**Grant Park Music Festival**

**Seventy-seventh Season**

**Grant Park Orchestra and Chorus**

Carlos Kalmar, *Artistic Director and Principal Conductor*

Christopher Bell, *Chorus Director*

**Mozart & Strauss**

Wednesday, August 10, 2011 at 6:30 p.m.

*Jay Pritzker Pavilion*

**GRANT PARK ORCHESTRA**

Carlos Kalmar, *Conductor*

**MOZART**

Overture to *La Clemenza di Tito*, K. 621

Symphony No. 31 in D major, K. 297 (K. 300a), “Paris”

Allegro assai

Andante

Allegro

**J. STRAUSS, JR.**

Overture to *Die Zigeunerbaron*

*Feuerfest!*, Polka Française, Op. 269

*Perpetuum Mobile*, Op. 257

*Künstlerleben Walzer*, Op. 316

*Bauern-Polka*, Polka Française, Op. 276

*Furioso*, Polka quasi Galopp, Op. 260

*Kaiser Walzer*, Op. 437

This program is partially underwritten by a generous gift from longstanding supporters Ginger and Jim Meyer.

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2011 Program Notes, Book 4 D17
Mozart's Overture to La Clemenza di Tito is scored for pairs of woodwinds, horns and trumpets, timpani and strings. The performance time is five minutes. The Grant Park Orchestra first performed this Overture on August 3, 1983, with David Zinman conducting.

It was during the summer of 1791 that Mozart's health broke for good. His last five years in Vienna, when he was in his early thirties, were marred by frequent bouts of illness (the year 1790 was one of the least productive of his life because of his poor health), and by his last summer, he was seriously in debt, Constanze's health had been nearly destroyed by her almost constant pregnancies following their marriage in 1782 (their fourth son — Franz Xaver Wolfgang — was born on July 26th), and Wolfgang was subjecting himself to a series of questionable folk remedies in an attempt to relieve his own suffering. In the spring of 1791, Emanuel Schikaneder, an old Salzburg pal of the composer whose financial ambition was matched only by the disreputability of his character, presented Mozart with a proposition to join him in producing a fantasy opera based on one of the Oriental themes then popular in Vienna. Mozart threw in with Schikaneder, a Freemason brother of his, and began composing The Magic Flute. Mozart had done considerable work on the new opera by July when two additional commissions came his way. The first was an anonymous but lucrative request to compose a Requiem for one Count Walsegg, who (odiously) intended to pass the work off as his own creation. No sooner had the Requiem appeared on his work table (next to the unfinished score for The Magic Flute) than Mozart was presented with yet another commission. Leopold II, the most recent incarnation of the ancient Habsburg line, was to be crowned King of Bohemia in Prague on September 6th, and it had been decreed by a clique of wealthy Bohemian landowners that Mozart should supply an opera for the occasion. The nearly impoverished composer could hardly refuse such an imperial offer, since it offered some ready cash and also fanned his still-not-abandoned hopes of securing a position as an opera composer at the Viennese court. For his subject, Mozart was given the fifty-year-old libretto La Clemenza di Tito by the venerable poet Metastasio, which had earlier been set by at least a dozen composers, not the least of whom was Christoph Willibald von Gluck. Caterino Mazzolà, Court Poet at Dresden, did what he could to modernize the libretto, but a composition in the hoary form of the opera seria did not allow for the peerless dramatic powers that Mozart had so magnificently displayed in Don Giovanni and The Marriage of Figaro, and the project was, in too many significant ways, stillborn.

Though Constanze had delivered her baby only three weeks before, Mozart talked her into making the trip to Prague with him for the premiere of Tito; Franz Süssmayr joined them to cobble the secco recitatives and serve as copyist. The little group left for Prague on August 25th or 26th. Mozart worked furiously in the carriage, and stayed up half the night in their inns along the way to finish the commission. He pressed on with his labor after arriving in Prague, though he felt very poorly and was especially upset because his tightly packed work schedule allowed him no time for parties or visits to old friends. As was his custom, Mozart left the composition of the Overture until last, and the night before the premiere the piece was still unwritten. With a copyist waiting at the door, he sat down at the clavier, pounded away on the instrument throughout the night, and finished the Overture by dawn. He gingerly handed the copyist the full orchestral score in the morning with special instructions not to smear the still-wet ink. Though Tito, written in great haste in an antiquated operatic style that Mozart found uncongenial, had only a modest success at its first hearing, during the three decades after its composer's death, it became the second most popular of his operas (after Don Giovanni), and was the first of his operas to be performed in London. As soon as his duties in Prague were finished, Mozart returned directly to Vienna, where he completed The Magic Flute and oversaw its production at the end of September. (He also composed the wondrous Clarinet Concerto during that month.) illness sapped his strength after the premiere of The Magic Flute and thoughts of the unfinished Requiem plagued him. (Süssmayr completed the work after Mozart's death.) Exactly three months after his difficult and hasty trip to Prague, Mozart was dead. He was 35.

