

Sunday, July 12, 2:30pm

HERBERT BLOMSTEDT CONDUCTING

BEETHOVEN Overture from the incidental music to  
Goethe's "Egmont," Opus 84

BRUCH Violin Concerto No. 1 in G minor, Opus 26  
Prelude: Allegro moderato—  
Adagio  
Finale: Allegro energico

JOSHUA BELL

{Intermission}

DVORÁK Symphony No. 8 in G, Opus 88  
Allegro con brio  
Adagio  
Allegretto grazioso  
Allegro ma non troppo

Bank of America is proud to sponsor the 2009 Tanglewood season.

Steinway and Sons Pianos, selected exclusively for Tanglewood.

Special thanks to Commonwealth Worldwide Chauffeured Transportation.

In consideration of the performers and those around you, please turn off all cellular phones, texting devices, pagers, and watch alarms during the concert.

Please do not take pictures during the concert. Flashes, in particular, are distracting to the performers and to other audience members.

Note that the use of audio or video recording during performances in the Koussevitzky Music Shed or Seiji Ozawa Hall is prohibited.

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

Overture from the incidental music to Goethe's "Egmont," Opus 84

*First performance:* June 15, 1810, Hofburgtheater, Vienna. *First BSO performance:* December 1881, Georg Henschel cond. *First Berkshire Festival performance:* August 13, 1936, Serge Koussevitzky cond. *First Tanglewood performance:* August 8, 1940, Koussevitzky cond. *Most recent Tanglewood performance:* July 20, 2001, Andrew Davis cond.

Goethe completed his historical tragedy *Egmont* in 1788 while on a tour of Italy. The historical count Egmont was the most illustrious victim of Spanish tyranny in the 16th-century Netherlands when he was treacherously seized by the Duke of Alba and executed in Brussels on June 4, 1568. In the closing scene of Goethe's drama (which treats the facts of history with great freedom) Egmont is in prison, awaiting execution. He sees a vision of Freedom, in the likeness of his sweetheart Klärchen, and awakens emboldened to address his countrymen with heroic words before being taken to execution, ending, "And to save all that is dearest to you, fall joyously, as I set you an example." The author called for music almost throughout this scene, first during Egmont's vision and then breaking in again immediately after his last words as the curtain falls with what Goethe called a "victory symphony."

Some twenty years after the writing of the play, Beethoven was commissioned by the Vienna Court theater to prepare the incidental music called for by Goethe. The production opened May 24, 1810, but although Beethoven had several months' notice, he had not managed to finish the overture in

time; it was added to the performance on June 15. Here the composer found a dramatic subject that he was in tune with as rarely before or after. Perceiving the conflict between Alba and Egmont as the clash between evil and good, he produced music of great force. Most of the overture uses no musical material from the incidental music to the play itself, but for the coda Beethoven suddenly quotes from the victory symphony, the very last music to be heard in the play. Coming at the end of the usually somber thematic material from the main part of the overture, it arouses a terrific sense of victory.

#### STEVEN LEDBETTER

Steven Ledbetter was program annotator of the Boston Symphony Orchestra from 1979 to 1998 and now writes program notes for other orchestras and ensembles throughout the country.

Max Bruch (1838-1920)

Violin Concerto No. 1 in G minor, Opus 26

*First performance:* January 5, 1868, Bremen, Karl Martin Rheinthal cond., Joseph Joachim, soloist. *First BSO performance:* October 1882, Georg Henschel cond., Louis Schmidt, soloist. *First Tanglewood performance:* August 8, 1975, Arthur Fiedler cond., Emanuel Borok, soloist. *Most recent Tanglewood performance:* August 17, 2008, Miguel Harth-Bedoya cond., Pinchas Zukerman, soloist.

Max Bruch was a child prodigy who grew into a gifted composer of extraordinary taste and refinement, a composer who could always be relied on to turn out works of professional finish and often of great beauty. He composed in virtually every medium and was highly successful in most. His cantata *Frithjof*, Opus 23 (1864), was extraordinarily popular for the rest of the century; it used to be given in Boston every year or so. Similarly his *Odysseus* (a cantata built on scenes from Homer), *Achilleus*, and a setting of Schiller's *Das Lied von der Glocke* were long popular in the heyday of the cantata and oratorio market that was fueled by annual choral festivals in just about every town of any size or cultural pretension in Europe or America. He also wrote three operas, three symphonies, songs, choral pieces, and chamber music. He was active as a conductor in Germany and England and eventually became a professor of composition at the Berlin Academy.

