

Meyer conducts Prokofiev & Brahms

A celebration of music and the sheer joy it provides.



Give Feedback on Dirk Meyer, Music Director Candidate!

Your Input Matters!

Tonight features one of our four Music Director Candidates!

After tonight's concert, [visit this link](#) to fill out our survey to provide your feedback on tonight's performance and candidate, **Dirk Meyer**.

Thank you for your interest in participating in our search for MSO's next Music Director!

[FILL OUT OUR MUSIC DIRECTOR SURVEY!](#)

Meet the Final

FOUR



THE SEARCH FOR

MSO's next Music Director

The Modesto Symphony Orchestra is in the process of finding its next Music Director!

After an overwhelming response from nearly 200 applicants, we have narrowed down the field to **four Music Director candidates**. The candidates will each conduct one of our Classics concerts where they will showcase their skill, personality, and musical taste. Get to know the Final Four as we get ready for next season!

[Learn more about our search!](#)

About the Show

Modesto Symphony Orchestra Association

Meyer conducts

Prokofiev & Brahms

Friday, April 1, 2022, 7:30 pm

Saturday, April 2, 2022, 7:30 pm

Gallo Center for the Arts, Mary Stuart Rogers Theater

Dirk Meyer, *conductor*

Alexander Korsantia, *piano*

Tonight features one of our four Music Director candidates. We would love for your feedback on their performance by filling out [this survey here](#). For more information about our Music Director search, [click here](#).

The Modesto Symphony Orchestra stands with Ukraine. The growing humanitarian crisis and violent conflict is heartbreaking and we support the people of Ukraine and their resiliency and courage.

Program

Oswaldo Golijov (b. 1960)

Sidereus (2010)

Sergei Prokofiev (1891-1953)

Piano Concerto No. 3 in C major, Op. 26 (1921)

Alexander Korsantia, *piano*

1. Andante- Allegro
 2. Tema con variazioni
 3. Allegro, ma non troppo
-

INTERMISSION

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

Symphony No. 1 in C minor, Op. 68 (1876)

1. Un poco sostenuto— Allegro - Meno allegro
 2. Andante sostenuto
 3. Un Poco Allegretto e Grazioso
 4. Adagio — Più andante — Allegro non troppo, ma con brio - Più allegro
-

The Doubletree by Hilton Modesto is the official hotel of the Modesto Symphony Orchestra.

Thank You

The Modesto Symphony Orchestra gratefully acknowledges the following sponsor for supporting this weekend's post-concert reception.

Friday, April 1, 2022

Bob Saunders

[For a full listing of donors & sponsors, click here.](#)

Thank you for wearing your mask!

For the safety of all concertgoers, masks are strongly recommended for all patrons. Thank you!

Photography, sound, or video recording of this performance is

Modesto Symphony Orchestra

strictly prohibited. Please remember to silence all electronic devices and refrain from text messaging during the concert. Mobile devices may be used to read program notes during the concert.

Program and artists subject to change. E&OE.

Rosters

Orchestra Roster

Dirk Meyer, conductor

Violin 1

Ilana Blumberg, *Concertmaster*
Dagenais Smiley, *Associate Concertmaster*
Karsten Windt, *Assistant Concertmaster*
Kirstan Hilton
Milka Kraleva-Castro
Elizabeth Kidwell
Matthew Oshida
Jolán Friedhoff
Yuri Cho
Elizabeth Rivard
Brian Lee
Ray Reinebach
Nicola Gruen

Violin 2

Myriam Cotton-Rack, *Principal*
Michelle Maruyama, *Assistant Principal*
Donald Grishaw
Josephine Gray
Donna Harrison
Gyongyver Petheo
Yuri Cho
Michael Nicholson
Sarah Biagini
Ivelina Kofler
Kymber Gillen
Julie Metz

Viola

Patricia Whaley, *Principal*
Kathryn Juneau, *Assistant Principal*
James Een
Valerie Tisdell
Jacob Hanson-Joseph
Daria D'Andrea
Nancy Ewing
David Cann
Melinda Rayne
Nao Kubota

Cello

Richard Andaya, *Principal*
Matthew Linaman, *Assistant Principal*
Hannah Harrington
Amy Brodo
Joel Cohen

Modesto Symphony Orchestra

Byron Hogan
Michelle Cho
Nicci Welch
Joan Hadeishi

Bass

Raymond Vargas, *Principal*
Sukyung Chun
Kevin Myers
Abhi Vinnakota
Christy Crews
Karen Zimmerman
Joe Lewis

