

## January 7, 2024 - Anton Nel & the Arizona Philharmonic Program notes by J. Michael Allsen

Our January program opens with an early work by the Finnish master Einojuhani Rautavaara, his *Divertimento*. The Arizona Philharmonic then welcomes South African pianist Anton Nel, for the *Piano Concerto No. 9*, written by a 21-year-old Mozart: widely considered to be Mozart's first masterpiece in this form. We continue with the Jazz-infused *Lullaby* of George Gershwin. Finally, we will say "farewell" with Haydn's *Symphony No. 45*—written by Haydn as a gentle but pointed reminder to his boss that it was time to pack up the summer house and go home!

### PROGRAM

#### EINOJUHANİ RAUTAVAARA

##### *Divertimento*

- *Allegro*
- *Adagio*
- *Allegretto ma energico*

#### WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

Anton Nel, piano

##### *Concerto No. 9 in E-flat Major for Piano and Orchestra, K. 271 (Jenamy)*

- *Allegro*
- *Andantino*
- *Rondo: Presto*

### INTERMISSION

#### GEORGE GERSHWIN

##### *Lullaby*

## JOSEPH HAYDN

### *Symphony No. 45 in F-sharp minor (Farewell)*

- *Allegro assai*
  - *Adagio*
  - *Menuetto*
  - *Presto—Adagio*
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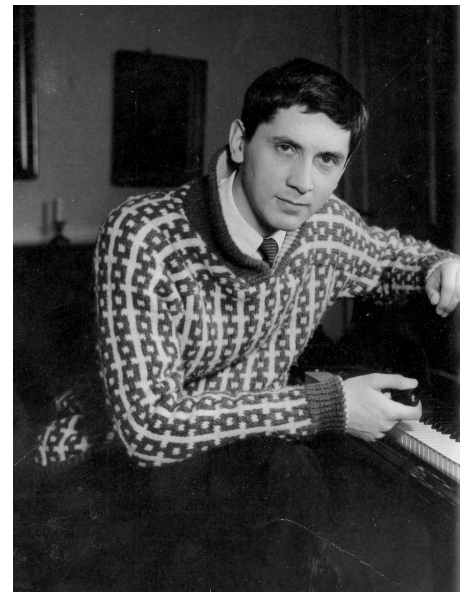
## Einojuhani Rautavaara (1928-2016)

### *Divertimento*

*This work was written in 1953, shortly before it was performed in Helsinki under the direction of Jorma Panula. Duration 9:00.*

### **Background**

Rautavaara was in many ways Sibelius's great successor in Finnish music. In 1952, after initially studying musicology at the University of Helsinki, he became a composition student at the musical academy founded by Sibelius. Near the end of his life, Sibelius took an interest in the young Rautavaara and recommended him for a Koussevitsky Fellowship in New York, which allowed him to study with Aaron Copland, Vincent Persichetti, and Roger Sessions. From 1966 until his retirement in 1990, Rautavaara taught composition at the Sibelius Academy. His compositions include dozens of works for the stage, from conventional operas to works for television and more *avant garde* theatrical pieces. He has also composed eight symphonies (some of which he later withdrew or extensively revised), several concertos—including a concerto for birds and orchestra!—and dozens of other orchestral pieces. Like Sibelius, Rautavaara was a composer whose style evolved constantly over his long career. His earliest works were influenced strongly by Bartók and Stravinsky, but also by Finnish folk styles. He later experimented with *avant garde* serialism and chance elements. Beginning in the 1960s, much of his music was in a style sometimes described as “neo-Romantic”—highly eclectic, and generally approachable to audiences. His *Divertimento* for string orchestra was a student work, written shortly after he enrolled at the Sibelius Academy. He wrote the piece for a fellow student, Jorma Panula, who wanted a new work to perform with a student string orchestra he conducted. In his previous studies as a musicologist, Rautavaara had become interested in the folk music,



particularly the fiddle-playing of the Ostrobothnian region of northern Finland, and there are echoes of that style in this work.

