



DAVID DANZMAYR CONDUCTS

STRAUSS

JUNE 29 | 6PM



WASHINGTON
NATIONAL
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CLARICE PRESENTS



NATIONAL ORCHESTRAL INSTITUTE + FESTIVAL



VIET CUONG (b. 1990)

John and Jim

(NOI+F Co-Commission,
World Premiere of the Version for Orchestra)

RICHARD STRAUSS (1864–1949)

Suite from Der Rosenkavalier, Op. 59

INTERMISSION

STRAUSS

Also sprach Zarathustra, Op. 30

Einleitung (Introduction)

Von den Hinterweltlern (Of the Backworldsmen)

Von der großen Sehnsucht (Of the Great Longing)

Von den Freuden und Leidenschaften
(Of Joys and Passions)

Das Grablied (The Song of the Grave)

Von der Wissenschaft (Of Science and Learning)

Der Genesende (The Convalescent)

Das Tanzlied (The Dance-Song)

Nachtwandlerlied (Song of the Night Wanderer)

David Danzmayr
conductor

**National Orchestral
Institute Philharmonic**

JOHN AND JIM

Viet Cuong

Viet Cuong, the son of Vietnamese immigrants, was born in 1990 in West Hills, California, north of Malibu, but grew up in Marietta, Georgia, where the school music program gave him both a love of music and a sense of belonging. He studied composition at the Peabody Institute, Princeton University and Curtis Institute of Music with such eminent composers as Jennifer Higdon, Kevin Puts, Steven Mackey, David Serkin Ludwig and Richard Danielpour, and received additional training at the Orchestra of St. Luke's DeGaetano Institute, Minnesota Orchestra Composers Institute, Mizzou International Composers Festival, Eighth Blackbird Creative Lab, Cabrillo Festival's Young Composer Workshop, Cortona Sessions, Copland House's CULTIVATE workshop and Aspen and Bowdoin music festivals. Cuong is now assistant professor of composition at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas and the Pacific Symphony's composer-in-residence; he previously held artist residencies at the California Symphony, Yaddo, Ucross, Atlantic Center for the Arts and Dumbarton Oaks, where he served as the early-career musician-in-residence. Cuong's eclectic compositions, which draw inspiration from and even incorporate everyday sounds and objects—a snare drum played with a hair comb and a credit card; *Re(new)al* opens with an ensemble of tuned crystal wine glasses—have been performed internationally by such diverse ensembles as the New York Philharmonic, Alarm Will Sound, Sō Percussion, United States Navy Band and PRISM Saxophone Quartet. Among Cuong's growing list of honors are the Frederick Fennell Prize, Walter Beeler Memorial Prize, Barlow Endowment Commission, ASCAP Morton Gould Composers Award, Theodore Presser Foundation Award, Cortona Prize, New York Youth Symphony First Music Commission and Boston GuitarFest Composition Prize.

Viet Cuong wrote, "I first heard the name Obergefell in 2015 when the case that bears it, Obergefell v. Hodges, was decided by the Supreme Court. That landmark ruling, among the most important in history for queer Americans, granted marriage rights to all same-sex couples. At that

moment, Obergefell was etched into history. For those who write about the law, the name would thereafter be written in italics, and today it's as much a shorthand for the case law of marriage equality as it is the name of a man. But at its core, the case began with two people.

"John Arthur and Jim Obergefell were married in July 2013. They had been together in a loving relationship for 22 years, and Jim was caring for John as he faced the end stages of ALS. In the last year of John's life, they traveled on a medical plane to Maryland—one of just a handful of states where same-sex marriage was legal at the time—to be married. The marriage ceremony was conducted on board the plane before they returned home to Ohio for their last months together. John passed away that October, and, because Ohio did not recognize their marriage as legal, Jim had to challenge the state in court to be listed as John's surviving spouse on his death certificate. The state appealed, and the court battle worked its way through the legal system until 2015, when Jim and his team were victorious before the Supreme Court. Their efforts ensured that the relationships of same-sex couples, including my marriage to my husband, would be seen as equal under the law. For that, I am deeply and personally grateful.

