



# USC Thornton Chamber Orchestra

Friday, Nov. 12, 2021  
7:30 p.m.  
Bovard Auditorium  
University of Southern California

Jeffrey Kahane, *conductor, piano*

**USC Thornton**  
School of Music

# Program

**Maurice Ravel**  
(1875-1937)

Piano Concerto in G Major  
*Allegramente*  
*Adagio Assai*  
*Presto*

Jeffrey Kahane, *piano*

## Intermission

**Jesse Montgomery**  
(1981- )

*Strum*

**Franz Joseph Haydn**  
(1732-1809)

Symphony No. 103 in E flat major  
*Adagio - Allegro con spirito*  
*Andante più tosto allegretto*  
*Menuet*  
*Allegro con spirito*

# About the Artist



Photo courtesy of Colorado Symphony Orchestra

Jeffrey Kahane joined the USC Thornton School of Music as a part-time faculty member in keyboard studies in 2015 and became a full-time professor in 2016 following a 20-year run as music director of the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra (LACO), the longest tenure of any music director in the ensemble's history.

Equally at home at the keyboard or on the podium, Kahane has established an international reputation as a truly versatile artist, recognized by audiences around the world for his mastery of a diverse repertoire ranging from Bach, Mozart and Beethoven to Gershwin, Golijov and John Adams.

# Program Notes

Maurice Ravel (1875-1937)  
Piano Concerto in G Major (1931)

In 1906, Ravel began writing a Piano Concerto in G based on Basque themes but set it aside to complete his left hand piano concerto. He came back to the G Major concerto in 1913 but abandoned the piece not long after. Finally in 1929 Ravel returned to the concerto and spent three years sketching the piece before its completion. Originally, he had intended to be the soloist for the first public performance but fatigue, poor health, and pressure had Ravel pass off this performance opportunity to Marguerite Long.

Rather than embrace the emotionally intense Sturm and Drang of the 19th century, Ravel wrote a musical portrait with the intent to entertain. Influences included Basque themes and jazz, which had been popular in Paris since the start of the decade.

Ravel said this about his work:

"[...] a concerto in the truest sense of the word: I mean that it is written very much in the same spirit as those of Mozart and Saint-Saëns. The music of a concerto should, in my opinion, be lighthearted and brilliant, and not aim at profundity or at dramatic effects. It has been said of certain great classics [specifically Brahms] that their concertos were written not 'for,' but 'against' the piano. I heartily agree. I had intended to entitle this concerto 'Divertissement.' Then it occurred to me that there was no need to do so, because the very title 'Concerto' should be sufficiently clear."

The piece starts with a sharp crack from the slapstick before a dazzling melody played by the piccolo, clarinet, and trumpet with accompaniment from the soloist. While the piano plays an almost meditative melody, the jazz influences emerge with outbursts of muted trumpet and clarinet which later get interrupted with crisp repeated notes. The second movement starts slowly with a piano alone before the woodwinds enter with the second theme to converse with the piano. The final movement returns to the high energy displayed in the first movement. This movement highlights a march-like melody based on a descending three-note motive as well as brassy fanfares. These ideas race to the end, and Ravel cleverly ends the movement exactly as it began.

Alex Liang (BM 2021)

# Program Notes

Franz Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)  
Symphony No. 103 in E Flat Major (1793)

- I. Adagio - Allegro con spirito
- II. Andante più tosto allegretto
- III. Menuet

After his fame in the Esterházy establishment and the death of his patron Prince Nikolaus, Haydn's services were no longer needed, allowing him to travel. Johann Peter Salomon, a German violinist, invited Haydn to London to conduct and commission new symphonies with a large orchestra. London welcomed Haydn graciously as his music had already permeated the city. During his second journey to London in 1794, he composed his Symphony No. 103, the eleventh of his twelve London Symphonies.

Upon listening, Symphony No. 103 was nicknamed "The Drumroll" after the long timpani solo that begins the work. The basses and bassoons start with a somber melody before it is passed to the violins. The harmonically ambiguous introduction paves the way for the brighter Allegro con spirito section that firmly establishes a tonic and flows its way to the end of the movement. The Andante movement has two themes and two keys alternating between C minor and C major. A gentle violin solo in C-major is interrupted by a furious C-minor outcry from the orchestra.

