

DEFIANT MOMENTS

Saturday | March 24, 2012 | 8 pm | Symphony Hall at the DECC
Duluth Superior Symphony Orchestra | Bohuslav Rattay, conductor
Adam Golka, piano

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2012

Berlioz

Roman Carnival Overture ca. 8'

Mozart

Concerto for piano No. 9,
K. 271 in E-Flat major (Jeunehomme) ca. 32'
Allegro
Andantino
Rondo

Adam Golka, piano

I N T E R M I S S I O N ca. 20'

Shostakovich

Symphony No. 5 Op. 47 in D minor ca. 44'
Moderato
Allegretto
Largo
Allegro non troppo

7pm Behind the Music is Hosted by William Bastian.
His profile appears on page 66.

Adam Golka's profile appears on page 44.
Bohuslav Rattay's profile appears on page 44.

Program subject to change

DEFIANT MOMENTS

A misunderstood composer stubbornly reworks themes from a failed opera into an exuberant and colorful overture...inspired by a gifted female pianist, Mozart takes an astonishing musical leap forward... and a timeless symphony composed during Stalin's purges presents a "man in all his suffering."

Hector Berlioz (1803-1869) was a brilliant French composer, essayist, and conductor whose musical ideas were enough ahead of his time that they were not always readily accepted. When he composed "Roman Carnival" Overture, Op. 9, in 1844, he had been having great difficulty getting his works performed in Paris. As a result, he composed no major works between 1841 and 1846.

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Yet Berlioz did not remain idle. In 1841 he began serial publication of his monumental *Treatise on Modern Instrumentation*. Complete publication followed in 1843. This was the first such book by a major composer and it revealed a new way of thinking about orchestration as an art, not simply a technique. Begun in the same year that the treatise was published, "Roman Carnival" Overture gives ample evidence that Berlioz was a master of the art of orchestration.

The main musical themes in the Overture come from Berlioz's opera *Benvenuto Cellini*, which he had completed in 1838. The opera, which was set in sixteenth-century Rome during carnival season, had been a failure. Berlioz accepted this failure gracefully, but lamented that the opera "contains a variety of ideas, an energy and exuberance and a brilliance of color such as I may perhaps never find again, and which deserved a better fate."

Two ideas from the opera are given another chance in the overture. A lively dance (a *saltarello*) from the opera's carnival scene provides material for the fast

sections of the overture, including a brief appearance at the beginning. A melody from the opera's love duet, "Oh Theresa, you whom I love more than my own life," becomes the main melody of the slow section (introduced by the English horn). Whether writing for solo English horn lightly accompanied by pizzicato strings or the full orchestra blazing away at a *fortissimo* level, Berlioz's vivid tone colors and transparent textures make sound itself a powerfully expressive element. The overture was immediately popular, even in Paris.

INSTRUMENTATION: Two flutes (second doubling on piccolo), two oboes (second doubling on English horn) two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, two cornets, three trombones, timpani, percussion (two tambourines, cymbals, triangle) and strings.

HISTORY: Tonight marks the DSSO's ninth performance of this overture on the Classical Series. Frequently performed in earlier years, the "Roman Carnival" Overture has not been heard here in over thirty years. It was previously heard in 1934, 1941, 1946, 1951, 1957, 1965, 1968, and on January 21, 1978.

... ———— *o o o o* ———— ...
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791) completed Concerto No. 9 in E-flat major, K.271, in January 1777. He had just turned 21. Many consider this work to be the first truly significant composition of the maturing composer. Albert Einstein called it "one of Mozart's monumental works which he never surpassed."

Although there is little documentation for the origins of the concerto, Mozart's

letters suggest that he composed it for a virtuoso pianist who visited his hometown of Salzburg in late 1776 or early 1777. Until recently, the identity of this pianist had been a mystery. In the early twentieth century, Mozart biographers concluded that Mozart's reference in his letters to "the jenomy" concerto was a misspelling of "jeunehomme." They surmised that he wrote the concerto for a "Mademoiselle Jeunehomme," although there was no evidence that a pianist by this name existed. The work began to be known as the "Jeunehomme" Concerto.

