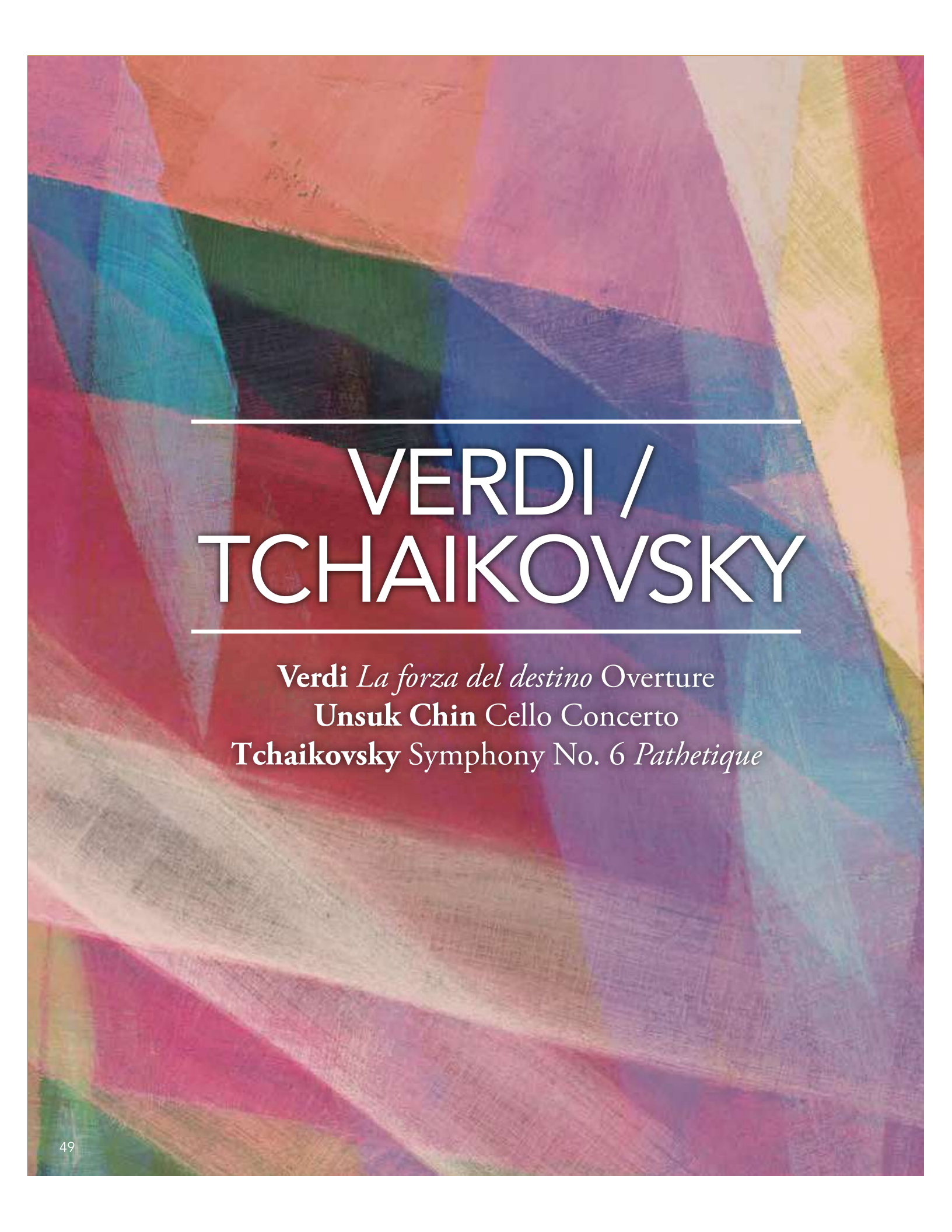




VERDI / TCHAIKOVSKY

Verdi *La forza del destino* Overture

Unsuik Chin Cello Concerto

Tchaikovsky Symphony No. 6 *Pathetique*

Sat.
FEB. 20
at 7:30pm

Sun.
FEB. 21
at 2:30pm

Pikes Peak Center for the Performing Arts

Chloé Dufresne *conductor*
Hayoung Choi *cello*

Unsk Chin's Cello Concerto sees the orchestra and soloist Hayoung Choi locked in a "psychological battle" in a surreal dreamscape where the listener is invited to make their own interpretation of what they hear. Bookending the concerto, two powerful pieces from Verdi and Tchaikovsky that speak to one another with profound emotional depth. Tchaikovsky's final completed work, Symphony No. 6 *Pathétique*, debuted nine days prior to his death. Verdi's masterful *La forza del destino* Overture adapts musical themes from his opera of the same name to demonstrate the overwhelming force of destiny.

Verdi *La forza del destino* Overture

Unsk Chin Cello Concerto
Aniri
Movement II
Movement III
Movement IV

Tchaikovsky Symphony No. 6 *Pathétique*

- I. Adagio – Allegro non troppo
- II. Allegro con grazia
- III. Allegro molto vivace
- IV. Finale: Adagio lamentoso

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CELLO

Hayoung Choi

Hayoung Choi is the First Prize Winner of the 2022 Queen Elisabeth Competition for Cello. She has also received First Prize at the 3rd Krzysztof Penderecki International Cello Competition and the Johannes Brahms International Competition, as well as awards such as the Landgrave of Hesse Prize, the Leyda Ungerer Music Prize, and the FENDI Music Award.

Driven by a deep musical curiosity, she is committed not only to the core cello repertoire but also to bringing lesser-known and rarely performed works to light.

