### CONCERT PROGRAM March 13. 2015

David Robertson, conductor Eva Kozma, violin Silvian Iticovici, violin

### WHITAKER FOUNDATION MUSIC YOU KNOW

**BRAHMS** Hungarian Dance No. 5 in G minor (1873)

(1833-1897)

**ROSAS** Sobre las olas (Over the Waves) (1891)

(1868-1894)

RAVEL Tzigane (1924)

(1875-1937)

Eva Kozma, violin

**ALFVÉN** Midsommarvaka (Midsummer Vigil), Swedish Rhapsody No. 1, op. 19 (1903)

(1872-1960)

INTERMISSION

**BORODIN** Polovtsian Dances from Prince Igor (1869-70, 1874-87)

(1833-1887)

Dance of the Polovtsian Maidens

Polovtsian Dances

**BARTÓK** Rhapsody No. 1 for Violin and Orchestra (1928-29)

(1881-1945)

Lassú— Friss

Silvian Iticovici, violin

Performed without pause

**GINASTERA** Four Dances from *Estancia*, op. 8a (1941)

(1916-1983)

Los trabajadores agrícolas (The Land Workers)

Danza del trigo (Wheat Dance)

Los peones de hacienda (The Cattlemen)

Danza final (Final Dance): Malambo

This concert is part of the Wells Fargo Advisors series.

This concert is supported by University College at Washington University.

This concert is supported by Boeing.

David Robertson is the Beofor Music Director and Conductor.

Eva Kozma is the Sid and Jean Grossman Guest Artist.

This concert is underwritten in part by a generous gift from Linda and Paul Lee.

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.

# A FEW THINGS YOU MIGHT NOT KNOW ABOUT MUSIC YOU KNOW

### BY EDDIE SILVA

- Johannes Brahms was a guy who knew what it was like to play piano with beer in his hair. From his childhood, music, all kinds of music, was heard in the street, emanating from saloons and parlors, from churches and concert halls, from bands of gypsies playing for coins. He absorbed it all, and in that brewing from boyhood to manhood, he made it into a music all his own, with memories of beer in his hair.
- Sobre las olas is associated with the flying trapeze, with one of the greatest hits of 1951, with Ernie on Sesame Street, with Disney movies, Popeye cartoons, and Barney the purple dinosaur. The Dead Kennedys used it on a track. Classic waltz, New Orleans jazz, Tejano (Tex-Mex) music—it fits to all forms.
- Maurice Ravel, a Frenchman born in a Basque town, wrote one of the most played gypsy violin tunes of all time, tonight played by a Romanian who grew up speaking mostly Hungarian. Are you getting a theme for tonight? Music has no borders.
- Sweden's summer days are endless, turning into nights that are never fully dark. Hugo Alfvén made his Swedish Rhapsody for such nights.
- We all get to be strangers in paradise in Aleksandr Borodin's greatest hit from his opera, *Prince Igor*.
- Brahms absorbed the music in the German cosmopolitan cities he lived in all his life. For Béla Bartók, in the 20th century, he went out and hunted the music down. The sounds Bartók heard in the classical music halls had grown stuffy, lacked the flick of the wrist and the click of the heels of his native Hungarian folk dance. He wandered, listened to music in small villages and on roadsides, and transcribed and remade it into such works as his Rhapsody No. 1. So is art remade and reborn again and again.
- *Estancia* is an Argentinean word for "ranch," and just as "ranch" stirs up images of the Wild West and the sorts of sounds Aaron Copland wrote for *Rodeo* and *Billy the Kid*, Alberto Ginastera imagined the legendary gauchos of the pampas and a frontier made for dancing.

### DAVID ROBERTSON

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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.

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David Robertson has acquired many languages during his international career, including, appropriate for tonight's concert, Hungarian.

Eva Kozma was "consulting muscian" for the Repertory Theatre of St. Louis's production of Michael Hollinger's *Opus* in 2014.



Silvian Iticovici's first solo with the St. Louis Symphony was in February 1984.