"*John and Jim* is my effort to pay tribute to the men whose love and devotion gave rise to great change, and I do so by interpolating source material from an iconic piece of traditional wedding music: Pachelbel's Canon in D. I adored Pachelbel's Canon in my youth, and learned a piano arrangement of it when I was 11 years old. For months, I would play the piece every morning before school, endlessly repeating its bass line while improvising melodies when the treble clef's music ran out. Through these explorations, I discovered some basic principles of music composition, and it was through the Pachelbel that I began composing in earnest. It was also around that time that I first learned of its use in weddings, as it was the frequent soundtrack to reality TV shows chronicling the weddings of straight couples. During that time, it saddened me that music I found so beautiful was emblematic of something that, according to the law, I could never have. It feels fitting that in the year of my own wedding to my partner

of 11 years, reframing (and perhaps reclaiming) the Pachelbel should provide the inspiration for a celebration of marriage equality.

“My piece is a conversation between two alternating phrases, one of which uses melodic fragments and harmonic progressions from the Canon in D as source material. In the Canon, Pachelbel established a single bass line and layered it with several melodies, two of which are quite iconic but never performed simultaneously in the original. I disassembled and rewrote these to work harmoniously with one another at the climax of the piece, which appears after several minutes of what I think of as the music finding and piecing itself together. Ultimately, I believe *John and Jim* sounds like both a departure and a nod to the piece that first inspired me to compose. All of this takes place in a reverberant atmosphere, where notes linger and continually echo around one another, symbolic of both the persistence and impact of people like John and Jim.

“*John and Jim* was commissioned by the Columbus Pride Bands and the Queen City Freedom Band of Cincinnati for the 2024 Pride Bands Alliance Annual Conference in Columbus, where it was premiered on July 20, 2024 by conductor Jon Noworyta and the combined bands. Tonight’s new version for orchestra was written for the National Orchestral Institute + Festival in recognition of the 10-year anniversary of the Obergefell vs. Hodges Supreme Court decision. Heartfelt thanks to the Pride Bands Alliance and NOI+F for this opportunity to tell my story and celebrate John Arthur, Jim Obergefell and the progress that has been made in the name of love.”

SUITE FROM DER ROSENKAVALIER, OP. 59

Richard Strauss

Norman Del Mar titled the chapter on *Der Rosenkavalier* in his biography of Richard Strauss, “The Crowning Success.” Notoriety was hardly new to Strauss when this opera appeared in 1911, but its success solidified a reputation that had elevated him, according to universal opinion, to the status of “World’s Greatest Composer.” The last dozen years of the 19th century saw the production of most of his tone poems, each one generating more popular interest than the one before. When *Salome* appeared in 1905 and *Elektra* followed four years later, Strauss was branded as the principal dispenser of musical modernity, stretching not only technical resources but also psychological probings in music far beyond anything previously known. It was therefore significant news when the Berlin Boersen-Courier learned before the premiere of Strauss’ 1911 opera that the score was “absolutely un-Strausslike, inasmuch as none of the excessively modern subtleties predominates in the vocal parts or orchestration. On the contrary, the score is brimming over with exceedingly pleasant and catchy melodies, most of them in three-four time. Yes, melodies, incredible as this may sound in the case of Richard Strauss. One waltz, especially, which the tenor sings, is likely to become so popular that many people will believe it is the work, not of Richard, but of Johann Strauss...” (The two Strausses were unrelated.)

The Berlin correspondent knew what he was writing about. So popular did Strauss’ bittersweet opera with the 18th-century Viennese setting prove to be that its music and fame spread through Europe like wildfire. Extra trains from Berlin and other cities had to be added to the rail schedule to handle the throngs journeying to Dresden to see this new artistic wonder. Productions were mounted within months in all the musical capitals of Europe. The 1917 catalog of the London publisher Chappell and Co. listed no fewer than 44 arrangements of music from *Der Rosenkavalier* for instrumental combinations ranging from brass band to salon orchestra, from solo mandolin to full symphony. The opera was made into a motion

picture in 1926—three years before sound movies were introduced! (A pit orchestra without singers played the much-truncated score.) The popularity of the haunting and infectious music from *Der Rosenkavalier* continues unabated today in both the opera house and the concert hall.

