

David Robertson, conductor
Emanuel Ax, piano

Friday, September 29, 2017 at 10:30AM

MOZART
(1756–1791)

Così fan tutte Overture, K. 588 (1790)

MOZART

Piano Concerto No. 20 in D minor, K. 466 (1785)

Allegro
Romance
Allegro assai

Emanuel Ax, piano

INTERMISSION

MOZART

Piano Concerto No. 14 in E-flat major, K. 449 (1784)

Allegro vivace
Andantino
Allegro ma non troppo

Emanuel Ax, piano

MOZART

Symphony No. 39 in E-flat major, K. 543 (1788)

Adagio; Allegro
Andante con moto
Menuetto: Allegretto
Finale: Allegro

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This concert is presented by the **Thomas A. Kooyumjian Family Foundation**.

The concert of Friday, September 29 is underwritten in part by a generous gift from **David A. Blanton, III**.

David Robertson is the **Beofor Music Director and Conductor**.

Emanuel Ax is the **Stanley J. Goodman Guest Artist**.

Pre-Concert Conversations are sponsored by **Washington University Physicians**.

FROM SALZBURG TO THE STRATOSPHERE

BY RENÉ SPENCER SALLER

TIMELINKS

1784 The American Revolutionary War ends with the ratification of the Treaty of Paris.

1785 Pioneering hot-air balloonist Jean-François Pilâtre de Rozier dies with a companion in an attempt to fly across the English Channel. It is the first known fatal aviation accident.

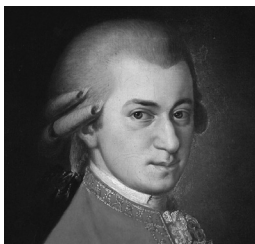
1788 Robert Burns writes “Auld Lang Syne.”

1790 George Washington delivers the first State of the Union address.

The piano concerto barely existed before Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. He didn't invent the form: J.S. Bach got there first (if harpsichord counts), and Joseph and Michael Haydn, whose scores Mozart studied, also composed impressive works in the genre. But Mozart launched the keyboard concerto into the stratosphere. Piano Concerto No. 14, which he completed early in his *annus mirabilis* of 1784, was the first that he entered into his personal catalog of completed works. As crazy as it seems to mere mortals, Mozart might have considered his first thirteen piano concertos to be juvenilia.

A year later, he wrote Piano Concerto No. 20 and seemed to skip over the rest of the Classical period, leaping headlong into what future generations would call Romanticism. Among Mozart's most famous concertos, this turbulent and virtuosic D-minor showpiece was performed by his son, also named Wolfgang, in September of 1842, at a huge tribute festival in Vienna that was attended by thousands of fans from all over the world. This event took place more than 50 years after the composer's death but a mere six months after that of his widow, Constanze, who had never stopped promoting her late husband's music.

Framing the piano concertos are two other examples of Mozartian magic. First on the program, the overture to his 1790 comic opera, *Così fan tutte*, hovers between loony and luminous. Closing the concert is his third-to-last symphony, No. 39, completed a little more than three years before his death at age 35.



WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

Born January 27, 1756, Salzburg

Died December 5, 1791, Vienna

Così fan tutte Overture, K. 588

The last of three brilliant collaborations with the Venetian poet and adventurer Lorenzo da Ponte, *Così fan tutte* represents Mozart's art at its most nuanced, elegant, and musically advanced. Da Ponte's ironic and morally ambiguous libretto, inspired by ancient *commedia dell'arte* and opera buffa tropes, is relentlessly implausible: two pairs of interchangeable lovers, a generous dash of deceit and cuckoldry, a pinch of philosophy, and a slew of wacky hijinks. The title is difficult to translate, but it means something like "all women behave this way."

Mozart began working on the project in September of 1789. Money was tight. Earlier that summer, he'd been reduced to writing more begging letters so that he could send Constanze, who was pregnant and ailing, to Baden for recuperation. But being underemployed brought one upside: more time to focus on the new opera. On New Year's Eve of 1790, Mozart held the first rehearsal for the singers at his own apartment; honored guests were his Masonic brother and frequent begging-letter recipient, Michael Puchberg, and Mozart's friend and colleague Joseph Haydn. The premiere took place on January 26 at Vienna's Burgtheater, probably with Mozart conducting from the keyboard.

