

SCHOOL OF MUSIC CONCERTS



Puget Sound Symphony Orchestra

Anna Jensen, conductor

Presents

IGNITE

A lit matchstick is positioned vertically on the left side of the image. The flame is large and stylized, with a bright orange and yellow core transitioning into a vibrant blue outer layer that flows upwards and to the right. The word "IGNITE" is written in a white, bold, sans-serif font across the upper part of the flame.

Thursday, Oct. 16

Schneebeck Concert Hall

7:30 p.m., Free admission

Or tune in at pugetsound.edu/schneebecklive

PUGET SOUND SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Anna Jensen, conductor

PROGRAM

Romanian Folk Dances, Sz. 56 (1915).....Béla Bartók (1881–1945)

I. Bot tánc / Jocul cu bâță (Stick Dance)

II. Brâul (Sash Dance)

III. Topogó / Pe loc (In One Spot)

IV. Bucsumí tánc / Buciumeana (Dance from Bucsum)

V. Román polka / Poarga Românească (Romanian Polka)

VI. Aprózó / Mărunțel (Fast Dance)

Starburst for String Orchestra (2012).....Jessie Montgomery (b. 1981)

Lullaby for String Quartet (1919).....George Gershwin (1898–1937)
arr. for string orchestra by Jeff Manookian

Fate Now Conquers (2020).....Carlos Simon (b. 1986)

INTERMISSION

Symphony No. 7 in A major, Op. 92 (1811–12).....Ludwig van Beethoven

I. Poco sostenuto – Vivace (1770–1827)

II. Allegretto

III. Presto

IV. Allegro con brio

PUGET SOUND SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Anna Jensen, conductor

Flute/Piccolo

Levin Kapur '28
Janelle Lymus '29
Katy Wade '28, P

Oboe

Viviana DePinto '26, P
Athena Schaefer '26

Clarinet

Emma Dubowitz '28
Mireia Pujol '26, P

Bassoon

Alex Kirner '26
Sahaj Olivar '26
Sara Ponsioen '26, P

Horn

Elias Albertson '27, P
Sonny Wong '26

Trumpet

Jack Lighthipe '28, P
Wyatt Ethan Logan, *guest artist*

Timpani/Percussion

Carter Fouts '27, P

Violin 1

Sarah Choi '28
Ethan Chythlook '26, CM
Ashlyn Collado '26
Paige Franklin '26
Mozea Havens '27, ACM
Madison Henning '26, ACM
Aylana Horvath '26
Anabel Moore '28
David Salo '29
Everett Skubinna '27
Elise Wadle '27
Hailey Yang '26

Violin 2

Simon Bessler '29
Cameron Bingham '29
Ubaldo Calderon '29
Oliver Eells '28
Sarah Gardner '28
Ruby Gunter '26, CP
Jackson Jay '26, AP
Aaron Levi '28
Niko Malm '29
Sam McBride '27, CP
Katy McCullough '27
Grace Shirley '28

Viola

Ella Begnaud '28
Amelia Calderon-Henes '26
Avery Choi '28
JooEun Choi '29
Elinor Cummings '29
Maeve Gregory '28
Hunter Klotz '27, CP
Mika Shor '28
Ava Strasser '27, CP

Cello

Liam Abbott '26, P
Benjamin Brooks '29
Grant Chythlook '29
Madeleine Coleman '28
Sarah Galpern '28, AP
Bronwyn McKasson '28
Sydney Pederson '28
Olivia Putz '27

Bass

Lucille Hamilton '28
Jordan Pilla '25, P

Orchestra Manager

Mozea Havens '27

CM = concertmaster

ACM = assistant concertmaster

P = principal

CP = co-principal

AP = assistant principal

BIOGRAPHIES



Dr. ANNA JENSEN'S passion for music translates to her deep involvement in music education. In addition to instructing at the University of Puget Sound, she is the executive director of the Tacoma Youth Symphony Association. During the summer she teaches at The Evergreen Music Festival and The Hammond Ashley Bass Workshop. Jensen has also taught at Central Washington University, Pacific Lutheran University,

Bowling Green State University, and was a graduate student instructor at the University of Michigan. In recent years, Jensen was awarded the *Outstanding Master Studio Teacher Award* from the American String Teachers Association, WA Chapter and the Washington State Music Educators Association "Friend of Music" award.

