



SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Presents

## Concerto Winner's Concert

**TCU Symphony Orchestra**

Dr. Germán Gutiérrez, Music Director

February 5, 2025

7:00pm

Van Cliburn Concert Hall at TCU

### Program

*Tableaux de Provence*

- I. *Farandole des jeunes filles* (Frاندole of the young girls)
- II. *Chanson pour ma mie* (Song for my love)
- III. *La bohémienne* (The Gypsy)
- IV. *Des alyscamps l'âme soupire* (A Sigh on the soul for Alyscamps)
- V. *Le cabridan* (The Southern Hornet)

Paule Maurice  
(1910-1967)

Jerry Olazaran, saxophone

*Knoxville: Summer of 1915*, Op. 24

Catherine DiGrazia, soprano

Samuel Barber  
(1910-1981)

**- Brief Pause -**

Piano Concerto No. 2 in F minor, Op. 21

- I. *Maestoso*

Frédéric Chopin  
(1810-1849)

Lizi Kakabadze, piano  
Mitchell Manlapig, conductor

Piano Concerto No. 5 in E-flat major, Op. 73 ("Emperor")

- III. Rondo. *Allegro*

Ludwig van Beethoven  
(1770-1827)

Ashley Chua, piano

## **Dr. Germán Augusto Gutiérrez**

Professor Germán Augusto Gutiérrez has served as Director of Orchestras and Professor of Orchestral Studies at Fort Worth's Texas Christian University (TCU) as well as Director of TCU's Latin American Music Center and biennial Latin American Music Festival since 1996. Since 2000, Dr. Gutiérrez has also served as Music Director of the Fort Worth Youth Orchestra (FWYO).

Dr. Gutiérrez is a frequent guest conductor of professional orchestras in the Americas, Europe, Middle East, Asia, Africa and Oceania. He recently recorded a CD with the Hong Kong Chamber Orchestra with Daniel Binelli and Polly Ferman as soloists. Recent invitations include the Qingdao Cosmopolitan Music Festival in China, the Fort Worth Symphony, the Shanghai Conservatory Symphony, the Alcalá de Henares Symphony Orchestra, in Spain; the Lebanon National Philharmonic and the Orquesta Filarmónica of Bogotá, Colombia. In 2011, the TCU Symphony Orchestra was awarded the Carlos Gardel Musical Prize for its CD "Cantar Latinoamericano" with Opus Cuatro as soloists. This award led to the invitation for the orchestra to perform in May, 2013 in Buenos Aires and Rosario. For the twelfth consecutive year Dr. Gutiérrez served as guest conductor of the Dallas Symphony's Hispanic Festival. In 2006, he was invited to conduct the Czech National Symphony in historic Smetana Hall as part of the 110th anniversary of Carl Orff's birth, where he led the orchestra in a performance of Carmina Burana. Maestro Gutiérrez has also appeared with the Argentina, Colombia, Puerto Rico, Perú and Cuba National Symphonies. Other orchestras include the Hu Bei State Symphony of China, the Free State Symphony Orchestra of South Africa, Shanghai Symphony (China), Xalapa and San Luis Potosí in Mexico, the Auckland Philharmonic (New Zealand), Sinfónica del Teatro Municipal de Rio de Janeiro, and Porto Alegre Symphony Orchestra (Brazil), among others. In 2002, Maestro Gutiérrez was invited to the Trentino region of Italy to conduct Rossini's opera The Barber of Seville for the 30th anniversary of the Pergine Spettacolo Aperto.



Under his baton, the TCU Symphony and the FWYO have achieved exceptional levels of recognition in Fort Worth and abroad. Both groups have traveled on numerous international tours, obtaining enthusiastic reviews, including repeat invitations as the featured orchestra to engagements such as the Iberoamerican Music Festival in Puerto Rico, and the Texas Music Educators Association Convention in San Antonio. With the TCU Symphony, Maestro Gutiérrez has also conducted the world premieres of more than fifty contemporary works. In 2017, Maestro Gutiérrez led the FWYO on a tour of Europe that included performances at Salzburg's Mozarteum, Eisenstadt's Esterházy Palace in Austria, and a concert in Prague.

