

Our Soloist

Eric Bittner, Trumpet



Eric Bittner has performed professionally since the age of sixteen. He is a graduate of the University of Houston with a degree in Trumpet Performance and Music Education. He has taught trumpet lessons for 36 years in the Houston and Austin Areas.

Mr. Bittner has toured extensively in Europe, Canada and the Continental United States, and he has performed with such groups as the Houston Symphony, the Houston Concert Chorale, the H.I.T.S. - Unicorn Theater Orchestra, The Houston Lutheran Chorale, the Houston - Tower Brass Ensemble and the Houston Lyric Brass Quintet.

He has been an instructor in Austin I.S.D. for 18 years and he has taught trumpet lessons at Hendrickson High School in Pflugerville I.S.D. In addition, he taught lessons at the Meridian World School in Round Rock. Mr. Bittner performs locally with the Austin Symphonic Band, the Balcones Community Orchestra, the St. Martin's Lutheran Church Symphonic Winds, the Longhorn Alumni Band and the Austin Civic Orchestra.

Eric Bittner has been a member of the BCO for 20 years.

Program Notes

by Robert Radmer

The Trumpet Concerto of **Johann Nepomuk Hummel** opens with a long-long-short-long figure that provides a feeling of nobility to the entire movement. The orchestra brings to light other melodic and rhythmic figures, then hands the proceedings over to the solo trumpet. A lively conversation ensues between the two entities, each voice contributing cogent thoughts to the discussion. Enjoy the communing of these disparate spirits as they observe, consult, debate and perhaps even indulge in a bit of gossip while bringing together players and listeners within the setting of live music.

Pierre Alexandre Monsigny was one of the most important composers of French opera in the middle of the 18th century, active at a time when the opera comique style was arriving on the scene. The rigaudon was a dance characterized by a movement-repose-movement-repose framework, and was very popular during the long reign of Louis XIV. In the work today the basic duple-time rhythmic base is charmingly confused by an emphasized upbeat on the very first note of the piece. This bit of aural teasing reappears periodically, providing to all some dancing and listening delight.

Edward Elgar's Salut d'amour (Love's Greeting) was written as an engagement present to his betrothed. The lovely and long-lined melody made the song immensely popular, and numerous arrangements for various instruments and small orchestras were made and heard around the turn of the 20th century. Enjoy the sentiment of a hit song from an innocent time.

Mozart's Symphony No. 40 opens with the accompaniment in the lower strings, joined a few moments later by the main tune of the movement in the violins. In contrast to the usual Classical symphony opening tune of bombast over a strong and rhythmic chordal accompaniment, Mozart begins in a whisper, using the smallest musical interval, the half-step, in an insistent, almost nervous manner. The tension is relieved occasionally, but the movement's underlying character is one of instability.

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Balcones Community Orchestra Players



Violin I

Mary Brown,
Concertmaster
Walter Romanko
Melissa Ruof
Elizabeth Jackson
Lucia Woodruff
Ellie Chubb
Mallory Matsumoto

Violin II

Andrea Gore
Nancy Hoagland
Susan Versluys
Kay Mueller
Lynn Lo

Viola

Dixie Addington
Jen Moon
Deb Weltzer

Cello

Karen Foster Cason
John Cox
Devin Cornacchio
Johannes Brinkmann
Marguerite Clayton
Howard Clayton

Bass

Ann Smith
James Lemuel

Flute

Kyndra Cullen

Oboe

Herson de la Garza
Steve Peckham

Clarinet

Gustavo Diaz
Byron Gifford

Bassoon

Chuck Hazlewood
Susan Kaczmarczik

Horn

Emily Quinn
Joanne Delk

Dr. Robert Radmer

Music Director/Conductor



Robert Alan Radmer is the founder and Music Director of the Balcones Community Orchestra, now in its 26th season. He has worked with youth orchestras and adult ensembles in six states. For twelve years he served as Music Director and Conductor for the Central Texas Medical Orchestra, and he has been a faculty member of the Austin Chamber Music Center since 2010.

