



2023-2024 SEASON

JAYCE OGREN, MUSIC DIRECTOR



PFEIFFER

NOVEMBER 18 & 19, 2023

SUNSET CENTER, CARMEL

Andrew Grams, Guest Conductor

Christina Mok, violin

*Pivot**

[running time 6']

Anna Clyne

(b. 1980)

Les Préludes [16']

Franz Liszt

(1811-1886)

INTERMISSION [20']

Violin Concerto in D Major, Op. 77 [38']

Johannes Brahms

(1833-1897)

I: Allegro non troppo

II: Adagio

III: Allegro giocoso, ma non
troppo vivace—
Poco più presto

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California Festival

A Celebration of New Music

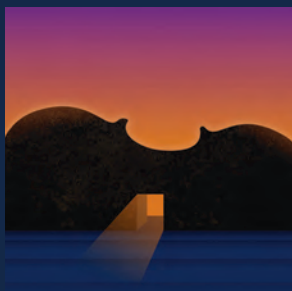
Monterey Symphony is participating in the inaugural California Festival: A Celebration of New Music. Along with more than 95 participating music organizations, we are celebrating the Golden State's legacy of experimentation and free-spirited artistry, showcasing music created in the last five years. Learn more: cafestival.org

The November concert will be rebroadcast on KAZU's HD2 Classical station on December 9, 2023, and December 10, 2023, both at 4 PM.

PROGRAM NOTES

By Dr. Alicia Mastromonaco
NOVEMBER 18-19, 2023

PFEIFFER (Whistler)



The Pfeiffer family were settlers in the Big Sur region who loved the land so much that they eventually sold it to the State of California to turn into a State Park. The pieces in this program also show a connection to place and draw from philosophical and poetic ideals; Clyne borrows from a Scottish fiddle tune and finds inspiration from her experiences in Edinburgh, Liszt draws from poems by Autran and Lamartine, and Brahms utilizes the *style hongrois* (the “Hungarian style”) in homage to his friend and collaborator, the Austro-Hungarian violinist Joseph Joachim, in his violin concerto.

Pivot

Anna Clyne (b. 1980)



English composer Anna Clyne (b. 1980) composed, *Pivot*, for the Edinburgh International Festival in 2021, where it was premiered by the BBC Symphony Orchestra with Dalia Stasevska conducting. It was co-commissioned by

the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, who premiered the work in November 2021 with David Danzmayr conducting. *Pivot* was written for string quintet and orchestra and embodies the celebratory and sometimes frenetic atmosphere that only a festival can provide.

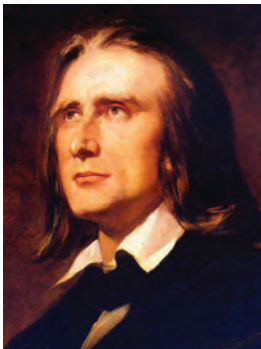
Pivot is a series of multiple musical vignettes that take the listener through various styles and genres. As the title suggests, the piece pivots between several different styles, Clyne’s nod to the wide array of performances she enjoyed at the Edinburgh festival. The boundaries between each segment sound like a musical doppler effect—the last bits and pieces from the previous segment are smeared into the next, like the sound bleed from neighboring stages at a music festival.

Interpolated between the various segments is the fiddle tune *The Flowers of Edinburgh*, a traditional 18th century Scottish fiddle tune that is also popular with American fiddlers. Clyne writes that this is one of the bridges she creates to connect to both Edinburgh and St. Louis. The fiddle tune sounds as if it is being heard through layers of fabric, and the listener has to hear between and beyond what might be at first apparent.

“Pivot ... embodies the celebratory and sometimes frenetic atmosphere that only a festival can provide.”

Les Préludes

Franz Liszt (1811-1886)



Hungarian composer Franz Liszt (1811-1886) was both a composer and, more importantly at the time, a virtuoso concert pianist. His fans were so obsessed with him that it set off a craze

known as “Lisztomania.” But Liszt was also an accomplished composer who heavily influenced the composers in his world. Some of his important contributions to the musical repertoire are his symphonic poems. Liszt is credited with coining the term symphonic poem in order to equally emphasize the importance of music and extra-musical program. Liszt’s symphonic poems are usually a one-movement

orchestral work, of which *Les Préludes* is the third (and most famous) of thirteen. Liszt’s symphonic poems generally have a title that is literary, artistic, or philosophical in nature.

