

The background is a textured, painterly illustration. In the foreground, a large, ornate fountain with multiple tiers and water spraying upwards is visible. In the background, a cityscape with various buildings, including a prominent domed structure on the left and several tall, thin towers or spires on the right, is depicted under a warm, golden light. The overall style is reminiscent of a classical or impressionistic painting.

# PENN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Thomas Hong, Conductor

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Friday, April 26, 2024

8:00 PM

Irvine Auditorium  
University of Pennsylvania



**PennMusic**  
UNIVERSITY of PENNSYLVANIA

The Department of Music and the Student Activities Council Present:

# PENN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Thomas Hong, Conductor & Director

With thanks to the University of Pennsylvania Music Department

Dr. Timothy Rommen, Department Chair  
Dr. Michael Ketner, Director of Performance  
Isaac Shalit, Performance Operations Coordinator  
Diane Imboden, Communications Coordinator  
Eugene Lew, Director of Sound and Music Technology

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University of Pennsylvania  
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8:00pm



# PROGRAM

## Pines of Rome

Ottorino Respighi (1879 - 1936)

- I. "I pini di Villa Borghese" ("The Pines of the Villa Borghese")
- II. "Pini presso una catacomba" ("Pines Near a Catacomb")
- III. "I pini del Gianicolo" ("The Pines of the Janiculum")
- IV. "I pini della via Appia" ("The Pines of the Appian Way")

## Symphony No. 3 in C Minor, OP. 78

Camille Saint Saëns (1835 - 1921)

- I. Adagio — Allegro moderato — Poco adagio
- II. Allegro moderato — Presto — Maestoso — Allegro

## About the Ensemble

The University of Pennsylvania Symphony Orchestra was founded in 1878 and is comprised of musicians from throughout the University community, primarily non-music majors. The ensemble rehearses for four hours each week and performs a diverse range of repertoire drawn from the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth Centuries. The Penn Symphony Orchestra rehearses and performs in historic Irvine Auditorium on Penn's Campus. Due to the increased number of student participation, the ensemble has expanded to two ensembles with rotating/interchangeable personnel.



## About the Conductor

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.

# PENN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

## RESPIGHI, PINES OF ROME

Flute, Clara Ma / Kristine Huang /

Camille Bachman\* (piccolo)

Oboe, Luna Sato / Jonathan Hong /

Marie Trudeau\* (english horn)

Clarinet, Kyunghwan Kim / Will Wang /

Ethan Thway (bass)

Bassoon, Judy Belland / Rick Barrantes\*

Horn, Brian Herman (Evan Bretz,

assistant) / Harry Li / Ryan Yang /

Harold Litt / Anagha Gouru / Anne Nye\*

Trumpet, Seamus Wang (Rob High\*,  
assistant) / Samy Antifit / Kent Bergin\*

Trombone, Tyler Jenkins-Wong / Rishi

Patel / Leo Zhou / Hunter Stufflebeam

(bass)

Tuba, Joseph Gould\*

Timpani, David Lu\*

Percussion, Avery Kirshbaum (keyboard

also) / Bill Priebe / Thomas Kolakowski /

Azaira Gonzalez

Piano, David Hughes\*

Harp, Daniel Benedict\*

Organ, Colin Howland\*

## 1st Violins

Hannah Lee, Concertmaster /

Julianna Cimillo

(1.5 stand, Hannah Goldberg /

Gracie Zhang)

Ethan Yu / Jonah Baer

Louis Dong / Joey Wu

Kevin Zhou / Richard Xiong

Maxine Moody / Leyla Robertson

Darae Kang / Isaac Yang

Henry Love / Ting-Wei Liao (Ernie)

## 2nd Violins

Talia Coopersmith, Principal /

Joy Onawola

(1.5 Hertha Torre Gallego)

Jason Ren / Susan Zhang

Victor Tsao / Kate Wong

Kevin Xu / Ethan Fan

Lucas Schrier /

Eva Gonzalez-Whitehead

Brinson Moore\* / Ben Amidon\*

## Viola

Autumn Cortright, Principal /

Greg Kraynak

(1.5 stand, Henry Sywulak-Herr)

Cynthia Dong / Rayan Jawa

Madeline Chun / Nihar Ballamundi

Emma Bethon / Justin Duong

Affan Jabbar / Svanik Jaikumar

## Cello

Michael Tu, Principal /

Samantha Martinez

(1.5 stand, Evan Jiang / Christine Kong)

Andy Liu / Leo Huang

Thomas Sharrock / Melanie Hilman

Marcela Reina\* / Lily Perrotta\*

## Bass

William Stewart, Principal / Alex Kalbach

Daniel Virgen\* / Christian Luevano\*

## SAINT-SAENS, SYMPHONY NO 3

("ORGAN") / Colin Howland, soloist

Flute, Alyssia Liu / Rebecca Lim /

Rishi Dadlani (also piccolo)

