

TORONTO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Gustavo Gimeno, Music Director

Program 2

Thursday,
September 25, 2025
7:30pm

Saturday,
September 27, 2025
7:30pm

Beethoven's Pastoral

Gustavo Gimeno, conductor

Kelly Zimba Lukić, flute

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Symphony No. 31 in D Major, K. 297/300a
"Paris"

I. Allegro assai

II. Andante

III. Allegro

Jacques Ibert

Concerto for Flute and Orchestra

I. Allegro

II. Andante

III. Allegro scherzando

Intermission

Ludwig van Beethoven

Symphony No. 6 in F Major, Op. 68 "Pastoral"

I. Awakening of cheerful feelings on arriving in the
country: Allegro ma non troppo

II. Scene by the brook: Andante molto mosso

III. Merry assembly of country folk: Allegro

IV. Thunderstorm: Allegro

V. Shepherd's Song – Happy, grateful feelings after the
storm: Allegretto

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791)

Symphony No. 31 in D Major, K. 297/300a “Paris”

Composed 1778

17 min

LONGING TO ESCAPE from the tyrannical grip of the Archbishop of Salzburg, Mozart set out in search of another job in September 1777. That journey, the first he had made without his father, turned out to be his passage into adulthood. He and his mother visited several centres where he had previously astonished everyone with his early-blooming gifts. Yet what had proven so impressive in a child aroused far less interest when displayed by an adult.

The Mozarts arrived in Paris on March 23, 1778. Over the next six months, Wolfgang continued to meet the same indifferent response. His surly, snobbish attitude toward the people of Paris was partly to blame. To make matters worse, his mother died in July. That led him to harbour a loathing for Frenchmen and French taste for the remainder of his life.

One of the few bright spots in his stay was his association with the Concert Spirituel, an organization that presented public concerts. Impresario Joseph Le Gros commissioned several works from him. They included a symphonie concertante for wind instruments and orchestra, which was never performed, and this symphony, which was.

“I was very nervous at the rehearsal,” Mozart wrote to his father two weeks after the fact, “for never in my life have I heard a worse performance. Next day I had decided not to go to the concert at all; but in the evening, the weather being fine, I at last made up my mind to go. Right in the middle of the first allegro was a passage I knew the audience would like; they were thrilled with it and there was a tremendous burst of applause. The andante also found favour, but particularly the last allegro.”

As suggested above, the symphony’s positive reception sprang primarily from Mozart’s understanding of Parisian audiences’ taste for colour and excitement above all. With French orchestras being larger than those in Austria, he was able to revel in the additional instrumental colours available to him (this is his first symphony to include clarinets). He also bowed to the local preference for symphonies with three movements rather than four. Le Gros, however, didn’t care for the slow movement, so Mozart composed a replacement. These performances will feature the one in 6/8 time, which scholarly investigations have determined to be the second of the two.

The symphony offers entertainment of the highest order. The opening, a sturdy call to attention, grabs the listener’s interest instantly. The first movement’s themes possess a virtually athletic energy, and here, as he does throughout the piece, Mozart clothes them in a rainbow of bright colours. The second movement provides a sweetly relaxing interlude before the arrival of a finale that outdoes the first movement for brilliance of effect and surging, concentrated vitality.

—Program note by Don Anderson

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I was so happy that as soon as the symphony was over I went off to the Palais Royal where I had a large ice, said the Rosary as I had vowed to do, and went home.

—W. A. MOZART, IN A LETTER TO HIS FATHER, FOLLOWING THE PREMIÈRE OF HIS “PARIS” SYMPHONY

Jacques Ibert (1890–1962)

Concerto for Flute and Orchestra

Composed 1932

19 min

IBERT BELONGED TO A GENERATION OF FRENCH COMPOSERS

—Darius Milhaud and Francis Poulenc among them—who are known first and foremost for their wit and irreverence. Although many of his best-known creations are light and frothy in character (such as the colourful orchestral travelogue *Ports of Call*, and the riotous *Divertissement* for chamber orchestra), Ibert was also fully capable of creating serious and substantial works when need be.

