

Chapel Hill

Philharmonia

Sunday, 9 March 2025
3:00 p.m.

Moeser Auditorium
University of North Carolina
at Chapel Hill

Donald L. Oehler, Conductor

Happily Fulfilled

Symphony No. 103 in E flat major, *Drumroll*

Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)

Adagio; Allegro con spirito

Andante più tosto allegretto

Menuetto

Finale: Allegro con spirito

— *Intermission* —

Clarinet Concerto No. 1 in F minor, Op 73

Carl Maria von Weber (1786-1826)

Allegro

Adagio ma non troppo

Rondo: Allegretto

Wonkak Kim, clarinet

Overture to *La Forza del Destino*

Giuseppe Verdi (1813-1901)

Happily Fulfilled

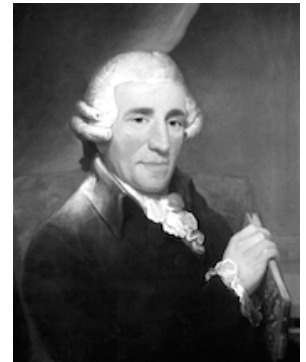
The three composers in our program all received welcome requests, at opportune times, for new works, the ones we play today. Two came from royal sources, the other from a successful impresario. All three requests were fulfilled by masterpieces still performed all over the world.

Haydn: Symphony No. 103 in E flat major, *Drumroll*

Joseph Haydn could be said to have been a lucky man. His parents, recognizing his musical talent, sent him away at age six to live and study with a choir director in a larger town. When he was eight the music director of the cathedral in Vienna happened by, looking for new choir boys; Haydn auditioned, and was off to Vienna. Out of a job after his voice changed in his teens, he struggled for a while, but at twenty he was hired by a well-known Italian composer and teacher, from whom he learned, as he put it, "the true fundamentals of composition." Soon his own works were being performed, attracting the notice of musically inclined aristocrats. This led in 1761 to his long employment by the wealthy Esterhazy family. He directed their musical enterprises until 1790, when the new prince gave him a pension with almost no further duties. He was only 58 and in good health.

With Esterhazy he had a contract which gave him the right to publish his compositions and accept external commissions. By the time he was pensioned he was one of the most renowned composers in Europe. He had also developed friendships in Vienna with connoisseurs and fellow musicians — most famously, Mozart. So in retirement he moved from the Esterhazy estate to the imperial capital.

Soon after his arrival he was approached by impresario Johann Peter Salomon with an offer he had refused earlier because he felt obligated to Esterhazy. Now he was free to accept it. He would go to London, where a series of concerts of his music would be arranged, for his (and Salomon's) benefit. So Haydn and Salomon traveled to London, arriving in January 1791. Along the way, they stopped in Bonn, Salomon's native city, where Haydn met 20-year-old Ludwig van Beethoven. This led later to the Elector of Bonn sponsoring Beethoven's study in Vienna with Haydn when he returned.



Haydn in 1791

The two-year London sojourn was a huge success for Haydn, artistically and financially. Six new symphonies were introduced. A return visit was arranged for 1794, which was another triumph. Again six new symphonies were presented, the last ones he wrote.

We play the eleventh of the twelve "London" symphonies. As its nickname suggests, it begins with a roll on the tympani, all alone. A slow introduction follows: a wandering plainsong, ambiguous in key and meter, ending on a unison G, suggesting that what is to follow might be in C. Instead the first theme, a bright little tune, begins on the upbeat in E-flat major:

Musical notation for the beginning of Haydn's Symphony No. 103. The first section is labeled "Adagio" and is in 3/4 time with a key signature of two flats (B-flat major). It consists of five measures of music with dynamics *p*, *sf*, *p*, and *pp*. The second section is labeled "Allegro con spirito" and is in 6/8 time with a key signature of one flat (E-flat major). It begins with a *p* dynamic and features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes.

Later a dancing second theme is introduced by violins and oboe. In the development, built almost entirely on the first seven notes of the first theme, Haydn weaves an extended musical fabric out of a small patch of material. An unresolved chord ends the recapitulation, the drumroll returns along with a short version of the introduction, and a brief coda concludes the delightfully inventive movement.

The second movement — which the first audience demanded be played again — is a set of double variations, on two themes said to be drawn from Croatian folk music. The first is in C minor, the second in C major, so the movement alternates between those modes. Both themes use a raised fourth tone (F-sharp here) in their scales, which gives the melodies a bit of extra tension. Some variations involve only changes in the accompaniment, with the themes largely unchanged. One is a solo for the concertmaster, presumably written for the celebrated violinist GB Viotti who led the orchestra at the premiere. Notable throughout is the effective use of the winds, which alternate with the strings in taking the leading voices. Some commentators suggest the influence of Mozart, who, Haydn said, showed him how to write for winds.

In the minuet a strong first beat gives the courtly dance a rustic lilt. Here and there Haydn adds extra measures, soft echos of the previous ones. The trio, strings with occasional commentary by bassoon and horns, is more conventionally mellifluous.

The finale starts with a characteristic horn call, which then becomes the accompaniment for the main theme in the violins:

The image shows a musical score for two parts: Horns in F and 1st Violins. The title is "Allegro con spirito". The Horns part is in F major, 2/4 time, and starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The 1st Violins part is in F major, 2/4 time, and starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The Horns part consists of a series of chords and single notes, while the 1st Violins part features a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes.

Haydn takes the first five notes of this theme as a motto and constructs an extended rondo movement from it. The main theme, with the horn accompaniment, returns three more times, and in between Haydn demonstrates how much musical enjoyment he can provide from five notes.