The libretto for *Der Rosenkavalier*, by the gifted Austrian man of letters Hugo von Hofmannsthal, is one of the masterworks of its type for the lyric stage. It gently probes the budding, young love of Octavian and Sophie, poignantly examines the fading youth of the Marschallin, and humorously exposes the blustering Baron Ochs. It is a superb evocation of sentiment, wit and vigor wedded to one of the most opulently glorious musical scores ever composed. Former New York Times critic Harold Schonberg wrote of the emotional milieu of the opera, “In *Der Rosenkavalier*, there are no Jungian archetypes, only the human condition. Instead of long narratives, there are Viennese waltzes. Instead of a monumental *Liebestod*, there is a sad, elegant lament from a beautiful, aristocratic woman who begins to see old age. Instead of death, we get a bittersweet and hauntingly beautiful trio that in effect tells us that life will go on as it has always gone on. People do not die for love in Hofmannsthal’s world. They face the inevitable, surrender with what grace they can summon up, and then look around for life’s next episode. As Strauss himself later said, ‘The Marschallin had lovers before Octavian, and she will have lovers after him.’” *Der Rosenkavalier* is an opera wise and worldly, sophisticated and touching, sentimental and funny that contains some of the most memorable music to emerge from the opera house in the 20th century.

The Suite that Strauss extracted from *Der Rosenkavalier* includes the Prelude to Act I, the luminous Presentation of the Rose from Act II, the blustering Baron Ochs’ Arrival and Waltz from Act II, the glorious trio and duet in the opera’s closing scene, and a rousing selection of waltzes from the score.

ALSO SPRACH ZARATHUSTRA, OP. 30

Richard Strauss

At the turn of the 20th century, when Richard Strauss’ flamboyant tone poems had earned him a reputation among the day’s leading musical modernist, a popular literary sport sprang up among journalists and commentators emerged to fit them with plots or stories or programs. Strauss was always chary with verbal information about the “meaning” of his tone poems, and, since he did not discourage others from having a go at it, a whole barrage of possible “explanations” greeted each new composition. *Also sprach Zarathustra*, deriving in some manner, at least, from the universal vision of Friedrich Nietzsche’s poem (left incomplete at his removal to a mental hospital), was an especially inviting target for the hurlers of literary tracts. The composer approved almost all of the efforts that came along (they were, after all, good publicity, and Strauss—and his very large income—thrived on publicity), so the latter-day reader is left with a bundle of occasionally contradictory evidence. The truth of the matter seems to be that Strauss’ music and Nietzsche’s poem actually share little more than a title and a few pretentious ideas. Virtually every attempt to equate a section of the tone poem with a specific passage from the poem has been unconvincing.

Though its philosophical intentions are correctly questioned, there has never been any doubt about the expressive powers of this music. (It was the Budapest premiere of *Also sprach Zarathustra* that inspired the young Béla Bartók to devote his life to composition.) The sections of Strauss’ tone poem mirror several strong emotional states, as indicated by the following program note that appeared at the work’s premiere, conducted by the composer in Frankfurt on November 27, 1896.

“First movement: Sunrise, Man feels the power of God. Andante religioso. But still man longs. He plunges into passion (second movement) and finds no peace. He turns toward science, and tries in vain to solve life’s

problems in a fugue (third movement). Then agreeable dance tunes sound and he becomes an individual, and his soul soars upward while the world sinks far below him.”

There is a progression inherent in the work, a sort of a-religious Pilgrim’s Progress, toward some transcendent state. One German writer, Rudolf Kloiber, viewed *Also sprach Zarathustra* as “a colorfully formed music-drama without words Strauss chose from the poem the speeches of Zarathustra to create a kind of scenario for the content and form of the work.”

There are three overtly programmatic elements that unify the work. The first is heard immediately at the outset. It is the theme of nature, the unison call by four trumpets based on the most fundamental acoustical pitches in the musical spectrum: C–G–C (inextricably wedged in the public consciousness by Kubrick’s “2001: A Space Odyssey”). The second is a sinister theme, perhaps depicting Fate, introduced by the trombones in the section, “Of joys and passions.” The third is the conflict between the C tonality—representing Nature—and that of B, the latter standing for Man’s aspirations. The unsettled struggle between these two (the technical term is bi-tonality) is most clearly discerned at the very end of the work, but it occurs many times throughout the piece.

