



SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Presents

TCU Symphony Orchestra
Dr. Germán Gutiérrez, Music Director

March 6, 2025

7:00pm

Van Cliburn Concert Hall at TCU

Program

Qui Vivra Vera (2015)

Dr. Neil Anderson-Himmelspach
(1976-)

Prelude to Act III from *Lohengrin*

Richard Wagner
(1813-1883)

Mitchell Manlapig, conductor

Overture to *Die Fledermaus*

Johann Strauss Jr.
(1825-1899)

Overture to *Guillaume Tell* (*William Tell*)

Gioacchino Rossini
(1792-1868)

Mitchell Manlapig, conductor

“Zueignung” (Devotion), Op. 10, No. 1

Richard Strauss
(1864-1949)

“Morgen!” (Tomorrow), Op. 27, No. 4

Twyla Robinson, soprano
Mitchell Manlapig, conductor

“Polovtsian Dances” from *Prince Igor*

Alexander Borodin
(1833-1887)

with the TCU Concert Chorale

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.

Dr. Neil Anderson-Himmelspach

Neil Anderson-Himmelspach (b.1976) is an award winning multi-disciplinary composer and bass player whose music can be heard on the stage, screen, museums, and television worldwide. Influenced in his youth by musical idioms of rock, jazz, punk, and classical music, Anderson-Himmelspach established his personal ethos of creating and sharing new music with joyous enthusiasm across multiple artistic endeavors. He has collaborated with visual artists Dax Norman and Adam Fung to create innovative and provocative films that have won many awards and have been featured in Australia, Russia, Spain, France, and the United States. His work with Dax Norman has been featured on the Cartoon Network creating bumpers for the Adult Swim programming featured on the Cartoon Network. Anderson-Himmelspach is the Associate Professor of Music Technology and Music Theory and Composition at Texas Christian University where he focuses on teaching composition lessons and electronic and electro-acoustic music.



Twyla Robinson

Twyla Robinson, soprano, serves at Texas Christian University as an Assistant Professor of Professional Practice and combines her teaching with an ongoing performing career. Recent seasons have seen her as the title role in *Ariadne auf Naxos* with Cincinnati Opera, *Sieglinde* in Act I of *Die Walküre* with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, the soprano soloist in Gorecki's *Symphony No. 3*, *Sorrowful Songs* with the Chicago Sinfonietta, Mahler's *Symphony No. 4* with the Orchestra Sinfonica di Milano Giuseppe Verdi, Shostakovich's *Symphony No. 14* with I Musici de Montreal Chamber Orchestra, and Claude Vivier's *Lonely Child* with the Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France. She also created the role of Becky Felderman in the world premiere of Ricky Ian Gordon's *Morning Star*, with the Cincinnati Opera.

Orchestral highlights include Strauss' *Vier letzte Lieder* with l'Opéra National de Paris, and Mahler's *Symphony No. 8 "Symphony of a Thousand"* with Jiří Bělohlávek at the opening night of the BBC Proms. She has performed Mahler's 8th *Symphony* with orchestras such as the Houston Symphony, Toronto Symphony, Münchner Philharmoniker, the Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, Essen Philharmonie, and recorded it with the Berlin Staatskapelle for Deutsche Grammophon, Pierre Boulez conducting. Other recordings include Beethoven's 9th *Symphony* with the London Symphony Orchestra and Bernard Haitink on the LSO Live label, Zemlinsky's *Lyrische Symphonie* with the Houston Symphony and Hans Graf with Naxos, Brahms' *Ein deutsches Requiem* with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra and Robert Spano with Telarc, Schubert's *Fierrabras* with Franz Welser-Möst on DVD with EMI, and Strauss' *Elektra* and *Daphne* with Semyon Bychkov and the West German Radio Orchestra on the Decca label



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.

