Hannu Lintu, conductor
Jonathan Chu, violin
Beth Guterman Chu, viola

**MOZART**
(1756-1791)  
Sinfonia concertante in E-flat major for Violin, Viola, and Orchestra, K. 364 (1779-80)
- Allegro maestoso
- Andante
- Presto

Jonathan Chu, violin
Beth Guterman Chu, viola

**INTERMISSION**

**SHOSTAKOVICH**
(1906-1975)  
Symphony No. 8 in C minor, op. 65 (1943)
- Adagio
- Allegretto
- Allegro non troppo—
- Largo—
- Allegretto
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

These concerts are part of the Wells Fargo Advisors series.

These concerts are presented by Thompson Coburn LLP.

Hannu Lintu is the Felix and Eleanor Slatkin Guest Artist.

The concert of Friday, April 10, includes free coffee and doughnuts provided through the generosity of Krispy Kreme.

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FROM THE STAGE

Beth Guterman Chu, Principal Viola, on Mozart’s Sinfonia concertante: “Mozart wrote for the viola tuned up a half step, so the viola is playing in D major instead of E-flat, which makes the passagework easier and makes for a brighter sound. Musicians stopped because violists got better. We can play E-flat without the tuning. I know of only one recording where it is done. I’m sure it changes the sound of the piece as we know it, with all open strings.

“There are two deterrents for playing Mozart’s way. One, when you retune, your instrument goes crazy; it’s bad for the instrument. Two, when you play music that way you’re hearing different notes than to which your ear is accustomed, and that can make you crazy.”
The beauties don’t die. The beauties don’t go away.

Dave Hickey—the writer, cultural commentator, polemicist, former gallery dealer, Texan who thinks bigger thoughts than most of us and writes those thoughts down more clearly and more provocatively than almost all of us—said this to me in the former Best Western on Lindell while he was donning his black art garb in preparation for a lecture at Washington University. I was a journalist then, claiming my privileged access by writing it all down.

Hickey was saying this to lots of folks back then. He was in his “beauty” phase, claiming that notions of beauty would be the principal driver of art-making in the soon-to-come new millennium. Beauty, in Hickey’s estimation, was to be thought of as a source of power, which attracts a community of desire, which may be subversive, which may distress accepted hierarchies, which may be socially and politically dangerous.

But one form of beauty does not supplant or bury another. People resist new forms of beauty because they think it may dismiss the old forms. Maybe for a time they do, but that’s fashion. Picasso did not erase Michelangelo; Beethoven did not conquer Bach. In the 21st century our ideas of beauty are as close to the values of the Renaissance and the Enlightenment as they have ever been. Even while Beck and Beyoncé steal the show, Mozart is far from forgotten.

Beauty, by its very nature, is political. If other members of the body politic hear beauty in that which is not status quo—a beauty that is not ordained—how will order be maintained? When Bob Dylan went electric at the Newport Folk Festival in 1965, he was breaking all the rules that others had set for him. When Robert Mapplethorpe photographed gay men having sex, it was condemned not because citizens would be shocked; it was feared because what if people came to think of such images as beautiful?

Mozart and Shostakovich made beauty in response to different callings, different attitudes, and different desires, but, essentially,
they both wrote to stir things up, to be heard, to claim a new order. And they composed so as to reside in beauty, which does not die, and does not go away.

**WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART**

Sinfonia concertante in E-flat major for Violin, Viola, and Orchestra, K. 364

**SURPLUS QUALITY** The beauty of Mozart, the beauty of his Sinfonia concertante in E-flat major specifically, are among the beauties that are most recognizable to us today. Mozart’s idea of beauty is deathless; it remains essential to our 21st-century critical judgment. To characterize that beauty, I turn to Maynard Solomon. Solomon’s biography of Mozart was such an enormous force when it appeared in 1995 that all other biographies that have come since must chart their own course in its wake. Mozart biographers after Solomon often devote a few pages, if not chapters, to argue how Solomon was right, or how Solomon was wrong. The main dispute is over Solomon’s characterization of the Mozart father-son relationship. Solomon takes a Freudian view—Leopold was the would-be tyrannical father, who would have devoured the son had Wolfgang not revolted. Their relationship was a constant battle over the son’s identity and autonomy. Solomon lays the theme on thick, and for me, gets to be more than a bit pushy. Other biographers cite the fond correspondence between father and son, and the obvious pride Leopold felt for his brilliant Wolfgang. They may have played the premiere of tonight’s work together for the Salzburg court. Fathers and sons always tangle, these biographers reason, Leopold and Wolfgang were no different. Mozart did not produce eternal music because of daddy issues.