Les Préludes was first performed at a benefit concert at the Weimar Hoftheater on February 23, 1854, with Liszt conducting. It was dedicated to Princess Carolyne Sayn-Wittgenstein, Liszt’s paramour for several decades. Sketches for *Les Préludes* date back as early as 1844, but Liszt put the work through multiple revisions before its premiere. The subtitle at the premiere was “d’après Lamartine,” in association with poet and politician Alphonse de Lamartine’s “*Les Préludes*” from his *Nouvelles méditations poétiques*. However, the piece was originally composed as an overture to *Les Quatre Éléments*, a choral cycle based on four poems by Joseph Autran before it was revised beginning in 1853 as an independent symphonic poem. Multiple musicologists have problematized the apparent ex-post-facto application of Lamartine’s poetry onto a piece written with Autran’s poetry in mind, but the more important idea is that the music bears allusions to extra-musical ideas, not that it exactly and clearly depicts them. Even without any conception of the program, the music from *Les Préludes* is a powerful evocation of the many tone colors, thematic transformations, and hyper-emotional expressivity that are hallmarks of Liszt’s compositions.

Violin Concerto in D Major, Op. 77

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)



German composer Johannes Brahms (1833-1897) wrote his Violin Concerto for his good friend, the Austro-Hungarian violinist, composer, and conductor Joseph Joachim. Brahms and Joachim met in Göttingen 1853 and enjoyed each other's company so much that Brahms returned the next summer to play music and compose together. Brahms wrote several pieces dedicated to Joachim in addition to the concerto, including his first violin sonata, the Scherzo in C for violin and piano, and the F-A-E- Sonata, written with Robert Schumann and Albert Dietrich for Joachim. The Double concerto, written in 1887 for violin and cello, served as a sort of peace offering to Joachim after Brahms sided with Joachim's ex-wife, Amalie, during their divorce proceedings in 1881. Brahms also arranged several of Joachim's pieces for piano and piano four hands. It goes without saying that the two had a close friendship and working relationship.

Brahms sent several passages to Joachim for editing, bowing, and his general opinions. Although he did not always heed Joachim's feedback (after all, Joachim said of Brahms that he was, "egoism incarnate, *without himself being aware of it*. He will not make the smallest sacrifice of his intellectual inclinations.") Still, the two worked on the concerto together, and the cadenza most often played today is Joachim's.

The concerto was premiered on New Year's Day, 1879 in Leipzig, with Joachim playing and Brahms conducting. The concert opened with the Beethoven Violin Concerto (also in D major). The concerto is more of a symphonic work with a solo violin than a virtuoso concerto. The piece shares much in common with Brahms's second symphony, written in 1877, which both open in D major in $\frac{3}{4}$ time, on triadic themes. In some ways, it is a companion piece to the symphony and bears many of the hallmarks of a symphony over the virtuosic showmanship of many concertos of the time.

"The concerto was premiered on New Year's Day, 1879, with Joachim playing and Brahms conducting."

The second movement opens with a beautiful oboe solo, so beautiful that violin virtuoso Pablo de Sarasate refused to play the concerto because he did not want to “stand on the rostrum, violin in hand and listen to the oboe playing the only tune in the adagio.” The third movement is written in the *style hongrois*, or the Hungarian style, partially in tribute to Joachim, who grew up in Pest and was familiar with the musical lexicon from Hungarian folk music mixed with Roma music. Brahms was drawn toward the *style hongrois* also because of his fascination with irregular rhythms, rubato, and triplet figures which are all an important part of the playing style.

Brahms and Joachim were good friends, and Joachim had been a student of Liszt's earlier in his life. The musical world in the wake of Beethoven's death in 1827 was having an identity crisis, and the two sides of the debate had strong opinions on the value of programmatic versus absolute music. An interesting connection between Liszt and Brahms is precisely their lack of connection; Brahms took such umbrage with Liszt's literary-oriented music that he wrote a manifesto with Joachim, stating that Liszt's program music ran “contrary to the inner spirit of music.” Brahms thought that music needed to progress “according to its own logic.” In other words, music should be absolute, without any program. Unfortunately, this manifesto was leaked to the press while it was still being circulated for signature, and Brahms suffered an immense amount of ridicule for his thoughts. He never again publicly expressed his opinions on artistic matters. In the end, both sides have won out, and we can hear the beautiful results of opposite 19th-century compositional ideals on the same program and appreciate them both equally.

DR. ALICIA MASTROMONACO

ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL HORN

Program Notes Author



Alicia has played with the Monterey Symphony since 2007. She is also a member of the Carmel Bach Festival, Marin and California Symphonies and plays with orchestras across the Bay Area, including the San Francisco Symphony, San Francisco Opera, Berkeley Symphony, Oakland Symphony, Santa Rosa Symphony, New Century Chamber orchestra, and other regional orchestras. She is Lecturer of Horn at Sonoma State University.

A San Francisco native, Alicia began her music studies at age seven on the piano and sang in the San Francisco Girls Chorus before taking up the

horn. Alicia earned Bachelor of Music degrees in Horn Performance and Musicology from Boston University, then did graduate work at the Universität der Künste Berlin before returning to California to continue her studies. She earned a Master of Music in horn performance at University of California, Los Angeles, and a Master of Arts and PhD in Musicology from University of California, Santa Barbara.

Alicia lives with her husband, daughter, and two cats in El Cerrito where she enjoys the many beautiful hiking trails just outside their door, baking sourdough bread, and gardening.