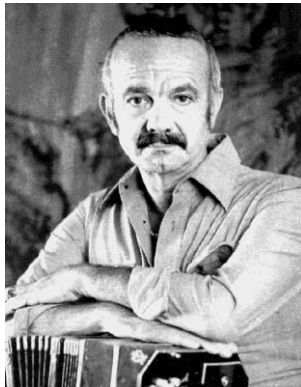


Travis Hatton, Music Director

Fall Concert: Passion



7:30pm Friday, November 9, 2018
3:00pm Sunday, November 11, 2018

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It's hard to imagine a violinist better suited to play Piazzolla's music than **Tomás Cotik**. Born in Buenos Aires, he has, in the words of one reviewer, "lived and breathed Piazzolla's music for the better part of his life." Cotik agrees, remembering that Tango was always "in the background" as he was growing up. "It was present on TV and on the radio." It was "played by busking bandoneón players on the subway stations of the "D" line...."

Cotik's early focus was on classical music. When he was living abroad in Germany, he remembers, "my main focus remained classical music, but a few years later I wrote a thesis about Piazzolla's music at the University of Music Freiburg. I had already played some of his music, acquired many of his albums, and wanted to read as much as possible about him and his music." Later, "I kept dabbling in the Nuevo Tango, including playing Piazzolla pieces in recitals and quartet concerts...." Cotik has recorded two CDs of Piazzolla's music with pianist Tao Lin. "For years," he writes, "I had tried to

find Tango sheet music in my sporadic visits to Buenos Aires.... I discovered some very good arrangements and decided to adapt some other pieces myself Piazzolla's music appeals to me not only as an Argentinean, but also as a classical musician. I hear aggression and madness, the honking, the chaos, the drunkenness, dizziness and the energy of the megalopolis of Buenos Aires. In Piazzolla's slow melodies, I perceive smoky atmospheres and veiled feelings, vegetative states of mind, wistfulness, nostalgic love...."

On one of these CDs, Cotik performs, with piano and percussion, his adaptation of *The Four Seasons of Buenos Aires*

Cotik, who earned his Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the University of Miami, is currently Assistant Professor at Portland State University. A veteran of more than fourteen CD recordings, he previously partnered with pianist Tao Lin to produce an album of sixteen Mozart sonatas for violin and piano, and the complete works of Franz Schubert for violin and piano, which *Fanfare* magazine compared favorably with the classic recording by Rachmaninoff and Kreisler.

Beaverton Symphony Orchestra

Travis Hatton, Music Director

Christina Rusnak

The Mountain Within (2015)

Astor Piazzola
(1921-1992)

The Four Seasons of Buenos Aires (Cuatro Estaciones Porteñas)

Summer (Verano Porteño) (1965)

Winter (Invierno Porteño) (1969)

Spring (Primavera Porteño) (1970)

Autumn (Otoño Porteño) (1970)

Tomás Cotik, violin

I n t e r m i s s i o n

Pyotr Ilych Tchaikovsky
(1840-1893)

Symphony No. 4 in f minor, Op. 36 (1877-8)

Andante sostenuto – Moderato con anima –

Moderato assai, quasi Andante, Allegro vivo

Andantino in modo di canzone

Scherzo: Pizzicato ostinato

Finale: Allegro con fuoco

Program Notes by Hugh Ferguson

Christina Rusnak – *The Mountain Within*

The Northwest Composer featured in today's concert is Portland resident Christina Rusnak. An avid hiker, Rusnak merges her love of place with her passion for composition. She is especially fond of the massive Denali National Park in Alaska, which encompasses nearly 10,000 square miles (about the size of Vermont) and boasts the highest peak in North America, Denali (previously known as Mt. McKinley). She has hiked its rugged terrain repeatedly, and has several compositions to show for it.

It was in grad school, she writes, that she realized “I needed to try to fuse my passions: Music and Place. . . . So I began looking for compositional opportunities with site-specific meaning or the chance to interpret a place through music.”

The Mountain Within is an example. She wrote it after her third visit to Denali, in 2015. {It} “examines the inner layers of our humanity” she explains, “as a hiker explores the park.”

“I’ve been composing since I was 9 years old,” she writes, “– very prolifically during my high school years, but ended up with a business degree in college. I never stopped writing, and in my 30’s I began studying composition again.” Early influences included Mendelssohn, Chopin, Bach, Ravel, Bartok, and Ginastera. And there was also Herbie Hancock, Chick Corea, Jean Luc Ponté, and the Yellow Jackets. “Avishai Cohen is one of my contemporary favorites,” she says, “and I am a huge fan of South American jazz. . . . I found jazz to be a creative respite to my theory and music history classes.”

