

ST. OLAF COLLEGE DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC PRESENTS

ST. OLAF PHILHARMONIA

Martin Hodel, *conductor*

SPRING CONCERT

St. Michael Catholic Church, Farmington — Friday, April 26

Skoglund Auditorium, St. Olaf College — Sunday, April 28

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St. Olaf Philharmonia

Martin Hodel, conductor

Program

Symphony No. 5 in C Minor, Op. 67

Ludwig Van Beethoven
(1770-1827)

- I. *Allegro con brio*
- II. *Andante con moto*
- III. *Allegro*
- IV. *Allegro*

Suite Hébraïque

Ernest Bloch
(1880-1959)

- II. Processional
- III. Affirmation

Mackenzie Toher '16 – *viola*
Jesse Brault '13 – *conductor*

Celestial Dawning from the *Natura* cycle (2013)
(Premiere Performance)

Kirsten Broberg
(b. 1979)

Intermission

Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Orchestra

Lee Actor
(b. 1952)

- I. *Andante appassionato*
- II. *Adagio*
- III. *Allegro molto*

Kurt Claussen – *alto saxophone*

Academic Festival Overture, Op. 80

Johannes Brahms
(1833-1897)

Notes

Symphony No. 5 in C Minor, Op. 67 • Ludwig Van Beethoven

Beethoven finished his 5th Symphony in 1808. He wrote it while simultaneously working on other large-scale works, including his 6th Symphony (“Pastoral”). Although usually referred to as the “C-Minor Symphony,” long sections of the work venture into the tonality of C major, and the symphony can be regarded as a tremendous inner battle: a war between major and minor — light and darkness.

The first theme of the Symphony is perhaps the most widely recognized combination of notes and rhythms in classical music. Among other interpretations, it has been perceived as “fate knocking at the door.” The motive — a major third followed by a minor third — mirrors the struggle of the entire symphony: whether to be major or in minor mode. Overall, the first movement follows a fairly traditional sonata form, with a relatively short development. In the recapitulation, the solo oboe cries out like a human voice, in recitative. Minor mode takes a decisive battle at the end of the first movement.

The second movement is a theme and variations featuring the lower strings. Though set squarely in Ab major, C major gains the upper hand in brief outbursts led by the horns, but it isn’t yet a true victory. Beethoven’s constant tinkering with key areas, rhythmic emphasis, and who gets to play what melodies, illustrates his ideal of form as growing out of the compositional process.

C minor rises again in the mysterious third movement, though the inner struggle between keys is evident by placing a C major fugue beginning with elephantine basses and cellos. A bridge with ambiguous harmonies set over an extraordinary long pedal C in the timpani sets up the glorious arrival of the fourth movement, this time unabashedly in C major, and adding the extra forces of trombones, piccolo, and contrabassoon to drive the point home. This final movement follows sonata form, but at the end of the development, Beethoven inserts a theme from the third movement ending with timpani roll that drives into the recapitulation. An extended coda propels the fourth movement into wildly triumphant music. Powerful hammer blows bring this incredible experience to a close in a most magnificent manner.

— program note by Mitchell Evett '14

Suite Hébraïque • Ernest Bloch

Ernest Bloch was born in Geneva, Switzerland, and began composing soon after he took up violin at age 9. After studying in Brussels and Frankfurt, he moved to the United States in 1916 and became the first musical director of the Cleveland Institute of Music in 1920. He later served as director of the San Francisco Conservatory of Music and taught at the University of California Berkeley. Varied influences, from Swiss and German to Native American and Gregorian chant, can be heard in the works of the prolific composer. Particularly, Bloch’s music is known for its spiritual expression. In a 1948 magazine interview, he said, “Spiritual values can never die. The universal idea must prevail. This crucial idea has permeated all of my life and most of my works — my ultimate faith and belief in the unity of man, in spite of real racial values and dissimilarities. My faith is in justice — even delayed — on earth, in the right of each man to live his life decently and usefully and giving to the community what he can give, according to his gifts, his forces.”

