

Friday, March 9, 2018 at 7:30pm  
Saturday, March 10, 2018 at 7:30pm  
Richardson Auditorium in Alexander Hall

**Princeton University Orchestra**  
**Michael Pratt, *Conductor***  
**Ruth Ochs, *Associate Conductor***

**SAMUEL BARBER**  
(1910-1981)

*Knoxville: Summer of 1915, Op. 24*

Solène Le Van '18, *Soprano*

**ERNEST BLOCH**  
(1880-1959)

*Schelomo: Rhapsodie Hébraïque* for Violoncello  
and Orchestra

Leland Ko '20, *Cello*  
Ruth Ochs, *Conductor*

*~ Intermission ~*

**SERGEI PROKOFIEV**  
(1891-1953)

Violin Concerto No. 2 in G Minor, Op. 63  
Allegro moderato  
Andante assai  
Allegro, ben marcato

Hana Mundiya '20, *Violin*

**RICHARD STRAUSS**  
(1864-1949)

*Till Eulenspiegel's Merry Pranks, Op. 28*

# PRINCETON UNIVERSITY ORCHESTRA

*(winds and percussion listed alphabetically, \*indicates principal player)*

## **Violin I**

Jeffrey Kuan\*  
Connie Zhu  
Yun Teng\*  
Haeun Jung  
Mary Kim  
Sarah Le Van  
John Li  
Soyeong Park  
Yinan Zheng  
Evelyn Wu  
Russell Kim  
Philippa Marks  
Fumika Mizuno  
Ellie Shapiro  
Dane Jacobson  
Tabitha Oh\*  
Alexander Regent

## **Violin II**

Kristin Qian\*  
Janice Cheon  
Isaac Treves  
Kathryn Leung  
Katherine Park  
Daniel Rim  
Sophia Winograd  
Lawrence Chiang  
Alice Lin  
Emiri Morita  
Nick Kim  
Nanako Shirai  
Alexander Zhu  
Nicholas Schmeller  
Mina Park

## **Viola**

Nathan Wong\*  
Tess Jacobson  
Julia Pak\*  
Katie Liu  
Claire Lee  
Kevin Tsao  
Nathan Rim  
Noah Pacis  
Ethan Glattfelder  
Preston Johnston  
Tore Nessel  
Renee Warnick

## **Violoncello**

Calvin VanZyvtveld\*  
DG Kim\*  
Bartosz Kaczmarski  
Sophie Wheeler  
Simon Lee  
Thomas Morris  
David Kim  
David Basili  
Joshua Choi  
Daniel T. Kim  
Phillip Shen  
Evan Wood

## **Contrabass**

Megan Chung\*  
Andrea Reino\*  
Matt Troiani  
Dorian Pousont  
Daniel Strayer  
Jack Hill  
Dan Hudson

## **Flute and Piccolo**

Haeley Ahn\*  
Nicholas Ioffreda\*  
Queenie Luo\*  
Gabriella Tummolo  
Annie Zou

## **Oboe and English horn**

Christine Kwon\*  
Camille Liotine  
Ethan Petno\*  
Michael Yeung\*

## **Clarinets**

Henry Ando\*  
Nicolas Chae\*  
Joseph Gelb\*  
Michael Hauge  
Yang Song\*

## **Bassoons**

Emily de Jong\*  
Gabriel Levine\*  
Jan Offermann\*  
Greg Rewoldt

## **French Horns**

Peter DeLong\*  
Allison Halter\*  
Thomas Jankovic  
Parker Jones  
Nivanthi Karunaratne\*  
Linus Wang\*  
Jacob Williams

**Trumpets**

Matthew Hetrick\*  
 Lucas Makinen\*  
 Christian Venturella\*  
 Duncan Waldrop\*

