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## Illinois State University Symphony Orchestra: Concerto Aria: Thomas Guilfoyle, Saxophone; Joohee Jeong, Piano; April 21, 2024

Thomas Guilfoyle  
*Illinois State University*

Joohee Jeong  
*Illinois State University*

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

**Illinois State University Symphony Orchestra**

**Concerto Aria**

**Thomas Guilfoyle, *saxophone***

**Joohee Jeong, *piano***

**Glenn Block, *conductor***

**Center for Performing Arts  
April 21, 2024  
Sunday Afternoon  
3:00 p.m.**

**This is the one hundred and seventy-ninth program of the 2023-2024 season.**

## Program

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

Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Orchestra, Op. 26 (1944) Paul Creston  
Movement II: Meditative (1906-1985)  
Movement I: Energetic

Thomas Guilfoyle, *alto saxophone* \*

Useon Choi, *conductor*

Concerto for Piano No. 2, Op. 18 (1901) Sergei Rachmaninoff  
Movement I: Moderato (1873-1943)

Joohee Jeong, *piano* \*

Useon Choi, *conductor*

Announcement of Seniors

## Intermission

Scholarship Awards Presentation

Scheherazade (1888) Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov  
(1844-1908)

I. The Sea and Sinbad's Ship

Largo e maestoso

Lento

Allegro non troppo

Tranquillo

II. The Story of the Kalendar Prince

Lento

Andantino

Allegro molto

Vivace scherzando

Moderato assai

Allegro molto ed animato

III. The Young Prince and the Young Princess

Andantino quasi allegretto

Pochissimo più mosso

Come prima

Pochissimo più animato

IV. Festival at Baghdad. The Sea. The Ship Breaks against a Cliff Surmounted by a  
Bronze Horseman

Allegro molto

Lento

Vivo

Allegro non troppo e maestoso

Tempo come

Glenn Block, *conductor*

**\*Winners of ISU 2024 Concerto Aria Competition**

## Program Notes

### CRESTON - CONCERTO FOR ALTO SAXOPHONE

The three-movement *Concerto for Alto Saxophone* is considered one of Creston's major works, as it demands polished technique and exacting control of both the soloist and ensemble. Originally written for orchestra, the Concerto was first performed by the New York Philharmonic in 1944, featuring Vincent Abato as soloist. In 1963, Creston rescored the work for symphonic band. The first movement, *Energetic*, is in sonata form and opens with an ensemble tutti section of the first theme, followed by solo saxophone flourishes. The soloist first presents the lyrical second theme alone, followed by the oboes and clarinets. The richly lyrical second movement, *Meditative*, begins with the principal theme presented by the flute, then the bassoon. The melody is plaintively beautiful and is composed within a 5/4 meter, although the melody's rhythmic and phrasal structure does not follow the traditional bar line. Near the middle of the movement, the soloist performs a lengthy cadenza based upon the juxtaposition of melodic fragments and accompanying material presented earlier in the movement. The movement concludes much as it began, this time with the theme first presented by the oboe, continued by the solo saxophone, and ultimately yielding to a serene F-sharp-major chord.

Notes from Baylor University Wind Ensemble concert program, 2 March 2020

### RACHMANINOFF - CONCERTO FOR PIANO NO. 2

"Melody is music and the foundation of all music. I do not appreciate composers who abandon melody and harmony for an orgy of noises and dissonances," Rachmaninoff asserted. Fulfilling this credo, the composer stuffed his *Second Piano Concerto* with an abundance of emotional, unforgettable tunes. Audiences around the world were delighted. During one of his tours in the United States, Rachmaninoff said, "These Americans cannot get enough of it."

*Concerto No. 2 for Piano and Orchestra* was a personal as well as a musical triumph for the composer. During his lifetime Rachmaninoff was prone to depression, and Stravinsky used to speak of his "everlasting six and a half foot scowl." Once again, for three years, between 1897 and 1900, Rachmaninoff had been in one of his deep depressions, unstable and unable to compose. It was said that Rachmaninoff could not even look at a blank piece of manuscript paper for two years. The trigger for all of this was he combined failure of a love affair and the critical disaster of his *First Symphony*, which had stopped him in his tracks. In his *Memoirs*, the composer explained, "A paralyzing apathy possessed me. I did nothing at all and found no pleasure in anything. Half my days were spent on a couch. I had given up in great despair." Even the consoling words from the great novelist Tolstoy failed to help him.

