

NORTH CAROLINA SYMPHONY

Mendelssohn & Mozart

FRI, SEP 25, 2026 | NOON

MEYMANDI CONCERT HALL, RALEIGH

North Carolina Symphony
Carlos Miguel Prieto, *conductor*
Justin Bruns, *violin*

PROGRAM

Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

Violin Concerto in E minor, Op. 64

I. Allegro molto appassionato

II. Andante

III. Allegretto non troppo – Allegro molto vivace

Justin Bruns, *violin*

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

Symphony No. 40 in G minor, K. 550

I. Molto allegro

II. Andante

III. Menuetto: Allegretto

IV. Finale: Allegro assai

The North Carolina Symphony gratefully acknowledges financial support from the State of North Carolina, the honorable Josh Stein, Governor; Wake County; and the City of Raleigh.



Thank you also to the generous individuals, businesses, foundations, and community partners who support the North Carolina Symphony through contributions each season.

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. Since 2008, he has been the music director of Orquesta Sinfónica de Minería (OSM), guiding the ensemble to a Latin Grammy award and residencies at Bravo! Vail in 2024 and 2025. In 2023, he received the Fine Arts Medal—Mexico’s highest honor for a musician. He served as Music Director of the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra from 2006 to 2023, helping lead the cultural renewal of New Orleans following Hurricane Katrina and earning a Grammy in 2024. From 2007 to 2022, he was Music Director of the Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional de México.

Prieto is in demand as a guest conductor for major 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. In 2025, he led concerts with the Philharmonia Orchestra in London and Switzerland and conducted the Los Angeles Philharmonic at the Hollywood Bowl. He also served as Semifinal and Final Round Conductor for the 2025 Van Cliburn International Piano Competition. In March 2026, Prieto conducted Britten’s *War Requiem* with the Radio Television Orchestra Madrid (RTVE) in a special concert for victims of terrorism attended by the Spanish Royal Family; he also returned to the National Orchestra of Spain this past season.

Since 2002, Prieto has conducted the Orchestra of the Americas, serving as Principal Conductor until 2011, when he was appointed Music Director. He has also worked extensively with young musicians at The Juilliard School, the Colburn School, the Curtis Institute, and elsewhere. In 2025 he led the Sinfónica Azteca, Mexico’s acclaimed youth orchestra, on a tour of Mexico. He continues to mentor emerging talent through 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 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.



Justin Bruns, violin
The Annabelle Lundy Fetterman Chair

Justin Bruns is Concertmaster of the North Carolina Symphony, appointed in 2025 after serving as Associate Concertmaster of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra. He was previously Assistant Concertmaster at the Colorado Symphony. A seasoned orchestral leader and passionate chamber musician, Bruns is also concertmaster of the Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music and Bellingham Music Festival and has served as guest concertmaster with the São Paulo Symphony, Hong Kong Sinfonietta, River Oaks Chamber Orchestra, and others.

Bruns began his studies at age three and won his first competition two years later. He made his solo debut with an orchestra at age nine. Since then he has appeared with orchestras throughout the United States, South America, and Europe. He has premiered over 20 solo, concerto, and chamber works. His chamber music highlights include a Carnegie Hall debut, residences at the Savannah and San Miguel Chamber Music Festivals, and frequent performance broadcasts on Performance Today. He has recorded with Bruce Springsteen, Faith Hill, and Pearl Jam.

A committed educator, Bruns has mentored students at Emory University, the National Youth Orchestra at Carnegie Hall, the NTSO Festival in Taiwan, and as an advisor and faculty of the ASO's Talent Development Program. Bruns graduated summa cum laude from the University of Michigan and was awarded the top prize upon graduation, the Stanley Medal. He earned his master's degree from the Shepherd School of Music at Rice University.

About the Music

Symphony No. 39 in G minor [c. 1765-68]

FRANZ JOSEPH HAYDN (1732-1809)

Working for the musically ravenous Prince Nikolaus Esterházy and spending much of each year providing entertainment at a remote country palace, Haydn, as he later acknowledged, “was forced to become original.” One new direction he explored starting in the late 1760s was the *Sturm und Drang* (“Storm and Stress”) aesthetic that was also cropping up in the theater, literature, and artwork of the time. The tendency toward heightened emotion and drama led Haydn to try composing symphonies in minor keys for the first time, including this Symphony No. 39 in G minor, which was likely the earliest example.

