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Atlanta Symphony Orchestra
featuring Elizabeth Koch Tiscione, *oboe*

10.20.24

34



Atlanta Symphony Orchestra

Earl Lee, *conductor*

Elizabeth Koch Tiscione, *oboe*

Symphony No. 104 in D Major, *London*

Adagio. Allegro
Andante
Menuet: Allegro
Finale: Spiritoso

Franz Joseph Haydn
(1732-1809)

L'horloge de flore (The Flower Clock)

3:00—*Galant de jour* (Day Jessamine or
Poisonberry)
5:00—*Cupidone bleue* (Cupid's Dart or Blue
Catananche)
10:00—*Cierge à grandes fleurs* (Nightblooming
Cereus)
12:00—*Nyctanthe du Malabar* (Night-flowering
or Malabar Jasmine)
17:00—*Belle-de-nuit* (Moonflower or Morning
Glory)
19:00—*Géranium triste* (Mourning Geranium)
21:00—*Silène noctiflore* (Night-flowering
Catchfly)

Jean Françaix
(1912-1997)

Elizabeth Koch Tiscione, oboe

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Symphony No. 4 in A Major, Op. 90, *Italian* Felix Mendelssohn
 Bartholdy
 (1809-1847)

Allegro vivace
 Andante con moto
 Con moto moderato
 Saltarello. Presto

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in memory of Elizabeth M. Hendricks

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PROGRAM NOTES

by Noel Morris
Program Annotator

Four Things You Need to Know:

1. Both Jean Françaix and Felix Mendelssohn were composer prodigies. Françaix wrote his first published piece at age ten. Mendelssohn wrote thirteen string symphonies by the age of fourteen.
2. Haydn found love in London. Unfortunately, he was married. He had had a long, loveless marriage, and he and his wife lived apart. Haydn later said of the Scottish widow Rebecca Shroeter, "I would have married her very easily if I had been free at the time."
3. King George III, the mad king portrayed in the *Bridgerton* spinoff *Queen Charlotte*, offered Haydn an apartment at Windsor Castle in an attempt to persuade him to settle in England. Ultimately, the composer declined.
4. Mendelssohn's *Italian* Symphony had a starring role in the 1979 film *Breaking Away*, along with the young Dennis Quaid. But Mendelssohn's superstar status came from something else: his "Wedding March" and his Christmas hit "Hark the Herald Angels Sing."

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Haydn Symphony No. 104

Encyclopedias refer to Franz Joseph Haydn as the "father of the symphony," which might elicit blank stares and yawns, but the real-life Haydn was a colorful guy. He clawed his way to the top of a harsh and unforgiving world and developed a new art form.

In November 1749, when sixteen-year-old Haydn aged out of the Vienna Boys' Choir, he found himself on the street. In 1753, he took a job as valet and accompanist to Niccolò Porpora, a famous composer (and abusive boss). Haydn cleaned the man's shoes in exchange for a place to sleep and some pointers on writing music.

Composers of Porpora's generation wrote three movement symphonies (sometimes called overtures) lasting ten or fifteen minutes. In Italy, these works summoned chatty opera audiences to their seats before the main event. They didn't command much attention. Haydn wrote his Symphony No. 1 in 1759 while working for a Bohemian count. The man was a music lover and kept a sixteen-piece orchestra on staff. When Haydn presented his new symphony, the Count's friends found it enchanting—especially Prince Paul Anton Esterházy, who hired Haydn in 1761.

Haydn remained with the Esterházy family for thirty years. Though a servant, he enjoyed lavish facilities, excellent players, and a small but world-class audience. Year after year, the Esterházys drew Europe's glitterati to a remote estate, and Haydn's reputation spread by word of mouth. In time, his symphonies grew from light little trifles into the main event.

By 1790, Haydn had had enough country life. The isolation got to him, and he complained incessantly to his friends. As luck would have it, his prince died, sadly, leaving the estate to someone who didn't like music. The new prince furloughed the musicians, and Haydn became a hot ticket.

On New Year's Day, 1791, he crossed the English Channel to a hero's welcome. Londoners treated him like a rock star and flocked to his concerts—the largest audiences he'd ever seen. Staying there for a year, Haydn received an honorary doctoral degree from Oxford University and produced a half-dozen

landmark symphonies. He returned to London in the fall of 1795 and went to work on more compositions. This time, the royals pleaded with him to stay forever. Haydn declined their offers but gave Londoners six more watershed symphonies—each a musical wonder in its own right.

The Symphony No. 104 is the culmination of his work in the genre, combining weight with gravitas. The so-called *London* Symphony requires nearly three times as many players as his First Symphony from 1759, pointing the way to his student, Beethoven. No. 104 has breadth and majesty yet lifts the spirit with infectious tunes, including a rollicking Croatian folk song called “Oj Jelena” in the finale.

Haydn returned to Vienna in 1796, and a new, music-loving Esterházy prince summoned him into service. Haydn stepped back into his servant’s uniform—but with a lot of money in his pocket.

Françaix *The Flower Clock*

Composer Jean Françaix came into the world when the *Titanic* sank and left it when James Cameron’s *Titanic* hit the silver screen. In eighty-five years, Françaix saw a radical flowering in music, from bebop to The Beatles, from Stravinsky to Snoop Dogg, but his musical sensibilities remained conservative. Steering clear of music’s radical pioneers, he wrote in a “light, neo-classical style,” pleasing audiences and giving oboe players some of their most popular works.

Over his long life, Françaix remained active as a pianist while cranking out dozens of compositions. He paid special attention to woodwind instruments, writing chamber works, and concertos for winds. He also produced operas, chamber works, ballets, and film scores.

