

David Robertson, conductor Julian Rachlin, violin

Friday, January 26, 2018 at 8:00PM Saturday, January 27, 2018 at 8:00PM

PETER RUZICKA

Elegie: Remembrance for Orchestra (2016) U.S. Premiere

(b. 1948)

MENDELSSOHN

Violin Concerto in E minor, op. 64 (1844) (1809-1847)

Allegro molto appassionato –

Andante –

Allegretto non troppo; Allegro molto vivace

Julian Rachlin, violin

INTERMISSION

JOHN ADAMS

(b. 1947)

Harmonielehre (1985)

Part I

Part II. The Anfortas Wound

Part III. Meister Eckhardt and Quackie

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The 2017/2018 Classical Series is presented by World Wide Technology, The Steward Family Foundation, and Centene Charitable Foundation.

These concerts are presented by the Thomas A. Kooyumjian Family Foundation.

David Robertson is the **Beofor Music Director and Conductor**.

Julian Rachlin is the Sid and Jean Grossman Guest Artist.

The concert of Friday, January 26 is underwritten in part by a generous gift from Ann and Paul Arenberg.*

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Pre-Concert Conversations are sponsored by Washington University Physicians.

*Deceased

INSPIRED RESOURCES

BY RENÉ SPENCER SALLER

TIMELINKS

1844 Samuel Morse writes "What hath God wrought" in the first telegraph message.

1985 The film *Amadeus* wins eight Oscars, including Best Picture, Best Actor, and Best Costume Design.

2016 Bob Dylan is awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature.

The three composers on this program are at once deeply original and deeply indebted to other composers. The slippery quality we call originality often comes from inspired assimilation: To compose is to listen closely to other voices and join an ongoing conversation.

The German conductor-composer Peter Ruzicka used the last known melody composed by Richard Wagner as a springboard for *Elegie: Remembrance for Orchestra*, which receives its U.S. premiere with these performances. Like much of the composer's catalog, *Elegie* is highly allusive. It finds its own voice by responding to an "unanswerable" prompt from the distant past. Here Ruzicka communes with Wagner, the eternal Romantic provocateur.

No one understood these posthumous dialogues better than Felix Mendelssohn, who studied the works of J.S. Bach and spent the greater part of his short life tirelessly promoting the long-dead composer's genius. While barely out of his teens, the Hamburg-born prodigy almost single-handedly launched a Bach revival that continues to the present day. But his Violin Concerto in E minor involved the active participation of another musician, one who was very much alive: Ferdinand David, his longtime friend and colleague. Their close collaboration, which took place on and off over six years, produced a violin concerto that instantly transformed the genre, setting new standards for Romantic virtuosity.

John Adams explains in his program notes for *Harmonielehre* that he conceived the 1985 orchestral piece as a response—parodic, not ironic—to the influence of Arnold Schoenberg and 12-tone composition. But Schoenberg wasn't Adams's only source of inspiration. Adams was intrigued by Jungian psychoanalytic theory at the time, and images from his dreams shape *Harmonielehre*'s harmonic landscape.



PETER RUZICKA Born July 3, 1948, Düsseldorf **Now Lives** Hamburg

Elegie: Remembrance for Orchestra

Born in Düsseldorf on July 3, 1948, Peter Ruzicka studied music theory, piano, and oboe in Hamburg from 1963 to 1968. He spent the next eight years focusing on musicology and law in Munich, Hamburg, and Berlin before earning his doctorate in 1977. The recipient of many awards and honors, Ruzicka has conducted both his own works and those of other composers in concert halls worldwide. Since 1990, he has served on the faculty of the Hochschule für Musik und Theater Hamburg.

Elegie is dedicated to Christian Thielemann, chief conductor at the Staatskapelle Dresden. Since 2015, the same year he won the coveted Richard Wagner Award in Leipzig, Thielemann has served as the musical director of the Bayreuth Festival, sacred ground for Wagner devotees. Needless to say, Wagner looms large in Ruzicka's Elegie.

