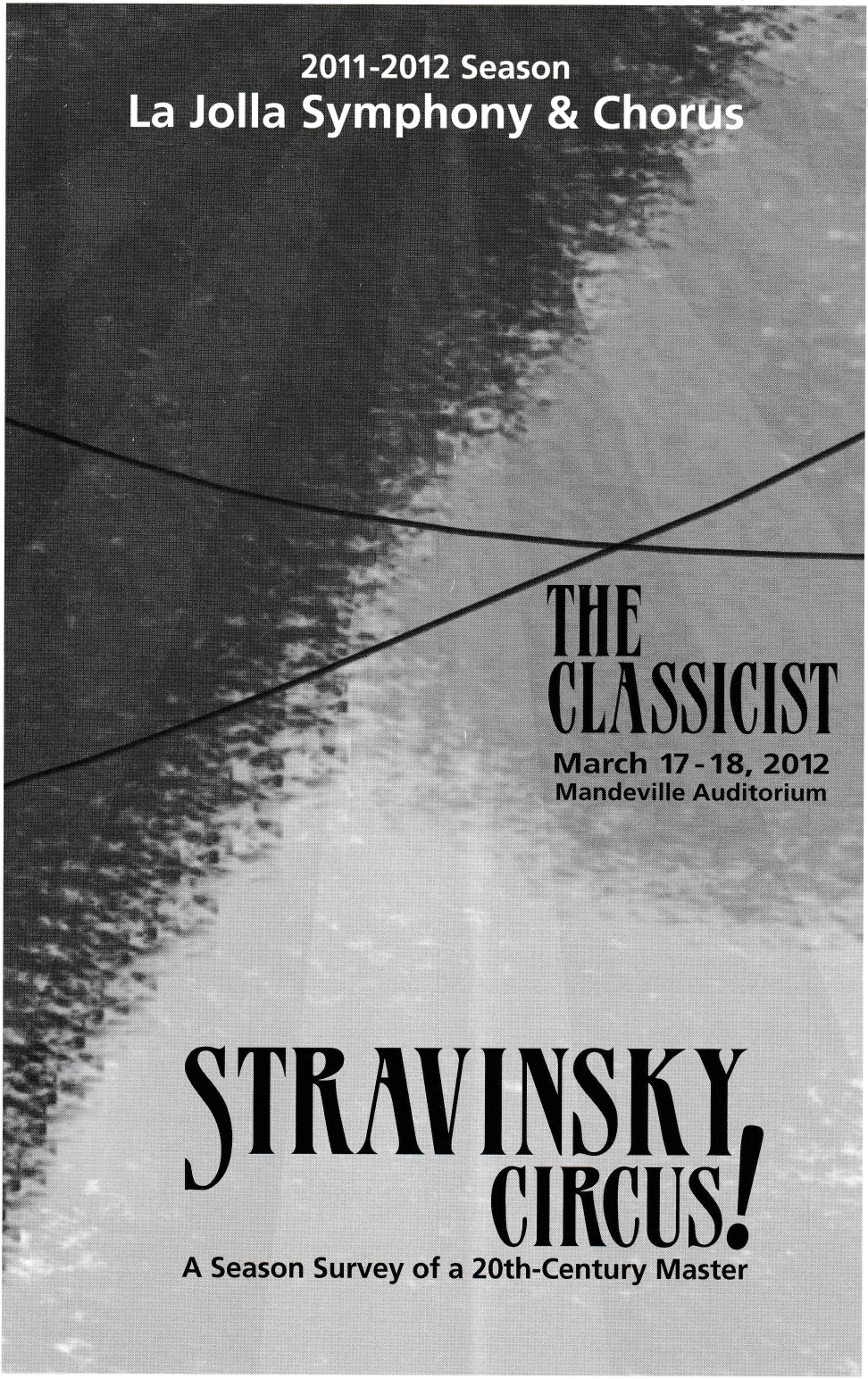
2011-2012 Season
La Jolla Symphony & Chorus
THE CLASSICIST
March 17 - 18, 2012
Mandeville Auditorium
STRAVINSKY, CIRCUS!
A Season Survey of a 20th-Century Master

