Winter Wonders
Dr. Robert G. Hasty, Music Director

North Shore Center for the Performing Arts in Skokie

Turandot Overture and March, Op. 37 ......................................................... Carl Maria von Weber
(1786-1826)

Holberg Suite, Op. 40 ................................................................. Edvard Grieg
Praeludium
Sarabande
Gavotte
Air
Rigaudon

Arpegionne Sonata, D.821 ................................................................. Franz Schubert
Allegro moderato
Adagio
Allegretto

Tabby Rhee, viola
Prize Winner, Bonnie & Lee Malmed 2017 Young Artists Competition

INTERMISSION

Symphony # 38 in D Major, K.504 “Prague” ................................. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
Adagio, Allegro
Andante
Presto

This concert is supported in part by
The Village of Skokie, Niles Township, and the Illinois Arts Council
**Program Notes**

**Carl Maria von Weber – Turandot Overture**

Though little known today, composer, conductor, and pianist Carl Maria von Weber was a widely respected and popular musician during the early years of the 19th century. His operas shaped the development of the Romantic opera in Germany, while his most celebrated work, *Der Freischütz*, was an extremely influential composition that helped pave the way for the groundbreaking music dramas of Richard Wagner.

Several years before the premiere of *Der Freischütz*, noted poet Friedrich Schiller issued a translation of Carlo Gozzi’s play, *Turandot*. The Turandot story itself was derived from Central Asian/Persian sources; it involves a prince who travels to China, falls in love with the Emperor’s daughter, solves deadly riddles to win her, and (after much travail) weds her in the end. For the 1809 premiere of Schiller’s version at the German National Theater, Weber contributed an overture and six instrumental pieces that served as incidental music to the play. For each of the six pieces after the Overture, Weber indicated specific text cues for their insertion in the play. The overture and most of the other incidental music is based on a single oriental theme that Weber had found in Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s *Dictionnaire de la Musique* (1768). This “air chinois,” as Rousseau labeled it, is characteristically pentatonic, and sounds almost like a cliché of a Chinese-style melody. It is first introduced by a solo flute and is then taken up by the strings and eventually, the entire orchestra. Weber’s colorful orchestrations also support the exotic nature of the music, through the pronounced use of drums and cymbals and is perhaps more characteristic of Turkish than Chinese music. For Weber, who never traveled far beyond his native Germany, the exoticism of nearby Turkey substituted for a more authentic Orientalism.

**Edward Grieg – Holberg Suite**

Though born in Bergen, Norway, Grieg spent his formative years in Germany as a student at the Leipzig Conservatory, and later in Copenhagen, the only Scandinavian city with a rich cultural life. In Copenhagen he met fellow Norwegian composer Rikard Nordraak, with whom he founded a society to promote Scandinavian music. It was at this time that Grieg resolved to cultivate a specifically Norwegian idiom. Having recently encountered traditional folk music, he began to incorporate folk elements in his music, leading some critics to claim that he was merely an arranger of folk song. In answer to such accusations he replied: “Nothing is more incorrect than the claim that my originality is limited to my borrowing from folk music. It is quite another thing if a nationalistic spirit, which has been expressed through folk music since ancient times, hovers over my original creative work.” Whether reliant upon folk borrowings or not, Grieg’s nationalistic spirit yielded a number of delightful works, including incidental music for Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson’s play *Sigurd Jorsalfar*, music for Ibsen’s *Peer Gynt*, and the *Holberg Suite*.

The *Holberg Suite* was commissioned for the celebration of the bicentennial of the birth of the Norwegian writer Ludvig Baron Holberg (1684-1754), often referred to as the “Moliere of the North”. Since Holberg was a contemporary of Bach and Handel, Grieg chose to compose his tribute in the form of a French Baroque period suite – a collection of various contemporary dances. The resulting work shows Grieg’s ability to assimilate Baroque elements into his own 19th century style. Grieg referred to the Suite as “my powdered-wig piece.”
Grieg begins his suite with a lively, optimistic Praeludium, which serves as an introduction to the following four dances. The Sarabande is a solemn processional dance in triple time with origins in Spain or Mexico, though Grieg's melody hints at a Norwegian folk tune. As in a Baroque suite, a Gavotte follows. The gavotte originated as a lively dance among the peasantry but, by the 18th century had been taken over and sanitized by the French court, its lively movements and boisterous character refined into a slower duple meter framework. A calm, sublime Air comprises the fourth movement. The concluding Rigaudon is another rollicking French folk dance marked by lively rhythms and playful melodies.