**Trombones**

Rajeev Erramilli\*  
 Bradley Spicher  
 Daniel Stern  
 Evan Wood

**Tuba**

Cara Giovanetti\*

**Harp**

Julia Ilhardt\*  
 Sarah Rapoport\*

**Timpani**

Reilly Bova  
 Nitish Jindal  
 Adam Petno

**Percussion**

Reilly Bova  
 Steven Chien  
 Noah Kim  
 Henry Peters  
 Madeline Song

**Celeste**

Seho Young

**PRINCETON UNIVERSITY ORCHESTRA COMMITTEE****Co-Presidents**

Megan Chung  
 Mary Kim

**Tour Committee**

Hyunnew Choi  
 Emily de Jong  
 Nicholas Ioffreda  
 Evelyn Wu

**Treasurer**

Bradley Spicher

**Social Chair**

Janice Cheon  
 Ethan Glattfelder

**Alumni Chair**

David Basili

**Publicity Chairs**

Nicholas Schmeller  
 Yang Song

**Gear Chair**

Lucas Makinen

**Members at Large**

Reilly Bova  
 Julia Ilhardt  
 Nicholas Ioffreda  
 Gabriella Tummolo

**Web Master**

Katie Liu

**Librarians**

Greg Rewoldt  
 Megan Chung

**Orchestra Manager**

Dan Hudson

## ABOUT THE PERFORMERS

The **Princeton University Orchestra** began with a group of professional musicians from the New York Symphony and Philharmonic Societies who performed a series of concerts at Alexander Hall in 1896, the first on February 13. The proceeds were “devoted to the funds for the establishment of a School of Music for the study of Musical Composition, Theory, and History at Princeton University.” In the ensuing 122 years, the orchestra has come to be an almost exclusively student organization; some 90-100 undergraduate and graduate musicians representing a broad spectrum of academic departments come together for concerts in Richardson Auditorium in Alexander Hall.

Under the direction of Michael Pratt since 1977, the orchestra has in recent years taken an important place in the state’s concert calendar. *The Newark Star-Ledger* had high praise for the orchestra’s “passionate performance” of Mahler’s “Resurrection” Symphony and called the performance of Mahler’s Third Symphony one “that would make any orchestra proud.” The Princeton University Orchestra performs ten to fifteen concerts a year on campus, in addition to international tours. These concerts include both new music and works from the standard repertory. Audience members and critics alike have commented that even the most familiar works take on a new freshness in the enthusiastic, spirited and precise performances given by the Princeton musicians.

The orchestra also serves an important role in Princeton’s Department of Music by both reading and performing new works by graduate composition students. In addition, the orchestra has also been invited to give command performances for special University events, such as the installation of President Harold Shapiro, and the celebration of Princeton’s 250th Anniversary. In April 2001, the Orchestra appeared at Lincoln Center for a special performance called “Beethoven and Homer, The Heroic Moment,” a program which combined the Fifth Symphony of Beethoven and Professor Robert Fagles reading from his translations of Homer’s *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*. The Orchestra has represented Princeton on tours both of the United States and Europe. Recent tours have seen visits to London, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Madrid, Barcelona, Prague, Bratislava, Budapest and Vienna. In January 2007 the Orchestra’s performance in Bratislava was taped for later broadcast on Slovak television. Participation in the orchestra is voluntary and extracurricular; students commit many hours to rehearsal above and beyond the time required for academic course work. Graduates of the orchestra have gone on to be performers, music teachers, and arts administrators, but the list of professions also includes lawyers, physicians, business executives, government officials, economists, architects, research scientists, and journalists. The Princeton University Orchestra offers an important opportunity for student instrumentalists to pursue musical interests in a way that significantly enhances their overall growth in a strong academic environment.

**F**or 40 seasons the Princeton University Orchestra has been led by Conductor **Michael Pratt**, a relationship that has resulted in the ensemble's reputation as one of the finest university orchestras in the United States. Over the years, the Orchestra and Pratt have performed a remarkable variety of the orchestral literature, from J. S. Bach's *Orchestral Suites*, to Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, to Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*.

