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10TH ANNIVERSARY SEASON



TEN!

an anniversary celebration

with the Leaptrott Trio

Kenn Wagner, violin

Charae Krueger, cello

Ben Leaptrott, piano

Amy Wilson
conductor

apo
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PHILHARMONIC
ORCHESTRA

Sunday, May 31, 2015
3:00 PM

North Decatur Presbyterian Church
Decatur, Georgia

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Welcome!

ABOUT THE APO

The Atlanta Philharmonic Orchestra is a volunteer community orchestra whose membership is not limited by sexual orientation or gender identity.

In December 2004, two clarinetists, an erstwhile oboe player cum English horn player, a rusty second violinist, and a very talented first violinist met with a choral director with the idea of forming a GLBT orchestra. Not a very promising start, but within a month the APO was rehearsing with a core group of about 20 musicians. Our inaugural concert, in November 2005, featured works by Sibelius, Rossini, Bach, and Dvorák. We have continued to grow in size ever since.

From our humble yet successful beginnings, we have expanded to a group of about 30 musicians who rehearse weekly (with a summer break) and perform four concerts each year.

JOIN US?

We welcome adult musicians with high school- or college-level ensemble experience who are capable of playing the challenging music selected for our programs. Prospective members are encouraged to attend two rehearsals with us before scheduling an audition.

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AMY WILSON music director, conductor

Amy Wilson is a promising young conductor who has conducted orchestras throughout the United States, Mexico, and Europe. Currently, she is also the artistic and executive director of the annual Southeast Stonewall Music Festival (founded in 2013) and principal guest conductor of the Atlanta Musicians Orchestra. She was previously associate conductor of the APO for three seasons.



photo by Felix Adamo

Amy holds degrees from the University of Cincinnati College–Conservatory of Music, the University of North Texas, and Mercer University. While at Mercer, she was the conductor of the Mercer/Macon Symphony Youth Orchestra, apprentice conductor of the Macon Symphony Orchestra, and conductor for the Mercer Opera. Recently, she guest conducted the Atlanta Musicians Orchestra, Yakima Symphony Chamber Orchestra, Ocmulgee Symphony Orchestra, and the Warner Robins Air Force Band.

She has studied with such distinguished conductors as Robert Spano, Adrian Gnam, Gustav Meier, Jesús López-Cobos, Anshel Brusilow, and Wayne Wyman and attended many prestigious masterclasses including the Seasons Fall Festival, California Conducting Institute, Conductors Retreat at Medomak, Pierre Monteux School, International Conductors Workshop and Competition, and Eduardo Mata conducting workshop. Amy was named the winner of the 2005 International Conductors Workshop and Competition. In the summer of 2011, Robert Spano invited her to study with him and to observe the Aspen Music Festival and School.



RYAN GREGORY acting concertmaster

An alumnus of the Atlanta Symphony Youth Orchestra, one of Ryan's formative experiences was performing Shostakovich's Fifth Symphony side-by-side with the ASO. He has played in the Georgia Symphony Orchestra and the South Florida Symphony. In 2014, he received a scholarship to attend the inaugural Miami Summer Music Festival. Recent performances as concertmaster have included Mahler's

Das Lied von der Erde and Mason Bates' Alternative Energy.

Ryan has twice been a finalist in Kennesaw State University's Concerto Competition playing the Barber and Tchaikovsky violin concertos, and he has performed in master-

classes by Robert Spano and Midori. His primary teachers have been Juan Ramirez, Oliver Steiner, and Helen Kim. His coaches and mentors also include Kenn Wagner, Catherine Lynn, Allyson Fleck, and Michael Alexander.

He teaches privately in Cartersville, Roswell, and Midtown Atlanta. He coaches string quartets under the auspices of the Georgia Youth Symphony Orchestra. He has led a variety of classes for kids and worked with children as young as infants.

Inspired by the creative spirit of the independent music scene in Atlanta, Ryan has performed and recorded with such acts as Little Tybee, Book Club, Spirits and the Melchizedek Children, and Book of Colors, as well as with *Creative Loafing's* "Improvisor of the Year" Eric Fontaine. He has also collaborated with the contemporary dance ensemble GloATL. Ryan is a member of the Klimt Duo, along with harpist Tyler Hartley.

