

The BYU-Idaho Department of Music  
presents

# SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA



George Gershwin 1898 - 1937

OCTOBER 30, 2024 7:30 PM  
BARRUS CONCERT HALL

# PERSONNEL

Dr. Robert Tueller, Director  
Elizabeth Crawford, Woodwind Specialist  
Dr. Bryce Mecham, Brass Specialist

Flute  
Maddie Draney  
Libby Tarbert  
Alina Williams

Oboe  
Teirza Tippets  
Alison Goodworth  
Elizabeth Nielsen

Clarinet  
Hazel Pak  
Jared Quiroz  
Adam Ballif

Bassoon  
Abby Huber  
Scott Browning  
Elizabeth Crawford

Saxophone  
Cordell Whitley  
Rebecca Schwartz  
Natalie O'Connor

Horn  
Caleb Nielsen  
Aleese Liscomb  
Jason Bull  
Jon Klein

Trumpet  
James Terry  
Sam Ballard  
Aiden Sharp

Trombone  
Eli Adams  
Trevon Westover  
Caleb Lyons

Tuba  
Seth Edwards

Timpani & Percussion  
Cameron Beck  
Kyron Dewey  
Hannah Webb

Harp  
Kate Baldwin  
Evelyn Gee

Violin I  
Clayton Hinto  
Rebekah Loveridge  
Joy Gil  
Natasha Davis  
Michael Weir  
Haylee Johnson  
Sarah Campbell  
Hyrum Talbot  
Anna Hastings  
Katie Niven  
Kaylyn Allison  
Jenna Williams  
Melanie Young

Violin II  
Kalena Buehler  
Melissa Griffin  
Annalyn Dean  
Maddie Jones  
Kahri Gee  
Ruth Richie  
Mckenna Jensen

Taylor Burnett  
Matheus Proenca  
Carson Dungan  
Lilly Smith  
Vivian Flake  
Julian Palacios  
Henry Goff

Viola  
Naomi Smith  
Talmage Kay  
Brayden Hahn  
Jeshua Garner  
Jack Clark  
Jacob Schurtz  
Dallin Parish  
Sage Ekman

Cello  
Lewis Garner  
Emma Ballif  
Talia Moore  
Philip Loertscher  
Blake Purser  
Emily Green  
Hattie Cavin  
Molly Tiffany  
Courtney Amsden  
Samantha Slater  
Lori Wilson  
Ella Baca  
Samantha Snarr

Bass  
Brianna Schmidt  
Andrew Faucette  
Ana Howell  
Eliza Billikopt

# PROGRAM

*Concerto in F* .....George Gershwin  
1891 - 1953

- I. Allegro
- II. Adagio - Andante con note
- III. Allegro agitato

Norman Krieger, piano

*Symphony No. 1* .....Samual Barber  
1910 - 1981

*Rhapsody in Blue* .....George Gershwin

Norman Krieger, piano

## NOTES

This all-American program begins and ends with George Gershwin: pianist Norman Krieger performs the two great Gershwin works for piano and orchestra, the Concerti in F and the Rhapsody in Blue: masterworks in combining 1920s jazz with classical form. Between these works, we have a career-making work by the young Samuel Barber, his *Symphony No. 1*.

Writing this work on the heels of his tremendously successful rhapsody *Rhapsody in Blue*, Gershwin clearly had something to prove: that he was to be taken seriously as a classical composer.

### George Gershwin

**Born:** September 26, 1898, Brooklyn, New York.

**Died:** July 11, 1937, Los Angeles, California.

### *Concerto in F*

- **Composed:** 1925.
- **Premiere:** Gershwin was the soloist first one was the soloist at the Premier in New York City on December 3, 1925 in Carnegie Hall.
- **Duration:** 31:00

