Mahler Chamber Orchestra



Mitsuko Uchida

Piano/Director





Dear Friends,

Welcome to Princeton University Concerts!

We have been awaiting this shared moment with you for a long time and are grateful to have the magic of live music finally pierce through the heavy silence of the past few years. I have always been in awe of music's inimitable ability to provide solace, to heal, and to make us feel connected to one another. I am sure that you join my sentiment of cherishing this capacity all the more after the trauma that we have all experienced, and I hope that tonight's program will help propel us forward.

I am keenly aware that we all sit in Richardson Auditorium tonight as changed people. While it has always been Princeton University Concerts' intention to help serve as a bridge between the world of music and the perpetually changing times in which we live—to help us experience and consider music within the context of our personal and communal histories—I am now approaching this mission with a renewed sense of urgency. With every offering, live or digital, Princeton University Concerts will strive to refine this essential and intricate relationship. And I am sincere in my invitation to you to be a part of this process as together we rebuild our community and look towards the future.

Thank you for your presence, your support, and your devotion to music.

Marna Seltzer

Director of Princeton University Concerts

Welcome back to Princeton University Concerts! We've missed you!

Thursday, March 24, 2022 at 7:30PM • Richardson Auditorium, Alexander Hall

CHARLES S. ROBINSON MEMORIAL CONCERT

MAHLER CHAMBER ORCHESTRA MITSUKO UCHIDA Piano/Director MARK STEINBERG Concertmaster/Leader

WOLFGANG | Piano Concerto No. 23 in A Major, K. 488 (1786)

AMADEUS Allegro
MOZART Adagio

(1756–1791) Allegro assai

HENRY Fantasias (c. 1680)

 PURCELL
 Fantasia No. 11 à 4 in A Minor, Z. 740

 (1659–1695)
 Fantasia No. 9 à 4 in B-flat Major, Z. 736

Fantasia No. 10 à 4 in C Minor, Z. 738

Fantasia No. 13 à 5 in F Major, Z. 745 (Fantasia upon One Note)

INTERMISSION

WOLFGANG

AMADEUS

Piano Concerto No. 24 in C Minor, K. 491 (1786)

Allegro

MOZART Larghetto Allegretto

PLEASE NOTE: Wearing a mask over your mouth and nose is required while inside the venue. Thank you for keeping our community safe.

Mahler Chamber Orchestra

VIOLIN 1

Mark Steinberg (USA) **
May Kunstovny (Austria)
Hildegard Niebuhr (Germany)
Alexandra Preucil (USA)
Geoffroy Schied (France)
Timothy Summers (USA)
Elvira van Groningen (Netherlands)

VIOLIN 2

Hayley Wolfe (USA)

Johannes Lörstad (Sweden) *
Michiel Commandeur (Netherlands)
Christian Heubes (Germany)
Mette Tjaerby Korneliusen (Denmark)
Katarzyna Wozniakowska (Poland)
Stephanie Baubin (Austria)
Fjodor Selzer (Germany)

VIOLA

Joel Hunter (United Kingdom) *
Maite Abasolo Candamio (Spain)
Justin Caulley (USA)
Yannick Dondelinger (United Kingdom)
Benjamin Newton (United Kingdom)

CELLO

Philip Higham (United Kingdom) * Stefan Faludi (Germany) Christophe Morin (France) David Drost (Germany)

DOUBLE BASS

Christoph Anacker (Germany) * Johane Gonzalez Seijas (Spain) Lars Radloff (Germany)

FLUTE

Chiara Tonelli (Italy)

OBOE

Clément Noël (France) Julian Scott (United Kingdom)

CLARINET

Vicente Alberola (Spain) Jaan Bossier (Belgium)

BASSOON

Higinio Arrue Fortea (Spain) Chiara Santi (Italy)

HORN

Peter Erdei (Hungary) Tobias Heimann (Germany)

TRUMPET

Christopher Dicken (United Kingdom) Noémi Makkos (Hungary)

TIMPANI/PERCUSSION

Martin Piechotta (Germany)

^{**} Concertmaster

^{*} Section Leader



About the Program

By Lucy Caplan © 2022 • Program Annotator

Lucy Caplan is a Lecturer on History and Literature at Harvard University. In 2016 she received the Rubin Prize for Music Criticism.

