



Yulianna Avdeeva

2023-24 Hal & Jeanette Segerstrom
Family Foundation Classical Series

BEETHOVEN & SIBELIUS

Thursday, May 16, 2024 @ 8 p.m.

Friday, May 17, 2024 @ 8 p.m.

Saturday, May 18, 2024 @ 8 p.m.

Tianyi Lu, conductor
Yulianna Avdeeva, piano
Pacific Symphony

PROGRAM

ANDRÉE *Andante quasi recitativo* for Strings

BEETHOVEN Piano Concerto No. 4 in G Major,
Op. 58

Allegro moderato

Andante con moto

Rondo: Vivace

Yulianna Avdeeva

-INTERMISSION-

SIBELIUS Symphony No. 2 in D Major, Op. 43

Allegretto

Andante; ma rubato

Vivacissimo

Finale: Allegro moderato

The 2023-24 season piano soloists are generously
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**This concert is being recorded for broadcast on
Aug. 11, 2024 on Classical California KUSC.**

*Performance at the Segerstrom Center for the Arts
Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall & Lobby*



PROGRAM NOTES

Elfrida Andrée

Andante quasi recitativo for Strings

Born: Feb. 19, 1841 in Visby, Sweden

Died: Jan. 11, 1929 in Gothenburg, Sweden

Composed: 1877

Premiered: May 24, 1877 in Gothenburg, with the composer conducting

Most recent Pacific Symphony performance: this is a Pacific Symphony premiere

Instrumentation: string orchestra

Approximate duration: 5 minutes



The pioneering organist, composer, and conductor Elfrida Andrée was born in the Swedish town of Visby during the Romantic era in classical music, 14 years after the death of Beethoven. Andrée and her sister, the soprano Fredrika Stenhammar, were the daughters of a physician, and both became renowned musicians. An activist in the women's movement in Sweden, Andrée was the first woman to gain prominence as a professional organist in Scandinavia, serving as the official organist in the cathedral in Gothenburg—a major musical center in Sweden—in 1861. In 1897, she was named leader of the Gothenburg Workers Institute Concerts, establishing her reputation as the first Swedish woman to conduct a symphony orchestra. For her services, she was elected to the Royal Swedish Academy of Music.

The influence of Beethoven and other Romantic composers can be heard in Andrée's music, along with a melodic richness all her own. Her brief, sonorous *Andante* is Apollonian in spirit—opening in broody darkness, but quickly blossoming into optimistic, songful melody that evolves like a plant reaching for the light. The underlying low strings provide dark texture, while the higher strings sing brightly.

Ludwig van Beethoven

Concerto No. 4 in G Major for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 58

Born: Dec. 16, 1770 in Bonn, Germany

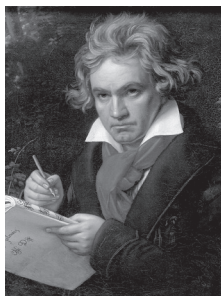
Died: Mar. 26, 1827 in Vienna

Composed: 1805-1806

Premiered: Mar. 1807 at the home of Prince Franz Joseph von Lobkowitz; public premiere was on December 22, 1808 at the Theater an der Wien in Vienna

Most recent Pacific Symphony

performance: Jun. 9, 2022, with Carl St.Clair conducting, and Alexander Romanovsky as soloist



Instrumentation: one flute, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, timpani, strings, and solo piano

Approximate duration: 35 minutes

When Beethoven transferred to Vienna in 1792, few in his circle suspected that he might spend the rest of his days there—or that he would transform the notion of the concerto. His great patron and protector, Count Ferdinand von Waldstein had arranged the move so that Beethoven could take instruction from Haydn, who welcomed and valued him as his most talented pupil.

Beethoven's writing indicates that he did not reciprocate Haydn's friendly feelings. But he approached his work with music's grand old man with utmost seriousness, cultivating mastery in the Classical style that he would eventually challenge and disrupt. He spent just one year studying with Haydn, but worked his way through the major forms of Classical composition as if following a curriculum of his own meticulous devising that was less attuned to the statesmanlike Haydn than to the bolder Mozart—who, like Beethoven, was a pianist who viewed writing piano concertos as strategically important in building his professional standing.

