

Toronto Symphony Orchestra

Sir Andrew Davis, Interim Artistic Director

Wednesday, January 16, 2019 at 8:00pm

Thursday, January 17, 2019 at 8:00pm

Friday, January 18, 2019 at 7:30pm

Saturday, January 19, 2019 at 8:00pm

Pinchas Zukerman, conductor & violin

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Overture to *The Marriage of Figaro*, K. 492

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Violin Concerto No. 5 in A Major, K. 219 “Turkish”

I. Allegro aperto

II. Adagio

III. Rondo: Tempo di Menuetto

Intermission

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Violin Concerto No. 3 in G Major, K. 216

I. Allegro

II. Adagio

III. Rondo: Allegro

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Symphony No. 35 in D Major, K. 385 “Haffner”

I. Allegro con spirito

II. [Andante]

III. Menuetto

IV. Presto

Pinchas Zukerman’s appearance is generously supported by Blake and Belinda Goldring.

As a courtesy to musicians, guest artists, and fellow concertgoers, please put your phone away and on silent during the performance.

ABOUT THE WORKS

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Overture to *The Marriage of Figaro*, K. 492

4
min

Born: Salzburg, Austria, January 27, 1756

Died: Vienna, Austria, December 5, 1791

Composed: 1785–1786

The Marriage of Figaro, a famous and scandalous play by the colourful French writer Beaumarchais—a sequel to his popular *Barber of Seville*—was first performed in Paris in 1784, but, even though it was published in German, Viennese theatres were banned from performing it. So it was with considerable audacity that Mozart and the librettist Lorenzo da Ponte began work on an operatic version in the fall of 1785. True, they excised most of the politics, but they were still working with controversial and inflammatory material widely considered subversive—if not revolutionary—both morally and politically, and some powerful forces in the Viennese court (including the composer Antonio Salieri) conspired to undermine the opera. Nevertheless, the première took place in Vienna on May 1, 1786. There were many encores, but its success was short-lived, the box-office receipts disappointing. But it was a huge hit in Prague, where it opened that December, and it was revived in Vienna (somewhat revised) in August 1789, after which its fame spread widely.

Figaro was Mozart's breakthrough work in the genre that meant the most to him as a composer. It is long and ambitious, uncommonly nuanced and sophisticated, with characters more finely drawn and profoundly human than in any previous opera buffa; it is also very funny. As was usual, the overture was written last, just

days before the première. The one-movement overture, by this time, had replaced the old three-movement sinfonia (the prototype of the concert symphony), though it was not until 1787, in *Don Giovanni*, that Mozart would write his first overture that actually quotes from the opera itself. In some earlier overtures, including those for *Idomeneo* and *The Abduction from the Seraglio* and this one, he sought at least to encapsulate the basic mood of the opera.

Beaumarchais's original title was *La folle journée, ou Le mariage de Figaro*, because the whole bewildering and hilarious plot unfolds over the course of a single “crazy day,” summed up perfectly in this bustling overture. (The score is marked *Presto*, a term Mozart used only when he wanted something played as fast as possible.) The main themes, all of them introduced quietly, convey stealth, aptly so for an opera laced with intrigue and disguise: the first theme scurries (strings and bassoons); the second darts and feints (strings, with commentary from flutes and oboes). The overture is set in an easygoing sonata form with no development section: a handful of themes are presented, then, after a quick transition back to the home key, the whole sequence is repeated. A brief coda featuring noisily chattering woodwinds follows, and the overture comes to a joyous close.

Program note by Kevin Bazzana

A single burst of creativity: Mozart's violin concertos

Mozart was, of course, one of the great pianists of his day, but he also had, for a time, a flourishing career as a violinist. He played as a child, and, in November of 1769, at just 13, he became concertmaster of the court orchestra of the Archbishop of Salzburg, in which capacity he gave many performances at home and abroad, leading the orchestra and taking solo parts, often in works of his own composition.

His love of the instrument is evident in the five violin concertos he wrote, with uncommon insight, at the age of 19, in a single burst of creativity between April and December of 1775. Regarding the violinist's art, he singled out a beautiful singing tone as the highest achievement of a violinist; he was giving himself the ultimate compliment when he said, in 1777, after a performance of one of his own concertos, that it "went like oil. Everyone praised my beautiful, pure tone."

