TORONTO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
Gustavo Gimeno, Music Director

Shostakovich & Mozart

Gustavo Gimeno, conductor
Charles Richard-Hamelin, piano
Steven Woomert, trumpet

Sofia Gubaidulina
Fairytale Poem (*Märchen-Poem*)

Dmitri Shostakovich
Piano Concerto No. 1 in C Minor, Op. 35
(Concerto for Piano, Trumpet, and String Orchestra)
I. Allegro moderato
II. Lento
III. Moderato
IV. Allegro con brio

Intermission

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
Symphony No. 39 in E-flat Major, K. 543
I. Adagio – Allegro
II. Andante con moto
III. Menuetto: Allegretto
IV. Finale: Allegro

Program 3

Thursday, November 5, 2026
7:30pm

Saturday, November 7, 2026*
7:30pm

Sunday, November 8, 2026*
3:00pm

***George Weston Recital Hall**

The November 7 performance is generously supported by the Estate of Penelope Knill Sullivan.

The TSO's George Weston Recital Hall Sunday Series is generously supported by Jim Fleck and Georgina Steinsky.

Steven Woomert is the Drysdale/Kerr Principal Trumpet Chair.

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Piano Concerto No. 1 by Dmitri Shostakovich presented under license from G. Schirmer Inc. and Associated Music Publishers, copyright owners.

Sofia Gubaidulina (1931–2025)

Fairytale Poem (*Märchen-Poem*)

Composed 1971

12 min

When the history of 20th- and 21st-century music is fully written, it seems pretty sure that Sofia Gubaidulina will be well remembered. Along with the likes of Alfred Schnittke and Arvo Pärt, she was one of the major figures in the generation of Soviet-born composers following Dmitri Shostakovich, who encouraged her early on. Before moving to Hamburg, Germany, in 1992, after the fall of the Berlin Wall, she spent the bulk of her life in the Soviet Union and faced many hardships, including being blacklisted in 1979 for music that was derided as "noisy mud."

With a range of influences stretching from 16th-century music to Second Viennese School composers like Alban Berg and Anton Webern, Gubaidulina experimented with unusual instrumentations, non-traditional ways of producing music, and organizing elements such as the Fibonacci sequence and the golden ratio. In addition, she was a devout member of the Russian Orthodox Church and wove sacred themes and symbols into much of her writing.

Fairytale Poem was written in 1971, a decade or so before Gubaidulina gained widespread fame for her 1980 violin concerto, *Offertorium*, which was championed by noted Latvian-born soloist Gidon Kremer. According to Gubaidulina's notes on the earlier work, the main character is a piece of classroom chalk that longs to draw castles and gardens but is relegated to delineating words, numbers, and geometric shapes. It slowly shrinks in size until it is discarded. But a boy finds the chalk and uses it to draw on the ground the very kinds of images of which it had only dreamed. "The chalk is so happy that it doesn't even realize how it is dissolving as it draws this beautiful world," the composer writes.

Fairytale Poem is scored for three flutes, three clarinets, percussion, harp, piano, and strings. Gubaidulina has shaped a distinctive and highly original sonic realm, with sometimes jarring dissonances and sharp contrasts in dynamics, mood, and feel—from a lonely bass-clarinet solo and hushed, other-worldly tones on the vibraphone, to a shrill blast and cascading tumble in the woodwinds and spaced percussive crashes on the piano. An air of melancholy pervades, but the piece ends with a kind of fevered ecstasy that fades into nothingness.

—Program note by Kyle MacMillan

Dmitri Shostakovich (1906–1975)

Piano Concerto No. 1 in C Minor, Op. 35 (Concerto for Piano, Trumpet, and String Orchestra)

Composed 1933

21 min

Gifted and admired as a concert pianist, Shostakovich completed two major piano works in 1933 for his own use, including the Concerto No. 1. He gave the première with the Leningrad Philharmonic on October 15, and soon he was playing it all over the Soviet Union to great acclaim. The piano writing in the concerto, though exciting and expressive, is lean. Moreover, the piano shares the solo spotlight with the trumpet, which plays many different roles throughout the music.

