University of Florida Performing Arts

presents

Royal Philharmonic Orchestra

Music Director: Daniele Gatti
Patron: HRH The Duke of York

with

Pinchas Zukerman, Conductor and Violinist
Jean-Philippe Tremblay, Guest Conductor

Tuesday, January 8, 2008, 7:30 p.m.

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PROGRAM

Serenade for Strings in E Minor, Op. 20
Edward Elgar

Allegro piacevole
Larghetto
Allegretto

Violin Concerto No. 1 in G Minor, Op. 26
Max Bruch

Vorspiel: Allegro moderato
Adagio
Finale: Allegro energico

Pinchas Zukerman, Violin Soloist
Jean-Philippe Tremblay, Guest Conductor

Intermission

Symphony No. 4 in F Minor, Op. 36
Pyotr Ilych Tchaikovsky

Andante sostenuto – Moderato con anima
Andantino in modo di canzone
Scherzo: Pizzicato ostinato, allegro
Allegro con fuoco

PROGRAM NOTES

Serenade for Strings in E Minor, Op. 20
Edward Elgar (1857–1934)

Elgar received his early musical training from his father, who was a church organist, and learned much about orchestration and composition by writing music for the amateur band of the Worcester County Lunatic Asylum. From these humble beginnings, he emerged as one of England’s most original and popular composers, creating such masterpieces as the Variations on an Original Theme (Enigma Variations), The Dream of Gerontius, the concertos for violin and cello and two remarkable symphonies. Elgar himself was an extremely competent violinist, which accounts for his mastery of his string writing in general and the string orchestra in particular.

The Serenade for Strings, in the form we know it today, dates from 1892, although it is most likely a re-working of a set of earlier string pieces. These Three Pieces for String Orchestra were performed in 1888 by the Worcestershire Musical Union, on which occasion the movements were described as Spring Song, Elegy and Finale, and although the manuscript has disappeared, the titles themselves seem to point to the later Serenade. Further evidence is provided by Caroline Alice Roberts, Elgar’s future wife, who attended this performance and was inspired to write a poem called On hearing some orchestral music. The poem describes melodies that tell of “rivers fringed with wavering reeds, Of hills awakening to the Spring,” whereas in the elegiac slow movement the music is “hushed to a finer mystic dream … and love and pain Now mingle in the strain again.”

The Serenade is necessarily much simpler in form and vocabulary than the later Introduction and Allegro for Strings, although its three movements are still unmistakably Elgarian, with their rich, lyrical themes and, in the middle movement, an exquisite expression of elegiac beauty. Elgar thought very highly of the piece, which he intended as a third anniversary
gift for his wife, and was greatly disappointed when his publishers rejected it as unsellable. The first performance, consequently, went to the Worcester Ladies’ Orchestral Class, conducted by the composer, and the Serenade for Strings has gone on to become one of the most popular and sellable of Elgar’s shorter works.

— Program note written by Brendan Beales

**Violin Concerto No. 1 in G Minor, Op. 26**

**Max Bruch (1838 – 1920)**

“Lovers of music ought, at this time of day, to show more gratitude to those who devote themselves to making beautiful things. It is not easy to write as beautifully as Max Bruch. ... It is really easy for Bruch to write beautifully, it is in fact instinctive for him; and such instinct is a matter which all modern critics and psychologists will agree to rate very high. Further, it is impossible to find in Max Bruch any lapses from the standard of beauty which he thus instinctively sets himself.”

— Sir Donald Francis Tovey

Born in Cologne, Max Christian Friedrich Bruch was the son of a lawyer and received his early musical training from his mother, who was a soprano and music teacher. At the age of 14 he composed a symphony and a string quartet, the latter winning him the Mozart Foundation Prize. He went on to study piano and composition with Ferdinand Hiller, Carl Reinecke, and Ferdinand Breunung, and by 1858 had established himself in Cologne both as a composer and a teacher. His subsequent career was divided between composing, teaching and directing, and he held numerous important posts, including three years as conductor of the Philharmonic Society in Liverpool. It was here that he came into contact with Liverpool’s Jewish community, for whom he composed his celebrated *Kol Nidrei* for cello and orchestra.

Although he composed several choral and orchestral works (including three concertos for the violin and one for two pianos), Bruch’s fame today rests largely on one phenomenally successful piece — the Violin Concerto in G minor. He was at work on the Concerto as early as 1864, and expressed in a letter that “I do not feel sure of my feet on this terrain.” Sure or not, the work became enormously successful, although it was to undergo considerable revision before it reached its final, finished state. Sadly, through his own misjudgment, Bruch made very little money out of his most famous work. He sold the Concerto outright, thereby depriving himself of the considerable fortune he would have made through royalties from the work’s continuing popularity with audiences.