TCU Symphony Orchestra

Violin I

Lucas Raulino* *Brazil*
Joao Pérez+ *Puerto Rico*
Liz Valentina Muñoz Morales *Colombia*
Oriana Gonzalez *Venezuela*
Alejandro Sanchez Rodriguez *Colombia*
Mahsan Jobeiri *Iran*
Kevin Andre Zerrate Arias *Colombia*
Andres Bravo Canedo *La Par, Bolivia*
Laura Pollack *Edmond, OK*
Eva Renaudat *Colombia*
Emma Swank *Tulsa, OK*

Violin II

Angelene Ku *United States*
Juan Pablo de León *México*
Natalie Caldwell *Fort Worth, TX*
Arnaldo Figueroa *Venezuela*
Daniela Vallejo Castano *Colombia*
Muyan Xin *China*
Eden Agabs *Summit, NJ*
Chase Morrison *Argyle, TX*
Amanda Ochraneck *Southlake, TX*
Gabriela Cruz *Dallas, TX*
Alexis Lizama *Katy, TX*
Kate Johnson *Long Beach, CA*

Viola

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

Cello

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

Flute

Kiana Fatemifar *Tehran, Iran*
Alexandra Langley *Lindsay, TX*
Abby Losos *Aledo, TX*
Derek Smilowski *Philadelphia, PA*

Oboe

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

English Horn

Chloe Caudill *Fort Worth, TX*

Clarinet

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

Bassoon

Ethan Ifert *Frisco, TX*
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 *Eules, TX*
Maya Huffman *Union Grove, TX*
Cole Reed *Flower Mound, TX*

Trumpet

Emanuel Arellano *Fort Worth, TX*
Frank Cardenas *Colombia*
Eric Liu *Suzhou, China*
Ethan Vinson *Mansfield, TX*

Trombone

David Clary *Pflugerville, TX*
Hannah Luna *Fort Worth, TX*
Nicholas Richa *McKinney, TX*
Seth York *Cypress, TX*
Dylan Sims *Duncanville, TX*

Bass Trombone

Zach Long *San Antonio, TX*
Trey Mulkey *Mansfield, TX*

Tuba

Ricardo Gonzalez *Rio Grande City, TX*
Casey Stringer *Fort Worth, 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*
Jackson Perez *Timmath, CO*

Harp

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

Assistant Conductor

Mitchell Manlapig *Shawnee, OK*

*Concertmaster for
Himmelspach/Wagner/Rossini

+Concertmaster for
J.Strauss/R.Strauss/Borodin

TCU Concert Chorale

Dr. Christopher Aspaas, conductor
Sarah Gould and Debbie Seitter, assistant conductors
Dr. Cecilia Lo-Chien Kao, collaborative pianist

Mary Grace Abney
Adam Arntsen
Elliot Banks
Lindsay Bastian
Anna Borges
Casey Caldwell
Kolby Carpenter
Sofia Dahm
Kaylyn Davis
Kai Diamond
Catherine DiGrazia
Ahmed Elghazali
Brennan Fisher
Karolina Flores
Sarah Gould
Eduardo Guerrero
Owen Harvey
Samantha Irvin
Kaylyn Langham
Sara Lwin

Golda Marcello
Adrian Martinez
Tim McCracken
David McDaniel
Dory McDonald
Casey McEvoy
Ethan McGregor
Kelsey Miguel
Will Moeller
Charlie Nelson
Michelle Pearce
Alyssa Perrin
Miguel Pesce
Carson Scott
Debbie Seitter
Elijah Sones
Sarah Squires
Lydia Taylor
Jadyn Thompson
Cassie Westlund

Program Notes

Himmelspach – *Qui Vivra Vera*

“Sit in reverie and watch the changing color of the waves that break upon the idle seashore of the mind.”
—Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

The last few years leading up to the writing of this piece I spent battling an internal war with my mind, body, and spirit. This battle left me having to learn a new way to compose. I had to begin by writing in very small chunks of music at a time and doing a lot of pre-compositional planning. My previous compositional style was probably never going to come back and I had to learn to accept that. I still had music that needed to be written and I had to find a new way to write it. *Qui Vivra Vera* is the first piece of concert music I have written since my battle that was over four minutes. The short pieces I had written prior to *Qui Vivra Vera* after I fell ill were short études that allowed me to stretch longer and longer breadths of focused compositional time. The change in my compositional habits was an assault on my ego for quite some time. I was reading poetry and fell across the above Longfellow quote. It spoke to me in a meaningful way. I realized that I was the same person with the same abilities as I had before I was ill. What I needed to learn and understand is that my learning a new way of getting my thoughts out through music was a positive. I now embraced my new style and was able to focus on composing itself and not how I was composing.

