

Puget Sound Symphony Orchestra
Anna Jensen, conductor

A BURST of FIRSTS

*First fall concert with works representing "firsts"
by Glinka, Walker, and Beethoven*

Tuesday, Oct. 10, 2023

Schneebeck Concert Hall, 7:30 p.m.

Free admission

Or tune in at pugetsound.edu/schneebecklive

SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Anna Jensen, conductor

Tuesday, Oct. 10, 2023

PROGRAM

- Ruslan and Ludmila Overture.....Mikhail Glinka
1804–57
- Lyric for Strings.....George Walker
1922–2018
- Symphony No. 1 in C Major, Opus 21.....Ludwig van Beethoven
I. Adagio Molto - Allegro con brio 1770–1827
II. Andante cantabile con moto
III. Menuetto. Allegro molto e vivace
IV. Finale. Adagio - Allegro molto e vivace

UNIVERSITY OF PUGET SOUND SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Anna Jensen, conductor

Violin 1

Ethan Chythlook '26,
concertmaster
Eli Connolly '25,
assistant concertmaster
Paige Franklin '26,
assistant concertmaster
Madison Hening '26
Hailey Yang '26
Else Mayo '24
Mozea Havens '27
Liv Hauge '25
Ashlyne Collado '26
Nikki Hindman '25
Jackson Jay '26
Sarah Kaczmarek '27

Violin 2

Katie Hayhurst '24, principal
Ruby Gunter '26
Silvana Byram '25
Everett Skubinna '27
Sam McBride '27
Elise Wadle '27
Katy McCullough '27
Oliver Wright '27
Ayli Horvath '26
Mari Love '27

Viola

Keola Tabisola '25, principal
Ryan Chernyavsky '25
Ela Escobar '24
Kianna Davis '25
Rowan Brune '27
Ava Strasser '27

Cello

Connor Adams '25, copincipal
Isabella Brady '24
Avi Graf '25, copincipal
Seren Hawtrey '24
Liam Abbott '26
Reagan Swinth '26
Aiden Higgens '24
Brenna Brook Burak '27
Angela Ronces-Cortes '24
Phoenix Stoker-Graham '24
Josh Ludski-Lee '27
Olivia Putz '27
Jordan Verkh-Haskell '25

Bass

Jordan Pilla '27, principal
Stella Dormer '27

Flute and piccolo

Alex Westervelt '25
Grace Playstead '24
Eliza Koch '24

Oboe

Athena Schaefer '26
Mariah Canton '24
Clara Gibbs '25

Clarinet

Levi Walsh '24
Mireia Pujol '26
Jenna Hlavaty '24

Bassoon

Sara Ponsioen '26
Sahaj Oliver '26
Alex Kirner '26

Timpani

Carter Fouts '27

Horn

Elliott Schunk '27
Madeline Miller '27
Elias Albertson '27
Caitlin Yoder '27

Trumpet

Abbey Hansen '24
Alyssa Shane '25
Mya Woods '25

Trombone

Coda Scott '25
Elias Thiemann '24

Tuba

Ian Dunlap '24

CONDUCTOR

ANNA JENSEN is an instructor at the University of Puget Sound and Pacific Lutheran University. She is the executive director of the Tacoma Youth Symphony Association and teaches during the summer at The Evergreen Music Festival and The Hammond Ashley Bass Workshop. Her double bass students have placed in the top-three at the state level numerous times and frequently win concerto competitions across the region. Jensen also has taught at Central Washington 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* by the American String Teachers Association, Washington Chapter and the "Friend of Music" award by the Washington State Music Educators Association.

She is the assistant principal bassist of Symphony Tacoma, the principal bassist of the Tacoma Opera Orchestra, the principal bassist of Vashon Opera, and regularly performs with orchestras across the region.

Receiving her doctorate in musical arts degree in double bass performance at the University of Michigan, she studied with 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.