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He wrote his oboe concerto, *The Flower Clock*, in 1959, after a concept put forth by the eighteenth-century botanist Carl Linnaeus. In 1748, Linnaeus developed a clock of sorts based on plants that flower at a specific time of day. Françaix used Linnaeus's idea of telling time according to the plants—a flower clock—and created atmospheric musical portraits of each flower, showing off the oboe's ability to produce a wide range of tone colors.

Mendelssohn Symphony No. 4, Italian

The expression "Grand Tour" has been applied to everything from diplomatic missions to a TV show. Originally, it referred to an extended trip through Europe for young gentlemen, designed to expose them to art and antiquities. When the prodigy Felix Mendelssohn took his Grand Tour, he hopped off the beaten path, taking a walking tour of Scotland, and knocked on the door of Sir Walter Scott (one of his literary heroes). He visited Goethe in Weimar and eventually went to Italy, where he stayed for over a year. As he traveled, he wrote music and sketched out various landscapes while studying the technique of the great masters.

A bundle of letters to family and friends provides a detailed travelogue. When Mendelssohn heard music that piqued his interest (good or bad), he would write it down and provide colorful commentary. When a Paris pipe organ left a bad impression, he wrote, "It sounded like a full chorus of old women's voices."

Upon arriving in Italy, he noted "an indescribable sensation of pervading contentment and satisfaction." He marveled at the sun-kissed landscapes. "The whole country had a gay and festive air, as if a Prince were expected to make his grand entry, and the vine branches with their purple grapes hanging in festoons from

the trees, made the most lovely of all festive wreaths." And so it was, young Mendelssohn poured this atmosphere into an Italian symphony.

The sunny opening to the piece bounds off the page with an almost laughing spirit, which tracks with his joyful musings. In Rome in February of 1831, he wrote: "I have once more begun to compose with fresh vigor, and the Italian symphony makes rapid progress." In April, he wrote a letter from Naples saying he expected to finish the piece before leaving Italy.

At some point, work on the symphony slowed. Mendelssohn finished it in Berlin, two years later, and conducted a performance in 1833. After the initial hearing, he made some changes and left the piece on a shelf. Probably, he meant to work on it some more, but life got away from him. Mendelssohn died in 1847 at age thirty-eight. The *Italian* Symphony remained unpublished until 1851.

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EARL LEE, CONDUCTOR

Winner of the 2022 Sir Georg Solti Conducting Award, Earl Lee is a renowned Korean-Canadian conductor who has captivated audiences worldwide. Earl is in his second season as Music Director of the Ann Arbor Symphony Orchestra and in his third season as Assistant Conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, which he has led in subscription concerts both at Symphony Hall and Tanglewood.



In addition to a full season of concerts with the Ann Arbor Symphony and subscription concerts with the Boston Symphony in Boston and at Tanglewood, Earl's 23/24 season included guest conducting engagements with the Vancouver Symphony, Calgary Philharmonic, Winnipeg Symphony, Colorado Springs Philharmonic, The Florida Orchestra, and the Royal Conservatory Orchestra Toronto. Previous seasons have seen subscription debuts with the San Francisco Symphony, Seoul Philharmonic, Hawaii Symphony, and Edmonton Symphony; leading the Lunar New Year galas of both the New York Philharmonic and San Francisco Symphony. Earl previously held positions as Associate Conductor of the Pittsburgh Symphony and Resident Conductor of the Toronto Symphony.

Earl mentored young musicians as former Artistic Director and Conductor of the Toronto Symphony Youth Orchestra, and as Music Director of the Pittsburgh Youth Symphony Orchestra. He is a regular guest conductor with the orchestras of North America's top music schools.

As a cellist, Earl has performed at festivals such as the Marlboro Music Festival, Music from Angel Fire, Caramoor Rising Stars, and Ravinia's Steans Institute and has toured as a member of the East Coast Chamber Orchestra (ECCO), and with Gary Burton & Chick Corea as a guest member of the Harlem String Quartet.

He studied cello at the Curtis Institute of Music and the Juilliard School and conducting at Manhattan School of Music and the New England Conservatory. He lives in New York City with his wife and their daughter.

ELIZABETH KOCH TISCIONE, OBOE

Elizabeth Koch Tiscione joined the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra at the beginning of the 2007-2008 season as principal oboe.



In addition to her responsibilities with the ASO, Ms. Tiscione plays Principal Oboe at the Grand Teton Music Festival, Strings Festival, Festival Mozaic and is a member of the Atlanta Chamber Players. She has performed as guest principal oboe with the orchestras of New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, San Francisco, St. Louis, Detroit, KBS, Baltimore, Rochester, Buffalo, Jacksonville and the Orpheus and St. Paul Chamber Orchestras.

She has been featured on NPR's "From the Top," has also performed at many chamber music festivals throughout the country and as a soloist with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center. Her teachers include, Marc Dubois, Daniel Stolper, Richard Woodhams and Robert Walters.

Elizabeth is from Hamburg, New York and started playing the oboe in the public school system. She went on to study at the Interlochen Arts Academy in Interlochen, Michigan and the Curtis Institute of Music, in Philadelphia.

Elizabeth has taught at some of the most prestigious institutions in the country including the Curtis Institute, Colorado College Summer Music Festival and the Aspen Music Festival.

She is on faculty at Kennesaw State University and maintains a private oboe studio out of her home. Elizabeth is married to another member of the Atlanta Symphony, trumpeter Michael Tiscione and they have a son, Elio. In Elizabeth's free time, she loves to cook, travel and practice yoga.



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