Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra
2017-2018 Mellon Grand Classics Season

June 15, 16 and 17, 2018

MANFRED HONECK, CONDUCTOR
EMANUEL AX, PIANO
PAUL APPLEBY, TENOR
MENDELSSOHN CHOIR OF PITTSBURGH
MATTHEW MEHAFFEY, DIRECTOR
PITTSBURGH YOUTH CHORUS
SHAWN FUNK, DIRECTOR

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN — Concerto No. 5 in E-flat major for Piano and Orchestra, Opus. 73, "Emperor"

I. Allegro
II. Adagio un poco mosso —
III. Rondo: Allegro

Mr. Ax

Intermission

HECTOR BERLIOZ — *Te Deum*, Opus 22

I. Te Deum (Hymn): Allegro moderato
II. Tibi omnes (Hymn): Andantino
III. Dignare (Prayer): Moderato quasi andantino
IV. Christe, rex gloriae (Hymn): Allegro non troppo
V. Te ergo quaesumus (Prayer):
Andantino quasi adagio (Tenor)
VI. Judex crederis (Hymn and Prayer):
Allegretto un poco maestoso

Mr. Appleby
Mendelssohn Choir of Pittsburgh
Pittsburgh Youth Chorus

PROGRAM NOTES BY DR. RICHARD E. RODDA

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN

Born December 16, 1770 in Bonn; died March 26, 1827 in Vienna

Concerto No. 5 in E-flat major for Piano and Orchestra, Opus 73, "Emperor" (1809)

Ludwig van Beethoven was born in Bonn on December 16, 1770, and died in Vienna on March 26, 1827. He composed his Fifth Piano Concerto in 1809, and it was premiered in Leipzig by the Gewandhaus Orchestra with Johann Philipp Schulz conducting and Friedrich Schneider as soloist on November 11, 1811. The Pittsburgh Symphony first performed the concerto at Carnegie Music Hall with conductor Frederic Archer and soloist William H. Sherwood on December 2, 1897, and most recently performed it with conductor Manfred Honeck and soloist Rudolf Buchbinder on April 28, 2017. The score calls for woodwinds in pairs, four horns, two trumpets, timpani and strings.
Performance time: approximately 38 minutes

The year 1809 was a difficult one for Vienna and for Beethoven. In May, Napoleon invaded the city with enough firepower to send the residents scurrying and Beethoven into the basement of his brother's house. The bombardment was close enough that he covered his sensitive ears with pillows to protect them from the concussion of the blasts. On July 29th, he wrote to the publisher Breitkopf und Härtel, "We have passed through a great deal of misery. I tell you that since May 4th, I have brought into the world little that is connected; only here and there a fragment. The whole course of events has affected me body and soul.... What a disturbing, wild life around me; nothing but drums, cannons, men, misery of all sorts." He bellowed his frustration at a French officer he chanced to meet: "If I were a general and knew as much about strategy as I do about counterpoint, I'd give you fellows something to think about." Austria's finances were in shambles, and the annual stipend Beethoven had been promised by several noblemen who supported his work was considerably reduced in value, placing him in a precarious pecuniary predicament. As a sturdy tree can root in flinty soil, however, a great musical work grew from these unpromising circumstances — by the end of that very year, 1809, Beethoven had completed his "Emperor" Concerto.

The sobriquet "Emperor" attached itself to the E-flat Concerto very early, though it was not of Beethoven's doing. If anything, he would have objected to the name. "Emperor" equaled "Napoleon" for Beethoven, as for most Europeans of the time, and anyone familiar with the story of the "Eroica" Symphony will remember how that particular ruler had tumbled from the great composer's esteem. "This man will trample the rights of men underfoot and become a greater tyrant than any other," he rumbled to his young friend and pupil Ferdinand Ries. The Concerto's name may have been tacked on by an early publisher or pianist because of the grand character of the work, or it may have originated with the purported exclamation during the premiere by a French officer at one particularly noble passage, "*C'est l'Empereur!*" The most likely explanation, however, and one ignored with a unanimity rare among musical scholars, was given by Anton Schindler, long-time friend and early biographer of Beethoven. The Viennese premiere, it seems, took place at a celebration of the Emperor's birthday.