Flute

Johanna Borenstein, *Principal*
Gail Edwards, *Piccolo*

Oboe

Jessica Pearlman, *Principal*
Robert Walker, *English Horn*

Clarinet

Rob Patterson, *Principal*
Cory Tiffin, *Bass Clarinet*

Bassoon

David Granger, *Principal*
Karla Ekholm
Michael Severance, *Contrabassoon*

Horn

Melia Badalian, *Principal*
Alex Camphouse, *Assistant Principal*
Nicky Roosevelt
Adam Wolf
William Harrington

Trumpet

John King, *Principal*
Derek McDonald

Trombone

Bruce Chrisp, *Principal*
Dillon MacIntyre
Wayne Solomon

Tuba

Forrest Byram, *Principal*

Modesto Symphony Orchestra

Timpani

John Weeks, *Principal*

Percussion

Thomas Rance, *Principal*

Artist Biographies



Dirk Meyer

conductor

German conductor **DIRK MEYER** is Music Director of the [Augusta Symphony](#) in Georgia and the [Duluth Superior Symphony Orchestra](#) (DSSO) in Minnesota. Having received much of his training in European opera houses, Meyer is also passionate about opera also holds the position of Music Director with the [Lyric Opera of the North](#).

Meyer has guest conducted many orchestras throughout the United States, including the Phoenix Symphony, Symphoria, the Orlando Philharmonic, the Springfield Symphony, the Naples Philharmonic and The Florida Orchestra. Other engagements include the Toronto Symphony and the Edmonton Symphony in Canada, the New Bedford (MA) and East Texas Symphonies, as well as the Sarasota Orchestra in Florida. Meyer is first prize winner of The American Prize in orchestral conducting and was awarded the Arts & Culture Initiative Award by the Depot Foundation in Minnesota in 2017.

Meyer's performances have been described as "mesmerizing" and "out of this world." As a champion of orchestral music Meyer brings classical music to new audiences, creating concert experiences that range from multimedia performances, to collaborations of all kinds. Most recently Meyer created The Beethoven Project, a collaboration with Minnesota Public Radio, which features the recording of Beethoven's nine symphonies. With the Augusta Symphony Meyer is currently recording five previously unrecorded works by Uruguayan-American composer Miguel del Aguila, in collaboration with peermusic Classical.

Maestro Meyer is the author of "[Chamber Orchestra and Ensemble Repertoire. A Catalog of Modern Music](#)". Abroad Meyer has conducted in countries like South Africa, the Czech Republic and Germany. He also led performances at the Plovdiv Opera in Bulgaria. Prior to his current appointments Meyer served as Associate Conductor of the Sarasota Orchestra, as well as assistant conductor with the Traverse Symphony, and the Missouri Symphony Orchestra.

Meyer has studied with teachers like Neeme Järvi and Jorma Panula and assisted at the Deutsche Oper am Rhein (Germany), as well as at the Vienna State Opera (Austria) and the Teatro Real in Madrid (Spain). He holds Doctor of Musical Arts and Masters degrees in orchestral conducting from Michigan State University, as well as Bachelor's Degrees from the Folkwang Conservatory in Germany (music) and the University Duisburg-Essen (philosophy).



Alexander Korsantia

piano

Alexander Korsantia is one of the leading

pianists of our time. A “major artist” (Miami Herald) and a “quiet maverick” (Daily Telegraph), Alexander Korsantia has been praised for a “piano technique where difficulties simply do not exist” (Calgary Sun).

In recent seasons Mr. Korsantia performed with the Stuttgart Philharmonic, Boston Philharmonic and Xiamen Philharmonic, Israel Symphony and Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra. With The Far Cry Chamber Group he played Galina Ustvolskaya's Piano Concerto in Boston und Tblisi.

Ever since winning the First Prize and Gold Medal at the Artur Rubinstein Piano Master Competition and the First Prize at the Sydney International Piano Competition, Korsantia's career has taken him to many of the world's major concert halls, collaborating with renowned conductors such as Christoph Eschenbach, Gianandrea Noseda, Valery Gergiev, and Paavo Järvi, with such orchestras as the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, The City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Mariinsky Orchestra, Orchestra Sinfonica Nazionale della RAI in Turin, Cincinnati Symphony, and Israel Philharmonic Orchestra.

Alexander Korsantia is a frequent guest in many of the world's leading concert series including in Warsaw, Boston, Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, Vancouver, Calgary, San Francisco, Lodz, St. Petersburg, and Blaibach and at major international festivals in Tanglewood and Verbier. A passionate chamber musician, he has collaborated with other leading soloists such as Vadim Repin, Miriam Fried, Kim Kashkashian, Sergei Nakariakov and the Stradivari Quartet.

