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Lynn Philharmonia No. 3



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Lynn Philharmonia No. 3

Guillermo Figueroa, music director

Jon Robertson, conductor

Saturday, Nov. 14 – 7:30 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 15 – 4 p.m. Keith C. and Elaine Johnson Wold Performing Arts Center

Othello Overture, op.93

Antonín Dvořák (1841-1904)

Concerto for Bassoon in F major, op. 75 Carl Maria von Weber

Allegro ma non troppo Adagio Rondo: Allegro

INTERMISSION

Symphony No. 4 ("The Inextinguishable"), op. 29

Allegro Poco allegretto Poco adagio quasi andante Allegro Carl Nielsen (1865-1931)

(1786 - 1826)

Please silence or turn off all electronic devices, including cell phones, beepers, and watch alarms.

Unauthorized recording or photography is strictly prohibited

A Message from the Dean

Welcome to the 2015-2016 season. The talented students and extraordinary faculty of the Lynn University Conservatory of Music take this opportunity to share with you the beautiful world of music. This is our 23rd anniversary of the Lynn Philharmonia and our 6th season performing in the Keith C. and Elaine Johnson Wold Performing Arts Center, a world-class concert hall that greatly enhances the musical offerings of our performing artists.

As the conservatory continues to expand and excel, your ongoing support, sponsorship and direct contributions ensure our place among the premier conservatories of the world and a staple of our community.

Please enjoy a magnificent season of great music.

Jon Robertson Dean

Artist Biographies



Jon Robertson, conductor

Maestro Jon Robertson enjoys a distinguished career as a pianist, conductor and academician. His career as a concert pianist began at age nine with his debut in Town Hall, New York, with the New York Times calling him a pint-sized Paderewski. As a child prodigy and student of the renowned pianist and teacher Ethel Leginska, he continued to concertize throughout the United States, the Caribbean and Europe. Already established as a brilliant concert pianist, he was awarded full scholarship six

consecutive years to the Juilliard School, where he earned his B.M., M.S. and D.M.A. degrees in piano performance as a student of Beveridge Webster. Although his degrees were in piano performance, he also studied choral conducting with Abraham Kaplan and orchestral conducting with Richard Pittman of the New England Conservatory of Music.

After completing a master's degree at the Juilliard School, he was appointed chair of the Department of Music at Oakwood College in Huntsville, Alabama. Among the many accomplishments realized during his tenure, the highlight was the tour of the college choir and Huntsville Symphony to Los Angeles, California, performing Verdi's Requiem to a rave review by the Los Angeles Times. In 1970, Robertson returned to the Juilliard as a Ford Foundation Scholar to complete his Doctorate of Musical Arts. At the conclusion of his degree, he once again performed with the Oakwood College choir and the American Symphony, performing Verdi's Requiem at Carnegie Hall to critical acclaim in the New York Times. In 1972, Robertson became Chair of the Thayer Conservatory of Music at Atlantic Union College, in Massachusetts, where he instituted the highly successful Thayer Preparatory Division; began the Thayer Conservatory Orchestra; tripled enrollment, renovated and refurbished the historical Thayer Mansion, home of the Thayer Conservatory; and led the New England Sinfonia on their successful national tour in 1975. He later traveled to Sweden and East Germany to become the first and only private student of Maestro Herbert Blomstedt, currently conductor and music director of the Gewanthaus Orchestra, Leipzig. After a well-received guest conducting appearance with the Kristiansand Symphony Orchestra in Norway, he was immediately engaged as conductor and music director in 1979 and served until 1987. Under his dynamic leadership, the orchestra enjoyed critical acclaim, along with consecutive sold-out seasons. While director of the symphony, he was also invited to conduct the National Norwegian Opera Company in six performances of La Boheme, as well as yearly productions with the Kristiansand Opera Company.

First appearing in Redlands, California, as guest conductor in the spring of 1982, Maestro Robertson became the conductor and music director of the Redlands Symphony Orchestra in the fall of that year and is currently in his twenty-seventh successful season with that ensemble. During his tenure, ticket sales have increased to capacity houses. In addition, the Redlands Symphony has enjoyed the distinction of receiving the highest ranking possible from the California Arts Council, as well as top ranking with the National Endowment for the Arts.

