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UNLV Symphony Orchestra

Taras Krysa
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

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UNLV Symphony Orchestra

2007

Holiday Classics
Sunday, December 2, 2007
Artemus W. Ham Concert Hall
2:00pm

2008

UNLV 50th Anniversary Celebration
Guest Conductor Itzhak Perlman
Saturday, January 26, 2008
Artemus W. Ham Concert Hall
8:00pm

From Russia with Love
Tuesday, February 19, 2008
Artemus W. Ham Concert Hall
7:30pm

UNLV Opera
Friday & Saturday, March 14 & 15, 2008
7:30pm
Sunday, March 16, 2008
2:00pm
Artemus W. Ham Concert Hall

Grand Finale
Tuesday, April 29, 2008
Artemus W. Ham Concert Hall
7:30pm
PROGRAM

Oberon Overture  C.M. von Weber  (1786-1826)

Concerto for Violin, Cello and Orchestra in A minor, Op. 102  J. Brahms  (1833-1897)

Allegro
Andante
Vivace Non Troppo

Intermission

Symphony No. 1 “Spring”, Op. 38  R. Schumann  (1810-1856)

Andante un poco Maestoso/Allegro Molto Vivace
Larghetto
Scherzo
Allegro Animato e Grazioso

THE UNLV SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

The Symphony Orchestra at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas is comprised of undergraduate/graduate music majors/majors in the UNLV College of Fine Arts as well as non-music majors in other departments at the university. The mission of this performing ensemble is threefold: 1) to help music majors become professional quality performers and teachers through learning about and achieving excellence in the performance of orchestral repertoire, 2) to introduce non-majors to an enriched life through music and striving for excellence, and 3) to enrich the cultural life and reputation of UNLV through excellent concerts on and off campus. Developing the skills required to reach these ends requires intensive private study, individual practice, rehearsal, and experience. In the context of the class, excellence means preparedness, determination, open-mindedness, and constant improvement. In an effort to provide a rich variety of musical experiences, the orchestra presents a number of programs each season that include the entire range of the orchestral repertoire, Broadway music, the operatic repertoire, and ballet. The orchestra performs at least one major work with chorus every year as well as one complete opera. Student soloists are featured throughout the year either on the Student Soloists Concert or as guest artists for winning the Grand Prize at the annual James Hunetzinger Solo Competition which carries with it a cash award of $1000.00.
Wei Wei Le
Violin

Wei-Wei Le was recently appointed Assistant Professor in Violin at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. A native of Shanghai, she began her violin studies at the age of six, and over the course of her career, Ms. Le has won numerous competitions, including the Yehudi Menuhin International Violin Competition (England), the Kloster Schontal International Violin Competition (Germany), and the Starling International Violin Competition (USA). Her studies have taken her to the Yehudi Menuhin School and Shanghai, Cincinnati, and New England conservatories with world renowned violin pedagogues, such as Yehudi Menuhin, Donald Weilerstein, Almita & Roland Vamos, Dorothy DeLay, and Kurt Sassmannshaus. As a solo performer, Ms. Le has given recitals and concerts all over the world, performing with noteworthy orchestras such as the Hong Kong Philharmonic, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra (London), Queensland Symphony (Australia), and the Tianjin Symphony Orchestra (China). Many of her performances have been conducted by Lord Yehudi Menuhin himself, who described her as “one of the most talented young musicians he has ever seen.” As a devoted chamber music player, Ms. Le has collaborated with great musicians and quartets in North America, Europe, and Asia, including Richard Stoltzman, William Preucil, Sara Chang, and Eliot Fisk, as well as the Ying Quartet and St. Petersburg Quartet. Her major projects since 2006 include the Complete Bartok Cycle with the Atlanta-based Vega Quartet and several appearances at Carnegie Hall. Prior to her appointment at the University of Nevada, Ms. Le served on the faculty at Emory University and Georgia State University in Atlanta.

