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During the recent holiday season our organization marked the 15th anniversary season of the Nevada Chamber Music Festival with eleven wide-ranging programs led by 2018 Artistic Director (and L.A. Philharmonic Concertmaster) Martin Chalifour. On the final day of music, we were proud to announce renowned cellist and frequent festival performer Clive Greensmith as our new NCMF Artistic Director. Mr. Greensmith will be a dynamic leader, blending his prowess as a cellist with a deep network of the world’s finest artists and a genuine love and knowledge of our Northern Nevada community. Stay tuned for the announcement of his first season at the helm coming later this summer.

Finally, today marks the official announcement of our finalists to serve as the Reno Chamber Orchestra’s next Music Director. Our Search Committee has spent countless hours reviewing over 140 applications and selecting these six fine conductors for consideration. The first candidate, Robert Franz, leads our final season concert on March 30th and 31st, joined on stage by UNR choirs and chamber festival favorite, pianist Steven Vanhauwaert. Mark your calendars now for six concerts in the coming year, and take part in helping us select the leader who will oversee next exciting chapter for your Reno Chamber Orchestra.

Musically Yours,

Thom Mayes,
Executive Director
This project is funded, in part, by a grant from the Nevada Arts Council, a state agency, and the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency.

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FRANZ SHUBERT (1797-1828)
*Overture in the Italian Style in C major, D. 591*

ROBERT SCHUMANN (1810-1856)
*Cello Concerto in A minor, Op. 129*
- Nicht zu schnell (A minor)
- Langsam (F major)
- Sehr lebhaft (A minor – A major)

**Soloist: Matthew Linaman, cello**

INTERMISSION

RICHARD STRAUSS (1864-1949)
*Le bourgeois gentilhomme, Op. 60*
- Ouverture
- Menuett (Minuet)
- Der Fechtmeister (The Fencing Master)
- Auftritt und Tanz der Schneider (Entry and Dance of the Tailors)
- Das Menuett des Lully (Lully’s Minuet)
- Courante
- Auftritt des Cléonte (Entry of Cléonte)
- Vorspiel (Intermezzo)
- Das Diner (The Dinner)

Support for these concerts has been provided by a generous grant from the
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The mission of the Reno Chamber Orchestra is to create intimate, inspirational musical experiences by engaging the community through vibrant music making by the Chamber Orchestra and chamber ensembles.

Michael Morgan became music director of the Oakland East Bay Symphony in 1990. He serves as artistic director of the Oakland Youth Orchestra, is Music Director Emeritus of the Sacramento Philharmonic and Opera, and is on the boards of Oaktown Jazz Workshops, the Purple Silk Music Education Foundation, and the Mathematical Sciences Research Institute. He teaches the graduate conducting course at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music and is Music Director at the Bear Valley Music Festival in California. As a guest conductor he has appeared with most of America’s major orchestras, including the New York Philharmonic, National Symphony, Baltimore Symphony, Philadelphia Orchestra, Atlanta Symphony, Alabama Symphony, Houston Symphony, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Seattle Symphony, and San Francisco Symphony.

Michael Morgan was raised in Washington, D.C. where he attended public schools and began conducting at the age of 12. While a student at Oberlin College Conservatory of Music, he spent a summer at Tanglewood. There he was a student of Gunther Schuller and Seiji Ozawa and it was at that time that he first worked with Leonard Bernstein. During his final year at Oberlin he was also the Apprentice Conductor of the Buffalo Philharmonic under Julius Rudel. In 1980, he won first prize in the Hans Swarowsky International Conductors Competition in Vienna, Austria and became Assistant Conductor of the St Louis Symphony Orchestra under Leonard Slatkin. In 1986, Sir Georg Solti chose him to become the Assistant Conductor of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, a position he held for five years.
MATTHEW LINAMAN