Maestro Gutiérrez holds *Músico Bachiller* and *Maestro en Música* degrees from the Tolima Conservatory in Colombia. He also received a master's degree from Illinois State University and a doctoral degree from the University of Northern Colorado. In recognition to his achievements, Dr. Gutierrez was included in the Hall of Fame of Illinois State University, and was invited to give the Commencement speech in May 2018. For his involvement and dedication to TCU, Maestro Gutiérrez received the Dean's Teaching Award (1999), the Dean's Award for Research and Creative Activity (2002), and the 2003 Chancellor's Award for Distinguished Research and Creative Activity, the highest award that the university bestows.

## Mitchell Manlapig

Mitchell Manlapig is a Doctor of Musical Arts candidate in Orchestral Conducting at Texas Christian University. Under the tutelage of Dr. Germán Gutiérrez, Manlapig serves as assistant conductor and manager of the TCU Symphony Orchestra. In addition to his duties with the TCU Symphony, he is principal conductor of the TCU Opera department.

Beyond his studies at TCU, Manlapig is the assistant conductor of the Fort Worth Youth Orchestra and the Fort Worth Medical Orchestra, where he also serves as operational director. He holds a conducting fellowship with the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra and was recently assistant conductor to Miguel Harth-Bedoya during Fort Worth Opera's 2024 production of *La bohème*. In 2024, he was also recognized as a National Finalist: Honorable Mention by the American Prize in Conducting.



Prior to his studies at TCU, Manlapig earned a Master of Music in Orchestral Conducting from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. During his final year of study at UWM, Manlapig served as acting director and manager of the UWM Symphony, as well as assistant conductor of the University/Community Orchestra. His position as acting director of the UWM Symphony led him to close collaborations with esteemed conductors such as Ken-David Masur and David Bloom. In 2021, he was selected as a participant in the Chicago Conducting Masterclass and Workshop Series with Donald Schleicher.

During his undergraduate study at Oklahoma Baptist University, Manlapig served as assistant conductor for the OBU/Shawnee Community Orchestra. He additionally garnered conducting appearances with wind ensembles, chamber groups, choirs, and was conductor for OBU's production of Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte* in 2020. As an acclaimed pianist, Manlapig is a two-time winner of OBU's annual Concerto-Aria competition and member of the prestigious *Pi Kappa Lambda* music honor society. Upon graduating with a B.M.A. in Piano Performance in 2020, Manlapig received both the Outstanding Senior in the Division of Music and the W.P. Blake Award, the highest honor bestowed by the university.

Manlapig has studied conducting with Dr. Germán Gutiérrez, Dr. Christopher Aspaas, Dr. Jun Kim, Dr. John Climer, Dr. Teresa Purcell, and Dr. Christopher Matthews. He has studied piano with Elena Abend, Dr. Michael Dean, and Kaye Shields.

## Jerry Olazaran

Jerry Olazaran is a second-year undergraduate student at Texas Christian University majoring in Music Education. He is also a native of Fort Worth, and was introduced to saxophone by his school's band program at age 11, and started taking lessons with Preston Lewis. After playing alto saxophone for a year, he switched to tenor saxophone and would go on to excel in his band program, advancing to Area in the All-State process and going onto the 5A All State Symphonic Band the following year. Additionally, he held several leadership positions in his band program including being a saxophone section leader and band president while also performing solos for the marching shows Hieroglyphics (2021) and Empire State (2022). He also received superior ratings in the UIL State Solo and Ensemble Contest his last 2 years of high school.



