

Season Concert 1

Strings in Motion

Featuring **The Nittany Ballet**

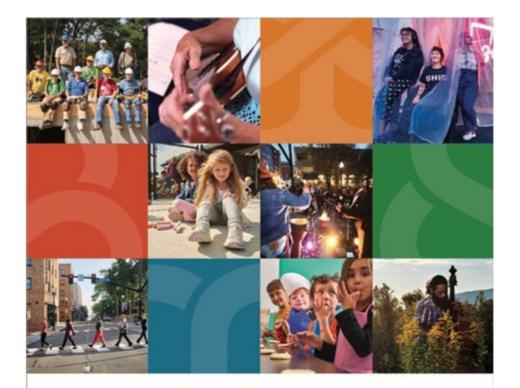
September 14, 2025 3:00pm Penn State Recital Hall

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Our Music Director

Gerardo Edelstein

A native of Argentina, Maestro Gerardo Edelstein has conducted symphonic music, opera, and choral works in Europe, Asia, South America, and the United States. Audiences, musicians, and press alike continuously praise him for his sensitive, charismatic, and energetic performances.

This season marks his third as the music director of the Pennsylvania Chamber Orchestra. Maestro Edelstein has also been music director/conductor of the Williamsport Symphony Orchestra for fifteen years and under his leadership, the orchestra has reached new artistic heights and secured financial stability.

In addition, he is director of orchestral studies, music director of the Philharmonic and Chamber Orchestras and music director of the Penn's Woods Music Festival at the Pennsylvania State University. Under his leadership, Penn State Orchestras have toured in Spain and performed in Carnegie Hall, the Kimmel Center, and Heinz Hall. For the 50th Anniversary of the College of Arts and Architecture, Maestro Edelstein conducted Leonard Bernstein's Mass.

Edelstein was principal conductor of the Jerusalem Oratorio Choir and Orchestra in Israel, leading the orchestra in radio and television appearances and touring throughout the country. In the United States, he served as assistant conductor, associate conductor, and music advisor for the Richmond Symphony in Virginia conducting a variety of performances. Under his leadership, the American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers (ASCAP) awarded the symphony first prize for innovative music programming awarded in 2000.

Other conducting engagements have brought him to Israel, the Czech Republic, Ukraine, Brazil. In the United States, he has conducted the Houston Chamber Orchestra, the Houston Ballet, the San Antonio Metropolitan Ballet, the Pennsylvania Chamber Chorale and Orchestra, and the Kalamazoo, Williamsport and San Antonio symphonies.



Over an illustrious career, Maestro Edelstein has performed with internationally renowned artists including Joyce DiDonato, Rachel Barton Pine, Jorge Maria Osorio, Randy Newman, and Dianne Schurr.

Committed to the education of young musicians, Maestro Edelstein has served as clinician and guest conductor for many orchestra festivals in Virginia, Texas, Vermont, Michigan, New York, Connecticut and Pennsylvania. He has also collaborated with the San Antonio Symphony and the Pittsburgh Symphony in side-by-side concerts. He has presented masterclasses and conducting workshops in the United States, Argentina, Israel, Brazil and Turkey.

Maestro Edelstein graduated with high honors from the National Conservatory of Music in Buenos Aires (piano) and studied choral conducting at the J. J. Castro Conservatory of La Lucila, Argentina. He continued his education in Israel at the Jerusalem Rubin Academy of Music where he won the Leonard Bernstein Conducting Scholarship awarded by the American/Israel Cultural Foundation. In the United States, he received a master's degree in orchestral conducting from the Shepherd School of Music at Rice University. His teachers included Mendi Rodan, Helmuth Rilling, and Larry Rachleff, among others.