A Closer Listen The overture riffs on a snippet sung in Act I of the first Mozart–Da Ponte collaboration, *Le nozze di Figaro*: "Così fan tutte le belle" (all the beautiful women act this way). This brief allusion, voiced in sinuous woodwinds, also inspired the latter work's title and one of the male lovers' climactic arias in the final act. After a brief Andante introduction, an ebullient Presto ensues. The overture ends with a fleeting recap of the main "Così fan tutte" theme.

First Performance January 26, 1790, Burgtheater, Vienna

First SLSO Performance November 29, 1979, Leonard Slatkin conducting

Most Recent SLSO Performance November 17, 2002, Gilbert Varga conducting

Scoring 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, 2 trumpets, timpani, and strings

Performance Time approximately 5 minutes

Piano Concerto No. 20 in D minor, K. 466

In 1785, while visiting Vienna, Leopold Mozart first heard his son's new concerto in D minor, and he wept for joy. During his stay he was constantly regaled with fresh evidence of Wolfgang's genius. He reported in a letter to his daughter Nannerl, the family's first child prodigy, that Joseph Haydn had declared, "Before God and as an honest man, I tell you that your son is the greatest composer known to me."

Mozart was 29 years old when he composed Piano Concerto No. 20. Between 1784 and 1786, he dashed off a dozen sublime piano concertos, and his Lenten-season subscription concerts were well attended and profitable. But by the mid-1780s, Mozart had begun to gravitate increasingly toward opera, which had long been his dream and the main reason he'd moved from Salzburg to Vienna earlier that decade. His style also began to change. As Jeremy Siepmann wrote, much of his music "was increasingly difficult to play, thereby discouraging the amateur; there was a darkening and intensification of its character and a new daring in its harmonies."

From Beethoven to Brahms The Piano Concerto in D minor might be, in Siepmann's words, "the first 'tragic' concerto ever written." The ink on the score was still wet when Mozart debuted it at a subscription concert on February 11, 1785. Intense, dramatic, and stormy, the three-movement concerto is Mozart's first in a minor key, a significant turning point for him. The Viennese aristocrats who made up most of his local audience were stunned. They wanted to be charmed and enticed, not ravished and ravaged.

Unsurprisingly, the Romantics were the most fervent advocates for Piano Concerto No. 20, thanks to the young Ludwig van Beethoven, who performed the work in March of 1795 at a benefit concert for Mozart's widow and surviving children. Beethoven composed two cadenzas for that occasion, and they are still performed routinely, if not exclusively. Mozart's own cadenzas are lost to time, probably because he hadn't bothered to write them down, but Beethoven's creations are so deeply cherished that they might as well be fused to the original work. Other worthy pianist-composers also rose to the original-cadenza challenge, including Johannes Brahms and Clara Schumann.

A Closer Listen The opening Allegro, in the home key of D minor, sets the mood with pulsing, syncopated chords, which send the solo piano skittering off in other directions. Next comes the tender, serene Romance, in B-flat major, a five-part rondo in common time; at its midpoint, it takes on a more menacing cast as it shifts into G minor. Finally, the electrifying Allegro assai begins in D minor and ends in D major, setting the template for Beethoven's *per aspera ad astra* (through hardship to the stars) model of pianistic heroism.

First Performance February 11, 1785, Mehlgrube Casino, Vienna, Mozart conducting

First SLSO Performance January 25, 1918, with Ossip Gabrilowitsch as soloist and Max Zach conducting

Most Recent SLSO Performance March 28, 2010, with Orli Shoham as soloist and Vassily Sinaisky conducting

Scoring flute, 2 oboes, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, 2 trumpets, timpani, and strings

Performance Time approximately 30 minutes

Piano Concerto No. 14 in E-flat major, K. 449

Despite mourning the sudden and devastating death of his infant son Raimund, moving house with the pregnant Constanze, and maintaining a grueling performance schedule, Mozart wrote an astonishing six piano concertos in 1784, starting with Piano Concerto No. 14. It was the first concerto he deemed worthy to include in the *Verzeichnüss aller meiner Werke*, his register of completed works. When Mozart logged the E-flat major concerto into this notebook, on February 9, he was 28 years old and still riding high as a performing composer-virtuoso. These salad days wouldn't last much longer.

