

BEETHOVEN'S "EROICA"

2021-22 HAL & JEANETTE SEGERSTROM FAMILY FOUNDATION CLASSICAL SERIES

Carl St.Clair, conductor
Gabriel Martins, cello

Frank Ticheli

ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE
for Audience and Orchestra
World Premiere

Tchaikovsky

VARIATIONS ON A ROCOCO THEME,
Op.33

*Moderato assai quasi Andante -
Thema: Moderato semplice
Variation I: Tempo della Thema
Variation II: Tempo della Thema
Variation III: Andante sostenuto
Variation IV: Andante grazioso
Variation V: Allegro moderato
Variation VI: Andante
Variation VII e Coda: Allegro vivo*

Gabriel Martins, cello

Intermission

Beethoven

SYMPHONY NO. 3 IN E-FLAT MAJOR,
Op. 55 ("Eroica")

*Allegro con brio
Marcia funebre: Adagio assai
Scherzo: Allegro vivace
Finale: Allegro molto*

Thursday, Oct. 14, 2021 @ 8 p.m.

Friday, Oct. 15, 2021 @ 8 p.m.

Saturday, Oct. 16, 2021 @ 8 p.m.

Segerstrom Center for the Arts
Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall

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PROGRAM NOTES

Frank Ticheli:

All the World's a Stage



A serious, acclaimed composer? Absolutely. But Frank Ticheli's *All the World's a Stage* is as playful, joyful and novel a work as you're likely to hear in a

concert hall. This *piece d'occasion* was commissioned by Pacific Symphony in celebration of Carl St. Clair's 30th anniversary season as the orchestra's music director. Ticheli was composer-in-residence with Pacific Symphony from 1991 through 1998, and by now—as he comments in his note on the piece—“Carl is a dear friend of nearly 40 years.”

Born in 1958 in Monroe, La., Ticheli received his doctoral and master's degrees in composition from the University of Michigan, and has achieved international recognition as a composer. He is frequently inspired by visual experience, especially architecture—notably the work of “starchitect” Frank Gehry. His music seems to shine and iridesce like one of Gehry's gleaming titanium structures, with distinctive phrases and gestures that glide among each other in layers...often without crisp attacks or endpoints.

In his compositional note, Ticheli comments:

All the World's a Stage takes its name from the oft-quoted line from Shakespeare's well known play, *As You Like It*—“All the world's a stage and all the men and women merely players.” For my piece, the “stage” is literally the entire performance hall. The audience participates with the orchestra in various ways—making gentle wind sounds and whistling effects, snapping fingers to a specified rhythm, singing Shakespeare's words set to an original melody, and so on.

The audience participates mostly in the beginning and end of the piece, whereas during the faster paced middle section they are able to sit back and enjoy the music. During this middle section, the energy is quite festive and dance-like. A boppy ostinato, first introduced by the bass clarinet and contrabassoon, serves as the main idea for the entire

section. Near the end, as the music builds in intensity, one may hear a hint of the wild energy conjured in the “Mambo” from Bernstein's *West Side Story*. Bernstein was Carl's beloved conducting teacher, and it seemed fitting to channel a bit of his most joyous music (although without ever quoting it directly).

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky: *Variations on a Rococo Theme*



Tchaikovsky's sumptuously beautiful set of variations on a “Rococo” theme is one of the most familiar works for cello soloist and full orchestra. But if you've never heard it before,

don't let the title mislead you; while we usually think of the Rococo style as laden with ornament and structural complexity, it meant something much different to Tchaikovsky. As the magisterial music scholar and conductor Nicolas Slonimsky (1894–1995) noted, the composer was quite definite on the subject. “Do you know what Rococo means?” Tchaikovsky asked his friend Wilhelm Fitzenhagen, a German cello virtuoso who taught at the Moscow Conservatory. Answering his own question, he said “It is a carefree feeling of well-being.” And he demonstrated with the simple, seductive melody of his own invention—a melody that became the basis of his *Variations on a Rococo Theme*. According to Tchaikovsky, who venerated Mozart above all other composers, the Rococo style was characterized by purity and lightness when it emerged in the days of Haydn and Mozart—only to be corrupted by coloristic and decorative excesses applied by Romantic composers later on.

Tchaikovsky composed the set of seven variations in 1877, dedicating it to Fitzenhagen, who performed the premiere in November of that year. And though it is not a cello concerto, it is the closest Tchaikovsky ever came to writing one, exploiting the full range of the instrument's wine-dark voice. As was customary with concertos at the time (and still is), the composer worked collaboratively with the dedicatee to take advantage of the instrument's technical and dramatic possibilities while ensuring

the playability of the score. A showy cadenza was even provided later on by another German cellist, Hugo Becker.