### **What You'll hear**

The *Divertimento* is in three brief movements, beginning with a driving *Allegro*. A series of rustic fiddle tunes, mimicking the style of Ostrobothnian fiddling without actually quoting authentic melodies. The shifting rhythmic accompaniment shows the influence of Bartók. The *Adagio* begins with lush string chorale. After a slight acceleration, there is short middle section: there is a series of modal tunes accompanied in the same style as the opening. The movement ends with a reprise of the chorale. The final movement (*Allegretto ma energico*) opens with more rustic fiddling. A sudden dissonance begins a slightly more intense fugal middle section. After a short reprise of the relaxed opening music, the work speeds up for a short coda.

### **Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)**

***Concerto No. 9 in E-flat Major for Piano and Orchestra, K. 271 (Jenamy)***

*Mozart completed this concerto in January 1777. Its first performance was probably by Mozart himself, during a visit to Mannheim in late 1777. Duration 30:00.*

### **Background**

Mozart spent most of his early life touring Europe as child prodigy with his father Leopold, looking for a prominent position for the phenomenally talented younger Mozart. By 1775, his years as a *Wunderkind* were over, however, and the young Mozart returned to Salzburg to serve his father's patron, Archbishop Colloredo. Aside from a few extended job-hunting trips, he would spend most of the next six years in his home town. This period, spent in provincial Salzburg is often painted as a frustrating time for young Mozart, who worked for much of his early 20s to get out from under the wing of his protective and sometimes overbearing father. But he was also surrounded by good friends, and—particularly in the early years—was astonishingly productive. He also seems to have enjoyed the role of a young, but very big fish in a very small pond! He composed symphonies, concertos, serenades, chamber works and even operas while in the Archbishop's employ, all the time working as a church musician for the Archbishop. Among the finest works he composed in Salzburg was the *Piano Concerto No. 9*—completed within a few weeks of his 21st birthday.



The name associated with this concerto was for more than two centuries one of the great Mozart mysteries. In the 1770s, there are several references in Mozart's letters to a pianist, "Mademoiselle Jenomy" (a name he and his father spelled differently in nearly every reference to her), for whom he composed the concerto. Mozart's biographers knew little else about this rather mysterious female pianist, but in one influential biography written in 1912, the authors—knowing that Mozart's spelling was no better than that of most 18th-century writers—decided that he was Italianizing a French name, and that the concerto was written for a "Mademoiselle Jeunehomme." The work was known popularly as the "Jeunehomme" concerto for nearly a century. But in 2003, Mozart scholar Michael Lorenz found that Mozart's spelling was not quite as bad as previously thought! He identified the pianist as Victoire Jenamy (1749-1812), the daughter of a prominent dancer and choreographer George Noverre. Noverre and Mozart were friends and professional colleagues: Noverre had choreographed a performance of Mozart's opera *Lucio Silla* a few years earlier. During the composer's visit to Paris in 1778, Mozart also composed a fine score for Noverre's ballet *Les petits riens*. It was through Noverre that Mozart knew Victoire Jenamy, who was married to a wealthy Viennese merchant. She was not a professional musician, but she did play occasionally in public and well enough to attract at least one admiring review in a Viennese paper. She apparently commissioned the concerto in 1776, though it is not clear whether she ever performed it. For his part, Mozart liked the concerto well enough to play it in both Mannheim and Paris in 1777 and 1778, and later programmed it on his concerts in Vienna.

### **What You'll Hear**

The best-known of Mozart's piano concertos are the series he wrote for his own concerts in Vienna in the 1780s, but *No. 9*, the last of the solo piano concertos he wrote in Salzburg, stands alongside these late masterpieces. It is one of the best of his early works: the biographer Alfred Einstein called it Mozart's "Eroica" for its boldness and innovation. This begins in the opening bars of the first movement (*Allegro*): concertos typically begin with an orchestral exposition, but here, the solo part jumps in during the first few measures, before stepping aside to allow the orchestra to introduce the main ideas. Near the end of this section, the piano enters with a long trill and short bit of lyricism as a bridge to its own exposition. The development is particularly long and intense, carried almost completely by the piano. When the main ideas are recapitulated, Mozart presents them in a new order and in shortened form. As usual, there is space near the end for a solo cadenza, but rather untypically, Mozart composed a set of cadenzas for this concerto, rather than leave them to improvisation.