Choi made her debut at the age of twelve with Camerata Salzburg, performing Haydn's Cello Concerto No. 1. Since then, she has appeared as a soloist with leading orchestras including the Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra, Brussels Philharmonic Orchestra, Belgian National Orchestra, Antwerp Symphony Orchestra, Luxembourg Philharmonic Orchestra, Seoul Philharmonic Orchestra, European Union Youth Orchestra, Kremerata Baltica Orchestra, Frankfurter Opern- und Museumsorchester, Poznań Philharmonic Orchestra, Kraków Philharmonic Orchestra, Boston Philharmonic Orchestra, KBS Symphony Orchestra, Orquestra Amazonas Filarmônica and Filarmônica de Minas Gerais. Highlights of the current season include her concert series as Artist in Residence at Lotte Concert Hall in Seoul; a Wigmore Hall recital with Alim

Beisembayev; and performances with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, Bremen Philharmonic Orchestra, Colorado Festival Orchestra, Brussels Philharmonic Orchestra, Oregon Symphony Orchestra, West Virginia Symphony Orchestra and the Basel Chamber Orchestra.

A passionate chamber musician, Choi has collaborated with celebrated artists such as Sir András Schiff, Gidon Kremer, Christian Tetzlaff, and Mitsuko Uchida. She regularly performs cello and violin duo works with her younger sister, SongHa.

Born in Bielefeld, Germany, in 1998, she attended the Purcell School in the United Kingdom and later studied at the Kronberg Academy and the Escuela Superior de Música Reina Sofía in Madrid under Frans Helmerson, Wolfgang Emanuel Schmidt, and Ivan Monighetti. She is currently pursuing Baroque cello studies with Lea Rahel Bader at the University of the Arts Berlin.

Hayoung Choi performs on the 1707 "Ex-Starker" Joseph filius Guarneri cello, generously on loan from an anonymous patron.