Mozart was one of many 18th-century musicians for whom the violin, of all solo instruments, most resembled the human voice in expressive potential, and his own violin concertos were nourished by his special genius as a composer of vocal music. He left an impressive body of music for violin with orchestra—more than three dozen movements in all, not counting unfinished and spurious works. And he composed almost all of this music in the mid-1770s, when he was in his late teens and early 20s and still in the employ of the Archbishop of

Salzburg, for whom, as a musical courtier, he was required to steadily churn out music—church music, symphonies, serenades, divertimentos, chamber music, dances—intended for immediate consumption as social entertainment. In the case of the violin concertos, he applied his spectacularly assured compositional technique eagerly to the task.

All five violin concertos are inspired works, though the first two, for all their charms, have always been overshadowed by the last three, which remain among Mozart's best-loved pieces. In the later concertos, his melodies are richer and more numerous, his sonorities more varied and beautiful, his rhetoric more profound and wide-ranging. Of these works, Maynard Solomon wrote that "the beauties succeed each other with a breathtaking rapidity, their outpouring of episodic interpolations suggesting that we need not linger over any single moment of beauty, for beauty is abundant." Mozart's forms, as a result, became increasingly original, adventurous, and irregular in the later concertos, full of strange and surprising digressions, yet remaining coherent, logical, even inevitable. In the experimental finales of the last three concertos, he plays fast and loose with the Classical rondo form by introducing the most unexpected contrasting episodes. Yet even where he is so brimming with ideas that he threatens to burst the bounds of convention, he never loses control of his material.

ABOUT THE WORKS

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Violin Concerto No. 5 in A Major, K. 219 “Turkish”

31
min

Composed: 1775

No. 5 in A Major, K. 219, is certainly the most impressive of Mozart’s violin concertos—in scale, ambition, and structure; in richness and profusion of ideas; in wit and charm; and in expressive range, brilliance of orchestration, and solo-violin writing. (A major was a key in which he always wrote with special beauty: witness the K. 488 piano concerto, the Clarinet Concerto, the Clarinet Quintet, and “Là ci darem la mano” from *Don Giovanni*.) Three dozen bars into the first movement, Mozart is already experimenting more radically than ever with the Classical concerto form. To introduce the soloist, he interrupts the orchestral introduction, marked *Allegro aperto*, with an astonishing parenthesis: six bars of tender *Adagio*, in which the solo violin sings a soaring *arioso* over a murmuring orchestral accompaniment. This music is never heard again, but it sets the entrance of the soloist in high relief, and introduces a thread of poetic sentiment that Mozart will weave throughout the high comedy of this concerto. This *Adagio section*, as it turns out, is only one of many surprises in the first movement, which blooms with fresh and ingenious ideas.

The slow movement is a graceful, luxuriant *Adagio*, scored with exceptional beauty and worked out in full sonata form. In operas like *Idomeneo*, *Così fan tutte*, and *The Magic Flute*, Mozart used E major as a *gentle* key (love, zephyrs, magnanimity, etc.), and, in this movement, from the two-note “sighing” figures in the opening bars to the striking feints

toward minor keys, he seems—not for the first time—to conceive of the violin concerto in terms that are overtly operatic.

The finale of K. 219 is an urbane minuet that unfolds at first in a perfectly conventional rondo form. But just when the end seems nigh, Mozart interpolates an episode even more astonishing than the *Adagio* in the first movement: 130 bars of the sort of tongue-in-cheek “Turkish” music he used in works like *The Abduction from the Seraglio* and the popular *Rondo alla turca* of the K. 331 piano sonata. All of the conventional building-blocks of 18th-century “Turkish” music are here: the key of A minor, march-like 2/4 time, drone basses, “gypsy” violin writing, leaping themes, pervasive chromaticism, “exotic” melodic intervals like the augmented second, repeated notes, frequent ornamentation, and grotesque, percussive scoring. (Mozart even marks one string passage “*coll arco al reverscio*”—“with the bow reversed”—which is to say *col legno*, the strings struck with the wood of the bow.) This particular episode has a handful of melodies of its own, several borrowed from folk music, arranged to form a separate little movement—a rondo within the rondo. When it’s over, the minuet returns to complete its appointed rounds, and, like the first movement, the finale ends quietly and wittily, with a little arpeggio decorated with grace notes—a wink and a smile.

Program note by Kevin Bazzana

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Violin Concerto No. 3 in G Major, K. 216

24
min

Composed: 1775

Of the five violin concertos written by the 19-year-old Mozart in that astonishing nine-month burst of creativity in 1775, No. 3 in G Major, K. 216, remained one of Mozart's own favourite pieces. In it, H. C. Robbins Landon wrote, "melody is piled upon melody and new ideas succeed each other in blissful insouciance of each other and of any strict formal pattern."