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Our Guest Artists

The Nittany Ballet

Paul Gibson, Artistic Director

Dancers: Luisa Becker, Anabelle Morales, Lisel Perles-LeClear, & Ryder Cunningham

Choreography: Paul Gibson, Rebecca Maciejczyk, & Jennifer Muccitelli

Nittany Ballet, the PASCP Dance Division, is the preeminent classical ballet school in central PA. From our tiniest dancers to our most advanced dancers, we provide top-quality training based in solid technique and an understanding of child development and informed by dance science. Our outstanding faculty bring their immense knowledge and experience into the classroom. In addition to developing beautiful dancers, we are also fostering the next generation of arts lovers and nurturing strong, empathetic, hardworking community members.



We believe that, in the "joyful pursuit of excellence," students build life skills such as perseverance, time management, leadership, team play, goal-setting, and more. This is evident in the many achievements of our students in their academic classrooms, school-related extracurriculars, and achievements in the ballet world. Many of our students earn admission and scholarships to prestigious year-round & summer programs around the world as well as going on to have professional careers.







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Strings in Motion

Novelette, Op. 52 No. 1 in A Major

Samuel Coleridge-Taylor

(1875 - 1912)

5 minutes

Danses concertantes

In collaboration with the Nittany Ballet

I. Marche-introduction

II. Pas d'action

III. Thème varié

IV. Pas de deaux

V. Marche-conclusion

Igor Stravinsky

Intermission

Serenade for Strings in C Major, Op. 48

Piotr I. Tchaikovsky

(1840 - 1893)

I. Pezzo in forma di Sonatina

II. Walzer

III. Elégie

IV. Finale (Tema Russo)

28 minutes

Smoking is not permitted in any of the School of Music facilities. Food and beverages are not permitted in the audience seating area. Live streaming sponsored by PNC and produced by CW Studios.









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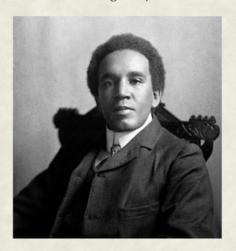
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Noveletten No. 1 Opus 52Samuel Coleridge-Taylor



Samuel Coleridge-Taylor was one of the most celebrated and prominent British composers of his time, yet he remains relatively unknown to most modern audiences due to his mixed race heritage and the historical overlooking of music written by composers of color. Born in London in 1875 to a father from Sierra Leone and a British mother, Coleridge-Taylor displayed an early talent for music when he began learning violin from his grandfather. At age 15, he was accepted into the Royal College of Music where he began studying composition with Charles Villiers Stanford.

Coleridge-Taylor found early success at the Three Rivers Choir Festival in England in 1898. At the recommendation of fellow composer Edward Elgar, Coleridge-Taylor was commissioned for an orchestral work, and the Ballade in A minor that he wrote was a runaway success with audiences and critics alike.

Inspired by that success, Coleridge-Taylor next composed a cantata (a work for choir and orchestra based on a secular text, and the first in what would become a trilogy of cantatas) based on Longfellow's poem The Song of Hiawatha, which catapulted him into further success in England and now across the Atlantic in the United States. In America, Coleridge-Taylor became a celebrated figure, representing Black artistic excellence in a field where few composers with similar backgrounds were able to find the success that he had. In 1904, Coleridge-Taylor visited the United States and was invited to meet President Theodore Roosevelt at the White House.

Throughout his professional and personal life, Coleridge-Taylor was involved in the ongoing racial struggles of the time: in 1900 he attended the first Pan-African Conference in London (where he met W.E.B Du Bois) and he also wrote a variety of works that incorporated traditional African spirituals and folk songs into symphonic forms, inspired by Brahms' use of Hungarian melodies or Dvořák's incorporation of Bohemian folk music into many large-scale symphonic forms.

The 2025-26 PCO concert season is nicknamed "Novelletten" after Coleridge-Taylor's compositions of the same name. On each of our concerts, we've programmed a movement (or two) from this set, written for strings, tambourine and triangle. Composed in 1901–02 and most likely inspired by a set of short piano works of the same name written by Schumann in 1838, each *Novelletten* is a musical miniature that explores expressive romantic ideals. *Novelletten* No.1 opens with an exciting statement from the full orchestra which gives way to a playful, waltz-like main theme.