Franz Schubert – Arpeggione Sonata
The Sonata in A-minor was originally conceived for the arpeggione, a fretted instrument with six strings tuned exactly like a classical guitar, and played with a bow while being held between the knees like the modern cello. Invented around 1814 by the Viennese luthier Johann Georg Staufer, it became extinct within ten years of its appearance. Nonetheless, the arpeggione had a small following of players and enthusiasts, among them Vincenz Schuster, for whom Schubert wrote the piece. By the time the Sonata was published posthumously in 1871, the instrument had long disappeared. Schubert appears to have written the Sonata without any financial consideration but solely as a friendly gesture toward Schuster. It remains the only significant work for the instrument, though today, it is most commonly performed on cello or viola. Transcriptions for other instruments, such as the double bass, flute, clarinet and guitar, also exist.
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The first movement, Allegro moderato, is characterized by contrasts in mood – the haunting A-minor melody at the start demonstrates Schubert's exceptional melodic gift, while the more animated, almost playful second subject suggests a bubbling brook. These two melodies are molded into a sonata form (a favorite of Schubert's), which may be divided into four sections: the exposition where the first and second subject are stated; the development where these themes are explored and transposed; the recapitulation where the original ideas return and are re-enforced; and a final coda or ending passage that returns to the opening minor key and brings about a lovely symmetry of form.

The second movement is a lyrical Adagio in the key of E-major. Here Schubert's gifts as a melodist are clearly seen as a tender tune, eloquently reminiscent of his magnificent Lieder, is sung out by the viola above an unobtrusive accompaniment. This movement gives way, without pause, to the concluding Allegro. After the initial theme is heard, several contrasting melodies are introduced. The initial theme returns sporadically to provide continuity and is heard one final time in its entirety to bring the movement to a close.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart – Symphony No. 38, K504

Mozart's career as a symphonist spanned the period from 1764-1788, beginning when he was eight years old and ending in his 32nd year. The earliest works, as might be expected, reveal a less defined personal approach, relying heavily on the influence of J.C. Bach, Carl Friedrich Abel, and other orchestral composers of the day. More distinctive features begin to emerge only in the works beginning around 1773; but at that time Mozart ceased to write symphonies with any regularity. Between 1774 and 1779 he only turned to symphonic composition sporadically and in the last twelve years of his life wrote no more than nine symphonies. However, these late works are among some of the finest symphonies ever written, including the Symphony No. 38 in D major, known as The Prague.

Symphony No. 38 was composed in late 1786 and premiered in Prague early the next year during Mozart's visit to that city. Although Mozart's popularity with the Viennese waxed and waned, he was consistently popular among the Bohemians and had developed a devoted following in the Bohemian capital. We know from a letter of Leopold Mozart that his son had been invited to Prague by a group of musicians and patrons following the tremendous success there of his opera Le nozze di Figaro during the 1786 season. However, though the symphony in question was premiered in Prague, we cannot be certain that it was written specifically for the Prague visit. It may just as likely have been composed for a planned (though never realized) trip to London or for a series of Advent concerts in Vienna in 1786. Nonetheless, due to its association with Prague, the nickname has stuck.

The work is unique among Mozart's late symphonies in that it is cast in three movements rather than the four that were common by this time. In this respect, it is somewhat of a throwback to his earlier symphonies in which a fast-slow-fast movement scheme was the norm. More pointedly, the three-movement design calls to mind the old-style operatic overture in which a tri-partite fast-slow-fast organizational scheme was also typical. It has even been suggested that the Symphony may be an offshoot of Mozart's original plan to open Figaro with an impressive three-movement overture.
The Symphony opens with an imposing slow introduction in which bold minor-key interjections and rhythmic syncopations create a dramatic atmosphere that to the astute listener recalls the world of Don Giovanni. In fact, one critic has written, “there is more than a whiff of greasepaint about this work." It has also been suggested that the length of the slow introduction is meant to compensate for the missing minuet movement and to bring the total length of the symphony into closer alignment with that of a standard four-movement symphony. This slow section strikingly sets off the Allegro that follows, in which trumpets and drums immediately introduce a buoyant, festive character. No less than six new melodies are introduced and developed over the course of this astonishingly complex movement that, when performed with the repeats Mozart indicated, is the longest single symphonic movement of the 18th century.

The second movement, Andante, is far more complex than is apparent in a casual listening. Underneath the typical Mozartian elegance and charm is a structure of tremendous intricacy, indicative of the composer’s consummate facility and orchestral mastery.

The finale covers a remarkable emotional spectrum, readily apparent in its opening measures, as Mozart calls the celebratory atmosphere into question with a passage for winds alone that develops into something almost violent. This is music where darkness lurks just beneath the light; even with all the bright themes and major-key harmonies, tragedy never seems very far away. Respected scholar Anthony Hopkins sums the finale up beautifully: “This movement shows Mozart in an unusual mood, nearer to Beethoven’s boisterousness than his fastidious taste normally allowed him to go.”

