Classics

Friday January 12, 2018 at 8:00 p.m. Saturday January 13, 2018 at 8:00 p.m.

De Waart Conducts American Masters

Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra Edo de Waart, conductor Margaret Butler, English horn Matthew Ernst, trumpet Philippe Quint, violin

Margaret Butler Matthew Ernst

LEONARD BERNSTEIN Serenade after Plato's Symposium for solo violin, strings, harp and percussion

I. Phaedras – Pausanias: Lento – Allegro

II. Aristophanes: Allegretto

III. Eryximachus: Presto

IV. Agathon: Adagio

V. Socrates – Alcibiades: Molto tenuto – Allegro molto vivace

Philippe Quint

Intermission

JOHN ADAMS.... *Harmonielehre*

I. [no title]

II. The Anfortas Wound

III. Meister Eckhardt and Quackie



The 2017.18 Classics Series is presented by UPAF. The Saturday Classics Series is sponsored by ROCKWELL **AUTOMATION.** The **MILWAUKEE JOURNAL SENTINEL** is the Classics media sponsor.

The length of the concert is approximately 1 hour 45 minutes.

 ${\it Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra\ canbe\ heard\ on\ Telarc, Koss\ Classics, Pro\ Arte,\ AVIE,\ and\ Vox/\ Turnabout\ recordings.\ MSO\ Classics}$ recordings (digital only) available on iTunes and at mso.org. MSO Binaural recordings (digital only) available at mso.org.

Guest Artist Biographies



Margaret Butler

boist Margaret Butler grew up in Rhode Island where she began her studies on the recorder and flute. A love for the sound of the Baroque oboe led her to study the modern oboe. She received her Bachelor of Music degree from the New England Conservatory of Music and her Master of Music degree from Rice University's Shepherd School of Music. Butler participated in the Banff Summer Music Festival, where she was a featured soloist and has also played in Graz, Austria, with the American Institute of Musical Studies.

She was principal oboist for the Florida Grand Opera, Miami City Ballet, and Palm Beach Opera before joining the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra in 2002. In 2007, she played principal oboe for the Santa Fe Opera Company and participated as a soloist in the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival. The following spring, she was invited to play as guest principal oboist for the Royal Scottish National Orchestra. In addition to performing with the Milwaukee Symphony, Butler is principal oboist for the Milwaukee Ballet Orchestra, is on faculty at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, and serves on the Board of Directors of Early Music Now.



Matthew Ernst

Matthew Ernst currently serves as principal trumpet of the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra. He was previously the principal trumpet of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra and Pops, where he performed on numerous recordings and appeared as a soloist. Ernst was also a member of the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra and acted as principal trumpet for the Virginia Symphony Orchestra.

Ernst has also held teaching positions at the University of Virginia, the University of New Orleans, and the New Orleans Center for the Creative Arts. He and his wife, Janna, a vocal coach and accompanist, tour extensively as a duo, giving performances and masterclasses across the country.

Ernst pursued his Bachelor of Music degree from the University of Michigan, where he studied with William Campbell. He received two Master of Music degrees from Southern Methodist University—the first in trumpet performance, studying with Tom Booth of the Dallas Symphony Orchestra, and the second in wind conducting. In addition to his degree work, he was also a fellow at Tanglewood Music Center and attended the Pacific Music Festival and Brevard Music Center.