The opening of the first movement shows at once the sarcastic side of the concerto, but the first theme, which follows in the piano, is

dark and harmonically unstable, revealing a sombre side. The second theme is a tongue-in-cheek march. Another theme follows (a sardonic Russian dance in the piano and basses), then a short, angry development, then an abbreviated recapitulation of the main themes, the march theme charmingly varied by the piano. The movement ends in an almost funereal mood, the piano accompanied only by sustained low notes in the trumpet.

The slow movement is profoundly melancholy—a *valse triste*. The moving main theme is beautifully set in muted strings. The piano enters toward the end of it, then offers new material that becomes increasingly anguished and dissonant, reaching an impassioned climax. The main theme is reprised, mournfully, by the muted trumpet (silent up to this point in the movement), and some simple but passionate counterpoint of cellos and piano brings the movement strikingly to a close.

Following the brief and somewhat introductory third movement, the finale is circus music, a dizzying, fleet-footed romp through a sequence of vivid and often dance-like themes. An episode in the middle of the movement parodies the German bands that used to wander the streets of Leningrad, and its unassuming, good-natured theme is given to the trumpet. A long piano solo just before the end draws perversely on a popular little rondo by Beethoven nicknamed "Rage Over a Lost Penny". In the closing pages, Shostakovich adds insistent bugle calls in the trumpet part to a souped-up reprise of the presto music.

—Program note by Kevin Bazzana

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791)

Symphony No. 39 in E-flat Major, K. 543

Composed 1788

30 min

After a gap of nearly two years, Mozart returned to composing symphonies during the summer of 1788. In the space of three months he created his three final and greatest works in this form.

Several mysteries surround them. No commission that would have inspired their creation has come down to us. Yet, given Mozart's supremely practical nature, it's unlikely that he composed them simply to satisfy himself. Uncertainty also exists regarding their performance during his lifetime, but circumstantial evidence points to one or more of them being played on several occasions.

Each is a masterpiece, and quite different from its comrades. In its drama and pathos, Symphony No. 40 in G Minor reflects Mozart's own downtrodden feelings at the time. No. 41 in C Major is one of his grandest and most confident statements. Its nature is perfectly characterized in its nickname, "Jupiter".

Symphony No. 39 is different again—elegant, witty, and superbly entertaining. The orchestration includes clarinets instead of the more usual oboes. This gives the symphony a particularly mellow sound and atmosphere.

It is the only one of the final trilogy to begin with an introduction in slow tempo. Mozart followed this practice only occasionally, in contrast to his friend Haydn, who used it in the majority of his mature symphonies. The preparatory section to Symphony No. 39 is a shade on the pompous side. Perhaps Mozart considered it a humorous contrast to the graceful and carefree "Allegro" that follows.

The symphony's playful character continues in the slow second movement, with an overlay of warmth added. Threats presented by the occasional turbulent outbursts prove temporary, evaporating quickly in the general

atmosphere of good humour. The outer sections of the third-movement minuet are all ballroom stateliness. The central trio belongs squarely to the countryside. Based on a dance tune from Switzerland, its rustic nature is enhanced by the sound of clarinets. The symphony wraps up with a nimble and witty finale, summoning images of the comic-opera world that Mozart understood so fully.

—Program note by Don Anderson

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



Charles Richard-Hamelin, piano

Charles Richard-Hamelin made his TSO début in March 2013.

Silver medalist and winner of the Krystian Zimerman Prize at the 2015 International Chopin Piano Competition, Charles Richard-Hamelin has emerged as one of the most important pianists of his generation. Recipient of the Ordre des arts et des lettres du Québec and of the prestigious Career Development Award conferred by the Women's Musical Club of Toronto, he was awarded the Prix Denise-Pelletier in November 2022, becoming the youngest recipient in the history of the Prix du Québec.