Piano Concerto No. 14 is sometimes called the “first Ployer” because it's one of two keyboard concertos that Mozart composed for his pupil Barbara “Babette” Ployer. He also made a copy for his sister Nannerl, a formidable musician in her own right. In a letter home to Salzburg, he instructed Nannerl and Leopold that the concerto “can be performed *a quattro* without wind instruments;” in other words, Nannerl could play it at home in a chamber version for keyboard and small string ensemble. But Mozart also played it himself, on March 17 of that year. In a letter to his father he boasted that the new concerto had “won extraordinary applause. Everywhere I go I hear praise of that concert.”

An Entirely Different Concerto Intimate and delicately profound, Piano Concerto No. 14 is set in E-flat major, a key that for Mozart and many of his contemporaries evoked the evening—and also, depending on the context, devotion, splendor, and awe. Later he described the piece as “a concerto in an entirely different style and written more for a small than a large orchestra.” The manuscript is inscribed, in jokey pidgin Italian, “Di Wolfgango Amadeo Mozart per la Sigra Barbara de Ployer.”

The first movement, marked *Allegro vivace*, announces itself in 3/4 time, which was somewhat unusual for Mozart; among his piano concertos, only two others begin in 3/4. In the opening measures alone, Mozart introduces at least five different themes. The slow central movement is in 2/4. Lyrical, subdued, and radiant, the *Andantino* has a bittersweet cast despite being in a major key. The intricately contrapuntal *Allegro ma non troppo* shifts from 2/2 to 6/8. The British musicologist Cuthbert Morton Girdlestone observed that the gait of this finale is “neither that of a gallop, nor of a race, nor even of a dance, but just of a swinging walk, swift and regular.”

First Performance unknown

First SLSO Performance March 1, 1963, with Fou Ts'ong as soloist and Irwin Hoffman conducting

Most Recent SLSO Performance June 26, 1999, with Ursula Oppens as soloist and David Loebel conducting

Scoring 2 oboes, bassoon, 2 horns, and strings

Performance Time approximately 21 minutes

Symphony No. 39 in E-flat major, K. 543

Mozart's last three symphonies are cloaked in mystery. We don't know when, if ever, he heard them performed, and they weren't published until after his death. It seems likely that Symphonies 39, 40, and 41 were intended for a series of subscription concerts scheduled for the summer of 1788, but no evidence suggests that these performances ever took place. Mozart was perpetually broke in those years, but it wasn't simply because he and Constanze lived beyond their means. The war between Austria and Turkey had set off an economic recession, which meant that he had to hustle even harder than usual to support his family. With fewer patrons able to subsidize him, he focused on composing works that he could sell on subscription or perform in concert. When his self-marketing efforts fell short, he begged for loans from his Masonic lodge brothers. Yet despite these frustrations, Mozart was at the height of his powers. Almost unbelievably, he composed his last three symphonies in the space of about nine weeks. He may have been motivated by the recent publication of Joseph Haydn's "Paris" symphonies, which generated tidy profits. Mozart was planning a trip to London and hoped that a batch of new symphonies might entice potential backers.

A Closer Listen Symphony No. 39 in E-flat major is the least-often performed of the "final trilogy," but this has little to do with its quality. As Phillip Huscher put it, "Its hallmarks are purely musical—difficult to pinpoint or explain—and it's a work of considerable understatement."

Like Symphonies 40 and 41, the symphony in E-flat conforms to the four-movement structure typical of the period. The slow, splendid preface is unusual for Mozart and more characteristic of Haydn. Stately chords with dotted rhythms give way to sweeping downward scales and dissonant textures before resolving into the gleaming main Allegro. The subsequent Andante, in A-flat major, begins with the strings singing gently. Although the music sometimes roils and seethes, the delicate chamber-music balance between strings and winds remains. (Notice the lack of trumpets and timpani in this movement and, still more remarkably, the complete absence of oboes throughout). In keeping with Classical convention, the third movement is a minuet, but it's no effete relic. Rustic and lilting, the trio contains one of Mozart's loveliest clarinet melodies, based on an Alpine folk dance. For the mercurial finale, Mozart subjects a single theme to a battery of variations and contrapuntal procedures.

