



AMERICAN CLASSICS



**Danny
ELFMAN**

Violin Concerto "Eleven Eleven"

**Adolphus
HAILSTORK**

Piano Concerto No. 1

Sandy Cameron, Violin

Stewart Goodyear, Piano

Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra

JoAnn Falletta



Danny Elfman (b. 1953): Violin Concerto “Eleven Eleven”

Adolphus Hailstork (b. 1941): Piano Concerto No. 1

This album of concertos from the American vernacular brings together two contrasting yet complementary works.

Danny Elfman is a highly proficient composer of music for screen, with Oscar nominations for soundtracks to *Good Will Hunting*, *Men in Black*, *Big Fish* and *Milk*. He is also a fluent TV composer, writing memorable themes for cult series *The Simpsons* and *Desperate Housewives*. His origins are found in rock music, as songwriter and founder member of Los Angeles band Oingo Boingo in 1979. The band’s music aroused the curiosity of director Tim Burton, who made the first of many collaborations with Elfman in 1985 on music for his first feature film, *Pee-wee’s Big Adventure*. The two have worked together on more than a dozen films, notably *Batman*, *Edward Scissorhands* and *Sleepy Hollow*, while Elfman has also written soundtracks for *American Hustle*, *The Girl on the Train* and the *Fifty Shades* trilogy among many others.

Concert hall commissions have also been forthcoming, beginning with *Serenada Schizophrenica* in 2005 for the American Composers Orchestra. The ballet *Rabbit and Rogue* followed three years later for American Ballet Theatre and Orange County Performing Arts Center. Noting his strong creative response in these works, Elfman vowed to write at least one “serious” piece per year, looking to repair a perceived disconnect between classical and film music audiences. Instinctively he has arrived at a natural equilibrium where descriptive melodic content is developed within satisfying structures.

The *Violin Concerto* is the first of his works to reference classical tradition in its title. A substantial four movement piece completed in 2017, it was co-commissioned by the Czech National Symphony Orchestra and the Royal Scottish National Orchestra. Elfman wrote the work for Sandy Cameron, a violinist he met while writing for the Cirque du Soleil show *Iris* in 2011. He was quickly taken by her technical prowess and boundless creativity, writing a cadenza for her in a suite of Tim Burton-inspired works. The two worked closely on the concerto’s solo part and its increasingly virtuosic demands.

The violin is a near-constant presence, and though it is amplified Elfman calls for restraint in balancing the percussion-rich symphony orchestra, enabling the soloist to play quiet sections without feeling overexposed. The conductor of this recording, JoAnn Falletta, has noted how “the colors of the amplified solo violin bring enormous radiance and great shading and nuance to the work. In keeping with Danny’s famous *Batman* score, the piece has the definite feeling of a voyage through a dark cityscape and is a true concerto noir.”

The “*Eleven Eleven*” subtitle is a happy numerical accident, with Elfman and Cameron finding the concerto to be exactly 1,111 measures long, an unexpected and profound link to the composer’s preoccupation with the number eleven. Even his surname has numerical connections, “elf” meaning “eleven” in German.

The violin concertos of Shostakovich and Prokofiev are useful stylistic reference points, but Elfman’s writing is fiercely individual. Beginning in contemplative mood, the first movement swells from initially sparse textures, moving up several gears to *Animato* with metallic percussion in support. A passionate cadenza leads to a statement of powerful intensity and a brief period of reflection.

A flurry of activity announces the second movement. Elfman’s direction *Spietato* (“cold blooded”) is unusual, the movement featuring wide melodic intervals and energetic passagework from the soloist. The music builds to a syncopated percussion ostinato, the violin delivering increasingly frenzied statements.

The third movement is also cold to the touch, though with largely consonant harmonies. A particularly ghostly episode finds muted strings observing a devilish set of high runs from the soloist, before the dynamic drops to its quietest level yet, the violin keening against icy strings.

After a breath the finale finds renewed vigor. Tempestuous strings and bells surge forward like a wave, the violin sitting atop the texture as the concerto’s apex is reached. This is a statement of terrific power, a ritualistic dance encouraged by whooping horns. The music ends where it began, briefly musing on the events of the previous 40 minutes.

In contrast to Danny Elfman the music of Adolphus Hailstork draws from different continents, with his life as an African American and love of jazz and blues tethered to an American eclecticism, held together by a deep understanding of Western classical tradition.