Yet today he is remembered primarily for a few concertos. There can be little doubt that the violin was his preferred solo instrument. With the exception of a double concerto for clarinet and viola, all of his compositions for soloist with orchestra—three concertos, the *Scottish Fantasy*, a Serenade, and a *Konzertstück*—feature the violin. The absence of other media in his concerto output was not for lack of opportunity or invitation. But Bruch felt a strong disinclination to compose for the piano. When Eugen d'Albert specifically asked for a piano concerto in 1886, Bruch wrote to his publisher Simrock, "Well—me, write a piano concerto! That's the limit!" Twelve years earlier, when Simrock had suggested that there might be a market for a cello concerto, Bruch was even more outspoken: "I have more important things to do than write stupid cello concertos!"

In any case, Bruch limited himself almost totally to the violin, and of his three concertos for that instrument, the first was one of his earliest successes and remains the most frequently performed of all his works. The fact that his other work has almost totally dropped out of sight may have been caused, in large part, by his desire to compose music that was immediately "accessible," comprehensible to the bulk of the audience on first hearing. Such music rarely retains its interest over the stylistic changes of a century. Bruch was certainly never embroiled in the kind of controversy that followed Brahms or Wagner or most of the other great innovators. In many respects he resembled the earlier Spohr and Mendelssohn, both of whom wrote a great deal of merely ingratiating music (though Mendelssohn, to be sure, also composed music that was more than that); it might be well made, but it did not speak to audiences across the decades, though every now and then someone would trot out one piece or another, having discovered that it was undeniably "effective."

One of the few works of Bruch that has not fallen into that rather patronizing category is his earliest published large-scale work, the present concerto. And it is, of course, the violinists who have kept it before the world, since it is melodious throughout and ingratiatingly written. The G minor concerto is so popular, in fact, that it is often simply referred to as "the Bruch concerto," though he wrote two others for violin, both in D minor.

Bruch had a great deal of difficulty bringing the work to a successful conclusion; he reworked it over a period of four years, which included even a public performance of a preliminary version. In the end, many of the details of the solo part came about as the result of suggestions from many violinists. The

man who had the greatest hand in it was Joseph Joachim (who was, of course, also to serve much the same function for the violin concerto of Johannes Brahms); Joachim's contribution to the score fully justifies that placing of his name on the title page as dedicatee. He worked out the bowings as well as many of the virtuoso passages; he also made suggestions concerning the formal structure of the work. Finally, he insisted that Bruch call it a "concerto" rather than a "fantasy," as the composer had originally intended.

Bruch's planned title—"Fantasy"—helps to explain the first movement, which is something of a biological sport. Rather than being the largest and most elaborate movement formally, Bruch designs it as a "prelude" and labels it as such. The opening timpani roll and woodwind phrase bring in the soloist in a progressively more dramatic dialogue. The modulations hint vaguely at formal structures and new themes, but the atmosphere throughout is preparatory. Following a big orchestral climax and a brief restatement of the opening idea, Bruch modulates to E-flat for the slow movement, which is directly linked to the Prelude. This is a wonderfully lyrical passage; the soloist sings the main theme and an important transitional idea before a modulation to the dominant introduces the secondary theme (in the bass, under violin triplets). Though the slow movement ends with a full stop (unlike the Prelude), it is directly linked with the finale by key. The last movement begins with a hushed whisper in E-flat, but an exciting crescendo engineers a modulation to G major for the first statement (by the soloist) of the main rondo theme. This is a lively and rhythmic idea that contrasts wonderfully with the soaring, singing second theme, which remains in the ear as one of the most striking ideas of the work, a passage of great nobility in the midst of the finale's energy.