As Director of the Princeton University Opera Theater, Pratt has conducted operas from Mozart to Ravel, and in the past decade has focused on the early Baroque operas of Monteverdi and Cavalli. One of the chief architects of Princeton's Certificate Program in Musical Performance, Pratt has served as its director for over twenty years, and is co-founder with Nathan A. Randall of the Richardson Chamber Players. Pratt was educated at the Eastman School of Music and Tanglewood, and his teachers have included Gunther Schuller, Gustav Meier, Leonard Bernstein and Otto Werner Mueller. He also holds the posts of Music Director of the Delaware Valley Philharmonic and Principal Conductor of American Repertory Ballet. He has also conducted the orchestras of Boston, Atlanta, Buffalo, Detroit, Indianapolis, and Odessa, Ukraine.

**Ruth Ochs** has conducted at Princeton University since 2002. As the music director of the Princeton University Sinfonia, she has led its growth from a chamber orchestra into a full-size symphony orchestra. Passionate about raising the bar for collegiate,

community, and youth orchestras, she also works with several local ensembles, including the Westminster Community Orchestra and the Princeton Charter School/Westminster Conservatory Youth Orchestra. She holds degrees in music and conducting from Harvard University and the University of Texas at Austin. For many summers, she studied conducting at the Pierre Monteux School in Hancock, Maine with Michael Jinbo. She received her Ph.D. in Musicology from Princeton in 2018.

**Y**oung singer and violinist **Solène Le Van '18** is already regarded as an exceptionally versatile and sensitive musician. Born in Colmar, France, Ms. Le Van was accepted into Princeton University at fifteen and is concentrating in French Literature and Culture with Certificates in Vocal Performance, Musical Theater, and Italian Language and Culture. Last year, Ms. Le Van won competitive admission to pursue a dual study program at the Royal College of Music in London in voice with Russell Smythe and violin with Daniel Rowland. Her debut recording with the label Sheva Collection, featuring world-premieres by Reynaldo Hahn and Emile Paladilhe, will soon be released internationally.

From an early age, Ms. Le Van has performed extensively as a soloist, both nationally and internationally. Venues include the 26th International Munster Jazz Festival in France, the Brunneby Concert Series in Sweden, the Encore Committee of the LA Philharmonic Concert Series, and Weill Recital Hall at

Carnegie Hall in New York City. She was also invited to perform at the International Vianden Festival in Luxembourg under the patronage of the US Embassy. A frequent prizewinner in competitions, Ms. Le Van won the David W. Scott Memorial Vocal Competition (both 1st Place and Audience Favorite Awards), the Henry LeRoy Violin Scholarship, the American Association for the Development of the Gifted and Talented International Competition in New York City (Gold Medalist), and the Young Musicians Foundation Debut Concerto Competition. As a YMF laureate, she performed world premieres with the YMF Debut Orchestra in Los Angeles under the baton of Roger Kalia. As a previous winner of the Princeton University Concerto Competition, Ms. Le Van sang Bernstein's "Glitter and Be Gay" with the Princeton University Orchestra under the baton of Michael Pratt. Recently, she also sang as a soloist in a performance of Handel's *Messiah* at the American Handel Society under the baton of John Butt. She was also engaged as a soloist in the role of Maria in a concert performance of Bernstein's *West Side Story* with the Royal College of Music Orchestra and Big Band.

Versatile in many instruments and styles, including jazz, folk, and musical theater, her performances in multiple genre have attracted the attention of composers and arrangers, including GRAMMY-award winner Bill Cunliffe, Emmy-award nominee J.A.C Redford. Ms. Le Van has studied the violin with Eric Wyrick and has been coached as well by Michaela Paetsch. In voice, she studies with Martha Elliott and has taken lessons from

Cynthia Munzer, Kim Josephson, and Jon Fredric West of the Metropolitan Opera.

