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Concert: Ithaca College Chamber Orchestra

Ithaca College Chamber Orchestra

Jeffrey Grogan

Heidi Gilbert

Elizabeth Swanson

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ITHACA COLLEGE

SCHOOL OF MUSIC

ITHACA COLLEGE CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

Jeffrey D. Grogan, conductor
Heidi J. Gilbert, graduate conductor
Elizabeth Swanson, graduate conductor

FORD HALL
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 21, 2004
8:15 P.M.

ITHACA

PROGRAM

Der Freischütz Overture (1821)

Carl Maria von Weber
(1786–1826)

Elizabeth Swanson, conductor

Norfolk Rhapsody (1906)

Ralph Vaughan Williams
(1872–1958)

Heidi J. Gilbert, graduate conductor

INTERMISSION

Pulcinella Suite (1922, revised 1949)

Igor Stravinsky
(1882–1971)

- I. *Sinfonia (Ouverture)*
- II. *Serenata*
- III. *Scherzino*
- IV. *Tarantella*
- V. *Toccata*
- VI. *Gavotta*
- VII. *Vivo*
- VIII. *Minuetto and Finale*

Williams started collecting folksongs in 1903, and the piece – originally one of three Norfolk Rhapsodies, now the only surviving piece – was written in 1905-06. Although the dates give the impression that the piece is an early work, it really is a post-London Symphony work; he revised it after time studying with Ravel in 1908, whom he later credited with helping him develop his own lightness of touch in orchestration.

Vaughan Williams composed music over a period of almost six decades, beginning with the song "Linden Lea" in 1901 and ending with his Ninth Symphony in 1958, the year of his death. He studied at Trinity College in Cambridge, taking weekly composition lessons in London with Sir Hubert Parry, and received a bachelor of music degree in 1893 and a history degree in 1894. In 1898 he earned his diploma as Fellow of the Royal College of Organists, and in 1899 passed the examination for the doctorate of music. During the wartime Vaughan Williams volunteered as a private in the Royal Army Medical Corps; after the war, he served as professor of composition at the Royal College of Music until 1939.

In 1935 King George V conferred Vaughan Williams with the Order of Merit, the highest of civil awards. Throughout his life he received honorary doctorates from many institutions, and composed many choral works (including five operas), as well as chamber music, nine symphonies, and concertos for oboe, tuba, violin, and piano. He also wrote film music and published several essays on musical subjects. He died at home in London at the age of 85; his ashes are buried in Westminster Abbey.

Born in Russia, Igor Stravinsky was a pioneer of twentieth century composition. While his first two ballets, *The Firebird* and *Petrushka*, established Stravinsky as a promising composer, the premiere of his third ballet, *The Rite of Spring*, resulted in violent protests from the audience. Upon moving to the United States in 1925, Stravinsky often appeared as a guest conductor. While many of his early compositions were based on Russian themes, later compositions indicated new compositional techniques and religious aspects. In addition to his ballets, Stravinsky's significant works include his *Concerto for Piano and Winds*, the *Symphonies pour instruments à vent*, the octet for wind instruments, and *L'Histoire du soldat*.

In 1919, Stravinsky was invited to arrange and orchestrate some pieces by the eighteenth-century Neapolitan composer Pergolesi for a new ballet to be produced by Serge Dyagilev. The resulting work,

PROGRAM NOTES

Carl Maria von Weber, born in Eutin, Germany, began and built his musical career with a synthesis of appointments as Kapellmeister in numerous court operas—Breslau, Karlsruhe, Stuttgart, Prague, and Dresden. Weber, like other musicians living in the first decades of the 19th century, survived at a time marked with social instability and intellectual upheaval. Looking back to this time of transition, Weber is described by Michael C. Tusa as "the leading exponent of early Romanticism in music, and much of his activity does resonate with the Romantic agenda: his emphasis on the wholeness of the art work; his insistence on the 'characteristic', sometimes at the expense of the 'beautiful'; his appeal to feeling as the ultimate arbiter of the 'truth' of an artistic experience; his reliance on 'romantic' subjects (in the sense of 'non-classical') for his operas; and the high value that he placed on originality."

