

Friday, July 15 • 7:30 pm  
Whittington-Pfohl Auditorium

# Nordic Night

Transylvania Symphony Orchestra  
Thomas Joiner, conductor • Eric Ohlsson, oboe

Hugo Alfven

*Midsommvarka*  
(*Swedish Rhapsody* No. 1), Op. 19

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Oboe Concerto in C Major, K. 314  
Allegro aperto  
Adagio non troppo  
Rondo: Allegretto  
*Eric Ohlsson, oboe*

## INTERMISSION

Jean Sibelius

Symphony No. 2  
Allegretto  
Andante ma rubato  
Vivacissimo, allegro moderato

## About the Performers

### Thomas Joiner, conductor

Thomas Joiner serves as professor of violin and orchestral activities at Furman University and as music director of the Hendersonville (NC) Symphony. He has performed in Carnegie Hall and the Kennedy Center as a principal player with the Indianapolis Symphony and as a violinist with orchestras in Louisville, Aspen, Charleston and Savannah. As an artistic ambassador for the United States Information Agency, Joiner presented recitals with pianist and BMC faculty member Douglas Weeks during a five-week tour of West Africa and the Middle East. He served for ten years as professor of violin and director of orchestral activities at the University of Georgia. Joiner and his wife, violist Anna Barbrey, perform as the Joiner Duo. During the summer, Joiner is co-concertmaster of the Brevard Music Center Orchestra and leads the Transylvania Symphony Orchestra.



### Eric Ohlsson, oboe



Now in his twelfth summer as a member of the Brevard Music Center artist faculty, Eric Ohlsson is principal oboe of the BMC Orchestra and is regularly featured as soloist and chamber musician. He began his professional career as co-principal oboe of the Columbus Symphony while still a student at Ohio State University. He has also served as principal oboe of the Naples Philharmonic, Augusta Symphony and South Carolina Philharmonic and Chamber Orchestra. His orchestra, solo and chamber performances have taken him throughout the United States and to Canada, Europe and South America. Ohlsson is currently principal oboe of the Tallahassee Symphony and the Palm Beach Opera. Ohlsson was on the faculty of the University of South Carolina and since 1996 has taught at Florida State University where he is

the Charles O. DeLaney Professor of Music in Oboe.

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## Notes on the Program

Tonight we hear two Scandinavian works, written at almost the same time, as bookends to Mozart's beautiful concerto for oboe.

### *Midsommvarka (Swedish Rhapsody No. 1), Op. 19* Hugo Alfven (1872-1960)

The Swedish composer, conductor, and violinist Hugo Emil Alfven was born in 1872. After his musical studies at the Stockholm Conservatory, he enjoyed a long and full career, mainly as a choral conductor, and he was the head of the music department at Uppsala University from 1910 to 1939. By the end of his life, in 1960, he was the grand old man of Swedish music, much beloved in his country. According to the New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, "his output was almost entirely of programme music,

often suggested by the Swedish archipelago; he commented that ‘my best ideas have come during my sea-voyages at night, and, in particular, the wild autumns have been my most wonderful times for composition.’” It all sounds very colorful, and it must be noted that Alfvén also showed early promise as a painter. The title of tonight’s piece, composed in 1903, translates literally as “midsummer vigil.” According to the *New Grove*, *Midsommvarka* is “a picture of the Swedish summer in highly-colored orchestral splendor, based on Swedish folk music and inspired by a rude peasant wedding.” A direct comparison of his music with his paintings would no doubt be revealing.

## Oboe Concerto in C, K. 314 Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

The life of a successful composer in eighteenth-century Europe bore hardly any resemblance to a composer’s life in 2005. Today, with access to academic positions and fees paid for commissioned works, composers (such as Mr. Alfvén, above) can be relatively independent. Gifted composers such as Mozart who wanted to “make it” in the music world of the eighteenth century had to find patronage from the wealthy and powerful, who would support them materially in return for music composed expressly for their own use. While still living in Salzburg, his birthplace, Mozart had the patronage of Hieronymus von Colloredo, Cardinal-Archbishop of Salzburg, and during this time most of his output consisted of liturgical choral music. By all accounts, however, Colloredo was a difficult employer, and Mozart chafed under what he considered to be repressive working conditions. (We must candidly admit that he was not really mistreated; during most of Franz Josef Haydn’s career, he was required to wear the livery of his employer and eat his meals with the servants.) During an extended visit to the capital city of Vienna, Mozart received word from Colloredo’s secretary that he was to return to Salzburg immediately to resume his duties. In a moment of ill-considered independence, Mozart quit. Thus, Vienna became his home for the rest of his short life; he could hardly have returned to the small, provincial Salzburg.