In his own program notes, Ruzicka mentions Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*. Arguably the most influential opera of the 19th century, *Tristan* swept away a century's worth of convention in roughly four feverish hours. With its intense chromaticism, its deliciously ambiguous harmonic insignia (the so-called *Tristan* chord), and its prolonged resolution, Wagner's music drama continues to provoke and polarize more than 150 years later.

The Composer Speaks

The last 13 bars that Richard Wagner wrote and played for his friends at the Palazzo Vendramin on the evening before his death are a declaration of love for [his wife] Cosima in the form of a mysterious question. The *Elegie* appears like a musical self-observation referring, as from afar, to *Tristan* and the circumstances surrounding its composition. Wagner's piano sketch has occupied me for a long time. Its openness and

First Performance April 16, 2016, Dresden, David Robertson conducting the Staatskapelle Dresden

First SLSO Performance this week (U.S. premiere)

Scoring 2 flutes, alto flute, percussion (bass drum, chimes, snare drum, vibraphone, antique cymbal, 2 nipple gongs), and strings

Performance Time approximately 9 minutes

indefiniteness caused me to pursue the thought, and to undergo a highly personal musical rapprochement and distancing. For this, I selected the sonic potential of a string orchestra, underlain by the impulses and "shadowy sounds" of three flutes and percussion. Wagner's question ultimately remains. And it still seems unanswerable, even today.

Peter Ruzicka



FELIX MENDELSSOHN Born February 3, 1809, Hamburg **Died** November 4, 1847, Leipzig

Violin Concerto in E minor, op. 64

Felix Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto in E minor is often treated as if it were his only violin concerto, despite the rediscovery in 1950 of another, in D minor, which he appears to have composed between the ages of 12 and 14. Although Yehudi Menuhin and others have recorded compelling interpretations of the earlier concerto, it's Mendelssohn's last major orchestral work, the Violin Concerto in E minor, op. 64, that everyone remembers.

The concerto had a long gestation. It almost certainly wouldn't exist, at least not in its current form, without the diligent participation of its dedicatee, the soloist at the premiere and Mendelssohn's friend since adolescence: Ferdinand David. Shortly after accepting the position of music director of the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra in 1835, Mendelssohn appointed David concertmaster. A few years later, when the composer began thinking about writing a new violin concerto, he turned to his old friend for advice.

On July 30, 1838, Mendelssohn wrote to David: "I should like to write a violin concerto for you next winter. One in E minor runs through my head, the beginning of which gives me no peace." Together, the two men hashed out the

First Performance March 13, 1845, Leipzig, Niels Gade conducting the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra with Ferdinand David as soloist

First SLSO Performance March 22, 1912, Max Zach conducting with Albert Spalding as soloist **Most Recent SLSO Performance** October 25, 2014, John Storgårds conducting with Heidi Harris as soloist

Scoring solo violin, 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, 2 trumpets, timpani, and strings

Performance Time approximately 25 minutes

work, mostly by correspondence, over the next six years. Mendelssohn was 29 years old when he began the concerto and 35 when he signed the autographed score, dated September 16, 1844. His correspondence shows that he kept soliciting David's input until the premiere, which took place on March 13, 1845. David was the soloist for the first performance, but Mendelssohn was too ill to lead the orchestra. He conducted the concerto for the first time later that year, with David again as soloist.

Rigor and Romanticism

Since its premiere, op. 64 has been a rite of passage for violin virtuosos. In the right hands, its Bachian rigor and Romantic lyricism make for a gripping interpretation. Mendelssohn's melodies are so seductive, his orchestrations so sumptuous, that it's easy to forget how unconventional the concerto must have sounded when it was new. Instead of the standard orchestral introduction, Mendelssohn starts the solo violin singing right away the same obsessive melody that he mentioned in his letter to David. This enigmatic theme blossoms into an ardent rhapsody, a reminder that the opening movement's tempo marking is Allegro molto appassionata.