But when Solomon takes a break from his principal argument, few write as well about what makes Mozart Mozart, and why he matters. For example: “Mozart’s mature instrumental music represents our civilization’s sign for the beautiful. We cannot think of him without thinking about beauty; we cannot refer to beauty without recalling the music. I believe this is so, not necessarily
because his works are more beautiful than those of other composers, though this may well be true, but because he created—or, at least, brought into the forefront of aesthetic consciousness—a special kind of musical beauty, one that thenceforth came to exemplify the idea of superlative beauty itself.” And what does Mozart’s “mature instrumental music do” that his earlier, more naive works don’t, according to Solomon? They contain “the excruciating, surplus quality that transforms loveliness into ecstasy, grace into sublimity, pleasure into rapture.”

**EXTREME BEAUTIES**  A mature realization of beauty contains an unease about beauty itself—its fragility, its precarious nature, its instability. Mozart had been scarred by disappointment and loss. His recent trip to Paris resulted in two devastations: Parisian society was less fond of the impetuous young man who had grown from the cuddly, exciting, child prodigal they had adored; and his mother, sent by Leopold to provide a watchful eye and a comforting spirit, died in Paris.

   Mozart was depressed and frustrated in dull Salzburg. He sulked a bit, for sure, and pissed off his father. He also made art—which is one thing that makes him so different from most 23-year-old sulking would-be artists.

   That, and what he makes. I turn to Solomon again, writing of Mozart’s post-Paris period, and of the Sinfonia concertante, K. 364, specifically, “…there is a shift toward quite unexpected conceptions of beauty, which now embody a sense of restlessness and instability, and even of the dangerous or uncanny…. Now extreme beauties embrace endangered sensibilities as Mozart traverses many paths that lead from fragmentation to restoration.”

   There’s a shiver of the modern in this: restlessness, instability, fragmentation, restoration, danger. Which leads us to Shostakovich 8.
DMITRY SHOSTAKOVICH
Symphony No. 8 in C minor, op. 65

A REQUIEM  If, as the American poet Wallace Stevens informed us early in the 20th century, “Death is the mother of beauty,” then what is mass death the mother of?
Shostakovich 8.

Shostakovich had been commissioned to write a great “Victory” Symphony, celebrating the Soviet Union’s triumph over Hitler. Shostakovich had just experienced international success. His Symphony No. 7, the “Leningrad” Symphony, premiered in that city while it was under siege. Prior to conductor Evgeny Mravinsky giving the downbeat to the Leningrad Philharmonic, Russian forces pushed back the German lines near the city with an artillery barrage, allowing for the symphony to be performed. The concert was broadcast live on radio around the world. With the victorious finale, Shostakovich became a worldwide hero, an artist patriot, a brave ally against Fascism. He appeared on the cover of Time magazine in a fireman’s helmet.

Now the tide of war had turned. The German armies were in full retreat and Soviet forces were unleashing their revenge on soldiers and citizens across Eastern Europe. In the summer of 1943, Shostakovich set to work on his Symphony No. 8, the follow-up to the glorious Seventh. He tried a few drafts, then stopped. He began again, and wrote a Requiem. The regime would not be pleased.

THE BEGINNING OF TERROR An estimated 20-million people died in Russia during World War II. What had they silently commissioned, this nation of the dead?

In 1943 such numbers had not been tallied or imagined, yet who in Russia had not lost another, a whole family, a whole village? At least those who had been lucky enough to be buried had earth to shield them from the tortured living. How many were simply lost, unknown, erased, rendered insignificant in the maw of war?

Shostakovich was caught between contradictory demands—that of a lethal regime; or that of the dead and those who had survived them.
I think of Shostakovich in his summer dacha, and I think of Rainer Maria Rilke at Duino Castle, near Trieste, prior to the Great War.