PROGRAM NOTES

Mikhail Glinka – Overture to Ruslan and Ludmila

Glinka spent his early childhood in the care of his overprotective grandmother. She kept him confined to a warm room, wrapped in furs and fed sweets. The only music he heard was the sound of the local church bells, and the folk songs sung by passers-by. When his grandmother died he was sent to live with his uncle, and it was here that he first heard an orchestra. Later, when he was sent to school in St Petersburg, he briefly took piano lessons with John Field, the Irish composer who invented the nocturne, and began to compose.

Upon leaving school, his father decided that he should work for the Foreign Office, and Glinka duly found himself employed at the Department of Public Highways. The job was hardly taxing, and so he had plenty of time to compose. The major turning point in his development came in 1830 when he travelled to Italy. Hearing the Italian style that was being forged by composers such as Bellini and Donizetti, he determined to create a distinctive Russian music. On his return to Russia he composed his first opera, *A Life for the Tsar*. This proved to be a great success and Glinka was rewarded by the gift of a ring from the Tsar worth 4,000 Roubles, and more importantly a post as director of the Imperial Chapel Choir. Shortly afterwards he began work on his second opera, *Ruslan and Ludmila*.

The poet, who devised the plot of *Ruslan and Ludmila*, Konstantin Bakhturin, did so by his own admission in a quarter of an hour while drunk. It shows: dramatically the opera is a mess, and is rarely performed now outside Russia. While the quality of the opera as a drama is suspect, however, the music Glinka produced for it though is some of his finest. It was the seed of a major transformation of Russian music undertaken by the next generation of Russian composers, including Rimsky-Korsakov.

The rollicking overture has found an enduring place as a concert opener, and encapsulates the qualities that would prove so influential. It showcases Glinka's dazzling deployment of the orchestra to full effect as well as his use of folk-derived thematic ideas. The closing bars move beyond conventional Western harmony and melody with the introduction of a descending whole-tone scale. This was the first time this had been heard in European music, but by the end of the century, composers such as Debussy would make it a familiar sound. In the opera, it stood as the theme of the evil dwarf Chernomor, who kidnaps Ludmila; thereafter it became the standard Russian way to portray sorcery or villainy in music.

*Program notes from Kensington Symphony:

<http://kensingtonsymphonyorchestra.blogspot.com/2013/03/glinka-overture-ruslan-and-lyudmila.html>

George Walker — Lyric for Strings

A string of firsts dominated George Walker's long life and career. He was the first African American graduate of the prestigious Curtis Institute of Music with a dual diploma in both piano and composition. In 1945, he was the first African American to debut with a solo recital at Manhattan's Town Hall and the first to perform with the Philadelphia Orchestra as the soloist for Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No. 3. In 1950, he became the first African American artist to sign with a major artist management company, and he spent the next several years playing a string of high-profile concerts in nearly every European capital. In 1956, Walker became the first African American to graduate with a doctoral degree from the Eastman School of Music. In 1961, he was hired by Smith College where he became the first tenured African American faculty member in any department. And finally, in 1996, Walker was the first African American to be awarded the Pulitzer Prize for Music in recognition of his composition *Lilacs* for voice and orchestra.

At his death in August 2018, Walker was one of the most decorated and revered composers in American history. *Lyric for Strings* was composed when Walker was only 24 years old, but it has remained one of his most enduring compositions. The sound, structure, and instrumentation of the piece are all clearly inspired by the famous *Adagio for Strings* composed by Walker's Curtis Institute classmate Samuel Barber in 1936. Walker first conceived the music that became *Lyric* as a middle movement for his first string quartet and originally titled it "Lament" in dedication to his grandmother who died the year prior. The piece fluidly and dramatically alternates between lush harmonies and stark solo passages which showcase the range of sounds possible in the string orchestra. In an interview not long before his death, Walker commented: "I never played a string instrument, but somehow strings have always fascinated me." In *Lyric*, we hear the beginning of this life-long fascination.

