

**PENN MUSIC & STUDENT ACTIVITIES COUNCIL**

P R E S E N T

**Penn Symphony Orchestra**  
*performing*

Dvořák's

# ***NEW WORLD***

**Symphony No. 9**

*and works of Beethoven and James Primosch*



Friday, October 29, 2021

IRVINE AUDITORIUM  
3401 SPRUCE STREET  
University of Pennsylvania

The Department of Music and the Student Activities Council present

# **PENN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA**

**Thomas Hong, Conductor & Director**  
**Meiching Huang (Philadelphia Orchestra), violin**  
**Ruby Lee (Penn '22), piano**  
**Evan Jiang (Penn '21), cello**

With thanks to the University of Pennsylvania Music Department

Dr. Timothy Rommen, Chair  
Dr. Michael Ketner, Director of Performance  
Maddie Hewitt, Performance and Communications Coordinator  
Eugene Lew, Director of Sound and Music Technology



## PROGRAM

- Variations on a Hymn Tune..... James Primosch
- Concerto for Violin, Cello, and Piano, Op. 56..... Ludwig Van Beethoven
- I. Allegro
  - II. Largo
  - III. Rondo alla Polacca

## INTERMISSION

- Symphony No. 9 in E Minor, op. 95, B. 178 ..... Antonín Leopold Dvořák
- I. Adagio. Allegro molto
  - II. Largo
  - III. Molto vivace
  - IV. Allegro con fuoco

Founded in 1878, the **Penn Symphony Orchestra** exists to provide the Penn community with orchestra concerts. Consisting of primarily undergraduate student members, the ensemble performs music ranging from the early Baroque styles to modern living composers. The Penn Symphony Orchestra rehearses and performs in historic Irvine Auditorium on the University of Pennsylvania campus.

Hailed by Kurt Masur as “one of the most talented young conductors of his generation,” **Thomas Hong** enjoys the distinction of being one of many successful protégés of the great Maestro. Having won titled positions with the Dallas, Pittsburgh, and Seattle Symphony Orchestras as well as Orchestre National de France, Hong has conducted countless concerts with those orchestras, ranging from classical, community, education and pops concerts. Presently, he is the artistic director and conductor of the University of Pennsylvania Orchestras. Recent activities include being principal conductor for the inaugural season of the DSO on the “GO” series with the Dallas Symphony, performing in neighboring venues of the North Texas area, and a re-engagement with the Utah Symphony, where he was the conductor for the Gina Bachauer International Piano Competition in Salt Lake City.





## **VIOLIN 1**

Stand 1 – Daphne Nie / Joey Wu  
Stand 1.5 – Daniel Hwang / Hannah Tsai  
Stand 2 – Helena Munoz / Zöe Patterson  
Stand 3 – Daniel Da / Maggie Yuan  
Stand 4 – Elliot Kim, Concertmaster / Hannah Chang  
Stand 5 – Bonnie Li / Yuxuan Liu  
Stand 6 – William Qi / Jonah Baer  
Stand 7 – Heewon Kim / Gabriel Hajjar

## **VIOLIN 2**

Stand 1 – Hannah Goldberg, Principal / Lucas Schrier  
Stand 1.5 – Alison Royce / Talia Coopersmith  
Stand 2 – Jason Ren, Co-principal / Mallory Peters  
Stand 3 – Jason (Jaemyoung) Lee / Laura Weiner  
Stand 4 – Anthony Lee / Joy Onawola  
Stand 5 – Tianhao Luo / Anna Nguyen  
Stand 6 – Susan Zhang / Annie Wu  
Stand 7 – Hyejin Lee / Michelle Wen  
Stand 8 – Victor Tsao / Wendi Song

## **VIOLA**

Stand 1 – Ella Cho, Principal / Gavin Lee  
Stand 1.5 – William Krasnow / Autumn Cortright  
Stand 2 – Cecilia Wright / Savannah Mueller  
Stand 3 – Anna Chung / Sahana Sundar  
Stand 4 – Kyle Huang / Kevin Chen  
Stand 5 – Nancy Drye / Evan Qiang  
Stand 6 – Henry Sywulak-Herr / Peter Proenca  
Stand 7 – Greg Kraynak / Eric Tao

## **CELLO**

Stand 1 – Deborah Zhang, Principal / Jason Shu  
Stand 1.5 – Angela Youn, Co-principal / Sophie Sax  
Stand 2 – Lianghuan Huang / Michael Tu  
Stand 3 – Gabrielle Ryu / Samantha Martinez  
Stand 4 – Sierra Wei / Christine Kong  
Stand 5 – Andy Liu / Edward Kim