Jerry's passion for music in high school evolved into a passion for teaching others and serving as a mentor to as many people as possible in or outside of music. He is currently part of the Director Board for TCU's Frog Camp, and is an active member of the Band Sorority, Tau Beta Sigma, Beta Delta chapter. He is also proficient in both concert and jazz saxophone. His accomplishments in jazz include being 7th tenor saxophonist in the state his senior year as well as being named soloist of the day at the UTA Jazz Festival (2022) and TCU Jazz Festival (2023). Jerry is currently principal saxophonist in TCU's Symphonic Band, and lead alto in Jazz 1.

## Catherine DiGrazia

Catherine DiGrazia, soprano, originally from Pharr, TX is a senior undergraduate Voice Performance major studying under the tutelage of Twyla Robinson. She is incredibly excited and grateful to share James Agee's vivid and nostalgic prose in Samuel Barber's *Knoxville: Summer of 1915*.

Her most recent performances were with Fort Worth Opera as Young Beth in their production of *Little Women* composed by Mark Adamo and as a chorus member in Puccini's *La Bohème*. Her TCU Opera performances include, Susannah in Floyd's *Susannah*, the Dew Fairy in Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel*, and First Spirit in Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*. Aside from opera, she was a soloist for TCU Chorale's ACDA Performance and at TCU's First Annual Christmas Festival. In April 2025 she will perform as Contessa in Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro* with TCU Opera.





## Lizi Kakabadze

Lizi Kakabadze, a young pianist born in 2001 in Tbilisi, Georgia, began her musical education at the Paliashvili Central Music School from 2006 to 2016. Afterward, she continued her studies at the E. Mikeladze Central Music School under the guidance of Natalia Natsvlishvili. Lizi furthered her musical education at the Tbilisi State Conservatoire, studying with the recently passed Emeritus Revaz Tavadze. After December 2020, she continued her studies with Associate Professor Manana Gotsiridze.

In 2007, Lizi gave her first public performance in a concert with the Tbilisi Chamber Orchestra. In 2009, she participated in the K. Sepashvili International Piano Competition and was awarded the 3rd prize. In 2012, Lizi won the 1st prize at the 3rd National Competition of Classical Music in Tbilisi, Georgia. The same year, she was granted a Diploma of Merit at the Mozart International Piano Competition in Rome. Also, she participated in the International Piano Competition "Golden Key" in Frankfurt, Germany and was awarded the III prize.



In 2016, Lizi was awarded the Grand Prix at the 1st International Piano Competition in Yerevan, Armenia. Notable participations include internationally acclaimed piano competitions held in Italy, Germany, and Azerbaijan. Also in 2016, Lizi was selected as a winner for the best virtuosic performance nomination and won the 1st prize in the 6th International Music Festival in Baku, Azerbaijan. In 2017, Lizi was awarded the 1st prize at the First International Contest for Performing Arts named after Vazha Chachava. In 2018, Lizi won the 1st prize in the International Piano Competition held in Valletta, Malta. Her unique style of playing was cherished by the jury and nominated her for "the <sup>1</sup> Best Performance of Liszt Paraphrase on Verdi Rigoletto." This has granted her the opportunity to record the CD with KNS Classical. The CD "Pearls" was published in May 2019 and is available on iTunes, Spotify, <sup>2</sup> Amazon, etc. In 2018, Lizi participated in masterclasses and was chosen by the jury to perform in two concerts at Grosser Ehrbar Saal in Vienna at the Prayner Konservatorium - Vienna International Pianists - VIP Academy. In 2020, Lizi participated in the Tbilisi Piano Fest organized by Dudana Mazmanishvili. She has taken masterclasses with musicians such as Massimiliano Ferrati, Jerome Rose, Gabriele Leporatti, and performed at the National Youth Palace. In November 2020, Lizi won a Gold Star prize at the Music and Stars Awards Competition. Recently, Lizi was chosen for the 12th International Piano Masterclasses in Katowice, Poland. She had masterclasses with Andrzej Jasinski, Joanna Lawrynowicz-Just, Carlo Palese, Tamas Ungar, Philippe Giusiano, and Anna Malikova. She also performed in the Concert Hall of the Akademia Muzyczna im. Karola Szymanowskiego. In October 2022, Lizi took IV Laureates Place in the VII Tbilisi International Piano Competition (I place was not awarded). She also received two special prizes: Liza Leonskaja's special prize for the Best Georgian Performer and Annarosa Tadel's special prize awarded by the Georgian Music Competition Fund for the Best Performance of Romantic Music.