**Leland Ko** is a 19-year-old cellist from Weston, MA. He was most recently a disciple of cellist, teacher, and Cleveland Quartet co-founder Paul Katz of the New England Conservatory of Music, and is now a sophomore at Princeton University pursuing a Bachelor of Arts degree. Prior to studying with Mr. Katz, Leland was a long-time student of Ronald Lowry. In 2011, he was admitted to the Perlman Music Program in New York City – a place that has meant home to him ever since – run by violinist Itzhak Perlman and his wife Toby. For six summers, Leland studied with Ronald Leonard, former principal cellist of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, as well as with Merry Peckham – among many others – who helped cultivate an intense passion for chamber music.

From its founding in 2012 until leaving Boston, Leland was also co-principal cellist of the Boston Philharmonic Youth Orchestra (BPYO) under the leadership of Benjamin Zander. With the orchestra, he toured across Europe. The BPYO has been indispensable in the lives of Leland and countless others, as it has opened his eyes to new attitudes to both music and life.

Leland is also a dedicated tennis player (and even more of a dedicated tennis fan), having played competitively on the United States Tennis Association circuit through much of his youth and serving as a stalwart on his high school's team as well as the Princeton club

tennis team. In the last few years, Leland has also become a long distance runner, which conveniently complements his other passion for eating (and occasionally cooking) food.

**H**ana Mundiya made her concerto debut with the New York Philharmonic at age 13 at David Geffen Hall in Lincoln Center as a part of the orchestra's Young People's Concerts. A prizewinner in the 9th Leopold Mozart Competition (2016) in Augsburg, Germany, second place winner in the 2016 Aspen Music Festival Concerto Competition, and Concerto Competition winner at Princeton University (2018), she is also a winner of the New York International Artists Competition, and has performed chamber music in Alice Tully Hall at Lincoln Center. Hana appeared as a guest soloist for the New York Piano Society in Carnegie Hall four times and with ThePianoGuys on the Stern Auditorium Perelman Stage at Carnegie Hall. In 2011, Hana performed as a soloist in a series of concerts with the Mainzer Kammerorchester in Germany to raving reviews, and made her solo debut with the Minsk Festival Orchestra, playing the *Symphonie Espagnole* by Lalo when she was 11 years old.

She is a sophomore studying Comparative Literature and Music Performance, and studied for a year as a freshman at The Juilliard School. Her teachers include Naoko Tanaka and Donald Weilerstein, with whom she has been studying since she attended The Juilliard School Pre-College Division. Her chamber music coaches include Laurie Smukler,

Samuel Rhodes, and Masao Kawasaki, and she has performed in orchestral concerts as a member of The Juilliard Orchestra and the Aspen Chamber Symphony. She is a member of the Princeton University Orchestra, and is the President of Opus 21. She has also been a featured artist by MusicalAmerica and is a member of the United Nations Chamber Music Society. She has attended the Aspen Music Festival and School, Masterclasses for Strings and Winds at the Banff Centre in Canada and *Fêtes Musicales en Savoie* in France.

She started playing the violin at the age of three at the School for Strings, and is a graduate of the United Nations International School and The Juilliard School Pre-College Division.

## PROGRAM NOTES

### Samuel Barber (1910-1981)

#### *Knoxville: Summer of 1915*

by Solène Le Van, ©2018

After composer Samuel Barber completed his wartime service in 1947, he was confronted by the harsh reality of civilian life and his father's failing health. He chanced upon a short autobiographical prose poem entitled "Knoxville Summer of 1915" by the then relatively unknown *The New York Times* journalist James Agee. Agee died at forty-five after attaining some modest critical acclaim. Little did he know that he would receive widespread recognition in 1958, when his novel *A Death in the Family* would be hailed as a masterpiece and awarded a posthumous Pulitzer Prize. The work prefigures the event that shattered the tranquility of his young life: the death of his father in an automobile accident when he was six years old. The novel is pervaded by an acute awareness of what has been irretrievably lost. The moments captured in transitory images - those of quiet contentment between a father singing lullabies and his son looking up at him with a vulnerable gaze, for instance - can never be regained.