Though Beethoven's reputation as one of music's boldest innovators is fully deserved, he did not publish a piano concerto until years after Mozart's death despite his own considerable abilities on the instrument. In Beethoven's first three concertos, Mozart's influence is unmistakable. But with his fourth, everything changes, and we hear the work of a more confident composer—one who has fully found his voice. This concerto's themes have a nobility that is distinctly Beethoven's own, and he develops them in ways that previous composers had never dared.

Did our modern conception of the Romantic concerto start here? Certainly, a case can be made for this idea. The concerto's freshness is apparent from its opening: The piano introduces a simple theme in G Major while the orchestra is at rest. Then the orchestra enters with the same theme, but in a key that bears little relation to the piano's statement, introducing a competitive tension between solo instrument and ensemble that would become a mainstay of Romantic concertos, and sustaining it with bold harmonic modulations. The second movement is rhapsodic and almost agonizingly slow, setting up a contemplative mood; Franz Liszt, the most admired pianist of his generation, described this movement as a depiction of Orpheus taming the furies.

In the sublime third movement, the piano keeps returning to the dramatic main theme despite the allure of one sub-theme after another. The structure is a traditional rondo form—A-B-A-C-A-D-A—but it builds with a sense of joyful drama. Hearing it, we can put a different twist on Liszt's description: Apollo, in his chariot of light, triumphantly bringing music to the world. Most tellingly, this concerto gives us the sense of grand, heroically scaled expression that was Beethoven's gift to future concertos.

PROGRAM NOTES

Jean Sibelius

Symphony No. 2 in D Major, Op. 43

Born: Dec. 8, 1865 in Hämeenlinna, Grand Duchy of Finland

Died: Sept. 20, 1957 in Järvenpää, Finland

Composed: 1901-02; revised in 1903

Premiered: Mar. 8, 1902 by the Helsinki Orchestral Society, with the composer conducting

Most recent Pacific Symphony

performance: Jan. 10, 2015 with Leo Hussain conducting

Instrumentation: two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, one tuba, timpani, and strings

Approximate duration: 43 minutes



In 1865, when the long-lived Sibelius was born, Beethoven—the composer in whose shadow all future symphonies would be written—was a living memory in the world of music. To the composers who followed him, his Symphony No. 9, completed in 1824, represented either the opening of infinite possibilities or the ultimate statement for the symphonic form...an artistic inspiration, but also a dead end. This added to the creative burdens faced by Sibelius, who belonged to a Swedish-speaking family of high achievers: His father, Christian Gustaf, was a physician, and his younger brother, Christian, was a professor who, as chairman of the Lapinlahti Asylum, founded the practice of modern psychiatry in Finland.

As things turned out, Jean Sibelius, too, was a high achiever. He composed well into his sixties and died at age 91, and enjoyed some of his most creative and productive years as a composer relatively early in life. By the time he completed his Symphony No. 2, he was 37 years old and his career as a composer was well established internationally. In addition to his first symphony, he had already published other very popular works in the characteristic Nordic style we hear in this one—including his violin concerto, *Finlandia*, *Karelia Suite*, and *Kullervo*, as well as the four Lemminkäinen Legends, which include the haunting *Swan of Tuonela*.

As a great symphonist's most popular symphony, Sibelius' second represents not only his distinctive sound, but also his approach to post-Beethoven symphonic form—a subject in which Sibelius and Mahler seemed to represent polar opposites. In their ideas about the symphony, these two great composers acknowledged their contrasting aims: Mahler's as expansive and philosophical as the world, the heavens, life, and death; Sibelius' a more detailed projection of the human imagination and the physical world. Some critics have heard Sibelius' Second, with its traditional four-movement presentation and predominance of traditional sonata allegro form, as offering a symphonic future more

directly in line with Beethoven's disciplined formalism. Mahler's symphonies cast off in a new direction without apparent constraints.

