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Illinois State University Symphony Orchestra, March 24, 2024

Glenn Block

Illinois State University

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Illinois State University
Wonsook Kim College of Fine Arts
School of Music

Illinois State University Symphony Orchestra

Glenn Block, *Music Director*

Center for Performing Arts Concert Hall
March 24, 2024
Sunday Afternoon
3:00 p.m.

This is the one hundred and thirty-first program of the 2023-2024 season.

Program

Please silence all electronic devices for the duration of the concert. Thank you.

Russian Easter Festival Overture, Op. 36 (1888) Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov
(1844-1908)

Useon Choi, *conductor*

Buenos aires: Carpe Diem (2014) Symphonic Movement Claudio Alsuyet
(born 1957)

Glenn Block, *conductor*

Award Presentation

Steven Allen Fox, *Outstanding Alumni Award*

Emotica (2024) World Premiere

Steven Allen Fox
(born 1975)

I. Unleashed

II. Sorrow

III. Joy

Sohee Kim, *soprano soloist*
Steven Allen Fox, *conductor*

Next ISU Symphony Concert:

Sunday, April 21 – 3:00 PM

Music by Rimsky-Korsakov, Rachmaninoff and Creston

Program Notes

RUSSIAN EASTER FESTIVAL OVERTURE, OP. 36

“In order to appreciate my Overture even ever so slightly, it is necessary that the hearer should have attended Easter morning services at least once, and at that, not in a domestic chapel, but in a cathedral thronged with people from every walk of life, with several priests conducting the cathedral service.” – Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov

As a child growing up in Tikhvin, a market town 120 miles east of St. Petersburg, Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov attended church services in a large, centuries-old cathedral. The raucous, joyful nature of the Easter services in Tikhvin Cathedral made an indelible impression on Rimsky-Korsakov. In the summer of 1888, as he finished ‘Scheherazade’, Rimsky-Korsakov also completed a 15-minute orchestral work he titled “Svetlyi prazdnik” (The Bright Holiday), an Easter overture based on music from the obikhod, a collection of chants used in Russian Orthodox liturgy.

Families of instruments (winds, strings, brasses) take turns intoning different chants from the obikhod – their distinctive timbres reference the varied crowd, “people from every walk of life.” Duets abound – flute with cello, oboe, and bassoon – and provide further shadings and nuances of orchestral color, before the full orchestra explodes with a pent-up, joyful celebratory shout announcing the Resurrection.

In his autobiography, *My Musical Life*, Rimsky-Korsakov wrote, “This legendary and heathen side of the holiday, this transition from the gloomy and mysterious evening of Passion Saturday to the unbridled pagan-religious merry-making of Easter Sunday, is what I was eager to reproduce in my overture ... The rather lengthy slow introduction . . . on the theme ‘Let God arise’ [woodwinds], alternating with the ecclesiastical melody ‘An angel wailed!’ [solo cello], appeared to me, in the beginning, as it were, the ancient prophecy of Isaiah of the Resurrection of Christ. The gloomy colors of the Andante lugubre seemed to depict the Holy Sepulchre that had shone with ineffable light at the moment of the Resurrection in the transition to the Allegro of the overture. The beginning of the Allegro, ‘Let them also that hate Him flee before Him,’ led to the holiday mood of the Greek Orthodox service on Christ’s matins; the solemn trumpet voice of the Archangel was replaced by a tonal reproduction of the joyous, almost dancelike tolling of bells, alternating now with the sexton’s rapid reading and now with the conventional chant of the priest’s reading the glad tidings of the Evangel. The obikhod theme, ‘Christ is arisen,’ ... appears amid the trumpet blasts and the bell-tolling, constituting also a triumphant coda.”

Program Notes by Elizabeth Schwartz

BUENOS AIRES: CARPE DIEM, SYMPHONIC MOVEMENT

Why Buenos Aires?

It is the name of a series of compositions that I write with gestures typical of the urban music of my city, Buenos Aires, in this way it differs from the works that do not contain it.

Why Carpe Diem?

In the poem, Horace (65 B.C.-Rome, 8 B.C.) writes "Carpe diem quam minimum credula", translation: "seize the day, do not trust tomorrow". The lyric poet speaks of enjoying the present, yes, but from the perception of the inevitable path that leads every human being to death.

It is a slow movement, expressive and with sensuality, with segments that vary in intensity and thematically, representing each moment to be lived as if there were no tomorrow. In a universal palette of orchestra colors poetically arise the musical gestures that make the color of the city music of Buenos Aires, a slow milonga only recognizable by the bass lines that gives way to the phrasing of tango in the violins, in the woodwinds in its repetition recalls gestures of the bandoneon, the great absent of this work paid homage to before the end, by wood and brass, everything, beyond the city, closer to the universe.

