



Prepare yourself for an evening of delightful irreverence and musical playfulness, as we present a concert that invites you to leave your expectations at the door and indulge in a bit of spirited fun! This program, designed in the spirit of “classical pops,” is built around the wonderfully absurd Beethoven 5 Sportscast by PDQ Bach, and features a carefully curated selection of works with competitive or athletic themes—some more overt than others.

Classical music is often regarded as a realm of solemnity and refinement, but tonight, we turn that notion on its head. In a time when the world feels heavy with its seriousness and division, art has the power to respond in many ways. While there are certainly moments for deep, profound expression, tonight is a celebration of whimsy and lightness—a joyful escape from the weight of the world. So, if you’ve been craving a respite from life’s intensity, this concert is your invitation to sit back, relax, and embrace the joy of play. Feel free to tap your toes, laugh out loud, and, yes, even hoot and holler—this is your permission slip to have fun!

The program features a delightful mix of musical treasures, starting with Carmen Suite, which has been captivating audiences for decades. While the opera’s fiery protagonist, Carmen, is best known for her seductive allure, tonight we also get to meet the bullfighter, Escamillo. The suite’s movements have been reordered to align with the narrative arc of the opera, adding a layer of storytelling to the musical experience. Next, we take a spin through the iconic Overture to William Tell, a piece so synonymous with horseback riding and cinematic heroism that it has become a pop culture touchstone.

Then, we turn to a more subtle reference to sporting life: the symphony of Joseph Bologne, Chevalier de Saint-Georges. A virtuoso violinist, composer, and conductor, Bologne was also a highly accomplished swordsman—an athletic skill that, though not immediately apparent in the music, gives the symphony its own sense of precision and finesse. And, of course, we have Beethoven 5 Sportscast, a cheeky take on the idea of music as sport, presented with all the exaggerated flair of a live broadcast. Expect over-the-top commentary, playful banter, and plenty of moments designed to surprise and amuse!

We conclude with a final burst of energy from Carmen, presenting some of the most popular and toe-tapping movements of the suite.

So, whether you’re here for the music, the humor, or just a chance to revel in the carefree joy of the evening, we hope you’ll leave feeling lighter, brighter, and with a smile on your face. Enjoy the performance—and remember, this is the one time it’s perfectly acceptable to have a little fun at a classical concert!

A special thank you goes out to our guest “sportscasters” and “referee,” Nikk Pilato, Adam White, and Ron Shaple ()18 (Anato)mmedia30. 0 s. 0 s5cther you’re here S0 gs/TN4s3.92116ols

Amy Gillingham Culligan, *music director & conductor*

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