



UBC SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Jonathan Girard, Director of Orchestral Activities

Carl Maria von Weber
Overture to “Der Freischütz”
Chengyu Zhang
graduate assistant conductor

Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov
Capriccio espagnol
Simón Ramírez Ortiz
graduate assistant conductor

Johannes Brahms
Symphony No. 3 in F Major
Jonathan Girard *conductor*

7:30PM, SAT. NOV 8, 2025
Chan Centre for the Performing Arts
music.ubc.ca/events

UBCSYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Jonathan Girard, Director of Orchestral Activities

Chan Shun Concert Hall, Chan Centre for the Performing Arts
Saturday, November 8th, 2025 ■ 7:30 p.m.

Carl Maria von Weber Overture to *Die Freischütz*
(1786 - 1826)

Chengyu Zhang - graduate assistant conductor

Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov Capriccio Espagnol, Op. 34
(1844 - 1908)

Simón Ramírez Ortiz - graduate assistant conductor

~ Intermission ~

Johannes Brahms Symphony No. 3 in F Major, Op. 90
(1833-1897)

- I. Allegro con brio
- II. Andante
- III. Poco Allegretto
- IV. Allegro

We are gathering today on the ancestral and unceded territory of the Musqueam people.

University of British Columbia Symphony Orchestra

Violin I

Yu-Jen Hsin*
Surrey, BC, Canada; MMus '27

Yuika Ravindran
Vancouver, BC; BMus '27

Nadya Nuyen
Surrey, BC; BMus '26

Jocelyn Chui
Vancouver, BC; BMus '26

Vickie Wang
Vancouver, BC; BSc '27

Marina Hoffman
Oakland, CA, USA; BSc '26

Galland Chan
Burnaby, BC; BA '28

Alesha Chan
Richmond, BC, Canada; BMus '29

Adrienne Marcano
Caracas, Venezuela; BMus '27

Kaylee Yoong
Surrey, BC; BSc '26

Ranen Wiebe
Chilliwack, BC; BSc '28

Ryan Howland
Victoria, BC, Canada; BSc '27

Nina Huang
Surrey, BC, Canada; BA '29

Matteya Lee
Vancouver, BC; BMus '27

Amy Chen
Surrey, BC; BMus '27

Lucy Moon
Langley, BC; BMus '26

Violin II

Grace M. Alexander*
Plains, MT, USA; MMus '26

Hilary Chan
Vancouver, BC; BMus '28

Christie Watts
Winnipeg, MB; BMus '27

Anali Delshadi
Tehran, Iran; BSc '26

Sam Daniel
Ottawa, ON, Canada; BMus '29

Betty He
Beijing, China; BMus, '28

Nancie Wu
Surrey, BC; BMus '28

Adron Tam
North Vancouver, BC; BMus '28

Evan Jung
Calgary, AB, Canada; BSc, '29

Adrina Khakdoost
Vancouver, BC, Canada BMus '29

Horace Yuen
Richmond, BC, Canada; BMus '29

Eric Hu
Ottawa, ON, Canada; BSc '28

Amanda Chin
Coquitlam, BC; BMus '28

Rowan Beiser-Hunt
Toronto, ON, Canada; BMus '29

Viola

Maia Forsyth
Calgary, AB; DMP '26

Sofiya Zavydovska*
Salem, OR, USA; BMus '26

Cat DeMello
Vancouver, BC; BMus '27

Andrew Llamas
The Woodlands, TX, USA; BMus '28

Cassandra Feltrin
Port Coquitlam, BC; BPSc '28

Alyx Triebel
Olympia, WA, USA; BMus '29

Sofie (Kyueun) Sun
Langley, BC, Canada; BMus '29

Jonah Cheung
Burnaby, BC, Canada; BSc '29

Pin Yi Hu
Coquitlam, BC, Canada; BMus '29

Violoncello

Fay Wang
Toronto, ON; BA '29

Natalie Chin
Vancouver, BC; BMus '27

Julian Lee De Vita*
Vancouver, BC; MMus '27

Gavin Wang
Richmond, BC; BMus '27

Giada Geherin
Albuquerque, NM, USA; BMus '29

Kai Segal
Vancouver, BC; BMus '26

Violet Wood
Fort Langley, BC, Canada; BMus '29

Wei-An Wang
