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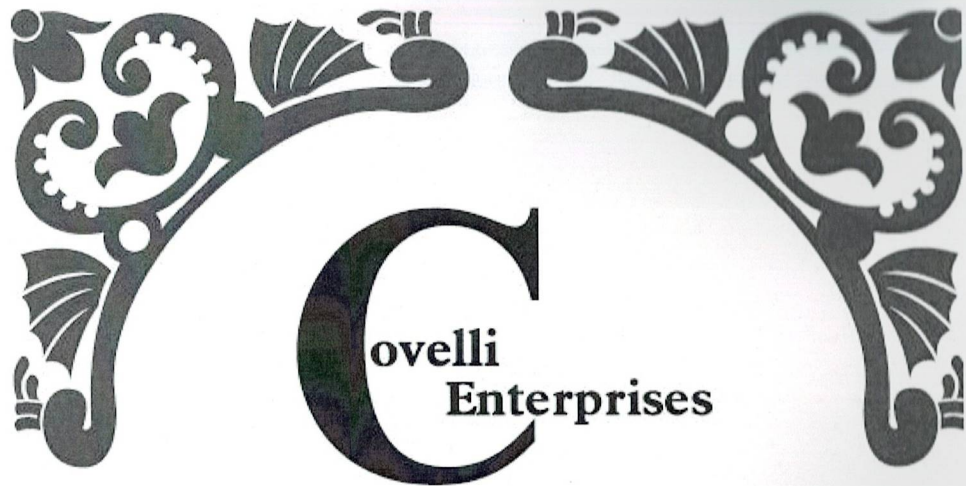
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Spring Concert 2024

April 21, 2024

Susan Davenny Wyner
Music Director & Conductor

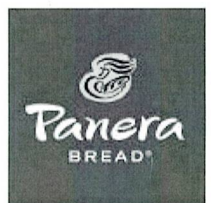
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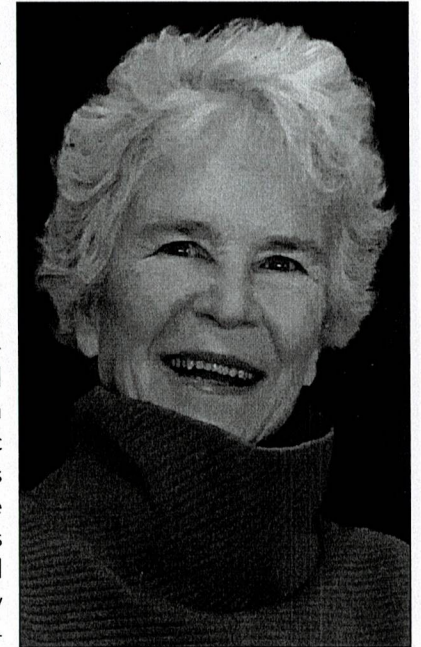


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**Welcome Notes from Music Director and Conductor
Susan Davenny Wyner**

Welcome to the Warren Philharmonic's 2023-2024 Season. Our concerts hold an incredible variety of music, ranging from favorites to new pieces and some surprises! As always we celebrate the gifts of our musicians. Their skills and ability to phrase and shape sound together transport us to wondrous emotional and imaginative worlds.



Our April "The Sound of Magic!" program begins with Mozart's fiery, characterful "Haffner" Symphony, a piece that even he found amazing. One can almost see our orchestra members disporting about on an operatic stage. We then travel to America for two gems by the African American composer Florence Price. One is luscious and warm, the other is a set of 3 dances with jazzy, Caribbean-tinged flair. For our finale, Beethoven's extraordinary 7th Symphony takes us from powerful monumental worlds to rollicking fun. It includes a mysterious procession and finishes with an explosion of joy which has been called "the apotheosis of dance." With this concert, I lovingly celebrate 24 years as Music Director and Conductor and bid farewell to this extraordinary orchestra.

The Warren Philharmonic is committed to playing a vital role in Education and Community Outreach. Over the years, the WPO has performed **Free School Concerts** for thousands of the area's school children.