As guest conductor, Maestro Robertson has conducted orchestras nationally and internationally, including: the San Francisco Symphony at Stern Grove, later returning for their subscription series in Davies Hall; American Symphony, New York; Fairbanks Symphony, Fairbanks, Alaska; Long Beach Symphony, Long Beach, California; Oakland East Bay Symphony, Oakland, California; Walla Walla Symphony Orchestra, Walla, Walla, Washington; Gavel Symphony Orchestra, Gavel, Sweden; Tronheim Symphony Orchestra, Tronheim, Norway; and the Beijing Central Philharmonic, China. He is a regular guest conductor of the Cairo Symphony Orchestra in Egypt and was the principal guest conductor of the Armenian Philharmonic Orchestra in Yerevan from 1995-98. Maestro Robertson has also conducted the Bratislava Chamber Orchestra, at the Pianofest Austria at Bad Aussee, Austria and most recently in Cape Town, South Africa and at the University of Stellenbosch International Festival.

From 1992-2004, Robertson served as Chair of the Department of Music at the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA). During his tenure, the department gained national and international recognition, attracting world-renowned faculty and highly gifted students, thus creating a world class department of music. Robertson was recognized at the Presidents Recognition Dinner for being instrumental in raising more than two million dollars for scholarships, as well as the expansion of the Opera department and Music Theater through the Gluck Foundation and other donors.

Robertson also created the Music Outreach Program targeting inner city African-American and Latino students at designated high schools and junior high schools. On a weekly basis, music students from UCLA gave private lessons to students who were enrolled in music programs at selected inner city schools in Los Angeles. Funding for this program was raised through interested donors, therefore this exceptional program was created at no cost to the institution.

Furthermore, following the reception of a grant from the Toyota Foundation, these students were also tutored in math and reading in preparation for the SAT exams. In order to complement the work accomplished at their respective schools, students were bused to UCLA for practice SAT tests. Thanks to the Music Outreach Program, a number of students were admitted to UCLA, and 98 percent of the students in the program went on to colleges in the United States. As a result of this program's success, Robertson was the recipient of the President's Award for Outreach Programs.

Adding to the numerous awards received throughout his illustrious career, Robertson was recently the recipient of an Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters from Loma Linda University, California for the cultural development of the Greater Inland Empire of San Bernardino, California.

Presently, Robertson is the dean of the Lynn University Conservatory of Music in Boca Raton, Florida (formerly The Harid Conservatory). Under his visionary leadership, the conservatory has joined the ranks of major conservatories and institutions of music, boasting a world-renowned faculty of performers and scholars. The conservatory is both highly selective and international, accepting students from fourteen foreign countries. With an intentional enrollment of just under 100 students, only the most talented applicants are accepted and mentored by the extraordinary faculty.

In addition to his position as conductor and music director of the Redlands Symphony, Robertson continues his guest conducting appearances nationally and internationally. Along with performing and academia, Robertson enjoys writing, the study of Theology, and is sought after as a consultant, lecturer and motivational speaker.



Eric Van der Veer Varner, bassoon

Eric Van der Veer Varner has enjoyed a particularly rich and varied musical career. He has held principal bassoon chair with the Windsor Symphony Orchestra since 2004, appearing as a soloist with the orchestra on numerous occasions, where his playing has been critically hailed as that "of ineffable liquid beauty". He has previously held positions with the Ann Arbor Symphony, The Michigan Opera Theater, the Sarasota Opera, and the Mannheim Chamber Orchestra in Germany. He performs in numerous summer festivals, including the Bellingham Festival of

Music, the Michigan City Chamber Music Festival, and the Interlochen Arts Festival.

An active soloist and chamber musician, Varner has appeared throughout Europe, the United States, and Canada. He is a founding member of the PEN Trio, a trio d'anche that explores the both traditional repertoire for reed trio, as well as championing new music. In collaboration with TrevCo Music Publishing, the PEN

Trio Collection was recently founded in order to publish and disseminate works commissioned by the trio. Upcoming performances include dates in Hong Kong, Trinidad, Baylor University, and Brigham Young University, among others. Their upcoming album, "Found Objects" is slated for release in 2015, and features music from the PEN Trio Collection.

