

R. Nathaniel Dett: Adagio Cantabile

from the "Cinnamon Grove" suite

Mozart: Symphonie No. 31 "Paris"

I. Allegro assai

II. Andantino

III. Andante

IV. Allegro

~ intermission ~

Brahms: Violin Concerto

Matt Weiss, soloist

I. Allegro non troppo

II. Adagio

III. Allegro giocoso, ma non troppo vivace

Sunday March 10th, 2024 6:00pm

Maple Park Church

17620 60th Ave W Lynnwood, WA 98037

Michael Böhnert Wheatley, Conductor



Active as a conductor and classical music educator, Maestro Wheatley is the Music Director and Conductor of Skagit Symphony. Prior to this, he held the posts of Assoc. Conductor of the American Youth Philharmonic, Music Director of the Seven Hills Sinfonietta (Cincinnati, OH), and Assoc. Conductor of the Southern Illinois Symphony Orchestra. During his tenure with the Seven Hills Sinfonietta, Maestro Wheatley established a reputation as a builder of orchestras and audiences. Now leading Skagit Symphony along similar evolutionary steps, his orchestra has grown by over a third to nearly 80 musicians, has debuted an annual Skagit Pops! concert program, and has set new records in season subscribers and concert goers.

Dr. Wheatley has led professional orchestras on three continents, most recently in Poland, Russia and

Ukraine, and in the USA with the Rochester Philharmonic, the Fargo Moorhead Symphony Orchestra, Southern Illinois Music Festival, and the Cincinnati Chamber Opera. Equally dedicated to guiding young orchestral players, he has led the student orchestras of the University of Cincinnati's College-Conservatory of Music, the Pierre Monteux School Festival Orchestra, the Eastman School of Music, and the St. Petersburg State Academic Symphony (Russia).

Dr. Wheatley's conducting teachers have included Christopher Zimmerman, David Zinman, Vassily Sinaisky, and Neil Varon. He is an alumnus of the Pierre Monteux School for Conductors, Peter the Great Music Academy (Russia), and the College-Conservatory of Music (Univ. of Cincinnati). In 2019 he was awarded his Doctorate of Music Arts degree from the Eastman School of Music. He has collaborated with soprano Renee Fleming, violinist David Kim, clarinetist Eric Mandat, pianist Sandra Wright Shen, and Pulitzer-winning composers John Adams, Christopher Rouse, Kevin Puts, and Jennifer Higdon.

In addition to his work as a conductor, Dr. Wheatley is a frequent clinician and also performs as a violinist. As a chamber musician he has collaborated with members of the Grammy-winning LaSalle and Tokyo String Quartets. He has recorded on the Centaur and Claremont record labels.



Matt Weiss, Violinist-Cellist-Composer



Matt Weiss graduated from the University of Washington School of Music, Seattle USA in 1991 earning a degree in Violin Performance while studying with Steven Staryk and serving under the baton of Maestro Peter Eros. He previously studied violin with Walter Schwede, Gwen Thompson, Mara Dvonch, Emanuel Zetlin, Denes Zsigmondy, Mari Nakamura, and Dr. Shinichi Suzuki. Matt studied music theory with Ken Benshoof, Diane Thome, and James Beale at the University of Washington and privately with William McGreal and James William Clarke who also instructed him in piano and conducting.

Matt is currently studying Cello with Benjamin Louwersheimer, Conducting with Bobby Collins, Acting and Accents with Jim Johnson, Voice Lessons from Jeffrey Moidel, and previously studied Acting with Robert Beltran and a bit of Shakespeare with Armin Shimmerman.

Matt occasionally does session work in the Seattle area with local bands of various genres, his biggest claim to fame being part of the Grammy nominated triple-platinum album "Jar of Flies" by the

Seattle grunge band Alice in Chains. Matt plays violin on "I Stay Away" and "Whale & Wasp".