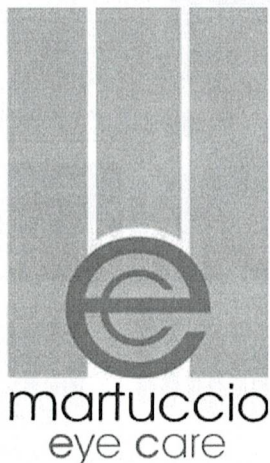
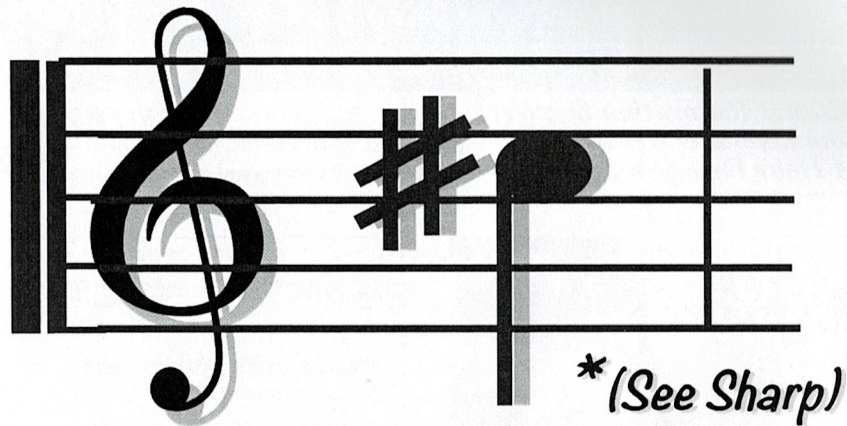
WPO's unique **Frank R. Bodor Strings of Joy!** program has put free stringed instruments in the hands of children and offered them free lessons. The students twice performed as soloists with the Philharmonic in works created especially for them.

The Philharmonic's **School-wide "Music in Art" Contest** has produced hundreds of drawings by school children which have been exhibited at Art Galleries, Museums and Community spaces as far as 200 miles away. In 2019 the WPO collaborated with Any Given Child and SMARTS to create an immersive week-long Music in Art curriculum.

Thank you for supporting this amazing orchestra. The gift of your involvement, however large or small, means the world.

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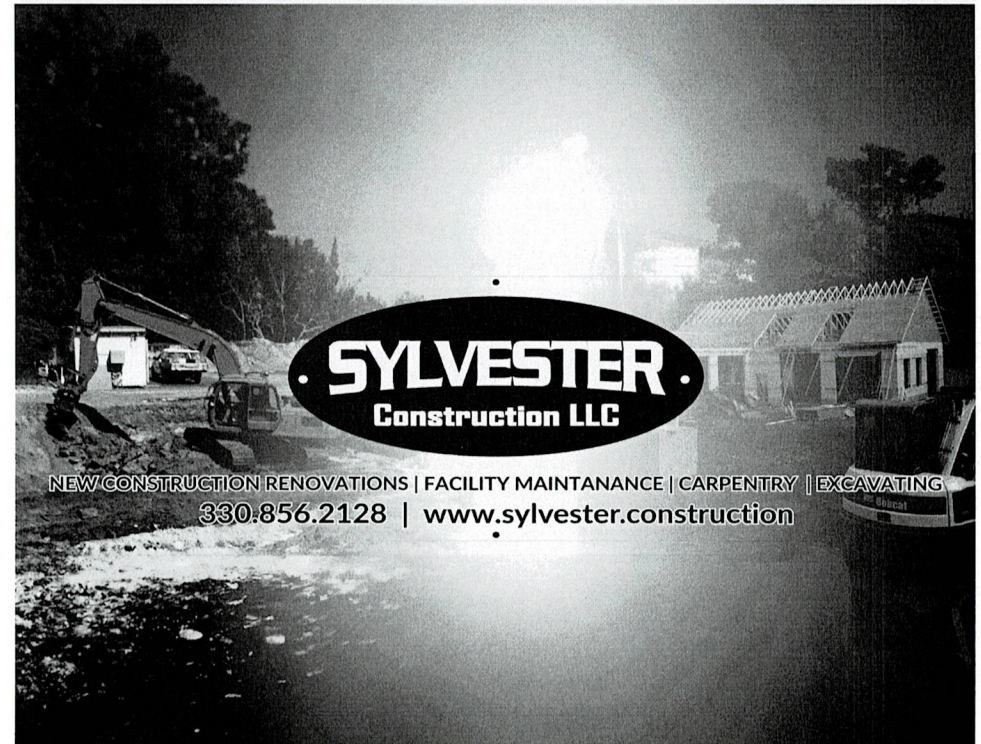
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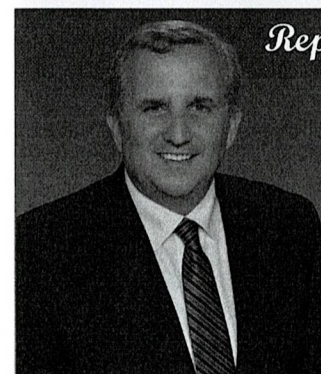
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SUSAN DAVENNY WYNER, Conductor

