsichords* that was itself a transcription of a *Concerto for Oboe and Violin* from early in Bach's Cöthen period. The fact that Bach would consider a work so filled with melodic expression to be appropriately transcribed for a non-sustaining instrument such as the harpsichord is compelling evidence of the degree to which composers in the Baroque era considered their music to be fungible. We might do well to remember this fact during our own time, when these works have achieved classic status and have been subjected to exhaustive musicological study; our focus on notions of purity, so-called authenticity and textual fidelity based upon research is inevitably more of a reflection of our own cultural values than those of the era in which Bach lived and worked.

The influence of Vivaldi is clear throughout this concerto, from its three-movement fast-slow-fast layout to its clearly wrought melodies derived from triadic and scale patterns. Yet the compositional voice of Bach dominates every bar. The work is suffused with a contrapuntal richness, sobriety and depth of expression that is wholly characteristic of Bach's music. Like every great artist, Bach absorbed what he was attracted to and changed it in ways that reflected his own personality. In doing so, he created works that would serve as models and sources of inspiration for composers of subsequent generations, from Beethoven to Mendelssohn, Brahms, Mahler, Schoenberg, Hindemith and beyond.

Dmitri Shostakovich *Symphony No. 5 in D minor, Op. 47*

The premiere in Leningrad on November 21, 1937 of Dmitri Shostakovich's *Symphony No. 5* represented a turning point in the composer's life. He was born 31 years earlier to parents with revolutionary ancestries

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who fostered in their son a strong commitment to the Bolshevik cause (legend has it that when Lenin returned from exile in 1917, the then 10-year-old Shostakovich ran to the Petrograd train station and caught a glimpse of him). The stunning facility and originality of his *First Symphony*, written as a conservatory graduation piece at the tender age of 19, had brought Shostakovich international attention; subsequent works such as his *Aphorisms* for piano, his *Second Symphony* and his *First Piano Concerto* established him as a bright light of a new Soviet avant-garde. By the mid-1930s he had become the most renowned composer of the new Soviet state. His opera *Lady MacBeth of Mtsensk District* had been hailed by authorities as a major achievement of Soviet culture. Between 1934 and 1936, it was performed nearly 200 times in Moscow and Leningrad; it was also heard internationally in New York, Stockholm, Zurich, London and Copenhagen.

In early 1936, Shostakovich's fortunes came crashing down in a way that threatened not only his career, but indeed his very existence. On January 26, Stalin attended a Moscow performance of *Lady MacBeth*. Enraged by the opera's lurid depiction of sexuality and murder, he and his delegation walked out demonstratively after the third act. Two days later, an editorial appeared in *Pravda*, the Communist Party's print mouthpiece, entitled "Muddle instead of Music," in which Shostakovich was denounced for writing music that was dissonant, esoteric and incomprehensible. Ten days later, Shostakovich's music for the ballet *The Limpid Stream* was similarly attacked in *Pravda*. From an early 21st century perspective, characterized by fading memories of the Cold War, these criticisms might be regarded as unfortunate and unfair, but not much more. Within the context of the political terror sweeping the Soviet Union in the 1930s, however, these editorials held profound implications for Shostakovich and his family.

On December 1, 1934 the head of the Communist

Party in Leningrad (Shostakovich's home city), Sergei Kirov, was assassinated at the Party's headquarters. Subsequently, Stalin claimed to have discovered a widespread conspiracy of anti-Stalinist Communists who were planning to assassinate the entire Soviet leadership (it has since been asserted that it was in fact Stalin who ordered Kirov's liquidation). He used this death as a pretext for eliminating anyone whom he perceived to be a political enemy. In her collection of reminiscences by Shostakovich's friends and colleagues, *Shostakovich: A Life Remembered*, the author Elizabeth Wilson describes the situation concisely:

"An atmosphere of hostility and grim suspicion came into being and, with little or no encouragement from the authorities, it became second nature for people to regard anyone near them as a possible informer or saboteur. The year 1936 is remembered now as the first of the great purges and 'show trials,' where Stalin's political enemies were forced into abject confessions and humiliation prior to their liquidation. It is estimated that over seven million people were arrested between 1936 and 1939. Stalin imposed the Terror so as to transform all institutions—the Party, heavy industry and the armed forces—into obedient tools. It affected people from all walks of life."

In this environment, the *Pravda* attacks were ominous in the extreme. Stalin had always regarded the Leningrad intelligentsia with great suspicion, making Shostakovich's situation vulnerable from the start. It was understood that Stalin had either written or dictated significant portions of the editorial "Muddle instead of Music," which included the loaded phrase "this could end very badly." Soon, Shostakovich was being referred to in various publications as "an enemy of the people"; people designated as such often lost their livelihoods, and sometimes their lives. Shostakovich was actually interrogated at NKVD (the Soviet secret police; the forerunner of the KGB) headquarters about his association with his patron, Marshal Mikhail Nikolayevich Tukhachevsky, the head of the

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Soviet military; even though Shostakovich revealed no significant information, Tukhachevsky was later arrested and shot. During this period he often slept with a packed suitcase close at hand, in the event that the secret police came and arrested him.

