

# GRANT PARK ORCHESTRA AND CHORUS

**Carlos Kalmar** Artistic Director and Principal Conductor

**Christopher Bell** Chorus Director



Friday, July 19, 2019 at 6:30 p.m.

Saturday, July 20, 2019 at 7:30 p.m.

Jay Pritzker Pavilion

## BEETHOVEN PIANO CONCERTO NO. 3

**Grant Park Orchestra**

**Martyn Brabbins** Conductor

**Stephen Hough** Piano

**James MacMillan**

*Stomp (with Fate and Elvira)*

**Ludwig van Beethoven**

Piano Concerto No. 3 in C minor, Op. 37

Allegro con brio

Largo

Rondo: Allegro

STEPHEN HOUGH

### INTERMISSION

**Ralph Vaughan Williams**

Symphony No. 2, *A London Symphony*

Lento — Allegro risoluto

Lento

Scherzo (Nocturne): Allegro vivace

Andante con moto — Maestoso alla marcia (quasi lento)

This concert is presented with generous support from  
*Classic Series Sponsor* William Blair and the  
Elizabeth F. Cheney Foundation

The appearance of Martyn Brabbins is underwritten by  
Walter E. Heller Foundation with a grant given  
in memory of Alyce DeCosta

Piano provided by Steinway Piano Galleries of Chicago

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



**Martyn Brabbins** is Music Director of the English National Opera, which recently extended his contract by two seasons to 2022. An inspirational force in British music, Mr. Brabbins has had a busy opera career since his early days at the Kirov and more recently at La Scala, Bayerische Staatsoper, and regularly in Lyon, Amsterdam, Frankfurt and Antwerp. He is a popular figure at the BBC Proms and with most of the leading British orchestras, and regularly visits top international orchestras such as the Royal Concertgebouw, DSO Berlin and Tokyo Metropolitan Symphony. Known for his advocacy of British composers, he has also conducted hundreds of world premieres across the globe.

He has recorded over 120 CDs to date, including prize-winning discs of operas by Korngold, Birtwistle and Harvey. He was Associate Principal Conductor of the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra 1994-2005, Principal Guest Conductor of the Royal Flemish Philharmonic 2009-2015, Chief Conductor of the Nagoya Philharmonic 2012-2016, and Artistic Director of the Cheltenham International Festival of Music 2005-2007. He is currently Visiting Professor at the Royal College of Music and Music Director to the Huddersfield Choral Society alongside his duties at ENO, and has for many years supported professional, student and amateur music-making at the highest level in the UK.



**Stephen Hough** combines a distinguished career as a pianist with those of composer and writer. Since taking First Prize at the 1983 Naumburg Competition in New York, Mr. Hough has performed with many of the world's major orchestras and given recitals at the most prestigious concert halls. He was the first classical performer to be awarded a MacArthur Fellowship. He was awarded Northwestern University's 2008 Jean Gimbel Lane Prize in Piano, won the Royal Philharmonic Society Instrumentalist Award in 2010, and in January 2014 was made a Commander of the Order of the British Empire by Queen Elizabeth in the New Year's Honors List. Many of Mr. Hough's

catalogue of over fifty albums have garnered international prizes, including the Deutsche Schallplattenpreis, Diapason d'Or, Monde de la Musique, several Grammy nominations, eight Gramophone Magazine Awards (including "Record of the Year" in 1996 and 2003), and the Gramophone "Gold Disc" Award in 2008, which named his complete Saint-Saëns piano concertos as the best recording of the past thirty years. His 2012 recording of the complete Chopin Waltzes received the Diapason d'Or de l'Annee, France's most prestigious recording award. His 2005 live recording of the Rachmaninoff piano concertos was the fastest-selling recording in Hyperion's history, while his 1987 recording of the Hummel concertos remains Chandos' best-selling disc to date. Mr. Hough's most recent releases, all for Hyperion, include Grieg's *Lyric Pieces*; a recording of his Mass "Missa Mirabilis" with the Colorado Symphony and Andrew Litton; a recital disc with Steven Isserlis including Mr. Hough's Sonata for Cello and Piano (*Les Adieux*); a solo recital of Scriabin and Janáček; and the Dvořák and Schumann concertos with the CBSO and Andris Nelsons. Mr. Hough has composed works for orchestra, choir, chamber ensemble and solo piano, several on commissions from the musicians of the Berlin Philharmonic, Gilmore Foundation, Genesis Foundation, London's National Gallery, Wigmore Hall, Le Musée de Louvre and Musica Viva Australia, among others. He is also a noted writer and holds faculty appointment at London's Royal Academy of Music, Royal Northern College in Manchester and Juilliard.