After a dignified introduction, the work's seven variations reveal themselves in elegant fashion—first in two movements marked *Tempo del tema*, and then in a stately Andante. The brilliant Slonimsky was incomparably descriptive in his analyses, and compared the fourth variation to a portrait by Greuze or a pastoral landscape by Fragonard, with “a pearly run of cerulean chromatics in the cello solo.” But the variations also incorporate the qualities of Russian folk music, especially in the sixth movement, with its elegiac sound. Slonimsky was not always so complimentary in describing the music of his fellow-Russian, but we sense that he greatly admired the *Variations on a Rococo Theme*—perhaps most of all for its elegant restraint.

Frank Ticheli

Born: Jan. 21, 1958. Monroe, La., USA

All the World's a Stage

Composed: 2019

World premiere: Oct. 14, 2021. Costa Mesa, Calif.

Instrumentation: 3 flutes including piccolo, 2 oboes, 3 clarinets including bass clarinet, 3 bassoons including contrabassoon; 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba; timpani, percussion, harp, piano, celeste; strings

Estimated duration: 10 minutes

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

Born: May 7, 1840. Votkinsk, Russia

Died: Nov. 7, 1893. St. Petersburg, Russia

Variations on a Rococo Theme

Composed: 1876–1877

World premiere: Nov. 30, 1877. Moscow, Russia

Most recent Pacific Symphony performance: April 18, 2015

Instrumentation: 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons; 2 horns, strings

Estimated duration: 19 minutes

Ludwig van Beethoven

Born: 1770. Bonn, Germany

Died: 1827. Vienna, Austria

Symphony No. 3, “Eroica”

Composed: 1803–1804

World premiere: June 9, 1804

Most recent Pacific Symphony performance: Dec. 5, 2015

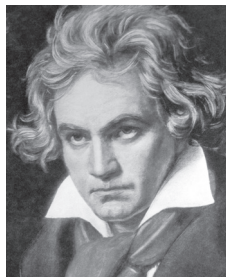
Instrumentation: 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons; 3 horns, 2 trumpets; timpani; strings

Estimated duration: 47 minutes

PROGRAM NOTES

Ludwig van Beethoven:

Symphony No. 3 in E-flat Major, "Eroica"



If one symphony can be called a turning point in the way Beethoven and the world viewed symphonic form, it is the "Eroica." Where Beethoven's first two symphonies are graceful and

decorously Classical, with the influence of Haydn and Mozart clearly heard, the Symphony No. 3 is a bold musical utterance that is longer in duration and bolder in its ideas than were its predecessors—literally a "Sinfonia Eroica," or heroic symphony.

But this title, which Beethoven himself appended to the symphony, was a last-minute revision of his original idea. Always concerned with the important ideas and events of his time, Beethoven had Napoleon Bonaparte in mind as the hero of this work. Like many intellectuals who opposed the oppressive regimes of central Europe, Beethoven saw Bonaparte as a potential savior. As early as 1798, Beethoven considered writing a symphony inspired by Napoleon. Significantly, he composed much of the music for it during the summer of 1803, the year after he wrote the Heiligenstadt Testament—the unsent letter to his brothers that revealed the depths of his feelings about his life, art and encroaching deafness. In our modern understanding of Beethoven's lifetime of achievement, the Heiligenstadt Testament marks his transition from a young Classical composer to a unique musical mind grappling with ideas in a way no composer had done before.

When Bonaparte declared himself emperor, Beethoven viewed his gesture as a denial of the very ideals he saw as heroic—the spirit of equality, brotherhood and freedom we would later hear enshrined in the Choral Symphony. According to one popular account circulated by Beethoven's student Ferdinand Ries, the composer dramatically "undedicated" the Symphony No. 3, tearing Bonaparte's name from the score, and what might have been the "Sinfonia Bonaparte" became the "Sinfonia Eroica."

But as the eminent music historian Phillip Huscher points out, Beethoven himself was not entirely beyond personal politics; his decision to drop Bonaparte's name from the score quickly followed his learning that Prince Lobkowitz would pay him generously for the honor. Later, after the dedication page had been destroyed, Beethoven temporarily changed his mind once again, understanding that a "Sinfonia Bonaparte" might augur well on his planned trip to Paris. Either way, this idea for a symphony was something new. Other composers were beginning to find ways of incorporating ideas and happenings in their music, but not like this. Beethoven had produced a symphony that was not merely abstract and decorative, but bound up in philosophical ideas and world events, with suggestions of theatrical narrative and the concerns of oratorio.

