



The Dayton Philharmonic Orchestra  
Presents

## East Meets West

**John Kurokawa, Clarinet**

Friday, January 7, 2022 at 8 pm  
Saturday, January 8, 2022 at 8 pm

Masterworks Series Sponsor



**To read more about this evening's program, scan this QR code with your phone camera, or text TRAVEL to 937-858-1820.**



# Dayton Philharmonic Musicians

## 1st Violins

**Jessica Hung**, Concertmaster\*  
Aurelian Oprea, Acting Concertmaster  
J. Ralph Corbett Chair  
**William Manley**, Acting Associate  
Concertmaster  
Huffy Foundation Chair  
**Youjin Na**, Acting Assistant Concertmaster  
Sherman Standard Register  
Foundation Chair  
**Elizabeth Hofeldt**  
**David Goist**  
**Mikhail Baranovsky**  
**Louis Proske**  
**John Lardinois**  
**Philip Enzweiler**  
**Dona Nouné**  
**Janet George**

## 2nd Violins

The Peter and Patricia Torvik 2nd  
Violin Section  
**Kirstin Greenlaw**, Principal  
Jesse Philips Chair  
**Kara Camfield**, Assistant Principal  
**Ann Lin Baer**  
**Gloria Fiore**  
**Scott Moore**  
**Tom Fetherston\***  
**Nick Naegele**  
**Lynn Rohr**  
**Yoshiko Kunimitsu**  
**William Slusser**  
**Yein Jin\***  
**Zhe Deng**

## Violas

**Sheridan Currie**, Principal  
F. Dean Schnacke Chair  
**Colleen Braid**, Assistant Principal  
**Karen Johnson**  
Grace Counts Finch Chair  
**Emilio Carlo\***  
**Scott Schilling**  
**Lori LaMattina**  
**Mark Reis**  
**Leslie Dragan**  
**Tzu-Hui Hung**  
**Belinda Reuning Burge**

## Cellos

**Jonathan Lee**, Principal  
Edward L. Kohnle Chair in memory  
of Audra Lunde Padrichelli, Principal  
Cellist 2003-2018  
**Christina Coletta**, Assistant Principal  
Gilbert and Patricia Templeton Chair  
**Lucas Song**  
Paul and Susanne Weaver Chair  
**Mark Hofeldt**  
**Nadine Monchecourt**  
**David Huckaby**  
**Isaac Pastor-Chermak**  
**Zoë Moskalew**

## Basses

**Deborah Taylor**, Principal  
Dayton Philharmonic Volunteer  
Association/C. David Horine  
Memorial Chair  
**Jon Pascolini**, Assistant Principal  
**Donald Compton**  
**Stephen Ullery**  
**Christopher Roberts**  
**James Faulkner**  
**Bleda Eilbal**

## Flutes

**Rebecca Tryon Andres**, Principal  
Dayton Philharmonic Volunteer  
Association Chair  
**Jennifer Northcut**  
**Janet van Graas**

## Piccolo

**Janet van Graas**

## Oboes

**Eileen Whalen**, Principal  
Catharine French Bieser Chair  
**Connie Ignatiou\***  
**Robyn Dixon Costa**

## English Horn

**Robyn Dixon Costa**  
J. Colby King and Nancy Hastings  
King Chair

## Clarinets

**John Kurokawa**, Principal  
Rhea Beerman Peal Chair  
**Rosario Galante**  
**Christopher Rueda**

## Bass Clarinet

**Christopher Rueda**

## Bassoons

**Rachael Young**, Principal  
Robert and Elaine Stein Chair  
**Kristen Smith**

## Horns

**Aaron Brant**, Principal  
Frank M. Tait Memorial Chair  
**Jessica Pinkham**  
**Todd Fitter**  
**Amy Lassiter**  
**Sean Vore**, Assistant/Utility Horn

## Trumpets

**Charles Pagnard**, Principal  
John W. Berry Family Chair  
**Alan Siebert**  
**Daniel Lewis**

## Trombones

**Timothy Anderson**, Principal  
John Reger Memorial Chair  
**Richard Begele**

## Bass Trombone

**Chad Arnow**  
Bill and Wanda Lukens Chair

## Tuba

**Timothy Northcut**, Principal  
Zachary, Rachel and Natalie Denka Chair

## Timpani

**Donald Donnett**, Principal  
Rosenthal Family Chair in Memory of  
Miriam Rosenthal

## Percussion

**Michael LaMattina**, Principal  
Miriam Rosenthal Chair  
**Davi Martinelli de Lira**  
Richard A. and Mary T. Whitney Chair  
**Gerald Noble**

## Keyboard

**Joshua Nemith**, Principal  
Demirjian Family Chair

## Harp

**Leslie Stratton**, Principal  
Daisy Talbott Greene Chair

\* Denotes musician on Leave of Absence

## East Meets West

Neal Gittleman, *Artistic Director and Conductor*

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### PROGRAM

CHARLES TOMLINSON  
GRIFFES  
(1884–1920)

#### **The Pleasure Dome of Kubla Khan**

REENA ESMAIL  
(b. 1983)