The Concerto opens with broad chords for orchestra answered by piano before the main theme is announced by the violins. The following orchestral tutti embraces a rich variety of secondary themes leading to a repeat of all the material by the piano accompanied by the orchestra. A development ensues with "the fury of a hail-storm," wrote Sir Donald Tovey. Following a recapitulation of the themes and the sounding of a proper chord on which to launch a cadenza, Beethoven wrote into the piano part, "Do not play a cadenza, but begin immediately what follows." At this point, he supplied a tiny, written-out solo passage that begins the coda. This being the first of his concertos that Beethoven himself would not play, he wanted to have more control over the finished product, and so he prescribed exactly what the soloist was to do. With this novel device, he initiated the practice of completely writing out all solo passages that was to become the standard method used by most later composers in their concertos.

The second movement begins with a chorale for strings. Sir George Grove dubbed this movement a sequence of "quasi-variations," with the piano providing a coruscating filigree above the orchestral accompaniment. This *Adagio* leads directly into the finale, a vast rondo with sonata elements. The bounding ascent of the main theme is heard first from the soloist and then from the orchestra.

Developmental episodes separate the returns of the theme. The closing pages include the magical sound of drum-taps accompanying the shimmering piano chords and scales, and a final brief romp to the finish.

HECTOR BERLIOZ

Born December 11, 1803 in Côte-Saint-André, France; died March 8, 1869 in Paris

Te Deum for Tenor, Chorus, Organ and Orchestra, Opus 22 (1849)

Hector Berlioz was born in Côte-Saint-André, France on December 11, 1803, and died in Paris on March 8, 1869. He composed Te Deum in 1849, and it was premiered in Paris at the Church of Saint-Eustache with Berlioz conducting and Friedrich Schneider as tenor soloist on April 30, 1855. These performances mark the Pittsburgh Symphony premiere of the work. The score calls for two flutes, two oboes, English horn, two clarinets, bass clarinet, two bassoons, four horns, four trumpets, three trombones, two tubas, timpani, percussion, organ and strings.
Performance time: approximately 55 minutes

After the ferocious failure of his *Damnation of Faust* at its premiere at the Opéra-Comique in December 1846, Berlioz decided he had suffered just about enough Parisian vitriol for the moment, and offered his talents for the appreciation of audiences somewhere else. His music was enjoying a fine success in Russia at that time, and he arranged an extended conducting tour for early 1847 to St. Petersburg, Moscow and Riga, where he was welcomed, respected and applauded. He returned to Paris in June hoping for a change of popular attitude toward his music, but he immediately became embroiled in a nasty controversy surrounding the appointment of a new director for the Opéra. When he received a proposal to conduct a season of opera as well as concerts of his own works in London from the notorious impresario, showman and charlatan Louis Antoine Jullien (who inscribed his setting of the *Lord's Prayer*: "Words by Jesus Christ. Music by Jullien"), Berlioz jumped at the chance. He arrived in London on November 6, 1847, and set about preparing Jullien's opera productions at the Drury Lane Theatre. Though both his conducting and the concerts of his music were warmly received by the English critics and public, by January 1848, it was apparent that Jullien's venture was careening toward failure and that Berlioz's contract would become just another scrap of paper in a bankruptcy proceeding. With revolution roaring through the streets of Paris in February, Berlioz independently tried to establish himself in London, but eventually had to abandon that plan and return to France. After he headed for home in July, the *Musical Times* lamented, "Hector Berlioz has left England. We feel that a great and original mind has gone from among us."

When Berlioz arrived in Paris in July 1848 after his half-year in London, he found the city still in shambles and intellectually stagnant from the uprising several months earlier. Parisian artistic life was shattered. He reported seeing a pianist playing for pennies on a street corner; fine painters were sweeping streets. The government authorized aid for dispossessed and unemployed artists, but it was woefully inadequate. "To think of the peaceful works of the mind or to seek the beautiful in arts and letters under such conditions is like trying to play billiards on a storm-tossed ship," he wrote to a friend in Russia. On July 28th came the news that his father had died; in mid-October, Harriet, the woman who had inspired the *Symphonie Fantastique* two decades before and whom Berlioz had married in 1833, suffered her fifth stroke and was virtually incapacitated. Still Berlioz persisted, eking out a meager living from his income as librarian at the Conservatoire and for his columns for the *Journal des Débats*. To help revitalize French musical life, he helped organize a popular concert for late October 1848 in the theater at Versailles, to which the public had been admitted only twice since its construction two centuries before. The event met with sufficient success to encourage him to found a Philharmonic Society in Paris the following year. Though this organization lasted only eighteen months and gave but twelve concerts, it did serve to spur the renewal of musical activities in the capital, and laid the foundation for such later concert series as those by Pasdeloup, Colonne and Lamoureux.

