



Detroit Symphony Orchestra Jader Bignamini, conductor

Saturday, July 22, 2023 • 7:30 p.m. Kresge Auditorium

WELCOME



Welcome to Interlochen Center for the Arts. I am thrilled that you have joined us for today's performance.

During your visit, I encourage you to explore our campus and immerse yourself in our one-of-a-kind creative community. In addition to performances, we also offer guided tours, workshops for adult learners, lakeside hotel rooms, delicious soft-serve ice cream, and so much more.

This summer, more than 3,000 young artists ages 8-18 have convened under the stately pines for the 96th season of Interlochen Arts Camp, while hundreds of others are experiencing our immersive arts education from their own homes through Interlochen Online. These students—who hail from over 50 U.S. states and territories and 40 countries—are currently engaged in a transformative artistic experience unlike any other. Together, they will refine their skills, forge lifelong friendships, and present hundreds of concerts and events—many of which are free to attend.

I hope that you will join us for one of these presentations and witness the unparalleled artistry of these remarkable young creatives. You can also enjoy many of our student performances from wherever you are by logging on to one of our webcasts or tuning in to a live World Youth Symphony Orchestra broadcast on Interlochen Public Radio.

Many of our Arts Camp students are able to be here this summer because of financial aid. Proceeds from Interlochen Arts Festival events, Scholarshop sales, Melody Freeze concessions, and gifts to the Interlochen Annual Fund enable deserving young artists to nurture their talents at Interlochen.

Thank you for investing in the artists of tomorrow. I hope you enjoy the performance.

Trey Devey

President, Interlochen Center for the Arts

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DETROIT SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Jader Bignamini, conductor

Saturday, July 22, 2023

7:30pm, Kresge Auditorium

Ballet Music from Act III of *Macbeth* Giuseppe Verdi (1813-1901)

Suite from Swan Lake, Op. 20Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky Scène (1840-1893) Valse Dance of the Swans Scène Hungarian Dance, Czardas Spanish Dance Neapolitan Dance Finale

Suite from *The Firebird* (1919 version) Igor Stravinsky Introduction and Dance of the Firebird (1882-1971) Dance of the Princesses Infernal Dance of King Kastchei Berceuse Finale

The DSO at Interlochen is supported by Paul M. Angell Family Foundation, Joanne Danto & Arnold Weingarden, Mr. & Mrs. Arn Tellem, Drs. David & Bernadine Wu, and one donor who wishes to remain anonymous. Additional support is provided by James A. Bannan, Dr. & Mrs. Charles G. Colombo, Dr. & Mrs. A. Bradley Eisenbrey, Mary Ann & Robert Gorlin, Mr. Michael Kuhne, Dr. Susan & Mr. Stephen Molina, William & Lauren Piontkowski, Ms. Joyce E. Scafe, Bob & Donna Schaerer, David Szymbroski & Marilyn Sicklesteel, Tom & Laura Trudeau, Mr. James G. Vella, Peter & Carol Walters, and Ms. Tiffany Weathersbee.

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PROGRAM NOTES

Ballet Music from Act III of *Macbeth* GIUSEPPE VERDI B. October 10, 1813, Le Roncole, Italy D. January 27, 1901, Milan, Italy Scored for flute, piccolo, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, bass clarinet, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 4 trombones, timpani, percussion, & strings. Duration: Approx. 9 minutes

Giuseppe Verdi is widely regarded as the greatest composer of Italian opera. He had established his reputation around the world with such masterworks as *II trovatore, Rigoletto, La traviata,* and *Don Carlo* by 1868, when Gioacchino Rossini, the only figure of comparable stature in 19th-century Italian music, died in Paris.

