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# GUITAR MANIA

A CONCERT BY **TWO RIVERS CHAMBER ORCHESTRA**

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**Saturday, March 28, 2026 • 7:30PM**

**Sunday, March 29, 2026 • 3PM**

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# WELCOME TO THIS CONCERT

Dear Friends,

Today's concert is an inspiring program filled with energy and excellence. With special guest Junhong Kuang on classical guitar, the performance will be virtuosic - Kuang is a rising star, earning prestigious awards and touring the globe. Music Director Jed Gaylin and the musicians of Two Rivers Chamber Orchestra thrive on collaborations like this one, combining their efforts such that everyone's artistry expands and the audience is dynamically engaged.

Guitar is an unusual instrument for us to highlight. One factor is its relative quietness as a solo concert instrument. The orchestra and the soloist must maintain a delicate interaction between the orchestra's capability for sweeping power and the guitar's fairly soft, nuanced expression. The result is a beautiful, vulnerable balance. Another rarity is the opportunity to showcase such an abundantly skillful classical guitarist, and for this reason, we are grateful to host Junhong Kuang this weekend.

We believe you will find the selections from Vivaldi, Villa-Lobos, and Schubert to be deeply moving and reflective. Vivaldi's guitar concerto is known especially for its ravishing and unforgettable slow movement. Villa-Lobos, in his concerto, captures a brisk Brazilian folk tradition with clarity and punch. The concert closes with one of Schubert's most intimately lyrical works. Your feedback on the post-concert survey emailed to ticketholders will help us report back to major sponsors - and we always value your input.

In other good news, Friends of Music sincerely appreciates all who contributed to our "Share from the Heart" fundraising campaign in February. Thanks to you, we raised just over \$15,000 and earned the matching gift from a lead donor committed to fostering local arts through investment in our organization. Everyone's involvement, even the smallest gift, does yield big returns. We will use the funds to cover the remainder of this season and to put plans in motion for next season. Thank you!

Also in February, Puzzle Mania, our popular annual jigsaw puzzle competition, took place in Shepherdstown. Congratulations to the winning teams - Frederick County Division of Fire & Rescue Services Puzzle Team and the Puzzle People from Winchester. It sure was fun to watch everyone in action! To all who participated, either by puzzling on one of the 47 teams or by working behind the scenes, thank you for joining in the festivities. Here, too, we raised funds essential to our ongoing operations.

With gratitude,



Heidi Johnston  
President, Friends of Music



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# JED GAYLIN

## MUSIC DIRECTOR

**Jed Gaylin joined us as Music Director of the Two Rivers Chamber Orchestra in 2012 after a nationwide search.** He has been a tremendous asset ever since, making an enormous difference in the quality and creativity of the orchestra's programming and performances, and this year his title has been expanded to Music Director of Friends of Music. We are lucky to have him!

Named in January 2026 as a "Top 30 Professional" by Musical America, Jed's approach to music, musicians, and life-lived-large is rare: It includes an old-world commitment to study and depth of conception, combined with a welcoming presence and warm engagement – both on and off the podium.

Orchestra members and soloists often recount how Jed's rehearsals and performances elicit their very best, not only individually but collectively. His dedication to exploring music's fullest potential in a collaborative spirit reaches beyond the stage to draw the audience into the creative act. Listeners feel engaged as participants in an eloquent musical conversation.

Jed is also the music director of the Hopkins Symphony Orchestra in Baltimore and the Bay Atlantic Symphony in New Jersey. In addition, he is principal guest conductor of the Cape May Music Festival. His numerous guest appearances include the St. Petersburg State Symphony, National Film and Radio Philharmonic (Beijing, China), Shanghai Conservatory Orchestra, Bucharest Radio Orchestra, Academia del Gran Teatre del Liceu (Barcelona, Spain), Eastman School of Music Broadband Ensemble, and many others.

He earned both a Bachelor of Music in piano and a Master of Music in conducting at the Oberlin Conservatory, and a Doctor of Musical Arts in conducting at the Peabody Conservatory. He attended the Aspen Music Festival as a conducting fellow. Among other honors, he has received a National Endowment for the Arts grant and the Presser Music Award. His conducting teachers have included Frederik Prausnitz, Leonard Slatkin, Jahja Ling, Murry Sidlin, Paul Vermel, and Michel Singher, and, for piano, Lydia Frumkin.