Currently the professor of bassoon and wind department chair at the Lynn Conservatory, Varner has previously held faculty appointments at Miami (Ohio) University, Heidelberg University, and the University of Windsor. He also spent fourteen summers working at the Interlochen Arts Camp, where he was the Assistant Director of the High Schools Boys Division.

Varner is the owner of TrevCo-Varner Music, "the world's foremost purveyor of fine sheet music for double reeds". TrevCo-Varner Music is the largest company in the world dedicated solely to double reed music, with over 12,000 titles in stock from publishers all over the world. In his capacity as owner, Varner is at the forefront of the new music scene, commissioning new works, and striving to make double reeds more accessible to the public.

Varner holds the Doctor of Musical Arts (2004) from the University of Michigan, where he also earned a Master of Music (2002) and a Bachelor of Music (1996) degree. Additionally, he holds a degree in Artistic Education (1998) from the Mannheim-Heidelberg Conservatory in Mannheim, Germany. His primary teachers were Richard Beene, Alfred Rinderspacher, Hugh Cooper and Michael Dicker.

When he is not busy playing and teaching, he enjoys watching college football, and reading.

Program Notes

Othello Overture, op.93 By Antonín Dvořák (1841-1904)

First performance: April 28, 1892, Prague, Orchestra of the National Theater, Dvorak, cond.

Though it is heard far less often than its sibling overture Carnival, Dvořák' s Othello is an equally fine work. Indeed, Dvořák biographer John Clapham says that it is "surely the finest of the composer's overtures." It is the final panel of a trilogy that he had originally conceived as a single work, to be published as Opus 91 under the title Nature, Life, and Love, and that is how it was first performed. But Dvořák soon decided that it was useful to consider the overtures as three separate compositions, performable independently; in the end he published them with consecutive opus numbers-91, 92, and 93. Dvořák, a highly religious man, wished to portray in his music three aspects of the divine life-giving force, which he called "Nature," aiming to show that it could both create and destroy life. He linked the three works by inventing a theme that appears in all three of them, the "Nature"

theme, which predominates in the first overture (In Nature's Realm) and makes a brief appearance in the second (Carnival) in its original form, but which returns in Othello only in a somewhat distorted shape to indicate that nature's force-love-is twisted by jealousy.

Othello begins as if it is going to be a sonata-form overture-a straightforward concert overture. A brooding introduction builds to a forzando outburst in the strings, introducing the "twisted" form of the "Nature" theme in flutes and clarinets: Othello's love has gone awry. The main Allegro con brio is dominated by a forceful theme representing Othello's jealousy. Its characteristic triplet infects many other ideas as the score proceeds. Halfway through the score Dvořák interrupts any plan to shape the movement into a formal sonata pattern and yields to an impulse to trace the closing scene in dramatic terms. In his own score he penciled in certain comments that clarify his understanding of the passage. The first of these, "They embrace in silent ecstasy," marks the beginning of the tragedy's closing stage. Soon after, Dvořák quotes Wagner's "magic sleep" motif from Die Walküre, as an indication that Desdemona has fallen into slumber. Othello, contemplating her putative infidelity, is consumed with jealousy and rage; the triplets increasingly dominate the rhythmic texture. A quotation from Dvořák's own Requiem hints at what is in store for Desdemona. She dies to a reminiscence of their love music. chilled by string tremolos played sul ponticello. Aghast at what he has done. Othello prays (a brief chorale in the woodwinds). He recalls their love; the "magic sleep" is now a permanent sleep of death. Over a long crescendo in the timpani and double basses, the twisted "Nature" theme softly comments; Othello now turns his aggressive rage on himself and makes his own guietus.

-- Written by Steven Ledbetter

Boston Symphony Orchestra concert program, Tanglewood Series, Summer 2007, Week 1, Saturday Concert, Boston Symphony Orchestra Program Books, Boston Symphony Orchestra Archives, Symphony Hall, Boston, MA. Accessed on August 18, 2015 at

http://cdm15982.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/ref/collection/PROG/id/696686.