Almost all of Verdi's early operas ran afoul of the censors because of the political implications of their plots. In 19th-century Europe, no one doubted that music and drama could inspire strong emotions and, perhaps, even action. The political arbiters were ever wary about allowing ideas of insurrection or royal fallibility to escape from the stage into the public consciousness. One such idea that did slip past their suspicious examination, however, was contained in Verdi's *Nabucco* of 1842. The chorus of longing for their lost homeland sung in that opera by the Israelites captive in Babylon, "Va, pensiero, sull'ali dorate" ("Fly, thoughts, on wings of gold"), was quickly adopted by the Risorgimento as an anthem of struggle for Italy's freedom. So great and enduring was the fame of this lovely music that it was sung by the crowds that lined the streets for Verdi's funeral procession almost six decades later.

Until the late 1830s, Verdi lived a relatively peaceful life. He had spent his youth as an altar boy and organist at San Michele Arcangelo in Bussetto, Italy. He later studied composition with Vicenzo Lavigna, a composer and maestro at La Scala in Milan, and in 1836 was named music director of the Busseto Philharmonic. That same year Verdi married his childhood sweetheart, Margherita Barezzi. They had two children together before tragedy struck in 1839, when one by one, the family fell ill. Margherita and the children died over the course of the year, changing Verdi's life forever.

In tribute to his family, the composer vowed never to write a comedy again and instead pursued mainly works of tragedy and drama. Verdi clung to the idea of inescapable destiny and wrote his tenth opera, *Macbeth*, in 1847, following the same theme. *Macbeth* is based on Shakespeare's play about the tragedy of political ambition, and Verdi worked closely with Francesco Maria Piave and later Andrea Maffei to create the libretto for this opera. Verdi was enthralled by the work of Shakespeare, stating that he was "one of my very special poets, and I have had him in my hands from earliest youth, and I read and re-read him continually."

The original version of *Macbeth* did not include the ballet music heard on today's program—this was added in 1865 when Verdi revised the opera for a Paris performance to fit the standard operatic form of the time, where most operas included some type of ballet music. He created this ballet excerpt for the witches in *Macbeth*, and this scene included a combination of dance and mime presented in three distinct sections: an allegro dance around the cauldron, an andante section featuring Hecate miming the action, and culminating in a wild waltz that returns to one final dazzling cauldron dance.

Suite from Swan Lake PYOTR ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY B. Votkinsk, May 7, 1840 D. St. Petersburg, November 6, 1893 Scored for 2 flutes, piccolo, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 2 cornets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion, & strings. Duration: Approx. 36 minutes

The first performance of what is still considered to be the quintessential ballet was a disaster of such epic proportions that it took Tchaikovsky's death and the subsequent renewal of interest in his life and works to bring about a second production. That premiere took place in Moscow at the celebrated Bolshoi Theater in March of 1877, and it was a failure for a number of reasons: the production overall was very shoddy; the choreography was uninspired and uninteresting; the prima ballerina was next to incompetent; the orchestra, inadequately rehearsed, simply could not handle the technical and musical demands of what was a very strong and inventive score; and that wonderful score was tampered with so as to include a number of dances by hack composers of the day.

The genesis of what is now the most popular of classical ballets is more mundane. In 1875, the director of one of the other theaters in Moscow asked Tchaikovsky to write music for a full-length ballet inspired in the main by a well-known German fairy tale. Mainly because of the financial reward, Tchaikovsky agreed, but he also had been wanting for some time to try his hand in this genre. He wrote at an uncommonly slow pace—by the time the score was finished almost a year had gone by and he had grown bored of writing the work. Then came the premiere, which, in spite of everything, actually did please a segment of the audience. The various folk legends on which the story was based were quite old, and usually had something to do with hunters finding swans, who beg the hunters not to shoot them, then at some point the swans are transformed into beautiful maidens who eventually marry the hunters.

