

CONCERT PROGRAM

April 25-26, 2015

David Robertson, conductor
Emanuel Ax, piano
Emily Ho, violin
Nicolae Bica, violin
Morris Jacob, viola
Anne Fagerburg, cello

ELGAR Introduction and Allegro, op. 47 (1905)
(1857-1934)
Emily Ho, violin
Nicolae Bica, violin
Morris Jacob, viola
Anne Fagerburg, cello

DETLEV GLANERT *Frenesia* (U.S. Premiere) (2013)
(b. 1960)

INTERMISSION

BRAHMS Piano Concerto No. 2 in B-flat major, op. 83 (1881)
(1833-1897)
Allegro non troppo
Allegro appassionato
Andante
Allegretto grazioso
Emanuel Ax, piano

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

These concerts are part of the Wells Fargo Advisors series.

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

These concerts are sponsored by Steinway Piano Gallery.

David Robertson is the Beofor Music Director and Conductor.

Emanuel Ax is the Ann and Lee Liberman Guest Artist.

Anne Fagerburg and Morris Jacob are the Carolyn and Jay Henges Guest Artists.

The concert of Saturday, April 25, is underwritten in part by a generous gift from Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence P. Katzenstein.

The concert of Sunday, April 26, is underwritten in part by a generous gift from Don and Nancy Ross.

Pre-Concert Conversations are sponsored by Washington University Physicians.

Large print program notes are available through the generosity of the Delmar Gardens Family and are located at the Customer Service table in the foyer.

FROM THE STAGE

Morris Jacob, viola, and Anne Fagerburg, cello, on Elgar's Introduction and Allegro, op. 47

Morris: "It's really beautiful, and kind of strange, as it's written for solo quartet and strings, but the quartet is in unison with the orchestra. It's Elgar at his best. He writes so well for strings, with beautiful, intimate moments, some of which are just majestic."

Anne: "Mo gets the best solo opportunity of all of us. I'm only out front for about two measures. But as Mo said, we're usually playing in unison or octaves, so we sound like a mini-string orchestra. We have to play so perfectly in tune with one another. But I've been playing next to this man for 25 years, so that won't be so difficult."



Anne Fagerburg

ROMANTIC PROJECTIONS

BY RENÉ SPENCER SALLER

TIMELINKS

1881

BRAHMS

Piano Concerto No. 2 in
B-flat major, op. 83
Thomas Edison and
Alexander Graham
Bell form a telephone
company

1905

ELGAR

Introduction and Allegro,
op. 47
Albert Einstein introduces
theory of relativity

2013

DETLEV GLANERT

Frenesia

Cardinal Jorge Mario
Bergoglio of Argentina
elected Pope, takes papal
name Pope Francis

The Victorian aesthete Walter Pater defined the Romantic character in art as “the addition of strangeness to beauty.” It’s an appealing description, if a slippery one. When we understand Romanticism as a concept rather than a historical movement, Romantics (or proto-Romantics, or post-Romantics) start popping up everywhere. To confound matters further, beauty is both subjective and culturally contingent, as is strangeness. What seemed strange, even shocking, to listeners 200 years ago—Beethoven’s radical expansion of Classical structure in his “Eroica” Symphony, for instance—barely registers as unusual to 21st-century ears. Not so long ago, dissonance and other deviations from Western standards of tonality were guaranteed to *épater le bourgeois* “shock the middle class”; today you’ll find these once-freakish features in car commercials and Kanye West singles. Strangeness is a form of novelty, and novelty gets old.

Romanticism dominated 19th-century Western culture, and it never quite disappeared. Its insistence on the primacy of subjective perception and its paradoxical yearning to transcend the limits of individual experience are ingrained in us. Romantic notions dictate our concept of identity, of authentic expression. In the cult of the individual, is apostasy even possible? Modernism wasn’t so much a rejection of Romanticism as a response to it, its inevitable corollary. Strangeness and beauty stayed put. This program presents three works—one from the late 19th century, one from the early 20th century, and one from last year—that offer three distinct takes on Romanticism. Brahms’s Second (and final) Piano Concerto fuses Classicism and Romanticism. Elgar’s Introduction and Allegro is both a neo-Baroque concerto grosso and a late-Romantic rhapsody. Glanert’s *Frenesia*, a co-commission by the St. Louis Symphony, is a symphonic reply (part tribute, part critique) to Richard Strauss’s *Ein Heldenleben*. Throughout the program, strange beauties abound.