CONDUCTOR

Chloé Dufresne

See page 5 for biography

Overture to *La forza del destino*

Title: Overture to *La forza del destino*

Duration: Approximately 8 minutes

Composer: Giuseppe (Fortunino Francesco) Verdi (Born in Le Roncole, near Parma, Italy on October 9 or 10, 1813; died in Milan, Italy on January 27, 1901)

Work composed: The opera was commissioned by the St. Petersburg Opera in Russia in 1861, and it was completed in that year and then premiered in St. Petersburg in 1862. Verdi made extensive revisions to the opera in 1869, including entirely rewriting the *Overture* – this has become the standard version now performed, and its *Overture* is the version performed tonight

World premiere: After its Russian premiere in 1862, Verdi's 1869 revision, which includes this version of the *Overture*, was premiered on February 27, 1869 in Milan at the famous La Scala Opera House

Instrumentation: piccolo, flute, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba (originally written for the cimbasso – a kind of bass trombone, and the precursor to the modern tuba), timpani, bass drum, cymbals, 2 harps, strings

In 1861, the renowned Italian opera composer Verdi received a commission for a new opera from the equally renowned opera house, the Imperial Theater of St. Petersburg, Russia. Like he had done for many of his previous operas, Verdi turned to a loosely veiled theme of Italy's struggles for independence and unification (called the *Risorgimento*) that had consumed much of the 19th Century. He also returned to one of the great librettists of the day, Francesco Maria Piave (1810 – 1876), a long-time friend and librettist for nine of Verdi's previous operas. Piave based his *La forza del destino* ("The Force of Destiny") on an 1835 Spanish drama, *Don Álvaro o la fuerza del sino* ("Don Alvaro, or the Power of Fate"), by the Spanish author and politician, Ángel de Saavedra (1791–1865). The opera was completed in 1862 and premiered to resounding success in St. Petersburg.

La forza follows the plight of two ill-fated lovers, Alvaro and Leonora, and Verdi sets the story around 1750 within the larger context of Italy and Spain's earlier quest for independence from the Hapsburg juggernaut. The opera begins with Alvaro and Leonora being hopelessly in love, but Leonora's father, a Spanish Marquis (dignitary), cannot accept Alvaro's "half-caste" Peruvian-Incan blood as a sufficient lineage for his daughter, and so, the two lovers attempt to elope. The father discovers their plan and confronts them, during which Alvaro's gun accidentally fires and kills the father. The two lovers immediately separate with the hopes of reuniting later, and thus is set into motion the current of Fate that will stalk Alvaro and Leonora forever, with vows of vengeance,

mistaken identities, and unforeseen blunders ultimately resulting in death and tragedy. Verdi's original 1862 version of *La forza del destino* came with a fairly short and simple Prelude as the curtain opener. But by 1869, Verdi extensively reworked the entire opera, including writing this full-scale *Overture* that we hear tonight. Both the opera, and its masterful *Overture*, have been beloved mainstays of opera and concert halls ever since.

The new 1869 *Overture* intertwines musical themes from the opera into its fabric (although not chronologically following the opera's story), beginning with three mighty salvos, proclaimed by the brass in unison – this is the first Fate motive representing the overwhelming force of destiny that overshadows the story, heard throughout the opera and *Overture*, and which also serves to call the audience to attention. These unison brass salvos are repeated and then we are swept into Verdi's extraordinary musical journey of fate and tragedy as the violins and cellos introduce a second, more rapid Fate motive – four quickly rising notes – that repeat three times, a motive which will often accompany Leonora throughout her tragic part of the story, and which evokes the unstoppable power of Fate. Meanwhile, the trombones, bassoons and basses thrum out racing heartbeats beneath – *thump-thump, thump-thump, thump-thump*. Following the second round of those introductory brass salvos comes a gentle theme in the winds. This theme is Alvaro's aria, when, after joining the army and losing all traces of Leonora, he resigns himself to searching for a new life. Cleverly, Verdi uses the second, rapid Fate motive as a counter melody underneath – the effect is unnerving, illustrating Alvaro's struggles against the inexorability of Fate.

