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2017-2018 • SEASON 73

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NICHOLAS WALLIN

ELGAR

Enigma Variations

JENNIFER HIGDON

Blue Cathedral

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WELCOME BACK TO OUR 73RD SEASON

Tonight's performance features the two winners of the symphony's 58th annual young artist competition: violinist Michelle Fu and pianist Nathan Hu.

Nearly 500 performing arts lovers attending the MCAF 2018 fundraiser *All You Need Is Love* contributed over \$100,000 the evening of March 10. After all of the event's ticket income and event costs are included, the remaining balance will be divided equally among each of the four sponsoring organizations: Mid-Columbia Ballet, Mid-Columbia Mastersingers, Mid-Columbia Musical Theater, and Mid-Columbia Symphony. Thank you to all who participated in this entertaining event.

For a number of years the Symphony has had a chair sponsorship program for its principals and the conductor. The Board's goal this season is to have sponsorships for all nineteen of the Symphony's principals, where last season saw only ten principals being sponsored. In addition to sponsorships for these principal seats, seated musicians, soloists, ensemble members, and even chorus members may be sponsored. These latter sponsorships may be for either the entire season or for an individual concert. Details are available in the concert program.

Your Symphony values its participation in the Fred Meyer Community Rewards and encourages its audience members to enroll in the program.

Be on the lookout for the April 19 special meeting of the Port of Kennewick commission. Renderings of the port's plans for the development of Vista Field will prominently feature the Arts Center Task Force's vision for the VISTA ARTS CENTER.

Finally, plan on attending *An Afternoon of Tafelmusik* described further on in this program. This event is limited to 50 patrons and takes place at Anelare Winery in Benton City. Shuttle transportation from the symphony's parking lot behind the MacHunter Building on Jadwin Avenue will be provided for an additional charge of \$10 per person.

Boyce Burdick, *Board President*

A Note from the President



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A Note from the Conductor

Nicholas Wallin

Good Evening and Welcome to tonight's concert! We are pleased to present two of our winners from our 58th annual Young Artist Competition on our program. It is always a pleasure to serve as one of the judges. My sincerest congratulations go not only to tonight's soloists, but also to our other division winners, and especially to all of the parents and teachers who support these talented students.

To balance out the program, I chose two pieces by Jennifer Higdon and Edward Elgar. Higdon's *Blue Cathedral* is an impressionist tone poem. Elgar's *Enigma Variations* is a collection of pieces that salute his friends and family. Please take a look at the program notes to learn a little bit more about both pieces.

As always, I thank you for your continued support of the Mid-Columbia Symphony. I hope to see you at our season finale in May! 🎻

SEASON TICKET RENEWAL
for the 2018–2019 season
will begin on May 19.

Concert Etiquette

- Please turn off cell phones & pagers.
- Patrons entering late will be admitted at the first natural break in the music and will be seated in the rear of the auditorium.
- Please do not applaud after individual movements. Wait until the entire piece is completed, as indicated by the conductor turning and facing the audience.
- Recording and use of cameras are forbidden.

Thank You

TONIGHT'S PROGRAM

THE MID-COLUMBIA SYMPHONY

PRESENTS

SOMETHING OLD, NEW, BORROWED & BLUE

SEASON CONCERT #4

MARCH 24, 2018 • RICHLAND HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM
NICHOLAS WALLIN, MUSIC DIRECTOR & CONDUCTOR

Blue Cathedral

JENNIFER HIGDON | B. 1962

Piano Concerto No. 1 in C Major, Op. 15

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN | 1770–1827

Nathan Hu, Piano

I. Allegro con brio

INTERMISSION

Violin Concerto No. 3 in B Minor, Op. 61

CAMILLE SAINT-SAËNS | 1835–1921

Michelle Fu, Violin

III. Molto moderato e maestoso—Allegro non troppo

Enigma Variations, Op. 36

EDWARD ELGAR | 1857–1934

Theme	VIII. W.N.
I. C.A.E.	IX. Nimrod
II. H.D.S.-P.	X. Dorabella
III. R.B.T.	XI. G.R.S.
IV. W.M.B.	XII. B.G.N.
V. R.P.A.	XIII. *** Romanza
VI. Isobel	XIV. E.D.U. Finale
VII. Troyte	