René Spencer Saller is a writer and music critic living in St. Louis. She has also written for the *Dallas Symphony*, *Illinois Times*, *Riverfront Times*, and *Boston Phoenix*.

First Performance unknown

First SLSO Performance January 23, 1914, Max Zach conducting

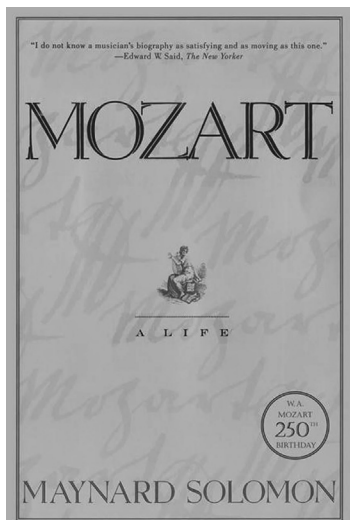
Most Recent SLSO Performance February 23, 2014, Bernard Labadie conducting

Scoring flute, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, 2 trumpets, timpani, and strings

Performance Time approximately 29 minutes

YOU TAKE IT FROM HERE

If this weekend's concerts have inspired you to learn more, here are a few recommended books with which to continue your explorations.



***Mozart: A Life*
by Maynard Solomon
HarperCollins, 1995**

This comprehensive biography is a classic for a reason: It presents the details of the composer's life clearly and knowledgeably.

***Mozart*
by Julian Rushton
Oxford University Press, 2006**

Rushton, a widely published music scholar, writes gracefully and concisely, with a minimum of jargon and idle speculation.

***Mozart's Women: His Family, His Friends, His Music*
by Jane Glover
HarperCollins, 2005**

Virginia Woolf's famous formulation was "What if Shakespeare had a sister?" In Mozart's case,

he did. Nannerl, the first child prodigy in the Mozart family, performed to great acclaim until she married, which ended her career forever. Glover, a respected conductor and Mozart scholar, writes sympathetically and perceptively about Nannerl as well as Mozart's wife, Constanze, his sister-in-law Aloysia, and many other women who helped inspire, shape, and support the great composer.

***Mozart at the Gateway to his Fortune: Serving the Emperor, 1788–1791*
by Christoph Wolff
Norton, 2012**

Blurbed by the likes of Yo-Yo Ma, Alfred Brendel, and Nikolaus Harnoncourt, this clear-eyed account of Mozart's last few years raises provocative questions that will enrich your understanding of his so-called "imperial style." Wolff, a Pulitzer Prize finalist, is one of the world's leading experts on Mozart and Bach.

All these books are available from the St. Louis Public Library.

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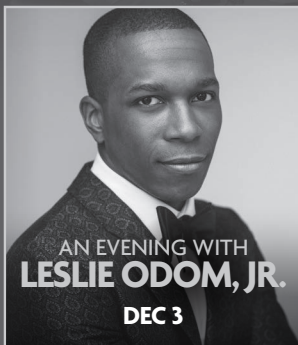
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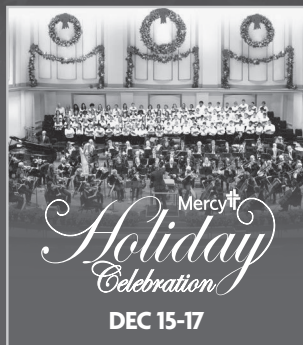
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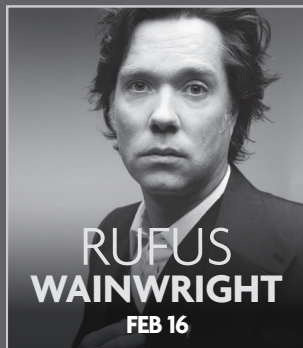
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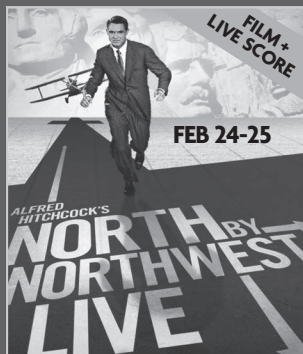
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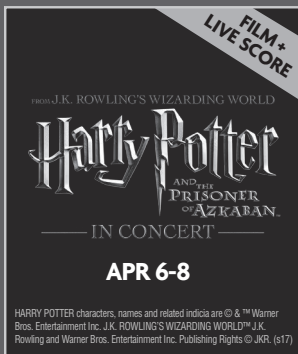
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David Robertson, conductor
Emanuel Ax, piano