Program Notes by Dr. Richard E. Rodda



PERFORMERS



DAVID DANZMAYR

Described by The Herald as “extremely good, concise, clear, incisive and expressive” David Danzmayr is widely regarded as one of the most exciting European conductors of his generation. Danzmayr is in his fourth season as music director of the Oregon Symphony, having started his tenure there in the orchestra’s 125th anniversary season. He also stands at the helm of the versatile ProMusica Chamber Orchestra Columbus, an innovative orchestra comprised of musicians from all over the U.S.

In addition, he holds the title of honorary conductor of the Zagreb Philharmonic Orchestra with whom he had served as chief conductor—leading the Zagreb musicians on several European tours with concerts in the Salzburg Festival Hall, where they performed the prestigious New Year’s Concert and the Vienna Musikverein.

David has won prizes at some of the world’s most prestigious conducting competitions including at the International Gustav Mahler Conducting Competition and at the International Malko Conducting Competition. In recognition of his successes, he has been awarded the Bernhard Paumgartner Medal by the Internationale Stiftung Mozarteum.

Propelled into a far-reaching international career, Danzmayr has quickly become a sought after guest conductor having worked in America with the symphonies of Cincinnati, Minnesota, St. Louis, Seattle, Baltimore, Atlanta, Indianapolis, Detroit, North Carolina, San Diego, Colorado, Utah,

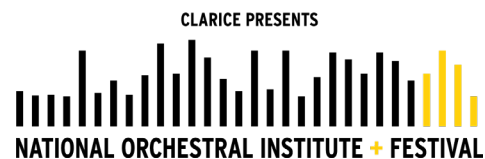
Milwaukee, New Jersey, the Pacific Symphony, Chicago Civic Orchestra, Houston Symphony and Grant Park Music Festival.

In Europe, David has lead the Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Bamberger Symphoniker, Sinfonieorchester Basel, Mozarteum Orchester, Essener Philharmoniker, Hamburger Symphoniker, Iceland Symphony Orchestra, Odense Symphony, Salzburg Chamber Philharmonic, Bruckner Orchester Linz and the radio symphony orchestras of Vienna and Stuttgart.

He frequently appears in the world's major concert halls, such as the Musikverein and Konzerthaus in Vienna, Grosses Festspielhaus Salzburg, Usher Hall Edinburgh and the Symphony Hall in Chicago.

Danzmayr received his musical training at the University Mozarteum in Salzburg where, after initially studying piano, he went on to study conducting in the class of Dennis Russell Davies. He has served as assistant conductor of the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, performing in all the major Scottish concert halls and in the prestigious, Orkney based, St Magnus Festival.

He was also strongly influenced by Pierre Boulez and Claudio Abbado in his time as conducting stipendiate of the Gustav Mahler Youth Orchestra and by Leif Segerstam during his additional studies in the conducting class of the Sibelius Academy. Subsequently he gained significant experience as assistant to Neeme Järvi, Stephane Deneve, Sir Andrew Davis and Pierre Boulez, who entrusted Danzmayr with the preparatory rehearsals for his own music.



NATIONAL ORCHESTRAL INSTITUTE + FESTIVAL

The University of Maryland's National Orchestral Institute + Festival (NOI+F) brings together aspiring orchestral musicians, conductors, composers and arts administrators from across the country for a month of dynamic music-making and professional exploration. Chosen through a rigorous, cross-country audition process, these young artists present passionate and thrilling performances at The Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center and in College Park, MD and Washington, D.C.

Beyond creating inspiring performances on-stage, NOI+F collaborates with renown partners across the country on a yearly basis. In 2015, NOI+F entered into a partnership with Naxos Records that has already produced six albums, including a GRAMMY nomination in the category of "Best Orchestral Performance" for the 2018 album "Ruggles, Stucky & Harbison: Orchestral Works."

Internationally recognized conducting luminary Marin Alsop was appointed first-ever music director of the National Orchestral Institute + Festival in 2020. As music director, Alsop leads the NOI+F Conducting Academy and conducts multiple concerts at The Clarice each June.

NOI+F is a program of Clarice Presents, The Clarice's artistic platform. Daring to envision a new role for the performing arts to play at UMD and throughout its communities, Clarice Presents reimagines the integration of artistic presentation, accessibility, local civic action and community engagement. The Clarice is an innovative and collaborative state-of-the-art performing arts facility comprising multiple venues. Together, the schools and organizations that call The Clarice home leverage creativity, innovation, research and engagement to act as a catalyst for the arts and address the grand challenges of our times.

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