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The plot of the opera concerns Vitellia, proud daughter of the deposed Roman Emperor Vitellius, who loves the new Emperor, Titus (Tito), but is furious that he has chosen Berenice, daughter of the King of Judaea, as his consort instead of her. She tries to persuade her admirer Sextus to join her in an assassination plot on Titus' life. Sextus, a close friend of the new Emperor, is at first loath to participate in such a monstrous undertaking, but his love for Vitellia proves irresistible, and he agrees to initiate her plan. The murderous adventure goes forward, but proves unsuccessful. Sextus is implicated by a fellow-conspirator, and brought before Titus. Fearful of revealing Vitellia's guilt, he refuses to answer the Emperor's question, and instead offers only his heartfelt contrition. Incensed by this apparent arrogance, Titus signs Sextus' death warrant. To save her lover, Vitellia comes forward to confess that it was she who instigated the assassination attempt, and Titus grants the conspirators clemency in the final scene.

The brief Overture to La Clemenza di Tito opens with a solemn intonation reminiscent of the stately chords preacing The Magic Flute. The vigorous main subject is followed by a delicate duet for flute and oboe, which serves as the second theme. The development section has many proto-Romantic harmonic shadings coloring its contrapuntal passages. The recapitulation begins not with the main theme, but with the more delicate second theme, which serves as a foil to the surprisingly stormy nature of much of the development. The music proceeds through repetitions of the opening intonation and the main theme before drawing to its abrupt conclusion.

SYMPHONY NO. 31 IN D MAJOR, K. 297 (K. 300A), “PARIS” (1778)
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Mozart's Symphony No. 31 is scored for pairs of woodwinds, horns and trumpets, timpani and strings. The performance time is seventeen minutes. The Grant Park Orchestra first performed this Symphony on July 8, 1966, with Irwin Hoffman conducting.

Mozart went to Paris in 1778 looking for work. Dissatisfied with the lack of opportunity in Salzburg, especially the absence of a local opera house, he thought that the music lovers of the sophisticated French capital might recognize his genius and provide him with a prestigious position that would allow him to write for the stage. He left Salzburg in September 1777 with his mother as chaperone, and proceeded through the towns of Augsburg (birthplace of his father, Leopold) and Mannheim. Mannheim was one of the great centers of instrumental music at the time, and Mozart learned much about recent advances in the art of the symphony, both in composition and in execution, during his stay. He also fell in love there with Aloysia Weber, an attractive singer whom he courted seriously but was discouraged from marrying by his father. After Wolfgang had dallied in Mannheim longer than business dictated, Leopold ordered him on to Paris in no uncertain terms. Reluctantly, he left, and mother and son arrived in Paris on March 23, 1778.

With the help of Baron Friedrich Grimm, whom Mozart had met on his first trip to Paris as a Wunderkind of seven in 1763, he was introduced to a number of the aristocracy, though his treatment at their hands was something less than he had hoped for — his letters home often complain of being kept waiting in drafty anterooms and of having to perform on wretched harpsichords. His greatest wish was to be asked to compose an opera, the musical genre closest to his heart throughout his life, but the Gluck-Piccioli feud contesting the merits of French versus Italian opera was then at its threshold of his artistic maturity.

Of the two slow movements he wrote for this Symphony, Mozart noted, “Each is right in its own way, for they have different characters.” The later movement (Andante, 6/8), Mozart's preference and the one usually heard in the Symphony, is languorous and sylvan.

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For the finale, Mozart sprang a surprise on his Parisian audience. “I began with the violins alone, piano for eight measures, followed at once by a sudden forte,” he recounted to his father in a letter. “The audience (as I had anticipated) cried 'Hush!' at the piano, but directly the forte began, they took to clapping.” The contrast and balance provided by the juxtaposition of soft and loud passages generates much of the excitement of this finale, whose other unexpected quality is the large form that was then customary in symphonies.

Alfred Einstein said that the Symphony No. 31 “hovers continually between brilliant tumult and graceful seriousness,” a quality heard immediately at the beginning with the contrast between the vigorous opening scalar tutti and the sweet, falling phrase that follows. Among the wealth of melodies (“twenty or thirty,” counted Tovey) is the structural second theme, a pert little phrase finished by a long, descending scale in gentle parallel harmonies played by the violins. As the sonata-allegro form unfolds, Mozart takes much care to balance the forceful, rising scale pattern of the first measures with the more soft and lyrical material.

