



CASUAL CLASSICS

Movie Music Mania

2023-2024 SEASON

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the 2023-2024 Valdosta Symphony Orchestra season at Valdosta State University. We are celebrating 34 years of the transformative power of music, and we are delighted to have you join us from your favorite seat in Whitehead Auditorium for what promises to be five inspiring live performances.

When the VSO performed its first concert in November 1990, VSU was the only institution of higher education in Georgia to have its own university-affiliated symphony orchestra — because we understand the undeniable role the arts play in bringing people together, fostering creativity, and driving innovation. As South Georgia’s flagship institution of higher education, having a professional orchestra playing live classical music in our backyard is just one example of how VSU is working to enhance communities through life-changing experiences.



The American Prize-winning VSO serves both the cultural life of Valdosta and the regional academic mission of VSU. Its membership is a unique blend of resident artist-faculty, students studying professional music disciplines, talented community performers, and carefully selected professionals from a five-state region. It attracts guest soloists of national and international renown.

The VSO contributes to the cultural life of the entire region. In addition to its concert performances, it offers musical enrichment grants to support VSU students pursuing creative endeavors. It provides exploratory string classes for children and adults through the South Georgia String Project, presents a special Youth Concert Series for school children and their teachers, and introduces the instruments of the orchestra to young children during the annual Tunes for Tots.

We are grateful for every member of the VSO for their tireless dedication to the musical arts and their willingness to share their talents with others. We are also grateful for the many individuals, families, and corporations who generously support, protect, and nurture our university community’s tradition of musical excellence.

Thank you for being a part of our audience.

Enjoy the performance!

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Richard A. Carvajal".

Richard A. Carvajal, Ph.D.
President of Valdosta State University

Good evening,

Our Valdosta Symphony Orchestra is truly a unique enterprise, one of a select few in the entire country that operates collaboratively and benefits both the university and community. The VSO is a premier example of our campus and community's commitment to Arts and culture, fostering tourism, economic growth, and civic pride. As such, we have a responsibility to nurture a thriving arts community, to educate, mentor, and support our students, and enhance the cultural landscape of our region. Together, we embark on a musical journey that captivates and uplifts our community, leaving an indelible mark for generations to come.



I want to take a moment to express my deep gratitude to all our attendees, steadfast season ticket holders, generous donors, and visionary sponsors. Your investment in the performing arts and specifically the Valdosta Symphony Orchestra, is a testament to your belief in the power of music -- to educate, inspire, and entertain, and we are grateful for your continued support.

Year after year, the VSO assembles unique performances that feature talented guest performers and showcases the outstanding artistry of our faculty through solo performances and collaborative leadership to create music recognized across national and international stages, right here in our own community.

Regarding our outstanding faculty and student performers, the Executive Director, and Director/Conductor of the VSO -- their hard work, grit, and dedication to their craft brings the orchestra to life. We are truly fortunate to have such a passionate group of students, faculty, guest artists, professionals, and loyal supporters -- we couldn't do it without you.

My sincere thanks to each one of you for championing our Valdosta Symphony Orchestra. We appreciate your attendance and your unwavering dedication to the College of the Arts, the Department of Music, and to the Valdosta Symphony Orchestra. We are delighted that you have chosen to be part of this effort.

Enjoy the evening and the performance, we are in for a real treat.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael T. Schmidt".

Michael T. Schmidt
Interim Dean, College of the Arts

Concert Sponsor

Houston and Tittle Family

Mary Erneste Houston of Nashville, Georgia, was a founding member of the Valdosta Symphony Guild and member of the Valdosta Symphony Board. When the Valdosta Symphony Orchestra was just in the planning stages, Mrs. Houston heard of these plans. As a music lover and talented musician herself, she was thrilled at the possibility of a symphony orchestra in South Georgia. She knew that the orchestra would require financial support to become a reality, so she asked her son, N.G. Houston III, to become a sponsor. His immediate reply was, "Mama, you know I will!" The Valdosta Symphony Orchestra gained its first sponsor, and the Houston and Tittle family have remained sponsors for all 34 years of the VSO.