Susan Davenny Wyner has received international acclaim for her conducting. The Library of Congress featured her in its 2003 "Women Who Dare" Engagement Calendar, and the MacNeil-Lehrer Newshour and WGBH Television have presented documentary features on her life and work. Her conducting credits include the Czech Philharmonic Chamber Orchestra, Odense Danish Symphony, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Boston Lyric Opera, Cleveland Orchestra members in benefit concerts, concerts at the Hollywood Bowl, and recordings for Bridge and Albany Records. Yo-Yo Ma, André Previn, Lynn Harrell, Claude Frank, Peter Serkin, and Emanuel Ax, have been among her guest soloists.

She has conducted repertoire from the 15th through 21st century—premiering over 40 new works, working with period instruments, and conducting 30 operas. The New York Times called her conducting "rapturous, richly textured and emotionally compelling." Opera News Online praised the "terrific lyrical moments under Susan Davenny Wyner's baton," The Los Angeles Times praised her "sensitive and thoughtful leadership," The Boston Globe wrote, "Under her baton the music breathes, lilts, romps, sighs, and sparkles," and four times selected her conducted performances among the "Best Musical Events of the Year."

She has been Music Director and Conductor of Boston Midsummer Opera since 2007, the Warren Philharmonic Orchestra since 1999, and Opera Western Reserve since its creation in 2004. From 1999-2005, she was Music Director and Conductor of The New England String Ensemble in Boston, which she brought to national prominence.

Initially trained as a violinist and violist, Susan Davenny Wyner went on to an international career as a Lyric Soprano—singing with the Metropolitan Opera, New York City Opera, London Symphony, Cleveland Orchestra, Boston Symphony, and other major orchestras. She often



premiered works written especially for her and recorded for Columbia Masterworks, Angel/EMI, Naxos, New World, CRI and Musical Heritage, winning both a Grammy and a Grand Prix du Disc. After a hit and run accident destroyed her singing voice, she began her career as a conductor.

She has held conducting positions at New England Conservatory, the Cleveland Institute of Music, Wellesley College, Brandeis and Cornell Universities, and has conducted numerous lecture demonstrations and master-classes for the National Conductors Guild, the Shanghai Conservatory, and Harvard and Yale Universities among many others.

Susan Davenny Wyner graduated *summa cum laude* from Cornell University with degrees in both comparative literature and music, then continued her studies at Yale and Columbia Universities, at the Tanglewood and Aspen Music Festivals, and at the Los Angeles Philharmonic Institute. In 1998, The American Orchestra League named her a Catherine Filene Shouse Conductor - a first-time award given by a national panel of conductors and orchestral managers to a conductor poised for major career.

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FLIGHT to the imagination,
and **LIFE** to everything.
- Plato

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The End of an Era

Susan Davenny Wyner, our Music Director, and Conductor is leaving her role with the Warren Philharmonic Orchestra. This marks the end of a twenty-four-year period that has been marked by a commitment to excellence, remarkable performances, artistic growth, and community engagement.

Susan has received international acclaim for her conducting. The Library of Congress featured her in its *2003 Women Who Dare Engagement Calendar*, and the MacNeil-Lehrer NewsHour and WGBH Television have presented special documentary features on her life and work. The New York Times called her conducting "rapturous" and "richly textured and emotionally compelling." The Cleveland Plain Dealer called her "a galvanizing presence," and the Chicago Tribune called her conducting "rousing and joyous." The Boston Globe wrote, "Under her baton the music breathes, lilts, romps, sighs and sparkles," and four times selected her performances as *Best Musical Events of the Year*.