MUSIC DIRECTOR **STEVEN SCHICK**

LA JOLLA SYMPHONY & CHORUS
Affiliated with UC San Diego

CHORAL DIRECTOR **DAVID CHASE**

THE CLASSICIST

Saturday, March 17, 2012, 7:30pm | Sunday, March 18, 2012, 2:00pm
Mandeville Auditorium, UCSD

Steven Schick conducting

MOZART — **Overture to *The Marriage of Figaro*, K.492**

STRAVINSKY — **Symphony in C**

Moderato alla breve
Larghetto concertante
Allegretto
Largo; Tempo giusto, alla breve

INTERMISSION

STRAVINSKY — **Ebony Concerto**

Allegro moderato
Andante
Moderato; Con moto

Curt Miller, clarinet

BEETHOVEN — **Symphony No. 1 in C Major, Opus 21**

Adagio molto; Allegro con brio
Andante cantabile con moto
Menuetto: Allegro molto e vivace
Adagio; Allegro molto e vivace

***Ebony Concerto* by arrangement with Boosey & Hawkes, Inc.**

Unauthorized flash photography and audio/video recording are prohibited during this performance.

We gratefully acknowledge our underwriters for this concert
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MISSION STATEMENT

Rooted in San Diego for over 50 years, the La Jolla Symphony and Chorus enriches our lives through affordable concerts of ground-breaking, traditional and contemporary classical music.

FROM THE CONDUCTOR

The Symphony is dead! Long live The Symphony! Could these have been the thoughts in Igor Stravinsky's mind as he put the finishing touches on his two great symphonic statements, the "Symphony in C" and his "Symphony in Three Movements?"

I will give you a brief moment to recover and ask yourself whether the music director whose orchestra is about to perform for you has just declared symphonic music to be dead? The answer is no. Of course not. I love both of the symphonies we'll play for you as well as many, many others. And certainly "symphonic music," that catchall category for anything played by a symphony orchestra, is still alive and very well. However, a "symphonic world view"—the artistic, historical, and cultural artesian feeder for the symphonies themselves is gone. It's hard to say exactly what dates are to be found on its tombstone, but for the sake of discussion let's say its birth was in 1789—as the streets ran red in the French Revolution, and it's death knell was sounded on that day in 1914 that Archduke Franz Ferdinand was assassinated and the planet stared into the abyss of its first true "world war."

That leaves two interrelated questions: why are those dates significant, and what more precisely is a "symphonic world view?" This latter idea needs to be considered in light of the growing movement of democracy in the late 18th century and the radical way classical era composers, especially Beethoven, responded to it.

We know the legend: that Beethoven dedicated his third symphony to Napoleon only to rip up the dedication page once Napoleon proclaimed himself emperor. So instead of the "Bonaparte Symphony," we now have "The Eroica." But a democratic resonance far deeper than that is to be found in the structure of early symphonies. The symphonic form asserted, as did democracy itself, a concept of fundamental equality in which diverse forces occupying differing roles work together to create a unified whole. Functionally, a symphonic form establishes an identifiable musical "home"—this involves the creation of primary tonal and thematic relationships—but it also allows for regions of otherness in the development section of the form or sometimes via the quotation of "exotic" elements of extra-European origin. The inevitable tonal and thematic return in the finale thus provides a built-in mechanism not only for reinforcing the identity of home, but also for expanding it to include vestiges of the "foreignness" that a listener has encountered along the journey through the piece. As a result a true symphony is not only an artistic but also political model that reinforces early democratic precepts of equality and social flexibility.

The death of the symphony as a political model does not mean that democracy itself has died or that we've lost interest in it, but it does mean that the world is more chaotic than we'd hoped and that democracy is an ideal and not a panacea. By the time Stravinsky sat down to compose his "Symphony in C" (with the score to Beethoven's Symphony No. 1 open on his desk) World War I was over. Like everyone else he had seen that our machines can come back to haunt us, that our social structures were not bullet proof, and that the ordered world we thought we'd inherited from the political philosophers of the Enlightenment might not be as ordered as we'd hoped. So when we hear the symphonic world-view through Stravinsky's musical voice it feels retrospective. The repeated exposition, the themes in different keys, the culminating cadential chords at the ends of movements have sepia-toned references to past practices rather than real contemporary currency. Perhaps they are even the nostalgic images of a vanishing worldview. What were classical values in Beethoven are not insignificantly called "neo-classical" in Stravinsky.