### Background

The premiere of Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* in February 1924 was a career-making event for the young composer. Gershwin was successful as a songwriter, and he and his lyricist brother Ira were already recognized as a great Broadway team. The *Rhapsody* was played on part of a lengthy concert staged by bandleader Paul Whiteman, and was clearly the hit of the concert. Among the musical notables present was Walter Damrosch, conductor of the New York Symphony Orchestra. Damrosch almost

immediately approached Gershwin with a commission for a new work to be titled *New York Concerto*. Gershwin accepted of course, but the prospect of writing a concerto was daunting. In particular, he was inexperienced in orchestration—this was something that he nearly always delegated in his Broadway store scores, and Whiteman’s staff arranger Ferde Grofé had done nearly all of the orchestration for *Rhapsody in Blue*. But Gershwin, who worked all his life for respectability in the world of what he termed “serious” music, had something to prove, later writing: “Many persons had thought that the *Rhapsody* was only a happy accident. Well, I went out, for one thing, to show them that there was more where that came from.” Gershwin worked on the concerto through the summer and fall of 1925, spending as much time on it as he could afford. (He was also writing two different Broadway shows at the same time.) Among other things, he was determined to orchestrate the piece himself.

Gershwin was the soloist at the premiere performance on December 3, 1925, in Carnegie Hall. A name change—from *New York Concerto* to the more academic *Concerto in F*—was Gershwin’s idea, and seems to have reflected his desire for acceptance as a Classical composer. Reviews ranged from enthusiastic to condescending to hostile, and Gershwin suffered a brutal post-concert snub by the Russian composer Alexander Glazunov, whose fifth symphony was on the same program. They met backstage and Gershwin enthusiastically expressed a desire to study orchestration with Glazunov. Glazunov frostily replied (through a translator) that Gershwin hadn’t even mastered the basics of counterpoint. However, Damrosch was delighted with the piece and so were audiences. The *Concerto in F*, a far more ambitious work than the *Rhapsody*, has become the most successful of all American piano concertos.

### What You’ll Hear

Many critics immediately placed the label “jazz concerto” on the work, but Gershwin resisted this, arguing that the work used “...certain jazz rhythms which are worked out in a more or less symphonic manner.” There are certainly moments that refer to 1920s jazz—the muted trumpet in the second movement or the dance rhythms of the first—but the concerto’s musical form owes more to the classical concerto than to jazz. The opening movement (*Allegro*) is in a rigorously classical sonata form, beginning with an exposition that carefully lays out the main thematic material. The themes themselves are clearly influenced by jazz, however: a syncopated melody that uses the rhythm of the “Charleston”—the most popular dance of the day—and a lighter, highly syncopated theme. In the development section, strings introduce a lush new idea that is given a broad treatment by the piano and orchestra. The main themes of the opening return, now with flashy piano ornamentation, and the movement ends with a brilliant coda. Gershwin, who was occasionally a bit pedantic in writing about his more “classical” works described the mood of the second movement (*Andante*) as “...a poetic nocturnal atmosphere which has come to be referred to as the American blues.” The opening of this “night music” is given over to a muted trumpet, which lays out a long bluesy melody, before the piano plays a more animated version of the same theme. The rest of the movement develops rather freely, with a passionate string theme acting as a kind of refrain. In the end, there is a grand climax before the opening theme returns, now in the flute.

Gershwin called the finale (*Molto agitato*) an “orgy of rhythm.” It follows directly on the heels of the second movement with a cymbal crash and an aggressive rhythmic burst from the orchestra. This highly percussive music is quickly picked up and developed by the piano. There are reminiscences of the first two movements worked into the texture, but they now have a more heavily rhythmic character. The climax of the movement is

signaled by an enormous gong crash and a grand reprise of the first movement's string theme. It ends with a final statement of the aggressive music of the opening.

Barber's *Symphony No. 1* was among the works that secured his international reputation. This compact work compresses the usual action of four movements into one.

## Samuel Barber

**Born:** March 9, 1910, Westchester, Pennsylvania.,

**Died:** January 23, 1981, New York City.

### *Symphony No. 1 in One Movement, Op. 9*

- **Composed:** Barber composed this work in Rome in 1934-35.
- **Premiere:** Bernardino Molinari conducted the premiere in Rome on December 13, 1936.
- **Duration:** 20:00.