He lives in Baltimore with his wife, poet Lia Purpura, and their standard poodle, Dasha.

For more information, visit his website at [jedgaylin.com](http://jedgaylin.com).



*"Generous" is the word listeners and performers use time and again to describe conductor Jed Gaylin's approach to the orchestra, the score, and the audience. His joyful abandon and probing intellect combine to create powerful programs, compelling interpretations, and evenings that are fresh and exuberant. The legendary conductor George Szell said: "In music one must think with the heart and feel with the mind." Jed Gaylin embodies this maxim abundantly and passionately.*

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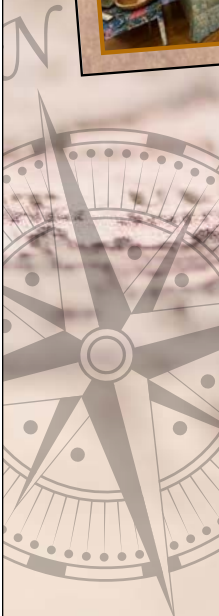
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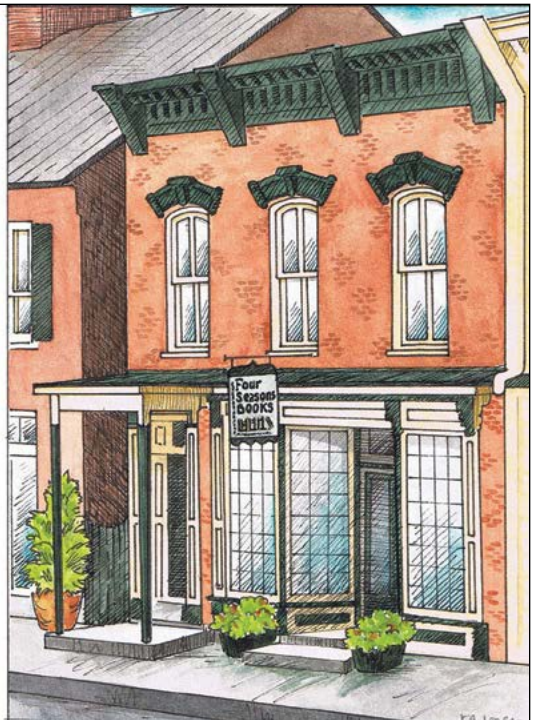
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# ABOUT THE ARTIST

## Junhong Kuang

As one of the most influential young musicians today, guitarist Junhong Kuang is named on conductor Julian Lloyd Webber's list of the '30 Brilliant Classical Musicians Under 30.'

Kuang began his study at the age of nine with Professor Xu Bao in Chengdu, China. He was accepted into the Peabody Institute of Johns Hopkins University at the age of 15. In 2017, at age 17, he was awarded the Top Prize in the guitar category of the prestigious ARD International Music Competition, along with the Audience Prize and the IFP-Musikpreis. Kuang is the youngest prize winner in the ARD's history.

Currently an associate professor of classical guitar at the Sichuan Conservatory of Music and Pre-College faculty at the Tianjin Juilliard School, he also continues his studies with the legendary maestro Manuel Barrueco. Kuang has given master classes at the New York Juilliard School Pre-college, Hong Kong Chinese University, Peking University, and Tianjin Conservatory of Music.

In 2024, Kuang was invited to perform the opening concert at the Madrid International Guitar Festival in Spain. He toured in China and Japan with Deutsche Grammophon recording clarinetist Tao Wang, and has performed with some of the top orchestras around the world, including the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, Estonian National Symphony Orchestra, Czech Chamber Philharmonic Orchestra, Munich Radio Orchestra, Basel Collegium, Peabody Symphony Orchestra, Sichuan Symphony Orchestra, Suzhou Symphony Orchestra, Chengdu Symphony Orchestra, Xiamen Philharmonic Orchestra, Sichuan Philharmonic Orchestra, Bay Atlantic Symphony Orchestra, Xian Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra, Harbin Conservatory of Music Symphony Orchestra, and Zhejiang Conservatory of Music Symphony Orchestra.