So what are we to make of the numerous "symphonies" composed after World War II? Philip Glass has nine of them—a cheeky number to have written! Are they not actual symphonies? Many recent pieces are in fact not symphonies, at least not as Beethoven, Mozart or even Stravinsky understood the word. By "symphony" many composers now mean simply "large-scale work for orchestra." Some of these are worthy, even great pieces of music, but what is absent in them is the naked political idealism of the early democrats. The great opportunity for us on this day is to hear the real thing: to hear the young Beethoven roar that the world could be different and that his music could be a potent agent of change. Hear also Stravinsky's reformulation of that ideal, perhaps tinged with the melancholy of experience, as he too imagined a different world. Isn't it grand to think of classical music not as the enfeebled soma that's served up with your order at an upscale restaurant, but as something to be hurled from the ramparts, as a real stake in our struggle to become the best versions of ourselves. Even from the relative calm of a "post-symphonic" world, that sounds pretty good. ■

STEVEN SCHICK conductor

For more than 30 years Steven Schick has championed contemporary music as a percussionist and teacher by commissioning and premiering more than 100 new works. Schick is a professor of music at the University of California, San Diego and in 2008 was awarded the title of Distinguished Professor by the UCSD Academic Senate.

Schick was one of the original members and percussionist of the Bang on a Can All-Stars of New York City (1992-2002). He has served as artistic director of the Centre International de Percussion de Genève in Geneva, Switzerland, and as consulting artist in percussion at the Manhattan School of Music. Schick is founder and artistic director of the acclaimed percussion group, red fish blue fish, a UCSD ensemble composed of his graduate percussion students that performs regularly throughout San Diego and has toured internationally. He also is founding artistic director (June 2009) of "Roots & Rhizomes"—an annual international course for percussionists hosted by the Banff Center for the Arts in Canada.

As a percussion soloist, Schick has appeared in Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, The Royal Albert Hall (London), Centre Pompidou (Paris), The Sydney Opera House and Disney Hall among many other national and international venues.

Schick is a frequent guest conductor with the International Contemporary Ensemble (Chicago and New York City), and in 2011 he was appointed artistic director and conductor of the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players. Schick has been music director and conductor of the La Jolla Symphony & Chorus since 2007.

PROGRAM NOTES by Eric Bromberger

OVERTURE TO *THE MARRIAGE OF FIGARO,* K.492

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

Born January 27, 1756, Salzburg
Died December 5, 1791, Vienna

The Marriage of Figaro, based on the Beaumarchais play that had been banned for its theme of social injustice and its portrayal of servants outsmarting their masters, had its premiere in Vienna on May 1, 1786, and promptly began a successful run. In many respects, *Figaro* marked the high point of Mozart's success during his lifetime. On a visit to Prague the following year to conduct the opera, Mozart reported that "here nothing is talked of but Figaro, nothing played but Figaro, nothing whistled or sung but Figaro, no opera so crowded as Figaro, nothing but Figaro."

Mozart customarily composed the overtures to his operas last, and that was probably the case with *The Marriage of Figaro,* though there is no evidence that he had to stay up all night before the final rehearsal to get it done, as was the case with *Don Giovanni.* Mozart's overtures were usually in sonata form, but he abandoned that form here, and for good reason. The *Marriage of Figaro* is witty, brilliant, and wise, and it needs an overture that will quickly set its audience in such a frame of mind. This overture is very brief (barely four minutes), and Mozart drops the development section altogether. He simply presents his sparkling themes (there are six of them, even in so short a space!), recapitulates them, and plunges into the opera. Evidence suggests that he had originally begun to compose a D-minor *Andante* as an interlude at the center of the overture, but saw that it would be out of place and crossed it out.

