

Yale SCHOOL OF MUSIC

José García-León, Dean

Yale Philharmonia

Peter Oundjian, *principal conductor*

Wanxinyi Huang, *viola*

Friday, October 24, 2025 | 7:30 p.m.

Woolsey Hall

Program

Benjamin Britten
1913–1976

Four Sea Interludes from *Peter Grimes*, Op. 33a

- I. Dawn. Lento e tranquillo
- II. Sunday Morning. Allegro spiritoso
- III. Moonlight. Andante comodo e rubato
- IV. Storm. Presto con fuoco

Edward Elgar
1857–1934
arr. for viola by
Lionel Tertis

Cello Concerto in E minor, Op. 85

- I. Adagio – Moderato
- II. Lento – Allegro molto
- III. Adagio
- IV. Allegro – Moderato – Allegro, ma non troppo
– Poco più lento – Adagio

Wanxinyi Huang, *viola*

INTERMISSION

Ludwig van Beethoven
1770–1827

Symphony No. 5 in C minor, Op. 67

- I. Allegro con brio
- II. Andante con moto
- III. Scherzo. Allegro – Trio
- IV. FInale. Allegro

As a courtesy to others, please silence all devices. Photography and recording of any kind is strictly prohibited. Please do not leave the hall during musical selections. Thank you.

Artist Profiles

Peter Oundjian, *principal conductor*

Toronto-born conductor Peter Oundjian has been an instrumental figure in the re-birth of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra since his appointment as Music Director in 2004. In addition to conducting the orchestra in dynamic performances that have achieved significant artistic acclaim, he has been greatly involved in a variety of new initiatives that have strengthened the ensemble's presence in the community and attracted a young and diverse audience.

In addition to his post in Toronto, from which he stepped down in 2018, Oundjian served as Principal Guest Conductor of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra from 2006 to 2010 and played a major role at the Caramoor International Music Festival in New York between 1997 and 2007. In 2012 he was appointed Music Director of the Royal Scottish National Orchestra.

Oundjian was the first violinist of the renowned Tokyo String Quartet, a position he held for fourteen years. Since 1981, he has been on the Yale School of Music faculty. He was awarded the School's Samuel Simons Sanford Medal for distinguished service to music in 2013 and named Principal Conductor of the Yale Philharmonia in 2015. He is Professor (adjunct) of Music and Orchestral Conducting at the School of Music.

Wanxinyi Huang, *viola*

Chinese violist Wanxinyi Huang, recently graduated from the Yale School of Music, where she earned both the Master of Music and Master of Musical Arts degrees under the mentorship of Professor Ettore Causa. She is now pursuing her Doctor of Musical Arts degree at Northwestern University under Professor Helen Callus.

A John White Awards winner at the 2025 Lionel Tertis International Viola Competition, Huang is also a prizewinner of the Yale Woolsey Concerto Competition. She was also a semifinalist in the 2024 Klein International Competition. Her other prizes include The ECSO Instrumental competition (2025), Paris International Music Competition (2021), the Hong Kong International String Competition (2019).

As a committed chamber musician, Huang has appeared at prestigious festivals including the Ravinia Steans Music Institute, Gstaad String Academy, Kronberg Violin & Viola Masterclass, Villars Music Academy, NUME Music Festival, THY Chamber Music Festival, and the Cullovio Chamber Music Festival. She is the founder of Ensemble ClassiCORE, a group that is actively engaged in chamber music and has performed at the Kennedy Center and toured China in 2024.

Huang has collaborated with or performed in masterclasses for distinguished artists such as Tabea

Zimmermann, Nobuko Imai, Nils Mönkemeyer, Walter Küssner, Misha Amory, Steven Tenenbom, Hsin-Yun Huang, Roberto Díaz, Midori Gotō, Emanuel Ax, Fabio Bidini, and David Grimal.

In addition to her solo and chamber work, Huang is an active orchestral musician. She currently serves as a tutti violist with the Hartford Symphony Orchestra. In 2019, she toured Europe and China with NYO-China under the baton of Ludovic Morlot. She has also performed with the Yale Philharmonia and as a guest with orchestras including Singapore Symphony Orchestra, the Sichuan Symphony Orchestra and the Sichuan City Hall Symphony Orchestra in China. Her performances have earned high praise from audiences and colleagues alike.

Program Notes

Four Sea Interludes from *Peter Grimes*

BRITTEN

Elizabeth Sellers

In 1939, Benjamin Britten and his companion, the tenor Peter Pears, both conscientious objectors, left their native England for Canada and the United States. While traveling in California, the two men read George Crabbe's "The Borough." The poem is set in a Suffolk fishing community, and tells of a social outcast, Peter Grimes, who is suspected in the deaths of his apprentices. Pears sketched an operatic adaptation of "The Borough" while still in America. After the men returned to England in 1942, Montagu Slater wrote the libretto for the opera which, with its premiere in 1945, would launch Britten as the most important composer of English opera since Purcell.