EDWARD ELGAR

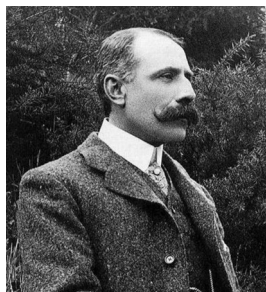
Introduction and Allegro, op. 47

SMILING WITH A SIGH On the program for the 1905 premiere of *Introduction and Allegro*, Edward Elgar included an epigraph from Shakespeare's strange and beautiful romance *Cymbeline*. Space does not permit a full synopsis of this convoluted tragicomedy about a cross-dressing, death-faking princess and her various disguised companions, but it doesn't matter. The excerpted lines—delivered by the heroine's long-lost brother, who doesn't realize that the guy he finds so ambiguously attractive is not only female but also his sister—tell us what we need to know:

Nobly he yokes
A smiling with a sigh, as if the sigh
Was that it was, for not being such a smile;
The smile mocking the sigh, that it would fly
From so divine a temple, to commix
With winds that sailors rail at.

Shakespeare reveled in paradox, the conjoining of apparent antitheses. Elgar did too, but in a different idiom. He wrote *Introduction and Allegro* at the suggestion of his friend August Jaeger ("Nimrod" in the *Enigma Variations*). To cap off an upcoming all-Elgar concert, Jaeger recommended "a brilliant quick string scherzo ... a real bring-down-the-house torrent of a thing such as Bach could write." The objective was to showcase the newly formed London Symphony Orchestra's string section, something that Elgar, an excellent violinist himself, was well-equipped to do. The form he devised resembled the Baroque concerto grosso, wherein a smaller group of instruments is set off against a larger ensemble (in this case, a string quartet and string orchestra). But instead of a fusty period piece, he produced something distinctly Elgarian: propulsive as a symphony and intimate as chamber music. *Introduction and Allegro* has no shortage of supercharged passion, but the smiling sigh cuts through all the same.

The *Introduction* begins in G minor, plunging downward in a fanfare of double-stops. A solo violin replies, tenderly at first. The quartet swoops up with a new motive. Then, a solo viola



Born

June 2, 1857, in Broadheath, near Worcester, England

Died

February 23, 1934, Worcester

First Performance

March 8, 1905, at Queen's Hall in Edinburgh, the composer conducting the newly formed London Symphony Orchestra

STL Symphony Premiere

February 3, 1945, with Harry Farbman, violin; Irvin Rosen, violin; Herbert Van den Burg, viola; and Max Steindel, cello; Stanley Chapple conducting at Kiel Auditorium

Most Recent STL Symphony Performance

May 20, 1994, Leonard Slatkin conducting

Scoring

string quartet
string orchestra

Performance Time

approximately 14 minutes



Kris Jones/REUTERS

Born

September 6, 1960, in
Hamburg

First Performance

January 23, 2014, Xian Zhang
conducted the Royal
Concertgebouw Orchestra in
Amsterdam

STL Symphony Premiere

These concerts

Scoring

4 flutes
2 piccolos
2 oboes
English horn
2 clarinets
bass clarinet
2 bassoons
contrabassoon
4 horns
3 trumpets
3 trombones
tuba
timpani
percussion
2 harps
celesta
strings

Performance Time

approximately 19 minutes

sings the most captivating melody yet, the one everyone always hums later. (Elgar claimed it was inspired by a distant “half-remembered” voice that he heard during a vacation in Wales.) After an extravagantly expressive interlude, the Allegro starts in G major. The opening fanfare, resurrected and set free, evolves into what Elgar called “a devil of a fugue”: a kaleidoscopic reconfiguration in the home key. The work is at once Romantic and Baroque, ecstatic and exact. Like the Bard of Avon, Elgar loved the mongrels best.

DETLEV GLANERT

Frenesia

A HEROIC FRENZY When Detlev Glanert was asked to compose something in honor of Richard Strauss’s 150th birthday, his thoughts turned, as any German composer’s might, to *Ein Heldenleben* (*A Hero’s Life*). Strauss’s sprawling symphonic poem, an obvious nod to Beethoven’s *Eroica*, is a paradigm of German High Romanticism. Over approximately 45 minutes, Strauss crammed in at least thirty quotations from his own oeuvre, along with musical caricatures of his flighty wife and his irksome critics. (The critics recognized themselves immediately and denounced him for his “monstrous egotism”; he took a prankish glee in hitting every bull’s eye.) Although Strauss maintained, somewhat coyly, that the autobiographical angle was “only partly true” and that the work’s subject was “a more general and free ideal of great and manly heroism,” no one believed him. But aside from the wounded critics, no one really held it against him either. Acts of monstrous egotism were more or less mandatory for the Romantics.

