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czech national
symphony orchestra
maxim lando, piano

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czech national symphony orchestra

steven mercurio, conductor
maxim lando, piano

Jan Václav Hugo Voříšek Symphony in D Major, op. 24,
First Movement, *Allegro con brio*

Antonin Dvořák Piano Concerto in G minor, op. 33

INTERMISSION

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart Symphony no. 38 in D Major,
Prague, K. 504

Dvořák *Czech Suite*

*The performance will last approximately
90 minutes with one 20-minute intermission.*

**This performance is supported in part by gifts from
Minnis and Louise Ridenour and Ellen and Leo Piilonen.
Additional funding is provided by the
G. Davis Saunders, Jr. Fund for Excellence**

program notes

jan václav hugo voříšek

symphony in d major, op. 24, first movement,
allegro con brio

Born May 11, 1791 in Vamberk, northeast Bohemia

Died November 19, 1825 in Vienna

Czech composer Jan Václav Hugo Voříšek was born in a provincial environment where his father was the leader of the village's cultural life, being a schoolmaster as well as the organist and choirmaster of the local church. Following in his father's footsteps, Voříšek studied the piano, violin, and organ in addition to composition. Soon he was touring as a child prodigy, playing Mozart's piano concertos and his own works. By the age of 10 he had won a scholarship to the Prague Classical Gymnasium, where he was encouraged to devote his energies to composition. Later he attended the Prague University, where he studied mathematics, philosophy, and law; all the while he took harmony, counterpoint, and composition lessons with Václav Jan Tomásek, one of the leading Czech composers of the time and a precursor of his country's Romantic nationalist movement.

Eventually Voříšek gave up his law career in order to fully pursue his musical endeavors. He supported himself by performing as conductor, piano soloist, and accompanist in salons and concert halls, while he tenaciously continued to compose. Unfortunately, his music did not always meet with the approval of his audiences. Voříšek revered Beethoven as a composer and tended to emulate the older master's style, but in Mozart-dominated Prague, even the music of Beethoven was regarded with great suspicion, let alone Voříšek's own. Frustrated with the reactionary attitude toward music of the Prague public, Voříšek moved to Vienna in 1813; there, he continued his studies, this time with Johann Nepomuk Hummel and Ignaz Moscheles. He soon gained favor and encouragement, not only with Hummel and Moscheles, but with Meyerbeer and Beethoven, himself, as well.

Voříšek's catalogue of works includes works for piano, chamber and symphonic music, and vocal and religious compositions; his creative output bears the stamp of an unusual genius and tends towards the new Romantic expression. In reaching the realm of Romanticism through his melodic and harmonic style, he can be compared to Schubert who — like Voříšek — stood on classical ground yet, more often than not, leaned toward Beethoven. His works exhibit a mixture of Romantic, pastoral, and lyrical elements with Beethoven's flair for the passionate and dramatic, and a technical brilliance bringing to mind the music of Liszt and Chopin. Moreover, he paved the evolutionary way for later Czech composers of the Nationalist school like Smetana. The two works most characteristic of Voříšek's qualities as a composer are the Violin Sonata, op. 5 and the Symphony in D Major, op. 24; Voříšek himself — although he had a modest view of his own works — is said to have agreed with this assessment, rating these two works as his best.

Voříšek completed the Symphony in D Major, op. 24 — his only work in this form — on January 21, 1823. The symphony bears the stamp of an original poetic personality arising from the source of Czech musical traditions. Beethoven's creative heroism also comes into play in this work.

The first movement, *Allegro con brio*, begins as the first theme is stated, transparently scored in the mood of a serenade or divertimento. The second phrase of this theme, however, exhibits a stormy character in true symphonic dialectics. After a connecting passage, a playful and serene second theme is exposed. The short development section, elaborating on both themes, is followed by a full recapitulation. Not unlike Beethoven, Voříšek often employs rhythmic displacement to bring about his climaxes. A coda based on the connecting passage concludes the movement.

program notes, cont.

antonin dvořák

piano concerto in g minor, op. 33

Born September 8, 1841 in Nelahozeves, near Kralupy

Died May 1, 1904 in Prague

This concerto has been described by some to have a mournful, elegiac feeling, having been written shortly after the death of the composer's daughter and in the same year as his *Stabat Mater*. On the other hand, other commentators describe it as lyrical and tender, but decidedly not lachrymose. It loosely follows the form of a Beethoven concerto and was Dvořák's first major work for piano.