Vancouver, BC; BMus '28

Alex Tuppurainen
Vancouver, BC, Canada; BMus '29

Hailey Kim
Coquitlam, BC, Canada; BMus '29

Chloe Pan
Richmond, BC, Canada; BMus '29

Carl Lemer
Vancouver, BC; BMus, BSc '28

Sophia Ner
Vancouver, BC; BASc '29

Bass

Jennifer Chu*
Vancouver, BC, Canada; DMA '29

Vivian Xu
Nanjing, China; BMus '27

Nicholas Covaser
West Kelowna, BC, Canada; BSc '30

Xander Delisle
Vancouver, BC; BSc '27

Noah Alejandro Ferrera-Palchinski
Vancouver, BC, Canada; MMus '27

Tony Zhou
Burnaby BC, Canada; BCom '29

Lukas Schmidt
Calgary, AB, Canada; BMus '26

Elias Veloso
Vancouver, BC, Canada; BMus '27

Flute & Piccolo

Smile Chow*
Vancouver, BC; BMus '27

Sulola Amani
Vancouver, BC; BSc, BMus '28

Gregor Gasovic-Varga, *piccolo*
New Westminster, BC; BMus '26

Oboe & English Horn

Sayako Leznoff, *English horn**
Vancouver, BC; BMus '26

Tina Chen
Shanghai, China; BMus '26

Clarinet

Francis Sadleir*
Vancouver, BC, Canada; BMus '26

Aaron McDonald
Joplin, MO, USA; DMA '27

Hin Man (Jasmine) Chan
Hong Kong; MMus '26

Bassoon

Connor Smith*
Littleton, Colorado, USA; BMus '27

Alison Wong
Vancouver, BC, Canada; BSc '28

Contrabassoon

Isaac Bull
MMus 93

Horn

Jeremy Solomon*
Vancouver, BC Canada; BMus '27

Otis M. Peake
Vancouver, BC, Canada; BMus '28

Eric Liu
Vancouver, BC, Canada; BMus '29

Adam Nguyen
Surrey, BC, Canada; BMus '28

Trumpet

Lamby Si Yi Wu*
Port Moody, BC; DMPS '26

Lucas Jung
Vancouver, BC; BMus '28

Trombone

Joel Kim*
Surrey, BC, Canada; BMus '28

Nicholas Hoshida
Honolulu, Hawai'i, USA; BMus '29

Bass Trombone

Pengqiu Zhang*
Shanghai, China; Unclassified

Tuba

Alexander Gibson*
Maple Ridge, BC, Canada; BMus '29

Harp

Silvia Li*
Vancouver, BC, Canada; BMus '28

Lacarmia Jia
Vancouver Island, BC, Canada; BMus '27

Percussion

William Huang*
Calgary, AB, Canada; BMus '27

Jerry Wang
Vancouver, BC, Canada; BMus '27

Matthew Lew
Surrey, BC, Canada; BMus, BEd '27

Alisa Carter
Portland, OR, USA; BA '26

Oscos Mak
Hong Kong; BMus '27

Ethan Cao
Richmond, BC, Canada; BMus '29

UBCSO Staff

Simón Ramírez Ortiz
Assistant conductor
Medellín, Colombia; MMus '26

Chengyu Zhang
Assistant conductor
Shanghai, China; MMus '27

Logan Lambert *librarian*

Matteya Lee, *librarian*

Jeremy Solomon, *librarian*

Nadya Nuyen, *stage manager*

Connor Smith, *stage manager*

* denotes principal player



Jonathan Girard is known for his generous, sophisticated conducting and his boundless enthusiasm, on and off the podium. In the kaleidoscope of orchestral sound, he emphasizes structure, colour, and nuance.

He serves as the Director of Orchestras at the University of British Columbia and Artistic Director of the Vancouver Youth Symphony Orchestra. Girard is also the Principal Guest Conductor of the Athens Philharmonic in Greece and has guest conducted around the world. He recently made his debut with the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, and more recently returned from leading concerts in South America. Previously, he held positions with the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra (NY), Portland Opera Repertory Theatre (ME), and the Ohio Light Opera.

