

43rd Season 2026-27

Mozart in G Minor

Foellinger Great Hall | Krannert Center for the Performing Arts
Friday, September 18, 2026 | 7:30 p.m.

Ian Hobson, music director, conductor, & piano
Jonathan Keeble, flute

Symphony No. 85 in B-flat Major,
Hob. I:85 ("*La Reine*")

FRANZ JOSEPH HAYDN
(1732–1809)

- I. *Adagio — Vivace*
- II. *Romance: Allegretto*
- III. *Menuetto: Allegretto*
- IV. *Finale: Presto*

Flute Concerto in D Minor

CARL PHILIPP EMANUEL BACH
(1714–1788)

- I. *Allegro*
- II. *Un poco andante*
- III. *Allegro di molto*

JONATHAN KEEBLE, *flute*

Intermission

Piano Concerto No. 15 in B-flat Major,
K. 450

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART
(1756–1791)

- I. *Allegro*
- II. *Andante*
- III. *Allegro*

IAN HOBSON, *piano & conductor*

Symphony No. 40 in G Minor, K. 550

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART
(1756–1791)

- I. *Molto allegro*
- II. *Andante*
- III. *Menuetto: Allegretto*
- IV. *Allegro assai*

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Meet the Music Director



Pianist and conductor **Ian Hobson** (Music Director) - called “powerful and persuasive” by The New York Times - is internationally recognized for his command of an extraordinarily comprehensive repertoire, his consummate performances of the Romantic masters, his deft and idiomatic readings of neglected piano music old and new, and his assured conducting from both the piano and the podium.

In addition to being a celebrated performer, Mr. Hobson is a dedicated scholar and educator who has pioneered renewed

interest in music of such lesser-known masters as Ignaz Moscheles and Johann Hummel. He has also been an effective advocate of works written expressly for him by a number of today’s noted composers, including Benjamin Lees, John Gardner, David Liptak, Alan Ridout, and Yehudi Wyner.

In addition to his work with Sinfonia and at the University of Illinois (Swanlund Emeritus Professor), recital and teaching engagements this season take Mr. Hobson throughout the United States and several times to South Korea. Mr. Hobson conducted at Carnegie Mellon University in January 2018.

As guest soloist, Dr. Hobson has appeared with many of the world’s major orchestras; in the United States these include the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and The Philadelphia Orchestra, the symphony orchestras of Baltimore, Florida, Houston, Indianapolis, Pittsburgh, St. Louis and the American Symphony Orchestra, the Orquestra Sinfónica de Puerto Rico. Abroad, he has been heard with Great Britain’s Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, The London Philharmonic Orchestra, the Hallé Orchestra, ORF-Vienna, Orchester de Beethovenhalle, Moscow Chopin Orchestra, Israeli Sinfonietta, and New Zealand Symphony Orchestra. Since his debut in the double role of Conductor and soloist with the Stuttgart

Chamber Orchestra in 1996, Maestro Hobson has been invited to lead the English Chamber Orchestra, the Sinfonia Varsovia (including an appearance at Carnegie Hall), the Pomeranian Philharmonic (Poland), the Fort Worth Chamber Orchestra (Bass Hall), and the Kibbutz Chamber Orchestra of Israel, among others.

Mr. Hobson is also a much sought-after judge for national and international competitions and has been invited to join numerous juries, among them the Van Cliburn International Piano Competition (at the specific request of Mr. Cliburn), the Arthur Rubinstein Competition in Poland, the Chopin Competition in Florida, the Leeds Piano Competition in the U.K., and the Schumann International Competition in Germany. In 2005 Hobson served as Chairman of the Jury for the Cleveland International Competition and the Kosciuzsko Competition in New York; in 2008 he was Chairman of Jury of the New York Piano Competition; and in 2010 he again served in that capacity of the newly renamed New York International Piano Competition.