The opening Agee's novel is suffused with an awareness of the frailty of life, and a tragic recognition that childhood must come to an end. The work describes the author's experience as a five-year-old imbibing a summer evening before dusk. Agee depicts small-town Tennessee with a tender lyricism:

the porches and rocking chairs, the pleasurable scents and the throbbing hum of night-time insects, as well as the familiar characters - the Artist, the Musician, Mother, Father, Aunt, Uncle. The boy's observations and the presence of his loved ones provide reassurance, but the placid chatter of his parents cannot satisfy his yearning to find answers to deeper questions. He cannot help but contemplate the night sky with a sense of radiance; the stars are "so near," and yet they are infinitely beyond him and the relatives "who quietly treat me, as one familiar and well-beloved... but will not ever tell me who I am." Agee expresses the striving of the individual to find his position in the universe and his search for something ineffable lying outside the contingencies of his own place and time. The dreamlike narration by the child seems, at times, to morph into an adult voice, which is desperate, pleading, lonely. During the narrator's supplication that God protect his parents "in the hour of their taking away", we apprehend the older Agee's realization that the security inherent to childhood is but a brief glimpse of light before the dark senselessness of mortality.

Agee's text left an indelible impression on Barber and gave him the impetus he desperately needed to compose during a difficult period in his life. Much of the appeal of Agee's piece lies not only in the inherent qualities of the prose, but also in the composer's shared childhood landscape of verandas and indolent summers in his hometown of West Chester, Pennsylvania, as warmly expressed in Agee's description of Knoxville, Tennessee. Both the author and

composer were five years old in 1915, and to both the period represents an era of innocence unmarred by the horrors of war. When the two men met, Barber was moved to discover that they had much in common in their lives and artistic temperaments. It is no surprise that when soprano Eleanor Steber commissioned a work from Barber, he immediately decided to set Agee's prose to music, rapidly composing a rhapsodic orchestral work mirroring the stream-of-consciousness text. When Steber premiered *Knoxville Summer of 1915* in 1948 with the Boston Symphony Orchestra under Serge Koussevitzky, it was an immediate success.

Masterfully crafted and romantic in sensibility, Barber's "Knoxville" finds at its center a remarkable sensitivity to text. The piercing opening alludes to a pastoral idiom in the plain woodwind scoring, and yet it also implies a call rising melodically towards the unknown. The uncertainty encapsulated in the oboe and cor anglais gives way to the regular lilt of triplet rhythms and 12/8 meter of a lullaby, mirroring the movement of rocking chairs in the prose. The "nostalgia" theme then appears, a three-note figure that serves as a basis for much of the pentatonic, folk-like line setting to the words "it has become that time of evening when people sit on their porches". The synaesthesia in Agee's description is reflected in the atmospheric mood-picture of Barber's word painting, in subtle instrumental characterizations of the languid aspects of the Knoxville twilight - for instance, a horse "breaking his hollow iron music on the asphalt" and "the taste... of vanilla, strawberry,

and starched milk." Soon, a chromatic sequence evokes the passing streetcar, disturbing the pastoral landscape and its trusted way of life, "crackling and cursing...like a small malignant spirit." As the sound of the streetcar gradually dies away, the silvery texture of the orchestra gives way to the lyric soliloquy "Now is the night one blue dew," culminating with an A-major chord with an added-seventh and a sumptuous ascent to a Bb pianissimo in the vocal line. The subdued rocking of "parents on porches" returns, with "the low and exalted sound of the locusts" expressed in a hushed meditative vocal line. A sudden tortured passage in the upper register of the strings suggests that the forces encroaching on the splendor of the night - the ephemerality of all that is human - are intrinsically contained in childhood bliss. The following section features the child's illustration of his parents; a passionate outburst on the word mother "who is good to me," leads into a section announcing the existential crisis at the core of the work. In the phrase "who shall ever tell the sorrow of being on this earth," the singer ascends dramatically once more to a Bb on the word "sorrow." The diatonic resolution accompanying the text "among the sounds of the night" weeps in its pianissimo intensity. The woodwind music from the very opening then returns, heralded by the deep foreboding of the basses, just as the child blesses all the well-loved people who form his universe. The music of the opening measures, transfigured and darkened, reappear in the emotional climax of the work, embodied in an anguished prayer which accelerates into a statement of the oboe theme in the strings: "May God

bless my people... in their time of trouble; and in the hour of their taking away.” As the child is put to bed, the music broadens and intensifies, while the original theme returns, ardent and bittersweet in the phrases “sleep soft smiling unto her” and “those who receive me.” After the singer’s last phrase (“But will not tell me who I am”), the orchestra repeats the “nostalgia” theme one more time, the last phrases permuting as in a hopeful question.

