

TORONTO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Gustavo Gimeno, Music Director

Sibelius Symphony No. 2

Osmo Vänskä, conductor
Johannes Moser, cello

Edvard Grieg
Suite No. 1 from *Peer Gynt*, Op. 46

- I. Morning Mood
 - II. Ase's Death
 - III. Anitra's Dance
 - IV. In the Hall of the Mountain King
-

Detlev Glanert
Cello Concerto

North American Première/TSO Co-commission

- I. Satz
 - II. Satz
 - III. Satz
-

Intermission

Jean Sibelius
Symphony No. 2 in D Major, Op. 43

- I. Allegretto
- II. Andante, ma rubato
- III. Vivacissimo
- IV. Finale: Allegro moderato

Program 3

Wednesday,
March 27, 2024

8:00pm

Thursday,
March 28, 2024

8:00pm

The TSO Chamber Soloists
Wednesday, March 27, 2024
6:45pm

Osmo Vänskä, clarinet
(special guest)
Michael Sweeney, bassoon
Neil Deland, horn
Jonathan Crow, violin
Clare Semes, violin
Ashley Vandiver, viola
Joseph Johnson, cello
Jeff Beecher, double bass

Jean Sibelius/
Arr. Jaakko Kuusisto
En Saga, Op. 9, for Octet

*The North American
Première of Detlev
Glanert's Cello Concerto is
generously supported by
Margie and Peter Kelk*

Edvard Grieg (1843–1907)

Suite No. 1 from *Peer Gynt*, Op. 46

Composed 1875; compiled 1888

10 min

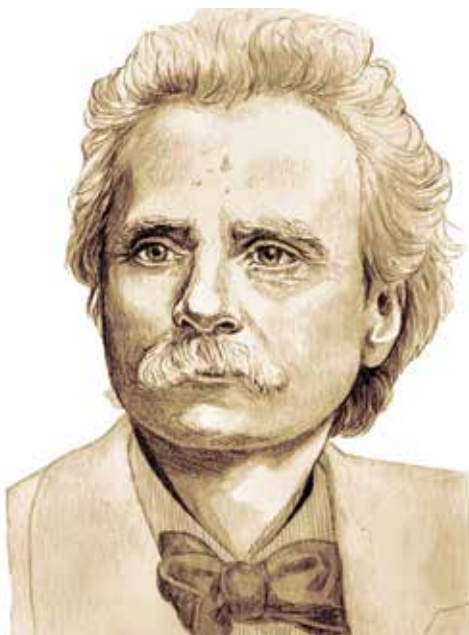
INCLUDING MUSIC AS AN INTEGRAL and enriching element of theatrical plays is an honoured tradition that stretches back several centuries. Among the most distinguished composers who have found inspiration in writing such scores are Purcell (numerous examples), Mozart (*Thamos, King of Egypt*), Haydn (*The Absent-Minded Man*, recast as Symphony No. 60), Beethoven (*Egmont*), Mendelssohn (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*), Tchaikovsky (*Hamlet*), and Sibelius (*The Tempest*).

Peer Gynt was originally a verse drama that Henrik Ibsen, the foremost Norwegian author of the day, wrote in 1867. The title character is a wild, selfish young man whose far-flung, often fantastic adventures lead to his becoming a caring human being. Ibsen decided to adapt it for the stage in 1874. Following local tradition, it would naturally have been expected that the production would include extensive incidental music. Ibsen invited Grieg, the country's foremost composer, to provide it, and sent him a detailed outline of how he saw the music's role. Grieg hesitated

but eventually accepted the invitation. He completed the score in September 1875. The first production, staged on a lavish scale in Oslo in 1876, scored an enormous success. This was due in no small part to Grieg's colourful, evocative music. His extensive score includes preludes, interludes, dances, songs, and choruses.