As a conductor, Jensen is a frequent clinician, adjudicator, and guest conductor for contests, festivals, and workshops across the Pacific Northwest, including Alaska. She has conducted numerous All-State orchestras, regional honor groups, summer music festival orchestras, and city-wide orchestra festivals. During the year, Jensen conducts the University of Puget Sound Symphony Orchestra, the Tacoma String Philharmonic at the Tacoma Youth Symphony Association, and is the director of orchestras at the Annie Wright Schools.

Jensen is the assistant principal bassist of Symphony Tacoma and regularly performs with orchestras and chamber ensembles across the region including the Paramount Theater Orchestra. She has performed with the Second City Chamber Music Series, the Icicle Creek Chamber Music Festival, the Kairos Music Festival and Lyceum, the Rackham Chamber Music Series, and the All Rivers at Once contemporary music series. Her vast interest in contemporary music has brought about numerous new chamber music works for the double bass and she has presented the world premieres of these works. She can be heard on William Bolcom's Grammy Award winning recording of his "Songs of Innocence and Experience", conducted by Leonard Slatkin.

Over the years, Jensen has been the featured double bass soloist with the Everett Philharmonic Orchestra, the Lake Chelan Bach Festival Orchestra, the Pacific Lutheran University Symphony Orchestra, the Wenatchee Symphony Orchestra, and the Tacoma Young Artists Orchestra. Jensen has won the Spokane Allied Arts Young Artist Competition, the Helen Snelling Crowe Competition, and was a finalist in the American String Teachers Association National Solo Competition.

Receiving her doctorate in musical arts degree in double bass performance at the University of Michigan, she studied with Dr. Diana Gannett and was a graduate student instructor. She holds degrees from the University of Michigan (DMA and MM) and Central Washington University (BM) and has been the recipient of the Mildred Tuttle Fellowship, the Farrell Merit Scholarship-Grant and was awarded the Presser Scholar. When not performing or teaching, Jensen can be found exploring the outdoors with her spouse and four children, hiking in the woods, or encouraging her own family's improvisational skills and joy of music!

Jensen is a Pierce County Arts Commissioner, where she represents District 7. She also serves on the Equity Review Team for the Tacoma Public Schools and the Finance Committee for the International Society of Bassists.

PROGRAM NOTES

Romanian Folk Dances, Sz. 56 (1915) by Béla Bartók (1881–1945)

After a two-year hiatus from composing due to struggles with depression caused by World War I, as well as some disappointments in his professional life, Bartók began composing again in 1915. And it is no surprise that one of his first compositions of this period is the suite entitled *Romanian Folk Dances*. Between 1909 and 1914 Bartók took numerous trips to the Transylvanian region, where he recorded and transcribed the music of the local Romanian population. He found Romanian folk music to be much richer in its variety than that of Hungary. The rhythms, the timbres, and the different combinations of local instruments such as violin, guitar, peasant flute, and bagpipe proved to be quite stimulating in his quest for new and exciting elements to introduce to 20th-century art music.

Bartók recognized three ways in which folk music can serve as the basis for art music. In the first method, the composer uses authentic folk melody with the addition of accompaniment and possibly an introduction and a conclusion. The second method is one in which the composer invents his or her own melody imitating a folksong. The last method is when the composer absorbs the essence of folk music in such a way that it becomes an integral part of his or her compositional language without an overbearingly noticeable connection to the folk tradition.

Of these three methods, the *Romanian Folk Dances* are clearly based on the first one. When arranging the folk melodies he had collected in Transylvania, Bartók preserved their pitch and rhythmic structure while introducing a rich harmonic language for the accompaniment. However, he was freer with the choice of tempo as some of the fast dances he made even faster, and some of the slower melodies even slower, thus emphasizing the individual character of each one of them.

