Sunday, July 14, 2:30pm

THE JOSEPH C MCNAY/NEW ENGLAND FOUNDATION CONCERT

ANDRIS NELSONS conducting

BEETHOVEN  Symphony No. 4 in B-flat, Opus 60
   Adagio—Allegro vivace
   Adagio
   Allegro vivace
   Allegro ma non troppo
   { Intermission }

HK GRUBER  “Aerial,” Concerto for Trumpet and Orchestra
   Done with the compass—Done with the chart!
   Gone Dancing
   HÅKAN HARDENBERGER

STRAUSS  “Dance of the Seven Veils” from the opera “Salome,” Opus 54

The performance of Beethoven’s Symphony No. 4 is supported by a gift from Liz and Alan Jaffe.

Piano by Steinway & Sons – the Artistic Choice of Tanglewood.

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Please note that the use of audio or video recording devices, or taking pictures of the artists—whether photographs or videos—is prohibited during concerts.

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)
Symphony No. 4 in B-flat, Opus 60

First performance: (private) March 1807, at the Vienna town house of the composer’s patron Prince Lobkowitz, Beethoven cond.; (public) April 13, 1808, Burgtheater, Vienna, Beethoven cond.

First BSO performance: December 3, 1881, Georg Henschel cond.

First Tanglewood performance: August 11, 1940, Serge Koussevitzky cond.

Most recent Tanglewood performance: July 24, 2015, Christoph von Dohnányi cond.

The works Beethoven completed in the last half of 1806—-the Fourth Symphony, the Violin Concerto, and the Fourth Piano Concerto among them—were finished rather rapidly by the composer following his extended struggle with the original version of his opera Fidelio, which had occupied him from the end of 1804 until April 1806. The most important orchestral work Beethoven had produced before this time was the Eroica, in which he had overwhelmed his audiences with a forceful new musical language reflecting both his own inner struggles in the face of impending deafness and his response to the political atmosphere surrounding him. The next big orchestral work to embody this “heroic” style—with a striking overlay of defiance as well—would be the Fifth Symphony, which had begun to germinate in 1804, was worked out mainly in 1807, and was completed in 1808.

In the meantime, however, a more relaxed sort of expression began to emerge, emphasizing a heightened sense of repose, a broadly lyric element, and a more spacious approach to musical architecture. The Fourth Symphony, the Violin Concerto, and the Fourth Piano Concerto share these characteristics to varying degrees, but it is also important to realize that these works, though completed around the same time, do not represent a unilateral change of direction in Beethoven’s approach to music, but, rather, the emergence of a particular element that appeared strikingly at this time. Sketches for the Violin Concerto and the Fifth Symphony in fact occur side by side, and that the two aspects—lyric and aggressive—of Beethoven’s musical expression are not entirely separable is evident also in the fact that ideas for both the Fifth and the Pastoral symphonies appear in the Eroica sketchbook of 1803-04. These two symphonies—the one strongly assertive, the other more gentle and subdued—were not completed until 1808, two years after the Violin Concerto. And it appears that Beethoven actually interrupted work on his Fifth Symphony so that he could compose the Fourth in response to a commission from the Silesian Count Franz von Oppersdorff, whom he had met through Prince Carl von Lichnowsky, one of his most important patrons during the early years in Vienna and the joint dedicatee, together with Count Razumovsky, of the Fifth and Sixth symphonies.

So Beethoven’s Fourth Symphony partakes successfully and wonderfully of both these worlds, combining a relaxed and lyrical element with a mood of exuberantly aggressive high spirits. The key is B-flat, which suggests—insofar as we can describe the effects of different musical keys—a realm of spaciousness, relaxation, and warmth, in contrast, for example, to the “heroic” E-flat of the Third Symphony and Emperor Concerto, the “defiant” C minor of the Fifth, and the “heaven-storming” D minor of the Ninth.
Beethoven actually begins the first movement with an Adagio introduction in a mysteriously pianissimo B-flat minor, and the mystery is heightened as the music moves toward B-natural, via the enharmonic interpretation of G-flat to F-sharp, until trumpets and drums force the music back to B-flat, and to the major mode, of the Allegro vivace. (This same gambit will be repeated on a larger scale as the music of the Allegro moves from the development into the recapitulation, at which point, once again, the timpani will play a crucial role in telling us where we belong—this time with an extended drum-roll growing through twenty-two measures from a pianissimo rumble to a further nine measures of thwacking fortissimo.) Once the Allegro is underway, all is energy and motion, with even the more seemingly relaxed utterances of the woodwinds in service to the prevailing level of activity. One more word about the first movement: one wants the exposition-repetition here, not just for the wonderful jolt of the first ending’s throwing us back to the home key virtually without notice, but also for the links it provides to the end of the introduction and the beginning of the coda.