*Program notes from Charleston Symphony:

<https://charlestonsymphony.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/MW1-Program-Notes.pdf>

Ludwig van Beethoven – Symphony No. 1

Ludwig van Beethoven wrote his First Symphony in the final years of the eighteenth century and premiered and published it in the opening years of the nineteenth. This timing during the shift from the Classical to Romantic eras is fitting; the work bears unmistakable signs of symphonic traditions established by two of the greatest names in classical music and Beethoven's most influential predecessors, W. A. Mozart and Joseph Haydn, as well as clear indicators of where Beethoven would take the symphonic genre in the years to come. Mozart and Haydn had together transformed the symphony from a relatively light and simple form of entertainment to something weightier and more musically complex. However, the genre would not reach its true zenith until the mantle was passed to Beethoven.

Beethoven's Symphony No. 1 premiered alongside works by Mozart and Haydn on April 2, 1800 at a benefit concert that served to announce the young composer and his music to Vienna. Compared with his revolutionary later symphonies, the First is often heard with modern ears as surprisingly cautious, conservative, and reserved. However, alongside the typical classical forms, instrumentation, and four-movement structure are the sudden and unexpected shifts in tonality, the inclusion of the not-yet-standard clarinets, and the more prominent use of the woodwind section at large that pointed toward Beethoven's later ingenuity. Context is key: with the benefit of some two hundred intervening years, we can now hear the symphony as the remarkable combination of tradition and innovation it is.

Beethoven's First Symphony begins with a slow, searching introduction that evades the home key of C major until the very end. It then launches directly into the energetic first theme of the Allegro proper, emphasizing the point by driving the tonic C home over and over. The lyrical second theme features the woodwinds in striking contrast to the strings of the first theme. An adventurous, almost aggressive coda closes the movement. The slow second movement provides some respite from the force of the first. Its mood is both pleasant and elegant, though the conspicuous timpani and trumpet sonorities are quite unusual for a classical slow movement.

The third movement is labeled a minuet, but its swift tempo stamps it as the first of Beethoven's symphonic scherzos. Wit, energy, and a driving momentum propel the movement forward into the finale. This closing movement starts with another slow introduction made up of snippets of scales that go on to build the main motivic material.

Playfulness and spirited energy tempered with strict adherence to classical form shows Beethoven's indebtedness to Mozart's and Haydn's influences, but the victorious conclusion boldly asserts his own character and foreshadows his innovation to come.

*Program notes by Laney Boyd for the Lincoln Symphony:

<https://lincolnsymphony.com/beethovens-heroic-beginnings-program-notes/>

UPCOMING SCHOOL OF MUSIC EVENTS

All events are free unless noted otherwise. Most performances are broadcast online at [PUGETSOUND.EDU/SCHNEEBECKLIVE](https://pugetsound.edu/schneebecklive)

WEDNESDAY, OCT. 11

Jacobsen Series: Boris Berman, piano*

Schneebeck Concert Hall, 7:30 p.m. | tickets.pugetsound.edu

FRIDAY, OCT. 20

Organ at Noon Series

Wyatt Smith, organ
Kilworth Memorial Chapel, noon

FRIDAY, OCT. 20

Puget Sound Wind Ensemble

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

FRIDAY, OCT. 27

Jacobsen Series: Euphony - An Evening of Low Brass Sounds*

Schneebeck Concert Hall, 7:30 p.m. | tickets.pugetsound.edu
Free for Puget Sound and K-12 students.

SATURDAY, OCT 28

Low Brass Music Day

School of Music Building, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. | [Register online](#)

SUNDAY, OCT. 29

Fall Festival of Choirs

Steven Zopfi, conductor
Schneebeck Concert Hall, 4 p.m.

*This concert will not be live streamed.

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.
pugetsound.edu/communitymusic | 253.879.3575