The melody of the first dance, entitled “Stick Dance,” came from two violinists whom Bartók recorded. It is in a moderate tempo followed by the relatively quick “Sash Dance,” which originally the composer heard performed on a peasant flute. The third dance (“In One Spot”) although also originally performed on a peasant flute, is much slower and darker in mood with a more southern, Balkan, or even Middle Eastern character emphasized by the interval of augmented second. The fourth dance (“Dance from Bucsum”) is in 3/4 meter unlike the rest of the dances, which are mainly in 2/4. Bartók gave it a gentle, almost minuet-like quality and a slower tempo, in sharp contrast to the original violin folk tune, which is quite brisk and energetic. Here again we hear the augmented second, which suggests influence from places south of Romania. The fifth dance, entitled “Romanian Polka,” alternates between 2/4 and 3/4 meters and is quite boisterous, as are the last two dances both entitled “Maruntel” (“Fast Dance”). Bartók emphasized their dance character by providing an energetic left hand accompaniment while preserving the violin-like quality of the lively ornamented melody.

—Milen Kirov

Starburst for String Orchestra (2012) by Jessie Montgomery (b. 1981)

Montgomery is a native New Yorker, a graduate of the Juilliard School in violin performance, and holds a master’s degree from New York University in music composition. Her publications focus on various combinations of strings, and enjoy wide performance popularity with noted ensembles throughout the country. She is a devoted supporter of educational activities, and youth musical ensembles. Her musical style is, if anything eclectic, and is obviously a reflection of the enormous variety of musical art in her native New York City. Mahler once somewhat fatuously remarked something to the effect that a symphony should contain “everything.” Well, Montgomery dips into a remarkable universe of musical traditions, and reinterprets them in her own voice—just not all in one piece, of course.

Starburst was written in 2012 for the “Sphinx Virtuosi,” the professional touring ensemble of the Sphinx Organization. The latter supports young African-American string players in the Detroit area; Montgomery is composer-in-residence for the organization. Starburst takes its title from the composer’s feeling that the young members of the “Sphinx Virtuosi” are rather like “new stars in a galaxy.”

A brief, but scintillating, affair, Starburst is a winsome example of much of new music of the twenty-first century. Montgomery is typical of young contemporary composers unhindered by the siren calls that dominated “academic” music of the second half of the twentieth century: complexity, dissonance, adherence to “systems,” and a general tendency to value art that is esoteric and recondite. Rather, the cheerful staccato perpetual motion

and constant interplay of a seemingly endless variety of ideas and motives creates a vivacious sparkle that perfectly encapsulates the title of the work. While not exactly clearly establishing a “key” for the audience, Starburst is a pleasant exploration of familiar scales, chords, arpeggios, and melodic ideas that anyone can enjoy and recognize. But, of course, adroitly woven together into quite a new composition. Who should know better than the composer herself how to describe it?

“This brief one-movement work for string orchestra is a play on imagery of rapidly changing musical colors. Exploding gestures are juxtaposed with gentle fleeting melodies in an attempt to create a multidimensional soundscape. A common definition of a starburst, “the rapid formation of large numbers of new stars in a galaxy at a rate high enough to alter the structure of the galaxy significantly,” lends itself almost literally to the nature of the performing ensemble that premiered the work, the Sphinx Virtuosi, and I wrote the piece with their dynamic in mind.”

—Wm. E. Runyan

Lullaby (1919) for String Quartet by George Gershwin (1898–1937), arranged for string orchestra by Jeff Manookian

Although he was a brilliant writer of melody, George Gershwin composed in full harmony at the piano. It’s not surprising then, that his *Lullaby* of 1919 was conceived at the keyboard. The one-movement work was then scored for string quartet and became a favorite at the private musicales held by Gershwin’s friends. The melody of the piece took on a second life as an aria in his opera *Blue Monday*. For the next four decades, revivals of *Blue Monday* provided the melody’s only appearance. It wasn’t until 1967 that the original string quartet received its first public performance in the hands of the Juilliard String Quartet.

A unison “tuning” note begins the work, followed by high gestures in the violin. The cello then carries the main melody, a tranquil yet swinging tune. In the central section the mood shifts, becoming more inquisitive. Soon the music winds back down and begins the comfortable, bluesy main melody again. At the close, the violins take the melody up into high harmonics and *Lullaby* comes to an end with a short tremolo, a sigh on the cello, and a unison pizzicato “plup.” When *Lullaby* was finally published in 1968, Ira

Gershwin wrote, “It may not be the Gershwin of *Rhapsody in Blue*, Concerto in F, and his other concert works, but I find it charming and kind.”

