

NORTH CAROLINA **SYMPHONY**

Elgar Enigma Variations

SUN, APR 13, 2025 | 3PM

MEMORIAL HALL, CHAPEL HILL

North Carolina Symphony
Carlos Miguel Prieto, *conductor*
Susanna Phillips, *soprano*

PROGRAM

Franz Schubert (1797-1828)

Symphony No. 8 in B minor, D. 759, "Unfinished"

- I. Allegro moderato
- II. Andante con moto

Richard Strauss (1864-1949)

Four Last Songs

- I. *Frühling*
 - II. *September*
 - III. *Bein Schlafengehen*
 - IV. *Im Abendrot*
- Susanna Phillips, *soprano*

INTERMISSION

Edward Elgar (1857-1934)

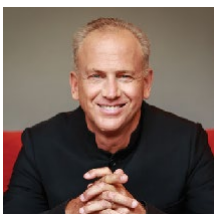
Variations on an Original Theme, Op. 36, "Enigma Variations"

Enigma: Andante

Variations:

- "C.A.E." L'istesso tempo
- "H.D.S.- P." Allegro
- "R.B.T." Allegretto
- "W.M.B." Allegro di molto
- "R.P.A." Moderato
- "Ysobel" Andantino
- "Troyte" Presto
- "W.N." Allegretto
- "Nimrod" Adagio
- "Dorabella" Intermezzo: Allegretto
- "G.R.S." Allegro di molto
- "B.G.N." Andante
- "****" Romanza: Moderato
- "E.D.U." Finale: Allegro

About the Artists



Carlos Miguel Prieto, *Music Director*
The Maxine and Benjamin Swalin Chair

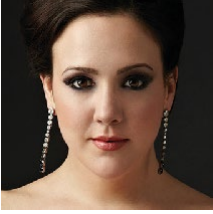
Mexican conductor and Grammy-winner Carlos Miguel Prieto started his tenure as Music Director of the North Carolina Symphony at the beginning of the 2023/24 season. From 2007 to 2022, he was Music Director of the Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional de México. In 2023 he received the Fine Arts Medal, Mexico's highest honor for a musician. He was Music Director of the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra from 2006 to 2023, where he helped lead the cultural renewal of New Orleans following Hurricane Katrina and won a Grammy in 2024. In 2008, he was appointed Music Director of the Orquesta Sinfónica de Minería (OSM), which he has led to a Latin Grammy nomination and a residence in 2024 at Bravo! Vail.

Prieto is in demand as a guest conductor for orchestras including the Chicago Symphony Orchestra; the symphony orchestras of Atlanta, Dallas, and Toronto; The Cleveland Orchestra and Minnesota Orchestra; and the San Francisco, Houston, and New World symphonies. He made his BBC Proms debut in 2023 and led the Los Angeles Philharmonic at the Hollywood Bowl in 2024. Recent engagements include the London Philharmonic Orchestra, Frankfurt Radio Symphony, Spanish National Orchestra, BBC National Orchestra of Wales, and Auckland Philharmonia.

Since 2002 Prieto has conducted the Orchestra of the Americas, which draws young musicians from the entire American continent—serving as Principal Conductor until 2011, when he was appointed Music Director. He has also worked with young musicians at The Juilliard School, the Colburn School, the Curtis Institute, and elsewhere, and leads the Carlos Miguel Prieto Conducting Fellowship at OAcademy, an online conservatory bringing together teachers and students from around the world. He has also worked with the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain and conducted both the National Youth Orchestra-USA and NYO2 at Carnegie Hall.

Prieto has conducted over 100 world premieres of works by Mexican and American composers, many commissioned by him. He places equal importance on championing works by Black and African American composers such as Florence Price, Margaret Bonds, and Courtney Bryan, among others.

Prieto has an extensive discography and was recognized by *Musical America* as Conductor of the Year in 2019. He is a graduate of Princeton and Harvard universities.



Susanna Phillips, *soprano*

These concerts are the North Carolina Symphony debut for Susanna Phillips.