Guest Artist Biographies



Philippe Quint

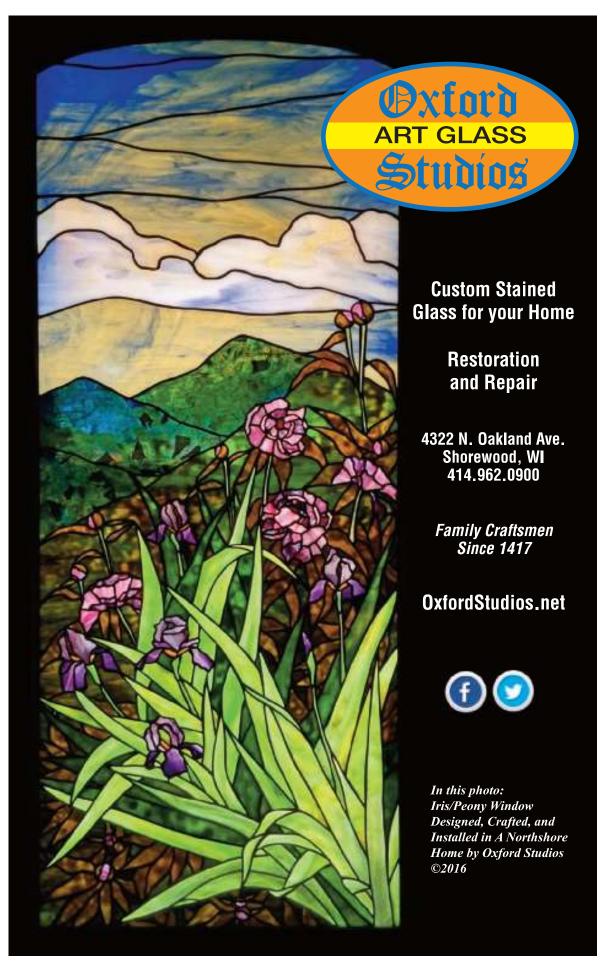
ulti-Grammy Award nominee violinist Philippe Quint has established himself as one of the leading American violinists of his generation.

Quint has won worldwide acclaim playing with the world's leading orchestras. Quint's 2017.18 season highlights include the Phoenix Symphony for the opening of their 70th season, his first collaboration with New York City Ballet for the performance of the Red Violin Concerto, a return to play/ lead Vancouver Symphony in an all-Baroque program, and a celebration of Bernstein's centennial in 2018 with a return to the North Carolina Symphony.

Quint's critically acclaimed discography includes the Mendelssohn and Bruch violin concertos and Beethoven's Romances with the Orquesta Sinfónica de Minería led by Carlos Miguel Prieto; Opera Breve with pianist Lily Maisky; and original arrangements of Bach's music by composer/ pianist Matt Herskowitz, titled Bach XXI, which debuted at Lincoln Center in February of 2016.

Born in Leningrad, Soviet Union (now St. Petersburg, Russia), Quint studied at Moscow's Special Music School for the Gifted with the famed Russian violinist Andrei Korsakov and made his orchestral debut at the age of nine. After moving to the United States, he earned both bachelor's and master's degrees from The Juilliard School. His pedagogues and mentors have included Dorothy Delay, Cho-Liang Lin, Masao Kawasaki, Isaac Stern, Itzhak Perlman, Arnold Steinhardt and Felix Galimir.

Quint plays the magnificent 1708 "Ruby" Antonio Stradivari violin on loan to him through the generous efforts of The Stradivari Society®.



Program Notes by J. Mark Baker



This weekend, we explore music by 20th-century American composers with Maestro Edo de Waart. Copland's haunting Quiet City and Bernstein's lively Serenade after Plato's Symposium comprise the first half. The concert concludes with a de Waart specialty, John Adams's Harmonielehre, premiered under his baton in 1985.

Aaron Copland

Born 14 November 1900; Brooklyn, New York Died 2 December 1990; New York, New York

Quiet City

Composed: 1939; revised 1940

First performance: 28 January 1941; New York, New York

Last MSO performance: MSO premiere

Instrumentation: English horn, trumpet, strings

Approximate duration: 10 minutes

n 1939, Aaron Copland was called upon to provide incidental music to Irwin Shaw's Quiet City—for his cash-strapped friends in the Group Theatre. The play's leftist political leanings and the opportunity to work with talented, cutting-edge artists on socially relevant issues drew Copland to the project. Though the production failed, the following year the composer fashioned portions of the score into a ten-minute orchestral piece. Decades later, in conversation with oral historian Vivian Perlis, the composer recalled:

Quiet City was billed as a "realistic fantasy," a contradiction in terms that only meant the stylistic difference made for difficulties in production. The script was about a young trumpet player who imagined the night thoughts of many different people in a great city and played trumpet to express his emotions and to arouse the consciences of the other characters and of the audience. After reading the play, I composed music that I hoped would evoke the inner distress of the central character. [Group Theatre co-founder Harold] Clurman and Elia Kazan, the director, agreed that Quiet City needed a free and imaginative treatment. They and the cast... struggled valiantly to make the play convincing, but after two try-out performances in April [1939], Quiet City was dropped.