Following the premiere, various revisions were made to the choreography—and even the music—by leading ballerinas of the day, demands to which Tchaikovsky surprisingly agreed. As a result, the ballet became more and more disjointed and difficult to follow, and performances virtually stopped. In 1880, a new choreographic version was created for the Bolshoi Theatre, but even though it remained in the company's repertoire for three years, it was not successful and eventually was dropped from active performance. Then, with the great successes of *The Sleeping Beauty* (1890) and *The Nutcracker* (1892) on the boards, plans were made to mount an entirely new production in St. Petersburg. This eventually took place one year after Tchaikovsky's premature death in 1893 and was the work of the famed choreographer Marius Petipa and his assistant Lev Ivanov, who sought to create a memorial program of the composer's music at the famous Maryinsky Theater.

This gala production took place in the winter of 1895 and was an absolute triumph. *Swan Lake* was finally revealed as an unquestioned masterpiece, and has since taken its place as a work of great historical importance in the development of modern ballet.

Suite from *The Firebird* (1919 version) IGOR STRAVINSKY B. June 17, 1882, Lomonosov, Russia D. April 6, 1971, New York, NY Scored for 2 flutes (1 doubling on piccolo), 2 oboes (1 doubling on English horn), 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion, harp, piano, & strings. Duration: Approx. 19 minutes

Igor Stravinsky's association with Serge Diaghilev and his Ballets Russes lasted two decades and proved one of the most fruitful artistic collaborations in history. Through Diaghilev, the composer met some of the leading creative figures of the day, and for the Ballet Russes Stravinsky produced most of the works that secured his fame. The first, and arguably most famous, is the score for the ballet *The Firebird*, which premiered in 1910. Stravinsky extracted two concert suites from the full score—one in 1911, and then a "revision" in 1919. The second version is generally regarded as the "standard" today.

The Firebird relates a fantastic tale. Wandering alone in a deep wood, Prince Ivan, son of the Czar, comes upon the mythical Firebird. Quickly he captures her, but when she offers a magic feather as ransom, he frees her. Continuing on his way, the prince encounters thirteen princesses, who are under the spell of Kastchei, a demon of terrible power. (In his presence women are made captive and men turned to stone.) When the princesses flee, Ivan follows them into Kastchei's castle and soon is captured. But he remembers the feather, and its magic renders Kastchei's spells harmless. The Firebird appears and shows the prince an egg containing the monster's soul. Ivan smashes it, destroying Kastchei and freeing the princesses.

The suite unfolds in five movements. The first three set the scene and introduce the principal characters of the fairytale drama. The initial measures suggest Prince Ivan wandering in the forest; an air of mystery and menace permeates the music of the low strings, the horn figures, and especially the eerie glissando harmonics in the strings. Next comes the dance of the Firebird, which sounds every bit as colorful and fantastic as the creature itself.

The second movement gives us music of the princesses, their gentle demeanor conveyed in a song-like melody played by the oboe to harp accompaniment. These dulcet sounds give way suddenly, however, to the "Infernal Dance of King Kastchei." The demon is suggested in angular rhythms and harsh outbursts, particularly from the brass. This entire sequence is brilliantly orchestrated, and we can scarcely imagine today the impact it must have made on audiences in 1910.

Of entirely different character is the "Berceuse," a haunting lullaby rather oriental in tone. A brief sequence of falling string tremolos leads to the finale. Its melody, announced by the horn and gradually taken up by the full orchestra, is repeated in ever more sonorous instrumentation, building to an imposing climax in the final measures.

-Program notes courtesy of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra

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About the DSO

The acclaimed Detroit Symphony Orchestra is known for trailblazing performances, collaborations with the world's foremost musical artists, and a deep connection to its city. As a community-supported orchestra, generous giving by individuals and institutions at all levels drives the continued success and growth of the organization. In January 2020, Italian conductor Jader Bignamini was named the DSO's next music director to commence with the 2020-2021 season. Celebrated conductor, arranger, and trumpeter Jeff Tyzik is the orchestra's Principal Pops Conductor, while Oscar-nominated trumpeter and composer Terence Blanchard holds the Fred A. Erb Jazz Creative Director Chair.