The first movement is essentially in sonata form. Two major themes are successfully presented by the small classical orchestra and are then taken over by the piano. Following the exposition, two more melodies appear: one is dancelike, the other lyrical. Interspersed between sections where two main melodies are more fully developed are transitions in which fragments of all four themes can be heard. The movement twice rises to a grandioso climax and just before the coda is a cadenza, which echoes the first subject.

The second movement, *Andante sostenuto*, is more songlike. The introductory subject is presented in the solo horn by the pulse of slow quarter notes. The quiet melody is presented alternately by the orchestra and the piano.

The third and final movement, *Allegro con fuoco*, is a modified rondo, wherein the sharp and rhythmically precise theme is presented first by the piano, and secondary motifs by the orchestra. Dvořák's used Czech folk melodies for this movement, and it is filled with good feeling.

wolfgang amadeus mozart

symphony no. 38 in d major, *prague*, k. 504

Born January 27, 1756 in Salzburg

Died December 5, 1791 in Vienna

Mozart was not always successful in his career; his music was not always appreciated or understood. This was in many cases the result of the composer's "modern" and advanced style of composition, which resulted in the inherent difficulties — too technically demanding for performers of the time, and often too conceptualized for his audiences — that would prevail in his music. Even his father would occasionally caution him in his many letters against such levels of loftiness in his style: "...when your music is performed by a mediocre orchestra, it will always be the loser, because it is composed with such discernment for the various instruments and is far from being conventional, as, on the whole, Italian music is ... I know your style of composition — it requires unusually close attention from the players of every type of instrument; and to keep the orchestra at such a pitch of industry and alertness for at least three hours is no joke."

When Mozart's opera, *The Marriage of Figaro*, was first produced in Vienna in May of 1786, it was only moderately successful, receiving a total of nine performances. In December, however, the opera was produced in Prague, where its success was so great that the composer was invited to appear in person. Constanze, his wife, accompanied him to Prague, where they were royally received. Regarding one of the many balls to which he and his wife were invited, the composer wrote, "I saw, however, with the greatest pleasure, all these people flying about with so much delight to the music of my *Figaro* transformed into quadrilles and waltzes, for here the one subject of conversation is *Figaro*; everlastingly, *Figaro!*"

In appreciation to the Prague public for their reception to *The Marriage of Figaro*, Mozart wrote his Symphony no. 38 in D Major, K. 504; the work was completed on December 6, 1786. Secure in his feeling that the work would be properly understood in this cosmopolitan city, Mozart produced one of his most profound works. It contains no minuet — and is accordingly sometimes referred to as the "Symphony with no minuet."

program notes, cont.

Although this could be explained by the fact that audiences in Prague were accustomed to hearing three-movement symphonies, the eminent musicologist Alfred Einstein justly declared in his book on Mozart that "It happens to lack a minuet simply because it says everything it has to say in three movements."

The *Prague* symphony's first performance in the city for which it was named occurred on January 19, 1787; it received as much adulation from the Prague concert-going public as had *Figaro* a little less than a year before. The audience responded to the symphony with tremendous applause. Franz Niemetschek, a schoolmaster from Prague to whom was entrusted Mozart's son Karl's education, was present on this occasion; years later Niemetschek, in an over-embellished account, stated: "The symphonies [sic] which he composed for this occasion are real masterpieces of instrumental composition, which are played with great elan and fire, so that the very soul is carried to sublime heights. This applied particularly to the grand Symphony in D major, which is still a favorite in Prague, although it has no doubt been heard a hundred times."

Mozart's 38th symphony is scored for a relatively large orchestra consisting of pairs of flutes, oboes, bassoons, horns, trumpets, timpani, and the usual complement of strings. A certain darkness of color may be observed in the symphony; this darkness is in evidence from the very beginning of the introduction, which precedes the first movement. Commentators have suggested that this work reveals the frustrations felt by Mozart over his failure to establish himself in Vienna. Alfred Einstein has written that the finale "is one of those rare D major movements of Mozart's which, despite all their appearance of cheerfulness, and despite their genuine perfection and feeling of completeness, leave a wound in the soul; beauty is wedded to death."

