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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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BLESSING OR CURSE ?

(Composers who overcame disabilities)

7:30 p.m. November 9, 2019 Notre Dame Academy, Park Hills, KY

The Kentucky Symphony Orchestra continues its flavorful, single barrel-esque 28th season with a musical proverb. Physical disabilities and handicaps afflict those in all walks of life. Yet those afflicted persevere, and many find success and acclaim through their talents and efforts, which begs the proverbial query — are these impairments a blessing or a curse?

The KSO explores three composers who overcame serious disabilities to pen great music. Swedish composer Allan Pettersson wrote 17 symphonies, but only completed five in his own hand before developing crippling Rheumatoid Arthritis, which further isolated him.

*“The music forming my work is my own life, its blessings, its curses:
in order to rediscover the song once sung by the soul.”* — Allan Pettersson

Pettersson’s foreboding Symphonic Movement opens the program with KSO associate conductor Thomas Consolo on the podium.



Jason Vieaux

Joaquín Rodrigo was blind since the age of 3, yet he studied music and wrote it down in Braille. Rodrigo would then dictate each work subsequently to a copyist, note by note, instrument by instrument, modification by modification, to produce a score in musical notation. Afterwards, Rodrigo proceeded to make final corrections with the assistance of his wife.

His *Concierto de Aranjuez* has become one of the classic concerti of the 20th century, and its Adagio movement is one of the most beautiful in orchestral music. Grammy award-winning classical guitarist Jason Vieaux joins the KSO for Rodrigo’s concerto led by KSO music director James Cassidy.

Rounding out the program is Ludwig Van Beethoven’s Symphony No. 6 (*Pastoral*). Beethoven became afflicted with tinnitus and his hearing notably decreased after his Second Symphony. By the time of his Sixth Symphony his hearing was very limited, and the sounds of nature that he employed in his Pastoral symphony came from his recollections of earlier countryside strolls.

Whether these composers would have created the sublime music represented on this program were it not for their afflictions no one will ever know, but their output manifests itself as a blessing for the generations that have enjoyed them since. James Cassidy remarked about his program title — “One owns a curse, but shares a blessing. These composers never allowed their physical debilities to prevent their muse from being heard. I would say they are blessed, as are we to continue to share their gifts.”

P.O. Box 72810 Newport, KY 41072 ● Phone: (859) 431-6216 ● www.kyso.org

The Kentucky Symphony Orchestra bestows many musical blessings at Notre Dame Academy at 7:30 p.m., Saturday, October 19, at NKU, Highland Heights, KY. Reserved seating tickets are \$19, \$27, \$35 (children ages 6-18 are 50% off) and are available online at kyso.org, by phone — (859) 431-6216, or at the door.

For additional information, visit the KSO at www.kyso.org or call (859) 431-6216.

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Allan Pettersson

Symphonic Movement

Thomas Consolo, *conductor*

Joaquín Rodrigo

Concierto de Aranjuez

I. Allegro con spirito

II. Adagio

III. Allegro Gentile

Jason Vieaux, *guitar*

Intermission

Ludwig van Beethoven

Symphony No. 6 in F *Pastorale*

I. Awakening of cheerful feelings upon arriving in the country

II. Scene by the brook

III. Merry gathering of peasants

IV. Tempest

V. Shepherd's song—cheerful and thankful feelings after the storm

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