In a number of his later works, including *Suite Hébraïque*, Bloch interweaves melodies reminiscent of traditional Jewish folk music. *Suite Hébraïque*, composed in 1950 for solo viola and orchestra, is divided into three short movements. The second movement, “Processional” features a passionate and dark melody from the solo viola accompanied by pulsing *pizzicati* in the strings. Movement three, “Affirmation,” as the name suggests, is an inspiring finale featuring a beautiful and graceful major-key theme played by both orchestra and solo viola.

— program note by Natalie Kopp '16

Celestial Dawning (2013) • Kirsten Broberg

I was inspired by actual and simulated pictures and videos of early formations of our and other solar systems. In the early stages there can be violent, giant collisions of massive bodies that can eventually turn into planets. This is evoked in the first section of the piece. The second section of the piece is designated with the character marking “slowly evolving.” This section represents a gradual transition of materials on a single planet. Later in the piece formations such as rain begin in the highest octave of the piano and glockenspiels. These formations eventually start cascading down in the section marked “like rain.” This section leads into a section marked “coming to life” with cascading rain in the piano and keyboard percussion, tendril-like lines in the double reeds and strings growing upwards like plant life while the flutes and clarinets play imagined bird calls. The piece ends with the brass and strings playing the calm of a yellow glow of streaming sunlight.

— program note by the composer

Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Orchestra • Lee Actor

Composer and conductor Lee Actor (b. 1952) exemplifies the liberal arts ideal of versatility, holding advanced degrees in both engineering and music composition. Actor has won a number of awards for his compositions, most recently for his *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra*, which was a finalist in the 2012 American Prize for Orchestral Composition.

Compared with standard orchestral instruments, the saxophone is a relatively new invention (mid-19th century), with little orchestral music written for it and finding its chief contemporary use in jazz. This fact inspired Actor to write a serious concerto with few jazz or popular inflections. However, the *Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Orchestra* is far from inaccessible; rather it presents an eclectic array of 20th century classical musical idioms. Each of its three movements shows a wide range of emotions and styles that appear almost unexpectedly throughout the concerto, keeping listeners and performers alike on their toes.

The first movement begins with a forceful statement of a Shostakovich-like melody by the cellos that turns into a fugue by the progressive addition of strings in counterpoint. A brief climax is followed by a short saxophone cadenza. The orchestra then rejoins with a Phillip Glass-like, undulating accompaniment in the strings on which the saxophone and woodwinds float freely. A buoyant section follows, featuring an octatonic, gypsy-like melody and relentless rhythmic ostinati, reminiscent of Stravinsky. The movement ends with a saxophone cadenza followed by a re-statement of the opening material and a quiet coda.

The main idea behind the second movement is Actor’s portrayal of “the image of a saxophonist playing all alone at night under the light of a single streetlamp.” The movement begins with a plaintive saxophone solo that wanders between different keys. The orchestra joins and engages in a conversation with the saxophone that leads to increasingly elaborate figurations on the theme, only to fade away quietly at the end. The intimacy and color of this movement give it a distinctly *film noir* flair.

The third movement is energized by incessant triplets, accented upbeats, and colorful harmonies. This movement is the closest to sonata form of the whole concerto. New themes are introduced and there is an overall playfulness evocative of Bernstein. Careful listening will reveal, however, that much of the previous material is restated in novel and unexpected ways. Overall, Actor’s *Concerto* pays homage to many previous composers while accomplishing the difficult task of maintaining inner coherence and originality.

— program note by Pedro Monque '16

Academic Festival Overture • Johannes Brahms

Johannes Brahms composed the *Academic Festival Overture* in 1880 as a musical thank you to the University of Breslau for the honorary doctorate conferred on him the previous year. Described by Brahms as “a jolly potpourri of student songs à la Suppé,” the overture is a rousing, upbeat piece that celebrates student university life. Structured around four traditional university pub tunes, the overture surprised many by focusing more on the lighthearted aspects of student life than was expected for the occasion. Ironically, the great German composer never himself attended college. When he was 20, however, Brahms spent two months with his friend and violinist Joseph Joachim at the college town Göttingen, enjoying debates with students and songfests at the beer halls. Perhaps those memories were his inspiration for *Academic Festival Overture*.