Concerto for Bassoon in F major, op. 75 By Carl Maria von Weber (1786-1826)

Tastes and perspectives change, in music as in everything else. Fifty years ago, a popular book about great composers, Men of Music by Wallace Brockway and Herbert Weinstock, dismissed Weber as the composer of three overtures, a piano concerto (referring to the F minor Conzertstück), and a "notable salon piece" (Invitation to the Dance), "What remains of Weber's once lofty reputation," they concluded, "is dwindling rapidly. It is becoming apparent that he was little more than a talented showman who happened, at a strategic moment, to epitomize the Zeitgeist, or its trappings, more obviously than any other musician of his time."

It must have seemed inconceivable that a composer who grew up in the German tradition should not have imbibed Beethoven whole and proceeded to turn out symphonies, sonatas, and string quartets. Weber did write two symphonies, but they were early works, quite uninfluenced by Beethoven. And his piano sonatas, too, were designed to show off his own remarkable virtuosity. In this realm he was more the antecedent of Chopin, Schumann, and Liszt than the follower of Beethoven. In fact, Weber was not especially suited by temperament to the

abstract musical forms that German musicians made their own throughout the romantic era. He was, first and foremost, a man of the theater, and all of his music--even that nominally in the genres of sonata and concerto--was dramatic in gesture and approach.

Weber came by his theatrical bent naturally; he was practically born backstage. His father ran the Weber Theater Company, which at the time of the composer's birth was resident in Eutin, near the Danish border of Germany; his mother was a singer and actress in the company. Even the family name was to some extent theatrical make-believe. The composer himself genuinely thought that he was descended from a Weber who had been ennobled by Emperor Ferdinand II in 1622 and that he therefore deserved the particle "von," denoting baronial rank, in his name; but it seems the "von" had been quietly appropriated by Carl Maria's father while traveling from town to town as an actor.

As a boy Carl Maria was weak and sickly, and he walked with a limp from a congenitally deformed right hip bone. But when he was able to undertake systematic music lessons, his talent became evident at once. One of his teachers was Michael Haydn (brother of the great Joseph). During a stay in Munich he absorbed the repertory of French operas and German Singspiels local theater, and he saw a production of one of his own operas just a few days after his fourteenth birthday.

In the hope of publishing his music more readily, Weber and his father worked for a time with the developer of the new technique of lithography. He had little liking for the drudgery of the work and soon gave up the printing business, though he evidently kept materials on hand to prepare his own music for the press. This led to a nearly fatal accident in 1806 when he drank from a wine bottle that his father had filled with acid for engraving; a friend found Weber's body prostrate on the floor. After two months of recuperation he was on his feet again, but he had lost forever a beautiful singing voice.

For the first dozen years of the nineteenth century Weber's life was generally unsettled, as he moved from place to place, staying from a few months to a few years at a time, playing the piano, writing sonatas and concertos and parlor pieces and patriotic songs for male chorus, composing and directing operas, and generally trying to establish himself solidly in an important musical center, and often moving suddenly to evade creditors. He had been forced to leave a good position as secretary to Ludwig, brother of Duke Friedrich of Württemberg, when Weber's father had settled his debts with money entrusted to the composer by the Duke for the purchase of horses. Weber was arrested, though eventually charges were dropped in exchange for banishment from Württemberg.

The young man had now attained his majority (he was just twenty-three). He had just discovered a story that, nearly ten years later, would form the basis of his greatest single success, the opera Der Freischütz. For a time he was an itinerant concert pianist, but on March 14, 1811, he arrived in Munich, where his Concertino for clarinet was so well received that the king commissioned two concertos for that instrument, both completed in quick succession. Members of the orchestra besieged him with requests for concertos for their instruments as well. He never wrote a cello concerto that he mentioned in one letter, but in November he

composed his Bassoon Concerto, a fine outing for an instrument that had always lacked solo repertory of substance, and the only bassoon concerto of its era that could be mentioned in the same breath as that of Mozart.

Weber's first goal was to provide an effective showcase for the soloist. His innate feeling for the woodwinds, as also indicated by the clarinet concertos of the same year, is well revealed in the Bassoon Concerto, which begins with a sharply dotted martial theme that shows the solo instrument in a cocky mood; this contrasts with a more lyrical second theme and the strings of fioritura to display both fingering ability and breath control. Weber treats the soloist like a theatrical character whose particular personality is projected in the music, but he is not much concerned with symphonic structures in this movement, which was the last part of the concerto to be composed.

