Thursday, December 11, 2014, at 8:00
Friday, December 12, 2014, at 1:30
Saturday, December 13, 2014, at 8:00
Tuesday, December 16, 2014, at 7:30

**Manfred Honeck** Conductor

**Haydn**
Symphony No. 93 in D Major
Adagio—Allegro assai
Largo cantabile
Menuetto: Allegro
Finale: Presto ma non troppo

**Strauss**
*Don Juan*, Op. 20

**INTERMISSION**

**Beethoven**
Symphony No. 7 in A Major, Op. 92
Poco sostenuto—Vivace
Allegretto
Presto
Allegro con brio

CSO Tuesday series concerts are sponsored by United Airlines.

This program is partially supported by grants from the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency, and the National Endowment for the Arts.
Joseph Haydn
Born March 31, 1732, Rohrau, Austria.
Died May 31, 1809, Vienna, Austria.

## Symphony No. 93 in D Major

In 1790, when he heard the news that Joseph Haydn’s longtime patron Nikolaus Esterházy had died, the impresario Johann Peter Salomon promptly went to Vienna to make the best business deal of his career. He showed up, unannounced, at Haydn’s door and said, “I am Salomon from London and have come to fetch you. Tomorrow we shall make an accord”—that final pun (in French accord means both “agreement” and “chord”) no doubt winning him critical points with the composer before negotiations had even begun.

Haydn had turned down offers to appear in England before, but now that he was free (and unemployed) he was more easily persuaded to visit this foreign country where his music had long been popular. (Haydn’s name was introduced to London audiences in 1765, inadvertently mangled as “Haydri,” when six of his string quartets were performed.) When Mozart, his only equal among composers, asked him how he would get along in a place where he didn’t even speak the language, Haydn replied, “Ah, my language is understood all over the world.” (Mozart died within the year; the two composers had said goodbye before Haydn left Vienna for London, not knowing it was the last time they would see each other.)

Haydn had agreed to compose six new symphonies for his London visit—two for the 1791 season and four more for the following year. The D major symphony performed at this week’s concerts is the one we think of as the first of the now-famous London Symphonies—the initial work in what turned out to be a set of twelve scores (nos. 93–104) that are among the crowning achievements of the classical era. But the chronology of Haydn’s symphonies is messy, and the ones we now know as nos. 95 and 96 were actually the first ones he unveiled, shortly after he arrived on New Year’s Day 1791. Three more followed early in 1792, beginning in February with no. 93, and continuing with nos. 98 and 94 in March.

No. 93 was even more popular with the British public than the two symphonies Haydn had premiered the previous year. The Times, which had ignored Haydn’s first season in the city, now raved: “Such a combination of excellence was contained in every movement, as inspired all the performers as well as the audience with enthusiastic ardour.” The D major symphony, like the other symphonies of 1792, suggests that Haydn had taken stock of his London public and was now writing music to satisfy their tastes, challenge their expectations, and even shock them. This D major symphony is a richer and more complex work than the one in the same key (no. 96) written for London scarcely a year earlier. The Oracle pronounced it “at once grand, scientific, charming, and original.” The opening movement, with its signature slow introduction—characteristic of all but one of the twelve London Symphonies—is particularly

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMPOSED</th>
<th>1791</th>
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<tr>
<td>FIRST PERFORMANCE</td>
<td>February 17, 1792, London. The composer conducting</td>
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<td>FIRST CSO PERFORMANCES</td>
<td>January 8 &amp; 9, 1953, Orchestra Hall. Guido Cantelli conducting</td>
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<td>MOST RECENT CSO PERFORMANCES</td>
<td>March 8 &amp; 10, 2007, Orchestra Hall. Roberto Abbado conducting</td>
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<tr>
<td>INSTRUMENTATION</td>
<td>two flutes, two oboes, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, timpani, strings</td>
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<tr>
<td>APPROXIMATE PERFORMANCE TIME</td>
<td>24 minutes</td>
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impressive, and Haydn proves his originality in the first minute, when he suddenly shifts from D major to the remote harmonies of E-flat major. The main body of the movement is a genial Allegro, featuring a big, showy development section that exhibits both science and charm.

The slow second movement begins unexpectedly with a solo string quartet that plays just once and never reappears, and later boasts one of Haydn’s most delightfully rude and perfectly timed jokes, courtesy of the bassoon, that is nearly as startling as the famous surprise that gave symphony no. 94 its nickname (“there the ladies will jump,” he said of that one). Haydn’s diary tells us that, at the second performance, both the first and second movements were “encort.”

The colorful minuet is offset by a trio that alternates loud fanfares and quiet responses to captivating effect. The finale is full of energy and unflagging imagination, right up to the theatrics of its noisy conclusion—an effect not lost on Beethoven in his own D major symphony written eleven years later.

Richard Strauss
Born June 11, 1864, Munich, Germany.
Died September 8, 1949, Garmisch, Germany.

Don Juan, Op. 20

Although he would later say that he found himself as inspiring a subject as any, Richard Strauss began his career composing music indebted to some of literature’s greatest characters. Strauss claimed that his inspiration to write music about Don Juan came from Nikolaus Lenau’s German verse play (left unfinished at his death), but it’s worth considering that Strauss conducted Mozart’s Don Giovanni in Munich shortly before he began to compose Don Juan, his first important work. (Don Juan launched Strauss’s career, but it took a few years for his name to replace that of another Strauss in audiences’ affection—when the Chicago Symphony played Don Juan for the first time in 1897, it was still necessary to report that the twenty-four-year-old composer was no relation to the “dance Strauss family.”) In fact, the seeds for Strauss’s Don Juan were planted as early as 1885, when he attended a performance of Paul Heyse’s play, Don Juans Ende.

Strauss’s Don Juan is not Heyse’s, nor Mozart’s, nor Lenau’s—despite words on the title page to the contrary—but a character entirely and unforgettably his own, defined in a few sharp musical gestures. (Now that Strauss’s tone poem—the term he preferred—has conquered the world’s concert halls, the figure of Don Juan is unimaginable without the ardent horn theme which, in Strauss’s hands, becomes his calling card.) Strauss once said his two favorite operas were Tristan and Isolde and Così fan tutte, and this work is informed by both the Wagnerian idea of undying love as well as Mozart’s understanding of passion as a fragile, ever-changing state of mind. It’s no small coincidence that, at the time he was composing this tone poem, Strauss himself fell madly in love with Pauline de Ahna, the soprano who would eventually become his wife.

Strauss worked on two tone poems during the summer of 1888. Macbeth, which gave him considerable trouble and wasn’t finished until
Herbert König’s portrait of Nikolaus Lenau, in which the poet is surrounded by romanticized images of the Hungarian and German landscapes.

1891, doesn’t profit from comparison with Shakespeare’s play. But with Don Juan, composed in just four months, Strauss discovered the knack (which would rarely desert him thereafter) for depicting character, place, and action of cinematic complexity so vividly that words of explanation are unnecessary. Still, Strauss prefaced the score of Don Juan with three excerpts from Lenau’s poem, and at the earliest performances he asked to have those lines printed in the program. Later, realizing that the public could follow his tone poems, in essence if not blow by blow, he disdained such self-help guides and trusted the music to speak for itself.

Strauss was always a master of the memorable first line—think of the glorious daybreak, now so often misquoted in television commercials, at the beginning of Thus Spake Zarathustra—but in all music, there are few openings as breathtaking as that of Don Juan—a rapid unfurling in which the hero leaps headlong in front of us. Throughout the work, Strauss doesn’t skimp on details, for even in his abridged biography of the great lover he depicts at least one flirtation, two torrid affairs, and a duel to the death.

There are many remarkable moments—the deeply felt love scene at the heart of the piece, beautifully launched by the oboe; the brazen new signature theme that follows, played by the four horns in unison; the hero’s precipitous fall from grace, when memories of his most recent loves pass quickly before him. Finally, after reliving the glory of past conquests, Don Juan recognizes that his victory is hollow—“the fuel is all consumed and the hearth is cold and dark,” Lenau writes—and he willingly dies at his adversary’s hand. With one piercing stab from the trumpets, he drops, trembling, to the ground.

As swiftly as Don Juan’s life had ended, Strauss’s dazzling career was launched.

**COMPOSED**
1898

**FIRST PERFORMANCE**
November 11, 1888, Weimar. The composer conducting

**FIRST CSO PERFORMANCES**
November 5 & 6, 1897, Auditorium Theatre. Theodore Thomas conducting
July 16, 1936, Ravinia Festival. Willem van Hoogstraten conducting

**MOST RECENT CSO PERFORMANCES**
July 28, 2007, Ravinia Festival. Christoph Eschenbach conducting
May 26, 27 & 29, 2010, Orchestra Hall. Rafael Frühbeck de Burgos conducting

**APPROXIMATE PERFORMANCE TIME**
19 minutes

**INSTRUMENTATION**
three flutes and piccolo, two oboes and English horn, two clarinets, two bassoons and contrabassoon, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, triangle, cymbals, glockenspiel, harp, strings

**CSO RECORDINGS**
1954. Fritz Reiner conducting. RCA
1960. Fritz Reiner conducting. RCA
1990. Daniel Barenboim conducting. Erato
Ludwig van Beethoven
Born December 16, 1770, Bonn, Germany.
Died March 26, 1827, Vienna, Austria.

Symphony No. 7 in A Major, Op. 92

Here is what Goethe wrote after he first met Beethoven during the summer of 1812:

His talent amazed me; unfortunately, he is an utterly untamed personality, who is not altogether in the wrong in holding the world to be detestable, but surely does not make it any the more enjoyable either for himself or for others by his attitude.

We’re told that the two men walked together through the streets of Teplitz, where Beethoven had gone for the summer, and exchanged cordial words. When royalty approached, Goethe stepped aside, tipping his hat and bowing deeply; Beethoven, indifferent to mere nobility, walked on. This was a characteristic Beethoven gesture: defiant, individual, strongly humanitarian, intolerant of hypocrisy—and many listeners find its essence reflected in his music. But before confusing the myth with the man, consider that, throughout his life, Beethoven clung to the “van” in his name because it was so easily confused with “von” and its suggestion of lofty bloodlines.

Without question, Beethoven’s contemporaries thought him a complicated man, perhaps even the utterly untamed personality Goethe found him. He was a true eccentric, who adored the elevated term Tondichter (poet in sound) and refused to correct a rumor that he was the illegitimate son of the king of Prussia, but looked like a homeless person (his outfit once caused his arrest for vagrancy). There were other curious contradictions: he was disciplined and methodical—like many a modern-day concertgoer, he would rise early and make coffee by grinding a precise number of coffee beans—but lived in a squalor he alone could tolerate. Certainly modern scholarship, as it chips away at the myth, finds him ever more complex.

We don’t know what Goethe truly thought of his music, and perhaps that’s just as well, for Goethe’s musical taste was less advanced than we might hope (he later admitted he thought little of Schubert’s songs). The general perception of Beethoven’s music in 1812 was that it was every bit as difficult and unconventional as the man himself—even, perhaps, to most ears, utterly untamed.

This is our greatest loss today. For Beethoven’s widespread familiarity—of a dimension known to no other composer—has blinded us not only to his vision (so far ahead of his time that he was...}

**COMPOSED**
1811–April 13, 1812

**FIRST PERFORMANCE**
December 8, 1813, Vienna. The composer conducting

**FIRST CSO PERFORMANCE**
October 28 & 29, 1892, Auditorium Theatre. Theodore Thomas conducting
July 3, 1936, Ravinia Festival. Ernest Ansermet conducting

**MOST RECENT CSO PERFORMANCES**
November 8, 9, 10 & 11, 2012, Orchestra Hall. Charles Dutoit conducting
July 24, 2014, Ravinia Festival. James Conlon conducting

**INSTRUMENTATION**
two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, timpani, strings

**APPROXIMATE PERFORMANCE TIME**
39 minutes

**CSO RECORDINGS**
1954. Fritz Reiner conducting. VAI (video)
1955. Fritz Reiner conducting. RCA
1971. Carlo Maria Giulini conducting. Angel
1979. János Ferencsik conducting. CSO (Chicago Symphony Orchestra in the Twentieth Century: Collector’s Choice)
thought out of fashion in his last years), but to the uncompromising and disturbing nature of the music itself.

His Seventh Symphony is so well known to us today that we can’t imagine a time that knew Beethoven, but not this glorious work. But that was the case when the poet and the composer walked together in Teplitz in July 1812. Beethoven had finished the A major symphony three months earlier—envisioning a premiere for that spring that did not materialize—but the first performance would not take place for another year and a half, on December 8, 1813.

That night in Vienna gave the rest of the nineteenth century plenty to talk about. No other symphony of Beethoven’s so openly invited interpretation—not even his Sixth, the self-proclaimed Pastoral Symphony, with its bird calls, thunderstorm, and frank evocation of something beyond mere eighth notes and bar lines. To Richard Wagner, Beethoven’s Seventh Symphony was “the apotheosis of the dance.” Berlioz heard a ronde des paysans in the first movement. (Choreographers in our own time have proven that this music is not, however, easily danceable.) And there were other readings as well, most of them finding peasant festivities and bacchic orgies where Beethoven wrote, simply, vivace.

The true significance of Beethoven’s Seventh Symphony is to be found in the notes on the page—in his distinctive use of rhythm and pioneering sense of key relationships. By the time it’s over, we can no longer hear the ordinary rhythm of a dotted eighth note followed by a sixteenth note in the same way again, and—even if we have no technical terms to explain it—we sense that our basic understanding of harmony has been turned upside down.

Take Beethoven’s magnificent introduction, of unprecedented size and ambitious intentions. He begins decisively in A major, but at the first opportunity moves away—not to the dominant (E major) as historical practice and textbooks recommended, but to the unlikely regions of C major and F major. Beethoven makes it clear that he won’t be limited to the seven degrees of the A major scale (which contains neither C- nor F-natural) in planning his harmonic itinerary. We will hear more from both keys, and by the time he’s done, Beethoven will have convinced us not only that C and F sound comfortably at home in an A major symphony, but that A major can be made to seem like the visitor! But that comes later in his scheme.

First we move from the spacious vistas of the introduction into the joyous song of the Vivace. Getting there is a challenge Beethoven relishes, and many a music lover has marveled at his passage of transition, in which stagnant, repeated E’s suddenly catch fire with the dancing dotted rhythm that will carry us through the entire movement. The development section brings new explorations of C and F, and the coda is launched by a spectacular, long-sustained crescendo that is said to have convinced Weber that Beethoven was “ripe for the madhouse.”

The Allegretto is as famous as any music Beethoven wrote, and it was a success from the first performance, when a repeat was demanded. At the indicated tempo, it is hardly a slow movement, but it is sufficiently slower than the music that precedes it to provide a feeling of relaxation.

By designing the Allegretto in A minor, Beethoven has moved one step closer to F major; he now dares to write the next movement in that unauthorized, but by now familiar, key. And he can’t resist rubbing it in a bit, by treating A major, when it arrives on the scene, not as the main key of the symphony, but as a visitor in a new world. We don’t need a course in harmony to recognize that Beethoven has taken us through the looking glass, and that everything is turned on its head.

To get back where we belong, Beethoven simply shatters the glass with the two fortissimo chords that open the finale and ushers us into a triumphant fury of music so adamantly in A major that we forget any past harmonic digressions. When C and F major return—as they were destined to do—in the development section, they sound every bit as remote as they did in the symphony’s introduction, and we sense that we have come full circle.

Phillip Huscher is the program annotator for the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.