Making its home at historic Orchestra Hall within the Max M. and Marjorie S. Fisher Music Center, the DSO offers a performance schedule that features PVS Classical, PNC Pops, Paradise Jazz, and Young People's Family Concert series. One of the world's most acoustically perfect concert halls, Orchestra Hall celebrated its centennial in 2019-2020. In addition, the DSO presents the William Davidson Neighborhood Concert Series in seven metro area venues, as well as a robust schedule of eclectic multi-genre performances in its mid-size venue The Cube, constructed and curated with support from Peter D. & Julie F. Cummings.

A dedication to broadcast innovation began in 1922, when the DSO became the first orchestra in the world to present a live radio broadcast of a concert and continues today with the groundbreaking *Live from Orchestra Hall* series of free webcasts, which also reaches tens of thousands of children with the Classroom Edition expansion. With growing attendance and unwavering philanthropic support from the people of Detroit, the DSO actively pursues a mission to embrace and inspire individuals, families, and communities through unsurpassed musical experiences.

JADER BIGNAMINI was introduced as the 18th music director of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra in January 2020, commencing with the 2020–2021 season. He kicked off his tenure as DSO Music Director with the launch of DSO Digital Concerts in September 2020, conducting works by Copland, Puccini, Tchaikovsky, and Saint-Georges. His infectious passion and artistic excellence set the tone for the season ahead, creating extraordinary music and establishing a close relationship with the orchestra. A jazz aficionado, he has immersed himself in Detroit's rich jazz culture and the influences of American music.

A native of Crema, Italy, Bignamini studied at the Piacenza Music Conservatory and began his career as a musician (*clarinet*) with Orchestra Sinfonica La Verdi in Milan, later serving as the group's resident conductor. Captivated by the operatic arias of legends like Mahler and Tchaikovsky, Bignamini explored their complexity and power, puzzling out the role that each instrument played in creating a larger-than-life sound. When he conducted his first professional concert at the age of 28, it didn't feel like a departure, but an arrival.

In the years since, Bignamini has conducted some of the world's most acclaimed orchestras and opera companies in venues across the globe including working with Riccardo Chailly on concerts of Mahler's Eighth Symphony in 2013 and his concert debut at La Scala in 2015 for the opening season of La Verdi Orchestra. Recent highlights include debuts with the Houston, Dallas, and Minnesota symphonies; Osaka Philharmonic and Yomiuri Nippon Symphony Orchestra in Tokyo; with the Metropolitan Opera, Vienna State Opera, and Dutch National Opera (Madama Butterfly); Bayerische Staatsoper (La Traviata); I Puritani in Montpellier for the Festival of Radio France; Traviata in Tokyo directed by Sofia Coppola; return engagements with Oper Frankfurt (La forza del destino) and Santa Fe Opera (La Bohème); Manon Lescaut at the Bolshoi; Traviata, Madama Butterfly, and Turandot at Arena of Verona; Il Trovatore and Aida at Rome's Teatro dell'Opera; Madama Butterfly, I Puritani, and Manon Lescaut at Teatro Massimo in Palermo; Simon Boccanegra and La Forza del Destino at the Verdi Festival in Parma; Ciro in Babilonia at Rossini Opera Festival and La Bohème, Madama Butterfly, and Elisir d'amore at La Fenice in Venice.

When Bignamini leads an orchestra in symphonic repertoire, he conducts without a score, preferring to make direct eye contact with the musicians. He conducts from the heart, forging a profound connection with his musicians that shines through both onstage and off. He both embodies and exudes the excellence and enthusiasm that has long distinguished the DSO's artistry.

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Kenneth Thompkins PRINCIPAL David Binder Adam Rainey

LEGEND

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Adam Rainey

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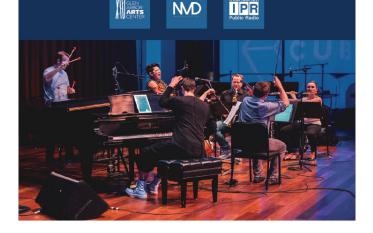
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