Of the three later violin concertos, K. 216 was pivotal, as Mozart's forms became increasingly original, adventurous, and irregular, full of strange and surprising digressions, yet always seeming coherent, logical, even inevitable, perfectly balancing freedom and order. It was also a definitive example of the Arcadian serenade style of Mozart's later Salzburg works. Maynard Solomon describes the multi-movement serenade as having "originated as an amorous musical offering, an open-air work sung by a lover to his beloved." Mozart imitated this style in much of his instrumental music, often giving a "vocal" part to a violin; but, in K. 216, he made the connection explicit, borrowing the opening theme of the first movement from the shepherd-king Aminta's noble aria "Aer tranquillo e di sereni" from Act I of *Il rè pastore*, a "serenata"—a short pastoral opera—that he had composed in Salzburg in April of 1775, the very month in which he began writing violin concertos.

The aria speaks of "tranquil air and serene days," "fresh springs and green fields," and Mozart translated this mood of idyllic pastorage, of amorous lyricism tinged with melancholy, into instrumental terms, transforming the violin concerto from a pleasant entertainment into a more poetic form of expression. The recapitulation in the first movement is preceded by a violin "recitative" also borrowed from *Il rè pastore*. There is a new world of sonority and sentiment in the dreamy, operatic *Adagio*, too. Mozart calls for flutes rather than oboes here (18th-century woodwind players often knew both instruments), and writes delicate melodic *fioratura* for the violin, supported by a serenade-like accompaniment of murmuring muted strings and *pizzicato* basses.

In the experimental finales of all three of the later violin concertos, Mozart plays fast and loose with the Classical rondo form by introducing the most unexpected contrasting episodes, yet, as stated earlier, he never loses control of his material. In K. 216, the jig-like *Allegro* unfolds as a perfectly conventional rondo, but just where we would expect the form to draw to a close, Mozart interpolates two delightful episodes. The first is a *galant*—a seductive French gavotte—in G minor (*Andante*), with dainty trills and a light, *pizzicato* accompaniment. ("It sounds as if a French dandy, with handkerchief to nose, had stepped in to reprove the boisterous dance

ABOUT THE WORKS

of the *Allegro*,” wrote the musicologist Daniel Heartz.) The second interpolated episode is a jolly *contredanse* in G major (*Allegretto*), based on a popular tune of the day known as the “Strassburger” (hence the nickname “Strassburg” Concerto). Having thus indulged

himself, to comic effect, Mozart brings back the jig, resolves the original rondo, and allows the concerto to close quietly, with a little curtsy from the oboes and horns.

Program note by Kevin Bazzana

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Symphony No. 35 in D Major, K. 385 “Haffner”

17
min

Composed: 1782

Music lovers owe an enormous debt of gratitude to Sigmund Haffner, Jr., a respected Salzburg businessman, son of the city’s former mayor, and a friend to Mozart from childhood.

In the summer of 1776, Haffner asked Mozart to compose a serenade to be performed at the marriage of Haffner’s sister Marie Elisabeth. The resulting eight-movement Serenade for Orchestra in D major, K. 250, popularly known as the “Haffner” Serenade, was first played on July 21, 1776, on the eve of the wedding.

Five years later, in 1781, Mozart relocated to Vienna in 1781 and took up the whirlwind life of a freelance composer. It was then that he made the acquaintance of Franz Joseph Haydn—a meeting that exerted an immeasurable influence on the musical life of each man. From Haydn, Mozart acquired a firmer grasp and a broader outlook on symphonic form; from Mozart, Haydn learned to use richer textures and harmonizations.

What’s more, both composers followed up their meeting with the creation of some of their greatest symphonies.

In Mozart’s case, Sigmund Haffner once again had a part to play. In mid-July, 1782, Mozart’s father, Leopold, passed on a second commission that Haffner had sent him, this time a request for a work to be performed at a celebration in honour of Haffner’s impending elevation to the nobility.

The timing proved awkward, since Mozart was deeply involved with several urgent projects, most notably his Serenade in C minor and the wind-band arrangement of his latest operatic success, *The Abduction from the Seraglio*. He composed it quickly, but apparently still not quickly enough to meet the deadline. A few months later, he asked his father to send it back so he could program it at a subscription concert in Vienna. To his embarrassment, the speed of its creation, plus the multiple

distractions he had undergone while composing it, resulted in his not recognizing it as his own work when it arrived.