As a composer, conductor, and performer, Mendelssohn disliked being distracted by applause between movements (which was then customary), so he devised ways to preempt any crowd noise. For instance, the cadenza in the first movement comes not at the end, as the audience would have expected, but at a little past the midpoint. Unusually for the time, Mendelssohn wrote out the cadenza instead of leaving it for the soloist to improvise. Perhaps even more unconventionally, after its big star turn, the solo violin reverts to accompaniment, flinging ricochet arpeggios against the orchestral recapitulation. Later on, the winds and solo violin collude in a foreshadowing of the upcoming Andante.

Then, while the rest of the orchestra falls silent, the bassoon sustains its note from the last chord of the Allegro, sliding into the central Andante. The slow movement is lustrous and lyrical, with a somewhat darker contrasting middle section. In one daunting passage, the soloist must play both lead and accompaniment before the theme returns to guide the movement to a blissful end.

Between the second movement and the closing Allegretto, the solo violin and strings offer a brief linking intermezzo. This wistful moment gives way to the ebullient finale, which begins with a trumpet fanfare and closes with an unbridled coda. Mendelssohn ends the concerto in magical E major, the same key he chose for his overture to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, composed when he was only 17 years old.



JOHN ADAMS Born February 15, 1947, Worcester, Massachusetts Now Lives Berkeley, California

Harmonielehre

Completed in 1985, *Harmonielehre* marked the end of an 18-month bout of writer's block for John Adams. The title of the expansive orchestral work is the German word for the theory of harmony. Although several books have been published under that title, Adams is referencing Arnold Schoenberg's revolutionary music-theory classic. As a student at Harvard, Adams studied with Schoenberg's student Leon Kirchner, who maintained a nuanced but respectful admiration for his former master.

Although Adams could appreciate Schoenberg's ideas, he felt the composer represented "something twisted and contorted." Adams explained:

He was the first composer to assume the role of high priest, a creative mind whose entire life ran unfailingly against the grain of society, almost as if he had chosen the role of irritant. Despite my respect for and even intimidation by the persona of Schoenberg, I felt it only honest to acknowledge that I profoundly disliked the sound of 12-tone music.

A more immediate source of inspiration for *Harmonielehre* was Adams's subconscious. At the time, the composer was fascinated by the writings of Carl Jung, particularly his analyses of Medieval mythology. Anfortas, whom Adams invokes in his movement title, is a classic Jungian archetype, the king whose wounds cannot heal. According to Adams, he "symbolized a condition of sickness of the soul that curses it with a feeling of impotence and depression."

The first part of *Harmonielehre* begins and ends with a brutal series of E minor chords; Adams calls these "the musical counterparts of a dream" in which he

First Performance January 1, 1985, San Francisco, Edo de Waart conducting the San Francisco Symphony

First SLSO Performance September 22, 2005, David Robertson conducting

Most Recent SLSO Performance March 31, 2007, Carnegie Hall, David Robertson conducting

Scoring 4 flutes (2nd, 3rd, and 4th doubling piccolos), 3 oboes (3rd doubling English horn), 4 clarinets (3rd and 4th doubling bass clarinets), 3 bassoons, contrabassoon, 4 horns, 4 trumpets, 3 trombones, 2 tubas, timpani, percussion (bass drum, bell tree, chimes, crotales, cymbals, glockenspiel, gong, sizzle cymbal, tam-tam, vibraphone, xylophone, small crash cymbal, 2 marimbas, 2 suspended cymbals, 2 triangles), 2 harps, celesta, piano, and strings

Performance Time approximately 40 minutes

"watched a gigantic supertanker take off from the surface of San Francisco Bay and thrust itself into the sky like a Saturn rocket."

The last part was inspired by another dream, about Adams's baby daughter Emily. In the dream, the infant, whose nickname then was Quackie, "rides perched on the shoulder of the Medieval mystic Meister Eckhardt, as they hover among the heavenly bodies like figures painted on the high ceilings of old cathedrals."

