

NORTH CAROLINA **SYMPHONY**

MENDELSSOHN & BRAHMS

FRIDAY, OCT 22, 2021 | NOON

Meymandi Concert Hall

Woolner Stage

Duke Energy Center
for the Performing Arts

Raleigh



The North Carolina Symphony, in grateful acknowledgment of its generous grant-in-aid, performs under the auspices of the State of North Carolina, the Honorable Roy Cooper, Governor.



The North Carolina Symphony gratefully acknowledges financial support from Wake County and the City of Raleigh.



NORTH CAROLINA SYMPHONY

Mendelssohn & Brahms

Friday Favorites

Fri, Oct 22, 2021 | Noon

MEYMANDI CONCERT HALL, WOOLNER STAGE

DUKE ENERGY CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS, RALEIGH

North Carolina Symphony

Marcelo Lehninger, *conductor*

Simone Porter, *violin*

Program

Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

Violin Concerto in E Minor, Op. 64

Simone Porter, *violin*

- I. Allegro molto appassionato
- II. Andante
- III. Allegretto non troppo – Allegro molto vivace

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

Selections from **Symphony No. 1 in C Minor, Op. 68**

- II. Andante sostenuto
- IV. Adagio – Più andante –
Allegro non troppo, ma con
brio – Più allegro

For the complete program, text the word **program** to 919.364.6864 or scan this QR code with your phone:



About the Music



Violin Concerto in E Minor, Op. 64 **Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)**

THE STORY

Felix Mendelssohn, who was conductor of the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra in addition to his work as a composer, was fortunate to have a phenomenal concertmaster, Ferdinand David. The two had been good friends since childhood and David's artistry inspired Mendelssohn to compose a violin concerto. "One in E minor keeps running through my head and the opening gives me no peace," Mendelssohn wrote.

Both agreed immediately that the concerto should offer more than flashy displays, and Mendelssohn continued to seek David's advice and tailored the concerto to his skills and musical personality. Although the concerto was first discussed in 1838, it was not completed until 1845—partly because Mendelssohn was busy writing the "Scottish" Symphony and partly because he spent several unhappy years in the early 1840s in Berlin as a court musician for King Friedrich Wilhelm IV.

When it finally came time for the premiere, Mendelssohn was ill and could not conduct (he died just a few years later at age 38). Danish conductor and composer Neils Gade filled in—with Ferdinand David, of course, as soloist.

Audiences at the time would have been surprised by several elements in the concerto, right from the beginning. The soloist enters almost immediately, after just several murmuring measures, rather than following the full main theme played by the orchestra. The solo cadenza at the end of the first movement's development section, just after the soloist seems to have finally arrived at the home key, also would have been unexpected; typically, the cadenza would appear later, at the end of the movement. Finally, Mendelssohn's audiences would have expected to be able to applaud between movements, but he didn't like this convention and purposely made it impossible by connecting each of the movements with no pauses in between.

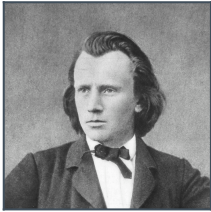
The Mendelssohn Violin Concerto is a staple of the repertoire, studied by nearly all violinists in their professional training. As Mendelssohn was working on it, Ferdinand commented, "There has only been one big, truly great concerto (Beethoven) and now there will be two!" And, although this may have been true, Mendelssohn replied, "I am not competing with Beethoven."

LISTEN FOR

- In addition to the soaring, restless melodies and virtuosic showmanship in the first movement, the understated but beautiful moments where the soloist serves as accompanist to the orchestra rather than vice versa—including the long, low note held as the flutes and clarinets introduce the second theme, and the ricochet (bounced bow) arpeggios at the beginning of the recapitulation
 - At the end of the *Andante*, the speech-like utterances from the soloist, as if telling us the second movement is done and it is time for the finale
 - The brass fanfare that opens the finale, followed by sprightly, joyous, fairy-like music that seems to echo Mendelssohn's music for *A Midsummer Night's Dream*
-

INSTRUMENTATION

Two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, timpani, strings



Selections from **Symphony No. 1 in C Minor, Op. 68**

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

THE STORY

Robert Schumann bestowed the highest praise on Johannes Brahms when he hailed him as Beethoven's successor—but, like Mendelssohn, Brahms had no interest in competing with Beethoven. In fact, he wrote, "You don't know what it is like hearing his footsteps constantly beside me," and swore that he would never write a symphony.

Clearly, Brahms changed his mind, but the pressure of being in Beethoven's shadow, along with his already deeply self-critical nature, meant that his First Symphony took 14 years to write—much to the frustration of his publisher, who was eager to sell a Brahms symphony.

Nervous about the reaction from Vienna's opinionated critics and audiences, who worshipped Beethoven, Brahms arranged for the work to premiere outside of the city, in Karlsruhe, where there was a high quality orchestra. It was 1876 and Brahms was 43 years old.

Even at the premiere, Brahms was critical of his symphony, calling it "long and not exactly amiable." He wasn't incorrect on those counts—the symphony is better described as weighty and impressive than charming—and the Vienna critic Eduard Hanslick stated that Brahms had absorbed the dark side of Beethoven.

