

Friday, April 15, 2022, 7:30 PM
Saturday, April 16, 2022, 7:30 PM
Richardson Auditorium, Alexander Hall

Princeton University Orchestra

Stuart B. Mindlin Memorial Concerts

Michael Pratt, Conductor

PROGRAM

Ludwig van Beethoven
(1770-1826)

Leonore Overture No. 3 op. 72a

Carlos Chavez
(1899-1978)

Sinfonía India

William Grant Still
(1895-1978)

Darker America

Leonard Bernstein
(1918-1990)

Symphonic Dances from West Side Story

As guidelines continue to change, visit musicprincetoninfohub.com/covid on the day of the event for the latest safety requirements.

This program will be performed without an intermission. The use of photographic, video or audio equipment is strictly prohibited. Please turn off or mute electronic devices for the duration of the performance.

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PROGRAM NOTES

Welcome to tonight's Stuart B. Mindlin concert, which celebrates the life of a local citizen and a stalwart member of the Princeton University Orchestra for many years until his accidental death in 1988. He befriended many generations of Princeton students and was an exemplar of the revered idea of "town and gown."

Whether by intent or serendipity, each work on tonight's concert speaks directly to struggles we face today, as this is being written, which sometimes come down to life and death itself: the struggles against tyranny, racism, intolerance toward diverse backgrounds.

Beethoven's paean to liberty and love, *Fidelio*, had several lives, one of which is represented tonight. *Leonore No.3* is the overture intended for the second version which was mounted in Vienna in 1806. (The third version from 1814 is the one that holds the world's stages now.) Tonight's overture exists with immense power as a concert piece. One of the most dramatic single works in all of Western music, its stirring trumpet call and blazing finish is a call to courage in the face of a struggle for freedom every bit as desperate in April 2022 as it was in the face of Bonaparte.

Sinfonía India (1936) is the second symphony by the Mexican composer Carlos Chavez. In one movement, every note in the compact work is a setting of melodies and dances of native American nations of Northern Mexico. All of it high energy and joyous, it does not take many hearings to feel in one's bones the same fundamental responses to crackling rhythm and soaring melody that move us in the music of European composers of the early twentieth century. Those tribes whose music Chavez captured and set are doubtless long dispersed, but Chavez reminds us memorably of what we have lost.

Darker America is a symphonic poem from 1924. William Grant Still was a revered figure in the Harlem Renaissance, breaking important racial barriers as the first Black composer to have an opera performed in a major house for a national broadcast and the first to conduct a major orchestra. In his own words:

Darker America, as its title suggests, is representative of the American Negro. His serious side is presented and is intended to suggest the triumph of a people over their sorrows through fervent prayer. At the beginning the theme of the American Negro is announced by the strings in unison. Following a short development of this, the English horn announces the sorrow theme which is followed immediately by the theme of hope, given to muted brass accompanied by strings and woodwind. The sorrow theme returns treated differently, indicative of more intense sorrow as contrasted to passive sorrow indicated at the initial appearance of the theme. Again hope appears and the people seem about to rise above their troubles. But sorrow triumphs. Then the prayer is heard (given to oboe); the prayer of numbed rather than anguished souls. Strongly contrasted moods follow, leading up to the triumph of the people near the end, at which point the three principal themes are combined.

West Side Story is in the front of conversations about American culture today because of the lavish Steven Spielberg film, but the painful issues it addresses are lasting and unforgiving. Inspired by *Romeo and Juliet* and molded into arguably the apex of American musical theater by three geniuses, Leonard Bernstein, Stephen Sondheim, and Jerome Robbins, it addresses an origin that Shakespeare does not—what is the fight about? We never learn why the Montagues and Capulets are at each other's throats, but there is no doubt about what spurs the Jets and Sharks: intolerance and racism. A truce of sorts takes place at the end as the rival gangs unite to bear Tony's body away, but Bernstein musically keeps open the question of whether or not this will change anything, with the last word given to a bass note that is dissonant to the sweet quote in the upper winds from "Somewhere."

Symphonic Dances from West Side Story is a montage of song and dance, orchestrated using the musical version of the first film. It premiered the same year as the Robert Wise film, 1961.

— Michael Pratt ©

Scan this QR code with your smartphone to access an expanded program with bios, notes, and more.



ABOUT

MICHAEL PRATT

The 2021-2022 season marks 44 years since Michael Pratt came to Princeton to conduct the Princeton University Orchestra—a relationship that has resulted in the ensemble’s reputation as one of the finest university orchestras in the United States.

He is credited by his colleagues and generations of students in being the architect of one of the finest music programs in the country: Princeton University’s Program in Music Performance. Pratt has served as the director of this certificate program since its inception in 1991, and its international reputation has solidified Princeton University’s standing as a vibrant home for students who are both musically and academically gifted. Pratt also established a partnership with the Royal College of Music in London that sends Princeton students to study abroad at this prestigious conservatory, and co-founded the Richardson Chamber Players, which affords opportunities for students to perform alongside performance faculty in chamber music concerts.