Saturday, September 30, 2017 at 8:00PM
Sunday, October 1, 2017 at 3:00PM

MOZART
(1756–1791)

Don Giovanni Overture, K. 527 (1787)

MOZART

Piano Concerto No. 16 in D major, K. 451 (1784)

Allegro assai
Andante
Allegro di molto

Emanuel Ax, piano

INTERMISSION

MOZART

Piano Concerto No. 17 in G major, K. 453 (1784)

Allegro
Andante
Allegretto; Presto

Emanuel Ax, piano

MOZART

Symphony No. 40 in G minor, K. 550 (1788)

Molto allegro
Andante
Menuetto: Allegretto
Allegro assai

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

These concerts are presented by the **Thomas A. Kooyumjian Family Foundation**.

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The concert of Sunday, October 1 is underwritten in part by a generous gift from **Emily Rauh Pulitzer**.

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MOZART IN MULTITUDE

BY RENÉ SPENCER SALLER

TIMELINKS

1784 The American Revolutionary War ends with the ratification of the Treaty of Paris.

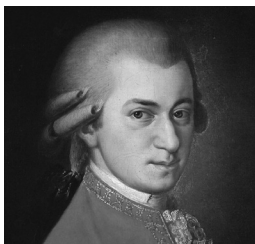
1787 Arthur Phillip sails from England with hundreds of convicts to establish a penal colony in Australia.

1788 Robert Burns writes “Auld Lang Syne.”

People hear in Mozart what they need to hear in Mozart. Take our concert closer, Symphony No. 40. As one of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart’s most frequently programmed orchestral works, the G-minor symphony has been accumulating interpretations for more than 200 years. The arch-Romantic composer-critic Robert Schumann lauded its “Grecian lightness and grace.” About a hundred years later, the musicologist Alfred Einstein described moments in it that “plunge to the abyss of the soul.” While you’re listening, you might hear wild elation in passages that sound like suffocating grief to someone else. All these responses and more are possible: Mozart symphonies contain multitudes.

The piano concerto portion of the program comprises one of Mozart’s more unjustly underperformed keyboard works, Piano Concerto No. 16, and its immediate successor, the so-called “Second Plover,” which is considerably better known. Piano Concerto No. 17 is famous for other reasons, too, including what is surely the best bird anecdote in the history of Classical music.

But first, the overture to Mozart’s *Don Giovanni*, a rich blend of pleasure and perdition that distills the opera’s plot, about the moral ruin of a sexual profligate, into a sublime six or so minutes.



WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

Born January 27, 1756, Salzburg

Died December 5, 1791, Vienna

Don Giovanni Overture, K. 527

Mozart partnered on three great comic operas with the Venetian poet and adventurer Lorenzo da Ponte; *Don Giovanni*, composed in 1787, was their second joint project. Da Ponte described his libretto as a *dramma giocoso*, or a tragicomedy. A year earlier, the pair had collaborated on *Le nozze di Figaro*, which became so huge in Prague that Mozart traveled there in January of 1787 to conduct a performance. In the wake of a sensational reception, Mozart received a much-needed commission from Pasquale Bondini, the impresario of the Prague company that performed *Figaro*, and thus was born *Il dissoluto punito, o sia il Don Giovanni* (*The Punished Rake, or Don Juan*), which most of us know simply as *Don Giovanni*.

The Prague premiere had to be postponed at least twice before Mozart was satisfied that the singers and orchestra members were adequately rehearsed. According to legend, he pulled an all-nighter to finish the score, dashing off the overture on the morning of the last rehearsal, on October 28, and barely leaving enough time for the copyists. “Although a few notes fell under the table,” Mozart reported, the orchestra members did a good job sight-reading the unfamiliar music.