He fashioned two orchestral concert suites from the full score, the first of which (1888) has long been one of his most popular

compositions. Its success came at a time when his self-confidence needed just such a boost. It begins with a poetic description of sunrise over the Sahara desert. A moving elegy for strings depicts the death of Åse, Peer's long-suffering mother. "Anitra's Dance" offers a delicate portrait of a Bedouin's lovely daughter whom Peter meets in Africa. Grieg scored it for the imaginative combination of muted strings plus triangle. The suite concludes with



↑
Edvard Grieg — by Kalya Ramu

"In the Hall of the Mountain King". Riding a growing wave of volume and animation, it accompanies a group of evil trolls as they angrily pursue Peer through their magical underground kingdom.

—Program note by Don Anderson

Detlev Glanert (b. 1960) Cello Concerto

North American Première/
TSO Co-commission
Composed 2022

30 min

DETLEV GLANERT CONTINUES TO BE ACTIVE

on the concert platform as well as in the opera house, with his newest orchestral score being a Cello Concerto for Johannes Moser. The work saw its world première on January 19, 2024, at the Luxembourg Philharmonic under the baton of Gustavo Gimeno, alongside Moser—followed by a performance at the Philharmonie in Cologne two days later. The new 30-minute concerto was commissioned by Elizabeth and Justus Schlichting, and co-commissioned by the Luxembourg Philharmonic, the Cologne Philharmonie (KölnMusik), and the Toronto Symphony Orchestra.

"I am not a composer who destroys the past to create his own world," Glanert declared in an interview at the start of his ten-year residency as House Composer for the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra in Amsterdam. "I want always to know where I am coming from, where my roots are ... that makes me free." This statement encapsulates the key facet of Glanert's music-making, that his music sits Janus-faced, taking in elements from past traditions and recasting them in new forms and contexts, not just for the present but for future audiences. This attitude to musical culture and history seems almost an application in sound of the merging of the past, the present, and the future that have informed the philosophical and poetical works of a number of writers, T. S. Eliot not least.

IN THE COMPOSER'S WORDS: "The concerto runs continuously but is subdivided into three sections. The opening movement starts in the dark and there is a constant confrontation between soloist and orchestra. Later on, the cello has a very light melody, almost dreamlike, but the rhythmic conflicts return and the movement ends back in the darkness. This is followed by a monstrous "Waltz", a self-destroying machine, building to an explosion. The third movement is an "Adagio" offering brighter, more optimistic worlds, even if the dark threatens to return. In very broad terms you could say the three movements have to do with faith, love, and hope, viewed both in positive and negative terms.

Solo cello is always one of the hardest solo instruments to balance with orchestra, especially because of its central register being in the bass region, so I've tried to pare back the orchestra as much as possible when the soloist is playing on C and G strings. I'm using a middle-sized orchestra, with triple woodwind only, not too much brass, percussion, harp, celesta and strings. Dvorák's Cello Concerto remains the masterpiece that acts as a model in terms of careful balancing."



—Program notes compiled and edited by Michael Zarathus-Cook with original texts by Guy Rickards (Boosey & Hawkes)

“ I don't believe that a secure way to the future exists. Everybody has to invent it by themselves again and again.

—DETLEV GLANERT

Jean Sibelius (1865–1957)

Symphony No. 2 in D Major, Op. 43

Composed 1902

44 min

WHEN HE ENTERED SIBELIUS'S LIFE IN 1900, Axel Carpelan was an unmarried, eccentric, hypochondriacal Finnish aristocrat in his 40s, with no career and an aimless life. His parents had thwarted his youthful ambition to play the violin, but he

remained devoted to music and literature, a passionate hanger-on in the milieu of artists and their patrons.

But he was no kook—and he had a strong personality, he was well informed, he had good ideas. One day, out of the blue, he wrote to Sibelius full of advice on what music he should write and how he should conduct his career, and thereafter he bombarded the composer regularly with opinions on a plethora of subjects, asking nothing in return but to be taken seriously. Sibelius replied

respectfully, and a friendship blossomed that proved mutually inspiring. He profited from his new friend's advice—Carpelan helped spur the creation of the Violin Concerto, the string quartet "Voces intimae", even some of Sibelius's last works, like *The Tempest*, *Tapiola*, and *the Second Symphony*.

