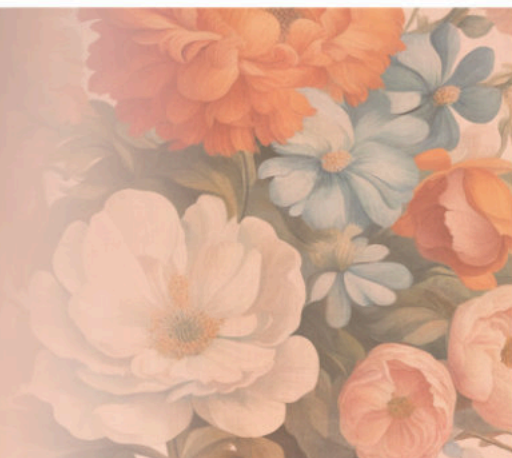


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Early morning mist over the Appalachian mountains

May 8, 2026

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May 8, 2026
Martingrove Collegiate

Matthew Jones Music Director

Florence Price

Piano Concerto in One Movement

Andantino – Adagio cantabile – Allegretto

Luke Welch, Piano

Aaron Copland

Appalachian Spring Suite

INTERMISSION

Ludwig van Beethoven

Symphony #6 in F major, Op. 68 "**Pastoral**"

*Awakening of happy feelings upon reaching
the countryside.*

Allegro ma non troppo

Scene at the brook.

Andante molto moto

Cheerful gathering of the country folk.

Allegro

Thunderstorm.

Allegro

*Shepherd's song. Happy, grateful feelings
after the storm.*

Allegretto



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MATTHEW JONES *Music Director*

Matthew completed his first season with us in May 2019.

A vibrant and enthusiastic conductor, Matthew is also a cellist and recorder player. For 15 years, he was the Music Director of the Timmins Symphony Orchestra. During his tenure, he also founded the Timmins Symphony Chorus.

He has been a guest conductor with the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony, Mississauga Symphony, Georgian Bay Symphony, Sault Saint Marie Symphony and the North Bay Symphony. Matthew continues to conduct the KWYO (Kitchener-Waterloo Youth Orchestra), helping to ensure the future of classical music in Ontario. It's a way of underlining his commitment to the future of music in Ontario!



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In addition to conducting, Matthew has a passion for teaching cello, recorder and theory to students from beginners through to advanced. He is a past board member of Orchestras Canada, the national voice of the Canadian orchestral community.

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TONIGHT'S PERFORMER

Award-winning Canadian pianist **LUKE WELCH** was born in Toronto, grew up in Mississauga, and played his first public performance at age seven. He graduated from University of Western Ontario in London with Bachelor and Master of Music degrees and completed additional graduate studies at Codarts Rotterdam University for the Arts in the Netherlands.



Welch made his debut as soloist with Durham Chamber Orchestra and has since collaborated with a number of local orchestras including the Windsor Symphony Orchestra, Mumbles Symphony Orchestra, Toronto Concert Orchestra, Winchmore String Orchestra, Greenway Strings, York Chamber Ensemble and Oakville Symphony Youth Orchestra.

He has performed extensively on the international stage with appearances in Canada, United States, the Netherlands, Germany, Belgium, France, Italy, England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales and New Zealand.

Welch is a highly sought after performer who has quickly emerged as an internationally recognized leading figure in promoting and recording repertoire of Black and BIPOC composers, including Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, R. Nathaniel Dett, Florence B. Price, Tom Wiggins and other preeminent composers of colour.

In addition to his performance commitments, he has also been highly sought after as an interdisciplinary collaborative pianist.

Welch's recordings have received international critical acclaim, and his performances have been broadcast extensively across Canada and internationally and been featured on CBC's *In Concert Album of the Week*. He is also active as a podcaster and was named the 2018 recipient of the Harry Jerome Arts Award. In addition, he has written contributions to the *Globe and Mail*, *Wholenote Magazine* and *La Scena Musicale Magazine*.

Welch serves on the Faculty of Piano at York University in Toronto, and was appointed as a piano instructor at the Royal Conservatory of Music's Oscar Peterson Program in its 2022 inaugural season.

PROGRAM NOTES

Florence B. Price (1899 – 1953) *Piano Concerto in One Movement*

The genius of Florence Price, lost to history for decades after her death in 1953, is justly being revived as 21st century audiences discover her remarkable life and boundary-breaking career. Price was saddled with classical music's double prejudices against women and African Americans. An accomplished pianist, she had to earn a living playing theater organ.