## **BASS**

Stand 1 – John Wallison / Jonathan Kim  
Stand 2 – Berk Soykan, Principal / Sarah Ramadan  
Stand 3 – William Stewart / Alex Kalbach

## **FLUTE**

Sherry Shi  
Michael Han  
Linda Kirsch  
Alyssia Liu  
Nadia Awad

## **OBOE**

Daniel Koropecyk-Cox  
Justin Wang

## **CLARINET**

Will Wang  
Greg Ferrey  
Eric Yang  
Christian Sun  
Michelle Yoon  
Xandro Xu

## **BASSOON**

Mikaeel Habib

## **HORN**

Harold Litt  
Jeremy Middleman  
Johnny (Jaeheon) Jeong  
Anagha Gouru  
Armando Chardiet  
Aidan Lewis  
Evan Bretz

## **TUBA**

Jacob Yacuboski

## **TRUMPET**

Adrian Wang  
Matthew Bloomfield  
Seamus Wang  
Celeste Adler  
Eli Harrison  
Ryan Dahn

## **TROMBONE**

Lance Lunceford  
Justin Amgott  
Tyler Jenkins-Wong  
Rishi Patel  
Hunter Stufflebeam, Bass

## **TIMPANI / PERCUSSION**

Tammy Yang

## **HARP**

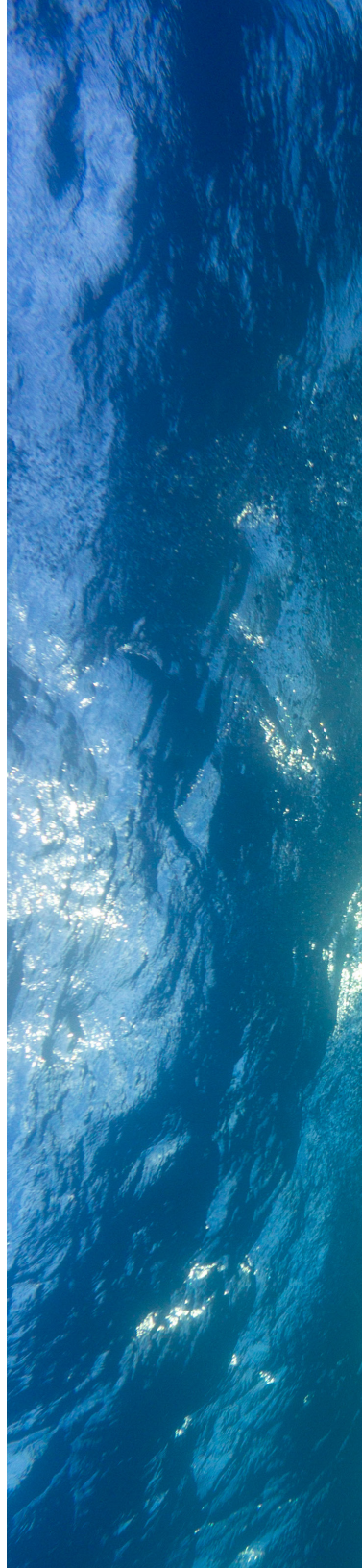
Elizabeth Vo-Phamhi

## **PIANO**

Eliza Keefe

## **GUEST MUSICIAN**

Vincent Luciano, bass  
Markus Lang, bass  
Mekhi Gladden, oboe  
Davey Heister, bassoon  
Brenda Weckerly, timpani / percussion  
Bill Priebe, percussion  
Mike Dettra, percussion



# NOTES ON PRIMOSCH

## James Primosch

Composed at the request of the Council Rock School District, these variations are based on a 19th century hymn tune called “Ebenezer”, written by Welsh composer Thomas J. Williams. I came to know the tune with the text “Through the Night of Doubt and Sorrow”, but my music does not reflect that somewhat lugubrious title! After a short introduction, the hymn is heard in the violins. Variations 1 and 3 treat the tune contrapuntally, with the tune sometimes played at different speeds simultaneously. Variations 2 and 4 change the rhythm of the hymn more dramatically. The extended ending of the 4th variation recalls some of the gestures of the introduction.

I tried to write a piece that would include a variety of moods, would appeal to young players, and would give each orchestral section a chance to shine. I am very grateful to the music program of Council Rock for a chance to work with their orchestras, and offer my heartfelt thanks to the student musicians who have worked so hard to bring this music to life.

