

# Juilliard Wind Orchestra



Juilliard

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Photo by Erin Baiano

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The Juilliard School  
presents

# Juilliard Wind Orchestra

William Short, Conductor

Sunday, October 1, 2023, 3pm  
Paul Hall

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN  
(1770–1827)

Octet in E-flat Major, Op. 103 (1792)  
Allegro  
Andante  
Menuetto  
Presto

ELEANOR ALBERGA  
(b. 1949)

*Nightscape* (1993)

*Performance time: approximately 45 minutes, without an intermission*

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Please make certain that all electronic devices are turned off during the performance. The taking of photographs and the use of recording equipment are not permitted in this auditorium.

# Notes on the Program

By Carys Sutherland

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## LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN

### Octet in E-flat Major

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**Ludwig Van  
Beethoven**

**Born:**

December 17, 1770,  
in Bonn, Germany

**Died:**

March 26, 1827,  
in Vienna

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Social events are usually accompanied by two things: food and music. A quintessential part of hosting a contemporary dinner party is a frantic search on Spotify for the perfect background playlist. Our modern subconscious minds love the ambience of gentle jazz, but if you were an 18th-century aristocrat, your parties would be full of Tafelmusik.

Tafelmusik, literally meaning “table music,” was a genre meant to provide light entertainment and amusement at hunts, feasts, and other noble events. Nowadays we may think of “background music” as a pejorative term, but there’s a charm to this tradition that’s somewhat been lost to time. The art of this style lies in disguising complex compositional techniques under a gauzy veil of cheer and frivolity. A specific type of Tafelmusik ensemble that was immensely popular in the 18th century was Harmonie, or wind band. Typically consisting of pairs of horns, bassoons, oboes, and later clarinets, this instrumentation became standard due to the close friendship of two men: Mozart and Joseph II, Holy Roman Emperor. Being intertwined with court politics as it was, Tafelmusik was a lucrative pursuit for many young composers seeking stable employment, and Beethoven, as the descendant of a musical family, would have been surrounded by it from childhood.

The Octet in E-flat Major, Op. 103, was written in 1792, when Beethoven was only 21, despite its high opus number (it was published posthumously in 1834). Beethoven was still living in his hometown, Bonn, as a violist in the court orchestra. His career would take off less than a year later, when he moved to Vienna to study under Haydn, but at this point young Ludwig’s genius was still bubbling on the stove. It may seem hard to reconcile the sparkle of this Octet with the stormy late string quartets or colossal Ninth Symphony, but it paints a portrait of the legendary composer at a young age, full of possibility and not yet distressed by deafness and poor health.

Beethoven experienced a bout of self-doubt in his late teens, when he is believed to have abandoned composition for some years after poor reviews on early pieces. It’s very possible that the themes of this Octet were bouncing around his mind during this time, and after: Beethoven later reworked this piece into his String Quintet, Op. 4. The Octet is a musical snapshot of adolescence, of the walking contradiction of proud and insecure that all teenagers are. Beethoven’s late works may have immortalized him, but his early works humanize him. This piece marks his crossing from former child prodigy to superstar in the making.

Despite his youth, Beethoven writes deftly for the Harmonie, with a deep understanding of what makes each instrument shine. The spotlight in the first movement is shared among bouncy oboe melodies, soulful bassoon

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countermelodies, and singing clarinet responses. Listen for the unusually virtuosic passages in the horns that make this a bucket-list piece for many players. The sparse, lilting *Andante* features the oboe and bassoon in solo roles. While *Tafelmusik* was not explicitly intended for dance, this barcarolle rhythm easily evokes the swishing of gowns upon floors. The third movement is a scherzo in minuet's clothing that seems to be foreshadowing the fast inner movements from his symphonies, particularly *Eroica*. The minuet is built upon a simple four-note motif: perhaps a predecessor to the Fifth Symphony? It's in moments like this that the illusion of simplicity cracks and Beethoven's maturity reveals itself, an outline of the composer he will come to be.

The clarinets steal the show in the final movement, a brief little rondo with arpeggios all the way home. Beethoven ushers us to the door and bids us goodnight with a wink. The party is over, but we depart with light hearts and full bellies, waiting eagerly for our next invitation. What will he come up with next?

## ELEANOR ALBERGA

### *Nightscape*

When we think of nighttime in New York City, we think of the inanimate: lights, cars, concrete, metal. We are serenaded by human and mechanical sounds, but not so much by nature. Yet evenings in Jamaica in the 1950s, where Eleanor Alberga grew up, would have been quite the opposite. Take the title of this piece's second movement—"Cicadas, tree-frogs, crickets, party-goers, geckos, dogs, burglars, and other nocturnal creatures"—as a sign that you're in for a ride. In *Nightscape*, Alberga brings to life every contradiction of nighttime: the blurry line between waking and sleeping, between thrill and threat, and how the darkness confuses friends with foes. The wind orchestra is transformed into a chorus of insects and animals scurrying around in the shadows, both whimsical and unsettling.