In October 2023, Lizi took 1st place in the competition of the Music Teachers National Association in Huntsville, Texas. Lizi has also taken masterclasses with the following professors: Yura Margulis, Alexander Korsantia, Nino Gvetadze, Maurizio Moretti, Stefan Moller, Naomi Ishii, Kurt Seibert, Eugenie Russo, Erik Tawaststjerna, Pawel Rydel, Cyprien Katsaris, and Antonio Pompa-Baldi.

Presently, Lizi continues her studies for a Master's Degree at Texas Christian University in Fort Worth. Over the last few years, Lizi has performed in many concerts, given several solo recitals in Ehrbar Saal, the Tbilisi State Conservatoire Grand and Chamber Hall, the Van Cliburn Concert Hall, and participated in various International Piano Competitions and Festivals, and performed with the symphony orchestra in Tbilisi.

## Ashley Chua

Ashley Chua Kai Qian is a first-year graduate student pursuing a Masters in Collaborative Piano at Texas Christian University (TCU), where she currently studies collaborative piano under Dr. Michael Bukhman and solo piano under Dr. Enrico Elisi.

She graduated from the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music (YSTCM) in Singapore in 2024 with Bachelor of Music (B.Mus), holding a double major in Piano Performance and Music & Society (MS).

As a pianist, Ashley has participated actively in a range of concerts and competitions, placing 3rd in the Piano division of the YSTCM Concerto Competition 2022 and attaining a Special Mention in 2023. In July of 2023, she was afforded the opportunity to attend the AmalfiCoast Piano Festival, and in 2024 the Texas State International Piano Festival.



# TCU Symphony Orchestra

## Violin I

Liz Valentina Muñoz Morales\* *Colombia*  
Daniela Vallejo Castano *Colombia*  
Angelene Ku *United States*  
Mahsan Jobeiri *Iran*  
Juan Pablo de León *México*  
Arnaldo Figueroa *Venezuela*  
Oriana Gonzalez *Venezuela*  
Muyan Xin *China*  
Joao Pérez *Puerto Rico*  
Eden Agabs *Summit, NJ*  
Chase Morrison *Argyle, TX*

## Violin II

Alejandro Sanchez Rodriguez *Colombia*  
Natalie Caldwell *Fort Worth, TX*  
Eva Renaudat *Colombia*  
Laura Pollack *Edmond, OK*  
Kevin Andre Zerrate Arias *Colombia*  
Andres Bravo Canedo *La Par, Bolivia*  
Lucas Raulino *Brazil*  
Emma Swank *Tulsa, OK*  
Alexis Lizama *Katy, TX*  
Amanda Ochraneck *Southlake, TX*  
Gabriela Cruz *Dallas, TX*  
Kate Johnson *Long Beach, CA*

## Viola

Jasmine Ong *Singapore*  
Kaylan Walker *United States*  
Joey Tullis *Fort Worth, TX*  
Phoebe Haun *Fort Worth, TX*  
Hope Ward *Tallahassee, FL*  
Daniel Compton *Frisco, TX*  
Holly LeMoine *Fort Worth, TX*  
Juan Vega *Colombia*

## Cello

Giuliano Bucheli *San Antonio, TX*  
Giancarlo Gonzales *Philippines*  
Daniela Herrera Garcia *Colombia*  
Olivier Gordon *Miami, FL*  
Jayme Eck *Albuquerque, NM*  
Nathan Hoang *Murphy, TX*  
Caio Sousa *Brazil*  
Grady O'Gara *San Roman, CA*  
Edna Rincón *Colombia*  
Bentley Altman *Anchorage, AK*  
Riley Kee *Tomball, TX*  
Jason Vierra *Hawaii*

