

Minnesota Orchestra

Brett Mitchell, conductor
Anthony Ross, cello

Thursday, November 15, 2018, 11 am	Orchestra Hall
Friday, November 16, 2018, 8 pm	Orchestra Hall
Saturday, November 17, 2018, 8 pm	Orchestra Hall

With these concerts we offer our deepest gratitude to the more than 8,000 Guaranty Fund donors who help the Orchestra enrich lives with outstanding classical music.

Please see the next page for a message from Guaranty Fund Chair Joe Green.

Kevin Puts	<i>Inspiring Beethoven</i>	ca. 15'
Dmitri Shostakovich	Concerto No. 2 for Cello and Orchestra Largo Allegretto Allegretto [The final two movements are played without pause.] <i>Anthony Ross, cello</i>	ca. 33'
	I N T E R M I S S I O N	ca. 20'
Ludwig van Beethoven	Symphony No. 7 in A major, Opus 92 Poco sostenuto – Vivace Allegretto Presto Allegro con brio	ca. 42'

OH+	<p>Concert Preview with Phillip Gainsley and Anthony Ross Thursday, November 15, 10:15 am, Auditorium</p> <p>Concert Preview with Phillip Gainsley, Brett Mitchell and Anthony Ross Friday, November 16, 7 pm, Auditorium</p> <p>Saturday, November 17, 7 pm, Auditorium</p>
thank you	<p>The Guarantors' Concerts are dedicated to the memory of John and Kitty Pillsbury for their decades of commitment to the Minnesota Orchestra.</p>

Minnesota Orchestra concerts are broadcast live on Friday evenings on stations of [Classical Minnesota Public Radio](#), including KSJN 99.5 FM in the Twin Cities.



Brett Mitchell, conductor

Brett Mitchell was named the fourth music director of the Colorado Symphony in September 2016. Prior to this appointment, he served as the Cleveland Orchestra's first associate conductor in over three decades and only the fifth in its 98-year history. He also led more than 100 performances as assistant conductor of the Houston Symphony, has held assistant conductor posts with the Orchestre National de France and the Castleton Festival, and was music director of the Saginaw Bay Symphony Orchestra. This season, he makes his subscription debuts here in Minnesota and with the Dallas and Vancouver symphonies, and returns to the Cleveland

Orchestra and Indianapolis Symphony. He is committed to working with young musicians who aspire to be professional orchestral players. He served as the music director of the Cleveland Orchestra Youth Orchestra and is regularly invited to work with students at the Cleveland Institute of Music, with orchestras such as the National Repertory Orchestra, and at the Texas Music Festival and Sarasota Music Festival. More: cmartists.com.



Anthony Ross, cello

Anthony Ross, now in his 31st year as a Minnesota Orchestra member, assumed the principal cello post in 1991. He has been a soloist many times with the

Orchestra, performing works by Tchaikovsky, Dvořák, Walton, Brahms, Herbert, MacMillan, Beethoven, Saint-Saëns, Elgar and Shostakovich, as well as many chamber works. In 2015, he performed Schumann's Cello Concerto under the direction of the late Stanislaw Skrowaczewski—thereby becoming the final musician to perform a concerto under Skrowaczewski's baton at Orchestra Hall. An avid chamber musician, Ross is a member of Accordo, an ensemble composed of principal string players from the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra and Minnesota Orchestra. He also plays regularly with the Chamber Music Society of Minnesota and with ensembles of his Orchestra colleagues, most recently performing Gordon Jacob's Quintet for Clarinet and Strings at a NightCap concert in July 2018. He has performed at music festivals in the U.S. and Europe and has been a faculty member at the Grand Teton, Aspen, Madeline Island and Indiana University festivals. More: minnesotaorchestra.org.

THANK YOU, GUARANTORS!



During this week of magnificent music, we offer our deepest gratitude to every donor who contributes to the Minnesota Orchestra's Guaranty Fund. The 2018 Guarantors' Week holds a special place in the hearts of all of us at the Minnesota Orchestra, as we have the great privilege of celebrating your generosity. Each performance this week is dedicated to the individuals and organizations whose financial contributions provide the vital support necessary for this Orchestra to deliver thrilling performances, outstanding educational programs and inspiring engagements throughout the community.