### **EVA KOZMA**

SID AND JEAN GROSSMAN GUEST ARTIST

Eva Kozma began violin lessons at the age of seven in her home of Targu Mures, Romania. Kozma won Second Prize in 1993 and Third Prize in 1994 in the Romanian National Competition. Kozma studied at Gheorghe Dima Music Academy, and later at McGill University. She served as Concertmaster of the McGill University Orchestra from 2001 to 2003, and won first place in the university concerto competition in 2003. She received a Fellowship to the Tanglewood Music Center and performed with the New World Symphony during the 2003-04 season.

Kozma was appointed Assistant Principal Second Violin with the St. Louis Symphony in September 2004. She has performed regularly in the Pulitzer Arts Foundation chamber series, curated by David Robertson. Pulitzer concert highlights include George Crumb's *Black Angels* in 2007, and Bartók's Solo Sonata in 2008.

Kozma has performed many chamber concerts under the auspices of the Symphony's Community Programs, and she has played in schools throughout the St. Louis area.

### SILVIAN ITICOVICI

A native of Romania, Silvian Iticovici joined the St. Louis Symphony in 1976. He received his master's degree from the Bucharest Conservatory and continued his studies with Yehudi Menuhin, in London and Amsterdam, and Ivan Galamian, in New York, and Norbert Brainin. Iticovici won second prize in the 1969 International Violin Competition in Sion, Switzerland and was the recipient of the Andr Gertler prize in the 1972 International Bach Competition in Leipzig. He has recorded for the Suisse-Romande Radio and was a member of the Camerata of Lysy, Switzerland. Iticovici has performed concertos with the St. Louis Symphony and chamber music with Chamber Music St. Louis and the Discovery Series. In addition to his performing duties, Silvian Iticovici is on the faculty of Washington University.

### CONCERT PROGRAM March 14-15, 2015

David Robertson, conductor Vadim Repin, violin Women of the St. Louis Symphony Chorus Amy Kaiser, director

DEBUSSY

**Nocturnes** (1897-99)

(1862-1918)

Nuages (Clouds) Fêtes (Festivals) Sirènes (Sirens)

Women of the St. Louis Symphony Chorus

Amy Kaiser, director

JAMES MACMILLAN

Violin Concerto (2009)

(b. 1959)

Dance Song

Song and Dance Vadim Repin, violin

**TCHAIKOVSKY** (1840-1893)

Symphony No. 4 in F minor, op. 36 (1877-78)

Andante sostenuto; Moderato con anima

Andantino in modo di canzona Scherzo. Pizzicato ostinato: Allegro

Finale: Allegro con fuoco

These concerts are part of the Wells Fargo Advisors series.

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

David Robertson is the Beofor Music Director and Conductor.

Vadim Repin is presented by the Whitaker Foundation.

Amy Kaiser is the AT&T Foundation Chair.

The concert of Saturday, March 14, is underwritten in part by a generous gift from Mr. and Mrs. Walter L. Hawkins, Jr.

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# IMAGES, REMEMBRANCE, CONFESSION

BY PAUL SCHIAVO

### **TIMELINKS**

1877-78

### TCHAIKOVSKY

Symphony No. 4 in F minor, op. 36 Thomas Edison demonstrates his first phonograph

1897-99

### **DEBUSSY**

### Nocturnes

Emile Zola publishes "J'accuse," his defense of convicted traitor Alfred Dreyfus

2009

### JAMES MACMILLAN

Violin Concerto James Cameron's Avatar released Each of the three compositions on the program of this week's St. Louis Symphony concerts alludes to something beyond the music itself. The orchestral triptych of Claude Debussy's *Nocturnes* portrays musical pictures of particular scenes. Debussy is often compared to the French Impressionist painters, and with this work he achieves in music something very like their ambiguous yet highly evocative use of line, color, and texture.

The Violin Concerto of Scottish composer James MacMillan is suffused with memory. Particular passages recall the dance music and folk songs MacMillan knew during his youth, and its finale brings a moving elegy for the composer's mother, who had passed away shortly before he began writing this work.

Like MacMillan's concerto, Pyotr Tchaikovsky's Fourth Symphony is a deeply personal work. Through its music the composer confessed to feeling condemned to misery by implacable destiny. The Fourth Symphony, Tchaikovsky told an intimate correspondent, is a reflection of his struggle against what he feared was his cruel fate.