Peter Grimes is a deeply psychological opera, and Britten employed the orchestra to underpin the characters' emotions and innermost thoughts. The dramatic action of the opera is framed by orchestral numbers, which set the mood for and comment on the events in the drama. Britten extracted four of the orchestral movements from the opera and published them separately as the *Four Sea Interludes*.

"Dawn" links the Prologue of the opera, which depicts the inquest into the death of Grimes' apprentice, with Act I. Faint grey light enters through high, pianissimo violins and woodwinds. Shifting orchestral timbres convey the cold, relentless ocean, and cymbals evoke

breaking waves. This music provides the background for a scene in which fishermen set about their early morning work.

"Sunday Morning" opens Act II. Ellen Orford, a widowed schoolmistress who serves as Grimes' link to the community and as his defendant, has arranged for a new apprentice to help Grimes, and this act begins with an optimistic tone. Church bells sound in the brass, and the continuing patterns in the winds and strings are reminiscent of change-ringing. Britten paints the warmth of the sun in this movement; Ellen Orford lingers outdoors in it while the rest of the townspeople walk to church.

At the close of Act II, the second of Grimes' apprentices dies. In "Moonlight," which precedes Act III, undulating waves are depicted by gently pulsating brass and string figures, and moonlight reflecting on the surface of the water and shining down the streets of the town is represented by harp and flute punctuations. The pensive mood underlines Grimes' inner turmoil and the growing animosity among the townspeople who attempt to sort out the recent events to determine what treatment Grimes should receive.

Although taken from Act I, "Storm" serves well as a closing movement for the *Four Sea Interludes*. Its harmonic dissonance and syncopated rhythms create an atmosphere that mirrors the mental state of Grimes and the other fishermen in Act I. Taken out of the context of the opera, "Storm" can also be heard as the culmination of the tension built in the preceding interludes.

Program Notes *cont.*

Cello Concerto in E minor

ELGAR

Laura Usiskin

Elgar's cello concerto is so beloved today that it is hard to imagine it ever having a less than stellar reputation. However, it did not get off to a promising start in the public's eye. At the work's premiere in 1919, the London Symphony Orchestra was severely unprepared, having had far less rehearsal time than expected or required for the piece, and thus played it poorly. Also, the audience had expected a work of magnitude similar to his successful violin concerto, which he had written around nine years earlier, and what they heard instead was a far more introspective and intimate composition that sounded more like chamber music than a symphonic piece. Elgar deliberately chose this deviation for several reasons. First of all, he was worried that the orchestra would overpower the solo cello (it being so much lower than a violin) and consequently thinned out the orchestra part significantly. Second, he had just finished three chamber pieces and was therefore in more of a mind to write in that particular vein. Fortunately, subsequent performances of the piece, as well as a successful recording of it, made it a staple of the cello repertoire.

The melody of the first movement—a long, descending, melancholy line in 9/8—was written by Elgar in March of 1918 (more than a year before he wrote the rest of the concerto) while he was in the hospital recovering from a tonsillectomy. He decided to use the melody for the concerto

in 1919 and finished the piece that summer while staying in a rural cottage. Although in some ways the concerto reflects the pastoral landscape of the English countryside, it more accurately reflects the political climate of the time, World War I having just ended. Elgar, deeply affected by the atrocities of the war, wrote the concerto as a reflection on despair, death, and mortality.

The soloist's opening chords establish the E minor tonality and portend the intense anguish to come. The first movement is in three sections: the first section develops the forlorn melody several times; the second section is lighter and more hopeful, yet still melancholy; and the third section returns to the sentiments of the first. The music moves *attacca* into the second movement, which begins with a reiteration of the opening chords of the first movement, this time as *pizzicati* from the solo cello. After a recitative section, where the cello teases the listener with snippets of the fast melody to come, the solo cello launches into a texture of perpetual motion that is light and cheerful. Twice in the movement the chatter of sixteenth notes stops for the cello to play a lush, lyrical melody—but only briefly before returning to the *scherzando*-like music. Optimism continues into the third movement, which has a sublimely beautiful, romantic melody and lush texture. The form of this movement is like an arch: it starts softly, grows to a climax, then relaxes at the close. The music moves *attacca* into the fourth movement, where all optimism ceases. After an introduction by the

orchestra, the solo cello plays a powerful recitative that ends with a bravura passage (an uncommon appearance in Elgar's writing). The following forceful melody has a rhythmic drive that pervades the movement. Near the end, however, the music gradually slows down until it reaches the tempo of the third movement, at which time the solo cello plays the third movement's melody for six bars, trails off into nothing, and then reiterates the anguished opening chords of the first movement yet again. Despair triumphs over optimism, and the concerto finishes with a dramatic close.