A Closer Listen First a terrific roaring *tutti*: the orchestra issues a doomy D minor chord. After a slow introduction foretells the hero’s hell-bound path, Mozart creates maximum comic contrast by recalling the fun parts of Don Giovanni’s moral downfall. The music shifts into the major mode, mimicking lusty comedic banter and soulful serenades. Devotees of the opera will recognize choice snippets from *Don Giovanni* recitatives and arias. In contrast to the overture for *Figaro*, which contained all new thematic material, the *Don Giovanni* overture quotes explicitly from the opera. To ensure a seamless transition into the first scene of Act I, Mozart didn’t include an ending in his original version of the score, but he later added a thirteen-bar conclusion so that he could perform the overture as an independent concert piece.

First Performance October 29, 1787, Estates Theatre, Prague, Mozart conducting

First SLSO Performance November 11, 1910, Max Zach conducting

Most Recent SLSO Performance December 8, 2013, Columbia, Missouri, Steven Jarvi conducting

Scoring 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, 2 trumpets, timpani, and strings

Performance Time approximately 7 minutes

Piano Concerto No. 16 in D major, K. 451

Early in February of 1784, Mozart explained the main reason that his career in opera was stalled once again: “I have works to compose which *at the moment* are bringing in money, but will not do so later,” he wrote in a letter. He was in high demand, and he worked like a demon: between February 26 and April 3, 1784, he performed for audiences at least 22 distinct times. As a freelance virtuoso-composer with a growing family, he needed to make the most of his popularity; he knew only too well how unreliable the Viennese aristocrats attending his subscription concerts could be. The not-yet composed works that he mentioned in the letter are likely his piano concertos Nos. 14 through 17, which he ultimately finished between February 9 and April 10 of 1784. He intended these both for himself and for his gifted pupil Barbara “Babette” de Ployer. Later that year, he wrote an additional four concertos.

Unlike most of his other efforts, Piano Concerto Nos. 16 and 17, which he completed on March 22 and April 12, respectively, were published while he was alive. He wrote No. 16 primarily for his own use, and he may have played it at a private concert on March 31 of that year. In a letter to his father, he described No. 16 as a concerto that was “bound to make the performer perspire.”

A Closer Listen Piano Concerto No. 16 is set in D major, a key that for Mozart usually meant a grand and festive occasion. The key was especially well-suited to the sonorities of the valveless trumpets of the era.

Right away in the opening Allegro assai, Mozart establishes stark oppositions (courtly and delicate vs. impetuous and dramatic; public and ceremonial vs. private and lyrical) only to reconcile them unexpectedly. After an orchestral introduction, the soloist enters imitatively, erupts in a mild scalar outburst, and then plucks from the chromatic blur a miraculous little motive. The first theme almost flutters into being. Later, shadowed by winds in the central Andante, the piano seems to conjure up Chopin from thin air. In the jubilant Allegro di molto finale—which starts out in 2/4 time and then switches to 3/8 near the end—the soloist spins out delirious variations on a theme. Counterpoint and chromaticism return briefly in the showy final cadenza, but the diatonic force of the main motive prevails.

First Performance possibly on March 31, 1784

First and Most Recent SLSO Performance November 27, 1960, with Malcolm Frager as soloist and Eduoard van Remoortel conducting

Scoring flute, 2 oboes, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, 2 trumpets, timpani, and strings

Performance Time approximately 25 minutes

Piano Concerto No. 17 in G major, K. 453

In April of 1784, Mozart composed Piano Concerto No. 17 in G major for his student Babette von Ployer. (It was a commission, but he meant to give Ployer first crack at it, not exclusive use; he certainly intended to play it, and probably did.) Ployer debuted it at her family's summer home on June 13, 1784. Her father, an agent of the Salzburg court in Vienna, could afford to hire a decent orchestra for the event, so Mozart had scored the concerto accordingly. After Ployer gave the premiere, Mozart and his student teamed up on one of his sonatas for two pianos. Piano Concerto No. 17 is sometimes called the "second Ployer" because it's the second of two keyboard concertos that Mozart composed for this accomplished young woman, the first being No. 14, K. 449.

