

# CU ★ PRESENTS

2021-22 Season



College of Music  
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO BOULDER

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*Spring 2022*

#### Editors

Sabine Kortals Stein  
Becca Vaclavik

#### Designer

Sabrina Green

#### Photography

CU Boulder Photography

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- Photography and video recordings of any type are strictly prohibited during the performance.
- Smoking is not permitted anywhere. CU Boulder is a smoke-free campus.

**CU ★ PRESENTS** is the home of performing arts at the University of Colorado Boulder.



The mission of the **University of Colorado Boulder College of Music** is to inspire artistry and discovery, together.



*The College of Music acknowledges that the university sits upon land within the territories of the Ute, Cheyenne and Arapaho peoples. Further, we acknowledge that 48 contemporary tribal nations are historically tied to Colorado lands.*

# CU Philharmonia Orchestra

Kedrick Armstrong, conductor

Renee Gilliland, conductor

7:30 p.m., Thursday, April 21, 2022

Grusin Music Hall

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## Program

### **Concerto grosso in G Major, HWV 319, Op. 6, No. 1**

George Frideric Handel (1685-1759)

I. A tempo giusto

II. Allegro

III. Adagio

IV. Allegro

V. Allegro

### **Records From a Vanishing City (2016)**

Jessie Montgomery (b. 1981)

*Kedrick Armstrong, conductor*

—Intermission—

### **Melody for string orchestra**

Myroslav Skoryk (1938-2020)

### **Symphony No. 5, D.485, B-flat Major**

Franz Schubert (1797-1828)

I. Allegro

II. Andante con moto

III. Menuetto: Allegro molto

IV. Allegro vivace

*Renee Gilliland, conductor*

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# Program notes

## **Concerto grosso in G Major, HWV 319, Op. 6, No. 1**

*George Frideric Handel (1685-1759)*

It has been given to few composers in the history of music to make a fortune from their works. Handel made two. He first arrived in London in 1710 after stocking his artistic cupboard with the most popular operatic conventions of the day, learned during his Italian apprenticeship. More than his compositional competitors, however, Handel brought to these practices a seemingly inexhaustible talent for rapturous melody and dogged entrepreneurship. Soon his operas became all the fashion among elegant Londoners, even though the audience could understand hardly a word of the Italian in which they were sung. Handel got rich.

Between 1738 and 1740, when Handel was beginning to commit his attention fully to oratorio, he produced a series of splendid concertos that could be used either as intermission features or for independent performance. The *Organ Concertos*, Opp. 4 (1738) and 7 (1740), were intended specifically for his own performance between the parts of his oratorios. The *Concerti Grossi*, Op. 6, of September–October 1739 could serve a similar function (they did so during Handel’s oratorio series later that season) or they could be played by anyone who acquired the music. Handel, in fact, made the Op. 6 *Concerti Grossi* available for general purchase by subscription, the only of his instrumental compositions to be so published. The works became popular so quickly that Walsh, Handel’s publisher, reported the following April, “[They] are now played in most public places with the greatest applause.”

Handel wrote the twelve *Concertos* of his Op. 6 with astonishing speed—Sept. 29 to Oct. 30, 1739—most of them apparently completed in a single day. These wondrous pieces, coming some 20 years after Bach’s *Brandenburg Concertos*, were old-fashioned for their day. They used the concerto grosso form—utilizing a small group of soloists rather than an individual player—that had been developed in Italy during the last half of the 17th century and perfected by Arcangelo Corelli with his *Concerti Grossi*, Op. 6, published in Rome in 1714. Handel’s entourage of soloists comprises two violins and a cello

that compete/collaborate (the term “concerto” implies both simultaneously) with a string orchestra bolstered by harpsichord. The movements, four to six in number, generally alternate in tempo between slow and fast, with some imitative writing spicing the quick sections. Handel’s strength, however, was melody, and these Concertos are less densely packed with complex counterpoint than are the *Brandenburgs*. In expression, though, they are in no way inferior to Bach’s masterpieces because of Handel’s unfailing thematic invention, sense of tonal balance, harmonic ingenuity, and invigorating rhythms. Of the Op. 6 *Concerti Grossi*, Percy M. Young wrote, “In these works it is tempting to see the peaks of Handel’s creative genius. Elsewhere the flame of inspiration may leap momentarily higher, but nowhere else has the consistency of imaginative thought so triumphal a progress.”

