

## GRANT PARK MUSIC FESTIVAL

**Carlos Kalmar** Artistic Director and Principal Conductor

**Christopher Bell** Chorus Director



Friday, August 4, 2023 at 6:30 p.m.

Saturday, August 5, 2023 at 7:30 p.m.

Harris Theater

## PINES OF ROME

**Grant Park Orchestra**

**Eric Jacobsen**, conductor

**Masumi Per Rostad**, viola

**Antonín Dvořák**

*Carnival Overture*

**Jessie Montgomery**

*L.E.S. Characters* (Grant Park Music Festival co-commission)

The Can Man

The Poet

Mosaic Man

Garbage Art

The Can Man (Reprise)

MASUMI PER ROSTAD

INTERMISSION

**Aaron Copland**

*Quiet City*

**Ottorino Respighi**

*Pines of Rome*

The Pines of the Villa Borghese

Pines Near a Catacomb

The Pines of the Janiculum

The Pines of the Appian Way

Organ provided by Triune Music/S.B. Smith & Associates

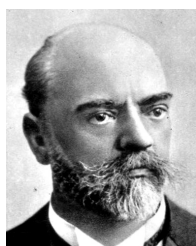
Friday's concert is being broadcast and streamed live  
on [98.7WFMT/wfmt.com](http://98.7WFMT/wfmt.com)



**Eric Jacobsen** combines fresh interpretations of the traditional canon with cutting-edge collaborations across musical genres. As both a conductor and cellist, he was hailed by the *New York Times* as “an interpretive dynamo.” Eric is artistic director and co-founder of The Knights, the uniquely adventurous NYC-based chamber orchestra. Eric is also music director of the Virginia Symphony Orchestra and the Orlando Philharmonic Orchestra and is a cellist in Yo-Yo Ma’s Silkroad Ensemble.



Japanese-Norwegian violist **Masumi Per Rostad** hails from the gritty East Village of 1980s New York. He was raised in an artist loft converted from a garage with a 1957 Chevy Belair as the remnant centerpiece in their living room. In addition to maintaining an active performance schedule worldwide, he serves on the faculty of the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, NY. As a member of the Pacifica Quartet (2001-2017), Masumi regularly performed in the world’s greatest halls. He is a D’Addario Artist. His Amati viola was crafted in Cremona, Italy in 1619.



### **ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK** (1841 - 1904)

#### **CARNIVAL OVERTURE, OP. 92, B.169 (1891)**

**Scored for:** three flutes including piccolo, three oboes including English horn, two clarinets, two bassoons, four French horns, two trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion, harp, and strings

**Performance time:** 10 minutes

**First Grant Park Orchestra performance:**

July 2, 1935; Eric DeLamarter, conductor

When Dvořák set off to compose the *Carnival Overture*, he threw himself into the genre of program music (music intended to evoke images or convey events). Of the idea, he told his friend, “Here I could be a poet as well as a musician.” Dvořák conceived of a trio of programmatic concert overtures to be performed as a set titled *Nature, Life, and Love*. The three overtures came to fruition between 1891 and 1892, but Dvořák later changed the titles. *Life* became *Carnival*. The composer conducted the three overtures’ premieres in April 1892 as part of a farewell concert in Prague before he went abroad to take up a position as director of the National Conservatory of Music in New York City. He also conducted the trio at Carnegie Hall, which proved a thrilling introduction of Dvořák’s music to his new home.

The carnival is already in full swing when the overture begins, and its grand main theme immediately rings out. A second melody matches its intensity, played first by violins and then echoed by woodwinds. Dvořák’s portrait of life isn’t entirely raucous, though; a more introspective section subdues the violins while solo flute and violin offer a break from the carnival atmosphere. The music whips itself up into a frenzy that leads back into the opening theme. One instrument unifies the overture under its consistent appearance in sections both grand and gentle: the tambourine! Clearly, Dvořák’s carnival—and life—were full of joy and excitement.



## JESSIE MONTGOMERY (b. 1981)

### *L.E.S. CHARACTERS* (2021)

**Scored for:** two flutes including piccolo, two oboes including English horn, two clarinets, two bassoons including contrabassoon, two French horns, two trumpets, alto saxophone, timpani, percussion, harp, strings, and solo viola

**Performance time:** 20 minutes

**First Grant Park Orchestra performance**

Jessie Montgomery grew up on Manhattan's Lower East Side in the 1980s, when the neighborhood was a magnet for new artistic exploration. She was surrounded by and exposed to a variety of art and activism, in part, thanks to her parents—her mother a theater artist and her father a musician. (*read more at [gpmf.org](http://gpmf.org)*)

## A NOTE FROM THE COMPOSER

Conceived as a series of vignettes, each of the five movements of *L.E.S. Characters* depicts a different real-life street performance artist or character from the Lower East Side, recalled as a childhood memory shared between myself and Masumi Per Rostad, for whom the piece was written. We grew up together and studied music together. I thought a series of character pieces would be a fun frame in which to place the viola at the center as subject and storyteller, recounting the images and memories of these artist souls and their impact on our creativity.