> Some years ago, I read a sentence that stopped me in my tracks. In an analysis of Purcell's Dido and Aeneas, the performance scholar Joseph Roach noted that the opera's earliest production, which famously occurred at an English girls' boarding school in 1689, took place "within an economy of slave-produced abundance." In one sense, this was obvious: It is hardly new information that the transatlantic slave trade created great wealth for its European agents. Yet I had never before seriously considered how that atrocity might have interacted with the concurrent development of European classical music. To think of these histories as not just parallel, but intertwined, was profoundly unsettling.

> A number of recent studies by musicologists have deepened our understanding of how slavery and art music tangled and overlapped. Most notably, David Hunter has uncovered evidence of Handel's multiple direct investments in the Royal African Company—an entity, founded by the Duke of York in 1662, that ultimately shipped hundreds of thousands of people across the Atlantic, where they were forced into slavery. Hannah Templeton has shown that in his journals, Leopold Mozart wrote that one of his patrons, William Ottley, liked to visit his plantations in the West Indies. Just as importantly, Maria Ryan considers how enslaved people in the British colonies engaged with European music—a vital and often underrecognized aspect of this history.



...recent studies by musicologists have deepened our understanding of how slavery and art music tangled and overlapped...prompting me to think more deeply about its meaning in its time and in ours.

These linkages may not be exactly surprising, given that European composers often traveled in elite circles and relied on the support of wealthy patrons. But they are inarguably challenging. As listeners to seventeenth- and eighteenthcentury music, what are we to do with this information? Some might be

tempted to acknowledge it and then set it aside—a possibility that could be especially tempting when the music in question, such as that on tonight's program, reveals no obvious relationship to this broader social context. Even so, though, these works represent a sonic link to that time and place: After all, isn't that ability to transport us to another world one of music's most magnificent qualities? I don't have answers to these questions, but I do know that ever since reading that sentence, I've listened to *Dido* differently: not in a way that makes me admire or appreciate it any less, but in a way that prompts me to think more deeply about its meaning in its time and in ours.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Piano Concerto No. 23 in A Major, K. 488 (1786)

If Mozart's piano concerti are rarely thought to represent the tumultuous political and social world in which the composer lived, they are often tied to other developments in his musical life. In the case of the Piano Concerto No. 23, this means turning to opera: in particular, *The Marriage of Figaro*, which Mozart was composing around the same time (and, interestingly, an opera whose own subject matter alludes to the broader revolutionary sentiments racing across 1780s Europe). The concerto is cut from an operatic cloth: It features abundantly singable themes, constant exchanges between soloist and ensemble, and a strong dramatic arc. Yet it steers clear of opera's pathos, instead opting for bright sunniness. The key of A major, prominence of warmtoned clarinets, and gracious melodies all contribute to an atmosphere of elegance and cheer.

In a letter to a patron, Mozart described this concerto and others written around the same time as music fit for a select audience. "They are compositions which I keep for myself or for a small circle of music-lovers and connoisseurs who promise not to let them out of their hands," he wrote (a perspective that no doubt had the added benefit of flattering the patron). The composer himself was the soloist at the premiere, and it is easy to imagine the atmosphere of conviviality and intimacy that he cultivated. The first movement sparkles with a warm-hued radiance, like sunlight glimpsed through the trees. In the second movement, the piano soloist engages in gentle dialogue with the woodwinds—especially the clarinets—creating an unflashy, chamber-music-like sense of conversation among friends. A somewhat more extroverted virtuosity surfaces in the third movement, as the soloist glides above the orchestra; there are brief moments of more tender emotion, but they resolve quickly into joy.

