



**GRAND VALLEY
STATE UNIVERSITY®**

**DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC,
THEATRE, AND DANCE**

Symphony Orchestra

Dr. Joel Schut, director

7:30 P.M.

Wednesday, February 19, 2025

Louis Armstrong Theatre

Haas Center for Performing Arts

GVSU Allendale Campus

Program

Overture in D Major (1912)

Kōsaku Yamada
(1886-1965)

*In collaboration with the GVSU Global Awareness Collaborative Colloquium
Japan Winter 2025*

Romeo and Juliet Overture-Fantasy (1880)

Pyotr Ilych Tchaikovsky
(1840-1893)

Molly Fenn, Juliet
Evan Bolla, Romeo

-Intermission-

William Tell Overture (1829)

Gioachino Rossini
(1792-1868)

La Muerte Del Ángel (1963)

Astor Piazzolla
(1921-1992)

Chamber Orchestra

Anime Symphonic Suite (2022)

Tony Gu
(b. 2002)

I. Adventure

Selections by Yasuharu Takanashi, Yugo Kanno, Katsuo
Ōno, Yuji Ohno, Satoshi Yaginuma

II. Reminiscence

Selections by Kemu (Shota Horie), Bruno Wen-Li, Kegani
(Soutarou Namikawa), Akito Matsuda, Joe Hisaishi

III. Aspiration

Selections by John Siegler & John Loeffler, Shunsuke
Kikuchi, Seiichirō Uno, Hidenori Chiwata

IV. Voyage

Selections by Kohei Tanaka, Toshio Masuda, Make-Up,
Makoto Miyazaki

Personnel Roster

Names are listed in alphabetical order to emphasize the contribution of each player

Violin 1

Noah Abdelkader
Genevieve Balivet
Rebekah Doody
Erin Gibbons
Rachel Glanton
Danielle Meyers
Gabrielle Phelps
Jocelynn Pierce
Andrew Kales*
Aveline Schienke
Hailey Smith
Madelyn Stembol
Avery Trimble

Violin 2

Esther Bard
Vera Bresser
Maggie Fisher
Elaina Frollo
Taylor Grifhorst
Breanna Lane
Daniel Lesinski
Priscilla Martin
Danny Parker
Claire Pohl
Kayla Shook
Kenneth Walker*
Aiden Zemaitis

Viola

Sam Bryant
Matt Durose
Symone Forrest
Cruz Peña*
Braedyn MacKeller
Xavaier Williams

Cello

Seamus Adams
Giselle Balivet
Ava Chupack
Jake Doctor*
Megan Ferenczhalmay
Grace Jenkins
Madigan Lautzenheiser
Aiden Mack
Pablo Mahave-Veglia+
Sam Nicely
Bridget Parlmer
Kaden Pokora
Maria Rocha
Levi Smith
Tyleur Wright

Double Bass

Cullen DeCou*
Iris Eppinga
Jae Gauthier
Andrew Lunn
Adam Zdarsky

Piccolo

Julia Meyer

Flute

Julia Meyer
Grace Morrison*
Kaiya VanDenBerg

Oboe

Joy Anderson*
Lea Carter*
James Hollister

English Horn

Natalie Kline

Clarinet

Sophia Janiga
Julia Smolinski*

Bassoon

Simon Furton
Daken VanDusen*

Horn:

Richard Britsch+
Tim Lester*
Logan Nommensen
Julia Schnike

Trumpet

Alec Bossa*
Mia Kolhoff

Trombone

Micah Babinski
Matt Keith
Dylan Schoolcraft*

Tuba

Jorge Gonzalez

Timpani

Zachary Haverkamp

Percussion

Ramses Arispe
Liam Martin
Brayden VanderWall

Harp:

Alison Reese+

*Section Principal

+Guest Artist

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Program Notes

Yamada – Overture in D

Kôşçak Yamada belongs to the group of the first fully-fledged composers that Japan produced. He was also a prominent conductor, organizer, and leader of the Japanese music world. As a great pioneer, he played a definitive rôle in helping Western music take root in Japan. In the 1860s, after 250 years of isolation, Japan restored extensive contacts with Western civilization, including music. Military bands were formed and in 1879 Ongaku-Torishirabe-Gakari, a national research centre of Western music (later to become the Tokyo Music School), was founded. Japanese traditional musicians under the Emperor started to learn Western music, and Japanese people were eager to make up for lost time in every field.

