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featuring Jichen Li, Cello  
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*Walter A. and Dorothy J. Oestreich Concerto Competition*

Saturday, March 21, 2015 – 7:00 p.m.

St. Matthew's Evangelical Lutheran Church  
1615 Wauwatosa Avenue  
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# program

Suite in D ..... Jeremiah Clarke  
(ca. 1674-1707)

- I. Prelude - The Duke of Gloster's March
- II. Minuet
- III. Sybelle
- IV. Rondeau - The Prince of Denmark's March
- V. Serenade
- VI. Bourrée
- VII. Ecosaise
- VIII. Hornpipe
- IX. Gigue

*Bob Syverson, Trumpet*

Variations on a Rococo Theme, Op. 33 ..... Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky  
(1840-1893)

- I. Introduction - Moderato quasi Andante
- II. Thema - Moderato semplice
- III. Variation I - Tempo della thema
- IV. Variation II - Tempo della thema
- V. Variation III - Andante sostenuto
- VI. Variation IV - Andante grazioso
- VII. Variation V - Allegro moderato
- VIII. Variation VI - Andante
- IX. Variation VII e Coda - Allegro vivo

*Jichen Li, Cello*

~ 15-minute Intermission ~

Symphony No. 9 ("From the New World") in E Minor ..... Antonín Dvořák  
(1841-1904)

- I. Adagio
- II. Largo
- III. Scherzo - molto vivace
- IV. Allegro con fuoco

# personnel

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Lynn Plowman  
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Gwenn Harmann†  
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# biographies



**Jamin Hoffman** has had an extensive career as a conductor, serving for thirteen years as the Assistant

and then Resident Conductor for the Milwaukee Ballet (1989-2002), as Conductor of UW-Milwaukee's University Community Orchestra (1992-2003), and as Orchestra Director at Nicolet High School since August of 2002. Jamin was appointed the Conductor of the Concord Chamber Orchestra in August of 2004.

As Resident Conductor of the Milwaukee Ballet, Jamin led the Milwaukee Ballet Orchestra in performances of many great masterworks to critical acclaim, including such works as Carl Orff's *Carmina Burana* (with the Milwaukee Symphony Chorus), Mozart's *Requiem* (with the Bel Canto Chorus), Tchaikovsky's *Swan Lake*, *Sleeping Beauty*, *The Nutcracker*, and *Anna Karenina*, Sergei Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet* and *Cinderella*, Igor Stravinsky's *The Firebird*, Paul Chihara's *The Tempest*, Aaron Copland's *Billy the Kid* and *Appalachian Spring*, Léon Minkus' *Don Quixote*, and Bela Bartok's *Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta*.

As a French horn player, Jamin performed regularly with the Waukesha Symphony and the

Concord Chamber Orchestra since moving to Milwaukee in 1988 until 2004. Even before taking his position at Nicolet High School, Jamin was active as an educator, giving in-school performances, presentations, lectures, and demonstrations throughout southeast Wisconsin. Jamin is an editor and published arranger of educational music for Hal Leonard Music Publishing, with over fifty published arrangements. Rounding out his musical activities, Jamin served as the President of the Board for the Concord Chamber Orchestra from 1997 to 2001.

A native of Mobile, AL, Jamin received his undergraduate degree from the University of Southern Mississippi (USM). While at USM he studied conducting with Dr. Joe Barry Mullins, horn with Dennis Behm and composition with Luigi Zaninelli. After graduation, Jamin was a music educator and horn player, performing regularly with four regional orchestras in Alabama, Mississippi, and Florida. He received his Master's degree from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, where he studied conducting with Margery Deutsch, horn with Barry Benjamin, and composition with John Downey.

Currently Jamin lives in Glendale with his wife, Sandra. In addition to his musical activities, Jamin enjoys spending time with his daughter Mara, cooking, reading, and spoiling his dog.



Cellist **Jichen Li** was born in 1988 in the People's Republic of China. He was a semifinalist in the Fifth Chinese

Golden Bell Award for Music in 2005 and a semifinalist in the fourth Tchaikovsky International Youth Music Contest in 2012.

Jichen studied cello at the Tianjin Conservatory of Music and the China Conservatory of Music before continuing his education in the United

States. He is currently working toward a master's degree from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, under the tutelage of Stefan Kartman.

Jichen has served as the principal cellist in various orchestras including those of the Tianjin Conservatory of Music, China Conservatory of Music, and is currently the principal cellist of the Sheboygan Symphony Orchestra. In addition to performing in the cello section of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, he also was the featured soloist in the 2015 UWM Concerto Competition.