The E-flat major Adagio sets a cantabile theme against a constantly pulsating accompaniment, all moving at a relaxed pace that allows for increasingly elaborate figuration in both melody and accompaniment as the movement proceeds. The second theme is a melancholy and wistful song for solo clarinet, all the more effective when it reappears following a fortissimo outburst from the full orchestra. The scherzo, another study in motion, is all ups and downs. Beethoven repeats the Trio in its entirety following the scherzo da capo (a procedure he will follow again in the third movement of the Seventh Symphony). A third statement of the scherzo is cut short by an emphatic rejoinder from the horns.

The whirlwind finale (marked “Allegro ma non troppo,” “Allegro, but not too...”; the speed is built into the note values, and the proceedings shouldn’t be rushed by an over-zealous conductor) is yet another exercise in energy, movement, and dynamic contrasts. Carl Maria von Weber, who didn’t much like this symphony when he was young and it was new, imagined the double bass complaining: “I have just come from the rehearsal of a Symphony by one of our newest composers; and though, as you know, I have a tolerably strong constitution, I could only just hold out, and five minutes more would have shattered my frame and burst the sinews of my life. I have been made to caper about like a wild goat, and to turn myself into a mere fiddle to execute the no-ideas of Mr. Composer.” Beethoven’s approach in this movement is wonderfully tongue-in-cheek and no-holds-barred: the solo bassoon, leading us into the recapitulation, is asked to play “dolce” (“sweetly”) when he’s probably thankful just to get the notes in, and only at the very end is there a brief moment of rest to prepare the headlong rush to the final cadence.

MARC MANDEL

Marc Mandel is Director of Program Publications of the Boston Symphony Orchestra.

HK Gruber (b.1943)
“Aerial,” Concerto for Trumpet and Orchestra (1999)
**First performance:** July 29, 1999, BBC Symphony Orchestra, Neeme Järvi cond., Håkan Hardenberger (the score’s dedicatee), soloist, in a BBC Proms performance at London’s Royal Albert Hall, having been commissioned by the British Broadcasting Corporation for the 1999 BBC Proms. **Only previous BSO performances:** November 2018, Andris Nelsons cond., Håkan Hardenberger, soloist, at Symphony Hall in Boston and Carnegie Hall in New York. **This is the BSO’s first Tanglewood performance of any music by HK Gruber**, though his “Frankenstein!!” was performed by the Tanglewood Music Center Orchestra in 1980 with Gunther Schuller conducting and the composer as soloist; and his Cello Concerto, written for Yo-Yo Ma, was premiered by the latter at Tanglewood in 1989 with Boston Musica Viva, Richard Pittman conducting.

HK Gruber’s reputation as a composer of craft and imagination, and as a performer of irreverent energy, is based in a lifetime of musical immersion in the history-saturated city of Vienna, where he was born. He was a member of the famous Vienna Boys Choir for several years before a mentor suggested, given the size of his hands, that he take up the double bass. He began as double bassist in Frederic Cerha’s new music ensemble die reihe and was principal bass of Vienna’s Tonkünstler Orchester before starting his long tenure in the bass section of the Austrian Radio Symphony Orchestra. He has said that playing in an orchestra was the best education a composer could want, given that he could ask any of his professional colleagues about the nuances of their instruments. He is also a sought-after orchestral conductor, leading many of Europe’s important ensembles; in 2009 he was appointed composer/conductor of the BBC Philharmonic.