On 2 March 1795 a short review of the first performance was printed in *The Morning Chronicle*:

Another new Overture, by the fertile and enchanting Haydn, was performed; which, as usual, had continual strokes of genius, both in air and harmony. The Introduction excited deepest attention, the Allegro charmed, the Andante was encored, the Minuets, especially the trio, were playful and sweet, and the last movement was equal, if not superior to the preceding.

History has certainly confirmed the description of Haydn as "fertile and enchanting."

Weber: Clarinet Concerto No. 1 in F Minor

Like Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Carl Maria von Weber was born to musical parents who were aware of his special talents at an early age. Unlike Leopold Mozart, Carl Maria's father Franz Anton von Weber did not have a steady position, but was constantly moving his family around to where he could find work. So young Weber had many teachers in many places. Some were very distinguished — e.g., Michael Haydn, younger brother of Joseph — and he received excellent musical training.

At age 17 Weber was hired as director of the opera in Breslau; like many of his jobs, it didn't last long. At 20 he was in Stuttgart as secretary to the brother of the king of Württemberg. Here he (and his father) got into financial and legal trouble and were banished. Wandering followed, during which he went to Munich to have one of his operas performed. The importance of that was not the opera, but that he met clarinetist Heinrich Baermann, with whom he formed a mutually fruitful friendship.

For Baermann Weber wrote — in three days — a concertino for clarinet and orchestra. Hearing it played, the Bavarian king commissioned Weber to write two clarinet concertos. In the following year Weber and Baermann toured widely together, featuring the new clarinet pieces in their concerts, a tour that helped to establish Weber as a composer of consequence.

We present today the first of the concertos, which was finished in a month and premiered on 13 June 1811. The first movement opens with cellos and basses softly stating a four bar motto that is played often by the orchestra but never by the soloist. This is elaborated in a brief martial exposition. When the soloist enters, it is with a plaintive line in the characteristic legato of the clarinet. The movement is in altered sonata form, but the soloist is a free spirit in it, sometimes in dialog with the orchestra, often in rapid passages with minimal accompaniment. At the end of the exposition an improvisatory 16-bar section, added by Baermann, is followed by a brief cadenza. Toward the end of the development the orchestra plays the four bar motto softly underneath the soloist's running passages, and they then reprise the opening. But the movement is brought quickly to a quiet end with only strings, a tympani roll, and the soloist in a low register.

The somber F minor of the first movement yields to pastoral C major in the second, starting with an aria for the soloist. The brief middle section starts in C minor but soon moves to the relative major for a charming dialog between the horn trio and the soloist. After a short reprise of the opening this combination returns to end the movement.

The soloist kicks off the last movement with a jaunty theme in F major. In rondo fashion, this recurs numerous times, with contrasting episodes in between. The passages for full orchestra are of a martial character, and there is an episode in the minor, but overall the movement is full of happiness, ending with the soloist scampering up the scale to a final high F.

Our soloist, **Wonkak Kim**, is Associate Professor of Clarinet at the University of Oregon School of Music. A native of South Korea, Dr. Kim came to the USA at age 15. He earned bachelor's degrees in mathematics and music from UNC, where he studied clarinet with Donald Oehler, and a Doctor of Music degree from Florida State University. He has appeared as a soloist with dozens of orchestras at renowned venues, including Carnegie Hall's Isaac Stern Auditorium and Weill Recital Hall, and frequently performs with distinguished artists and chamber music ensembles across the United States, Latin America, Europe, and Asia. A sought-after guest artist and teacher, Kim has been invited to many of the world's leading institutions. His extensive discography with Naxos, MSR, Albany, and Navona Records has earned international acclaim.



Verdi: Overture to *La Forza del Destino*

In the eighteen years after his breakthrough success with *Nabucco*, Giuseppe Verdi wrote eighteen new operas, including three still widely performed: *Rigoletto*, *Il Trovatore*, and *La Traviata*. He was famous and relatively rich, and considered retiring from composing. The struggle of the Italians for independence from the Austro-Hungarian empire and their desire to unify the country had sparked a patriotic impulse in Verdi. He was elected to a new provincial council, and was one of five chosen to meet with the King of Piedmont, who would later become Italy's first king. He turned down several offers from various opera companies for new works or new productions of existing ones.

Nevertheless, when a request came in 1860 to write an opera for the imperial theater in St Petersburg, which promised a great deal of money and an all-expenses trip to Russia, Verdi began looking for a subject. He decided to adapt an 1835 Spanish play called *Don Alvaro o la fuerza del sino*. (Verdi's title is a translation into Italian of the last four words; in English it is *The Power of Fate*.) After some delays the new work was successfully premiered on 29 October 1862.

The plot is convoluted — and bloody. It begins with a botched elopement when the hero accidentally kills the heroine's father, for which the heroine's brother vows vengeance. The hero changes his persona twice, becoming a soldier and then a monk. In one scene the brother, using an assumed name, encounters his sister who is disguised as a man. In a final scene duel the hero kills the brother, who before dying kills his sister. In the original version of the opera the hero then commits suicide, but in the revision performed today he survives, reconciled with his fate.

The overture, which quickly became a concert favorite, begins with the fate motive: three forceful unison Es played twice by bassoons and brass. This is followed by an ominous E minor pattern, in the low registers of the violins and cellos, that permeates the entire piece:



This material, together with two melodies from arias in the opera, are combined to make a characteristically dramatic overture, which ends somewhat incongruously in a joyful E major.

Notes by Lawrence Evans