We honor each of you for your meaningful contributions to the Guaranty Fund. The Minnesota Orchestra continues its momentum, flourishing as a result of your financial investment and the stability that it creates. You guarantee a bright future for this world-renowned ensemble and for all those whose lives are deeply enriched by its music.

Our community is more vibrant because of the value you place on sustaining a world-class Orchestra right here in our own backyard. I offer you my heartfelt thanks for this wonderful gift you share with all who live in and visit our community. When you hear a concert or read about the remarkable achievements of your Minnesota Orchestra—here at home, across the state or beyond—be proud to know that you make this phenomenal music possible. Thank you!

Joe Green

Guaranty Fund Chair, 2018-19



Kevin Puts

Born: January 3, 1972,
St. Louis, Missouri;
now living in Yonkers,
New York

Inspiring Beethoven

Premiered: January 17, 2002

This week, Twin Cities audiences have two opportunities to hear world-class performances of music by Kevin Puts. The Minnesota Orchestra is performing his *Inspiring Beethoven*, while just across the river, Minnesota Opera presents *Silent Night*, which won Puts the 2012 Pulitzer Prize for Music—an honor that places him in distinguished and increasingly diverse company which includes Aaron Copland, Charles Ives, Dominick Argento, Wynton Marsalis and the most recent Pulitzer recipient, rapper Kendrick Lamar.

Silent Night, one of two operas which Minnesota Opera has commissioned from Puts, is the composer’s best-known work to date, boasting more than a dozen productions throughout the U.S. and Canada, with upcoming performances including a U.K. premiere by Opera North in Leeds, England. Puts’ compositional output, however, extends well beyond his opera about the 1914 Christmas truce in the trenches of World War I. During the past two decades he has received commissions and performances from many major ensembles and institutions. Among them are the New York Philharmonic, Zurich Tonhalle Orchestra, Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, St. Louis Symphony, Boston Pops, Miro Quartet, Eroica Trio, Carnegie Hall and Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center.

The Minnesota Orchestra, too, has commissioned Puts: in 2006 it premiered his *Sinfonia concertante* for five soloists and orchestra. His ties to the Orchestra have grown even stronger since, through performances of his *Symphony No. 4*, *From Mission San Juan*; *Two Mountain Scenes*; *Millennium Canons*; and *Rivers Rush*. In 2014 he was named director of the Minnesota Orchestra Composer Institute, succeeding the program’s founding director Aaron Jay Kernis.

Puts’ most recent works have received world premieres on both coasts. His first chamber opera, an adaptation of Peter Ackroyd’s gothic novel *The Trial of Elizabeth Cree* with libretto by Mark Campbell, was commissioned and premiered by Opera Philadelphia in September 2017. In the orchestral realm, his Oboe Concerto, *Moonlight*, was commissioned by the Baltimore Symphony for its principal oboist Katherine Needleman, who premiered it in June 2018 and is reprising it this month with Marin Alsop conducting. In addition, *Silent Night Elegy*, an orchestral fantasy based on music from *Silent Night*, was premiered last month by the San Francisco Symphony. He is currently at work on an orchestral song cycle based on the letters of Georgia O’Keeffe and Alfred Stieglitz titled *The Brightness of Light*, which will be performed by Renée Fleming and Rod Gilfry and several orchestras in the coming seasons. His music is also well-represented on recordings, including *Loves Comes in at the Eye*, a new album released in July 2018 by Albany Records.

the Beethoven connection

Inspiring Beethoven was commissioned by the Phoenix Symphony and premiered shortly after the composer’s 30th birthday in January 2002, during a festival in which the orchestra presented Beethoven’s symphonies and premiered new works by Puts, Mason Bates, Stefan Freund and Gregory Mertl—each of whom drew inspiration from Beethoven’s music.

one-minute notes

Puts: *Inspiring Beethoven*

Inspiring Beethoven imagines the mercurial process of Beethoven, as Kevin Puts interweaves his own original material with fragments from the first movement *Vivace* of Beethoven’s Seventh Symphony. The music builds to a passage quoted directly from the Seventh, then fades to nothingness.

