



Western Music

Don Wright Faculty of Music

WESTERN UNIVERSITY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

12:30 p.m., February 13, 2026

Paul Davenport Theatre

Simone Luti, *conductor*

Violin Concerto, Op. 14

Allegro

Andante

Presto in moto perpetuo

Samuel Barber

(1910–1981)

Soloist: Julian Trippell, *violin*

Maritsa Brookes Concerto Competition Finalist 2024-25

Songs and Dances of Death

Lullaby

Serenade

Trepak

The Field Marshal

Modest Mussorgsky

(1839–1881)

Soloist: Daria Kharchenko, *mezzo-soprano*

Maritsa Brookes Concerto Competition Finalist 2024-25

[Texts and translations available online](#)

Knoxville: Summer of 1915, Op. 24

Samuel Barber

(1910–1981)

Soloist: Amy Godin, *soprano*

Maritsa Brookes Concerto Competition Finalist 2024-25

The [Maritsa Brookes Concerto Competition](#) awards are awarded to any undergraduate or graduate student in the Don Wright Faculty of Music on the basis of performance excellence demonstrated in a solo concerto competition. This annual competition has been a highlight for many students over the years. This award was made possible through a generous donation by Maritsa Ateena Brookes (BA '57). The winners receive the honour of performing their selection in a public concert with the Western University Symphony Orchestra in the following school year, pending availability and continued eligibility. In addition, a generous monetary award is shared amongst eligible winners, received in the fall following the competition.

PROGRAM NOTES

Samuel Barber: Violin Concerto, Op. 14 (1939)

Samuel Barber composed his Violin Concerto in 1939 for the young virtuoso Iso Briselli. While Briselli admired the lyricism of the first two movements, he initially found the high-energy finale too disconnected from the other movement, leading to some early controversy surrounding the work. Despite this, the concerto soon gained recognition for its expressive power and technical brilliance.

The first movement features long, singing lines of warmth and elegance, followed by a deeply introspective second movement that highlights the violin's expressive voice. The perpetual-motion finale provides a striking contrast, requiring exceptional agility and precision. Today, Barber's Violin Concerto is celebrated as one of the most enduring American concertos of the twentieth century.

Modest Mussorgsky: *Songs and Dances of Death*

Mussorgsky's *Songs and Dances of Death* present one of the most unflinching portrayals of death in the vocal repertoire. In four songs, Death appears as seducer, comforter, mocker, and conqueror—rocking a child to eternal sleep, courting a young woman, dancing a drunken peasant to his grave, and finally claiming soldiers fallen on the battlefield. Mussorgsky's stark realism and speech-like vocal writing strip away sentimentality, forcing the listener to confront death as an intimate, human presence.

Samuel Barber: *Knoxville: Summer of 1915*, Op. 24 (1947)

Knoxville: Summer of 1915 is Barber's tender meditation on childhood, memory, and loss. Set to a prose text by James Agee, both Barber and Agee explore nostalgia through the eyes of a young child—rich with sensory detail, warmth, and unspoken fragility.

Barber's music flows gently, mirroring the rhythm of spoken language while enveloping the listener in a haze of nostalgia. Beneath its surface calm lies an awareness of impermanence; the adult composer looks back knowing that this world of security and innocence cannot last. Often described as Barber's most autobiographical work, *Knoxville* is both a love letter to the past and a quiet elegy for what time inevitably takes away.

Program notes by Tasman Tantasawat

*Knoxville, Summer of 1915, Op. 24 by Samuel Barber presented under license from
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*Concerto for Violin and Orchestra by Samuel Barber presented under license from
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WESTERN UNIVERSITY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Flutes

Grace Zhu (*also as Piccolo*)*
Yiping Zhang (*also as Piccolo*)*

Oboes

Mateo Zapata*
Ashlyn Black*
Pauline Dizon (*as English Horn*)

Clarinets

Yiyuan Da*
Kaitlyn Chambers
(*also as Bass Clarinet*)

Horns

Chrysa Balaka*
Kai Church*
Lela Burt

Trumpets

Matthew Usher*
Rex Mulder

Trombones

Amy Jordaan*
John Lau
Max Zhang

Tuba

Daniel Montaseri

Percussions

Cora Robison
Kiran Steele

Keyboard

Lauren Esch

Violins

Yanet Campbell**
Alex Matwijiw*
Helen Faucher
Julian Trippell
Erin Van Dyke
Yuyin Chen
Jerry Ma
Zisen Zhou
Frank Su
Cordelia Poon
Brett Trampleasure
Clara Martin
Ashley Lo
Charlotte Usprich
Yongxuan Wu
Haiyue Yang
Kate Roberge
Khloe Wang
Cyr Cyr
Lerissa Mowatt
Jayden so
Deion Liu
Theodore Chow

Violas

Tasman Tantasawat*
Cian Diamond*
Lincoln St John
Yifan Liu
Yining Yang
Maria Camila Lopez
Lexi White
Olivia Cardillo
Stella Shin
Grace Wright

Celli

Abigail Greenland*
Isaac Lee
Felicity Ngo
Nicholas Lago
Kara Lim
Jason Too
Thomas Gadd
Charlotte Montgomery-Seto

Double basses

Adela Montgomery*
Joshua Guttormson
Thomas Locke

** Concert Master
* Principal

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