She received her master’s in music from the University of North Texas in 2010, and moved to Portland in 2012.

“The process I love/hate the most,” she says, “is the rigor of trying to convey on paper what my imagination believes could be the potential of a musical element – motive, theme or gesture. Composing is both the hardest and MOST JOYFUL thing I do. I love the learning that comes with every piece.”

The Mountain Within is the third piece by Rusnak that was inspired by Denali. “My first two pieces,” she explains [*Flow*, in 2012 and *Teklanika* in 2013] “focused on the river as it transforms over time and the topography and geological forces that shaped the park.”

Scored for string orchestra — violins, violas, cellos, and string bass — its performance time is just under eight minutes.

Astor Piazzolla and the New Tango

Astor Piazzolla [1921-1992] is recognized as the man who more than anyone else revolutionized the traditional Argentine tango, creating a new version — *Nuevo Tango* — that incorporates elements from jazz and classical music. A virtuoso on the bandoneón, an accordion-like instrument with buttons instead of a keyboard, Piazzolla performed his own compositions on it throughout his career.

A gifted arranger and bandleader, he experimented ceaselessly with different ensembles, but his favorite was the quintet, consisting of bandoneón, electric guitar, violin, piano, and

double-bass.

Born in 1921 in Mar del Plata, a seaside resort city about 250 miles south of Buenos Aires, the only child of Italian immigrant parents, Astor was born with a badly twisted right leg that several surgeries — begun in his second year -- only partially corrected. He would always walk with a limp, even when grown to his full adult height of 5' 6".

When he was four, the family moved to Greenwich Village in New York City. He grew up listening to his father's records of tango orchestras, jazz, and classical music. On the streets, Astor soon learned to take care of himself despite his limp. He earned the nickname "Lefty" because of his stiff, left-handed punch.

When he was nine, his father bought him a second-hand bandoneón. "To give pleasure to the old man, I clumsily tried to learn," he recalled, "and I was dreadfully bad." Three teachers gave up on him, but when he eventually began applying himself, his progress was astonishing. He played a tango in public, and was intoxicated by "being on stage, being applauded by people." He was hooked. He was eleven.

Music became the core of his existence. He took piano lessons from a neighbor who had studied with Rachmaninoff, and who introduced him to the music of Bach. He began playing more and more in public.

When he was 15, the family returned to Mar del Plata, and Astor began playing the bandoneón in local tango orchestras. But seeing no future as a musician there, he soon left his family and moved to Buenos Aires. He found work with a prominent tango orchestra there, but hated the atmosphere of the cabaret, and the musical limitations of tango. He longed to get into symphonic music.

The next several years found him striving relentlessly to become a classical musician, using pay from his tango gigs to pay for lessons with the classical composer Alberto Ginastera and the pianist Raúl Spivak. He studied the scores of Stravinsky, Bartók, and Ravel, and rose early each morning to listen to the rehearsals of the opera house orchestra. "In my head I had Bach and Schumann and Mozart," he would say later, "and very little tango."

He wrote a symphony, entered it in a contest, and won a year's study in Paris with the legendary French composition teacher Nadia Boulanger. He went there determined to become a classical composer, but when Boulanger heard him play a tango, she told him firmly, "*This is Piazzolla! Don't ever leave it!*"

Back home, (arriving in the spring of 1955) he took Boulanger's advice to heart. The tango he had grown up with was an overtly sexy dance, born in the back alleys and brothels of Buenos Aires. He now formed an octet and wrote tangos for it that combined elements of Argentinean folk music with those of contemporary classical, jazz and popular music. The result was as suitable for the concert hall as for the dance floor. He so transformed this *tango de la guardia vieja* (tango of the old guard) that it hardly seemed connected to its ancestor. He had created a new tango, a *tango nuevo*.

It was a long time catching on. After a couple of years he moved to New York, where his "Jazz-Tango" won few adherents. In June of 1960, he sailed for home. He had to borrow money for the trip.

Buenos Aires welcomed him back. TV stations invited him to appear, and journalists found him to be “good copy.” He formed the *Quinteto Nuevo Tango*: bandoneón, piano, violin, electric guitar, and double bass. Demand for him as performer, conductor, arranger, and composer was growing. Radio gigs and TV appearances established him as a cultural icon. He wrote ten film scores between 1950 and 1967. He was on his way.

On May 19, 1970 the *Quinteto* premiered *Cuatro Estaciones Porteñas: The 4 Seasons of Buenos Aires* at the Teatro Regina.