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KENN WAGNER guest artist

Kenn Wagner, first violinist with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, began focusing his studies toward a musical career at age 13, after soloing with the New Orleans and Arlington, Va., Symphonies. Driven to play in a great orchestra someday, he trained under Joseph Gingold, former concertmaster of the Cleveland Orchestra, and Vernon Sum-

mers, violinist with the National Symphony. Before graduating from Indiana University, he won his first position with the New Jersey Symphony. While finishing his bachelor's degree – playing with New Jersey and substituting in the Baltimore Symphony – Kenn auditioned and joined the Atlanta Symphony in 1994, with the aid of coaching from William Steck, concertmaster of the National Symphony.

With his dream realized, he has enjoyed substituting with chamber music groups including the Riverside Chamber Players, the Leaptrott Trio, the Atlanta Chamber Players, Awadagin Pratt's Next Generation Festival, and National Chamber Players with special guest Kenneth Slowik of the Smithsonian Chamber Players. Kenn has appeared many times as soloist and concertmaster with the Atlanta Community Symphony Orchestra. He played the Mendelssohn concerto with the APO in May 2013. He has also performed with the Camerata at Kennesaw University, the Dekalb Symphony, the Clark/Spellman Orchestra, the City of Christ Church Symphony Orchestra string section in New Zealand, and with the Shenzhen Symphony Orchestra in China.

Kenn served as acting assistant concertmaster for the ASO during the 2004-05 season and has been principal second and assistant concertmaster as well as acting concertmaster of the Wintergreen Music Festival in Wintergreen, Va.

BEN LEAPTROTT guest artist

After finishing his Master's of Music degree in piano performance from the Eastman School of Music, Ben won a scholarship to continue post-graduate studies at the Sweelinck Conservatorium in Amsterdam. He also spent two summers in Salzburg, Austria, studying at the Mozarteum. After almost six years in Europe, he finished his studies with two diplomas – Uitvoerend Musicus (Soloist) and Kammermusik (Chamber music) – and performed both solo and collaborative concerts in several countries.

He moved to Atlanta in 1987, where he continued doing numerous recitals and performed as guest soloist with the Winston-Salem Symphony. His duties also included being rehearsal pianist and coach/accompanist for the Atlanta Opera for 13 years. He has also worked with Mobile Opera, Piedmont Opera, Augusta Opera, and Capital City Opera companies. He recently concluded 24 years as music director at the Episcopal Church of the Atonement. Ben now serves as organist for Central Congregational Church of Christ.

Ben is currently in his sixth year as assistant professor of music with a specialty in collaborative arts at Brenau University. He has been an official accompanist for the district and regional Metropolitan Opera Auditions and artist in residence at Brenau with The Leaptrott Trio. He is a founding board member and vice president of the Fritz and Lavinia Jensen Foundation, which serves to promote talented opera singers nationally.

CHARAE KRUEGER guest artist

Charae Krueger is principal cellist for the Atlanta Opera Orchestra and the Atlanta Ballet Orchestra. She also plays frequently with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra. She is the cello artist-in-residence at Kennesaw State University and performs with the Summit Piano Trio and KSU Faculty String Trio.

She enjoys chamber music and solo recital work and plays throughout the Southeastern U.S. She is a regular featured artist at The Highlands-Cashiers Chamber Music Festival in North Carolina, the Grand Teton Music Festival in Wyoming, and at the North Georgia Chamber Music Festival. Recently she has performed with the Emory Chamber Music Society of Atlanta and pianist William Ransom, SO Percussion Ensemble, Sonic Generator, Atlanta Chamber Players, and Fringe concert series.

Her recitals have been featured on NPR's Performance Today, WABE in Atlanta, and WGBH in Boston. She has played on albums of Bruce Springsteen, Faith Hill, and Natalie Cole. She has twice performed the entire Beethoven cycle of cello sonatas with pianist Robert Henry and has done a recital tour and accompanying live CD with pianist Stanley Yerlow.

Charae received her early cello training in Canada at the Regina Conservatory of Music. She went on to study at Brandon University and received her Bachelor of Music Performance degree from New England Conservatory in Boston. She also holds an Artist Diploma from the Longy School of Music in Cambridge, Mass. During summers, she continued her training at the Banff Centre in Canada and with the Juilliard Quartet. She was a participant in the New York String Orchestra Seminar with concerts conducted by Alexander Schneider at Carnegie Hall.

