

4-26-2003

Concert: Ithaca College Wind Ensemble

Ithaca College Wind Ensemble

Stephen Peterson

James Miller

Kevin Zamborsy

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*“It is
my plan
to build
a school
of music
second
to none.”*

—William
Grant Egbert
(1867–1928)
Founder,
Ithaca
Conservatory
of Music

SCHOOL OF MUSIC

ITHACA

ITHACA COLLEGE WIND ENSEMBLE
Stephen Peterson, conductor
James Miller, graduate conductor
Kevin Zamborsy, graduate conductor
Richard Faria, basset clarinet

Fantasia in G (1983)

Timothy Mahr
(b. 1956)

Clarinet Concerto in A major, K. 622 (1791)

W. A. Mozart
(1756-1791)

Allegro
Adagio
Rondo

Trans. Robert Rumbelow

Richard Faria, basset clarinet

INTERMISSION

Suite from the ballet "L'Oiseau de feu" (1919)

Igor Stravinsky
(1882-1971)
Trans. Randy Earles

Ford Hall
Saturday, April 26, 2003
8:15 p.m.

Program Notes

"Borrowed Masterworks"

Fantasia in G (1983)

Timothy Mahr

The composer describes Fantasia in G as a "joyful celebration of winds." It is a brief work based on Schiller's hymn *Ode to Joy* which Beethoven used in his Symphony No. 9. It is light, and incorporates frequently mixing meters with changing tempi to keep the flow of the piece moving forward to the final statement of the hymn. Counter melodies introduced in the soprano saxophone and the trumpet section float over the hymn, while the principle tune (Mahr's own) is introduced by a piccolo and clarinet duet after a flourished introduction.

Mahr wrote this work first in a version for organ prelude for a wedding, and expanded it later into a composition for the St. Olaf College Band, conducted at the time by Miles Johnson.

Timothy Mahr is a professor of music at St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minnesota, where he is the Conductor of the St. Olaf Band and teaches courses in composition, conducting and music education. Previous to his 1994 appointment at St. Olaf College, Mahr was Director of Bands at the University of Minnesota, Duluth, for ten years and taught instrumental music at Milaca High School (MN) for three years. Mahr is the principal conductor of the Twin Cities-based Minnesota Symphonic Winds and, while in Duluth, was the founder and conductor of the Twin Ports Wind Ensemble. He is Immediate Past President of the North Central Division of the College Band Directors National Association (1999-2001), and has served on the Board of Directors of the National Band Association and was a founding board member of the Minnesota Band Directors Association.

Clarinet Concerto in A major, K. 622 (1791)

W. A. Mozart

Written during the last two years of Mozart's life, the Clarinet Concerto was his final instrumental composition. He wrote it for the famed clarinetist Anton Stadler (1753-1812), whose abilities had inspired Mozart before, in his Clarinet Quintet and in the lyrical, challenging clarinet solos in *La Clemenza di Tito*.

Stadler played this concerto on a specially constructed instrument that had four additional semitones below the bottom note of the soprano clarinet in A. This instrument is now referred to as the "basset-clarinet," not to be confused with the basset horn. Although the piece

is usually performed on soprano clarinet (due to the decline in popularity of the basset clarinet), tonight's performance will feature Richard Faria on the instrument Mozart originally had in mind.

Composed for basset clarinet and orchestra, Mozart left the oboes out of his orchestra so that their penetrating sound would not affect the colors of the remaining winds and, especially, the solo clarinet. The transcription for winds, however, adds the oboes back into the group.

The first movement is a lengthy sonata that incorporates imitative counterpoint, mode mixture, and tends to use the soloist and the orchestra in combination to create textures and colors. "Adagio" is a seldom-used marking for Mozart, reserved for his most deeply felt music. The second movement of this concerto is no exception. It is beautiful in its simplicity and serenity, using the full range (especially the *chalumeaux*) of the basset clarinet. The final rondo is based on a short, motivic tune. It is filled with tricky rhythms and buoyant lines, flowing to the end after a brief moment of repose, in a brilliance of unpredictability that only Mozart could provide.