His popularity surged. He answered calls to perform in Europe, South America, Japan, and the United States, usually with the quintet, but also as a soloist with symphony orchestras and chamber groups. He continued to write chamber music and symphonic works, works that were increasingly taken up by classical performers such as the Kronos Quartet.

On August 4, 1990, in Paris, he suffered a stroke that left him in a coma. He never regained consciousness, and died in Buenos Aires, almost two years later on July 4, 1992. His opus comprises more than 1000 works.

On August 20, 2008, the Mar del Plata airport was renamed the Astor Piazzolla International Airport.

Astor Piazzolla didn't write this arrangement of *The Four Seasons of Buenos Aires*, never heard it performed, and was in fact dead by the time it came into being. But Piazzolla's genius infuses it, and no one familiar with his work could mistake its musical personality — its rhythms, harmonies, dissonances, melodies, harsh percussive effects — for that of anyone but Piazzolla.

He probably didn't have a four-movement suite in mind when, in 1965, he composed what stands today as the “Summer” portion of *Las Cuatro Estaciones Porteñas*. He had just returned from a U.S. tour when he suddenly realized that he had promised to have four pieces ready for a recording session scheduled for the next day, and he hadn't yet written a note. Overnight, he produced the four promised pieces, one of which is “Summer,” or *Verano Porteñas*.

Not until four years later did he write “Otoños” (“Autumn”). Another year passed before, in 1970, he composed both “Primavera” (“Spring”) and “Invierno” (“Winter”).

Piazzolla, who had spent decades studying classical music, was well aware that the title would call to mind the famous, centuries-old *Four Seasons* of Vivaldi, and in a musical acknowledgement, he quoted a passage of Vivaldi in the closing bars of *Invierno*.

In the late 1990's, several years after Piazzolla's death, the Latvian violinist Gidon Kremer commissioned an arrangement in which he, Kremer, would be the soloist, accompanied by string orchestra. The arranger, Leonid Desyatnikov, expanded on Piazzolla's allusions to Vivaldi. James M. Keller, program annotator of the New York Philharmonic, claims to have counted “15 quotations of varying lengths that intensify the link between Piazzolla's pieces and Vivaldi's” in Desyatnikov's arrangement.

It is that arrangement that we hear today. See how many you can find!

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky and the genesis of his Fourth Symphony

In the spring of 1877, thirty-six-year-old Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky was enjoying a situation many young composers could only dream of: the mega-wealthy widow of a railroad baron had approached him and asked him please, *please* could she be his patron.

It got even better: He had to promise that there would never be any personal contact. For Tchaikovsky, who harbored a revulsion against any physical relation with the opposite sex, this was the stuff dreams are made of. Nadezhda von Meck would send him 500 rubles a month, they would be pen pals, and he would no longer have to teach composition at the Conservatory. From now on he could devote all his time and energy to composing.

That was the rosy position in which he found himself in May 1877 as he began work on what would be his Symphony No. 4 in F Minor. Then another letter arrived, from another female admirer. It would drive him to the verge of suicide.

The letter was from Antonina Milyukova, who claimed that she had been in one of the classes he had taught at the Conservatory, and that she was madly in love with him. He had no memory of her, and, as he wrote von Meck, had “lived thirty-seven years with an innate aversion to marriage.” Then again, he had actually been considering marriage for almost a year, in the hope that it would dispel the rumors of his homosexuality.

And so on June 1, 1877, Tchaikovsky halted work on the first three movements of his symphony to call on Antonina for the first time. A day or two later he proposed. On July 6, they got married.

Tchaikovsky had a profound physical aversion to his bride, but he believed cohabitation with her would be bearable since he had done all he could to make clear to her that their relationship was to be strictly platonic. The message had not gotten through to Antonina, though, and when Tchaikovsky realized this it threw him into a suicidal state. A psychiatrist prescribed a complete change of scenery and a permanent separation from Antonina.

Thanks to von Meck’s stipend and his supportive siblings, Tchaikovsky was able to follow his doctor’s orders. His brother Anatoly took him to Switzerland, then on to Paris and Italy. He arranged for the unfinished manuscript of the Fourth Symphony to be sent to him from Moscow and he completed the scoring in Venice during January 1878. “In my heart of hearts I feel sure it is the best thing I have done so far,” he wrote von Meck.