About the Music Director



Howard Hsu

Howard Hsu is the Music Director of the Valdosta (GA) Symphony Orchestra and serves as Associate Professor of Music and Director of Orchestra Studies at Valdosta State University. Under his leadership, the Valdosta Symphony was selected as the 2014 winner of the American Prize in Orchestral Performance (community division),

and has had performances aired statewide on Georgia Public Broadcasting Radio's "Midday Music" and "Orchestras of Georgia" programs. Hsu has performed with the Canadian Brass, Robert McDuffie, Simone Dinnerstein, Jennifer Frautschi, Wendy Warner, Christine Brewer, Rachel Barton Pine, Orion Weiss, Stanford Olsen, Alexander Ghindin, Alexander Schimpf, Katia Skanavi, Awadagin Pratt, Elena Urioste, Amy Schwartz Moretti, the Empire Brass, and the Melodica Men. He conducted the world premiere of James Oliverio's Trumpet Concerto No. 1: *World House*, the U.S. premiere of Ned McGowan's Concerto for iPad and Orchestra (Rotterdam Concerto 2), and has given the Georgia premieres of Fernande Decruck's Sonata for Saxophone and Orchestra, several of the Debussy/Matthews Preludes, and Jonathan Bailey Holland's *Motor City Dance Mix*.

Howard Hsu has appeared as guest conductor with the Hartford (CT), Fox Valley (WI), Wyoming, Mankato (MN), Macon (GA), and New Britain (CT) Symphonies, as well as the Bronx (NY) Arts Ensemble, with whom he conducted the world premiere of Eleanor Cory's *O'Keefe's Flora*. He was a Visiting Assistant Professor of Music at the University of Connecticut and Associate Conductor of the University of Connecticut Symphony Orchestra, and was Visiting Instructor of Music and Director of the Orchestra at Connecticut College.

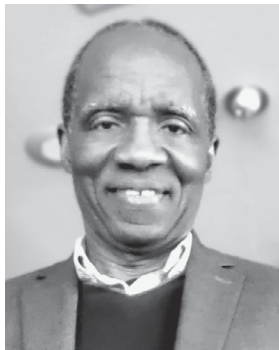
Howard Hsu received his D.M.A. from the University of Connecticut, his M.M. from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, and his B.S. from the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

The VSO would like to thank Ronald Pelham (winner of the “Be the Maestro” Symphony Ball auction item) and Walter Prettyman (winner of the “Singing Sensation” Symphony Ball auction item) for their generous support. Ronald Pelham conducted the 1st movement of Mozart’s “Eine Kleine Nachtmusik” in November 2023, and Reatha Pavey (courtesy of Walter Prettyman) performs “Fly Me to the Moon” this evening.

Ronald Pelham, Guest Conductor – November 4, 2023

Ronald Pelham was born in Jacksonville, FL with formative years spent in Central Florida (pre-Disney World), the FAMU graduate has enjoyed a wide pallet of musical genres throughout his life. Delta Blues to New Age



Jazz, Klezmer to Country Western; Gregorian Chants to Bollywood; solo piano to full symphonic orchestration. I love music. The widely known European classical composers to which we all have been exposed, hold fond musical memories for Ron. First listened to on a rigid scratchy record, impaled on the spindle of a beat up record player. The needle practically dug a deeper groove in the hard plastic with each play. Nevertheless, the music seared a lasting impression on his young

mind. And today, many decades later, music—the universal language—continues to play a prominent role in the sustained growth of the developing self. Having secured the never dreamed of opportunity to stand in as “conductor” of an orchestra of such accomplished musicians as the Valdosta Symphony Orchestra, the entire process was joyously exhilarating. It was made even better with the guidance, wit and expertise of our own Dr. Howard Hsu (Music Director of the Valdosta Symphony Orchestra; Director of Orchestral Studies). It is my hope we all continue to be uplifted by the live musical performances of the Valdosta Symphony Orchestra, and that we help others experience the joy, peace and beauty of this music.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Reatha M. Pavey, Guest Vocalist – March 30, 2024

Reatha Pavey was born in Miami, FL and raised in an artist neighborhood in Coconut Grove. She began singing at the age of three at Central Baptist Church in downtown Miami. At the age of ten, she was asked to join the Billy Graham Choir. Once off the road, she sang in various coffee houses in Coconut Grove and received the attention of David Crosby, who was opening a recording studio. Ms. Pavey performed backup vocals in his studio for many years, and performed in various productions at the Coconut Grove Playhouse. Ms. Pavey moved to Valdosta in 1998 and became a member of the Valdosta Choral Group. She joined the Valdosta Theatre Guild and performed in plays and musical productions such as *My Fair Lady*, *Nonsense*, *Gypsy Rose*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, *9 To 5* and *Into the Woods*. She has been the female vocalist for duet group Echo's. Ms. Pavey is a member of the Valdosta Symphony Guild and recently served as Guild President. She is currently serving on the Valdosta Symphony Orchestra Board of Directors as Past Guild President.



