

NORTH CAROLINA **SYMPHONY**
BARBER VIOLIN CONCERTO

FRIDAY & SATURDAY, NOV 4-5, 2022 | 8PM

Meymandi Concert Hall
Woolner Stage

Duke Energy Center
for the Performing Arts

Raleigh



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Barber Violin Concerto

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MEYMANDI CONCERT HALL, WOOLNER STAGE
DUKE ENERGY CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS
RALEIGH

North Carolina Symphony
Grant Llewellyn, *conductor*
Geneva Lewis, *violin*

Aaron Copland (1900-1990)
Quiet City

Samuel Barber (1910-1981)
Violin Concerto, Op. 14

- I. Allegro
- II. Andante
- III. Presto in moto perpetuo
Geneva Lewis, *violin*

INTERMISSION

Charles Ives (1874-1954)
The Unanswered Question

Leonard Bernstein (1918-1990)
Fancy Free

- I. *Enter Three Sailors*
- II. *Scene at the Bar*
- III. *Enter Two Girls*
- IV. *Pas de deux*
- V. *Competition Scene*
- VI. *Three Dance Variations (Galop, Waltz, Danzón)*
- VII. *Finale*

About the Artists



Grant Llewellyn, conductor

Grant Llewellyn served as North Carolina Symphony's Music Director for sixteen seasons and now holds the post of Music Director Laureate. Highlights from last season include a gala with Renée Fleming on the 90th anniversary of the Symphony's very first concert and performances of Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 featuring the N.C. Master Chorale.

Grant Llewellyn is renowned for his exceptional charisma, energy, and easy authority in music of all styles and periods. This season is his eighth as Music Director of the Orchestre National de Bretagne. Guest engagements have included the BBC Symphony Orchestra, Helsinki Philharmonic, Philharmonia Orchestra, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, and Royal Scottish National Orchestra, among others. Llewellyn enjoys a continuing relationship with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales whom he led on tour to Patagonia and South America as well as joining their 90th anniversary celebrations and conducting their Proms in the Park in September 2018.

Llewellyn has conducted widely across North America, most notably the symphony orchestras of Atlanta, Boston, Houston, Milwaukee, Montreal, St. Louis, and Toronto, The Philadelphia Orchestra, and the Orchestra of St Luke's at Caramoor Festival. During his time as Music Director of the Handel and Haydn Society, America's leading period orchestra, he gained a reputation as a formidable interpreter of music of the baroque and classical periods. An accomplished opera conductor, he has appeared at the opera companies of English National Opera, Opera North, and the Opera Theatre of Saint Louis. Productions include the United States premiere of Handel's *Richard the Lionheart* with the Opera Theatre of Saint Louis and *Fidelio* with the Opéra de Rennes, where last season he led Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress*.

Notable recordings with the North Carolina Symphony include *American Spectrum*, featuring 20th century works with the saxophonist Branford Marsalis, and Britten's Cello Symphony and Prokofiev's Sinfonia Concertante with the cellist Zuill Bailey; with the BBC Symphony Orchestra, Llewellyn recently recorded a disc of Lowell Liebermann's orchestral works.

Deeply committed and passionate about engaging young people with music, Llewellyn regularly leads education and outreach projects; in 2017 he led the first ever "relaxed" BBC Prom with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, a concert specially designed for those with autism, sensory and communication impairments, and learning disabilities.

Born in Tenby, South Wales, Llewellyn won a Conducting Fellowship to the Tanglewood Music Center in Massachusetts in 1985, where he worked with Bernstein, Ozawa, Masur, and Previn.



Geneva Lewis, violin

These concerts are the North Carolina Symphony debut of Geneva Lewis.

Lauded for “remarkable mastery of her instrument” (*CVNC*) and hailed as “clearly one to watch” (*Musical America*), Geneva Lewis is the recipient of a 2022 Borletti-Buitoni Trust Award and a 2021 Avery Fisher Career Grant, and was Grand Prize winner of the 2020 Concert Artists Guild Competition. She also won Kronberg Academy’s Prince of Hesse Prize and has been named a *Performance Today* Young Artist in Residence, and *Musical America*’s New Artist of the Month. Most recently, Lewis was named one of BBC Radio 3’s New Generation Artists.

