

Saturday, May 19, 2012 at 8pm
Sunday, May 20, 2012 at 3pm

George Manahan, conductor
Branford Marsalis, saxophone

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART (1756-1791)

Symphony No. 38 in D Major ("Prague"), K. 504 (1786)

- I. Adagio—Allegro
- II. Andante
- III. Finale: Presto

ALEXANDER GLAZUNOV (1865-1936)

Concerto for Alto Saxophone in E-flat Major, Op.109 (1934)

Mr. Marsalis

Intermission

MODEST MUSSORGSKY (1839-1881)

Pictures at an Exhibition (1874, orch. 1922)

Orchestrated by Maurice Ravel (1875-1937)

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| Promenade I | <i>Gnomus</i> ("The Gnome") |
| Promenade II | <i>Il vecchio castello</i> ("The Old Castle") |
| Promenade III | <i>Tuileries (Dispute d'enfants après jeux)</i>
("Tuileries (Dispute between Children at Play)")
<i>Bydlo</i> ("Oxen") |
| Promenade IV | Ballet of the Unhatched Chicks
Samuel Goldenberg and Schmuyle
<i>Limoges le marché</i> (The Market at Limoges)
<i>Catacombae (Sepulchrum romanum)</i>
('Catacombs (Roman Sepulcher)')
The Hut on Hen's Legs (Baba-Yaga)
The Hero's Gate at Kiev |

We are deeply grateful to Gayle and Neil Aaron, Millicent and Martin Kaufman, Ms. Mary Neumann, Hannah and Walter Shmerler, Teddi and Murray Stahl, and Mrs. Ruth Toff for their generous support of the 2011-12 season.

This season is made possible by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature.

This season is also made possible, in part, by ArtsWestchester with funds from Westchester County Government.

In the 1840s, the Belgian instrument manufacturer Adolphe Sax developed a new family of instruments that combined favorable aspects of both woodwinds and brass. The saxophone features a single reed and keys like a clarinet, but its brass construction lends it greater sound projection. Although the saxophone spent its first half-century serving a niche role in French military bands, French composers, starting with Berlioz, perceived the instrument's potential for use in orchestral music. In this concert, we hear that potential realized.

Symphony No. 38 in D Major ("Prague"), K. 504 (1786)

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

(Born January 27, 1756 in Salzburg; died December 5, 1791 in Vienna)

Instrumentation: two flutes, two oboes, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, timpani, and strings.

In the winter of 1786-87, Mozart was growing frustrated with the Viennese concert-going public. After *The Marriage of Figaro* opened to lukewarm reviews and only received nine performances, he sought opportunities for his music to be heard elsewhere in Europe. When *Figaro* premiered in Prague on December 10th, Mozart was elated to learn that the Bohemian audience had given his opera a rapturous reception. He quickly agreed to make the 150-mile journey to present his newly completed D Major symphony in that city the following month. On January 19th, Mozart conducted the symphony's first performance. It was so well-received that the audience compelled him to give a half hour's worth of encores: he played a keyboard improvisation based on "*Non più andrai*" from *Figaro*. Declaring "*meine Prager verstehen mich*" ("the people

of Prague understand me"), he was soon commissioned to produce a new opera, which became *Don Giovanni* and was staged in Prague the following October.

The Prague symphony's opening movement includes a slow introduction, a tactic which Mozart employed in only three symphonies, the others being No. 36 ("Linz") and No. 39. This portentous *Adagio* creates dramatic contrast by alternating between quiet violin figures and powerful chords for the full orchestra, complete with heartbeat-like timpani. The *Allegro* begins sneakily, with an off-beat accompaniment pattern. Creating the pulse from which the lively main theme emerges. Mozart develops this theme with exquisitely crafted counterpoint, the trademark of his later symphonies. This *Adagio-Allegro* configuration presages the form of Mozart's overtures to *Don Giovanni* and *The Magic Flute* and in fact, the repeated eighth note figures of the Prague symphony's *Allegro* bear a striking resemblance to the melody of the latter opera's overture.

The *Andante* movement not only serves as a graceful interlude, but demonstrates Mozart's increasing interest in exploring new harmonic territory in his slow movements. With effortless transitions between major and minor key episodes, the movement suggests a hidden layer of tension. Mozart notably eschews a Minuet movement in the Prague symphony, proceeding straight ahead to the Finale. A spirited *Presto*, this movement is characterized especially by the prominent roles offered to the woodwinds.

Concerto for Alto Saxophone in E-Flat Major, Op.109 (1934)

ALEXANDER GLAZUNOV

(Born August 10, 1865 in Saint Petersburg; died March 21, 1936 in Neuilly-sur-Seine, France)

Instrumentation: solo saxophone and strings.