**JAMES MACMILLAN** (b. 1959)

**STOMP (WITH FATE AND ELVIRA) (2006)**

**Scored for:** pairs of woodwinds, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion and strings

**Performance time:** 5 minutes

**First Grant Park Orchestra performance**

Scottish composer James MacMillan, born in Kilwinning, Ayrshire on July 16, 1959, was educated at the University of Edinburgh (B.Mus., 1981) and University of Durham (Ph.D., 1987), where his principal teacher was John Casken. After working as a lecturer at Manchester University from 1986 to 1988, MacMillan returned to Scotland, where he has since fulfilled many important commissions and taught at the University of Edinburgh and Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama in Glasgow. In 1993, MacMillan won both the Gramophone Contemporary Music Record of the Year Award and the Classic CD Award for Contemporary Music; he was made a CBE in 2004, given the 2008 British Composer Award for Liturgical Music, and named an Honorary Patron of the London Chamber Orchestra in 2008. In October 2014, MacMillan inaugurated the Cumnock Tryst, a festival of international scope that he organized in his boyhood home in southern Scotland. Macmillan's compositions, many of which incorporate traditional Scottish elements and bear some stamp of either his religion (Catholicism) or his politics (socialism). Of his creative personality, MacMillan wrote, "I respect tradition in many forms, whether cultural, political or historical, and in keeping up a continuous, delicate scrutiny of old forms, ancient traditions, enduring beliefs and lasting values one is strengthened in one's constant, restless search for new avenues of expression. Therefore, in ideological

**Binny's**  
BEVERAGE DEPOT

**If you can't find it at Binny's,  
it's probably not worth drinking!™**

**BINNY'S BEVERAGE DEPOT  
IS PROUD TO SUPPORT  
THE GRANT PARK  
MUSIC FESTIVAL**

**40 SUPERSTORES • SERVING ILLINOIS SINCE 1948  
BINNYS.COM**

terms, my works express the timeless truths of Roman Catholicism alongside a fierce social commitment. And musically one can hopefully sense the depths of times past integrating with attempts at innovation.”

MacMillan provided the following pretty much inscrutable information about *Stomp*: “The dark, brooding cloud of fate that had been hovering over St. Petersburg lifted and drifted west to Sweden, where it made an amorous encounter with a young tightrope walker, Elvira Madigan. They eloped and headed west again, ending up at a *céilidh* in Kilkenny, or Kilmarnock, or somewhere ...” First, a *céilidh* [KAY-lee] is a Scottish social gathering with traditional folksongs and instrumental music, dancing and storytelling. Second, *Stomp* was commissioned for a concert on March 3, 2007 marking the 25th Anniversary of the Barbican Centre, home of the London Symphony Orchestra and one of the city’s most important concert venues — it was given in the presence (as the Brits phrase it) of Her Majesty the Queen — that also included Mozart’s Piano Concerto No. 21, K. 467 with Mitsuko Uchida as soloist and Tchaikovsky’s Fourth Symphony, all conducted by Sir Colin Davis. Third, Mozart’s Concerto No. 21 was used as background music for a popular 1967 Swedish film titled *Elvira Madigan*, based on the 19th-century story of a Danish tightrope dancer who left the circus to run away with a married Swedish military officer. Their situation became so desperate that the officer shot first Elvira and then himself. The town where they died together maintains a memorial to their love at their mutual gravesite. And, lastly, critics from London’s *Times* and *Financial Times* summarized *Stomp*’s strangely interlocked references: “An irreverent deconstruction of the two big works on the concert — Tchaikovsky’s Fourth Symphony and Mozart’s ‘Elvira Madigan’ Piano Concerto — *Stomp* went through all sorts of wacky distortions before being whisked, *céilidh*-style, into a punch-drunk jig of delight”; “Imagine Mozart and Tchaikovsky in kilts, thrown into the middle of a highland fling.”



## LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN (1770-1827)

### PIANO CONCERTO NO. 3 IN C MINOR, OP. 37 (1797-1803)

**Scored for:** pairs of woodwinds, horns and trumpets, timpani and strings

**Performance time:** 34 minutes

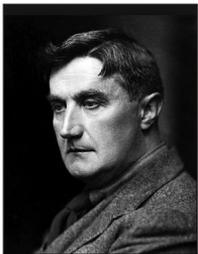
**First Grant Park Orchestra performance:** August 11, 1950, Erich Leinsdorf, conductor, with Zadel Skolovsky as soloist

By 1803, Emanuel Schickaneder, the colorful character who figured so prominently in the closing pages of Mozart’s life as the librettist and producer of *The Magic Flute*, had taken over the management of Vienna’s Theater-an-der-Wien. His house was locked in a fierce competitive battle with the court-subsidized Kärntnertortheater, run by Baron Peter von Braun. When von Braun hired the distinguished Luigi Cherubini as resident composer, Schickaneder felt obliged to counter with his own music master, and he approached Beethoven with an offer. Beethoven, who had felt the need to write for the stage for some time, accepted gladly — especially since the job carried free lodgings in the theater as part of the compensation. He and Schickaneder dutifully plowed through a small library of possibilities for an operatic subject, but none inspired Beethoven until he took up work on *Fidelio* late in 1803. In the meantime, Beethoven took advantage of his theatrical connection to put some of his instrumental works on display. Since opera was forbidden in Catholic countries during Lent at that time, the Theater-an-der-Wien was available for concerts in the early spring, and Beethoven scheduled such an event during April 1803. It had been fully three years since he last presented a concert entirely of his own orchestral music, and he had several

scores that were awaiting their first presentations, including the Second Symphony, the oratorio *Christ on the Mount of Olives* and the Third Piano Concerto. He programmed all of these and also tossed in the First Symphony, which had been premiered at his concert three years earlier.

Beethoven proceeded enthusiastically with plans for the concert, working right up to the last minute putting finishing touches on the new compositions. (His pupil Ferdinand Ries found him in bed writing trombone parts for the oratorio only three hours before the rehearsal began.) He had just a single rehearsal on the concert day for this wealth of unfamiliar music, and, with his less-than-adept players, it is little wonder that it went poorly. The public and critical response to the concert was lukewarm, undoubtedly due in large part to the inadequate performance. Beethoven, however, was delighted to have played his music for the Viennese public, and he was well on his way to becoming recognized more for his ability as a composer than as a pianist.

The Third Concerto's first movement opens with the longest introductory orchestral *tutti* in Beethoven's concertos. The strings in unison present the main theme; the lyrical second theme is sung by violins and clarinet in a contrasting major mode. The closely reasoned development section grows inexorably from thematic fragments heard in the exposition. The recapitulation begins with a forceful restatement of the main theme by the full orchestra. The second movement is a nocturne of tender sentiments and quiet moods. Though analysis reveals its form to be a three-part structure (A–B–A), it is in spirit simply an extended song — a marvelous juxtaposition of hymnal tranquility and sensuous operatic love scene. The traditional, Classical rondo was a form of simple, high spirits meant to send the audience away in a bubbling mood. Mozart, in his incomparable late concertos, had begun to explore the emotional depth possible with the rondo, and in this Third Concerto, Beethoven continued that search. He incorporated elements of sonata design into the finale to lend it additional weight, even inserting a fugal passage in the second episode. Only in the closing pages is the dark world of C minor abandoned for a vivacious romp through C major to close this wonderful work of Beethoven's early maturity.