From the first instant, when this music stirs to life, to its sudden explosions of energy, the overture has delighted all who hear it and is the perfect lead-in to the comic escapades (and human insight) that will follow. Faced with having to choose a performance marking for his players, Mozart dispensed with any description of the emotional character he wanted from a performance. He simply chose one word, and it is perfect: *Presto.* ■

SYMPHONY IN C

IGOR STRAVINSKY

Born June 17, 1882, Oranienbaum
Died April 6, 1971, New York City

We do not instinctively think of Stravinsky as a symphonist. He made his reputation as a composer of ballets and music for small ensembles, piano, and voice, but not as someone attracted to this most Germanic and formal of structures. He wrote only three mature works that he was willing to call a symphony: the *Symphony of Psalms* (1930), *Symphony in C* (1940), and *Symphony in Three Movements* (1945).

The composition of the *Symphony in C* was spread out, in both time and place. Stravinsky began the first movement in Paris in the fall of 1938 and had the first two movements complete the following summer, just before the outbreak of World War II. He came to the United States in the fall of 1939 to give the Charles Eliot Norton lectures at Harvard and wrote the third movement in Cambridge that winter. He then moved to Los Angeles, and the symphony was completed in Hollywood on August 19, 1940.

This was a terrible time for Stravinsky and for the world at large. While Stravinsky was working on the *Symphony in C,* his wife, mother, and daughter all died, and the composer himself contracted tuberculosis and was briefly committed to a sanatarium. Stravinsky began this symphony at the moment of the Munich crisis of 1938 and completed it during the fiercest fighting of the Battle of Britain. Yet there is no trace of these troubles—personal or international—in the music, which remains relaxed and serene throughout. Stravinsky would later say that "I consider that music is, by its

very nature, essentially powerless to *express* anything at all, whether a feeling, an attitude of mind, a psychological mood, a phenomenon of nature." T. S. Eliot insisted that the greater the artist, the greater the separation between his life and his work, and the *Symphony in C* illustrates this perfectly: born in darkness, it shines throughout.

Stravinsky's choice of key is almost as important as his decision to write a symphony: C major is the most fundamental, the most "open," of keys—it is "white-key" music. Stravinsky had scores of Beethoven and Haydn symphonies (as well as the Tchaikovsky *First Symphony*) on his desk as he worked, and he referred to these classical models frequently. But the *Symphony in C* is not a pastiche, nor is it a conscious anachronism like Prokofiev's *Classical Symphony* of 1917. Instead, Stravinsky tries here to adapt the forms of the past for his own music in the present. The structure of the *Symphony in C* is extremely clear—and extremely classical: a sonata-form first movement, complete with exposition, development, and recapitulation; a slow movement in ABA form; a dance movement, also in three-part form; and a finale that recalls material from the opening movement to bring the symphony to a formally symmetric close.

A good symphony grows organically out of its opening material, and the opening flourish of the *Symphony in C* contains the germ of much of what will follow. Its rhythm will animate the first movement, but more important is the three-note tag that concludes this flourish. This is the fundamental "shape" of the opening movement: it reappears in many forms during the opening moments and eventually becomes the movement's principal theme, sung by solo oboe. A second subject arrives right on cue in the horns, and listeners will have no trouble following the structure of this movement (the Beethoven-Haydn model is clear). The oboe's long main theme draws the movement to what appears to be a quiet close before strident chords leap up to seal it off. Stravinsky himself noted what may be the most unusual feature of this music: among all his mature works, this is the only movement in which the meter never changes—the music remains in 2/2 throughout.

The second movement is significantly marked *Larghetto concertante,* for there is a soloistic quality to Stravinsky's use of different instrumental sections here. It opens with a double theme, played simultaneously by solo oboe and first violins. These two ideas—graceful, ornate, and singing—establish the character of the movement, and Stravinsky underlines this with his constant admonitions to the players: *dolce, cantabile, grazioso, espressivo.* The central episode leaps forward at twice the speed of the opening, and Stravinsky rounds the movement off with an abbreviated return of that opening material.

The second and third movements are joined—the woodwinds' quiet three-note gesture at the end of the second movement becomes the lower strings' forceful gesture that opens the *Allegretto.* The third movement of the classical symphony was based on the minuet, and Stravinsky bases his third movement on dance forms as well. The metric irregularities absent in the first movement show up here with a vengeance, as the music leaps almost by the measure from 3/8 to 5/16 to 7/16 to 2/8. The middle section slows down a little and dances slinkily along rhythms that have been identified with the *passepied,* but the opening vitality quickly returns, and a brief fughetta drives the movement to its poised close.

