UNLV Symphony Orchestra

Taras Krysa, Music Director and Conductor

PROGRAM

Felix Mendelssohn (1809–1847)
Overture to a Midsummer Night's Dream

Gustav Mahler (1860–1911)
Symphony No. 5 in C-sharp Minor
IV. Adagietto

INTERMISSION

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827)
Symphony No. 6 in F Major ("Pastoral")
I. Allegro ma non troppo
II. Andante molto moto
III. Allegro
IV. Allegro
V. Allegretto

Tuesday, February 14, 2012 7:30 p.m. Artemus W. Ham Concert Hall
Performing Arts Center
University of Nevada, Las Vegas
Felix Mendelssohn’s *Overture to a Midsummer Night’s Dream* musically depicts a fantastical world inspired by the Shakespearean play of the same name. Franz Liszt described the overture’s opening chords as follows, “Do they not resemble slowly drooping and rising eyelids, between which is depicted a charming dream-world of the most lovely contrasts?” The vivid imagery is striking, and indeed the music immediately transmits the listener into a magical realm with the upper strings’ light, fast strokes, emulating the flutter of fairy wings. From there, the overture winds through a number of musical themes, all derived from the work’s opening six measures. The overture, which Mendelssohn completed in 1826, is the first movement in the programmatic *Ein Sommernachtstraum (A Midsummer Night’s Dream)*. It is followed by a number of movements for orchestra and choir, composed as incidental music, and dedicated to the Crown Prince of Prussia (later King Friedrich Wilhelm IV). Of these smaller pieces the scherzo, intermezzo, nocturne, and wedding march are frequently excerpted as an orchestral suite. The overture is frequently performed as part of this suite or as an independent concert work, as we perform it today.

The “Adagietto” from Gustav Mahler’s Symphony No. 5 is perhaps one of the best-known and most beloved works from his repertoire. The interpretation of the work, itself, remains highly controversial; is it a slow, melancholy work of deep emotional turmoil or a poignant testament to the sublime and beautiful? Part of the work’s sorrowful connotation derives from its use, since its composition in 1902, in commemorating a number of somber occasions, including Robert Kennedy’s funeral. Mahler, however, claimed to have written the “Adagietto” as a “love letter” to his wife, Alma Schindler, whom he married in 1902. If this is true, then the work can hardly be perceived as despondent. Regardless of the piece’s interpretation and tempo, which can lead to a performance time ranging anywhere from 9 to 14 minutes, Mahler’s “Adagietto” is unquestionably full of unrelenting passion, and emotional, and dynamic extremes.
Ludwig van Beethoven’s Symphony No. 6, “Pastoral”, completed in 1808, follows immediately upon his famous monumental Symphony No. 5, yet the two works could not be more stylistically different. In fact, the “Pastoral” Symphony somewhat shocked and even disappointed audiences who expected the bold harmonies and innovative gestures in the Fifth Symphony premiered earlier that same evening. Instead Beethoven’s sixth symphony depicts a series of poignant nature scenes including, in Beethoven’s own words, “pleasant feelings which awaken in men on arriving in the countryside...scene by the brook... merry gathering of country people, interrupted by...thunder and storm, into which breaks ...salutary feelings combined with thanks to the Deity.” Beethoven modeled the symphony after his own visits to the countryside, which he frequented as he dealt with his impending deafness. The fifth symphony can thus be thought of as his heroic battle against fate (going deaf), and the tranquil sixth as his reprieve. Both Beethoven’s fifth and sixth symphonies advanced the classical symphony genre in unique ways. Beethoven’s fifth symphony uses unprecedented motivic development, building a four-movement work on a seemingly unremarkable three-note idea. The third and fourth movements are played attaca and the finale features a return to the third movement, clearly establishing the work’s cyclical nature. In contrast the sixth symphony uses traditional symphonic forms, such as sonata allegro, loosely. Harmonies focus not on tonic-dominant polarity but mediant relationships. These third progressions greatly influenced Beethoven’s slightly younger contemporary, Franz Schubert, who adopted much of this traditionally romantic harmonic vocabulary in his own works.
# UNLV Symphony Orchestra Personnel

**Violin I**
- Dmytro Nehrych*
- Sammi Ciarlo
- Sarah Wright
- Debra Yavitz
- Belinda Martinez
- Elizabeth Bedrosian

**Violin II**
- Samantha Altermann*
- Braydon Pikyavit
- Keegan Bonabian
- Kevin Reilly
- Paris Griffin

**Viola**
- David Chavez*
- Rahmaan Phillip
- Valerie Reives
- Rosemary Fajardo
- Shelby Rosten
- Youngmee Merrick

**Cello**
- Rebecca Gray*
- Anthony Rodriguez
- Chang Yue
- Brad Taylor
- Robert Chavez
- Jeremy Russo
- Domenique Jackson
- Corinne Hymel

**Flute**
- Chrissy McHugh
- Carmella Cao
- Kate Zigterman

**Oboe**
- Alexandra Gilroy
- Ryan Schwartz
- Chris Fujiwara

**Clarinet**
- Jennifer Iles
- Jonathan Cannon

**Bassoon**
- Brandon Durham
- Brock Norred
- Bronson Foster

**Horn**
- Erin Paul
- Kyle Tolstyka
- Jordan Rush
- Michael Villarreal

**Trumpet**
- Dumitru Cernei
- Allison McSwain
- Kyle Overlay

**Trombone**
- Keith Larsen

**Tuba**
- Saxon Lewis*

**Timpani**
- Luigi Ng

*Principal