In our irony-glutted, post-everything era, it’s no longer possible to assert oneself like that. *Frenesia* (“frenzy” in Italian) invokes the Straussian hero without entirely embracing him. Although Glanert admires Strauss’s last great tone poem too much to mock it, he recognizes that it was a product of its time. *Frenesia* is the “anti-*Heldenleben*,” he explains, “because the piece is against the traditional Romantic view

of grand heroism, which I think is no longer possible after historic events leading to 1945.”

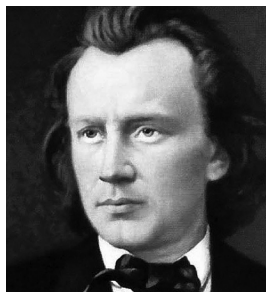
Inspired by Strauss’s muscular sensuality, Glanert found a way to honor his predecessor without emulating him. “The physicality of the music tells us something about the situation of the people living in Strauss’s own time,” he writes. “I wanted to try a similar approach in my new orchestral work—using my own sound world, of course, and in a way that doesn’t imitate or quote Strauss’s gestures, but develops them further. That’s why *Frenesia* is a portrait of the modern human being, with his physicality, his nervous system, muscles and movements.”

This modern portrait comprises a wide-ranging array of instruments, from Wagnerian anvils to beatnik bongos, from the fathomless rumble of the contrabassoon to the hectic shriek of the piccolo. Blaring brass and machine-gun drums accost jittery marimbas; the dark rattle of the temple block offsets the sugarplum chime of the celesta. A whirling waltz falls apart, casting off syncopated shards. Silences encroach. *Frenesia* ends with an anticlimax: a tiny tic of a figure, mechanical as a music box, reminds us of the distance. As Glanert recently told an interviewer from the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, “It gives a shock—we are back in our time, and we hear it still as an echo from another time. Everything is gone, but the music is echoing itself.”

JOHANNES BRAHMS

Piano Concerto No. 2 in B-flat major, op. 83

BEYOND VIRTUOSITY More than twenty years elapsed between Johannes Brahms’s First and Second Piano Concertos. A chronic perfectionist, Brahms had spent five years writing draft after draft of his First Piano Concerto, and he felt cautiously hopeful about the first performances. After a mildly disappointing reception in Hanover, the official premiere in Leipzig was an outright disaster. Although he played well, everyone, even the conductor, hated the music. The 25-year-old composer tried to take it in stride, writing to a friend that “the failure has made no impression whatever on me.... After all,



Born

May 7, 1833, in Hamburg

Died

April 3, 1897, in Vienna

First Performance

November 9, 1881, in Budapest, the composer was the solo artist, with the National Theater Orchestra, Hans von Bülow conducting

STL Symphony Premiere

November 12, 1915, Harold Bauer was soloist, with Max Zach conducting at the Odeon Theater

Most Recent STL Symphony Performance

November 3, 2012, Yefim Bronfman was soloist, with John Storgårds conducting

Scoring

2 flutes
piccolo
2 oboes
2 clarinets
2 bassoons
4 horns
2 trumpets
timpani
strings

Performance Time

approximately 46 minutes

I'm only experimenting and feeling my way as yet." But the hissing of audience members and the savage reviews left him shaken, and his work habits grew even more painstaking and self-critical. In a letter to his close friend Joseph Joachim, he vowed, "A second will sound different."

By the time Piano Concerto No. 2 was finished, Brahms was 48 and a seasoned orchestrator, having recently completed his Symphony No. 2. He had worked on his Second Concerto on and off for three years and sardonically referred to it as a "heavy cross" and a "long terror." In a July 1881 letter to his friend Elisabeth von Herzogenberg, his trademark irony was even more pronounced than usual: "I don't mind telling you that I have written a tiny, tiny piano concerto with a tiny, tiny wisp of a scherzo."

He was surely vindicated, if unsurprised, when his Second Piano Concerto elicited rapturous applause everywhere except in Leipzig, that die-hard Wagner town. Brahms had stopped practicing the piano regularly and was no longer a virtuoso—even his loyal partisans noticed the marked decline in his playing ability—but somehow, in several performances, he managed to pull off the Second Concerto, never mind its many technical challenges. Stretching out for nearly 50 minutes, with four movements instead of the standard three, the concerto demands an almost superhuman endurance. The first two movements bristle with double-note runs and thorny chords. The third movement is tender and ravishing, an intimate duet between cello and piano. As the pianist Stephen Hough puts it, the Second Concerto seems "like a massive chamber work, where the musical ideas are an exchange rather than a confrontation."