Andrew Smith
Cello

Cellist Andrew Smith is an Associate Professor of music at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, where he performs regularly in the southwest as a member of The Cerberus Trio. He is an original member of the Camerata de Deia, a group founded in 2001 to be the resident ensemble with The Festival Internacional de Deia, a summer festival in Mallorca, Spain. He is also a founding member of The Adriatic Chamber Music Festival, a summer music program in southern Italy, where he has taught and performed since its inception in 1998. An active recitalist, as well as chamber musician, Andrew has collaborated with pianists Alfredo Oyaguez, and Carl-E Ponten in concerts in Spain, Italy, and Sweden, as well as in Kosovo, Serbia, and Macedonia. In February 2006, he performed the world premiere of Linda Catlin Smith’s Ballad, for Cello and Piano, with pianist Eve Egoyan at the Glenn Gould Studios in Toronto. In April of the same season he played the Beethoven “Triple” concerto with pianist Mykola Suk, and violinist Byron Tauchi in Chernigiv and Kiev, with the Philharmonic of Ukraine. Prior to his appointment at UNLV Mr. Smith played with the Nicoletti String Quartet in Santa Barbara where he also performed regularly with the Santa Barbara Symphony, and the Santa Barbara Chamber Orchestra. For two years he was principal cellist with the West Virginia Symphony, where he was in residence as a member of the Montani String Quartet. He has won several awards and prizes, including first prize in the Performing Arts Scholarship Foundation competition in Santa Barbara, and an Esperia Foundation grant to study with the eminent Hungarian cellist Csaba Oncay at the Liszt Academy in Budapest. He has studied chamber music with such notable musicians as Felix Galimir, Leon Fleisher and Julius Levine, as well as members of the Juilliard, Guarneri, Emerson, Alban Berg, Vermeer, Muir, and American string quartets. He has also participated in numerous chamber music festivals, among them the Taos School of Music, Kneisel Hall, The Quartet Program, and Bravo! Colorado.

Mr. Smith is a recipient of the Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the University of California, Santa Barbara, where he was a member of the Young Artists String Quartet. He also holds a Master’s degree from The Mannes College of Music in New York, and a Bachelor of Music degree from the Hartt College of Music in Hartford, CT. He has studied cello with Timothy Eddy, Bernard Greenhouse, Leslie Parnas, Ron Leonard, and Geoffrey Rutkowski
Taras Krysa was born in Kiev, Ukraine to a musical family and began his formal studies as a violinist at the Moscow Conservatory. After moving to the United States, Mr. Krysa continued his studies at Indiana University and Northwestern University both in violin and conducting. His conducting teachers have included Victor Yampolsky, Jorma Panula and David Zinman. As a violinist, Mr. Krysa has won positions with the New World Symphony Orchestra and St. Louis Symphony Orchestras. In 2002, Mr. Krysa left the St Louis Symphony Orchestra to focus on conducting full time. In recent seasons his conducting appearances have included National Ukrainian Symphony Orchestra, Orchestra van het Osten, New World Symphony, St. Petersburg Symphony, Moscow Soloists, Slovak Sinfonietta, Spoleto Festival Chamber Orchestra, Kiev Chamber Orchestra and the Lublin Philharmonic Orchestra. He has made three critically acclaimed recordings for the Brilliant Classics label. In addition, Mr. Krysa has served as Principal Conductor of the Ukrainian State Pops Symphony Orchestra, which he led on the several European tours with the appearance at the Concertgebouw Hall. Currently, Taras Krysa is serving as a Director of Orchestras at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