Richard Faria, a founding member of the new music group Ensemble X, is also a member of the Cayuga Chamber Orchestra. He has performed with the National Repertory Orchestra, Aspen Music Festival, Syracuse Symphony, Manhattan Chamber Orchestra, Skaneateles Festival, Bang on a Can Festival, Mother Mallard, as a guest artist with the Sylvan Wind Quintet, Ithaca Wind Quintet, Ariadne String Quartet, Atlantic String Quartet, Guild Trio, as soloist with the Young Composer's Collective and the North West Symphony, and as artist-in-residence at the Apple Hill Center for Chamber Music and the Garth Newel Music Center. He has premiered concerti written for him by Steven Burke and Joshua Kohl, and has appeared at Weill Recital Hall, Carnegie Hall, Merkin Hall, Miller Theater, and the Smithsonian Institution. Richard is a contributing author to *The Clarinet* magazine, and has recorded for Tzadik, Albany, Newport Classic, Koch, and Mark Records.

Dr. Faria is assistant professor of clarinet at Ithaca College in Ithaca, New York. His teachers have included Michael Galván, Joaquín Valdepeñas, Dr. Elsa Ludewig-Verdehr, John McCaw, Georgina Dobrée, and Charles Neidich.

Igor Fyodorovich Stravinsky was born in 1882 in Russia, became a French citizen by 1934, and then a naturalized American in 1945. He died in New York in 1971. His early musical training was inconsequential, though his father was a respected Russian Basso. It was not until he joined with the Russian composer Nicolai Rimsky-Korsakov that Stravinsky's musical talents truly ignited.

In Paris during the year 1909 the *Ballet Russe* made its debut, and was immediately successful. Two men, Sergei Diaghilev and Mikhail Fokine, along with the famed dancer Nijinsky headed the company, wanting desperately to add a Russian folk story to their repertory. They settled on the fairy tale of the Firebird. The Firebird (or Zhar-ptitsa) is a fabulous creature: "Its feathers blaze with golden or silvery sheen, its eyes shine like crystal, it dwells in a golden cage. In the depth of the night it flies into a garden and lights up as brilliantly as a thousand burning fires. A single feather from its tail illuminates a dark room. It feeds on golden apples which have the power of bestowing youth and beauty."

Fokine was the first to pursue the Firebird tale as a possibility for the *Ballet Russe*. He then faced a daunting task: find a composer capable of creating music that would reflect the popular tale. The commission eventually went to Anatole Liadov, an established and respected composer. Stravinsky was young (27) and unknown when the *Ballet Russe* Commissioned Liadov, and he had only written the rarely performed *Fireworks* for Orchestra by that time. He was not even considered for the commission.

Liadov turned-out to be a procrastinator, lazy, shy, sensitive, and very self-critical. Faced with writing such a large work under a rapidly approaching deadline, he became worried. Finally Liadov folded, telling Fokine he would not be able to compose the music for the ballet. By this time (only weeks before the opening of the ballet) Fokine and Diaghilev were desperate. Fokine turned to Igor Stravinsky, whose name was already attached to "Fireworks" so why not "Firebird?" He was given only one month to compose the score to the Firebird.

The Firebird, a popular Russian folk tale, is summarized below:

(Introduction) The czar's son, Prince Ivan, has an unexpected meeting with a fabulous bird with plumage of fire during a hunting excursion. In exchange for not being hunted down by Ivan, the fabulous Firebird bargains her freedom by giving Ivan a magic feather (The Firebird and

Her Dance). Later, Ivan chances upon an enchanted castle with a courtyard full of lovely maidens (Round Dance of the Princesses). They warn Ivan of the evil Kastchei in the castle who, for his own amusement, turns travelers into stone. Ivan, undaunted, enters the castle, and is faced by the evil Kastchei. The magic feather shields him from harm, and the Firebird appears, sending Kastchei and his ogres into a mad dance (Infernal Dance of King Kastchei). The evil ones are left exhausted and eventually destroyed by the Firebird (Berceuse). Kastchei's victims are freed from their stone spells, and Ivan wins the hand of a lovely Princess(Finale).