As conventionally understood, concertos are supposed to be vehicles for virtuosos. The Violin Concerto that Brahms had written for Joachim was, at least in the minds of showboating soloists, "too symphonic," and his Second Piano Concerto was even more so. Despite its difficulty and its resemblance to Beethoven's "Emperor" Concerto, the B-flat Concerto isn't about heroic displays of prowess. Brahms gave some of his best melodies to the other instruments: the radiant solo horn in the opening movement, the plangent cello and soft clarinets in the Andante. Played properly, the concerto requires great sensitivity on the part of the soloist, who often augments the orchestral colors instead of thundering over them.

Brahms dedicated the Second Concerto to his old Hamburg piano teacher, Eduard Marxsen. When he first began studying with Marxsen, the 10-year-old Brahms seemed headed for a career as a touring prodigy, but Marxsen saw in his pupil something beyond virtuosity. He taught Brahms to listen, to feel, to improvise. He took a good performer and helped him become a great composer.

DAVID ROBERTSON

BEOFOR MUSIC DIRECTOR AND CONDUCTOR

A passionate and compelling communicator with an extensive orchestral and operatic repertoire, American conductor David Robertson has forged close relationships with major orchestras around the world. In fall 2014, Robertson launched his 10th season as Music Director of the 135-year-old St. Louis Symphony. In January 2014, Robertson assumed the post of Chief Conductor and Artistic Director of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra in Australia.

To celebrate his decade-long tenure with the St. Louis Symphony in 2014-15, Robertson has showcased 50 of the orchestra's musicians in solo or solo ensemble performances throughout the season. Other highlights include an upcoming concert performance of Verdi's *Aida* featuring video enhancements by S. Katy Tucker, and last March, the Symphony's successful return to Carnegie Hall. Zachary Wolfe wrote in the *New York Times* that "the orchestra reveled in warm, luxurious yet sharply alert sound."

In 2013-14, Robertson led the St. Louis Symphony in a Carnegie Hall performance of Britten's *Peter Grimes* on the Britten centennial that Anthony Tommasini, in the *New York Times*, selected as one of the most memorable concerts of the year. In spring 2014 Nonesuch Records released a recording of the orchestra's performances of two works by John Adams: *City Noir* and the Saxophone Concerto, which received the Grammy® Award for Best Orchestral Performance, in February 2015.

Robertson is a frequent guest conductor with major orchestras and opera houses around the world. In his inaugural year with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, he led the ensemble in a seven-city tour of China in June 2014. He also led the summer 2014 U.S. tour of the National Youth Orchestra of the United States of America, a project of Carnegie Hall's Weill Music Institute, in major venues across the U.S. In fall 2014, David Robertson conducted the Metropolitan Opera premiere of John Adams's *The Death of Klinghoffer*.



David Robertson conducts the season finale, Verdi's *Aida*, on May 7 and 9.



Marcus Perry Brown

Emanuel Ax marks his 40th-anniversary season performing with the St. Louis Symphony with this weekend's concerts, and his fourth performance of the Brahms 2 with the Symphony, his second with David Robertson.

First Performance with St. Louis Symphony

February 29, 1976, Chopin's Piano Concerto No. 2 in F minor, op. 21, Gerhardt Zimmermann conducting

First Subscription Concert

December 14, 1978, Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 2 in B-flat major, op. 19, Zdeněk Mácal conducting

Most Recent Performance

September 28, 2012, Chopin's Piano Concerto No. 2 in F minor, op. 21, David Robertson conducting

EMANUEL AX

ANN AND LEE LIBERMAN GUEST ARTIST

Born in Lvov, Poland, Emanuel Ax moved to Winnipeg, Canada, with his family when he was a young boy. His studies at the Juilliard School were supported by the sponsorship of the Epstein Scholarship Program of the Boys Clubs of America, and he subsequently won the Young Concert Artists Award. Additionally, he attended Columbia University where he majored in French. Ax captured public attention in 1974 when he won the first Arthur Rubinstein International Piano Competition in Tel Aviv. In 1975 he won the Michaels Award of Young Concert Artists, followed four years later by the coveted Avery Fisher Prize.