#### **Clarinet Concerto**

I. *Saans* (Breath)

II. *Pawan* (Wind)

**John Kurakowa**, clarinet\*

WOLFGANG AMADEUS  
MOZART  
(1756–1791)

#### **Overture from *The Abduction from the Seraglio***

RICHARD STRAUSS  
(1864–1949)

#### **Suite from *The Rosenkavalier***

*\*Louis S. Cantor, Rose Sorokin Cantor, Samuel L. Cantor, and Lena Cantor Endowed Artist*

### About Our Endowed Artist



#### **John Kurokawa, clarinet**

John Kurokawa currently performs as Principal Clarinetist of the Dayton Philharmonic Orchestra and Cincinnati Chamber Orchestra. The press applauds his “...warmth, communication, and easy virtuosity” (Cincinnati Enquirer) and “truly flawless technique and intonation... a tone as smooth as silk and velvet.” (Kettering-Oakwood Times). An avid chamber musician, he gives educational concerts at schools all over the Miami Valley with the Dayton Philharmonic Woodwind Quintet and is a founding member of the Prestige Clarinet Quartet, which has been a featured ensemble at the Oklahoma Clarinet Symposium, International Clarinet Association Clarinetfest, and many other universities and national symposia.

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## Charles Griffes – *The Pleasure Dome of Kubla Khan*, Op. 8 (1912)

Charles Griffes' *The Pleasure Dome of Kubla Khan*, Op. 8, is a striking example of early 20th-century American Impressionism, blending lush harmonic textures and exotic imagery to evoke a dreamlike, atmospheric vision of Samuel Taylor Coleridge's famous poem, *Kubla Khan*. Composed in 1912, Griffes' orchestral tone-poem reflects the fascination with the Orient and the exotic that swept Western culture in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

The inspiration for Griffes' composition comes directly from Coleridge's tale of a mythical pleasure dome built by the Mongol ruler Kubla Khan in the remote reaches of Asia, a place of mystery, beauty, and grandeur. Coleridge's verse, with its vivid depictions of an otherworldly paradise, is echoed in Griffes' lush, magical imagery through rich orchestration and chromaticism, using music to paint a seductive, captivating soundscape.

As the piece begins, Griffes creates an ethereal atmosphere, evoking the dreamlike quality of the poem's description of the pleasure dome with a shimmering string texture. The opening bars feature a sense of fluid motion, where melodies rise and fall like distant waves or the misty mountains surrounding the palace.

The piece unfolds in a single continuous movement, marked by sections that alternate between dark, mysterious moods and bright, opulent moments. Lyrical woodwinds are often paired with soaring strings, creating a sense of expansive space that mirrors the grandeur of the poem's descriptions. A delicate balance between tension and release—as well as the contrast between light and shadow—is central to the work's musical architecture.

Throughout the piece, Griffes uses a rich palette of orchestral colors, notably in his brass and percussion writing, which brings grandeur and intensity to the work. Shifting rhythms and unexpected harmonic turns heighten the surreal quality of the musical narrative, echoing Coleridge's account of a fantastical vision that eludes complete understanding.

At the tone-poem's climax, a representation of the pleasure dome's ultimate mystery, is both awe-inspiring and ominous, as the orchestral forces build to a dramatic peak. Yet, like the poem itself, the music never fully resolves, leaving a sense of ambiguity and wonder as the final notes fade.

*The Pleasure Dome of Kubla Khan* is a masterful example of Griffes' ability to create vivid, evocative orchestral images. It captures the essence of the exotic and the unknown, transporting listeners to a realm where beauty and danger coexist, much like Coleridge's vision of beautiful but unreachable paradise.

—ChatGPT(!), toned-down, edited, and corrected by NG, 2025

## Reena Esmail — Clarinet Concerto (2017)

The first time I saw one of Shankar Tucker's videos on YouTube, almost five years ago, I knew I wanted to write him this concerto. I didn't know him back then: I was just one of his millions of fans from around the world, who was so deeply moved to see a musician who blended these two traditions with such incredible imagination.

Five years after I first saw that video, this project finally found a home with Albany Symphony.

Shankar is a unique performer: he has trained extensively in both Western and Hindustani classical music—both at New England Conservatory in Boston, and with a great master of Hindustani music, Hariprasad Chaurasia in India. In writing this piece, I found that so many doors were open to me that had never been open at the same time: I could notate a simple melody that he could then ornament or vary. I could ask him to improvise in a raag. I could ask him to read notation off a page, in changing time signatures. I could write in a complex western form because he could easily follow what was on the page. There are very few musicians in the world who are able to do all of these things, and even fewer who are able to do them with the grace, fluidity and soul of Shankar Tucker.

Hindustani music is an aural tradition: the nuance of a phrase is picked up through call and response, by hearing and repeating. In both movements of this concerto, the melodies that start in the clarinet eventually find their way into the orchestra. Many of these melodies came from Shankar's own improvisations—we worked together on this piece at the conceptual level and found material we both loved. The aural transfer of these melodies to the western musicians is embedded in the piece itself, and the exchange of musical cultures is taking place in real time, before your ears.