OBERON

Carl Maria Weber (1786-1826) was a reformer whose goal was to make opera into a total work of art - musical, literary, dramatic and stenographic. In this sense he anticipated Wagner, who admired him greatly. As a composer Weber was a progressive who rejected well-worn Italian operatic formulae in favor of a new, intensely Romantic and specifically German style. This was in fact a cross-breeding of late eighteenth and early nineteenth century French opera with popular German Singspiel, in which sung pieces alternate with spoken dialogue, a form that had reached its artistic peak in Mozart’s The Abduction from the Seraglio and The Magic Flute. In Weber’s three best-known operas: Der Freischütz (The Free Shooter), Euryanthe and Oberon, all completed in the early to mid 1820s, the musical depiction of nature became an important element, and an atmosphere of the supernatural and of fantasy wafted onto the stage. It is no wonder that Weber’s operas so powerfully influenced the next generation of Romantic opera composers, especially Berlioz and Wagner, just as his evocative instrumental writing, in his concert and salon pieces as well as his operas, influenced Mendelssohn, Chopin and Schumann. Sadly, Oberon was to be Weber’s swansong as he was to die in London only six weeks after the London première. Oberon is full of a rich variety of musical styles and mixes some of the familiar fantasy characters of Shakespeare’s A Midsummer Night’s Dream with trials of love in exotic settings. As was his custom, Weber composed his Oberon Overture as an abstraction of the drama to follow. After the opening call of the magic horn, we hear the fairy music and the little march of Charlemagne’s court; the first subject of the Allegro comes from the Act 2 quartet, the second from one of the hero Huon’s arias; and also introduced is part of the heroine Reiza’s aria, ‘Ocean! Thou mighty monster,’ the best known number in the opera. Beautifully organized, and composed with an ear for instruments that dazzled even Berlioz, the Oberon Overture is a worthy conclusion, if all too premature, to the life of the man who set Romantic opera on a new course and who was the father of modern orchestration.
In its best pages Oberon reaches a summit that few other operas attain. It is at its best in the overture, which is a magical excursion into the kingdom of fairies, sprites and elves, continually touched with the mystery and wonder of the forest.

DOUBLE CONCERTO

When Brahms (1833–1897) decided to write a double concerto for violin and cello, he had few recent precedents. During the Baroque era, composers had delighted in the concerto grosso, a concerto for orchestra with multiple soloists. Mozart composed several double concerti for two or three pianos, one for harp and flute, one for violin and viola, and one (of uncertain authenticity) for four wind soloists. From Beethoven came a triple concerto for violin, cello, and piano. Yet all those examples were decades in the past. Other than an occasional double piano concerto, Romantic composers of the nineteenth century never bothered with concerti for more than one soloist. Brahms, however, rarely interested himself in the same things that attracted others of his generation. This return to an earlier genre was typical of his life-long fascination with classic styles of composition, and it shows how he updated those styles to fit the grandeur of a Romantic orchestra. Although, in conception, his Double Concerto is the sort of piece that might have come from Mozart’s time, it is given its fullest expression through the rich voice of Romanticism. This concerto was Brahms’ last concerto, as well as his final composition using the orchestra. Dating from 1887, it followed his fourth and final symphony by two years. In this work, Brahms may have planned to pay modern tribute to the Baroque ideal of the concerto grosso, but he also hoped to kill two birds with one stone. He had promised his friend, the cellist Robert Hausmann a solo concerto, but he had also never written such a work. Also, he had recently had a falling-out with his long-time colleague, the violinist Joseph Joachim, who felt that Brahms had sided with Joachim’s ex-wife during their recent divorce proceedings. Through the balm of one composition, Brahms hoped to soothe three souls: Joachim’s, Hausmann’s, and his own. Since he had previously completed his Violin Concerto, two violin sonatas, and two cello sonatas, it would seem that he would have possessed the necessary familiarity to write for these two instruments together, but Brahms was less certain of his suitability. Himself a pianist, he felt insecure composing for a solo instrument that he could not play, and the fact that virtuoso players would willingly offer advice was not much comfort. As he remarked in a letter to his dear friend Clara Schumann, “It is quite a different matter writing for instruments whose character and sound one can only incidentally imagine, than for an instrument which one knows totally.” She firmly reassured him as to his fitness for the task, and even offered her own home in Baden-Baden for the new work’s first rehearsals. Its premiere was given in Cologne on October 18, 1887. Brahms himself conducted that performance. The soloists were the men for whom it had been written: Joachim and Hausmann.