His award-winning recordings include works by Beethoven, Prokofiev, Rachmaninoff, and Copland. In 2020 his recording of Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No. 2 was released to great critical acclaim (with Stuttgart Philharmonic under Dan Ettinger, at German label Hänssler). His solo piano transcription of Ravel's La valse was published by Sikorski.

Born in Tbilisi, Alexander Korsantia began his musical studies at an early age with his mother, and later became a pupil of Tengiz Amiredjibi, Georgia's foremost piano instructor. In 1992, he joined the famed piano studio of Alexander Toradze at Indiana University in South Bend, USA. In 1999, then-President Eduard Shevardnadze awarded him the Order of Honor. Mr. Korsantia is a recipient of the Golden Wing award (2015) and Georgia's National State Prize (1997). Korsantia resides in Boston where he is a Professor of Piano at the New England Conservatory.

Program Notes

Sidereus

Oswaldo Golijov

Oswaldo Golijov

Sidereus

<p>Composer: born December 5, 1960, La Plata, Argentina Work composed: 2010; co-commissioned by 36 orchestras to honor the career of Henry Fogel, former President and CEO of the League of American Orchestras. World premiere: Mei-Ann Chen led the Memphis Symphony Orchestra at the Cannon Center for the Performing Arts in Memphis, TN, on October 16, 2010. Instrumentation: 2 flutes, 2 oboes, English horn, 2 clarinets, bass clarinet, 2 bassoons, contrabassoon, 2 horns, trumpet, piccolo trumpet, trombone, bass trombone, tuba, timpani, and strings Estimated duration: 9 minutes</p>

Since 2000, when Oswaldo Golijov's *La Pasión según San Marcos* (St. Mark Passion) premiered, he and his music have been at the forefront of the contemporary music world; *The Boston Globe* hailed *La Pasión* as "the first indisputably great composition of the 21st century." Golijov has also received acclaim for other groundbreaking works such as his opera *Ainadamar*; the clarinet quintet *The Dreams and Prayers of Isaac the Blind*; several works for Yo-Yo Ma and the Silk Road Ensemble; vocal music for soprano Dawn Upshaw; and scores he has written for the films of Francis Ford Coppola. In the fall of 2021, Golijov's latest work, *Um Dia Bom*, for the string quartet Brooklyn Rider, premiered in Boston. Golijov is currently the Loyola Professor of Music at College of the Holy Cross, where he has taught since 1991.

The title *Sidereus* comes from the 17th-century Italian astronomer Galileo Galilei, whose 1610 treatise *Sidereus Nuncius* (Starry Messenger) described his detailed telescopic observations of the surface of the moon. "With these discoveries, the moon was no longer the province of poets exclusively," Golijov said in an interview. "It had also become an object of inquiry: Could there be water there? Life? If there was life, then the Vatican was scared, because, as Cardinal Bellarmine wrote to Galileo: How were the people there created? How would their souls be saved? What do we do about Adam? Wasn't he supposed to be the first man? How do we explain the origin of possible life elsewhere? What about his rib? It's the duality: the moon is still good for love and lovers and poets, but a scientific observation can lead us to entirely new realizations."

Two years after its premiere, composer and critic Tom Manoff heard the Eugene Symphony perform *Sidereus*, and noticed an uncanny resemblance between it and *Barbeich*, a solo work for accordion by Michael Ward-Bergeman. In his blog, Manoff accused Golijov of plagiarism. A number of other well-known critics latched

on to the story, and a major controversy ensued.

As it happens, Golijov and Ward-Bergeman are friends and long-time creative collaborators, and some of the music in both *Barbeich* and *Sidereus* comes from deleted sections of a film score the two men had co-written. "Osvaldo and I came to an agreement regarding the use of *Barbeich* for *Sidereus*," Ward-Bergeman explained. "The terms were clearly understood, and we were both happy to agree."

© Elizabeth Schwartz

NOTE: These program notes are published here by the Modesto Symphony Orchestra for its patrons and other interested readers. Any other use is forbidden without specific permission from the author, who may be contacted at www.classicalmusicprogramnotes.com

Piano Concerto No. 3 in C Major, op. 26

Sergei Prokofiev

Sergei Prokofiev

Piano Concerto No. 3 in C Major, Op. 26

Composer: April 27, 1891, Sontsovka, Bakhmutsk region, Yekaterinoslav district, Ukraine; died March 4, 1953, Moscow

Work composed: 1916-21; dedicated to poet Konstantin Balmont.

