# CONCERT PROGRAM October 23-24, 2015

John Storgårds, conductor Lars Vogt, piano Kate Reimann, soprano Jeffrey Heyl, bass-baritone

**BEETHOVEN** Egmont Overture, op. 84 (1809-10)

(1770-1827)

**SCHUMANN** Piano Concerto in A minor, op. 54 (1841-45)

(1810-1856)

Allegro affettuoso Intermezzo: Andantino grazioso— Allegro vivace

Lars Vogt, piano

INTERMISSION

NIELSEN Symphony No. 3, op. 27, "Sinfonia espansiva" (1910-11)

(1865-1931)

Allegro espansivo Andante pastorale Allegretto un poco Finale: Allegro

Kate Reimann, soprano Jeffrey Heyl, bass-baritone

# **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

These concerts are part of the Wells Fargo Advisors Orchestral Series.

These concerts are sponsored by Steinway Piano Gallery.

John Storgårds is the Sid and Jean Grossman Guest Artist.

Lars Vogt is the Charles V. Rainwater, III Guest Artist.

The concert of Friday, October 23, is underwritten in part by a generous gift from Mr. and Mrs. Harvard K. Hecker.

The concert of Saturday, October 24, is underwritten in part by a generous gift from Margaret P. Gilleo and Charles J. Guenther, Jr.

Pre-Concert Conversations are sponsored by Washington University Physicians.

Large print program notes are available through the generosity of the Bellefontaine Cemetery and Arboretum and are located at the Customer Service table in the foyer.

# FROM THE STAGE

Kristin Ahlstrom, Associate Principal Second Violin, on John Storgårds: "It's great to work with a conductor who plays your instrument well. (Storgårds was a professional violinist before he decided to go back to school to study conducting). There are several violinist/conductors that have come to St. Louis a number of times: Peter Oundjian, Jaap van Zweden, and Storgårds to name a few, and they know how to ask the string section to do things using our shared vocabulary.

"Storgårds has a sort of magnetic intensity about him, and he looks directly into our eyes when he's conducting, but he does it without being intimidating. Nielsen's 'Sinfonia espansiva' is in excellent hands, and I think it will be a real crowd-pleaser."



John Storgårds

# A PASSIONATE STRUGGLE

BY RENÉ SPENCER SALLER

"There is scarcely any passion without struggle."— Albert Camus, *The Myth of Sisyphus* 

# **TIMELINKS**

1809-10

### **BEETHOVEN**

Egmont Overture, op. 84 Napoleonic wars expand French Empire across Europe

1841-45

# **SCHUMANN**

Piano Concerto in A minor, op. 54 Schumann's Symphony Nos. 1 & 4 premiere

1910-11

#### **NIELSEN**

Symphony No. 3, op. 27, "Sinfonia espansiva" Russia exerts influence over Finland All three works on this program are the products of struggle. When Beethoven wrote his *Egmont* Overture, the 39-year-old composer had every reason to despair. His city was under occupation, his latest love interest had spurned him, and his ears were roaring and screeching incessantly. He had a reputation for grumpiness—under the circumstances, who wouldn't?—but his flinty idealism held fast.

Robert Schumann suffered from a serious mental illness, and his home life, though mostly happy, was chaotic enough for reality television. Imagine the opening moments of a Schumann Show episode: babies and toddlers swarming underfoot: an overworked wife and mother who just happens to be the greatest piano virtuosa of her age; and an eccentric-genius dad who composes feverishly during his manic phases and hardly at all during his depressive jags. Schumann's Piano Concerto encompasses both emotional extremes, along with every nuance between them, but self-expression isn't the end game. The work connects the soloist to the orchestra, the piano to the oboe, the clarinet to the strings. "Only connect!" E.M. Forster would write some 60 years later. Schumann understood that imperative. To connect is to live, and vice versa: it's as simple, and as difficult, as that.