Yamada was born in these surroundings on 9th June 1886, the sixth of seven children. His father was formerly a samurai of lower grade in the Mikawa district (today's Aichi Prefecture), but the end of Japanese feudalism, with the collapse of the shogun regime, involved the disappearance of the samurai class. Yamada's father started his new life as a speculator in Tokyo, which brought him a large amount of money and a life of debauchery, but it did not last long, and soon after Kôşçak was born, the family moved to Yokosuka, where his father started a bookstore. In this naval city, as the Sino-Japanese War drew near, Yamada was enchanted by military bands marching around the city, and he tirelessly followed them. He also became familiar with hymns sung in church, as his mother's side of the family was devout Protestant and it is said that his family had a harmonium. Yamada's starting-point as a musician was these sounds of military bands, melodies of hymns, and the timbre and harmonies of the harmonium.

Yamada's life in Yokosuka was brief, as the family lost everything in a fire, returning to Tokyo when the boy was seven years old. In poverty, his brother left the family and his father died of cancer when Yamada was nine. Immediately after that, he was sent to a dormitory school (a night school with printing facilities), which was run by a clergyman in Sugamo, in the northern part of Tokyo. In this school he started a life of work, studies and hymns, dreaming of becoming a composer, but heavy work had a serious effect on his health, which forced him to spend two years in Kamakura, attended by his mother. After recovering from illness, he worked as an errand-boy in Shimbashi Station and when he was fourteen, he went to Okayama, in the West of Japan, where his thirteen-year-old sister lived. His sister had married an Englishman, Edward Gauntlet, who had come to Japan through his keen interest in the Orient and was teaching English at the Sixth High School of Okayama, one of the leading schools in Japan. This brother-in-law was from a well-connected family and was an amateur musician and an organist for the Anglican Church. Playing instruments and

singing hymns with him, Yamada's dream of becoming a composer grew. His brother-in-law advised him to be a musician and helped him financially. His mother was at first against the idea of a samurai's child becoming a musician, but when Yamada was seventeen, she died, leaving a will that allowed him to follow this course. Thus in 1904 Yamada entered the Tokyo Music School, after studying at Kwansei Gakuin High School (a missionary school) and having experience in choral work and organ playing.

Although his desire was to become a composer, Yamada's major study at the Tokyo Music School was singing, as the school had no composition department until the 1930s. It seems that the Japanese government in those days only thought of training performers and educators in the field of Western music. Students who hoped to be composers were left to their own devices. While studying the cello and theory under the two German teachers at the school, August Junker, who was a pupil of Joachim, and Heinrich Werkmeister, who was from the Berlin Musikhochschule, Yamada continued to write string quartets, piano pieces, violin pieces, songs and choral works, when in 1910 Werkmeister recommended him to his private cello pupil Koyata Iwasaki, who was among the leaders of the Mitsubishi Foundation. Iwasaki promised to help him financially with his studies in Berlin. Yamada left for Berlin in high spirits and entered the Musikhochschule, Werkmeister's alma mater, in April 1910, studying there with Max Bruch and, among others, Karl Leopold Wolf.

Yamada's studies in Berlin were quite fruitful and significant. He absorbed everything he could in Berlin, while continuing to study academic harmony and counterpoint at school. During this Berlin period, he made a series of epoch-making achievements in Japanese music history. Yamada's predecessors had been attempting pieces for wind band, sonatas for solo instruments and piano-accompanied songs, but Yamada surpassed them in Germany, where he created orchestral pieces, a symphony, symphonic poems and a full-scale opera (including *Heavenly Maiden fallen to Earth*), all of which were the first-ever attempts of their kind by a Japanese composer. The present recording contains four pieces from this period.