Girard is passionate about designing innovative projects involving orchestral improvisation, visual arts, climate data, and groundbreaking technology. Notable projects include Slippages, a work combining ink drawings and data from the movement of glaciers, and Kamoï Komachi, a Noh opera by Farshid Samandari integrating Japanese and Western classical music instruments and styles.

He champions new and little-performed works, particularly by women and underrepresented composers, and has offered Canadian and North American premieres of works by Kaija Saariaho and Ana Sokolović, Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, Óscar Navarro, Florence Price, Arvo Pärt, Francis Poulenc, and others.

Girard's work has been featured on TV on The National in Canada and broadcast on NPR (US), the CBC (Canada), and on four commercial recordings of works by Dorothy Chang, Stephen Chatman, Emmerich Kálmán, and others.

He believes in the power of orchestral music to create and share beauty that changes lives, and devotes significant time to advocating and working in music education. He has become internationally known for his conducting pedagogy and has now trained many successful emerging conductors with professional positions across the US and Canada. He has led youth orchestras across the continent and maintains a significant presence at festivals, clinics, and masterclasses across the Pacific Northwest. He led the Massachusetts All-State Orchestra during the pandemic years and served as conducting faculty at summer festivals including the Vancouver Symphony Orchestral Institute and the Marrowstone Music Festival.

Girard holds a DMA in orchestral conducting from the Eastman School of Music, an M.M. from Boston University, and a B.Mus. summa cum laude from the Hartt School of Music.

Off the podium, he takes to the skies as a pilot with multi-engine and instrument ratings. Flying mirrors music: discipline becomes freedom, precision becomes adventure, and practice becomes poetry.

Learn more at www.jonathangirard.com



Simón Ramírez Ortiz is a conductor, pianist, and educator from Medellín, Colombia.

He has been involved with music since early childhood. Born into a musical family, he began playing piano at the age of 5 under the instruction of Javier Franco Posada. In 2016, he gave his first piano recital under the guidance of Lise Frank. Additionally, he learned to play the violin and participated in various performances with the Instituto Musical Diego Echavarría orchestra, where he later became a teacher.

He started his university studies in Piano Performance with Ana María Orduz Espinal and world-acclaimed Colombian pianist Blanca Uribe Espitia (2020-2021). He has taken conducting classes with Carolina Morales, Cecilia Espinosa, and Ana María Patiño.

He is currently pursuing a Master of Music in Orchestral Conducting under the tutelage of Jonathan Girard at the University of British Columbia.

Simón has traveled as a conductor with the orchestra of the Instituto Musical Diego Echavarría (Medellín) on several occasions. He has conducted in Italy, France, and the United States in collaboration with the SIMAN Orchestral Foundation. He is passionate about pedagogy and teaching. From 2020 to 2024, he worked as a teacher of piano, theory, choir, and orchestra at the Instituto Musical Diego Echavarría. Additionally, back in his native Medellín, he has participated in local opera productions such as *Tosca* and *La Traviata* under the direction of Pedro Salazar, and Andrés Orozco-Estrada as guest conductor with the Orquesta Filarmónica de Medellín and the “Tonos Humanos” choir.

Currently studying with Dr. Jonathan Girard at UBC School of Music, **Chengyu Zhang** is a conductor, a composer, and an organist from Shanghai, China.

He began his professional music training in secondary school and received his high school diploma from Music Middle School Affiliated to Zhejiang Conservatory of Music in 2020, majoring in composition. During high school, he also studied conducting with Dr. Jie Zhou, who was his first mentor in the field. After high school, he attended Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York. There, his composition teachers include Prof. Carlos Sanchez-Gutierrez, Prof. Riccardo Zohn-Muldoon, Prof. David Liptak, Prof. Robert Morris, and Prof. Daniel Pesca. Additionally, at Eastman, he received conducting lessons with Professor Neil Varon on a weekly basis. In the summer of 2025, Chengyu Zhang graduated from Eastman with high distinction and entered the UBC School of Music, where he seeks a career as a professional orchestral conductor.



PROGRAMME NOTES

Compiled by Simón Ramírez Ortiz and Chengyu Zhang

Overture to “Die Freischütz” - Carl Maria von Weber

Often regarded as the first of its kind, Carl Maria von Weber's *Der Freischütz* (J. 277, *The Marksman*) has retained its status as one of the most influential German Romantic operas. Following its triumphant Berlin premiere in 1821, it was enthusiastically performed throughout German-speaking lands, while future generations of composers—including Wagner and Mahler—praised its artistic achievements and drew lasting inspiration from it. Few works have resonated so immediately and universally across all social classes as *Der Freischütz* did from its very first performance.