It is uncertain why Berlioz undertook the *Te Deum*, his only work from 1849. He received no commission for the score, nor did he have any immediate prospect of a performance, though he may have anticipated that his Philharmonic Society would undertake the premiere or that the score might even be used for the coronation ceremonies of Louis Napoleon as Emperor Napoleon III. The *Te Deum* seems to have arisen from some grand, ceremonially militaristic feelings aroused by the revolutions of the preceding year coupled with a renewed memory of the Catholic liturgy stirred by the religious observations surrounding his father's death a year before. The musical material and ceremonial nature of

the work probably derived from several projected pieces from the 1830s: an opera about the Last Judgment; a symphony on "The Return of the Army from Italy," inspired by Berlioz's tour along the routes of Napoleon's Italian campaign; and a seven-movement work in honor of France's illustrious dead. This last plan gave rise to the deliriously noisy *Symphonie funébre et triomphale* of 1840, quite probably the only symphony ever scored for wind band with optional strings. Some ideas from these projects were channeled into the *Requiem* of 1837, while others surfaced in the *Te Deum*. The score of the *Te Deum* was completed during the first week of October 1849. The Philharmonic Society collapsed the following year amid heated squabbling over the division of the organization's tiny profits, and Berlioz locked the *Te Deum* in his desk, where it remained, unperformed, for six years.

In 1855, Berlioz seemed finally to be gaining some success in Paris, the last European musical capital to recognize his genius. The government gave him the honor of overseeing three of the seven concerts that were to be held in conjunction with the Great Exhibition of that year, even allowing him to mount the still-untried *Te Deum* as the inaugural program. He assembled an army of 950 performers for the premiere on April 30th at the Church of Saint-Eustache, a spacious 17th-century edifice on the Right Bank not far from the Palais Royale: 100 strings, 50 winds, two choirs of 100 each and a children's chorus of 600. (The music for the youngsters was added sometime after Berlioz had heard the 1851 Charity Children's Concert in London's St. Paul's Cathedral with 6,500 voices joining in unison to sing *All People That on Earth Do Dwell*.) The dress rehearsal for the *Te Deum*'s musical horde two days before the performance drew considerable critical attention, and the church was packed for the premiere. "The *Requiem* has a little brother," the composer wrote to Franz Liszt at the end of the day. "The *Te Deum* was performed today with magnificent precision. It was colossal, Babylonian, Ninivite.... What a pity that I am the author of it. I could write a most curious article about it all. This time it isn't just a matter of *piccoli paesi*, but a scene from the Apocalypse."

The *Te Deum*, the great hymn of praise and thanksgiving, is among the most ancient extant items of Christian musical worship. Long attributed to St. Ambrose, it has been shown to be the work of one Nicetus, a 6th-century bishop in Remisiana (now Nish, Serbia), though certain of its lines can be traced back as far as the third century A.D. It is one of the few remaining examples of a type of verse written to imitate the Psalms, a genre given the intriguing title of *psalmus idioticus* (from the Greek "idio," meaning "characteristic" or "distinctive," as in "idiomatic"; i.e., a verse in the character of a psalm). The words of the *Te Deum*, a component of both the Roman Catholic and Anglican services, received special settings throughout the Middle Ages and Renaissance, including one by Palestrina, and since the 17th century have been the basis of many grand, festive compositions, among which are examples by Purcell (1694), Handel (two, 1713 and 1743), Bruckner (1884), Dvořák (1896), Verdi (1898), Kodály (1936), Vaughan Williams (1937), Britten (1945) and Walton (1953).