Blue Cathedral
JENNIFER HIGDON | B. 1962

NOTES BY JENNIFER HIGDON

Blue...like the sky. Where all possibilities soar. Cathedrals...a place of thought, growth, spiritual expression...serving as a symbolic doorway in to and out of this world. Blue represents all potential and the progression of journeys. Cathedrals represent a place of beginnings, endings, solitude, fellowship, contemplation, knowledge and growth. As I was writing this piece, I found myself imagining a journey through a glass cathedral in the sky. Because the walls would be transparent, I saw the image of clouds and blueness permeating from the outside of this church. In my mind's eye the listener would enter from the back of the sanctuary, floating along the corridor amongst giant crystal pillars, moving in a contemplative stance. The stained glass windows' figures would start moving with song, singing a heavenly music. The listener would float down the aisle, slowly moving upward at first and

then progressing at a quicker pace, rising towards an immense ceiling which would open to the sky...as this journey progressed, the speed of the traveler would increase, rushing forward and upward. I wanted to create the sensation of contemplation and quiet peace at the beginning, moving towards the feeling of celebration and ecstatic expansion of the soul, all the while singing along with that heavenly music.

These were my thoughts when The Curtis Institute of Music commissioned me to write a work to commemorate its 75th anniversary. Curtis is a house of knowledge—a place to reach towards that beautiful expression of the soul which comes through music. I began writing this piece at a unique juncture in my life and found myself pondering the question of what makes a life. The recent loss of my younger brother, Andrew Blue, made me reflect on the amazing journeys that we all

make in our lives, crossing paths with so many individuals singularly and collectively, learning and growing each step of the way.

This piece represents the expression of the individual and the group...our inner travels and the places our souls carry us, the lessons we learn, and the growth we experience. In tribute to my brother, I feature solos for the clarinet (the instrument he played) and the flute (the instrument I play). Because I am the older sibling, it is the flute that appears first in this dialog. At the end of the work, the two instruments continue their dialogue, but it is the flute that drops out and the clarinet that continues on in the upward progressing journey. This is a story that commemorates living and passing through places of knowledge and of sharing and of that song called life.

This work was commissioned and premiered in 2000 by the Curtis Institute of Music. 🎵



Enigma Variations, Op. 36
EDWARD ELGAR | 1857-1934

NOTES BY RICHARD THOMPSON

Although this work is commonly known by the title 'Enigma', the great unanswered question is exactly what the puzzle is supposed to be. In pencil, Elgar wrote the word 'enigma' by the theme after having completed composition of the entire work, and he later said that the riddle's "dark saying must be left unguessed." Each variation is accompanied by initials or a nickname, referring to the acquaintance of Elgar's whose personality is ostensibly represented. But this provides no mystery; the people in question can be easily identified.

Causing some consternation among music scholars is Elgar's comment that "through

and over the whole set another and larger theme goes, but is not played." This has led some to speculate that the 'enigma' theme is itself derived from another melody, perhaps one from a different composition, or even by a different composer. Yet no convincing candidate theme has been offered in support of this theory. Whatever the case, Elgar either lost interest in the 'enigma' gimmick or simply decided that the answer was best left unknown, since in his later life he referred to the work only as "my Variations." Regardless, the great success of the piece catapulted the composer to widespread renown; he received an honorary doctorate from Cambridge the year after the work

was first performed in 1899, and he came to be regarded almost overnight as the finest composer England had yet produced.