(*Haffner* is based on a shelved serenade; Mozart had dusted it off, and found that it was better than he remembered it to be. Perhaps for this reason, some doubt exists as to the nature of the piece he composed to meet Haffner's second commission. Was it, like the first, a serenade, this time in six movements? Or was it always intended to be a four-movement symphony? The eminent Mozart scholar Neal Zaslaw believes it to have been the latter, and that is how the Mozarts, father and son, referred to it in their correspondence.)

Launched by a stirring call to attention, the sweeping first movement with its octave leaps

and assertive rhythms has just one real theme, a marked departure for the period. Such is the ingenuity that Mozart brings to bear that any lack of a traditional, clear-cut companion melody stirs not a ripple of regret. The second movement is a serene, gracious *Andante*; the third, a brief *Menuetto* with a tender Trio section at its core. The *Finale*, which Mozart requested, via his tell-tale *Presto* score marking, to be played "as fast as possible," bubbles over with comic-opera vivaciousness. The main theme of this movement is a close variation of the jovial aria "Ah, how I shall triumph," from his comic opera *The Abduction from the Seraglio*. And triumph he does.

Program note by Don Anderson

THE ARTISTS



Pinchas Zukerman conductor and violin

Pinchas Zukerman made his TSO debut in January 1975.

With a celebrated career encompassing five decades, Pinchas Zukerman is renowned as a virtuoso and admired for the expressive lyricism of his playing, singular beauty of tone, and impeccable musicianship. As a mentor, he has inspired generations of young musicians who have achieved prominence in performing, teaching, and leading roles with music festivals around the globe.

The 2018/19 season marks Zukerman's 10th season as Principal Guest Conductor of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra (RPO) in London, and his fourth as Artist-in-Association with the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra in Australia. He leads the RPO on a tour of the United Kingdom and Ireland, conducting works by Mozart and Vaughan Williams, and performing as soloist in Beethoven's Violin Concerto. Zukerman joins the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra in performances of

Bruch's Violin Concerto in G Minor, on tour in Germany, the Netherlands, and Switzerland. He appears as soloist and conductor with the National Arts Centre Orchestra in Ottawa, the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, and the Indianapolis Symphony. He also makes concerto appearances in North America with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, Colorado Symphony, Los Angeles Philharmonic, and New World Symphony, and in Europe with the Gulbenkian Orchestra, Orquesta Nacional de España, NDR Radiophilharmonie, Salzburg Camerata, and Moscow State Symphony Orchestra. Additionally, he conducts the Deutsche Staatsphilharmonie Rheinland-Pfalz, and conducts and is soloist with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra on a tour of South Korea.

As a founding member of the Zukerman Trio, along with cellist Amanda Forsyth and pianist Angela Cheng, Pinchas Zukerman appears in Baltimore and at New York's 92nd Street Y; tours Italy, including Bologna, Milan, and Naples; and gives performances in Germany at Villa Musica in the Rhineland-Palatinate and in Mönchengladbach. Zukerman and Forsyth join the Jerusalem Quartet in a program of Strauss, Schoenberg, and Tchaikovsky sextets in Chicago, Houston, Atlanta, Princeton, Berkeley, and Vancouver. Mr. Zukerman also appears with Ms. Forsyth in performances of the Brahms Double Concerto with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and joins violinist Viviane Hagner and the National Arts Centre Orchestra for performances of the Mozart Sinfonia Concertante.

Pinchas Zukerman's extensive discography includes more than 100 titles, for which he has gained two GRAMMY® awards and 21 nominations. Recent albums include: *Baroque Treasury* on the Analekta label, with the National Arts Centre Orchestra, cellist Amanda Forsyth, and oboist Charles Hamann in works by Handel, Bach, Vivaldi, Telemann, and Tartini; Brahms's *Symphony No. 4* and *Double Concerto* with the National Arts Centre Orchestra and Ms. Forsyth, recorded live at Ottawa's Southam Hall; and a critically acclaimed album of works by Elgar and Vaughan Williams with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. Mr. Zukerman has recorded for Decca, Analekta, CBS Masterworks, Philips, Angel, Deutsche Grammophon, CBC Records, Altara, Biddulph Recordings, Sony, and BMG Classics/RCA Victor Red Seal.