What is this question? Perhaps Barber asks us to consider whether we can defy the irreversibility of time in such instances of beauty. Barber shows us that death and decay are in the midst of things precious to us: the light of dusk is a fading light; the child’s parents and loved ones will all pass away. The piece awakens pity for the transient in life, and yet in the composer’s own words, it is precisely through such “intensity of feeling that one attains true existence” through “contact with something outside of himself.” By reaching for something outside of ourselves, Barber is able to redeem inevitable loss and give us in return a glimpse of the eternal.

### **Ernst Bloch (1880-1959)**

#### ***Schelomo: Rhapsodie Hébraïque***

by Leland Ko, ©2018

There is a story that tells of how Ernest Bloch went to a field nearby his home, constructed an altar of stones, wrote a fervent vow on a piece of paper swearing himself to the composition of music, and burned the piece of paper over the altar. He was only 10 years old.

Whether or not this story is true, it makes a point – Bloch’s devotion to music was something that defined his entire life. Though he was born in Geneva in 1880, he spent a large portion of the latter half of his life in America, as both a composer and a teacher. He held a post at the Mannes School of Music from 1917-1920, and then became the first president of the Cleveland Institute of Music before moving to the west coast, teaching at the San Francisco Conservatory and the University of California at Berkeley, until he passed away in Portland, Oregon, in 1959.

This work, *Schelomo*, is a centerpiece of what was known as Bloch’s “Jewish Cycle,” which, although it constitutes only a small portion of all his compositions, includes the majority of works for which he is known. It was composed between 1915 and 1916, in the midst of the First World War, and consequently, as with many works written at this time, *Schelomo* is an expression of loss — loss of loved ones, loss of a way of life, and loss of faith in life itself. As Bloch began to feel the condition of the world on a deeper and more personal level, he gravitated towards the Ecclesiastes. The following text, in particular, spoke to him:

“Vanity of vanities, all is vanity.

...

All things toil to weariness:

Man cannot utter it.

The eye is not satisfied with seeing,

Nor the ear filled with hearing.

That which hath been

Is that which shall be,

And that which hath been done

Is that which shall be done;  
And there is nothing new under the  
sun.”

(Ecclesiastes 1:2-9)

From this came his conception for *Schelomo* – as the Ecclesiastes are attributed to King Solomon, so the orchestral part in this work became the experiences, the suffering, and the thoughts of King Solomon, while the solo cello became the voice given to those thoughts – that is, the cello is the voice of King Solomon (“Schelomo” in transliterated Hebrew). In this way, more so than in other staples of the cello repertoire, the cello and orchestra are entirely dependent on each other. It is no concerto: it is a single 20-minute movement, and the unconventional harmonies, the ever-changing levels of complexity, and the spectrum of emotional intensity that it covers can exhaust and overwhelm performer and audience alike. As much as this work feels as though it tells or follows a clear story, Bloch said in his own program notes from 1955, “I had no descriptive intentions. I was saturated with the Biblical text and, above all, with the misery of the world, for which I have always had so much compassion.”

But as with every piece, *Schelomo* exists on many levels. There is what the composer felt and expressed through his music, but there is also always what the performer and audience feel. Bloch may have intended an expression of the misery of the world, but not all of us – especially myself at my age – have lived through the worldly tragedies that he did. I admit that I avoided learning this piece for many years because I told myself

I was not “emotionally ready” – that feels a little bit like unnecessary modesty to me now, but just because I play it now does not mean that I suddenly fully understand what Bloch felt. A teacher of mine reminds me that not necessarily being able to relate directly to a composer’s life does not mean that the music loses power – the music still speaks, just in different ways to everyone. And whether it does so in the worldly way it did to Bloch or in perhaps a more personal and internal way, I can only hope that, at the very least, this piece leaves you with something.