For Carl Nielsen, life had been a struggle since the day he was born, 150 years ago, into a very large, very poor family on the Danish island of Fyn. He was exceptionally gifted, sure, but more important, he was a scrapper. Composition, like everything else in his life, involved problem solving, and he wouldn't settle for easy answers. Grounded in a harmonic language so original that it still sounds fresh today, Nielsen's Symphony No. 3 plunges past late Romanticism into a singularly modern, unmistakably Scandinavian style. At a celebration of Nielsen's centennial 50 years ago, Leonard Bernstein announced that Nielsen's

time had come, but he spoke too soon. Many recent critics, such as Alex Ross, have proposed that Nielsen is the most underrated composer of the 20th century. Maybe this year, in the waning months of his sesquicentennial, we'll catch up to the Great Dane. If we don't, so what? In Nielsen, as in life, the pleasure is in the striving.

# **LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN**

Egmont Overture, op. 84

FROM MISERY TO MEANING Late in 1809 Beethoven accepted a commission to write an overture and incidental music for a revival of Goethe's Egmont. With its themes of liberation, equality, and sacrifice, Goethe's 20-year-old verse drama was profoundly meaningful to Beethoven. Based on actual historical events, Goethe's story takes place in the 16th century, when Spain ruled the Netherlands. Its eponymous hero is a Flemish statesman and general who pleads for tolerance and is convicted of treason. Before his execution, his dead wife appears to him in a vision and promises that their people will be free again. The plot must have struck Beethoven as painfully apt. Vienna, his adopted home, was occupied by France during much of 1809. In April the composer complained in a letter, "What a destructive, disorderly life I see and hear around me, nothing but drums, cannons, and human misery in every form." When the din became unbearable, he hid in his brother's cellar and wedged his head between pillows.

Although Franz Liszt hadn't yet coined the term "symphonic poem," the *Egmont* Overture fits the definition. Dark, urgent, and dramatic, it isn't just sonic scene-painting; it tells a story and shapes our emotional responses. In *Beethoven: Anguish and Triumph*, Jan Swafford demonstrates how form follows function: "A stark orchestral unison begins the overture; then comes a darkly lumbering gesture in low strings, evoking the burden of oppression. The key is F minor, for Beethoven a tragic, death-tinted tonality." Although the play ends with the hero's execution, Goethe called for a "symphony of victory," and Beethoven delivered just that with his F-major



**Born** December 16, 1770, Bonn

# **Died** March 26, 1827, Vienna

**First Performance** June 15, 1810, in Vienna

**STL Symphony Premiere** October 1, 1881, Joseph Otten conducting

# Most Recent STL Symphony Performance

February 6, 2010, David Robertson conducting

# **Scoring**

2 flutes piccolo 2 oboes

2 clarinets 2 bassoons

4 horns 2 trumpets

timpani strings

# **Performance Time** approximately 9 minutes



**Born** June 8, 1810, in Saxony

# **Died** July 29, 1856, near Bonn

### **First Performance**

December 4, 1845, in Dresden, under the direction of Ferdinand Hiller, Clara Schumann played the solo part

# **STL Symphony Premiere** January 24, 1913, Marion Bauer was soloist, with Max Zach

was soloist, with Max Zach conducting

# Most Recent STL Symphony Performance

November 5, 2011, Eric Le Sage was soloist, with Stéphane Denève conducting

# **Scoring**

solo piano

2 flutes

2 oboes 2 clarinets

2 bassoons

2 horns

2 trumpets timpani

strings

#### **Performance Time**

31 minutes

coda. Count Egmont's death is marked by a brief silence; it's not irrelevant, but it's also not the point. *Egmont* ends in triumph, not in tragedy. The overture's conclusion foretells a freedom that only Beethoven—the stubborn dreamer, the Enlightenment's eternal child—could imagine. Mired in misery, he still believed in joy.

#### **ROBERT SCHUMANN**

Piano Concerto in A minor, op. 54

A TRICKY HYBRID Since at least 1827, Schumann had been trying, and failing, to write a piano concerto. In 1839, the year before their marriage, he wrote to Clara Wieck about his creative struggle: "Concerning concertos, I've already said to you they are hybrids of symphony, concerto, and big sonata. I see that I can't write a concerto for virtuosi and have to think of something else." (If he sounds testy, imagine the pressure he must have been getting from his virtuosa fiancée.)

In 1841, he gave his young bride the *Fantasie* in A minor for piano and orchestra. She was delighted with the single-movement work, remarking in their marriage diary that "the piano is most skillfully interwoven with the orchestra; it is impossible to think of one without the other." But after two private performances, the *Fantasie* foundered. Unable to sell it to a publisher, Schumann put it aside and focused on chamber music while his depression worsened.