### **CLAUDE DEBUSSY**

**Nocturnes** 

INSPIRED BY POETRY AND PAINTING Debussy's three orchestral *Nocturnes* took shape in a long and complex gestation over the course of the 1890s. The composer originally conceived them as an orchestral evocation of three poems in a collection by the symbolist writer Henri de Regnier, then as a work for violin and orchestra before recasting it once again for orchestra. This final version of the work was complete in all essentials by the end of 1899.

Despite the early association with de Regnier's poems, commentators have ascribed a number of other influences and inspirations to the *Nocturnes*. Connections with certain

paintings by Monet, Renoir, and Turner have been drawn, as well as between the final movement and Charles Swinburne's "Nocturne," a poem about a mermaid rising from the sea. On a more mundane note, Debussy's friend Paul Poujard declared that the composer told him the music for Nuages (Clouds) had come to him while watching storm clouds pass and hearing a boat's horn near the Seine, and that Fêtes (Festivals) represented memories of a village fair.

MUSICAL IMAGES Debussy chose not to reveal the origins of the composition, but he did comment on the music itself, discussing the three pieces in strikingly visual terms:

The title Nocturnes...is not meant to designate the usual form of the nocturne, but rather all the various impressions and the special effects of light that the word suggests. Nuages renders the immutable aspect of the sky and the slow, solemn motion of the clouds, fading away in grey tones lightly tinged with white. Fêtes gives us the vibrating atmosphere with sudden flashes of light. There is also the episode of the procession (a dazzling, fantastic vision) which passes through the festive scene and becomes merged in it. But the background remains persistently the same: the festival, with its blending of music and luminous dust, participating in the cosmic rhythm. Sirènes depicts the sea and its countless rhythms and presently, among the waves silvered by the moonlight, is heard the mysterious song of the Sirens as they laugh and pass on.

Debussy paints the sky with muted but extraordinarily rich sonic colors in Nuages, whose principal elements are a sequence of circling chords and a brief figure assigned to the English horn. (Are its repeated phrases a transformation of the boat horn that Debussy may have heard on the banks of the Seine?) The somber character of this music is dispelled at once with the first notes of Fêtes. From its outset this music conveys a sense of tremendous energy through its use of insistently repeating melodic fragments that pass in kaleidoscopic succession. Midway through the movement the celebration pauses



**Born** August 22, 1862, Saint Germain-en-Laye, near Paris

### **Died** March 25, 1918, Paris

**First Performance (final version, complete)**October 27, 1901, in Paris, conducted by Camille

**STL Symphony Premiere** March 3, 1911, with Max Zach conducting

### Most Recent STL Symphony Performance

September 28, 1996, Hans Vonk conducting

### **Scoring**

strings

Cheville

women's chorus in 3rd movement 3 flutes piccolo 2 oboes English horn 2 clarinets 3 bassoons 4 horns 3 trumpets 3 trombones tuba timpani percussion 2 harps

### **Performance time** approximately 25 minutes



**Born**July 16, 1959, Kilwinning,
Ayrshire, Scotland

### **Now Resides** Glasgow

### **First Performance**

May 12, 2010, in London, Vadim Repin was the soloist, and Valery Gergiev conducted the London Symphony Orchestra

### **STL Symphony Premiere** This week

### Scoring

2 flutes piccolo 2 oboes English horn 2 clarinets bassoon contrabasson 2 horns 2 trumpets 2 trombones tuba timpani percussion piano strings

### **Performance Time** approximately 25 minutes

as a march—distant at first, but drawing ever nearer—brings us an imaginary procession.

The final movement is the most novel in its scoring, if only for its use of a women's choir singing wordlessly to suggest the sea-maidens of its title. Its fluid rhythms and the constant swell and fall of its phrases create a seascape that is at once poetic and convincing. Debussy would develop these ideas further and even more impressively in his great portrait of the sea, *La Mer*, which he began two years after Sirènes was first heard.