Sibelius' Second, with its more worldly approach to symphonic expression, is full of joyful energy, and has consistently ranked as his most popular symphony. It took rise from the Finnish master's 1901 visit to Italy and was completed in 1902. Despite the composer's brooding and often pessimistic nature, in this composition we hear affirmation and pleasure in the world. The symphony begins with the unalloyed pleasure of Sibelius' travels in a land he adored. He described the symphony's sparkling first movement as a colorful Italian mosaic.

Is there also a strongly political dimension to this symphony? Is it a musical narrative of the achievement of independence for the Finnish homeland? We can choose to hear the bright colors of the first movement as offering the promise of freedom; the darker second movement, with its shift to D minor, could reflect suffering under foreign dominion; the tumultuous scherzo creates an atmosphere of fevered resistance; and perhaps the triumphant finale transmutes the sunny optimism of the first movement's Italy to the emergence of Finland as a free and sovereign nation. If you don't recognize it, wait for the triumphant spirit of the final movement, which can sound familiar and nationalistic even if you never heard it before. It is a culmination in every sense.

This latent political message is especially evident to natives of Finland, and has added impetus to the symphony's popularity. While Beethoven proved that symphonies could have deeply political dimensions (his third and ninth symphonies are among his compositions that address the great sociopolitical issues of his day), in the 20th century symphonies began to address politics in a more particular way, depicting actual events programmatically. Tchaikovsky, whose compositions are among the only things about Russia that Sibelius actually liked, made his symphonies as personal and specific as a diary. It is quite possible that Sibelius made his second symphony an account of Finland's oppression as a duchy controlled by Tsar Nicholas II of Russia, and its eventual emergence as a free nation.

Michael Clive is a cultural reporter living in the Litchfield Hills of Connecticut. He is program annotator for Pacific Symphony and has written numerous articles for magazines and newspapers in the U.S. and U.K. and hundreds of program notes for orchestras and opera companies. Operahound.com

ABOUT THE CONDUCTOR

Internationally known for her thrilling energy on the podium, her deeply creative approach to the repertoire, and her open-hearted style of leadership, Chinese-born New Zealander Tianyi Lu collaborates with major orchestras and opera houses worldwide. Her work is driven by an ethos of empowerment, creating connection and compassion across diverse communities through music.



After winning first prize in 2020 at both the Sir Georg Solti International Conductors' Competition and the International Conducting Competition "Guido Cantelli" in Italy, Lu was appointed Conductor-in-Residence with the Stavanger Symphony Orchestra in Norway, following a sensational debut with them in 2020-21. She is also the Female-Conductor-in-Residence with the Welsh National Opera and Principal Conductor of the St Woolos Sinfonia in the UK.

Recent highlights include concerts and recordings with the Het Residentie Orkest Den Haag, Västerås Sinfonietta, Orquestra Gulbenkian, Philharmonia Orchestra London, Hallé Orchestra Manchester, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Ulster Orchestra, Malmö Symphony Orchestra, Dresden Philharmonie, and Sydney Symphony Orchestra. A former Dudamel Fellow, in July 2021 Lu made her Hollywood Bowl debut with the LA Phil, and in autumn 2021 conducted performances of Verdi's *Rigoletto* at the Aalto-Musiktheater Essen. Lu conducted various concerts with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra as their Assistant Conductor throughout 2017-19.

The 2023-24 season sees Lu make her debut in London with the London Philharmonic Orchestra, as well as further debut appearances with Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, Orchestre National de Lyon, Duisburger Philharmoniker, and Orchestre de Chambre de Lausanne. Return engagements include Het Residentie Orkest Den Haag, Orquestra Gulbenkian, and Ulster Orchestra. At Theater Basel, Lu leads the world premiere of Bobbi Jene Smith's production of *Marie & Pierre*, composed for Ballett Basel by Celeste Dram.

Passionately committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion and to building a more empathetic world through the arts, Lu is an Artist Ambassador for Opera for Peace. She is regularly invited to work with and speak to communities and institutions about her experiences in empowering leadership, transforming cultures, resilience and wellbeing. She has appeared in and hosted Welsh National Opera's Podcast *The O Word*, has spoken as a guest for London Marathon Events and the *Do More Good* Podcast, and conducted and hosted Ears Wide Open concerts with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra.