In 2003, musicologist Michael Lorenz uncovered a likely identity for "Mlle. Jeunehomme." She was probably Victoire Jenamy, the wife of a wealthy merchant in Vienna. Her father, Jean Georges Noverre, was a prominent choreographer with whom Mozart became friendly in 1773. Mozart must have met Jenamy at that time as well. Jenamy seems not to have been a professional pianist, although her playing at a ball in Vienna in 1773 attracted the favorable notice of a newspaper reviewer. Jenamy and her father did travel to Salzburg in late 1776 or early 1777.

The considerable technical and expressive demands in Concerto No. 9 suggest that Jenamy must have been an extraordinary pianist. For her benefit, Mozart wrote cadenzas for all three movements, as well as several cadenza-like transitions. (When he performed his concertos, Mozart improvised the cadenzas.) The active writing for the left hand would have been suited to Mozart's own style as a pianist, which was described by a contemporary as remarkable for "his feeling, the rapidity of his fingers, and the great execution and strength of his left hand particularly." Of course Mozart intended also to perform the concerto himself, and did so on more than one occasion.

This concerto shows a leap forward in Mozart's style. While he retains the basic framework of standard concerto forms, he introduces the piano much sooner than expected, in the second measure. (Concertos of this time normally had an extended orchestral section before the piano entry.) Critic Michael Steinberg calls this

unexpected intrusion “a delicious impertinence.” In addition to the close interplay between piano and orchestra, Mozart offers an unusual profusion of musical ideas that heighten the sense of spontaneous conversation between soloist and orchestra, a conversation that takes delightful and often surprising turns.

Mozart is at his most sublime in the slow movement, which is like a tragic operatic recitative and aria full of mournful sighing, throbbing, and pained dissonances. Dark thoughts are washed away by the bubbling high spirits of the final rondo. The stately minuet with four variations that Mozart inserts unexpectedly into the rondo may have been his special tribute to Jenamy’s father, the choreographer.

INSTRUMENTATION: Two oboes, two horns and strings.

HISTORY: The only performance of this concerto by the DSSO prior to this evening was on October 25, 1968, featuring John Browning. Tonight’s guest artist, Adam Golka, has not previously performed with the Orchestra, yet he has been heard before in Duluth. He presented a solo recital at St. Scholastica in October of 2010.



Dmitry Shostakovich

(1906-1975) is considered by many to be the greatest symphonist of the mid-20th century. Of his fifteen symphonies, Symphony No. 5 in D minor, Op. 47, is by far his most popular.

By the time he composed the symphony, Shostakovich had enjoyed more than a decade of recognition as the pre-eminent composer in the Soviet Union. But in January of 1936 he fell from grace almost overnight. The occasion of his downfall was a scathing editorial in *Pravda*, published two days after Stalin and his entourage had walked out on a performance of Shostakovich’s opera *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District*. Titled “Muddle Instead of Music,” the article attacked Shostakovich for writing “‘leftist’ confusion instead of natural, human music” and warned him that his “game of

clever ingenuity...may end very badly.” At a time when other Soviet artists were being detained and even killed, Shostakovich took this warning seriously, expecting that at any moment he could be arrested and imprisoned. Although he remained free, he lived uneasily with the threat of a “bad end” hanging over him for most of his life.

Completed in July 1937, the Fifth Symphony was Shostakovich’s first major work after the *Pravda* article. The Leningrad Philharmonic gave the premiere in November 1937, a time when Stalin’s purges were in full force. Audience members wept openly during the slow movement and gave the symphony an ovation that lasted half an hour.

Fortunately for Shostakovich, the official press approved of the Fifth Symphony. A Moscow newspaper article, “My Creative

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Answer,” praised the symphony as “a Soviet artist’s practical creative answer to just criticism.” (Shostakovich wisely allowed this quote to be attributed to him.) With this official approval, Shostakovich was rehabilitated, at least for the moment, as a composer whose music expressed Soviet ideals.

But was Shostakovich really supporting Soviet ideals in his Fifth Symphony? Conjectures as well as polemics have arisen from this question during the years since the work appeared. The best documentation for Shostakovich’s own thoughts seems to have appeared in the Moscow article, “My Creative Answer.” There he said: “At the center of the work’s conception I envisioned *a man* in all his suffering.... The finale resolves the tense and tragic moments of the preceding movements in a joyous, optimistic fashion.” Such an expression of ultimate optimism would have aligned well with official aesthetic ideals.

