

The finale's dramatic moment passes soon enough, giving way to high-spirited good times. As Schubert wrote about himself: "When I attempted to sing of love, it turned to pain. And when I tried to sing of sorrow, it turned to love."

First performance: 1824, at the home of Archduke Rudolph in Vienna

First SLSO performance: November 4, 1974, George Silfies, clarinet; George Berry, bassoon; Roland Pandolfi, horn; Max Rabinovitsj and John Korman, violins; Robert Vernon, viola; John Sant'Ambrogio, cello; and Henry Loew, bass

Most recent SLSO performance: October 22, 1990, George Silfies, clarinet; George Berry, bassoon; Roland Pandolfi, horn; Takaoki Sugitani and Deborah Bloom, violins; William Martin, viola; Stephen Balderston, cello; and Donald Martin, bass

Scoring: clarinet, bassoon, horn, 2 violins, viola, cello, bass

Performance time: Approximately 50 minutes

Tim Munro is the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra's Creative Partner. A writer, broadcaster, and Grammy-winning flutist, he lives in Chicago with his wife, son, and badly-behaved orange cat.



St. Louis Symphony
Orchestra

stéphane denève : music director

20
21
141st season

Alison Harney, violin
Angie Smart, violin
Christian Tantillo, viola
Jennifer Humphreys, cello
Ronald Moberly, double bass
Tzuying Huang, clarinet
Andrew Gott, bassoon
Victoria Knudtson, horn

Friday, October 30, 2020 at 7:30pm
Wednesday, November 4, 2020 at 7:30pm

CAROLINE SHAW

(b. 1982)

Entr'acte (2011)

Angie Smart, violin
Alison Harney, violin
Christian Tantillo, viola
Jennifer Humphreys, cello

SCHUBERT

(1797-1828)

Octet in F major, op. 166, D. 803 (selections) (1824)

Adagio—Allegro
Andante un poco mosso
Andante & Variations
Menuetto & Trio
Andante molto—Allegro
Tzuying Huang, clarinet
Andrew Gott, bassoon
Victoria Knudtson, horn
Alison Harney, violin
Angie Smart, violin
Christian Tantillo, viola
Jennifer Humphreys, cello
Ronald Moberly, double bass

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The 2020/2021 Classical Series is presented by the **Steward Family Foundation**.
This program is presented by **The Thomas A. Kooyumjian Family Foundation**.

Program Notes

By Tim Munro

For humans, no emotion is absolute. Joy may be colored by an edge of sadness; sorrow can allow rays of hope. The music on this program understands this all-too-human complexity.

"When I attempted to sing of love," Franz Schubert wrote to a friend, "it turned to pain. And when I tried to sing of sorrow, it turned to love." We are drawn to the humanness of his music as it wavers: major key to minor key, light to shadow.

Caroline Shaw's music often feels close to tears, but always retains its inner peace. In a performance of her trembling *Entr'acte*, the musicians seem to be centering their breath through a sort of musical ritual: gesture, silence, gesture, silence.



CAROLINE SHAW

Born August 1, 1982, Greenville, North Carolina

Entr'acte

Caroline Shaw prefers to be known as "musician" rather than "composer." What might seem like humility is actually evidence of a modern artist. Her musicianship is the sum of interconnected parts: violinist, vocalist, composer, and producer.

The Brooklyn-based, Pulitzer Prize-winning musician's recent works include a large-scale cantata inspired by the Golden Record launched into space in 1977, and an orchestral work that reflects a visit to Los Angeles' Griffith Observatory. She is currently working on a short opera for the Chicago Lyric Opera "about loneliness."

Much of Shaw's music responds to music of the past, whether Buxtehude or Bach, Mozart or Haydn. The inspiration for *Entr'acte* came when she found herself struck by what she calls the "spare and soulful shift" in a performance of the Minuet and Trio movement of Haydn's String Quartet Op. 77 No. 2.

Haydn's perky minuet falls into silence, and when the trio section begins, there has been a slip, a change in color. In homage to that shift, *Entr'acte* is structured as an old-fashioned minuet and trio. Shaw says she is "riffing on that classical form but taking it a little further."

Historically, an *Entr'acte* is an interlude between acts of a play or opera. Shaw's work has no such function, but the title is appropriate. Shaw's music has certain transitory quality—uncertain about what might come next, it threatens to lapse into silence.

Shaw seeks "the other side of Alice's looking glass, in a kind of absurd, subtle, technicolor transition."

First performance: March 21, 2011, by the Brentano Quartet

First SLSO performance: These concerts

Scoring: String quartet

Performance time: Approximately 11 minutes



FRANZ SCHUBERT

Born January 31, 1797, Vienna, Austria

Died November 19, 1828, Vienna, Austria

Octet in F major, op. 166, D. 803

The music of Schubert's Octet is dressed for two occasions. It wears fun, unpretentious threads, ready for a relaxed hang with friends. But look closer: everything is made with the finest materials, impressing even the fussiest connoisseur.

Schubert learned this code-switching from Beethoven. Indeed, Beethoven was Schubert's chief source of inspiration throughout his life—a sort of artistic father-figure. And although they both lived in Vienna, the two may never have met.

Schubert modeled his Octet on Beethoven's Septet. The Septet was immensely popular in Vienna, played across the city, and hummed on the streets. Schubert stole liberally, copying Beethoven's instrumentation (adding a violin) and his layout of movements. And copying the Septet's careful balance of entertainment and ambition.

The Octet is certainly entertaining: filled with jaunty dances, hummable tunes, and heart-rending moments. It shows off the virtuosity of the ensemble, particularly the artistry of the first violinist and clarinetist.

But it also thinks big. The work lasts more than an hour in a complete performance (the *Minuet* movement will not be performed on this program) and includes not one but two extended slow movements. Indeed, Schubert wanted it to "pave the way towards a grand symphony."

And there is no absence of drama. The Octet's final movement begins with a dark, almost operatic scene: Strings shudder, winds cower. Schubert quotes music from his song "The Gods of Greece," which sets a poem about loss and mourning:

*Fair world, where are you? Return again,
sweet springtime of nature!
Alas, only in the magic land of song
does your fabled memory live on.*

When he wrote the Octet, Schubert was in pain. "I feel myself the most unhappy and wretched creature in the world," he wrote in a letter at the time. "Imagine a man whose health will never be right again, and who in sheer despair over this makes things worse and worse instead of better."