Hailstork looked closely at the role of Gregorian chant in fashioning Western art music, moving on to consider the equivalent role of the spiritual as the root of African American art music. He undertook these studies before learning of Dvořák's integration of the two, and he was profoundly moved by William Grant Still's mission to write music speaking about African American existence in the United States.

From an early age Hailstork was attracted to the sound of the piano, calling the high notes the "angels" and the low notes the "devils." Supported by his mother, a singer, he started composing at the age of 16. After graduating from Howard University, Washington, he moved on to the American Conservatory at Fontainebleau in France, where he studied with Nadia Boulanger. She revolutionized both his perception of Western music and the construction of his own compositions.

Putting her teaching to good use, Hailstork has mastered a number of classical forms. These include three substantial symphonies – the first recorded by the Virginia Symphony Orchestra and JoAnn Falletta (Naxos 8.559722) and the second and third recorded by the Grand Rapids Symphony and David Lockington (Naxos 8.559295) – and a number of orchestral works drawing from spirituals and African American heritage, including *Fanfare on Amazing Grace*, performed at the inauguration of President Joe Biden in 2021.

Hailstork has simultaneously explored the piano in a solo capacity, completing three sonatas and numerous shorter works. He considered the instrument's potential as a solo instrument, though did not see himself as a natural piano concerto writer, intimidated by the illustrious history of the medium. On inspection of his *Piano Concerto No. 1*, Falletta convinced him otherwise.

The work was commissioned in 1992 by a consortium of five orchestras, led by the Virginia Symphony Orchestra. Hailstork, a close neighbor of Falletta's, had become a "composer in residence" with the VSO, placing Norfolk and Southeast Virginia on the musical map. Together they gave the first performance in 1997 with soloist Leon Bates, marking the VSO's first Carnegie Hall appearance. At this point the conductor was sufficiently moved to declare the work "one of the greatest American piano concertos since Gershwin's *Concerto in F*." Buoyed by the reception, Hailstork has since returned to the form, completing two more concertos at the time of writing.

Piano Concerto No. 1 starts with soloist and violins in unison, setting out a chantlike melody and establishing a serious tone, indicating a knowledge of both Hindemith and Britten. The music opens into wider vistas and becomes more forceful but retains a songful touch, becoming lost in thought as the movement closes.

After a brief introduction, the *Adagio* finds the solo piano extolling a beautiful and bittersweet melody. A burst of activity brings an angular profile to the keyboard writing before strings and piano resume their intensely lyrical discourse. Hailstork proceeds to a grand finale, a "barnstormer" prefaced by a brief meditation before the piano flexes its muscles, culminating in rippling passagework up and down the keyboard. A sweeping, overtly Romantic statement follows, before the emotions of the slow movement are briefly recalled. With a final flourish, the concerto drives emphatically to the finish.

Ben Hogwood

Sandy Cameron



Photo: Megan Wintory Photography

Violinist Sandy Cameron is one of the most strikingly unique and versatile artists of her generation. As a soloist, she performs extensively throughout the world, including appearances at the White Nights Festival, the Kennedy Center, David Geffen Hall, the Elbphilharmonie, and the Sydney Opera House. In 2017, Cameron gave the world premiere performance of *Eleven Eleven*, the violin concerto written for her by Danny Elfman. In 2018, she recorded the piece for Sony Classical with John Mauceri and the Royal Scottish National Orchestra. Other special stage appearances include *Bach by Beltrami*, Cirque du Soleil, Tan Dun's *Martial Arts Trilogy*, Danny Elfman's *Music from the Films of Tim Burton*, global tours with Chris Botti, and a number of Disney productions at the Hollywood Bowl and in international arenas. Cameron is also featured as a soloist on a number of soundtracks for film, television, and video games. The outstanding violin used by Cameron, crafted by Pietro

Guarnerius of Venice, c. 1735, is on extended loan through the generous efforts of the Stradivari Society of Chicago.
www.sandycameron.com