The Valdosta Symphony Orchestra
34th Season
Howard Hsu, Music Director
“Movie Music Mania”

March 30, 2024

This concert is sponsored by Houston and Tittle Family.

***Fly Me to the Moon* | 3 mins**

Bart Howard (1915–2004) /arr. David Springfield

Reatha Pavey, vocals

Courtesy of Walter Prettyman, winner of the

“Singing Sensation” Symphony Ball auction item

***Also sprach Zarathustra: Introduction* | 2 mins**

Richard Strauss (1864–1949)

***Raiders of the Lost Ark: “Raiders March”* | 5 mins**

John Williams (b. 1932)

***Symphony No. 25 in G Minor: I. Allegro con brio (excerpt)* | 2.5 mins**

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791)

***Home Alone: “Somewhere in My Memory”* | 4.5 mins**

John Williams

***Cavalleria Rusticana: Intermezzo* | 3 mins**

Pietro Mascagni (1863-1945)

***Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone: Suite for Orchestra* | 17 mins**

John Williams

I. Hedwig’s Theme

II. The Sorcerer’s Stone

III. Nimbus 2000

IV. Harry’s Wondrous World

~ INTERMISSION AND COSPLAY COMPETITION ~

***Sound of Music: Introduction* | 2 mins**

Richard Rodgers (1902–1979) and Oscar Hammerstein II (1895-1960)

/arr. Robert Russell Bennett

***Mission: Impossible Theme* | 3 mins**

Lalo Schifrin (b. 1932)/arr. Calvin Custer

***Theme from Schindler’s List* | 3 mins**

John Williams/arr. Custer

Kristin Pfeifer Yu, violin

***Suite from Psycho* | 3 mins**

Bernard Herrmann (1911-1975)

I. Prelude

V. The Murder

***Enigma Variations: IX. “Nimrod”* | 4 mins**

Edward Elgar (1857-1934)

***Star Wars Suite for Orchestra* | 24 mins**

John Williams

I. Main Title

II. Princess Leia’s Theme

III. Imperial March (Darth Vader’s Theme)

IV. Yoda’s Theme

V. Throne Room & End Title

Howard Hsu, conductor

THE VALDOSTA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Howard Hsu, *Music Director • Lougenia and William Gabard Chair*

Clell Wright, *Chorus Master*

Violin I

Kristin Pfeifer Yu,
Concertmaster
Leona Strickland
Hudson Chair

Alexander Reshetnichenko,
Assistant Principal
Hannah MacLean
Gabriela Fogo
Petra Bubanja
Xin Yu Chang
Edward Charity
Felipe Romagnoli
Stacey Sharpe
Sergio Sabillon
Chuck Gunsaulus

Violin II

Kenneth Davis,
Acting Principal
Megumi Terry
Thomas Roggio
Catherine Yara
Elma Sanabria
Alysia Johnson
Michael Sparks
Amelia Pharis
Jennifer Clyde
Madison Brown
Marina Volynets
Rachel Friedman

Viola

Laurel Yu, *Principal*
Brantley and Barbara
Jenkins Chair
Miriam Tellechea
Allyson Royale
Molly Turner
Luiz Barrionuevo
Dylan Heib-Schatzberg
Hunter Sanchez
Jonathan Drawdy
Benjamin Suarez

Violoncello

Steven Taylor, *Principal*
Daniel and Carolyn
Coleman Chair
Christina Wong
Kyna Elliott
Lidia Sanchez
Micah Taylor
Anthony Shands

Contrabass

Tod Leavitt, *Principal*
Gabriel Monticello,
Assistant Principal
Samuel James
Vadim Volynets
Trent Harper

