Thursday, December 14, 2017 at 7:30 PM
Richardson Auditorium in Alexander Hall

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY SINFONIA
Ruth Ochs, Conductor
Lou Chen '19, Assistant Conductor

HECTOR BERLIOZ
Roman Carnival Overture
(1803-1869)

ALEXANDER BORODIN
In the Steppes of Central Asia
(1833-1887)

PIOTR ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY
Variations on a Rococo Theme
(1840-1893)

Moderato quasi Andante
Thema: Moderato semplice
Variation 1: Tempo della Thema
Variation 2: Tempo della Thema
Variation 3: Andante sostenuto
Variation 4: Andante grazioso
Variation 5: Allegro moderato
Cadenza
Variation 6: Andante
Variation 7 and Coda: Allegro vivo

Maxwell Watkins GS, Cello

- INTERMISSION -
JOSEPH HAYDN
(1732-1809)

"Achieved is the Glorious Work"
from The Creation (arr. D. Miller)

Sinfonia Trombone Quartet
Sofia Dimitriadoy '20
Nathaniel Hontz '21
Matthew Myers GS
Kevin Nuckolls GS

WITOLD LUTOSŁAWSKI
(1913-1994)

Dance Preludes
Allegro molto
Andantino
Allegro giocoso
Andante
Allegro molto

Henry Ando '20, Clarinet

OTTORINO RESPIGHI
(1879-1936)

Fountains of Rome
The Fountain of Valle Giulia at Dawn
The Triton Fountain at Morning
The Fountain of Trevi at Midday
The Villa Medici Fountain at Sunset
PRINCETON UNIVERSITY SINFonia

**Violin**
- Abe Chien, *co-concertmaster*
- Isabella Khan, *co-concertmaster*
- Angela Yang, *co-concertmaster*
- Cathy Chen, *co-principal*
- Kristen Hauge, *co-principal*
- Alexander Menegas, *co-principal*
- Nsomma Alilonu
- Lauren Anllo
- Nia Arora
- Udit Basu
- Donovan Cassidy-Nolan
- Jaeyoon Cha
- Olivia de Geofroy
- Kalyana Duggal
- Kevin Feng
- Alexander Gaura
- Jordan Heinzl-Nelson
- Michaela Hennebury
- Akiva Jackson
- Amy Jeon
- Andrew Kaneb
- Lily Kim
- Sophia Lee
- Anna Qin
- SiSi Peng
- Hannah Smalley
- Trina Swanson
- Katja Vassilev
- Melissa Wang
- Jan Offermann
- Connor Staggs

**Cello**
- Anthony D’Arienzo, *co-principal*
- Connor Hainge, *co-principal*
- Camille Heubner, *co-principal*
- Brian LaPointe
- Jessica Ma
- Timothy Morrow
- Sean-Wyn Ng
- Michael Prablek
- Maxwell Watkins
- Brian LaPointe
- Ian Iverson, *principal*
- Jonah Vernejoul

**Bass**
- Freddy Hertan
- Jack Hill
- Isherwood
- Naoushelter

**Flute/Piccolo**
- Kathy Fan
- Emma Guare
- Jessica Ho
- Alina Kido-Matzner

**Oboe/English Horn**
- Sunny He
- Camille Liotine

**Clarinet/Bass Clarinet**
- Chesley Chan
- Gabriela Hayward-Lara
- Michaela Hennebury
- Thomas Massoni
- Audrey Shih
- Eileen Wang