Shostakovich: Cello Concerto No. 2

What do pretzels, birthdays and the sound of a cello have in common? They are each items that inspired Shostakovich’s dark, introspective and intricate Second Cello Concerto, performed this week for the first time at Orchestra Hall.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 7

Beethoven’s lively Seventh Symphony, famously called “the apotheosis of the dance” by Wagner, constructs a series of astonishing musical moments from short, simple figures. The second movement, based on a repeating rhythm, has been an audience favorite since its premiere two centuries ago.

Puts' composition, which imagines the mercurial creative process of Beethoven, is directly related to the symphony that concludes this program, Beethoven's Seventh—specifically the sprightly *Vivace* section of its first movement. (Not, as might be presumed, the Seventh's *Allegretto* second movement, which is perhaps more ingrained in popular culture through its frequent use in films.) Puts interweaves fragments of Beethoven's music with his own original material, often characterized by rapid woodwind figurations which contrast with more prolonged tones from brass and strings. The activity builds to a half-minute passage quoted directly from the Seventh Symphony, carefully notated as such in Puts' score, followed by a fade to *niente*.

The composer shares his own comments: "*Inspiring Beethoven* is a musical tale, completely imagined, of Ludwig van Beethoven finding the inspiration to compose the first movement *Vivace* of his Symphony No. 7. The materials of this joyous movement—the shape of the melody, the sprightly dotted rhythm—are all there, but I have cast them in the darkest of colors, reflecting the grim, inescapable realities of the great composer's life. Out of the darkness intensified by the despair of his ever-worsening deafness, hope and inspiration come like a beacon of light, without warning, as they always seem to. Who or what causes this sudden transformation, I leave to the imagination of the listener."

Instrumentation: 2 flutes, piccolo, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, contrabassoon, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, bass drum, suspended cymbal, tamtam, tom toms, glockenspiel, vibraphone, chimes, xylophone, piano and strings

Program note by **Carl Schroeder**.



Dmitri Shostakovich
Born: September 25, 1906
 Saint Petersburg, Russia
Died: August 9, 1975,
 Moscow, Russia

Concerto No. 2 for Cello and Orchestra, Opus 126
Premiered: September 25, 1966

Shostakovich saw in the New Year of 1966—the year that would bring his 60th birthday—with close friends, including cellist Mstislav Rostropovich and his wife, opera singer Galina Vishnevskaya. At a party game (similar to our “Name That Tune”), Shostakovich played a popular 1920s street song from Odessa that he loved, “Bubliki, kupite bubliki” (Pretzels, buy my pretzels). That spring, when he began to write the first of two works celebrating his birthday, the song of the pretzels and the

sound of Mstislav Rostropovich's cello merged mysteriously into a new concerto, the second one he wrote for his dear friend to play.

Rostropovich met Shostakovich in 1943, when the 16-year-old cellist joined the composer's classes in orchestration at the Moscow Conservatory. When Shostakovich heard his student play, he recognized a once-in-a-generation talent. “He showered me with a mass of compliments,” the cellist recalled decades later—“he almost choked on them, such was his delight.” But it would be years before Shostakovich wrote anything for his friend to play. Once, when Rostropovich asked the composer's wife what he would have to do to get Shostakovich to write him a concerto, she replied, “The only recipe I can give you is this—never ask him or talk to him about it.” Rostropovich kept still “with the greatest difficulty,” and he finally was rewarded—with two major works in the span of seven years: one concerto in 1959 (as if to make up for lost time, the cellist learned and memorized it in four days) and then a second concerto composed in the spring of 1966. The first performance was given on September 25 of that year, at a gala concert celebrating the composer's 60th birthday.

a new interest, late in life

Aside from an early, lightweight piano concerto which he wrote when he was in his twenties, Shostakovich became interested in the concerto form relatively late in his life, and only as a direct result of his contact with important performers like Rostropovich, or, in the case of the two violin concertos, David Oistrakh. A second piano concerto was written for his son Maxim (who played it for the first time on his 19th birthday). The small number of concertos in his vast output is surprising considering that Shostakovich produced 15 symphonies and 15 string quartets; three dozen film scores; several opera and ballet scores; and a great many songs, choral works, piano pieces, and arrangements of other music (including, of all things, “Tea for Two,” which became the *Tahiti Trot*).