The Symphony no. 38 in D Major, K. 504, opens with an impressive introduction marked *Adagio*. A symphonic introduction is relatively rare with Mozart, and this example is filled with profound expression; it also contains a preview of the first theme of the following section. For the main body of the movement, the tempo changes to *Allegro*. The first

theme presented is a composite of some half-dozen motifs welded together in a cohesive manner peculiar to Mozart. The second theme is more lyrical, lacking the same degree of intensity as observed in the opening section. This theme is first given to the strings alone; a bright closing section concludes the exposition. The development section is built from motifs of the first theme. Both themes return before the final coda is reached.

The second movement, *Andante*, like the previous movement, follows the plan of sonata form. The singing, melodic main theme is frequently colored by chromatic elements. The second theme is restful as well as lyrical. The development section involves itself almost exclusively with the first theme, aside from various connecting passages heard in the exposition. The recapitulation expands on all the elements presented at the beginning of the movement.

The final movement, *Presto*, also in sonata form, is marked by its swift pace and great intensity. Instrumental contrasts are provided by the use of winds separately and in a variety of combinations. The main subject was one which greatly pleased the work's first audience in Prague; it recalls Susanna's and Cherubino's duet from Act II of *The Marriage of Figaro*. After a modified restatement of the main theme, the complementary second subject is presented. The development concerns itself with the principal subject. After innovative modulations into distant keys, the two themes return to the home key for the recapitulation. A magnificent coda concludes this animated work.

With its symphonic gravity, intellectual concentration, and emotional maturity, this work represents its composer at his best, as he achieved a perfect synthesis of an instrumental style developed to the utmost for its time, a style which is invigorated by its animated counterpoint and the compelling melodies that only the best of operatic composers could create. Mozart's Symphony no. 38 in D Major makes a worthy predecessor to the majestic trilogy of symphonies that conclude this genius' catalogue in this genre.

program notes, cont.

antonin dvořák

czech suite in d major, op. 39

Born September 8, 1841 in Nelahozeves, near Kralupy

Died May 1, 1904 in Prague

The *Czech Suite*, op. 39, composed in 1879, is a perfect embodiment of Dvořák's synthesis of classical forms with the folk traditions of his homeland, Bohemia. Written shortly after the success of his *Slavonic Dances*, this charming five-movement work is filled with warmth, lyricism, and the spirit of Czech folk culture.

The *Czech Suite* opens with a pastoral *Preludium (Pastorale)* that evokes the serene beauty of the Bohemian countryside. Its flowing melodies and gentle harmonies set a tranquil and idyllic tone, inviting listeners into Dvořák's musical world. The second movement, *Polka*, is a lively dance, full of rhythmic vitality and delightful charm, paying homage to one of Bohemia's most beloved folk traditions.

The third movement, *Sousedská*, is a slow, graceful dance characterized by its tender and nostalgic quality. This is followed by the spirited *Romance*, which showcases Dvořák's gift for crafting heartfelt, singing melodies. The suite concludes with the jubilant *Finale (Furiant)*, a high-energy dance featuring syncopated rhythms and dynamic contrasts, bringing the work to a vibrant and exhilarating close.

Although the *Czech Suite* does not incorporate actual folk tunes, its melodies, rhythms, and harmonies are steeped in the essence of Czech folk music. This piece stands as a testament to Dvořák's ability to bridge the local and the universal, offering a distinctly Czech voice within the broader context of European art music. Its combination of accessibility and depth continues to captivate audiences worldwide, making it a favorite in the orchestral repertoire.

guest essay

This essay is part of a series of writings by Virginia Tech faculty, staff, and community members that contextualize Moss Arts Center visiting artist performances.

Modern-day audiences might be forgiven for thinking that Czech music only really began in the 19th century. In some sense they would be right — this was the age of cultural revivals and growing consciousness of national identity, and it was in the 1860s and 1870s that a coherent story of Czech musical history began to be constructed, one that has come down to us in the present. Czech scholars and critics had good reason to build this narrative, for they wanted to differentiate themselves from what they perceived as the Germanizing pressures of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, ruled by the long-lived Habsburg dynasty, of which they were a part. Drawing on the writings of philosopher and theologian Johann Gottfried von Herder, they focused on the culture of the rural peasantry, holding up the Czech language, folk songs, poetry, and dances as the wellsprings of national specificity and a unique ethnic identity. Yet such a strategy had consequences for all the composers who came from the lands of Bohemia and Moravia, which today comprise the nation-state of Czechia.