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The Overture to The Gypsy Baron is scored for pairs of woodwinds plus piccolo, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, timpani, percussion and strings. The performance time is eight minutes. The Grant Park Orchestra first performed this Overture on June 13, 1940, with Izler Solomon conducting.

“This fiend of German birth, destitute of grace, delicacy and propriety, a disgusting practice,” spluttered one English writer of the 1830s about that diabolic instrument of immorality: The Waltz. Why, in this depraved display, he ranted, the couple actually danced in each other’s arms, refusing to keep the respectable distance that characterized all the good old dances. And it was that crafty pair of Viennese tunemongers, Johann Strauss and his buddy Josef Lanner, who were the main perpetrators of this insult to humanity, dispensing a concoction of sounds that Wagner described as “a stronger narcotic than alcohol” arousing “passions bordering on mad fury.”

Alas for the poor Englishman, anything irresistible was bound to be a success.

The waltz was descended from an Austrian peasant dance called a Ländler, a heavy-handed (footed?) affair in moderate triple meter that gained great popularity during Mozart’s last years in Vienna. (He wrote music for such German Dances when they were first allowed to join the staid, old minuet in the imperial balls in 1788.) The Viennese went mad over the new dance, and spent many nights literally dancing until dawn. Michael Kelly, a friend of Mozart and a participant in the premiere of The Marriage of Figaro, noted such dedication in the 1790s to this sort of merriment that, “for the sake of ladies in the family way, who would not be persuaded to stay at home, there were apartments prepared, with every convenience for their accouchement, should they be unfortunately required.” It was really in the 1830s and 1840s, however, that the waltz established its definitive form and style and became a European mania. Strauss the Elder led a crack orchestra in his own compositions, faster-tempo and more lilting modernizations of the old Ländler. So great was the popularity of the waltz during his lifetime that, during at least one carnival season, the ball-rooms of Vienna could accommodate 50,000 people in an evening — in a city with a population of 200,000. His reputation spread well beyond the Austrian capital, and he was called on to play 72 public concerts in England during the coronation of Queen Victoria in 1837.

Papa Johann tried to discourage his sons from going into the music business, but Johann, Jr. was determined to be part of the waltz madness. He established a rival orchestra to that of his father and both prospered for a time, but at his father’s death in 1849, the son merged the two ensembles. Strauss the Younger, was soon dubbed “The Waltz King,” and he ruled over his domain as had no one in the history of music. He not only made pots of money — he made people happy. One French journalist wrote in 1852, “In every house, on every piano in Vienna, lie Strauss waltzes.... They are sung and trilled and played throughout Europe. Plebeian and aristocrat hum and pipe them; orchestra and barrel organ play them. We hear them on the street, at the ball, in the garden, and at the theater.” The waltz continued to flourish into the 20th century, becoming almost an opiate in the feverish years before World War I when the old Austro-Hungarian Empire was rapidly decaying. The waltz became, and remains, a symbol of a more care-free time, when an elegantly beribboned captain would whirl away the night with his dazzling companion.

On a visit to Budapest to conduct his operetta Der lustige Krieg, Strauss met the celebrated Hungarian playwright Maurus Jókai. Strauss, like most Viennese, was addicted to the exoticism of Magyar food, wine, stories and folk music, and he decided that a new novel by Jókai, called Saffi, would make an excellent operetta libretto. Jókai suggested that Ignaz Schnitzer, a Viennese journalist with an instinctive feeling both for the stage and for things Hungarian, write the text. Composer and librettist worked closely and carefully together, and The Gypsy Baron was not completed for two years. The premiere was scheduled for the Theater an der Wien on October 24, 1885, the eve of the composer’s sixtieth birthday, an occasion that engendered celebrations throughout Austria. Strauss, who had not had an unqualified stage success since Die Fledermaus eleven years earlier, paced the
wings in nervous anxiety. It worked. The Gypsy Baron was a triumph. Emperor Franz Josef himself attended, stayed for the entire performance (surprisingly, this leader of the world’s most music-mad city did not care much for music, and usually exited at the first intermission), and after the final curtain told the thrilled composer, “I enjoyed myself immensely.” The Overture, like the overetta it prefaces, blends exotic Hungarian gypsy songs and dances with lighthearted Viennese waltzes.