After about a minute, the next theme arrives in the upper strings, beautiful, beleaguered, hovering above *tremolos* (shimmering, quaking) in the lower strings. This is Leonora's aria when she pleads for divine mercy in her loneliness. Since separating from Alvaro, she's taken refuge in a cave near a Monastery in the Spanish mountains, but she finds that her life as a hermit is no salve for her broken heart and tragic circumstance. As she searches for comfort with her pining melody, here, too, the omnipresent rapid Fate motive reappears and begins to trouble the moment even more. A new theme is soon after introduced, energetic and wonderfully lyrical, and heard first in the clarinet over a harp accompaniment, from an earlier scene when Leonora has hope after entering the Monastery to find a new life as a hermit in the hills. And yet again, the rapid Fate motive crawls in to threaten its musical fabric. A brief brass chorale soon appears at about five minutes, evoking the liturgical chants from the Monastery where Leonora has taken refuge, and then, the previous themes and the rapid Fate motive combine to race this *Overture* to its exhilarating conclusion. The pacing and balance alone are stunning achievements, but most memorable is this *Overture's* emotive strength – once it launches into its first theme, the listener is entirely swept up in Verdi's swirling, fateful currents of Destiny.



Unsuk Chin

Title: Cello Concerto

Duration: Approximately 30 minutes

Composer: Unsuk Chin

Work composed: Chin was commissioned to write this Concerto by the BBC and she composed it throughout 2006-2008. It was written specifically for German cellist Alban Gerhardt, and the Concerto's first premiere occurred in 2009. Chin then revised the Concerto, in which form we hear it tonight, in 2013

World premiere: This most recent version had its premiere on June 10, 2013 with the Bavarian State Orchestra at the National Theatre in Munich, Germany, with American Kent Nagano conducting and Alban Gerhardt as the cello soloist

Instrumentation: solo cello, 3 flutes, alto flute, piccolo, 3 oboes, English horn, 3 clarinets, E-flat clarinet, 3 bassoons, contrabassoon, 4 horns, 4 trumpets, 4 trombones, bass trombone, tuba, timpani, percussion: [bass drum, bongo, chocalho, claves, crotales, cymbals, glass wind chimes, glockenspiel, güiros, maracas, marimba, metal blocks, pitched gongs, pop bottles, sandbox, sandpaper, snare drums, tambourines, tam-tams, temple bell, temple blocks, tenor drum, thunder sheet, tom-toms, triangles, tubular bells, vibraphone, whip, wood blocks, xylophone], 2 harps, piano, celesta, strings

Cello Concerto

Aniri

Movement II

Movement III

Movement IV

South Korean composer Unsuk Chin is one of the world's most widely celebrated contemporary composers. Self-taught on the piano as a youngster, she then studied formally first at the Seoul National University in South Korea, and then moved permanently to Berlin where she studied with the renowned composer, György Ligeti (1923 – 2006), a pre-eminent 20th Century avant-garde composer. Chin has won numerous accolades and awards, including the prestigious Grawemeyer Award for Music Composition in 2004 (for her 2001 *Violin Concerto No. 1*). Her works have spanned just about every genre, from piano etudes to opera, and have been commissioned and performed all across the world, from Seoul to Los Angeles, Sao Paulo to Amsterdam. Her *Cello Concerto* was commissioned by the BBC in 2006 to be premiered in that year's Proms music festival, but Chin was delayed by work on her celebrated opera, *Alice in Wonderland*, and finally completed and premiered her *Concerto* in 2009. The *Concerto* was specifically written for German cello virtuoso, Alban Gerhardt. After its premiere, Chin revised the work in 2013 into the version heard tonight.

One of the principles behind Chin's composition processes was described by her some years ago:

"I try to render into music the visions of immense light and of an incredible magnificence of colors that I see in all my dreams — a play of light and colors floating through the room and at the same time forming a fluid sound sculpture."

In that same experiential spirit, Chin has often said that she wants her music to allow the listener to be inspired to make their own interpretations of what they hear. Rather than lead the listener with a strong narrative, Chin wishes that her music will suggest and nudge us to our own personal experience.