Two major projects are part of the second half of his 2014-15 season, the first being a two week "Celebrate the Piano" festival with the Toronto Symphony curated by Ax. With many pianists performing, including himself, the festival explores the many facets of the instrument. The second is a European tour with the Philadelphia Orchestra and Yannick Nézet-Séguin, beginning with a joint appearance in Carnegie Hall.

A Sony Classical exclusive recording artist since 1987, recent releases include Mendelssohn Trios with Yo-Yo Ma and Itzhak Perlman, Strauss's *Enoch Arden* narrated by Patrick Stewart, and discs of two-piano music by Brahms and Rachmaninoff with Yefim Bronfman.

In recent years, Ax has turned his attention toward the music of 20th-century composers, premiering works by John Adams, Christopher Rouse, Krzysztof Penderecki, Bright Sheng, and Melinda Wagner. Ax is also devoted to chamber music, and has worked regularly with such artists as Young Uck Kim, Cho-Liang Lin, Yo-Yo Ma, Edgar Meyer, Peter Serkin, Jaime Laredo, and the late Isaac Stern.

Emanuel Ax resides in New York City with his wife, pianist Yoko Nozaki. They have two children together, Joseph and Sarah. For more information about Ax's career, please visit EmanuelAx.com.

EMILY HO

Emily Ho grew up in California where she began piano at age three and violin at age four. She won the Interlochen Arts Camp Concerto Competition on piano and later went on to graduate as salutatorian of the Interlochen Arts Academy. She continued her violin studies at Northwestern University, where her principal teacher was Blair Milton, a former member of the St. Louis Symphony. Emily Ho began graduate school at Rice University, studying with Kathleen Winkler, before winning a position with the St. Louis Symphony at the age of twenty-one. She has performed with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra on tour and at the Ravinia Festival, as well as with the Sun Valley Summer Symphony, Tanglewood Music Center, Music Academy of the West, Festival-Institute at Roundtop, and the Aspen Music Festival and School where she was an orchestral fellowship recipient.



Emily Ho most recently performed as soloist with the St. Louis Symphony in January 2008.

NICOLAE BICA

Born into a family of musicians, Romanian violinist Nicolae Lucian Bica started his violin studies in his native town, Brasov, at the age of six with Ilarion I. Galati. In 1988 he continued his studies in Bucharest with Carmen Runceanu and Stefan Gheorgiu.

In the mid-'90s Bica performed with national orchestras in Romania and Austria, including appearances as soloist with the Romanian National Radio Orchestra and the George Dima Philharmonic in Brasov.

After receiving his Bachelor of Music degree and the Professional Studies diploma from the Harid Conservatory, Bica was awarded a scholarship from the Buder Foundation to continue his studies at Webster University under the watchful eyes of the Concertmaster and the Principal Second Violin of the St. Louis Symphony, David Halen and Alison Harney, respectively.

Since the 2001 season, Nicolae Bica has been a full-time member of the St. Louis Symphony.



Nicolae Bica most recently performed as a soloist with the Symphony in May 2008.



MORRIS JACOB

CAROLYN AND JAY HENGES GUEST ARTISTS

A member of the St. Louis Symphony since 1981, violist Morris Jacob received his musical training at the Cleveland Institute of Music. He studied violin with David Cerone and viola with Robert Vernon. Jacob earned a Bachelor's of Music in violin in 1975 and a Master's of Music in violin/viola in 1977. Before joining the St. Louis Symphony, Jacob spent four years as the Associate Principal Viola of the Columbus (Ohio) Symphony. Since coming to St. Louis, Jacob has been very active playing chamber music and has appeared as a soloist with the St. Louis Symphony Chamber Orchestra and the St. Louis Symphony Youth Orchestra. Morris Jacob is an avid woodworker, having made most of the furniture in the home that he shares with his wife, Symphony cellist Anne Fagerburg.

Morris Jacob was a member of an electrified Symphony quartet performing George Crumb's *Black Angels* at the Pulitzer Arts Foundation in 2012.



ANNE FAGERBURG

CAROLYN AND JAY HENGES GUEST ARTISTS

A member of the cello section of the St. Louis Symphony since 1980, Anne Fagerburg received her bachelor's degree from Oberlin College and her master's degree and performer's certificate at Eastman School of Music. Her teachers have included Andor Toth, Jr., Paul Katz, and Leonard Rose.

Before joining the orchestra, she toured the United States as a member of the Carmel Quartet and the Ellicott Piano Trio. She has played recitals in Detroit, Washington, D.C., Baltimore, Cleveland, New York City, Rochester, Buffalo, St. Louis, Albany, and Fountainbleau, France. She now performs with fellow orchestra members Kristin Ahlstrom and Peter Henderson in the Ilex Piano Trio.