### **Walter A. & Dorothy J. Oestreich Concerto Competition Scholarship Fund**

In memory of his late wife, long-time CCO supporter Walter Oestreich established the Dorothy J. Oestreich Concerto Competition Scholarship Fund in 2000. Upon

Walter's death in 2014, the fund was renamed by the CCO to honor him also. Income generated from this fund has provided scholarships to the winner of the CCO's annual Concerto Competition since the fund's inception.

The competition is open to musicians (instrumentalists, pianists and vocalists) who are residents of Wisconsin and/or attend a Wisconsin high school, college or university, and who are aged 25 or younger as of the audition date.

The deadline for applications is December 1st of each year.

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## program notes

**Jeremiah Clarke** is thought to have been born in London around 1674. While little is known of his early life, records show he became a pupil of John Blow at St. Paul's Cathedral, and later became an organist at the Chapel Royal. "A violent and hopeless passion for a very beautiful lady of a rank superior to his own" caused him to commit suicide in 1707. He considered both hanging and drowning as options for his suicide, and tossed a coin to decide his fate. The coin, however, landed in the mud on its side, so he felt he had to choose a third option, deciding to shoot himself. He performed the deed in the cathedral churchyard. At the time, suicides were not generally granted burial in consecrated ground, but an exception was made in Clarke's case, and he was buried in the crypt of St Paul's Cathedral.

Clarke is best remembered for one movement of his **Suite in D**, "The Prince of Denmark's March" (also commonly called the "Trumpet Voluntary"), originally written about 1700 for the keyboard. From the late 1800s until the 1940s, the work was attributed to Henry Purcell, and was published as such in William Sparkes' *Short Pieces for the Organ*. This version became very popular, and several orchestral transcriptions and recordings have been made of it, further cementing the erroneous notion that the original piece was by Purcell.

Compared to his contemporaries, Clarke's use of the trumpet in this Suite is rather conservative, with only two pronounced solo passages. The beauty of the music, however, with its cheerful tunes and graceful dances should be certain to secure this work an important place in the concert repertoire.

\* \* \*

**Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893)** was a Russian composer whose works included symphonies, concertos, operas, ballets, chamber music, and a choral setting of the Russian Orthodox Divine Liturgy. Some of these are among the most popular theatrical music in the classical repertoire. He was the first Russian composer whose music made a lasting impression internationally, which he bolstered with appearances as a guest conductor later in his career in Europe and the United States. One of these appearances was at the inaugural concert of Carnegie Hall in New York City in 1891. Tchaikovsky was honored in 1884 by Emperor Alexander III, and awarded a lifetime pension in the late 1880s.

Though his musical talent was apparent from an early age, Tchaikovsky was educated for a career as a civil servant. There was few opportunities for a musical career in Russia at that time, and no system of public music education. At his first opportunity, Tchaikovsky entered the nascent Saint Petersburg Conservatory, from which he graduated in 1865. The formal Western-oriented teaching he received



there set him apart from composers of the contemporary nationalist movement embodied by the Russian composers of *The Five* (Balakirev, Cui, Mussorgsky, Rimsky-Korsakov, and Borodin), with whom his professional relationship was mixed. Tchaikovsky's training set him on a path to reconcile the Western techniques he had learned at the Conservatory with the Russian folk music to which he had been exposed from childhood. From this reconciliation, he attempted to forge a personal but unmistakably Russian style – a task that did not prove easy. The principles that governed melody, harmony, and other fundamentals of Russian music ran completely counter to those that governed Western European music; this seemed to defeat the potential for using Russian music in large-scale Western composition or for forming a composite style, and it caused personal antipathies that dented Tchaikovsky's self-confidence. Russian culture exhibited a split personality, with its native and adopted elements having drifted apart increasingly since the time of Peter the Great, and this resulted in uncertainty among the intelligentsia of the country's national identity.

Despite his many popular successes, Tchaikovsky's life was punctuated by personal crises and depression. Contributory factors included leaving his mother for boarding school and his mother's subsequent early death, as well as that of his close friend and colleague Nikolai Rubinstein, and the collapse of the one enduring relationship of his adult life, his 13-year association with the wealthy widow

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Nadezhda von Meck. His homosexuality, which he kept private, has traditionally also been considered a major factor, though some musicologists now downplay its importance. His sudden death at the age of 53 is generally ascribed to cholera; there is an ongoing debate as to whether it was accidental or self-inflicted.