The title *Qui Vivra Vera* is French for “What will be, will be.” The title and the Longfellow quote really freed my mind to open up and not be afraid to embark on a longer concert piece without the baggage I had imposed on myself. I wanted the form of the piece to feel free as well. In order to do this I employed the use of a recurring harmonic element. This recognizable musical fragment pops up throughout the composition in various transpositions and rhythmic variations. This fragment was taken from a chorale that I had written before I had fallen ill and it is reminiscent of my life before. The timeline of the piece became a chronology of my personal musical style pre-illness to the present. The fragment appears more frequently as time unfolds in the piece until a new version of the chorale, that the musical fragment is from, is heard at the end of the composition.

This piece is a cathartic reflection of the sorrow and anger that I felt through my illness. I became insecure as a teacher, composer, and performer as my illness progressed. At some point through my battle I realized that finding a new way to work, teach, and perform was a positive thing. I learned to manage my compositional workflow in a new and exciting way, my work became a patchwork of musical fragments that were delicately sewn together creating a refreshing new musical style. All of the negativity I felt about being sick and the interruption to my creative life became an opportunity to create in a new and exciting way. *Qui Vivra Vera* is a representation of my new musical style. I am excited about the direction my art is heading. The Longfellow quote is self-reflective and also describes that change of musical colors in the composition. The listener will hear distinct changes in colors through the work as the recurring harmonic fragment exposes itself in the different sections of the composition. I had to let go of the control I once felt I had in my life before I was ill. This control was perceived and not real. I have little control over anything and “What will be, will be.” *Qui Vivra Vera* is a reflection of my catharsis as I moved through a terrible time in my life and a preview of my new musical style. My new style is reflective, whimsical, fearless, and thoughtful as it is an outgrowth of a powerful personal journey.

- Dr. Neil Anderson-Himmelspach

Wagner – Prelude to Act III from *Lohengrin*

Wagner composed most of *Lohengrin* during his years as Kapellmeister in Dresden (he was second Kapellmeister, actually, but a very active one – sort of general music director for the King of Saxony). The composer sided with the republican rebels in the abortive revolution of 1848, and when Prussian soldiers regained control of the city the following year, Wagner fled, first to the shelter of Franz Liszt in Weimar, then on to Switzerland on a fake passport.

There Wagner completed *Lohengrin*, dedicating it to Liszt, who gave the premiere in Weimar in August 1850, with the composer necessarily absent in exile. (Wagner had led a concert performance of the Act I finale in Dresden in September 1848, during the brief revolutionary era.) The medieval tale of chivalry and betrayal contrasts spiritual purity and striving against worldly evil and machinations. The brilliantly jubilant Prelude to Act III, another example of Wagner's deft hand with a brass melody blazing through a whirl of strings, introduces the wedding of Lohengrin and Elsa (and is followed in the opera by the famous bridal march).

- John Henken

J. Strauss Jr. – Overture to *Die Fledermaus*

In addition to the nearly 500 pieces of dance music he published, Johann Strauss, Jr. scored important successes as a composer of operetta and light opera. *Die Fledermaus* has proved the most enduring, but *Der Zigeunerbaron* (The Gypsy Baron) and *Eine Nacht in Venedig* (A Night in Venice) remain in the active repertory even outside German-speaking lands. Strauss, Jr. was just coming off a fifty-performance run of his now-forgotten *Karneval in Rom* (Carnaval in Rome). Fortunately cushioned from the effects of a financial meltdown that shook international stock markets in May 1873, he plunged into his *Fledermaus* project without delay. It was based on a French script, *Reveillon* (the term refers to a long, festive dinner on the eve of a holiday), by Offenbach's librettists Henri Meilhac and Ludovic Halévy, refashioned for Viennese tastes by two German writers, Carl Haffner and Richard Genée. It proved a perfect tonic for a Vienna eager to have a good time again.

Die Fledermaus was successful from the outset. Its initial run ended after sixteen performances to make way for a visiting troupe that had previously been booked in the same theater. After that, it returned to the boards, picking up where it left off in charming audiences with its story of extramarital flirtation, spousal disguise, and clever revenge, all of which is washed down with a stream of laughter and a river of champagne. By the end of the year, productions were up and running in Berlin, Budapest, and New York, and it rapidly spread throughout the opera-loving world.

