

CHILDREN'S PROGRAM NOTES FOR FESTIVAL CONCERTS

AUGUST 6 • ASPEN FESTIVAL ORCHESTRA

WHO IS PERFORMING TODAY?

Aspen Festival Orchestra
Joshua Weilerstein *conductor*
Augustin Hadelich *violin*

WHAT IS BEING PLAYED TODAY?

BEETHOVEN: Overture to *Egmont*, op. 84
CHRISTOPHER ROUSE: Symphony No. 5
BRAHMS: Violin Concerto in D major, op. 77

LEARN ABOUT THE MUSIC!

BEETHOVEN: Overture to *Egmont*, op. 84

Beethoven wrote Overture to *Egmont*, op. 84, in 1809 while living alone in Vienna, Austria. Many people had left when French troops took over the city during the Napoleonic Wars, but Beethoven stayed. He received an offer to write music for a play called *Egmont*, which details the story of a sixteenth-century Dutch man, Count *Egmont*, who stands up to the Spanish army invading his town. He dies heroically but inspires many people to take a stand against the invasion.

An overture is a piece of music that is played at the beginning of a longer piece, such as an opera or play, and introduces the music. The entire play is rarely performed because it requires a lot of people and planning, but this shorter overture is often found in concert programs.

- How was Beethoven's situation similar to Count *Egmont*'s?
- Do you think it was easy or hard for Count *Egmont* to stand up to the Spanish army? Why?

CHRISTOPHER ROUSE: Symphony No. 5

This symphony by American composer Christopher Rouse was written in 2015 and first performed in February 2017. It is written in one long movement and was inspired by Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, which Rouse listened to as a child. The beginning four-note rhythm references Beethoven, and the timpani part is identical to what Beethoven wrote in his own piece. Timpani are drums in a set, usually made of copper, that are part of the percussion section of the orchestra. The individual drums are different sizes and textures to produce different sounds when the tim-

panist strikes the drumhead with different mallets—a type of drumstick.

- Do you see the timpani? How many drums are there? How does the timpanist play them? What sounds do they make?
- What do you think about Christopher Rouse using parts of Beethoven's symphony for his music? Do you ever get inspired by art or music that already exists when you're creating your own?

BRAHMS: Violin Concerto in D major, op. 77

Johannes Brahms wrote this violin concerto, his first and only violin concerto, for his good friend and violinist, Joseph Joachim in 1878. A concerto is written for one soloist playing with an orchestra. Brahms had written most of it but asked Joachim to help finish the soloist part since he himself was not a violinist. The two worked together on the piece and performed it on New Year's Day in 1879. Many people thought the concerto was not ready to be performed and needed more work, so Brahms and Joachim continued to revise it for another year until it became one of the most well-known violin concertos in the world. Listen for the solo oboe in the beginning of the second movement. After a while, the solo violin takes over the melody. How does the sound change between these two instruments? How are they alike, and how are they different?

- Do you ask your friends for help sometimes? With what?
- Do you think it was hard for Brahms to hear that his piece needed more work? Do you think he ever thought of giving up? Why do you think he didn't?

music is what feelings sound like