The second concerto for Rostropovich is dramatically different from the first, just as the two violin concertos for Oistrakh would also inhabit different worlds. (That may not be a coincidence: Shostakovich said he modeled his Second Violin Concerto on the Second Cello Concerto.) Where the First Cello Concerto is big and dramatic, ideally capturing Rostropovich's larger-than-life personality, the second is dark, even somber. Perhaps Shostakovich was trying to test—or at least stretch—his soloist's extraordinary gifts. “Mstislav Rostropovich,” the composer later wrote, “never resting, always searching and growing—is of such significance that it seems already possible to claim his name will come to be given to a whole era of cello playing, an era in which the range of possibilities for the instrument has been immeasurably broadened, and in which players have been set new tasks and new problems.” No doubt he also wanted to tap into the cello's affinity for

inwardness—intimate, confidential kinds of music—and for what he had come to value most of all in Rostropovich’s playing: “the intense, restless mind and the high spirituality that he brings to his mastery.”

the concerto in brief

largo. The cello begins the work alone, slowly carving out a theme based on descending half steps that is the essential building material for the piece. The music is introspective and austere, and although the development section is bolder and livelier, that mood does not stick. The bass drum sets off a short cello cadenza and then contributes to it as well. At no point in the concerto is there a big bravura solo turn for the cellist. This is a concerto in which the single voice and that of the crowd are intricately interwoven. (Apparently, at one point during composition, Shostakovich even thought the score was on the verge of becoming his Fourteenth Symphony, despite the fact that the solo cello plays nearly nonstop throughout.)

allegretto; allegretto. The next two movements, both marked *Allegretto*, are highly different in character. (They are played without pause.) The second movement is a characteristic Shostakovich scherzo—driven, manic, sometimes grotesque. The main tune is the pretzel theme, “Bubliki, kupite bubliki,” originally a song about a penniless young girl forced to sell pretzels on the street. Here it sounds desperate, even menacing. A fanfare for two horns interrupts to begin the finale. The cello imitates the fanfare, unexpectedly accompanied by tambourine, and then begins a series of new themes. The “Bubliki” music returns to crown the climax, other themes are reviewed in reverse order, and the music winds down quickly to end in a whisper.

Instrumentation: solo cello with orchestra comprising flute, piccolo, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 3 bassoons (1 doubling contrabassoon), 2 horns, timpani, side drum, bass drum, tambourine, tom-toms, whip, woodblock, xylophone, 2 harps and strings

Program note by Phillip Huscher. Phillip Huscher is the program annotator for the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Copyright © 2018 by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Reprinted by permission.



Ludwig van Beethoven

Born: December 16, 1770,
Bonn, Germany
Died: March 26, 1827,
Vienna, Austria

**Symphony No. 7 in A major,
Opus 92**

Premiered: December 8, 1813

Beethoven turned 40 in December 1810, and things were going very well. True, his hearing had deteriorated to the point where he was virtually deaf, but he was still riding that white-hot explosion of creativity that has become known, for better or worse, as his “heroic” style.

re-imagining music

Over the decade-long span of that style, 1803 to 1813, Beethoven essentially re-imagined music and its possibilities. The works that crystallized the heroic style—the *Eroica* and the Fifth Symphony—unleashed a level of violence and darkness previously unknown in music and then triumphed over them. In these symphonies, music became a matter not of polite discourse but of conflict, struggle and resolution.

In the fall of 1811, Beethoven began a new symphony, his Seventh, which would differ sharply from those two famous predecessors. Gone is the sense of cataclysmic struggle and hard-won victory. Instead, this music is infused from its first instant with a mood of pure celebration.

Such a spirit has inevitably produced interpretations as to what this symphony is “about”: Berlioz heard in it a peasants’ dance, Wagner called it “the apotheosis of the dance,” and more recently Maynard Solomon has suggested that the Seventh is the musical representation of a festival, a brief moment of pure spiritual liberation.