After the first performances by Council Rock South, the piece was done by the Philadelphia Sinfonia and at the College of the Ozarks. This is now the FIFTH performance, and the SECOND by a college ensemble. Although written for high school students, I think there is enough musical substance here for college students to have fun with the piece. ☺

*The Orchestra pays tribute to James Primosch, longtime University of Pennsylvania professor, who passed away on Monday, April 26, 2021. This music embodies the joy, hope and optimism of the composer's character and personality.*

# NOTES ON BEETHOVEN

## Evan Jiang

**Beethoven began composition on his Concerto for Violin, Cello, and Piano, Op. 56** – more popularly known as the “Triple Concerto” – in the spring of 1804, at the beginning of what historians refer to as his “Heroic” decade. This was a period of incredible creative output for Beethoven during which he composed some of his most recognizable and beloved works. Although we typically think of a concerto as having a single soloist, the choice of multiple solo instruments for this concerto was not a revolutionary idea. It harkens back to the *sinfonia concertante*, a previously popular genre in the Classical era that melded the symphony and concerto, whose origins lie even further back in time to the Baroque *concerto grosso*, a similar genre for a small group of soloists and orchestra. While these two archaic forms informed Beethoven’s decision to compose a concerto for multiple soloists, his choice of the violin, cello, and piano – the piano trio – for the solo instruments was unprecedented in the literature. In a letter to his publisher, Beethoven wrote that he believed he had truly conceived “really something new” with the Triple Concerto.

Although composed alongside other famous works such as the “Eroica” symphony and the “Appassionata” piano sonata, the Triple Concerto is of a completely different character and style from these contemporary works by Beethoven. Instead of instilling a sense of drama and emotional depth often associated with works in the Heroic decade, Beethoven opted for music that is free, expansive, and elegant. Compositionally, Beethoven had to overcome the problem of how to equally spotlight each of the soloists while keeping the work within manageable formal bounds. This was a particularly relevant challenge for the solo cello, since it is both the acoustically disadvan-



tagged voice in a piano trio and in a concerto as the soloist competing against the orchestra. In the end, Beethoven's solution was to often have the three soloists play just as a trio and allow the cellist to have the first statement of many of the themes in each movement.

The opening movement, marked *Allegro*, begins with a quiet statement of the first theme in the cellos and basses, the lowest register of the orchestra. The orchestral introduction slowly builds to a full tutti, giving a complete exposition of the movement's themes. The texture thins out considerably when the solo cello enters, leading in the rest of the soloists one after the other. The orchestral accompaniment throughout the movement is minimal, allowing the soloists to play with little obstruction. Perhaps the most impressive thing about this movement is its length – at ~17 minutes, it's one of Beethoven's longest.

By contrast, the second movement is brief, almost as if it is an interlude between the two outer movements. Beethoven marked the movement *Largo*, a tempo indication that he rarely used, suggesting very slow and dignified music. At the end of the movement, only the solo cellist remains, playing a single note that slowly increases in rhythmic speed until it launches us directly into the next movement. The third movement, marked *Rondo alla polaca* or “rondo in the style of a polonaise”, is a lighthearted and jovial finale. Like the other movements, the solo cello is the first to take up the dance-like theme, which returns periodically in between other contrasting sections as a part of the rondo form. Near the end of the movement, Beethoven ramps up the energy by shifting from triple to duple meter, propelling the movement into a frenzy. However, this excitement doesn't last forever, as the return of the triple meter and the final recapitulation of the original

rondo tune brings the Concerto to a rousing conclusion.

Although not performed as often as some of Beethoven's other concertos and often disparaged compared to some of his other great works, the Triple Concerto remains a unique composition in the literature and if nothing else, is enjoyable music that aims to please. ☺

## NOTES ON DVOŘÁK

### Wm. E. Runyan

Dvořák wrote nine symphonies, but Americans are most familiar with his last one, Symphony No. 9 in E Minor, “From the New World.” Its popularity and success was assured from its première in Carnegie Hall in 1893. It is safe to say that it is the most important work composed in the United States up until that time. By the 1880s Dvořák was a leading composer with a worldwide reputation, although he had not achieved great financial security for his beloved family. So it was with notable alacrity that he responded to the offer by a wealthy New York philanthropist to come to that city and assume the duties of head of her new American Conservatory—and at a stunning salary! He came to America in 1892 and stayed for three years, during that time composing several significant works, including the cello concerto, the “American” string quartet, and, of course, the ninth symphony.