Berlioz's original version of the *Te Deum* was in eight movements. One of them, an orchestral *Praeludium* to the *Dignare*, was omitted from the published edition. Another, the *March for the Presentation of the Colors* (for which Berlioz requested twelve harps), was intended for ceremonial use only. In the remaining six movements, Berlioz carefully exploited the antiphonal characteristics of his performing forces to create a structure of almost architectural dimensions and splendor. Great choral shouts alternate with *sotto voce* whispers, not unlike pillars of a Gothic cathedral that are spaced with glittering stained glass windows. The tenor soloist is heard only in the fifth movement, but his music brings to the score an element of lyricism and personal expression that serves as a foil to the galvanic closing *Judex crederis*. The same careful balance is heard in the use of the instrumental forces, which contrasts the considerable body of orchestral players with the organ — "Pope and Emperor, speaking in dialogue from opposite ends of the nave" is how Berlioz characterized the disposition of his ensemble.

Though Berlioz's *Te Deum* has never enjoyed the renown of his *Requiem*, it is every bit that work's equal in grandeur of expression and mastery of construction. Berlioz said of the *Judex crederis*, "It is unquestionably the most imposing thing that I have produced," and J.H. Eliott felt the score to be "the most powerful of all Berlioz's works. In no other music of the composer are there released such enormous discharges of sheer nervous energy."

Te Deum (Hymn)

Te Deum laudamus,	We praise Thee, O God,
te Dominum confitemur.	we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord.
Te aeternum Patrem	Thee, the Father everlasting,
omnis terra veneratur.	all the earth doth worship.

Tibi omnes (Hymn)

Tibi omnes Angeli,	To Thee all the angels,
tibi coeli, et universae Potestates,	to Thee the heavens, and all the powers,
tibi Cherubim et Seraphim	to Thee the cherubim and seraphim
incessabili voce proclamant:	cry out without ceasing:
Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus	Holy, holy, holy,
Deus Sabaoth.	Lord God of hosts.
Pleni sunt coeli et terra	Full are the heavens and the earth
majestatis gloriae tuae.	of the majesty of Thy glory.
Te gloriosus chorus Apostolorum,	Thee, the glorious choir of the apostles,
te Prophetarum laudabilis numerus,	Thee, the admirable company of the prophets,
te Martyrum candidatus laudat exercitus.	Thee, the white-robed army of martyrs doth praise.
Te per orbem terrarum sancta confitetur Ecclesia,	Thee, the holy Church throughout the world doth confess:
Patrem immensae majestatis;	The Father of incomprehensible majesty;
venerandum tuum verum et unicum Filium;	Thine adorable, true, and only Son,
Sanctum quoque Paraclitum Spiritum.	and the Holy Ghost the Paraclete.

Dignare, Domine (Prayer)

Dignare, Domine, die isto	Vouchsafe, O Lord, this day
sine peccato nos custodire.	to keep us without sin.
Aeterna fac cum Sanctis tuis	Make us to be numbered with Thy saints
in Gloria numerari.	in glory everlasting.
Miserere nostri, miserere nostri!	Have mercy on us, have mercy on us!

Christe, Rex Gloriae (Hymn)

Tu, Christe, tu rex gloriae,	Thou art the King of Glory, O Christ,
Patris sempiternus Filius.	Thou art the everlasting Son of the Father.
Tu, devicto mortis aculeo,	Thou, having overcome the sting of death,
aperuisti credentibus	hast opened to believers
regna coelorum.	the kingdom of heaven.
Ad liberandum	Thou, having taken upon Thee
suscepturus hominem,	to deliver man,
non horruisti virginis uterum.	didst not abhor the Virgin's womb.
Tu ad dexteram Dei sedes	Thou sittest at the right hand of God,
in gloria Dei Patris.	in the glory of the Father.

Te Ergo Quaesumus (Prayer)

Te ergo quaesumus, Domine,	We therefore pray Thee,
famulis tuis subveni,	help Thy servants,
quos pretioso sanguine redemisti.	whom Thou hast redeemed with Thy precious blood.
Fiat super nos misericordia tua, Domine,	O Lord, let Thy mercy light upon us,
quemadmodum speravimus in te.	as our trust is in Thee.

Judex Crederis (Hymn and Prayer)

Judex crederis	We believe that Thou
esse venturus.	shalt come to be our judge.
In te, Domine, speravi,	O Lord, in Thee have I trusted,
non confundar in aeternum.	let me never be confounded.
Salvum fac populum tuum	Save Thy people
et benedic haereditati tuae, Domine.	and bless Thine heritage, O Lord.

Per singulos dies benedicimus, laudamus te. Et laudamus nomen tuum.	Day by day we magnify and praise Thee. And we praise Thy name forever.