The overture begins softly and mysteriously (in C minor) and builds into the introduction of the first tune, the hymn-like “*Wir hatten gebauet ein stattliches Haus*” (“We Had Built a Stately House”), by the woodwinds and brass. The second violins introduce the lyrical second tune, “*Der Landesvater*” (“The Father of Our Country”), and the third tune, the freshman song known as “*Fuchsleid*” (“Fox Ride”) or “*Was kommt dort von der Hoh*” (“What Comes from on High”), is introduced by two bassoons and cello while violas pizzicato. The piece ends with a rousing and dramatic coda with the most well-known of the tunes, “*Gaudeamus igitur*” (“Let us Rejoice While We Are Young.”) The overture has long been one of Brahms’ most performed works.

— program note by Natalie Kopp '16

Biographies

Martin Hodel is Associate Professor of Music at St. Olaf College, where he has been teaching since 1997. He has performed as a soloist, chamber musician and orchestral player in the United States and around the world. Currently an extra and substitute player, he played full time during the 2005-2006 season in the trumpet section of the Minnesota Orchestra. As Principal and Solo Trumpet with the Eastman Wind Ensemble, Hodel toured the United States and Japan, and he has toured coast to coast in America with the Dallas Brass. He has also shared the stage with jazz artists Joe Henderson, Maria Schneider, Slide Hampton, Claudio Roditi, David Murray, and Jimmy Heath, and has toured Germany with organist Bradley Lehman as part of the Hodel-Lehman Duo. A CD by the Duo, *In Thee is Gladness*, recorded in Emden, Germany has been released on Larips Records. Hodel appears as a soloist on eight other compact discs, has performed live on the nationally-broadcast radio program, A Prairie Home Companion, on Minnesota Public Radio, on public television, and on national broadcasts of the radio programs Sing for Joy and PipeDreams. Hodel holds a doctorate in trumpet performance and a Performer’s Certificate from the Eastman School of Music, a master of music in trumpet and conducting from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and a bachelor’s degree in music education from Goshen College. He studied orchestral conducting with Lon Sherer, Tonu Kalam, Mark Gibson and Donald Hunsberger. His trumpet teachers have included Charles Geyer, Barbara Butler, Allen Vizzutti, James Ketch, Raymond Mase, Craig Heitger, David Hickman and Anthony Plog.

Dr. Hodel has conducted a number of groups, including several string and regional high school festivals. Before coming to St. Olaf, he taught at Goshen College where he conducted the Goshen College Orchestra and taught trumpet. Additionally, Hodel studied Baroque (natural, valveless) trumpet and 18th century trumpet literature in Europe with Dr. Edward H. Tarr, the leading expert on early trumpets and trumpet literature.

The music of **Kirsten Broberg** has been performed by internationally recognized ensembles such as the Kronos Quartet, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, MusicNOW Ensemble, International Contemporary Ensemble, New York New Music Ensemble, Jack Quartet, New Millennium Orchestra, Sonic Inertia Dance and Performance Group, Third Coast Percussion, and Ensemble Dal Niente of Chicago (which she founded and for which she currently serves as the Composer and Artistic Advisor). Her music has been heard at the Sonic Fusion Festival in Edinburgh, International Contemporary Ensemble New York and Chicago ICE Fests, June in Buffalo Festival in New York, Sonic Impact at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago, Electronic Music Midwest Conference in Chicago, Sound Field New and Experimental Music Festival in Chicago and Opera Cabal Multimedia Festival in Chicago. She has won a Fromm Foundation Commissioning Grant from Harvard University, two Encore Grants from the American Composers Forum, first place in the Accent '04 International Call for String Quartets at Cincinnati Conservatory, and first place in the University of Minnesota Call for Orchestral Scores. She holds a doctorate in music composition from Northwestern University where she was a student of Augusta Read Thomas, Jay Alan Yim and Jason Eckardt. Dr. Broberg has taught at numerous colleges and universities such as Northwestern University in Chicago, Illinois, the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis, Minnesota and St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minnesota. In 2013, she was appointed Assistant Professor at the University of North Texas in Denton, Texas.