The work owes its lasting popularity to its colorful orchestration and its brilliantly defined characters. The theme itself is built on two contrasting though interwoven ideas; the first, in the minor, is patterned sequentially over a firm rising bass; the second is more flowing and rhapsodic in the major key. A cadence in the major leads into the first of the fourteen variations, which offer glimpses into Elgar's relationships with the following people:

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I. C.A.E.

The initials are those of Lady Elgar, and according to the composer the variation is "really a prolongation of the theme with what I wished to be romantic and delicate additions".

II. H.D.S-P.

Hew David Steuart-Powell was a well-known amateur pianist who frequently played chamber music with Elgar. His characteristic diatonic run over the keys before beginning to play is suggested. The theme appears in the bass.

III. R.T.B.

R B Townsend's reedy voice is parodied by a bassoon in this mazurka-like variation.

IV. W.M.B.

The initials stand for W Neath Baker, a country squire, gentleman and scholar. According to the composer, this variation depicts an occasion when WMB had forcibly read out the arrangements for carriages to assembled guests at a house party and then left the music room with an inadvertent bang of the door!

V. R.P.A.

The scholar and painter Richard Arnold, the son of Matthew Arnold, was a great lover of music and a self-taught pianist. According to Elgar his serious conversation was frequently broken up by whimsical and witty remarks.

VI. Isobel

Isabel Fitton was a Malvern lady, and a keen amateur viola player. The opening bar, a phrase made use of throughout the variation, is a basic student exercise in string crossing!

VII. Troyte

Arthur Troyte Griffith was a Malvern architect who designed Elgar's house, and the music hammers out great blocks of sound as if in preparation for the construction of some noble edifice. Troyte thought that the music represented himself and Elgar running for shelter having been caught in a thunderstorm.

VIII. W.N.

Winifred Norbury was the most musical member of a large family. There is in the music a suggestion of her characteristic laugh. After relaxing all the way down to a single note, held by the violins, the music moves directly into the following variation, without doubt the most celebrated of the set.

IX. Nimrod

August Johannes Jaeger of Novello & Co. was for many years Elgar's closest friend and a valued adviser. Jaeger is German for 'hunter' and Nimrod is 'the mighty hunter'. According to the composer, his noble variation is the record of a long summer

evening talk between the two men, when Jaeger discoursed eloquently on the slow movements of Beethoven.

X. Dorabella

Dorabella is a character from Mozart's opera *Così fan Tutti*, but it was also Elgar's nickname for his young acquaintance Dora Penny. Her poise is represented by the ballet-like grace of the variation, but she also had a slight stammer, to which Elgar alludes with lilted interruptions in the woodwind.

XI. G.R.S.

George Robertson Sinclair was for many years the organist at Hereford Cathedral. The variation, however, has nothing to do with organs or cathedrals. In Elgar's own words: "The first few bars were suggested by his great bulldog Dan falling into the River Wye (bar 1); his paddling upstream to find a landing place (bars 2 & 3); and his rejoicing bark on landing (2nd half of bar 5), GRS said "Set that to music!" I did; and here it is."

XII. B.G.N.

A meditative cello solo, such as might have been played by Basil Nevinson, an amateur musician of some distinction, and a close friend of the composer.

XIII. ***

The asterisks take the place of the name of a lady, possibly Lady Mary Trefusis, who was, at the time of the composition, on a sea voyage. The drums suggest the distant throb of a liner, over which the clarinet quotes a phrase from Mendelsohn's 'Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage'.

XIV. E.D.U.

'Edoo' was Lady Elgar's nickname for Elgar himself. The work was written at a time when friends were dubious and generally discouraging as to the composer's musical future, and this last variation serves to show Elgar's self confidence in the face of such doubts. References to Variation 1 (CAE) and Variation 9 (Nimrod), the two great influences on the life and art of the composer, are entirely fitting to the intention of this finale, the effect of which is cumulative, with the big climaxes arising out of the musical texture and finally the original theme emerging to ride triumphantly above the great swell of sound. ♪

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Nicholas Wallin
MUSIC DIRECTOR & CONDUCTOR



Nicholas Wallin returns in 2017-2018 for his tenth year as Music Director and Conductor of the Mid-Columbia Symphony. Wallin has garnered praise for his committed performances and his bold creative programming style, focusing on American music and collaborations with area musicians. While remaining firmly rooted in the standard symphonic repertoire, he is also an advocate for performing new music by living composers.