Older musicians, for example, tended to be forgotten or sidelined. Until the efforts to revive and create a Czech national culture picked up steam in the latter half of the 19th century, ambitious composers frequently left behind the lands of their birth in favor of wealthier cities with more active cultural lives. This was true of the Baroque composer Jan Dismas Zelenka (1679-1745), who though educated in Prague spent his professional career working for the court in Dresden. Classical-era composers like Václav Jan Křtitel Tomášek (1774-1850) and Jan Václav Hugo Voříšek (1791-1825) were active around the turn of the 19th century, the former working in Prague and the latter in Vienna. These composers often spoke German as their language of daily use, as it was considered the language of educated businesspeople and professionals. Because of this they and their musical achievements were often claimed as culturally German, and later Czech nationalists left them out of the emerging story of Czech music.

guest essay, cont.

For Czech composers of the later 19th century, folk music and dances became the primary lens through which their music was understood as specifically Czech by audiences outside Bohemia and Moravia. This situation was especially true of the music of Antonín Dvořák, by far the most popular and well-known Czech composer of the 19th century. Modern descriptions of Dvořák inevitably emphasize the fact that he drew from Czech folk music in creating classical music like art songs, piano pieces, string quartets, and symphonies. This characterization is well-grounded in the historical record, of course — Dvořák's first piece that found widespread commercial success, the *Moravian Duets*, op. 20, of 1876, drew on the texts of František Sušil's collection, *Moravian National Songs*. Dvořák's musical settings were, characteristically, entirely original ones that did not arrange or quote pre-existing melodies.

Dvořák would go on to submit the *Moravian Duets* as part of an application for a state stipend program for Austrian artists. Sitting on the review board for the scholarship was none other than Johannes Brahms, who was immediately drawn to what he described as the "piquancy" of the songs. Brahms in turn sent the songs to his publisher, Fritz Simrock, beginning what would be a long relationship between the publisher and Dvořák. Simrock's edition of the duets was a spectacular success, and, keen to capitalize on German consumers' desire for exotic musical works, he immediately commissioned Dvořák to write the *Slavonic Dances*, op. 46 (1878). Originally written as four-hand piano duets, the orchestral versions of these pieces immediately entered the concert repertoire, where they have remained perennial favorites. Aside from a Ukranian *dumka*, Dvořák's inspirations were all forms with Czech origins: the furiant, the polka, the *sousedká*, and the *skočná* all feature in the series of dances. With these pieces, Dvořák's international renown was firmly established, as was the connection between the composer and folk music in the public eye.

Yet there is much to lose if we only think about Dvořák, and Czech composers generally, in the context of folk music. Dvořák was an incredibly prolific composer, producing songs, religious and secular choral works, piano pieces, chamber music for all manner of ensembles,

symphonies, symphonic poems, and operas. A great deal of his music has little if anything to do with folk music, from the monumental choral outpourings of the *Stabat Mater*, op. 58 (1876-80) to the lyrical intimacy of the *Serenade for Strings*, op. 22 (1876-78). Dvořák could also express nationalist impulses in other ways. His *Hussite Overture*, op. 67 (1883), for example, drew on well-known melodies associated with Czech history, the *St. Wenceslas Chorale* and the Hussite hymn *Ye Who Are Warriors of God*. His opera, *Čert a Káča* (*The Devil and Kate*, 1898-99), while it does feature folktale characters and settings, deploys a richness of Wagnerian operatic language to tell its fairytale story.

Thinking about classical music in terms of national schools is all but unavoidable in the present, and indeed, the composers themselves did in many cases consider themselves to be part of national traditions, contributing to the cultural development of their homelands. But nationalist ways of thinking, whether implicit or explicit, can often lead us to miss things that don't fit the particular narratives of national development that arose in the 19th century. Given the artistic wealth of European classical music across the centuries, it pays to think about such narratives critically, and to seek out music that lies beyond the well-traveled paths.