## **RALPH VAUGHAN WILLIAMS** (1872-1958)

### **SYMPHONY NO. 2, A LONDON SYMPHONY (1912-1914)**

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

**Performance time:** 44 minutes

**First Grant Park Orchestra performance:** July 6, 1983, Gerhardt Zimmermann, conductor

Though Ralph Vaughan Williams was a man of distinguished pedigree — his mother was a member of the Wedgwood pottery family and Charles Darwin was his great-uncle — he spent much time investigating the musical ways of the English common people. As a young man, he devoted many months to trooping through provincial hamlets and villages collecting folksongs with his colleagues Gustav Holst and George Butterworth, and from 1904 to 1906, he edited a new version of the *English Hymnal*. In those vernacular songs and in the great traditions of Elizabethan music just being rediscovered in the early 20th century, Vaughan Williams recognized a wealth of models and inspiration that could serve as the bases for a distinctly English compositional idiom. “Have we not all about us forms of musical expression which we can take and

purify and raise to the level of great art?" he asked. "The lilt of the chorus at a music-hall joining in a popular song, the children dancing to a barrel-organ, the rousing fervor of a Salvation Army hymn, the cries of street pedlars. Have all these nothing to say to us?" He contended that "every composer cannot expect to have a world-wide message, but he may reasonably expect to have a special message for his own people." With this nonsense view of nationalism and a vast knowledge of his country's musical heritage, it is not surprising that Vaughan Williams produced some of the most characteristically English music ever written.

In both matter and manner, *A London Symphony*, Vaughan Williams' earliest, large purely instrumental score, is one of the seminal works of his musical nationalism. Such a piece was first suggested to him in 1911 by George Butterworth, a young composer of great promise who was killed five years later in the First World War. Perhaps inspired by Monet's impressionistic London scenes and H.G. Wells' novel *Tono-Bungay* (in which the Thames is seen as the symbol of the entire country), as well as by the river view from his home in Cheyne Walk, Vaughan Williams chose to make the subject of the piece the city of London, where he had lived since his marriage to Adeline Fisher in 1897. At first, he thought the work might be a symphonic poem, perhaps a counterpart to Delius' *Paris* of 1899, but by 1912, he had settled on a symphony in the traditional four movements, and that same year was able to play through the first two movements at an upright piano on a visit to his friend in Cambridge, the composer Cecil Armstrong Gibbs. The work was finished in early 1914, and premiered on March 27 at the Queen's Hall, London, conducted by Geoffrey Toye at a concert of new music. Though the performance was an excellent success, the composer was dissatisfied with the new *Symphony*, and he extensively revised the score for a performance by the conductor-composer Albert Coates in 1920 (when the work was first published), and again (before a second edition was printed), in 1936. (H.C. Colles noted that the *Symphony* was "like London itself, in that the builders will not let it alone.") *A London Symphony* (it was Vaughan Williams' second work in the genre, but he never formally gave it a number — only his Eighth and Ninth Symphonies bear that distinction) established its composer as a major figure in British music, and served to spread his reputation abroad. It is said to have been one of his own favorites among his works.

For his 1920 performance of *A London Symphony*, Albert Coates supplied a detailed program for the music with enough topographical specificity to throw any Anglophile into fits of longing. The first movement, he noted, portrays "daybreak by the river. Old Father Thames ... deep and thoughtful, shrouded in mystery. 'Big Ben' solemnly strikes the half-hour. Suddenly one is in the Strand in the midst of morning traffic.... Then one turns off the Strand into the quiet little streets known as the Adelphi, haunted principally by beggars and ragged street-urchins. We return to the Strand, and are once again caught up in the bustle and life of London." Coates went on to place the second movement in "Bloomsbury. Dusk is falling. It is the damp and foggy twilight of a late November day.... In front of a pub, an old musician plays the fiddle. In the distance is heard the street cry, 'Sweet lavender; who'll buy sweet lavender?'" Coates said the third movement represents "all the noises of Saturday night in the very poor quarters on the south side of the Thames, when these slums resemble a street fair, heard while one sits across the River." The finale deals with "a 'Hunger March' — a ghostly marching past of those who are cold and hungry and unable to get work.... The *Symphony* ends as it began, with old Father Thames flowing calm and silent, as he has flowed through the ages, the keeper of many secrets, shrouded in mystery."

©2019 Dr. Richard E. Rodda