## Background

Barber began studying piano, voice, and composition at Philadelphia's Curtis Institute of Music when he was just 14. (He met fellow Curtis student Gian Carlo Menotti when he was 18 and Menotti was 17—the beginning of a close romantic and professional relationship that lasted most of Barber's life.) He had already won prestigious awards for composition and his witty *Overture to "The School for Scandal"* had been performed by the Philadelphia Orchestra when he applied for the American Rome Prize in 1934. Barber won, and was able to spend most of 1934-35 living in a villa in Rome, together with Menotti and several older colleagues. His *Symphony No. 1* was the major product of this Roman sojourn.

A first symphony is often a landmark in a composer's career, and Barber's *Symphony No. 1*—one the last works he wrote without a commission—was a work that brought him more welcome attention than anything he composed previously. He met the conductor Bernardino Molinari in Rome, and Molinari was quite enthusiastic about the new work, conducting its premiere and performing it a few months later on an American tour. The symphony was next picked up by Artur Rodzinski, who conducted it in both New York and Cleveland, and who also programmed it at the Salzburg Festival in 1937—the first work by an American composer to be played at this prestigious German festival. (It was at the Salzburg Festival that Barber came to the attention of the aging maestro Arturo Toscanini, who commissioned two new works for his newly-created NBC Orchestra: the *Adagio for Strings* and the *First Essay*.)

## What You'll Hear

The *Symphony No. 1* is a compact work that compresses the usual contrasting characters of four symphonic movements into a single unified piece. A possible model for this work was the single- movement seventh symphony of Sibelius, and this has much of the unity of that tightly- organized work. Barber was no modernist, and the broad themes and dramatic, sometimes thunderous writing for brass gives this symphony a sweeping Romantic character. Barber provided the following program note:

“The form of my *Symphony in One Movement* is a synthetic treatment of the four-movement classical symphony. It is based on three themes of the initial *Allegro non troppo*, which retain throughout the work their fundamental character. The *Allegro* opens with the usual exposition of a main theme, a more lyrical second theme, and a closing theme. After a brief development of the three themes, instead of the customary recapitulation, the first theme, in diminution forms the basis of a scherzo

section (*Vivace*). The second theme (oboe over muted strings) then appears in augmentation, in an extended *Andante tranquillo*. An intense crescendo introduces the finale, which is a short passacaglia based on the first theme (introduced by the violoncelli and contrabassi), over which, together with figures from other themes, the closing theme is woven, thus serving as a recapitulation for the entire symphony. ”

Gershwin's 1924 *Rhapsody in Blue* was his first great success in fusing jazz style and classical form and scoring.

## George Gershwin

### *Rhapsody in Blue*

- **Composed:** January and February, 1924.
- **Premiere:** Gershwin was the piano soloist with the Paul Whiteman Orchestra in the premiere, in New York City on February 12, 1924.

### Background

By 1924, Gershwin was a huge success on Broadway, and well-regarded as a pianist. It was at this time that Paul Whiteman conceived one of the most ambitious concerts of the Roaring '20s. Whiteman, the self-styled “King of Jazz,” announced an “Experiment in Modern Music” for February 12, 1924, a concert that would supposedly answer the question “What is American Music?” Whiteman planned to bring together jazz of all styles with Classical music, and newly- composed works by composers such as Irving Berlin and Victor Herbert. Whiteman and Gershwin had casually chatted about a large-scale jazz-style orchestral work for the Whiteman Orchestra. But this casual commitment became a *fait accompli* when Gershwin read the *New York Herald's* January 3 announcement that he was “already at work” composing a “jazz concerto” for Whiteman's grand concert! Composing a concerto in just over a month was a daunting task for a composer who had never written a work of this scale, and he already had several heavy Broadway commitments. Rather than attempting a traditionally-conceived concerto, Gershwin settled on a “rhapsody”—a much less rigorous form that would allow him to develop musical ideas freely. According to a letter by Gershwin, the final inspiration for the score came during a train trip to Boston for the opening of his show *Sweet Little Devil*:

“It was on the train, with its steely rhythms, its rattlety-bang that is often stimulating to a composer—I frequently hear music in the heart of noise—I suddenly heard—and even saw on paper—the complete construction of the rhapsody from beginning to end. No new themes came to me, but I worked on the thematic material already in my mind, and tried to conceive the composition as a whole. I heard it as a musical kaleidoscope of America, of our vast melting pot, of our national pep, of our blues, our metropolitan madness. By the time I reached Boston, I had a definite *plot* of the piece, as distinguished from its actual substance.”

