# November 15, 2025

**7:30 pm**

## "Songs of Freedom!"

### Armed Forces Salute
***Arr. Bob Lowden (1920 - 1998)***

### Violin Sonata – "Version for Violin and Orchestra"
***Aaron Copland (1900 - 1990)***
***Gerald Elias, orchestration***

**Elissa Lee Koljonen, violin**

**I. Andante semplice – Allegro**
**II. Lento**
**III. Allegretto giusto - Presto - Andante**

## INTERMISSION

### Symphony No. 3 in E-Flat Major, Op. 55, "Eroica"
***Ludwig van Beethoven (1770 – 1827)***

**I. Allegro con brio**
**II. Marcia funebre: Adagio assai**
**III. Scherzo: Allegro vivace – Trio**
**IV. Finale: Allegro molto**

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## "Songs of Freedom!"

## Armed Forces Salute

***Arr. Bob Lowden (b. Camden, New Jersey, July 23, 1920; d. Medford, New Jersey, October 30, 1998)***

To honor our veterans of the Armed Forces for Veterans Day, we feature a piece that's a favorite: *Armed Forces Salute*, arranged by Bob Lowden. This is a wonderful medley of service songs including *The Caisson Song* (Army), *Semper Paratus* (Coast Guard), *The Marines' Hymn, The Air Force Song*, and *Anchors Aweigh* (Navy). The short melodic tunes are easy to spot at the beginning of the piece, including phrases from *Columbia, the Gem of the Ocean,* and *America the Beautiful*. We also hear *When Johnny Comes Marching Home*.

Robert William "Bob" Lowden, an internationally known arranger and composer, was one of the best-known modern-day arrangers for orchestra, bands, and jazz bands. His works encompass professional orchestras, film, and recordings, and he was a major contributor of musical arrangements for America's college and high school performers. Appropriately, during World War II, he served as a trombonist in the Military Music Chapel of the 322nd United States Army in Fort Dix.

***Robert Lowden***

## Violin Sonata – "Version for Violin and Orchestra"

***Aaron Copland (b. Brooklyn, New York, November 14, 1900; Sleepy Hollow, New York, December 2, 1990)***
***Gerald Elias, orchestration***

**I. Andante semplice – Allegro**
**II. Lento**
**III. Allegretto giusto - Presto - Andante**

## Elissa Lee Koljonen, violin

In composing his Violin Sonata, it was Copland's idea "for the piano to complement the violin rather than merely accompany it." Although he had not intended to incorporate folk materials, "certain qualities of the American folk tune had become part of my natural style of composing, and they are

echoed in the Sonata." Vivian Perlis writes in 1998, “The violinist Gerald Elias orchestrated the piano part and premiered his version during the week of the composer's 90th birthday – November 1990.” Below is an actual review of the original *Sonata for Violin and Piano*.

Gerald Elias created this arrangement by orchestrating the original piano accompaniment in 1990. Elias is a violinist, formerly of the Utah Symphony and previously served with the Boston Symphony Orchestra and Boston Pops Orchestra. He is now also a well-published author of music mystery novels. Elias states that he received orchestration guidance from “none other than John Williams!” John Williams was the former conductor of The Boston Pops as well as composer of film music such as *Jaws*.

Growing up on Long Island, Jerry Elias began to study the violin at age 7. He then attended the Oberlin College Conservatory studying with David Cerone, who later became the Executive Director and violin professor at The Cleveland Institute of Music. In later years, his main violin teachers were Ivan Galamian, the famous teacher at Juilliard and Curtis, and Joseph Silverstein, former concertmaster of the Boston Symphony and later conductor of the Utah Symphony.

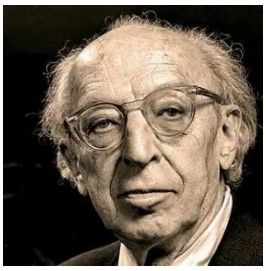
In 1969, Elias attended the Boston University Tanglewood Institute (summer home of the Boston Symphony Orchestra - BSO), beginning a relationship with Tanglewood that has lasted to this day as he still performs in the violin section during summers with the BSO. In the same year (1969), he was selected to participate in the very first New York String Seminar, led by the inimitable Alexander Schneider. With soloists Isaac Stern (violin) and Jean Pierre Rampal (flute), this experience opened his eyes to a lofty new world of ensemble playing.

After graduating from Yale University in 1975, he joined the Boston Symphony violin section. In 1988, he won the associate concertmaster position with the Utah Symphony, which he held until 2011.

Elias also served on the faculty of the University of Utah School of Music, played first violin of the Abramyan String Quartet, and since 2004 was the music director of the *Vivaldi by Candlelight* chamber orchestra series in Salt Lake City. He also was a guest conductor of the Salt Lake Symphony. His music compositions have been performed in the Moab Music Festival (Utah) and the Pittsburgh Symphony.

In 2021, he relocated to Seattle from Salt Lake City, where he has connected with multifaceted cultural scene, including performing on a Baroque violin, and meeting with book clubs and doing book events. He looks forward to expanding his music and literary horizons both in Seattle and in his family’s little cottage in the woods in western Massachusetts, near Tanglewood.