Henry Purcell, Fantasias (c. 1680)

Purcell lived nearly a century before Mozart, but there are striking similarities between the two composers. Both were revered for their work in opera—as mentioned above, Purcell's Dido and Aeneas was a hallmark of the genre alongside their instrumental music. Both died tragically young, in their midthirties. Yet in other ways, that century of separation makes all the difference. While there is something appealingly familiar about Mozart's much-loved piano concertos (both because they were a source of inspiration to later canonical composers and because they are programmed so often), Purcell's Fantasias have a more disorienting sound. Written around 1680, when the composer was 21 years old, they were originally composed for viol consort—an ensemble already fading in popularity at the time of their composition. They retain an enduring strangeness, that of a path not taken.

These fantasias, part of a group of 15 such works, are sinuous and sinewy. Voices collapse atop one another to create tightly voiced, dissonant intervals, then go their separate ways, propelled by rigorous rhythms and stern patterns. The resulting collage—one of counterpoint glued together by chromaticism—is idiosyncratic in sound. Moments of sunlit consonance fade suddenly into achy tenderness. The unpredictability feels not just unfamiliar, but unformulaic, attesting to the freedom that the genre of the fantasia allows. While these qualities permeate all the fantasias, they come to the fore in Fantasia No. 13 (Fantasia upon One Note). The opening moments are open, warm, and generous. Almost without warning, the sound sinks into a deeply dissonant place, then bursts into passages of intricate counterpoint. Refusing to sit still, the piece continues to cycle among these moods before finally coming to a soft, well-earned resolution at its close.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Piano Concerto No. 24 in C Minor, K. 491 (1786)

An adventurous energy bubbles under the surface of Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 24. Unlike its A-major counterpart—so quintessentially Mozart in its grace and expressivity—this concerto pushes at the limits of convention. It is one of only two piano concerti that Mozart wrote in a minor key, and it calls for an uncharacteristically large orchestra that includes both oboes and clarinets. The first movement's triple meter is also atypical, as are the knotty chromatic harmonies that percolate throughout. Even the material score itself is unusual: Mozart used extra-large manuscript paper with 16 staves instead of 12 and

rearranged several sections of the work as he revised. Its crossed-out phrases and scrawled revisions convey an air of urgency, even confusion. (It perhaps comes as little surprise that later Romantic composers were drawn to this work: Beethoven had it in mind as he wrote his own c-minor piano concerto 14 years later, in 1800.)

These same qualities can be heard throughout the concerto's three movements. We hear every note of the chromatic scale within the first several measures, previewing the harmonic complexity to come, before the piano makes a strikingly unaccompanied entrance. The rest of the movement seesaws between major and minor, and copious sequential passages lead the listener to harmonic extremes. The second movement has a nostalgic sweetness, with an almost lullaby-like first theme followed by an extended back-and-forth between soloist and orchestra. The third movement's somewhat morose variations are rooted in a minor key, although they later venture off into several sunnier moods before returning to the minor for an intense race to the finish.





MAHLER CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

Mahler Chamber Orchestra (MCO) was founded in 1997 based on the shared vision of a free and international ensemble, dedicated to creating and sharing exceptional experiences in classical music. With its core 45 members from 20 different countries, MCO works as a nomadic collective of passionate musicians uniting for tours in Europe and across the world. The orchestra has, to date, performed in over 40 countries across five continents. It is governed collectively by its management team and orchestra board; decisions are made democratically with the participation of all musicians.

MCO's sound is characterized by the chamber music style of ensemble playing among its alert and distinct musical personalities. The orchestra received its most significant artistic impulses from its founding mentor, Claudio Abbado, and from Conductor Laureate Daniel Harding. As current Artistic Partners, pianists Mitsuko Uchida and Leif Ove Andsnes as well as violinist Pekka Kuusisto inspire and shape the orchestra in longterm collaborations. Concertmaster Matthew Truscott leads and directs the orchestra regularly in chamber orchestra repertoire, while MCO's longstanding collaboration with Artistic Advisor Daniele Gatti focuses on larger symphonic works.