Program Notes by the Composer

EMOTICA - World Premiere

Emotica is a work that has been in progress for nearly 24 years. I was lucky enough to be accepted to the University of Southern California Graduate Certificate program, Scoring for Film & Television, for the 1999-2000 school year. This was an incredible learning experience, where every few weeks we were given the opportunity to go into a recording studio and record original music, written to a scene provided by a teacher. For one of these sessions we recorded in the university's auditorium, with the USC Symphony Orchestra. My scene was the opening to Cape Fear with Robert Deniro. My approach was to portray the coming evil as he was released from prison. As I worked on this 1:30 of music I realized the theme I wrote was something I wanted to expand. It did not take long to decide on an orchestral piece portraying fear and anger. That was the birth of Unleashed, which is now movement 1 of this piece. I enjoy diving into human emotion and psychology, and to communicate a wide array of experiences, such as fear vs. triumph or joy. This led to the concept of a multi-movement piece that would exhibit various human emotions. A year or two prior to the pandemic (Covid-19), two horrific events occurred that had a personal impact. The first was the sudden death, due to a drunk driver, of my childhood piano teacher's granddaughter. The second was the murder of the daughter of our family's daycare provider. Both struck me as some of the worst experiences any parent or grandparent could experience. Many emotions flooded me over the next few days, and Sorrow, movement 2, was born. Once completed, I now knew it was time to finish *Emotica*, but I needed a third movement. After having to deal with fear, anger, and sorrow, something happier was necessary. It took me some time to work out how to convey something of joy and love, but two ideas came to mind that ended up being the catalyst for creativity. One was the piano solo I composed, and performed, at my wedding, as a gift to my wife. It was based on the famous Corinthians verse, "Love is patient..." The second was the idea of joy. Over and over I considered what music gives me joy, and that helped me to solidify the approach. If it made me smile and happy, it would work. And now, movement 3, simply titled Joy, has been completed. Thank you to Dr. Glenn Block at Illinois State University, my alma mater, for providing the deadline to complete this work. Without his offer to conduct the world premiere on March 24, 2024, this may still be "in progress." I hope that you enjoy, and feel something emotionally, as you listen.

Program Notes by the Composer

Biographical Notes

GLENN BLOCK has served as the Director of Orchestras and Opera and Professor of Conducting at Illinois State University since 1990. In addition, he served as Music Director of the Youth Symphony of Kansas City from 1983-2007. Prior to his appointment at Illinois State in the fall of 1990, Dr. Block served for 15 years as Director of Orchestras and Professor of Conducting at the Conservatory of Music of the University of Missouri - Kansas City and Music Director of the Kansas City Civic Orchestra. Born in Brooklyn, Dr. Block was educated at the Eastman School of Music. He received his Ph.D. from the University of California at San Diego.

A frequent guest conductor, he has appeared in over 42 states with all-state and professional orchestras. Foreign guest-conducting have included concerts and master classes at the Fontainebleau Conservatoire in France, and concerts in Spain, Canada, Colombia, Estonia, Russia, Italy, Hungary, Austria, Czech Republic and throughout South America since 2012. He has served on the Boards of Directors for both the Conductors Guild and the Youth Orchestra Division of the American Symphony Orchestra League. The Youth Symphony of Kansas City and Dr. Block made their Carnegie Hall debut in June 1997. Dr. Block has served on the faculty of the National Music Camp at Interlochen as Resident Conductor of the World Youth Symphony Orchestra, and at the Interlochen Arts Academy as Visiting Conductor. In addition, he has served as Music Director of the Summer Festival Orchestra at the Rocky Ridge Music Center in Estes Park, Colorado.

He has been invited to serve as Adjunct Professor of Conducting at Illinois Wesleyan University and Interim Music Director of the Illinois Wesleyan Symphony.

He has conducted many of the major orchestras of Argentina: Teatro Colón, Chascomus, Posadas, Salta, Mar del Plata, Mendoza, Iguazu International Music Festival; Paraguay: Orquesta Nacional de Paraguay, Camerata Miranda, Orquesta de la Policia Nacional, Orquesta Camera de la Ciudad de Asunción (OCMA); Londrina, Brazil International Music Festival (2019); Guadiagrele, Italy Opera Festival (2019, 2020, 2022); Wuhan, China (2019); Ho Chi Minh, Vietnam National Orchestra of Vietnam (2018). He has led international conducting seminars throughout South America, Asia, and Europe.

He will return in the summer of 2024 to guest-conduct orchestras in Argentina (Rio Negro/Patagonia, Mar del Plata, Salta); Asunción, Paraguay (Orquesta of the Universidad de Norte (UniNorte), Orquesta de la Policia Naciona, Orqusgta Sinfonica de la Ciudad de ASUNCION (OSCA)]; in the Republic of San Marino and in Italy.