Alexander Glazunov belonged to the generation of Russian composers that followed after Mussorgsky and Rimsky-Korsakov. A student of the latter, Glazunov was famous for having an incredible ability to absorb and remember music, once memorizing an entire symphony on only one hearing. As a composer, he wrote well-regarded symphonies and ballets that still see occasional performance. He also served as director of the Saint Petersburg Conservatory from 1905 to 1928, shepherding the school through the tumult of revolution. Whether due to wanderlust or frustrations with communism, Glazunov left Russia forever in 1928 and spent his final years in Paris. Although he was a notoriously conservative composer who disliked the music of Stravinsky (a former student and the most popular Russian composer in Paris), Glazunov demonstrated a willingness to explore new ideas during his brief years in Paris. At the request of the German saxophonist Sigurd Raschèr (1907-2001), he produced his saxophone concerto, one of his last compositions.

Glazunov cast his saxophone concerto in a single movement that transitions between several distinct sections. Unlike much music composed in the 1930s, the piece is consistently tonal and uses late-Romantic harmonic language. After a string introduction, the saxophone enters playing a mellifluous theme. This warm, *legato* melody exquisitely captures the instrument's unique quality. A darker middle section leads into a cadenza which allows the soloist to explore the full extent of the alto saxophone's range. Next, the soloist leads the orchestra into the energetic *fugato* of the final section. A retrospective coda recalls the concerto's earlier themes as the saxophone brings the piece to an ebullient close.

Pictures at an Exhibition (1874, orch. 1922)

MODEST MUSSORGSKY

(Born March 21, 1839 in Toropets, Pskov region, Russia; died March 28, 1881 in Saint Petersburg)

Orchestration by Maurice Ravel

(Born March 7, 1875 in Ciboure, France; died December 28, 1937 in Paris)

Instrumentation: three flutes (one doubling piccolo), two oboes (one doubling English horn), two clarinets, bass clarinet, two bassoons, contrabassoon, alto saxophone, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, glockenspiel, chimes, triangle, tam-tam, rattle, whip, cymbal, snare drum, bass drum, xylophone, celesta, harp, and strings.

Among the canonical works in the orchestra repertoire, *Pictures at an Exhibition* was shaped by an unusually large number of artistic contributors. The spark that inspired Modest Mussorgsky to compose the original piano suite was the unfortunate passing of his friend, Russian artist Viktor Hartmann (1834-1873), who died of an aneurysm. Mussorgsky and Hartmann shared similar aesthetic views about the need for distinctively Russian art. The composer owned several of Hartmann's paintings, which he gladly offered for display at the memorial exhibition that was staged at Saint Petersburg's Academy of Fine Arts in Hartmann's honor. The exhibition ran from February through March of 1874, and Mussorgsky completed his manuscript of *Pictures at an Exhibition* that June.

The suite was never publicly performed during Mussorgsky's lifetime. Although he was a talented pianist, Mussorgsky wrote very little music for the instrument, and he did not consider *Pictures at an Exhibition* to be among his important compositions. After his death, the unpublished manuscript was entrusted to his fellow composer

Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov, who set about preparing it for publication. The edition that Rimsky-Korsakov sent to the printers in 1886 features numerous amendments to Mussorgsky's original piece: Rimsky-Korsakov was responsible for many changes in dynamics and articulation, in addition to a small but significant number of corrections to Mussorgsky's notes.

As the piano suite gained admirers in the ensuing decades, several composers endeavored to provide orchestrations. Commissioned by Serge Koussevitzky (1874-1951), Maurice Ravel completed the definitive orchestration of *Pictures at an Exhibition* in 1922. Although the French composer went to great lengths to obtain Mussorgsky's original version of the suite, only the Rimsky-Korsakov edition was available at the time. Ravel's meticulous orchestration did not attempt to imitate Russian instrumental style. Despite this, his version of *Pictures at an Exhibition* is considered to be one of the quintessential pieces of Russian orchestral music.

Mussorgsky's suite begins with the *Promenade* theme, embodied by a resplendent solo trumpet in Ravel's orchestration. In alternating 5/4 and 6/4 measures, this theme is characteristically Russian. Mussorgsky's friend Vladimir Stasov (1824-1906), an important Russian critic, provided programmatic annotations for the first publication of *Pictures at an Exhibition*. According to Stasov, the *Promenade* depicts "[Mussorgsky] as he strolled through the exhibition; joyfully or sadly recalling the talented deceased artist. ... He does not hurry,

but observes attentively."