Gruber had studied bass at the Vienna Hochschule für Musik along with composition and theory. His principal composition teachers included Alfred Uhl, the Schoenberg pupil Erwin Ratz, and Gottfried von Einem, and he was strongly drawn to Stravinsky’s music. Like many composers in the 1960s trying to find new avenues outside of the academy and traditional concert hall, in 1967 he, Kurt Schwertsik, and others founded the MOB art & tone ART Group. Much of its repertoire was strongly satirical and theatrical, the influence of older German melodrama (via Schoenberg’s *Pierrot lunaire*) as well as the new performance art of the 1960s. Gruber’s work was definitively marked by Hanns Eisler and such Kurt Weill/Bertolt Brecht collaborations as *Die Dreigroschenoper* (*The Threepenny Opera*).

By the later 1960s Gruber had achieved recognition as both a composer and as a cabaret-style actor and singer, parallel pursuits that led to his *Frankenstein!!*, which made him internationally famous following its 1978 premiere. Commissions followed, particularly for concertos, for which his dramatic bent was a natural complement. Among others, he wrote a concerto for cello and small orchestra for Yo-Yo Ma; the percussion concerto *into the open...* for Colin Currie and the BBC Philharmonic; and his Piano Concerto, commissioned for Emanuel Ax by the New York Philharmonic, and premiered under Alan Gilbert’s direction in January 2017.
Håkan Hardenberger knew Gruber from occasions when the trumpeter was soloist with the Austrian Radio Symphony Orchestra. As Hardenberger related in an interview, when they got together to discuss a new concerto, “Nali [Gruber’s nickname] was...particularly curious about deconstruction and alienation combined with beauty and poetry” in the trumpet’s sonic vocabulary. He also asked if Hardenberger would be willing to play multiphonics—specifically singing and playing a note at the same time—and also convinced him to play a cow’s horn, which Hardenberger had identified as the trumpet’s forbear in Sweden. Along with cow’s horn and standard trumpet, Gruber also called for piccolo trumpet in B-flat. Thus Gruber joined an impressive list of composers who have written trumpet concertos at Hardenberger’s request, a list including Harrison Birtwistle, Toru Takemitsu, Mark-Anthony Turnage, Arvo Pärt, and many others. Gruber also wrote Busking, a concerto for trumpet, accordion, banjo, and strings, for Hardenberger.

Aerial’s title comes from the idea that both movements are aerial views of a landscape. The first is the far north, a nod to Hardenberger’s homeland of Sweden. “Done with the compass—Done with the Chart!” from Emily Dickinson’s poem “Wild nights—Wild nights!” (no. 269), suggests something unfettered and brilliant, but Gruber instead wrote a slow movement that lets the listener focus on the subtle and surprising flows of instrumental color, especially within the solo part. At the very start of the concerto, the solo trumpet’s first sounds are multiphonics: the player plays the C trumpet’s low F-sharp while singing another pitch above it; by changing the sung pitch, yet another note emerges (the magic of acoustics). Gruber asks for other actions seemingly designed to discomfit the virtuoso: pitch bending and pulling slides to destabilize pitch and timber foreshadow the inevitably out-of-tune, raw sound of the cow horn. The delicate harmonic backdrop often has an almost jazzy, bluesy quality, unexpectedly heightened with the move to the cow’s horn, which is given a long, lyrical line, although its range is necessarily narrow. Moving from cow’s horn to piccolo trumpet, the solo part ratchets up in virtuosity, and the orchestra too becomes more active to the end of the movement.

The aerial view depicted in “Gone Dancing,” in Gruber’s mind, shows a planet all the inhabitants of which have disappeared, leaving only a sign reading “Gone Dancing.” We’re asked to conjure Fred and Ginger for the lush but pointillized version of dance music from Hollywood’s golden era that begins the movement. The soloist leaps continually through an enormous pitch range while toggling rapidly between open and stopped notes with a plunger mute and negotiating a wide and subtle array of dynamics. This precision and accuracy is matched in the glittering, occasionally overpowering orchestral music. The second half is marked Prestissimo, the trumpet (initially muted) and orchestra exchanging phrases of a clearly Middle Eastern melodic flavor. Shifting among several meters (7/8, 8/8, 10/8, for example), the rhythm evokes the region’s dance music, and the vast orchestra calls forth an amazing array of color and texture. The soloist runs through a variety of mutes and plays the last several pages on
piccolo trumpet. The part is marked **ffff** almost throughout the movement. The orchestra gradually dissipates, and a final sustained note leaves the now-subdued trumpet entirely alone.