The Concerto No. 1 in G major opens with a majestic processional that is, by turns, pompous and tender. It leads to a jolly Allegro full of bounding, high spirits. The third movement, in slow tempo, brings a touching pathos at the central point of this Concerto that balances the exuberance of the outer sections. A fugal movement and a whirling dance in 6/8 meter bring this robust work to a close. —*Program note by Richard E. Rodda*

## **Records From a Vanishing City (2016)**

*Jessie Montgomery (b. 1981)*

*Records from a Vanishing City* is a tone poem based on my recollections of the music that surrounded me as I grew up on Manhattan’s Lower East Side in the 1980s and 1990s. Artists, truth seekers and cultures of all kinds defined our vibrant community. The embracing diversity burst out with an effortless everydayness in block parties, festivals, and shindigs of every sort. Partly because my parents were artists—but also because I just couldn’t help it—I soaked up all that surrounded me: Latin jazz, alternative rock, Western classical, avant-garde jazz, poetry and Caribbean dance music, to name a few.

A year before completing this work, a very dear family friend passed away and it was decided that I would be the one to inherit a large portion of his eclectic record collection. James Rose was one of the many suns in the Lower East Side cosmos who often hosted parties and generous gatherings

for our extended artist family. His record collection was a treasure trove of the great jazz recordings of the 1950s, 1960s and beyond—he was mad for John Coltrane, but also Miles Davis and Thelonious Monk and Ornette Coleman, as well as traditional folk artists from Africa, Asia and South America.

In the process of imagining this piece, a particular track on a record of music from Angola caught my ear: a traditional lullaby which is sung in call and response by a womens' chorus. This lullaby rang with an uncanny familiarity in me. An adaptation of this lullaby and the rhythmic chant that follows it appears in each of the three main sections of *Records*.

This piece is dedicated to the memory of James Rose.

—*Program note by Jessie Montgomery*

## **Melody for string orchestra**

*Myroslav Skoryk (1938-2020)*

Myroslav Skoryk (born in 1938 in Lviv, Ukraine) initially entered the conservatory in his native city in 1948, but his studies were interrupted by the deportation of his family to Siberia for having criticized the Soviet regime. He resumed his musical studies in Lviv in 1955, when he and his family were finally allowed back into the city. In 1960 he enrolled for postgraduate studies with Dmitri Kabalevsky at the Moscow Conservatory. He later joined the faculties of the Lviv and Kiev Conservatories. Skoryk's oeuvre, often drawing from the rich lore of Ukrainian folk music, is diverse, spanning classical concert music, jazz, pop music and film music. His melancholy *Melody* is from the film *The High Mountain Pass*. —*Program note by Anne Maley and Lindsay Koob*

# Symphony No. 5, D.485, B-flat Major

Franz Schubert (1797-1828)

A Vienna native, Schubert grew up with the figure of Ludwig van Beethoven, also a Viennese resident at the time, looming large. And indeed, Schubert's Symphony No. 4 (which he entitled "The Tragic") was clearly the work of a young composer still under a Beethovenian spell, a young man struggling with the shadow cast by Vienna's resident 800-pound musical gorilla.

His Symphony No. 5, written only a few months after No. 4, was Schubert's moment of breaking free from the symphonic domination of Beethoven. The Symphony is often described as a work which pays homage to the classical masters Mozart and Haydn, but, in the same breath, it is frequently dismissed as lightweight. Does this somehow imply that this work isn't up to the standards set by Beethoven, or even by Schubert himself?

Hardly. Looking at it another way, describing Symphony No. 5 as "light" pays the greatest compliment to the then-19-year-old Schubert. In this work, the young composer manages to defy gravity, or at the very least, attempts to take charge of its forces musically. By looking back to the older masters, and breaking free of the Beethovenian model, Schubert has lightened his burden, if you will, discovering a unique symphonic voice in the process. Schubert even scored this work delicately—without clarinets, trumpets or timpani.

There is no heavy, lugubrious *Adagio* introduction here, either: on hardly a moment's notice, the first theme is announced. The fresh, unencumbered opening of the *Allegro* is lightness itself. Jaunty and tuneful, the principal themes are also introduced with the unmistakable Schubertian chromaticism totally in evidence; and, rather than pulling us down or adding weight, this chromatic motion keeps pushing ahead, providing motion, buoyancy, and an occasional harmonic surprise. Just as the second theme has been stated, a rising line provides a further sense of airiness to the movement. This "rising" idea returns at the end of the movement (and in fact, throughout the whole symphony), in the recapitulation; this time, the rising notes seem to literally leap into musical space.

If the first movement is a leap, the second is a soft landing. The *Andante*

*con moto* sings, even sighs at times, perhaps mindful of a Mozartean model. Schubert may be paying tribute, but he is always himself, ever propelling this movement with short, rising chromatic passages—his musical fingerprint. The *Menuetto* is a typical dance movement at first, and like a dancer, Schubert must contend with gravity. A sense of landing on the ground is clear—one can almost feel a dancer’s feet sweep up, then gently fall; likewise, in the *Trio*, one can imagine graceful and elegant dancers slowly rising with the music. Many believe this movement, in G minor, is an homage to Mozart’s Symphony No. 40 (also in G minor and a work which clearly influenced Schubert).