## Double Bass

Iván Yael Talancón Flores *México*  
Kaleb Comstock *San Antonio, TX*  
Arturo Zamora Argumedo *San Antonio, TX*  
Graysen Malek *McKinney, TX*  
Sixto Elizondo *San Antonio, TX*  
David Gutierrez *Mesquite, TX*

## Piccolo

Alexandra Langley *Lindsay, TX*

## Flute

Kiana Fatemifar *Tehran, Iran*  
Alexandra Langley *Lindsay, TX*

## Oboe

Chloe Caudill *Fort Worth, TX*  
Bella Evans *Richardson, TX*  
Ella Schupp *Grapevine, TX*  
Edgar Vasquez

## English Horn

Chloe Caudill *Fort Worth, TX*

## Clarinet

Samuel Brown *Philadelphia, PA*  
Gizelle Guerrero *Adkins, TX*  
Pablo Albert *Keller, TX*

## Bassoon

Diego Llamas *Crowley, TX*  
Ethan Peel *North Richland Hills, TX*

## Horn

James Brandt *League City, TX*  
Roger Gonzalez *Palestine, TX*  
Nicolas Hernandez *Keller, TX*  
Ethan Hildebrand *Euless, TX*  
Maya Huffman *Union Grove, TX*  
Cole Reed *Flower Mound, TX*

## Trumpet

Frank Cardenas *Colombia*  
Eric Liu *Suzhou, China*

## Bass Trombone

Zach Long *San Antonio, TX*

## Timpani/Percussion

Joe Donohue *Marietta, GA*  
Robert Allen *Pantego, TX*  
Ashlyn Bailey *Aledo, TX*  
Hezan Daroona *Frisco, TX*  
Emily Dean *Bullard, TX*  
Adam Mackey *Cypress, TX*

## Harp

Isabella Grace Ebo *Fort Worth, TX*  
Silvia Torres Rodarte *Frisco, TX*

## Assistant Conductor

Mitchell Manlapig *Shawnee, OK*

\*Concertmaster

## Program Notes

### Maurice – *Tableaux de Provence*

*Tableaux de Provence* (Pictures of Provence) is a programmatic suite composed by Paule Maurice (Sept. 29, 1910 – August 18, 1967) between 1948 and 1955 for alto saxophone and orchestra, most often performed with piano accompaniment only. The work was dedicated to French saxophone virtuoso Marcel Mule.

The movements describe the culture and scenery of Provence, southeast France, where the Mules, Paule Maurice and her husband, composer Pierre Lantier, spent vacation time together. *Tableaux de Provence* was first recorded by Marcel Mule in 1957 on the Selmer release Marcel Mule, with Solange Robin on piano. It was premiered on December 9, 1958, by Jean-Marie Londeix with the Orchestre Symphonique Brestois.

The "Tableaux" is a series of musical pictures from the area known as Provence in the southeast corner of France bordering the Mediterranean. Ms. Maurice explains each of the five sections: in the first movement, the *Farandoulo di Chatouno* (Dance of the Young Girls), is the joyous sound of young girls in France dancing to the provençal dance, known as the farandoll; the second movement *Cansoun Per Ma Mio* (Song for My Love), is a serenade whose accompaniment sounds the open strings of the guitar at the beginning of the piece. *La Boumiano* (The Bohemian Women or The Gypsy), is a rhythmic soliloquy of the people of mige [sic]. In *Dis Alyscamps l'amo Souspire* (A Sigh on the Souls for the Alyscamps) are the laments of friends that hover over the cemetery at Alyscamps expressing sadness. Finally *Lou Cabridan*; Cabridan is described as a great, flying creature, turning and bustling through the provence. He takes a moment to poise on the flowers, then, watching his chance, flees his narrow valley.