Danses ConcertantesIgor Stravinsky with the Nittany Ballet



In 1939, Igor Stravinsky left France shortly after the outbreak of World War II and moved to the United States, where he would spend the rest of his life. He settled in Los Angeles, where many other musicians fleeing the war moved and had found success creating music for Hollywood. Though he and his second wife Vera initially struggled with their finances and a significant language barrier, the two were eventually able to embed themselves into Hollywood's social circles of artists, celebrities and authors.

In 1941, Stravinsky was commissioned by American composer and conductor Werner Janssen to write *Danses Concertantes* for the Werner Janssen Symphony, an ensemble Janssen created in 1940 in Los Angeles and which championed new music. The work is a concert ballet suite, containing five individual movements of carefully crafted dance music; though not originally intended to be set to choreography, Stravinsky's longtime collaborator Balanchine staged the first dance production in 1944.

Stravinsky conducted the Janssen Symphony in the premiere in February, 1942. Throughout each of the movements, Stravinsky looks to the concerto grosso genre for inspiration, where passages written for the full orchestra are balanced with smaller groups of solo instruments.

Marche - Introduction - A proud and playful march, replete with Stravinsky's trademark rhythmic accents which displace a traditional sense of steady beat and propels the music in quirky and unexpected ways.

Pas d'action - Stravinsky maintains the high energy of the opening movement and adds a touch of playful mischievousness by alternating the opening idea with several episodes with solo strings and winds. The final note held by the clarinet carries over into the beginning of the following movement.

Thème varié - The heldover clarinet note from the second movement transforms in a gentle and serene theme presented by the woodwinds. Stravinsky takes the theme and subjects it to four variations, which shift in mood from tranquil to playful, with a touch of jazzy swing in the middle.

Pas de Deux - Stravinsky uses solo flute and clarinet extensively in this movement, with its gentle melodies set against a quiet yet almost always constant rhythmic drive from the orchestra's lower voices.

Marche - Conclusion - A reprise of the opening material but altered to bring the work to an ecstatic close.

Serenade for StringsPiotr I. Tchaikovksy



In late 1880, Tchaikovsky produced two compositions that could not have been more different. The first was the 1812 Overture-a bombastic commemoration of Russia's victory over France in the earlier part of the century, and infamous to listeners in modern times for its inclusion of a battery of cannons as a percussion instrument. The second was the Serenade for Strings, a piece bursting to life with sunshine and great emotional depth, which closes today's program. Of the two, Tchaikovsky wrote in a letter "The 1812 Overture will be very showy and noisy, but will have no artistic merit because I wrote it without love. But the Serenade, on the contrary, I wrote from inner compulsion. This is a piece from the heart, and so I venture to say it does not lack artistic worth."

In fact, the Serenade was one of Tchaikovsky's favorite works from the moment of its completion. "I just love this serenade terribly, and I'm dying for it to see the light of day as soon as possible," he wrote to his publisher, and it seems that the process of completing the work helped lift the composer's spirits after one of the most turbulent periods in his life. A few years earlier, Tchaikovsky-who struggled with the secret of his homosexuality his entire life-entered a doomed marriage with former student Antonia Miliukova to quell any suspicions about his personal life and assure his standing in proper society. But the sham proved too much. On his wedding night, Tchaikovsky fled his wife and walked into the Moskva River. Afterwards, Tchaikovsky traveled to Italy with his brother on recommendation from a doctor to heal from the episode. It was after this trip that Tchaikovsky began sketching the Serenade, admitting to his friend and patroness Nadezhda von Meck that composing the work invigorated his mood and shook him from his "indefinable melancholy."

After completing the score in October 1880, a surprise private performance was given at the Moscow Conservatory by Tchaikovsky's fellow professors and students. The public premiere was given a year later on October 30, 1881 in St. Petersburg. Cast in four movements, a typical performance takes around 30 minutes.