The "Eroica" Symphony received its premiere performance in December, 1804 in a private concert at the home of Prince Lobkowitz in Vienna. It was brought before the public at Vienna's Theater an der Wien in April 1805.

With stentorian E-flat chords rumbling through the orchestra, the "Eroica" Symphony opens onto the largest orchestral movement composed up to that time. And though in those hugely scaled opening moments we don't know how long the movement may last, the symphony already sounds "big" in its beginnings. These sonic blasts are followed by cello voices that suggest a main theme. But does this movement really have a "main theme" at all? The musical phrases we hear seem more concerned with movement and with a sense of tension, and it is through these means that the symphony builds a feeling of fateful importance within us.

In the slow movement that follows, the sense of building tension continues, as if the symphony were brooding over the events of history as they take shape. This movement has come to be known as a funeral march; the critic Paul Bekker, for one, described it as conveying "the emotions of someone watching the funeral procession from afar, passing by, and then fading in the distance." But this is a halting rhythm—slow, yes, but not conducive to marching. Its solemnity seems to freeze and overwhelm us. Do we hear the sound of mourning for the past, or does the movement point us toward a dark, challenging future? This is one of the first symphonic movements whose slowness and gravity send a hush through the concert hall, and it remains one of the most seriously affecting movements in music. It is accorded a special reverence among musicians. Tellingly, when the news of George Szell's death reached Leonard

Bernstein at Tanglewood in July 1970, Bernstein led the players of the Boston Symphony Orchestra in an unscheduled, emotion-charged performance of this movement in tribute to the Hungarian-born conductor. Reportedly, there were not enough scores to go around—but the players did not need them.

With the third movement, the shape of the symphony begins to emerge as an Orphic struggle through darkness and toward light. It begins with surprising softness opening onto a trio dominated by horns. The effect refreshes us and provides a sense of hope. And it propels us toward a fourth movement that surges with triumphant energy.

Listeners who know their Beethoven are more than familiar with the melody that dominates the fourth movement of the "Eroica"; it is also heard in his ballet *The Creatures of Prometheus* and in the piano variations of Opus 33. But when framed for the ballet, this melody is just a catchy, danceable tune, cheerful and lyrical. In the "Eroica" it is something much more: an expression of apotheosis, joyful and heroic. Many listeners have described this movement as the awakening of a sleeping giant, but surely it is the symphony's hero rising up. As the movement takes shape into a triumphant march, we can imagine the hero marching into a historic destiny as the symphony's finale blazes with light.

Michael Clive is a cultural reporter living in the Litchfield Hills of Connecticut. He is program annotator for Pacific Symphony and Louisiana Philharmonic, and editor-in-chief for The Santa Fe Opera.



FRANK TICHELI

Composer

Frank Ticheli's music has been described as being "optimistic and thoughtful" (*Los Angeles Times*), "lean and muscular" (*The New York Times*), "brilliantly effective" (*Miami Herald*) and "powerful, deeply felt... crafted with impressive flair and an ear for striking instrumental colors" (*South Florida Sun-Sentinel*). Ticheli (b. 1958) joined the faculty of the University of Southern California's Thornton School of Music in 1991, where he is professor of composition. From 1991 to 1998, Ticheli was composer-in-residence of Pacific Symphony.

Frank Ticheli's orchestral works have received considerable recognition in the U.S. and Europe. Orchestral performances have come from the Philadelphia Orchestra, Atlanta Symphony, Detroit Symphony, Dallas Symphony, American Composers Orchestra, the radio orchestras of Stuttgart, Frankfurt, Saarbruecken and Austria, as well as the orchestras of Austin, Bridgeport, Charlotte, Colorado, Haddonfield, Harrisburg, Hong Kong, Jacksonville, Lansing, Long Island, Louisville, Lubbock, Memphis, Nashville, Omaha, Phoenix, Portland, Richmond, San Antonio, San Jose, Wichita Falls among

others. His clarinet concerto was recently recorded by the Nashville Symphony on the Naxos label with soloist James Zimmermann.

Ticheli is well known for his works for concert band, many of which have become standards in the repertoire. In addition to composing, he has appeared as guest conductor of his music at Carnegie Hall, at many American universities and music festivals and in cities throughout the world, including Schladming (Austria), Beijing and Shanghai, London and Manchester, Singapore, Rome, Sydney and numerous cities in Japan.

