

Mozart & Schubert

Sunday, October 26, 2025 2:30 p.m. at the Isabel

This performance is presented in honour of Mrs. Melba Matthews and Dr. Raymond Matthews.













PHOTOS: S. WILD



Mozart & Schubert

Kingston Symphony

Evan Mitchell, Conductor Eve Legault, Assistant Conductor*

Program

Rossini (1792-1868)

Il barbiere di Siviglia: Overture

Dvořák (1841-1904)

Serenade in D minor

I. Moderato quasi marcia

II. Menuetto - Trio: Presto

III. Andante con moto

IV. Finale: Allegro molto

Intermission

Mozart (1756-1791)

Don Giovanni: Overture

Schubert (1797-1828)

Symphony No.5 in B-flat Major

I. Allegro

II. Andante con moto

III. Menuetto: Allegro molto

IV. Allegro vivace

*Appears courtesy of Tapestry Opera's Women in Musical Leadership program.



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Notes from our Maestro

I confess to being endlessly fascinated with the creative processes of the great composers. Thus, the idea behind today's concert was to perform "perfect" works from four of history's most esteemed composers – Mozart, Rossini, Dvorak, and Schubert – and hold them up to the light for closer inspection.

Mozart, for one, composed his two-act opera Don Giovanni in 1787, in collaboration with librettist Lorenzo da Ponte. The premiere was a critical success and the opera remains one of the most famous of all time. The story follows the legend of Don Juan (Don Giovanni in Italian), a serial philanderer who eventually meets his downfall. Yet, despite the serious subject matter, the opera was originally advertised as a dramma giocoso, meaning it combines both tragedy and comedy.



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Mozart's overture to Don Giovanni reflects this duality. It opens with a slow and ominous introduction, foreshadowing the tragic events to follow. The music transitions into a contrasting allegro, representing Don Giovanni's reckless joie de vivre. The speed and energy continue to the end of the overture, preparing the audience for a story filled with fast-paced drama and intrigue. The overture to Don Giovanni only existed in Mozart's head while he was feverishly working on transcribing the rest of the opera for the music copyists. The overture was the last to be copied. As the lights were dimmed for the opera's world premiere, the librarian was handing out music to the overture, ink still wet, for the musicians to sight read.



Family portrait: Maria Anna ("Nannerl"), Wolfgang, Anna Maria (medallion) and Leopold Mozart, 1780s. Artist possibly Johann Nepomuk della Croce.



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Rossini, like Mozart, was also known to write in a hurry. He signed the contract to compose Il barbiere di Siviglia (The Barber of Seville) in December 1815, less than two months before the opera was to be premiered. It quickly became Rossini's most famous comic opera, and is regarded by many to be one of the best of all time. Interestingly, the overture wasn't originally written for the opera that it introduces, nor does it contain any of its musical themes. It features a slow introduction, a fast main section where the theme is passed between the strings and the winds, and a recapitulation. The ending contains a famous "Rossini crescendo," where the main motive is repeated louder and louder to create an exciting conclusion. Rossini recycled the overture from his opera seria, Aureliano in Palmira, rather than composing a new work. Still, it has a dollop of the comic perfection that the Barber of Seville demands.



Painting of Gioachino Rossini, 1815. Artist Unknown.



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Dvorak's Wind Serenade exemplifies the composer's finest gift: that of creating magnificent melodies. In 1877, Dvorak heard the Vienna Philharmonic play Mozart's Serenade in B-flat Major for wind instruments. This performance spurred him to create a similar composition in only 14 days, a work inspired by the Czech folksongs of his childhood. The Serenade is scored for paired oboes, clarinets, and bassoons, a contrabassoon, three horns, a cello, and a double bass. While many of Dvorak's pieces are composed in an international style, his music often features Czech folksongs and rhythms that mimic the Czech language. The first movement of his serenade includes a regal melody fit for a military band. Some scholars say that the second movement, a minuet in 3/4 time, mimics the soudeskà, a traditional Czech couple's dance. The third movement features a slow, lyrical melody above an accompaniment reminiscent of a hurdy-gurdy or barrel organ. To close, Dvorak includes a frenzied polka, including quotations from the introductory march.



Antonín Dvořák 1882. Unknown Photographer.





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Finally, Franz Schubert wrote his Symphony No. 5 in the autumn of 1816, when he was only 19 years old. Despite his tragically short life, Schubert was an exceptionally prolific composer, completing approximately 1,000 works in a mere 31 years. Like Dvorak's Serenade, Schubert's Fifth Symphony is his tightest symphonic creation and the most focused, as it was scored for the smallest orchestra of any of his symphonies. On that note, the scoring is identical to Mozart's famous Symphony No. 40, which is also one of my very favourites. Schubert pays tribute to the classical masters through his light and jaunty melodies, but leaves his own musical fingerprint through interesting chromatic harmonies. This piece was only performed once in Schubert's lifetime, at a house concert, where an orchestra composed of his friends and amateur players was assembled. The first public performance did not occur until after Schubert's death in 1828. We are fortunate to have this musical snapshot of a youthful and optimistic period of Schubert's life, before illness and tragedy arrived in the decade to follow.

Each of these works reminds us of the role that chance, inspiration, and even procrastination play in the creative process. I hope that you enjoy these treasures of the orchestral repertoire this afternoon.



Franz Schubert, 1875. Artist: Wilhelm August Rieder

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Eve Legault, Assistant Conductor

Originally from Gatineau, Quebec, conductor Eve Legault is known for her expressive and dynamic presence on the podium. As a conductor with Tapestry Opera's Women in Musical Leadership (WML) program, Eve has worked twice as an Assistant Conductor at the Manitoba Opera. She also assisted at the Calgary Philharmonic, Opera Kelowna, and Shaw Festival and was a Guest Conductor as well as the first Assistant Conductor with the National Youth Orchestra of Canada. Eve has received mentorship from conductors such as Gustavo Gimeno, Sarah Ioannides, Tyrone Paterson, Daniel Raiskin, Paul Sportelli, Rosemary Thomson, and Naomi Woo.

Previously, Eve became the first woman to conduct her hometown orchestra, the Orchestre symphonique de Gatineau. Other engagements included a concert as Guest Conductor with the Ottawa Chamber Orchestra. Eve was also Guest Conductor and subsequently Principal Conductor of the Pembroke Symphony Orchestra from 2023-2025.







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Between 2020 and 2022, she received 16 individual contracts at the National Arts Centre Orchestra in Ottawa, as a Guest Assistant Conductor to Alexander Shelley, John Storgårds, Dalia Stasevska, and Xian Zhang. During the summer 2021, Eve was Assistant Conductor with the Montreal-based Orchestre de la francophonie, under the artistic direction of Jean-Philippe Tremblay.

Eve completed graduate studies in three disciplines: conducting, piano and accompanying. She holds a Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the Manhattan School of Music in New York, where she was bestowed the Helen Cohn Award.

Eve was awarded a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada Doctoral Fellowship. She also received four grants from the Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec and a grant from the Canada Council for the Arts to participate in conducting masterclasses in Europe (Kenneth Kiesler and the Berlin Sinfonietta, Tomáš Netopil and the Moravian Philharmonic Orchestra). During a masterclass in Finland with Sasha Mäkilä and the Helsinki Metropolitan Orchestra, she was selected by the musicians as the "Orchestra's Favorite Conductor."





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