Flute

Lindsay Sparks, *Principal*
Elizabeth Goode
Kellie Henry
Rebekah McCord

Oboe

Susan Eischeid, *Principal*
Allan and Joan
Dear Chair
Jennifer Pifer
Lindsay Miller

Clarinet

Peter Geldrich, *Principal*
Kay Jennett Chair
Christian Windish
Manuel Barreto

Bass Clarinet

Dennis Savoie

Bassoon

Shannon Lowe,
Acting Principal
Sherwood Wise, *Interim*
Bassoon

Horn

Kelly Langenberg, *Principal*
Paul Basler
Kirston Waters
Riley Prichard
Abraham Sulin

Trumpet

Javian Brabham, *Principal*
Jacob Bady
Richard Wiemer
Johnny Dixon
Braeden Floyd

Trombone

Douglas Farwell, *Principal*
Jerry Jennett Chair
Franklin Carmona
Riley Carr

Bass Trombone

Evan Hurst

Tuba

Ryan Sorenson, *Principal*
Charles Williams
William Griffin

Timpani

Ryan Smith, *Principal*

Percussion

Milik Green
Jakalin Bryant
Jacob Walden
Austin Browning
Zachary Whitesides

Harp

Catie Canale

Keyboard

Valerie Holton Smith, *Principal*
Maila Springfield
Bebei Lin

Valdosta Symphony Orchestra

ABOUT THE MUSIC

Music for the Movies: A Brief History

by Alan M. Rothenberg

While early motion picture technology rendered the images mute, music was almost always present when the movies were shown. Movies were usually accompanied by music, played live by anything from a single musician playing piano or organ, to a full-sized orchestra. Some film companies distributed cue sheets with their movies that listed key moments in the film and suggestions of music appropriate to each section. For big-budget, high-profile releases, studios sometimes commissioned specific music to be performed. But really, the studios had little control over what music was performed during the film.

Technological Improvements

For studios to have control over the music—and to provide spoken dialogue—for a movie, two technological problems had to be solved: amplification and synchronization. Efforts to synchronize sound—dialogue, effects, and music—with a movie’s visual images usually involved finding a way to physically link the projector with a phonograph. With the growing popularity of movies in the 1920s, especially feature-length films, theaters were getting larger—some seating a few thousand people—so the volume produced by an acoustic phonograph that amplified sound using a large horn would be inadequate.

In 1906, Lee DeForest invented the signal amplifying Audion tube, but it wasn’t until the 1920s, when the Audion was combined with the newly developed loudspeaker, that the amplification problem was solved. The first successful system for synchronization was Western Electric’s Vitaphone system, which used a phonograph electronically connected to, and controlled by, the film projector. The first release using Vitaphone was in April 1926, a music-only accompaniment for the movie *Don Juan*. Then in October they released a short movie called *A Plantation Act*, which featured Al Jolson, in blackface, singing three of his hit songs. This movie, considered lost until a copy was found in the Library of Congress about 20 years ago, is the first “talkie.” But it was the October 1927 release of *The Jazz Singer* that established both the Warner Brothers studio and the talking picture. Shortly thereafter the Fox Movietone system was introduced. This system incorporated the movie’s sound into an optical track on the film itself, running parallel to the images—hence the term “soundtrack.”

The “sound on film” method won out, and most studios adapted to the new form quickly, investing large sums of money to create soundstages dedicated to film production and equipping theaters with audio equipment. Yet there was still resistance—Samuel Goldwyn was quoted as saying “...there is something gentle and poetic in the idea of being able to tell a story [with only] animated shadows that flit across a screen.” Still, by the end of the decade, the silent movie became essentially obsolete.

Early Film Music

Taking the success of *The Jazz Singer* as a model, most early sound films featured many songs, often unrelated to the plot. Some films consisted only of songs; one notable example is MGM’s 1929 release *The Broadway Melody*, advertised as the first “all-talking, all-singing, all-dancing” picture. Studios hired songwriters, including notable Tin Pan Alley composers like George Gershwin. But within just a few years the number of features emphasizing music

dropped precipitously. In 1931, the Los Angeles Times reported, “A majority of filmgoers acknowledge their susceptibility to the influence of music accompaniment. They find it an emotional stimulus, tending to increase reaction to the scenes portrayed on the screen. But the instant music is made the object of attention, and the visual movement halted for emphasis on the aural, the eye becomes fatigued, the ear conscious that it is listening to a mechanical reproduction.” The “music accompaniment” referred to is now known as “underscore,” music played under dialogue. At first, this was accomplished by playing music while the scene was being filmed, usually with poor results. The invention of the mixing console in 1932 allowed music, dialogue, and sound effects to be recorded separately, and then incorporated into the edited film. This led to the “symphonic method” of underscoring, similar to what was used with silent movies. RKO executive producer David O. Selznick was quoted as saying that music should fit the precise action, mood, and even words in a screen play, and obviously should be specially composed.

