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2024-2025 Concert Season

CELEBRATING OVER 40 YEARS OF MUSIC IN THE COMMUNITY

Dr. Pierre-Alain Chevalier | Music Director

Brahms Violin Concerto

Village Church

October 25 & 27, 2024

Guest artist

Kunito Nishitani, violin

Our Music Director and Soloist



Pierre-Alain Chevalier



Kunito Nishitani

The Composers



Schubert



Mendelssohn



Brahms

Beaverton Symphony Orchestra

Pierre-Alain Chevalier, Music Director

Franz Schubert
1797-1828

Symphony No. 8 in B Minor, D. 759 (“Unfinished”)
Allegro moderato
Andante con moto

length: 25 minutes

Felix Mendelssohn
1809-1847

Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage, op. 27

length: 12 minutes

intermission

Johannes Brahms
1833–1897

Concerto for Violin in D Major, op. 77
Allegro non troppo
Adagio
Allegro giocoso; ma non troppo vivace

Kunito Nishitani, violin

length: 40 minutes

Our Music Director and Conductor

Pierre-Alain Chevalier has worn many hats in his career, crossing the entire country to perform with numerous ensembles and teach students of all ages. As a music director Chevalier employs a community-centered approach to concert programming and his technique on the podium led to awards with the American Prize in 2019 and 2021, and the International Conductors Workshop and Competition in Atlanta, Georgia in 2016. He holds high standards of every group he leads, encouraging musicians and students to surpass their own expectations.

Chevalier served as Music Director of the Baytown Symphony Orchestra (TX) for four seasons beginning in 2017 and has conducted in concert the Willamette Valley Symphony (OR), Mt. Hood Pops Orchestra (OR), Symphony of Southeast Texas in Beaumont (TX), Coeur D'Alene Symphony (ID), Rainier Symphony (WA), the Gwinnett Symphony Chamber Orchestra (GA), the Bayou City Symphony (TX), the Rose City Chamber Orchestra (OR), Houston Cecelia Chamber Choir, and has directed student ensembles including Orchestra of the Pines and SFA Opera Theater (TX), The Hartt Symphony Orchestra and Contemporary Players (CT), Moores School Symphony and Chamber Orchestras (TX), Mt. Hood Community College Choirs (OR), Houston Community College's Southwest Choir, and Willamette University's Dramatic Vocal Arts Ensemble (OR).

Chevalier has taught a variety of subjects to students of all ages at Mt. Hood Community College (OR), Lone Star College System (TX), San Jacinto College (TX), Lee College (TX), Houston Community College (TX), AFA (formerly the American Festival for the Arts in Texas), Sam Houston High School (TX), Memorial Elementary (TX), Horizon Elementary (OR), Fowler Middle School (OR), and as Interim Director of Orchestral Activities at Stephen F. Austin State University (TX) in 2019. He also served as a clinician for programs in the Goose Creek Memorial, Cypress-Fairbanks, Spring, Klein, Katy, and Houston School Districts in Texas, and Lake Washington School District in Washington.

Additional activities include composition, music production, videography and photography, and general creativity in multimedia. Chevalier holds degrees from the Moores School of Music (DMA), The Hartt School (MM), and Willamette University (BM).

A Letter from our Music Director

Welcome to Beaverton Symphony Orchestra's 41st season!

This is my first season as Music Director of the Beaverton Symphony Orchestra (BSO), and I am honored to have been chosen to lead this marvelous ensemble. These players are among the most devoted volunteers I have ever met; to the core they are committed to this organization and to ensuring that it thrives well into the future. We are still getting to know each other—how we work, how we rehearse and perform—but I feel a kinship with these musicians. It is with immense gratitude and joy that I accepted this role; the responsibility of artistic leadership is one I take very seriously.

The landscape of classical music has been shifting for some time, accelerated in the last several years, but the desire to hear beautiful music, to fill our hearts with the joy of music, is embedded in the human soul. Live music still nurtures our hearts, provides artistic fulfillment, and holds a special place in our communities. This season marks the first of a new chapter for the BSO, and with your continued support, the beginning of the next 40 years of beautiful music making.