The Composer Speaks

My own *Harmonielehre* is parody... in that it bears a "subsidiary relation" to a model... but it does so without the intent to ridicule. It is a large, three-movement work for orchestra that marries the developmental techniques of Minimalism with the harmonic and expressive world of *fin de siècle* late Romanticism. It was a conceit that could only be attempted once. The shades of Mahler, Sibelius, Debussy, and the young Schoenberg are everywhere in this strange piece. This is a work that looks at the past in what I suspect is "postmodernist" spirit, but, unlike *Grand Pianola Music* or *Nixon in China*, it does so entirely without irony.

The first part is a 17-minute inverted arch form: high energy at the beginning and end, with a long, roaming *Sehnsucht* (yearning) section in between.... In this slow, moody movement entitled *The Anfortas Wound*, a long, elegiac trumpet solo floats over a delicately shifting screen of minor triads that pass like spectral shapes from one family of instruments to the other. Two enormous climaxes rise up out of the otherwise melancholy landscape, the second one being an obvious homage to Mahler's last, unfinished symphony.

The final part, *Meister Eckhardt and Quackie*, begins with a simple berceuse (cradlesong) that is as airy, serene, and blissful as *The Anfortas Wound* is earthbound, shadowy, and bleak....The tender berceuse gradually picks up speed and mass... and culminates in a tidal wave of brass and percussion over a pedal point on E-flat major.

—John Adams (Excerpted from his website at **earbox.com/harmonielehre**.)

René Spencer Saller is a writer and music critic living in St. Louis. She has also written for the Dallas Symphony, *Illinois Times, Riverfront Times*, and *Boston Phoenix*.

FROM THE ARCHIVES



Ninth Symphony Program

Friday Afternoon, January 23 at 3:00

Saturday Evening, January 24 at 8:15

FRITZ KREISLER

FRITZ KREISLER

was born in Vienna, February 2, 1875, and displayed musical gifts of uncommon order in his earliest childhood. Fortunately for him his father, one of the leading physicians in Vienna, was also an amateur musician of high order, who instructed and encouraged him to such a purpose that at the age of seven he appeared at a concert for children given in Vienna by Carlotta Patti and entered the Vienna Conservatory, where he studied under Hellmesberger and Auber. This was a special privilege, pupils as a general rule being ineligible for admission in that institution before the age of fourteen. He was, in fact, the youngest child who has studied there, and justified to the full the opinion formed of his exceptional talents by carrying off, in 1885, the gold medal for violin-playing at the age of ten.

Mr. Kreisler's playing has been described as uniting dazzling technique with highest musical qualities which have given him the foremost place in the world as an interpreter of the great classical concertos. It is full of glow and high courage, above all intensely individual, his readings and even his methods of fingering being quite his own. He is said to be hardly less accomplished as a planist than as a violinist and with his capacity for development bids fair to become one of the most remarkable figures in the annals of modern music.

THE COMPLETE PROGRAM

Mozart - - - Symphony No. 39, in E Flat, Op. 543

I —Adagio; Allegro

II —Andante con moto

III—Menuetto

IV—Finale; Allegro

Debussy - - - - - Symphonic Poem "La Mer" (First time)

Mendelssohn - - - Concerto for Violin and Orchestra

Single Admission, \$1.00 to \$2.00

Tickets on sale at

FAMOUS-BARR CO., Main Floor Gallery

-14-

St. Louis Symphony Orchestra advertisement for January 1914 concerts that included Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto with Fritz Kreisler conducted by Max Zach.



DAVID ROBERTSON

Beofor Music Director and Conductor

David Robertson—conductor, artist, thinker, and American musical visionary—occupies some of the most prominent platforms on the international music scene. A highly sought-after podium figure in the worlds of opera, orchestral music, and new music, Robertson is celebrated worldwide as a champion of contemporary composers, an ingenious and adventurous programmer, and a masterful communicator whose passionate advocacy for the art form is widely recognized. A consummate and deeply collaborative musician, Robertson is hailed for his intensely committed music making.

