

BEETHOVEN 3 & BRAHMS

Robert Uchida *Violin*
Evan Mitchell *Conductor*

 **OCTOBER 20, 2019**

 **2:30 P.M.**

 **THE ISABEL**

PROGRAM

Violin Concerto in D Major, Op. 77

Allegro non troppo

Adagio

Allegro giocoso; ma non troppo vivace

BRAHMS (1833-1897)

INTERMISSION

Symphony No. 3 in E Flat Major, Op. 55

Allegro con brio

Marcia funebre: Adagio assai

Scherzo: Allegro vivace

Finale: Allegro molto

BEETHOVEN (1770-1827)

TODAY'S MUSIC

with Evan Mitchell

This season's Masterworks Series lineup may be the best ever - at least since I became Music Director. As many of you probably know, I have a propensity for thematic, alternative programming. Even so, the pairing of the Brahms Violin Concerto and Beethoven's Third Symphony may seem the most pedestrian, uninspired lineup imaginable.

But in practice, putting these works together tells a story of two titanic symphonic innovators at a parallel moment in their own personal progression. One of the works is truly extraordinary solo violin feature. The other is a true symphony, but one that takes the convention of the day, stretches it beyond its load-bearing limits, and then blazes a path to an entirely new era of music. The Eroica represents a watershed moment in music history. Its premiere marked the beginning of the Romantic period of music, ushered in on the staggering power of a single symphonic work.

Brahms' only violin concerto is, without a doubt, my absolute favourite. I purchased a brand new set of orchestral parts so we could present Brahms' sublime fusion of drama, virtuosity, and unparalleled musical depth with a blank slate. The Violin Concerto rightly belongs in this celebration of Beethoven's great genius, as it marks an important innovation - that of making equal partners of the orchestra and soloist. Concertos simply don't get any better.

Beethoven set the world on fire with the Eroica, with its passion, trickery, powerful narrative, and simultaneous homage to the past and laser-focus forward. It was initially misunderstood by many of his contemporaries, due to its mammoth scope, ambition, and length. The first movement alone is longer than many of Mozart's complete symphonies. Yet, it managed to usher in a new wave of musical history by paying tribute to what came before. Beethoven stuffed the classical symphony beyond its breaking point with this work's first three movements and then lovingly kissed it goodbye in the finale. The Eroica may be the most important piece of music Beethoven ever wrote.