Mozart's Starling Like Olivier Messiaen, Ottorino Respighi, and countless other great composers, Mozart was fascinated by birdsong. For about three years, as Lyanda Lynn Haupt and others have documented, Mozart kept a pet starling, delighted by the creature's gift for mimicry. In an expense notebook entry for May 27, 1784, he noted that he'd spent 34 Kreuzer to buy the "Vogelstar" (starling), and then he transcribed a version of the opening theme from the finale of his recently finished Piano Concerto No. 17, as sung by the starling. The bird appears to have adjusted the rhythm at one point and switched a G-sharp for a G; underneath his notated bird rendition, Mozart scrawled, "That was beautiful!"

When the starling died on June 4, 1787, Mozart wrote a heartfelt elegy for his pet ("A little fool lies here/ Whom I held dear"), and he buried him in the backyard.

Movement by Movement The opening Allegro begins with divided strings and a vigorous ascending figure. Mozart starts out almost improvisationally, churning up at least five tunes and occasionally wandering far afield of the G-major tonic during the restless modulations. The woodwind writing is especially advanced here because he was confident that the Viennese musicians hired by Ployer's family would be up to the challenge. The woodwind section continues to shine in the subsequent Andante, in C major; the strings take on a supporting role as obbligato flute, oboe, and bassoon assume melodic duties for a while. The piano imitates the strings' dramatic start-stop gesture at the beginning of the movement, a tactic that Beethoven, Berlioz, Tchaikovsky, and others would later borrow. Instead of the expected rondo, the beguiling Allegretto finale presents a series of variations on a theme, the same one that inspired Mozart's starling. The last movement also boasts rigorous fugato passages and a contrapuntal left-hand workout for the soloist.

First Performance unknown

First SLSO Performance: January 10, 1969, with Malcom Frager as soloist and Peter Erös conducting

Most Recent SLSO Performance: January 18, 2015, with Richard Goode as soloist and David Robertson conducting

Scoring: flute, 2 oboes, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, strings

Performance Time: approximately 30 minutes

Symphony No. 40 in G minor, K. 550

Mozart, almost unbelievably, composed his last three symphonies in the space of about nine weeks. Although Nos. 39 through 41 were not published during his lifetime, 21st-century Mozart scholars no longer assume, as most of their predecessors did, that the composer never heard them performed. It seems likely that he intended his final three symphonies for a series of subscription concerts scheduled for the summer of 1788; whether any of these shows ever took place remains unclear. He was also planning a concert tour of London, and he may have hoped to attract English patrons with a strongly varied batch of new symphonies.

Life in Vienna was increasingly difficult. His fickle fans weren't thrilled by his recent turn toward darker, deeper, more complicated music; his baby daughter had recently died; the debts were piling up. But it's almost always a mistake to interpret Mozart's music through biographical lenses. As a composer, Mozart valued contrast above all else, and he often delivered "twins of opposing character," as Mozart scholar Julian Rushton put it.

Completed on July 25, 1788, Symphony No. 40 is one of only two Mozart symphonies in a minor key. It is much more dramatic and emotionally intense than its major-key counterparts, Nos. 39 and 41 ("Jupiter"). Mozart created two versions of Symphony No. 40, adding a pair of clarinets to the revised score and adjusting the other wind instruments accordingly. In the 1860s, Johannes Brahms bought the autograph scores of both versions; he later donated them to a museum in Vienna.

Great G-minor Symphony No. 40 is also sometimes called the "Great G-minor" to distinguish the four-movement work from Mozart's earlier, somewhat less impressive Symphony No. 25, the "Little G-minor." Beethoven copied 29 bars from the finale of No. 40 into the sketchbooks for his Fifth Symphony. Like the Piano Concerto No. 20 (another example of the Mozartian minor key), Symphony No. 40 was a favorite of the musical Romantics who dominated the latter half of the 19th century.