Finally, under the hypnosis treatment of Dr. Nikolai Dahl (who had recently treated his aunt, Varvara Arkadyevna Satina) he recovered sufficiently to quit excessive drinking, to regain his will and ability to write. After the treatment, Rachmaninoff recorded; “I heard the same hypnotic formula repeated day after day while I lay half asleep in an armchair in Dahl’s study. ‘You will begin to write your concerto... You will work with great facility... The concerto will be of an excellent quality.’ It was always the same without interruption. Although it may sound incredible, this cure really helped me.” Appropriately, Rachmaninoff dedicated the work to his physician.

On October 14, 1901, he premiered his complete *Second Piano Concerto in C minor* with the Moscow Philharmonic conducted by Alexander Siloti. The outcome was wild, unfettered acclaim. (A partial Moscow premiere had taken place in December of 1900, with the second and third movements.)

The first movement, *Moderato*, opens with nine chords, stated with growing intensity from piano solo. Violins bounce from this springboard to immediately produce the first theme with collaborating piano embellishment. The soloist is brought to the forefront to introduce a yearning second theme (marked *moderato*, piano.) Both ideas are developed in lyrical fashion, with a dapper march digression from the pianist. The recapitulation focuses largely on the second theme (sung by French horn) before a bright coda brings the movement to a close.

Asafiev’s biography summarizes “[Rachmaninoff’s] music tenderly glorifies the beauty in life...the listener experiences the presence of human breathing, a vital flow of living speech, which goes from heart to heart.” And, one might add, from age to age.

Themes from the concerto have been extracted to become long-time favorites and the music was heard in several film scores such as Noel Coward’s *Brief Encounter*. Explanation for the concerto’s popularity is really quite simple. It brims with unforgettable themes and rhapsodic emotion. Emotional excess was the social norm in turn of the century Russia; melancholy was a favorite. Rachmaninoff sampled and endured many emotional states, and these were reflected in his work. “I write that which is in my heart at the time I am composing...these moods become part of my music,” he explained.

Notes by Marianne Williams Tobias, Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra

## **RIMSKY-KORSAKOV - SCHEHERAZADE**

*Scheherazade* is a wonderful piece. It is full of glorious solo opportunities. Its vitality, the charm of its tunes, and the effortless brilliance of its orchestration never fail to make an impression and to give delight.

One of the programmatic elements of which we can be certain is the portrayal of the Sultan and Sultana in the first minute. The unison and *fortissimo* proclamation that opens the work obviously represents the former, a brutal psychopath. Fairy-tale chords for soft woodwinds lead to the seductive and flattering violin-voice of Scheherazade herself.

And now the symphonic suite can begin. The first movement is spacious music—call it Prelude, call it “The Sea and Sinbad’s Ship,” or simply Allegro non troppo. The measures are broad, and the pace of harmonic change is majestic. The Sultan’s motif is the principal one; the Scheherazade violin also returns, and in a manner that suggests she is doing more than just telling stories. Development is cleverly and effectively mixed with simple statement and restatement. The chapter ends dreamily.

Scheherazade herself begins the second movement. After her brief introduction, the bassoon leads off with a wistful theme. The intensity is heightened when the oboe takes this melody, but the violins change its character to *grazioso*. Brass fanfares erupt, leading to one of Rimsky-Korsakov’s most imaginative orchestral inventions, a clarinet recitative over the unmeasured strumming of plucked strings. Fanfares again open the way to the second main part of the movement, a swift, feather-light scherzo that is both reminiscent of Berlioz’s “Queen Mab” and prophetic of Dukas’s *The Sorcerer’s Apprentice*. The fanfares return, as does the recitative, this time declaimed by the bassoon, and the movement makes its way to a brilliant ending.