FEUERFEST! (“FIREPROOF”), POLKA FRANÇAISE, OP. 269 (1869)

Josef Strauss (1827-1870)

The Feuerfest! Polka is scored for pairs of woodwinds with piccolo, four horns, four trumpets, three trombones, tuba, percussion and strings. The performance time is three minutes. This is the first performance of the work by the Grant Park Orchestra.

Papa Johann Strauss tried to discourage his sons from following him into the music business, but only Josef, the second-born, initially took his advice. Though he did not join the military as his father wished, Josef did train as an engineer and architect and started a promising career in those fields. He began as an architectural designer for the city; later he built a water works in Trumau and was then made chief engineer of a spinning factory. In an age still giddy with the first flush of the Industrial Revolution, however, Josef’s real passion was invention. He tinkered away during his free hours, and eventually took out several patents, one of which was for a successful street-cleaning machine soon put into use by the Viennese magnificacy. At age 26, he was well launched on a respectable, bourgeois life.

Older brother Johann, however, was working himself into a nervous exhaustion with his feverish activity with the Strauss Orchestra at the time. He came home late one night and collapsed at his mother’s feet. Six months of complete rest was prescribed. His illness presented the pressing problem of how the orchestra, the main financial support of the family, was to be kept going. Young Eduard was only eighteen, so the sole choice seemed to be Josef. He was brought into the family discussion and at first refused to take over, pleading lack of training and ability, the duties of another occupation, and an awkward and unattractive personal appearance. Finally his objections were overcome when Johann, from his sickbed, told him, “You are the most talented of us all.” Josef acquiesced, and, after some lessons in music theory and violin, he made his debut as conductor of the Strauss Orchestra on July 23, 1853. For this initial appearance, he wrote his first set of waltzes called Die Ersten und die Letzten (“The First and the Last”). Hardly the last. He found a real talent for composition, and wrote some 283 works, including 222 waltzes, during the remaining seventeen years of his life.

The Viennese took quickly to this new Strauss. He lacked the urbane, stylish elegance of his older brother, but his melancholy, thoughtful manner made an excellent impression on the public. His pensive personality carried over into his music-making, and many of his most important works have a nostalgic, wistful character that was a new addition to the stylistic vocabulary of the waltz. He was also the first to conduct this music with a baton rather than with a violin bow. (He refused to publicly embarrass himself with his fledgling string technique during his first years as a musician.) He also led the waltzes at a slower tempo than was customary, giving them a sweetness and sensual lassitude that heightened their emotional appeal. In both his conducting and his music, he greatly influenced not only the later works of Johann, but also contributed immeasurably to the wonderful tradition of Viennese music.

Josef’s best works easily stand comparison with those of his more famous brother, and are, in fact, often wrongly attributed to him. Dorfschulballen aus Oesterreich (“Austrian Village Schoolball”), Sphärenklänge (“Music of the Spheres”), Delirien, Mein Lebenslauf ist Lieb und Lust (“My Life’s Course Is Love and Delight”) and the Pizzicato Polka (written in collaboration with Johann) are as finely crafted as any music that the Strauss clan produced. Richard Strauss (no relation), when he was creating that sparkling distillation of earlier Viennese life, Der Rosenkauf, even turned to the music of Josef and used his Dynamiden as one of the waltz themes in the opera. Josef Wertheimer, in his book on The Waltz Emperor, wrote, “After the sudden death of his favorite brother in 1870, Johann Strauss said, ‘Josef was the most gifted among the three of us. I am only the more popular one.’ Strauss’ admiring biographers use this quote as proof of his modesty, but it really shows his intellectual honesty and musical acumen. Posthume has confirmed his judgment.”

Feuerfest! — Fireproof! — was the marketing slogan of Vienna’s Wertheim Safe Company, founded by Franz von Wertheim in 1852 to manufacture a line of products to keep “cash, securities and documents safe from burglary and fire.” Wertheim demonstrated the efficacy of his safes in a spectacular publicity stunt in Constantinople in 1857, when he set one into a bonfire before a gathering of international dignitaries and the Sultan himself and the contents emerged unscathed. The orders for 3,000 safes that flooded in from Constantinople were matched by similar demand throughout the Habsburg Empire, and Wertheim was soon one of Vienna’s wealthiest and most influential businessmen. For the staff party on March 13, 1869 celebrating the completion of the firm’s 20,000th safe, Wertheim hired the Strauss Orchestra to provide the music and commissioned Josef to write Feuerfest!, a delightful Polka Francaise whose delicate strains are wittily countered by the metallic clangs emanating from the percussion section to evoke the company’s ironworks.

PERPETUUM MOBILE, OP. 257 (1862)

Johann Strauss, Jr.