One of the youngest ever graduates of the Royal Academy of Music, Mr. Hobson began his international career in 1981 when he won First Prize at the Leeds International Piano Competition, after having earned silver medals at both the Arthur Rubinstein and Vienna-Beethoven competitions. Born in Wolverhampton, England, he studied at Cambridge University (England), and at Yale University, in addition to his earlier studies at the Royal Academy of Music. A professor in the Center for Advanced Study at the University of Illinois, Hobson received the endowed chair of Swanlund Professor of Music in 2000.



Meet the Soloist



Jonathan Keeble is known for his rich tone, effervescent personality, and nuanced musicality. In high demand as a performing artist and master class clinician, he has been described as having an “infinitely flexible sound, with many subtle colors,” and is among the leading performer/pedagogues of his generation.

He is a regular performer, adjudicator, and presenter at National Flute Association (NFA) conventions, and is a Past President of the Association. In 2023 he became the 51-year-old Association’s 15th recipient of its Distinguished Service Award. Recent tours include appearances on concert series and festivals in New Zealand, Brazil, Australia, Ecuador, Korea, Hong Kong, and throughout the United States.

Jonathan is the flutist for the award winning Prairie Winds and Aletheia Duo, and Principal Flute of the Sinfonia da Camera. He spends summers performing and teaching at Aria International, Madeline Island Chamber Music, the Pacific Northwest Flute and Piccolo Seminar, and at the University of Illinois Pre-College Flute Seminar. As the Professor of Flute at the University of Illinois, Jonathan is one of two faculty in the School of Music’s history to receive the Provost’s Award for Undergraduate Teaching Excellence. In the spring of 2017 he received the College of Fine and Applied Arts Award for Excellence in Teaching.

He has performed with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the Kansas City Symphony, and in chamber recitals with Yo-Yo Ma, Renée Fleming, and Luciano Pavarotti, among others. Classes and solo performances include appearances at the Eastman School of

Music, the Juilliard School, Rice University, Indiana University, Northwestern University, and elsewhere.

Jonathan's students populate the globe as recording artists, faculty at universities and colleges, and as orchestra members. He plays a Nagahara Full Concert flute with 14 karat headjoint, and platinum extended riser.



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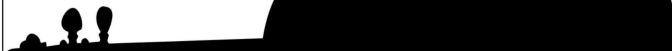
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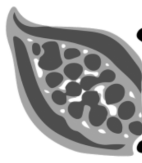
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Notes on the Program

Symphony No. 85 in B-flat Major, Hob. I:85 ("La Reine")

Franz Joseph Haydn

(Born March 31, 1732, in Rohrau, Austria; died May 31, 1809, in Vienna)

From 1761 to 1790, Haydn was in the service of the princely Esterházy family, for whom he composed symphonies, operas, masses, chamber music, and whatever else they required. Despite Haydn's seclusion at his employer's country-seat, the composer's fame had spread throughout Europe. His symphonies were performed regularly in Paris from about 1773 on, and about sixty of them were published there during his lifetime. In fact, Haydn's symphonies were in such great demand in Paris that some unscrupulous publishers even affixed his name on works many other Central European composers had actually written, not Haydn.

Probably in 1784, Haydn received a commission from the newly formed private concert society, *Les Concerts de la Loge Olympique* in Paris, an offshoot of a Masonic lodge. He composed a set of six symphonies, Nos. 82-87, for it, in 1785 and 1786, and they were performed to great acclaim at the fashionable Parisian organization in 1787-8. Admission to *La Loge Olympique* required a rigid examination and elaborate initiation ceremonies. The society's concerts were given at a hall in the Tuileries, with the Queen and her court frequently in attendance. The orchestra of the Loge Olympique was a large one, even by present-day standards. It had forty violins, ten basses, and double woodwinds. The orchestra musicians wore embroidered coats with lace ruffles, carried swords at their sides and placed their plumed hats beside them when they played.