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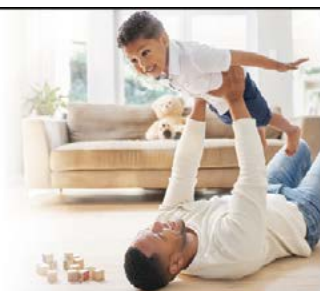
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THE  
PROGRAM

# GUITAR MANIA

**Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741); transcribed by Emilio Pujol—  
Guitar (Lute) Concerto in D major, RV 93**

Allegro giusto

Largo

Allegro

*Junhong Kuang, guitar*

**Heitor Villa-Lobos (1887-1959)—Concerto for Guitar and  
Small Orchestra**

Allegro preciso – Poco meno

Andantino e Andante

Cadenza: Quasi allegro – Andante – Quasi allegro –  
Poco moderato

Allegro non troppo

*Junhong Kuang, guitar*

— INTERMISSION —

**Franz Schubert (1797-1828)—Symphony No. 5 in B-flat  
major, D. 485**

Allegro

Andante con moto

Menuetto – Allegro molto – Trio

Allegro vivace



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### ANTONIO VIVALDI

(Born in Venice, Italy, on March 4, 1678;  
died in Vienna, Austria, on July 28, 1741)

#### Guitar (Lute) Concerto in D major, RV 93

1. Allegro giusto
2. Largo
3. Allegro

The Italian composer Antonio Vivaldi wrote over 500 instrumental concertos, and his invention and imagination for the concerto genre have been celebrated from his lifetime until today. His concertos' lyricism and overt emotionalism were immensely influential on late Baroque and early Classical composers. But in his day, Vivaldi was also extremely renowned around Europe for his operas (he wrote over 40 of them). In fact, he was beckoned to Prague to stage several operas in 1730 for the Czech royal family. While in Prague, the Bohemian (Czech) count Jan Josef Vrtba commissioned Vivaldi to compose a set of four lute concertos (RV 93) featuring solo lute, two violins, and basso continuo (typically a harpsichord), of which the *Lute Concerto in D major*, performed tonight, was the first in the set.

These lute concertos are the only concertos that Vivaldi wrote specifically for the lute. Actually, they were written for the archlute, an instrument that was larger than the typical lute but smaller than the theorbo. The reason Vivaldi wrote no other lute concertos is unknown, but one factor may have been the lute's relative quietness as a solo concerto instrument. This would have been problematic in the bigger halls that were being built in the 1600s and 1700s to accommodate the increasingly popular demand for operas and larger orchestral pieces. In any case, it appears that Count Vrtba loved the archlute, and luckily for us, Vivaldi was keen to oblige his coincidental patron, creating a concerto that is alive with lyricism and infectious energy, and an absolutely gorgeous and soulful middle movement. The brisk, barely 10-minute-long *Lute Concerto in D major* has grown tremendously in popularity in more recent years, although this work is typically performed (as it is tonight) arranged for a guitar soloist and chamber orchestra, adding a few more strings than just the original two violins.



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## PROGRAM NOTES

The opening movement, *Allegro giusto* (appropriately fast), begins with a vivacious ritornello (“little return”) – a Baroque musical section that returns several times in a movement. Its opening theme is joyfully declamatory and tuneful and is delightfully constructed of several seemingly off-kilter five-bar phrases. In contrast to the first phrase of this opening theme, the next phrase is hued in a minor tonality and is more subdued. These two contrasting phrases give the sense of a conversation of ideas. Some historians think the minor-keyed phrase might have been inspired by Bohemian folk music that Vivaldi heard on the streets of Prague, although there is no direct source of the tune. The solo guitar then takes the lead, playing several variants of the ritornello’s theme as it moves through the movement and shows off some wizardly virtuosity. The ritornello and the guitar-featured sections then alternate throughout this short movement in a lyrical vortex of energy.