—Jesse Rothwell

Fate Now Conquers (2020) by Carlos Simon (b. 1986)

This piece was inspired by a journal entry from Ludwig van Beethoven's notebook written in 1815: "Iliad. The Twenty-Second Book But Fate now conquers; I am hers; and yet not she shall share In my renown; that life is left to every noble spirit And that some great deed shall beget that all lives shall inherit."

Using the beautifully fluid harmonic structure of the 2nd movement of Beethoven's 7th symphony, I have composed musical gestures that are representative of the unpredictable ways of fate. Jolting stabs, coupled with an agitated groove with every persona. Frenzied arpeggios in the strings that morph into an ambiguous cloud of free-flowing running passages depicts the uncertainty of life that hovers over us.

We know that Beethoven strived to overcome many obstacles in his life and documented his aspirations to prevail, despite his ailments. Whatever the specific reason for including this particularly profound passage from the Iliad, in the end, it seems that Beethoven relinquished to fate. Fate now conquers.

—Carlos Simon

Symphony No. 7 in A major, Op. 92 (1811–12) by Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827)

The year 1812 was a momentous time for Beethoven, just as it was for Napoleon Bonaparte. And it can easily be said that things went badly for both of them.

Napoleon's foolhardy invasion of Russia, begun in 1812, led inevitably to his defeat at Waterloo three years later, and to exile away from the excitement and commanding commotion of human (and French national) society.

Beethoven's own inner exile was also coming to a new finality, as 1812 marked a new turning-point, when he had to face the social difficulties arising from his deafness. It was clear now that his future would be quite isolated from the everyday world of others, and especially from female companionship.

1812 is also the year of Beethoven's famous letter to the "Immortal Beloved," likely Antonie Brentano, an aristocratic Viennese woman (with a 10-year-old daughter) married to a Frankfurt businessman. The letter is ambiguous in many ways, but it suggests a mutual passion and a profound sense of resignation to the impossibility of a future together. Beethoven was bitterly critical of adultery in others, a further psychological obstacle, whose force we can only guess at.

At all events, the great stream of music that had been flowing abundantly since the “Heiligenstadt” crisis 10 years before– the “middle-period” masterpieces that stemmed from his first coming to terms with his growing deafness – now began to dry up. The rest of the decade is marked by recurrent bouts of depression and the production of very little music.

Out of these troubles were ultimately born the transcendent works of his final years – the last piano sonatas, the late string quartets, and the Ninth Symphony. Although Beethoven completed his Seventh and Eighth symphonies before the curtain of silence fell completely, he made little progress with the Ninth, conceived at that time as part of a three-symphony group. The Seventh was, in fact, mostly in place before the drama of 1812 unfolded.

The Seventh has always been regarded as one of the mightiest of the nine, less forceful perhaps than the Fifth, less ambitious than the Ninth, smaller than the Third, but broader in range and spirit than any other. The key-color of A major is unusual in Beethoven’s orchestral music, depending partly on the exultant sound of horns in A major, one of that instrument’s highest registers. The sense of a “divine dance,” as Richard Wagner called the Seventh, is very strong in both first and last movements as well as in the scherzo, driven by powerful rhythmic energy and heavy instrumentation. Meanwhile, the Allegretto, though full of charm, has a sense of inexorable fatality.

The slow introduction to the first movement is a huge free-standing structure of its own, only slowly giving way to the persistent E’s that herald the start of the main Allegro section and its relentless dancing rhythm. Two striking moments in this great movement should have our attention. First, in the recapitulation (or return) the texture suddenly lightens to allow the oboe to take the melody in a thinner, fresher texture, like a brief clearing of persistent clouds. And, at the end, the lower strings set up a bizarre grumbling ostinato (repetition) that seems to be stuck in a groove until the final cadences come to the rescue. This is the passage that elicited Carl Maria von Weber’s famous remark that Beethoven had shown himself “fit for the madhouse.”