Like Chin's dream-creation style, her *Cello Concerto* seems to linger in surreal, vivid dreamscapes. But dreams can be

fearful places as well, with night terrors and ethereal specters haunting them – these are sonic places where the *Concerto* also dwells, and occasionally, quite violently. Although Chin has usually resisted giving any narrative gloss to her compositions, in this *Concerto*, she specified that the soloist and the orchestra are engaged in a recurring “psychological battle.” The result is a multi-dimensional work filled with constantly shifting soundscapes and expressions – from musical passages of atmospherically sonic wonders, to uniquely ethereal passages, and to moments that are ferocious and downright frightening. Chin achieves much of her unique soundscapes in her *Concerto* by using modern playing techniques, including, to name only a few, different ways of producing harmonics on both winds and strings, by only tapping the keys over the holes of the wind instruments without blowing through the instrument, and especially, by using a universe of percussion instruments, both conventional and unique (such as striking empty soda bottles).

The first movement is the only one of the *Concerto*’s four with a title – “*Aniri*” – although this title is somewhat enigmatic. An “*Aniri*” is a part of an old Korean type of play called a *Pansori*, where an actor speaks and sings a narrative accompanied by a drum, and sometimes, the narrator patters gibberish in between scenes. But Chin doesn’t explain who the narrator might be, nor what or whether there is a story to tell – rather, it seems, the title exists itself as a dream totem. The movement opens with a sense of lightness and beauty, as two harps pluck slowly and dreamily. Soon, the solo cello slides into the harps’ contented sound world, and sensing that all is well, the cellist soon begins to create some lovely melodies, but this scene of contentment rather quickly evaporates.

The next several minutes of music feature increasingly interesting sound effects – glissandi and harmonics, percussive sounds, and sonics that we’ve likely never heard before (such as bamboo brushes on a timpani head, crotales being played by a string bass bow, a sandbox –what it sounds like, to make a swishing sound – and the violins rapidly depressing strings on the finger board without bowing or plucking the string). The soloist and orchestra, meanwhile, become increasingly agitated in wild gestures and restless rhythms. This soloist-versus-the-orchestra comes to several inevitably violent climaxes, the first at about six minutes.

Just after that first explosion, the orchestra remains aflame, overtop of which the solo cellist launches into exceptionally virtuosic playing. But the music soon shifts into something sonically mesmerizing. About two-and-a-half minutes later, the cello has drifted back to its opening peacefulness, while around it, the strings play a broken chorale-like passage in some of the most arrestingly ghost-like and strangely beautiful music imaginable. From here until the closing bars, a panoply of sonic wonders drift by, creepy, and unearthly, and fascinating. The solo cello then patters away over long-held notes in the strings, into the movement’s ending silence.

The second movement is brief and wild. It begins with the cello and the percussion in a kind of call-and-response shouting match. The cello slings a flurry of a few notes, to which various percussion instruments respond with an insistent tapping. Soon enough, however, as bystanding orchestral instruments crowd around, they too begin to call out the solo cellist with their own progressively aggressive flurries of notes – the makings of a sound riot. Around the middle of the movement, the solo cello seems to try to escape the whole street fight by singing increasingly higher in its range. These solos are a wonderfully strange kind of lyricism juxtaposed against the orchestra that angrily swirls underneath like a stirred-up nest of hornets. Shortly, though, the solo cello is dragged back into the fray and the last section of the movement hurls madly to its final notes.

The third movement emerges out of the resonating sound that was left over from the violent conclusion of the second movement. The music now is absolutely dreamlike, a marvel of imaginative sounds, with the solo cello fixating on one pitch, and while around it the orchestra creates hollow, wandering chords, in something like a hymn, but fractured. Nonetheless, this opening is beautiful in its dreaminess. The solo cello eventually begins to sing, lyrically, soulfully, romantically, but also as though wandering and lost in a kind of extended cadenza over orchestral chords. Into this soundscape burst two brief sonic eruptions, but the ending section becomes ever more surreal and hair raising, as the solo cello drifts higher and higher into ever-dizzying heights, while the strings and contrabassoon sink lower and lower into the earth, weighted downwards by a final soft and gravity-laden rumble of the bass drum.