The Overture to *Die Fledermaus* provides a potpourri-style foretaste of several of the operetta's principal tunes. The whole is dominated by a duple-time dance number and an infectious waltz whose bustling melody is announced initially by the strings, playing staccato and low in their range, before it is taken up by the entire orchestra. Other tunes intercede, but these two indelible melodies return to bring this overture to its buoyant end.

- James M. Keller

Rossini – Overture to *William Tell*

"... the piece as a whole is treated with incontestable superiority, a verve such as Rossini had perhaps never shown before in such alluring fashion... the overture to William Tell is a work of an immense talent which resembles genius so closely as to be mistaken for it." The quote is by Hector Berlioz, who wrote at length – essentially in complimentary terms – about Rossini's now very famous overture to his 35th and final opera.

The opera was premiered in Paris in 1829, just about the time Berlioz was preparing to compose his *Symphonie fantastique*, and the wild-eyed French composer-turned-critic found much to excite him in the opera's overture. Some other of his observations are well worth noting. For example, of the overture as a whole, he said "... Rossini has so enlarged the form that his overture becomes, in truth, a symphony in four very distinct parts, instead of the piece in two movements with which composers are ordinarily satisfied." Examining the four sections, Berlioz found "... the first paints well the calm of a profound solitude... It is a poetic opening... being written only for five solo cellos, accompanied by the rest of the basses and double basses, the whole orchestra being put in action in the following piece – the storm."

Continuing his analysis, Berlioz said, “The storm is succeeded by a pastoral scene of the greatest freshness – the melody of the English horn is delicious, and the badinage of the flute above this tranquil song is of a ravishing freshness and gaiety. We observe in passing that the triangle, which is struck pianissimo at intervals, is very much in place; it is the bell of the flocks peacefully grazing while the shepherds utter their joyous songs.”

About the final, and most familiar section of the overture, Berlioz enthused, and then defused his enthusiasm, saying: “This last part of the overture is treated with a brio, a verve, which always excites an audience, but it is entirely based on a rhythm outworn today... (but) despite the lack of originality in the theme and the rhythm, despite an abuse of the bass drum which is very disagreeable at certain moments, and the slightly vulgar use of that instrument always to strike the accented beats... it must be admitted that the piece as a whole is treated with an incontestable superiority...” Thank you for your kind words, Mr. Berlioz.

- Orrin Howard

R. Strauss – *Zueignung*

The songs of Richard Strauss (1864-1949) are among the most memorable works of a composer who found a profound satisfaction in writing for singers. His wife of 55 years, Pauline de Ahna, had an important career as an operatic soprano, and their relationship certainly accounted, to some extent, for Strauss’s devotion to vocal writing. Beyond that, however, was a seemingly innate, profoundly sensitive appreciation of beautiful voices and a thorough understanding of how to present them to best advantage.

In contrast to his most dramatic operas (*Elektra*, *Salome*, *Die Frau ohne Schatten*), Strauss’s songs are often exquisitely intimate. An exception to that is “Zueignung” (“Dedication”), a sweeping outpouring of emotion, building in the three verses to a magnificently stirring climax. The text by Austrian poet Hermann von Gilm (1812-1864) finds the singer expressing how sorrowful she is when her love isn’t with her, and then offering gratitude for that love which gives her such joy.

- Rob Ainsley

Text and Translation

Zueignung

German source: Hermann von Gilm

Ja, du weißt es, teure Seele,
Daß ich fern von dir mich quäle, Liebe macht die Herzen
krank,
Habe Dank.

Einst hielt ich, der Freiheit Zecher,
Hoch den Amethysten-Becher,
Und du segnetest den Trank,
Habe Dank.

Und beschworst darin die Bösen,
Bis ich, was ich nie gewesen,
Heilig, heilig an’s Herz dir sank,
Habe Dank!

Dedication

English translation © Richard Stokes

Yes, dear soul, you know
That I’m in torment far from you,
Love makes hearts sick –
Be thanked.

Once, revelling in freedom,
I held the amethyst cup aloft
And you blessed that draught –
Be thanked.