Others were not so sure. Tchaikovsky was still in Italy when Nikolai Rubinstein conducted the premiere on February 22, 1878 in Moscow to rather tepid response. It was better received at its St. Petersburg premiere the following November, but in 1890, reaction to the premiere in the United States was harsh. The New York Post reviewer wrote, “The Fourth Tchaikovsky Symphony proved to be one of the most thoroughly Russian, i.e. semi-barbaric, compositions ever heard in the city.” Three years later, though, its premier in Britain was a sell-out, and enthusiastic applause followed every movement. Today it is a staple of the orchestral repertoire and one of the most frequently performed symphonies of the late 19th century.

The Orchestra

Violin I

Rachael Susman, *Concertmaster*
David Abbott
Sarah Brody Webb
Anne Haberkern
Pamela Jacobsen
Susan Booth Larson
Kris Oliveira
Don Power
Spencer Shao
Regan Wylie
Anne Young

Violin II

Robin Erickson, *Principal*
Maria Cardona
Nancy Downie
Caroline Fung
Elle Hohn
Veronika Kuznetsova
Christina Reynolds
Andrew Shu
Laura Semrau
Nancy Vink

Viola

Bev Gibson, *Principal*
Jane Brown
Jean Daniels
Samrah Elainie
Lindsey Lane
Adele Larson
Jazzy Leemhuis
Jillian Logsdan
Ethan Smith

Cello

Marcy England, *Principal*
Kristin Dissinger
Mark Doroshkin
Mark Hankin
Holly Hutchason
Michelle McDowell
Jackson Ross
Janelle Steele

Bass

Veronika Zeisset, *Principal*
Carl Geczy-Haskins
Vyatas Nagisetty
Deanna Pretlow
Emily Wood

Flute & Piccolo

Ellen Berkovitz
Linda Hartig
Jerry Pritchard

Clarinet

Kelly Lantz
Milt Monnier

Oboe

Sharon Ross, *Principal*
Lindsey Meyers

Bassoon

Tricia Gabrielson, *Principal*
Nancy Pierce

French Horn

Kippe Spear, *Principal*
Jennifer Anderson
Heather Campbell
Greg Gadeholt

Trumpet

Mayne Mihacsi, *Principal*
Jason Bills

Trombone

Paul Hanau, *Principal*
John Zagorski
Eric Olson

Tuba

Jay Klippstein

Percussion

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Symphony Best Friend

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Jerry Bobbe
Lucy Brehm
Jane Brown
Patricia Campbell
Nancy & Chris Carter
Richard Crimi
Dave & Wendy DeHart
Sharon Eng
Roxanne Goebel
Scott & Ann Hutchason
Claudia Hutchison

Symphony Best Friend (cont.)

P D Johnston
Sean & Nina Kelley
Howard E Kronish
Gerard Lais
Dora Lan
Gerald Lindgren
Fay Littlefield
Moreen Madson

James Main
Richard & Jean Miyahira
Catherine Mock
Milt Monnier
Christine Myers
Frieda F Pardo
Rose Mary Payne
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Other levels

Kris Oliveira

In memory of my mother and sister

Nancy Vink

In memory of Terry Hu Culter

Don & Carole Anderson,
Martha England

In memory of Mary Musa

Bev Gibson, Vicki Hilgers,
Jodi Wells, Susan Donora,
Marcia Kahn, Jackie Flynn

In honor of Conrad Brown

Robert Elgin

In memory of Leroy Steinmann

Sharon Ross

In memory of Peter Weis

Martha England

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Sunday January 20, 2019 at 3:00 pm

The Westside Youth Choir joins the BSO for a special Family concert featuring works for voices and orchestra, Modest Mussorgsky's frightening *Night on Bald Mountain*, and his monumental suite *Pictures at an Exhibition*, accompanied by an exciting new video presentation prepared especially for the BSO.

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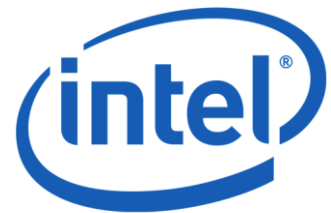
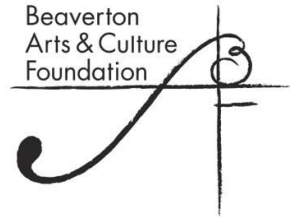


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Travis Hatton, Music Director

Travis Hatton's versatile conducting career spans a broad range of musical organizations around the world. He has led opera and ballet companies throughout Europe and America, and has appeared as a guest conductor with orchestras in Poland, Slovakia, the Czech Republic and in Boston, Tennessee, Indiana, California, Alaska, Colorado, Washington, Oregon and Texas. He holds a Bachelors of Music degree (awarded Magna Cum Laude) in Music Theory and Composition from the University of the Pacific and a Masters of Music degree in Orchestral Conducting from the New England Conservatory of Music.



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