Program notes by Dr. Michael Vaughn
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TABBY RHEE | VIOLIST

Violist Tabby Rhee is currently pursuing a Bachelor of Music degree under the mentorship of Misha Amory and Heidi Castleman at the Juilliard School. Highlights of Tabby’s musical achievements include: Scholarship Recipient of the Jerome and Elaine Nerenberg Foundation from the Musicians Club of Women, Winner of the Skokie Symphony Bonnie and Lee Malmed Young Artists Competition, Winner of the Society of American Musicians Young Artist Competition, Madison Symphony Orchestra Bolz Young Artist Competition, Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra Young Artist Competition and Milwaukee Youth Senior Symphony Concerto Competition. Other awards include: Winner of the Satori International Music Competition, Menomonee Falls Young Artist Competition, Merit Scholarship Recipient of the Wisconsin Civic Music Association, Montecito International Music Festival, and Yellow Barn Young Artist Program.

Tabby is a former student of Roland and Almita Vamos at the Music Institute of Chicago Academy. She has toured with the National Youth Orchestra of the United States to Latin America, and to Vienna and Budapest with the Milwaukee Youth Symphony Orchestra. Ms. Rhee shares her love of music with her local community through her active role as a founding member, volunteer mentor, sectional coach, and artistic assistant for the Wisconsin Intergenerational Orchestra. She has also held positions of concertmaster and principal violist in the Milwaukee Youth Symphony Orchestra. Tabby Rhee is a proud recipient of a Kovner Fellowship at the Juilliard School.
Dr. Robert G. Hasty is the Music Director of the Kenosha Symphony Orchestra, Principal Conductor of the Highland Park Strings, and the conductor of the Chamber Orchestra and the Philharmonia at the Henry and Leigh Bienen School of Music at Northwestern University where he also serves as the Associate Director of Orchestras. He is also Artistic Director of the International Schools Choral Music Society.

Dr. Hasty began his career teaching music in the public schools in Southern California. This included serving as District Music Coordinator of the Capistrano Unified School District where he supervised the K-12 music education program and its staff of 39 teachers. He also served an elected term as Vice President in charge of String Education for the Southern California School Band and Orchestra Association.

A noted researcher in music cognition, Dr. Hasty has been an author for two publications delivered at the 7th International Conference on Music Perception and Cognition in Sydney, Australia. A book on his research on conducting has recently been published: “Critical Listening While Conducting”. The European Society for Cognitive Sciences of Music invited him to speak at their conference in Portugal on these studies.

As a conductor, Dr. Hasty has appeared with the All-American College Orchestra at Walt Disney World, Beijing Youth Orchestra, Elmhurst Symphony Orchestra, Grant Park Symphony Orchestra, Irvine Youth Symphony, La Primavera Orchestra, Merit Symphony Orchestra, Metropolis Youth Symphony, National High School Music Institute Orchestra, Northwestern University Symphony Orchestra, NU Opera Theater, NU Contemporary Music Ensemble, and the Skokie Valley Symphony Orchestra. His performances have been broadcast on WFMT radio in Chicago and on the Big Ten Network. Dr. Hasty’s international engagements include two sold-out performances at the National Concert Hall of Taipei, Taiwan, the Forbidden City Concert Hall in Beijing, China, the Shanghai Oriental Arts Center Concert Hall in Shanghai, China, and the Busan Cultural Center Main Theater in Busan, South Korea. He is sought-after as an honor orchestra conductor, conducting honor groups across the United States. He is a member of the conducting and music education faculties at the Bienen School of Music.

Dr. Hasty continues to perform as a freelance violinist and violist. The Aliso Viejo Symphony Orchestra, with whom he has served as concertmaster, the Capistrano Valley Symphony, and the Mozart Classical Orchestra are a few of the ensembles that have requested his violin services. Dr. Hasty was the violist on the world premiere of Kathy Henkel’s Moorland Sketches, which was broadcast on KUSC-FM Los Angeles. Currently, he is living out a long-held musical fantasy as a fiddler, performing and recording with singer-songwriter Christina Trulio’s band (ASCAP).
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Isabelle Rozendaal
Alyssa Isaacson
David Ratner
Gigi Fiore
Charles Evans
George Sobolevsky

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Michael Zahlit
Michael Rozental
Jason Rosen

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David Cowen
Nazgul Bekturova
Howard Miller
Mike Taber
Marcia Chessick
Susan Hammerman

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Karl Erik Seigfried, *Principal*
Jacque Harper

#### Flute
Karen Frost, *Principal*

#### Piccolo
Sandra Rowland

#### Oboe
Tricia Wlazlo, *Principal*
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#### Clarinet
Walter Grabner, *Principal*
Irwin Heller

#### Bassoon
Beth Heller, *Principal*
Jennifer Speer

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Matthew Oliphant, *Principal*
Paul Seeley

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Winter Wonders
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