ROBERT KIRZINGER

Composer/annotator Robert Kirzinger is Associate Director of Program Publications of the Boston Symphony Orchestra.

Richard Strauss (1864-1949)

“Dance of the Seven Veils” from the opera “Salome,” Opus 54


The story of the death of John the Baptist is told in two almost identical versions in the Gospels of Matthew and Mark:

> For Herod himself had sent forth and laid hold upon John, and bound him in prison for Herodias’ sake, his brother Philip’s wife: for he had married her. For John had said unto Herod, It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother’s wife. Therefore Herodias had a quarrel against him, and would have killed him; but she could not: For Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just man and an holy, and observed him; and when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly. And when a convenient day was come, that Herod on his birthday made a supper to his lords, high captains, and chief estates of Galilee; and when the daughter of the said Herodias came in, and danced, and pleased Herod and them that sat with him, the king said unto the damsel, Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt, and I will give it thee. And he sware unto her, Whatever thou shalt ask of me, I will give it thee, unto the half of my kingdom. And she went forth, and said unto her mother, What shall I ask? And she said, The head of John the Baptist. And she came in straightway with haste unto the king, and asked, saying, I will that thou give me by and by in a charger the head of John the Baptist. And the king was exceeding sorry; yet for his oath’s sake, and for their sakes which sat with him, he would not reject her. And immediately the king sent an executioner, and commanded his head to be brought: and he went and beheaded him in the prison, And brought his head in a charger, and gave it to the damsel: and the damsel gave it to her mother. (*Mark* 6:17-28, King James Bible)

It should be noted in particular that in this, the earliest version of the story, it is Herodias who drives the action; the daughter, whom we know as Salome, is not even given a name.

The death of John the Baptist has long been a subject for painters, and it was a painting that led to the creation of the drama on which Strauss’s opera is based. Already during his Oxford days, Oscar Wilde had discovered Flaubert’s story *Hérodias*, itself inspired by two paintings by Gustav Moreau. Wilde drew from Flaubert’s story extensively in his own work, though his
plot is almost the opposite of Flaubert’s, for Wilde makes Salome herself the moving spirit of the action. Since the attention given at that time to the story of Salome, Herod, Herodias, and John the Baptist was essentially a Parisian phenomenon, the Irish-born Wilde, being almost completely bilingual, wrote his 1891 play *Salome* in a poetic French prose. At first the play flopped in Paris, and a precious, consciously old-fashioned English translation by Lord Alfred Douglas was banned by the Lord Chamberlain’s office, since it represented Biblical characters on stage. In 1901 a German translation by Hedwig Lachmann was a tremendous success at Max Reinhardt’s theater in Berlin. Upon seeing this version, Strauss immediately recognized its operatic potential. After briefly considering a verse libretto, he decided instead to set (with cuts) the German translation of Wilde’s original French prose.

In Wilde’s play, Herodias hates Jochanaan as much as any earlier Herodias, but she takes no overt action to cause his execution. Far from persuading her daughter to rouse Herod’s passions with a dance, she is opposed to the entire idea from the first, quite naturally upset at the interest her husband takes in her daughter by an earlier marriage. Only when Salome herself requests, as her reward, the head of Jochanaan, does Herodias enthusiastically praise her wise choice. In Wilde’s version, Salome becomes a fascinating and ambiguous figure, still young and chaste, completely inexperienced in any aspect of love, yet at the same time cruel and utterly depraved.

The score took Strauss two years to complete. The exotic subject stimulated him to experiment with harmony and orchestral color, with heightened intensity and emotional force. The first performances of the opera at Dresden were an enormous success, but it faced censorship troubles almost everywhere. A single open rehearsal at the Metropolitan Opera shocked so many influential people that it was not heard again there for a quarter-century. Still, the opera has long been considered one of the composer’s finest achievements, a great theatrical tone poem, symphonic in its construction, with a richly worked tapestry of thematic ideas that grow and develop along with the plot. The musical technique is basically Wagnerian—weaving together a constantly developing series of thematic ideas into an elaborate and flexible symphonic web. Strauss continually creates new combinations and sonorities to fit the changing moods and emotional states of the story through timbre and harmony.