### JAMES MACMILLAN

Violin Concerto

CELTIC ROOTS "As a Scot," composer James Mac-Millan observed in an interview, "I've grown up with fiddle music. I used to play in folk bands when I was younger, and fiddles were always the core part of that music." MacMillan went on to say that he hoped to "plug into that reservoir of experience and memory" in creating his Violin Concerto, "something that can give it a soul that both sings and dances."

The 55-year-old MacMillan is Scotland's foremost composer. He is fiercely proud of his nationality and heritage, which often finds reflection in his music. One of his best-known compositions is set in the style of an old Scottish ballad. Other works have been inspired by Scottish folklore or history. The Violin Concerto, although carrying no literary or specific historical associations, nevertheless reflects the Celtic culture with which the composer strongly identifies. MacMillan wrote this work in 2009 for our soloist, Vadim Repin, who has championed it throughout the world. The score is dedicated jointly to Repin and to the composer's mother, who died shortly before MacMillan began working on the piece. To some extent, the work is a requiem for her.

SONG, DANCE, ELEGY The piece unfolds in the traditional concerto format of three movements, their titles indicating dancing, singing, or both. Mac-Millan begins with three iterations of a brief but strong and pointed phrase for the orchestra. From the last of these emerges a swiftly running line for the solo violin, its none-too-smooth rhythms conveying a nervous energy. Soon, however, some

ethereal melodic swirls lead to a second theme, a broad melody whose line seems to yearn upward. This, too, proves short-lived. The orchestra now takes up the animated first theme, then the chiseled figure of the opening moments. MacMillan plays with all these ideas as the music unfolds, then offers a surprise: a digression into a lively Scottish reel late in the movement.

Although dance-like rhythms dominated the initial movement, lyrical expression prevails in the second. This portion of the concerto opens with a melody sung by oboe, then passing to the strings while the solo violin weaves counterpoint around it. MacMillan proceeds to vary and develop this material in a series of episodes. But as in the first movement, he takes an unexpected turn into new material, again redolent of Celtic folk music. The composer calls this passage "a hazy, remembered amalgam of old Irish tunes" providing "a memory of childhood."

The final movement, MacMillan says, has both "the physical energy of the first but some of the singing quality of the second, while introducing a new feeling of burlesque." Again, there are surprising developments, chiefly in the form of words spoken by members of the orchestra. In German they intone a phrase MacMillan recalls hearing in his dreams: "Eins, zwei, drei, vier: Meine Mutter, tanz mit mir." ("One, two, three, four: my mother, dance with me." This invocation to the composer's recently deceased mother propels the composition into darker territory. The music seems to grow distraught and reckless; it detours to a surreal waltz and finally builds to a tragic climax and a cadenza solo for the violin. Having achieved, it seems, a measure of cathartic release, the piece moves quickly to its conclusion.

### PYOTR IL'YICH TCHAIKOVSKY

Symphony No. 4 in F minor, op. 36

A COMPOSER IN CRISIS "I write," the great Russian composer Pyotr Tchai-kovsky once declared, "so that I may pour my feelings into my music." This is, of course, a highly Romantic attitude toward the art of composition, and one that suggests an autobiographical element in at least some of Tchaikovsky's works, veiled though their personal meanings may be. Nowhere is this more true than in the composer's Fourth Symphony.

Tchaikovsky completed this work late in 1877 following the most harrowing emotional crisis of his life. Earlier that year, in what was surely a desperate attempt to quell his homosexuality and find some measure of the domestic tranquility for which he longed, he had entered into a hasty marriage with a young woman who had once been a student at the Moscow Conservatory, where Tchaikovsky taught. Their union was brief and disastrous. Within weeks Tchaikovsky suffered an almost complete nervous collapse and attempted suicide. The marriage was dissolved and the composer eventually recovered enough composure to resume working. But he emerged from the ordeal convinced that he was destined to a life of personal torment.