Matthew Linaman, a native of Reno, Nevada, began playing cello through his elementary school music program at age 11. He studied privately with Emily Uhlman until being accepted into the preparatory program at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music (SFCM) at age 16. Matthew has now performed in over 15 countries both as a soloist, teacher and cellist of the Cello Street Quartet (CSQ). Shortly after forming CSQ while he was a student, the quartet was asked to serve as musical ambassadors through the U.S. State Department’s American Music Abroad program, where they performed and taught in Hungary, Kosovo and Russia. He has spoken on the TEDx stage (2017), presented on entrepreneurship in music at SFCM, and was featured in a full-length podcast episode about the miraculous story of how he acquired his cello. Matthew was the winner of the SFCM Concerto Competition (2012), the Reno Chamber Orchestra College Concerto Competition (2012), the Oakland Symphony Young Artists Competition (2013) and the Avanti Award for Outstanding Artists (2017). After receiving the coveted Dean’s Award for outstanding contribution to chamber music at SFCM, Matthew graduated in 2013 where he studied with award-winning French cellist Jean-Michel Fonteneau. This performance marks Matthew’s second collaboration with the RCO and his third with Michael Morgan; the most recent being in November of 2018, with the Oakland Symphony, performing the world premier of Richard Marriott’s “Ghostship Requiem Cello Concerto”, commemorating the 36 people who died in a tragic fire at an artist warehouse in Oakland in 2016. Matthew is grateful to perform on an exquisite French cello from 1830 that he acquired through crowd-funding in 2014.
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FRANZ SCHUBERT
Born: January 31, 1797, Vienna, Austria
Died: November 19, 1828, Vienna, Austria

Franz Schubert is one of the best-loved and most important composers of the nineteenth century, his music consistently marked by a remarkable melodic gift, rich harmonies, and an expansive treatment of traditional forms. During his short but extremely prolific career, he composed nine symphonies, dozens of chamber and solo piano works, and a host of operas and liturgical works. His songs, numbering over 600, virtually created the genre of the art song. He started composing in his teens, and some early works came to the notice of Antonio Salieri, who worked with the young composer on composition and music theory. After a couple of unhappy years spent as a schoolteacher by day and composer by night, Schubert decided to pursue a career as a full-time composer, leading a somewhat bohemian life while creating a vast number of compositions that, at the time, attracted little attention. Only gradually did his music win acclaim, inspiring a remarkable burst of creativity in the mid 1820s. By that time, however, he was suffering badly from the syphilis and (possibly) typhoid fever that would take his life at age 31.

Overture “In the Italian Style” in C major, D. 591
Composed: 1817
Duration: 8 minutes
Instrumentation: 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, 2 trumpets, timpani, strings

Starting in 1813, when the twenty-year-old Gioacchino Rossini experienced major successes with his operas Tancredi and L’italiana in Algeri, his music quickly became ubiquitous throughout Europe. Within a couple of years, Austria, and Schubert’s home town of Vienna, were themselves experiencing Rossini-mania, especially after the visit of the Italian Opera Company to Vienna in November 1816. Schubert was among the many Rossini enthusiasts, and in November 1817, he set aside the Symphony No. 6 that he was then working on to compose a pair of Overtures that evoke the world of Rossini. While the title they have since acquired, “in the Italian Style,” didn’t come from Schubert himself, the appellation is more than appropriate.

The Overture in C major is probably the more popular of the two, possibly because it was published many years before the other (in D major, D. 590). It begins with a gently portentous slow introduction that leads into a duet for clarinet and bassoon. Their tune is taken up by the strings. After a brief pause, the tempo increases with a jolly melody with dotted rhythms that certainly calls Rossini to mind. Another theme is introduced by the flute and oboe before the eruption of one of those famous slow-building, repetitive “Rossini crescendos.” A repeat of this music leads into another increase in tempo for the Overture’s exciting final moments.
ROBERT SCHUMANN
Born: June 8, 1810, Zwickau, Germany
Died: July 29, 1856, Endenich, Germany

Schumann was one of the quintessential artists of music’s Romantic era. Encouraged in a wide range of studies by his writer/publisher father, Schumann became a law student at the University of Leipzig. But music was his first love. He studied piano with Friedrich Wieck, and later married Wieck’s daughter Clara, one of the finest pianists of her time. Schumann’s efforts to become a piano virtuoso were foiled when he developed partial paralysis of his right hand, so he focused on composing and writing. His music was often written in feverish bursts of activity – 1840, for instance, saw the creation of over 140 songs, and 1842 was a year of chamber music. While he composed in larger forms such as opera, symphony, and concerto, many feel that Schumann’s true genius came to the fore in his songs and piano miniatures. As a critic he co-founded the influential Neue Zeitschrift für Musik and wrote articles praising composers like Chopin and Brahms. Having long suffered from mental problems, in 1854 Schumann tried to drown himself in the Rhine, and he spent his final years in an asylum.