The MCO musicians' engagement with their audiences include Feel the Music which opens the world of music to deaf and hard-of-hearing children through workshops in schools and concert halls. Through the MCO Academy, the orchestra works with young musicians to provide a high-quality orchestral experience and a unique platform for international exchange.

MCO commenced its 2021/22 Global Season with its annual residency at Lucerne Festival, performing with pianist Yuja Wang, followed by the world premiere of George Benjamin's Concerto for Orchestra at the BBC Proms. Immersing listeners in Mozart's two most creative years, Leif Ove Andsnes reunited with MCO after their acclaimed album *Mozart Momentum 1785* (Sony Classical).

With Mitsuko Uchida, MCO will tour across Europe and from one U.S. coastline to the other. The season also finds pianist Igor Levit, violinist Alina Ibragimova, and conductor Elim Chan making their debuts. MCO will present Les Adieux with violinist Patricia Kopatchinskaja, showcasing visceral concert staging and unveiling pioneering new technologies that transform listeners' encounters with recorded performances into even more intimate and inspiring experiences. Tonight's concert was originally scheduled for March 2020, the very first concert to be canceled due to COVID-19. We are so pleased to finally have the MCO make its PUC debut this evening.

MARK STEINBERG

Mark Steinberg is first violinist and founding member of the Brentano Quartet. The ensemble was quartet-in-residence at Princeton University for close to 15 years and is now ensemble-in-residence at Yale University. The quartet has performed extensively in North America, Europe, Australia, and New Zealand, as well as in Japan, China, Korea, Israel, and Colombia. The quartet has also recorded extensively and has won many awards, such as the Naumburg Chamber Music Award, the inaugural Cleveland Quartet Award, and the Royal Philharmonic Society award for best debut in the United Kingdom. Mark has appeared often with pianist Mitsuko Uchida, with whom he presented the complete Mozart sonata cycle in London's Wigmore Hall in 2001, with additional recitals in other cities. With Mitsuko Uchida, he has also recorded a group of Mozart sonatas for Philips. Mark has been soloist with the London Philharmonia, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Kansas City Camerata, the Auckland Philharmonia, and the Philadelphia Concerto Soloists, with conductors such as Kurt Sanderling, Esa-Pekka Salonen, and Miguel Harth-Bedoya. Mark holds degrees from Indiana University and The Juilliard School and has studied with Louise Behrend, Josef Gingold, and Robert Mann. He is currently on the violin faculties of the Manhattan School of Music and CUNY The Graduate Center. Steinberg has been on quartet competition juries at the Banff International Quartet Competition, the London Quartet Competition, and twice at the Mozart International Quartet Competition in Salzburg, as well as the Naumburg Violin Competition. He has taught often at the Banff Centre for the Arts, the Aspen Festival, Norfolk Chamber Music Festival, and the Taos School of Music and has given masterclasses at the Eastman School of Music, the Cleveland Institute of Music, the Britten-Pears Institute in Aldeburgh, England, the Mozarteum in Salzburg, the Guildhall School, the Amsterdam Conservatory, Yellow Barn, and numerous other schools.

EXTEND THE LISTENING!

We asked Mark Steinberg to share a musical playlist with you. Point your smartphone camera to this code to hear it.



MITSUKO UCHIDA

One of the most revered artists of our time, Mitsuko Uchida is a performer who brings a deep insight into the music she plays through her own search for truth and beauty. She is renowned for her interpretations of Mozart, Schubert, and Beethoven, both in the concert hall and on CD, but she has also illuminated the piano music of Alban Berg, Arnold Schoenberg, Anton Webern, and György Kurtág.

Ms. Uchida performs with the world's finest orchestras and musicians. She has enjoyed close relationships over many years with the world's most renowned orchestras, including the Berlin Philharmonic, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Bavarian Radio Symphony, London Symphony Orchestra, London Philharmonic Orchestra, and-in the U.S.-the Chicago Symphony and The Cleveland Orchestra, with whom she recently celebrated her 100th performance at Severance Hall. Conductors with whom she has worked closely have included Bernard Haitink, Sir Simon Rattle, Riccardo Muti, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Vladimir Jurowski, Andris Nelsons, Gustavo Dudamel, and Mariss Jansons.