Perpetuum Mobile is scored for pairs of woodwinds plus piccolo, four horns, three trumpets, trombone, timpani, percussion, harp and strings. The performance time is three minutes. The Grant Park Orchestra first performed this work on August 27, 1941, with Leroy Shield conducting.

Among the best-known novelty numbers by Johann Strauss, Jr. is the delightful 1862 Perpetuum Mobile, subtitled “A Musical Jest.” It is said that Strauss intended this exercise in orchestral virtuosity as a mild dig at the tendency of the day to emphasize showmanship over musical content. Essentially a set of free variations on the short eight-measure theme heard at the beginning, it is both a familial relation to the symphonic scherzo and, wrote Jerome Pastene, “the apotheosis of the dance-hall galop.”

KÜNSTLERLEBEN WALZER (“ARTIST’S LIFE WALZES”), OP. 316 (1867)

Johann Strauss, Jr.

The Artist’s Life Waltzes are scored for pairs of woodwinds with piccolo, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion and strings. The performance time is ten minutes. The Grant Park Orchestra first performed these Waltzes on August 16, 1935, with Frank Laird Waller conducting.

Künstlerleben (“Artist’s Life”) is one of several of Strauss’ most memorable waltzes — including The Blue Danube, Tales from the Vienna Woods and Wine, Women and Song — that were originally created as vocal works for the Vienna Men’s Chorus, directed by the noted conductor Johann Herbeck. Künstlerleben, introduced successfully at the ensemble’s carnival ball on February 18, 1867, only three days after the fiasco that greeted the premiere of The Blue Danube, is a buoyant tribute to the boundless creativity inspired in the composer by the artistic spirit of his native city.
The Bauern Polka is scored for pairs of woodwinds with piccolo, four horns, two trumpets, trombone, timpani, percussion and strings. The performance time is three minutes. This is the first performance of this work by the Grant Park Orchestra.

Though Johann Strauss was in constant demand throughout Europe after he began touring in 1856, he was enticed to spend the summer seasons during the following decade performing at the fashionable Russian resort of Pavlovsk, south of St. Petersburg. For his residency at Pavlovsk in 1863, Strauss composed the rustically atmospheric Bauern-Polka ("Peasants' Polka"). His Russian devotees loved it. On August 31st, just two days after he first played the piece at Pavlovsk, he wrote to his Viennese publisher, Carl Haslinger, "People don't just stamp their feet, they sing it too. I played it today for the third time, and the public already sings it as accurately as the musicians; this peasant music is so catchy that high and low in the audience stand right before the orchestra to enjoy it." When Tsar Alexander II once appeared at a concert at Pavlovsk, declaring the Bauern-Polka to be his favorite piece and ordering its performance, Strauss reported that "it caused more applause than a movement of a symphony by Beethoven since even the members of the orchestra joined in the ovation."

FURIOUSO, POLKA QUASI GALOPP, OP. 260 (1861)
Johann Strauss, Jr.

The Furioso Polka is scored for pairs of woodwinds with piccolo, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, timpani, percussion and strings. The performance time is three minutes. The Grant Park Orchestra first performed this work on August 13, 2002, with Carlos Kalmar conducting.

Strauss composed Furioso for his 1861 season at Pavlovsk. The work's fiendish vivacity was captured in the title page illustration of the first piano edition, which showed two demons stretching a rope across a dance floor to trip up the whirling couples.

KAISER-WALTZER ("EMPEROR WALTZES"), OP. 437 (1888)
Johann Strauss, Jr.

The Emperor Waltzes is scored for pairs of woodwinds, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, timpani, percussion, harp and strings. The performance time is ten minutes. The work were first performed by the Grant Park Orchestra on August 6, 1935, with Leo Kopp conducting.

The Kaiser ("Emperor") Waltzes, written in 1888 as part of the grand celebrations marking the fortieth anniversary of Emperor Franz Josef's coronation, is one of the great works in the form composed by Johann Strauss, Jr., "the most beautiful flower that the incredible tree of Strauss music had produced in 75 years," according to the French writer Guillaume Ritter. Conceived for the concert hall rather than for the ballroom, it opens with an introductory march, akin in spirit to the serenades of Mozart, which gives presentiments of the upcoming waltz. The body of the work comprises four separate waltzes in complimentary keys and moods. A wistful coda recalls the themes of the first and third waltzes. Of these closing pages, and of the complete Kaiser Waltzes, Joseph Wechsberg wrote, "The mood is nostalgic, a short, last reminiscence; there is a moment of sadness — life goes so fast, and with it everything that is beautiful — but in the very end there is that final expression of live-and-let-live."