The Hapsburg-born Queen of France, Marie Antoinette, attended the concerts of this series of Haydn symphonies, and it was reported that she particularly liked No. 85. Her admiration for this symphony gained it its nickname *La Reine* ("The Queen"). Although the orchestral forces available to Haydn in Paris were potentially much larger than Prince Nikolaus had provided for him at Esterhazy, his orchestration for this symphony remained quite modest: flute, two oboes, two bassoons, two French horns, and strings. Yet for *La Loge*, Haydn's instrumental writing took on a new complexity and offered challenges to the players that he could easily have imagined but would not have dared to make earlier. When a French music publisher issued these works, he said, "These symphonies, of beautiful character and astonishing workmanship, will be studied with great eagerness by those fortunate to have heard them, and

even by those who do not know them. Haydn's name explains their extraordinary quality."

The symphony opens with a brief but stately and imposing introduction, *Adagio*, using the dotted rhythm that was typical of the French opera overture of the time. The introduction leads into the body of the first movement, *Vivace*, an interesting structure built essentially of a single theme. Before the expected repeat of the exposition, usual in a classical Sonata form first movement, Haydn introduces two further short themes to engage the listener's attention. The first is twittery and features flute and violin. The second, surprisingly in the minor mode, is heard in the flutes, bassoons, and lower strings. Haydn's biographer Karl Geiringer hypothesizes that it could be an intentional quotation from the beginning of Haydn's *Farewell* Symphony, written over a decade before, but printed in Paris only a year before the first performance of *La Reine*. In the development, Haydn enriches his material harmonically while syncopated violins add to the rhythmic variety. The recapitulation begins with a restatement of the movement's very first theme, heard in bassoon solo.

No usual slow movement follows but instead the refined second movement, which Haydn headed *Romance, Allegretto*; it is a set of four variations on a French folk song, *La Gentille et Jeune Lisette*, which he also used in at least two other works. The violins first state the theme in two repeated sections before the variations fill out the rest of the movement. The first variation is the most intricate of the four variations and engages the whole orchestra. The strings play the minor key second variation; the flute joins in the later part of it. The major key returns for the third variation, and the flute is prominent. Solo bassoon, with oboes and violins are on display in the fourth variation. This movement has the air of the Rococo about it, much in the style evoked by the painter Watteau.

The third movement is a minuet, *Allegretto*, a sturdy country-dance with a gentle, waltzing pastoral *Ländler* as the contrasting central trio section. Like the minuet, the *Ländler* is made up of two repeated sections of unequal length, here with prominent solo passages for bassoon and oboe.

The mellifluous finale, *Presto*, a combination of rondo and sonata forms, brings the symphony to a lively close. The solo bassoon states the first theme, the Rondo theme. The fourth is the shortest of all the movements, but one in which Haydn nevertheless displays all his skill.

The score calls for a flute, two oboes, two bassoons, two horns, and strings.

Concerto for Flute and Strings, in D Minor, W. 22

Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach

(Born March 8, 1714, in Weimar; died December 14, 1788, in Hamburg)

Johann Sebastian Bach's second surviving son, Carl Philipp Emanuel, was the godson of Telemann and his successor as Music Director in Hamburg. Carl Philipp Emanuel was an enterprising young musician who, when only seventeen years old, at about the time that his father's music was being published for the first time, engraved one of his own minuets and sold it as his Op. 1. His parents wanted him to be educated outside of music and sent him to the Law Faculty of the University at Leipzig, but he abandoned it for a career in music. He went to Berlin, where he became involved with the Prussian royal family and spent twenty-eight years in the service of Frederick the Great. The Berlin court was a seat of conservatism in music, and the music Bach wrote there does not generally show the kind of freedom of form and sentiment that was to appear in his Hamburg works.

Frederick II, a brilliant military commander as well as a patron of musicians, poets, and philosophers, reigned as King of Prussia from 1740 to 1786. The composer of more than a hundred musical works, Frederick the Great was also a Latin and French scholar. Music had an important place in his life: he was an avid flutist, who played daily, both alone in the early morning, as well as later in the day in ensembles at the court concerts held every evening at seven. A musician of the time wrote that Frederick II played slow movements beautifully, but that fast tempos revealed his weak technique and unsteady rhythm.

