

January 16, 2027

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Yaniv Dinur, *Conductor*

Alexander Korsantia, *Piano*

Ludwig van BEETHOVEN
(1770-1827)

Piano Concerto No. 4 in G major, Op. 58
Allegro Moderato
Andante con moto
Rondo (Vivace)

INTERMISSION

UnsuK CHIN
(b. 1961)

subito con forza

Ludwig van BEETHOVEN
(1770-1827)

Symphony No. 5 in C minor, Op. 67
Allegro con brio
Andante con moto
Scherzo: Allegro
Allegro

Mr. Korsantia is represented by Felsner Artists.

Stage flowers provided by Hilly Fields Florist

Thanks to Saginario Tuning & Pianocraft for support in presenting Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 4



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Born in Bonn, Germany, **Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827)** had hoped to study with Mozart in Vienna, but his plans changed when his mother's death and his father's alcoholism made it necessary for him to assume financial responsibility while still a teenager. However, at twenty-two he moved to Vienna, studied with Haydn (Mozart had died the previous year), and remained there until his death. He was well known as a virtuoso pianist before his increasing deafness around the age of thirty made it difficult for him to perform. Beethoven's performance as soloist at the 1808 premiere of Piano Concerto No. 4 was one of his last as a pianist. In addition to the concerto, the program included the Choral Fantasy, the premieres of the Symphonies No. 5 and No. 6, as well as solo works and excerpts of larger works. Can you imagine a twenty-first century audience sitting through a four-hour Beethoven concert as the Viennese public did that December 1808?

Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 4:

It was customary for concertos to start with an orchestral exposition that states all the first-movement themes before the soloist enters and re-states the themes. Beethoven, ever the revolutionary, flaunts tradition by beginning the **Fourth Concerto** with a hymn-like passage played by the pianist; the orchestra repeats the chordal theme almost immediately but in a different key. A triadic secondary theme in dotted rhythm appears in the violins, imitated by oboe and then by flute. Along with the closing theme, these ideas are expanded, often by rhythmic variation. Throughout the concerto there are many solo piano passages of two-against-three notes, extended arpeggiations in the left hand, tricky passages of legato thirds, as well as double- and triple trills. In the middle of the **Allegro moderato**, an orchestral chord progression leads

one to expect a cadenza, and the soloist begins the primary theme with passionate *fortissimo* chords, but then the orchestra reappears to play the theme while the pianist provides an exquisite accompaniment in the treble register. Later, a true cadenza allows the soloist to further expand on the themes while demonstrating technical and artistic ability. Declamatory, unison strings play a dotted rhythm to begin the **Andante con moto**. The soloist quietly counters with reflective chords. A dialogue ensues between the lyrical piano part and the insistent orchestral theme, which foreshadows the fourth movement instrumental recitative in Beethoven's Ninth Symphony (1822–24). Beethoven indicates that the pianist should depress the *una corda* ("soft") pedal until the final measure of the movement, which segues immediately into the **Rondo**. The energetic rondo theme alternates between solo and orchestra. An especially lovely secondary episode contains a sweet contrapuntal conversation between piano and winds that again foreshadows the Ninth. Beethoven has great fun altering the character of the main theme by transposing to various keys and providing variations on his idea. After another solo cadenza, the concerto ends with one last elated return to the primary theme.

subito con forza

Un Suk Chin (b. 1961), a self-taught pianist, studied composition at Seoul National University in her native South Korea. A 1985 grant to study in Germany resulted in her working for three years with György Ligeti at the Hochschule für Musik und Theater Hamburg. Now based in Germany, she credits such diverse composers as Bartók, Debussy, Webern, Xenakis, Stravinsky, and Ligeti as important influences in her compositional style. Chin's music has been performed all over the world by such eminent conductors as Gustavo

Dudamel, Simon Rattle, Esa-Pekka Salonen, and Yaniv Dinur. Works include concertos for violin and for cello, opera, pieces for orchestra and voices, and electronic music. One interesting aspect of some of her vocal works is her use of anagrams, palindromes, and acrostics to inform her musical structure. Tonight's composition, **subito con forza** (Suddenly with force), was commissioned by BBC Radio 3, the Kölner Philharmonie, and the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra. Premiered by the latter ensemble in Amsterdam on 24 September 2020, the dedication reads, "On the occasion of the 250th anniversary of Beethoven's birth." Eerie *ppp* strings, harmonics in the violins (high overtones), sustained clarinet pitches, and intrusions from the piano and percussion, along with glimpses of Beethoven, create what could be a slasher movie soundtrack.