Cello Concerto in A minor, Op. 129
Composed: 1850
Duration: 24 minutes
Instrumentation: 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, 2 trumpets, timpani, strings, solo cello

After a number of musical and mental/emotional crises in the late 1840s, in 1850 Schumann took the post of music director of the orchestra in Düsseldorf, succeeding his composer-conductor friend Ferdinand Hiller who had recommended him for the job. This proved to be an unwise decision. Schumann was not an inspiring leader – as one commentator has put it, “There is something heartrending about poor Schumann’s epochal inefficiency as a conductor” – and he was fired after two seasons. At the beginning of this Düsseldorf interlude, though, Schumann felt energized, composing his Cello Concerto in just two weeks in October 1850 – in fact, he completed the work on October 24, on the very day he conducted his first concert with the Düsseldorf orchestra.

In the autograph score, Schumann called the work a “Konzertstück,” or “Concert piece,” for “cello with orchestral accompaniment,” perhaps indicating the nature of the solo part relative to the orchestra. At one point, Schumann had stated, “I cannot write a concerto for the virtuosos. I must try for something else.” While the solo part in his Cello Concerto is challenging, it isn’t purely a flashy virtuoso vehicle, either. As to the orchestra’s role, the perceived thinness of the orchestration led famed cellist Mstislav Rostropovich to have his friend Dmitri Shostakovich re-orchestrate the piece, adding a harp and piccolo and more French horns (that arrangement is seldom heard today, as the quality of Schumann’s own work has been validated over time).
Schumann was very happy with his Concerto, describing it as “really quite a jolly piece.” Schumann’s wife Clara also loved it, writing in her diary, “I have played Robert’s Violoncello Concerto through again, thus giving myself a truly musical and happy hour. The Romantic quality, the vivacity, the freshness and humor, also the highly interesting interweaving of violoncello and orchestra are indeed wholly ravishing, and what euphony and deep feeling one finds in all the melodic passages!” But the work was not played during Schumann’s lifetime. Its premiere waited until 1860, and it was only in the twentieth century, in part due to the advocacy of Pablo Casals, that the Concerto became part of the standard repertoire.

The Concerto’s three movements are played without pause (this is a technique that Schumann used frequently, as it is said that he disliked applause between movements of a work). Quiet chords from the winds and pizzicato strings open the work. Those chords – which become a recurring motto, appearing as well in the transition to the slow second movement and before the main melody of the finale – introduce the cello’s presentation of the first movement’s distinctive first main theme. The subsequent second theme is more energetic and passionate. In the development of these melodies, the mood turns agitated. The stormy cello part doesn’t relent, even when the French horn tries to divert it back to the first theme.

Eventually the main themes are repeated, and a short recitative for the cello leads into the second movement, in which the cello’s song arises over quiet pizzicati from the strings. That intense lyricism is suddenly interrupted by an energetic passage for the cello featuring double-stops (two strings played at once). Excitement continues to build, briefly interrupted as one of the ideas from the first movement recurs. At one point the solo cello is featured in a duet with the orchestra’s principal cello, a passage some have interpreted as Schumann’s tribute to, a symbolic conversation with, his wife Clara. Another feature heard several times is a pair of notes, a descending fifth interval, that Schumann also associated with Clara (it apparently reminded him of her name). Two main themes, the first strong, the other more lyrical, are featured and developed in the third movement. An unusual accompanied cadenza for the cello leads into the work’s lively conclusion.