The brooding *Andantino* was Mozart's first concerto middle movement written in a minor key. The inspiration here was clearly operatic, and the piano's solo aria here is broken occasionally by passages that sound like recitative. The movement develops a pair of long lyrical phrases and culminates in an emotional cadenza. The closing movement (*Rondo: Presto*) is a complete contrast: music tied together by an energetic theme that also seems suited for opera, but in this case a fast-paced comic scene. (Several writers have noted the similarity between this bustling theme and an aria sung by Monastatos in Mozart's *Magic Flute*.) Between repeats and developments of this idea, Mozart places varied contrasting episodes: a suddenly wistful moment

for the solo piano, a short cadenza that leads into a surprisingly extended courtly minuet, a long solo passage that maneuvers the music back to the main theme, and an exuberant closing passage that turns flippant at the very end.

### **George Gershwin (1898-1937)**

#### ***Lullaby***

*Gershwin composed this work in 1919 as a piano piece, and shortly afterwards rescored it for string quartet. Duration 9:00.*

#### **Background**

No American composer was more successful in incorporating the Blues and Jazz in Classical compositions than George Gershwin. Gershwin was a successful writer of popular songs and Broadway hits, but beginning with his *Rhapsody in Blue* of 1924, Gershwin gained a reputation writing what he referred to as “serious” music: a whole series of Jazz-influenced orchestral works that remain concert standards today. His *Lullaby* was written in 1919 as a piano piece, and Gershwin transcribed it for string quartet, largely as an exercise in orchestration. He never intended to publish it, though it was apparently performed at parties by his string-playing friends. (The string quartet version of *Lullaby* was not played in public until 1967, and it is now heard frequently—as at this concert—as a string orchestra piece.) It did surface in public once during his lifetime, but in a very different format. Gershwin repurposed the piece as an aria in his first attempt at a “serious” stage work, the short “Jazz opera” *Blue Monday*, produced as part of George White’s *Scandals of 1922*.



#### **What You’ll Hear**

*Lullaby* begins with a brief introduction featuring a kind of “tuning note” and some high violin harmonics, and Gershwin then introduces the bluesy main theme, above a gently rocking accompaniment that has just a bit of what Jazz musicians of the day referred to as the “Latin tinge.” There is a wistful middle section that opens with short solos for violin and cello. The opening music returns, with a few short Blues riffs added—and eventually played in harmonics—before the piece ends with short, wry coda.

**Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)**  
***Symphony No. 45 in F-sharp minor (Farewell)***

*Haydn composed the Symphony No. 45 in the summer of 1772. The first performance was at the estate of Prince Nicolaus Esterházy. Duration 25:00.*

**Background**

If any one person deserves to be credited as the “father of the symphony,” it is Haydn. His long musical career spanned the musical beginnings of the Classical symphony, and his 104 symphonies, written over a span of 35 years, could serve as a musical history of the development of symphonic form; Haydn himself was responsible for many of those developments. He helped to establish the compositional framework that would contain much of the greatest Classical and Romantic music. There are no second-rate symphonies among the 104, but some are more famous than others, including the “Farewell” symphony of 1772. The well-known story behind this symphony is given by Haydn’s earliest biographers. By the 1770s Haydn had risen to the position of *Kapellmeister*—chief musician—at the court of Prince Nicolaus Esterházy, a music-lover and a relatively generous patron. Haydn enjoyed a fine working relationship with his employer, and took good care of his musicians. While Prince Esterházy spent the social season in Eisenstadt, near Vienna, his court, including the entire orchestra, spent the summer at his opulent but remote palace of Esterháza. The story, as told by Haydn’s biographer Greisinger in 1810, is:



“Among Prince Esterházy’s *Kapelle* there were several vigorous young married men who, in the summer, when the Prince stayed at Esterháza, were obliged to leave their wives behind in Eisenstadt. Contrary to his custom, the Prince once extended his sojourn in Esterháza by several weeks: the loving husbands, thoroughly dismayed by this news, went to Haydn and asked for his advice. Haydn had the inspiration of writing a symphony (which is known under the title ‘Farewell’ symphony), in which one instrument after the other is silent. This symphony was performed as soon as possible in front of the Prince, and each of the musicians was instructed, as soon as his part was finished, to blow out his candle and leave with his instrument under his arm. The Prince and the company understood the point of this pantomime at once, and the next day came the order to leave Esterháza.”