While there is general agreement about the “tense and tragic moments” of the first three movements—heavy-booted power on the march in the first and third

movements, profound sorrow and anguish in the Largo—the finale gives rise to differing interpretations. Four years after Shostakovich’s death, a Russian musicologist published a book, *Testimony*, which claimed to be based on interviews with the composer. Although the credibility of the information in *Testimony* has been contested vigorously, a statement attributed to Shostakovich is at least worth considering as an example of how some of his compatriots heard the finale: “I think it is clear to everyone what happens in the Fifth. The rejoicing is forced, created under 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, our business is rejoicing.’ What

kind of apotheosis is that? You have to be a complete oaf not to hear that.”

Whatever his expressive intent, Shostakovich would have appreciated that instrumental music is open to many interpretations and can have multiple meanings. Not even a repressive regime can control the way a listener interprets a work. (It is probably not a coincidence that symphonic music thrived in the Soviet Union.) Shostakovich’s fellow citizens were free to hear in the Fifth Symphony whatever resonated with their own experiences and emotions—and so are we.

INSTRUMENTATION: Two flutes, piccolo, two oboes, English horn, two clarinets, E-flat clarinet, two bassoons, contra bassoon, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (glockenspiel, xylophone, snare drum, cymbals, bass drum, triangle, tam tam), two harps, piano, celesta and strings.

HISTORY: This evening the DSSO will perform this symphony for the sixth time. It was also heard in 1953, 1958, 1965, 1978, and on January 14, 1995, with guest conductor Mark Russell Smith.

Tonight's guest artist: **Adam Golka, piano**



With “supreme technique” and “a savvy sense of drama and pacing” (Ft. Worth Star-Telegram) pianist Adam Golka has won

international prizes, including the 2008 Gilmore Young Artist Award, first prize in the 2nd China Shanghai International Piano Competition in 2003, and most recently the 2009 Max I. Allen Classical Fellowship Award of the American Pianists Association.

Mr. Golka's concerto appearances have included engagements with the Atlanta, Houston, Dallas, Milwaukee, Indianapolis, Phoenix, San Diego, Fort Worth, Syracuse, Lansing, Knoxville, Albany, South Dakota, and Grand Rapids symphonies, the Grand Teton and Colorado music festival orchestras, and internationally with the BBC Scottish Symphony, National Arts Centre Orchestra, the Sinfonia Varsovia, the Shanghai Philharmonic, Orchestre Poitou-Charentes, and the Orquesta Filarmonica de Jalisco. 2010-2011 season highlights include concertos of Beethoven, Liszt,

Tchaikovsky, Rachmaninoff, and Ravel with the Warsaw Philharmonic and the Indianapolis, West Virginia, Wichita, Ann Arbor, Silicon Valley, and Pensacola Symphonies. In March 2010, Golka made his Isaac Stern Auditorium debut at Carnegie Hall, playing Rachmaninoff's Third Concerto with the New York Youth Symphony.

A first-generation American, Golka comes from an immigrant family of Polish musicians. Born and raised in Houston, Texas, Golka moved to Fort Worth, Texas when he was 15 in order to pursue studies with Jose Feghali at Texas Christian University. Currently, Adam resides in Baltimore, Maryland, where he is studying with the legendary Leon Fleisher at the Peabody Institute.

BOHUSLAV *R*ATTAY, CONDUCTOR



Czech conductor Bohuslav Rattay has gained a reputation as one of the finest talents of his generation, combining impassioned and virtuosic musicianship with a determination to bring great music into the lives of all people. Now in his fifth season as the Artistic Director of the Muncie Symphony Orchestra and his first season as Music Director of the Lake Charles Symphony, Maestro Rattay has been acclaimed for his fresh and inspired interpretations of works ranging

from perennial concert-hall favorites to the contemporary, with special appreciation often given to his insightful understanding of the music of his native Bohemia.

Maestro Rattay joined the music faculty of Ball State University in 2006 and is a frequent guest conductor of All-State and youth orchestras across the United States, where he is highly valued as a mentor both for his skills as a conductor as well as his youthful energy.

In addition to his permanent positions at Muncie and Lake Charles, Mr. Rattay is in great demand as a guest conductor across the United States and Europe. Recent engagements include the Virginia Symphony, West Michigan Symphony, Prague's Dvůřák Symphony Orchestra, and the Charleston (SC) Symphony, where he received critical accolades for a “vibrant” performance delivered with “elegant panache.”

Maestro Rattay holds degrees from the Prague Conservatory, Rice University and the Peabody Institute of Music, and divides his time between the United States and Europe.