



**Grant Park Orchestra and Chorus**  
Carlos Kalmar, Principal Conductor  
Christopher Bell, Chorus Director

**Rachmaninov Rhapsody**

Wednesday, August 3, 2016 at 6:30 p.m.

Jay Pritzker Pavilion  
GRANT PARK ORCHESTRA  
Carlos Kalmar, *Conductor*  
Stephen Hough, *Piano*

MacMILLAN      *Britannia*

RACHMANINOV      *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini*  
Op. 43  
STEPHEN HOUGH

IBERT      *Escales*  
Rome — Palermo  
Tunis — Nefta  
Valencia

Tonight's concert is supported by the Walter E. Heller Foundation,  
given in memory of Alyce DeCosta.

Additional support is provided by the Smart Family Foundation  
and Joan and Robert Feitler.

The appearance of Stephen Hough is sponsored in part by Stephen A. MacLean.

Piano provided by Steinway Piano Galleries of Chicago.



**STEPHEN HOUGH** was the first classical performing artist to win a MacArthur Foundation Fellowship. He has also received Northwestern University's Jean Gimbel Lane Prize and the Royal Philharmonic Society Instrumentalist Award, and in 2014 was made a Commander of the Order of the British Empire by Queen Elizabeth. Mr. Hough has appeared with most of the major European and American orchestras and regularly plays recitals in major halls and concert series around the world. He is also a frequent guest at such festivals as Aldeburgh, Aspen, Blossom, Edinburgh, Hollywood Bowl, Mostly Mozart, Salzburg,

Tanglewood, Verbier, Grant Park, Blossom and BBC Proms, where he has made over twenty concerto appearances, including playing all of the works by Tchaikovsky for piano and orchestra during the summer of 2009, a series he repeated with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Many of Mr. Hough's catalog of over fifty albums have garnered international prizes, including the Deutsche Schallplattenpreis, Diapason d'Or, Monde de la Musique, several Grammy nominations, eight Gramophone Magazine Awards (including "Record of the Year" in 1996 and 2003), and Gramophone "Gold Disc" Award. His 2005 live recording of the Rachmaninov piano concertos was the fastest-selling recording in Hyperion's history, while his 1987 recording of the Hummel concertos remains Chandos' best-selling disc to date. Mr. Hough has composed works for orchestra, choir, chamber ensemble and solo piano, and regularly contributes articles to *The Guardian*, *The Times*, *The Tablet*, *Gramophone* and *BBC Music Magazine*; in 2008 he was invited by *The Telegraph* in London to start a blog, which has become one of the most popular forums for cultural discussion. Stephen Hough is Visiting Professor at London's Royal Academy of Music, holder of the International Chair of Piano Studies at his alma mater, Royal Northern College in Manchester, and a member of the Juilliard faculty.



## **BRITANNIA (1994)**

### **James MacMillan (born in 1959)**

*Britannia* is scored for piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, English horn, two clarinets, bass clarinet, two bassoons, contrabassoon, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion, harp, and strings. The performance time is 12 minutes. This is the first performance of the work by the Grant Park Orchestra.

Scottish composer James MacMillan was educated at the University of Edinburgh (B.Mus., 1981) and University of Durham (Ph.D., 1987), where his principal teacher was John Casken. After working as a lecturer at Manchester University from 1986 to 1988, MacMillan returned to Scotland, where he has since fulfilled numerous important commissions and taught at the University of Edinburgh and the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama in Glasgow. He has also served as Artistic Director of the Edinburgh Contemporary Arts Trust, Affiliate Composer of the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, Composer/Conductor with the BBC Philharmonic, and Visiting Composer of the Philharmonia Orchestra and Artistic Director of its contemporary music series, Music Today; he became Principal Guest Conductor of the Netherlands Radio Chamber Philharmonic in 2010. In 1993, MacMillan won both the Gramophone Contemporary Music Record of the Year Award and Classic CD Award for Contemporary Music; he was made a CBE in 2004, given the 2008 British Composer Award for Liturgical Music, named an Honorary Patron of the London Chamber Orchestra in 2008, and appointed a Knight Bachelor in 2015. In 2014, James MacMillan inaugurated the Cumnock Tryst, a festival of international scope that he organized in his boyhood home in southern Scotland.