CONCERTMASTER*Ryan Gregory***VIOLIN***Cale Brandon**Earlisha Curney**Louis Delouiser**Chip Epsten ***Brendan Kretzschmar***Marlina McKay (F)****Marius McNeil****VIOLA***Evalye Alexander**Eric Gray**Kyle Lineberry***CELLO***Theo Aalto**Kristin Andree**Ruth Einstein ***David Feschuk**Joe Lamb**Faith Lynn**Kelly Maxwell**Stephen MacDonald***BASS***Rashid Brown***ORGAN & PIANO***Clinton Miller*

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TEN!

Overture to *The Barber of Seville**Gioacchino Rossini***Concerto for Violin, Cello, and Piano
in C Major, Op. 56, "Triple Concerto"***Ludwig van Beethoven*

Allegro

Largo (attacca)

Rondo alla polacca

*Kenn Wagner, violin**Charae Krueger, cello**Ben Leaptrott, piano***INTERMISSION****Variations on an Original Theme, Op. 36, "Enigma"***Edward Elgar*

Theme – Enigma (Andante)

Variation I: C.A.E. (L'istesso tempo)

Variation II: H.D.S-P. (Allegro)

Variation III : R.B.T.(Allegretto)

Variation IV: W.M.B. (Allegro di molto)

Variation V: R.P.A. (Moderato)

Variation VI: Ysobel (Andantino)

Variation VII: Troyte (Presto)

Variation VIII: W.N. (Allegretto)

Variation IX: Nimrod (Adagio)

Variation X: Dorabella – Intermezzo (Allegretto)

Variation XI: G.R.S. (Allegro di molto)

Variation XII: B.G.N. (Andante)

Variation XIII: * * * – Romanza (Moderato)

Variation XIV: E.D.U. – Finale (Allegro)

ABOUT THIS AFTERNOON'S PROGRAM

OVERTURE TO *THE BARBER OF SEVILLE* (1813)

Gioacchino Rossini

Although this familiar overture bears no thematic resemblance to what follows it, it does energetically introduce the comic thrust of the opera which Rossini is said to have spent a mere 13 days composing. Whether he recycled (for the second time) a previously written overture out of convenience or because he lost the original, the third time was the charm. But the fact that essentially the same music could introduce a light-hearted opera, a serious opera (*Aureliano in Palmyra*), and a historical tragic opera (*Elisabetta, regina d'Inghilterra*) speaks to how well his basic style adapts to a variety of dramatic settings.

Rossini's music was a staple in cartoons from big Hollywood studios in the 1940s and '50s. In the 1944 parody short, *The Barber of Seville*, we see the first fully realized Woody Woodpecker. You'll hear the overture in the 1941 Looney Tunes *Notes to You*, with Porky Pig, and in *Kitty Foiled*, a 1948 Tom and Jerry reel. Elmer Fudd gets a clean shave from Bugs Bunny in *The Rabbit of Seville* (1950), voted #12 of the 50 Greatest Cartoons of All Time.

CONCERTO FOR VIOLIN, CELLO, AND PIANO IN C MAJOR, OPUS 56 (1803)

Ludwig van Beethoven

Essentially a concerto for piano trio, this is the only concerto Beethoven ever completed for more than one solo instrument and the first instance of this combination of instruments in classical music. It combines the scale of his grand concerto style with instrumental dialogues among the soloists more typical of chamber music. Instead of relying on the dramatic transformation of material, the interest comes from the work's contrasting sonorities, its interplay between soloists and orchestra, and its formal cohesion.

It can be characterized as "polite entertainment." The often-heard dotted rhythm (short-long, short-long) lends an air of graciousness and pomp that, while not "heroic," would have conveyed a sense of fashionable dignity to listeners of the time. The jogging triplets in much of the accompaniment also lend to this effect.

Unusual for a concerto of this scale, the first movement begins quietly, with murmuring cellos and basses presenting the rhythmic primary melody. The rest of the orchestra finally finds its way in and presents the various themes of the first movement in a more straightforward style. Then the solo trio enters one by one, starting with the cello. Each gets their chance at all of the themes. The orchestra serves only as the barest background with an interjection here and there. Missing from this movement is a cadenza. While it was common for a soloist to improvise,

group improvisation didn't happen until 100 years later, with jazz.

In the brief slow movement, the solo cello presents a sublime melody, which it then shares with the violin, while the piano provides a discreet accompaniment. Rather than develop the peaceful theme, Beethoven links it to the final movement using a set of short variations.