**Bassoon**
- Francesca Billington
- Josef Gramespacher

**Horn**
- Peter DeLong
- Kaki Elgin
- Ned Furlong
- Elizabeth Keim
- Josh Maccoby

**Trumpet**
- Joseph Giguere
- Christian Venturella
- Randy Wilson
- Jonathan Zhi

**Trombone**
- Sofia Dimitriadoy
- Nathaniel Hontz
- Matthew Myers
- Kevin Nuckolls

**Tuba**
- David Salkowski

**Harp**
- Jacqueline Eberhard
- Julia Ilhardt

**Percussion**
- Louis Josephson
- Barak Nehoran
- Henry Peters
- Sam Schiebe

**Piano/Celeste**
- Maryam Abdurrahman
- Edward Zheng
NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

Roman Carnival Overture

Hector Berlioz has gone down in history as an eccentric Romantic with an idiosyncratic musical style. This is somewhat accurate, but deserves qualification. Berlioz was a colorful person, music critic, and composer, who had a unique and inimitable musical style. His music features appealing melodies, clever rhythms, contrapuntal maneuvers, and brilliant orchestration, all of which figure prominently in his Roman Carnival Overture.

The Roman Carnival Overture had its origin in the 1838 failure of Berlioz’s opera, Benvenuto Cellini. Set in sixteenth-century Rome, the opera featured a lively saltarello danced in the Piazza Colonna. Despite the dancers’ agility, the conductor never caught the tempo; this and other mishaps left audiences hissing. Berlioz—known for reusing his own music in subsequent works—used the brisk saltarello, and one of the opera’s early love duets, as the basis for a new Overture. The opera’s love theme is the luscious melody heard first played by the English horn and then violas in the slower portion of the introduction. Berlioz preferred to conduct his own music to ensure their successful performance. At the Overture’s premiere in 1844, he was forced to repeat the work for an adoring Parisian audience.

--Ruth Ochs

In the Steppes of Central Asia

In the Steppes of Central Asia is a symphonic poem composed by Alexander Borodin. It was initially intended to be performed on the 25th anniversary of Czar Alexander II’s ascension to the Russian throne. However, the project fell through, and its music was largely forgotten—except for Borodin’s piece, which remains popular to this day. First conducted by Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov and dedicated to Franz Liszt, it is monumental by association and in execution.

The piece begins with a single E harmonic in the first violins. Enveloped by this stark simplicity and airy timbre, we can imagine the desolate steppe lands of the Caucasus, virtually untouched by any signs of life. Suddenly, the clarinet introduces a lilting, meandering melody, which represents a group of Russians leading a caravan. This theme soon gives way to a pizzicato passage in the lower strings—the "travelling" theme—which represents the gentle, unhurried plodding of the horses and camels. Then the English horn enters with an expressive eastern melody, revealing the passengers of the caravan to be a group of Central Asians.

The Russian and Asian themes are eventually played simultaneously, in different instrumental combinations, as the two groups interact and grow closer to us. As they pass by and recede into the distance, the Asian theme drops out. The Russian theme
is shortened and then augmented, while undergoing a brief canon in the woodwinds. We are reminded of melodic echoes, reverberating around the vast expanse and returning to us in fragmented, warped form. Finally, we are left with sustained high notes in the violins and flutes, reminding us that we are once more alone in the steppes. But the music, and the memory of the passing caravan, still hangs in the chilly air.

--Lou Chen

**Variations on a Rococo Theme**

For Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky, 1876 was a year filled with travel and creative success. Since the opening of the Moscow Conservatory in 1866, Tchaikovsky was professor of harmony. Yet his schedule was flexible, and in 1876 he traveled, visiting France and Bayreuth, Germany, where he absorbed the latest music of Richard Wagner. Compositionally, he had reached his mature stride and his music received praise at home and abroad. Despite professional success, Tchaikovsky struggled with personal matters, including insecurity and his sexual orientation, all of which he shielded from the public. To cope, he escaped into the world of his music. In late 1876, amidst the bustle of the holidays, Tchaikovsky sought out the realm of his musical idol, Mozart, and composed his Variations on a Rococo Theme.

Contrary to what the title might suggest, Tchaikovsky crafted the theme himself. Modeled on the balanced phrase structure of Classical-era music, the theme is tinged with hints of melancholy and nostalgia. In the eighteenth century, the Rococo was a florid, ornate, and graceful style most evident in architecture and the visual arts. Tchaikovsky reflected this style and his beloved Mozart through the lens of the nineteenth century and his own musical style.