In this way, the *Promenade* theme in its varied iterations serves as the link between the twelve pictures on display. The pictures themselves were organized by Mussorgsky into contrasting pairs. The thrashing tantrums of *Gnomus* are balanced by the mysterious song of the troubadour in *Il vecchio castello*, rendered so memorably by Ravel with an alto saxophone solo. Similarly, the sprightly children in the *Tuileries* are juxtaposed with the trudging laborers of *Bydlo*. In the latter picture, Rimsky-Korsakov replaced the original opening double-forte with a dramatic, extended crescendo. Ravel's orchestration of *Bydlo* uses a tuba playing in the upper reaches of its range in one of the instrument's most transparent moments.

In the second half of *Pictures at an Exhibition*, a strange thing happens. The *Promenade* interludes disappear, and Mussorgsky moves seamlessly from one picture to the next. Did he abandon the pretense of actually being at the exhibition? In fact, the *Promenade* theme is still an important part of the piece, but it has been transformed. First in *Catacombs* and then in *The Hero's Gate at Kiev*, the theme re-emerges within the paintings themselves, depicting Mussorgsky's total immersion in Hartmann's works. Amid the triumphant chords and crashing bells of *The Hero's Gate*, Mussorgsky reveals that *Pictures at an Exhibition* is about not just the paintings, but the emotional experience of viewing them.)))

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Promenade Theme





George Manahan, conductor

In his second season as Music Director of the American Composers Orchestra, the wide-ranging and versatile George Manahan has had an esteemed career embracing everything from opera to the concert stage, the

traditional to the contemporary. In addition to his work with ACO this season, Mr. Manahan continues his commitment to working with young musicians as Director of Orchestral Studies at the Manhattan School of Music as well as guest conductor at the Curtis Institute of Music.

He served as Music Director of the New York City Opera for fourteen seasons and was hailed for his leadership of the orchestra where he “gets from his players the kind of heartfelt involvement unthinkable in the City Opera orchestra pit 20 years ago. ... These musicians operate with such consistent energy and involvement” (*The New York Times*).

In May 2011, Mr. Manahan was honored by the American Society of Composer, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP) for his “career-long advocacy for American composers and the music of our time which has enriched

and enabled concert music both at home and abroad.” His recent Carnegie Hall performance of Samuel Barber’s *Antony and Cleopatra* was hailed by audiences and critics alike, “What a difference it makes to hear the piece performed by an opera conductor who palpably believes in it,” said *The New York Times*. “The fervent and sensitive performance that Mr. Manahan presided over made the best case for this opera that I have encountered.”

Mr. Manahan’s guest appearances include the Orchestra of St. Luke’s, the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra, as well as the symphonies of Atlanta and San Francisco, the Hollywood Bowl Orchestra, and New Jersey Symphony, where he served as acting Music Director for four seasons. He is a regular guest with the Music Academy of the West, and the Aspen Music Festival, and has also appeared with the Opera Companies of Seattle, Chicago, Santa Fe, Portland, the Opera Theatre of St. Louis, Opera National du Paris, Teatro de Comunale de Bologna, the Bergen Festival (Norway), the Casals Festival (Puerto Rico) and Minnesota Opera, where he was Principal Conductor.

His many appearances on television

include productions of *La Bohème*, *Lizzie Borden*, and *Tosca* on PBS. The "Live from Lincoln Center" telecast of New York City Opera's production of *Madame Butterfly* won a 2007 Emmy® Award under his direction.

George Manahan's wide-ranging recording activities include the premiere recording of Steve Reich's *Tehillim* for ECM; recordings of Edward Thomas's *Desire Under the Elms*, which was nominated for a Grammy® Award; Joe Jackson's *Will Power*; and Tobias Picker's *Emmeline*. His enthusiasm for contemporary music continues today; he has conducted numerous world premieres, including Charles Wuorinen's *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*, David Lang's *Modern Painters*, Hans Werner Henze's *The English Cat*, and the New York premiere of Richard Danielpour's *Margaret Garner*. As Music Director of the

Richmond Symphony (VA) for twelve years, he was honored four times by the American Society of Composer, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP) for his commitment to new music.

He received his formal musical training at the Manhattan School of Music, studying conducting with Anton Coppola and George Schick, and was appointed to the faculty of the school upon his graduation, at which time The Juilliard School awarded him a fellowship as Assistant Conductor with the American Opera Center. Mr. Manahan was chosen as the Exxon Arts Endowment Conductor of the New Jersey Symphony and he made his opera debut with the Santa Fe Opera, conducting the American premiere of Arnold Schoenberg's *Von Heute Auf Morgen*.)))