Stewart Goodyear



Photo: Anita Zvonar

Stewart Goodyear is an accomplished concert pianist, improviser, and composer. He has performed with many of the major orchestras and chamber music organizations around the world, including the Chicago Symphony under Daniel Barenboim, The Philadelphia Orchestra under Yannick Nézet-Séguin and Christoph Eschenbach, and the MDR Leipzig Radio Symphony Orchestra under Jun Märkl and Kristjan Järvi. Some of the orchestras and chamber music organizations that have commissioned Goodyear are the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival, Chamber Music Northwest, Toronto Symphony, National Arts Centre Orchestra, and the Orchestre Métropolitain. Goodyear's discography includes the complete sonatas and piano concertos of Beethoven, as well as concertos by Tchaikovsky, Grieg, and Rachmaninov, and four albums of solo works. His recordings have been released on the Marquis Classics, Steinway & Sons, Orchid Classics, and Bright Shiny Things labels. Highlights of the 2022–23 season include performances with the Nashville, Colorado, Baltimore, and Vancouver symphonies.
www.stewartgoodyearpiano.com

Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra



Founded in 1935, the GRAMMY Award-winning Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra (BPO) is Buffalo's leading cultural ambassador, presenting more than 120 classics, pops and youth concerts each year. Since 1940, the orchestra's permanent home has been Kleinhans Music Hall. In March 2018, the BPO became the first American orchestra to perform at the Beethoven Easter Festival in Warsaw, Poland. In 2022, they made their 25th appearance at Carnegie Hall celebrating the life and works of Lukas Foss, former BPO music director. Over the decades, the BPO has matured in stature under leading conductors William Steinberg, Josef Krips, Lukas Foss, Michael Tilson Thomas, Julius Rudel, Semyon Bychkov and Maximiano Valdés. During the tenure of JoAnn Falletta, the BPO has rekindled its distinguished history of radio broadcasts and recordings, including the release of over 50 albums of diverse repertoire on the Naxos and Beau Fleuve Records labels. The Philharmonic's recording of John Corigliano's *Mr. Tambourine Man: Seven Poems of Bob Dylan* (Naxos 8.559331), featuring soprano Hila Plitmann, received GRAMMY Awards for Best Classical Vocal Performance and Best Classical Contemporary Composition. www.bpo.org

JoAnn Falletta



Photo: Heather Bellini

Multiple GRAMMY-winning conductor JoAnn Falletta serves as music director of the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra (BPO) and music director laureate of the Virginia Symphony Orchestra. She has guest conducted many of the most prominent orchestras in America, Canada, Europe, Asia and South America. As music director of the Buffalo Philharmonic, Falletta became the first woman to lead a major American ensemble. With a discography of over 120 titles, she is a leading recording artist for Naxos. Her GRAMMY-winning Naxos recordings include Richard Danielpour's *The Passion of Yeshua* with the BPO (8.559885-86), Kenneth Fuchs' *Spiritualist* with the London Symphony Orchestra (8.559824) and John Corigliano's *Mr. Tambourine Man: Seven Poems of Bob Dylan* with the BPO (8.559331). Falletta is a member of the esteemed American Academy of Arts and Sciences, has served as a member of the National Council on the Arts, is the recipient of many of the most prestigious conducting awards and was named *Performance Today's* Classical Woman of the Year 2019 and one of the 50 great conductors of all time by *Gramophone* magazine.

www.joannfalletta.com

Danny
ELFMAN
(b. 1953)

Violin Concerto
“Eleven Eleven” (2017)

41:33

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|----------|-----------------------------|--------------|
| 1 | I. Grave; Animato | 13:13 |
| 2 | II. Spietato | 9:51 |
| 3 | III. Fantasma | 8:42 |
| 4 | IV. Giacoso; Lacrime | 9:36 |

Adolphus
HAILSTORK
(b. 1941)

Piano Concerto No. 1 (1992)

23:42

- | | | |
|----------|----------------------------|-------------|
| 5 | I. Moderato | 6:30 |
| 6 | II. Adagio | 9:30 |
| 7 | III. Lento – Vivace | 7:33 |

Sandy Cameron, Violin 1–4

Stewart Goodyear, Piano 5–7

Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra

JoAnn Falletta

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AMERICAN CLASSICS

This recording presents brand new concertos from two vibrant and contrasting American composers. Adolphus Hailstork’s *First Piano Concerto* draws on his African American heritage to create a work brimming with energy and high spirits, reflecting the rich traditions of jazz and blues. The *Violin Concerto “Eleven Eleven”* by Danny Elfman – renowned for his many film scores – has its roots in the composer’s rock, film and television background, but also illustrates his love for the music of Shostakovich and Prokofiev. In keeping with his famous *Batman* score, this work is a true violin concerto noir that is both haunting and compelling.

www.naxos.com

Playing
Time:
65:20