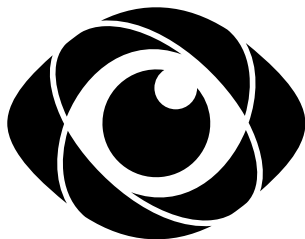
The second movement, *Largo* (slowly, solemn), floats on sheer beauty. The guitar opens the movement by playing an unhurried, ruminative melody over long-held notes in the upper strings and a gentle, pulsing thrum in the bass instruments. This opening section lasts approximately one minute and then repeats. Stylistically, soloists typically embellish their part the second time through, crafting virtuosity to enhance the emotional potential of the music. (In most of Vivaldi’s concertos, the soloist’s part is merely bare bones on paper, demanding a good deal of improvisation.) After the repeat, a section painted with rich harmonies begins, and this also repeats with even more improvisatory embellishments, which will end this mesmerizing movement.

The third and final movement, *Allegro*, begins with the orchestra twirling with a spritely theme sparkling with perpetual triplets. The energy is infectiously fun and dance-like, and the entire movement lasts only about two minutes. After the orchestra opens with its triplet flurries, the solo guitar jumps to the fore with its own spinning whirlwinds of notes. The orchestra and soloist then trade phrases over a skipping bass line that propels everything along, and this fleet and tune-filled concerto ends with exuberant cheerfulness.



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## HEITOR VILLA-LOBOS

(Born in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on March 5, 1887; died in Rio de Janeiro on November 17, 1959)

### Concerto for Guitar and Small Orchestra

1. Allegro preciso - Poco meno
2. Andantino e Andante
3. Cadenza: Quasi allegro - Andante - Quasi allegro - Poco moderato
4. Allegro non troppo

Heitor Villa-Lobos is inarguably Brazil's most important Classical music composer of the 20th century. He is known for blending native Brazilian folk music into Classical idioms; most memorable are his set of nine *Bachianas Brasileiras* (1930–1945) – amalgamations of Brazilian folk music reimagined as if Bach had written them. Villa-Lobos was born just as his country overthrew its Portuguese ruling king and began to nationally celebrate its indigenous identity and – most important for this gifted composer – its folk arts and music. Villa-Lobos grew up playing guitar in that rediscovered musical environment, teaching himself to improvise grandly alongside the popular street musicians of his day, even (or so Villa-Lobos reported) trekking into the jungle to explore indigenous tribal music. At the same time, he was captivated by the European culture that flourished in his hometown of Rio de Janeiro. Already composing in earnest, in 1923 Villa-Lobos was persuaded to visit Paris to attract more European audiences. While there, he met the great Spanish guitar virtuoso Andrés Segovia (1893–1987). In 1930, when Villa-Lobos returned from Paris to Brazil, he retained his friendship with Segovia, writing several guitar works for him, including a commission for a guitar concerto in 1951.

Villa-Lobos finished the concerto that year in a three-movement form titled *Fantasia concertante*. This *Fantasia* version contained no cadenza, however, and it seems that Segovia was reluctant to premiere it without one (although there are alternate versions to this story). As such, in 1955, Villa-Lobos added a remarkable cadenza into the work and titled this new version *Concerto for Guitar and Small Orchestra*. In 1956 in Houston, Segovia performed the premier and Villa-Lobos conducted. The *Concerto*, hailed at its first performance as “beautiful,



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exquisite in its graces of theme, treatment and coloration, intensely lyric, rhythmically inventive, and in general a joy to the ear,” has become one of the foundations of the guitar concerto repertoire.

Despite the added cadenza and title change, no other alterations were made to the *Concerto*, allowing it to retain the loose rhapsodic feel of a *Fantasia* – an old musical form that emphasizes improvisation and creative expression. One of the many wonders of this unique concerto is its general quietude, in which lyricism and guitar ruminations are celebrated more than grand climaxes or exuberant gestures. In addition, its use of a reduced orchestra allows the voice of the guitar to truly gleam, and throughout, Villa-Lobos weaves the constant suggestion of folk music.