Despite the acclaim her work enjoyed during her lifetime, Florence Price became a footnote to 20th century music until a miraculous discovery occurred in 2009, when a derelict house outside of Chicago – later determined to have been her vacation home – was found to contain hundreds of her lost manuscripts... but, not the piano concerto. That turned up only in 2019 at a private auction. Happily, publisher G. Schirmer eventually purchased the entire extant Price catalog and her genius is now attracting the attention it rightfully deserves.

Price writes in a late-Romantic aesthetic – full and passionate, with a knowing eye for tradition and innovation. The first section startles us with a Lisztian cadenza that unexpectedly breaks in after only nine measures of orchestral introduction; Price makes sure from the start there's no missing the virtuosic piano-writing. The third movement is another surprise: as in many traditional concertos, it's in a lively dance rhythm, here not a jig but a juba, an African form related to the rag.

Price performed the concerto only once, in a 1934 performance at the Chicago Musical College. The work demonstrates a masterful weaving of Price's sophisticated and elegant talent for orchestration with her delightful creative exploration of African American musical themes and spirituals. Garnering great acclaim, the work was performed in multiple venues around the region.

Aaron Copland (1900 – 1990) *Suite from Appalachian Spring*

Aaron Copland had long admired the innovative artistry of American dancer Martha Graham, who in 1931 had

choreographed the dance solo *Dithyrambic* to the composer's Piano Variations. Over a decade later, in 1942, an opportunity finally arose for the two of them to collaborate – a commission by the eminent music patron Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge for a half-hour-long ballet. Copland worked on the score, originally for 13 instruments, over the next two years; in 1944, the ballet, entitled *Appalachian Spring* which Graham had taken from a poem by Hart Crane, was premiered at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. A critical success, it won the Pulitzer Prize and the New York Music Critics' Circle Award the following year. Six months after the ballet's premiere, Copland arranged the music into a suite for orchestra, which was first performed by the New York Philharmonic in October 1945. It is in this form that *Appalachian Spring* is best known today.

Through his distinctive application of modernist elements such as static harmonies, extended tonality, and cross rhythms, Copland evokes in the music of *Appalachian Spring* a certain character of life in rural America – specifically, its spaciousness, simplicity, and down-to-earth quality drawn from American pastoral mythology as well as Anglo-American folk music.



The Suite consists of eight sections, which progress without break. Below is the ballet's synopsis, for context, followed by the composer's individual descriptions of each section of the Suite:

"A pioneer celebration in spring around a newly built farmhouse in the Pennsylvania hills in the early part of the last century. The bride-to-be and the young farmer-husband enact the emotions, joyful and apprehensive, which their new domestic partnership invites. An old neighbour suggests, now and then, the rocky confidence of experience. A revivalist and his followers remind the new householders of the strange and terrible aspects of human fate. At the end the couple are left quiet and strong in their new house.

1. *Very slowly*. Introduction of the characters, one by one, in a suffused light.
2. *Fast*. Sudden burst of unison strings in A-major arpeggios starts the action. A sentiment both elated and religious gives the

keynote to this scene.

3. *Moderate*. Duo for the Bride and her Intended – scene of tenderness and passion.

4. *Quite fast*. The Revivalist and his flock. Folksy feelings – suggestions of square dances and country fiddlers.

5. *Still faster*. Solo dance of the Bride – presentiment of motherhood. Extremes of joy and fear and wonder.

6. *Very slowly (as at first)*. Transition scene reminiscent of the introduction.

7. *Calm and flowing*. Scenes of daily activity for the Bride and her Farmer-husband. There are five variations on a Shaker theme. The theme, sung by a solo clarinet, was taken from a collection of Shaker melodies. The melody borrowed and used almost literally is called “Simple Gifts.”

8. *Moderate. Coda*. The Bride takes her place among her new neighbours. At the end the couple are left “quiet and strong in their new house.” Muted strings intone a hushed prayerlike chorale passage. The close is reminiscent of the opening music.”

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770 – 1827)

Symphony No. 6 in F Major, Op. 68, “Pastoral”

When Beethoven comes to mind, one may think first of monumental power and even violent ferocity, but the *Pastoral Symphony* offers a very different glimpse of the composer. Beethoven had reason to feel ferocious, having tasted more than his fair share of disarray and anguish in his life. Of principal concern was the loss of his hearing that had begun by late 1802 – a great adversity for anyone, but a catastrophe for a musician. In the six years since, his deafness had increased dramatically.

Add to his personal challenges the nervous political climate that surrounded him: Vienna had been occupied by Napoleon’s troops since November 1805, and the civic restlessness would erupt into violence within months of the *Pastoral Symphony*’s premiere.