Since her solo debut at age 11 with the Pasadena POPS, Lewis has gone on to perform with orchestras including the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, Sarasota Orchestra, Pensacola Symphony Orchestra, and Duluth Superior Symphony Orchestra. The 2022/23 season includes performances with the Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra, Augusta Symphony, Kansas City Symphony, Austin Symphony Orchestra, and Arkansas Symphony Orchestra.

An advocate of community engagement and music education, Lewis was selected for the New England Conservatory’s Community Performances and Partnerships Program’s Ensemble Fellowship. Her quartet was also chosen for the Virginia Arts Festival Residency, during which they performed and presented master classes in elementary, middle, and high schools.

Lewis received her Artist’s Diploma and Bachelor’s degree in music as the recipient of the Charlotte F. Rabb Presidential Scholarship at the New England Conservatory of Music. Prior to that, she studied at the Colburn School of Performing Arts. She currently studies at Kronberg Academy. Past summers have taken her to the Marlboro Music Festival, Ravinia’s Steans Music Institute, The Perlman Music Program’s Chamber Workshop, International Holland Music Sessions, Taos School of Music, and the Heifetz International Music Institute.

Lewis currently performs on a violin by Zosimo Bergonzi of Cremona, c. 1770, courtesy of Guarneri Hall NFP and Darnton & Hersh Fine Violins, Chicago.

About the Music



Quiet City

AARON COPLAND (1900-1990)

THE STORY:

In a 1939 letter to music critic and fellow composer Virgil Thomson, Aaron Copland wrote of his challenges writing music for theatrical productions, noting, “my career in theater has been a flop—through no fault of my own I hasten to add.” Copland’s incidental music for *Quiet City*, an experimental play by Irwin Shaw planned for Broadway, was just one of the works Copland had in mind when he wrote his letter to Thomson.

Through a confusing mix of fantasy and realism, Shaw’s play told the story of two brothers: one who had renounced his Jewish heritage to pursue materialism and social status, and the second, a nervous and frustrated man who sought to reawaken his brother’s conscience through his trumpet playing. As Copland remembers, the play consisted of the first brother imagining “the night thoughts of many different people in the city” interspersed with recollections of his brother’s trumpet. While the first brother ultimately chooses to remain in his state of estrangement, the trumpet remains a symbol—as Copland insists, “wonderfully clear, wonderfully promising, wonderfully triumphant.”

The play foundered upon its opening; the producers cut their losses early, allowing only two performances of the work before it was pulled on account of poor reception. Despite the play’s failure, Copland decided to rework his incidental music into a short suite for English horn, trumpet, and string orchestra, giving the work a life of its own independent of its failed dramatic context.

LISTEN FOR:

- The grandiose trumpet flourishes of the initial section, almost recitative-like in their fluidity of declamation
- The wistful English horn melodies in the second section—such plaintive expression is not often associated with Copland, but nevertheless produces quite a memorable effect
- The expanding range of the string section as the climax is approached—the lower registers gradually descend further and further in pitch, while the violins soar to ever-increasing heights

INSTRUMENTATION:

English horn, trumpet, strings



Violin Concerto, Op. 14

SAMUEL BARBER (1910-1981)

THE STORY:

Samuel Barber is one of the most respected American composers of the twentieth century. With early works such as the Adagio for Strings (1936) and his Symphony in One Movement (1936), Barber emerged on the American music scene as a composer of immense promise. Rather than embracing the staunch modernism of his colleagues who found great inspiration in Stravinsky's propulsive rhythm and Schoenberg's atonal experimentation, Barber adopted an exquisite lyricism and emotional depth, earning him a reputation as a "neoromantic" composer.

Barber composed his Violin Concerto, Op. 14 on a commission from Samuel Fels, a board member of Philadelphia's Curtis Institute of Music, from which Barber received his degree in 1934. With the cash advance from the commission, Barber retreated to the mountains of Switzerland, where he finished the first two movements—his trip was cut short as Europe was on the brink of war. Upon returning to the United States, Barber showed the first two movements to Fels. He in turn gave them to violinist Iso Briselli, who had agreed to premiere the concerto. However, Briselli was not happy with the work, desiring a concerto of showstopping virtuosity rather than one of the lyrical depth that characterized Barber's drafts. Even Barber's inclusion of a rousing and virtuosic final movement was not enough to keep Briselli on board; he gave up the rights to perform the work on grounds of creative difference. However, there were plenty who saw the value of Barber's romantic sensibilities—the concerto was premiered on February 7, 1941 by The Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy with well-respected violinist Albert Spalding as soloist; it remains a staple of the violin repertory.