Still, Brahms shouldn't have worried about the reaction—the symphony was extraordinarily well received, even if the comparisons with Beethoven persisted. (The symphony was even referred to, for better or worse, as "Beethoven's Tenth.") Brahms must have known that the comparisons would be unavoidable by writing a symphony that, just like Beethoven's Fifth, traced a journey from struggle to triumph, from C minor to C major. The chorale-like melody in the fourth movement is sometimes called "Brahms' Ode to Joy," and when pressed about the resemblance between his melody and that in Beethoven's Ninth, Brahms replied, "Any ass can see that."

In any case, it would appear Brahms got the confidence boost that he needed; he completed his Symphony No. 2 the following year.

LISTEN FOR

- The rapturous violin solo at the end of the *Andante sostenuto* that seems to have paved the way for Brahms' Violin Concerto
 - The dark emotion in the slow introduction of the fourth movement, pierced by a radiant horn call
-

INSTRUMENTATION

Two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, contrabassoon, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, timpani, strings

About the Artists



Marcelo Lehninger

conductor

Marcelo Lehninger most recently led the North Carolina Symphony in 2017; the program included Dvořák's Symphony No. 8 and MOXIE, by Kristen Kuster, and featured pianist Simon Trpčeski performing Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto No. 1.

Brazilian-born Marcelo Lehninger was appointed Music Director of the Grand Rapids Symphony in 2016. In 2018, he brought the orchestra to Carnegie Hall, its first performance at the famed venue in thirteen years. He previously served as Music Director of the New West Symphony in Los Angeles, for which the League of American Orchestras awarded him the Helen H. Thompson Award for Emerging Music Directors. For five years, he served as Assistant and then Associate Conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra.

Lehninger's 2021/22 season includes debuts with the San Antonio Symphony, Peninsula Music Festival, and the Prague Philharmonia in the Czech Republic, and returns to the Sarasota Orchestra, North Carolina Symphony, and the Minas Gerais Philharmonic in Brazil.

Before dedicating his career to conducting, Lehninger studied violin and piano. He holds a Master's degree from the Conductors Institute at New York's Bard College.



Simone Porter

violin

Simone Porter makes her North Carolina Symphony debut with these concerts.

Born in 1996, Simone Porter made her professional solo debut at age 10 with the Seattle Symphony and her international debut with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra in London at age 13. In March 2015, she was named a recipient of an Avery Fisher Career Grant.

Recent highlights include Mendelssohn with New Jersey Symphony Orchestra and Brahms with Pacific Symphony. Beginning with the Aspen Music Festival, where she is a frequent guest, in 2021 she resumed a full season of concerts to include the North Carolina and Colorado symphonies, Sarasota Orchestra, Orchestre symphonique de Québec, and the symphony orchestras of St. Louis, Bakersfield, and Princeton. Recitals include a program in Boston featuring the world premiere of a commission from composer Reena Esmail.

Raised in Seattle, Washington, Porter studied with Margaret Pressley as a recipient of the Dorothy Richard Starling Foundation Scholarship, and was then admitted into the studio of Robert Lipsett, with whom she studied at the Colburn Conservatory of Music in Los Angeles. Summer studies have included many years at the Aspen Music Festival, Indiana University's String Academy, and the Schlern International Music Festival in Italy.

Porter performs on a 1740 Carlo Bergonzi violin made in Cremona, Italy, on generous loan from The Master's University, Santa Clarita, California.

About Our Musicians

Violin I

Brian Reagin

Concertmaster

The Annabelle Lundy Fetterman Chair

Dovid Friedlander**

Associate Concertmaster

The Assad Meymandi and Family Chair

Karen Strittmatter Galvin*

Associate Concertmaster

Emily Rist Glover*

Assistant Concertmaster

The Anne Heartt Gregory Chair

Erin Zehngut*

Assistant Concertmaster

Carol Chung*

The James C. Byrd and Family 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

Lin-Ti Wang*

The Jessie Wyatt Ethridge Chair

Eileen Wynne

The Harvey At-Large Chair

To Be Filled

The J. Felix Arnold Chair

Violin II

Jacqueline Saed Wolborsky

Principal

The Nancy Finch Wallace Chair

David Kilbride*

Associate Principal

The Blanche Martin Shaw Chair

Anton Shelepov*

Assistant Principal

Qi Cao**Janet Gayer Hall****Oskar Ozolinch****Jeanine Wynton**

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

To Be Filled

Assistant Principal

Petra Berényi**Paul Malcolm****Amy Mason**

The J. Sidney Kirk Chair

Sandra Schwarcz

The Samuel H. and Anne Latham Johnson Viola Chair

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

†deceased

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

David Meyer

The Nell Hirschberg Chair

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

Robert K. Anderson

Associate Principal

The Dr. and Mrs. Preston H. Gada Chair

Craig Brown

The Mark W. McClure Foundation Chair

Erik Dyke

The Harlee H. and Pauline G. Jobe Chair

Bruce Ridge

The John C. and Margaret P. Parker 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

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

Matthew Griffith*

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

Christopher Caudill**

Rachel Niketopoulos**

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

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.