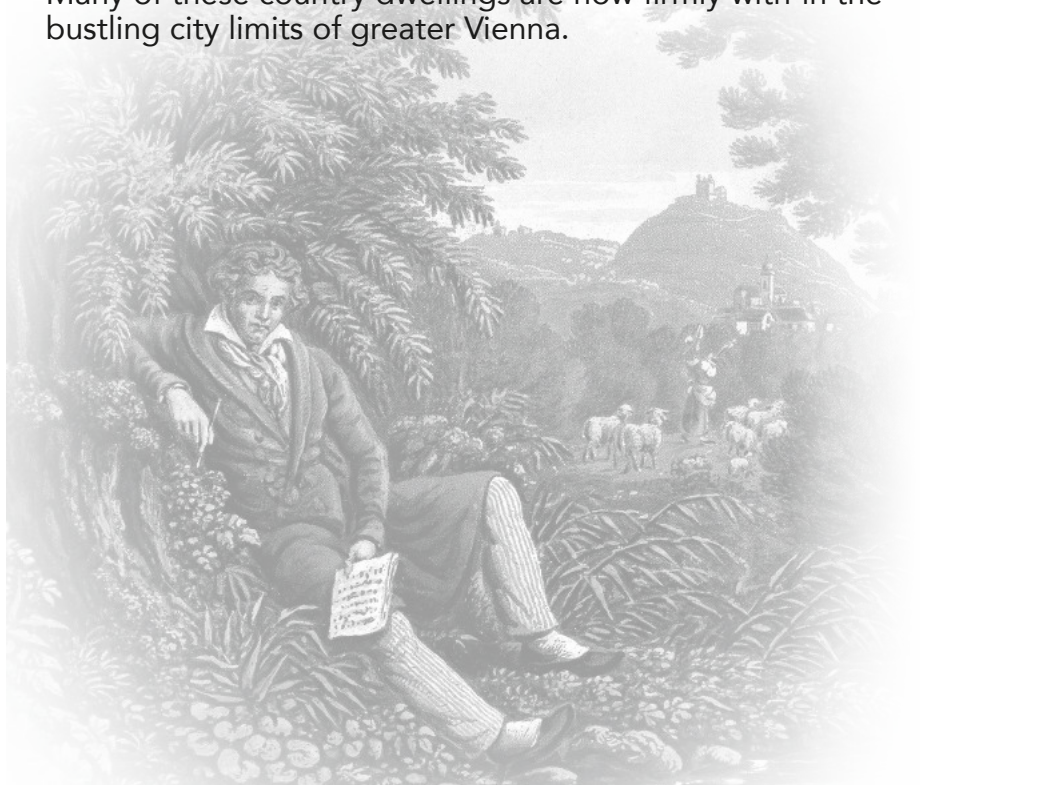
It is interesting to note that much of Beethoven’s work on his Sixth Symphony was accomplished at the same time he was completing his Fifth. They are in such contrast: the Fifth being dark and driven, while the Sixth offers a very different insight into Beethoven.

Beethoven himself conducted the first performance on December 22, 1808, in Vienna. Even by nineteenth-century standards, the historic concert was something of an endurance test. That night, Beethoven conducted the premieres of both his Fifth and Pastoral Symphonies, played his Fourth Piano Concerto

(conducting from the keyboard); and rounded out the program with the *Gloria* and the *Sanctus* from the *Mass in C*; the concert aria *Ah! perfido*; improvisations at the keyboard, and the *Choral Fantasy*, written in great haste at the last moment as a grand finale!

A programmatic work was not a novel idea, but offering the experience more novelly as in Beethoven's own words: "Pastoral Symphony – more an expression of feeling than painting," was indeed a more innovative offering. Nonetheless, tone-painting and "situations to discover" exist bountifully in this symphony, and Beethoven clearly condoned the use of the title *Pastoral*. Appreciation of the lovingly detailed scenery and expressed feelings, as well as their abstract underpinnings, are one and the same, since Beethoven made them completely interactive.

From a more nostalgic point of view, the City of Vienna we think of today is a far cry from the Vienna that Beethoven knew. Beethoven was well known to be constantly on the move, spending the summer months in the country where he encountered many of the inspirations for this beautiful Symphony. In 1808 alone, he hung his hat at no fewer than four addresses. Many of these country dwellings are now firmly with-in the bustling city limits of greater Vienna.





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 Kasthuri
 Theivendirarajah

VIOLIN 2

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 Ania Kordiuk
 Isidora Kunovac
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 Pat Shand
 Ionel Stoica

Vishwa

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