One defining characteristic of the first movement is its use of pregnant pauses to build tension. Another more subtle feature is its reliance on a very small amount of thematic material, with one main idea (starting with a leap up to a bouncing repeated note) informing every portion—an approach that points the way toward Haydn’s future student-turned-rival Beethoven. After such a serious start, the Andante finds Haydn in a playful mood, with dance-like strides interrupted by forte interjections and more pauses that here serve to set up the comic timing.

The linear interplay between the melody and bass line in the *Menuet* serves a reminder that Haydn, for all he did to move musical style forward, was still a child of the Baroque era and its arcane systems of counterpoint. He was also writing at a time when horns had no valves and were limited to a confined set of pitches, so he cleverly used two pairs of horns tuned to different keys so he could feature their outdoorsy sound in the contrasting trio section.

The finale exemplifies the relentless forward drive and wild theatricality that Haydn cultivated in his *Sturm und Drang* phase, a sound that influenced every composer in his wake—above all young Mozart, who happened to work alongside Haydn’s brother in Salzburg, giving him early access to unpublished scores. For undeniable proof of Haydn’s impact, just look at the symphony that the 17-year-old Mozart wrote a few years after this one, in the same key of G-minor.

Two oboes, bassoon, four horns, strings

About the Music

“This is music we truly adore—the repertoire that made us become musicians.”

Carlos Miguel Prieto, *Music Director*

Violin Concerto in E minor, Op. 64 [1844]

FELIX MENDELSSOHN (1809-1847)

Felix Mendelssohn surely inherited the intellectual curiosity of his grandfather, the famous Jewish philosopher Moses Mendelssohn, but it was really the fortune his father amassed in the banking business that gave Mendelssohn every possible advantage to capitalize on his extraordinary gifts. Guided by elite tutors, he developed into a prodigy unlike any the world had ever seen—a preternaturally mature composer and pianist who could improvise or sight-read anything, and who could also play violin, paint hyper-realistic watercolors, and speak and read in six languages, among his myriad talents. For fun, he would invite Berlin’s finest musicians over to his family’s mansion to play chamber music, which is how he became lifelong friends with a fellow prodigy one year younger than him, the violinist Ferdinand David.

Mendelssohn was a seasoned pro when, at the age of 26, he took over as Music Director of the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra. He invited David to join the orchestra as its concertmaster, and he soon suggested writing a concerto for him. “One in E-minor sticks in my head,” Mendelssohn wrote, “the beginning of which will not leave me in peace.” He finally drafted the concerto six years later, a process that involved many letters back and forth with David to discuss technique. The concerto turned out to be the last orchestral score that Mendelssohn completed; two years after its 1845 premiere in Leipzig, he suffered a series of strokes and died at the age of 38.

Some of the concerto’s most magical moments are those that defy conventional responsibilities, like when the violin launches immediately into the brooding first theme. Instead of a big flourish at the end of the cadenza (which is placed earlier than would be expected), the violin simply continues its ghostly arpeggios while the orchestra brings back the main melody.

A single held note from a bassoon links the first movement to the second, which blooms into an expressive aria for the violinist. As the slow movement recedes, a halting transition builds anticipation and points the concerto toward its sunny conclusion in E. As a contrast to the flirty main theme, a regal secondary theme injects new grandeur and gravitas. This last big tune reworks the rhythms and intervals of the violin’s initial melody, transforming what first appeared as a lonely question into a communal affirmation.

Solo violin; two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, timpani, strings

Symphony No. 40 in G minor, K. 550 [1788]

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART (1756-1791)

As of 1908, no one could have predicted what was right around the corner for Igor Stravinsky, a 26-year-old composer. When Mozart began writing symphonies, he was an eight-year-old keyboard prodigy on tour in London, where he played for King George III among other adoring fans. On his previous trip to England, he had met and befriended J. C. Bach, the youngest son of J. S. Bach and a trendsetter in the emerging genre of the symphony. Later, as a teenager back in his hometown of Salzburg, Mozart looked to the example of Joseph Haydn. Some of the symphonies Mozart wrote as a 17- and 18-year-old ranked among his first truly brilliant compositions, and by that time he had already completed three-fourths of his lifetime symphonic output.

Once Mozart set out on his own as a freelancer in Vienna, his busy schedule of performing and teaching left little time or need for new symphonies; most were for special events, like the “Haffner” Symphony for a family friend’s wedding in Salzburg and the “Linz” and “Prague” Symphonies for concerts in those cities. But then his lucrative run of self-produced concerts in Vienna stalled out, and his income from opera productions faltered. There were hungry mouths to feed in Mozart’s growing family, and he was going broke.