The Overture in D major, completed on 22nd March 1912, is the first-ever orchestral piece in Japan. The instrumentation is for pairs of wind instruments, two horns, two trumpets, timpani and strings. This Allegro assai piece is written in sonata form, but without a development section. It starts with the first theme, which ascends up an octave from D. This ample, clear melody is a kind of challenge by the composer to Japanese traditional music, which often moves with less clarity within a narrow range. With this first theme, Yamada makes a bold step for Japanese musical westernization. The fact that the first work for Western orchestra starts like that is of historical significance. The second theme in A major, presented

with soft staccato notes, is gallant in character, spiced with chromaticism. After the statement of the themes, the first theme in D major returns, followed by the second theme in D major this time, and the piece comes to a conclusion.

-Note by Morihide Katayama

Tchaikovsky – Romeo and Juliet

In the nineteenth century, the Russian aristocracy and Imperial Court developed a strong appetite and respect for European classical music, which was mainly performed in their palaces. Embracing Western styles and tastes manifested into an artistic and social pedigree, and travel to the West was part of the elite lifestyle. Upper class Russians also liked to be speak French, and by age six Tchaikovsky was able to speak French and a bit of German, taught to him by his nanny, Fanny Durbach, whom he addressed all of his life as mademoiselle.

After a short career as a civil servant, he turned to music, producing symphonies, ballets, operas, concerti, string quartets and piano trios in traditional western formats. Ultimately, Tchaikovsky became the first Russian composer known and loved internationally. He received an honorary Doctor of Music degree from Cambridge, and became a member of the Academie des Beaux-Arts in France.

However, there was a reaction to Western enthusiasms. Within growing Russian nationalism, a counter-current developed. Led by a group called The Mighty Five, a formidable insistence on purely Russian music and Russian sources gained momentum. Its members, largely self-taught, were Balakirev, Borodin, Rimsky-Korsakov, Modest Mussorgsky, and Cui. In the simplest terms, there were two basic and contentious factions: those who embraced the West and those who were focused on “new music” with Russian roots and influences. Somewhat ironically, Tchaikovsky and the Five both shared a commitment to “Russianness,” but how it was to be expressed was very different.

Tchaikovsky, who had formal Conservatory training, and Balakirev, founder of the Mighty Five, had a friendship and a “working relationship.” On his side, Balakirev thought that academic musical training was a threat to inspired composition, probably because he never had any. However, he managed to maintain an influential career in composition, conducting and research into Russian folk music. Tchaikovsky’s brother, Modest, noted that the composer’s relationship with the Mighty Five resembled “those between two friendly neighboring states—cautiously prepared to meet on common ground, but jealously guarding their separate interests.” (*The Life and Letters of Peter Ilich Tchaikovsky* by Rosa Newmarch)

It was Balakirev who suggested that he write the *Romeo and Juliet* Overture, explaining literary analyses, and even sent suggested themes, harmonic development and orchestration. The composer was only 29, and he took the advice to heart and collaborated extensively. The composer was happy with the idea and noted, "It will be my most monumental work. It now seems to me absurd that I could not see earlier that I was predestined, as it were, to set this drama to music". In a letter to Balakirev he stressed, "The layout is yours. The introduction portraying the friar, the fight—Allegro and love—the second subject; and secondly the modulations are yours: also the introduction in E, the Allegro in B-flat minor, and the second subject in D-flat." He completed the Overture in 1869, and the Overture premiered on March 16, 1870. The response was tepid, and eventually there were two revisions in 1872 and 1880. The *Romeo and Juliet* Overture-Fantasy put Tchaikovsky on the map and became a masterpiece.