(cont'd on next page)

Pezzo in forma di sonatina - Tchaikovsky turned to Mozart for inspiration for the Serenade, especially in the opening movement, which opens with a grand and noble chorale in a slow tempo—like the slow introduction of a classical-era symphony. This gives way to a soaring and sparkling faster section in a buoyant 6/8 meter, which lilts along with propulsive energy. The faster themes are developed and set in contrasting moods which evoke dark storm clouds, but not before the sun breaks through and the chorale-like opening comes back to draw the movement to a close.

Waltz - As graceful and poised as any waltz Tchaikovsky wrote, this movement of the Serenade is often performed as a standalone piece.

Élégie: Larghetto elegiaco - The third movement serves as the emotional heart of the Serenade, filled with tender and soaring melodies shared by the whole orchestra.

Finale (Tema russo): Andante — Allegro con spirito - The finale opens with another slow introduction, with a heldover note from the third movement becoming the basis of this material. This gives way to a joyous dance full of vivacious and lifeaffirming energy. After a brief appearance from the work's opening chorale, the Serenade closes in a flurry of energy.

Progam notes by Michael Divino.

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Upcoming Concerts



Holiday Concert

Friday, December 19, 2025 | 7:30pm Penn State Recital Hall

Celebrate sounds of the holidays with the PCO. Come sing along to your favorite music of the season, from Handel's Messiah (Part I) to your favorite carols. This concert is sure to fuel your holiday spirit!

Season Concert 2

Romantic Reflections

Sunday, January 18, 2026 | 3:00pm Penn State Recital Hall

Our storytelling season continues with performances of Coleridge-Taylor's Noveletten Nos. 2 and 3, as well as Saint-Saëns's dazzling Piano Concerto No. 2 featuring **Katherine Benson**. We conclude with Brahms's majestic Haydn variations. A thrilling blend of elegance, virtuosity, and orchestral brilliance awaits!





Upcoming Concerts



Season Concert 3

Fantastical Classical Tales

Sunday, May 3, 2026 | 3:00pm Penn State Recital Hall

Delight in a rich musical tapestry featuring Ravel's enchanting Ma Mère l'Oye, Andrés Martín's soulful Bass Concerto featuring **Patricia Weitze**l, Coleridge-Taylor's lyrical Novelette No. 4, and Mozart's triumphant Jupiter Symphony. You won't want to miss this captivating blend of storytelling, skill, and classicism, as we close our season with the crowning achievement of classical symphonic writing!



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Saturday, March 28, 2026 | 11:00am Good Shepherd Catholic Church

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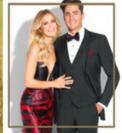












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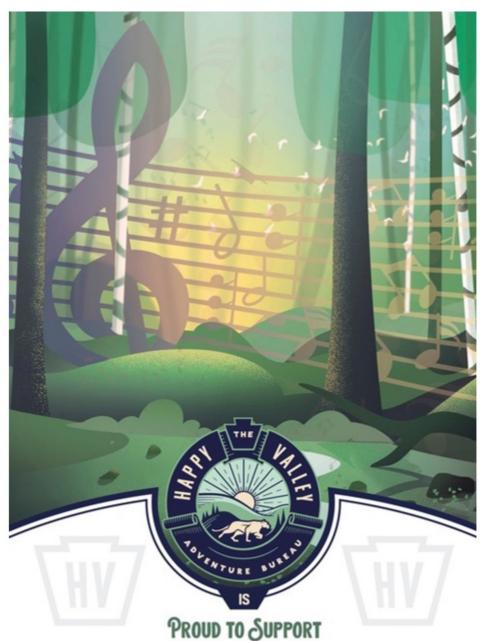


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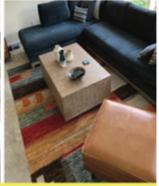
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- 24/7 Emergency Care
- QCare Walk-In Care
- Family Medicine
- Orthopedics and Sports Medicine
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