The final movement begins with slashing outbursts from the piano and orchestral strings, each separated by long and silent gaps. The solo cello shouts back in a violent and long-lasting argument that Chin described as “psychological warfare.” As orchestra and cello slug back and forth, the solo cello must play with mounting, almost impossible virtuosity. Eventually, however, with both parties pummeled by the violence, another dreamscape arises, with the solo cello playing a lyrically meandering solo, over subdued strings that rise and fall in glissandi between pitches – the effect is something like floating on waves in total darkness. Perhaps, in all the rage, there is nothing left for the cellist to do but sing – and this extended passage is uncannily gorgeous. With three last shrieks from the orchestra, the solo cello again begins climbing up into the stratosphere, as if ascending, while, with astonishing inventiveness, the string basses and bass drum grumble in the lowest possible sonics, until the *Concerto* fades into a final silence.

Symphony No. 6 *Pathétique*

Title: Symphony No. 6 in B minor, “Pathétique,” Op. 74
Duration: Approximately 46 minutes

Composer: Pyotr Il'yich Tchaikovsky (Born in Kamko-Votinsk, Russia on May 7, 1840; died in St. Petersburg on November 6, 1893)

Work composed: February through August, 1893
World premiere: Tchaikovsky conducted the premiere in St. Petersburg on October 28, 1893

Instrumentation: 3 flutes, piccolo, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, (often, a bass clarinet is used for a portion of the bassoon part in the first movement), 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, bass drum, cymbals, tam-tam, strings

Symphony No. 6 *Pathétique*

- I. Adagio – Allegro non troppo
- II. Allegro con grazia
- III. Allegro molto vivace
- IV. Finale: Adagio lamentoso

By the mid-1880's, Russian composer Tchaikovsky had become a world-wide celebrity, even having somewhat of a cult following in St. Petersburg. Having by then written five symphonies with the *Fourth* and the *Fifth* bringing him considerable fame, Tchaikovsky was enthusiastically immersing himself in writing a sixth symphony starting in 1892. But along the way, he abandoned its ideas and began anew, and this “new” *Sixth Symphony* kept Tchaikovsky up at night, aflame with inspiration. When he completed it in 1893, he wrote to his favorite nephew, Vladimir Davydov, that he had written:

“...a symphony with a programme, but with a programme of a kind which remains an enigma to all – let them guess it who can. The program of this symphony is completely saturated with myself and quite often during my journey I cried profusely.”

He never explained this “programme,” nor any underlying story for his *Sixth*, but the music itself speaks volumes of emotions. And tragedy. Tchaikovsky had certainly written music that could be laden with pathos, perhaps more effectively than any other Romantic composer of his time. And he was haunted by the specter of Fate, explaining that it was “...the fatal force which prevents our hopes of happiness from being realized, and which watches jealously to see that our bliss and happiness are never complete and unclouded...”. As he progressed through his later symphonies, both his *Fourth* (1878) and *Fifth* (1888) embrace Fate and sadness to increasingly heightened degrees. The *Sixth* exhibited even more allusions to Fate, with its first movement beginning in a sobering darkness, and its finale dying away in tragic vulnerability. With its deeply emotive ending, Tchaikovsky's *Sixth Symphony* was subtitled the “Passionate” (in Russian)

by him and his brother, Modest, although shortly afterwards his title was mistranslated as “Pathétique,” which is how it's been known it ever since.

The premiere of the *Symphony* was conducted by Tchaikovsky in St. Petersburg on October 28, 1893, and it was, according to Modest, exceedingly well received. Nine days later, to the shock of the entire music world, Tchaikovsky died, with the cause of death officially listed as cholera from drinking tainted, unboiled water. Nevertheless, several of the facts surrounding his death have been in question and the mysteries and conspiracies have continued unabated to the present day; maybe it was Fate catching up to the composer after all; maybe the answers could have been found in his foreboding and mysterious “programme,” maybe it was murder disguised as a forced suicide as punishment for his homosexuality. Or perhaps, it was truly the cholera epidemic that killed him along with the 500,000 other victims in St. Petersburg that year. Today, it is hugely unlikely that we will ever know with certainty. Whatever the source of the *Pathétique's* pathos, what is knowable is that the poignancy and power of this *Symphony* make it, truly, one of the towering achievements of Western music.