Mozart's choice of key excluded the possibility of using trumpets in his orchestration, but the tonal range is still quite rich. The opening *Molto allegro* will be familiar to connoisseurs of cell-phone ringtones of the 1990s, as well as from numerous other pop cultural sources. The *Andante*, in 6/8 time and the key of E-flat major, is full of surprises: little chromatic slides, pulsing horns, long swoops arrested by choppy short strokes. The third-movement *Menuetto* is technically a dance in 3/4 time, but with its violent rhythmic displacements is virtually undanceable. The closing *Allegro assai* begins with a scampering string theme that eventually develops into a fugato passage. The secondary theme is more lyrical with a slippery, supple clarinet obbligato.

René Spencer Saller is a writer and music critic living in St. Louis. She has also written for the *Dallas Symphony*, *Illinois Times*, *Riverfront Times*, and *Boston Phoenix*.

First Performance unknown

First SLSO Performance January 16, 1908, Max Zach conducting

Most Recent SLSO Performance April 27, 2013, Bernard Labadie conducting

Scoring flute, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, and strings

Performance Time approximately 35 minutes



MARIE MAZZUCCO

Emanuel Ax most recently appeared with the SLSO in April 2015.

EMANUEL AX

Stanley J. Goodman Guest Artist

Born in Poland, Emanuel Ax moved to Winnipeg with his family when he was a young boy. A winner of the Young Concert Artist Award, Arthur Rubinstein International Piano Competition, Michaels Award, and the Avery Fisher Prize, he is now also a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Always a committed exponent of contemporary composers, with works written for him by John Adams, Christopher Rouse, Krzysztof Penderecki, Bright Sheng, and Melinda Wagner already in his repertoire, the 2016–17 season featured two newly commissioned works. With the New York Philharmonic conducted by Alan Gilbert, January brought the world premiere of HK Gruber's Piano Concerto, followed in March by the European premiere with the Berlin Philharmonic and Simon Rattle. As a regular visitor to the world's leading orchestras, he has recently performed with the orchestras of Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Cincinnati, Toronto, Seattle, Milwaukee, and Detroit.

As a Sony Classical exclusive recording artist since 1987, his recent releases include Mendelssohn trios with Yo-Yo Ma and Itzhak Perlman, Strauss' *Enoch Arden* narrated by Patrick Stewart, and discs of two-piano music by Brahms and Rachmaninoff with Yefim Bronfman. In 2015 Deutsche Grammophon released a duo recording with Perlman of Sonatas by Fauré and Strauss which the two artists presented on tour during the 2015–16 season. A frequent and committed partner for chamber music, he has worked regularly with Young Uck Kim, Cho-Liang Lin, Yo-Yo Ma, Edgar Meyer, Peter Serkin, Jaime Laredo, and the late Isaac Stern.

Ax resides in New York with his wife, pianist Yoko Nozaki. They have two children together, Joseph and Sarah. He holds honorary doctorates of music from Yale and Columbia universities.



JAY FRAM

DAVID ROBERTSON

Beofor Music Director and Conductor

A compelling communicator and innovative programmer with a vast symphonic and operatic repertoire, David Robertson is currently in his 13th and final season as music director of the storied 138 -year-old St. Louis Symphony Orchestra. He also serves as chief conductor and artistic director of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra in Australia and has previously been principal guest conductor of the BBC Symphony Orchestra and music director of the Orchestra National de Lyon and the Ensemble Intercontemporain in Paris.

As music director of the SLSO, Robertson has solidified the orchestra's standing as one of the nation's most enduring and innovative. His established relationships with artists and composers is deeply rooted, and is evidenced by the orchestra's strong relationship with composer John Adams. Their 2014 release of *City Noir* (Nonesuch Records)—comprising works by Adams performed by the SLSO with Robertson—won the Grammy Award for best orchestral performance.

Robertson is devoted to supporting young musicians and has worked with students at festivals in Aspen, Tanglewood, Lucerne, at the Paris Conservatoire, the Juilliard School, Music Academy of the West, and the National Orchestra Institute. In 2014 he led the USA Coast to Coast tour of the National Youth Orchestra of Carnegie Hall.

Musical America's conductor of the year in 2000, Robertson is the recipient of numerous honorary doctorates. He was elected a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 2010 and awarded the Chevalier de l'Ordres des Arts et des Lettres in 2011. He is married to pianist Orli Shaham and has four children.