So popular was the Allegretto second movement in the 19th century that it was often played as a concert piece on its own and even, on occasion, substituted for the slow movements of other symphonies! Yet, of the entire symphony, this is the movement that most strongly looks forward to the Romantic sensibilities of Berlioz, Robert Schumann, Mendelssohn, and others – all of whom seem to have derived creative benefits directly from it. Schubert must have been bewitched by its hypnotic rhythm, which he often adopted. The opening A-minor passage, gradually growing in sound like an approaching procession, leads, somewhat surprisingly, to a glowing section

in a major tonality, scored for winds over a still-throbbing string accompaniment. Each section is heard once more before the close, a characteristic parting passage with melodic fragments thrown from one instrument to another. Almost no other movement in all Beethoven leaves such haunting memories as this.

The scherzo third movement is a persistent alternation of a loud and vivacious triple-meter dance, with a calmer, static trio section that winds its way over low horns and basses. Thus, one part of the movement takes wing, the other is rooted to the ground.

The old tradition that symphonic finales should be light and breezy is firmly buried by the Seventh's fourth movement, one of the heaviest blockbusters in the symphonic repertory. Constant hammer-blows (on off-beats) and a shortage of quiet music puts Beethoven in the role of a prankish ringmaster. Beethoven's humor sometimes takes the form of subtle jokes that play on the audience's gullibility. But here the trick is not subtle at all. We watch (hear) him work his magic directly in front of us. We are mesmerized, amazed, and dumbfounded, even as we see exactly how it's done.

—Hugh Macdonald

UPCOMING SCHOOL OF MUSIC EVENTS

Admission is free for these events. Most performances are live-streamed at pugetsound.edu/schneebecklive.

THURSDAY, OCT. 23

Puget Sound Wind Ensemble

Gerard Morris, conductor
Schneebeck Concert Hall, 7:30 p.m.

FRIDAY, OCT. 24

Jacobsen Series: Leroy Ostransky Day

Gwynne Brown, curator
Schneebeck Concert Hall, 7:30 p.m.
Tickets required, Free for students

SUNDAY, OCT. 26

Jacobsen Series: Girsky String Quartet with Xiaohui Yang

Kilworth Memorial Chapel, 2 p.m.
Tickets required, Free for students

THURSDAY, OCT. 30

Keyboard Series: Pipes Spooktacular – A Halloween Organ Concert

Wyatt Smith, organ
Kilworth Memorial Chapel, 7:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, NOV. 1

Jacobsen Series: Duo Diorama

Minghuan Xu, violin; Winston Choi, piano
Kilworth Memorial Chapel, 7:30 p.m.
Tickets required, Free for students

MONDAY, NOV. 3

Concert in Collins – Library at Noon Series

Collins Memorial Library, noon

WEDNESDAY, NOV. 5

Concerto–Aria Spotlight Recital

Schneebeck Concert Hall, noon

All listings are subject to change. For the most current information about upcoming arts events and lectures, visit pugetsound.edu/events.

Puget Sound is committed to being accessible to all people. If you have questions about event accessibility, please contact 25Live@pugetsound.edu, or visit pugetsound.edu/accessibility.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We acknowledge that this event takes place on the ancestral territory of the Puyallup Tribe and the Lushootseed-speaking people, whose relationship with the land continues to this day.

We respectfully acknowledge and honor the history and presence of Indigenous students, staff, and faculty here at Puget Sound. We who are guests on this land offer our gratitude for the opportunity to make music together here.

The School of Music strives to recognize, include, and respect all of the peoples and musical traditions that make up our community.

The School of Music at University of Puget Sound, situated within a nationally recognized liberal arts university, prepares students to be broad-minded, creative, arts-aware social leaders. We attract highly engaged student musicians and empower them to create the diverse musical offerings and effective educational programs of the future.

From the classroom to the concert hall, we cultivate students' self-expression, cultural competency, and critical engagement. Through a wide variety of public offerings and a vibrant Community Music program, the School of Music enriches the cultural life of both the Puget Sound campus and surrounding communities.

Community Music, a division of the School of Music, welcomes people of all ages and skill levels to participate in music lessons and classes throughout the year.
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