Eleanor Alberga, who was originally trained as a classical pianist, won a scholarship in 1970 to attend the Royal Academy of Music in England, where she has been based ever since. It was not until 2001 that her career transitioned away from piano, but she has since made a name for herself as a preeminent contemporary composer in the U.K., where her music is most frequently performed. She has cited Messiaen and Bartók as major influences, but her music is not only informed by her classical training. She spent time as a guitarist with the Jamaican Folk Singers and many years as a rehearsal pianist for the London Contemporary Dance Theatre. The driving rhythmic energy behind her compositions stems from a deep understanding of modern dance and Afro-Caribbean musical traditions.

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**Eleanor Alberga**

**Born:**  
September 30, 1949,  
in Kingston, Jamaica

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## Notes on the Program (Continued)

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*Nightscape*, originally written in 1993, went largely unplayed until 2020, when it was revised and revitalized. It is scored for an unusual combination of oboes, bassoons, clarinets, basset horns, French horns, and double bass—the same instrumentation used by Mozart in his *Gran Partita*, to which this work is a modern companion piece. Mozart's metropolitan swagger is beautifully contrasted by Alberga's steadily building frenzy of jazzy rhythms and insect calls. *Nightscape* is like a window cracked open, bringing the wild inside.

The first movement is a portrait of the sunset and all the feelings that may evoke: for some, peace and drowsiness, while for others, excitement at what the night has in store. Dexterous clarinet parts are accompanied by grating stopped horn and bouncy bassoon.

The second movement, as the title suggests, is the heart of the piece's whimsy and playfulness. It's pure fun in every sense, nonsensical and a little bit manic, like the *Alice in Wonderland* of classical music. Listen for what can only be described as a chorus of howling neighborhood dogs and the constant underlying buzz of cicadas in the clarinets.

*French horn player Carys Sutherland is in the final year of her bachelor's studies at Juilliard.*

## About William Short

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William Short was appointed principal bassoon of the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra in 2012. He served in the same capacity with the Delaware Symphony Orchestra and is a founding member of the Gotham Wind Quintet. A dedicated teacher, Short serves on the faculties of Juilliard, Manhattan School of Music, and Temple University as well as the Verbier Festival and Interlochen Arts Camp. He has presented classes at colleges and conservatories around the country and at conferences of the International Double Reed Society, for which he serves as an officer. Short has also performed and taught at the Lake Champlain, Lake Tahoe, Mostly Mozart, Stellenbosch (South Africa), Strings, and Twickenham festivals. He is an occasional editor and composer whose works have been published by the Theodore Presser Company and TrevCo-Varner Music. Short received his bachelor's from the Curtis Institute of Music, where he studied with Daniel Matsukawa and Bernard Garfield, and his master's at Rice University's Shepherd School of Music, where he studied with Benjamin Kamins.



# Juilliard Orchestra

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Juilliard's largest and most visible student performing ensemble, the Juilliard Orchestra is known for delivering polished and passionate performances of works spanning the repertoire. Comprising more than 375 students in the bachelor's and master's degree programs, the orchestra appears throughout the season in concerts on the stages of Juilliard's Peter Jay Sharp Theater, Alice Tully Hall, and Carnegie Hall. The orchestra is a strong partner to Juilliard's other divisions, appearing in opera, dance, and drama productions as well as presenting an annual concert of world premieres by Juilliard student composers. This season, an impressive roster of world-renowned conductors lead the Juilliard Orchestra, including John Adams, Marin Alsop, Joseph Colaneri, JoAnn Falletta, Ken-David Masur, Tito Muñoz, Nimrod David Pfeffer, Donald Runnicles, Jörg Widmann, and Thomas Wilkins as well as faculty conductors David Robertson, the director of conducting studies and distinguished visiting faculty, and Jeffrey Milarsky. Among the virtual projects students from the orchestra participated in during the 2020 lockdown was *Bohero Juilliard*, which became a viral sensation. The Juilliard Orchestra has toured across the U.S. and throughout Europe, South America, and Asia, where it was the first Western conservatory ensemble allowed to visit and perform following the opening of the People's Republic of China in 1987, returning two decades later, in 2008. In summer 2019, the orchestra traveled to London, where they performed alongside the Royal Academy of Music in Royal Albert Hall at the BBC Proms. Other ensembles under the Juilliard Orchestra umbrella include the conductorless Juilliard Chamber Orchestra, Wind Orchestra, Lab Orchestra, and contemporary music group AXIOM.



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# Juilliard Wind Orchestra

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William Short, *Conductor*

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN  
Octet in E-flat Major, Op. 103

**Oboe**

Kara Poling, *Principal*  
Jacks Pollard

**Clarinet**

Anoush Pogossian, *Principal*  
Jingrui Liu

**Bassoon**

Collin Odom, *Principal*  
Ricky Shi

**French Horn**

Emily Howell, *Principal*  
Colby Kleven

ELEANOR ALBERGA  
*Nightscape*

**Oboe**

Jacks Pollard, *Principal*  
Kara Poling

**Clarinet**

Jingrui Liu, *Principal*  
Anoush Pogossian

**E-flat Clarinet**

Anoush Pogossian

**Basset Horn**

Yingcun Jun, *Principal*  
Joshua Choi

**Bassoon**

Ricky Shi, *Principal*  
Collin Odom

**French Horn**

Drew Morgan, *Principal*  
Colby Kleven  
Emily Howell  
Brooks Wisniewski

**Double Bass**

Sami Ahn

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