Christopher Campo-Bowen, assistant professor of musicology at Virginia Tech, specializes in the connections between classical music, opera, culture, politics, and society in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Author of Visions of the Village: Ruralness, Identity, and Czech Opera (Oxford University Press, 2025) and co-editor with Anja Bunzel of the volume Women in Nineteenth-Century Czech Musical Culture: Apostles of a Brighter Future (Routledge, 2024), Campo-Bowen teaches courses on music history and culture in the School of Performing Arts.

czech national symphony orchestra roster

VIOLIN I

Alexej Rosík
Martin Bialas
Zuzana Bialasová
David Šroubek
Petr Zimanyi
Monika Zimanyi
Richard Valášek
Libor Kaňka
Sára Zvěřinová
Bence Fazekas

VIOLIN II

Štěpán Lauda
Jiří Kohoutek
Andrea Astrabova
Ivana Morysova
Katerina Rihova
David Vorac
Iva Jaške Příhonská
David Pleva

VIOLA

Vladimir Paulen
Michal Demeter
Aneta Novotna
Miroslav Novotny
Zuzana Korenova
Irena Stranska

VIOLONCELLO

Daniel Baran
Rudolf Mrazik
Olga Bílková
Viktor Vondráček

DOUBLE BASS

Silvia Gerykova
Marek Ondrej

FLUTE

Tim Kadlec
Sarah Steffekova

OBOE

Marta Bílá
Tserennadmid
Boldbaatar

CLARINET

Lubomir Legemza
Dušan Mihely

BASSOON

Samuel Bercik
Ondrej Vasku

FRENCH HORN

Ales Janousek
Pavel Chomoucky

TRUMPET

Jan Hykrda
Roman Kubát

PERCUSSION

Lukas Tvrdy

biographies

maxim lando, piano



American pianist Maxim Lando has been described as a “dazzling fire-eater” (*ARTS San Francisco*) and “a total musical being” (*The New Criterion*). Lando was lauded by Anthony Tommasini in the *New York Times* as displaying “brilliance and infectious exuberance” combined with “impressive delicacy” and a “wild-eyed danger.”

Lando first made international headlines performing together with Lang Lang, Chick Corea, and the Philadelphia Orchestra led by Yannick Nézet-Séguin at Carnegie Hall’s 2017 Opening Night Gala. Since then, he has performed with major orchestras around the world, including Pittsburgh Symphony, Russian National Orchestra, Toronto Symphony, Israel Philharmonic, Mariinsky Theater Orchestra, Vancouver Symphony, Zurich Chamber Orchestra, Moscow Philharmonic, Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, St. Petersburg Symphony, Memphis Symphony, Hawaii Symphony, and many others.

A recipient of the prestigious Gilmore Young Artist Award, Lando is also first prize winner in both the 2022 New York Franz Liszt International Competition and the Vendome Prize 2021-22. He continues to garner international attention on the largest stages, this past year returning to Carnegie Hall to perform Liszt’s Piano Concerto, no. 1 with Orchestra of St. Luke’s, led by Gábor Hollerung. As winner of the 2021 Juilliard Concerto Competition, he made his Alice Tully Hall debut performing Rachmaninoff’s *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini* with the Juilliard Orchestra, led by Xian Zhang.

In 2020 Lando was named *Musical America’s* New Artist of the Month, and in 2018 at age 16, he won first prize at the Young Concert Artists International Auditions. His following sold-out recital debuts at Carnegie Hall’s Zankel Hall and the Kennedy Center’s Terrace Theater included Liszt’s complete *Transcendental Etudes* and were hailed by the *New York Times* as a concert “You Won’t Want To Miss!”

biographies, cont.

Lando has been featured as a guest artist at numerous festivals, including Gilmore Piano Festival, Aspen Music Festival, Kissinger Sommer (Germany), Mecklenburg-Vorpommern Festival (Germany), Ravinia Festival, Rising Stars Munich, and Musical Olympus International Festival (Russia). Recital highlights include performances at the National Center for Performing Arts in Beijing, Alte Oper Frankfurt, Louis Vuitton Foundation in Paris, Carnegie Hall Presents, Symphony Hall in Shenzhen, Chicago's Millennium Park, Lied Center of Kansas, Beethoven Haus in Bonn, *Grammy Salute to Classical Music*, and University of Georgia Athens Presents. He was invited by Lang Lang to perform for the historic opening of Steinway and Sons in Beijing, and performed Rachmaninoff's Third Concerto for an outdoor audience of 50,000 people with Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra in Madison, Wisconsin.

Lando is a passionate chamber musician, collaborating with artists such as Daniel Hope, Julian Rachlin, Lynn Harrell, and the Danish String Quartet. He was awarded a 2023 International Classical Music Award (ICMA) for *Into Madness* (recorded by Bavarian Radio on Berlin Classics) with German violinist Tassilo Probst.