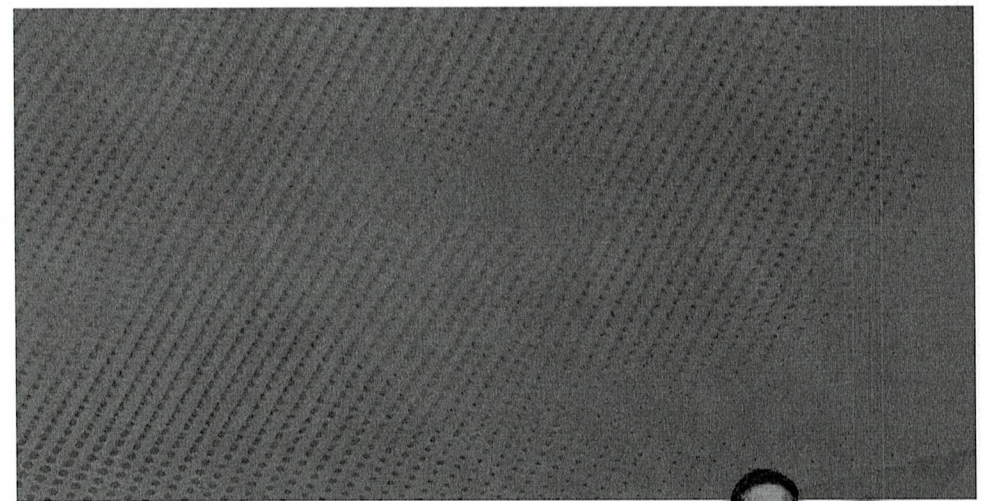
We have called her a visionary, our friend, and mentor. She has been committed to our Orchestra and its role in our community. Under Susan Davenny Wyner's guidance, the WPO has flourished into a cultural cornerstone in the Mahoning Valley. Her passion, vision, and commitment to musical excellence have left an indelible mark on the hearts of both musicians and audiences alike.

Susan has also been a driving force behind the WPO's outreach programs, educational initiatives, and collaborations with local artists and organizations. Outreach programming has included school concerts, Art in Music contests, and the Frank R. Bodor *Strings of Joy* program which provides free violin instruction to students in grades three through seven.

We will be forever grateful for her leadership, artistic vision, and the countless performances that have enriched the lives of those fortunate enough to experience them live.

Today, Susan will conduct her last concert as Music Director of the Warren Philharmonic Orchestra. Words are insufficient in expressing our organization's appreciation for what Susan has given us over the past quarter of a century.

William E. Mullane
Warren Philharmonic Orchestra
Board Chair.

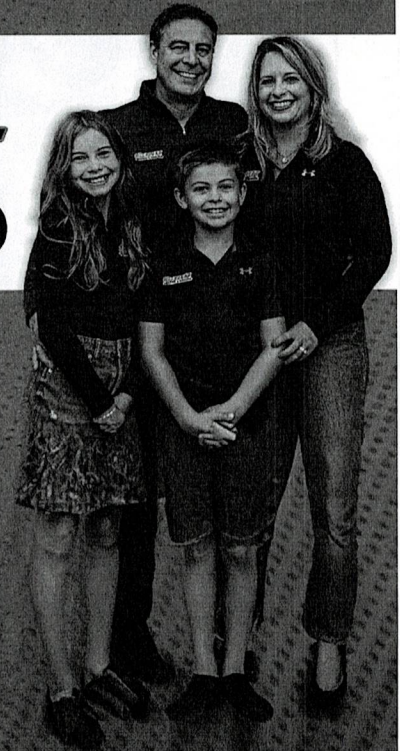


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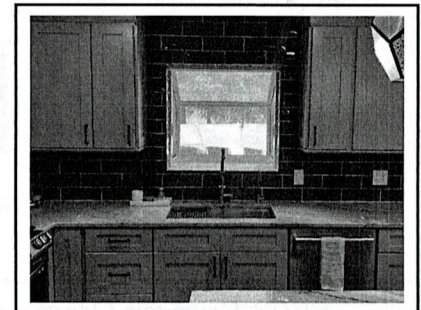
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THE SOUND OF MAGIC!

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PROGRAM NOTES

by Steven Ledbetter & Susan Davenny Wyner

(Mr. Ledbetter was Program annotator for the Boston Symphony from 1979-1998)

April 21, 2024

THE SOUND OF MAGIC!

WOLFGANG AMADÈUS MOZART (1756-1791)

Symphony No. 35 in D major, K.385, *Haffner*

Johannes Chrysostomus Wolfgang Gottlieb Mozart, who began calling himself Wolfgang Amadeo about 1770 and Wolfgang Amadè in 1777, was born in Salzburg, Austria, on January 27, 1756, and died in Vienna on December 5, 1791. He composed the six movements of a serenade (from which he took the movements of this D major symphony, K.385) in Vienna at the end of July and beginning of August 1782. The present form of the symphony took shape the following winter, and it received its premiere on March 29, 1783, in Vienna. The score calls for two each of flutes, oboes, clarinets, bassoons, horns, and trumpets, plus timpani and strings. The flutes and clarinets are a late addition, made when the composer recast the work into four movements. Duration is about 18 minutes.