The Overture (cast in *sonata-allegro* form) begins with a long introduction: a solemn chorale sung by clarinets and bassoons opens the scene, representing Friar Lawrence.

Two contrasting main themes emerge. The first brutal and nervous, represents the warring Capulet and Montague families. The second is the splendid love theme for Romeo and Juliet, first stated by English horn and muted violas. Many have said, "This is the best love music there is..." A development section (complete with warring families) is brilliantly scored and developed before the recapitulation. Herein, the love theme melody receives its most grand statement. At the conclusion, the music moves into a quiet, reflective segment with quiet timpani. Steadily the music retreats into deep sadness: what futility and tragedy had occurred. A roaring conclusion marked by aggressive, angry timpani and a stern chord brings the Overture to its close.

-Note by Marianne Williams Tobias

Rossini – William Tell Overture

Gioachino Rossini was one of the most celebrated Italian composers of the 19th century and consequently enjoyed widespread success, prestige, and wealth during his life. As one of the most prolific opera composers, William Tell was his thirty-ninth and final opera. The four-act opera is based on a play (Wilhelm Tell) by Friedrich Schiller that tells the story of William Tell, an archer and Swiss hero that helps to liberate Switzerland from Austrian occupation. Though the opera is rarely performed, the overture (the introduction to the opera), remains a concert-hall favorite.

Though William Tell may not be Rossini's most well-known opera, melodies from the overture have become pop culture mainstays. The overture is divided into four distinct sections, and while the English Horn solo in the

third section found its way into cartoons, it is the last section (The March of the Swiss Soldiers) that has cemented itself into widespread cultural recognition. In addition to being used in early Mickey Mouse cartoons, the melody from the Finale rode into radio and TV history as the opening credits to the radio and TV versions of The Lone Ranger, and has since made its way into cartoons, commercials, and movies alike.

-Note by Danielle Taylor

Piazzolla - La Muerte Del Ángel

Astor Piazzolla (1921-1992) was an Argentine tango composer, bandoneon player, and arranger. Piazzolla was known for writing music that contained an eclectic mix of jazz and classical genres, as well as experimentations of sound. His musical language revolutionized the traditional tango into a new style termed Nuevo Tango, which was distinct from the traditional tango through its incorporation of elements of jazz and its use of extended harmonies, dissonance, counterpoint, and forays into extended compositional forms. His compositions and arrangements, comprised of more than 1000 works, continue to influence musicians around the world.

Composed as a fugue in four voices, La Muerte del Angel (Death of the Angel), written in 1962, is related to several compositions in Piazzolla's Angel Series, which includes Tango del Angel (1957), Introduccion al Angel (1962), Resurrección del Angel (1962), and Milonga del Angel (1965). Some of these compositions were written for a theater play by Alberto Rodriguez Munoz, an Argentine playwright. Although Piazzolla purposely didn't worry about accomplishing the academic and rigorous steps of a typical fugue, this piece nevertheless showcases the ease with which he manages the musical form. It is necessary to point out the natural conciliation that Piazzolla achieves between a tango and a musical form that is typically baroque. La Muerte del Angel is a classic example of Piazzolla's ability to take advantage of the European traditions and submit them into the pulse of his own style.

-Note by Jason Cumberledge

Gu – Anime Symphonic Suite

Firstly, a heartfelt thank you to Grand Valley State University for performing my Anime Symphonic Suite No.1. Hearing this work performed live in its original orchestration has been a dream come true. This suite features pieces from 18 classic Japanese anime, each representing a different subgenre. I've designed each movement to reflect a distinct theme and style.

