

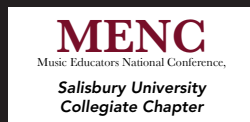
Tchaikovsky & Friends



Featuring
Wesley Baldwin, Cellist
Tchaikovsky Rococo Variations,
Pezzo Capriccioso,
Borodin Symphony No. 2

Saturday • May 14, 2011
7:30 p.m. • Holloway Hall Auditorium

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WESLEY BALDWIN

cello

Cellist Wesley Baldwin performs throughout the United States and Europe as soloist and chamber musician. As a soloist he has appeared with conductors including Dan Allcott, James Fellenbaum, Serge Fournier, Cyrus Ginwala, Francis Graffeo, Adrian McDonnell, Daniel Meyer, Jorge Richter, Richard Rosenberg, Brendan Townsend, Kirk Trevor and David Wiley, and with the Laredo Philharmonic, the Oregon Mozart Players, the Symphony of the Mountains, the Bryan Symphony, the Oak Ridge Symphony, and the Wintergreen and Hot Springs Festival orchestras, among others. Concerts this year

include concerto performances with the Oak Ridge, Wintergreen Festival, New River Valley, Salisbury, and Bismarck-Mandan symphony orchestras, and solo and chamber recitals in Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Indiana, Louisiana, Maryland, Missouri, North and South Carolina, Tennessee and Virginia.

An advocate for great music from all eras, Baldwin is one of the only performers of several little-known and new concerti for cello, including recently those by Wagenseil, Jacob T.V., Behzad Ranjbaran and Alan Shulman. His recording of Shulman cello music, released by Albany records in 2010, enjoys widespread critical acclaim. He has also recorded for the Naxos, Zyode, Centaur and Innova labels.

Baldwin was the founder of the Plymouth String Quartet, with whom he was a top prizewinner in the Fischhoff National Chamber Music Competition and a finalist in the PaoloBorciani International String Quartet Competition. Other performing honors Baldwin has received include the Prix Mercure and Homer Ulrich awards. Most recently, Baldwin is a 2011 recipient of a Tennessee Arts Commission Individual Performing Artist Fellowship.

As a member and principal cellist of the New World Symphony, Baldwin performed with many of the world's great conductors, and toured Japan, Scotland, England, Argentina and Brazil. His orchestral colleagues there selected him as the recipient of the New World Symphony's Community Board Award for artistic integrity and leadership.

Baldwin has performed chamber music at the Aspen, Cazenovia, Hot Springs, Ojai, Sandpoint, Mainly Mozart, May in Miami, Skaneateles and Sub-tropics music festivals, and internationally in Italy, France, Monte Carlo, Spain, Austria, Brazil, Argentina, the United Kingdom and Costa Rica.

Baldwin is now cellist of the James Piano Quartet, the resident ensemble at Sweet Briar College and the Wintergreen Festival. In the summers, he performs and teaches at the Michigan City Chamber Music Festival, the ARIA academy and at the Wintergreen Festival, where he serves on the faculty of the Wintergreen Academy and holds the Leonard Rose Memorial chair as principal cellist of the Wintergreen Festival Orchestra.

A passionate teacher, Baldwin serves as the youngest full professor in the School of Music at the University of Tennessee, where he received the Chancellor's Award for Professional Promise. His former students play and teach throughout the United States.

Baldwin founded and directs the Tennessee Cello Workshop, an annual three-day gathering of roughly 100 cellists of all ages from throughout the United States held each February.

Baldwin plays on a cello by J.B. Vuillaume. He lives in Knoxville with his wife (soprano Melisa Barrick), three great children and three dogs.

PROGRAM

SALISBURY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

At Salisbury University

Saturday, May 14, 2011

7:30 p.m.

Holloway Hall Auditorium

Overture on Russian Themes, op. 28 Nikolay Rimsky-Korsakov
(1844-1908)

Variations on a Rococo Theme,
for cello and orchestra in A, op. 33 Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky
(1840-1893)

Andante Cantabile Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky
Wesley Baldwin, cello

– I N T E R M I S S I O N –

Pezzo capriccioso for
cello and orchestra in B minor, op. 62 Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky
Wesley Baldwin, cello

Symphony No. 2 in B minor Alexander Borodin
(1833-1887)

SALISBURY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

At Salisbury University
Dr. Jeffrey Schoyen, Music Director

Violin I

*Sachiho Murasugi,
concertmaster
Amy Beauchamp
Rosie Cockey
Richard Leavitt
Amanda Libby
Page Miller
John Yoon

Violin II

*Bobbie Thamert
Amanda Biederman
Caitlin Conway
Anna Cooke
Mary-Beth Goll
Paul Herman
Susan Parker
Jenel Waters

Viola

*Jessi Deane
Michele DeHaven
Sam Cole
Julie Gellman
Rume Jessa
Dan McCarthy

Cello

*Martha Mancuso
Madeleine Clifton
Kristilyn Frieze
John Han
Kristen Lamb
Patricia Rose
Kelly Schallhorn

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*Fred Geil
Adriane Irving
Cassidy Morgan
Tanya Robbins

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*Lesley Weihs
Lisa Adams
Susan Zimmer

Oboe

*Julie Barton
Amy Sterling

Clarinet

*Debra Scott
Scott Bunting

Bassoon

*Paul Scott
Nicholas Pino

Trumpet

*Ron Davis
Bill Williams

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*Lee Knier
Jarod Armes
Kurt Ludwick

French Horn

*Kayla O'Connor
Charles Doherty
Seth Frieze
Kristen Knight-Griffin
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*John Scott

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PROGRAM NOTES

Nicolai Rimsky Korsakov

Overture on Russian Themes, op. 28

This work was written in 1866 soon after the first Symphony. It is based on three folk songs: “Glory,” “At the Gates” and “Ivanushka’s Caftan.” The last two are quite similar, and Balakirev disagreed about the choice. But the composer had already composed some clever “harmonic tricks” on them and decided to go ahead. The work was conducted by Balakirev late that year. Despite its success, the composer thoroughly revised the score in 1880. Only the revised version was published and is habitually performed.

