



## Legato in Times of Staccato

### Playlist 8 - Tuesday, May 26th, 2020

Curated by Music Director, Fouad Fakhouri

#### [Wagner: Götterdämmerung - Siegfried's Death and Funeral March](#)

*Die Götterdämmerung* (The Twilight of The Gods) is the last of four operas that make up Wagner's Ring Cycle. In the final act, the hero, Siegfried, is murdered, and his body is carried on his shield offstage to the somber music of a funeral march. Several motifs from earlier in the opera come back as if to recount the hero's life. About mid-way through the piece as the music swells, the motif of the magic sword triumphantly appears through the voice of a solo trumpet, and Siegfried's own heroic motif appears soon after in the horns. The death theme returns to the end scene.

#### [Carl Orff: Carmina Burana](#)

*Carmina Burana* is the title given to a 13th-century manuscript discovered in a village in Bavaria in 1803. The manuscript included roughly 250 medieval songs and poems about a wide range of mostly secular topics including love, nature, and fortune. Early medieval musical manuscripts did not indicate exact pitches or rhythms and contained no specific instrumental accompaniments or harmonies. Drawing on his own knowledge of medieval music reconstruction, Carl Orff composed the choruses based on the rhythmic and melodic meters of the poems themselves, and he used a large orchestra to create an array of colorful interludes and accompaniments to offset the simplicity of the choruses.

#### [Horowitz plays Schumann: Traumerei in Moscow](#)

#### [Horowitz plays Scriabin: Etude for Piano in C# Minor, Op. 2 No. 1](#)

In April 1986, at the age of 81, renowned pianist Vladimir Horowitz returned to the Soviet Union for the first time in 61 years to give recitals in his homeland. His performance in Moscow was a huge political and musical event that was televised internationally and later put on DVD. Crowds gathered outside the already over-packed Moscow Conservatory, trying to push their way past police barricades to witness the performance. As seen in these two recordings, audiences were visibly overcome by Horowitz's breathtaking artistry and virtuosity in performing the music of Rachmaninov, Scriabin, and Liszt, among



## Legato in Times of Staccato

others. Horowitz performed Schumann's *Träumerei* as one of three encore pieces that had audiences crying and emotionally transfixed by the music.

Four selections by Elizabeth Yeager-

### [Beethoven: Symphony No. 9](#)

Ludwig van Beethoven was almost completely deaf when he completed his ninth symphony in 1824. Music historians and theorists often hold that the piece embodies Beethoven's painful journey with his hearing loss – it seems to speak of loneliness, frustration, struggle, and personal loss. The choral finale is where sound is literally given a voice in celebration of what music was to Beethoven. Imagine being a composer slowly losing the abilities needed to create and communicate your feelings and your art.

### [Karl Jenkins: Pie Jesu from Requiem](#)

Composer Karl Jenkins often draws from other cultures when composing music. His *Requiem*, composed in 2005, is an unconventional setting of the standard Latin Requiem Mass. The music combines 16th-century Latin prayers, sung with Western orchestration and choral harmonies, with 17th- and 18th-century Japanese death haikus, sung with Japanese flute and melodic styles.

### [Kathleen Battle - Pie Jesu - Requiem - Gabriel Fauré](#)

Gabriel Fauré's *Requiem* is unlike other requiems in that it focuses on comforting mourners rather than the magnitude of death. The overall temperament of the work is soothing with its delicate textures, subtle harmonies, and generally quiet nature.

### [Dire Straits - Walk of Life](#)



## Legato in Times of Staccato

Selection by Chuck Pugh-

### Grieg: Piano Concerto in A Minor

The dramatic three-note motif that famously opens this piece is widely known as Grieg's melodic fingerprint. Grieg was an admirer of Schumann and piano concerto enthusiasts often note the similarities of Grieg's Piano Concerto in A minor with Schumann's Piano Concerto. Both are in the key of A minor and begin with a flourish of descending notes from the piano. However, Grieg's opening motif, which is prominent in Norwegian folk-music, has appeared in several of his compositions and reflects of his native Norwegian culture.

Selection by Josh White-

### Debussy: La Mer

Josh White says the following about his choice:

"I could listen to Debussy's La Mer every day and I still hear amazing things I had not noticed before! It has been on my iPod Classic since 2009 (I am old school lol), and I am still amazed by this work!"

*La mer*, subtitled "Three Symphonic Sketches," is a sentimental musical portrait of Debussy's time at Cannes in the summers when he was a child. The first sketch recalls the wondrous moments of illumination as the sun rises over the sea at dawn. The second sketch reflects the playful nature of the waves, and the last sketch captures the sometimes violent dynamics between sea and air.

Selection by Jenny Oliver-

### Simon & Garfunkel: The 59th Street Bridge Song

Jenny says the following about her choice:

"This is my 'soundtrack to life' song. Short, simple, and puts me in a good mood. I try to start every day with this attitude!"



## Legato in Times of Staccato

Selection by Matt English--

### [Mahler: Symphony No. 2](#)

Symphony No. 2 in C minor ("Resurrection Symphony") took Mahler six years to complete. The story arc, expressed in five movements, follows man's questioning of the meaning of life and death. The first movement poses the question "What is this life – and this death? Do we have an existence beyond it?"; the second and third movements question the significance of our daily actions; the fourth movement reflects the human desire to turn to God and faith; and the final movement paints a picture of the Last Judgment and the rise to Heaven.

Two selections by Hannah Wadley

### [Richard Strauss: Don Juan Op. 20](#)

Hannah says the following about her choice:

"I can never get enough of this piece. It's beautiful, chaotic, and powerful. There is never a dull moment in Strauss pieces."

Richard Strauss' inspiration to compose music about one of literature's greatest characters, Don Juan, came from an unfinished retelling of the tale by poet Nikolaus Lenau. Lenau envisioned Don Juan as a romantic dreamer instead of a cruel seducer. Strauss composed for this version of the character, making Don Juan a passionate and heroic figure signified with a prominent solo horn call.

### [Tony Bennett, Lady Gaga: The Lady is a Tramp](#)

Hannah says the following:

"These two make a wonderful pair. This is Lady Gaga's best style of singing in my opinion. She is such a talented musician, super nice and super smart. If you ever have the time to watch her documentary, *Gaga: Five Foot Two* on Netflix, I highly suggest it. It changed my perspective and respect for her as a person and a musician."



## Legato in Times of Staccato

Selection by Bill Hutchison of Lake Jackson, TX

### [George Gershwin: Concert in F Major](#)

Gershwin's Piano Concerto in F Major is often called his "most classical" composition. Though it closely follows traditional concerto form, the piece is rooted in American jazz and dance styles. In the composer's own words: "The first movement employs the Charleston rhythm. It is quick and pulsating, representing the young enthusiastic spirit of American life. It begins with a rhythmic motif given out by the kettle drums.... The principal theme is announced by the bassoon. Later, a second theme is introduced by the piano. The second movement has a poetic, nocturnal atmosphere, which has come to be referred to as the American blues, but in a purer form than that in which they are usually treated. The final movement reverts to the style of the first. It is an orgy of rhythms, starting violently and keeping to the same pace throughout."

\*\*\*To access the full Spotify playlist for week 8, click [here!](#)\*\*\*