And you banished the evil spirits,
Till I, as never before,
Holy, sank holy upon your heart –
Be thanked.

R. Strauss – *Morgen!*

Completed in 1894, Richard Strauss composed his set of Four Songs as a wedding present for his wife, the eminent soprano Pauline de Ahna. The fourth song, “Morgen!” (“Tomorrow!”), is one of Strauss’ most well-known works. Set to another text by John Henry Mackay, this rapturous love song paints the inner elation of a lover staring into the eyes of his beloved. The voice waits a considerable amount of time before entering with “and tomorrow the sun will shine again,” as if caught mid-thought in dreamy reverie. Strauss uses the solo violin to emphasize the theme, creating a sense of sweet nostalgia, and a succession of chords that never resolve perfectly depicts the lover’s yearning for his beloved.

- Gaia Mariani Ramsdell

Text and Translation

Morgen!

German source: John Henry Mackay

Und morgen wird die Sonne wieder scheinen
Und auf dem Wege, den ich gehen werde,
Wird uns, die Glücklichen, sie wieder einen
Inmitten dieser sonnenatmenden Erde ...

Und zu dem Strand, dem weiten, wogenblauen,
Werden wir still und langsam niedersteigen,
Stumm werden wir uns in die Augen schauen,
Und auf uns sinkt des Glückes stummes Schweigen ...

Tomorrow!

English translation © Richard Stokes

And tomorrow the sun will shine again
And on the path that I shall take,
It will unite us, happy ones, again,
Amid this same sun-breathing earth ...

And to the shore, broad, blue-waved,
We shall quietly and slowly descend,
Speechless we shall gaze into each other’s eyes,
And the speechless silence of bliss shall fall on us ...

Borodin – Polovtsian Dances

Alexander Borodin was a self-described “Sunday composer”: a scientist by day, he wrote music in his free time but nonetheless won enough acclaim as a composer of Russian art music to gain a position among the country’s “Mighty Handful.” He began writing music as a devotee of Mendelssohn, but quickly changed his language to something of a more nationalistic bent. Still, echoes of Mendelssohn’s style, particularly his talents for lyrical, melodic writing, remain an underlying theme in Borodin’s later, folk-influenced works.

Because of his lifelong work in chemistry and medicine, Borodin’s output is, relative to other composers, exceedingly small. His primary works include his Second Symphony, a handful of songs, a particularly notable String Quartet (the Second) and his opera Prince Igor, for which he wrote both the music and the libretto. Borodin worked on the opera for some two decades, but left it unfinished at his death in 1887. His colleagues Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov and Alexander Glazunov finished the work (including recreating the overture from sketches that Borodin had sung to his colleagues, a feat that Glazunov is said to have done from memory) in time for an 1890 premiere. The opera, though posthumous and largely filled in by others, took a respected position as an emblem of Russian nationalist music, and although the opera’s plot may more accurately be called a series of sketches, the total effect is still vibrant and unified.

By the end of the second act of Prince Igor, the title character has been taken prisoner by the Polovtsian Khan Konchak. The Khan, intrigued by his depressed captive, calls in a group of slaves to liven Prince Igor’s spirits. The servants’ songs begin as sentimental recollections of their homeland, but gradually gain vigor and become shouts in praise of the slaves’ royal master. The process takes roughly 11 minutes, during which a flurry of energetic winds and percussion

join in a sparkling, rhythm-driven dance. The instrumentation is brilliant and crystalline, reliant upon powerful brass and soloistic woodwinds to brighten the already exotic, lithe melodies.

Borodin was not an ethnomusicologist; his sketches contain a handful of melodies that he apparently considered to be equally appropriate for both the main body of the opera and those parts which concern the nomadic Polovtsians. But in spite of a general disdain among the Mighty Handful for incorporating explicitly “ethnic” signatures (César Cui, a close friend of Borodin’s, was particularly emphatic about this), the Polovtsian scenes in Prince Igor do contain a smattering of appropriate rhythmic and melodic influences. In addition, Borodin’s bright tone colors, graceful melodic lines, and energetic rhythms create a general feeling of celebration and enthusiasm that make the work appropriate as a piece for both the operatic stage and the concert hall.

- Jessica Schilling