The first movement of the Concerto is a rhapsodic prelude whose opening drum-roll and somber woodwind theme introduce an impassioned flourish on the solo violin. The orchestra soon settles down to a more regular rhythmic pattern, against which the soloist pits a new, dramatic theme. The contrasting second subject, introduced once again by the violin, is a long, *cantabile* melody that slowly climbs through the instrument’s higher register via a series of ecstatic, high trills. The foregoing material is then treated to a clear-cut series of developments, culminating in a rich *tutti* for full orchestra. The opening flourishes return, their rhapsodic gestures now heightened, to provide a transitional link to the next movement. The central *Adagio* is the emotional core of Bruch’s Concerto. It unfolds as a string of lovely themes, the first three of which are introduced by the soloist. A fourth theme emerges from these, announced initially by the horns and woodwind while the solo violin overlays its own florid gloss. These themes reappear throughout the movement, sometimes transformed by the orchestra in glowing instrumental colors and often in decorated versions by the soloist.

The final movement is a sparkling, dance-like *Allegro energico* with a strong Hungarian flavor, possibly in tribute to the famous violinist Joachim. After a few bars of “wait-for-it” preparation, the soloist enters with the main theme, much of which calls for
“quadruplestopping” on the instrument (playing all four fiddle strings at once). A transitional theme leads to the “big tune” of the movement, a soaring, triumphant melody given first by the full orchestra and then sumptuously represented by the soloist. Having mustered his melodic forces Bruch commences to reassemble them, often virtually unchanged, but moving effortlessly and effectively towards the Concerto’s exciting presto finale.

— Program note written by Brendan Beale

**Symphony No. 4 in F Minor, Op. 36**

**Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893)**

The emotionally volatile Fourth Symphony signalled a new intensity of expression in Tchaikovsky’s symphonic work. As the composer later reflected, “No one of my orchestral pieces was the result of such labour, but on no other have I worked with so much love and with such devotion.” The Symphony is dominated by a fatalistic idea which is grippingly announced at the very opening and goes on to dominate the piece in one form or another, whether subtly insinuated into the textures of the slow movement and pizzicato Scherzo, or blazing forth towards the end of the finale before it scurries away in an overwhelming wave of breathless optimism.

Tchaikovsky was blessed with one of the most profoundly instinctive of creative gifts. Far from merely representing the self-indulgent outpourings of an emotionally unstable personality, the often painful immediacy of his deeply introspective and volatile sound-world was to touch a whole generation of composers as disparate in technique as Puccini, Sibelius and Berg. Tormented throughout his life by feelings of guilt regarding his homosexuality (referred to simply as “Z” in his correspondence), it is a bitter irony that as little as 20 years after Tchaikovsky’s death, the great impresario Diaghilev could write from the admittedly racy artistic circles of Paris: “Tchaikovsky thought of committing suicide for fear of being discovered a homosexual; but today, if you are a composer and not a homosexual, you might as well put a bullet through your head.”

Tchaikovsky’s early musical progress was constantly hampered by his father’s blinkered desire to see him enter the legal profession. Despite composing his first song setting at the age of four and subsequently showing signs of exceptional talent (none of the local teachers could keep pace with him), six years later Tchaikovsky was packed off to the School of Jurisprudence. This caused him such deep distress that on the day of his arrival he had to be forcibly torn away from his mother and then clung onto the wheels of her carriage in an effort to prevent her leaving. He graduated in 1859, immediately obtained a job with the Ministry of Justice in St. Petersburg, but after three years of inexorable tedium, the 22-year-old wrote to his father informing him that he was going to make music his career. Enrolling at the conservatory in 1863, Tchaikovsky’s progress was fairly spectacular. Having composed little more than a handful of piano pieces and songs up to this point, within five years he had the remarkably assured First (Winter Daydreams) Symphony under his belt. In addition, he had been taken on as a lecturer at the newly founded Moscow Conservatory, and then in 1869 produced the first version of his seminal Romantic masterpiece, the fantasy overture Romeo and Juliet.