Symphony No. 5 in C minor

BEETHOVEN

Patrick Campbell Jankowski

Beethoven's Fifth Symphony emerged from a turbulent life in a fraught Vienna between 1807 and 1808. Napoleon's armies had occupied the city in 1805 and would return in 1809; the composer's hearing was failing; patronage was shifting, with public opinion more essential than ever to an artist's success. Sketched alongside the Pastoral Symphony—its veritable opposite in many ways—the Fifth emerged from this pressure as a model of concision and drive. Its premiere on December 22, 1808, part of Beethoven's notoriously under-rehearsed marathon concert at the Theater an der Wien, was received with uneven opinion, but the symphony's stature rose quickly.

The terse, insistent motto that opens the work with the now ubiquitous “three shorts and a long” does more than start

the piece; it seeds the entire symphony. In the Allegro con brio, that cell is squeezed, sequenced, and hurled between sections. An unexpected oboe cadenza briefly stalls the charge before the engine restarts. The Andante con moto offers variations that pivot between noble and intimate. The Scherzo recasts the motto in both whisper and force through hushed strings and a taut fugato. Without pause, the music gradually transforms to C major for the Finale—piccolo, contrabassoon, and trombones (firsts for a Beethoven symphony) blazing the way. Fragments of the scherzo reappear mid-finale, binding the arc from doubt to affirmation. Beethoven's contemporary E. T. A. Hoffmann heard no less than “the machinery of awe, of fear, of terror, of pain,” but also “shining rays of light through the darkness.”

Yale Philharmonia Roster

Peter Oundjian, *principal conductor*

VIOLIN I

Nicholas Hammel
Miray Ito
Jimin Lee
Hayoung Choi
Hyein Koo
Inhae Cho
Cameron Chase
Jiyeon Park
Caroline Smoak
Gayoung Kim
Jaewon Wee
Jeongmin An

VIOLIN II

Matthew Cone
Dabin Yang
Dexter Mott
Sumin Cho
Joey Lau
Megan Lin
Maya Ito Johnson
Daniel Rafimayeri
Alex Zhou
Josephine Kim

VIOLA

Kiarra Saito-Beckman
Nicolas Perkins
Vincenzo Calcagno
Soyoung Cho
Aditi Prakash
Julian Seney
Juan Alvarez Jimenez
JungAhn Shin

CELLO

Balder Hella Mikkelsen
Abigail Leidy
Charles Zandieh
Hayoung Moon
Dylan Kinneavy
Hyun Ji Kim
Austin Fisher
Bethany Bobbs

DOUBLE BASS

Josue Alfaro Mora
Yuge Chen
Joshua Rhodes
Andrew Vinther
Arden Ingersoll
Logan Lee

FLUTE

Ben Smith ¹
Jolie Fitch ^{2,3}

PICCOLO

Jolie Fitch
Ben Smith
Carter Reynolds

OBOE

Annie Winkelman ¹
Alexis Wilson ²
Tina Shigeyama ³
Jacob Duff
Amy Kim

CLARINET

Alex Swers ¹
Nickolas Hamblin ³
Katelyn Poetker ²
Eszter Pokai
Juan Pedro
Espinosa Monteros

E-FLAT CLARINET

Nickolas Hamblin

BASSOON

Davey Hiester ^{1,2}
Aaron Nealy ³
Logan Stokes

CONTRABASSOON

Laessa Winters

HORN

Cristina Vieyetz ¹
Dylan Kingdom
Aidan Lewis
Gretchen Berendt
Esther Orlov-Mayer ²
Sam Hart
Lily Judge ³
Oved Rico

TRUMPET

Karlee Navarro ^{1,3}
Ethan Wood ²
Katie Hillstrom

TROMBONE

Naomi Wharry ¹
Madelyn Stoklosa ²
Griffin Rupp ³
William Roberts

BASS TROMBONE

Alex Felker

TUBA

Junming Wen ^{1,2}

TIMPANI

Han Xia ¹
Anna Mueller ²
Kyle Rappe ³

PERCUSSION

Matt Boyle ¹
Ethan Hall

HARP

Jiaxian Chen ¹

¹ *Principal on Britten*

² *Principal on Elgar*

³ *Principal on Beethoven*

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1 & 2 **Yale Opera**

Sat 7:30 p.m. & Sun 2:00 p.m. | Morse Recital Hall
Tickets start at \$13, Faculty/Staff start at \$10, Students start at \$6

NOV 15 **Christopher Theofanidis - *Siddhartha, She***
Jeffrey Douma, *guest conductor*
Yale Philharmonia

7:30 p.m. | Woolsey Hall
Tickets start at \$13, Faculty/Staff start at \$9, Students free

DEC 3 **A Celebration of Claude Frank**
Horowitz Piano Series

7:30 p.m. | Morse Recital Hall
Tickets start at \$31, Faculty/Staff start at \$23, Students start at \$12

JAN 23 **Xian Zhang, *guest conductor***
Yale Philharmonia

7:30 p.m. | Woolsey Hall
Tickets start at \$13, Faculty/Staff start at \$9, Students free

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