Given Gershwin's relative inexperience in writing for orchestra, and the short lead time available, much of the orchestration was done by Whiteman's staff arranger, Ferde Grofé. In the end, Whiteman's pretentious and over-long “Experiment” was a qualified success. However, Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*—the 24th work on a program of 25 pieces—stole the show.

### What You'll Hear

The *Rhapsody* opens with a famous clarinet *glissando*, the trademark lick of Ross Gorman, Whiteman's lead clarinetist, which Gershwin adopted as the perfect lead-in to

the first theme. The piece develops freely, with one theme flowing naturally into the next, and with increasing intensity, until the piano takes a long solo and slows the tempo. The central section is based upon a romantic melody that sounds like a nod to Tchaikovsky with a bit of jazz punctuation. There is a recapitulation, and the piece ends aggressively, with the solo piano playing its loudest.

A native of Los Angeles, **Norman Krieger** is one of the most acclaimed pianists of his generation and is highly regarded as an artist of depth, sensitivity and virtuosic flair. As the Los Angeles Times put it, "Krieger owns a world of technique-take that for granted. He always knows exactly where he is going and what he is doing. He never for instant miscalculates. He communicates urgently but with strict control. He is alert to every manner of nuance and at every dynamic level his tone flatters the ear."

Myung-Whun Chung, Donald Runnicles, Leonard Slatkin, Michael Tilson Thomas, Jaap van Zweden and Zubin Mehta are just a few of the conductors with whom Krieger has collaborated. Krieger regularly appears with the major orchestras of North America, among them the New York Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Chicago Symphony, Minnesota Orchestra and the National Symphony. He has performed throughout Europe, Asia and South America including tours of Germany, France, Poland, Holland Scandinavia, Korea, China, New Zealand and Israel. He recently performed at the PyeongChang Music festival in Korea. In September 2014, he recorded the Brahms Sonata Op. 1 and the Piano Concerto No. 2 with the London Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Philip Ryan Mann, which will be released on Decca.

In recital, Krieger has appeared throughout the United States, Europe, Mexico and Asia, while chamber music collaborations have included appearances with soprano Sheri Greenawald, violinists Paul Huang, Sarah Chang, Pamela Frank and Mihaela Martin, violist Nobuko Imai, cellists Myung Wha Chung, Jian Wang, Edward Aaron and Frans Helmerson as well as the Tokyo string quartet. His debut at New York City's prestigious Carnegie Hall and Mostly Mozart Festival earned him an immediate invitation to Lincoln Center's Great Performers Series. Krieger made headlines by being named the Gold Medal Winner of the first Palm Beach Invitational Piano Competition.

He began his studies in Los Angeles under the tutelage of Esther Lipton. At age 15, he became a full-scholarship student of Adele Marcus at The Juilliard School where he earned both his Bachelor and Master degrees. Subsequently, he studied with Alfred Brendel and Maria Curcio in London and earned an Artist Diploma from the New England Conservatory, where he worked with Russell Sherman.

A champion of contemporary music, he features the music of John Adams, Leonard Bernstein, John Corigliano, Daniel Brewbaker, Donald Crockett, Judith St. Croix, Lukas Foss, Henri Lazarof and Lowell Liebermann among his active repertoire. Krieger is the founding artistic director of The Prince Albert Music Festival in Hawaii. Since 2008, he has served on the summer faculty at the Brevard Music Festival in North Carolina. From 1997 to 2016 he was a professor at the Thornton School of Music at the University of Southern California. In August 2016 he was appointed Professor of Piano at the Jacobs School of Music at Indiana University. Jeanné, Inc., TRN, Evensong Music, and Shanghai Conservatory of Music Press; most of them can also be heard on the Albany, Bloomington Symphony Orchestra, Crystal, Enharmonic, Jeanné Digital Recordings, Move, MSR, Recherché, Toccata Classics, and US Navy Band labels. He is a member of ASCAP and the Christian Fellowship of Art Music Composers.