Stravinsky himself believed that the two concluding movements—those written in America—were fundamentally different from the opening two "European" movements, and he noted that certain passages in the final two movements "might not have occurred to me before I had known the neon glitter of Los Angeles's boulevards from a speeding automobile." The finale opens with an almost lugubrious *Largo* for bassoons and lower brass, but the music steps out sharply at the *Tempo giusto, alla breve.* Within this movement's rush of activity, we begin to make out old friends: bits of rhythm and the three-note tag that dominated so much of the first movement begin to intrude. The finale seems in constant brisk motion—including a short-lived fugato—but as it nears the end, tempo and mood relax, and finally the wind choir sings a chorale based on the three-note tag. The *Symphony in C* concludes with a muted final chord for strings that is not quite in C major.

The *Symphony in C* was dedicated to the Chicago Symphony Orchestra on the occasion of its fiftieth anniversary. Stravinsky led that orchestra in the premiere on November 7, 1940. ■

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EBONY CONCERTO

IGOR STRAVINSKY

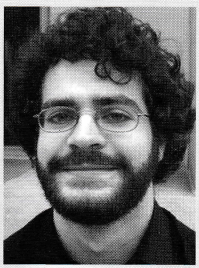
By the early years of the twentieth century, American popular music had begun to make its way to Europe, and soon it was influencing art music there: *Golliwog's Cakewalk* shows that by 1908 Debussy was quite familiar with American ragtime music. In the years after World War I, American jazz arrived in full force in Europe, and soon jazz rhythms and instrumentation began to show up in the music of Ravel, Berg, Krenek, Martinu, and many others. Igor Stravinsky had written some brief ragtime movements in the decade after his great Russian ballets, but he did not fully engage jazz until he arrived in the United States in 1940.

During World War II, bandleader Woody Herman asked Stravinsky—then living in Los Angeles—for a piece for his band, and Stravinsky began a careful study of jazz, listening to recordings of Herman's Thundering Herd and researching the capability and range of its instruments. The *Ebony Concerto,* as Stravinsky named his new piece, was scored for the instruments of Herman's band—two alto saxes, two tenor saxes, baritone sax, bass clarinet, five trumpets, three trombones, piano, harp, guitar, doublebass, tom-toms, cymbals and drums—plus one "extra" instrument: a French horn.

Stravinsky described the *Ebony Concerto,* which he completed on December 1, 1945, as a "jazz concerto grosso with a blues slow movement," but that is not quite accurate because Stravinsky did not preserve the ritornello structure of the baroque concerto grosso, choosing instead to write in classical forms. The *Ebony Concerto,* which spans only about nine minutes, has a sonata-form first movement, a ternary-form slow movement, and a variation-finale, forms that would have been more readily familiar to Mozart than to Vivaldi. As a nod to Woody Herman's abilities, the clarinet is given a central role, though the *Ebony Concerto* is really an ensemble piece rather than a solo

concerto. Also, the scrupulous Stravinsky allows no room for individual improvisation here—every part is carefully and specifically notated.

The three movements may be described briefly. The opening *Allegro moderato* contrasts a bouncy, spiky first theme-group with a more lyric second idea shared by trombone and clarinet. These ideas are developed and recapitulated, the solo clarinet is given a brief cadenza, and the movement ends quietly. The central *Andante* is the "blues" movement, but listeners are more likely to be struck by the heavy, almost oppressive atmosphere of its opening than by any blues-like melody; the brief middle section is perky, and the movement concludes with the return of the opening material. The finale opens with a *Moderato* introduction, then Stravinsky offers a theme, a sequence of quick variations on it, and some virtuoso writing for the solo clarinet before the *Ebony Concerto* arrives at its unexpectedly subdued and solemn concluding chords. ■