From its 1941 premiere, Copland's nighttime urban pastorale has needed no programmatic context, except perhaps its title, to make it one of his most popular scores. "Since it is mostly quiet, it fills a niche in concert programs," the composer modestly remarked. But we know better: Along with Barber's Adagio for Strings and Ives's The Unanswered Question, it ranks as one of America's most contemplative musical meditations.

Recommended recording: Leonard Bernstein, New York Philharmonic (Deutsche Grammophon)

Program Notes



Leonard Bernstein

Born 25 August 1918; Lawrence, Massachusetts Died 14 October 1990; New York, New York

Serenade after Plato's Symposium for solo violin, strings, harp and percussion

Composed: 1953-54

First performance: 12 September 1954; Venice, Italy

Last MSO performance: November 2007; Joseph Silverstein,

conductor; Frank Almond, violin

Instrumentation: timpani, percussion (bass drum, tenor drum, snare drum, triangle, chimes, suspended cymbals, glockenspiel,

xylophone, tambourine, Chinese blocks), harp, strings

Approximate duration: 31 minutes

n June 1951, shortly after the death of his mentor Serge Koussevitsy, Leonard Bernstein was commissioned by the

Koussevitsy Foundation to write an orchestral work. A violin concerto in all but name, the *Serenade* is the largest piece Bernstein ever composed for the instrument. It was eventually dedicated to both Koussevitsy and his wife Natalie.

Bernstein biographer Humphrey Burton suggests that Bernstein's decision to base the work on Plato came late in the compositional process and that the programmatic aspects might be somewhat pasted on. He posits the notion that the *Serenade* may be seen as a self-portrait of the composer: "grand and noble in the first movement, childlike in the second, boisterous and playful in the third, serenely calm and tender in the fourth, a doom-laden prophet and then a jazzy iconoclast in the finale."

Isaac Stern premiered the *Serenade* at Teatro La Fenice. Though it met with a mixed reception (composer and critic Virgil Thomson thought it a "negligible contribution to music"), it has become one of Bernstein's most popular works for orchestra. Indeed, the composer himself seems to have been pleased with the score: Not long after the first performance, he sent a letter to another important mentor, Dimitri Mitropoulous, proclaiming his plans to abandon conducting to focus solely on composing. Fortunately, the Maestro pursued both careers for another 36 years.

The following are Bernstein's notes, from the original LP recording:

There is no literal program for this Serenade, depite the fact that it resulted from a re-reading of Plato's charming dialogue, *The Symposium*. The music, like the dialogue, is a series of related statements in praise of love, and generally follows the Platonic form through the succession of speakers at the banquet. The relatedness of the movements does not depend on common thematic material, but rather on a system whereby each movement evolves out of elements in the preceding one. For the benefit of those interested in literary allusion, I might suggest the following points as guideposts:

I. *Phaedrus: Pausanias (Lento. Allegro)* Phaedrus opens the symposium with a lyrical oration in praise of Eros, the god of love (fugato, begun by the solo violin). Pausanias continues by describing the duality of lover and beloved. This is expressed in a classical sonata-allegro, based on the material of the opening fugato.

Program Notes

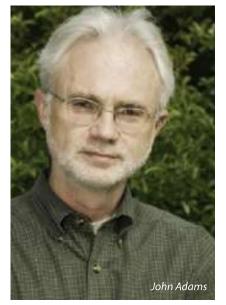
II. Aristophanes (Allegretto) Aristophanes does not play the role of the clown in this dialogue, but instead, that of the bedtime story-teller, invoking the fairy-tale mythology of love.

III. Eryximachus (Presto) The physican speaks of bodily harmony as a scientific model for the workings of love patterns. This is an extremely short fugato scherzo, born of a blend of mystery and humor.

IV. Agathon (Adagio) Perhaps the most moving speech of the dialogue, Agathon's panegyric embraces all aspects of love's powers, charms, and functions. This movement is a simple threepart song.

IV. Socrates: Alcibiades (Molto tenuto. Allegro molto vivace) Socrates describes his visit to the seer Diotima, quoting her speech on the demonology of love. This is a slow introduction of greater weight than any of the preceding movements and serves as a highly developed reprise of the middle section of the Agathon movement, thus suggesting a hidden sonata form. The famous interruption by Alcibiades and his band of drunken revelers ushers in the Allegro, which is an extended rondo ranging in spirit from agitation through jig-like dance music to joyful celebration. If there is a hint of jazz in the celebration, I hope it will not be taken as anachronistic Greek party music, but rather as the natural expression of a contemporary American composer imbued with the spirit of that timeless dinner party.