The choice to create in a variety of styles and tones was a conscious one. “I want to be free—independent of the prejudices which arbitrarily divide the defenders of a certain tradition and the partisans of a certain *avant garde*,” he said. “All systems are valid, provided one derives music from them.”

He originally planned to become an actor. He entered the Paris Conservatoire to study drama, but it was the institution’s musical branch that eventually won him over. Among his teachers was Gabriel Fauré. After returning to his studies following an interruption for war service, he won the Conservatoire’s prestigious Prix de Rome composing competition in 1919. Three subsidized years in the Italian capital later, he returned to Paris and launched a career as a highly successful composer.

He first made his mark by combining his twin loves—music and drama—as a writer of incidental music for theatre and film. Eventually he worked with matching skill in virtually all forms of music except oratorio.

Ibert’s delightful, elegant Flute Concerto was commissioned by the celebrated French soloist Marcel Moysé. It clearly demonstrates Ibert’s statement that “I have given to my instruments, in my concertos, themes appropriate to their sonorous qualities, and which respect their expressive possibilities.”

It also displays a bright and clear approach to orchestration, one that never veils the featured performer.

He was vacationing in Marseille on the evening of the concerto’s première. As he listened to a live radio broadcast of the performance, a newspaper reporter who was interviewing him noticed he was smiling “as if,” in the journalist’s words, “the music was quite unknown to him, and he was just discovering it with delight.”

The compact opening movement is lithe and cheerful. The constant animation places major demands upon the soloist’s agility and endurance. A longer, exquisitely tender slow movement follows. Ibert’s choice of muted orchestral strings envelopes the soloist in a delicately whispered halo of sound. The dazzling, rhythmically intricate finale—which served for many years as the test piece for flute at the Paris Conservatoire—places even greater virtuoso demands upon the soloist than the opening movement. Ibert also calls for considerable warmth and expressiveness in the relaxed central panel.

—Program note by Don Anderson

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It’s so well done. Nothing is written in excess—it’s not overly indulgent, and every line has a purpose. It’s complex and also a crowd-pleaser.

—TSO PRINCIPAL FLUTE KELLY ZIMBA LUKIĆ ON THE IBERT FLUTE CONCERTO



Learn more about this piece, and Kelly’s relationship with it, in our *Noteworthy* feature “Take Five: A Closer Look at Ibert’s Flute Concerto”.

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827)

Symphony No. 6 in F Major, Op. 68 “Pastoral”

Composed 1808

40 min

THE GROUNDBREAKING “PASTORAL” SYMPHONY

was very nearly buried by a set of unfortunate circumstances at its première in Vienna. On the evening of December 22, 1808, Beethoven gave a concert at Theatre an der Wien made up entirely of his own works: the towering Fifth Symphony, the Piano Concerto No. 4, the *Choral Fantasy*, two sections of the Mass in C major, the aria “Ah! perfido”, and an extemporization on the piano, in addition to the “Pastoral” Symphony. An ambitious program, to be sure—but bad planning plagued it from start to finish.

A concert for the Society for Musicians’ Widows was being held at the Court Theatre that same evening, so Beethoven’s “take” was not what it might have been. His concert was badly rehearsed, precipitating breakdowns that caused him to abuse the players almost to the point of mutiny. At four hours, the concert was too long. And the hall was unheated, so the audience, too loyal to leave, sat and shivered in bitter cold.