This *Concerto in D minor* was written at about the midpoint of the 18th century for one of the regular royal musical soirees. Its music is unquestionably that of C.P.E. Bach, as it corresponds to an authenticated harpsichord concerto; nevertheless, the flute adaptation may have been created by another. Its three movements follow the traditional fast-slow-fast sequence of the time: the first, *Allegro*, has a dramatic principal theme, and a second lighter, more graceful subject that allows for much ornamentation and virtuosic playing. The second central movement, *Un poco Andante*, is legato and elegant but incorporates some dramatic more recitative-like sections; the third and final movement, *Allegro di molto*, is very quick and intense, with demanding technical feats expected of the soloist, giving premonitions of the Sturm und Drang style that C.P.E. would later take up, even though this work, as a whole, is more or less in still in the lighter galant style.

It is scored for solo flute, strings, and continuo.

Concerto for Piano and Orchestra No. 15, in B-Flat Major, K. 450

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

(Born January 27, 1756, in Salzburg; died December 5, 1791, in Vienna)

1784 to 1786 were the climactic years of Mozart's too short career, when he was at the height of his popularity as a composer, pianist, and teacher. In this brief period, he wrote twelve glorious piano concertos, *The Marriage of Figaro*, six of his finest string quartets, and a large number of other works. In 1784 alone, Mozart composed six piano concertos, each one of astonishing perfection. In a letter from Vienna to his father in Salzburg, he said that he was writing them as money-makers during the hours he took from the daily labors that supported him: morning music lessons for the daughters of the rich and evening concerts in the palaces of the nobles. His notebooks show twenty-two engagements for performance during the five weeks from February 26 to April 3, 1784. In the eight weeks from February 9 to April 12 alone, he wrote four piano concertos, of which this is the second. He composed this concerto during a burst of creative energy for a series of subscription concerts in Vienna.

Simply getting all this music down on paper was so much work that in many places he only sketched the solo piano part. Since Mozart planned to perform them himself, he needed little more than a reminder to himself of what he intended to play. He did, however, write out the elaborately detailed orchestral accompaniments, which were much more complex than much of the music by the other successful musicians of the time.

To his noble audiences, Mozart was only one of many popular entertainers who performed their own works. Those who engaged him often hardly knew or cared what he played for them. They were searching only for the latest music. Mozart knew that his work was different from that of his contemporaries, even though his letters indicate that he sometimes thought of himself as only the best of the hacks. He said he turned out music to please, trying to suit the compositions to the audiences, writing for public appeal, for success, for money; yet, he knew that he did so with originality and with invention that the others did not possess nor could even imagine.

Mozart entered the concerto in a notebook that he had recently begun to keep as a current catalog of his compositions. He dated it in Vienna on March 15, 1784, and he performed its premiere on March 24, 1784. The accompanying orchestra he listed consisted of two oboes, two bassoons, two French horns, strings, and a flute, which was added for the third movement.

Three of the four preceding concertos he had composed were to be played at home by young ladies with the accompaniment of a string quartet, to which winds might be added. In that year, he wrote at least six piano concertos, each with its own character. He set the bar ever higher, and considered this concerto as a work that “makes you sweat, but the B flat major concerto outdoes the one in D in its level of difficulty.”

Even today, this work is considered challenging, because it includes many complex scale patterns, bright arpeggios, runs, and broken chords, with which Mozart showcased his own pianistic virtuosity as well as delighted listeners with its sparkling brilliance and graceful melodies. The wind section (oboes, bassoons and horns) not only accompanies the piano but takes part in a musical dialogue with the piano. Simon Keefe notes that Mozart’s contemporaries felt that the woodwind writing in K. 450 was “newly intricate and sophisticated.”

The first movement, *Allegro*, is spirited and upbeat. The piano part is demanding yet lyrical, allowing Mozart to display his talent for making complex passages sound natural. He balances bright orchestral passages with sparkling and intricate solo piano passages. The second movement, *Andante*, is intimate and thoughtful. The piano leads with soft, almost vocal lines. The orchestration is straightforward yet expressive, highlighting the solo role of the piano.