Wallin has conducted numerous ensembles across the country including the Spokane Symphony and Hartford (Conn.) Opera Theater. He has served as guest conductor or adjudicator for orchestras and music festivals across Washington, Idaho Oregon, Illinois, and Michigan, and previously served as Music Director for the Washington-Idaho Symphony. In the summer of 2006, Wallin studied and conducted in St. Petersburg, Russia, as a participant in the International Academy of Advanced Conducting. His conducting teachers have included Gustav Meier, Markand Thakar, Akira Mori and Craig Kirchoff, and he has conducted in workshops and masterclasses for numerous leading conductors, including Leonard Slatkin, David Zinman and Gunther Schuller.

Wallin is a native of Ann Arbor, Mich., and

began his musical training there on piano and tuba. In 1991 he enrolled at Northwestern University, where he earned three degrees, a bachelor of arts in mathematics, a bachelor of music in tuba performance and a master of music in tuba performance. After leaving Northwestern, he earned a master of music degree in orchestral conducting from the Peabody Conservatory of Music. At Peabody he was a student of Gustav Meier and a recipient of the Graduate Conducting Fellowship. In December 2004, he completed a doctor of musical arts degree in conducting, with a secondary area in music theory at the University of Minnesota, where he received a College of Liberal Arts Graduate Fellowship.

Wallin is also an Associate Professor and the Chair of the Department of Music at Lake Forest College in Lake Forest, Ill. There he conducts the orchestra and teaches courses in music theory. Prior to this appointment, Wallin served on the faculty at Washington State University in Pullman. Wallin believes strongly in music education for all ages and enjoys speaking to organizations and music classes in the schools. He and his wife, Alice Swan, live in Evanston, Ill., with their sons, Rex and Enzo.

Thank You!
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Nathan Hu
PIANO



Nathan Hu is a 7th grade student at Enterprise Middle School. He has been studying piano with Ms. Holly Harty for more than 6 years. Currently he is a piano player of the Mid-Columbia Youth Symphony. Besides winning Mid-Columbia Symphony Young Artist competition, he has also won several awards from Washington State Sonata Festival, Washington State Musical Teacher's Association Spring Awards, Inland Northwest Musician's Young Artist competition, and Musicfest Northwest Festival. Nathan also plays violin and chess. He is a member of the Math team for his school and a member of Tri-City Channel Cats swimming team.



Michelle Fu
VIOLIN



Michelle Fu has played violin since age eight and studies with Frank Lu and Xiao-Po Fei. She also plays piano and is actively engaged in anything music, playing in Hanford High School's pit orchestras, the WMEA All-State Orchestra, the Mid-Columbia Youth Symphony, and the Mid-Columbia Symphony. When Michelle isn't practicing, she is involved in school activities such as Key Club, journalism, and AP classes, coaches the Enterprise Math Club, and likes taking photos, running, and spending time with friends.

MID-COLUMBIA SYMPHONY

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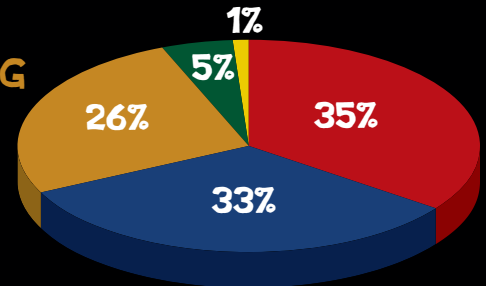
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