The Haffner family of Salzburg has been immortalized through two compositions by Mozart, the *Haffner* Serenade, K.250 (248b), of 1776, commissioned for a family wedding, and the *Haffner* Symphony, K.385, of 1782. Actually the symphony was originally intended simply to be another serenade, for use at the celebration given Sigmund Haffner, a boyhood chum of Mozart's, when he was elevated to the nobility in recognition of his generous benefactions made to the city. Mozart's father, Leopold, urgently requested some suitable music from Wolfgang. This happened not long after the younger Mozart's arrival in Vienna, when he was busy trying to establish himself in the capital with pupils and commissions for compositions and attempting to get ready for his forthcoming wedding to Costanze Weber, which was to take place on August 4. (Mozart carefully kept the wedding plans a secret from Papa until it was too late for him to interfere).

Mozart's first reaction was that he was too busy: "I am up to the eyes in work," he wrote on July 20. But he promised to burn the midnight oil and send something—one movement at a time—by each post (twice a week). Not until a week later, on the 27th, did he make his first shipment, though, and it was only a single movement. He explained that he had just had to

compose "in a great hurry" a wind serenade, but he promised to have four movements ready on the next post day. Still the work dragged out, but apparently he sent it all by August 7 (one letter seems to be missing, so we are not sure).

There is no evidence regarding the exact date of the premiere. Leopold presumably prepared the work for performance, and we may assume that the serenade was performed as Mozart wrote it—with an introductory march and two minuets. The march survives; the second minuet is lost.

Just before Christmas Wolfgang wrote to ask his father to send back "the new symphony which I composed for Haffner at your request." He wanted to include the new work in a concert he was planning for Lent (the most popular time for concerts, since opera houses and theaters were closed). Leopold sent the original score back to Vienna; when Wolfgang saw it again, he wrote: "My new *Haffner* Symphony has positively amazed me, for I had forgotten every single note of it. It must surely produce a good effect." But he chose nonetheless to adapt it to better fit the normal canons of concert use—four movements (with only a single minuet)—and added parts for flutes and clarinets, which had been lacking in the serenade.

Mozart included the revised symphony on a concert that he gave on March 29, 1783. The program was arranged in a way that we would find very bizarre today, though it was the normal run of business at an eighteenth-century performance. The concert opened with the first three movements of the new symphony. It was followed by an aria, a piano concerto, an operatic *scena*, a *concertante* symphony, another concerto, another *scena*, a keyboard fugue, and a vocal rondo and then came the finale of the *Haffner* Symphony!

Even though it survives only in its four-movement form, the *Haffner* Symphony still recalls the many earlier serenades Mozart had composed for use in Salzburg, in being generally lighter in construction, somewhat more looselimbed than a normal symphony planned as such from the outset (after all, music to be performed as the background to a party is not likely to have had many listeners willing to follow a detailed musical argument with any degree of concentration).

The pomp of the Symphony's first movement is splendidly worked out with material based almost entirely on the opening gesture, with its dramatic octave leaps or their linear equivalent, running scales in eighths or sixteenths. The Andante is lush and delicately elaborate, filled with those graces we call "Mozartean." The minuet contrasts a vigorous and festive main section (whose grand melodic leaps remind us of the first movement) with a more graceful Trio.

The finale seems to be a reminiscence—whether intentional or otherwise, who can say?—of Osmin's comic aria "O wie will ich triumphieren" (O how I will triumph!) from *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, (*Abduction from the Serail*). The opera was first performed on July 16, 1782, just two weeks before Mozart composed his *Haffner* finale. Osmin's aria begins with the same general melodic shape but has many more repeated notes, which Mozart cut to the witty minimum for his symphonic movement. His satisfaction with the Osmin aria, and his recollection of that recently performed score, may explain the complete fluency with which he noted down this movement in his symphony manuscript, as if at a single sitting. Mozart was also clearly pleased with his symphony finale—enough to use it, isolated from the rest of the work, as the concluding music for an entire concert! As he correctly recognized, his witty play of dynamics in the various returns of the rondo tune was the perfect vehicle to send the audience home in a cheerful mood.