While in Salzburg, however, Mozart had plenty of opportunity to write instrumental music. Whatever the Archbishop’s faults, it must be conceded that he had good taste in music, and Mozart’s instrumental output during this period was prodigious—most of his symphonies, the first few string quartets and piano sonatas, all five of his violin concerti, the beautiful *Sinfonia concertante* for violin and viola, and the concerti for the bassoon, flute, and oboe all date from this time. Concerted works for wind instruments, while not unknown, were considerably harder to come by than the many examples for violin or keyboard, and we don’t know why he decided to write these pieces. Indeed, his dislike for the flute is well documented.

The concerto for oboe was written in 1778, at the same time as the flute concerto in G, K. 313. It is cast in the traditional three-movement form of the time, although Mozart eschews the usual minuet-finale, probably in response to the newfangled *style galant* he had encountered in his travels about Europe. Mozart’s finale is a sprightly, high-spirited thing with an impressive, and surprising, amount of counterpoint. It follows on the heels of a sublime slow movement that must be ranked as one of the most beautiful he had composed up to that time. The first movement, in keeping with the aesthetic of the age, is the longest and most compositionally elaborate of the three. The Mozart oboe concerto was destined to be the last important concerto for the oboe written for many years, although Beethoven tried his hand at one which he never finished. On the whole the Romantics were not interested in oboe concerti—not until the Richard Strauss concerto of 1945 do we find another one by a major composer.

## Symphony No. 2 in D, Op. 43 Jean Sibelius (1865-1957)

The history of the symphony as a genre is an interesting one. For about seventy-five years (1750-1825) it was the instrumental form *par excellence*, from its beginnings with characters such as Johann Christian Bach (one of the many sons of Johann Sebastian) to its glorious flowering in the works of Haydn and Mozart. With the symphonies of Beethoven and Schubert the stylistic scale tipped into Romanticism: the Ninth Symphony of Beethoven was finished in 1824, and the final symphony of Schubert, the so-called “Great C-major,” was apparently begun in 1825 (we don’t know when he completed it). The year 1830 brought with it the great and hyper-Romantic “Symphonie fantastique” of the Frenchman Hector Berlioz, a work of such striking originality and daring that composers for the rest of the 19th century were forced to come to terms with it, either by embracing or rejecting its audacities. At this point, then, what did the symphony represent? Was it even relevant anymore? There were prominent composers on each side of the question, and some who didn’t know what they thought. This stylistic indecision is particularly evident in the symphonies of the early Romantics Schumann and Mendelssohn, who tried, to put it crudely, to stuff their fresh and modern music into an outline that had evolved in the hands of their predecessors. Most of the time the fit was not a good one, and composers knew it—thus the symphony’s decline as the orchestral genre of choice.

As the nineteenth century proceeded the symphony question became a divisive one, with militant camps of opposed partisans staking out positions in the print media of the day. The Europeans took their music very seriously, indeed. The composers themselves remained above the fray, looking on with bemusement as the Bruckner camp took potshots at the Brahms camp in the newspapers and journals of the leading musical cities. All this debate forced composers to refine and distill their beliefs, and a certain stylistic clarity began to emerge. Schumann’s attempt to bridge the gap between Classical, Enlightenment ideals and Romantic self-expression was recognized as ultimately fruitless, and a composer didn’t attempt a symphony until he was absolutely sure what the form meant to him and how he planned to deal with its challenges. Some, such as Wagner, cast it off immediately as archaic, while others, such as Richard Strauss, wrote symphonies only in their early, formative years before changing directions.