Lando is an alumnus of the Lang Lang International Music Foundation, and studies with longtime mentor Hung-Kuan Chen at the Juilliard School. Learn more at amp-worldwide.com.

steven mercurio, music director



Maestro Steven Mercurio is an internationally acclaimed conductor and composer who is currently the music director of the Czech National Symphony Orchestra. Notably, Mercurio also served as music director of the Spoleto Festival for five years and as principal conductor for the Opera Company of Philadelphia.

For the stage, he has conducted more than 60 operas in seven languages. His engagements have taken him to many of the world's best loved opera houses. In addition to Mercurio's operatic repertoire, his symphonic

appearances have spanned the globe, appearing throughout Europe, Australia, the Far East, and broadly throughout the United States.

Mercurio has conducted countless operatic and symphonic television broadcasts, including the internationally acclaimed *Christmas in Vienna* series highlighted by the bestselling Three Tenors (Carreras, Domingo, and Pavarotti). Distinguished telecasts have also included Mercurio conducting the RAI's production of *Christmas from the Church of San Francesco in Assisi*, or Beethoven's Symphony no. 5 with his own Czech National Symphony Orchestra for ARTE in commemoration of the Beethoven 250th Anniversary celebration.

As a composer, Mercurio's compositions include songs, chamber works, and pieces for large orchestra. His large-scale orchestral work, *For Lost Loved Ones*, was given its world premiere by Zubin Mehta and the New York Philharmonic Orchestra. *Mercurial Overture* was given its world premiere by the Oslo Philharmonic in a live concert telecast honoring Nobel Peace Prize winner Médecins sans Frontières. Mercurio's symphony, *A Grateful Tail*, is based on American playwright Eugene O'Neill's *Last Will and Testament of Silverdene Emblem O'Neill* and premiered in Prague in 2013.

Mercurio is an acclaimed and sought-after arranger and collaborator and has created arrangements for a wide array of performers across multiple genres, including Sting and Chick Corea. Most recently, he served as arranger, conductor, and producer for Andrea Bocelli's best-selling recording, *Believe*. In 2022 he produced, arranged, and conducted superstar crossover cellist HAUSER's new recording for Sony Masterworks, *The Player*.

biographies, cont.

czech national symphony orchestra

Over the past 30 years the Czech National Symphony Orchestra (CNSO) has grown to become one of the leading Czech ensembles and highly sought-after orchestras in Europe. Its glowing reputation can be attributed to the members' versatility across a wide range of genres, spanning classical, film, jazz, and musicals, which attract large domestic and international audiences.

The orchestra has collaborated or performed at concerts and in the CNSO Studio in Prague with such notable conductors, composers, and film directors as Lalo Schifrin, Pino Donaggio, Giuliano Taviani, Danny Elfman, Hans Zimmer, James Newton Howard, Quentin Tarantino, Vince Mendoza, Giuseppe Tornatore, Carl Davis, Steven Mercurio, Marcello Rota, Vladimir Cosma, Christian Lindberg, and Chick Corea. It has recorded a wealth of wonderful music, including a Christmas album with acclaimed tenors Plácido Domingo and Vittorio Grigolo and music for Tarantino's *Western*, *The Hateful Eight*. The ensemble also enjoyed a valuable and longstanding collaboration with the legendary Ennio Morricone (1928-2020), involving a series of concerts performed on numerous European tours. On the strength of the concert collaboration, Morricone booked the Czech National Symphony Orchestra for a recording, and they subsequently created a truly exceptional soundtrack together at London's famous Abbey Road studio. Morricone's music went on to pick up a number of awards, among them a Golden Globe, a BAFTA, and an Oscar.

In recent years, Andrea Bocelli, Rolando Villazón, José Carreras, Domingo, Jonas Kaufmann, and Piotr Beczala have performed on several occasions with the orchestra, while collaborations in the field of pop music have included top names such as Sting, George Michael, Natalie Cole, Dianne Reeves, Angélique Kidjo, Denise Donatelli, and Ute Lemper, along with instrumentalists James Morrison, Branford and Wynton Marsalis, Bobby Shew, Joe Lovano, John Abercrombie, John Patitucci, Dave Weckl, Chick Corea, and many more.