But what they heard upon the playing of the “Pastoral”—if they were not too frozen to listen—was a work that, in some ways, launched a century of programmatic symphonies. In the composer’s own words, the “Pastoral” Symphony is “rather expressions of sensations than of tone-painting.” He supports this with movement headings that talk of feelings rather than events or narrative. According to the American music scholar Alexander Wheelock Thayer, “even the most descriptive of its movements, the ‘Scene by the brook,’ is entirely dissolved in bewitching sonorities, in an undulating flow of tones which fills one with unspeakable peace. Indeed, this is not

programme music as it was later understood, but the sheerest musical poetry expressed in tones, not in ideas.”

The first movement immediately produces a rustic flavour. The themes of both the first and second thematic groups are quietly joyful and possess a rhythmic squareness not usually associated with the composer at this date. Yet they are still symphonic themes, susceptible to symphonic treatment. And that is exactly the way they are treated, proclaiming a superbly disciplined and proportioned movement. A broad sonata movement comes next, only slightly ruffled by the occasional change of rhythmic accent. The coda includes birdcalls that are clearly recognizable, and one of the accompanying figures in the movement proper was suggested, as Beethoven told his biographer and friend Anton Schindler, by “that lady composer up there”—the melodious yellowhammer.

A scherzo and trio form the third movement. The former, appropriately jovial, is followed by a slightly cruel parody of village music-making in which, over an “oompahpah” figure, the woodwind solos insist on entering a beat too soon. The merrymaking is interrupted by the onset of a storm in the fourth movement. Its ferocity is short-lived, as the rapid violin figure slows down, converting it from a torrent to a broad, hymn-like theme. Beethoven, while sketching the work, had contemplated a choral finale. As it is, the final movement is one of utter simplicity and repose. The themes follow the pattern of many German folk songs, and are built on the notes of the common chord over simple harmonies. The ending is a delightful surprise.

—Program note by Godfrey Ridout

For a biography of Gustavo Gimeno, please turn to page 8.



Kelly Zimba Lukić, flute

Kelly Zimba Lukić made her TSO soloist début in February 2019.

Kelly Zimba Lukić joined the Toronto Symphony Orchestra as Principal Flute in 2017. Previously a flute fellow at the New World Symphony, she has performed with the San Francisco Symphony and Chicago, Pittsburgh, and Detroit Symphony Orchestras in such venues as Carnegie Hall, Beijing’s National Centre for the Performing Arts, the Royal Albert Hall, and the Teatro del Lago in Frutillar, Chile. She was featured on the cover of *Flute Talk* magazine in October 2017.

Zimba Lukić is thrilled to join the faculty of The Royal Conservatory of Music’s Glenn Gould School in 2025 alongside her teaching positions at the University of Toronto and OAcademy Music Conservatory. Additionally, she has served on the faculties of the National Youth Orchestra of Canada, the National Youth Orchestra of the United States of America, the Atlantic Music Festival, the Orford Winds Workshop, Sinfónica Azteca, Credo Flute, Sitka Fine Arts Camp, and Belvoir Terrace. Zimba Lukić regularly teaches master classes at universities, youth orchestras, and flute clinics across the Americas and is always learning from her students.

In 2020, she teamed up with her colleague TSO Associate Concertmaster Clare Semes to form Sonority Sisters, a flute and violin duo that performs for corporate events, Concerts in Care (for seniors in care), weddings, and school groups. The pair has been featured on BlogTO, CBC News Toronto, CTV *Your Morning*, and Global News for their work in bringing classical music to unconventional spaces and new audiences. Zimba Lukić also performs with TSO Principal Harp Heidi Elise Bearcroft in their duo, Steel6ix—a name that pays tribute to their Pittsburgh roots and newfound home in Toronto.

Originally from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Zimba Lukić completed her graduate studies at Rice University’s Shepherd School of Music and received bachelor’s degrees in flute performance and music education from the University of Michigan. She is greatly indebted to all of her teachers, especially Leone Buyse and Amy Porter.



←
Kelly Zimba Lukić receives
applause following her
performance of Debussy’s
Syrinx as part of *Barbara
Hannigan Sings & Conducts*
on February 13, 2019.