FROM FANTASIE TO CONCERTO At the end of 1844, a particularly wretched year, the Schumann clan moved to Dresden, and Robert returned to the concerto challenge. This time he had a plan. After some revisions, the *Fantasie* became the first movement of a concerto. In 1845 he added an intermezzo and a finale. Taken together, the three movements fulfill a promise he had made in an essay published six years earlier: "We must await the genius who will show us in a newer and more brilliant way how orchestra and piano may be combined, how the soloist, dominant at the keyboard, may unfold the wealth of his instrument and his art, while the orchestra, no longer a mere spectator, may interweave its manifold facets into

the scene." He was that genius, of course, and, masculine pronoun notwithstanding, Clara was the soloist at the Dresden premiere on December 4, 1845.

Clara did more than perform the work over and over again until her death, a half-century later. She is encoded into its DNA. Take the lambent, yearning main theme, first sung by the oboe. As the late Michael Steinberg explained, "Bearing in mind that what we call B-natural the Germans call H, you can see that the first four notes of the oboe theme could be taken to spell Chiara, or CHiArA, using those letters that have musical counterparts (C/B/A/A) in this Italian version of Clara's name...."

Despite being composed over four turbulent years, the concerto is a miracle of coherence. Schumann spun out a wealth of melodies for his second and third movements by reconfiguring the first movement's main theme. The lustrous intermezzo shows off the skills he had honed during his chamber-music sabbatical. The finale contains some blazing bravura passages, certainly, but they're not the central concern. Whether forging new melodic paths or supporting other instruments, the piano is always essential, but that doesn't make it most important. Listen to the back-and-forth of the winds and the piano in the opening movement. Listen to the fervent cello-piano pairing in the Intermezzo's second theme. Listen to the ways in which the opposing rhythms of two- and three-beat patterns—"hemiola," the music-nerds call it—galvanize the finale. This concerto shines because of its relationships.

#### **CARL NIELSEN**

Symphony No. 3, op. 27, "Sinfonia espansiva"

HEADING HOME Between 1910 and 1911, when Carl Nielsen composed his Symphony No. 3, he was employed as second conductor of the Royal Theater, a position he had held for two years with little hope of advancement. Although a decade had elapsed since the premiere of his Second Symphony, the 45-year-old composer hadn't been slacking. As always, he needed to do something new, and his Third Symphony would prove to be his breakthrough. Over more than 30 minutes, the Third welds ruddy, folk-flavored melodies to restless rhythms, mixing lusty dances and yearning rhapsodies. Nielsen dismantles conventional formal procedures, but he doesn't substitute anarchy. One of his trademarks—what the Nielsen scholar Robert Simpson called "progressive tonality"—is to end a symphony in a key different from that of the opening: in other words, the home key is a destination, but we won't recognize it until we get there. In 1911, this key-hopping habit was downright subversive; even for 21st-century, post-post-whatever listeners, Nielsen's tonal expeditions destabilize and electrify.

THE WORK OF LIFE The first movement bears the tempo marking "Allegro espansivo," which inspired Nielsen's subtitle for the work: "Sinfonia espansiva." As Simpson explained, Nielsen understood "espansiva" to mean "the outward growth of the mind's scope and the expansion of life that comes from it." Nielsen assigned descriptive subtitles to four of his six symphonies, but as he explained years later, in a newspaper interview, the names didn't matter



**Born** June 9, 1865, on the island of Fyn

# **Died** October 3, 1931, in Copenhagen

# First Performance February 28, 1912, in Copenhagen, Nielsen conducted the Royal Danish Orchestra

# **STL Symphony Premiere** This week

# Scoring

3 flutes piccolo 3 oboes English horn 3 clarinets 3 bassoons contrabassoon 4 horns 3 trumpets 3 trombones tuba timpani strings

# **Performance Time** approximately 39 minutes

much: "My first symphony was nameless.... But then came *The Four Temperaments, Espansiva*, and *The Inextinguishable*, actually just different names for the same thing, the only thing that music can express when all is said and done: the resting powers as opposed to the active ones."