The contrasting movements of this work are full of animation and charm. This piece is considered one of Maurice's finest.  
- Lori Rosenbauer Huff

### Barber – *Knoxville: Summer of 1915*

In the musical Pantheon of 20th-century America, Samuel Barber occupies a distinctive place as a modern romanticist. He was surrounded by music since childhood; his maternal aunt, Louise Homer, was a famous contralto singer; her husband, a respectable song composer. When Barber was seven years old, he sent this note to his mother: "I was not meant to be an athlete, but a composer, and I will be, I am sure. Don't ask me to go and play football."

At that tender age he already had learned to play the cello. Later he became proficient as a pianist. He also studied singing quite seriously, and even sang the baritone solo in a recording of his own work, *Dover Beach*. This recording, issued by RCA Victor, is now a collector's item....

When Eleanor Steber asked Barber to write for her a movement for soprano and orchestra, he selected a passage from the novel, *A Death in the Family*, by James Agee, for his text. In it a small boy, lying in the grass at his home in Knoxville, Tennessee, listens to the sounds around him. He hears the "iron moan" of a passing streetcar, with "the bleak spark crackling and cursing above it like a small malignant spirit set to dog its tracks." Looking at the sky, he thinks of the sorrows of life on earth, and says a prayer: "May God bless my people, my uncle, my aunt, my mother, my good father..." With this prayer he is put to bed. Agee's reminiscence is precisely autobiographical, for in 1915 he was six years old.

Samuel Barber contributed to Agee's poem in prose a perfect setting. It possesses an immediate sense of childhood memories; the singing line is a natural translation of words into music. The child's train of thought, with its sudden shifts of emotional concentration, is reflected in the gentle changes in the character of the music. Diatonic modalities, articulated by mysterious cadences and plagal harmonic inflections, create the needed ambiance of nostalgic recollection. Occasional metaharmonies and the pointed sharpness of the rhythms do not perturb the luminous euphony of the music. There are also touches of illustrative onomatopoeia, as in the unusual effect of pizzicati glissando in the lower strings to represent the electric sparks of the streetcar antenna.



*Knoxville* was performed for the first time by the Boston Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Serge Koussevitzky, on April 9, 1948. Eleanor Steber was the soloist.

- Nicolas Slonimsky

## Chopin – Piano Concerto No. 2 in F minor

Though he published it second, Chopin's Piano Concerto in F minor was actually the first concerto he composed. After a surprisingly successful impromptu solo debut in Vienna, the nineteen-year-old composer returned home to Warsaw to compose a concerto that he could play on tours in the future. Chopin completed it during the fall of 1829 and gave the premiere in Warsaw the following March, where it was enthusiastically received.

The first movement begins with a substantial orchestral passage that introduces its main themes: The first is a Romantic melody of stark dynamic contrasts in F minor; the second, a more lyrical one introduced by the woodwinds in A flat major. When the piano enters, it reinterprets the first and second themes with ornamentation inspired by the expressive embellishments of bel canto opera singers. Even though the piano is technically a percussion instrument, Chopin was a master of creating smooth, singing, legato melodies for it. These lyrical themes are bridged by exquisitely crafted virtuoso passages that show Chopin's sensitivity to the sonority of the piano. After a brief but intense passage for orchestra, the pianist returns to develop the ideas introduced earlier. Beginning tranquilly, the music become inexorably more tumultuous, building to a fiery passage for orchestra. The soloist then returns with the first theme, which quickly transforms into the second. The movement concludes with virtuoso passagework and a decisive orchestral coda in F minor.

In a letter to a friend, Chopin confessed that the slow second movement of the concerto was inspired by Konstancja Gladkowska, a young singer who was a classmate of his at the conservatory in Warsaw: "Perhaps to my misfortune, I have met my ideal and have served her faithfully for six months, without speaking to her about my feelings. I dream about it: under her inspiration, the adagio of my Concerto in F minor and, this morning, the little waltz that I'm sending you [the Waltz in B minor, Op. 69 No. 2], have been born....I tell to the piano what I confide to you."