Oboe, Daniel Koropeckyj-Cox /

Luna Sato

Clarinet, Colin Ly / Will Wang /

Ethan Thway (bass)

Bassoon, Rick Barrantes\* / Alex Hill

Horn, Harold Litt / Evan Bretz /

Anagha Gouru (Brian Herman, assist.) /

Anne Nye\*

Trumpet, Seamus Wang (Rob High\*,

assist.) / Samy Antifit / Kent Bergin\*

Trombone, Tyler Jenkins-Wong /

Rishi Patel / Leo Zhou /

Hunter Stufflebeam (bass)

Tuba, Joseph Gould\*

Timp, Avery Kirschbaum

Percussion, David Lu\* / Bill Priebe\*

Piano, Wenxin Tu / David Hughes\*

### 1st Violins

Elliot Kim, Concertmaster / Bonnie Li  
(1.5 stand, Julianna Cimillo)  
Isaac Yan / Hannah Tsai  
Roberto Ligeralde / Daniel Da  
William Qi / Amy Hong  
Hannah Goldberg / Alan Hong  
Cece Petruconis / Aiwen Li  
Ryan Aihara / Gabriel Huang  
Emily Li Wang / Linlin Yang

### 2nd Violins

Michael Huang, Principal /  
Jason (Jaemyoung) Lee  
(1.5 stand, Joy Onawola / Angela Zhu)  
Eric Liu / Michelle Edavettal  
Sophie Rosales / Ian Lee  
Yam Felsenstein / Sophia Fu  
Tianhao Luo / Eric Cui  
Hannah Lee / Louis Dong  
Ben Amidon\* / Brinson Moore\*

### Violas

Henry Sywulak-Herr, Principal /  
Gavin Lee  
(1.5 stand, Lucas Schrier)  
Liam Tan / Sidney Fitzgerald  
Vidhu Bulumulla / Dominik Kau

### Cello

Christine Kong, Principal / Sophie Sax  
Gabrielle Ryu / Thomas Sharrock  
Michelle Shi / Brianna Hess  
Andy Liu / Katie Kim  
Melanie Hilman / Evan Jiang  
Marcela Reina\* / Lily Perrotta\*

### Bass

Maria Evancho, Principal / William  
Stewart  
Daniel Virgen\* / Christian Luevano\*

\*Guest Musician

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## Program Notes

By Wm. Runyan

### **Pines of Rome, P. 141**

#### **Ottorino Respighi**

After Respighi moved permanently to Rome in 1913--at the time, a center of orchestral concerts in Italy--he turned more attention to the composition of instrumental music. His first big success was the symphonic poem, *Fountains of Rome*, from 1916, although it did not garner accolades immediately. But, by the early 1920s it was fast becoming an international hit, and he was on his way to world-wide recognition—not to speak of a much more secure financial future. He followed up on this success with two more symphonic poems evocative of his home: *Pines of Rome* (1924) and *Roman Festivals* (1926). Collectively, they are often known as his “Roman trilogy.” They all are showpieces for orchestra, spectacular evidence of his mastery of orchestration, vivid musical imagination, and flamboyant penchant for instrumental color. He had listened well to his predecessors who were successful in this vein.

Pines of Rome is cast into four movements, all using the conceit of pine trees that happen to be growing by various evocative Roman locations to tie everything together. Respighi scored the work for a large orchestra: the usual and familiar full complement, with additions of piano, organ, celesta, off-stage brass band, and (for the first time in musical history), a sound recording of a bird. All of these resources receive a full workout. What else would one expect from a composer who, in a later composition (Brazilian Impressions) adroitly depicted snakes and spiders in a Jungle research institute! Pines of Rome was an immediate hit; Toscanini was so enamored with it that he included it in the first concert—and nineteen years later, the last—that he conducted with the New York Philharmonic.

The first movement, “Pines of the Villa Borghese,” is a sparkling, lilting evocation of children playing on a Sunday morning, madly dashing about, full of youthful delight. The Villa Borghese is one of the largest public gardens in Rome, built in the informal English garden style, containing spectacular plantings, lakes, pathways, and buildings. It has long been a favorite with tourists and natives alike, and Respighi conjures up a bright musical context that depicts the cheerful setting. A filigree of attractive rhythmic figures and simple tunes clearly evoking childhood mirth sustains the fun-filled, light-hearted atmosphere. Woodwind trills, cheeky dissonances, glissandi in the harps and keyboards, high register brass, and the complete absence of “gloomy” low instruments sustain the joy.