The longest of the four movements by far, the first movement brings us through some incredibly heart-wrenching moments. Beginning with an introductory *Adagio* (slowly), the bassoon plays a very simple, rising four-note motive over open fifths from deep in the strings. The opening feels as though its climbing out of despair – everything is dark and murky in this moment, incarnated by Tchaikovsky with a kind of uncanny sadness. This opening is fairly brief, and the music then picks up tempo slightly to *Allegro non troppo* (fast but not too much) – here the rising four-note motive is taken up by the strings, but innovatively, it's given to the viola section, some playing in their high registers sounding like odd violins. The sound is thus slightly strained and peculiar, and despite the livelier tempo, the music is still struggling – an emotional undercurrent that pervades much of this movement. But there is some relief, and that happens at about four-and-a-half minutes with one of Tchaikovsky's most exquisite and memorable melodies, first heard in the upper string and cellos.

Many consider it a love song, and surely, it's surpassingly lovely. But the opening motive eventually returns, now in quadruple speed with an orchestra that's filled with a building anger. About nine minutes later, with menacing and mocking brass, and a timpani roll that would splinter the earth into pieces, the music culminates in a devastating climax. And then quiet. The love song returns but this time with stridency, until Tchaikovsky ends the movement in a most remarkable way: the strings begin a continuous sequence of slow and descending pizzicato, while overtop, the brass play a gentle-mannered chorale, like a benevolent epilogue quelling some of the pathos of this movement, as the music softly steps to its ever-quieting end.

The second movement, *Allegro con grazia* (fast and graceful), continues the hopeful trend left by the closing section of the first movement. And it's a miracle in itself – a lilting waltz written not in three beats but five beats to the bar. But naturally, with Tchaikovsky, the great composer of ballets like *Swan Lake* and *The Nutcracker*, the flow is seamless and the listener almost won't immediately recognize its off-balanced-ness. It's also a nod toward Russian folk music which is often cast in a lopsided meter, but with Tchaikovsky, this waltz's main theme is exceptionally tuneful and graceful. At about three-and-a-half minutes, a *Trio* (contrasting middle section) arrives, and here, over softly throbbing timpani strokes and string basses that sound like a beating heart, the upper strings portray a long sequence of sighs. The opening theme returns, with wonderful little touches from the winds and brass, and then the main theme and pulsing sighs combine to dance us into this movement's gentle close.

The third movement, *Allegro molto vivace* (fast and very lively) is, on its face, also a departure from the first movement's pathos – it's a quick-footed march, filled with effervescent melodies and catapulting energy. The opening bars begin with the strings and winds in a kind of Mendelssohn-esque gossamer fluttering of triplets, and soon the oboe presents the main theme, a light-hearted little proclamatory tune. This tune will grow with vigor, march-like, through all the instruments eventually, with an ever-growing push and verve. But as well, the fluttering triplet accompaniment will also grow in momentum and animation. The movement is a marvel of compounding excitement and a certain sort of glee, eliciting an uninhibited joy. And yet, the music eventually becomes increasingly frantic, unhinging itself, hyper-maniac, as though there is something menacing driving it all. The march ends in the kind of thrilling bombast that concluded his *Fourth Symphony*, but, as rollicking as it is, there's something hollow about it. With all its triumphal heroism, this third movement leaves us more exhausted than exhilarated – Tchaikovsky has brought the Symphony to the edge, a precipice.