World premiere: Frederick Stock led the Chicago Symphony with the composer at the piano on December 16, 1921.

Instrumentation: solo piano, 2 flutes (1 doubling piccolo), 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, timpani, bass drum, castanets, cymbals, tambourine, and strings.

Estimated duration: 28 minutes

American journalist: "What is a classical composer?"

Sergei Prokofiev: "He is a mad creature who composes work incomprehensible to people of his own generation. He has discovered a certain logic, as yet unknown to others, so that they cannot follow him. Only later do the roads that he has pointed out, if they are good ones, become understandable to those around him."

In his memoirs, Sergei Prokofiev said he "wished to poke a little fun at the Americans," when asked the question quoted above in a 1927

interview he gave in New York. Prokofiev's tongue-in-cheek response was more accurate than he intended, however, particularly with regard to his own music and how it was received by American audiences.

Prokofiev composed in a patchwork style, jotting down fragments of themes in a notebook as they came to him. Prokofiev kept these musical diaries for years, and often referred to them when he composed. Several of Prokofiev's musical ideas for the Third Piano Concerto had been gestating since 1913, including the delicate melody that forms the basis for the Andantino theme and variations. Like a quilt design fashioned from many unrelated patches, Prokofiev's Third Piano Concerto is an artful arrangement of musical ideas that evolve into a unified sound collage. Prokofiev put the finishing touches on the third concerto during the summer of 1921, while he was living in St. Brevin-les-Pins, on the northwest coast of France.

The Andante-Allegro contrasts the languid opening clarinet melody with the piano's ebullient energy. The final theme, a rapidly ascending stampede of thirds in the piano, was one of the first fragments Prokofiev wrote almost a decade earlier. The theme of the *Tema con variazioni* (Theme with variations) is a lilting, rhythmic melody first heard in the winds; the five variations that follow are, by turns, wistfully elegant, agitated, stormy, mysterious, and frenzied. Prokofiev characterized the Allegro ma non troppo as an "argument" between piano and orchestra, full of "caustic humor ... with frequent differences of opinion as regards key." After much musical bickering, the concerto ends with a blazing coda.

The exuberant, brash Piano Concerto No. 3 drew thunderous applause from American audiences but rather tepid reviews. After the premiere, one Chicago paper described it as "a plum pudding without the plums." Later concerts in New York produced similar reactions; Prokofiev's observation about the "certain logic" of contemporary composers proved prescient. Three years after the end of WWI, which disrupted all societal and cultural conventions, audiences were receptive to Prokofiev's post-war explorations of new sonorities, but critics, often more conservative than their readers, were not. Discouraged by the lackluster American reviews of his music, Prokofiev departed for Europe. In 1932, he made his first recording, playing the Third Concerto with the London Symphony Orchestra. This recording helped make the Third Piano Concerto one of Prokofiev's most popular works.

© Elizabeth Schwartz

NOTE: These program notes are published here by the Modesto Symphony Orchestra for its patrons and other interested readers. Any other use is forbidden without specific permission from the author, who may be contacted at www.classicalmusicprogramnotes.com

Symphony No. 1 in C Minor, op. 68

Johannes Brahms

Johannes Brahms

Symphony No. 1 in C Minor, Op. 68

Composer: born May 7, 1833, Hamburg; died April 3, 1897, Vienna

Work composed: Brahms began working on his first symphony in 1856 and returned to it periodically over the next 19 years. He wrote the bulk of the music between 1874 and 1876.

World premiere: Otto Dessoff led the Badische Staatskapelle in Karlsruhe, on November 4, 1876.

Instrumentation: 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, contrabassoon, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, timpani and strings.

Estimated duration: 42 minutes

"There are fewer things heavier than the burden of a great potential."

- Linus van Pelt, Peanuts

In 1853, Robert Schumann wrote a laudatory article about an unknown 20-year-old composer from Hamburg named Johannes Brahms, whom, Schumann declared, was the heir to Beethoven's musical legacy. Schumann wrote, "If [Brahms] directs his magic wand where the massed power in chorus and orchestra might lend him their strength, we can look forward to even more wondrous glimpses into the secret world of the spirits." At the time Schumann's piece was published, Brahms had composed several chamber pieces and works for piano, but nothing for orchestra. The article brought Brahms to the attention of the musical world, but it also dropped a crushing weight of expectation onto his young shoulders. "I shall never write a symphony! You have no idea how it feels to hear behind you the tramp of a giant like Beethoven," Brahms grumbled.