Thus when Shostakovich's *Fifth Symphony* was premiered, the atmosphere in the concert hall of the Leningrad Philharmonic was charged with the highest level of intensity. The reaction of the audience to the music was nothing short of cathartic, as described by one member of the audience:

"...many of the listeners started to rise automatically from their seats during the finale, one after another. The music had a sort of electrical force. A thunderous ovation shook the columns of the Hall, and Mravinsky lifted the score high above his head, so as to show that it was not he, the conductor, or the orchestra who deserved this storm of applause, these shouts of 'bravo'; the success belonged to the creator of this work."

The ovation lasted a full half-hour, with Shostakovich called to center stage to take a bow as many as 40 times. His triumph was such that Party bureaucrats scrambled to find a position that would somehow acknowledge Shostakovich's success while not abandoning their previous harsh criticisms of the composer. The chairman of the Leningrad branch of the Union of Soviet Composers lamely wrote:

"The beating of drums and blowing of trumpets that heralds the composer and his new work drowns the healthy—or at least justified—sentiments of doubt and negative criticism, which even the most talented work must provoke... The brilliant mastery of the Fifth Symphony does not preclude the fact it does not by any means display all the healthy symptoms for the development of Soviet Symphonic Music."

This carping sentiment is revealing, for while the *Fifth Symphony* is written in a less complicated melodic

and harmonic language than some of Shostakovich's previous works, it clearly did not meet the definition of "Soviet Realism" demanded by the Party (the oft-quoted subtitle to the work, "A Soviet Artist's Reply to Just Criticism" was written by a journalist, not Shostakovich). The government had explicitly decreed that it was the duty of Soviet composers to, in the words of the Shostakovich scholar Roy Blokker, "create hopeful, spirited music—proletarian music—built on Russian themes and folk heritage, inspired by the economic successes of the state and appealing to as many people as possible". Yet the *Fifth Symphony* provides very few of these features. The first movement is prevailing in the minor mode; half its length is spent in music that is essentially meditative and often dark. Once the tempo quickens, the harmonic language becomes more dissonant, the orchestration more strident. A march-tune that might ordinarily be associated with a celebration of military might is set with harmonies that reduce it to an obscene parody. The recapitulatory climax is a ferocious lamentation for the entire orchestra, while the music at movement's close is that of a shattered, desolate soul. The second movement, a *scherzo* with Mahlerian overtones, shrieks with mockery and sarcasm. The third movement may be appropriately described as an elegy. Shostakovich once told a friend that the *Fifth Symphony*, like many of his others, commemorated the suffering of victims of political oppression; "my symphonies are tombstones," he said.

Appearances notwithstanding, the message of the *Finale* may be the most ambiguous. Its thundering, sonorous *Coda*, with its repeated *tutti* affirmation of D Major, would seem to conclude the symphony on a celebratory note, yet this may not have been what Shostakovich was seeking to convey. This *Coda* is based on the opening melody of the movement, the head of which Shostakovich used as the melodic basis for the song *Rebirth* from his *Four Romances on Poems by Pushkin*, Op. 46 (one opus number before the *Fifth Symphony*). The song's text reads:

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*A barbarian-artist, with a sleepy brush,
Blackens over a picture of genius.
And his lawless drawing
Scribbles meaninglessly upon it.*

*But with the years the alien paints
Flake off like old scales
The creation of genius appears before us
In its former beauty.*

*Thus do delusions fall away
From my worn-out soul,
And there spring up within it
Visions of original, pure days.*

The resonant themes for Shostakovich within Pushkin's poem are obvious. The images of a barbarian-

artist (Stalin, the grandiose tyrant who made the final authority in all facets of Soviet life, from the military to agriculture and even to the arts) blackening over a picture of genius (Shostakovich), of lawless drawing and delusions falling away, with the hope of eventual regeneration, must have seemed painfully apt to the composer, given his circumstances. That the *Finale* of his symphony would be based on motives from a song with this text belies the commonly expressed notion that the *Fifth Symphony* is essentially a submission by a great creative spirit to the crushing political force of a totalitarian state. Rather, it is an expression of a type of defiance that is perhaps best summed up in an old Russian Proverb: "It's alright to kiss them, if you must, as long as you spit when they're not looking."