Kurt Claussen has taught saxophone and band for more than twenty years, working with students at all levels from beginner through adult. Since 1995, he has been a band and woodwind specialist at Falcon Ridge Middle School in Apple Valley, Minnesota. In addition to his school duties, he is adjunct instructor of saxophone at St. Olaf College, and also maintains a select private saxophone studio. Mr. Claussen freelances throughout the Twin Cities metropolitan area, and has appeared as a solo and quartet recitalist and clinician in the United States, Canada, Norway, and Germany. He holds the Performer's Certificat from the Conservatoire National de Region de Bordeaux, France, where he studied with eminent saxophonist and teacher Jean-Marie Londeix. He earned the master of music degree in saxophone performance from the University of Minnesota, studying with Ruben Haugen, and the Bachelor of Arts in music education from St. Olaf College.

The St. Olaf Philharmonia, formerly the St. Olaf Chamber Orchestra, was founded in 1975 as a 12-member string ensemble and led for the first two years by the late Professor Emerita, Beatrix Lien. Associate Professor Dr. Andrea Een served as conductor from 1977-1994. During this period the size of the string ensemble grew, and eventually, winds and percussion were added to the ensemble. In 1996, the name was changed from Chamber Orchestra to Philharmonia when it became a full-sized symphony orchestra. Dr. Jo Ann Polley assumed the leadership of the Philharmonia in fall 1994 and retired in spring of the 2005-2006 academic year.

The orchestra performs music from all periods including repertoire for string orchestra, chamber orchestra, and symphony orchestra. Rehearsing twice weekly, membership consists of first year through senior year students. Members of this musical organization pursue virtually every academic major offered on campus. The Philharmonia complements the 90-member St. Olaf Orchestra, directed by Professor Steven Amundson. In 1998, the ensemble accepted an invitation to perform at the Minnesota Music Educator's Association Mid-Winter Clinic. The concert season of the Philharmonia consists of a Family Weekend concert, a fall concert, a chapel service, and a spring concert with a weekend concert tour.

ST. OLAF PHILHARMONIA

MARTIN HODEL, *CONDUCTOR*

VIOLIN I

Joseph Ahn, Madison, Wis.
biology/chemistry/music
Elsa Block, Eau Claire, Wis.
nursing
Kira Braun, Robbinsdale, Minn.
undecided
Courtney Breyer, Appleton, Wis.
psychology
Kassandra DiPietro, Appleton, Wis.
English
Alyssa Hare, St. Paul, Minn.
psychology
Laura Holdrege, Chicago, Ill.
social work
Rachel Jackman, Englewood, Colo.
exercise science/psychology
Maren Magill, Winnetka, Ill.
history
Anna Mattson, Idaho Falls, Idaho
chemistry
Catherine Oliver, Omaha, Neb.
mathematics/music
Δ Stephen Sweeney, Duluth, Minn.
biology/music education

VIOLIN II

Caroline Bressman, Omaha, Neb.
art history/English
Jeannyffer Campos Gomez, Colonia Cipres,
Guatemala
biology/music
Erika Espey-Sundt, Minneapolis, Minn.
sociology/anthropology/Norwegian
~ Margaret Gerty, Lindstrom, Minn.
psychology/philosophy
Natalie Kopp, Westerville, Ohio
English
Emma Larson, Coon Rapids, Minn.
English
Pedro Monque, Puerto Ordaz, Venezuela
music/biology
Jessica Scott, Madison, Wis.
biology/music/psychology
Derek Waller, Wyoming, Minn.
English/history
Robert Wankel, New Hope, Minn.
English/political science
Jocque Warner, New Richmond, Wis.
Spanish