The *Finale*, marked *Allegro vivace*, builds on the dance-like *Minuet*. As with the first movement, it is bouncy and jocular, with the unmistakable touch of Schubert in the occasional chromatic sleight of hand and the frequent harmonic surprises.

All in all, the lightness of Symphony No. 5 represents a tremendously optimistic and whimsical moment for Schubert, whose short and tragic life was riddled with every kind of sickness, disappointment, and suffering. We can be thankful that he captured such an instant of cheerfulness in this work.

—*Program note by Dave Kopplin*



# Personnel

## **Kedrick Armstrong**, conductor

Praised by the Chicago Tribune for his ability to “simply let the score speak for itself,” conductor Kedrick Armstrong enjoys a wide range of work spanning early music to premiering new works. This season, he returned to the Knox-Galesburg Symphony to conduct Handel’s *Messiah* after his debut performance conducting the orchestra in 2020. Armstrong is an alum of Chicago Sinfonietta’s Project Inclusion Freeman Conducting Fellow program, where he served as assistant conductor during the 2018-2019 season. He made his subscription debut conducting on the orchestra’s annual MLK Tribute Concert in 2019. Applauded for his “knack for balancing orchestral-choral forces,” he was invited back the following season, where he led the Chicago premiere of Joel Thompson’s *Seven Last Words of the Unarmed*.

Armstrong shares his time between the concert stage and the opera pit. He will debut in 2022 with the DePaul Opera Theater conducting Leonard Bernstein’s *Candide*. Armstrong also returns to Lyric Opera of Chicago in 2023 to premiere a new opera, *The Factotum*, by Will Liverman and K Rico. He made his Chicago Opera Theater debut in 2021, leading the premiere of Matthew Recio’s *The Puppy Episode*. Kedrick holds a BM in history and literature from Wheaton College and is currently pursuing an MM in orchestral conducting from the University of Colorado Boulder with teacher and advisor Gary Lewis. Armstrong uses his voice and platform as a Black conductor to advocate for classical music’s performance, publication and preservation of minority voices. This advocacy has led to various speaking engagements and his current research into Black women composers within CU Boulder’s Helen Walker-Hill collection.

## **Renee Gilliland, conductor**

Renee Gilliland conducts the University of Colorado Boulder Campus Orchestra where she is pursuing a Doctor of Musical Arts degree under the instruction of Maestro Gary Lewis. Concurrently, she is the assistant conductor of the CU Symphony, Chamber and Philharmonia Orchestras. Gilliland also serves as the assistant conductor of the Boulder Philharmonic Orchestra. Previously, Gilliland was the music director of the Anschutz Medical Campus Symphony Orchestra in Aurora, Colorado and associate conductor of the Denver Philharmonic Orchestra. She was awarded an Artist Diploma in orchestral conducting from the University of Denver where she was the assistant conductor of the Lamont School of Music Symphony and Opera Theater Orchestras. Gilliland has conducted in workshops and festivals in the United States as well as abroad in Bulgaria, Ukraine and the Czech Republic. She has conducted works in concert with the El Paso Symphony, Boulder Concert Band, Aurora Symphony and Bang on a Can All Stars, among others. She enjoys working with diverse musicians of all ages and exploring new repertoire.

# Philharmonia Orchestra

## Violin

Olivia Breen  
Alyssa Byrne  
Noah-Michael Carlson  
Corbin Glover  
Richi Hsieh  
Sam Jarvis \*  
Jacob Lei  
Logan Indge  
Sarah Payton  
Elijah Pouliot  
Quinn Rubin  
Bebe Seidenberg +  
Jacob Stewart  
Max Tuning  
Brandon Wu

## Viola

Len Eppich  
Madeline Guyer  
Cameron Halsell +  
Bryce Kayser

## Cello

Amy Delevoryas  
Nia Lepore  
Joshua Vierra +

## Double Bass

Joey Aigner +  
Ella Bajcsi

## Flute

Erika Gossett

## Oboe

Ricky Arellano  
Zane Holland

## Clarinet

Ashley Civelli  
Randel Leung

## Bassoon

Clarrisse Bosman  
Laynie Metsker  
Robert Scherer

## Horn

Ervin Keeling  
Max Martin  
Kieran Scruggs

## Trumpet

Hayden Eters  
Mitchell Row

## Timpani

Christian De La Torre

\* *concertmaster*  
+ *principal*

# CU ★ PRESENTS



## Upcoming events at the College of Music

*Event details are subject to change, but the CU Presents website will always be up-to-date.*

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College of Music

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO BOULDER

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