In addition to its subscription series, the orchestra travels abroad on international tours, including almost all countries in Europe, as well as places as far flung as the United States, Japan, Australia, South Korea, China, Dubai, Oman, Canada, and Mexico. In the spring of 2016 the orchestra traveled on a tour of the United States, where it performed a spectacular show, *Disney Fantasia: Live in Concert*. 2017 saw the orchestra head off on a month-long European tour with film composers Morricone and Howard. 2018 brought an interesting opportunity for the orchestra to tour Europe with the acclaimed musical *La La Land*, and notably, as part of the *Symphonic Cinema* project, it toured the U.K. for nearly two months, performing a program of box office Hollywood evergreens, conducted by Ben Palmer.

In 2019 the orchestra set off on a promising extended tour of the United States; however, at the beginning of 2020, it was forced to scale back its concert activities due to the global pandemic. Nevertheless, the ensemble responded quickly to the changing landscape by arranging live performances online. The orchestra launched a new internet platform, NetConcert, and activities on the concert platform resumed the orchestra's standard tempo. After accompanying Domingo at his performance in the Czech Republic during the summer of 2021, the CNSO accepted a collaboration with the world-famous writer and composer Dan Brown, performing his *Wild Symphony* in Prague.

The orchestra is currently based at recording Studio No. 1, otherwise known as the "Gallery," where it has earned several gold CDs for the sale of more than 30,000 media, as well as the Gustav Mahler Prize for the interpretation of the composer's works and, in particular, prestigious contracts with IMG Artists in London and APM in New York. A long-term recording project in cooperation with the Japanese publishing house JVC Victor Entertainment stands out as yet another significant achievement, so far resulting in 50 CDs and eight DVDs.

The pinnacle for the CNSO was the 2022 Grammy Award for Best Arrangement, Instruments and Vocals, given for the composition *To the Edge of Longing* from Vince Mendoza's record, *Freedom Over Everything*. Mendoza was nominated twice for two different tracks from this album,

biographies, cont.

which was recorded together with the CNSO in Studio No. 1. Moreover, the orchestra's director, Jan Hasenöhr, was also the initiator of the project and the record's producer.

Trumpet player Hasenöhr launched the Czech National Symphony Orchestra in 1993 together with legendary conductor Zdeněk Košler; the ensemble then enjoyed 10 wonderful years under the direction of American conductor Paul Freeman (1996–2006). The orchestra was led by chief conductor Libor Pešek from 2007 to 2019, and this partnership was exceptional, whether they were working together in concert during their subscription series or on the five hugely successful tours around Great Britain. These concerts have earned the CNSO an enviable reputation with British audiences, and the orchestra regularly returns to the country. One particularly noteworthy, historic achievement was the recording marathon undertaken between 2007 and 2017 when, led by Pešek, the CNSO made a complete recording of Gustav Mahler's symphonies.

In the spring of 2019, following Pešek's departure, the post of conductor was assumed by American artist Steven Mercurio. This outstanding musician, a pupil of Leonard Bernstein, has been working with the orchestra for several years now, a collaboration that continues to deliver a number of exceptional projects.

Learn more at amp-worldwide.com.

The Czech National Symphony Orchestra first performed at the Moss Arts Center in 2019. This is Lando's first performance at the center.

tell us what you think!



We'd love your feedback on this performance. If you complete the short survey, you can enter for a chance to win two tickets to A.I.M by Kyle Abraham on Saturday, March 22, 2025.

bit.ly/czech-nso-feedback

Please note, survey responses are anonymous. If you would like a response to your feedback, please email mossartscenter@vt.edu.

engagement events

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 18

UNIVERSITY CLASS VISIT: MUSIC AS GLOBAL CULTURE

As part of their exploration of musical traditions from around the globe, students spoke with pianist Maxim Lando about his life, career, and love of music.

Special thanks to the Virginia Tech School of Performing Arts

go deeper

Dvořák and Voříšek both cite composers Ludwig van Beethoven and Franz Schubert as influences on their musical styles. What elements of Beethoven and Schubert do you hear in tonight's program?

PK-12 PROGRAMS AT THE MOSS ARTS CENTER

Each year, wildly enthusiastic students — from PK through 12th grade — fill our theatre for free matinee performances by artists from all over the world. They explore our visual arts galleries during school tours and create and learn during hands-on workshops with artists. For many students, visiting the Moss Arts Center is the first time they've ever been to a performing arts facility or gallery. Why do young people need access to the arts? Engaging in artistic activities offers a wide range of skills that they will use throughout their lives.