The Third Symphony begins with a machinegun barrage of a single note, A, which sounds 26 times, speeding up as the intensity mounts. The second movement—Nielsen called it a "landscape Andante"—is serene and luminous, with the highly unusual feature of a soprano and baritone vocalizing on the vowel "Ah." Nielsen's manuscript reveals that the slow movement was originally all-instrumental. Toward the end Nielsen added the two vocal parts accompanied by the following sentences: "All thoughts vanished. I lie beneath the sky." He ultimately deleted the text, but the spellbound, songful aura remained.

For a 1931 performance of the work, in Stockholm, Nielsen wrote program notes for each movement: "The first movement was meant as a gust of energy and life affirmation blown out into the wide world. The second movement is the absolute opposite...the peaceful mood that one could imagine in Paradise. The third movement is a thing that cannot really be described, because both evil and good are manifested without any real settling of the issue. By contrast, the finale is perfectly straightforward: a hymn to work and the healthy activity of everyday life. Not a gushing homage to life, but a certain expansive happiness about being able to participate in the work of life...."

With his typical ambivalence, he undercut the descriptions with a caveat: "I must be permitted to emphasize that my remarks must in no way be viewed as a program. The art of music cannot express anything at all conceptual, and [my] remarks... must therefore be conceived as a private matter between the music and myself.

Program notes © 2015 by René Spencer Saller

# **JOHN STORGÅRDS**

SID AND JEAN GROSSMAN GUEST ARTIST

Chief Conductor of the Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra and Principal Guest Conductor of BBC Philharmonic Orchestra and the National Arts Centre Orchestra in Ottawa, John Storgårds has a dual career as a conductor and violin virtuoso and is widely recognized for his creative flair for programming and his commitment to contemporary music. He additionally holds the title of Artistic Director of the Chamber Orchestra of Lapland and was the Chief Conductor of the Tampere Philharmonic from 2005-08.

Storgårds appears with such orchestras as WDR Symphony Orchestra in Cologne, Bamberg Symphony, Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, Netherlands Radio Symphony Orchestra, BBC Symphony, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Zurich's Tonhalle Orchestra, and the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, as well as all of the major Scandinavian orchestras and the Sydney, Melbourne, and New Zealand symphonies. Soloists with whom he collaborates include Yefim Bronfman, Colin Currie, Sol Gabetta, Håkan Hardenberger, Karita Mattila, Matti Salminen, Gil Shaham, Baiba Skride, Christian Tetzlaff, Jean-Yves Thibaudet, and Frank Peter Zimmermann.

Storgårds made his North American debut with the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra during the 2005-06 season. Since then, he has appeared with the Boston Symphony at Tanglewood, the Cleveland Orchestra at Blossom, and with the National, Toronto, Detroit, Atlanta, Montreal, Cincinnati, Indianapolis, and Houston symphonies. During the 2015-16 season, he makes his debuts with the New York Philharmonic and the Baltimore and Vancouver symphonies; begins his tenure as the Principal Guest Conductor of the National Arts Centre Orchestra; and returns to the Toronto and Houston symphonies.

Highlights of John Storgårds' 2015-16 season in Europe include a return to the Proms with the BBC Philharmonic, a European tour as well as a tour to Mexico with the Helsinki Philharmonic to mark the 150th birthday of Jean Sibelius, his Japanese debut with the NHK Symphony, and recordings with the Gothenburg Symphony and Oslo Philharmonic.



John Storgårds most recently conducted the St. Louis Symphony in October 2014.



Lars Vogt most recently performed with the St. Louis Symphony in September 2013.

### **LARS VOGT**

CHARLES V. RAINWATER. III GUEST ARTIST

Lars Vogt has established himself as one of the leading musicians of his generation. Born in the German town of Düren in 1970, he first came to public attention when he won second prize at the 1990 Leeds International Piano Competition and has enjoyed a varied career for nearly twenty-five years. His versatility as an artist ranges from the core classical repertoire of Mozart, Beethoven, Schumann, and Brahms to the romantics Grieg, Tchaikovsky, and Rachmaninoff through the dazzling Lutoslawski concerto. Vogt is now increasingly working with orchestras both as conductor and conducting from the keyboard. His recent appointment as Music Director of the Royal Northern Sinfonia at the Sage, Gateshead in Newcastle, U.K., beginning with the 2015-16 season, reflects this new development in his career.