Classical Composers in Hollywood—The Symphonic Style

As the concept of the composed soundtrack for a movie became widespread, Hollywood let go of the Tin Pan Alley types, and looked to composers trained in symphonic music. One of the pioneers in the symphonic style was Austrian-American composer Max Steiner (1888–1971). Steiner’s music for *King Kong* (1933) is considered to be the first great film score. Steiner used Richard Wagner-style leitmotifs for characters and concepts. He also combined them to express emotions not explicitly made clear by the film’s dialogue, such as the merging of the King Kong and Fay Wray themes after Kong’s death to express Kong’s feelings for the woman.

The rise of Nazism in the 1930s and the subsequent outbreak of World War II provided Hollywood with great film composers. Trained in traditional conservatoires in Europe, these classically oriented composers, many of them German and Jewish, escaped to America. Franz Waxman (1906–1967), Erich Korngold (1897–1957), Dimitri Tiomkin (1894–1979), and others, discovered it was difficult to make a living as a serious composer in America, but they found employment with film studios. These composers were frequently resentful that their concert music was ignored in their lifetime, although in the last thirty years there has been a renewal of interest in their symphonies and concertos.

New York born and Julliard trained, Bernard Herrmann (1911–1975) worked for the CBS radio network, then composed film scores for movies by Orson Wells (*Citizen Kane*, *The Magnificent Ambersons*) and Alfred Hitchcock (*Vertigo*, *North by Northwest*). His most famous score was for Hitchcock’s 1960 *Psycho*, and the screeching violins heard during the famous shower scene has become an “aural meme,” frequently used in television and movies to imply impending doom. Music journalist Alex Ross writes that Herrmann “revolutionized movie scoring by abandoning the illustrative musical techniques that dominated Hollywood in the 1930s and imposing his own peculiar harmonic and rhythmic vocabulary.”

An Industry in Trouble, New Musical Sources

After World War II, the film industry suffered a series of financial and creative setbacks. A long-standing anti-trust lawsuit was settled, requiring the studios to divest themselves of the theaters they owned. Protective tariffs in foreign countries, especially England, reduced the revenue studios received from non-US film showings. The activities of the House Un-American Activities Committee labeled talented writers, actors, and composers as communist sympathizers, and put them on a “blacklist,” making them unemployable. And even though most Americans had more disposable income than ever before, more people stayed home to watch the newly popular medium of television, rather than go out to see movies.

Once again, the studios turned to technological solutions, providing moviegoers with experiences not available on the early home television sets. Almost all movies were released in color, and wide-screen formats like Cinerama, CinemaScope, and Panavision were developed. The fifties also saw the release of more “epic” films, like *The Robe* (1953), *The Ten Commandments* (1956), and *Around the World in Eighty Days* (1956). Musically, films became more varied, with scores that ventured into jazz and rock, like Alex North’s music for *A Streetcar Named Desire* (1951) and Leonard Roseman’s for *Rebel Without a Cause* (1955).

The move away from symphonic movie scores continued into the 1960s, as the influence of pop music became apparent. David Raksin (1912–2004), best-known as the composer of “Laura,” the theme song for the 1944 Otto Preminger film of the same name, identified three main reasons for this trend: “One, to sell recordings—and incidentally gain publicity for the picture. Two, to appeal to the ‘demographically defined’ audience. . . Three, because so many directors and producers. . . suddenly find themselves in the land of the young; tormented by the fear of not being ‘with it.’” Perhaps the most telling example of this trend is the two movies featuring The Beatles, *A Hard Day’s Night* (1964) and *Help!* (1965), whose soundtrack albums earned more money than the films.

