

The *Largo* is the *Fifth Symphony's* emotional core, played by divided strings, in eight part counterpoint, and solo woodwinds. Biographer David Fanning calls the movement "...a channel for a mass grieving at the height of the Great Terror, impossible otherwise to express openly." It brought many audience members to tears. For Maxim Shostakovich, born in 1938 to parents ever fearful of a knock on the door, it evokes "the last night at home of a man sentenced to the *gulag*..."

Martial brass and percussion return in the *Finale* with electricity that literally stirred audiences to their feet. It ends with a forceful coda, *fortissimo* in D major. Such exultation! But, then, why is the tempo so slow, reduced to half that of the original march? And why is a piercingly high A repeated measure after measure? DDS, quoted by Volkov, explains: "The rejoicing is forced, created under a threat... It's as if someone were beating you with a stick and saying, 'Your business is rejoicing, your business is rejoicing,' and you rise, shaky, and go marching off, muttering, 'our business is rejoicing'...What kind of apotheosis is that? You have to be a complete oaf not to hear that..." Volkov may have put words into the composer's mouth, but DDS himself embedded a powerful clue in the score. The germinal four note figure of this movement quotes his own song setting, composed a year earlier (Op. 46), of social reformer Alexander Pushkin's (1799-1837) poem *Rebirth*: "A barbarian artist, with sleepy brush/Blackens over a picture of genius/And his lawless drawing/Scribbles meaninglessly upon it./But with the years the alien paints/Flake off like old scales;/The creation of genius appears before us/In its former beauty./Thus do delusions fall away/From my worn-out soul./And there spring up within it/Visions of original, pure days." The code seems transparent. Stalin is the barbarian artist, blackening over his country's art and society. The composer envisions a day when his own pure music will be heard and understood. — Mark Furth

Chapel Hill Philharmonia Musicians

# section principal	Celina Charles	Peggy Sauerwald	Flute	French Horn	Percussion
Violin I	Cary Eddy	Pat Tennis	Cathy Phipps #	Sandy Svoboda #	Roger Halchin #
Mark Furth #	Joanna Fried	Doris Thibault	Denise Bevington	Tim Dyess	Bill Hayes
Sarah Alward	Cheryl Harward	Yuka Yoshie	Pat Pukkila	Jerry Hulka	Leah Shull
Kim Ashley	Judy Jordan	Violoncello	Mary Sturgeon	Garth Molyneux	Alice Tien
Kari Haddy	Lindsay Lambe	Dick Clark #	Oboe	Adams Wofford	Harp
Beth Harris	Brennan Less	Karen Daniels	Judy Konanc #	Trumpet	Quinn Lippmann
Elizabeth Johnson	Heather Morgan	Jim Dietz	John Konanc	David Marable #	Librarian
Shoji Nakayama	Sally Rohrdanz	Steve Ellis	English Horn	Hermann Wienchol	Laura Lengowski
David O'Brien	Laura Rusche	Len Gettes	John Konanc	xxxx	Susan Strobel
Leah Schinasi	Harriet Solomon	Paula Goldenberg	Bassoon	yyy	Guest Conductor
Susan Strobel	Debby Wechsler	Jonathan Stuart-	Paul Verderber #	Trombone	Andrew McAfee
Masato Tsuchiya	Karen Wilson	Moore	Kathryn Mathis	Charles Porter #	
Elizabeth Weinzierl	Viola	Alice Tien	Clarinet	Everett Goldston	
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Chapel Hill Philharmonia

Hill Hall Auditorium — University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

7:30 PM May 6, 2007

Donald L. Oehler, Music Director

William Walton (1902 - 1983)

Portsmouth Point, concert overture

Gerald Finzi (1901 - 1956)

Clarinet Concerto, Op. 31

Adagio, ma senza rigore

William Clark, clarinet

2007 Chapel Hill Philharmonia Student Concerto Competition Award

Dmitri Shostakovich (1906 - 1975)

Symphony No. 5 in D minor, Op. 47

Moderato

Allegretto

Largo

Allegro non troppo

The beginning of the 20th century was a time of Empires fated to undergo radical transformation. William Walton and Gerald Finzi were both children of a British Empire over which The Sun Never Set, but they reflected different aspects of its character. Dmitri Shostakovich was born in Tsarist Russia, soon to be swept by the Communist Revolution. Their distinctive national cultures and the dramatic upheavals of their century profoundly influenced these composers' music.