We don’t know exactly what opportunity prompted Mozart to write the three symphonies that turned out to be his last in the summer of 1788—but whatever it was, it didn’t pan out. He must have at least found some use for the Symphony No. 40, based on a later rewrite (performed at these concerts) that added clarinets.

The symphony’s first movement begins with a peculiar and essential quirk of phrasing that assigns the violas to quiver through one measure of bare accompaniment. When the violins enter a moment later with a theme that sighs three times before leaping up, there is a subtle rub between what our ears hear as the strong beat and the underlying architecture of the phrase. The result is a persistent and restless feeling of propulsion, as if each phrase must scurry forward to stay ahead of the surge.

The Andante second movement is the only portion of the symphony that moves away from the turbulence of G minor, and even here patterns of hiccupping rhythms and delayed resolutions echo the stormy first movement. The *Menuetto* is unusually grave for the portion of a symphony that often serves as a palate-cleanser, with respite only coming in the contrasting trio section. The finale, with its heated dialogue of soft and loud phrases, embodies the passion and drama that Mozart honed on the operatic stage, most recently in *Don Giovanni*. The leaping arpeggio that launches the main theme borrows a trick that Mozart had picked up years earlier in the orchestral hotspot of Mannheim, Germany—a signature flourish known as a “Mannheim rocket.”

Flute, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, strings

The Musicians of the North Carolina Symphony

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

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

Violin I

Justin Bruns, Concertmaster
*The Annabelle Lundy Fetterman
Chair*

Kai Bryngelson, 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

Maria Meyer
*The Tom and Mary Mac Bradshaw
Chair*

K. Lee Morris
The Harvey At-Large Chair

Esther Roestan

Jessica Ryou
The James C. Byrd and Family Chair

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

Erin Zehngut
The J. Felix Arnold Chair

Violin II

Jacqueline Saed Wolborsky,
Principal

The Nancy Finch Wallace Chair

Tiffany Kang, Associate Principal
The Blanche Martin Shaw Chair

David Kilbride, Assistant Principal

Qui Cao

Nicholas Garcia-Hettinger
*The Joseph C. and Diane Bastian
Chair*

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

Pin-Hao Liao

Amy Mason
The J. Sidney Kirk Chair

Daniel Moore

To Be Filled
*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

Emma Cary
The Sara Wilson Hodgkins Chair

David Meyer
The Nell Hirschberg Chair

Samuel Sykes
The William Charles Rankin Chair

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*

Omar Haffar
*The Harllee H. and Pauline G. Jobe
Chair*

Javier Hernandez

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

Flute

Megan Torti, Principal
*The Mr. and Mrs. George M. Stephens
Chair*

Mary E. Boone, Assistant Principal
*The Dr. and Mrs. Shaler Stidham, Jr.
Chair*

Alexandra Stokes*
The Jack and Sing Boddie Chair

Piccolo

Alexandra Stokes*

Oboe

Melanie Wilsden, Principal
The Hardison and Stoltze Chair

Joseph Peters, Associate Principal
The Lizette T. Dunham Chair

Hoon Chang
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
The Paul R. Villard and Gabriel Wolf Chair

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

To Be Filled, Principal
The George Smedes Poyner Chair

David Dash*,
Associate Principal
The Henry and Martha Zaytoun and Family Chair

Benjamin Hauser**

Trombone

Devin Drinan, Principal
The Thomas Warwick Steed, Jr. Family Chair

John Ilika, 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

Rajesh Prasad*, Principal
The Margery and Earl Johnson, Jr. Chair

To Be Filled*, 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

**Leave of absence

Named musician chairs are made possible through very meaningful gifts to the Symphony's endowment. As such, these donor families are also members of the Lamar Stringfield Society.

All string players rotate stands on a periodic basis in each section with the exception of titled players: Principals, Associate Principals, and Assistant Principals.

The North Carolina Symphony is a member of the League of American Orchestras and the International Conference of Symphony and Opera Musicians.

The North Carolina Master Chorale is the Resident Chorus of the North Carolina Symphony.

The North Carolina Symphony Foundation gratefully acknowledges the generous gift of the Lupot violin from Arnold and Zena† Lerman.

†deceased

NORTH CAROLINA SYMPHONY

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