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Branford Marsalis, saxophone

NEA Jazz Master, renowned Grammy Award®-winning saxophonist and recent Tony Award® nominee Branford Marsalis is one of the most revered instrumentalists of his time. The three-time Grammy Award®-winner has continued to exercise and expand his skills as an instrumentalist, a composer, and the head of Marsalis Music, the label he founded in 2002 that has allowed him to produce both his own projects and those of the jazz world's most promising new and established artists.

Mr. Marsalis made his Broadway debut as the composer of original music for the Tony Award®-winning Broadway revival of August Wilson's play "Fences." Mr. Marsalis received a Tony nomination in the category of "Best

Original Score (Music and/or Lyrics) Written for the Theatre" and a 2010 Drama Desk Award® for "Outstanding Music in a Play" for his participation.

Leader of one of the finest jazz quartets today, and a frequent soloist with classical ensembles, Branford has become increasingly sought-after as a featured soloist with such acclaimed orchestras as the Chicago, Detroit, Düsseldorf, and North Carolina symphonies and the Boston Pops, with a growing repertoire that includes compositions by Copland, Debussy, Glazunov, Ibert, Mahler, Milhaud, Rorem, and Vaughn Williams. His propensity for innovative and forward thinking compels him to seek new and challenging works by modern classical composers such as modern Scottish composer Sally Beamish, who, after hearing Mr. Marsalis perform her composition *The Imagined Sound of*

Sun on Stone at the 2006 North Sea Jazz Festival, was inspired to re-conceive a piece in progress, *Under the Wing of the Rock*, which he premiered as part of Scotland's Celtic Connections festival in Beamish's home country in January 2009.

Making his first appearance with the New York Philharmonic in the summer of 2010, Mr. Marsalis was again invited to join them as soloist in their 2010-2011 concert series where he unequivocally demonstrated his versatility and prowess, bringing "a gracious poise and supple tone ... and an insouciant swagger" (*The New York Times*) to the repertoire.

In 2011, the National Endowment for the Arts conferred the prestigious Jazz Masters Fellowship on the Marsalis Family, a celebration and acknowledgement of a family described by *The New York Times* as "jazz's most storied living dynasty", who have made an indelible mark, collectively and individually, on the history and the future of jazz, America's art form.

Embodying expressiveness, melody, and emotion; those elements of music that transcend genre and period and speak to us of inspiration and beauty, Mr. Marsalis' upcoming release, *Songs of Mirth and Melancholy* is a spectacular duo collaboration with his Quartet's longtime pianist, Joey Calderazzo. Comprised of seven original compositions plus a cover of Wayne Shorter's *Face On the Barroom Floor* and Brahms's *Die Trauernde*—like all of Mr. Marsalis' nearly two dozen recordings in various styles—*Songs of Mirth and Melancholy* is born of an ever-evolving love of music which has marked his career.

Having gained initial acclaim through his work with Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers and his brother Wynton's quintet in the early 1980s, Mr. Marsalis also performed and recorded with a who's-who of jazz giants including Miles Davis, Dizzy Gillespie, Herbie Hancock, and Sonny Rollins. He has also collaborated with such diverse artists as Sting,

the Grateful Dead and Bruce Hornsby. His expansive interests are further reflected in his explorations in film, radio and television, including his role as the musical director of *The Tonight Show* with Jay Leno for two years in the early 1990s. Mr. Marsalis has also acted in such popular movies such as *Throw Mama from the Train* and *School Daze*, provided music for *Mo' Better Blues* and other films and hosted National Public Radio's syndicated program "Jazz Set". Dedicated to changing the future of jazz in the classroom, Mr. Marsalis has shared his knowledge at such universities as Michigan State, San Francisco State, Stanford and North Carolina Central, with his full Quartet participating in an innovative extended residency at the NCCU campus. Beyond these efforts, he is also bringing a new approach to jazz education to student musicians and listeners in colleges and high schools through Marsalis Jams, an interactive program designed by Mr. Marsalis in which leading jazz ensembles present concert/jam sessions in mini-residencies. Marsalis Jams has visited campuses in the Northeast, Mid-Atlantic, Southeast and Southwest, and later established an ongoing Marsalis Berklee Jams series with the Berklee College of Music.

In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, the New Orleans native joined forces with friend Harry Connick, Jr. to conceive the New Orleans Habitat Musicians' Village, the newly constructed community in the city's historic Upper Ninth Ward that provides new homes for displaced residents, including musicians and their families. At the heart of the Village stands Ellis Marsalis Center for Music, a magnificent facility with performance, instructional and practice spaces and a recording studio.

Whether on the stage, in the recording studio, in the classroom or in the community, Branford Marsalis embodies a commitment to musical excellence and a determination to keep music at the forefront.)))