Despite recurring fits of depression brought about by his natural insecurity and homosexuality, this opened the floodgates to a stream of compositions over the following seven years which indisputably established Tchaikovsky as Russia’s greatest living composer, including the Second (Little Russian) and Third (Polish) Symphonies, the First Piano Concerto, the ballet Swan Lake and the Variations on a Rococo Theme for cello and orchestra (1876). That same year, Tchaikovsky began exchanging letters with a wealthy widow, Nadezhda von Meck, who offered to support him financially (and emotionally) on the rather strange condition that neither of them should ever meet. Overwhelmed by her generosity, he responded with three axiomatic, storm-tossed masterworks: the symphonic
fantasia Francesca da Rimini, the opera Eugene Onegin, and the Fourth Symphony that we hear played tonight.

Now at the very height of his powers, Tchaikovsky took the appallingly ill-advised step of marrying a psychologically wayward admirer of his, Antonina Milyukova. Tormented and repulsed, after only a few weeks he escaped to the Caucuses where he suffered a nervous collapse having made a bungled attempt at suicide. It took him nearly 10 years to recover fully artistically, for whilst a number of works he composed during the early/mid 1880s are highly popular today (the Capriccio Italien, Serenade for Strings, and 1812 Overture in particular), the music of this period, despite many felicities and moments of burning inspiration, only occasionally manages to live up to the supreme promise of his earlier work. His final years witnessed a glorious affirmation of his extraordinary creative prowess, highlighted by the ballets The Sleeping Beauty and The Nutcracker, and the Fifth and Sixth (Pathétique) Symphonies, the latter completed in the year of his death, 1893.

The Fourth Symphony (1877) was written especially with his new patron, Nadezhda von Meck, in mind — he even referred to it as “our Symphony.” Von Meck was beside herself with excitement at the time: “To tell you what ecstasies your work sent me into would be unfitting, since you are accustomed to praise and admiration from those much better qualified than a creature so musically insignificant as I. It would only make you laugh.” Tchaikovsky prepared a note for von Meck explaining exactly what he set out to achieve in this magnificent work. It provides a rare insight into the composer’s creative psyche, suggesting that no matter how complex the purely musical processes at work, the emotional impact of his work was always of paramount importance to him.

“The introduction holds the key, the essence, the primary idea of the entire symphony. It is Fate, the inescapable power that prevents one from achieving true happiness and one’s chief aims in life, which stifles peace and contentment and ensures that the sky is always clouded — a primeval force that swings, like the mighty sword of Damocles, constantly over one’s head, continually poisoning the soul. It is unstoppable and invincible. One can do nothing but submit oneself to the inevitable.

“The second movement encapsulates another form of sadness. It is the melancholic feeling that overpowers one when one sits alone at night, exhausted by the day’s labours; the book that one is reading has slipped from one’s hand and now the memories come flooding back. One looks back on the past with despair, yet feels unable to reshape and improve one’s existence. Life has lost its former allure.

“The Scherzo suggests the fleeting glimpses and indistinct shadows that drift into the imagination after one has sipped some wine and become mildly intoxicated. The mood alternates between happiness and despair. Suddenly the figure of a drunken peasant drifts into view. Military music is heard in the distance. These are striking images that drift in and out of the subconscious of the dreamer. They exist apart from reality — they are fantastic, nonsensical.

“The finale represents some jubilant celebration. If you can find no joy in your own soul, look to others. Yet just as one rediscovers feelings of happiness, inextinguishable Fate once again reminds us of its presence. While others continue rejoicing in the joy of being alive, can you still feel that the world is cloaked in sorrow? Yes — there is still happiness, unadorned and pure. Rejoice in the happiness of others and there is still some sense in being alive.”

— Program note written by Julian Haylock
BIOGRAPHIES

Pinchas Zukerman
Conductor and Violinist

Pinchas Zukerman has been recognized as a phenomenon for nearly four decades. His musical genius, prodigious technique and exceptional artistic standards have long been a marvel to critics and audiences alike. His devotion to younger generations of musicians who are inspired by his magnetism has been applauded worldwide. Equally respected as a violinist, violist, conductor, pedagogue and chamber musician, Pinchas Zukerman is a master of our time.

Currently in his ninth season as Music Director of the National Arts Centre Orchestra in 2007-08, Mr. Zukerman also conducts the Pittsburgh, Atlanta, and Colorado Symphonies this season, in addition to concerto appearances with the New York Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony and Cincinnati Symphony. He conducts and plays concerti with London’s Royal Philharmonic Orchestra both in Italy and on the Orchestra’s highly anticipated North American Tour in January 2008.