Since 2016, Ms. Uchida has been an Artistic Partner of the Mahler Chamber Orchestra, with whom she is currently engaged on a multi-season touring project in Europe, Japan, and North America. She also appears regularly in recital in Vienna, Berlin, Paris, Amsterdam, London, New York, and Tokyo, and is a frequent guest at the Salzburg Mozartwoche and Salzburg Festival.

She has also been the focus of a Carnegie Hall Perspectives Series entitled Mitsuko Uchida: Vienna Revisited. She has been featured in the Concertgebouw's Carte Blanche Series where she collaborated with tenor Ian Bostridge, the Hagen String Quartet, Chamber Orchestra of Europe, and Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, as well as directing from the piano a performance of Schoenberg's Pierrot Lungire, Ms. Uchida has also been Artist-in-Residence at the Vienna Konzerthaus, Salzburg Mozartwoche, Lucerne Festival, and with the Berlin Philharmonic, where she performed a series of chamber music concerts and a Beethoven piano concerto cycle with Sir Simon Rattle.

A founding member of the Borletti-Buitoni Trust and Co-Director of the Marlboro Music Festival (with pianist Jonathan Biss), Ms. Uchida is a recipient of the Golden Mozart Medal from the Salzburg Mozarteum and the Praemium Imperiale from the Japan Art Association. She has also been awarded the Gold Medal of the Royal Philharmonic Society and the Wigmore Hall Medal and holds honorary degrees from the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. In 2009 Ms. Uchida was made a Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire. Ms. Uchida made her PUC debut several weeks ago with tenor Mark Padmore. We are thrilled to be welcoming her back tonight with the Mahler Chamber Orchestra.

About the Charles S. Robinson Memorial Concert

This concert is funded in part by a gift from a trust, initially established in 1924 by Charles S. Robinson in loving memory of his father, John T. Robinson, and in appreciation of Princeton University for its services to the Princeton community. Since 1964, the trust has supported Princeton University Concerts performances of chamber and orchestral music.

A well known benefactor of cultural activities in Princeton, Robinson served on the Princeton Battle Monument Commission and as Princeton's Postmaster. Born into a family of publishers of early Princeton newspapers such as the Princeton Press (1854–1860) and the Princeton Standard (1859–1870), he was also owner and editor of the Princeton Press (1873–1916), a predecessor to both the Princeton Packet and the Princeton University Press.

Princeton University Concerts is grateful to the Robinson family for its generous support of tonight's concert.

SUPPORT US

Supporting Princeton University Concerts is critical to our future. Ticket sales cover less than half of the cost of presenting the very best in world-class music. Remaining funds come, in part, from our generous endowment, left to PUC by the Ladies' Musical Committee in 1929. We remain eternally grateful for the support of the Philena Fobes Fine Memorial Fund and the Jesse Peabody Frothingham Fund.

Other support comes from donors like you. We are grateful to the individuals whose support at all levels ensures that musical performance remains a vital part of Princeton, the community, and the region.

If you wish to make a donation to Princeton University Concerts, please call us at 609-258-2800, visit puc.princeton.edu, or send a check payable to Princeton University Concerts to: Princeton University Concerts, Woolworth Center, Princeton, NJ 08544.

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We are deeply grateful for all of the support we have received and thank all of our donors and volunteers. The list below acknowledges gifts of \$100 or more, received between September 1, 2021 and March 1, 2022. If you see an error or would like to make a change in your listing, please contact the Concert Office at 609-258-2800.

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All events take place at 7:30PM at Richardson Auditorium, Alexander Hall.

Thursday, March 31

Ébène String Quartet

Thursday, April 7

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Thursday, April 21

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Wednesday, April 27

Sheku Kanneh-Mason Cello Isata Kanneh-Mason Piano

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