It abruptly ends, though, as we enter the dark world of a catacomb. The second movement (“Pines Near a Catacomb”) is set in the malarial region of the Roman campagna, abandoned in ancient times, but with extraordinary stark beauty. The ominous, dark atmosphere of the burial caverns is aptly portrayed by most of the instruments that we did not hear in the first movement. Trombones, with the deepest of organ notes beneath them, don the garb of priests as they solemnly chant the melodies of the dead. The gloom is then broken by a shimmering solo trumpet, offstage in a lonely elegy. The chanting soon returns, building to a huge climax, more affirmatively, perhaps alluding to triumph over death. All soon dies down (no pun intended), as the brass returns to a crespular chant.

The “Pines of the Janiculum” is a tranquil visit at night to the prominent hill west of Rome where St. Peter is popularly thought to have been crucified, and which is now the site of a number of universities, colleges, and academies. It offers a spectacular view of Rome, and is named after the Roman god, Janus, who famously looked simultaneously in two opposite directions: the past and the future. This movement is a nocturne, opened by the gong and piano, introducing various woodwind solos that quietly evoke the moon on the pines. Apparently, a nightingale is perched in one of them, for as the music gradually fades away in trills, his song is faintly heard.

The nightingale is chased away, and the mood is ominously broken by the distant tread of the Roman Legions on the Appian Way (“Pines of the Appian Way”), beginning far off, perhaps in the morning mist, as they grow inexorably closer. A sinuous solo in the English horn adds a bit of mystery. Fanfares are heard, both in the orchestra and in the off-stage band that portrays the ancient Roman buccine—the large circular horns familiar from Roman mosaics. Everyone in the orchestra gradually joins in as the Legions march closer, and the music grows inevitably to a

paroxysm of aural grandeur. It's one of the most impressive moments in orchestral sound, and never fails to please.

## **Symphony No. 3 in C Minor, OP. 78**

**Camille Saint-Saëns**

Camille Saint-Saëns lived a long life, and was remarkable for his wide-ranging intellectual interests and abilities. As a child he was, of course, a precocious musical talent, but even then he evinced a strong natural interest in almost every academic subject—including, but certainly not restricted to, astronomy, archaeology, mathematics, religion, Latin, and Greek. In addition to a life of musical composition and virtuoso keyboard performance, he also enjoyed success as a music journalist, champion of early music (Handel and Bach), and leadership in encouraging French musical tradition. His father died when he was an infant, and he grew into middle age extraordinarily devoted to his mother—his marriage at the age of forty to a nineteen-year old did not last long. He simply left the house one day in 1881 and chose never to see her again; she died in 1950 at the age of ninety-five. Saint-Saëns went on to live an active life, filling an important rôle in the musical life of France—as performer, composer, author, spokesman, and scholar. He was peripatetic—researching Handel manuscripts in London, conducting concerts in Chicago and Philadelphia, visiting Uruguay and writing a hymn for their national holiday, and vacationing in the Canary Islands. He celebrated seventy-five years of concertizing in August of 1921 in his eighty-sixth year, and died a few months later.

Perhaps his most well-known and successful work is his opera, *Samson et Dalila*, one of a dozen. However, other works vie for that honor, for he was a most prolific composer, working in almost every genre common at that time. Despite this versatility he perhaps did his best work in the traditional Classical models—symphonies, concertos, chamber music, and sonatas. Symphony No. 3 (1886), the so-called “organ” symphony, was his last symphony, but only one of a large number of works for orchestra. He composed symphonic poems, suites, concertos, marches, and dances—dozens of them. Calling for a large orchestra, including two pianos and a large organ, Symphony No. 3 is heard as two large movements, but really is in four, with the first two and last two movements connected and heard respectively as one. One will clearly hear in this work two of Saint-Saëns’ trademarks: a repetitive rhythm that dominates a movement, and his gift for lovely, sensuous melody. He was a gifted melodist, and compared his talent with the natural fecundity of a fruit tree. This you will hear in the lush second movement (second half of the first continuous section). The initial entry of the organ often surprises folks, so be prepared. The spectacular sonic combination of the fortissimo organ and the percussive pianos juxtaposed on the large orchestra is particularly felicitous, and is a triumph of Romantic orchestral imagination (Richard Strauss wasn’t the only game in town in this regard). All in all, this symphony is characteristic of much of Saint-Saëns’ work: not necessarily profound, but crafted with great skill, innate musicianship, and typically Gallic in its clarity of expression and form. And, it must be said—almost always immensely appealing.



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Featured Art: “View over Rome from the fountain of the Villa Medici”  
by Salomon Corrodi (1810-1892) *circa 1850*