William Walton was a chorus boy at Oxford University and matriculated there at age 14. He pored over contemporary scores in the music library, but failed a basic Greek and maths exam and left without a degree. Walton spent the next decade as an “adopted, or elected, brother” and London house guest to his fellow student Sacheverell Sitwell and siblings Osbert and Edith, intellectuals and *avant garde* poets. Notice first came in 1922 with *Façade*, an accompaniment to Edith's nonsense poetry. The Zürich premiere in 1926 of the vibrant concert overture **Portsmouth Point** brought international recognition. Walton took his inspiration from an etching by caricaturist **Thomas Rowlandson** (1757-1827) depicting Britain's main seafaring town in 1811. As tall-masted ships lie at anchor, salty ‘tars’ and their officers consort lustily with the town's fair (and not-so-fair) damsels; a peglegged fiddler dances by a yapping dog; bloomers wave from a flag post; dockworkers trundle merchandise to the shore; and signs advertise a money lender and the Ship Tavern. Walton captures the scene with jaunty rhythms and a hubbub of themes suggesting sea shanties, a hornpipe, and a Catalan *sardana*. The tempo marking is *Robusto*. Britannia rules the waves and all is right with the world in a drunken, jazzy way that befits the Roaring '20s.



Walton's stature grew with concertos for viola and violin, the massive choral work *Belshazzar's Feast*, and a powerful *First Symphony*. At government behest he composed patriotic film scores during World War II, and he was knighted in 1951. Walton won Oscar nominations for the scores to Laurence Olivier's *Henry V* (1944) and *Hamlet* (1948). The postwar years, however, saw the decline of the British Empire and a shift in musical tastes. Composers like Benjamin Britten gained acclaim, and Sir William's “grand old man” status did not temper the perception that he was a conservative throwback.

Born in London to Jewish parents, **Gerald Finzi** lost his father at age seven and two older brothers a few years later. A third brother and his composition teacher Ernest Farrar died on World War I battlefields. Finzi became a pacifist. He viewed the artist's role as creating a better society, like a “coral reef insect, building his reef out of the transitory world around him and making a solid structure to last long after his own fragile and uncertain life.” He chose a country home with his artist wife Joyce Black, tending apple orchards, collecting over 3000 volumes of English poetry and literature, and founding a fine community orchestra, the Newbury String Players. Finzi's work shares a pastoral quality with that of his friend Ralph Vaughn Williams. He composed many vocal settings to poems of Thomas Hardy, Thomas Traherne, and William Wordsworth, often on the theme of the innocence of youth. The **Clarinet Concerto** (1949), with string orchestra, became one of Finzi's most popular compositions. Tonight we hear the elegiac slow movement, which in the complete work is flanked by two energetic outer movements, and reveals both baroque and folk inspirations. In 1951 Finzi was diagnosed with Hodgkin's Disease. His immune system weakened, he died five years later of a viral infection.



Gerald Finzi

Clarinet soloist **William Clark**, winner of the 2007 Chapel Hill Philharmonia Student Concerto Competition, is a senior at Durham School of the Arts. He studies clarinet with the CHP's Music Director, Professor Donald L. Oehler. A member of the Triangle Youth Philharmonic and the Duke University String School Orchestra, William has been first chair clarinetist of the North Carolina All-State Orchestra and All-State Band, and has attended the Interlochen (Michigan) Center for the Arts Program. William is a National Merit Scholar Finalist and plans to enter UNC-Chapel Hill this fall.