Soprano Susanna Phillips' 2024/25 season has included engagements with Musica Sacra, Oratorio Society of New York, Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra, and San Francisco Symphony. Career highlights include numerous roles at The Metropolitan Opera, with a role debut in 2024 as Mimì in Puccini's *La bohème* as well as portrayals including Musetta in *La bohème*, Pamina in Mozart's *The Magic Flute*, Micaëla in Bizet's *Carmen*, Countess Almaviva in Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro*, and Clémence in The Metropolitan Opera's 2016 premiere of Kaija Saariaho's *L'amour de loin*. *The New York Times* called her performance as Fiordiligi in Mozart's *Così fan tutte* a "breakthrough night." She has also performed the role of Stella in a concert staging of Previn's *A Streetcar Named Desire* opposite Renée Fleming and sung leading roles with Boston Baroque.

Dedicated to symphonic works, Phillips has collaborated with orchestras including the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, The Philadelphia Orchestra, Santa Fe Symphony, Dallas Symphony Orchestra, Gulbenkian Orchestra, Orchestra of St. Luke's, and Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, as well as Huntsville Symphony in her native Alabama. Some credits include Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, Mahler's Second and Fourth Symphonies, Mozart's *Coronation Mass*, Fauré's and Mozart's Requiems, and Orff's *Carmina Burana*.

Her awards include The Metropolitan Opera's Beverly Sills Artist Award (2010), Operalia (First Place and the Audience Prize), The Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition, the MacAllister Awards, and the George and Nora London Foundation Awards for Singers Competition. She is a graduate of Lyric Opera of Chicago's Patrick G. and Shirley W. Ryan Opera Center and holds both a bachelor's and a master's degree from The Juilliard School.

About the Music



Symphony No. 8 in B minor, D. 759, "Unfinished"
FRANZ SCHUBERT (1797-1828)

THE STORY

It is ironic that Franz Schubert's arguably most famous work is one that he did not complete. Though he died at the age of 31, Schubert was extraordinarily prolific. He wrote more than 1,500 works for orchestra, piano, chamber ensembles, and voice—his output exceeding that of many composers who lived more than twice as long.

It is unknown why Schubert never finished his Eighth Symphony. He began the work in 1822, six years before his death, but moved on after completing two movements and sketching a third. With his health already in decline and other projects in progress, he sent the manuscript of the completed movements to musician Anselm Hüttenbrenner in gratitude for a professional favor.

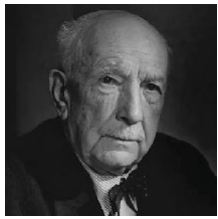
Schubert's fame skyrocketed after his passing, but the Unfinished Symphony remained unknown until Hüttenbrenner's brother Joseph mentioned it in a letter to Viennese conductor Johann von Herbeck—calling it a "treasure" comparable to "all the symphonies of Beethoven." Eventually von Herbeck was shown the manuscript, and the work was given its official premiere in 1865, nearly forty years after Schubert's death. Despite its unfinished status, it would become one of his most beloved works.

LISTEN FOR

- The two juxtaposing themes of the first movement, both introduced by cellos: the first is ominous, setting up the movement's uneasy effect; the second lilting, reminiscent of a nursery rhyme
- The songful compositional style of the second movement, particularly in the solos of the woodwind section—Schubert was particularly famous for his composition of *lieder*, German art songs for voice and piano

INSTRUMENTATION

Two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, three trombones, timpani, strings



Four Last Songs
RICHARD STRAUSS (1864-1949)

THE STORY

The work known as *Four Last Songs* began with 82-year-old Richard Strauss's discovery of a poem by Joseph von Eichendorff titled "At Sunset." In it, an old couple contemplates the end of their lives: "We have gone hand in hand/Through joys and distress,/Now we rest from our wanderings/High above the quiet land." Strauss was reminded of his own long and happy marriage to the soprano Pauline de Ahna.