The minuet is firmly in the key of Eb major but slowly explores denser harmonic regions. Haydn refers back to a Classical-era minuet with very strong downbeats in each measure rather than the flowing rhythms in a Baroque minuet. The Finale starts with a rather ominous horn call that is repeated throughout the movement. Haydn introduces his main theme with four notes and uses this motive to paint a contrapuntal conversation among the orchestra. The conclusion combines the horn call and the four-note motive, tumultuously racing to the end.

Alex Liang (BM 2021)

# Program Notes

Jessie Montgomery (1981- )  
*Strum* (2006/2012)

*Strum* is the culminating result of several versions of a string quintet I wrote in 2006. It was originally written for the Providence String Quartet and guests of Community MusicWorks Players, then arranged for string quartet in 2008 with several small revisions. In 2012 the piece underwent its final revisions with a rewrite of both the introduction and the ending for the Catalyst Quartet in a performance celebrating the 15th annual Sphinx Competition.

Originally conceived for the formation of a cello quintet, the voicing is often spread wide over the ensemble, giving the music an expansive quality of sound. Within *Strum* I utilized texture motives, layers of rhythmic or harmonic ostinati that string together to form a bed of sound for melodies to weave in and out. The strumming pizzicato serves as a texture motive and the primary driving rhythmic underpinning of the piece. Drawing on American folk idioms and the spirit of dance and movement, the piece has a kind of narrative that begins with fleeting nostalgia and transforms into ecstatic celebration.

— Jessie Montgomery

# USC Thornton Chamber Orchestra

## Violin I

Yu-Chen Lin, *concertmaster*  
Agatha Blevin  
Arianna O'Connell  
Artem Kolesov  
Emily Hsu  
Nayoung Yoo  
Vikram Iyer  
Yue Qian

## Violin II

Billie Smith, *principal*  
Bradley Adam Bascon  
Floriane Naboulet  
Kendra Sobania  
Olena Kaspersky  
Peiwen Su  
Taiga Murooka  
Veronika Manchur

## Viola

Jenny Sung, *principal*  
Andrew Grishaw  
Daniel Miles  
Ellie Welker  
Emma Antonides  
Wilfred Farquharson

## Cello

Ji Sun Jung, *principal*  
Madeline Sheard  
Myles Yeazell  
Peter Choi  
Sarah Kim  
Taeguk Mun

## Bass

Dan Carson, *principal*  
Alan Wang  
Avery Weeks  
Ethan Moffitt

## Harp

Mana Azimi

## Flute

Chloe Descher  
Emily Harrington+  
Hyojin Park\*

## Oboe

Cameron Roberts\*+  
Sara Petty

## English Horn

Sara Petty

## Clarinet

Abraham Schenk  
Alex Chang  
Espen Aas\*  
Ray Wyant+

## Eb Clarinet

Alex Chang

## Bassoon

Anne Ranzani  
Samantha Epp

## Horn

Eun Jin Koh  
Katherine Yang+  
Rachel Lauson  
Susannah Greenslit\*

## Trumpet

Kobe Sampson-Davis  
Richard Torneros Francisco\*  
Svend Lykkegaard+

## Trombone

Stephen Hannan

## Timpani

Austin Cernosek\*+

## Percussion

Dominic Grande

Michael Dehan

Paul Matthews\*

Soojin Kang

\* *Principal on Ravel*

+ *Principal on Haydn*

# **Acknowledgements**

## **ORCHESTRA DEPARTMENT**

Carl St.Clair

Artistic Leader and Principal Conductor

Sharon Lavery

Resident Conductor, Chair of Winds & Percussion

Mike Basak

Orchestra Manager

Brent Anderson

Orchestra Librarian

## **ORCHESTRA STAFF**

Alex Liang

Andrew Grishaw

Derek Zimmerman

Emmanuel Louis Jesus Rojas

Lindsay Bryden

Samantha Kwan

Sara Petty

Sarah Wager

Susannah Leigh Greenslit

# Upcoming Signature Series Events

Nov. 19-20 at 8 p.m.

USC Thornton Opera presents Britten's  
*Curlew River* and Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice*

Nov. 29 at 4:30 p.m.

Chamber Music Festival: Winds & Percussion

Dec. 3 at 8 p.m.

Baroque Sinfonia

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