Currently in his valedictory season as music director of the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, and his fifth season as chief conductor and artistic director of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, he has served as artistic leader to many musical institutions, including the BBC Symphony Orchestra, the Orchestre National de Lyon, and, as a protégé of Pierre Boulez, the Ensemble Intercontemporain. With frequent projects at the world's most prestigious opera houses, including the Metropolitan Opera, La Scala, Bayerische Staatsoper, Théâtre du Châtelet, the San Francisco Opera, and more, Robertson will return to the Met in 2018 to conduct the premiere of Phelim McDermott's new production of *Così fan tutte*.

During his 13-year tenure with the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, Robertson has solidified the orchestra's standing as one of the nation's most enduring and innovative. His established and fruitful relationships with artists across a wide spectrum is evidenced by the orchestra's ongoing collaboration with composer John Adams. The 2014 release of *City Noir* (Nonesuch Records)—comprising works by Adams performed by the SLSO with Robertson—won the Grammy Award for Best Orchestral Performance. Robertson is the recipient of numerous musical and artistic awards, and in 2010 was made a Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres.



Julian Rachlin is making his SLSO debut.

JULIAN RACHLIN

SID AND JEAN GROSSMAN GUEST ARTIST

Julian Rachlin is principal guest conductor of the Royal Northern Sinfonia and Turku Philharmonic Orchestra and also leads the Julian Rachlin & Friends Festival in Palma de Mallorca. Highlights of his 2017/18 season include the opening of the St. Petersburg Philharmonic Orchestra season with Yuri Temirkanov, the opening of the Barcelona Symphony Orchestra season with Kazushi Ono, a tour with La Scala Filarmonica and Riccardo Chailly, his return to the Orchestra del Maggio Musicale with Zubin Mehta, and a residency at the Prague Spring Festival. He will also have his own series at the Vienna Musikverein.

As conductor, he will tour Europe with the English Chamber Orchestra and will guest conduct the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, State Academic Symphony Orchestra of Russia, Vienna Symphony Orchestra, Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra, Hungarian National Philharmonic, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, Orchestra della Svizzera Italiana, Moscow Virtuosi, National Taiwan Symphony Orchestra, and Prague Philharmonia.

Born in Lithuania, Rachlin immigrated to Vienna in 1978. He studied violin with Boris Kuschnir at the Vienna Conservatory and with Pinchas Zukerman. After winning the Young Musician of the Year Award at the Eurovision Competition in 1988, he became the youngest soloist ever to play with the Vienna Philharmonic, debuting under Riccardo Muti.

Rachlin, a UNICEF goodwill ambassador, is committed to educational outreach and charity work. He plays the 1704 "ex-Liebig" Stradivari and a 1785 Lorenzo Storioni viola, on loan to him courtesy of the Dkfm. Angelika Prokopp Privatstiftung. His strings are kindly sponsored by Thomastik-Infeld.

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If you love the music you hear today, come back for these concerts:



James Ehnes

EHNES PLAYS SAINT-SAËNS Saturday, March 10 at 8:00PM Sunday, March 11 at 3:00PM Cristian Măcelaru, conductor James Ehnes. violin

BRITTEN Sinfonia da requiem SAINT-SAËNS Violin Concerto No. 3 VAUGHAN WILLIAMS Symphony No. 4

"A supreme virtuoso of the instrument" (*Daily Telegraph*), violinist James Ehnes returns to astound with Saint-Saëns's Violin Concerto No. 3, a tour-de-force culminating in a grandiose finale. Guest conductor Cristian Măcelaru brings Vaughan Williams's fierce and defiant Fourth Symphony to life in a work full of imagination and lyricism, leading the listener to a grandiose finale of fury.



Christian Tetzlaff

BRUCKNER 4
Friday, April 27 at 10:30AM
Saturday, April 28 at 8:00PM
David Robertson, conductor
Christian Tetzlaff. violin

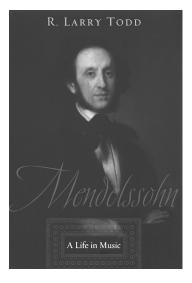
WIDMANN Violin Concerto **BRUCKNER** Symphony No. 4, "Romantic"

Upheld as one of the Bruckner's most famous works, his Symphony No. 4, the "Romantic," builds with anticipation and tension that leads to triumph as the orchestra launches the listener into his fairytale world. Declared by the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* "phenomenal, performing in a manner that had to be seen, as well as heard, to be believed," Christian Tetzlaff returns to perform Widmann's otherworldly and mystifying Violin Concerto.