Dramatic repeated notes launch into the finale, a "rondo in the Polish style." The main theme is based on a polonaise (or polacca), a popular aristocratic dance during the Napoleonic era. Switching from triple to duple time and quickening the tempo, Beethoven offers two splendid variations, then a written-out cadenza for the trio. The swaggering polonaise – now with a witty dialogue between trio and orchestra – returns, bringing the concerto to a stirring conclusion.

VARIATIONS ON AN ORIGINAL THEME, OPUS 36, "ENIGMA" (1899)

Edward Elgar

Tired from a day's teaching, Elgar lit a cigar on an October evening in 1898 and began to improvise at the piano. One theme in particular struck his wife's fancy, and she asked what it was. "Nothing," he replied, "but something might be made of it. Powell [the future Variation II] would have done this, or Nevinson [Variation XII] would have looked at it like this." He played some more and asked, "Who is that like?"

"I cannot say," Alice Elgar replied, "but it is exactly the way Billy Baker [Variation IV] goes out of the room." And added, "Surely, you are doing something that has never been done before."

Eventually this game led to his first major success in orchestral composition – a work dazzling in its ingenuity, technical skill, and range of expression. Elgar dedicated it to "his friends pictured within." Its June 19, 1899, premiere at London's Queen's Hall was an immediate popular success, and it transformed him from a moderately successful provincial composer to a national and international figure, the recognized standard-bearer of British music in his generation.

An enigma is a mystery, a puzzle, or a riddle, and Elgar supplies two in this work: the original theme and an overarching theme which isn't played. He told the program annotator at its first performance:

The Enigma I will not explain — its "dark saying" must be left unguessed, and I warn you that the apparent connection between the Variations and the Theme is often of the slightest texture; further, through and over the whole set[,] another and larger theme "goes," but is not played — so the principal Theme never appears ... the chief character is never on stage.

Part of the enduring lure of this music is the game of trying to guess the riddles it hides. Solutions commonly propose a well-known melody, perhaps a counterpoint to Elgar's theme or in some other way linked to it, such as "Rule! Britannia." Other non-musical answers are based on the Bible, Shakespeare, and the value of pi. He never confirmed an explanation in his lifetime, and the enigma remains.

Musically, the deceptively simple A-B-A theme is, in the words of Elgar's biographer Diana McVeagh, "as productive as a goldmine." It consists of rhythmic palindromes: The rhythm is the same whether the melody is played forward or backward. The two halves of the melodic phrase suggest two different keys, one major and one minor, and this builds drama into the melody. We hear the suggestion of shadow and light and feel the potential for both thoughtful and emotional moments, all encapsulated in one beautiful theme.

The work gives us Elgar's perceptions of 13 people – and one dog. At the earliest performances, each movement was identified only by the initials of the featured subjects. While you don't need to know anything about them to enjoy the work, a bit of background allows you to appreciate it more. He identified these characters in notes he supplied for player piano rolls of the Variations, issued in 1929. Some of these are quoted below.

Variation I: C.A.E.

A loving portrait of his wife, (Caroline) Alice. "The variation is really a prolongation of the theme with what I wished to be romantic and delicate additions; those who knew C.A.E. will understand this reference to one whose life was a romantic and delicate inspiration."

Variation II: H.D.S.-P.

The pianist Hew David Steuart-Powell often played chamber music with Elgar on violin and B.G.N. (Variation XI) on cello. The opening measures of this variation represent him warming up.

Variation III: R.B.T.

In amateur theatricals, Elgar had enjoyed Richard Baxter Townsend's caricature of an old man, "the low voice flying off occasionally into 'soprano' timbre." The violins' plucked strings and their woodwind doublings represent the eccentric Oxford don's habit of riding about on a tricycle, ringing its bell.

Variation IV: W.M.B.

William Meath Baxter, the brother-in-law of R.B.T, was a hospitable country squire with an abrupt, fiery temperament. "In the days of horses and carriages it was more difficult than in these days of petrol to arrange the carriages for the day to suit a large number of guests. This Variation was written after the host had, with a slip of paper in his hand, forcibly read out the arrangements for the day and hurriedly left the music-room with an inadvertent bang of the door."

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Variation V: R.P.A.

Richard Arnold, a sensitive pianist, was the son of poet Matthew Arnold. “His serious conversation was continually broken up by whimsical and witty remarks.” The strings represent his nobility of mind and deeply truthful way of playing music.

Variation VI: Ysobel

The viola here is Isabel Fitton, a student of Elgar’s who switched from violin to viola to make up for a shortage of violists in her neighborhood. The melody is “pensive and for a moment romantic,” blending her grave formality with her statuesque beauty. The melody contains many string crossings, an homage to her struggles playing the instrument.