While his music is and has remained popular among audiences, critical opinions were initially mixed. Some Russians did not feel it was sufficiently representative of native musical values and were suspicious that Europeans accepted it for its Western elements. In apparent reinforcement of the latter claim, some Europeans lauded Tchaikovsky for offering music more substantive than base exoticism, and thus transcending stereotypes of Russian classical music.

The **Variations on a Rococo Theme, Op. 33**, was the closest Tchaikovsky ever came to writing a full concerto for cello and orchestra. The style was inspired by Mozart, Tchaikovsky's role model, and makes it clear that Tchaikovsky admired the Classical ("Rococo") style very much. The theme is not Rococo in origin, but was actually written by Tchaikovsky in the Rococo style.

Tchaikovsky wrote this piece in late 1876 and early 1877, immediately following his tone poem *Francesca da Rimini*, for and with the help of Wilhelm Fitzenhagen, a German cellist and fellow-professor at the Moscow Conservatory. Fitzenhagen gave the premiere in Moscow on November 30, 1877, with Nikolai Rubinstein

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conducting. Immediately following this performance, Fitzenhagen made extensive revisions on the piece – including changing the order of the variations, and cutting one variation entirely – to which Tchaikovsky grudgingly acquiesced, and which have now become standard. The original version was not played again until 1941.

Tchaikovsky had rarely been attracted to the variation form before, but felt drawn to the utility of this form. In a traditional concerto format, structural complexities and dramatic issues would have clashed with the 18th-century detachment and finesse Tchaikovsky was trying to attain. The variation format allowed him to retain the melodic outlines and harmonic support in each variation. The potential problem with this approach could be a lack of variety between variations, which would have effectively killed the piece, but Tchaikovsky avoided this trap. There is barely a phrase within each variation whose relationship to the theme is not explicit, yet no two variations assemble their constituent phrases in the same manner, nor build to the same proportions. One device which helps Tchaikovsky greatly in this regard is a *codetta* attached to the end of the theme, to which is attached in turn a quasi-cadential or linking extension. Tchaikovsky varied this extension in length and direction, further modifying the proportions of individual variations and providing a bridge passage from one variation to the next. He even mixed the *codetta* material with the theme itself in the *Andante grazioso* variation.

\* \* \*

**Antonín Dvořák (1841–1904)** was a Czech composer. Following the nationalist example of Bedřich Smetana, Dvořák frequently employed aspects, specifically rhythms, of the folk music of Moravia and his native Bohemia (then parts of the Austrian Empire and now constituting the Czech Republic). Dvořák’s style has been described as “the fullest recreation of a national idiom with that of the symphonic tradition, absorbing folk influences and finding effective ways of using them.”

Dvořák displayed his musical gifts at an early age, being an apt student of violin playing from age 6. The first public performances of his works were in Prague in 1872-1873. Seeking recognition beyond the Prague area, he first submitted a score of his *Symphony No. 1* to a prize competition in Germany but he did not win. The manuscript, not returned, was lost until many years later. In 1874, he made a submission for the Austrian State Prize for Composition, including scores of two further symphonies and other works. Brahms, unbeknownst to Dvořák, was the leading member of the jury and was highly impressed. The prize was awarded to Dvořák in that year and again in 1876 and 1877, when Brahms and the prominent music critic Eduard Hanslick – also a member of the jury – made themselves known to him. Brahms recommended Dvořák to his publisher, Simrock, who soon afterward commissioned what became the *Slavonic Dances*, Op. 46. These were highly praised by the Berlin music critic Louis Ehlert in 1878. The sheet music (of the original piano 4-hands version) had excellent sales, and Dvořák’s international reputation was launched.

Dvořák's first piece of a religious nature, his setting of *Stabat Mater*, was premiered in Prague in 1880. It was very successfully performed in London in 1883, leading to many other performances in the United Kingdom and United States. In his career, Dvořák made nine invited visits to England, often conducting performances of his own works. His *Symphony No. 7* was written for London. After a brief conducting stint in Russia in 1890, Dvořák was appointed as a professor at the Prague Conservatory in 1891.

In 1890-1891, he wrote his *Dumky Trio*, one of his most successful chamber music pieces. In 1892, Dvořák moved to the United States and became the director of the National Conservatory of Music of America in New York City. While in the United States, Dvořák wrote some of his most successful orchestral works. The **Symphony No. 9 ("New World")** spread his reputation worldwide. His Cello Concerto is the most highly regarded of all cello concerti. Also, he wrote his American String Quartet, his most appreciated piece of chamber music. But shortfalls in payment of his salary, along with increasing recognition in Europe and homesickness, led him to leave the United States in 1895 and return to Bohemia.