CLAUDIO ALSUYET, was born in Buenos Aire, Argentina in October 1957. He is the composer of many compositions for orchestra, choir, chamber groups and mixed media. Premiered on several continents, recipient of awards and scholarships, Alsuyet was a composer-in-residence at the Instituto Superior de Arte del Teatro Colón in the year 2000, of which he was also its Director from 2015 to 2017. In his compositions, he uses different media, genres and sounds, from voice and piano in his lieder to combinations of instruments with live processing and orchestra.

He is currently a member of the Symphonic and Chamber Music Commission of SADAIC, where he teaches Composition Applied to Poetic and Dramatic Texts and Instrumentation in the Bachelor of Musical Arts Composition degree at the DAMUS National University of the Arts. Buenos Aires, the city and its popular music are very present in his compositions, especially reflected in his Buenos Aires series of works.

He obtained distinctions in composition, such as the TRINAC 90 and TRINAC 1992 prizes. His work "Sólo Saxo Baritone" for saxophone was one of those recommended by the International Tribune of Composers of Denmark. The Antorchas Foundation granted him the subsidy for musical creation in 1993, "Antorchas Scholarship for Musical Composition" 1998, in the same year his work "JSRoger" obtained the honorable mention of the Municipal Prize for Composition and Symphonic Movement the First Prize at the Symphonic Music category for the 2002-2003 biennium. First Prize 2005 Composition Contest of the University of Buenos Aires, for the creation of a work for Soloists, Choir and Orchestra of the University of Buenos Aires. His Symphonic work "...de luces" received an honorable mention in the "Guillermo Graetzer" contest of SADAIC 2006, CAREERSHIP IN MUSIC Award APA 2018 (Argentine Award Winning Artists), Honorable Mention National Award in Symphonic Music 2018, among other distinctions.

His works are programmed and performed by different organizations throughout the world.

He has orchestrated much of the music of Astor Piazzolla He has also participated as a member of the Jury in prestigious composition contests: National Symphony Orchestra of Ecuador, National Endowment for the Arts, CABA Municipal Award, Argentine Music Council (CAMU), National Tribune of Composers, SADAIC, among others.

STEVEN ALLEN FOX is an innovative concert creator, conductor, producer and composer He has conducted or produced over 100 premieres of new compositions and suites. In the summer of 2022, he made is debut on the stage of Walt Disney Concert Hall with the Los Angeles Film Orchestra. He has conducted the San Francisco Symphony, Los Angeles Film Orchestra, the Silly Symphonies Orchestra, Hollywood Studio Symphony, Golden State Pops Orchestra, Tenerife Symphony, and the Video Games Live Orchestra. Special engagements include "Disney's The Little Mermaid Live in Concert" with the San Francisco Symphony, Guest Conductor for the international film music festival "Fimucité" in Tenerife, Spain, and the Assistant Conductor position for the World Premieres of "Beauty and the Beast In Concert," "The Little Mermaid Live in Concert " and "Coco Live-to-Film Concert Experience," and also Cover Conductor to Maestro John Mauceri for "Nightmare Before Christmas Live to Film" at the famed Hollywood Bowl in 2023. With the Golden State Pops Orchestra, which Steven founded in 2002, he has had the privilege to be Principal Conductor for "The Magnificent Movie Poster World of Drew Struzan," the Varése Sarabande 35th Anniversary Concert Gala Series in Los Angeles, and "A Spoonful of Sherman: A Symphonic Concert." Steven has had the opportunity to work with some of the most influential composers and artists in the industry. Notable professionals Steven has worked with, or shared the stage with include Kelsey Grammer, Zooey Deschanel, John Stamos, Rebel Wilson, Taye Diggs, Marissa Jaret Winokur, Shoshana Bean, Cheech Marin, Peter Gallagher, Hans Zimmer, Danny Elfman, Alan Silvestri, Richard Sherman, Thomas Newman, John Debney, Michael Giacchino, and Michael Kosarin. As a composer Fox has provided scores for multiple feature length films, and shorts.