Matt also has a keen interest in the classical and folk music of India and studied tabla from the world-renowned tabla virtuoso Vishal Nagar of the Delhi gharana, and appeared in recital with Vishal and Ujwal Nagar, performing a violin lehra in Charukeshi raga as Vishal and Ujwal presented a stunning tabla duet. Recently, Matt has performed several concerts playing violin, viola, and cello with Sarod virtuoso Richard Russell.

Matt also is a great fan of classic Star Trek, The Orville, The Expanse, Space Command, and other sci-fi and has been seen dressed up as Captain Kirk, Mr. Spock, the young Obi-Wan Kenobi, and other characters, most notably in his YouTube romps "Charlie Matthews and the Cosmic Nebula Band" starring himself and his kids when they were young, playing the cello in "Bach and the Tribbles," and starring as Captain Hardinger in the Star Trek/The Orville fan series "Egotastic Trek," having a cup of chai with his wife Beverly in "Introducing Chef Bev", and most recently playing cello as "Star Trek Cello Guy with Tim Russ Crew."



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PROGRAM NOTES:

R. Nathaniel Dett: Adagio Cantabile from the "Cinnamon Grove" suite

"When thou commandest me to sing it seems that my heart would break with pride; and I look to thy face, and tears come to my eyes."

Robert Nathaniel Dett (October 11, 1882 – October 2, 1943), was a Canadian-American composer, organist, pianist, choral director, and music professor. During his lifetime he was a leading Black composer, known for his use of African-American folk songs and spirituals as the basis for choral and piano compositions in the 19th century Romantic style of Classical music.

He was among the first Black composers during the early years after the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP) was organized. His works often appeared among the programs of Will Marion Cook's New York Syncopated Orchestra. Dett performed at Carnegie Hall and at the Boston Symphony Hall as a pianist and choir director.

Dett was born in 1882 in Drummondville, Ontario (now part of Niagara Falls, Ontario), to Charlotte (Washington) Dett and Robert T. Dett. The young Dett studied piano at an early age, showing initial interest when he was three years old and starting piano lessons at the age of five. When he was a child, his mother directed him to study Shakespeare, Longfellow and Tennyson, and commit passages to memory.

In 1893, the family moved over the border to Niagara Falls, New York. At about age 14, Dett played piano for his local church, the Methodist Mission Church. He studied at the Oliver Willis Halstead Conservatory of Music from 1901 to 1903.

He continued his piano studies at the Lockport Conservatory, matriculating to the Oberlin Conservatory of Music in Ohio, where he first encountered the practice of incorporating spirituals in classical music. Dett toured as a concert pianist and during this period wrote only rudimentary piano compositions. He came under the influence of Emma Azalia Hackley, a soprano singer, who inspired his interest in black American folk music.

Throughout his lifetime, Dett continued to study music, including studies at many prestigious institutions such as the American Conservatory of Music, at Columbia University, Northwestern University, the University of Pennsylvania, and Harvard.[9] Each summer, he attended major national institutions. In 1919, he founded the Musical Arts Society which organized concerts with artists such as Marian Anderson, Henry T. Burleigh, Grainger, Roland Hayes, Sousa and Clarence Cameron White and the Belgian Royal Band who presented Dett with the Palm and Ribbon Award.[9] From 1920 to 1921, he attended Harvard University, where he studied with Arthur Foote, winning two prizes. Don't Be Weary Traveller, a choral composition, won the Francis Boott Award, while his essay "The Emancipation of Negro Music" won the Bowdoin prize. His interest in composition had to accommodate his demands of teaching and administration. Percy Grainger recorded the "Juba" from In the Bottoms during Dett's year at Harvard.

"Cinnamon Grove" was originally a suite for piano. Today we are playing an arrangement of the Adagio Cantabile for string orchestra by James Ray.

Mozart: Symphonie No. 31 "Paris"

The Symphony No. 31 in D major, K. 297/300a, better known as the Paris Symphony, is one of the most famous symphonies by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. It may have been first of his symphonies to be published when Seiber released their edition in 1779.

The autograph manuscript of the symphony (with that of the alternative middle movement) are preserved in the Berlin State Library.