Variation VII: Troyte

The Malvern architect Arthur Troyte Griffith, who designed Elgar’s house and was one of his closest friends, was a pianist of, ahem, rather modest abilities. “[T]he strong rhythm suggests the attempts of the instructor (E.E.) to make something like order out of chaos, and the final despairing ‘slam’ records that the effort proved to be in vain.”

Variation VIII: W.N.

Although named for Winifred Norbury, the movement was suggested by the 18th-century house where she lived with her sister, the site of many musical performances and gatherings of musicians. “The gracious personalities of the ladies are sedately shown. W.N. was more connected with the music than others of the family, and her initials head the movement.” She’s also given a nod with the suggestion of her characteristic laugh.

Variation IX: Nimrod

This affectionate Adagio is the generous heart of the whole work. Elgar’s nickname for his great friend, champion, and publisher A.J. Jaeger was a pun. Jäger, German for “hunter,” becomes Nimrod, the mighty hunter from the book of Genesis. The movement, which begins with a reminiscence of Beethoven’s “Pathétique” sonata, “is the record of a long summer evening talk, when my friend discoursed eloquently on the slow movements of Beethoven.” He died in 1909, and nearly 20 years later Elgar wrote: “His place has been occupied but never filled.”

This variation has become popular in its own right and is sometimes used at British funerals, memorial services, and other solemn occasions. Musicologist Bill McGlaughlin likens its place in British music to the place Samuel Barber’s Adagio for Strings holds for Americans.

Variation X: Dorabella (Intermezzo)

Taken from Mozart’s *Così fan tutte*, this was the pet name for Dora Penny, step-niece of W.M.B. (Variation IV). Elgar was very close to this cheerful and music-loving young woman, whose slight stammer is mimicked by the woodwinds. You

can also sense a powerful yet repressed sexual tension. He once told her that “she of all people” should recognize the larger theme of the Variations.

Variation XI: G.R.S.

George Sinclair was organist at Hereford Cathedral. But the real subject here is his bulldog, Dan, who made an enthusiastic leap at a cat on the bridge at Hereford, fell into the River Wye, paddled furiously upstream to find a landing place, and emerged with a shade of his sodden fur and a triumphant bark. G.R.S. remarked to Elgar at the time, “Set that to music.” And he did.

Variation XII: B.G.N.

Basil Nevison is the amateur cellist who played with Elgar and H.D.S.-P. (Variation II). “The Variation is a tribute to a very dear friend whose scientific and artistic attainments, and the wholehearted way they were put at the disposal of his friends, particularly endeared him to the writer.” It begins and ends with solo cello.

Variation XIII: * * * (Romanza)

The mysterious asterisks supposedly take the place of the name of a lady who was, at the time he was writing this, on a sea voyage. It starts harmlessly enough, and sweetly, but after only a few bars the movement is interrupted by a strange rocking figure in the violas. Then “the drums suggest the distant throb of the engines of a liner over which the clarinet quotes a phrase from Mendelssohn’s *Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage*.”

Elgar said she was Lady Mary Lygon, the sponsor of a local music festival, who sailed to Australia with her brother, the newly appointed governor of New South Wales. However, the brooding melancholy and its subtitle “Romanza” might be a covert tribute to another woman. Some speculate that the nostalgic music refers to Helen Weaver, who was briefly engaged to Elgar in 1883-84, before emigrating to New Zealand in 1885 for her health.

Variation XIV: E.D.U. (Finale)

“Edoo” was Alice’s pet name for her husband, from the German “Eduard,” and this movement is a self-portrait. In the longest, loudest, and most complex of the variations, the melodies of C.A.E. and Nimrod – the two great influences on Elgar’s life and art – return. “The whole work is summed up in the triumphant broad presentation of the theme in the major.”

A month after its successful premiere, some say at the prodding of Jaeger, Elgar reworked this last variation by adding 100 measures and a part for organ.

Program notes by Kate Siegel, with information from: Kevin Bazzana (Toronto Symphony Orchestra), Beth Fleming (Symphony Silicon Valley), Elizabeth and Joseph Kahn (Long Beach Orchestra), James M. Keller (New York Philharmonic), Lori Newman (New Mexico Philharmonic), Michael Steinberg (San Francisco Symphony), Ryan Turner (Emmanuel Music), John P. Varineau (Lansing Symphony Orchestra), and Wikipedia.