YOU TAKE IT FROM HERE

BY RENÉ SPENCER SALLER



PETER RUZICKA peter-ruzicka.de/en/

Along with biographical information and an updated list of his compositions and scheduled appearances, Ruzicka's website also includes links to many of his essays on aesthetics and other composers, such as Stravinsky and Mahler.

FELIX MENDELSSOHN Mendelssohn: A Life in Music by R. Larry Todd Oxford University Press, 2005

Drawing on autograph manuscripts, letters, diaries, and artwork, R. Larry Todd offers a comprehensive, intelligent, and insightful account of Mendelssohn's achievements. Todd, a professor of musicology at Duke University and a leading Mendelssohn scholar, strikes an effective balance between biography and musical analysis.

Letters of Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy from Italy and Switzerland translated by Lady Wallace

Project Gutenberg: gutenberg.org/files/39384/39384-h/39384-h.htm

Mendelssohn was a prolific and graceful correspondent, and Project Gutenberg offers a free eBook version of this collection. It also contains scans of Mendelssohn's sketches and drawings from his travels, as well as transcriptions of several musical passages that he discusses at some length.

JOHN ADAMS

, Hallelujah Junction: Composing an American Life by John Adams Picador. 2009

Although it's funny and unpretentious, Adams's memoir doesn't shy away from big ideas. The composer shares his thoughts on aesthetics, the creative process, and his development of a harmonic language in a vivid literary voice.

earbox.com

Adams's website offers essays and recording excerpts of many of his works.

MALLINCKRODT

Corporate Donor Spotlight

Mallinckrodt is a global specialty pharmaceutical company united around a powerful mission: *Managing Complexity. Improving Lives*. Fueled by strong leadership and talented employees, Mallinckrodt is focused on developing innovative branded therapies and cutting-edge technologies that address the unmet medical needs of patients, including small, underserved populations with often severe and critical conditions. Founded in 1867 by three brothers in St. Louis, Mallinckrodt has been a major part of the city's history ever since. With our U.S. corporate shared services headquarters in Hazelwood and operating sites around the world, Mallinckrodt employs more than 3,500 employees globally. Mallinckrodt was



Mark Trudeau, President and CEO of Mallinckrodt

recently named a best company for LGBT equality and its inclusion and diversity council ranked number two in the nation by the Association of Employee Resource Groups and Councils.

What are Mallinckrodt's philanthropic ideals and priorities?

At Mallinckrodt, we believe our corporate responsibility goes beyond the millions of people whose lives we touch every day. This means advocating for patient health and access to medicines, building stronger and safer communities, and employing sustainable business practices. Mallinckrodt strives to advance society in meaningful ways through our charitable giving, employee matching gifts, and volunteer programs. The company's philanthropic reach spans focus areas of health and wellness, science education, life sciences, and anti-drug initiatives.

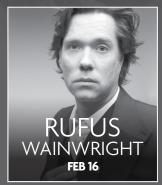
Mallinckrodt has been a corporate box sponsor for six years. How does your support of the SLSO fit within your overall giving priorities?

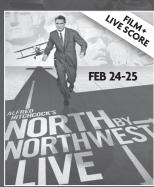
A core pillar of Mallinckrodt's corporate social responsibility is giving back to the communities that have helped us grow for more than 150 years. We partner with organizations that are making a tangible difference and driving positive change within local communities through education, economic development, and cultural enrichment. As a cornerstone within the community, the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra improves the lives of people of all ages and backgrounds throughout our region, making St. Louis a better place to live and do business.

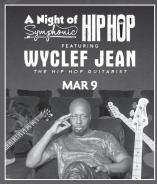
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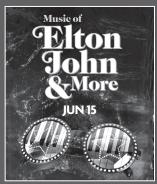














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