Dvořák's ten operas all have librettos in Czech and were intended to convey Czech national spirit, as were some of his choral works. By far the most successful of the operas is *Rusalka*. Among his smaller works, the seventh *Humoresque* and the song cycle "Songs My Mother Taught Me" are also widely performed and recorded. He has been described as "arguably the most versatile ... composer of his time."

Dvořák composed the **Symphony No. 9 in E minor ("From the New World")** in 1893 while he was the director of the National Conservatory of Music of America. It is by far his most popular symphony, and one of the most popular of all symphonies. Neil Armstrong took a recording of the New World Symphony to the Moon during the Apollo 11 mission, the first Moon landing, in 1969.

Dvořák was interested in Native American music and the African-American spirituals he heard in America. As director of the National Conservatory he encountered an African-American student, Harry T. Burleigh – later a composer himself – who sang traditional spirituals to him and said that Dvořák had absorbed their 'spirit' before writing his own melodies. Dvořák stated:

"I am convinced that the future music of this country must be founded on what are called Negro melodies. These can be the foundation of a serious and original school of composition, to be developed in the United States. These beautiful and varied themes are the product of the soil. They are the folk songs of America and your composers must turn to them."

The symphony was commissioned by the New York Philharmonic, and premiered on December 16, 1893 at Carnegie Hall conducted by Anton Seidl. A day earlier, in an article published in the New York Herald on December 15, 1893, Dvořák

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further explained how Native American music had been an influence on this symphony:

“I have not actually used any of the [Native American] melodies. I have simply written original themes embodying the peculiarities of the Indian music, and, using these themes as subjects, have developed them with all the resources of modern rhythms, counterpoint, and orchestral colour.”

In the same article, Dvořák stated that he regarded the symphony's second movement as a “sketch or study for a later work, either a cantata or opera ... which will be based upon Longfellow's [The Song of] Hiawatha” [Dvořák never actually wrote such a piece.] He also wrote that the third movement scherzo was “suggested by the scene at the feast in Hiawatha where the Indians dance”.

In 1893, a newspaper interview quoted Dvořák as saying “I found that the music of the negroes and of the Indians was practically identical,” and that “the music of the two races bore a remarkable similarity to the music of Scotland.” Most historians agree that Dvořák is referring to the pentatonic scale, which is typical of each of these musical traditions.

In a 2008 article in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, prominent musicologist Joseph Horowitz asserts that African-American spirituals were a major influence on Dvořák's music written in America, quoting him as saying, “In the negro melodies of America I discover all that is needed for a great and noble school of music.” Dvořák did, it seems, borrow rhythms from the music of his native Bohemia, as notably in his Slavonic Dances, and the pentatonic scale in some of his music written in America from African-American and/or Native American sources. Statements that he borrowed melodies are often made but seldom supported by specifics. Michael Steinberg writes that a flute solo theme in the first movement of the symphony resembles the spiritual “Swing Low, Sweet Chariot.” Leonard Bernstein averred that the symphony was truly multinational in its foundations.

Dvořák was influenced not only by music he had heard, but by what he had seen, in America. He wrote that he would not have composed his American pieces as he had, if he had not seen America. It has been said that Dvořák was inspired by the American “wide open spaces” such as prairies he may have seen on his trip to Iowa in the summer of 1893. Notices about several performances of the symphony include the phrase “wide open spaces” about what inspired the symphony and/or about the feelings it conveys to listeners.

Dvořák was also influenced by the style and techniques used by earlier classical composers including Beethoven and Schubert. The falling fourths and timpani strokes in the New World Symphony's “Scherzo” movement evokes the “Scherzo” of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. In his fourth movement, Dvořák's use of flashbacks to prior movements is reminiscent of Beethoven quoting prior movements as part of the opening Presto of the last movement.

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## about the cco

### **Making Classical Music Accessible**

The Concord Chamber Orchestra was founded in 1975 to provide volunteer musicians the opportunity to create stimulating musical experiences for the enjoyment and inspiration of Milwaukee area audiences and, through our annual concerto competition, to give promising young musicians a venue in which to perform.

Our membership consists of players from various professions and age groups united by a love of music. The orchestra made the community of Wauwatosa its home in 1993, and now performs regularly at St. Matthew's Evangelical Lutheran Church.

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*Frank Almond, Artistic Director*

## Season Finale

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