

# CU ★ PRESENTS

2022-23 Season



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UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO BOULDER

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# Philharmonia Orchestra

## Masters of Form

Kedrick Armstrong, conductor

Renee Gilliland, conductor

7:30 p.m., Thursday, April 27, 2023

Grusin Music Hall

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## Program

### Overture (2022)

Jessie Montgomery (b. 1981)

### Ouvertüre, Scherzo und Finale, Op. 52 in E Major

Robert Schumann (1810-1856)

- I. Overture
- II. Scherzo
- III. Finale

*Kedrick Armstrong, conductor*

## — Intermission —

### Symphony No. 2 in E minor

Emilie Mayer (1812-1883)

- I. Un poco adagio - Allegro assai
- II. Scherzo
- III. Un poco adagio cantabile
- IV. Finale. Allegro vivace

*Renee Gilliland, conductor*

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# Program notes

## **Overture (2022)**

*Jessie Montgomery (b. 1981)*

Overture is a one-movement orchestral tutti steeped in harmonic textures inspired by a fusion between jazz and American classical harmonies, Baroque rhythmic gestures and polyphonic tension.

—*Program note by Jessie Montgomery*

## **Ouvertüre, Scherzo und Finale, Op. 52 in E Major**

*Robert Schumann (1810-1856)*

*Overture, Scherzo, and Finale*, Op. 52 (1841) was written in the wake of Robert Schumann's marriage to Clara. Feeling that an orchestra best portrayed his celebratory feeling, he also wrote two symphonies—No. 1 in B-flat and No. 4 in D minor (revised in 1851)—as well as a *Fantasia* in A minor for piano and orchestra. Although the piece was written in 3 weeks, the *Finale* was revised in 1845 (shortly before publication). Essentially a symphony without a slow movement, Schumann even referred to it as his “Symphony No. 2” before calling it a suite to a potential publisher, pointing out that “the individual movements can be played separately.” Earlier still, he referred to the piece as a *Sinfonietta*.

The *Overture* (*Andante con moto - Allegro*) begins with an introduction in E minor, presenting two important motives—a leaping violin passage and an aggressive, descending cello figure. These elements come back in the faster *Overture* proper, which switches to E major and marks the beginning of the sonata-form's exposition. Schumann cleverly uses the introductory motives with the *Overture*'s primary theme before heading towards the recapitulation. The *Scherzo* (*Vivo*) is driven by theme characterized by dotted figures, which continues without much alteration until the contrasting trio section, which is very lyrical. This section consists of a gentle arching melody in the clarinets and oboes, which is then closely echoed by the strings. On its second appearance, the trio incorporates motives from the *Overture* and is introduced by the descending cello line. A return of the primary theme of the *Overture* closes the *Scherzo*. The *Finale* (*Allegro molto vivace*) is one of the faster pieces of music

Schumann wrote. The main theme, a rising stepwise line in dotted rhythms played by the first violins, is presented in fugato style. A contrasting—more graceful—theme perhaps shows Mendelssohn’s influence on Schumann (who he met and greatly admired) through its gentle orchestration. The *Finale* closes with a triumphant coda built of the main theme.

—*Program note by Kindred Spirits Orchestra*

## **Symphony No. 2 in E minor**

*Emilie Mayer (1812-1883)*

The music of German composer Emilie Mayer is currently being rediscovered and recognized for its beauty and significance. With greater availability and awareness of her music, conductors are programming her works and reaching greater audiences. Mayer’s oeuvre spans eight symphonies, concert overtures, an opera and a piano concerto, as well as numerous chamber and solo works. “She was the most prolific German woman composer of the Romantic period, yet most of her music (which is in the Berlin Staatsbibliothek) has remained unperformed since her death.”

Mayer is a historically unique figure, a woman composer whose music included large orchestral works that were performed and heard during her life. Her musical education began when she was very young. With the support of her father, an apothecary, Mayer began taking piano lessons at the age of five. She stated that after a few lessons, “I composed variations, dances, little rondos, etc.” Her piano teacher told her, “Wenn du die Meu gifst, kann ut die wat warden ... If you make an effort, you can become something.” Mayer studied composition with German composer Carl Loewe in Stettin (now Szczecin, Poland), and later traveled to Berlin to study fugue and counterpoint with Adolf Bernhard Marx and orchestration with Wilhelm Wieprecht. By her own investment, many of Mayer’s works were printed and performed during her lifetime. In April of 1850, the *Vossische Zeitung* (Voss’s Newspaper) reported, “A lady, Miss Emilie Mayer, will have a number of her compositions performed in the concert hall of the Königliches Schauspielhaus; ... such a concert program, created entirely by female hand, is, according to our experience and knowledge at least, unique in the musical history of the world.” Three years later, another concert of Mayer’s works was presented with the King and

Queen in attendance. “Her music was performed in Brussels, Lyons, Budapest, Dessau, Halle, Leipzig and Munich, and was much acclaimed during her lifetime.” There are accounts by the critic, Ludwig Rellstab, that Mayer’s music was performed “to great applause.”