VIOLA

Marit Aaseng, Alexandria, Minn.
studio art/psychology
Sarah Bell, Manchester, Mo.
environmental studies/dance/music
Stephen Chen, Denver, Colo.
chemistry/Spanish
Caitlin Churchill, Salem, Ore.
political science
Chloe Elzey, Menasha, Wis.
music/philosophy
~ Robyn Ferg, Chippewa Falls, Wis.
mathematics/Russian area studies
Jessica Hanson, Fitchburg, Wis.
English
Juliana Hynek, Mequon, Wis.
French/chemistry
Rebekah Raines, Eugene, Ore.
theater
* Magill Schumm, Iowa City, Iowa
biology/sociology/anthropology
* Mackenzie Toher, Kirkland, Wash.
music
Caroline Wood, River Forest, Ill.
history/studio art

CELLO

Becca Bevans, Waverly, Neb.
environmental studies
Carl Graefe, Bemidji, Minn.
political science/Norwegian/German
* Liam John, Essex Junction, Vt.
undecided
James Lach, Vadnais Heights, Minn.
music/mathematics/chemistry
Nick Lee, Fox Point, Wis.
history/mathematics
§* Riley Palmer, Eagan, Minn.
English
Zachary Rolfs, Arden Hills, Minn.
chemistry/music
Mira Sen, Batavia, Ill.
political science/English
Kyle Shelton, Urbandale, Iowa
biology/chemistry
Katie Simpson, Glendale, Wis.
history
Seth Spawn, Stillwater, Minn.
biology
Priyanka Subramanian,
Westport, Conn.
economics/mathematics
Alison Williams, Moorhead, Minn.
chemistry

STRING BASS

* Kelsey Peterson, Grand Forks, N.D.
Spanish/ARMS
Kirsten Vezina, Stillwater, Minn.
music
Ruth Whittington, Powell, Ohio
biology

FLUTE/PICCOLO

Emily Hill, Independence, Minn.
music education
Jung-Yoon Kim, Chicago, Ill.
music performance
Joshua Weinberg, St. Peter, Minn.
music performance
Ida Zalk, Maplewood, Minn.
music performance

OBOE/ENGLISH HORN

Nora Serres, Duxbury, Mass.
psychology
Luke Simonson, Morristown, Minn.
music

CLARINET/BASS CLARINET

Rachel Berg, Shorewood, Wis.
music/environmental studies
✧ Christopher Steer, Eagan, Minn.
Russian area studies
Annika Wayne, Macomb, Ill.
music

BASSOON/CONTRABASSOON

Ethan Boote, Columbia, Mo.
art history
Michael Paradis, Eden Prairie, Minn.
mathematics/physics
✧ Siyan Xie, Shenzhen, China
art history/music

HORN

Michael Burgdorf, Buffalo, Minn.
mathematics
Philip Claussen, Apple Valley, Minn.
music
B Crittenden, Dekalb, Ill.
music/psychology
Claire Dennis, Middleton, Wis.
nursing

TRUMPET

Tristan Frank, Mount Horeb, Wis.
music performance/mathematics
Ryana Holt, Colorado Springs, Colo.
mathematics/English
Stephen Martin, Mounds View, Minn.
music performance

TROMBONE

Zachary Gingerich, Conway, Ark.
music performance
Phillip Meyer, Woodstock, Ill.
music education
~ Ramsey Walker, Vashon, Wash.
music

BASS TROMBONE

~ Mitchell Evett, Wexford, Pa.
music education

TUBA

Peter Micholic, Apple Valley, Minn.
music

HARP

Joy Gunderson, Phoenix, Ariz.
church music

PERCUSSION

Guanlu Guan, Shenzhen, China
music/mathematics
Ben Harvey, Duluth, Minn.
electronic artistic design
Jordan Pesik, Eagan, Minn.
biology
Nicholas Rekuski, St. Anthony Village,
Minn.
mathematics/physics

Δ Concertmaster

* Principal/Co-principal
~ Officer
§ Manager
✧ Bass Clarinet
✧ Contrabassoon

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Kent McWilliams, *vice chair*

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Tim Wells, *administrative assistant*