WRESTLING WITH FATE This background is keenly relevant to the Fourth Symphony. We know from his correspondence and diary that Tchaikovsky conceived the work as a musical narrative of predestined suffering and a search for solace. In a letter, he went on to describe this narrative as a struggle against "Fate,



**Born** May 7, 1840, Kamsko-Votkinsk, Russia

### **Died** November 6, 1893, St. Petersburg

### **First Performance** February 22, 1878, in Moscow, Nikolay Rubinstein

Moscow, Nikolay Rubinstein conducted the orchestra of the Russian Music Society

## **STL Symphony Premiere** January 23, 1905, Alfred Ernst conducting

### Most Recent STL Symphony Performance

October 30, 2013, with Steven Jarvi conducting in Cape Girardeau, Missouri

### Scoring

2 flutes piccolo 2 oboes 2 clarinets 2 bassoons 4 horns 2 trumpets 3 trombones tuba timpani percussion strings

### **Performance Time** approximately 44 minutes

which prevents our hopes of happiness from being realized, ... a constant, relentless spiritual torment." That struggle results sometimes in agitation and despair, sometimes in attempts to escape into fantasies. "So life swings," Tchaikovsky wrote, "between cruel reality and ephemeral dreams of happiness." The music of the symphony's first movement mirrors the abrupt alternation of these contrasting emotional states. (Tchaikovsky identified the horn call that opens the symphony as signifying the sternness of fate.)

The second movement represents further effort to evade "cruel reality" through indulgence in pleasant memories. The third movement, Tchaikovsky stated, "expresses nothing so definite. Rather, it is a succession of capricious arabesques that pass through the mind when one has had a little wine and feels the first glow of intoxication." In the finale, temporary release is gained through revelry and pleasure. "But no sooner do you abandon yourself to merriment," the composer observed, "than Fate reappears, reminding you of your suffering. Others pay no attention to your sorrow.... Join them, and life will yet be bearable."

All this raises questions that have persistently surrounded narrative, or "program," music: How concretely can any program be embodied in music? Is knowledge or acceptance of the program a prerequisite for appreciating the composition? Tchaikovsky himself was ambivalent on this point. "Most assuredly my symphony has a program," he told the critic and composer Sergey Taneyev, referring to the work that closes our concert, "but a program that cannot be expressed in words; the very attempt would be ludicrous."

Perhaps the essential thing is that this symphony partakes of Tchaikovsky's unique sense of melody, rhythm, and orchestral color, not that it relates any specific details of his biography. But one can ponder such issues indefinitely. Ultimately, the choice of how to hear this symphony, and what to hear in it, is up to each listener.

Program notes © 2015 by Paul Schiavo

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David Robertson and the St. Louis Symphony perform Debussy's *Nocturnes* and Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 4 at New York City's Carnegie Hall on March 20.



Vadim Repin most recently performed with the St. Louis Symphony in September 2007.

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### **VADIM REPIN**

WHITAKER FOUNDATION GUEST ARTIST

Born in Siberia in 1971, Vadim Repin began playing the violin at the age of five. At age 11, Repin won the gold medal in all age categories in the Wienawski Competition and gave his recital debuts in Moscow and St. Petersburg. In 1985, at 14, he made his debuts in Tokyo, Munich, Berlin, and Helsinki; a year later he debuted at Carnegie Hall. In 1987, Repin became the youngest ever winner of the prestigious Reine Elisabeth Concours violin competition.

Recent highlights have included tours with the London Symphony Orchestra and Valery Gergiev, and collaborations with Christian Thielemann in Tokyo, with Riccardo Muti in New York, with Riccardo Chailly in Leipzig, and with Vladimir Jorowski on a tour of Australia with the London Philharmonic Orchestra. Repin appeared in recitals with pianist Itamar Golan in Boston, Washington D.C., and New York City. After acclaimed premieres of the violin concerto written for him by James MacMillan in London, Philadelphia, New York's Carnegie Hall, the Salle Pleyel in Paris, and Amsterdam's Concertgebouw, Repin reprised the piece at the 2013 BBC Proms with the BBC Scottish Symphony and Donald Runnicles, culminating in a sold out Royal Albert Hall performance.

