

Giancarlo Guerrero, a native of Costa Rica, is a five-time Grammy award winning Music Director of the Nashville Symphony Orchestra, a post he has held since 2009 and recently committed to through the 2024-25 season. Guerrero previously held posts as the Principal Guest Conductor of The Cleveland Orchestra's Miami Residency from 2011 to 2016, Music Director of the Eugene Symphony between 2002 and 2009, and Associate Conductor of the Minnesota Orchestra from 1999 to 2004. The Narodowe Forum Muzyki is very pleased with the appointment of Giancarlo Guerrero to the position of Artistic Director of the Wrocław Philharmonic! Guerrero will conduct four weeks during the 2017 season in Wrocław, and beginning with the 2018 season, he will spend eight weeks per season with the orchestra in addition to touring and recording activities.

Garrick Ohlsson was born April 3, 1948, in White Plains, N.Y., he began his piano studies at the Westchester Conservatory of Music, later entering The Juilliard School, in New York City. As a student of Claudio Arrau, he has established himself as a master of the works of Mozart, Beethoven and Schubert, though he performs the entirety of the piano repertoire extending into the 21st century, as well as pieces commissioned for himself. Ohlsson was awarded the First prizes at the 1966 Busoni Competition in Italy and the 1968 Montréal Piano Competition, in addition to being the winner of the 1970 Chopin International Piano Competition, for which he remains the only American winner. He is a founding member of the FOG Trio with violinist Jorja Fleezanis and cellist Michael Grebanier.

In 1994 Ohlsson was awarded the Avery Fisher Prize and in 1998 he received the University Musical Society Distinguished Artist Award in Ann Arbor, MI. In 2008 he re-released his 16-disc set of the Complete Works of Chopin followed in 2010 by a complete set of the Brahms piano variations. In 2011 he was honoured with a Grammy award for his recording of Rachmaninoff's *Third Piano Concerto*. Mr Ohlsson was featured in the documentary *The Art of Chopin* in recognition of the Chopin bicentenary in 2010 and was the 2014 recipient of the Jean Gimbel Lane Prize in Piano Performance from the Northwestern University Bienen School of Music. The artist currently resides in San Francisco, California.

Esa-Pekka Salonen wrote *Gambit* in 1998. The piece has an overture character and is based on gestures which are combined and juxtaposed in an everchanging environment. The two main themes are a descending pentatonic scale and a rudimentary rhythm in which the incarnations themselves do not change. Salonen's writing makes virtuosic demands on individual players and they are notable for the detail of their instrumental composing and texture, in this instance, he has created for a large symphony orchestra. *Gambit* is an optimistic piece with a pleasant and accessible opening and closing.

Salonen founded the contemporary music group Toimii in 1980 with fellow composers Magnus Lindberg and Otto Romanowski and it was this partnership that seems to have inspired *Gambit*. The composer wrote in his description of the piece, "Some harmonic progressions as well as the persistent minor third figure in the introduction are deliberate, free quotations from Magnus Lindberg's music. I have dedicated *Gambit* to this talented friend of mine as a homage on his fortieth birthday."

In 1959, **Samuel Barber** accepted a commission for a *Piano Concerto* honouring the upcoming centenary of the music publisher G. Schirmer, Inc. Barber began working on the concerto the following spring and finished the first two movements in 1960, but elements of the finale remained unsettled until two weeks before the premiere on September 24, 1962. The piece was composed with the pianist John Browning in mind and it was performed by the Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Erich Leinsdorf as part of a concert series dedicated to the opening of the Philharmonic Hall at the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, in New York City, which coincided with the anniversary of G. Schirmer, Inc. Harold Schonberg wrote in the New York Times the following morning, "This is a real virtuoso concerto, with some staggeringly difficult writing. It also has a strong sense of melodic profile, a lyric slow movement and a sense of confidence in the entire conception." The *Piano Concerto* earned Barber a Pulitzer Prize in 1963 and a Music Critics Circle Award in 1964. Over the next few years Browning toured internationally and in 1965 he recorded the concerto with the Cleveland Symphony Orchestra, conducted by George Szell. Later that year the album was awarded the Grammy for Best Composition by a Contemporary Composer.

Antonín Dvořák left his home in Vysoká, Czechoslovakia in 1892 and accepted the directorship of the National Conservatory of Music in New York. He began sketching his E minor symphony only three months after he arrived and finalized it in the spring of 1893. His *Ninth Symphony* premiered in New York at Carnegie Hall on December 16, 1893, with Anton Seidl conducting the New York Philharmonic. The *New York Evening Post* proclaimed it "the greatest symphonic work ever composed in this country." Affectionately subtitled, *From New World*, the piece has become the best known and most beloved of his American compositions.

Though the piece was unmistakably inspired by his time in America, due to intense homesickness, the music he composed during this period includes some of his most intensely Czech. Thus the *New World Symphony* notably contained stylistic elements that were indicative of Bohemian, German, French, Scottish, and other Old World sources in addition to the links attributed to Native American music and African spirituals. The composer later referred to all his American compositions as "genuine Bohemian music," and said that the title of his *Ninth Symphony* was only meant to signify "impressions and greetings from the New World." In essence, it was meant to be a musical postcard home.