STEVEN LEDBETTER

Antonín Dvořák

Symphony No. 8 in G, Opus 88

*First performance:* February 2, 1890, Prague, Dvořák cond. *First BSO performance:* February 1892 (American premiere), Arthur Nikisch cond. *First Tanglewood performance:* July 30, 1966, Erich Leinsdorf cond. *Most recent Tanglewood performance:* July 13, 2003, Kurt Masur cond.

Dvořák's fame at home had begun with the performance in 1873 of his patriotic cantata *Heirs of the White Mountain*. (The defeat of the Bohemians by the Austrians at the battle of the White Mountain just outside Prague in 1620 led to the absorption of Bohemia into the Habsburg empire, a condition that obtained until October 28, 1918.) An international reputation was made for him by the first series of Slavonic Dances of 1878 and also by his *Stabat Mater*. The success in England of the latter work was nothing less than sensational, and Dvořák became a beloved and revered figure there, particularly in the world of choir festivals, much as Mendelssohn had been in the century's second quarter (but see George Bernard Shaw's reviews of Dvořák's sacred works).

In the 1890s, this humble man, who had picked up the first rudiments of music in his father's combination of butcher shop and pub, played the fiddle at village weddings, and sat for years among the violas in the pit of the opera house in Prague (he was there for the first performance of Smetana's *Bartered Bride*), would conquer America as well, even serving for a while as director of the National conservatory in New York. Johannes Brahms was an essential figure in Dvořák's rise, providing musical inspiration, but also helping his younger colleague to obtain government stipends that gave him something more like the financial independence he needed, and, perhaps most crucially, persuading his own publisher Simrock to take him on. Next to talent, nothing matters so much to a young composer as having a responsible and energetic publisher to get the music into circulation, a subject many a composer today could address eloquently.

Unlike Haydn and Beethoven, Dvořák never sold the same work to two different publishers, but on a few occasions, and in clear breach of contract, he fled the Simrock stable, succumbing to the willingness of the London firm of Novello to outbid their competition in Berlin. One of these works was the G major symphony, published in a handsomely printed full-size score by Novello, Ewer, and Co. of London and New York, copyright 1892, and priced at thirty shillings. Dvořák's other Novello publications were vocal works, including his great dramatic cantata *The Specter's Bride*, the oratorio *Saint Ludmilla*, the Mass in D, and the *Requiem*. Given the English passion for Dvořák engendered by his *Stabat Mater* in 1883, it is no wonder that Novello was willing to bid high.

Simrock primarily wanted piano pieces, songs, chamber music, and, above all, more and more Slavonic Dances—in other words, quick sellers—while Dvořák, for his part, accused Simrock of not

wanting to pay the high fees that large works like symphonies merited. (Simrock, having paid 3000 marks for the Symphony No. 7, offers a mere and insulting 1000 for No. 8.) Yet Dvorák was not just interested in money, though as someone who had grown up in poverty he was not indifferent to comfort. He had grand goals as a composer of symphony and opera—not just to do those things, but to do them, especially symphony, in as original a way as he was capable. Understandably, therefore, and in full awareness of the value of Simrock's initial support, he resented a publisher who showed some reserve about endorsing his most ambitious undertakings. I also suspect that another factor in these occasional infidelities of Dvorák's was his unabated irritation with Simrock for his insistence on printing his name as German "Anton" rather than Czech "Antonín." They eventually compromised on "Ant." Novello was willing to go with "Antonín."

It had been four years since Dvorák's last symphony, the magnificent—and very Brahmsian—No. 7 in D minor. During those four years, Dvorák had made yet another attempt at opera (this time with a political-romantic work called *The Jacobin*, full of superb music), revised the Violin Concerto into its present form, written a second and even finer series of Slavonic Dances, and composed two of his most loved and admired pieces of chamber music, the A major piano quintet and the piano quartet in E-flat. He felt thoroughly ready to tackle another symphony, and as he got to work in the seclusion of his country house, each page of freshly covered manuscript paper bore witness to how well-founded was his faith in himself and his ability to write something that, as he said, would be "different from other symphonies, with individual thoughts worked out in a new way."