Far more at home with romantic mood-painting than with sonata form, Weber typically began composition of his concertos with the slow movement, as he did here; the first idea to come to him was used in the middle section of the second movement, in which the bassoon sings against the mellow sound of two horns-a wonderfully colored invention in a passage so "operatic" that the bassoon seems to be on the verge of speech. Though Wagner is supposed to have said that romanticism began with the entrance of the four horns in the Freischütz Overture of 1821, we certainly have strong hints of it here a decade earlier.

The finale is straightforward and witty, designed by a man at home in the theater to rouse the listeners to applause at its close.

-- Written by Steven Ledbetter

Boston Symphony Orchestra concert program, Tuesday B Series, Season 115 (1995-1996), Concert 2, Boston Symphony Orchestra Program Books, Boston Symphony Orchestra Archives, Symphony Hall, Boston, MA. Accessed on August 18, 2015 at http://cdm15982.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/ref/collection/PROG/id/391123.

Symphony No. 4 ("The Inextinguishable"), op. 29 By Carl Nielsen (1865-1931)

Nielsen composed his Fourth Symphony between 1914 and January 1916. It was first performed in Copenhagen on February 1, 1916, with Nielsen conducting the Music Society Orchestra.

In a preface to the published score, Nielsen offered a partial explanation for the title The Inextinguishable:

Under this title the composer has endeavoured to indicate in one word what the music alone is capable of expressing to the full: The elemental Will of Life. Music is Life and, like it, is inextinguishable. The title...might therefore seem superfluous; the composer...has employed the word in order to underline the strictly musical character of his subject. It is not a programme, but only a suggestion as to the right approach to the music.

Shortly after starting work on the symphony, he wrote to the opera singer Emil Holm about his first efforts. "I can tell you that I have come a good way on a new,

large orchestral work, a kind of symphony in one movement, which would describe everything one feels and thinks by the concept we call Life or, rather, 'Life' in its inmost meaning." After the symphony was well under way, he wrote to Julius Rontgen, Dutch composer and personal friend, telling of his progress and offering further details about his musical intentions:

I shall also soon have a new symphony ready. It is very different from my other three and there is a specific idea behind it, that is, that the most elementary aspect of music is Light, Life, and

Motion, which chop silence to bits. It's all those things that have Will and the Craving for Life that cannot be suppressed that I've wanted to depict. Not because I want to reduce my art to the imitation of Nature but to let it attempt to express what lies behind it. The crying of birds, the wailing and laughter of man and beast, the grumbling and shouting from hunger, war, and mating, and everything that is called the most elementary--I see well that my words cannot explain, for one can rightly say, "Shut up, and let us hear the thing when it is finished."

For all of Nielsen's many other declarations favoring objectivity in music, he describes the Fourth Symphony as a subjective depiction of the irrevocable processes of nature, reflected in the struggles between contrasting elements in the score.

One of the most obvious of those struggles is the dialogue between the two timpanists. Nielsen designates that the second timpanist be placed at the edge of the orchestra, toward the audience, enhancing the musical opposition with spatial separation. Timpani I punctuates the opening measures with an accented tritone, an interval the ancients called diabolus per musica. The devil himself would enjoy the battle (no other term seems adequate here) between the two timpanists and the orchestra that develops in the last movement, with both players hammering away at different tritones while the orchestra continues with its own material. The symphony grows internally through conflicting tonalities, sometimes producing much dissonance, but in such a manner that the conflict of keys, or the motion from one tonal center to another, becomes the substance of Nielsen's musical dialectic. This continuing tonal evolution permeates the symphony, leading to an uninterrupted tonal fabric, and the four movements are played without interruption.