© Steven Ledbetter

FLORENCE PRICE (1887-1953)

Adoration (1951)

Originally written for organ - arranged for violin and orchestra by Elaine Fine

Florence Price [see notes below] composed "Adoration" for organ in 1951, two years before her unexpected death and two years before "Dances in the Canebrakes". A brief work meant to be used in church services, "Adoration" only came to light in 2009 (58 years later!) when it was discovered in a box of her compositions that was rescued from an abandoned Illinois house slated for demolition. As the title suggests, "Adoration" follows the form of devotional sacred hymnody, its meditative opening melody returning at the end with a final amen. Elaine Fine describes her arrangement for solo violin and orchestra as analogous to "painting the same image in oils or watercolors, or in different light, so that we experience the composition in a new way." (Note by SDW)

FLORENCE PRICE (1887-1953)

Dances in the Canebrakes* (1953)

Originally written for piano - orchestral version by William Grant Still.

*A "canebrake" is a thick hedge of rivercane plants, similar to bamboo, that

commonly grew along the edges of streams or lakes in the Deep South. In pre-Civil War days, the thickets had to be cleared for planting cotton. Teams of Black slaves did the backbreaking work but at night they would join together in singing and dancing. (Note by SDW)

Florence Price, a native of Little Rock, Arkansas, was a pioneer black American composer who distinguished herself early on. Most notably, she is remembered as the first black American woman to garner success as a composer of symphonic music. Her first symphony is perhaps her best-known work. Winner of a national prize, it was given its première in 1933 by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra—a social and cultural milestone in this country at that time.

At a young age she journeyed north to Boston to study at the New England Conservatory of Music and returned to Arkansas and Georgia to teach at various small black colleges. After marriage she and her husband left a racially troubled Arkansas in 1927 for Chicago and her further study at the American Conservatory of Music. Her career blossomed, and recognition for her art led to the afore-mentioned symphony in 1931, followed by two more symphonies, concertos, and other works for orchestra. She composed in a variety of other genres: chamber works, piano music, and vocal compositions—over three hundred in all! Her songs and arrangements of spirituals were perhaps her most performed compositions. But, sadly, little of her oeuvre has been published; but with her increasing popularity today, that situation is rapidly changing.

Price was a prolific composer of piano works and this three-movement suite for piano solo was composed shortly before her death. It was later orchestrated by the eminent fellow Southern composer, William Grant Still. The snazzy first movement, “Nimble Feet,” is clearly in ragtime style, infused with its characteristic syncopations. “Tropical Moon” is redolent of a languorous Caribbean evening, with its intimation of what Jelly Roll Morton called a “slow drag,” or jazz’s “Spanish Tinge.” Others may think of it as similar to a tango. In any case, it’s immensely seductive. Finally, the last movement, “Silk Hat and Walking Cane,” evokes nothing of the hard labor of working in the cane fields. Rather, it is all about escaping that work, and finding a bit of refuge in the urban fancy balls and social gatherings that often featured the dance called the “cake walk.” Associated with African-American dances, it may be remembered even in Debussy’s tribute, *Golliwog’s Cakewalk*. It probably originated on antebellum plantations as a black satire of white society, but evolved into a complex life in the whole controversial minstrel show tradition. It, too, has a habanera rhythm, woven into ragtime textures.

This little suite, while modest in scope, is a gem of crafting popular

ethnic musical elements into an artful and charming work of art. Price, as with so many accomplished composers, was as capable of composing for the salon as for the symphony hall.

©2023 Notes by William E. Runyan

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN (1770-1827)

Symphony No. 7 in A, Opus 92

Ludwig van Beethoven was baptized in Bonn, Germany, on December 17, 1770, and died in Vienna on March 26, 1827. He began the *Symphony No. 7* in the fall of 1811, completed it in the spring of 1812, and led the first public performance in Vienna on December 8, 1813. The score calls for two each of flutes, oboes, clarinets, bassoons, horns, and trumpets, plus timpani and strings.

The first performance of the Seventh Symphony, which took place in Vienna on December 8, 1813, at a charity concert that also included the premiere of *Wellington’s Victory in the Battle of Vittoria*, Opus 91, was one of the most splendid successes of Beethoven’s life. The concert was repeated four days later, at the same benefit prices, and raised a large sum of money for the aid of Austrian and Bavarian troops wounded in the Battle of Hanau. More important from the musical point of view, it marked the real arrival of popular recognition that Beethoven was the greatest living composer. To tell the truth, it was probably the potboiler *Wellington’s Victory*, which concluded the program, that spurred the most enthusiasm. Wellington, after all, was allied with the Austrians in opposing Napoleon, and a degree of patriotic fervor infected the proceedings; moreover the piece was simply calculated to appeal to a broad general audience more certainly than the lengthy abstract symphony that had opened the concert. Beethoven, of course, knew that the symphony was the greater piece. He called it, in fact, “one of my most excellent works” when writing to Johann Peter Salomon (for whom Haydn had written his symphonies 93101), asking him to use his good offices with a London publisher to sell a group of his works there. And because of the special popularity of *Wellington’s Victory* (a popularity which was even more likely in England than in Vienna), Beethoven adjusted his prices accordingly: a London publisher could have the “grand symphony” (the Seventh) for thirty ducats, but the *Battle Symphony* would cost eighty! Those fees do not in any way reflect Beethoven’s view (or ours) of the relative merits of the two works; he was simply asking what he thought the market would bear.