Recommended recording: Gidon Kremer; Leonard Bernstein, Israel Philharmonic Orchestra (Deutsche Grammophon)



John Adams

Born 15 February 1947; Worcester, Massachusetts

Harmonielehre [Harmony Lesson]

Composed: 1984-85

Premiere: 21 March 1985; San Francisco, California

Last MSO performance: September/October 2011; Edo de

Waart, conductor

Instrumentation: 4 flutes (2nd, 3rd, and 4th doubling piccolo), 3 oboes (3rd doubling English horn), 4 clarinets (3rd and 4th doubling bass clarinet), 3 bassoons, contrabassoon, 4 horns, 4 trumpets, 3 trombones, 2 tubas, timpani, percussion (marimba, vibraphone, xylophone, chimes, crotale, glockenspiel, suspended cymbals, sizzle cymbal, cymbals, bell tree, tam tam, triangle, bass drum) 2 harps, piano, celeste, and strings

Approximate duration: 40 minutes

ohn Adams's orchestral scores are among the most frequently performed and influential Jecompositions by an American since the era of Copland and Bernstein. Works such as Shaker Loops, Harmonielehre, Short Ride in a Fast Machine, and his Violin Concerto are now staples of the symphonic repertoire. His recent works include the Passion oratorio The Gospel According to the Other Mary, Absolute Jest (for string quartet and orchestra, based on fragments of Beethoven) and the Saxophone Concerto.

Program Notes

The title of Adams's three-movement symphony comes from Arnold Schoenberg's treatise on tonal harmony, written at the exact same time his own compositions were leaving it behind. Adams has said the decision to call the work Harmonielehre was somewhat whimsical, that it perhaps implied his own "psychic quest for harmony." In it, he combines late-19th-century chromatic harmony—brushing up against Wagner, Mahler, Sibelius, Debussy, and Schoenberg's über-Romantic Gurrelieder—with the rhythmic features of Miminalism. ("Enlightened thievery," as the composer called it.)

Before writing *Harmonielehre*, Adams had suffered from a protracted creative block. A vivid dream shook him out of his funk. In it, he was crossing the San Francisco Bay Bridge. A huge oil tanker, sitting on the water, "slowly rose up like a Saturn rocket and blasted out of the bay into the sky. I could see the rust-colored metal oxide of its hull as it took off," the composer wrote. In the next day or two, he found the propellant for his own symphonic rocket, the 39 powerfully pounding E-minor chords that begin the piece. The first movement is cast in an inverted arch form, with high energy at the beginning and end, and a long, yearning section in between.

The slow second movement, "The Anfortas Wound," both recalls and transcends Adams's deeply disturbing writer's block. In its opening measures, the composer references the emotionally desolate beginning of Sibelius's Symphony No. 4. The solo trumpet intones an elegy over gently moving minor triads that move from one orchestral choir to another. Two huge climaxes arise out of this depressing scene, the second one recasting a chord from Mahler's unfinished Tenth Symphony.

"Meister Eckhardt and Quackie" also found inspiration through a dream: The medieval German philosopher was floating in space, carrying Adams's four-month-old daughter Emily on his shoulders. (They'd nicknamed her "Quackie" because of an endearing duck-like sound she made as a baby.) The movement begins with a gentle lullaby and gradually increases its tempo and texture. At the end, there's an epic harmonic struggle between the work's main keys. Adams says he placed them together, "as if in a mixer, and let them battle it out." Finally, E-flat major—think Beethoven's "Eroica" Symphony and "Emperor" Concerto—wins "through its strength, and this movement seems like an epiphany" (Adams).

Harmonielehre was commissioned by the San Francisco Symphony and its music director, Edo de Waart, who gave the premiere performance—and then recorded it three days later. "Despite the daunting length and rhythmic complexity of the piece," Adams writes on his website, "both conductor and orchestra made a totally convincing representation of it, and the recording can testify to the rare instances where a composer, a conductor, and an orchestra create an explicable bond among each other."

Recommended recording: Edo de Waart; San Francisco Symphony (Nonesuch)