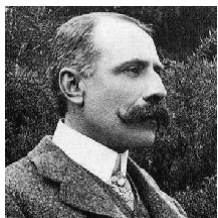
In the twilight of his life, Strauss had lived through the desolation of Europe after two World Wars, the crumbling of traditional techniques of composing music, and the souring of his reputation after institutions he led in Germany were taken over by the Nazi regime. Over the next two years Strauss composed four songs, beginning with the von Eichendorff poem that had so affected him and continuing with three poems by Hermann Hesse. Following his death, his publisher compiled the four songs under the title *Four Last Songs*. The cycle follows a life in seasons, beginning with *Spring*, followed by *September*, then *When Going to Sleep*, and culminating in *At Sunset*. In these songs, we hear Strauss's wistful farewell to the world.

LISTEN FOR

- The flute in the first song, *Spring*, which mimics birdsong as the voice intones words marveling at the trees and sky
- The long, soaring melodic lines in *September*—a signature of Strauss' compositional style
- The duet between the horn and solo violin in *Going to Sleep*, the horn representing himself (Strauss' father was a professional horn player) and the solo violin representing his wife
- The last word sung by the singer, "Tod" or "Death," as the violas, horn, and English horn quote a melody Strauss composed in his youth: *Death and Transfiguration*

INSTRUMENTATION

Two piccolos, three flutes, two oboes, English horn, two clarinets, bass clarinet, three bassoons, contrabassoon, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, harp, celesta, strings



Variations on an Original Theme, Op. 36, "Enigma Variations"

EDWARD ELGAR (1857-1934)

THE STORY

By the time English composer Edward Elgar reached his forties, he had found limited success as a composer, making a modest living by teaching and doing copywork for a music publisher. After a particularly long day of instructing students, Elgar sat at the piano and began playing for his wife, Alice. Her interest was captured by a melody he conjured; for her amusement, he began improvising on the theme, embodying different members of their group of friends. Eventually the composer created a set of variations for orchestra, each based on one of his friends—a project that began “in a spirit of humor, and continued in deep seriousness.”

The subtitle “Enigma” refers to a theme that Elgar hinted at but never explained. Some believe the Enigma refers to the mysterious way in which the piece’s principal melody came to him that first evening; others believe that there is an actual melody, hidden by the composer somewhere within the variations.

When the work was premiered in London on June 18, 1899, Elgar was catapulted to instant fame. The dedication inscribed on the score reads: “To my friends pictured within.”

LISTEN FOR

- The original theme that opens the work, and from which all fourteen variations are derived
- The hauntingly beautiful first variation, *C.A.E.*, in which Elgar pays homage to his partner: Caroline Alice Elgar
- The timpani in the fourth variation—titled *W.M.B.* after Elgar’s friend William Meath Baker—which uses the timpani to depict William’s bombastic nature, especially his propensity for slamming doors
- The viola section in the sixth variation, *Ysobel*, paying tribute to Isabel Fitton—an amateur violist with whom Elgar enjoyed playing chamber music
- The gorgeous, sweeping theme in the work’s most famous variation, titled *Nimrod*, which depicts Elgar’s best friend, August Jaeger

INSTRUMENTATION

Piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, contrabassoon, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion, organ, strings

TEXT AND TRANSLATION

Four Last Songs

Richard Strauss (1864-1949)

"Frühling"

Hermann Hesse

In dämmrigen Grüften
Träumte ich lang
Von deinen Bäumen und blauen Lüften,
Von deinem Duft und Vogelsang.

Nun liegst du erschlossen
In Gleiß und Zier,
Von Licht übergossen
Wie ein Wunder vor mir.

Du kennst mich wieder,
Du lockst mich zart,
Es zittert durch all meine Glieder
Deine selige Gegenwart.

"September"

Hermann Hesse

Der Garten trauert,
Kühl sinkt in die Blumen der Regen.
Der Sommer schauert
Still seinem Ende entgegen.

Golden tropft Blatt um Blatt
Nieder vom hohen Akazienbaum.
Sommer lächelt erstaunt und matt
In den sterbenden Gartentraum.

Lange noch bei den Rosen
Bleibt er stehen, sehnt sich nach Ruh.
Langsam tut er die großen
Müdgewordnen Augen zu.