The new symphony opens strikingly with an introduction in tempo, notated in G major like the main part of the movement, but actually in G minor. This melody, which sounds gloriously rich in cellos, clarinets, bassoons, and horns, was actually an afterthought of Dvorák's, and he figured out how to bring it back most splendidly at crucial points during the movement. The Adagio also begins on a harmonic slant. Those first rapturous phrases for strings are—or seem to be—in E-flat major, and it is only in the eighth measure that the music settles into its real key, C minor. Now we sense the long shadow cast by Beethoven's *Eroica*, because the moment C minor is established, the music concentrates on gestures that are unmistakably those of a funeral march. A radiant C major middle section, introduced by a characteristic triple upbeat, makes the *Eroica* reference even more unmistakable, and rises to a magnificently sonorous climax. After some moments of calm, the music becomes more impassioned than ever and finally subsides into a coda that is both elegiac and tender. It is also, like most of this symphony, a marvel of imaginative scoring.

By way of a scherzo, Dvorák gives us a leisurely dance in G minor. The Trio, in G major, is one of his most enchanting pages. The main section of the movement returns in the usual way, after which Dvorák gives us a quick coda which is the Trio transformed, music he actually borrowed from his 1874 comic opera *The Stubborn Lovers*. After this strong taste of national flavor, Dvorák becomes more Czech than ever in the finale, which one might describe as sort of footloose variations, and which is full of delightful orchestral effects, the virtuosic flute variation and the mad, high trilling of the horns from time to time being perhaps the most remarkable of these.

#### MICHAEL STEINBERG

Michael Steinberg was program annotator of the Boston Symphony Orchestra from 1976 to 1979, and after that of the San Francisco Symphony and New York Philharmonic. Oxford University Press has published three compilations of his program notes, devoted to symphonies, concertos, and the great works for chorus and orchestra.

#### Guest Artists

##### Herbert Blomstedt

Born in the United States to Swedish parents, Herbert Blomstedt began his musical education at the Royal Academy of Music in Stockholm and at the University of Uppsala. He later studied conducting at the Juilliard School in New York, contemporary music in Darmstadt, and Renaissance and Baroque music at the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis. He worked with Igor Markevitch in Salzburg and Leonard Bernstein at Tanglewood. Mr. Blomstedt made his conducting debut with the Stockholm

Philharmonic in February 1954 and served as chief conductor of the Oslo Philharmonic, Swedish Radio Symphony, and Danish Radio Symphony. As chief conductor of the Dresden Staatskapelle from 1975 to 1985, he toured Europe, the United States, and Japan. As a guest conductor he has appeared with such orchestras as the Berlin Philharmonic, Munich Philharmonic, the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam, the Boston Symphony, Chicago Symphony, Cleveland Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra, Israel Philharmonic, and the NHK Symphony, of which he is currently honorary conductor. Conductor laureate of the San Francisco Symphony, Mr. Blomstedt was music director there from 1985 to 1995, bringing the orchestra to major European concert venues and festivals including Edinburgh, Salzburg, Munich, and Lucerne. From 1996 to 1998 he was music director of the NDR Symphony Orchestra in Hamburg. In the 1998-99 season he succeeded Kurt Masur as music director of the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, a post he held through 2004-05. Now honorary conductor of that orchestra, he returns to Leipzig regularly. In 2006, three more orchestras awarded him the title of honorary conductor: the Danish Radio Symphony, the Swedish Radio Symphony, and the Bamberg Symphony Orchestra, where he has been conducting since 1982. His extensive discography includes more than 130 works with the Dresden Staatskapelle, among them the complete symphonies of Beethoven and Schubert. With the Danish Radio Symphony, he recorded the complete works of Carl Nielsen. In 1987, he and the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra signed an exclusive contract with Decca. Many of their recordings received major awards, and his complete cycles of the Sibelius and Nielsen symphonies are considered exemplary reference recordings. With the Gewandhaus Orchestra, he recorded Brahms's Symphony No. 4, Bruckner's Symphony No. 9, Hindemith's *Sinfonia serena* and *Die Harmonie der Welt*, Mendelssohn's piano concertos, works by Richard Strauss, Sandström's *High Mass*, and Mendelssohn's *Elijah*. The German label Querstand released a boxed set of live concert recordings covering the Leipzig period from 1998 to 2005, including Bruckner's Symphony No. 8 (from his farewell concerts with the Gewandhaus Orchestra) and Bruckner's Symphony No. 7. Herbert Blomstedt has received several honorary doctorates and is an elected member of the Royal Swedish Music Academy. In the fall of 2003 he was awarded the Grosses Bundesverdienstkreuz by the German Federal President Johannes Rau. He celebrated his eightieth birthday on July 11, 2007. Herbert Blomstedt made his Boston Symphony Orchestra debut at Tanglewood in 1980 and his BSO subscription series debut in February 2004, returning to Tanglewood in 2006 for an appearance with the Tanglewood Music Center Orchestra and two programs with the BSO. He led the BSO most recently this past March and conducted the TMCO in Sibelius's Symphony No. 2 this past June 29, as part of its first concert this summer.