The first movement erupts with contrasting harmonies of C (in the strings) and D (in the winds), with the tritone A-E-flat in the timpani adding to the general harmonic instability. The calm lyricism of a second theme, played by the clarinets, offers marked contrast to the violent opening, and becomes a frequent point of reference. It returns near the movement's end in an emphatic declamation by bassoons and brass instruments over a reiterated E in the timpani, which then becomes the musical link with the following Poco allegretto. This graceful three-part intermezzo serves the role of a traditional scherzo movement. Much of it is written for the woodwinds, the orchestral timbre that was associated with most of the stable points of reference in the first movement. Continuing that reference, clarinets end the movement with a series of plaintive, descending thirds. The combination of implied harmonies in

C and G leave the question of key unresolved, particularly when the following Poco adagjo quasi andante abruptly moves off toward E, introducing a mediant relationship to C and G. The quiet character gradually gives way to increasing agitation that subsides only slightly before closing with an abrupt con anima for strings.

A Grand Pause offers both players and audience an opportunity to catch a collective breath before the full orchestra bursts forth with the closing Allegro. The timpani erupt again in their bellicose dialogue, responding to a note in the score advising them that they should maintain a menacing character through the end of the movement, even when playing quietly. References to the clarinet theme from the first movement appear frequently until it finally returns, emphatically, in the home key of E. The final arrival at the basic key of the work introduces a forceful element of stability that continues to the end of the symphony. Reactions to the first performance of Nielsen's Fourth Symphony in 1916 were swallowed in the enormity of events surrounding the war then engulfing Europe. In later years, the intensity of the work often jolted audiences. Even if listeners are unaware of the tonal operations, the music largely speaks for itself, with the conflicts involving key, theme, and instrumentation producing a dramatic musical statement.

-- Lee, Douglas. Masterwoks of 20th-century Music: the Modern Repertory of the Symphony Orchestra. (New York: Routledge, 2002), 244-246.

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The Keith C. and Elaine Johnson Wold Performing Arts Center, designed by noted architect Herbert S. Newman, is a state-of-the-art performance facility. The elegant lobby is graciously lit with chandeliers replicating those in New York City's Lincoln Center. The 750-seat theatre, designed in paneling reminiscent of the inside of a violin, features superb acoustics, a modern lighting system and comfortable seating. The Wold Center opened in March 2010.

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Upcoming Events

Mostly Music: Brahms

Thursday, Nov. 19 – 7:30 p.m. Count and Countess de Hoernle International Center | Amarnick-Goldstein Concert Hall \$20

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Thursday, Dec. 3 – 7:30 p.m. Count and Countess de Hoernle International Center | Amarnick-Goldstein Concert Hall \$10

Nancy Weems in Recital

Saturday, Dec. 5 - 7:30 p.m. Count and Countess de Hoernle International Center | Amarnick-Goldstein Concert Hall \$20

Guest pianist Nancy Weems performs the Haydn Sonata in E Major, Bach-Busoni Chaconne, Prokofieff Sonata No. 6, and a selection of Mendelssohn's Songs Without Words. Weems has performed extensively in the United States, the former Soviet Union and fourteen foreign countries throughout Europe, Asia, and Central America. She won the Artistic Ambassador Competition and top awards in the International Recording Competition. Ms. Weems has recorded for Albany and Bay Cities labels and the disc "Classical Hollywood" was nominated for a Grammv Award.

Master Classes

Sunday, Dec. 6 at 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. Count and Countess de Hoernle International Center | Amarnick-Goldstein Concert Hall Free (No tickets necessary)



13th Annual Gingerbread Concert

Presented by Lynn University Friends of the Conservatory of Music

Sunday, Dec. 13 - 3 p.m. Location: Boca Raton Resort and Hotel \$35 General Admission

This concert attracts parents, grandparents and kids of all ages to enjoy season classics performed by Guillermo Figueroa and the Lynn Philharmonia. This annual event raises scholarship funds for the conservatory's deserving and talented student-musicians who hail from all over the world.

2nd Annual Lynn Chamber Competition Final Round

Saturday, Dec. 12 - 7:30 pm Keith C. and Elaine Johnson Wold Performing Arts Center FREE (no tickets necessary)

Winners of this evening's competition will perform on the Lyric Chamber Series in New York City in May.

2015 National Chopin Piano Competition winner

Thursday, Jan. 7 – 7:30 p.m. Count and Countess de Hoernle International Center | Amarnick-Goldstein Concert Hall \$20

First-place winner of the Ninth National Chopin Piano Competition, Eric Lu, presents an all-Chopin recital.

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