"The Can Man" is inspired by the work of Gene Pool, an environmental activist and performance artist who used to ride around our neighborhood on a unicycle dressed in a full-body suit of aluminum cans. Imagine the spectacle! His character bookends the form of the work, and in between, a tribute to Jim Power "The Mosaic Man" and to the poets and teachers who fashioned gardens with sculptures made of scraps, junk, and debris to create something playful and imaginative.

This piece is dedicated to the memory of Chris Pors and Mary Lou Francis (our violin teacher who was executive director of the Third Street Music School Settlement when Masumi and I were studying there), and Robbie McCauley, my mom—all of whom were lost during the COVID pandemic in 2020-2021. The tragedy of these losses framed the creation of this piece, which, at its conception, was inspired by childlike wonder and creativity. Thank you for the gift, for setting the stage, and for giving us a path to play in. Forever in our hearts.



## AARON COPLAND (1900 - 1990)

### *QUIET CITY* (1939)

**Scored for:** English horn, trumpet, and strings

**Performance time:** 10 minutes

**First Grant Park Orchestra performance:**

August 3, 1994; Richard Buckley, conductor

Aaron Copland wrote music in various genres and mediums, including ballet, opera, and incidental music—music meant to

serve as background texture and enhance the atmosphere and meaning in films or plays. He wrote incidental music for several Broadway productions, including Irwin Shaw's *Quiet City*. The play was billed as a "realistic fantasy," which drew Copland's interest. *Quiet City* failed to take off, however, and closed after just a few performances. In 1940, Copland condensed the play's music into the *Quiet City* suite, which serves as a miniature version of the play's drama. The piece is one of Copland's most loved; describing its popularity, he modestly claimed, "Since it is mostly quiet, it fills a niche in concert programs."

In *Quiet City*, a middle-aged businessman named Gabriel Mellon rejects his Jewish background and aspirations of being a poet by changing his name and choosing a sensible career as a department store president. His brother, David Mellnikoff, serves as a sort of inner voice for Gabriel, inspiring Gabe's artistic side and social conscience. Ultimately, Gabe turns away from his own inner longings and identity and begins to lose his mind as a result. He is haunted by the sounds of a trumpet, his brother's instrument. In his biography, Copland shared, "My trumpet player was simply an attempt to mirror David Mellnikoff. But *Quiet City* seems to have become a musical entity . . . and David Mellnikoff has long since been forgotten!"

The music supports the fear and unease of *Quiet City*'s characters. A softhearted string opening ushers in the trumpet, which enters on a repeated note influenced by Jewish chant and blows of the shofar, an ancient (ram's horn) instrument often used in Jewish religious practice. The music that represents David is marked as "nervous and mysterious." Unadorned melodies illustrate Gabriel's reflections upon his lost dreams and the painful relationship he has with his father. David's trumpet call returns, and a few lonely strings pluck into the quietude. Though the city is packed with people, Gabriel's most incessant companions are in his own head: his memories.



## **OTTORINO RESPIGHI** (1879 - 1936)

### ***PINI DI ROMA (PINES OF ROME), P.141 (1923)***

**Scored for:** three flutes including piccolo, three oboes including English horn, three clarinets including bass clarinet, three bassoons including contrabassoon, four French horns, three trumpets, four trombones, six buccine, timpani, percussion, harp, celesta, piano, organ, and strings

**Performance time:** 23 minutes

**First Grant Park Orchestra performance:**

September 3, 1937; Leroy Shield, conductor

In Ottorino Respighi's biography penned by his wife, Elsa, she wrote that when the composer was writing *The Pines of Rome*, "it was a particularly happy time for him," and it was one of the works "in which he was most emotionally involved."

In an interview, Respighi explained, "Since my first arrival in Rome, two characteristic aspects of the city have spoken to my imagination above all: the marvelous fountains and the umbrella-like pines that appear in every part of the horizon." In a 1926 program note, he stated, "The centuries-old trees, which so characteristically dominate the Roman landscape, become witnesses to the principal events in Roman life." ([read more at gpmf.org](http://readmoreatgpmf.org))

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