Unfortunately for the shy composer, this music is all that came of his unspoken infatuation. Many critics continue to regard this movement as one of his loveliest creations, comparing it to the nocturnes he would compose later. After a brief orchestral introduction, the piano plays a long, singing, poetic melody. This leads to a contrasting central section, which begins dramatically with tremolo strings. Above them the pianist imitates operatic recitative, as if speaking instead of playing music. The lyrical melody then reappears, and the movement ends as it began with the orchestral introduction.

The finale begins with a melody in the style of a mazurka, a type of Polish dance. Virtuoso passagework then leads to a contrasting, rustic theme in A flat major accompanied by strings playing *col legno*, with the wood of the bow. After the opening mazurka theme returns, a horn solo introduces a brilliant, F major coda.

- Calvin Dotsey

## Beethoven – Piano Concerto No. 5 in E-flat major ("Emperor")

Beethoven's last piano concerto dates from the beginning of May 1809, when Napoleon's army besieged Vienna, causing the Austrian Imperial family and court, including Beethoven's pupil, friend, and benefactor Archduke Rudolph, to flee the city. On May 11, the French artillery, which commanded the heights of the surrounding countryside, was activated. Beethoven's house stood perilously close to the line of fire.

Those who could not—or, like Beethoven, would not—leave home sought shelter underground. Beethoven found a temporary haven in the cellar of his brother's house. Once the bombardment had ceased and the Austrian forces had surrendered, the composer described "a city filled with nothing but drums, cannon, marching men, and misery of all sorts."

After the summer, Beethoven left the city and produced back-to-back masterpieces in the “heroic” key of E-flat: the Fifth Piano Concerto and the “Harp” Quartet, Op. 74. The grim experiences of the preceding months had not diminished his creative powers.

With the Treaty of Vienna signed in October 1809, life in the city returned to a semblance of normalcy, but there was no opportunity to present the new concerto. That had to wait two years, and not in Vienna but in Leipzig, with Friedrich Schneider as soloist. Beethoven, who had played the solo part in his four previous piano concertos, was now too deaf to perform with orchestra.

For the Vienna premiere in February 1812, the soloist was Beethoven’s prize pupil, Carl Czerny. At that concert, a French army officer supposedly called the work “an emperor among concertos.” It is more likely that the “Emperor” moniker was the brainchild of an early publisher. Whatever its origin, the sobriquet seems apt for music of such grandeur.

In the concerto, Beethoven is no longer writing up to his own lofty standards as a performer but those of the following generation, personified by Czerny. Yet while the projection of power is among the composer’s aims, overt display is not, with nothing resembling a solo cadenza in sight. With the “Emperor,” Beethoven created a truly symphonic concerto.

The first movement opens with a grandiose E-flat chord for full orchestra, interrupted by a series of equally commanding arpeggios for the soloist, suggesting an early cadenza. Instead, Beethoven alternates mighty pronouncements for the orchestra and the piano. The introduction ended, the piano offers a broad, swaggering theme. The musicologist Donald Francis Tovey described this passage and the ensuing, more subdued second theme: “The orchestra is not only symphonic, but is enabled by the very necessity of accompanying the solo lightly to produce ethereal orchestral effects that are in quite a different category from anything in the symphonies. On the other hand, the solo part develops the technique of its instrument with a freedom and brilliance for which Beethoven has no leisure in sonatas and chamber music.”

The second movement is one of the composer’s sublime inspirations. The muted strings play a theme of incomparable beauty and tenderness; the piano responds in hushed, descending triplets, creating a subtle tension until the theme is fully exposed. The nocturne-like character of the movement is furthered by a delicate balance of soft woodwinds, strings, and the soloist as the music mysteriously fades away. Then, over a sustained horn note, the piano introduces, softly and still *andante*, the theme of the Rondo finale. Suddenly, dramatically, the piano lunges into the final theme, a grandly exuberant *allegro*.

- Herbert Glass