But it may be safest to leave the issue of meaning aside and instead listen to the Seventh simply as music. There had never been music like this before, nor has there been since: this symphony contains more energy than any other piece of music ever written. Much has been made (correctly) of Beethoven’s ability to transform small bits of theme into massive symphonic structures, but here he begins not so much with theme as with rhythm: tiny figures, almost scraps of rhythm. Gradually he releases the energy locked up in these small figures and from them creates one of the mightiest symphonies ever written.

the symphony: small ideas transformed

poco sostenuto–vivace. The first movement opens with a slow introduction so long that it almost becomes a separate movement of its own. Tremendous chords punctuate the slow beginning, which gives way to a poised duet for oboes. The real effect of this long *Poco sostenuto*, however, is to coil the energy that will be unleashed in the true first movement, and Beethoven conveys this rhythmically: the meter of the introduction is a rock-solid (even square) 4/4, but the main body of the movement, marked *Vivace*, transforms this into a light-footed 6/8. This *Vivace* begins in what seems a most unpromising manner, however, as woodwinds toot out a simple dotted 6/8 rhythm and the solo flute announces the first theme. This simple dotted rhythm saturates virtually every measure of the movement, as theme, as accompaniment, as motor rhythm, always hammering into our consciousness. At the climax, horns sail majestically to the close as the orchestra thunders out that rhythm one final time.

allegretto. The second movement, in A minor, is one of Beethoven's most famous slow movements, but the debate continues as to whether it really is a slow movement. Beethoven could not decide whether to mark it *Andante*, a walking tempo, or *Allegretto*, a moderately fast pace. He finally decided on the latter, though the actual pulse is somewhere between those two. This movement too is built on a short rhythmic pattern, in this case the first five notes: long-short-short-long-long—and this pattern repeats here almost as obsessively as the pattern of the first movement. The opening sounds like a series of static chords—the theme itself occurs quietly inside those chords—and Beethoven simply repeats this theme, varying it as it proceeds. The central episode in A major moves gracefully along smoothly-flowing triplets before a little fugato on the opening rhythms builds to a great climax. The movement winds down on the woodwinds' almost skeletal reprise of the fundamental rhythm.

presto. The scherzo explodes to life on a theme full of grace notes, powerful accents, flying staccatos and timpani explosions. This alternates with a trio section for winds reportedly based on an old pilgrims' hymn, though no one, it seems, has been able to identify that hymn exactly. Beethoven offers a second repeat of the trio, then seems about to offer a third before five abrupt chords drive the movement to its close.

allegro con brio. These chords set the stage for the finale, again built on the near-obsessive treatment of a short rhythmic pattern, in this case the movement's opening four-note fanfare. This pattern punctuates the entire movement: it shapes the beginning of the main theme, and its stinging accents thrust the music forward continuously as this movement almost boils over with energy. The ending is remarkable: above growling cellos and

basses (which rock along on a two-note ostinato for 28 measures), the opening theme drives to a climax that Beethoven marks *fff*, a dynamic marking he almost never used. This conclusion is virtually Bacchanalian in its wild power. No matter how many times we've heard it, it remains one of the most exciting moments in all of music. Beethoven led the first performance of the Seventh Symphony in Vienna on December 8, 1813—a huge success, with the audience demanding that the second movement be repeated.

Instrumentation: 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, 2 trumpets, timpani and strings

Program note by **Eric Bromberger.**



This week's program marks the Minnesota Orchestra's first-ever performances of **Puts' Inspiring Beethoven**. Puts' next collaboration with the Orchestra will be the 16th annual Minnesota Orchestra Composer Institute, his fourth as the program's director, in January 2019. During the weeklong Institute, co-presented by the American Composers Forum, Puts will mentor seven emerging composers as they work with Music Director Osmo Vänskä, Orchestra musicians and other experts in the field of contemporary music. On January 18, 2019, the Orchestra will present a Future Classics program of new works by the seven participants.

The Minnesota Orchestra's only previous performance of **Shostakovich's Second Cello Concerto** came on March 20, 1970, at Northrop Memorial Auditorium. That concert, which took place less than four years after the concerto's premiere, was led by the well-known composer-conductor Gunther Schuller in his Minnesota Orchestra debut, while Robert Jamieson, then the Orchestra's principal cellist, was the soloist. Jamieson, who died in February 2018 at age 94, retired from the Orchestra in 1991 and was succeeded in the position by tonight's soloist, Principal Cello Anthony Ross, who performed Shostakovich's First Cello Concerto with the Orchestra in 2009.

The Orchestra gave its initial performance of **Beethoven's Seventh Symphony** on March 9, 1906, at the Minneapolis Auditorium, with founding Music Director Emil Oberhoffer conducting. Exactly one month later, the Orchestra's eventual fifth music director, Antal Dorati, was born in Budapest, Hungary.