The work was composed in 1778 during Mozart's unsuccessful job-hunting sojourn in Paris. The composer was then 22 years old. The premiere took place on 12 June 1778 in a private performance in the home of Count Karl Heinrich Joseph von Sickingen, the ambassador of the Electorate of the Palatinate. The public premiere took place six days later in a performance at the Concert Spirituel.

The work received a positive review in the June 26 issue of the Courrier de l'Europe, published in London:

"The Concert Spirituel on Corpus Christi Day began with a symphony by M. Mozart. This artist, who from the tenderest age made a name for himself among harpsichord players, may today be ranked among the most able composers."

The work was performed again at the Concert Spirituel on 15 August, this time with a new second movement, an Andante replacing the original Andantino in 6/8.

Brahms: Violin Concerto

The Violin Concerto in D major, Op. 77, was composed by Johannes Brahms in 1878 and dedicated to his friend, the violinist Joseph Joachim. It is Brahms's only violin concerto, and, according to Joachim, one of the four great German violin concerti.

The work was premiered in Leipzig on January 1, 1879, by Joachim, who insisted on opening the concert with the Beethoven Violin Concerto, written in the same key, and closing with the Brahms. Joachim's decision could be understandable, though Brahms complained that "it was a lot of D major—and not much else on the program."

Joachim was not presenting two established works, but one established one and a new, difficult one by a composer who had a reputation for being difficult. The two works also share some striking similarities. For instance, Brahms has the violin enter with the timpani after the orchestral introduction: this is a clear homage to Beethoven, whose violin concerto also makes unusual use of the timpani.

Critical reaction to the work was mixed: the canard that the work was not so much for violin as "against the violin" is attributed equally to conductor Hans von Bülow and to Joseph Hellmesberger, to whom Brahms entrusted the Vienna premiere, which was however rapturously received by the public.

Henryk Wieniawski called the work "unplayable", and the violin virtuoso Pablo de Sarasate refused to play it because he didn't want to "stand on the rostrum, violin in hand and listen to the oboe playing the only tune in the adagio."

Today's performance includes the premiere of an original cadenza in the first movement written by Matt Weiss.

The Octava Chamber Orchestra Personnel

(section members listed alphabetically)

Violins

Sarah Malmstrom Concertmaster Begin NoraAssistant Concertmaster Kenna Smith-Shangrow *principal 2nd violin

Benita Lenz Charlene Utt Dustin Peskuric Jason Forman Natalie Toida Nathan Jensen

Violas

Mariya Ksondzyk *principal Jennifer Schillen Elisa Carbajo **Cellos**

David Tan *principal Lyn Fulkerson Shannon Hamilton

Bass

Amelia Matsumoto *principal Eddie Nikishina

Flute

Helen Lee *principal Lisa Hirayama

Oboes

Michael LaBrecque *principal John Dimon

Clarinets

Ward Drennan *principal

Jeff Bruce

Bassoons

Kerry Philben *principal Jessica Kleebauer

Horns

Carey LaMothe *principal

Craig Kowald
JJ Barrett
Scott Barnes

Trumpets

George Steward *principal

Darin Faul

Timpani

Ian Alvarez *principal

The Octava Chamber Orchestra was originally formed by Conductor Emeritus Johan Louwersheimer and Concertmaster Matthew Weiss in 1991 after they met as students at the *University of Washington School of Music*. We put on a number of performances in the USA and Canada before disbanding after Johan completed his studies and returned to his home in Abbotsford, Canada. Octava reformed in the summer of 2007 and we have been going strong ever since!

The Octava Chamber Orchestra is a non-profit corporation in the State of Washington, a tax-exempt organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

~ Our Board Members ~

Matthew Weiss president Ian Alvarez vice president Charlene Utt secretary Beverly Weiss treasurer Trevor Lutzenhiser advisor John Dimond advisor Terri Sandys advisor

The Octava Chamber Orchestra would like to thank everyone at Maple Park Church for their enthusiasm and support in today's concert.

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