The new symphony contained difficulties that the violin section declared unperformable during rehearsals; Beethoven persuaded the players to

take the music home and practice overnight, a concession almost unheard of! The rehearsal the next day went excellently. The composer Ludwig Spohr, who was playing in the violin section for that performance, has left in his memoirs a description of Beethoven's conducting during the rehearsal—a remarkable enough feat since Beethoven's hearing was by now seriously impaired.

Beethoven had accustomed himself to indicate expression by all manner of singular body movements. So often as a *sforzando* occurred, he tore his arms, which he had previously crossed on his breast, with great vehemence asunder. At *piano* he crouched down lower and lower as he desired the degree of softness. If a *crescendo* then entered he gradually rose again and at the entrance of the *forte* jumped into the air. Sometimes, too, he unconsciously shouted to strengthen the *forte*.

Spohr realized that Beethoven could no longer hear the quiet passages in his own music. At one point during the rehearsal, Beethoven conducted through a pianissimo hold and got several measures ahead of the orchestra without knowing it.

[He] jumped into the air at the point where according to his calculation the *forte* ought to begin. When this did not follow his movement he looked about in a startled way, stared at the orchestra to see it still playing *pianissimo* and found his bearings only when the longexpected *forte* came and was visible to him. Fortunately this comical incident did not take place at the performance.

The extraordinary energy of the Seventh Symphony has generated many interpretations from the critics, among the most famous of which is Wagner's description, "Apotheosis of the Dance." The air of festive jubilation was certainly linked by the first audiences with the victory over Napoleon, but many later writers have spoken of "a bacchic orgy" or "the upsurge of a powerful dionysiac impulse." Even for a composer to whom rhythm is so important a factor in his work, the rhythmic vehemence of this symphony, in all four movements, is striking.

At the same time, Beethoven was beginning to exploit farranging harmonic schemes as the framework for his musical architecture. If the Sixth Symphony had been elaborated from the simplest and most immediate harmonic relations—subdominant and dominant—the Seventh draws on more distant keys, borrowed from the scale of the minor mode. The very opening, the most spacious slow introduction Beethoven ever wrote, moves from the home key of A major through C major and F major (both closely related to A *minor*), before returning to A for the beginning of the Vivace. That introduction, far more than being simply a neutral foyer serving as entry to the house, summarizes the architecture of the entire building: A, C, and F are the harmonic poles around which the symphony is built.

Nowhere, not even in the opening movement of the Fifth, does Beethoven stick so singlemindedly to one rhythmic pattern as in the Vivace of the Seventh. It skips along as rhythmic surface or background throughout. The slow movement was a sensation from the beginning; it had to be encored at the first two benefit concerts, and during the nineteenth century it was also frequently used, especially in Paris, as a substitute for the slow movement of the Second Symphony. The dark opening, stating the accompaniment to the entire march theme before the melody itself appears; the hypnotic repetition of a quarternote and two eighths; the alternation between major and minor, between strings and winds; the original fusion of march, rondo, and variation forms—all these contribute to the fascination of this movement.

The Presto of the third movement is a headlong rush, broken only slightly by the somewhat slower contrasting Trio. Beethoven brings the Trio around twice and hints that it might come for yet a third time (necessitating still one more round of scherzo) before dispelling our qualms with a few sharp closing chords. The closing Allegro con brio brings the symphony to its last and highest pitch of jubilation.