**Sergei Prokofiev (1891-1953)**

**Violin Concerto No. 2 in G Minor, Op. 63**

by Hana Mundiya, ©2018

Sergei Prokofiev wrote his Second Violin Concerto between 1934 and 1935. He completed most of the work in various regions of his homeland, Russia, but started composing in Paris, where it was commissioned by a group of French musicians who were friends of the violinist Robert Soërens. The concerto, his last Western commission, was written as Prokofiev was resettling in Russia; he started it in Paris, then wrote the rest in Voronezh, on the banks of the Don River, and in Polenovo, in a secluded house in the countryside (both in Russia), as well as in Azerbaijan. Although most of the work was written in his native land, hints of his cosmopolitan and traveling life are apparent; for example, while the sweet and soaring second theme of the first movement is reminiscent of a French landscape (and not unlike some melodies found in his ballet music for *Romeo and Juliet*, which he

was composing at the same time), the use of castanets and Spanish flair in the third movement may be a reflection on the city of its premiere, Madrid.

Despite Prokofiev's reputation for expressing a combination of neoclassicism, sarcasm, and grotesquerie in his music, the time of the composition of this concerto marked a change in his composition style to one of simplicity. He conveyed this in a manifesto in 1934, in which he wrote that his music "should not be old-fashioned; it must be a new simplicity." According to Aaron Copland, this simplicity can be credited to the fact that he wrote much of it in Russia; he expressed that Prokofiev's "rediscovery of his native land only made him lean more strongly on music of utter simplicity and directness." This can be heard particularly in the more lyrical passages of every movement - in the singing second theme of the first movement, the delicate, yet slightly sarcastic melodies of the second movement, and the brief but sweet lines in the last.

When I listened to this concerto for the first time, I was struck by the chamber music-like exchanges between the solo violin and sections in the orchestra. Prokofiev had considered titling the piece, "Concert Sonata for Violin and Orchestra" - "sonata" implies that he had had some chamber music elements in mind, which are very clear upon listening. He ultimately named it Concerto No. 2; he wrote that he "nevertheless wanted it to be altogether different from No. 1 both as to music and style." The instrumentation is not large, which allows for intimate dialogue between the solo violin and the orchestra - the woodwind

instrumentation is essentially identical to that of a classical orchestra, with two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, and two trumpets, although the percussion instrumentation in this piece is slightly different (there is no timpani). For example, there are several moments when the violin answers a melody from a section, and then passes it on to another. There are countless situations in which each voice that is playing is equally important - the cellos may play the same melody as the trumpet (in the third movement), or the oboe and solo violin may exchange the melody before their respective lines interweave with one another (in the first movement).

It was my dream ever since I first heard this piece when I was twelve years old to play it with an orchestra, and I am so happy and grateful to have the opportunity to perform it with my friends and Maestro Pratt.

### **Richard Strauss (1864-1949)**

#### ***Till Eulenspiegel's Merry Pranks, Op. 28***

by John Ahern GS, ©2018

Richard Strauss' own program notes to this tone poem (composed in May 1895) began thus: "Once upon a time there was a knavish fool named Till Eulenspiegel. He was a wicked goblin up to new tricks..." The story traces how the legendary trickster made so many rude jokes and effected so many scandalous revelations that he was eventually put to death for blasphemy and being a general nuisance. The music is a delightful reflection of this trajectory: a theme from the French

horn brimming with boisterous bad ideas, a theme from the clarinet full of all the wrong notes, rattles and trumpets interrupting polite moments, and, eventually, the death-toll snare drums and ominous brass as Till Eulenspiegel meets a gruesome end. We perhaps cannot know why this tale originated in the 14th century, nor why so many generations of Europeans passed it down, but it does seem that Richard Strauss liked it, at least in part, because he identified with the plight of Till. Strauss partook in some little “blasphemies” of his own: thematically, he loved portraying edgy content, like his opera *Salome* (1905) that famously shows the titular character kissing John the Baptist (not so bad, you think)—after John has been bloodily beheaded; musically, Strauss is full of formal confusion and decadent harmonies.