Though he was himself penniless, and had never left Scandinavia, Carpelan raised money from private donors to allow Sibelius to travel to the Continent in the fall of 1900, in order to soak up Italian culture. At Rapallo, early in 1901, Sibelius began to sketch his Second Symphony, which he developed after



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Jean Sibelius —by Kalya Ramu

returning home in May, his work sustained by a quarterly allowance that Carpelan arranged. After some "bitter struggle," he completed the symphony early in 1902, and conducted the première in a series of sold-out concerts in March, in Helsinki. According to his biographer, Erik Tawaststjerna, "No previous new work had enjoyed such popular success in Finland."

In the Second, Sibelius still bowed to the classical symphonic model, with a plan of four movements, and all but the "Scherzo" in some kind of sonata form. But more than the post-Romantic, Tchaikovsky-influenced First, the Second bears the stamp of Sibelius's mature style. His command of symphonic development is impressive—in each movement he offers a wealth of distinctive and pregnant themes and molds them into intricate, dramatic, but unpredictable forms. The musical materials and the

orchestral sonorities now evoke that cold, massive, unmistakably Nordic sound-world that we associate with the Sibelius style, and that Glenn Gould once described aptly as "passionate but anti-sensual."

Listen, for instance, to the granitic sonorities he draws from the brass and woodwind choirs, as in the huge chorale-like brass pronouncement that heralds the recapitulation in the first movement. Listen to the quintessentially Sibelian textures of stark melodies in woodwinds and horns over an accompaniment of murmuring strings, often with a pedal-point in the brass or timpani.

(You hear textures like this throughout: in the broad theme developed in the middle of the first movement; in the main theme of the “Andante”; in the slippery “Scherzo”, where melodic motifs pile atop dancing string figures; and in the second theme of the “Finale”, with running figuration in the violas and cellos, and a timpani roll supporting a woodwind theme.)

And listen to the plentiful passages in which Sibelius builds great musical tension over a long span: the drive to the brass “chorale” in the first movement; the close of the “Scherzo”, where a reprise of the pastoral trio section, with its affecting oboe melody, makes a transition to the “Finale”; the grandiose, processional main theme of the “Finale”, announced in the strings with trombone fanfares and a grinding drone in the bass; and above all, the triumphant coda that brings the symphony mightily to a close. —Program note by Kevin Bazzana



Osmo Vänskä, conductor

Osmo Vänskä made his TSO début in April 2000.

Both Conductor Laureate of Minnesota Orchestra—where he held the music directorship for 19 years—and Music Director of Seoul Philharmonic Orchestra from 2020 to 2023, Osmo Vänskä is recognized for his compelling interpretations of repertoire of all ages and an energetic presence on the podium. His democratic and inclusive style of work has been key in forging long-standing relationships with many orchestras worldwide.

Performances of Mahler’s Symphony No. 8 with Minnesota Orchestra in June 2022 provided a fitting culmination for Vänskä’s tenure as Music Director. Together they undertook five major European tours, as well as a historic trip to Cuba in 2015—the first visit by an American orchestra since the two countries re-established diplomatic relations. Vänskä also made a five-city groundbreaking tour to South Africa in 2018 —the first visit by an American orchestra—as part of worldwide celebrations of Nelson Mandela’s Centenary drawing together South African and American performers in musical expressions of peace, freedom, and reconciliation. Vänskä and Minnesota Orchestra also made an acclaimed return to the BBC Proms in Summer 2018.

This season he will conduct the orchestras of Atlanta, Bergen, Detroit, Netherlands Radio, Antwerp, Pittsburgh, Seattle, Tokyo Metropolitan, Sydney, Adelaide, and Toronto amongst others. Recent guest-conducting invitations include renowned international ensembles such as symphonique Orchestre de Montréal and the Chicago, Cleveland, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, and San Francisco symphony orchestras in North America, Orchestre de Paris, Iceland Symphony, Bamberger Symphoniker, Berlin’s Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester and Rundfunk-Sinfonieorchester, and the Philharmonia and London Philharmonic orchestras. He is regularly invited to guest conduct in Asia including with Shanghai Symphony Orchestra and the China, Hangzhou, Hong Kong, and Taiwan philharmonic orchestras.