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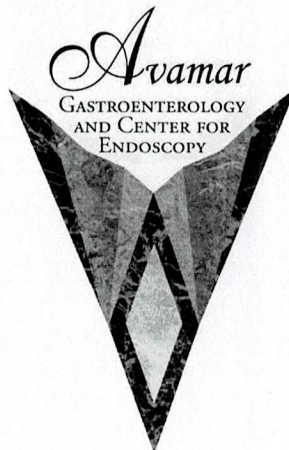
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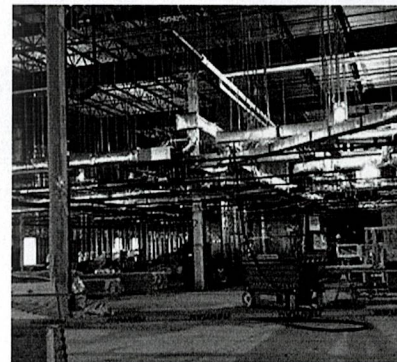
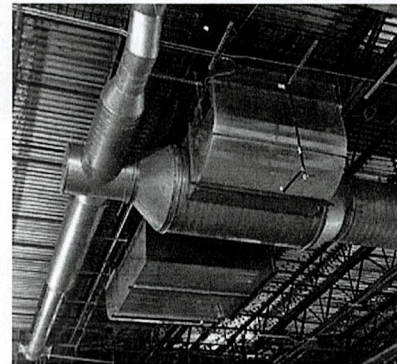
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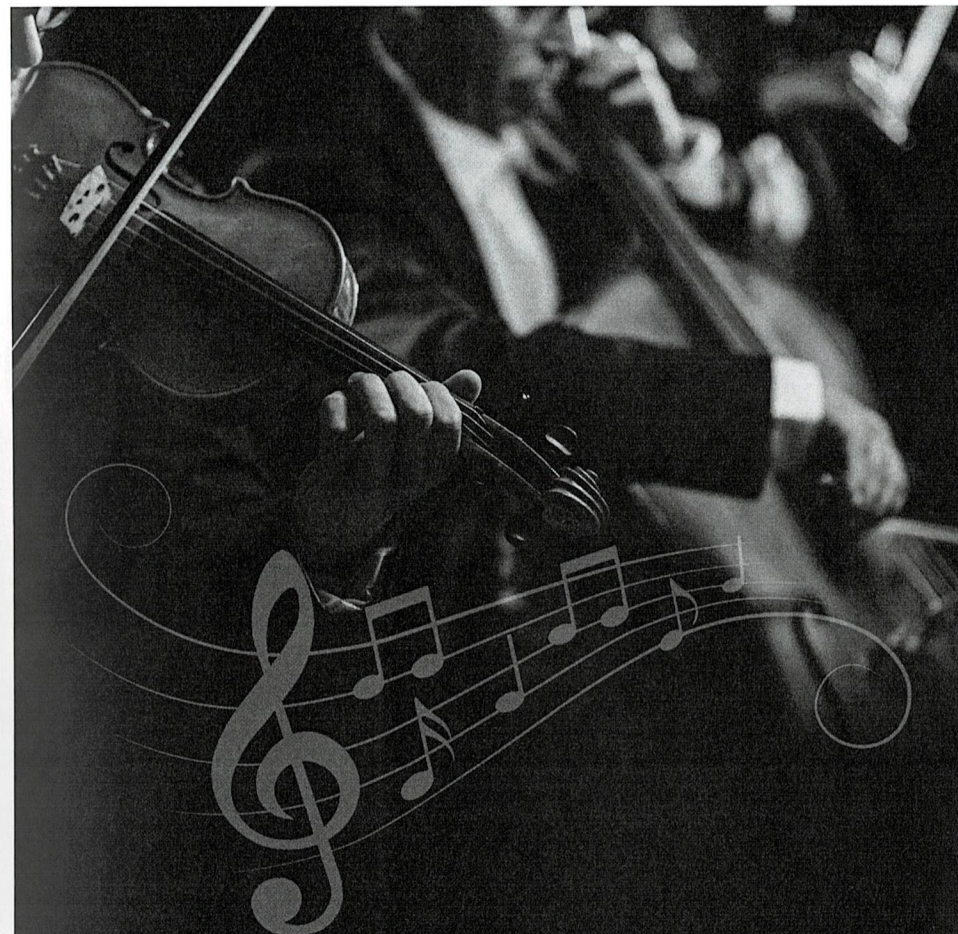


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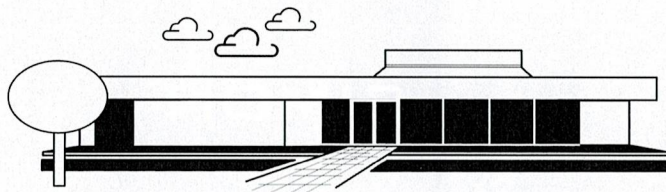
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