CURT MILLER clarinet

Clarinetist Curt Miller specializes in the performance of new and recent chamber music in addition to presenting evocative performances of clarinet repertoire extending back to the 18th century. In 2011 Miller performed music by Rebecca Saunders at the Harvard Fromm Players series and co-founded an octet, *Knell,* dedicated to performing new commissions and 20th-century gems. He has performed recent music with the ensemble *Palimpsest* and at the *Art of Elan* series in the San Diego Museum of Art. As a performer of older works he frequently appears with members of the San Diego Symphony and UCSD faculty in the *Camera Lucida* chamber series. Past engagements have taken Miller around the world including performances with the Oberlin Contemporary Music Ensemble in New York, multiple appearances at the Kennedy Center's *Conservatory Project,* studies at the Lucerne Festival Academy under Pierre Boulez and orchestral performances at Disney Hall in Los Angeles, the Rudolfinum of Prague, and as a guest artist at the Festival de Santa Catarina, Brazil. He received his BM from Oberlin Conservatory as a student of Richard Hawkins and an MA in Music Performance at UCSD under Anthony Burr. Miller was the 2011 second-place award winner in the La Jolla Symphony and Chorus's Young Artist Competition.

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SYMPHONY NO. 1 IN C MAJOR, OPUS 21

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN

Born December 16, 1770, Bonn
Died March 26, 1827, Vienna

Beethoven began sketches for a symphony in C major in 1795, just three years after he arrived in Vienna, but the piece did not go well and he abandoned it. The symphony was the grandest of purely instrumental forms, and—because he did not want to rush into a field where Haydn and Mozart had done such distinguished work—Beethoven used the decade of the 1790s to refine his technique as a composer and to prepare to write a symphony. He slowly mastered sonata form and began to write for larger chamber ensembles and for wind instruments; he also composed two piano concertos before taking on the challenge of a symphony. Beethoven then wrote the *First Symphony* in 1799-1800, and it was first performed, along with his *Septet,* in Vienna on April 2, 1800.

The genial *First Symphony* has occasionally been burdened with ponderous commentary by those who feel that it must contain the seeds of Beethoven's future development—every modulation and detail of orchestration has been squeezed for evidence of the revolutionary directions the composer would later take. Actually, Beethoven's *First* is a very straightforward late-eighteenth-century symphony, the product of a talented young man quite aware of the example of Haydn and Mozart and anxious to master the most challenging form he had faced so far. In fact, one of the most impressive

things about Beethoven's *First Symphony* is just how conservative it is. It uses the standard Haydn-Mozart orchestra of pairs of winds plus timpani and strings (though early reviewers commented on its heavy use of the winds); its form is right out of Haydn (with whom Beethoven had studied); and its spirit is consistently carefree. There are no battles fought and won here, no grappling with darkness and struggling toward the light—the distinction of the *First Symphony* lies simply in its crisp energy and exuberant music-making. There are some unusual features along the way, but these should be enjoyed as the striking touches they are rather than exaggerated in light of Beethoven's future directions as a symphonist—the young composer who wrote the *First Symphony* was, frankly, looking backward rather than forward.

The key signature of this symphony may suggest that it is in C major, but the first movement's slow introduction opens with a stinging discord that glances off into the unexpected key of F major. This leads to another "wrong" key—G major—and only gradually does Beethoven "correct" the tonality when the orchestra alights gracefully on C major at the *Allegro con brio.* Many have noticed the resemblance between Beethoven's sturdy main theme here and the opening of Mozart's *"Jupiter" Symphony,* composed twelve years earlier. This is not a case of plagiarism or of slavish imitation—only a young man's awareness of the thunder behind him. This energetic movement, with its graceful second theme in the woodwinds, develops concisely and powerfully.

The second movement, marked *Andante cantabile con moto,* is also in sonata form. The main theme arrives as a series of polyphonic entrances, and Beethoven soon transforms the dotted rhythm of this theme's third measure into an accompaniment figure—it trips along in the background through much of this movement, and Beethoven gives it to the solo timpani for extended periods. Beethoven's stipulation *con moto* is crucial: this may be a slow movement, but it pulses continuously forward along its 3/8 meter, driving to a

graceful climax as the woodwind choir sings a variant of the main theme.