Much of this success stems from the opera's plot, rooted in a traditional German ghost story. Librettist Johann Friedrich Kind preserved the folk tale's structure while transforming its tragic ending into a redemptive one. At the opera's heart lies a profound moral opposition: the struggle between good and evil, and their capacity to transform one another. The protagonist Max—a respected, kind-hearted hunter—driven by desperation, descends into the Wolf's Glen to seek the demon's aid in achieving his goal. Though he succeeds through dark means, he ultimately repents and receives forgiveness. Max's dilemma resonates deeply: anyone might find themselves in such a predicament. When virtue and justice seem to fail, what path should we choose?

The overture embodies this dramatic conflict. It opens with a serene introduction depicting the peaceful rural life of a Bohemian village, with horn calls evoking the hunters' world. This tranquility is soon shattered by ominous timpani and pizzicato double bass, creating an atmosphere of foreboding. The music then erupts into a tempestuous passage as Max wavers before resolving to seek the demon's help. The horns, representing the benevolent world of hunters and villagers, clash against the clarinet's dark timbres, which symbolize the demon Samiel (the "Black Huntsman"). These two worlds struggle for dominance, with darkness nearly prevailing—until Max's sincere confession transforms the music. The overture's brilliant conclusion anticipates both his forgiveness and the opera's joyful resolution.

Also in 1821...

Napoleon Bonaparte died in exile on the island of St. Helena ▪ The Greek War of Independence erupted against Ottoman rule ▪ Mexico declared independence from Spain ▪ The United States purchased Florida from Spain for \$5 million ▪ Michael Faraday made groundbreaking advances in electromagnetism in Britain ▪ Gustave Flaubert and Fyodor Dostoevsky were born ▪ The poet John Keats died of tuberculosis at age twenty-six

Capriccio Espagnol - Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov

Composed in 1887, Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov's *Capriccio espagnol* stands as one of the most brilliant showcases of orchestral virtuosity in the Romantic repertoire. Originally conceived as a violin fantasy, the work evolved into something far more remarkable: a dazzling five-movement suite in which nearly every instrument claims its moment in the spotlight, while the percussion section propels the music with infectious Spanish rhythms.

Rimsky-Korsakov was a master orchestrator and a leading member of "The Five," a circle of Russian nationalist composers that included Borodin, Balakirev, Cui, and Mussorgsky. Together, they championed a distinctly Russian musical language, though they were equally captivated by exotic subjects—whether Oriental tales (*Scheherazade*) or, in this case, the vibrant culture of Andalusia. Beyond his compositional achievements, Rimsky-Korsakov shaped the next generation of Russian music as a professor at the St. Petersburg Conservatory, teaching harmony, orchestration, and composition to students who would include Stravinsky and Respighi.

The *Capriccio* draws its inspiration from Spanish folk melodies and dance rhythms, which Rimsky-Korsakov clothes in shimmering orchestral colors. The opening *Alborada* (morning song) introduces the main theme through dialogue between clarinet and violin, setting an atmosphere of sunlit Mediterranean landscapes. The second movement, *Variazioni*, offers lyrical contrast: a contemplative theme unfolds in the lower strings and horns, answered by violas and cellos, with a poignant English horn solo at its center.

The *Alborada* returns as the third movement before giving way to the *Scena e canto gitano* (Scene and Gypsy Song), where the percussion springs to life and soloists—violin, clarinet, flute, and harp—navigate passages of breathtaking virtuosity. The orchestra builds momentum toward the exuberant finale, *Fandango asturiano*, a whirlwind movement that weaves together contrasting themes and recalls earlier material. In a stroke of brilliance, the *Alborada* theme returns for the coda, now played by the full orchestra in a radiant, triumphant conclusion.

Also in 1887...