Engagements last season included chamber music in Paris and Lyon with Denis Matsuev, Jean-Yves Thibaudet, Gautier Capuçon, Alexander Kniazev, and other friends; recitals in Italy, Spain, France, and the United States; and a series at Japan's Pacific Music Festival. Highlights of the current season include a European tour with Orchestre de la Suisse Romande under Neeme Jarvi, and concerts in Vienna with Kent Nagano and Lionel Bringuier in both the Musikverein and the Konzerthaus. In March 2014, as Artistic Director, Repin presented the first Trans-Siberian Festival of the Arts in Novosibirsk's magnificent new concert hall.

Repin lives in Vienna and plays on the 1743 "Bonjour" violin by Guarneri del Gesù.

Vadim Repin's recordings are available on Deutsche Grammophon and Erato/Warner Classics.

### **AMY KAISER**

AT&T FOUNDATION CHAIR

One of the country's leading choral directors, Amy Kaiser celebrates her 20th season as Director of the St. Louis Symphony Chorus in 2014-15. Kaiser has conducted the St. Louis Symphony in Handel's Messiah, Schubert's Mass in E-flat, Vivaldi's Gloria, and sacred works by Haydn and Mozart as well as Young People's Concerts. She has made eight appearances as guest conductor for the Berkshire Choral Festival in Sheffield, Massachusetts, Santa Fe, and at Canterbury Cathedral. As Music Director of the Dessoff Choirs in New York for 12 seasons, she conducted many performances of major works at Lincoln Center. Other conducting engagements include concerts at Chicago's Grant Park Music Festival and more than fifty performances with the Metropolitan Opera Guild. Principal Conductor of the New York Chamber Symphony's School Concert Series for seven seasons, Kaiser also led many programs for the 92nd Street Y's acclaimed Schubertiade. She has conducted more than twenty-five operas, including eight contemporary premieres.

A frequent collaborator with Professor Peter Schickele on his annual PDQ Bach concerts at Carnegie Hall, Kaiser made her Carnegie Hall debut conducting PDQ's Consort of Choral Christmas Carols. She also led the Professor in PDQ Bach's Canine Cantata "Wachet Arf" with the New Jersey Symphony.

Kaiser has led master classes in choral conducting at Indiana University Jacobs School of Music, served as faculty for a Chorus America conducting workshop, and as a panelist for the National Endowment for the Arts.

Amy Kaiser has prepared choruses for the New York Philharmonic, Ravinia Festival, Mostly Mozart Festival and Opera Orchestra of New York. She also served as faculty conductor and vocal coach at Manhattan School of Music and the Mannes College of Music. An alumna of Smith College, she was awarded the Smith College Medal for outstanding professional achievement.



Amy Kaiser prepares the chorus for the Symphony season finale, Verdi's *Aida*, in May.

### WOMEN OF THE ST. LOUIS SYMPHONY CHORUS 2014-2015

Amy Kaiser Ellen Henschen
Director Allison Hoppe

Heather Humphrey

Leon Burke III Kerry H. Jenkins
Assistant Director Patricia Kofron
Debby Lennon

Gail Hintz Gina Malone Accompanist Jei Mitchell

Johanna Noel Nordhorn Susan Patterson Heather McKenzie Patterson

Manager Susan Patterson Sarah Jane Price

Joy Boland Valerie Reichert
Cherstin Byers Kate Reimann
Alyssa Claire Callaghan Patti Ruff Riggle

Victoria Carmichael Michelle Suzanne Rose

Jessica Klingler Cissell Maureen Taylor Laurel Dantas Natanja Tomich

Jamie Lynn Eros Samantha Dane Wagner

Heather Fehl Nicole C. Weiss

Lara Gerassi Mary Murphy Wissinger

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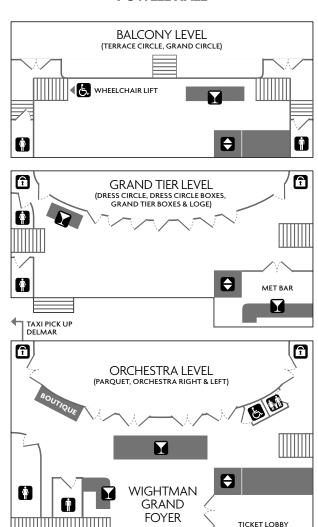
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