Anthony Princiotti

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

ANTHONY PRINCIOTTI *conductor* has conducted the DSO for 13 years. He received his Doctor of Music degree from the Yale School of Music and a BM from the Juilliard School. He received a conducting fellowship at Tanglewood, where he studied with Leonard Bernstein, Gustav Meier and Seiji Ozawa. Mr. Princiotti has also received the Marshall Bartholomew Scholarship, the Charles Ives Scholarship and the Yale School of Music Alumni Association Prize. From 1981-1987, he was first violinist with the Apple Hill Chamber Players and has appeared as a guest conductor with the Calgary Philharmonic, the Vermont Symphony, the New England String Ensemble, the Hartford Symphony, the San Paolo State Symphony, the Yale Philharmonic, the Norfolk Festival Orchestra, the Pioneer Valley Symphony and the Young Artists Philharmonic. Mr. Princiotti is also Music Director of the New Hampshire Philharmonic Orchestra and Associate Conductor of the Vermont Symphony. He produces *The Glass Bead Game*, a weekly radio program that combines music from wildly different

genres within the context of a particular organizing theme or idea. His recording of Telemann's *Twelve Fantasias for Unaccompanied Violin* is due to be released later this month.

JENNIFER CRIST '07 *oboe* has played oboe for 12 years, and participated in the DSO since her first year. This year she is an orchestra manager. Jenny thanks her family and friends for all their support, and for being at every concert. She also thanks her teachers, Cheryl Bishkoff, Julie Vaverka and Anthony Princiotti, for their wonderful teaching and encouragement.

AARON LEVY '07 *violin* is a Dartmouth senior in his fourth year with the DSO. He performed with the Schenectady Symphony Orchestra as a soloist in April 2005. After graduation this June, he plans on attending law school. He thanks Maestro Princiotti for providing extensive individual instruction over the past four years as well as for his exceptional dedication to the DSO.

DARTMOUTH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Violin

* Jeffrey Wang '06
Stephanie Kim '08
Aaron Levy '07
Danielle Strollo '07
Melody Dai '07
Patricia Jo '09
Lynn Guo '08
Kenneth Fan '09
David Faherty '07
Lisa Mao '08
Allison Baker '09
Laura Romain '09
Clara Smith TH
Philip Back '10
Vania Lin '10
Cathy Lian '10
Deborah Johnson '10
Carina Serreze '09
Elizabeth Shribman '10
Elizabeth Werley-Prieto '09

Viola

+ Edward Kim '09
**Leslie Sonder F
Zieanna Chang '10
Michaela Yule '10

Cello

David Villagra '08
Elizabeth Jackson '06
Stephen Chang '09
Amy Davis '09
Brian Howe '10

Bass

Kristen Lurie '08
George Ochoa '10

Flute

Clara Chew '09
Sinny Wang '08

Piccolo

Katie Risher '10

Oboe

+ Jennifer Crist '07
Emily Frank '08

Clarinet

Lisel Murdock '09
Sarah Brown '08

Bassoon

Karen Woolley '09
Nina Anderson '08

French Horn

Kimberly Schreiber '07
Patrick Karas '08
Sherwin Yeo '10

Tuba

Robert Eliason C

**denotes concertmaster*

***denotes orchestra librarian*

+ denotes student manager

COMING EVENTS

For tickets or information call the Box Office at 603.646.2422 or visit hop.dartmouth.edu

Dartmouth Symphony Orchestra

All P.D.Q. Bach Concert

with special guest, Dartmouth Chamber Singers

Saturday, February 24 • 8 pm • Spaulding Auditorium

\$18 • Dartmouth students \$3

Sally Pinkas, piano

with Yuri Mazurkevich, violin

Ukrainian violinist joins pianist-in-residence in Brahms *Sonatas for Violin and Piano*.

Monday, November 20 • 7 pm • Spaulding Auditorium

\$18 • Dartmouth students \$5 • 18 & under \$14

★ Discussion with Sally Pinkas and Yuri Mazurkevich immediately following the performance.

200th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Handel Society of Dartmouth College

Celebration for the Season

Includes Mozart's *Vesperae solennes de confessore in C* and *Venite populi in D Major*, with the Hanover Chamber Orchestra.

Tuesday, November 28 • 7 pm • Spaulding Auditorium

\$18 • Dartmouth students \$3

Post-performance reception, *Top of the Hop*

COMING EVENTS

For tickets or information call the Box Office at 603.646.2422 or visit hop.dartmouth.edu

THEATREWORKS/USA

If You Give a Mouse a Cookie & Other Story Books

Popular children's books burst onto the stage in this sparkling musical review.

Thursday, November 30 • 7 pm • The Moore Theater

\$18 • Dartmouth students \$5 • 18 & under \$14

Recommended for ages 4 and up.

REVELS NORTH

The Christmas Revels

An Appalachian Celebration of the Winter Solstice

Colorful legends, fanciful jack tales and cheerful traditional dances of Appalachia—an Upper Valley family tradition.

Thursday, DECEMBER 14 • 7 pm*

Friday, DECEMBER 15 • 7:30 pm

Saturday, DECEMBER 16 • 2 pm & 7:30 pm

Sunday, DECEMBER 17 • 1 pm & 5 pm

Spaulding Auditorium • \$22.50 • Dartmouth students \$5 • 18 & under \$10

* Children's tickets 1/2 price this show!

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