Learn more at bit.ly/moss-k12.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Virginia Tech acknowledges that we live and work on the Tutelo/Monacan People's homeland, and we recognize their continued relationships with their lands and waterways. We further acknowledge that the Morrill Land-Grant College Act (1862) enabled the commonwealth of Virginia to finance and found Virginia Tech through the forced removal of Native Nations from their lands in California and other areas in the West.

LABOR RECOGNITION

Virginia Tech acknowledges that its Blacksburg campus sits partly on land that was previously the site of the Smithfield and Solitude Plantations, owned by members of the Preston family. Between the 1770s and the 1860s, the Prestons and other local White families that owned parcels of what became Virginia Tech also owned hundreds of enslaved people. Enslaved Black people generated resources that financed Virginia Tech's predecessor institution, the Preston and Olin Institute, and they also worked on the construction of its building.



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**Make your gift here starting
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bit.ly/giving-day-2025-moss



This is the perfect time to show your support for the Moss Arts Center.

Regardless of age, background, ability, and circumstance, the arts are impactful. Everyone can find their place in the arts and that is especially true at the Moss Arts Center. Here, everyone is welcome to explore, discover, and find what stirs their soul and brings them joy.

There are endless reasons to support the arts. What's yours?

All Giving Day donations to the Moss Arts Center will be recognized in the 2025-2026 season Moss Arts Center performance programs.



MOSS ARTS CENTER

190 Alumni Mall, Blacksburg, VA 24061
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MOSS ARTS CENTER

Through Sun.,
March 30, 2025



Shaunté Gates *This Is Not a Test*

Ruth C. Horton Gallery

Washington, D.C.-based artist Shaunté Gates' solo exhibition features a survey of mixed-media paintings and densely layered works that combine photography, painting, collage, and found materials, resulting in surreal, dreamlike compositions that merge portraiture, landscape, and architecture.

Charisse Pearlina Weston *I saw the room but darkly dreamed it ...*

*Miles C. Horton Jr. Gallery and
Sherwood Payne Quillen '71 Reception Gallery*

New York-based artist Charisse Pearlina Weston's solo exhibition engages with themes of surveillance and tactics of Black refusal by transforming materials associated with observation and control through repetition and reuse.

Free Related Event **Beyond the Frame Gallery Tours**

Thurs., March 13, 12 PM

Moss Arts Center Grand Lobby

Charisse Pearlina Weston; pyrolytic envelop I (into the bright and distributed subject side), 2024; text etched on slumped and folded Mirropane surveillance glass and concrete; 51 1/2 x 22 x 14 1/2 inches; © Charisse Pearlina Weston; courtesy of the artist and Dr. Charles Boyd

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Contra Dance is a traditional American dance in which couples dance in two long facing lines or in groups of four. No partner required!

Y COMMUNITY GALLERY

We are proud to announce that the YMCA at Virginia Tech is opening a brand-new community art gallery in The Y Center at 1000 N. Main St., Blacksburg. We are extremely grateful to eARTh (by Diane Relf) for sponsorship of this new space and for the generous support of Shelter Alternatives and Bell Electric.

Y BOOK FAIR

Among the many volumes of books that will be available in our annual Book Fair there will be a collection of books of local origin, authors and interest. We'll have literally thousands of books, comics, graphic novels, vinyl and vintage collectibles for you to peruse at the very best prices around so get ready!



YOUR GUIDE TO RECYCLING AT THE Y

WHAT

Textiles (gently used household items to include books, clothing, housewares, blankets, toys, etc.)

*Thrift Shop (Blacksburg)
Please deliver to Thrift Shop dock during business hours.*

Electronics (working & non-working TV's (from Mont. County residents only)

*Thrift Shop (Blacksburg)
Please deliver to Thrift Shop dock during business hours.*

Batteries (Rechargeable batteries only)

*Thrift Shop (Blacksburg)
Bring inside to Recycling Station.
Each item will need to be individually bagged. Bags and tape will be provided.*

CFL's, Ink Jet cartridges, rechargeable batteries

*Thrift Shop (Blacksburg)
Bring inside to Recycling Table. Each item will need to be individually bagged. Bags and tape will be provided.*

We love to hear from you! Feel free to send us an email at ymca@vtymca.org and we will be in contact with you soon.

Y CENTER

Thrift Shop, Pottery Studio,
Event Room, and Conference Room
1000 North Main Street
Blacksburg, VA 24060
540-552-2633

MAIN OFFICE

Lancaster House
403 Washington Street SW
Blacksburg, VA 24060
540-961-9622
ymca@vtymca.org