Dmitri Dmitrievich Shostakovich (DDS) survived two World Wars, the Communist Revolution, and a half century of Soviet regimes that frequently shipped artists to the *gulag* or simply had them shot. In his 100th anniversary season DDS presents an enigmatic figure. Who was the frail man behind the Harry Potter specs? Was he “a mediocre human being” who “toadied and cringed before his Soviet bosses” (Bernard Holland, *New York Times*), an unmanly “wuss” (biographer Laurel Fay)? Was he a coddled member of the Soviet elite, a four-time winner of the lucrative Stalin Prize, and a Party official (although joining only in 1960)? Or was he a heroic dissident who, in the face of vicious criticism, intense psychological pressure, and probable imprisonment or death, wrote coded works expressing grief and anguish, and protesting the inhumanity of life under Joseph Stalin and his successors? The **Fifth Symphony in D minor** serves as a focal point for the controversy.

DDS entered the Petrograd Conservatory at age 13, overcame privation, and emerged as a star. His *First Symphony* gained international acclaim. Two more symphonies, film scores (36 by career's end), and a satiric opera followed. Despite demands that he adhere to Socialist Realism, DDS embraced the *avant garde*. His next opera, *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District* (1934), explicitly sexual and musically edgy, scored a huge triumph at home, filling two Moscow theaters, and abroad. Then in January 1936 Stalin attended a performance and, scandalized, left before the final act. A scathing review in *Pravda*, the official newspaper, pronounced: “This is music intentionally made inside-out, so that there would be nothing to resemble classical music, nothing in common with symphonic sounds, with simple, accessible musical speech... This is leftist muddle instead of natural, human music.” Solomon Volkov (in *Testimony: The Memoirs of Dmitri Shostakovich*, purportedly dictated by DDS before his death in 1975, but of disputed authenticity) claims that Stalin authored both this diatribe and a follow-up attack on the more conventional ballet *The Limpid Stream*. DDS expected exile or a bullet. Supporters rallied behind the scenes, and he was spared. DDS withdrew his ambitious *Fourth Symphony*. His public answer to “Muddle Not Music” was the premiere of the *Fifth Symphony* in Leningrad on November 21, 1937. A tense audience listened, wept, and exploded with a 40 minute ovation as conductor Eugene Mravinsky waved the score overhead. What did they hear?



Dmitri Shostakovich

By contrast to *Lady Macbeth*, the *Fifth Symphony* uses conventional tonality and symphonic structure. Was it with sincerity that DDS accepted a reviewer's tag of the work as “a Soviet artist's reply to just criticism”? Yet to many the music conveyed a defiant message. Russian *émigré* conductors who knew him, Kurt Sanderling, Vladimir Ashkenazy, Mstislav Rostropovich, and the composer's son Maxim, now concur that in this work DDS “addressed himself to the dominant theme of his life: anti-Stalinism.” (Sanderling) The Symphony opens with a dramatic gesture reminiscent of Beethoven's *Grosse Fugue* – a call to attention – then develops around a lyrical theme. Maxim Shostakovich, quoted by Ian MacDonald (1997) in *DSCH Journal* No. 7, paints a heroic picture: “The theme... is human, warm... It asks ‘Why aren't we kind to each other?’” A stormy cello entrance signals an “Attack of negative forces,” that builds and climaxes with “the hero being torn apart.” The theme returns, now hushed, “a requiem for that man who would have lived a different life if he did not attack the evil...”

The second movement shows the strong influence of Gustav Mahler, DDS's closest antecedent as a symphonist. Some critics describe it as a folk-influenced *scherzo* or grotesque waltz, others as a sardonic mockery of Socialist Realism. Maxim Shostakovich goes further: “Mahler was in his tradition, but this is not a waltz. It is the aggression of a soulless negative force. A machine of destruction... [the] violin solo is a child's voice from beneath a soldier's boot... The flute repeats the solo, a defiant fist still raised... [T]he force begins again, and the movement finishes with the victory of evil...”