Who, if I cried out, would hear me among the angels’ hierarchies? and even if one of them pressed me suddenly against his heart: I would be consumed in that overwhelming existence. For beauty is nothing but the beginning of terror, which we still are just able to endure, and we are so awed because it serenely disdains to annihilate us. Every angel is terrifying.

(“The First Elegy,” Stephen Mitchell translation)

Shostakovich—caught between the terror of devils and of angels.

He made his choice. He knew what he would be making. He knew what he would be risking. Beauty has a way of infuriating authority, whether in Salzburg or in Moscow.

TO ENDURE From the first movement, anyone in attendance for the 1943 Moscow premiere would have known this night would end badly for Shostakovich. The mood is thick, dense, as if the low strings were emerging from black soil, as if this were the song the dead knew, the infinite choirs of dead. “Unremitting in its sheer intensity of feeling” the critic Robert Layton has written. It is less the soul of anguish, than the soullessness of anguish being sung. The vehement dotted rhythm in the low strings awakens a serene theme in the violins. A theme that is soon brutalized. A sonic violence ensues.

Two swift movements attempt to maintain the precarious balance of the first movement monolith. Yet these movements are nonetheless grotesque, pitiless with toccata-like rhythms that motor desperately. A heart, a nation of hearts, the drunken dances at millions of wakes.

A brilliant trumpet episode in F sharp, shifts the mood, leading to a tremendous climax and the penultimate movement, Largo—a very slow tempo. This is the most poignant and searching music of the symphony.

Pan the camera slowly, ever so slowly, across the desolation of the countryside, the world uprooted, villages are rubble, cities are rubble, smoldering fires, a people huddled and starved, and everywhere the dead, the battlefields where a new art of destruction is on exhibit. Pan the camera on and on, as Shostakovich’s theme returns again and again through various colors, various instruments in solitude against the slow undulation of bows.

In the final movement, Layton writes, “a kind of peace” is achieved, but it is “as much the peace of exhaustion and resignation as a real tranquility.” “Formalist, repulsive, ultra-individualistic … not a musical work at all,” the official criticism spat. And Shostakovich apologized. And endured. Because beauty does.

Program notes © 2015 by Eddie Silva
HANNU LINTU
FELIX AND ELEANOR SLATKIN GUEST ARTIST

Chief Conductor of the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra since August 2013, Hannu Lintu previously held the positions of Artistic Director and Chief Conductor of the Tampere Philharmonic Orchestra, Principal Guest Conductor with the RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra, Dublin, and Artistic Director of the Helsingborg Symphony and Turku Philharmonic orchestras.

Highlights of Lintu’s 2014-15 season include his debut with the Hallé Orchestra and appearances with the BBC Scottish Symphony, Warsaw Philharmonic, and Lahti Symphony orchestras, as well as WDR Sinfonieorchester Köln, Orquesta Simfònica de Barcelona, and Tokyo Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra. In the U.S. he returns to the Baltimore Symphony and makes his debut with the Detroit Symphony and Minnesota orchestras. Last season Lintu stepped in at short notice to conduct the Philharmonia Orchestra, and other recent engagements have included the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, MDR Sinfonieorchester Leipzig, and Orchestre national de Lyon; the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic and Gothenburg Symphony orchestras; and the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra and Houston Symphony.

Lintu has received several accolades for his recordings, including a 2011 Grammy nomination for Best Opera CD; plus Gramophone Award nominations for his recordings of Enescu’s Symphony No. 2, with the Tampere Philharmonic Orchestra, and the Violin Concertos of Sibelius and Thomas Adès with Augustin Hadelich and the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra.