#### Joshua Bell

Joshua Bell's 2008-09 season began with the worldwide Sony Classical release of Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons* recorded with the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields; his return to his alma mater—Indiana University's Jacobs School of Music—as a senior lecturer; and the tenth-anniversary DVD release of the film *The Red Violin* featuring his playing on John Corigliano's Oscar-winning soundtrack. Mr. Bell is also featured on the soundtrack of the recent Paramount Vantage film *Defiance*. An exclusive Sony Classical artist, he has created a richly varied catalogue of recordings, including Corigliano's *The Red Violin* Concerto, Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto, "The Essential Joshua Bell," "Voice of the Violin," and "Romance of the Violin." In 2004 *Billboard* named "Romance of the Violin" its "Classical CD of the Year" and named Mr. Bell "Classical Artist of the Year." Highlights of the current season include a South American tour; summer festival performances at Aspen, Ravinia, Napa, Verbier, Cortona, Sun Valley, Tanglewood, and the Hollywood Bowl; concerts with the New York Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic, and the symphony orchestras of San Francisco, Indianapolis, Pittsburgh, Montreal, Atlanta, Minneapolis, Seattle, Syracuse, and Oregon, and a United States recital tour with Jeremy Denk. International engagements include a tour with the Verbier Festival Orchestra to Athens, Lisbon, Berlin, and Munich performing Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons*, and concerts in Madrid with the Spanish National Orchestra, in Paris with the Orchestra Philharmonique de Radio France, and in Beijing with the China National Symphony Orchestra. He also performed with Miami's New World Symphony, on Lincoln Center's "Great Performers" Series, and on a European tour with the Minneapolis Orchestra and Osmo Vänskä. After a performance at the 92nd Street Y with longtime collaborator Steven Isserlis, he returned to Europe to tour with the Camerata Academia, followed by a European recital tour with Jeremy Denk, and performances in Vancouver, Seattle, Los Angeles, Portland, Denver, and Phoenix. Joshua Bell came to national attention at

fourteen with his Philadelphia Orchestra debut, followed by his Carnegie Hall debut, an Avery Fisher Career Grant, and a recording contract. He has collaborated with such artists as Pamela Frank, Steven Isserlis, and Edgar Meyer, and such non-classical artists as Josh Groban, James Taylor, and Sting. Grammy-nominated for “Gershwin Fantasy,” “Short Trip Home,” and an all-Bernstein recording featuring the *West Side Story* Suite, he received the 2008 Academy of Achievement award for exceptional accomplishment in the arts. He appeared as himself in the film *Music of the Heart*, has made numerous television appearances, and has been profiled in many publications. Raised in Bloomington, Indiana, Joshua Bell was an avid computer game player and competitive athlete. By age twelve he was serious about the violin, inspired by his beloved teacher Josef Gingold. His alma mater, Indiana University, honored him with a Distinguished Alumni Service Award only two years after his graduation in 1989. He has been named an “Indiana Living Legend” and received the Indiana Governor’s Arts Award. Inducted into the Hollywood Bowl Hall of Fame in 2005, he currently serves on the Artist Committee of the Kennedy Center Honors. He plays the 1713 Gibson ex Huberman Stradivarius. Joshua Bell made his first Boston Symphony appearance in July 1989 at Tanglewood and his BSO subscription series debut in January 1994. His most recent subscription appearances were in January 2007, playing Bruch’s G minor violin concerto, and his most recent Tanglewood appearance with the BSO was in August 2008, playing music of Chausson and Saint-Saëns.