The last movement of the concerto is a joyful *Allegro*, a rondo that opens with a glittering piano melody. As in the initial movement, Mozart highlights the piano soloist with a virtuosic and radiant part. He also features playful interchanges between the piano and the orchestra.

The concerto displays great daring and novelty, then considered extremely desirable qualities. Mozart’s skill at extending and enlarging upon one musical idea is basically without precedent. Simultaneously, he uses many, many thematic ideas, in a profusion of creativity and develops many of these ideas in counterpoint, using procedures he learned from his study of Bach.

Symphony No. 40, in G minor, K. 550

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

An anonymous critic of this symphony once wrote, “There are few things in art that are perfect. The *G minor Symphony* is one of them.” In two months of the summer of 1788, at a time of terrible misfortune and disappointments, Mozart wrote this and two other symphonies, which were the three last symphonies he composed. It was a particularly hard

time for him because his wife was ill and his always troubled finances had never been worse. He made every effort he could to ward off great despair; he even wrote his friend Puchberg for a loan explaining that he was in a period “prey to gloomy thoughts which I must repel with all my might.”

Instead of reflections of the composer’s unhappy condition, the three symphonies are powerfully assertive works. Perhaps Mozart’s troubles had caused him to turn inward and to discover within himself, consciously or unconsciously, music of an emotional depth that no one had ever before imagined possible. Mozart presumably had none of the usual reasons for writing the symphonies he had had in the past because there were no commissions and no promises of concert dates, and no publisher waiting to receive them.

At that time, composers rarely wrote solely from inspiration, and some historians believe these three symphonies were conceived purely from an inner, emotional, expressive impulse. No record exists of when any of Mozart’s last three symphonies were first performed; the only evidence that the *Symphony in G minor* may possibly have been played during his lifetime is the fact that he re-orchestrated it, adding two clarinets to the orchestra and revising the two oboe parts to fit the enlarged wind section. The occasion for the revision may have been the pair of concerts, given at the Imperial and Royal Court Theater for the benefit of the widows and orphans of musicians, performed on April 16 and 17, 1791, less than eight months before Mozart’s own death. Among the prominent performers were Mozart’s sister-in-law and Vienna’s leading clarinetists, the Stadler brothers. The unidentified symphony that opened the program may have been this one, in its clarinet version. The musical director of the event was Antonio Salieri. As Mozart also changed the orchestration of two passages of the second movement, his recent biographer, Robert Gutman, believes that such modifications could have only followed from the results of specific performances such as this one. Gutman thus concludes that the popular idea that Mozart never heard his last three symphonies is a myth.

In describing this work, Pitts Sanborn noted: “There is no doubt that this symphony is touched with the ineffable sadness that sometimes crosses like a summer cloud the radiance of Mozart’s sun-god temperament. And along with this there are moments of a celestial tenderness. Yet, at the same time, this Symphony has its capricious and sprite-like quality, which comes out in the ascending and descending pairs of thirty- second notes in the *Andante*, echoed distantly in the whimsicality and waywardness of certain measures of the Finale.”

This symphony's first movement, *Molto allegro*, full of melancholy passion, begins with its first theme in octaves in the violins. There is a strong and forceful subsidiary theme before the second wistful theme enters. The poise, the elegance, and the beautiful proportions of the second movement, *Andante*, begin with an elegiac first theme in the violins, which emerges from the rhythmic figure of the opening measures. Unlike most slow movements of symphonies, this movement is in sonata form. Mozart called the third movement *Minuet* and marked it *Allegretto*, but the movement is not a graceful ballroom minuet. Instead, the *Minuet* is vigorous and animated, full of syncopated rhythms and clashing dissonance, with a contrasting central *Trio* that is relaxed and direct. The final *Allegro assai* is the most spirited of the symphony's four movements. Also in sonata form, it opens with a theme whose first eight notes are identical to the first eight notes of the initial theme of Beethoven's *Symphony No. 5*, but the rhythm is so different that the ear does not easily sense the similarity. The strings and then the woodwinds introduce the lyrical second theme.