Frank Ticheli is the recipient of a 2012 "Arts and Letters Award" from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, his third award from that prestigious organization. His Symphony No. 2 was named winner of the 2006 NBA/William D. Revelli Memorial Band Composition Contest. Other awards include the Walter Beeler Memorial Prize and First Prize awards in the Texas Sesquicentennial Orchestral Composition Competition, Britten-on-the-Bay Choral Composition Contest and Virginia CBDNA Symposium for New Band Music.

In 2018, Ticheli received the University of Michigan Alumni Society's highest

honor, the Hall of Fame Award, in recognition for his career as a composer. He was also awarded national honorary membership to Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia, "bestowed to individuals who have significantly contributed to the cause of music in America," and the A. Austin Harding Award by the American School Band Directors Association, "given to individuals who have made exceptional contributions to the school band movement in America." At USC, he has received the Virginia Ramo Award for excellence in teaching, and the Dean's Award for Professional Achievement.

Frank Ticheli received his doctoral and master's degrees in composition from The University of Michigan. His works are published by Manhattan Beach, Southern, Hinshaw and Encore Music, and are recorded on the labels of Albany, Chandos, Clarion, Equilibrium, Klavier, Koch International, Mark, Naxos and Reference.



PHOTO CREDIT: GENEVA LEWIS

GABRIEL MARTINS

Cello

Cellist Gabriel Martins (b. 1998) is the winner of the 2020 Concert Artists Guild (CAG)-Young Classical Artists Trust (YCAT) Grand Prize, the 2020 Sphinx Competition, the 2020 Schadt String Competition, the 2018 Orford Music Award and the 2013 David Popper International Cello Competition. Additionally, he won the second prize in the 2014 International Tchaikovsky Competition for Young Musicians and the Czech Music Fund prize in the 2018 Prague Spring International Music Competition. He has performed as a soloist and chamber musician in venues such as Carnegie Hall, the Great Hall of the Moscow Conservatory, Maison Symphonique in Montréal, Teatro Gran Rex in Buenos Aires and Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles. According to esteemed cellist Ralph Kirshbaum, he has “revealed heart, passion, intellect and a finely-nuanced palette of colors in a compelling manner worthy of a seasoned artist.”

Martins’ upcoming debuts include Wigmore Hall in London and Merkin Hall in New York City as well as Pacific Symphony. He has appeared in concerto performances with the Aspen Conducting Academy Orchestra, Fukuda Ensemble (São Paulo), Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, Memphis Symphony, Modesto Symphony Orchestra,

New Russia State Symphony Orchestra, Sphinx Symphony Orchestra, USC Thornton Symphony and has given solo recitals on the Dame Myra Hess Memorial Concerts and IU Summer Music series. His performances have aired on National Public Radio’s *From the Top*, New York’s WQXR and Chicago’s WFMT. In 2019, Martins toured with Miriam Fried and Musicians from Ravinia’s Steans Music Institute, giving concerts in Boston, Chicago, New York City and elsewhere. 2021 saw the debut of his first complete Bach Cycle, in collaboration with the Kaufman Center and the Alphadyne Foundation, where he played all Six Cello Suites back to back in New York City. In the spring of 2022 he will debut his first complete Beethoven Cycle, in collaboration with pianist Kati Gleiser and the Lakes Area Music Festival, performing and recording all of the works for cello and piano.

Born of American and Brazilian heritage, Martins grew up in Bloomington, Ind. He began playing the cello when he was 5, studying with Susan Moses at the Indiana University String Academy. He later served as a teaching assistant at the Academy’s summer program. His festival appearances have included the Piatigorsky International Cello Festival, Ravinia Steans Music Institute, Yellow Barn Music Festival, Orford Music Academy, Four Seasons Festival

Winter Workshop and Aspen Music Festival and School, where he won the Low Strings Concerto Competition. He received his B.M. as a Presidential Scholar at the USC Thornton School of Music with Ralph Kirshbaum. In his freshman year at USC, he won the school’s concerto competition as well as its Bach competition. He received his M.M. at the New England Conservatory of Music.

In addition to his commitment to the great classics of the cello repertoire, Martins composes his own works and arranges many others. His “Songs of Solitude” received their world premiere in the spring of 2021 in collaboration with the Brooklyn Public Library, and his new cello arrangements of Bach’s solo violin sonatas and partitas have received high acclaim and a feature in *The Strad Magazine*. He is also a passionate educator, teaching privately and giving a number of masterclasses. His students have gone on to achieve major success in competitions and performances around the world. He also runs an educational series on Youtube, *Cello Tips*, which has garnered thousands of viewers worldwide. Martins currently plays on a composite Francesco Ruggieri cello made in Cremona, c. 1690 and a François Nicolas Voirin bow made in Paris, c. 1880.