*https://www.mysteriesandmusic.com/biography*



***Aaron Copland***

***Gerald Elias***

## Review of original Violin Sonata for Violin and Piano by Aaron Copland

**IV. Andante semplice – Allegro**
**V. Lento**
**VI. Allegretto giusto - Presto - Andante**

There is interesting information written about this work which intrigued Gerald Elias enough to orchestrate the piece. "Copland's *Violin Sonata* balances the confidence and grief of wartime," writes Eric Bromberger in the January-February 2024 issue of *Strings Magazine.* "The year 1943 found Aaron Copland in Hollywood where he completed two works—the chamber-ballet *Appalachian Spring* and the *Sonata for Violin and Piano*. They are among his finest compositions: *Appalachian Spring* won the Pulitzer Prize for Music in 1945, and the *Violin Sonata* may well be the greatest by an American composer."

Both works are peaceful and—for the most part—serene. "Copland himself called the *Violin Sonata* one of his 'most accessible' works. Yet beneath this music's seemingly simple surface runs a darker vein, touched with moments of emotion and pain. The score is dedicated to one of Copland's friends who had been shot down and killed that year in the South Pacific, and those who set out to perform this sonata must find a way to balance the light and the darkness that are both part of this sonata," continues Bromberger. Copland's *Violin Sonata* is wonderful music.

Austrian composer and conductor Anton Webern is quoted in Howard Pollack's book *Aaron Copland*, as saying Copland's "*Violin Concerto* is among the finest creations in the modern repertoire."

**What to Listen for**

**Andante semplice – Allegro**
On the surface, the structure of Copland's Violin Sonata is straightforward: a sonata-form first movement gives way to a singing slow movement, which is followed without pause by a vigorous finale.

The first movement's slow introduction, aptly marked *andante semplice*, offers a dialogue between the piano's quiet chords and the violin's five-note responses. Gradually the violin's theme-shape accelerates to become an *allegro,* and the movement is built around the contrast between these two tempos. At the movement's center comes a peaceful interlude in which the pianist answers the violinist's singing phrases with quiet cadences; one astute critic has noted that these cadences seem—both emotionally and rhythmically—to say "amen." The movement eventually slows to its opening tempo and concludes quietly.

**Lento**
The *lento*, in modified ternary form, is even simpler than the first movement. Here, very slow outer sections frame a gentle interior episode marked "tenderly"; along the way come brief reminiscences of the first movement's germinal theme-shape.

**Allegretto giusto - Presto - Andante**
Out of the quiet close, the finale bursts to life with a fiercely energetic violin cadenza. This alternates with more lyrical material until the end, where music from the sonata's very beginning is recalled. The violin's opening theme-shape now returns over fragmentary accompaniment, and the music fades into

silence on sustained chords. These are built on extremely wide intervals, and the effect at the close is of great space—and great calm.

*stringsmagazine.com/coplands-violin-sonata-balances-the-confidence-and-grief-of-wartime/*

## INTERMISSION

## Symphony No. 3 in E-Flat Major, Op. 55, "Eroica"

***Ludwig van Beethoven (1770 – 1827)***

**I. Allegro con brio**
**II. Marcia funebre: Adagio assai**
**III. Scherzo: Allegro vivace – Trio**
**IV. Finale: Allegro molto**

*This work is scored for two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, three horns, two trumpets, timpani, and strings.*

We are so pleased to be able to hear a performance of this symphony, originally planned for the time during the pandemic when all the La Crosse Symphony Orchestra live concerts were cancelled due to COVID-19.

This symphony was composed in the summer of 1803. The first public performance was given in Vienna, on April 7, 1805, with Beethoven himself conducting. Private performances had been played earlier. The dedication - after much discussion - was to Prince Lobkowitz, a generous patron of Beethoven's.

"If any single composer deserves a special chapter in the history of music, that composer is Ludwig van Beethoven," writes Joseph Kerman in his book *Listen – Brief Edition*. "Beethoven's music has enjoyed broad-based, uninterrupted popularity from his own day to the present."

"To become acquainted with this work is to understand some of the mainstream symphonic literature of the nineteenth century," writes Paul Henry Lang in *The Symphony 1800-1900, A Norton Music Anthology.* "Indeed, the home of the classical symphony as musical format was Vienna."

As mentioned earlier, Aaron Copland wrote several books about music. In *What to Listen for in Music*, Copland states that "the question of a composer's individual character is really made up of two distinct elements: the personality with which he is born and the influences of the time in which he lives."

He continues, "Take Beethoven, for example. One of the most obvious characteristics of his style is its ruggedness. He had a reputation for being a brusque and craggy individual. Yet, the early Beethoven was rugged within the limits of an eighteenth-century classical manner, whereas the mature Beethoven underwent the influence of the liberating tendencies of the nineteenth century."

"The *Eroica Symphony* is the work with which Beethoven ushered in a new style that completely and permanently changed the very nature of music," writes Jonathan D. Kramer in *Listen to the Music*. "The powerful, liberating, heroic nature of the *Third Symphony* is unmistakable."