It’s a great story, but focusing just on Haydn’s sly little musical Public Service Announcement at the end, really just the last half of the last movement, takes attention away from the fact that this is also a really fine symphony. The *Symphony No. 45* is one of the Haydn works whose style is described as *Sturm und Drang* (“storm and stress”), a series of several symphonies written

around 1770. *Sturm und Drang* was a popular literary and theatrical movement at the time— heavy on the emotion and tragedy—and the designation seems appropriate for these symphonies, in which minor keys predominate, and Haydn introduces a new intensity and complexity not seen before in his works. Haydn was in fact in great professional shape at the time, but many writers have speculated on the cause of this serious turn: some enduring resentment among his colleagues over his promotion, an unpleasant incident in 1765 when one of Haydn’s musicians accidentally burned down a house, marital problems, or even a romantic crisis with the singer Luigia Polzelli, a singer at the Esterházy court. One purely musical reason may have been his preoccupation with vocal music at this time. Haydn composed over 20 operas for the court (including a few for lip-synching marionettes!), and was a skilled musical dramatist. Works like the *Symphony No. 45* have this same dramatic expressiveness, without a vocal text.

### **What You’ll Hear**

In the opening movement (*Allegro assai*), Haydn launches directly into the main idea: a stern descending violin theme accompanied by aggressive figures from the low strings. There is no real contrast from this seriousness in the exposition, and he avoids giving an expected contrasting theme. The development is mostly in a major key, and he briefly introduces a more lyrical figure. But this music stops abruptly and the opening theme brusquely takes over and restores unrelenting severity until the end.

The two middle movements are much lighter in character. The *Adagio*—the symphony’s longest movement—has occasional moments of darkness, but an air of refined elegance dominates most of the movement, with vocal-style melodies carried by muted violins, lightly decorated by horns and oboes. The *Menuetto* is a typically good-humored Haydn minuet, though with occasional quirky twists, and the occasional hint of a more serious mood. The ending is a curiously shy little melodic gesture.

The finale starts out conventionally enough: a quick *Presto* theme in minor, followed by contrasting major-key material. But just when things seem to be wrapping up as expected, Haydn springs his surprise. The character of the music lightens for a lilting and serene *Adagio*, whose texture gradually thins as the musicians leave the stage one by one, eventually leaving only the first violinists to finish.

## **MUSICIANS**

### **Anton Nel**

Winner of the 1987 Naumburg International Piano Competition at Carnegie Hall, Anton Nel continues to tour internationally as a recitalist, concerto soloist, chamber musician, and teacher. Highlights in the U.S. include performances with the Cleveland Orchestra, and the Chicago, San Francisco, Dallas, Seattle, and Detroit Symphonies as well as recitals coast to coast. Overseas he has appeared at the Wigmore Hall in London, the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, Suntory Hall in



Tokyo, major venues in China and Korea and undertakes regular tours to South Africa. Much sought after as a chamber musician he regularly appears with some of the world's finest instrumentalists at festivals on four continents. He holds the Joe R. and Teresa Lozano Long Endowed Chair at the University of Texas at Austin, is currently also a Visiting Professor at the Manhattan School of Music, and annually presents masterclasses at the Glenn Gould School in Toronto. During the summers he is on the artist-faculties at the Aspen Music Festival and School, the Orford Music Academy in Quebec, and at the Steans Institute at the Ravinia Festival. Mr. Nel also frequently performs as harpsichordist and fortepianist. His recordings include four solo CDs, several chamber music recordings, and works for piano and orchestra by Franck, Faure, Saint-Saens, and Edward Burlingame Hill. The Johannesburg-born Mr. Nel is a graduate of the University of the Witwatersrand, where he studied with Adolph Hallis and the University of Cincinnati where he worked with Bela Siki and Frank Weinstock. His website is [antonnel.com](http://antonnel.com)



## CONDUCTOR

**Peter Bay** became Music Director and Conductor of the Austin Symphony Orchestra in 1998 and the Arizona Philharmonic in 2018. He returns to the Britt Festival Orchestra (OR) as Music Advisor and Guest Conductor for the 2024 summer season.