Radmer has appeared as a violist with chamber ensembles and orchestras in over two thousand performances since 1981 in 21 states and ten countries, and he was awarded the Doctorate in Viola Performance from the University of Southern Mississippi in 1993. For ten years he served on the faculty of St. Edward's University teaching strings and conducting the orchestra, and has been a member of the music faculties of Texas State University, the College of St. Scholastica, Eastern New Mexico University, and Southwest Texas State University. Radmer was honored by being named Teacher of the Year in 1996 by the New Mexico Chapter of the American String Teachers Association.

Radmer teaches violin, viola and guitar in his private studio, and in his spare time he is a composer of concert music and is also an active member of the popular music scene in Austin. He performs and records as a guitarist, singer, songwriter and improvising violist with Jack Jensen in their band, Reel Sheboygan, and in 2022 he accompanied the Eagles with 37 of Austin's finest in concert at the Moody Center.

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The BCO thanks the Episcopal Church of the Resurrection and staff for the opportunity to perform in their lovely facility
Promotion: Libby Bryer
Recording: Mike Koetting
Performance Capture Austin
”

A black and white line drawing of a string quartet, showing a woman playing the cello, a man playing the double bass, a woman playing the violin, and a man playing the violin.

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and classical music enthusiasts.**

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Thank you!

Program Notes

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The second movement Andante is Mozart at his most playful, yet still magnificently inspired. He constructs the piece around a tune pretending to be an accompaniment (or possibly an accompaniment pretending to be a tune), in which an upward leap finds repose during seven repeated long notes, balanced by a fleeting, insouciant two-note figure. These two ideas delight in their difference like a large dog playing with a kitten. That emotional vein is contrasted in the following Menuet with an angular tune unimaginable as an accompaniment to elegant dancing. The mood is relieved temporarily in the middle section, but darkness and dissatisfaction returns. The expansive main motive of the Finale contradicts that of the first movement, employing a climbing motive spanning all of 13 scale notes. However, even this tune closes at its highest point with a tiny, half-step fall, connecting in the ear of the listener to the motive of the first movement. This half-step is used repeatedly throughout the movement in an endless variety of guises, providing the work an overall unity that is stunning in both its simplicity and power.

2024-2025 Calendar



Sept 22 - 4:00 pm
Robert Radmer, Viola



Oct 20 - 4:00 pm
Kyunghoo Kim, Piano



Nov 17 - 4:00 pm
Eric Bittner, Trumpet



Jan 26 - 4:00 pm
Olga Kossovich, Violin
Gerald Gaul, Viola



Feb 23 - 4:00 pm
Susan McDonald, Guitar



March 23 - 4:00 pm
Bryan Hall, Violin



April 27 - 4:00 pm
Chloe Yofan, Violin



May 25 - 4:00 pm
SungEun Park, Piano

What is a community orchestra?

Strings, Woodwinds, Brass, Percussion. Our all-volunteer group draws its repertoire from the masterworks for small orchestra, and presents live concerts in venues that approximate the conditions under which these works were first performed and heard. Thus, you may find our concerts casual, as this orchestra plays for everyone. Conductor, Dr. Robert Radmer's philosophy is "Let them play, so that the world can hear!"

So, this is your first live classical music concert?

Prepare to be delighted! Give yourself up to the music as these wonderful performers and their lively Conductor intend to soothe your soul and fire your imagination. Take time to read the program notes, as they give insight into the composer's intentions and how those aims are to be accomplished in the music.

When should I clap?

Unlike pop concerts where we clap, yell, whoop and whistle at any given time, classical concerts are about being silent so that each detail is heard. Celebrating the orchestra comes at the beginning when the Conductor approaches the stage and again at the end of the pieces when all the sections (movements) are completed. There is usually a pause between movements and the Conductor will remain facing the orchestra as they prepare for the next wonderful round. When it's over, the Conductor will face the audience with a smile. The music is designed to deeply move you. Feel free to express your joy!

Are children welcome?

More than ever our young minds are welcome to experience cherished music from our time and generations before. Every child should have the opportunity to hear and learn to play an instrument. Studies have shown that children who participate in music learning generally perform better in other studies. So, yes, bring on the kiddos. Please keep in mind that your child should be ready to listen quietly for the magical hour-long concert.

Let Go, Relax and Enjoy!