The first movement, *Allegro preciso* (fast without wavering of tempo), is perhaps the most overtly folk-influenced movement of the *Concerto*. It begins with the orchestra delivering a set of syncopated rhythms that will return many times in this movement, rippling with quiet energy and sounding like the deliberate stamped-out steps of a folkdance. The guitar quickly joins the orchestra with ebulliently ascending triplets, as if Villa-Lobos is revisiting those delightful years of his youth when he was improvising on his guitar with street musicians. The second section occurs at about three minutes, *Poco meno* (a little less in tempo), and a very lyrical theme is presented by the guitar over lazy strings, which Villa-Lobos described as celebrating “the melodic atmosphere of rather popular songs from the Northeast of Brazil.” After a return to the introductory dance-like syncopation, the movement races to its end in a delightfully inventive way – the orchestra suddenly stalls on a full chord. The listener has the feeling of being caught off-guard by a magical and unexpected sight, and the first movement simply stops.

The second movement, *Andantino* (a leisurely pace, not too slow), begins with the winds playing gossamer-like runs over calm strings and horn. The guitar soon enters with the lyrical charm of a love song, folk-like in nature, and providing gentle flourishes between the notes of the melody. This leads to the *Andante* (rather slow) in about one minute, which features some magical solos for both the winds and the guitar. A particularly beautiful passage begins about two and a half minutes later when the oboe sings slowly and soulfully over the accompaniment of undulating arpeggios in the guitar. The passage then winds itself



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up before settling down to a hushed and golden-hued end.

After a slight pause, the Cadenza – a dedicated section of a concerto that showcases the soloist’s virtuosity – follows. Villa-Lobos conceived of this as a short, separate movement, even assigning several tempo markings. At three and a half minutes, it is long for a cadenza and functions more like a keystone; this is a place for the guitar soloist to dazzle. The section also bridges the three other movements. The first two tempo markings, *Quasi allegro* (almost fast) and *Andante* (leisurely) coalesce themes from the first two movements, and the third tempo, again using the marking *Quasi allegro*, wanders into new thematic territory, featuring a magical and deceptively difficult series of triplets with harmonics (soaring high pitches played by lightly depressing and playing the guitar string). And the fourth section, *Poco moderato* (moderately paced), begins with new, jaunty, and syncopated rhythms that foretell the thematic material in the final movement. As the *Poco moderato* progresses, the music becomes terser until a final, grand chord stops the cadenza in preparation for the last movement.

The final movement, *Allegro non troppo* (fast but not too much), then dances away with the winds taking up the Cadenza’s syncopated rhythms, punctuated by strongly accented notes in the strings. Within a few measures, the guitar enters with breezy runs filled with joyful verve. In Villa-Lobos’s words, this movement is meant to metamorphosize these opening materials continuously in the pursuit of exploring the guitar’s virtuosic capabilities, with an underlying current of folk dance and song. Indeed, the guitar comes out of its shell. (Segovia himself mentioned the many difficult passages, although the writing never exploits sheer finger work over musical beauty.) A particularly bewitching example of this begins at about three minutes, when the guitar launches into a lyrical but driving passage, which seems to be preparing for pyrotechnical bravura but instead becomes a heart-catching duet with the first violin and then morphs yet again into a rhapsody between guitar and oboe. And like the first movement, this finale’s ending comes almost too abruptly. As both guitar and orchestra are busily rhapsodizing, the momentum suddenly grinds to a stop on a unison chord, only this time the guitar has one, brief, final punctuation to end this enduringly enchanting concerto.

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## FRANZ SCHUBERT

(Born in Vienna, Austria, on January 31, 1797; died in Vienna on November 19, 1828)

### Symphony No. 5 in B-flat major, D. 485

1. Allegro
2. Andante con moto
3. Menuetto - Allegro molto - Trio
4. Allegro vivace

Franz Schubert was only 19 years old in 1816 when he composed his *Fifth Symphony*. That he had already written four symphonies and almost 500 compositions spanning virtually every genre is extraordinary for such a young composer. From an early age, Schubert's near-manic, lifelong need to constantly compose seemed to have come from an almost magical wellspring of creativity. Clearly, one of his early inspirations was Mozart, who had died only five years before Schubert's birth. As he recorded in his diary shortly before he began composing this *Fifth*:

As from afar the magic notes of Mozart's music still gently haunt me [...] O Mozart, immortal Mozart, how many, oh how endlessly many such comforting perceptions of a brighter and better life hast thou brought to our souls!