"It is the conflict between faith and skepticism, the struggle between belief and disbelief – which Goethe described as the most important theme of world history – that creates those dynamic tensions which tend to expand and threaten to burst the bonds of form." Maynard Solomon in his book, *Beethoven*, continues, "*The Eroica* is Beethoven's elaboration of that theme in the closing hours of the Enlightenment."

The conductor and author Norman Del Mar writes "Perhaps it is worth bearing in mind that at every performance there is someone in the audience who has never heard the *Eroica* before, and for whom it should create an overwhelming impact."

> "Don't only practice your art but force your way into its secrets; for it, and knowledge, can raise men to the divine." *Ludwig van Beethoven*

"Beethoven left as rich a mass of documentary material as any composer in history," adds Maynard Soloman. "Among these materials were a large number of manuscript scores of works, both published and unpublished; a profusion of sketchbooks; his library, and the unparallel collection of four hundred Conversation Books containing the personal conversations between the deaf composer and his associates during his final decade."

Soloman continues, "It is a reasonable assumption, then, that Beethoven wished us to know something more about him than a mere chronology of his life and work. He wanted understanding as well. As an artist and as a man, he knew the healing power of communication."

"Ludwig van Beethoven was born into a family of court musicians in Bonn," writes Soloman. "He was baptized on December 17, 1770, and was probably born on December 15 or 16. Beethoven's admiration for his grandfather – for whom he was named – bordered on hero worship; the resulting desire to emulate the Kapellmeister – his grandfather's occupation – remained with him throughout his life. He carried a childlike reverence for his grandfather. Ludwig the elder was the most powerful force in Bonn's musical life."

When Beethoven was about four or five years old, he started to study the piano (clavier) and the violin with his father, Johann. "He was a tiny boy, standing on a little footstool in front of the clavier," states Soloman. "Johann rejoiced in his son's accomplishments as a pianist and invited music lovers in Bonn and at the court to hear the boy play at his apartment – with an admission charge. In 1778, he presented him in a concert in Cologne. It seems possible that Johann's goal was to train his son as a competent court musician," adds Soloman.

'While Beethoven wasn't learning very much in school, the center of Beethoven's life was his music, which occupied virtually all his waking hours. He later told his student, Carl Czerny, that he practiced 'prodigiously,' usually until well past midnight perfecting the technique which was to mark him as one of

the outstanding keyboard virtuosos of his day," continues Soloman. "He continued studying the piano with other musicians outside his home, as well as the organ, the violin, and horn."

One of the serious works for keyboard that he studied was *The Well-Tempered Clavier* of Johann Sebastian Bach. This work consists of two sets of preludes and fugues in all 24 major and minor keys for keyboard. He learned all about the fugue (something like a round) in these pieces which are written in every key (think 12 major keys and 12 minor keys). Then as a boy of 11 or 12 years of age, he started studying composition with Christian Gottlob Neefe, the German composer, organist, and conductor who came to Bonn. Neefe became Beethoven's only significant composition teacher.

After he turned 20 years old, Beethoven's career as a musician began to establish itself. He became an assistant court organist and played in an orchestra. He then began his "first period" as a composer. This was a time when the music of the Classical Era of Mozart and Haydn was transitioning into the more complex Romantic period. Yet, Classical Era music had showed simplicity in music history because the earlier Baroque Period (in which Bach excelled) with its compound fugues – which, remember, Beethoven studied as a young student of the keyboard – and advanced harmonic and polyphonic forms, for instance, was highly complex.

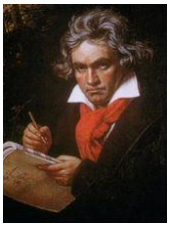
Beethoven was on the forefront of reintroducing some Baroque techniques such as the fugue which we will hear in the 2nd movement of *Symphony No. 3*.

**What to Listen For**

*Symphony No. 3* begins with two forceful forte chords. "They set key and tempo as well as giving us an idea of the character of the music," writes Michael Steinberg in his book, *The Symphony*. "This is followed by a melody which simply presents the notes of the chord individually," continues Jonathan D. Kramer in *Listen to the Music*. It is a fabulous symphony. "The boldness of Beethoven's writing for the horn section shows fascinating imagination throughout the work," adds Norman Del Mar. Just listen to the horns!!

"The Funeral March, which forms the second movement, is a portrayal of death," writes Maynard Solomon. "It is concerned with the death of a hero as written on the symphony's title page – *to celebrate the memory of a great man*." "The oboe now takes up the melody," adds Del Mar. "A poignant fugue continues to its shattering climax," writes Kramer. Following the last chord is a long pause before the *Scherzo* continues.

The third movement, *Scherzo*, contributes an enormous vitality that comes from wonderfully inventive rhythms. No audience member will forget the famous, awesome horn trio fanfare which is exhilarating. Best of all, the horn fanfare repeats!! Lastly, the originality of the finale lies in its form. It starts as a series of variations on a simple theme, which becomes the bass line of a more melodic theme.



***Ludwig van Beethoven***