In August 2007, the Zukerman Chamber Players made their first-ever visit to South America for an eight-concert tour, followed by appearances at Switzerland’s Montreux Festival, the Enescu Festival in Bucharest, Romania, and the 10th Jewish Summer Festival in Budapest. Additional highlights of the 2007-08 season include the ensemble’s return to New York’s 92nd Street Y for a three-concert series with guest artists focusing on works by Mendelssohn, and debuts in Miami, Puerto Rico, La Jolla and Las Vegas. Upcoming recording releases are viola quintets of Mozart and Dvorák, and Schubert’s Trout Quintet and Mozart’s Piano Quartet No. 2 in E-flat Major with pianist Yefim Bronfman.

Born in Tel Aviv in 1948, Pinchas Zukerman began studying at age eight with Ilona Feher. With the guidance of Isaac Stern and Pablo Casals, and the support of the America-Israel and Helena Rubenstein Foundations, he came to America in 1962 to study with Ivan Galamian on scholarship at The Juilliard School. In 1967 he won First Prize in the 25th Leventritt Competition, setting the stage for his solo career. He has held numerous artistic positions, including Music Director of the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra for seven years and Principal Guest Conductor of the Dallas Symphony Orchestra for two years, and currently chairs the Pinchas Zukerman Performance Program at the Manhattan School of Music. In October 2002, he became the first recipient of the Isaac Stern Award for Artistic Excellence at the National Arts Awards Gala in New York City, and in May 2006 was appointed as the Rolex Mentor and Protégé Arts Initiative’s first instrumentalist mentor in the music discipline.

Pinchas Zukerman’s extensive discography contains over 100 titles and has earned 21 Grammy nominations and two awards: “Best Chamber Music Performance” in 1980 and “Best Classical Performance, Instrumental Soloist With Orchestra” in 1981. The Zukerman Chamber Players’ debut recording for CBC Records, Mozart-Zukerman, was nominated for a 2004 Juno Award in the “Classical Album of the Year: Solo or Chamber Ensemble” category.
Jean-Philippe Tremblay
Guest Conductor

Universally hailed by the Canadian press as “a great interpreter” with “a true musical vision” 28-year-old French Canadian conductor Jean-Philippe Tremblay has developed an impressive and varied international career.

Mr. Tremblay has conducted the National Symphony Orchestra in Washington, D.C., the London Philharmonic Orchestra, the Philharmonia Orchestra (London), the Prague Chamber Orchestra, the Radio Orchestra of Dresden, the Vienna Chamber Orchestra, the Tanglewood Music Center and concerts in Spain, England and France.

At home he has conducted extensively at the invitation of the Montreal Symphony Orchestra, the Laval Symphony Orchestra, the Toronto Youth Symphony, the National Ballet of Canada, Sinfonia Nova Scotia, and the National Arts Centre Orchestra in Ottawa, where he was Assistant Conductor to Pinchas Zukerman from 2001 to 2003.

Last season’s highlights include appearances with the Vienna Chamber Orchestra, the Winnipeg Symphony, and the Budapest Radio Chamber Orchestra. Upcoming engagements include concerts with the Rotterdam and Seoul Philharmonics; Ensemble Moderne Contemporain in Paris; a North American tour with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and Pinchas Zukerman as soloist; and concerts in London, Chicago and Oslo.

In addition to his extensive symphonic engagements, Mr. Tremblay is active in the operatic world, conducting each season professionally mounted productions of the great operatic classics for Jeunesses Musicales du Canada in various centers around the country.

Jean-Philippe Tremblay has been music director of l’Orchestre de la francophonie canadienne since its founding in the summer of 2001. The orchestra performs at various annual Canadian festivals and their concerts are broadcast frequently by Radio-Canada’s cultural channel.

In January 2007, Mr. Tremblay and l’Orchestre de la francophonie canadienne embarked on their first international tour to China, performing concerts and master classes in 13 different cities, the largest concert tour by a North American orchestra to visit China to date.

Active as a recording artist, Mr. Tremblay’s recently transcribed Schumann String Quartets, Nos. 1 and 3 for string orchestra have been released to critical acclaim on the Naxos label in September 2006. In the same period he released on the 21X label performances of the Bruch Violin Concerto No. 1 with violinist Alexandre da Costa followed by an all-symphonic release with l’Orchestre de la francophonie canadienne of Bruckner’s Symphony No. 7 on the Analekta label. He has recorded more than 15 concerts for CBC Radio and is an exclusive recording artist with Analekta.