RICHARD STRAUSS

Born: June 11, 1864, Munich, Germany
Died: September 8, 1949, Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany

The son of a horn player in the Munich Court Orchestra, Richard Strauss received considerable musical training early in life, and was already writing ambitious and accomplished music as a teenager – the famous conductor Hans von Bülow called the seventeen-year-old Strauss “by far the most striking personality since Brahms.” In the last decade or so of the nineteenth century Strauss composed many of his best-known orchestral scores, like Don Juan, Ein Heldenleben, and Also sprach Zarathustra. Early in the twentieth century his interest turned to opera, as he took conducting posts at
the Berlin Hofoper and Vienna Staatsoper and composed renowned operas like *Salome*, *Elektra*, and *Der Rosenkavalier*. He maintained a very busy schedule of composing and conducting, but in the 1930s and 1940s stirred considerable controversy through his involvement with the Nazi regime. But he was able to continue working, albeit at a slower pace, even after World War II, producing memorable works such as the *Four Last Songs* in his eighties.

**Le bourgeois Gentilhomme Suite**, Op. 60

**Composed:** 1911-17  
**Duration:** 35 minutes  
**Instrumentation:** 2 flutes (1 doubling piccolo), 2 oboes (1 doubling English horn), 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons (1 doubling contrabassoon), 2 horns, trumpet, bass trombone, timpani, percussion, piano, harp, strings

One of several collaborations between the playwright/actor Molière and composer Jean-Baptiste Lully, *Le bourgeois Gentilhomme* (The Bourgeois Gentleman) is one of the prime examples of “comédie-ballet,” a stage presentation combining drama, music and dance. Such works were fairly commonplace in the second half of the seventeenth century, and were a mainstay of the court of Louis XIV of France, for whom *Le bourgeois Gentilhomme* was originally created.

First presented on October 14, 1670, *Le bourgeois Gentilhomme* became the point of inspiration almost two and a half centuries later, in 1911, for another writer-composer team, Hugo von Hoffmannsthal and Richard Strauss. Their concept was that Strauss would create new music for a new and shorter version of Molière’s comedy, which would then serve as a prologue, a sort of “play within a play,” for the opera *Ariadne auf Naxos*. This lengthy hybrid work proved unsuccessful, however, and Strauss subsequently discarded the Molière section from *Ariadne*. He however salvaged nine sections of incidental music he had written for the Molière, and in 1917 fashioned his concert suite *Le bourgeois Gentilhomme*, which was given its first performance under his own direction on January 31, 1920.

*Le bourgeois Gentilhomme* tells the story of Monsieur Jourdain, the son of a cloth merchant whose main goal in life is to rise above his middle-class birth and become an aristocrat. Note the oxymoron of the work’s title: back in seventeenth century France, a “gentleman” was by definition a nobleman, and therefore couldn’t possibly be a member of the middle-class as well. Consistently ridiculous in his efforts to master dancing, fencing, music, and philosophy – the skills of a true nobleman – Jourdain continues to harbor a desire to marry a marchioness or other noble. He also betrays no little hypocrisy in his efforts to prevent his daughter Lucille to marry the middle-class Cléonte. Cléonte, however, has the last laugh when he disguises himself as the Sultan of Turkey. Jourdain of course welcomes the opportunity to marry his daughter off to the Sultan – as the father of the bride, he too would acquire noble status, which he does in the comical “ceremony” that concludes the play.

Strauss’s evocation of the world of *Le bourgeois Gentilhomme* is vivid: we hear Jourdain’s pomposity and self-importance, his comically awkward efforts to dance and fence and acquire courtly manners, and, in the concluding “The Dinner,” his unfortunate attempt to impress a group of guests with a multi-course feast – topped off by the sudden appearance of a young man who leaps from a giant omelet and proceeds to dance! In some of his later works like the beautiful Oboe Concerto of 1945, Strauss sheds some of the grandiosity of his more famous orchestral works and takes on some of the sound and tone of the era of Mozart and Haydn, while not entirely abandoning his more modern, chromatic harmonic and melodic language. He similarly evokes the seventeenth century setting of *Le bourgeois Gentilhomme*, in part through the modest, chamber orchestra-sized scoring, and in part through the use of some of Lully’s original music, most obviously in the movements “Lully’s Minuet,” “Courante,” and “Cléonte’s Entry.”

Chris Morrison is the former Executive Director of the Reno Chamber Orchestra. His blog is at 32minutes.wordpress.com
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- The Reno Philharmonic, for sharing its music stands and other equipment for RCO rehearsals.

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