In this tone poem, Strauss has brilliantly created a work that is at war with itself. The piece constantly tries to domesticate and civilize the rudeness of Till’s clarinet melody: with a pastorale or a polka or prim and proper harmonies that could have been in Mozart, it pleads with Till’s melody to have a little sobriety and social grace. And for brief moments, Till’s melody plays along. But then it betrays the piece, always running away with the tempo and infecting different orchestral sections with chaos. At last, when it is clear that the jocular melody cannot be controlled by the formal constraints of the piece, the piece must put the melody to death, and that final wheezing from the clarinet is its pathetic end. Afterwards, the orchestra moralizes briefly with a restrained version of Till’s melody: this is what happens when a joke goes too far. Thank goodness, order has been restored. Or has it?

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## **PRINCETON UNIVERSITY ORCHESTRA SPRING 2018 SEASON**

*Michael Pratt’s 40th-Anniversary Season as Conductor*

All concerts begin at 7:30pm in Richardson Auditorium in Alexander Hall  
and are \$15 general/\$5 students unless otherwise stated

**Friday and Saturday, April 27 and 28, 2018** - Britten - War Requiem

*The Stuart B. Mindlin Memorial Concerts*

**Saturday, June 2, 2018 at 8:00pm** - *Reunions Fireworks Concert; Finney Field; Free*

# Upcoming Music at Princeton Events

Sunday, March 11, 3pm

***Richardson Chamber Players: Bernstein & Friends, A Centennial Celebration***  
***presented by Princeton University Concerts***  
Richardson Auditorium in Alexander Hall

Sunday, March 11, 8pm

***Princeton Sound Kitchen: Wack Pianos I***  
Lee Music Room, Lewis Arts complex

Tuesday, March 13, 8pm

***Princeton Sound Kitchen: Wack Pianos II***  
Lee Music Room, Lewis Arts complex

Wednesday, March 14, 7:30pm

***Princeton University Glee Club Presents:  
A workshop with Tenebrae Choir***  
Princeton University Chapel

Thursday, March 15, 8pm

***Tenebrae Choir***  
***presented by Princeton University Concerts***  
Princeton University Chapel

Saturday, March 17, 1pm

***Baby Got Bach Family Concert***  
***presented by Princeton University Concerts***  
Richardson Auditorium in Alexander Hall

Tuesday, March 27, 7:30pm

***Edward Zhang '19, Piano***  
Taplin Auditorium in Fine Hall

Wednesday, March 28, 7:30pm

***Nathan Wong '18, Viola***  
Taplin Auditorium in Fine Hall

Thursday, March 29, 8pm

***Sir András Schiff, Piano***  
***presented by Princeton University Concerts***  
Richardson Auditorium in Alexander Hall

Saturday, March 31, 3pm

***DG Kim '18, Conductor***  
Lee Music Room, Lewis Arts complex

Thursday, April 5, 8pm

***Artemis String Quartet***  
***presented by Princeton University Concerts***  
Richardson Auditorium in Alexander Hall

Sunday, April 8, 1pm

***Christopher Jagoe '18, Organ***  
Princeton University Chapel

Tuesday, April 10, 8pm

***Princeton Sound Kitchen:  
Freelance Concert***  
Taplin Auditorium in Fine Hall

Wednesday, April 11, 7:30pm

***Kristin Qian '18, Violin***  
Taplin Auditorium in Fine Hall

Thursday, April 12, 8pm

***Lawrence Brownlee, Tenor***  
***presented by Princeton University Concerts***  
Richardson Auditorium in Alexander Hall

For more information visit  
**[music.princeton.edu](http://music.princeton.edu)**