In the last decade of the nineteenth century the Finnish composer Jean Sibelius, already published and with a growing reputation, put the finishing touches on his Symphony No. 1 in E minor, Op. 39. While containing much that is beautiful and effective, it must be counted as one of those works of stylistic discomfort. Sibelius did not yet have the technique to allow it to develop itself; at times, the music seems to be trying to slip its collar and run off in unexpected directions. The Symphony No. 2 in D, completed in 1902, was a decisive step forward—greater skill and self-assurance provides a rapprochement with the old models instead of strain or discomfort. While Sibelius’s ideas of what it meant to write a symphony developed through five more works, the Symphony No. 2 represents a composer in an early flush of genius, demonstrating the relevance of a form many had dismissed as anachronistic. As the final D-major peroration resounds it is easy to be carried away by his confidence.

—James Howsmon

# Transylvania Symphony Orchestra

## Thomas Joiner, conductor

### Violin I

Heather MacArthur, concertmaster  
Christine Short\*  
Kristen Kline  
Steven Kim  
Emily Nebel  
Abigail Reisman  
Stephanie Hao  
Sara Guerriero\*  
Jordan Wong  
Ashley Martin  
Bethany Moore  
Julia Reeves  
Luke Rohde  
Anna Grace Strange  
Maddie Jansen  
Chandler Fugate-Laus  
Elizabeth Robinson  
Carter Tholl  
Haley Dreis  
Deborah Johnson

### Violin II

Seth Gilliard, principal  
Gerome Stewart\*  
Matthew DeBeal  
Mia Detweiler  
Steven Boyd  
Melanie Riordan  
Madeline McCreery  
Lauren Trolley\*  
Dianna Joiner  
Julia Alexander  
Katherine Floriano  
Svetlana Schneyderman  
Juliana Lynch  
Matthew Madonia  
Kylan Moran  
Louis McCracken  
Raymond Harrison  
Brandis Godwin

### Viola

Leah Reiter, principal  
John Concklin\*  
Chelsea Godwin  
Presti Hinson  
Erin Rafferty  
Stephanie Ethridge

Christopher Kalter  
Christopher Lanier\*  
Sarah Brown

### Cello

Christina Kim, principal  
Leslie Lyons\*  
Arleigh Aldrich  
Jenna McCreery  
Michael O'Boyle  
Sarah Schmitz\*  
Andrea Albertini  
Zachary Mansell  
Anna Owensby  
Kaitlyn Grady  
Emme Johnston  
Andrew Brown  
Nicholas Gold

### Double Bass

Jonathan Deans, Principal  
Patrick Byrd\*  
Mary Reed  
David Connor  
Stella Heine  
Steven Metcalf  
Lewis Heald  
Benjamin Harshbarger  
Luis Catalan

### Flute

Brian Burkett  
Jacob Farnsworth  
Nave Graham  
Elyse Roberts  
Sonali Mahta-Rao

### Oboe

Christopher Conners  
Alexandra Dawson-Beatty  
Jeffery Taylor  
Connie Vogelmann

### Clarinet

Jonathan Cohen  
Maressa McCall  
Peter Sabino  
Emily Tyndall

### Bassoon

Kian Anderson  
Ellen Martin  
Angela Moretti  
Jeffrey Nesrsta  
Megan Schlie

### Horn

Eric Damashek  
Andrew Fierova  
Mario Lopez  
Olivia Sedlack  
Beth Smeltzer  
Almichael Taylor  
Jason Ward  
Allison Youngblood

### Trumpet

Ben Campbell  
Anna Garcia  
Alex Fioto  
Matthew Morrow  
John Roberts  
Graham Watt

### Trombone

James Pannell  
Nathan Lodge

### Bass Trombone

Timothy Robinson

### Tuba

Alexander Hays-Ekeland  
Drew Prichard

### Harp

Katie Buckley\*\*  
Claire Aronis

### Timpani

Saul Green  
Cameron Heard

### Percussion

Saul Green  
Lee Hinkle

\* Brevard Music Center Teaching Assistant

\*\* Brevard Music Center Faculty