MacMillan's compositions, many of which incorporate traditional Scottish elements and bear some stamp of either his religion (Catholicism) or his politics (socialism), include two operas, a *St. John Passion*, concerted works for piano (*The Berserking*), percussion (*Veni, Veni, Emmanuel*), cello, clarinet, organ and trumpet, orchestral scores, chamber works and pieces for solo voices and chorus. Of his creative personality, MacMillan wrote, "There are strong Scottish traits in my works, but also an aggressive and forthright tendency with a strong rhythmic physicality, showing the influence of Stravinsky, Messiaen and some minimalist composers.... My philosophy of composition looks beyond the introversion of the New Music 'ghetto' and seeks a wider communication while in no way promoting a compromising populism.... The 'modernist' zeal of the post-World War II generation of composers who attempted to eschew any continuation of tradition is anathema to me. I respect tradition in many forms, whether cultural, political or historical, and in keeping up a continuous, delicate scrutiny of old forms, ancient traditions, enduring beliefs and lasting values one is strengthened in one's constant, restless search for new avenues of expression. The existence of the influence of the old alongside the experiments of the new should not appear incongruous. Therefore, in ideological terms, my works express the timeless truths of Roman Catholicism alongside a fierce social commitment. And musically one can hopefully sense the depths of times past integrating with attempts at innovation."

MacMillan composed *Britannia* in 1994 on commission from British Telecommunications and the Association of British Orchestras "as a celebration," according to the composer, "of a major force in our musical life, the British orchestra. *Britannia* is a ten-minute orchestral fantasy based on 'patriotic themes.' There is no program or story as such but the work's tapestry of popular melodies and resonant allusions may provoke, given their new and unfamiliar contexts, some surprising scenarios in the mind of the listener, particularly at a time when petty chauvinism threatens to rear up once again throughout Europe. The piece grows out of a short sketch written in 1994, *Mémoire Impériale*, which is based on a march tune by General John Reid, an 18th-century British army officer who established the music department at Edinburgh University. Reid's theme and the 'imperial' themes of Elgar and Arne are thrown into a volatile concoction with other materials — an Irish reel (which becomes a jig), a Cockney drinking song, other march tunes and a hazy Celtic modality. All the main ideas are presented in quick and stark succession during the fast opening section. The slow middle part begins with a serene canon that is gradually undermined by military allusions on brass and percussion. This confrontation leads to the work's climax, which is followed by an unsettled coda."

## Joan and Robert Feitler, Smart Family Foundation



Joan and Robert Feitler and the Smart Family Foundation are proud to sponsor this concert at the Grant Park Music Festival. Native Chicagoans, the Feitlers have long celebrated and supported the arts in this city. Returning to Chicago in 1996 after living for many years in Milwaukee, Joan and Bob Feitler have been deeply involved in educational and arts funding through the Smart Family Foundation and through their own work with many Chicago and national organizations.



**RHAPSODY ON A THEME OF PAGANINI  
FOR PIANO AND ORCHESTRA, OP. 43 (1934)  
Sergei Rachmaninov (1873-1943)**

*The Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini is scored for piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, English horn, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion, harp and strings. The performance time is 22 minutes. The Grant Park Orchestra first performed the Rhapsody on August 1, 1958, with Milton Katims conducting. Agustin Anievas was the soloist.*

sody on August 1, 1958, with Milton Katims conducting. Agustin Anievas was the soloist.