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

Variations on a Rococo Theme

Done in the potentially tedious theme and variations format, the work begins with a simple theme and plumbs the depths and streaks to the heights of the capabilities of the cello. The rococo theme itself is a simple one and if it tips its hat to the 18th century – and Tchaikovsky’s musical idol, Mozart – it is thoroughly Tchaikovskyan and utterly Romantic. Each of the seven variations is skillfully crafted and none sounds contrived or forced – always a potential trap in this form. Two expressive cadenzas further push the performance envelope of the cello and at least one variation is as powerfully mournful and expressive as anything the morose Russian ever composed. The work finally bursts forth into a joyous final variation and concludes with satisfying enthusiasm, but without overly produced bombast.

Rococo Variations were composed in short score near the end of 1876 for Wilhelm Fitzhagen, who was principal cellist at the Moscow Conservatory. Fitzhagen got a short score of the new variations so he could make the cello part idiomatic while Tchaikovsky was orchestrating the rest. This was introduced at a Moscow concert on November 30, 1877, when the composer was “recuperating” in Switzerland from the debacle of his one and only marriage earlier that year. He didn’t know of revisions Fitzhagen made and presented to the publisher Jurgenson as “authorized.” Tchaikovsky’s own version had a brief introduction for strings before the theme itself, in two parts, then eight variations, and a coda. Fitzhagen added repeat marks to both halves of the theme, killed variation 8, rearranged the original order (to 1, 2, 7, 5, 6, 3, 4) and truncated the coda. Although biographer David Brown has damned this version as “deplorably corrupt,” it remains charming, albeit less effective than the original, finally published in a 1956 Soviet edition of Tchaikovsky’s complete works.

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

Pezzo capriccioso

Tchaikovsky wrote this piece during a summertime visit to Germany and dedicated it to Anatoly Brandukov, a pupil of the cellist who premiered (and drastically revised) the composer's *Variations on a Rococo Theme*. Brandukov, too, saw fit to toy with the *Pezzo Capriccioso* after its 1888 publication, and it is heard today in both his version and Tchaikovsky's original; the following description refers to Tchaikovsky's conception.

The piece is capricious – not in a lighthearted way, but in its manner of toying with various aspects of a mood. That mood is initially rather dark; the work begins with a dramatic declamation from the soloist, a theme that ascends the scale at the beginning of each phrase, even though the phrase itself falls. This gives way to a rising, impulsive melody that would be eminently singable if it didn't devolve to instrumental passagework. About halfway through, a mercurial scherzo briefly takes over, but soon gives way to the main theme it had interrupted. Soon, though, the scherzo material succinctly provides the last word. This was the last completed work for solo instrument and orchestra that Tchaikovsky wrote.

Alexander Borodin

Symphony No. 2

Alexander Borodin's *Symphony No. 2* in B minor took a long while to compose, as Borodin fit it in between labors on other works and his efforts as a scientist to ensure that women had access to chemistry courses. It was begun in 1869, but the piano score was not complete until 1875, and the orchestral version was not performed until 1877. That version was revised in 1879 after a poorly received premiere. Yet posterity has made the *Symphony No. 2* not only Borodin's most popular symphony, but the most popular symphony written by any member of the nationalist *Mighty Handful* (Nikolay Rimsky-Korsakov, César Cui, Modest Mussorgsky, Mili Balakirev and Borodin) because of its vividly rugged harmonies, deft orchestration and a seemingly inexhaustible fund of energetic, passionate and, above all, Russian themes.

A program for all but the second movement of the symphony has survived, as Borodin told it to critic Vladimir Stassov. The sonata-form first movement depicts a gathering of Russian knights; it opens with a strong, noble theme played on unison strings, as brasses and winds provide dark color and essay a chivalric-sounding contrasting theme. After a few repetitions of the opening music, a second theme enters, based on motifs from the folk songs "The Terrible Tsar" and "The Nightingale" and distinguished by its easy lyricism. The development section introduces a gallop rhythm that affects fragments of the themes and lends a knightly feel to the proceedings, leading into a recapitulation whose longer notes and thicker orchestration make it even more emphatic than the exposition. The *Prestissimo* scherzo that follows uses a sustained brass chord to modulate from B minor to F major (a remote key) and then launches into a succession of quick, bright, lightly scored melodies. The *Trio* takes a graceful, winding theme (also derived from the above mentioned folk songs) and runs it through various keys. The *Andante* third-movement portrays a legendary minstrel named Bayan and evokes the sound of his zither in the opening bars with harp and *pizzicato* strings. At first, a warm horn melody dominates, but soon a struggle develops between a nervous, minor-mode motive introduced on the woodwinds and the opening melody. Finally, the opening melody enters triumphantly in the strings and leads into a coda that brings back the minstrel evocation; this in turn leads directly into the *Allegro* finale. This finale depicts a jubilant crowd, using an appropriately buoyant main theme (decorated with generous percussion) and a second theme that begins as a quiet lyric, but soon expands into a celebration itself. A new development theme recalls the symphony's opening music, but this soon yields to a supremely joyous, unstoppable elaboration of the two main themes, whose momentum propels the music through the recapitulation and the coda. Borodin's *Symphony No. 2* deserves its exalted position in the annals of the *Mighty Handful's* orchestral music.

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