The 1020th Suntory Subscription Concert
Thu. July 17, 2025, 19:00 at Suntory Hall

The 172nd Tokyo Opera City Subscription Concert
Fri. July 18, 2025, 19:00 at Tokyo Opera City Concert Hall

The 1021st Orchard Hall Subscription Concert
Sun. July 20, 2025, 15:00 at Bunkamura Orchard Hall

Min Chung, conductor
Mayuko Kamio, violin*
Akihiro Miura, concertmaster

Tchaikovsky:
Violin Concerto in D major, Op. 35* (ca. 36 min)

I. Allegro moderato – Moderato assai
II. Canzonetta: Andante
III. Finale: Allegro vivacissimo

— intermission (ca. 15 min) —

Tchaikovsky:
Symphony No. 6 in B minor, Op. 74
"Pathétique" (ca. 46 min)

I. Adagio – Allegro non troppo
II. Allegro con grazia
III. Allegro molto vivace
IV. Adagio lamentoso

Presented by the Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra
Subsidized by the Agency for Cultural Affairs Government of Japan | Japan Arts Council
In Association with Bunkamura (July 20)

- ♪ All seats are reserved. Late admittance will be refused during the live performance. If you enter or reenter just before the concert or between movements, we may escort you to a seat different from the one to which you were originally assigned.
- ♪ Exiting during the performance will be tolerated. If you do not feel well, please exit or enter as you need. However, please mind the other listeners so that they will be minimally disturbed.
- ♪ Please refrain from using your cellphone or other electronic devices during performance.
- ♪ Hold applause please. Please cherish the "afterglow" at the end of each piece for a moment before your applause.

Artists Profile

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Min Chung,
conductor

Associate conductor of
the Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra

Min Chung is Music Director of the Gangneung Philharmonic Orchestra and Associate Conductor of the Tokyo Philharmonic, since 2015. He served as the Principal Guest Conductor of Orchestra Haydn di Trento e Bolzano between 2020-23.

Highlights with his titled orchestras include semi-staged performances of La Traviata featuring acclaimed soprano Hera Hyesang Park, Mahler's Fourth Symphony, a collaboration with Seong-Jin Cho with Gangneung Philharmonic and subscription concerts with Tokyo Philharmonic. Min recently led a highly-successful tour of Japan with the GPO.

Other symphonic highlights include Maggio Musicale, Orchestra Sinfonica Nazionale della RAI di Torino, Orchestra del Teatro Comunale di Bologna, Wiener Kammerorchester, Mariinsky Theatre Orchestra, Deutsche Kammerakademie Neuss am Rhein, Orchestra dell'Accademia Teatro alla Scala, Orchestra Sinfonica del Teatro Lirico di Cagliari, Orchestra Festival della Valle d'Itria, Hangzhou Philharmonic, Shenzhen Symphony, Mexico City Philharmonic, Korea Chamber Orchestra, Busan Philharmonic and Daegu Opera Orchestra, to name a few.

In demand on the operatic stage, Min has led productions at Mariinsky Theatre (Madama Butterfly), Teatro alla Scala Milan (Die Zauberflöte), Korean National Opera (Madama Butterfly, Don Carlo, L'enfant et les sortilèges) and Teatro Politeama Greco (La traviata, Don Carlo).

17 July
18 July
20 July

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Mayuko Kamio,
violin

17 July

18 July

20 July

Japanese violinist Mayuko Kamio, the gold medalist of the 2007 International Tchaikovsky Competition. She made concerto debut in Tokyo at the age of ten under the baton of Charles Dutoit, in a concert broadcast on NHK television. Since then, she has appeared as soloist with the Boston Pops conducted by Keith Lockhart, the Tonhalle Orchestra in Zurich with Mstislav Rostropovich, and the Israel Philharmonic under Zubin Mehta. As a recitalist, she has performed in such major cities as New York, Washington DC, St. Petersburg, Moscow, Frankfurt, Warsaw, and Tokyo.