By contrast, the third movement bristles with energy, and Beethoven's marking *Menuetto* seems incorrect: this may well be a minuet in form, but the indication *Allegro molto e vivace* banishes any notion of dance music. This movement is—in everything but name—a scherzo, the first of the remarkable series of symphonic scherzos Beethoven would write across his career (this movement is similar to the third movement of Beethoven's *String Quartet in F Major, Opus 18, No. 1,* composed in these same years—that movement *is* marked *Scherzo*). The trio section is dominated by the winds, whose chorale-like main tune is accompanied by madly-scampering violins.

The most amusing joke in this symphony comes at the opening of the finale, where a rising scale emerges bit by bit, like a snake coming out of its hole; at the *Allegro molto e con brio* that scale rockets upward to introduce the main theme. With this eight-bar theme, the movement seems at first a rondo, but it is actually in sonata form, complete with exposition repeat and development of secondary themes. A vigorous little march drives the symphony to its resounding close.

Beethoven's *First Symphony* found enthusiastic audiences—it was soon performed in Berlin, Breslau, Frankfurt, Dresden, Munich, Paris, and London, and there is even evidence that it may have been performed in Lexington, Kentucky, in 1817 (Beethoven would have been delighted). To those dismayed by the course of Beethoven's subsequent music (their number included Haydn), the *First Symphony*—which so cheerfully trails clouds of eighteenth-century glory—remained a symbol of the direction his career should have taken. ■

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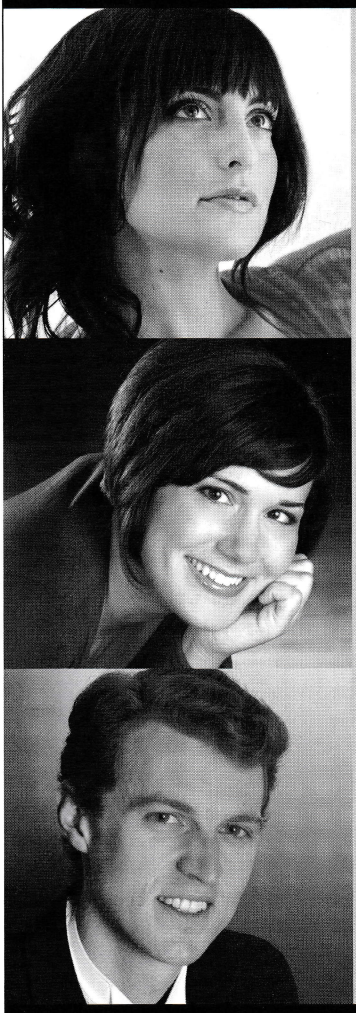

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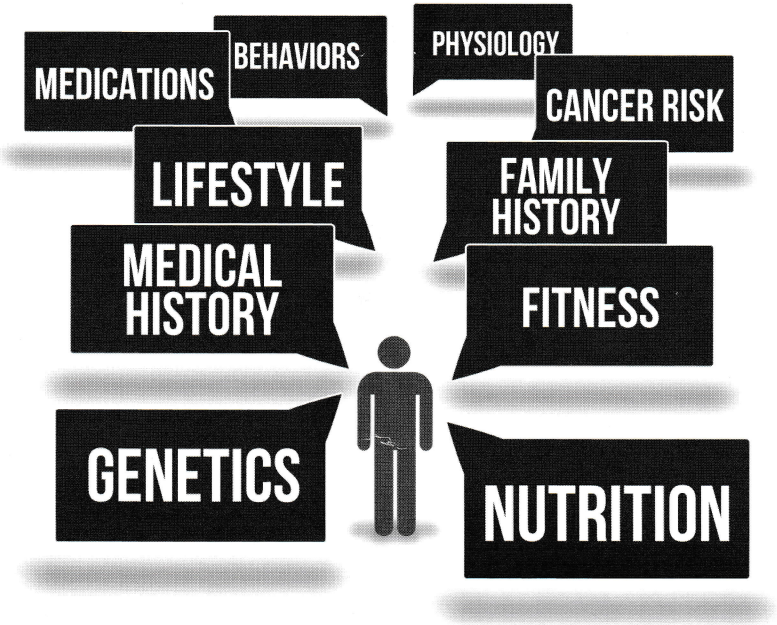

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