We kick off season 41 with a familiar presence: Kunito “Kuni” Nishitani. BSO patrons will remember his recent performance of the Saint-Saëns Violin Concerto and long-time fans may remember one of his six earlier performances. Kuni's first appearance with the BSO was more than 20 years ago! An outstanding Japanese violinist, Nishitani spent many years studying music in the US and, more specifically, in Portland! He is an old friend of the orchestra, and I am so pleased to share the stage with him for the season-opening concert. He will perform the monumental Concerto for violin and orchestra by Johannes Brahms.

This concerto is vast! The length of a standard symphony, it made sense for us to restructure the concert in an unusual way. The normal overture-concerto-symphony pattern is jumbled: starting with a symphony (albeit an “unfinished” one), then an overture before intermission, follow by a concerto to conclude the performance. I think you will find it a refreshing twist on the standard form and a rousing way to conclude this performance.

We are thrilled to share the culmination of our efforts over these past several weeks. It takes many people, devoted to their craft, to perform works like these. And it takes patrons like you, who recognize and appreciate the value of our efforts, for performances like this to be possible. Thank you for supporting the Beaverton Symphony Orchestra with your patronage today.

Please introduce yourself after the concert. I so look forward to making your acquaintance and would love to hear how music has brought joy to your life.

To a bright future full of music,

Pierre-Alain Chevalier

Our Soloist

Kunito Nishitani, violinist & conductor, has served on the faculties of New York University, Portland State University, Rose City Music Academy, Ikebukuro Community College, and Kunito International Violin and Viola School. In 2014 Mr. Nishitani established two orchestras in Tokyo: Shakuji International Orchestra and Kunito International Youth Orchestra, and serves as music director and conductor of both. Additionally he has conducted the Orchestra Emile, the PSU Symphony Orchestra, Suginami Baroque Ensemble, and the Lewis and Clark College Orchestra. He also assisted with the Portland Youth Philharmonic and the Metropolitan Youth Symphony as a string instructor. In 2012 and 2013, he was invited as a guest conductor for the Kanto Plain Honor Orchestra.

Nishitani has served as concertmaster in the US and Japan, appearing as a soloist in both countries with concertos of Mendelssohn, Tchaikovsky, Bruch, Glazunov, Lalo and Khachaturian. Nishitani is an adjudicator of Japan Classical Music Competition. He received high praise for the Japan-US: 150 Years of Friendship Celebration Concert sponsored by the Consulate General of Japan in Portland, Oregon.

Nishitani has released six CDs: Chanson de Matin & Nuit; A Collection of Pieces for Solo Violin; and Great Three Violin Sonatas. He also wrote and published violin method books, “Kunito Violin Method Op.1 – Op.4”, “Diary of the violinist as an exchange student in Portland, OR” and “Secrets The Learning Violin Techniques.”

Mr. Nishitani earned a Bachelor’s degree at Portland State University and Master’s at New York University. He received violin training from Professor Chikashi Tanaka (Professor Emeritus, Geidai University of the Arts and concertmaster of the NHK Symphony Orchestra), Professor Carol Sindell (who studied with Jascha Heifetz and is a PSU faculty member), and Professor Martin Beaver (first violinist in the Tokyo String Quartet and faculty member at The Colburn School). He studied conducting with Professor Kazue Kamiya (Saito conducting method), Professor Keith Clark, and Professor Michiyoshi Inoue.

Program Notes by Jazzy Leemhuis

Franz Schubert (1797-1828)

Symphony in B Minor, (“Unfinished”)

Premier: 17 December 1865, Vienna

“My music is the product of my genius and my misery, and that which I have written in my greatest distress is that which the world seems to like best,” - Schubert

“Unfinished” suggests that the work was suddenly abandoned because of an unforeseen tragic event, but this is not the case with Schubert’s “Unfinished” symphony. Schubert lived an additional six years after he put the symphony aside. There are three common theories as to why the symphony remained unfinished. First, Schubert was feeling insecure about his symphonic aspirations—living in the shadow of Beethoven’s masterpieces. Second, the date on the manuscript is October 1822, the same time in which the first symptoms of Syphilis began to appear, throwing Schubert into a deep depression. Third, the “Unfinished” symphony is vastly different from Schubert’s first symphonies which are written in the Classical style. The “Unfinished” symphony embraces more romantic ideas; Schubert simply did not know where to go after completing the first two movements.