The last movement, *Adagio lamentoso* (slowly and lamenting), is one of Tchaikovsky's most extraordinary innovations – ending as it does in a minor key, and softly, without fanfare, ebbing into darkness. By 1893, though a few symphonies had ended in minor keys, by convention they ended in climactic fury (Brahms' 1885 *Symphony No. 4* the best example). Not only does Tchaikovsky violate this major-key norm, but much of this finale is shrouded in whispers instead of energy and fireworks – Tchaikovsky even marking some passages to be played *pppppp* (extremely quietly). The strings begin the movement with a theme given to the violas, as he had begun the first movement, and with the bassoons bleating out lonely, distant-sounding notes high in their registers. This opening theme is a series of descending sighs, and as the bassoons begin to add more notes to their lonely response, they play a series of suspension notes – where the harmony shifts underneath the melodic line, leaving the pitch suspended and lost sounding until it drops down into the harmony – this technique had been used for several centuries to denote longing and sadness.

As the music progresses, it sinks further into sonic depths, with the bassoons the first to reach nearly the bottom of their range. That Tchaikovsky framed this finale movement to begin in such a moody, yearning way is deeply moving, but audience-goers would expect the finale to soon pick up in tempo and stretch for light. But it never really makes it there. Instead, the movement surges into impassioned climaxes that never quite break free, but instead are continually pulled back, weighted down by an inescapable burden. At about seven minutes, an eerily-soft tam-tam fills a moment of silence, and then a very solemn brass chorale stops time – it's an answer to the closing moments of the first movement, but here, the chorale is no longer benevolent, but steeped in resignation. The strings then play their opening theme again with some passion, but the remainder of the movement is destined to fade into a dark oblivion. And though this is a Symphony that clearly ends in elegiac despair it is some of the most profoundly beautiful and affecting music that Tchaikovsky ever created.

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Chloé Dufresne

Music Director

"Chloé Dufresne endeared herself with a rare combination of humility and authority... Chloé took control of the piece, telling its story, picking at its colours, literally 'conducting' its magic."

- Andrew Mellor, Gramophone.

With her clear technique, calm authority and imaginative palette, Chloé Dufresne has made her mark as a conductor only a few years since graduating from the Sibelius Academy. In 2025, she was appointed Music Director of the Colorado Springs Philharmonic and serves as Associate Artist of the Orchestre National de Bretagne and Artistic Director of Orchestre Ostinato.

A background in singing and choral conducting has led Dufresne naturally to opera, and in the 2024–25 season she conducted *Carmen* at Theater Magdeburg, *Orphée aux enfers* with Opéra national du Capitole de Toulouse, *L'Elisir d'amore* with Opéra national de Lorraine, and a new production of Leonard Evers' *Humanoid* at Semperoper Dresden. Earlier productions include *Don Giovanni*, *Norma*, *Albert Herring* and Offenbach's *Pomme d'Api* for Opéra Rouen, Opéra de Toulon, Opéra de Nice and Opéra National de Lorraine, as well as a Bayreuth production of Wagner's *The Ring for children* at the Helsinki Festival. Alongside her commitments in Colorado, this season Dufresne conducts Deutsche Staatsphilharmonie Rheinland-Pfalz, Stuttgarter Philharmoniker, Staatsorchester Rheinische Philharmonie Koblenz and Kuopio Symphony Orchestra.

In France, she returns to Orchestre National de Bretagne, Opéra Grand Avignon (with Offenbach's *La Belle Hélène*) and Opéra national de Paris for Mozart's *La Finta Giardiniera*. As well as specializing in core repertoire by composers such as Debussy, Tchaikovsky, Stravinsky, Dvořák and Beethoven, Dufresne is a strong advocate for new music and won a prize for her interpretation of music by Camille Pepin at the Besançon Conducting Competition.

Dufresne studied viola, singing and choral conducting before completing her Masters in conducting from the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki in 2020, where her teachers included Atso Almila, Sakari Oramo and Alain Altinoglu. She was a Conducting Fellow at the 2022 Lucerne Festival and a Dudamel Fellow with the Los Angeles Philharmonic.