During his prestigious career, Vogt has performed with many of the world's great orchestras including the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Berlin Philharmonic, Vienna Philharmonic, London Philharmonic, London Symphony Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, Boston Symphony, Dresden Staatskappelle, NHK Symphony, and Orchestre de Paris. He has collaborated with some of the world's most prestigious conductors including Sir Simon Rattle, Mariss Jansons, Claudio Abbado, and Andris Nelsons. His special relationship with the Berlin Philharmonic has continued with regular collaborations following his appointment as their first ever "Pianist in Residence" in the 2003-04 season.

Highlights of Lars Vogt's 2015-16 season include appearances with the London, Vienna, and RSB Berlin symphonies as well as with the Orchestre de Paris; a recital tour with performances in Paris, Barcelona, and Dresden; and in the U.S., performances with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra; a return appearance at New York's Mostly Mozart Festival; and a trio tour with Christian and Tanja Tetzlaff with performances in San Francisco, Vancouver, New York, Boston, and Toronto.

#### **KATE REIMANN**

Soprano Kate Reimann is a highly valued artist in the St. Louis community. She has performed with all four St. Louis opera companies, including Gateway Opera, a chamber opera company she co-founded. Recent roles include Waldvogel in Siegfried with Union Avenue Opera, The Widow in The Boor and Laetitia in The Old Maid and the Thief with Gateway Opera, Contessa Almaviva in The Marriage of Figaro with Vancouver Summer Opera, and Sarah in The Ballad of Baby Doe with Winter Opera Saint Louis. In 2014 Reimann sang in the United States premiere of Athanasios Argianas' work, A Canon for Three Voices with the Pulitzer Arts Foundation. As a principal singer with the St. Louis Symphony Chorus, she has made three trips to Carnegie Hall and covered solos in Brahms's Ein deutsches Requiem, Mozart's Requiem, Messiah, and Carmina burana. Kate Reimann received her Master of Music degree from Washington University in 2012.



Kate Reimann most recently sang as a soloist with the Symphony in January 2015.

# JEFFREY HEYL

Jeffrey Heyl holds degrees from the Eastman School of Music, Hartt School of Music, and the University of Iowa. He presently teaches voice at Lindenwood University, Urshan College, and the Community Music School. He is also Director of Music and Worship at Green Trails United Methodist Church. Heyl has sung extensively and has appeared in opera, oratorio, recital, and musical theater, including leading roles in I Pagliacci, Cavalleria rusticana, Susannah, Die Fledermaus, and Amahl and the Night Visitors. In oratorio he has appeared in Messiah, Elijah, Carmina burana, Ein deutsches Requiem, Beethoven's Symphony No. 9, Songs of a Wayfarer, and the Midwest premiere of Mark Hayes's Requiem with conductor Kevin McBeth. He has appeared with the St. Louis Symphony with conductors David Robertson and Nicholas McGegan, and in Summer Sun, Winter Moon, where he sang the part of Raven with the composer Robert Kapilow conducting.



Jeffrey Heyl most recently sang as a soloist with the St. Louis Symphony in January 2015.

# **HOOKS**

If you love the music you hear in this concert, you'll want to come back for more later in the season

# **HALEN PLAYS BEETHOVEN: March 18-20**

Jun Märkl, conductor; David Halen, violin

BEETHOVEN Fidelio Overture
BEETHOVEN Violin Concerto
SCHUMANN Symphony No. 3, "Rhenish"

Beethoven and Schumann are combined again for very Romantic concerts.



David Halen

# MORE SCHUMANN:

KRISTIN AHLSTROM. ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL SECOND VIOLIN

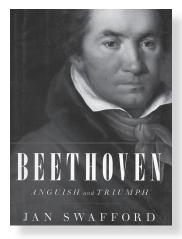
"The first time Storgårds came to St. Louis, we played Schumann's Symphony No. 4, and I remember thinking how beautifully he shaped the phrases. I'm looking forward to playing more Schumann with him."



Kristin Ahlstrom

# 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.



# Jan Swafford, Beethoven: Anguish and Triumph **Houghton Mifflin Harcourt**

With a lot of Beethoven bios out there, this is one of the most recent and one of the best if you want to invest yourself in a deep, long, and rewarding read.