Omitting the customary orchestral introduction found in concerto forms, Barber begins at once with an elegant violin passage, setting the tone for the rest of the work. The clarinet introduces the mysterious, yet buoyant second theme that recurs in various guises throughout the movement. The andante second movement retains the expressivity of the first, yet with an increased solemnity. In the brief yet invigorating third movement, after several introductory timpani strikes, the violin is unleashed to race the orchestra to the end of the work.

LISTEN FOR:

- The tremendous length of the solo violin's opening phrase—a seemingly endless melody that is in fact composed of several small motives seamlessly linked together and repeated
- The brilliant return of the first theme in the middle of the first movement, played this time by the orchestra rather than solo violin and preceded by a brass fanfare that states the lilting second theme in a major key
- The dramatic shift between major and minor mode in the second movement's first solo violin section—by making subtle melodic changes like this, Barber drastically alters the tone of the movement

- The contrasting nature of the last movement compared to the first two—the incessant movement, chromatic inflections, and virtuosic figuration can perhaps be heard as Barber's response to Briselli's suggestion that the first two movements were too lyrical and easy to play

INSTRUMENTATION:

Solo violin; two flutes (one doubling piccolo), two oboes, two clarinets, bass clarinet, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, timpani, percussion, piano, strings



The Unanswered Question

CHARLES IVES (1874-1954)

THE STORY:

Charles Ives's *The Unanswered Question* remains one of his most enduring and accessible works. Composed in the summer of 1906, the piece did not receive a proper premiere performance for nearly forty years, when it was rescued from obscurity for an all-Ives program at Columbia University's Second Annual Festival of Contemporary Music.

Since he worked primarily as an insurance agent, Ives's music remained largely unknown to all but a small circle of American composers who championed his work. Such seclusion fostered Ives's rigid individualism and penchant for experimentation in his compositions—his use of polytonality, atonality, tone clusters, and other “modern” compositional devices antedates their broader adoption by decades.

The Unanswered Question is one such prescient work, a mixture of elements layered atop one another in a musical collage that Ives referred to as a “cosmic drama.” Three separate musical entities interact, each with a distinct programmatic role, which Ives elaborates in a preface to the score. The static string parts (originally written to be performed out of sight and off stage) represent “the Silences of the Druids—who Know, See and Hear Nothing.” The serene atmosphere of “silences” is pierced seven times by the solo trumpet statements, which stand for “the Perennial Question of Existence.” After each trumpet “question” is asked, a flute quartet that Ives deems the “Fighting Answerers” offers “the Invisible Answer,” which struggles throughout the piece to give an adequate response to the trumpet's question. Each time the question is posed, the “Fighting Answerers” become more agitated, growing in length and volume as they offer up frustrated answers to “the Perennial Question of Existence;” the last iteration even mocks the question through imitative repetitions that explode into utter chaos. The work ends with a final statement of the trumpet's question, resounding unanswered into the sonic mist of the strings, which all the while remained stoic and unaffected by the exchanges.

Today, Ives's combination of simultaneously occurring independent lines is regarded as a hallmark of his style; as *The Unanswered Question* amply demonstrates, Ives's experiments are not arbitrary sonic concoctions. Rather, *The Unanswered Question* offers the listener a chance to sonically engage with the complex questions of life and existence. For, as Ives biographer Jan Swafford remarks about *The Unanswered Question*, “in contemplating the sublime mystery of creation, a question can be better than an answer.”

LISTEN FOR:

- The constancy of the trumpet's “Perennial Question of Existence,” which remains rigidly unaltered through each of the seven utterances
- The metrical discrepancy between the three parts—the trumpet “question” always occurs at a different point in the string progression, and the flutes are deliberately instructed to keep “very uneven time”

- The increasingly volatile response of the flutes (“Fighting Answerers”) as they gradually shift from a docile statement to a forceful mass of sound

INSTRUMENTATION:

Four flutes, trumpet, strings



Fancy Free

LEONARD BERNSTEIN (1918-1990)

THE STORY:

In the early fall of 1943, the twenty-five-year-old Leonard Bernstein answered a knock at the door of his Carnegie Hall apartment only to be greeted by a stranger: the dancer Jerome Robbins of Ballet Theatre (now American Ballet Theatre). Robbins had recently developed a ballet scenario he felt required a jazzy score to complement its distinctively American setting. Bernstein welcomed Robbins inside, heard his pitch for what would become *Fancy Free*, and immediately presented Robbins with musical themes, eager for their collaboration—the first of many, including the Broadway musicals *On the Town* (1944) and *West Side Story* (1957).