Through the series of seven variations and coda, Tchaikovsky pared Enlightenment balance with gentle chromaticism and Romantic pathos. In the introduction, optimistic, major-mode rising gestures in the strings are paired with downward, minor-scale triads in the horn. The theme, introduced by the solo cello, mixes similar elements of beauty and elegance with nuanced inner rhythmic turns and fleeting chromatic touches. The first two variations are closely modeled on the structure of the theme. With the third variation, Tchaikovsky begins to depart his model; only melodic intervals connect it with its parent theme, while luxuriant beauty seems to be the topic of this conversation between the cello solo, orchestral strings, oboe, and clarinet. A shift in where the theme begins in relation to the downbeat enriches variation four, which also begins to highlight the soloist’s virtuosic technique. Variation five is essentially a return to the main theme, though played by the flute, while the cello solo plays a line consisting only of trilled notes. A cadenza concludes this variation. The sixth variation is the most nostalgic. The only minor-mode
variation, it outwardly expresses sentiment that only the rest of the piece could suggest. Pathos is short-lived as the final variation and coda are a bouncy and energetic return to optimism. The solo part is enriched with stunning technical challenge yet with Tchiakovský’s guiding pen, it all seems effortless and elegant.

--Ruth Ochs

\textit{Dance Preludes}

Witold Lutosławski (1913-1994) was a Polish composer and conductor, who by the 1950's had become recognized as one of his country’s most important contemporary composers. From the end of World War II until Stalin's death in 1953, he and other Eastern Bloc composers were subject to Stalin's artistic censorship. Any music regarded as "formalist," or inaccessible to the masses, was strongly looked down upon. The party-approved artistic movement was socialist realism, which glorified communist values through realistic and grounded imagery. In this stifling artistic climate, Lutosławski had to walk the line between formalism and unoriginality. His solution was to write music where the primary motivic material comes from traditional Polish folk songs, assuaging complaints of formalism, and then to innovate with rhythm and harmony. His \textit{Dance Preludes} (1954) and Concerto for Orchestra (1950-1954) represent the pinnacle of his work with this style; after Stalin’s death in 1953, the artistic climate in Poland began to relax, and Lutosławski was free to move off in new directions (particularly aleatoric music).

The \textit{Dance Preludes} are based on folk songs from northern Poland, but their exact sources are unclear, partly because the borrowed material is woven in so seamlessly. Rhythmically, these pieces are mainly characterized by a heavy use of polymeter between the clarinet and orchestra. Much of the tension and vitality of the first, third, and fifth movements derives from this sense that the soloist has sheared off from the orchestra. Throughout, the combination of rough-around-the-edges folk style with these complex polyrhythms and liberal usage of synthetic scales and polychords gives the whole work a sound that is at once both old and new.

--Henry Ando

\textit{Fountains of Rome}

At the turn of the twentieth century, opera dominated the Italian musical scene. The trend gradually transformed, thanks in large part to Ottorino Respighi’s interest in the symphonic poem. Born in 1879, Respighi studied composition and violin in his native Bologna. After graduation, he traveled and explored music being composed elsewhere. He traveled twice to Russia (1900, 1902), where he played viola in several major orchestras, and met and likely studied with Rimsky-Korsakov. He also spent a year in Berlin, Germany (1908-09). Back in Italy, Respighi turned to composition, and began
teaching in Rome. Completed in 1916, *Fountains of Rome* became the first of three major tone poems depicting the sights, sounds, and history of Rome. *Pines of Rome* followed in 1924, and *Roman Festivals* in 1928. Conceived as a continuous work, *Fountains of Rome* presents four movements each depicting one of Rome’s famous fountains at a time of the day when each exudes a special aesthetic power.