# Ted Libby, "The Life and Music of Robert Schumann"

npr.org

When the Schumann bicentennial rolled around few years ago, NPR and Ted Libby produced this fascinating audio profile.

# Tom Huizenga, "Evenly Odd: Carl Nielsen's **Distinctive Symphonies**" npr.org

If you have an easy day or evening, just Google away and find these cool NPR music profiles.

Read the program notes online, listen to podcasts, and watch the St. Louis Symphony musicians talk about the music. Go to stlsymphony.org. Click "Connect."

Keep up with the backstage life of the St. Louis Symphony, as chronicled by Symphony staffer Eddie Silva, via stlsymphony.org/blog.

The St. Louis Symphony is on









# ST. LOUIS SYMPHONY YOUTH ORCHESTRA



# **Sunday, November 8 at 3pm** Steven Jarvi. conductor

BORODIN In the Steppes of Central Asia RIMSKY-KORSAKOV Capriccio espagnol DVOŘÁK Symphony No. 9, "From the New World"

\$1 per ticket service fee

Series sponsored by Children's Hospital St. Louis

with additional support from the G.A., Jr. and Kathryn M. Buder Charitable Foundation and the ESCO Technologies Foundation

# **AUDIENCE INFORMATION**

#### **BOX OFFICE HOURS**

Monday-Friday, 10am-5pm; Saturday, 12pm-5pm; Closed Holidays and Sundays.

#### TO PURCHASE TICKETS

Box Office: 314-534-1700 Toll Free: 1-800-232-1880 Online: stlsymphony.org Fax: 314-286-4111

A service charge is added to all telephone and online orders.

### SEASON TICKET EXCHANGE POLICIES

If you can't use your season tickets, simply exchange them for another Wells Fargo Advisors subscription concert up to one hour prior to your concert date. To exchange your tickets, please call the Box Office at 314-534-1700 and be sure to have your tickets with you when calling.

#### **GROUP AND DISCOUNT TICKETS**

314-286-4155 or 1-800-232-1880 Any group of 10 or more is eligible for a discount on tickets for select Orchestral, Holiday, or Live at Powell Hall concerts. Call for pricing.

Special discount ticket programs are available for students, seniors, and police and public-safety employees. Visit stlsymphony.org for more information

#### **POLICIES**

You may store your personal belongings in lockers located on the Orchestra and Grand Tier Levels at a cost of 25 cents.

FM radio headsets are available at Customer Service.

Cameras and recording devices are distracting for the performers and audience members. Audio and video recording and photography are strictly prohibited during the concert. Patrons are welcome to take photos before the concert, during intermission, and after the concert.

Please turn off all watch alarms, cell phones, pagers, and other electronic devices before the start of the concert.

All those arriving after the start of the concert will be seated at the discretion of the House Manager.

Age for admission to STL Symphony and Live at Powell Hall concerts varies, however, for most events the required age is five or older. All patrons, regardless of age, must have their own tickets and be seated for all concerts. All children must be seated with an adult. Admission to concerts is at the discretion of the House Manager.

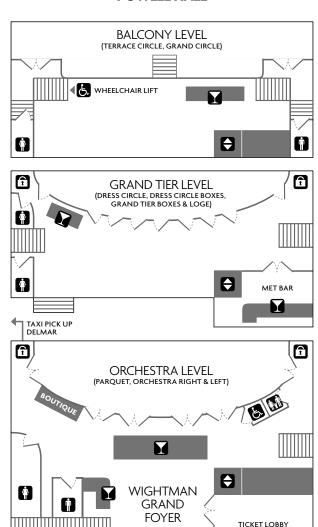
Outside food and drink are not permitted in Powell Hall. No food or drink is allowed inside the auditorium, except for select concerts.

Powell Hall is not responsible for the loss or theft of personal property. To inquire about lost items, call 314-286-4166.

### **POWELL HALL RENTALS**

Select elegant Powell Hall for your next special occasion. Visit: stlsymphony.org. Click "About Us," then "Hall Rental" for more information.

# **POWELL HALL**





Please make note of the EXIT signs in the auditorium. In the case of an emergency, proceed to the nearest EXIT near you.

CUSTOMER SERVICE