Maestro Bay has appeared with over eighty different orchestras including the National, Chicago, St. Louis, Houston, Dallas, Baltimore, New Jersey, North Carolina, San Antonio, Tucson, West Virginia, Colorado, Hawaii, Sarasota, Fort Worth, Bochum (Germany), Carinthian (Austria), Lithuanian National, and Ecuador National Symphonies, the Minnesota and Algarve (Portugal) Orchestras, the Louisiana, Buffalo, Rhode Island and Boca del Rio (Mexico) Philharmonics, the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, the Eastman (*Postcard from Morocco*) and Aspen (*The Ballad of Baby Doe*) Opera Theaters, and the Theater Chamber Players of the Kennedy Center. Summer music festival appearances have included Aspen and Music in the Mountains (CO), Grant Park and Ravinia (IL), Round Top (TX), OK Mozart (OK), Mostly Modern (NY), and Skaneateles (NY). In June 2018 he led fully staged performances of Leonard Bernstein's Mass as part of the Bernstein100Austin celebration.



Peter is the primary conductor for Ballet Austin. For Austin Opera he has conducted *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *La Traviata*, *Turandot*, *The Marriage of Figaro*, and *La Bohème*.

Other positions held by Bay have included Music Director of the Erie Philharmonic, Annapolis Symphony Orchestra, Breckenridge Music Festival (CO), Britt Festival Orchestra (OR), Bravo! Big Sky Classical Festival (MT), Hot Springs Music Festival (AR), and posts with the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra, St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, and Richmond Symphony. Bay and the ASO with pianist Anton Nel released a critically acclaimed Bridge CD of Edward Burlingame Hill's music. With the Richmond Symphony he recorded the U.S. premiere of Britten's *The Sword in the Stone* for Opus One Records, and with the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra *Voices*, featuring the percussion ensemble NEXUS. He is conductor for Christopher Cross' *Secret Ladder* album and Hanan Townshend's soundtrack to the 2016 movie *The Vessel*.

In 1994, he was one of two conductors selected to participate in the Leonard Bernstein American Conductors Program. He was the first prize winner of the 1980 Baltimore Symphony Orchestra Young Conductors Competition and a prize winner of the 1987 Leopold Stokowski Competition sponsored by the American Symphony Orchestra. In July 2012 and January 2020, he appeared in *Solo Symphony*, a choreographic work created for him by Allison Orr of Forklift Danceworks, and was inducted into the Austin Arts Hall of Fame in May 2016.

Peter is married to soprano Mela Sarajane Dailey and they have a son Colin.

## **ORCHESTRA**

### **Oboe**

Laura Arganbright, Principal

Mary Simon

### **Bassoon**

Chip King, Principal - *chair sponsored by RoJean Madsen*

### **French Horn**

Martha Sharpe, Principal - *chair sponsored by RoJean Madsen*

Karen Teplik, Associate Principal

### **Violin I**

Katherine McLin, Concertmaster

Michael DiBarry, Associate Concertmaster

Spencer Ekenes

Sunny Jo

Emily Nardo

Ramon Soberano

Luke Stikeleather

**Violin II**

Luke Hill, Principal

Louis Coste

Megan Evans

Dasom Jeon

Ava Wipff

Danny Yang

**Viola**

Kimberly Hankins, Principal - *chair sponsored by RoJean Madsen*

Katherine Shields, Associate Principal

Bryn Cannon

Mason Haskett

Grace Wills

**Cello**

Wesley Skinner, Principal

Mary Anne Bruner - *chair sponsored by Barbara Metz*

Mary DiBartolo

Claudia Vanderschraaf

**Contrabass**

Jason Roederer, Principal

Jason Howard