He helped to win the Independent Film Channel award for animated short for *The Artist* by Ian Dale. His compositions include a wind quintet, multiple arrangements for Concert Band, and selections for Symphony Orchestra. Steven has a Bachelor's Degree in Music Theory and Composition from Illinois State University and a Graduate Certificate in Film and Television Scoring from the University of Southern California

SOHEE KIM is a Soprano and Cultural Arts Manager. At the 2019 Incheon International Airport Art Port Youth Festival, Sohee Kim was selected as a solo vocalist and also developed experience as an Arts Manager in planning and promoting the program. In 2020, she was awarded 3rd place at the Seoul Music Competition. She has worked promoting performances of the theater of Yun Dong-ju, known for his lyrical poetry dedicated to the Korean independence movement against the Japanese Empire. Furthermore, she served as a researcher on the status of cultural activities in Korea at the Korea Arts & Culture Education Service, assisting with the 2018 and 2019 Cultural Activities Surveys conducted by Arts Council Korea. She obtained a certificate of Art and Culture Education to effectively share music with many people.

Sohee Kim holds a bachelor's degree in vocal music from Sungshin Women's University and a master's degree in Arts and Cultural Management from Hongik University, where she completed her master's thesis "A Qualitative Study on the Career Exploration Experiences of Vocal Music Major Students." She is currently pursuing her master's in voice performance at Illinois State University, is active on stage and is a member of the studio of Dr. Michelle Vought.

USEON CHOI is a native of South Korea, and is currently pursuing his second Master's Degree in Orchestral Conducting at the Illinois State University under the guidance of Dr. Block. He has abundant experience teaching in the collegiate level and conducting professional chamber orchestras in South Korea. Previous to his studies at Illinois State University, he was Visiting Professor in Clarinet/Wind Conductor at Silla University (South Korea), Adjunct Clarinet Professor at Inje University (South Korea) and music director for Gimhae Jungang Girls Middle School Bridge Youth Orchestra and Viva Chamber Orchestra. Prior to his music journey in South Korea, he was the Principal Clarinetist at Great Falls Symphony Association in Montana and Ft. Collins Symphony in Colorado. He is currently the Backun Clarinet Artist and Silverstein Works Artist.

In 2022 Dr. Choi was invited to Busan Maru International Music Festival to conduct the youth orchestra concert and worked with K-12 orchestras. Dr. Choi has received third place at the National Busan Music Competition and performed concertos with Busan Philharmonic, Dong-A University Orchestra and Kyungsnag Philharmonic Orchestra.

Internationally, Dr. Choi has given performances in Belgium, Spain, Japan and South Korea collaborating with international clarinetists. A devoted enthusiast of the clarinet choir, Dr. Choi has performed with numerous clarinet choirs such as the Busan Clarinet Choir, Kansai Clarinet Society and now leads the Jubiler Clarinet Ensemble. Dr. Choi is very passionate about chamber music and his experience blossomed when he held the position as Resident Clarinetist for the Chinook Winds Woodwind Quintet in Montana.

ISU SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Glenn Block, *Music Director*

Violin I

Gibson Swalley, *concertmaster*
Colleen Loemker
Chona Noble
Sergio Ravelo
Hannah Appleyard

Viola

Carlos Leon, *principal*
Daniel Haan
Zeph Mussman
Ulzhan Ydrysova
Trinity Howell
Katelynn Lesinski
Aaron Wolz

Double Bass

Jay Cebrero, *principal*
Alexandra Jennings
Laura Velez
William Hussey
Devin Parks, *electric bass*

Flute/Piccolo

Gina Russell, *principal*
Chelsea Davis, *co-principal*
Breanna German, *piccolo*

Oboe

Elli Ji, *principal*
Carson Mullins
Sara Walsh, *co-principal*

Clarinet

Alec Jenkins, *bass clarinet, co-principal*
Christian Rucinski, *co-principal*
Holly Peters

Bassoon

Rosalie Truback, *principal*
Wes Smith, *contrabassoon*
Emma Turner

Harp

Sabrina Vaughan, *principal*

Staff

Dr. Useon Choi, *assist. conductor,
manager/librarian*
Sergio Ravelo, *assist. manager/librarian*

Violin II

Brody Macias, *principal*
Blake Bowers
Daniel Blanco
Vittorio Causarano
Lexi Rocha

Cello

Joe Brackmann, *principal*
Kahauri Brown-Givens
Brandon Campos
Delia Bonnet
Oluwagbenga Ajila
Brian Hershey
Jenny Komperda
Lily Moen

Horn

Daniel Ota, *principal*
Lydia Cermak
Alicia Cruz
Sam Fortuna
Jeason Lopez
Matthew Tutterow

Trumpet

Ryan Valdivia, *principal*
Joshua Mobley, *co-principal*

Trombone

Phil Denzmore, *principal*
Grant Cermak
Nick Sisson, *bass trombone*

Tuba

Matthew Sourwine, *principal*

Timpani/Percussion

Sara Eckert, *principal*
Matt Boguslawski
Jack Cacciabondo
Jann ah Fedorchak
Kirsten Kadow
Matthew McAdams

Keyboard

Garret Kniffin, *principal*