Ms. Kamio was born in Osaka in 1986, and began to play the violin at the age of four. Her early teachers were Chikako Satoya, Machie Oguri and Chihiro Kudo, and she worked with Koichiro Harada at the Toho Gakuen School of Music. She studied in the U.S. with Dorothy DeLay and Masao Kawasaki at the Aspen Music Festival and the pre- college division of The Juilliard School. She completed artist's diploma studies at the Hochschule für Musik und Theater in Zurich, where she worked with Zakhar Bron. Her violin is a Stradivarius 1731 “Rubinoff” from the Munetsugu Collection. She is a professor at the Tokyo College of Music.

Program Notes

Text by Robert Markow

Tchaikovsky: Violin Concerto in D major, Op. 35

Tchaikovsky's music largely reflected his personal life: by turns hyperemotional and passionate, reflective and introspective, often darkly turbulent and overlaid with a touch of neuroticism. All of this and more is found in his Violin Concerto. Tchaikovsky wrote it during March and April of 1878 in Switzerland, where he was inspired by the natural beauty around him and by the friendship of a young violinist friend and composition student, Yosif Yosifovich Kotek, who was visiting from Berlin and who was responsible for introducing Tchaikovsky to the wealthy patroness Nadejda von Meck. Kotek expressed dissatisfaction with the second movement, and Tchaikovsky replaced it with an entirely different one. Madame von Meck was not entirely pleased with the concerto either. But the biggest blow was probably the rejection from the celebrated virtuoso and teacher Leopold Auer, to whom the work was originally dedicated.

Auer pronounced it "unplayable" (a diplomatic way of saying it was too difficult). Not until nearly four years after its completion did Adolf Brodsky take up its cause, giving the first performance not in Russia but in Vienna on December 4, 1881, with Hans Richter conducting the Vienna Philharmonic.

The initial response to the concerto was devastating. The city's most esteemed critic, the notoriously conservative Eduard Hanslick, called it long, pretentious and vulgar. "The violin is no longer played; it is pulled, torn, drubbed," he wrote, and suggested that the concerto "gives us for the first time the hideous notion that there can be music that stinks to the ear." Strong words for a concerto that today ranks as one of the half dozen most popular of its kind! Yet Hanslick was not alone in his opinion; eight of the ten reviews that appeared in Viennese journals voiced much the same sentiment.

Tchaikovsky rewrote the dedication to Brodsky, who went on to perform the concerto in London, and then in Moscow, eventually winning public support for it. Even Auer, in his old age, finally saw its merits; the concerto would become one of the mainstays in the repertories of his

protégés, including Mischa Elman, Jascha Heifetz, and Efrem Zimbalist. Once the concerto was proven "playable" after all, violinists everywhere took up its cause. Today's musicians conquer the most fiendish diff iculties of just a few generations ago, and Tchaikovsky's concerto is now regularly performed even by gifted students, as well as by nearly every professional in the world.

Although full of bravura passage work, the concerto also contains a wealth of pure romantic lyricism for which Tchaikovsky is so noted. The first movement boasts both a lyrical first and second theme, and even the cadenza emphasizes the expressive over the virtuosic. The second movement, subtitled "Canzonetta," has a certain melancholic wistfulness to it − soulful though not mournful. The muted solo violin presents the first folklike theme. This brief movement is followed without pause by the exhilarating Finale, whose themes suggest Russian dance tunes and rhythms, especially the trepak.

PIOTR ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY: Born in Votkinsk, May 7, 1840; died in St. Petersburg, November 6, 1893

Work composed: 1878 World premiere: December 4, 1881 in Vienna, by Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Hans Richter, with Adolph Brodsky as soloist
Instrumentation: 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, timpani, strings, solo violin

Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 6 in B minor, Op. 74 "Pathétique"

So firmly entrenched in the public consciousness is the subtitle of Tchaikovsky's Sixth Symphony that the work is often referred to simply as "The Pathétique." The catchy title has long been thought to have originated with the composer's brother Modest. However, recent research has overturned this theory, and it is now believed that the title came from the composer himself, and that he had used it while still working on the score. It is also now known that Tchaikovsky asked his publisher Jurgensen to add the title (in French), not remove it, as history has long claimed.

Tchaikovsky used the French word (pateticheskу in Russian), which derives from the Greek patheticos, referring to something passionate, emotional, and having overtones of suffering.

Death seems to lurk in much of the work. The words "death" and "dying" occur in a letter Tchaikovsky wrote explaining the plan of the symphony. Some listeners hear an expression of a hypersensitive artist given to alternating moods of exaltation and dejection, and try to follow each emotional state in the music as a mirror of the composer's soul. Predominantly dark orchestral colors, the frequent use of sinking themes and downward scales, the minor tonality, outbursts of defiance and poignant dissonances all contribute to Tchaikovsky's expressive purpose. Other listeners take their cue from critic Philip Hale, who wrote, "Here is a work that, without a hint or a suggestion of a program, sums up in the most imaginative language the life of man, with his illusions, desires, loves, struggles, victories, unavoidable end."

Musicologist and composer Jonathan Kramer offers this balanced view: "Tchaikovsky's language is one of immediacy, not subtlety, and nowhere is his emotionalism more personal than in the *Pathétique*. His sentimentalism was symptomatic of his era, but today the excesses of late romantic art can be appreciated in their historical context. We have known, in the wars of the twentieth century, a deeper and far more devastating hysteria than is depicted in the Sixth Symphony. The unbridled outpouring of this music, especially in its last movement, is tolerable today because it does not seem to portray the deepest possible human despair."

Tchaikovsky began working on his last symphony in February of 1893 and conducted the first performance on October 28 in St. Petersburg. It was only mildly successful, due to a puzzling *Adagio* finale that ended softly, an indifferent orchestra, and the composer's consequent lack of enthusiastic leadership. Nevertheless, he felt that it was "the best and especially the most sincere of my works. I love it as I have never loved any of my other musical creations." At the second performance, three weeks later, conducted by Eduard Napravnik, the symphony left a powerful impression. But the composer was dead − his *Symphonie pathétique* had become his swan song.

The introductory bassoon solo, which crawls slowly through the

murky depths of the orchestra, becomes the melodic material for the *Allegro* section's principal theme. The second theme, presented by the violins, is probably the most memorable of the entire work – haunting in its beauty, poignancy, and sad lyricism. The clarinet brings this theme down to the limits of audibility … a crash abruptly shatters the mood, and the development section ensues, one of the most violent and ferocious passages Tchaikovsky ever wrote. A brief recapitulation is followed by a consoling coda.

The second movement is the famous "broken-backed waltz," limping yet graceful, in 5/4 meter. A Trio section in the middle, also in 5/4, is noteworthy for the steady, pulsing notes in the bassoons, double bases and timpani.

The third movement combines elements of a light scherzo with a heavy march. So festive and exuberant does the march become that one is tempted to stand and cheer at the end, making all the more effective the anguished cry that opens the finale.

The finale's infinitely warm and tender second theme in D major works itself into a brilliant climax and crashes in a tumultuous descent of scales in the strings. The first theme returns in continuously rising peaks of intensity, agitation and dramatic conflict. Finally the energy is spent, the sense of struggle subsides, and a solemn trombone chorale leads into the return of the movement's second theme, no longer in D major but in B minor – dark, dolorous, weighted down in inexpressible grief and resignation. The underlying heart throb of double basses eventually ceases and the symphony dies away into blackness … nothingness …

Work composed: 1893 World premiere: October 28, 1893 in St. Petersburg, conducted by the composer
Instrumentation: 3 flutes (3rd doubling on piccolo), 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (bass drum, cymbals, tam-tam), strings

Formerly a horn player in the Montreal Symphony, **Robert Markow** now writes program notes for numerous orchestras and other musical organizations in North America and Asia. He taught at Montreal's McGill University for many years, has led music tours to several countries, and writes for numerous leading classical music journals.