The premiere of the opera *Der Freischütz* at the Berlin Schauspielhaus in 1821 was an incredible triumph. Fourteen of the seventeen musical pieces were met with ovations; in fact, the Overture was repeated in its entirety. Within one year thirty German opera houses had performed the work. This new "disease" called *Freischützenfieber* caught on and spread like wildfire, and within in four years the opera was flourishing at an international level.

Romantic characteristics which contribute to *Der Freischütz* ("The Free-Shooter") include a greater use of folk music and German folklore, an emphasis on nature and natural objects, aristocrats replaced by commoners as protagonists, dialogue interspersed with sung material, and the orchestral writing used to comment on and embellish the stage drama. The Overture specifically uses dramatic musical language such as key relationships, leitmotifs, and tone colors to foreshadow what is to come.

Of the music of Ralph Vaughan Williams, Ernst Newman wrote in the NY Times, ". . . we get nowhere else in music of the brooding beauty of the quiet English countryside and an expression that has no rival anywhere in music of what thoughtful Englishmen regard as one of the most precious possessions of their race – the vein of mellow mysticism that runs through so much of our heritage of poetry and prose." *Mellow mysticism* is a good way to describe the opening and closing sections of his *Norfolk Rhapsody No. 1* in E Minor, a piece based on several English folksongs. Vaughan

Pulcinella, was a vast reworking of the music of Pergolesi by Stravinsky, and it became what many consider to be the first significant work in the neo-classical style. Stravinsky later stated, "*Pulcinella* was my discovery of the past, the epiphany through which the whole of my later work became possible." The full ballet included choreography by Massine and décor by Picasso, but the suite that Stravinsky extracted in 1922 is heard most often. The suite contains about half of the music from the ballet, and is confined to the opening and closing sequences.

The subject of *Pulcinella* is taken from a manuscript found at Naples, dating from 1700. In the ballet, all of the young girls in the neighborhood love Pulcinella, while the young men seek to kill him out of jealousy. As soon as they get the chance, they disguise themselves as Pulcinella to impress their loved ones, but Pulcinella has changed places with a double, who pretends to die under the blows of Pulcinella's enemies. The real Pulcinella, disguised as a magician, appears and brings his double back to life. When the young men think that they are finally rid of him, Pulcinella appears as himself and finds a wife for each of them. Pulcinella weds Pimpinella with the blessing of his double, Fourbo, who in turn takes the role of the magician.

Program notes by Heidi Gilbert,
Elizabeth Swanson,
and Kevin Zamborsky.

ITHACA COLLEGE CHAMBER ORCHESTRA
Jeffrey Grogan, conductor

Violin I

Annie Chen
Dan Demetriou, *concertmaster*
Neil Fronheiser
Joshua Modney
Maureen Pohlman
Daniel Sender, *assistant concertmaster*

Violin II

Elizabeth Cary
Katie Cavallaro
Natasha Colkett
Tamara Freida
Amanda Hockenberger*
Christian Simmelink

Viola

Katerina Lewis
Nina Missildine
Cassandra Stephenson*
Loftan Sullivan

Cello

Diana Geiger
Elizabeth Meszaros
Christina Stripling*

Bass

Patrick O'Connell*
Ryan Reardon

Flute

Michelle Casareale
Leslie Kubica*

Oboe

Emily Di Angelo
Alex Hughes*
Chris Neske

Clarinet

Alex Hanessian
Matt Libera
David Minot*

Bassoon

Brian Jack*
Jennifer Myers

Horn

Maria Fulgieri*
Leah Jones
Michelle Leroy
Tyler Ogilvie

Trumpet

Kathryn Cheney
Kathryn Cooper*
Aaron Evens

Trombone

Matt Haines*
Sarah Paradis

Bass Trombone

Mark Walsh

Tuba

Christian Carichner

Timpani

Mary Gardner

Percussion

Jennie Herreid

Harp

Myra Kovary**

* denotes principal player

** guest artist

Personnel listed in alphabetical order to emphasize
each member's personal contribution.