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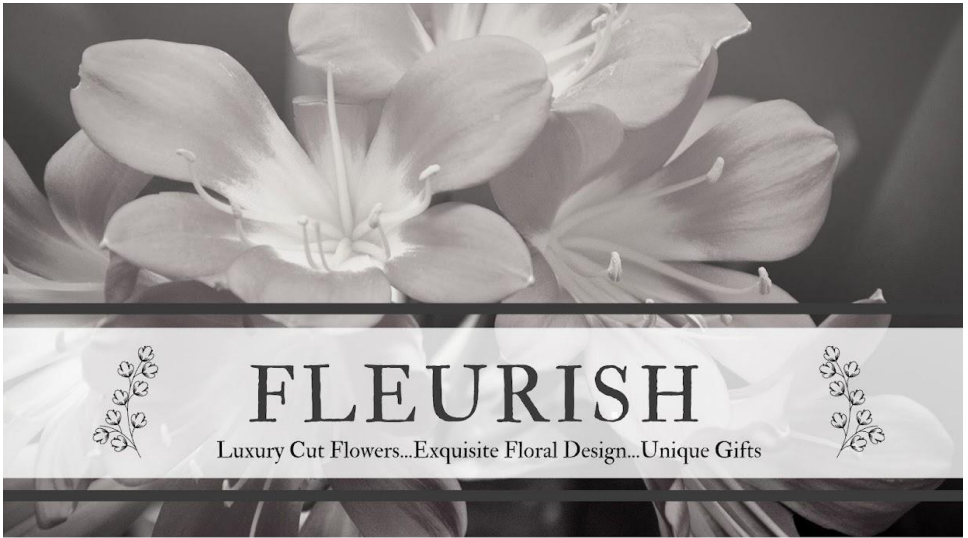
Sinfonia da Camera

In residence at the Krannert Center for the Performing Arts, this professional chamber orchestra is led by world-renowned pianist, conductor, and educator, Maestro Ian Hobson. Sinfonia da Camera is comprised of University of Illinois faculty, staff, and students, as well as distinguished regional and national freelance musicians. Founded in 1984, Sinfonia has welcomed world-class soloists, commissioned new works, and presented beloved orchestra favorites and hidden gems to local audiences for over 40 years.

In its debut season, Sinfonia released an acclaimed recording of French Piano Concerti with music director Ian Hobson conducting from the keyboard; it was the subject of a 90-minute Public Television special. Since that time, Sinfonia has performed over 1,000 musical works featuring more than 150 local and guest artists. Through Maestro Hobson's commitment to excellence in all of the orchestra's endeavors - special projects, recordings, tours, and concerts for the hometown crowd at Krannert Center for the Performing Arts - Sinfonia has achieved national and international recognition.

Sinfonia has been featured on over a dozen recordings and has several projects in the works. In 2011, the Albany label released a Sinfonia recording on another American composer, William Schuman, during his centenary year. A live recording of Sinfonia da Camera's October 6, 2012 concert featuring music by Pulitzer Prize-Winning composer George Walker was recently released on Albany Records. The fourth and final volume of the Ignaz Moscheles cycle was released in 2012. The previous volumes were reviewed by American Record Guide: "Hobson, whose elegant phrasing, remarkable ear for color, and miraculous ability to evenly sustain the most difficult runs - each like a string of pearls - are simply a joy to hear" and "[The concerti] seem tailor-made for Hobson's great panache and free-wheeling style." Ten recordings by Sinfonia da Camera for the Zephyr label have been released to rave reviews at home and abroad.

To learn more about the orchestra, Maestro Hobson, the musicians, administration, and Advisory board visit our website at www.sinfonia.illinois.edu.



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*Contributors from August 1, 2025 through September 8, 2026.
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