Dvořák plunged right in with his work in New York, and took the opportunity to continue in greater depth his interest in indigenous American musical materials—especially Black American spirituals and whatever Native American music—or what passed for that in those days—that he could find. The exact nature of “American” melodies, rhythms, and harmonies that surfaced in his music during those three years has long been a major source of controversy.



The first movement begins with a brief, slow introduction, which lays out an essential melodic shape, important through the movement. Soon, after a spiky accent from the strings, the main theme is heard again, but clearly now in the horns. After a while the other main idea—a rather dark little bucolic “village dance”—is introduced by oboes and flute. The last idea is an optimistic tune, first heard in the low register of the solo flute. With all the themes introduced, a relatively short development of them ensues—all of the ideas easily recognized. And, as at the beginning, the horns start our trip back home with the main theme. After a harmonic surprise, the movement ends with the same dynamic mood of the beginning.

A few dark, low chords in the brass and woodwinds introduce the famous English horn solo—just try to not think of the faux spiritual, “Goin’ Home,” if you can! The middle section, in the minor mode, seems to be a gentle, funereal march, supported after a little while by *pizzicato* basses. Softer and softer, the mood is sustained until a sudden interruption from dancing woodwinds brings in a brighter frame of mind, sounding almost like rustic bagpipes skirling. At this juncture, Dvořák, in a characteristic move, brings back two important ideas, easily remembered from the first movement—one played by the trombones, the other by the horns and violins. These he combines with the English horn tune, now in the trumpets—all in one measure! The solo English horn from the beginning quickly returns, and after a wistful contribution from a solo violin and cello, the ominous chords that opened the movement bring us to the end.

The third movement scherzo is a mad Czech dance, with the added treat of two trios—rather than the conventional single one—in the middle as contrast. They serve as a lyrical foil to the hammering freneticism of this careening Slavic folk choreography. By now, you’ve undoubtedly noticed how, in the best Romantic fashion, Dvořák is tying all the movements together, not only by quoting the same

themes from movement to movement, but also by slyly fashioning all of them from the same simple musical intervals, creatively varied. This movement is no exception—after the dynamic opening (with some cross-accented familiar to those who remember his *Slavonic Dances*), the more relaxed first trio echoes the English horn tune from the slow movement. After a brief return to the thundering opening the second trio provides a diversion in the guise of a lilting *Ländler*, replete with the composer’s penchant for trills. Then, back to the hammering first section, ending with a coda, and what else?—a quote of the familiar horn motif from the opening of the symphony.

The last movement starts ominously in a dark, march-like mood, with unison horns and trumpets pealing out the famous modal theme. After chewing on this a bit, the orchestra goes to the expected second theme. This pleasant contrasting material is heard first in the soothing solo clarinet, followed by others. What then ensues is a magic development of all of almost everything that you will remember as a tune from all the movements—varied, combined, and worked through as only a composer at the height of his powers, and a true disciple of Beethoven and Brahms could do. Even without all of this truly admirable intellectual and musical discipline, the psychological buildup to the end is sheer joy to experience. Constantly changing moods, tempos, and dynamics inevitably lead us to the triumph at the end, as minor turns to major, sustained by fortissimo statements of our familiar melodies. Interspersed are the familiar ominous chords from the slow movement, now sounded out in stentorian tones by all the winds. A final last reiteration of the main themes of the first and last movements takes us home. When all has been said, it really doesn’t matter at all whether this magnificent work is from the “New World,” or the world of Dvořák’s beloved Bohemia—there is no doubt that it is from the musical world of a genius.





# UPCOMING CONCERTS

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**October 30 | 7:00 PM**

Opus Siniestrus

**November 2 | 5:15 PM**

Penn Music Colloquium: Roshanak Kheshti

**November 10 | 5:00 PM**

Across Cultures and Time: Music by Ania Vu

**November 18 | 8:00 PM**

Baroque and Recorder Ensembles

**November 19 | 8:00 PM**

Penn Jazz Ensembles

**November 20 | 8:00 PM**

Penn Wind Ensemble

**November 21, 3:00 PM**

Penn Chorale

**November 21, 8:00 PM**

Opera and Musical Theater Workshop

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For more information visit the Music Department Events Calendar

**[music.sas.upenn.edu/events](https://music.sas.upenn.edu/events)**