Hannu Lintu studied cello and piano at the Sibelius Academy, where he later studied conducting with Jorma Panula. He participated in masterclasses with Myung-Whun Chung at the Accademia Chigiana in Siena, Italy.
Jonathan Chu rejoined the St. Louis Symphony in September as Assistant Principal Viola. He was previously a member of the orchestra’s Second Violin section in the 2006-07 season, and has been a member of both the Boston Symphony Orchestra and Philadelphia Orchestra viola sections. Distinguished in chamber and orchestral music, he performs on both violin and viola. As a member of the Philadelphia Orchestra’s viola section, he toured throughout Asia and Europe, and he has performed with many other ensembles including ECCO and Santa Fe Opera orchestras as a violinist, the Juilliard Orchestra as concertmaster, and the St. Paul and Orpheus chamber orchestras as guest principal. Chu has performed chamber music with the Musicians from Marlboro and in Caramoor’s Rising Stars series. With the Fader Piano Quartet, he was a prizewinner at the Coleman Competition in Pasadena, California. He is also a founding member of the Io String Quartet. Chu has attended festivals including Marlboro, Yellow Barn, and Taos, and has recorded with the rock band Vampire Weekend as both violinist and violist.

Chu attended Vanderbilt University, where he graduated summa cum laude with a bachelor of music degree along with a second major in economics, and received his master’s degree at the Juilliard School, where he studied with Robert Mann. He plays on a violin made in 1823 by Nicolas Lupot, a gift from his former teacher Marianne Pashler, and a viola made in 2004 by Hiroshi Iizuka.
Beth Guterman Chu joined the St. Louis Symphony as Principal Viola in January 2013. Chu was a member of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center and was Principal Violist in the IRIS Chamber Orchestra. As a chamber musician she has performed with distinguished artists and ensembles including Colin Carr, David Finckel, and Wu Han, members of the Guarneri Quartet, Gary Hoffman, Joseph Kalichstein, Edger Meyer, the Orion Quartet, Itzhak Perlman, Menahem Pressler, and Gil Shaham.

Chu has participated in many summer festivals including the Marlboro Music Festival, Music@Menlo, Steans Institute at Ravinia, Bravo Vail Valley Music Festival, Bridgehampton Chamber Music Festival, and the Aspen Music Festival and School. She has recorded on the Deutsche Grammophon, Tzadik, and Naxos labels, and has toured across the U.S., Europe, and Asia.

Chu received her Artist Diploma at the New England Conservatory studying with Kim Kashkashian, and her bachelor of music and master of music degrees from the Juilliard School studying with Masao Kawasaki and Misha Amory. Beth Guterman Chu’s husband Jonathan became Assistant Principal Viola in September. They live in St. Louis with their two sons.
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, when Shostakovich was branded a “formalist” by the Soviet regime, what did that mean?

Formalism: as vaguely defined by the Soviet censors, Shostakovich was guilty of making music that was more about form than content, modernist, art-for-art’s-sake, avant-garde, Western, and an insult to “the people,” without recognition of the glory of Russian folk traditions—you could wind up in the Gulag, dead, or both, for this crime.

PLAYING VIOLIN, PLAYING VIOLA:
JONATHAN CHU, ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL VIOLA

“Switching to violin feels most different in the right hand. You’ve got a larger sweet spot on the viola. The left hand doesn’t change much. There’s not as much drama on the viola—it’s more mellow.

“I’m partial to the E string on the violin. E-flat was a special key for Mozart, his most heartfelt key.

“You work hard on the viola to get that sound. Everything takes more effort on the viola. I press more on the viola, while the violin has more speed.”

Jonathan Chu
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.

Maynard Solomon, *Mozart: A Life*
Harper Perennial
For as annoying as it can be, Solomon’s 1995 Big Daddy of a bio remains a brilliantly told story and revealing analysis of the music

Elizabeth Wilson, *Shostakovich: A Life Remembered*
Princeton University Press
In its second edition, Wilson’s moving interviews with those who knew the composer are poignant and, at times, heartbreaking

Dave Hickey, *The Invisible Dragon: Essays on Beauty*
University of Chicago Press
Since I mentioned it … Hickey has revised and expanded his original 1993 provocation

Read the program notes online. Go to stlsymphony.org. Click “Connect,” then “Program Notes.”

Learn more about this season of anniversaries with videos and podcasts. Click “Connect,” then “10-50-135.”

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

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May 1-3
David Robertson, conductor; Allegra Lilly, harp; Michael Sanders, tuba

This concert has some sexy, sexy music: Bizet’s Carmen, Debussy’s Sacred and Profane Dances, and the steamiest of them all, Ravel’s Bolero.

Presented by the Thomas A. Kooyumjian Family Foundation
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