"Spring"

*In shadowy crypts
I dreamt long
of your trees and blue skies,
of your fragrance and birdsong.*

*Now you appear
in all your finery,
drenched in light
like a miracle before me.*

*You recognize me,
you entice me tenderly.
All my limbs tremble
at your blessed presence!*

"September"

*The garden is in mourning.
Cool rain seeps into the flowers.
Summertime shudders,
quietly awaiting his end.*

*Golden leaf after leaf falls
from the tall acacia tree.
Summer smiles, astonished and feeble,
at his dying dream of a garden.*

*For just a while he tarries
beside the roses, yearning for repose.
Slowly he closes
his weary eyes.*

“Beim Schlafengehen”

Hermann Hesse

Nun der Tag mich müd gemacht,
Soll mein sehnliches Verlangen
Freundlich die gestirnte Nacht
Wie ein müdes Kind empfangen.

Hände, laßt von allem Tun,
Stirn vergiß du alles Denken,
Alle meine Sinne nun
Wollen sich in Schlummer senken.

Und die Seele unbewacht
Will in freien Flügen schweben,
Um im Zauberkreis der Nacht
Tief und tausendfach zu leben.

“Im Abendrot”

Joseph Karl Benedikt, Freiherr von Eichendorff

Wir sind durch Not und Freude
Gegangen Hand in Hand,
Vom Wandern ruhen wir
Nun überm stillen Land.

Rings sich die Täler neigen,
Es dunkelt schon die Luft,
Zwei Lerchen nur noch steigen
Nachträumend in den Duft.

Tritt her, und laß sie schwirren,
Bald ist es Schlafenszeit,
Daß wir uns nicht verirren
In dieser Einsamkeit.

O weiter stiller Friede!
So tief im Abendrot,
Wie sind wir wandermüde—
Ist dies etwa der Tod?

“Going to Sleep”

*Now that I am wearied of the day,
my ardent desire shall happily receive
the starry night
like a sleepy child.*

*Hands, stop all your work.
Brow, forget all your thinking.
All my senses now
yearn to sink into slumber.*

*And my unfettered soul
wishes to soar up freely
into night's magic sphere
to live there deeply and thousandfold.*

“At Sunset”

*We have through sorrow and joy
gone hand in hand;
From our wanderings, let's now rest
in this quiet land.*

*Around us, the valleys bow
as the sun goes down.
Two larks soar upwards
dreamily into the light air.*

*Come close, and let them fly.
Soon it will be time for sleep.
Let's not lose our way
in this solitude.*

*O vast, tranquil peace,
so deep in the evening's glow!
How weary we are of wandering—
Is this perhaps a hint of death?*

The Musicians of the North Carolina Symphony

Carlos Miguel Prieto,
Music Director
The Maxine and Benjamin Swalin Chair

Grant Llewellyn,
Music Director Laureate

Sophie Sze-Ki Mok,
Assistant Conductor
The Lucy Moore Ruffin Chair

Violin I

To Be Filled, Concertmaster
The Annabelle Lundy Fetterman Chair

To Be Filled,
Associate Concertmaster
The Assad Meymandi and Family Chair

Anna Black,
Assistant Concertmaster
The Anne Heartt Gregory Chair

Karen Strittmatter Galvin, Assistant
Concertmaster

Emily Rist Glover
The Jessie Wyatt Ethridge Chair

Paul Goldsberry
The Richard and Joy Cook Chair

Seula Lee
The Governor James B. Hunt, Jr. Chair

Joseph Meyer*

Maria Meyer
The Tom and Mary Mac Bradshaw Chair

Minjoo Moon*
The Harvey At-Large Chair

Pablo Sánchez Pazos
The Phyllis ("Pat") Conrad Wells Chair

Jessica Ryou
The James C. Byrd and Family Chair

Erin Zehngut
The J. Felix Arnold Chair

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Foundation gratefully
acknowledges the generous gift
of the Lupot violin from Arnold
and Zena† Lerman.*

†deceased

Violin II

Jacqueline Saed Wolborsky,
Principal
The Nancy Finch Wallace Chair

Tiffany Kang,
Associate Principal
The Blanche Martin Shaw Chair

David Kilbride,
Assistant Principal

Qi Cao

Janet Gayer Hall

Chris Jusell

Oskar Ozolinch

Subin Shin

Jeanine Wynton

Viola

Samuel Gold, Principal
*The Florence Spinks and Charles
Jacob Cate and Alma Yondorf
and Sylvan Hirschberg Chair*