Mr. Tremblay has received the Joyce Conger Award for the Arts, the Rose Roitman Award and is an honorary member of the Golden Key International Honor Society. In September, 2003, MacLeans Magazine presented him as a “Leader of Tomorrow” in its “Top 30 under 30,” celebrating young Canadian personalities. He also received the musician’s prize at the 2002 Dimitris Mitropoulos International Competition for Orchestral Conducting (Greece). In 2004-05, he was selected by Kurt Mazur and Christoph von Donhanyi as one of three participants in the Allianz International Conductors Academy in London.

An avid chamber musician, every year Jean-Philippe Tremblay swaps his baton for his viola to perform in various North American festivals. He is also Artistic Director for the
New York-based Tremblay Ensemble, and a close collaborator with Jeunesses Musicales du Canada in Montreal where he acts as a faculty member to young conductors and composers for the Young Artists Programme at the National Center of the Arts in Ottawa.

Mr. Tremblay was trained in viola, composition and conducting at the Conservatoire de musique du Québec (Chicoutimi), the faculty of music at l’Université de Montréal, the Pierre Monteux School, Tanglewood Music Center and the Royal Academy of Music in London. He has studied under such renowned artists as Robert Spano, Seiji Ozawa, André Previn, Jorma Panula, Paolo Bellomia and Michael Jinbo.

Royal Philharmonic Orchestra

Royal Philharmonic Orchestra
Music Director: Daniele Gatti
Patron: HRH The Duke of York

Founded in 1946 by Sir Thomas Beecham, with his vision of bringing world-class performances of the greatest music written to the length of the country, the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra continues to maintain Beecham’s legacy by offering audiences in the UK and abroad the highest possible standards of music-making, accompanied by some of the most acclaimed artists of the day. Since its formation, the Orchestra has been directed by some of the world’s finest conductors, most notably Rudolf Kempe, Antal Doráti, André Previn and Vladimir Ashkenazy. The RPO continues to thrive, undertaking a busy concert, touring and recording schedule, under the inspired leadership of Maestro Danièle Gatti (Music Director since 1996). The Orchestra is pleased to announce that from the beginning of the 2009-10 Season, Charles Dutoit will become Artistic Director and Principal Conductor, with Daniele Gatti continuing as Conductor Laureate.

The Orchestra is London-based — its 2007-08 Royal Albert Hall Season includes a number of spectacular concerts ranging from popular classics such as Vaughan Williams’ The Wasps Overture and Elgar’s Enigma Variations to Symphonic Rock and Filmharmonic. The series features many internationally-acclaimed artists including Leonard Slatkin, Sir Thomas Allen and John Lill. The RPO’s London Residency at Cadogan Hall complements the immensity of the Orchestra’s performances at the Royal Albert Hall by offering a range of concerts within the intimate surroundings of London’s newest concert venue. The 2007 series features artists of the caliber of Sir Andrew Davis, Tasmin Little and Vernon Handley. The RPO also looks forward to performing a new series of concerts at the newly refurbished Royal Festival Hall in spring 2008.

The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra uses its schedule in the capital as the springboard for a comprehensive regional touring program around the UK including residencies in Northampton, Croydon, Lowestoft, Wimbledon, Catford and Crawley. The Orchestra also plays to tens of thousands of people across the country in open-air concerts throughout the summer months each year.

As an international orchestra, the RPO has toured more than 30 countries in the last five years, including performances for the late Pope John Paul II in the Vatican and the President of China in Tiananmen Square. Recent tours have included the RPO’s first ever
tour to Egypt, performing in the Cairo and Alexandria opera houses with Leonard Slatkin, and performances in France, Spain, Italy and Germany.

The RPO extends its artistic work through a vibrant and innovative Community and Education program. Using music as a powerful and motivating force, the RPO works in a variety of settings including projects with young homeless people, youth clubs, the probation service, schools and families. RPO Community and Education projects promote live music-making, reflecting the diversity of the individuals involved, as well as the Orchestra’s own background.

The RPO records widely for all the major commercial record companies and also has its own record label, which includes the popular Here Come The Classics™ series. These recordings reflect the versatility of the RPO’s repertoire, ranging from popular orchestral and choral works to film classics and music from the musicals.

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Phil Woods
Andrew Fletcher
John Thurgood

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BRIAN THOMSON
Mike Allen
Adam Wright

Trombone
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Rob Tooley
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Tuba
KEVIN MORGAN

Timpani
MATT PERRY

Percussion
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