DID YOU KNOW?

Sometimes Charles Schulz sketched actual excerpts of Beethoven's music for Schroeder to play in the *Peanuts* comic strip. He personally preferred the music of Brahms, but he thought that Beethoven was a funnier name

Beethoven's Symphony No. 5:

Are there any more famous four notes in music than the opening of Beethoven's Fifth? Even if one doesn't hear the pitches (three repeated notes followed by a descending minor third), the rhythm alone (short-short-short-long) is instantly recognizable. After those first four notes are immediately repeated a step lower, Beethoven extends the idea and uses a horn call based on the motto to form the bridge to the more lyrical second theme, for which the four-note motto provides accompaniment. Finally, a very energetic closing theme involves multiple repetitions

of the motto before the exposition is repeated. Note the effective use of silence and the dialogues between instruments. Beethoven increases the drama and tension with unexpected contrasts of dynamics. Two things you might not have previously paid attention to: (1) just as the recapitulation begins with the repeated four-note motto, there is an unexpected detour for a brief, poignant oboe solo; (2) the composer introduces an emphatic new theme in the expanded coda. The form of the **Andante con moto** is a double variation—two themes are varied through rhythmic modification, changes in harmony and instrumentation, and alternation of mode (major/minor). The first is a genteel theme for violas and cellos; the second theme is initially heard in clarinets, bassoons, and violins while lower strings provide a triplet accompaniment. The

melody becomes a regal fanfare when the trumpets and horns take over. Listen carefully for the rhythmic four-note motto in the background. In the third movement, **Scherzo: Allegro**, instead of the courtly minuet and trio associated with Haydn and Mozart, Beethoven inserts a scherzo and trio (scherzo= Italian for “joke,” suggesting a more light-hearted, less aristocratic movement). It begins with cellos and basses playing a “sneaky” *pianissimo* theme that outlines a minor chord. A secondary theme in the horns uses the short-short-short-long rhythm of the opening motto (old rhythm, new melody). Cellos and basses are featured again at the beginning of the trio section. When the scherzo returns, the sneaky theme is now pizzicato; the horn motive is also transformed with quiet clarinets, oboe, and plucked violins. A truly stir-

ring feature of this composition is Beethoven’s segue to the finale; a sustained chord in the strings over regular timpani pulses unleashes an epic crescendo that bursts into the **Allegro**. Another thing to note in this perhaps too-familiar work is the repetition of the short-short-short-long theme from the scherzo; its hushed transformation is eerie, especially as it gives way to a climactic recapitulation of the triumphant first theme. The symphony is a victorious transcendence over darkness and despair.

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Dr. Akers has a Master of Music degree in Piano Performance from Indiana University and a Ph.D. in Historical Musicology from Florida State University

Dr. Ruth Ruggles Akers has been writing the TSO program notes since 2006. Most recently a professor of music history/literature and OLLI classes at Florida State University, she previously taught at Palm Beach State College and Florida Atlantic University, and she was an artist-in-residence at the Dreyfoos School of the Arts in Palm Beach. Currently a member of the Opening Nights Development Council and the FSU College of Music Dean’s advisory council, she previously served on the FSU Foundation Board of Trustees, FSU’s national Alumni Association board, TSO’s board, and the Community Foundation of North Florida. She and Les, her husband of fifty-one years, support many of the cultural organizations in our capital city. They have three children, two children-in-law, six charming and talented grandchildren, and a crazy rescue beagle. If they are not in the audience at a musical event, they can probably be found at an FSU game—football, basketball, baseball, softball, soccer . . .