In 1823, Schubert was awarded the Diploma of Honor of the Styrian Musical Society in Graz. In a letter to the Society he stated, “In order to also give musical expression to my sincere gratitude, I shall take the liberty before long of presenting your honorable Society with one of my symphonies in full score.” The score of the “Unfinished” symphony was handed off to Schubert’s friend and member of the Society, Anselm Huttenbrenner who for an unknown reason, held onto the symphony until the middle of 1865, when he gave the score to Johann von Herbeck who led the premier in Vienna on 17 December 1865.

The dark, agitated introduction of the first movement leads into the first theme, a melody carried by oboe and clarinet. The second theme, and the most famous and recognizable melody of the symphony, is presented by the cellos. The movement swings from day to night, turbulent to calm before reaching a troubled ending, much like the beginning.

The second movement, although not joyful, is more peaceful than the first. The melodies woven throughout the movement demonstrate Schubert’s incomparable ability to write song.

Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

***Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage*, op. 27**

Premier: 7 September 1828, Berli

Felix Mendelssohn met the famous, popular, and influential writer Johann Wolfgang von Goethe in 1821. Goethe was impressed with the young Mendelssohn, even comparing him to Mozart. Mendelssohn's *Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage* was inspired by two of Goethe's short poems (*Meeresstille* and *Glückliche Fahrt*), as well as a Beethoven cantata by the same name, and Schubert's song *Calm Sea*.

When the piece was written in 1828, a calm sea could mean frightening consequences for sailors, who depended on the wind. The poem describes an uneasy sailor and a vast ocean without waves. Mendelssohn captures the motionless sea with a shimmering calmness in his opening, but the undercurrent of anxiety and foreboding creeps into the peaceful quiet.

Calm Sea (*Meeresstille*)

Deep quiet rules the waters;
Motionless, the sea reposes,
And the boatsman looks about with alarm
At the smooth surfaces about him.
No wind comes from any direction!
A deathly, terrible quiet!
In the vast expanse
Not one wave stirs.

Prosperous Voyage (*Glückliche Fahrt*)

The mist is torn away,
The heavens turn bright,
And Aeolus unfastens
The bonds of fear.
There, the winds rustle,
The boatsman stirs.
Quickly! Quickly!
The waves rise up again.
The distant view draws close,
Land ho, I call!

— Johann Wolfgang von Goethe
translated from the German by Scott Horton

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)
Concerto for Violin in D Major, op. 77
Premier January 1, 1879

Fifteen-year-old Johannes Brahms sat spellbound in the audience as he heard the seventeen-year-old Joseph Joachim perform the Beethoven Violin Concerto, but the young Brahms had no hope of meeting the celebrated Joachim then. The two men met five years later as musicians on an almost even footing and formed an enduring personal and professional friendship. It was after Joachim stopped composing and focused more on his teaching and his solo careers that Brahms found the confidence to compose his Violin Concerto. Brahms relied heavily on Joachim's knowledge of the violin to write the concerto. Their letters back and forth show the tremendous extent that Joachim influenced Brahms's choices, including persuading Brahms to not add a scherzo to the work.

The concerto is more symphonic in nature, rather than a flashy piece showcasing the brilliance of the violinist. When a critic complained that it was a concerto written *against* the violin, violinist Bonislaw Huberman responded, "It is a concerto for violin against the orchestra—and the violin wins!"

The long and lyrical first movement alternates between lovely musical lines and agitation. The original cadenza was written by Joachim.

The second movement's expressive main theme, played first by the oboe, outraged Spanish violinist Pablo Sarasate, who said he would not stand on the stage with his violin while the oboe played the only melody. But the oboe does not carry the melody through the movement, when the violin answers, it captures the texture richness and builds the theme into one of the most memorable of Brahms compositions.