A distinguished recording artist for the BIS label, Vänskä has recorded all of Mahler’s symphonies with the Minnesota Orchestra. The Fifth Symphony received a GRAMMY® nomination in 2017 for Best Orchestral Performance. Vänskä and Minnesota Orchestra have also recorded the complete symphonies of Beethoven and Sibelius to critical acclaim, winning a GRAMMY® Award for Best Orchestral Performance in 2014 and being nominated on several occasions. In 2021 the Minnesota Orchestra under Vänskä was voted *Gramophone’s* Orchestra of the Year.

Vänskä is the recipient of a Royal Philharmonic Society Award, the Finlandia Foundation's Arts and Letters award, the 2010 Ditson Award from Columbia University, and the Pro Finlandia Medal awarded to him by the State of Finland. He holds honorary doctorates from the Curtis Institute of Music, and the Universities of Glasgow and Minnesota, and was named *Musical America's* 2005 Conductor of the Year. In 2013, he received the Annual Award from the German Record Critics' Award Association for his involvement in BIS's recordings of the complete works of Sibelius.



Johannes Moser, cello

Johannes Moser made his TSO début in May 2009

Hailed by *Gramophone* magazine as "one of the finest among the astonishing gallery of young virtuoso cellists," German-Canadian cellist Johannes Moser has performed with the world's leading orchestras such as the Berliner Philharmoniker, New York Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony, BBC Philharmonic at the BBC Proms, London Symphony Orchestra, Symphonieorchester des Bayerischen Rundfunks, Koninklijk Concertgebouworkest, Tonhalle Orchestra Zurich, Tokyo NHK

Symphony, Philadelphia, and Cleveland Orchestras with conductors of the highest level including Riccardo Muti, Lorin Maazel, Zubin Mehta, Vladimir Jurowski, Franz Welser-Möst, Pierre Boulez, Paavo Jarvi, Yannick Nézet-Séguin, Gustavo Dudamel, and more.

His recordings include the concertos by Dvořák, Lalo, Elgar, Lutostawski, Dutilleux, and Tchaikovsky, which have gained him the prestigious Preis der deutschen Schallplattenkritik and the Diapason d'Or, and *Gramophone* said of the Lutostawski and Dutilleux Cello Concertos, "Anyone coming afresh to these masterly works... should now investigate this new release ahead of all others."

A dedicated chamber musician, Moser has performed with Emanuel Ax, Joshua Bell, Jonathan Biss, and James Ehnes, among others. Moser is also a regular at festivals including the Verbier, Schleswig-Holstein, Gstaad, and Kissinger festivals, the Mehta Chamber Music Festival, and the Colorado, Seattle, and Brevard music festivals. Renowned for his efforts to expand the reach of the classical genre, as well as his passionate focus on new music, Moser has recently been heavily involved in commissioning works by Julia Wolfe, Ellen Reid, Thomas Agerfeldt Olesen, Johannes Kalitzke, Jelena Firsowa, and Andrew Norman. Throughout his career, Moser has been committed to reaching out to all audiences, from kindergarten to college and beyond. He combines most of his concert engagements with master classes, school visits, and pre-concert lectures.

Moser holds a professorship at the prestigious Cologne Hochschule für Musik und Tanz. Born into a musical family in 1979, he began studying the cello at the age of 8 and became a student of Professor David Geringas in 1997. He was the top-prize winner at the 2002 Tchaikovsky Competition, in addition to being awarded the Special Prize for his interpretation of *Variations on a Rocooco Theme*. In 2014 he was awarded with the prestigious Brahms Prize. A voracious reader of everything from Kafka to Collins, and an avid outdoorsman, he is a keen hiker and mountain biker in what little spare time he has. Moser plays on an Andrea Guarneri Cello from 1694 from a private collection.