Of these first five symphonies, the *Fifth* is considered Schubert's best creation in that genre during this early period of his orchestral writing. The work displays both a mature artifice and a light and extroverted beauty that gleams with charm.

Although Schubert's *Fifth* is indebted to Mozart's influence, it foreshadows many of the distinctive hallmarks of Schubert's works throughout his lifetime: It is filled with beautifully lyrical, singable themes as well as experiments with harmonic inventions. Both characteristics overflow in this work, and they are traits that Schubert used with increasing mastery in his oeuvre. In fact, as Schubert composed his *Fifth* during the month of September 1816, he was simultaneously working on 16 other compositions, 13 of which featured voice, including lieder (songs), a cantata, and a Magnificat. It is not surprising, then, that much of the symphony's lyricism could have worked equally well for voice.



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## PROGRAM NOTES

The first movement, *Allegro* (fast), evokes Mozart's style. After a brief, four-bar introduction, the initial theme is presented by the first violins playing an ascending tune with a carefree skipping rhythm, which is answered immediately in the string bass line. This thematic gem is one of the most lighthearted, singable tunes of any Schubert work. One minute later, a second theme is introduced by the first violins, a wonderfully lyrical tune that could easily be an aria. Between and around these themes, the flute and oboes add a good-natured breeziness to the work. At about four minutes, the two themes begin to morph in sure Classical symphonic method, but Schubert also introduces some darker, dramatic harmonic regions that bring a sense of quietly stewing conflict. The effervescent two opening themes then return to end the movement in sheer joyfulness.

The second movement, *Andante con moto* (slowly but with motion), begins with the first violins singing an extremely expressive, slightly wistful tune, as though Schubert is telling a story of long ago, transporting us to a world of beauty. At about two and a half minutes, a very atypical key change (up one step) leads to a dreamy, floating duet between the violins and the winds, underpinned by pulsing lower strings. Throughout the rest of the movement, Schubert continues to stoke a restless but beautiful shifting between major and minor tonal regions. The overall bucolic feel of this *Andante* prevails throughout until the horn gently heralds the final bar.

The third movement, *Menuetto - Allegro molto* (very fast) - Trio, cast in a minor key, immediately grabs our attention with its fervency, even aggression. The overt dramaticism of its opening theme – an arpeggiated rise followed by an accentuated descent – can be traced back to a portion of Schubert's unfinished opera *Des Teufels Lustschloss* (The Devil's Pleasure Palace), which he had begun writing two years earlier, in 1814. Musicologists argue, too, that the theme recalls the dance movement (*Menuetto*) of Mozart's *Symphony No. 40 in G minor*, which is likely intentional. Most distinctive is how this movement contrasts with the lightness and the



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## PROGRAM NOTES

serenity of the prior movements; Schubert will develop this type of mood shift with enormous success through the rest of his writing life. Continuing these contrasts, the Trio section that begins about two minutes later is completely charming and rustic and cast in a major key, with its second full section gorgeously lyrical. The opening dramatic music returns to finish the Menuetto with a certain urgency.

The final movement, Allegro vivace (fast and very spirited), returns to the glorious lightness of the opening movement with some vivacious flair. The themes are airy and cheerful throughout, although Schubert allows the harmonies to sneak into more shadowy realms, with fleeting, dark chordal moments in nearly every phrase. Rather than creating conflict via these contrasts, however, Schubert appears to be evolving his harmonic language into the Romantic Era, where dark and light harmonies combine to create thicker, more multidimensional musical expression. Even with its darker dustings, this movement flits very happily through, with especially rich moments for the woodwinds. The ending returns to the opening section, which closes this delightful symphony with an air of smiling merriment.

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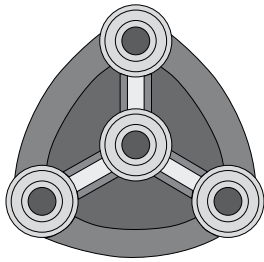
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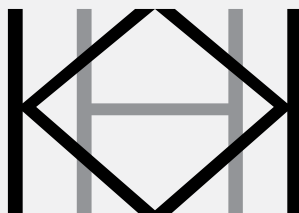
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