The final triumphant movement opens in what some call a "Hungarian Style," a nod to Joachim's Hungarian heritage. The movement ends with the same melody in which it begins, fast, showy, and fun.

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Sibelius Second Symphony

Friday January 24, 2025 at 7:00 pm at Village Church

Sunday January 26, 2025 at 3:00 pm at Village Church

Saint-Saëns - *Bacchanale* from *Samson and Delila*

Delius - *The Walk to Paradise Garden* from *A Village Romeo and Juliet*

Sibelius - Symphony No. 2 in D Major, op. 43



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Application available: November 1, 2024

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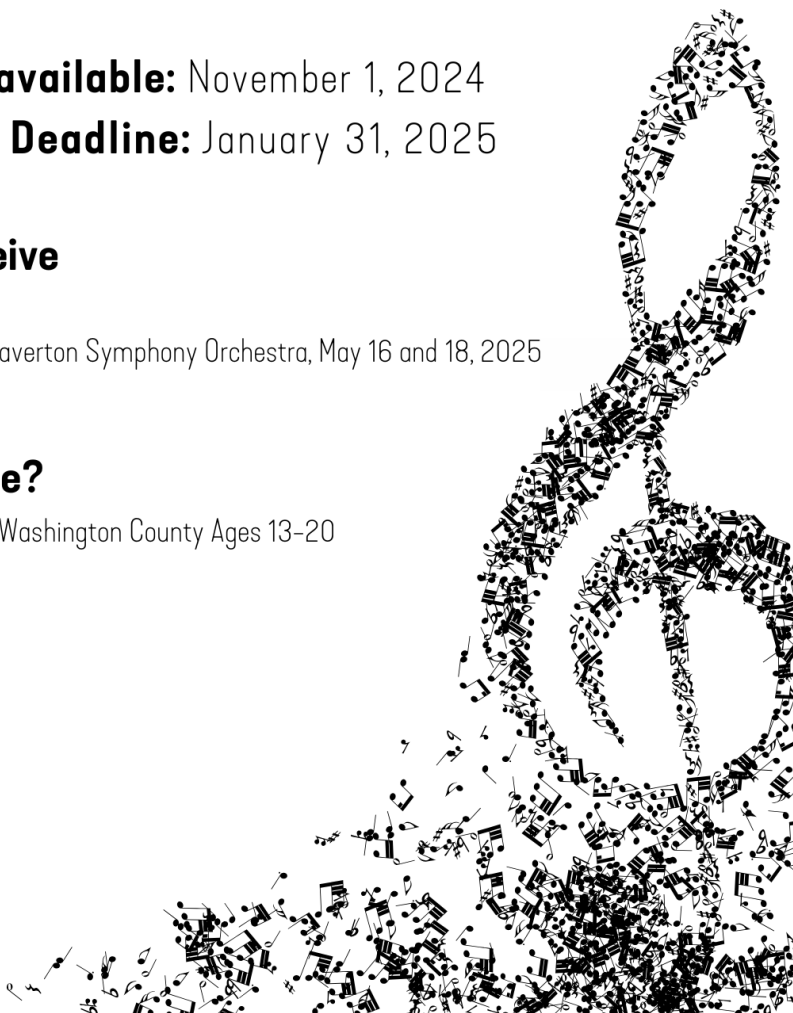
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beavertonsymphony.org





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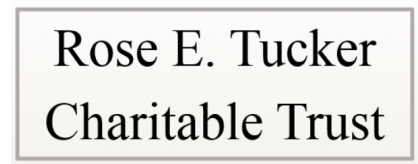
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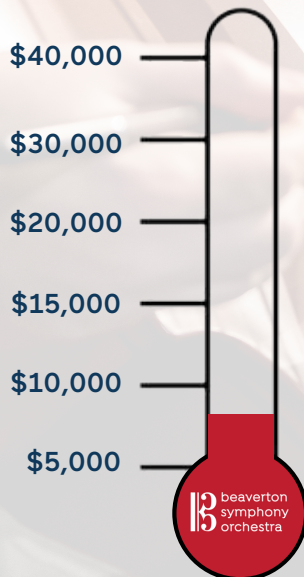
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Beaverton Symphony Orchestra

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