Salome’s “Dance of the Seven Veils” was the last music that Strauss composed for the opera. Clearly intended to be performable as a separate piece, it is a wonderfully sensuous potpourri of the opera’s main themes, opening with new themes found only here to give it a barbaric local color, then continuing with various seductive ideas, including a slow waltz that culminates in a brilliant *presto* section ending in a wild version of the theme of Salome’s lust for Jochanaan.

STEVEN LEDBETTER

Steven Ledbetter was program annotator of the Boston Symphony Orchestra from 1979 to 1998.

Guest Artist
Håkan Hardenberger

Håkan Hardenberger is renowned both for his performances of the classical repertoire and as a pioneer of significant and virtuosic new trumpet works. He performs with the world’s foremost orchestras, including the New York Philharmonic, Wiener Philharmoniker, Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra, Berliner Philharmoniker, Boston Symphony, and London Symphony Orchestra, collaborating regularly with such conductors as Martyn Brabbins, Péter Eötvös, Alan Gilbert, Daniel Harding, Ingo Metzmacher, Andris Nelsons, Sakari Oramo, Jukka-Pekka Saraste, and John Storgård. Works written for and championed by him include those by Sir Harrison Birtwistle, Brett Dean, Hans Werner Henze, Steven Mackey, Arvo Pärt, Toru Takemitsu, Mark-Anthony Turnage, Rolf Wallin, and HK Gruber. In spring 2019, Mr. Hardenberger gave the world premieres of Robin Holloway’s trumpet concerto with BBC Philharmonic and Tobias Brostroem’s concerto for two trumpets with Jeroen Berwaerts and the Malmö Symphony Orchestra, both with John Storgård on the podium. He also returned to the Orchestre de Paris, Dresdner Philharmonie, and Scottish Chamber Orchestra. Conducting is an integral part of Mr. Hardenberger’s music-making. He conducts orchestras such as the BBC Philharmonic, the Saint Paul and Swedish chamber orchestras, the Dresdner Philharmonie, RTÉ National Symphony Dublin, Orquesta Sinfónica de Euskadi, and Malmö Symphony Orchestra. Adding to his prolific discography, which includes releases on the Philips, EMI, Deutsche Grammophon, and BIS labels, in October 2018 Mr. Hardenberg released “The Scene of the Crime,” a duo recording with percussionist Colin Currie featuring works by such composers as Brett Dean and André Jolivet. Leading up to the recording of that album, the duo performed in London, Malmö, Aldeburgh, Wimbledon, and Bergen. In another duo, he and pianist Roland Pöntinen performed at Wigmore Hall, at Kunstfestspiele Hannover, and in Detmold. This past September at the Malmö Chamber Music Festival, of which he is artistic director, he featured the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields, harpist Xavier de Maistre, and composers-in-residence Mark Anthony Turnage and Betsy Jolas. Born in Malmö, Sweden, Håkan Hardenberger began studying the trumpet at the age of eight with Bo Nilsson, continuing his studies at the Paris Conservatoire with Pierre Thibaud and in Los Angeles with Thomas Stevens. He is a professor at the Malmö Conservatoire. Håkan Hardenberger made his BSO debut in January 2012 as soloist in the American premiere of Mark-Anthony Turnage’s From the Wreckage with Marcelo Lehninger conducting, subsequently appearing with Andris Nelsons and the BSO in Rolf Martinsson’s Bridge (at Tanglewood in 2014) and the American premiere of Brett Dean’s Dramatis Personae (November 2014, followed by a 2015 Tanglewood performance and tour performances in London, Lucerne, and Cologne). In July 2017 he was soloist with Andris Nelsons and the Tanglewood Music Center Orchestra in Turnage’s From the Wreckage and, joined by BSO principal trumpet Thomas Rolfs, Turnage’s Dispelling the Fears for two trumpets and orchestra. His most recent BSO appearances were subscription performances of HK Gruber’s Aerial in November 2018.