The Yellow River flooded in China, killing an estimated 900,000 to 2 million people ▪ Anne Sullivan began teaching six-year-old Helen Keller ▪ Arthur Conan Doyle published "A Study in Scarlet," introducing Sherlock Holmes to the world ▪ Giuseppe Verdi's opera "Otello" premiered at La Scala ▪ Queen Victoria celebrated her Golden Jubilee, marking 50 years on the British throne ▪ Marc Chagall and Le Corbusier were born ▪ Alexander Borodin died

Symphony No. 3 in F major - Johannes Brahms

After completing his Second Symphony in 1877, Brahms waited six years before returning to the genre—though he was hardly idle, composing two piano concertos and two overtures during this hiatus. In the summer of 1883, while staying in Wiesbaden on the Rhine, he finally unveiled his Symphony No. 3 in F Major: a work of remarkable concentration and ambition.

The Third Symphony is the shortest of Brahms's four symphonies, but its brevity belies its sophistication. Rather than presenting four self-contained movements, Brahms weaves them into a continuous, integrated whole through techniques he had rarely employed before. Most strikingly, he uses cyclic form: the opening theme returns at the symphony's close, creating a sense of completion and inevitability. He also forges connections through harmonic relationships—the opening movement's tension between F major and F minor finds its mirror when the serene C major Andante gives way to a turbulent C minor third movement. These structural experiments would lay the groundwork for his even more ambitious Fourth Symphony.

Yet for all its formal adventurousness, the work remains unmistakably Brahmsian in its rhythmic character. Brahms loved to displace rhythms, beginning phrases on unexpected beats and blurring the sense of the barline. In the first movement, this technique reaches an extreme: the music flows with such metric ambiguity that conventional downbeats seem to dissolve entirely. The third movement achieves similar restlessness through subtler means, stretching and compressing melodic note values to create a sense of constant, gentle motion—as if melody and listener were swaying together on a rolling ship.

In just thirty-three compact minutes, the Third Symphony distills Brahms's mature mastery while revealing the experimental spirit beneath his so-called "conservative" exterior—a work that looks both backward to Classical tradition and forward to new expressive possibilities.

Also in 1883...

The Krakatoa volcano erupted, killing over 36,000 people in one of history's most catastrophic natural disasters ▪ The Brooklyn Bridge opened in New York after 14 years of construction ▪ The Metropolitan Opera House opened with a performance of Gounod's "Faust" ▪ American and Canadian railroads instituted five standard continental time zones ▪ The Orient Express began its first journey from Paris ▪ Coco Chanel and Franz Kafka were born ▪ Richard Wagner died

UPCOMING PERFORMANCES

UBC Bands: Sky to Stone

Wednesday, November 19th at 7:30 p.m. | Chan Shun Concert Hall, Chan Centre for the Performing Arts

UBC Bands honours [UBC Climate Emergency Week](#) with a powerful **Concert Winds** program featuring works including David Maslanka's *Mother Earth*, Jodie Blackshaw's *Vulnerable Joy*, and Robert Buckley's *Cascadia Suite*, the performance explores themes of nature, resilience, and environmental urgency through bold, contemporary wind band repertoire. The **Symphonic Wind Ensemble** explores the thematic evolution from nature to architecture through a program featuring Richard Wagner's *Elsa's Procession to the Cathedral*, Frank Ticheli's *Angels in the Architecture*, and John Mackey's *The Frozen Cathedral*, among other works that interrogate space and structure.

[Purchase tickets here.](#)

UBC Opera: Die Zauberflöte

Thursday, November 27th to Saturday, November 29th at 7:30 p.m.

Sunday, November 30th at 2:00 p.m.

Old Auditorium

One of Mozart's most loved operas! A delightful introduction to the world of classical music and opera, offering enchanting melodies, beautiful costumes, and a timeless story that resonates with audiences of all ages.

[Purchase tickets here.](#)

UBC Choirs & UBC Symphony Orchestra: Bernstein and Holst

Saturday, December 6th at 7:30 p.m. | Chan Shun Concert Hall, Chan Centre for the Performing Arts

Don't miss the popular UBC School of Music's End-of-Term concert celebrating the UBC Symphony Orchestra and UBC Choirs together in an epic performance. *Get your tickets early!*

Chichester Psalms by Leonard Bernstein

[Hyejung Jun](#), conductor

The Planets by Gustav Holst

[Jonathan Girard](#), conductor

[Purchase tickets here](#)

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School of Music