—Reena Esmail, 2017

Addendum: In 2021, composer Reena Esmail reworked the Concerto's solo clarinet part so it could be played by DPO Principal Clarinet John Kurokawa and by other clarinetists not trained in the improvisatory techniques of Hindustani Classical Music. Reena wrote out all of the solo clarinet's improvised passages, thereby making the piece playable by more players than just Shankar Tucker. John and the DPO's January 2022 performance was the world premiere of this revised version of the Concerto. And I hope it won't be the last such performance!

—NG, 2025

## **Mozart: Overture to *The Abduction from the Seraglio*, K. 384**

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's *The Abduction from the Seraglio* (*Die Entführung aus dem Serail*), composed in 1782, was the then-young composer's most adventurous opera yet. (See the film *Amadeus*, where Emperor Joseph II critiques the opera saying, "Too many notes." Mozart replies, "I don't understand. There are just as many notes, Majesty, as are required. Neither more nor less.") The opera *is* full notes, with many brilliant *coloratura* passages. That was adventurous, especially for a young, relatively unknown composer. But *The Abduction*'s most adventurous aspect was its racy setting—a Turkish pasha's harem.

The overture, composed at the last minute before the Vienna premiere, evokes the opera's Turkish setting with the exotic sounds of Turkish military percussion instruments—cymbals, bass drum, and triangle—instruments, which, when played by Turkey's military bands, had terrorized Viennese citizens a century earlier during the Turkish army's siege of Vienna.

The opera is a *singspiel*, a form of German opera that alternates between spoken dialogue and sung arias, ensembles, and choruses. *The Abduction from the Seraglio* tells the story of Belmonte, a young European nobleman who embarks—with his servant—on a daring mission to rescue his beloved Konstanze—and her maid—from the clutches of the Pasha Selim. After many comic episodes, Belmonte's rescue plan ultimately fails. But the Pasha decides to free the Westerners and the opera ends with everyone praising the Pasha's wisdom and clemency.

The Overture opens softly in the strings, answered immediately by bold fanfares in the winds and brass. This back-and-forth creates an atmosphere where the listener never quite knows what will happen next—preparing the opera audience for the twists and turns that await them after the curtain rises. The middle of the Overture is slow and lyrical, music that will be sung in the sad aria that Belmonte sings immediately after the overture.

In this brief yet thrilling Overture, Mozart introduces us to the world of *The Abduction from the Seraglio*, blending humor, adventure, and the allure of the exotic. It is a masterwork of orchestral writing, with Mozart's signature wit, intelligence, and flair, making it a captivating introduction to his first great opera.

As Mozart wrote it, the overture has no ending. It connects directly to Belmonte's aria. In concert performances like the Dayton Philharmonic's it's performed with a concert ending written by Mozart's contemporary, the German composer Johann André.

—ChatGPT(!), toned-down, edited, and corrected by NG, 2025

## Concert Program Note: *Rosenkavalier* Suite by Richard Strauss

Richard Strauss's *Der Rosenkavalier* (*The Knight of the Rose*), premiered in 1911, is one of the most beloved operas in the German repertoire. A work of sumptuous orchestral color, psychological depth, and melodic invention, it is both a high point of Strauss's operatic career and a masterful depiction of love, youth, and the passage of time.

Set in 18th-century Vienna, the opera revolves around the entangled relationships between several key characters. The Marschallin (a German term meaning “the field marshal’s wife (or, perhaps, widow)”), is an older Viennese princess with a much younger lover, Count Octavian. Their affair is complicated by the Marschallin’s awareness of the fleeting and fickle nature of youth. A secondary plot involves the her boorish cousin, Baron Ochs, and his romantic pursuit of a young woman, Sophie. After many twists and turns of the story, the Marschallin gives up her young lover so that he may marry Sophie, his new love.

The exact provenance of the *Rosenkavalier* Suite is unknown. Strauss authorized its creation from the opera’s instrumental music, but it is generally believed that Strauss did not do the musical arrangement himself. Authorship is often attributed to conductor Artur Rodzinski, who conducted the suite’s premiere in 1944, but no one knows for sure who actually created it. With the exception of a few bars of transitional music, however, every note of the suite was written by Strauss when he composed the opera.

The suite opens with a brilliant, boisterous orchestral introduction taken note-for-note from the opera, where it is a musical representation of the Marschallin and Octavian making love behind the unraised curtain. The suite continues with a series of episodes taken from the opera, including the Act Two “Presentation of the Rose” scene, where Octavian presents a silver rose to Sophie, and a famous waltz sequence.

The suite concludes with the music from famous Act Three trio sung by the Marschallin, Octavian, and Sophie. The delicate interplay between the characters’ emotions is mirrored in the music, which shifts between bittersweet reflection and moments of optimism. Strauss captures the tension between the inevitable passage of time and the hope for new beginnings, leaving the listener with a sense of both longing and resolution.

The *Rosenkavalier* Suite, beautifully condenses the essence of Strauss’ four-hour opera into a stunning 25-minute orchestral journey that brings concert audiences into the magical world of *Der Rosenkavalier* without staging, costumes, sets—or singing.

—ChatGPT(!), toned-down, edited, and corrected by NG, 2025