Because Brahms took almost 20 years to complete what became his Op. 68, one might suppose its long gestation stemmed from Brahms' possible trepidation about producing a symphony worthy of the Beethovenian ideal. This assumption, on its own, does Brahms a disservice. Daunting though the task might have been, Brahms also wanted to take his time. This measured approach reflects the high regard Brahms had for the symphony as a genre. "Writing a symphony is no laughing matter," he remarked.

Brahms began sketching the first movement when he was 23, but soon realized he was handicapped by his lack of experience composing for an orchestra. Over the next 19 years, as he continued working on Op. 68, Brahms wrote several other orchestral works, including the 1868 German Requiem and the popular 1873

Variations on a Theme by Haydn (aka the St. Anthony Variations). The enthusiastic response that greeted both works bolstered Brahms' confidence in his ability to handle orchestral writing. In 1872, Brahms was offered the conductor's post at Vienna's Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde (Society of Friends of Music). This opportunity to work directly with an orchestra gave Brahms the invaluable first-hand experience he needed. 23 years after Schumann's article first appeared, Brahms premiered his Symphony No. 1 in C minor. It was worth the wait.

Brahms' friend, the influential music critic Eduard Hanslick, summed up the feelings of many: "Seldom, if ever, has the entire musical world awaited a composer's first symphony with such tense anticipation ... The new symphony is so earnest and complex, so utterly unconcerned with common effects, that it hardly lends itself to quick understanding ... [but] even the layman will immediately recognize it as one of the most distinctive and magnificent works of the symphonic literature."

Hanslick's reference to the symphony's complexity was a polite way of saying the music was too serious to appeal to the average listener, but Brahms was unconcerned; he was not trying to woo the public with pretty sounds. "My symphony is long and not exactly lovable," he acknowledged. The symphony is carefully crafted; one can hear Brahms' compositional thought processes throughout, especially his decision to incorporate several overt references to Beethoven. The moody, portentous atmosphere of the first movement, and the short thematic fragments from which Brahms spins out seemingly endless developments, are all hallmarks of Beethoven's style. Brahms also references Beethoven by choosing the key of C minor, which is closely associated with several of Beethoven's major works, including the Fifth Symphony, Egmont Overture, and Piano Concerto No. 3. And yet, despite all these deliberate nods to Beethoven, this symphony is not, as conductor Hans von Bülow dubbed it, "Beethoven's Tenth." The voice is distinctly Brahms', especially in the inner movements.

The tender, wistful *Andante sostenuto* contrasts the brooding power of the first movement. Brahms weaves a series of dialogues among different sections of the orchestra, and concludes with a duet for solo violin and horn. In the *Allegretto*, Brahms slows down Beethoven's frantic scherzo tempos. The pace is relaxed, easy, featuring lilting themes for strings and woodwinds. The finale's strong, confident horn solo proclaims Brahms' victory over the doubts that beset him during Op. 68's long incubation. Here Brahms also pays his most direct homage to Beethoven, with a majestic theme, first heard in the strings, that closely resembles the "Ode to Joy" melody from Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. When a listener remarked on this similarity, Brahms snapped irritably, "Any jackass could see that!"

© Elizabeth Schwartz

NOTE: These program notes are published here by the Modesto Symphony Orchestra for its patrons and other interested readers. Any other use is forbidden without specific permission from the

Modesto Symphony Orchestra

author, who may be contacted
at www.classicalmusicprogramnotes.com



FRIDAY
MAY 6
7:30 PM

SATURDAY
MAY 7
7:30 PM

HAAS CONDUCTS
WIJERATNE
Tchaikovsky

TICKETS START AT \$19
MODESTOSYMPHONY.ORG



STAR WARS
A NEW HOPE
IN CONCERT

FILM LIVE WITH ORCHESTRA
PRESENTED BY
MODESTO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
JUNE 3 AT 7:30 PM & JUNE 4 AT 2 PM
TICKETS AT MODESTOSYMPHONY.ORG
MUSIC BY JOHN WILLIAMS



©1977 & 1981 LUCASFILM LTD. PRESENTATION LICENSED BY DISNEY CONCERTS IN ASSOCIATION WITH DISNEY CONCERTS AND FILM MUSIC. LUCASFILM AND YAMNER/CAMPBELL MUSIC. © ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

2021-22 SEASON PARTNER
 **BOVETT**
PETROLEUM



MODESTO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA