

February 12, 2022



Romance

Photo: Jeffery Noble

Romance

Saturday, February 12, 2022 • 7:30PM
Peoria Civic Center Theater

Peoria Symphony Orchestra
George Stelluto · Conductor
Central Illinois Ballet

The Tempest: Fantasy-Overture, Op. 18

Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky
(1840-1893)

Suite from The Sleeping Beauty, Op. 66a

Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky

Introduction
Adagio (Pas d'action)
Pas de caractère
Panorama
Waltz

Central Illinois Ballet

INTERMISSION

Suite from Swan Lake, Op. 20a

Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky

Scene
Waltz
Dance of the Swans
Scene (Pas d'action)
Hungarian Dance (Czardas)
Spanish Dance
Neapolitan Dance
Mazurka

Central Illinois Ballet

Concert Sponsors & Underwriters

Carl W. Soderstrom, MD
Conductor's Circle

The Meredith Foundation

This program is partially supported by a grant
from the Illinois Arts Council Agency.



Central Illinois Ballet

Central Illinois Ballet was formed under the direction of Rebekah von Rathonyi and Joshua Gullett in 2015 to bring professional ballet to Central Illinois. CIB emerged from its school, The Cornerstone Academy for Performing Arts, established in January 2012 in the historic Cornerstone building of downtown Peoria with four instructors and six students. The organization began outreach and lecture demonstrations, taking dance, music, and singing into the area's nursing homes, schools, libraries, and veterans posts. Recognizing that the greater Central Illinois community needed a professional dance company and school that would positively contribute to the standard of living, the performing ensemble was formed. After Cornerstone Academy staged their first production of *The Nutcracker* at the Orpheum Theatre in Galesburg, the demand for

more professional main stage productions quickly increased. After two highly successful seasons, the Board of Directors and Artistic Staff formally separated the performance ensemble from the Academy by founding the Central Illinois Ballet in January 2015.

The 2021-22 CIB company consists of ten professional dancers recruited from all over the United States. Each dancer brings talent, unique style, and personality to the company, with productions ranging from classical and romantic ballet such as *Dracula*, *The Nutcracker*, and *Peter Pan*, to more modern and contemporary styles such as *Sweeney Todd*, *The Great Gatsby Ballet*, and *Women of History*. With a highly gifted group of professional dancers, Central Illinois Ballet will be celebrating our ten-year anniversary for the entire 2021-2022 season. We are humbled and grateful to be able to continue to bring elegance, sophisticated artistry, collaboration, and creativity to our community.

Peoria Symphony Orchestra

February 12, 2022

George Stelluto • Conductor

Conductor Podium Endowment

Robert E. Gilmore – Caterpillar Inc.

Directors Charitable Award Program

Violin 1

Marcia Henry Liebenow, Concertmaster
Courtney Silver, Assistant Concertmaster
Margaret FioRito
Katie Cousins
Michelle Wynton
Jo Marie Sison
Fiona Brickey
Susan Oliverius
Miguel Aguirre

Violin 2

Guest Principal
The Frederick Family Endowment
Leslie Koons
Rosemary Ardner
Molly Wilson
Hyo-Jung Chun
Faith Burdick
Ashley Fitzwater

Viola

Guest Principal
Sharon and John Amdall Endowment
Rebecca Boelzner
Mary Heinemann
Jason Warner
Lowell Koons

Cello

Adriana Ransom, Principal
Parker Endowment in memory of H. H. Block
Yunjin Ro
Emily Munn-Wood
Francisco Malespin

Bass

Austin Vawter, Principal
Peoria Symphony Guild and Friends
Endowment In Memory of Norbert Cieslewicz
Patrick Aubryn, Assistant Principal
Garold Fowler
Margaret Briskin

Flute

Yukie Ota, Principal
Augusta Foundation Endowment in the name
of E.C. Heidrich
Denise Cooksey
Kimberly Tegg

Oboe

Alex Liedtke, Principal
Mrs. Thomas Foster Endowment
[Second Oboe to be announced]

Clarinet

Roger Garrett, Principal
Eric Ginsberg

Bassoon

Michael Dicker, Principal
Terry Maher

Horn

Amy Krueger, Principal
Mrs. Trenchard French Endowment
[Assistant Principal Horn to be announced]
Dawn Clark
[Third Horn to be announced]
David Snyder

Trumpet

Sarah Carrillo, Principal
David Nakazono
William Booher
Scott MacQuarrie

Trombone

Mark Babbitt, Principal
Stephen Parsons
Chris Darwell

Tuba

Terry Solomonson, Principal

Timpani

David Collier, Principal
Eugene and Donna Sweeney Endowment

Harp

Nichole Young, Principal

Percussion

Peggy Bonner, Principal
Kevin Nichols
Ben Stiers

Maestro's Message

Only a handful of composers warrant a program devoted exclusively to their music. Tchaikovsky is one of them. From ballets and symphonies to tone poems and concerti, almost every devotee of art music has a favorite Tchaikovsky work, and usually several. His music possesses not only emotional intelligence, but also brilliant and sophisticated, yet subtle, psycho-dramatic pacing. His holistic use of detail to bring depth and meaning to the entirety is unrivaled. In this program, the physical, psychological, and intellectual facets of music

are fully in play among the orchestra, the dancers, and your own psyche. Tchaikovsky is a master at blending them together. He has an innate ability to depict a physical scene while expressing the emotion and psychology of the situation, making these components inseparable. For example: the moonlit pathos and shimmering beauty of the opening of *Swan Lake*, the stillness of ships at sea and the love theme in *The Tempest*, and the sweetness and charm of the princess and court dances in *The Sleeping Beauty*. Even in his non-programmatic works,

Tchaikovsky creates sophisticated, empathetic scenes in the mind and heart of each listener, making his music personally identifiable. But it is, perhaps, his inimitable genius for turning literature into music that most endears him to us. —G. Stelluto

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Written by Michael Allsen © 2021

This all-Tchaikovsky program is simply titled “Romance”—and romance is the inspiration for three fine works by one of the Romantic Era’s greatest composers. We open with his “fantasy-overture” inspired by Shakespeare’s *The Tempest*. Of all the plot twists in this complicated drama, Tchaikovsky focused most clearly on the romance between Ferdinand and Miranda, whose lyrical love theme becomes the emotional pinnacle of the piece. Members of the Central Illinois Ballet then join us for two suites from Tchaikovsky’s beloved ballet scores, both of which have fairytale love stories at their core. In *The Sleeping Beauty*, it is romance with a happy ending, ending with the marriage of Princess Aurora and Prince Florimund. In *Swan Lake*, the romance of Odette and Prince Siegfried comes to a much more tragic end.

Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893)

The Tempest: Fantasy-Overture, Op. 18

Tchaikovsky composed this work in August 1873 and completed its orchestration two months later. It was premiered in Moscow on December 7, 1873. Duration 23:00.

Background

One of the most influential groups in 19th century Russian music was a loose association of Russian nationalist composers that came to be known as the “mighty five,” including Mussorgsky, Balikirev, Cui, Borodin, and Rimsky-Korsakov. Though Tchaikovsky was not recognized as a member of this group, he knew and admired their music and valued their advice. He had, for example, written his *Romeo and Juliet Overture* in 1869 with coaching from Mily Balikirev. Another figure associated with “the five” was the music critic Vladimir Stasov. He met Tchaikovsky at a Christmas celebration hosted by Nicolai Rimsky-Korsakov, and in late December 1872, sent Tchaikovsky a letter with three minutely-detailed scenarios for possible pieces. The first was based upon Gogol’s *Taras Bulba*, the second on Walter Scott’s novel *Ivanhoe*, and the third on Shakespeare’s *The Tempest*. Tchaikovsky decided to write a “fantasy-overture” on *The Tempest*, though he and the sometimes-prickly Stasov disagreed about whether the piece actually needed a “tempest.” Tchaikovsky felt the storm that opens the play was not nearly as important as the central love story between Ferdinand and Miranda. In the end, he ignored much of Stasov’s suggested form for the piece and adopted a much simpler scenario:

“The Sea. The magician Prospero commands his spirit Ariel to create a storm, of which a victim is the fortunate Ferdinand. The enchanted island. The first timid stirrings of love between Ferdinand and Miranda. Ariel. Caliban. The lovers are overwhelmed by their passion. Prospero renounces his magical powers and leaves the island. The Sea.”

Tchaikovsky waited until August to start work on *The Tempest*, but when he finally began, the work took shape quickly in the course of just eleven days. He wrote excitedly to his patron and confidante

Nadezda von Meck: “I cannot convey to you my state of bliss during these two weeks... I wrote *The Tempest* without any effort, as though moved by some supernatural force.” The premiere in Moscow that December, conducted by his friend Nicolai Rubinstein, was a complete success. Stasov finally had a chance to hear the piece a year later, and though he found a few minor things to criticize, congratulated the composer, writing, “What a delight your *Tempest* is! What an incomparable piece!”

What You’ll Hear

The Tempest opens with calm, rolling music that clearly portrays the sea. This gives way rather suddenly to mysterious chords representing Prospero, and light-footed, agitated music for the spirit Ariel. Despite his early doubts about whether a storm was actually needed, Tchaikovsky wrote a fine one. Opening with rolls of thunder from the timpani, it quickly explodes into enormously violent music dominated by the brass. A mysterious passage for horns and trombones leads into a long central section that depicts the island itself with quiet, pastoral music. A nervous *animato* passage represents the first meeting of the lovers Miranda and Ferdinand, but this is quickly overwhelmed by jagged, angry music representing the savage Caliban. The grand, romantic passage that follows represents the lovers. There is a clear family resemblance between this soaring music and the more famous “love theme” of his earlier Shakespearean piece, *Romeo and Juliet*. A brief, agitated flourish, which seems to represent the wrapping up of all the play’s various conflicts, leads into a triumphant version of Prospero’s theme. *The Tempest* ends as it began: on the calm sea.

Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky

Suite from The Sleeping Beauty, Op. 66a

Tchaikovsky completed his ballet score The Sleeping Beauty in 1889, and the ballet was premiered in St. Petersburg on January 15, 1890. The orchestral suite heard here was published in 1899, after the composer’s death, edited by Tchaikovsky’s former student Aleksandr Siloti. Duration 23:00.

Background

Tchaikovsky’s three great ballets are staples of the repertoire of both ballet companies and symphony orchestras: *Swan Lake* (1876), *The Sleeping Beauty* (1889), and *The Nutcracker* (1892). *Swan Lake* was his first attempt at writing a ballet score, and though his score was masterful, the production was a failure. Eleven years later, Tchaikovsky was ready to try again. By this time, he was among Russia’s most successful composers. Ivan Vsevolozhsky, director of the Imperial Theater in St. Petersburg, approached him with a commission for a ballet based upon the familiar *Sleeping Beauty* fairytale.

Fairytales were, of course, the basis of many ballets in the Romantic era, and part of the popular adult literature of the day. Though we most often know them in today’s milder, “Disneyfied” versions, fairytales were not in any way “kid stuff” in the 19th century. They often featured child abduction, murder, dismemberment, and sexual undercurrents that were distinctly PG-13. *The Sleeping Beauty* story was first printed in French in 1697 by Charles Perrault, an author who edited several fanciful tales, partly derived from French folk tales that are well-known today. *Sleeping Beauty* was then adapted and published by the Brothers Grimm in 1812.

Though *Swan Lake* had been an embarrassing flop, Tchaikovsky quickly accepted Vsevolozhsky’s offer. Vsevolozhsky created the scenario for the ballet, based primarily on the Grimm version, with several scenes inserted from Perrault. The formidable Marius Petipa was the choreographer who oversaw the “Golden Age” of St. Petersburg’s Imperial Ballet, and *The Sleeping Beauty* is considered

his masterpiece. (Petipa also had a hand in *The Nutcracker* two years later and in the successful revival of *Swan Lake* after Tchaikovsky's death.) Petipa and Tchaikovsky worked well together, though it was clearly Petipa who ran the show, providing the composer with a detailed set of instructions for each dance. Considering the size of the score—more than four hours in its original, uncut version—Tchaikovsky worked with amazing speed, completing the score over the winter and spring of 1888–89. *The Sleeping Beauty's* premiere, on January 15, 1890, was a complete success. Tchaikovsky felt the ballet score was among his finest works. He described it as a “dancing symphony,” and the quality of its orchestral writing rises well above most 19th century ballet scores.

Given the ballet's success, Tchaikovsky saw the desirability of publishing an orchestral suite. But he dithered over which movements to include, eventually delegating the project to his student and assistant Aleksandr Siloti. Publication was delayed by Tchaikovsky's death and posthumous confusion over just whom he had authorized to put together the suite. Siloti's version, containing five movements only lightly edited from the original ballet score, was finally published in 1899.

What You'll Hear

The *Suite* opens with a sweeping *Introduction*, which begins with fiery music for Carabosse, the evil fairy who lays a curse on the baby Princess Aurora: that she will be pricked by a needle on her sixteenth birthday and die. Most of the movement is taken up by the sweeter music of the Lilac Fairy, one of baby Aurora's fairy godmothers. She is able to modify the curse so that the princess will not die, but sleep for a hundred years. The dramatic *Adagio (Pas d'action)* comes from Aurora's sixteenth birthday party in Act I, as four princes appear to present roses to her as love tokens. The more humorous *Pas de caractère* comes from Act III, the wedding of Aurora and her prince charming, Florimund, in which there is a set of dances by a whole series of characters from *other* fairytales. In this case, it is Puss in Boots and the White Cat, portrayed by sly, distinctly feline music. The *Panorama* sets up the climax of Act II: it plays as the Lilac Fairy guides Prince Florimund through an enchanted forest to where Princess Aurora is sleeping... waiting for his kiss. The *Waltz* ending the suite returns us to their wedding in Act III, with a grand, swirling dance for the entire party.

Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky

Suite from Swan Lake, Op. 20a

Tchaikovsky composed Swan Lake in 1875-76. The first performance was at the Bolshoi Theater in Moscow on March 4, 1877. The suite heard here was excerpted after Tchaikovsky's death.

Duration 31:00.

Background

Although the story of *Swan Lake* seems to have originated in a German collection of folk tales, the Russians have also claimed the story for their own. Just who transformed it into a ballet scenario is unclear, but in 1875 Tchaikovsky was commissioned by the Bolshoi Theater's balletmaster, Julius Reisinger, to write the score. *Swan Lake* was Tchaikovsky's first attempt at writing a full ballet, and though his music was wonderful, the 1877 production was a dismal failure. Among the factors contributing to this flop: the ballerina in the lead role of Odette was pulled from the production at the last minute due to a scandal. She had apparently accepted several pieces of jewelry from a wealthy suitor, only to pawn them for cash and marry another dancer! The production as a whole, however, was doomed by its lackluster choreography. One of Tchaikovsky's friends wrote: “Costume, stage scenery, and machinery did nothing to conceal the complete emptiness



of the dancing. For the balletomane there was barely more than five minutes pleasure in the dancing... but the music lover had better luck.”

There were more unsuccessful productions over the next few years, and Tchaikovsky always intended to revise the score, but died before he could return to the project. *Swan Lake* was finally revived at a memorial program for Tchaikovsky in 1895—in a version revised by choreographers Marius Petipa and Lev Ivanov which remains more or less standard today. This revised version, which retained Tchaikovsky's music intact, was a complete success, and *Swan Lake* has never fallen from the repertoire—there have been thousands of productions since them.

Swan Lake tells the story of Prince Siegfried who, as heir to the kingdom, must name his bride at a ball held on his birthday. Unwilling to marry except for love, he takes off in pursuit of a flock of swans. Just as he is about to shoot one of the birds, he realizes that she is actually a woman who has been transformed into the form of a white swan: Princess Odette, who was enchanted by the evil magician von Rothbart. Siegfried falls hopelessly in love and threatens to kill the magician, only to be stopped by Odette, who knows that if von Rothbart dies before the spell is broken, she will remain a swan forever. Siegfried returns to the ball dejected, and the prince's parents introduce a series of prospective brides, each of whom dances to music from her native land. Suddenly, he meets the magician's daughter Odile, disguised as Odette, but as a black swan. He dances with Odile and declares to the court that he will marry her, just a moment before the real Odette arrives and Siegfried realizes he has been duped. He returns to the lake to find Odette and declares his love. In the end, the lovers must drown themselves to break the spell, united only in death.

What You'll Hear

The *Suite's* opening *Scene* accompanies Odette and her retinue of swans—all of them, of course, enchanted princesses—as they glide across the surface of Swan Lake. What begins as a quiet oboe solo quickly grows into a passionate romantic passage for the full orchestra. The *Waltz* comes from Act II and was originally intended for a large ensemble of peasants dancing in honor of the prince at his ball. Tchaikovsky introduces a series of lilting lyrical themes, including a bold trumpet solo, before the dance ends in an energetic coda. The brief *Dance of the Swans* has an appropriately “ducky” main theme played by oboes and bassoons to accompany an ensemble dance of Odette's feathered girlfriends. The more extensive *Scene (Pas d'action)* accompanies the passionate duet of Odette and Siegfried from Act II, with a long, lush introduction for harp and solo violin, a light waltz led by the solo violin, and finally a romantic duet for violin and cello. The closing four movements are the national dances of the princesses hoping to catch Siegfried's attention at the ball in Act III. *The Hungarian Dance (Czardas)* opens with dramatic, Roma-flavored music that moves to a frenzied conclusion. The wild *Spanish Dance* is driven throughout by castanets and tambourine. The Italian princess gets a *Neapolitan Dance*, with a virtuoso trumpet solo that evokes the joyful street music of Naples. The final dance, for a Polish princess, is a blazing and forceful *Mazurka*, which includes a humorous central trio for the woodwinds. ♦

Connect with the things that matter most.

Life is made up of a few big milestones and thousands of little moments. At Commerce Bank, we've got resources and guidance that can help you move between them and be ready for whatever challenges come your way. Visit us online, stop by your nearby branch or give us a call at 309.676.1311. We're here to help.

commercebank.com

© 2021 Commerce Bancshares, Inc.



PROUD TO SUPPORT THE
PEORIA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

THE
Music
SHOPPE
INC.

SPECIALIZING IN SERVICE TO
MUSIC EDUCATION SINCE 1961

Normal • Champaign • Springfield
themusicshoppe.com