SPRING SYMPHONY

In 1839, Clara Schumann had written: “Dear Robert, don’t take it amiss if I tell you that I’ve been seized by the desire to encourage you to write for orchestra. Your imagination and your spirit are too great for the weak piano.” And Schumann was also galvanized by his discovery, also in 1839, of Schubert’s Great C Major Symphony, which he had unearthed from a pile of the deceased composer’s manuscripts being held by Schubert’s brother. Schumann’s “Symphonic Year” of 1841 opened with a frenzy of creativity. In just four days and sleepless nights, January 23–26, he sketched in full his First Symphony and by February 20 had completed its orchestration. He called it his “Spring” Symphony; Clara reported that it was inspired by a poem by his friend Adolph Böttger about a lover longing for spring—even to the line “Im Tale blüht der Frühling auf!” (“Spring blossoms in the valley!”) dictating the rhythm of its opening fanfare. But we should not listen to this work as simply a tone poem about this most pleasing and hopeful of seasons. Like Beethoven explaining his “Pastoral” Symphony, Schumann wrote a musical friend that “my purpose was not to describe or paint,” and he soon suppressed the descriptive titles he had given the four movements: “Beginning of Spring,”
"Evening," "Jolly Playmates," and "Spring at its Height." Rather this symphony is an expression of psychological springtime, reflecting the season's spirit of optimism and new life. It reveals Schumann's joy and unfettered energy as the happy couple awaited the birth of the first of their eight children. Nothing could be more joyous or energetic than the brass fanfare that launches the first movement or the upward hurtling of violins and woodwinds that follows. Schumann already shows his Romantic daring here in veering immediately toward the unexpected key of D minor rather than establishing his home base of B-flat major. This slow introduction, full of Beethovenian drama, creates an air of expectancy until it finally accelerates into the main Allegro section. There, its jaunty first theme is actually a sped-up version of the opening fanfare. And its bouncing dotted rhythm becomes the motor that powers nearly the whole movement. The chief contrast is the gently swaying woodwind idea that serves for a lyrical second theme. After a repeat of the exposition material, the development section is driven forward by the omnipresent gallop of the dotted rhythm. This is capped by the movement's most exhilarating moment, as the opening brass fanfares and up-rushing strings cut through the orchestra's activity to announce the recapitulation. A final surprise breaks Schumann's rush to the finish line, as he pauses to present a marvelous, heartwarming new theme led by the strings. A poignant song melody, intensified by little stabbing accents and expressive ornamental notes, forms the substance of the slow movement, originally titled "Evening." The music is colored richly by unexpected harmonies and Schumann's masterful blending of orchestral sonorities (so much for the charge that he didn't know how to write for orchestra!). The melody returns twice, first in cellos and later in woodwinds, each time with exquisitely varied accompaniments. At movement's end, the trombones softly intone a plaintive chorale. The music ends harmonically in the air, bridging directly to the Scherzo. The finale explodes with a new version of the upward-rushing idea that opened the symphony. But then it eases into a lightly pattering violin theme, "as slight as a daisy chain," in Donald Francis Tovey's words. Far more impressive is the second theme: a triumphant idea proclaimed proudly by the full orchestra before being passed to woodwinds for a puckish echo. And it is this theme Schumann chooses for his development section. The return of the upward-rushing scale puts the final seal of joyful triumph on the young bridegroom's first and very successful foray into the symphonic field.
UNLV Symphony Orchestra Personnel

Flute
Amy Davis
Clare Fransoli
Asuka Kawashima
Farah Zoldghadr

Oboe
Mika Brunson - English Horn
Alex Hayashi
Lee Jong Yong

Clarinet
Heidi Boothe
Kanade Oi
Aki Oshima

Bassoon
David Adams
Leigh Anne Duncan
Eric Foote
Jonathan Steveson

Harp
Melaney Scarberry

French Horn
Dianne Alton
Richard Brunson
Chris Kase
Bryce Nakao
Fred Stonemers

French Horn
Philip Garber
Travis Higa
Megumi Kurokawa
Cara Sommers

Trumpet
Jeff Hines
James Nelson
Hitomi Shoji

Trombone
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Gerard Polanco
Vasheral Trinkle
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Michael Karagiozis
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Stephen Osbourne Jr.

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Willie Harrington
Korey Mueller

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Megan Wingerter
Barbara Ellis
Christina Riegert
Zachary McBride
Kellon Davis
Mina Park
Hermann Brunm
Amanda Gentile

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Angie Lee
Alyson Maddelon
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UNLV Marching Band Scholarship
Cal McKinley Music Memorial Scholarship
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Martha Peterson Las Vegas Opera Scholarship
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