The work opens at dawn in the once rural north of Rome with a pastoral landscape and the Fountain of the Valle Giulia. Murmurs from mid-range strings, and misty high-harmonics, accompany woodwind solos suggesting farmers tending their herds and flocks. The sound of blaring horns introduces the musical reflection of Bernini’s masterpiece, the Triton Fountain on the Piazza Barberini. In mythology, Triton calmed or raised the seas by blowing on his conch shell. The climax of the work is Respighi’s tribute to the Trevi Fountain at midday. The triumph and power of the music convey the fountain’s scale and triumphant majesty. The close of *Fountains of Rome* places the listener near a modest fountain near the Villa Medici and overlooking Rome at dusk. Tranquility dominates as the symphonic poem peacefully closes.

--Ruth Ochs

---

**ABOUT THE PERFORMERS**

The **PRINCETON UNIVERSITY SINFONIA** is a full symphony orchestra that unites eager, music-loving students to explore symphonic repertory from the Baroque to the very newest. Its members are undergraduate and graduate student musicians with diverse academic interests and backgrounds, who join their talents for the pleasure of making music together and for others. Having grown from a small chamber orchestra to its current size, the orchestra has expanded the scope of its musical mission on campus, as well. The orchestra now performs regularly with faculty soloists, and pursues a creative variety of works composed by undergraduate composers. In 2014, several members of the Sinfonia began an outreach initiative with the Community House After School Academy (CHASA) at Princeton University’s Pace Center for Civic Engagement. Each spring the orchestra sponsors a concerto competition for its own members, and the winners perform with the orchestra in May of each year.

**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.

HENRY ANDO '20 grew up in Urbana, Illinois. In the fall of 2016, he crossed many cornfields to come to Princeton and major in Physics. Outside of academics, he is a tutor for ISC and MAT 215, and works in a biophysics lab on campus. Henry has played with both Sinfonia and PUO, and has taken clarinet lessons from Jo-Ann Sternberg. Henry started playing piano at age seven, and took up clarinet at ten. Throughout middle and high school, he took clarinet lessons from Karen DeBauche. In high school, he was part of the Urbana High School Wind Symphony and the Tiger Marching Band, of which he was the drum major during his senior year. He played in the East Central Illinois Youth Orchestra from 2011-2016, and in the Urbana Pops Orchestra from 2012-2015. He played the Mozart Concerto with UPO in the summer of 2015. He first learned about the Lutosławski Dance Preludes in 2014 when he played a few movements for a competition, but it was not until later when he heard the Martin Fröst recordings of them that he really appreciated how much fun they are. He hopes you enjoy the concert as much as he has enjoyed preparing for it!

LOU CHEN is a junior from San Bernardino, California. He is pursuing a major in Music with certificates in American Studies and Conducting Performance. This is his second year as Assistant Conductor of Sinfonia, with whom he’s performed works by Mendelssohn, Saint-Saens, and Chaminade. Additionally, he serves as an opinion columnist for the Daily Princetonian and as Director of the Trenton Youth Orchestra, for which he was awarded the Santos-Dumont Prize for Innovation. Next semester, he will be studying musicology at Oxford University, where he will miss Sinfonia dearly!

MAXWELL ATKINS is currently a third-year PhD student in the Chemistry Department at Princeton. He was born in 1993 in Allentown, Pennsylvania and began studying piano at the age of four and cello at the age of nine. In high school, Max played with the PMEA all-state orchestra as well as the MENC all-eastern honors orchestra. Max received a degree in Biochemistry from Lehigh University in 2015, where he studied cello with Chris Gross. At Lehigh, Max was principal cellist as well as student president of the University Philharmonic for two years. At Princeton, Max has played with Sinfonia for the past three years and is also currently the music director for Princeton’s resident cello ensemble, La Vie en Cello. Max isn’t sure what he wants to do yet after he graduates, but he hopes to keep music a major part of his life no matter what.