The first movement blends five anime with an "adventure" theme, opening the suite in an epic, grand style. The orchestration is filled with massive

percussion and brass sections and a gradual buildup to the musical climax. In contrast, the second movement is written in a minimalistic style and incorporates many techniques that make the movement “light and acoustically pleasing”. I have used light, airy sounds created by the mark tree, and glockenspiel, also featuring high-pitched piano notes alongside pizzicato strings. The third movement brings a fun, nostalgic energy, perfect for celebrating beloved anime that brought great memories to our childhood. Finally, the fourth movement incorporates world music elements, including a Tin Whistle to evoke the sea voyages of One Piece, and ethnic Japanese instruments for Naruto. The idea of “voyage” in the last moment ties together the suite’s overarching story, that it was a celebration of the music presented in the last 30 to 40 years of Japanese music.

After spending over 1.5 years on this project, I hope you enjoy this orchestral suite, which is a musical journey of approximately 24 minutes. Special thanks to Ms. Phoebe Mao for her beautiful illustrations and help with the final YouTube presentation.

-Tony Gu

Pieces included in the 1st movement:

1. Fairy Tail Main Theme - From “Fairy Tail” | Originally composed by Yasuharu Takanashi
2. il vento d’oro - From “JoJo’s Bizarre Adventure: Golden Wind” | Originally composed by Yugo Kanno
3. Detective Conan Main Theme - From “Detective Conan” | Originally composed by Katsuo Ōno
4. Theme from Lupin III ‘78 - From “Lupin the Third” | Originally composed by Yuji Ohno
5. Only My Railgun - From “A Certain Scientific Railgun” | Originally composed by Satoshi Yaginuma

Pieces included in the 2nd movement:

6. Sincerely - From “Violet Evergarden” | Originally composed by Kemu (Shota Horie)
7. Old Memory - From “Yosuga no Sora” | Originally composed by Bruno Wen-Li
8. Ugoku, Ugoku - From “Girls’ Last Tour” | Originally composed by Kegan (Soutarou Namikawa)
9. Hajimari No Senritsu - From “Sound! Euphonium” | Originally composed by Akito Matsuda
10. One Summer Day - From “Spirited Away” | Originally composed by Joe Hisaishi

Pieces included in the 3rd movement:

11. Pokémon Theme - From “Pokémon” | Originally composed by John Siegler & John Loeffler
12. Doraemon’s Song - From “Doraemon” | Originally composed by Shunsuke Kikuchi
13. Tonchin Kanchin Ikkyu San - From “Smart Ikkyu San” | Originally composed by Seiichirō Uno
14. Butter-Fly - From “Digimon” | Originally composed by Hidenori Chiwata

Pieces included in the 4th movement:

15. We Are! - From “One Piece” | Originally composed by Kohei Tanaka
16. Naruto Main Theme - From “Naruto: Shippuden” | Originally composed by Toshio Masuda
17. Pegasus Fantasy - From “Saint Seiya” | Originally composed by Make-Up
18. Seigi Shikkou - From “One Punch Man” | Originally composed by Makoto Miyazaki

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Upcoming MTD Events

February 20 at 7:30 PM – PS Series: *Tigers Be Still*. KBB
February 20 at 7:30PM – Tuba & Euphonium Chamber Concert. SVS
February 21 at 1:00PM – Piano Pedagogy Event (Marlais). SVS
February 21 at 7:00PM – High School Wind Band Workshop Performance.
February 21 at 7:30 PM – PS Series: *Tigers Be Still*. KBB
February 22 at 4:15PM - Wind Symphony Concert. LAT
February 22 at 7:00PM – Jr High Honors Band Concert. LAT
February 22 at 7:30 PM – PS Series: *Tigers Be Still*. KBB
February 23 at 5:00PM – Guest Masterclass: Dr. Mafer Guglielmina, flute.
February 23 at 7:30PM – Guest Artist Recital: Mafer Guglielmina. SVS
February 26 at 7:30PM – Guest Artist Recital: Cercis String Quartet. SVS
February 28 at 3:00PM – Guest Artist Masterclass: Bill Baxtresser, trumpet.
March 19 at 7:30PM – Marlais Studio Event. SVS
March 21 at 9:30AM – Spring Oboe Workshop.
March 28 All Day – Spring Dance Day. 1600

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