Despite the electricity of their first meeting, the duo was presented with a fair share of obstacles in the completion of the ballet. Bernstein's budding conducting career took him all around the country with engagements, and Robbins was constantly touring with Ballet Theatre—the two were rarely together during the creation of *Fancy Free*. Consequently, the bulk of *Fancy Free* was composed and choreographed via letters and tape recordings between the two men. When Bernstein finished composing a section, he would record a four-hand piano arrangement (with none other than Aaron Copland playing second piano) and send it off to Robbins for approval and edits. The challenges of such a situation are summarized well by Bernstein in a letter to Robbins only one month before the premiere on April 18, 1944, "These [musical edits] are really impossible to discuss like this...get home! I need you!"

The whimsical plot of *Fancy Free* involves three Navy sailors on 24 hours of shore leave. After a few drinks, the sailors wander outside the bar and notice a captivating woman. Two of the sailors dance after her in hot pursuit, while the third finds himself a partner of his own with whom he dances a passionate *pas de deux*. When the first woman returns with the two sailors, everyone realizes that there are three men but only two women! A contest ensues for who will win the affection of the women, each sailor dancing a solo variation (a waltz, a galop, and a danzón). Ultimately, the women cannot declare a winner, leading to a fistfight between the men while the women scurry off. The ballet ends with a new woman captivating the sailor's attention, presumably ending the scene where it began.

With World War II still raging, the lighthearted scenario and American imagery presented in *Fancy Free* enlivened the spirits of all who listened—it was performed over 160 times in its opening year alone—an effect owed in no small part to Bernstein's playful and jazz-infused score.

LISTEN FOR:

- The central role of the piano, which Bernstein called the "auditory key to the ballet"—the solo in the Finale is a highlight
- Rhythmic vitality and innovation throughout the piece, featured foremost in the first movement—each new phrase propels forward with a jaunty, syncopated thrust
- The "popular song style" of the *pas de deux*, featuring blue notes, slick glissandos, and a passionate string section

INSTRUMENTATION:

Two flutes (one doubling piccolo), two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion, piano, strings

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About Our Musicians

Carlos Miguel Prieto,
Music Director Designate
The Maxine and Benjamin Swalin Chair

Grant Llewellyn,
Music Director Laureate

Michelle Di Russo,
Associate Conductor
The Lucy Moore Ruffin Chair

Violin I

Brian Reagin, Concertmaster
The Annabelle Lundy Fetterman Chair

To Be Filled, Associate Concertmaster
The Assad Meymandi and Family Chair

To Be Filled, Assistant Concertmaster
The Anne Heartt Gregory Chair

Karen Strittmatter Galvin, Assistant
Concertmaster

Emily Rist Glover
The Jessie Wyatt Ethridge Chair

Paul Goldsberry
The Richard and Joy Cook Chair

So Yun Kim
The Governor James B. Hunt, Jr. Chair

Marilyn Kouba
The Phyllis ("Pat") Conrad Wells Chair

Maria Meyer
The Tom and Mary Mac Bradshaw Chair

Pablo Sánchez Pazos

Jessica Ryou

Lin-Ti Wang*

Eileen Wynne
The Harvey At-Large Chair

Erin Zehngut
The J. Felix Arnold Chair

To Be Filled
The James C. Byrd and Family Chair

**The North Carolina Symphony Foundation
gratefully acknowledges the generous gift of
the Lupot violin from Arnold and Zenat
Lerman.**

**deceased*

Violin II

Jacqueline Saed Wolborsky, Principal
The Nancy Finch Wallace Chair

To Be Filled, Associate Principal
The Blanche Martin Shaw Chair

David Kilbride, Assistant Principal

Qi Cao

Janet Gayer Hall

Oskar Ozolinch

Anton Shelepov

Jeanine Wynton

To Be Filled

Viola

Samuel Gold, Principal
*The Florence Spinks and Charles Jacob
Cate and Alma Yondorf and Sylvan
Hirschberg Chair*