He has been invited to many major festivals such as La Roque-d'Anthéron and the Nohant Festival Chopin in France, the Prague Spring Festival, the Chopin and His Europe Festival in Warsaw, the Festival de Lanaudière, and the George Enescu Festival in Bucharest. As a soloist, he has performed with many ensembles including the major Canadian symphony orchestras (Montreal, Toronto, Ottawa, Métropolitain, Quebec City, Edmonton, Calgary, and others) as well as the Warsaw Philharmonic Orchestra, Sinfonia Varsovia, Tokyo Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra, Singapore Symphony Orchestra, Korean Symphony Orchestra, Orquesta Filarmónica de la UNAM (Mexico), Les Violons du Roy, and I Musici de Montréal. He has worked with such renowned conductors as Yannick Nézet-Séguin, Kent Nagano, Rafael Payare, Bernard Labadie, Antoni Wit, Vasily Petrenko, Jacek Kaspszyk, Aziz Shokhakimov, Peter Oundjian, Jacques Lacombe, Fabien Gabel, Carlo Rizzi, John Storgårds, Alexander Prior, Giancarlo Guerrero, Christoph Campestrini, Lan Shui, Otto Tausk, Jean-Marie Zeitouni, Kazuki Yamada, and Jonathan Cohen. Richard-Hamelin is also active as a chamber musician. He has performed with Ema Nikolovska, Andrew Wan, James Ehnes, Marie-Nicole Lemieux, Marc-André Hamelin, the Dover Quartet, the New Orford String Quartet, the Apollon Musagète Quartet, and the Meccore String Quartet, among others. A graduate of McGill University, the Yale School of Music, and the Conservatoire de musique de Montréal, he studied with Paul Surdulescu, Sara Laimon, Boris Berman, André Laplante, and Jean Saulnier.

Richard-Hamelin has recorded 13 albums, all released on the Analekta label (Outhere Music). Five of these are dedicated primarily to the solo piano works of Frédéric Chopin; there are also five recordings with Andrew Wan, concertmaster of the Orchestre symphonique de Montréal (OSM). He has also recorded concertante works: both Chopin piano concertos with the OSM, conducted by Kent Nagano, and Mozart's Piano Concertos Nos. 20 and 23, and 22 and 24 with Les Violons du Roy, conducted by Jonathan Cohen. Six Félix Awards (ADISQ) and a JUNO (2022) saluted the quality of these albums, which have received critical acclaim worldwide.



Steven Woomert, trumpet

Steven Woomert made his TSO soloist début in November 2008.

Principal Trumpet Steven Woomert has been a member of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra since 2014, serving first as Associate Principal Trumpet and becoming Principal Trumpet in 2025. He has appeared as Guest Principal Trumpet of the Orchestre symphonique de Montréal, the National Arts Centre Orchestra, and the Canadian Opera Company Orchestra. He also regularly performs with the Sun Valley Music Festival orchestra and others in the US.

Born in Toronto, Woomert began his musical studies at age 5 on violin, adding trumpet at age 11. He holds a bachelor's degree from Northwestern University, where he studied with Barbara Butler, Charles Geyer, and Christopher Martin, and an artist diploma from The Glenn Gould School at The Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto, where he studied with Andrew McCandless. While still a student, he was the winner of the 2013 International Trumpet Guild Orchestral Excerpts competition. Woomert has participated in numerous summer festivals, performing with the National Youth Orchestra of Canada, National Academy Orchestra of Canada, Banff Festival Orchestra, National Orchestral Institute, and National Repertory Orchestra, and at Spoleto Festival USA.

As an active educator, Woomert enjoys working with his trumpet studio at The Glenn Gould School and coaching students in the National Youth Orchestra of Canada. Woomert and his father, Barton, former Associate Principal Trumpet of the TSO, commissioned and recorded an album of new music for two trumpets and piano in 2016 entitled *Tandem*. Outside of his performing and teaching, Woomert enjoys playing with his TSO colleagues on their volleyball team, the Gustav Bahlers, and spending time with his lovely wife and two young children.

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