The music Stravinsky provided was clearly influenced by Rimsky-Korsakov: Romantic, truly Russian, exciting, lyrical, and orchestrated with vibrant colors. It also, however, began to foreshadow Stravinsky's later ballet music (i.e. *Petroushka* and *The Rite of Spring*) during its later moments (Infernal Dance). For the most part, however, the *Firebird* is considered to be a strong reflection of the late Romantic period, and represents a composer on the verge of his Neoclassical response to Romanticism.

The *Firebird* was well received, and was merely the beginning for the partnership of Diaghilev, Fokine, Nijinsky, and Stravinsky. One of the more interesting responses to the *Firebird* occurred long after its premiere, however. In 1937 Warner Brothers made a B-movie entitled *The Firebird* featuring a womanizer who plays a phonograph recording of Stravinsky's music to seduce a virginal maiden living in an apartment directly below his own. Igor Stravinsky, furious about his music being used in such a manner, sued Warner Brothers in a very public trial for defamation of character. The French judge who heard the case dismissed Stravinsky's argument, however, claiming: "It is the greatest compliment in the world for a composer when his music can seduce!" He then sarcastically decided in favor of Stravinsky, awarding him one franc for "moral damage" suffered through the process.

ITHACA COLLEGE WIND ENSEMBLE

Stephen Peterson, conductor

James Miller, graduate conductor

Piccolo

Doug Han*
Gwendolyn Mathis

Flute

Kim Kather
Leslie Kubica*
Gwendolyn Mathis
Tamara Nelson

Oboe

Ann Marie Amedro
Tracy McLaughlin
Jamie Strefeler*

English Horn

Ann Marie Amedro

E-flat Clarinet

William Stevens

Clarinet

Melanie Bulawa
Eric Callahan*
Alex Henessian
Wolcott Humphrey
Jeanette Korinis
Therese Stokas

Alto Clarinet

Byron Ford

Bass Clarinet

Sarah Bennett

Bassoon

Rebecca Hammontree
Brian Jack
Jessica Shore*

Contrabassoon

Brian Jack

Soprano Saxophone

Joel Diegert

Alto Saxophone

Heidi Bellinger*

Tenor Saxophone

Joel Diegert
Allison Dromgold

Baritone Saxophone

Kevin Marshall

Trumpet

Jesse Hazzard-Watkins
Jason Hess
Cassandra Large
Ben Richards
Jeremy Schlegel
Christopher Yee*

Horn

Maria Fulgieri
Brian Hoeflschweiger
Leah Jones
Tyler Ogilvie
Jeff Rubin*

Trombone

Robert Bruns
Tim Smith*

Bass Trombone

Peter Ostrower

Euphonium

Phil Giampietro*
Natasha Keller

Tuba

Lesley Bannister
Andrew Smith*

Timpani

Steve Solook

Percussion

Ian Craft
Mary Gardner
Jennie Herreid
Thomas Kline*
Vincent Malafronte

Piano

Claudia Tomsa

Contrabass

Josef Lorenz

* denotes principal

Coming Events

April

- 27 3:00 Chamber Orchestra, Choir, Madrigal Singers,
soloists
St. John Passion; Lawrence Doebler, conductor
- 28 7:00 Collaborative Piano Duos; Charis Dimaras, coach
8:15 Symphonic Band; Henry Neubert, conductor
- 29 7:00 Intergenerational and Children's Choirs
8:15 Symphony Orchestra & Chamber Orchestra;
Jeffrey D. Grogan, conductor; Wei-Hsun Yuan, piano
- 30 8:15 Opera Workshop; Patrick Hansen, stage and music director

May

- 1 8:15 Percussion Ensemble; Gordon Stout, conductor
- 2 7:00 Guest Recital; Glimmerglass Opera Young
American Artists
- 17 8:30 Gala 36th Commencement Eve Concert (Gymnasium)

Ithaca College Concerts 2003-4

Friday, October 3, 2003

Czech philharmonic Chamber Orchestra
with pianist Richard Ormrod

Program: Beethoven concerto, Husa, Mozart, Prokofiev

Thursday, January 29, 2004

Sharon Isbin, guitar

Gaudencio Thiago de Mello, percussion

Program: Latin American music

Thursday, March 25, 2004

Sylvia McNair, soprano

Ted Taylor, piano

Program: Sondheim, Rodgers, Porter, Kern, Gershwin, and Arlen