The tender third movement returns to the more leisurely gait of the first. It is a lovely flow of lyric invention, scored with remarkable finesse, the writing for quiet percussion being especially charming. Scheherazade has her say, but it is with the lyric main theme that the movement comes to its gentle and smiling close.

The finale opens much as the first movement did, with the contrast of Sultan and Sultana, though this version is more elaborate. The music, after this double introduction, is quick and exciting. With the appearance of the Sultan’s theme, grandly declaimed by the trombones against swirling strings, the suite arrives at its rhetorical high point. It subsides into sinister shudderings, punctuated by a single stroke on the tam-tam—a nice instance of the composer’s elegant economy with all his colorful percussion. Appropriately enough, it is Scheherazade who has the last word. When her sinuous melody returns, her mode of address is sweet and capricious. Then she repeats way down on the fourth string and the music climbs, slowly, slowly, into the ether. This is going to be the first secure night’s sleep the lady has had in almost three years.

Notes by Michael Steinberg, San Francisco Symphony

### **Biographical Notes**

**THOMAS GUILFOYLE** is a saxophonist from Lombard, Illinois. He is a sophomore studying music education at Illinois State University where he performs with the Wind Symphony and Jazz Ensemble II. In addition, he is the lead section leader for the saxophone section in the Big Red Marching Machine. He is a member of the studio of Dr. Paul Nolen.

**JOOHEE JEONG** is an accomplished pianist and collaborative artist with extensive experience in both performance and education. She is originally from South Korea and moved to the USA to pursue her bachelor's degree. With a diverse background in music, Ms. Jeong is currently studying for the Master of Music in Collaborative Piano at Illinois State University. She previously earned a Master of Music in Piano Performance from the University of Indiana, South Bend, and a Bachelor of Music in Piano Performance, also from the University of Indiana, South Bend.

From 2016 to 2022, she served as Adjunct Piano Faculty at the University of Notre Dame, where she instructed private lessons, provided accompaniment for opera rehearsals, and served as a collaborative pianist, contributing significantly to the musical development of students in both individual and ensemble settings.

In USA, she has received numerous awards recognizing her musical achievements, including 1st prize in the ISMTA Competition in the Collegiate division, the Martin Fellowship, and 2nd prize in the IMM Collegiate Scholarship Competition.

Currently, she is a member of the studio of Dr. Geoffrey Duce, after having studied with esteemed pianists including Alexander Toradze and Ketevan Badridze.

**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. Glenn 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, Taiwan 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 Jubilee 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 Great Falls, Montana under the umbrella of the Great Falls Symphony Association. His conducting teachers include Vančo Čavdarski, Steve Pratt, Dr. James Keene and Dr. Glenn Block.

**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 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.

Beginning in May, 2024 until January, 2025, Dr. Block will be on sabbatical from ISU for the Fall semester, 2024, living in Buenas Aires, Argentina and guest-conducting orchestras and leading international conducting seminars in Argentina (Rio Negro/Patagonia, Mar del Plata, Salta, Rosario); Asunción, Paraguay (Orquesta of the Universidad de Norte (UniNorte), Orquesta de la Policia Nacional de Paraguay, Orquesta Sinfonica de la Ciudad de Asunción (OSCA)); in the Serene Republic of San Marino and in Italy.



# ISU SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Glenn Block, *conductor*

## 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

## Flute/Piccolo

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

## Oboe

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

## Clarinet

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

## Bassoon

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

## Harp

Sabrina Vaughan, *principal*

## Staff

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*  
Sam Fortuna, *co-principal*  
Lydia Cermak  
Alicia Cruz  
Jeason Lopez  
Matthew Tutterow

## Trumpet

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

## Trombone

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

## Tuba

Payton Gray, *principal*

## Timpani/Percussion

Sara Eckert, *principal*  
Matthew McAdams, *co-principal*  
Matt Boguslawski  
Jack Cacciabondo  
Hannah Fedorchak  
Kirsten Kadow

## Keyboard

Garret Kniffin, *principal*