Anne Fagerburg was a member of the SymphonyCares program's Heart Quartet, performing at IN UNISON churches and other venues throughout the region to advocate for women's heart health in February.

A BRIEF EXPLANATION

You don't need to know what "andante" means or what a glockenspiel is to enjoy a St. Louis Symphony concert, but it's always fun to know stuff. For example, what is a "scherzo," which Elgar was encouraged to write, and which Brahms included a "wisp" of in his Second Piano Concerto?

Scherzo: literally meaning "joke" in Italian, it's a musical term with a long evolution, all the way back to the middle ages, but since Beethoven a scherzo has become generically considered as a shift in a cycle—you may expect a minuet, for example, but here's a scherzo; sometimes humorous or ironic, but most often of a fast pace; Elgar's composition, which became Introduction and Allegro, was originally suggested to be a scherzo that would bring down the house in the middle of a concert

PLAYING ELGAR:

MORRIS JACOB, VIOLA

ANNE FAGERBURG, CELLO

Morris: "The hardest part about this piece is getting up front of the orchestra to play it."

Anne: "The hardest thing is never playing in front of the audience; it's playing in front of your colleagues."

Morris: "That and playing this in unison, making one large sound together."

Anne: "It's like singing in a chorus. When you can hear single voices, it's not a good thing."



Morris Jacob & Anne Fagerburg

YOU TAKE IT FROM HERE

If these concerts have inspired you to learn more, here are suggested source materials with which to continue your explorations.



Ken Russell, director,
“Elgar: Portrait of a Composer”

YouTube

In 1962, long before the British film director got all hallucinogenic with *Tommy* and *Lisztomania*, he made this admirable TV documentary about Elgar for the BBC; Google “Ken Russell at the BBC-Elgar”

“Detlev Glanert on *Frenesia*”

Australian Broadcasting Corporation

An illuminating interview archived on soundcloud, Google “Detlev Glanert on *Frenesia* by abcclassic”

Stephen Hough,

“Brahms’s Piano Concertos: Which Is First Among Equals?”

The Guardian

Pianist Stephen Hough nearly writes as well as he plays; here he assesses which Brahms concerto is the best; Google “Brahms’s Piano Concertos: which is first among equals”

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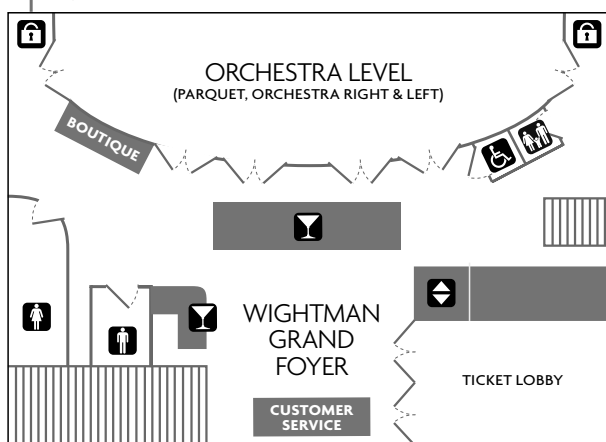
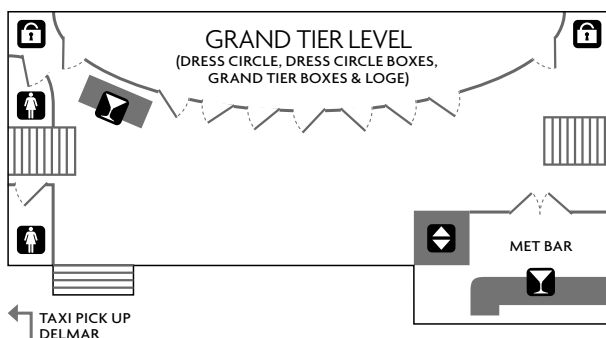
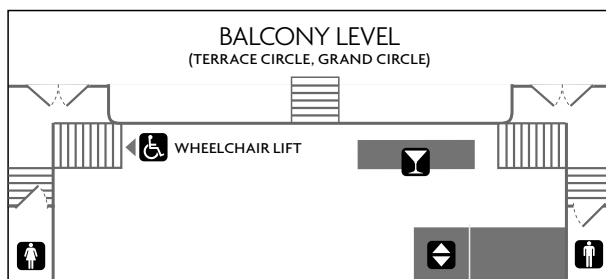
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