Mayer’s Symphony No. 2 in E minor was premiered in 1847. The first movement features a slow introduction, *Un poco adagio*, followed by a fiery *Allegro assai* that features a noble and flowing secondary theme. The second movement, *Scherzo*, begins with the melody in the lower strings and is set in canon and as upper woodwind solos. Mayer uses transitions of commanding, unison chords in the middle of the second theme and the movement concludes with a powerful finish. The triplet is a signature rhythm throughout each movement with the exception of the third movement, *Un poco adagio, cantabile*, which carries the feeling of three with its 9/8 time signature. Mayer puts the first warm opening melody in the first violins and builds the texture by doubling the first flute and first oboe. She develops the movement with ornamentation and flowing sixteenths. The movement begins in C major, shifts to E-flat major, goes to C minor, and finishes back in C major. The symphony ends with the exciting *Finale. Allegro vivace*. The lyrical secondary theme begins with a playful violin and cello solo with flute and oboe dialogue in the second iteration. Mayer speeds up the main motive building excitement and bringing the symphony to a rousing conclusion.

—*Program note by Renee Gilliland*

# Personnel

## **Kedrick Armstrong**

Praised by the Chicago Tribune for his ability to “simply let the score speak for itself,” Kedrick Armstrong enjoys a wide range of conducting. Kedrick currently serves as the Creative Partner and Principal Conductor of the Galesburg Symphony Society/Knox-Galesburg Symphony. During the 2023/2024 season, he will debut at the Portland Opera, conducting a new opera, *The Factotum*, by Will Liverman and DJ King Rico. Future engagements also include returns to the Lyric Opera of Chicago and Oakland Symphony. Armstrong has appeared with the Lyric Opera of Chicago, Chicago Opera Theater, Oakland Symphony, Chicago Sinfonietta and DePaul University Opera. Kedrick uses his voice as a Black conductor to advocate for classical music’s performance, publication and preservation of minority voices. This advocacy and research have led to various speaking engagements and his current appointment as the Porter Research Fellow with the University of Colorado Boulder’s American Music Research Center, where he’s also pursuing a Master of Music in orchestral conducting. Armstrong also holds a Bachelor of Music in music history/literature from Wheaton College.

## **Renee Gilliland**

Renee Gilliland conducts the University of Colorado Boulder Philharmonia Orchestra, where she is pursuing a Doctor of Musical Arts under the instruction of Maestro Gary Lewis. Concurrently, she is the assistant conductor of the Boulder Philharmonic Orchestra. Previously, Gilliland has conducted the CU Boulder Campus Orchestra and Anschutz Medical Campus Orchestra. Gilliland has also served as the 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 Austria, Bulgaria, Ukraine and the Czech Republic. She has conducted works in concert with the Boulder Philharmonic, the El Paso Symphony, Boulder Concert Band, Playground Ensemble, Grand Junction

Symphony Orchestra and Bang on a Can All Stars among others. In 2021, Gilliland was featured in the inaugural Girls Who Conduct Conducting Symposium: Diverse Pathways to the Podium as part of the Ensemble Showcase. Passionate about discovering and promoting diverse repertoire, Gilliland contributes as the Youth Orchestra Assistant Editor for the African Diaspora Music Project. Gilliland enjoys working with musicians of all ages and bringing to life works of diverse composers.

## Philharmonia Orchestra

### Violin

Alyssa Byrne  
Alex Earle  
Regina Helgoth  
Logan Indge  
Jacob Lei  
Gregory Nyberg  
Sarah Payton  
Eli Pouliot  
*Concertmaster*  
Jacob Stewart  
Max Tuning  
Adam Weller

### Viola

Rebecca Donoho  
Chloe Ehrmantraut  
Len Eppich  
*Principal*  
Madeline Guyer  
Bryce Kayser

### Cello

Mackenzie Baca  
Marti Flickinger  
Logan Kuhlman  
Nia Lepore  
*Principal*  
Connor Medberry

### Bass

Ella Bajcsi  
*Principal*  
Asher Dobrin  
Paul Marshall

### Flute

Erika Gossett  
Ayla Lantz  
Madison Tallman

### Oboe

Ricky Arellano  
Zane Holland

### Clarinet

Carson Conley  
Nikhila Narayana

### Bassoon

Isabel Goodwin  
Larissa Harrison  
Ross Lowrey  
Sheridan Sturm

### Horn

Abigail French  
Ervin Keeling

### Trumpet

Noah Solomon  
Colin Terk

### Trombone

Jorin Benson  
Carl Enger  
Jake Spies

### Timpani

Justin Doute



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