As the 1960s progressed into the next decade, movie music became even more eclectic, drawing on a mixture of musical styles, even within a particular picture. It was rare to hear a full-blown custom symphonic score in a film, but the use of excerpts became more common. For his 1967 film *2001: A Space Odyssey*, Stanley Kubrick commissioned music from composer Alex North, but after the director heard North’s score, he decided to stay with music they were using as placeholders during the editing process. As a result, a space station waltzed to Johann Strauss’ “On the Beautiful Blue Danube,” a trip to the outer reaches of the galaxy was accompanied by music from the Hungarian composer György Ligeti, and long stretches of the movie had no music—or dialogue—at all. Bracketing the film was the opening of *Also Sprach Zarathustra* by Richard Strauss (1864–1949) which quickly became another aural meme. Other classical pieces that were frequently used were the “Intermezzo” from *Cavalleria Rusticana* by Pietro Mascagni (1863–1945), the “Nimrod” variation from *Enigma Variations* by Edward Elgar (1857–1934), and pieces by Wolfgang Mozart (1756–1791).

Film companies realized that television was not “the enemy,” since showing movies became a staple of television programming, bringing more revenue to the studios. Programs created for the small screen often became source material—characters, settings, or music—for the big screen, and vice versa. The theme for the television show *Mission Impossible* (1966–1973), composed by Lalo Schifirín (born 1932) was incorporated into the music for the series of movies based on the show. Ten years after the first *Star Trek* movie (1979) some of its music became the theme for the television program *Star Trek: The Next Generation*.

A Return to the Symphonic Sound

While the eclecticism of the 1960s and early 70s continued, there was a distinct shift back to the symphonic style of the 1930s and 40s. The most prominent exponent of the style is John Williams (born 1932). His involvement in film and television scoring began around 1960; he played piano for the film version of *West Side Story* (1961), and, billed as Johnny Williams, scored episodes of television programs like *Bewitched*, *Time Tunnel*, and *Land of the Giants*. His scores for the movies *How to Steal a Million* (1966) and *Valley of the Dolls* (1967) gained him his first Oscar nominations.

Williams’ scores caught the attention of a rising film director named Stephen Spielberg, who had Williams compose the music for *Jaws* (1975), which earned Williams his first Oscar for Best Original Score. The two-note ostinato that signals the approach of the shark has become

another aural meme for impending danger. As popular as that film was, it was his scores for the *Star Wars* movies, beginning in 1977, that brought him general name recognition. Since then, he has scored innumerable high-profile films, including *Schinder's List* (1993), the *Indiana Jones* films (1981–2023), the first three *Harry Potter* films (2001–2004), and others, amassing 52 Oscar nominations and five wins.

While he has dabbled in other styles, such as his jazz-influenced score for *Catch Me if You Can* (2002), most of Williams' scores pay homage to the great film composers such as Franz Waxman, Bernard Herrmann, and Erich Korngold. The influence of classical works is often quite noticeable—his music for *Star Wars*, for example, recalls Gustav Holst's 1917 suite *The Planets*.

Into The Future

While the work of John Williams has certainly dominated film music for the last fifty years, younger composers such as Hans Zimmer, Alexander Desplat, Danny Elfman, and Michael Giacchino are making their mark. And the practice of drawing from a wide variety of musical styles and “isms” continues.

New York Times journalist Stephen Holder wrote, “Good movie music can now be tailored to the genre and to the mood of the moment, with a fine-tuned precision made possible by technological advances. And certain scores...show the warring strains of symphonic and pop film music merging into something that is neither one, but that has characteristics of both, and that opens up new approaches to scoring. For ultimately in film music, what's good is what works, what seduces us to hop on a celluloid magic carpet and take a ride to a place where sound and image, dream and reality, meet and momentarily merge.”

That statement, written in 1989, is still the case, and will likely always be so.

Program Notes © 2024 Alan M. Rothenberg www.noteperfectnotes.com



Valdosta Symphony Orchestra

Upcoming Events

April 27, 2024

Evocative

Wagner *Tristan und Isolde: Prelude and Liebestod*

Strauss *Don Juan, Op. 20*

Respighi *Pines of Rome*

Legendary lothario Don Juan comes to life in Strauss's swaggering tone poem
Wagner's lush scoring captures the longing and doomed love between Tristan and Isolde
Respighi recalls visions of Italy's past in his stunning *Pines of Rome*

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