Kurt Tseng,
Associate Principal
The Betty Ellen Madry Chair

Brian Sherwood,
Assistant Principal

Petra Berényi

Paul Malcolm

Amy Mason
The J. Sidney Kirk Chair

Daniel Moore

Sandra Schwarcz
*The Samuel H. and Anne Latham
Johnson Chair*

Cello

Bonnie Thron, Principal
The June and Tom Roberg Chair

Elizabeth Beilman,
Associate Principal
*The Sarah Carlyle Herbert Dorroh
Chair*

Peng Li, Assistant Principal,
Anonymously Endowed

Yewon Ahn**
Anonymously Endowed

David Meyer
The Nell Hirschberg Chair

Marc Moskovitz*
*The William Charles Rankin
Chair*

Lisa Howard Shaughnessy
The Sara Wilson Hodgkins Chair

Samuel Sykes*

Nathaniel Yaffe
*The Secretary of Cultural
Resources Betty Ray McCain
Chair*

Double Bass

Leonid Finkelshteyn, Principal
*The Martha and Peyton
Woodson Chair*

Joshua DePoint,
Associate Principal
*The Dr. and Mrs. Preston H. Gada
Chair*

Craig Brown
*The Mark W. McClure Foundation
Chair*

Erik Dyke
*The Harlee H. and Pauline G.
Jobe Chair*

Bruce Ridge
*The John C. and Margaret P.
Parker Chair*

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Megan Torti, Principal
*The Mr. and Mrs. George M.
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Mary E. Boone,
Assistant Principal
*The Dr. and Mrs. Shaler Stidham,
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Alexandra Stokes*
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Piccolo

Alexandra Stokes*
The Jean Dunn Williams Chair

Oboe

Melanie Wilsden, Principal
The Hardison and Stoltze Chair

Joseph Peters,
Associate Principal,
The Lizette T. Dunham Chair

To Be Filled
*The Clarence and Alice Aycock
Poe Chair*

English Horn

Joseph Peters
*The Bruce and Margaret King
Chair*

Clarinet

Samuel Almaguer, Principal
*The Mr. and Mrs. J. Christopher
Walker, II Chair*

Sammy Lesnick,
Assistant Principal
*The Kathryn Powell and Green
Flavie Cooper Chair*

Bassoon

Aaron Apaza, Principal
*The Mr. and Mrs. Fitzgerald S.
Hudson Chair*

Wenmin Zhang,
Assistant Principal,
The Beethoven Chair

French Horn

Rebekah Daley, Principal
The Mary T. McCurdy Chair

Kimberly Van Pelt,
Associate Principal
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Gabriel Mairson
The James Marion Poyner Chair

Russell Rybicki
*The Roger Colson and
Bobbi Lyon Hackett Chair*

To Be Filled
*The Mary Susan Kirk Fulghum
Chair*

Trumpet

Paul Randall, Principal
The George Smedes Poyner Chair

Ben Hauser,
Associate Principal
*The Henry and Martha Zaytoun
and Family Chair*

Trombone

John Ilika, Principal
*The Thomas Warwick Steed, Jr.
Family Chair*

Steven Osborne*,
Assistant Principal
The Frances Armour Bryant Chair

Bass Trombone

Matthew Neff
Anonymously Endowed

Tuba

Seth Horner, Principal
*The Governor and Mrs. James G.
Martin, Jr. Chair*

Timpani

Colin Hartnett, Principal
*The Patricia R., Steven T. and
George F. Hackney III Chair*

Percussion

Richard Motylinski, Principal
*The Margery and Earl Johnson,
Jr. Chair*

Rajesh Prasad,
Assistant Principal
*The Abram and Frances Pascher
Kanof Chair*

Organ

To Be Filled
*The Albert and Susan Jenkins
and Family Organ Chair*

Library

Stephanie Wilson,
Principal Orchestra Librarian
*The Mary Colvert and Banks C.
Talley Chair*

Taylor Troyer,
Assistant Orchestra Librarian

*Acting position

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