Lu completed her Master of Music in Orchestral Conducting with Distinction at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama in 2015, where she studied with David Jones. She has assisted or attended masterclasses with Sir Andrew Davis and Xian Zhang with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, Daniele Gatti with the Concertgebouworkest, Bernard Haitink with the Lucerne Festival Orchestra, and is an alumni of the Hart Institute for Women Conductors at The Dallas Opera. Other teachers and mentors have included Sian Edwards, Carlo Rizzi, Neemi Järvi, Alexander Polianichko, Kenneth Kiesler, Carlo Montanaro, and Alice Farnham.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Yulianna Avdeeva gained worldwide recognition at the 2010 Chopin Competition, where she won First Prize with a "detailed way of playing" that "matched Chopin's own" (*The Telegraph*). A pianist of fiery temperament and virtuosity, Avdeeva plays with power, conviction, and sensibility, having won over audiences all over the world.



A favorite artist in Europe with recurring concert engagements at the Warsaw Philharmonic or Rudolfinum in Prague, Pierre Boulez Saal Berlin, Vienna Konzerthaus, and Elbphilharmonie Hamburg, Avdeeva has also given concerts for Ukrainian Relief, including one together with Anne-Sophie Mutter at the Lucerne Chamber Music Festival.

Her 2022-23 season began with a Tippet Rise Festival recital in the U.S., followed later by a Carnegie Hall debut recital. She performed with the Vienna Symphony and after an acclaimed first collaboration in 2021 tours again with Teodor Currentzis and SWR Symphony in Munich, Hamburg, and Vienna. In mid-winter she returns to Japan with concerts in Tokyo, Osaka, Yokohama, and Kyoto to be followed with concerto appearances with the Frankfurt Radio Symphony (Andris Poga), RAI National Orchestra (Juraj Valčuha), Bergen Philharmonic (Petr Popelka), Basque National Orchestra (Robert Trevino) and Camerata Salzburg (Finnegan Downie Dear). She will also perform in recitals in Leipzig, Florence, Madrid, Barcelona, Aarhus, and Naples.

Among her other extensive orchestral collaborators are the LA Phil, Montreal Symphony, City of Birmingham Symphony, Rundfunk-Sinfonieorchester Berlin, Royal Stockholm Philharmonic, London Philharmonic, Finnish and Danish Radio Symphonies, Czech Philharmonic, Pittsburgh Symphony, Dresden Philharmonic, Sinfonieorchester Basel, Kremerata Baltica, Orchestra dell'Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia, KBS Symphony, and Yomiuri Nippon Symphony.

A dedicated chamber musician, Avdeeva has toured regularly throughout Europe with violinists Julia Fischer and Gidon Kremer, with appearances at Wigmore Hall, Tonhalle Zurich, and Festspielhaus Baden-Baden, among others. In addition to being a regular guest at Festival Chopin Warsaw and the Festival International de Piano La Roque d'Anthéron, recent seasons have seen Avdeeva in recital at the Salzburg Festival, Rheingau Musik Festival, Elbphilharmonie Hamburg, Boulez Saal, Vienna Konzerthaus, Palau de la Música Catalana, Musikfest Bremen, Jerusalem Chamber Music Festival, and Shostakovich Festival Saxony.

Avdeeva's recordings of Chopin concertos with the Orchestra of the Eighteenth Century and Frans Brüggen (2013), her three solo albums featuring works by Bach, Mozart, Schubert, Chopin, Liszt, and Prokofiev (2014, 2016, and 2017), and her collaboration with Gidon Kremer in Mieczyslaw Weinberg's chamber music (2017 and 2019) comprise a formidable record of Avdeeva's art topped off by a Deutsche Grammophon (2019) solo recording as part of a milestone collection dedicated to Chopin Competition Gold Medalists.

Piano aficionados around the world also enjoy her educational online streaming project, the #AvdeevaBachProject, which she started during the lockdown, gaining more than half a million views.