Over the years, he has guided many generations of Princeton students through a remarkable variety of orchestral and operatic literature, from early Baroque Italian opera through symphonies of Mahler to the latest compositions by students and faculty. He has led the Princeton University Orchestra on eleven European tours. Under Pratt, the orchestra has also participated in major campus collaborations with the University’s Theater and Dance programs in such works as the premieres of Prokofiev’s *Le pas d’acier* and *Boris Godunov*, a revival of Richard Strauss’s setting of the Molière classic, *Le Bourgeois gentilhomme*, and a full production of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, with all of Mendelssohn’s incidental music.

Pratt was educated at the Eastman School of Music and Tanglewood, and his teachers and mentors have included Gunther Schuller, Leonard Bernstein, Gustav Meier, and Otto Werner Mueller.

In March 2018, he was awarded an honorary membership to the Royal College of Music, London (HonRCM) by HRH The Prince of Wales. At Princeton’s Commencement in 2019, he was awarded the President’s Award for Distinguished Teaching by President Christopher Eisgruber.

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY ORCHESTRA

The Princeton University Orchestra (PUO) has been the flagship symphony orchestra of Princeton University since 1896 and is one of the most prestigious and highly-acclaimed collegiate orchestras in the country. At over one hundred and twenty undergraduate musicians strong, the orchestra performs eight annual performances in Alexander Hall and tours internationally every other year. Since 1977, Maestro Michael Pratt has served as its Music Director. For more information about PUO, visit orchestra.princeton.edu.

Violin

Celeste Belknap ^
Melody Choi
Victor Chu
Andi Grene
Andrew Guo
Samuel Hanson
Rachel Hsu
Dane Jacobson '22
Isabella Khan^
Haram Kim
Joanna Kuo '22
Soonyoung Kwon
Yuqi Liang +
Allen Liu '22
Andrew Liu
Ethan Luk
Allie Mangel '22
Lukas Mann
Myles McKnight
Emiri Morita '22 *
Abby Nishiwaki
David Opong
Adrian Rogers
Claire Schmeller
Nina Shih
Iroha Shirai
Kodai Speich
Bryant So '22 *
Luca Stewart
Alexandra Wong
Natalie Wong
Sea Yoon
Madeline Yu
Evan Zhou

Viola

Michael Fording
Trey Hydock
Watson Jia
Rohan Jinturkar
Andrew Jung
Dorothy Junginger
Johanna Linna '22 +
Noah Pacis '22
Jack Shigeta
Anna Shin
Hannah Su
Albert Zhou

Violoncello

Katherine Cappola
Jeremy Cha
Rachel Chen
Brandon Cheng
Aaron Dantzer
Bridget Denzer +
Andrew Do
Jack Gallahan
William Gu
Matthew Kendall
Allen Park
William Robles
Phillip Shen '22
Natalia Arbelaez-Solano '22
Aster Zhang

Contrabass

Luke Begley '22
Tyler Benson ^
Chaz Bethel-Brescia '22
Ewan Curtis
Thomas Graul '22 ^
Debby Park '22 +
Daniel Strayer '22
Cara Turnbull

Flute and Piccolo

Christine Deng '22 +
Annette Lee +
Alex Tsai +
Audrey Yang +

Oboe

Jeremy Chen +
Leon Chen
Sarah Choi
Darren Chiu +
Richard Huang
Vedrana Ivezic '22 +

English Horn

Roshini Balasubramanian '22

Clarinets

Naomi Farkas
Neerav Kumar '22 +
Emily Liushen '22 +
Kevin Mo
Kyle Tsai +
Allison Yang +

Saxophone

Naomi Farkas

Bassoons

Taylor Akin +
Annie Jain +
Conner Kim +
Gabriel Levine ^

French Horns

Soncera Ball +
Spencer Bauman
Helen Brush
Clara Conatser +
Benjamin Edelson +
Selena Hostetler

Trumpets

Gabriel Chalick +
Arjun Guthal '22 ^
Trevor Holmes +
Devon Ulrich +
Coleman Yanagisawa

Trombones

Justin Bi '22 +
Jack Isaac +
Kevin Nuckolls +

Tuba

Sebastian Quiroga '22 +

Harps

Leila Hudson ^
Allana Iwanicki '22
An-Ya Olson '22

Timpani

Jake Klimek
Elijah Shina '22

Percussion

Jake Klimek
Louis Larsen
Elijah Shina '22
Andrew Tao
John Wallar ^
Alex Valtchanov '22 ^

Keyboards

Kyrie S. McIntosh
Vian Wagatsuma ^

Librarians

Dan Hudson
Annette Lee
Audrey Yang

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Dan Hudson

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Bridget Denzer

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