The legend of Nicolò Paganini has haunted musicians for over two centuries. Gaunt, his emaciated figure cloaked in priestly black, Paganini performed feats of wizardry on the violin that were simply unimagined until he burst upon the European concert scene in 1805. Not only were his virtuoso pyrotechnics unsurpassed, but his performance of simple melodies was of such purity and sweetness that it moved his audiences to tears. So far was he beyond the competition that he seemed almost, well, superhuman. Perhaps, the rumor spread, he had special powers, powers not of this earth. Perhaps, Faust-like, he had exchanged his soul for the mastery of his art. The legend (propagated and fostered, it is now known, by Paganini himself) had begun. Paganini, like most virtuoso instrumentalists of the 19th century, composed much of his own music. Notable among his oeuvre are the breathtaking *Caprices* for Unaccompanied Violin, works so difficult that even today they are accessible only to the most highly accomplished performers. The last of the *Caprices*, No. 24 in A minor, served as the basis for compositions by Schumann, Liszt and Brahms, and was also the inspiration for Rachmaninov's *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini*, which

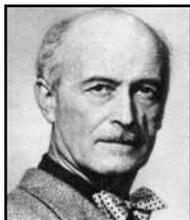
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he combined with the ancient chant melody *Dies Irae* ("Day of Wrath") from the Requiem Mass for the Dead.

The *Rhapsody*, a brilliant showpiece for virtuoso pianist, is a set of 24 variations. The work begins with a brief, eight-measure introduction followed, before the theme itself is heard, by the first variation, a skeletal outline of the melody. The theme, 24 measures in length, is stated by the unison violins. The following variations fall into three groups, corresponding to the fast–slow–fast sequence of the traditional three-movement concerto.



## **ESCALES ("PORTS OF CALL") (1922)** **Jacques Ibert (1890-1962)**

*Escales* is scored for piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, English horn, two clarinets, three bassoons, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion, two harps, celesta and strings. The performance time is 14 minutes. The Grant Park Orchestra first performed this work on August 8, 1957, with Milton Katims conducting.

Jacques Ibert was the son of a Parisian businessman and it was his father's intention that the boy follow in the paternal footsteps when it came time to choose a career. Jacques had other ideas, however, and he studied music in secret so as not to incur Papa's displeasure. Curiously, Ibert chose to be admitted to the Paris Conservatoire not as a musician but as an actor, another of his ambitions since childhood, though he studied music along with histrionics. His musical instincts soon won out, however, and he decided that composition offered the more fruitful future course. He studied with Fauré and became friends with his classmates Honegger and Milhaud. Ibert interrupted his studies during the First World War to serve with the French Navy, eventually becoming an officer in the Naval Reserve. He continued his education after the war at the Paris Conservatoire with Paul Vidal, and in 1919 won the *Prix de Rome*. It was during his residency in Rome that he produced the work that brought him his first recognition, the *Ballade of Reading Gaol*, based on a poem by Oscar Wilde. From 1937 to 1955, Ibert served as director of the Academy of Rome, then left Italy to become head of the united management of the Paris Opéra and the Opéra Comique, a post he held for two years. His only visit to the United States was during the summer of 1950 to conduct master classes at the Berkshire Music Center at Tanglewood. Though best known for his witty *Divertissement* and the set of orchestral tone poems *Escales* ("Ports of Call"), Ibert produced a sizable amount of music, including seven operas, five ballets, numerous orchestral and vocal scores, concerted works for cello, flute, saxophone and oboe, as well as chamber music and compositions for solo piano.

During Ibert's tour of duty with the French Navy in World War I, he visited many Mediterranean ports, and was attracted to their local color and native music. The impressions of these sea voyages was the inspiration for *Escales* ("Ports of Call"), which he wrote in Rome to fulfill the composition requirement of his *Prix de Rome*. The work is in three movements: *Rome–Palermo*, *Tunis–Nefta* and *Valencia*. *Escales* opens with sweeping, almost cinematic music depicting a large ship moving through sparkling waters to call at a bustling port, after which the voyage continues with the sea music that opened the movement. The second movement changes venue to the north African port of Tunis, portrayed by an exotic oboe melody in irregular meter intoned above a subtle string accompaniment. The finale evokes the fiery dance rhythms of Spain set in a brilliant whirl of orchestral color.

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performing arts, conservation of  
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and alleviation of poverty.