Kurt Tseng, Associate Principal
The Betty Ellen Madry Chair

Brian Sherwood, Assistant Principal

Petra Berényi

Paul Malcolm

Amy Mason
The J. Sidney Kirk Chair

Sandra Schwarcz
*The Samuel H. and Anne Latham Johnson
Chair*

Kirsten Swanson*

Cello

Bonnie Thron, Principal
The June and Tom Roberg Chair

Elizabeth Beilman, Associate Principal
The Sarah Carlyle Herbert Dorroh Chair

Peng Li, Assistant Principal
Anonymously Endowed

Yewon Ahn
Anonymously Endowed

Sunrise Kim**
The William Charles Rankin Chair

Rosalind Leavell*

David Meyer**
The Nell Hirschberg Chair

Marc Moskovitz*

Lisa Howard Shaughnessy
The Sara Wilson Hodgkins Chair

Nathaniel Yaffe
*The Secretary of Cultural Resources
Betty Ray McCain Chair*

Double Bass

Leonid Finkelshteyn, Principal
The Martha and Peyton Woodson Chair

Bruce Ridge*, Associate Principal
The John C. and Margaret P. Parker Chair

Craig Brown
The Mark W. McClure Foundation Chair

Erik Dyke
The Harllee H. and Pauline G. Jobe Chair

John Spuller*
The Dr. and Mrs. Preston H. Gada Chair

Flute

Anne Whaley Laney, Principal
*The Mr. and Mrs. George M. Stephens
Chair*

Mary E. Boone, Assistant Principal
The Dr. and Mrs. Shaler Stidham, Jr. Chair

Elizabeth Anderton Lunsford
The Jack and Sing Boddie Chair

Piccolo

Elizabeth Anderton Lunsford
The Jean Dunn Williams Chair

Oboe

Melanie Wilsden, Principal
The Hardison and Stoltze Chair

Joseph Peters, Associate Principal
The Lizette T. Dunham Chair

Amanda LaBrecque*

Sandra Posch**
The Clarence and Alice Aycock Poe Chair

English Horn

Joseph Peters
The Bruce and Margaret King Chair

Clarinet

Samuel Almaguer, Principal
The Mr. and Mrs. J. Christopher Walker, II Chair

Zhenyu Wang*, Assistant Principal
The Kathryn Powell and Green Flavie Cooper Chair

Bassoon

Aaron Apaza, Principal
The Mr. and Mrs. Fitzgerald S. Hudson Chair

Wenmin Zhang, Assistant Principal
The Beethoven Chair

French Horn

Rebekah Daley, Principal
The Mary T. McCurdy Chair

Kimberly Van Pelt, Associate Principal
The Paul R. Villard and Gabriel Wolf Chair

Corbin Castro*
The Roger Colson and Bobbi Lyon Hackett Chair

Tanner West*
The James Marion Poyner Chair

To Be Filled
The Mary Susan Kirk Fulghum Chair

Trumpet

Paul Randall, Principal
The George Smedes Poyner Chair

David Dash*, Associate Principal
The Henry and Martha Zaytoun and Family Chair

Trombone

John Ilika, Principal
The Thomas Warwick Steed, Jr. Family Chair

Jonathan Randazzo, Assistant Principal
The Frances Armour Bryant Chair

Bass Trombone

Matthew Neff
Anonymously Endowed

Tuba

Seth Horner, Principal
The Governor and Mrs. James G. Martin, Jr. Chair

Harp

Anita Burroughs-Price
Vonda Darr

Timpani

Colin Hartnett, Principal
The Patricia R., Steven T. and George F. Hackney III Chair

Percussion

Richard Motylinski, Principal
The Margery and Earl Johnson, Jr. Chair

Rajesh Prasad, Assistant Principal
The Abram and Frances Pascher Kanof Chair

Organ

To Be Filled
The Albert and Susan Jenkins and Family Organ Chair

Library

Stephanie Wilson, Principal Orchestra Librarian
The Mary Colvert and Banks C. Talley Chair

*Acting position

**Leave of absence

Named musician chairs are made possible through very meaningful gifts to the Symphony's endowment. As such, these donor families are also members of the Lamar Stringfield Society.

All string players rotate stands on a periodic basis in each section with the exception of titled players: Principals, Associate Principals, and Assistant Principals.

The North Carolina Symphony is a member of the League of American Orchestras and the International Conference of Symphony and Opera Musicians.

The North Carolina Master Chorale is the Resident Chorus of the North Carolina Symphony.

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