

Fall 9-26-2010

Marshall University Music Department Presents a Faculty Recital, featuring, Ann Marie Bingham, clarinet, and, Mila Markun, piano, Leslie Petteys, piano, Martin Saunders, trumpet, Elizabeth Reed Smith, violin

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DEPARTMENT of MUSIC

presents a

Faculty Recital

featuring

Ann Marie Bingham, clarinet

and

Mila Markun, piano

Leslie Petteys, piano

Martin Saunders, trumpet

Elizabeth Reed Smith, violin

Sunday, September 26, 2010

Smith Recital Hall

3:00 p.m.

Program

(Please, no applause before or after the *Abyss of the Birds*)

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| <i>Quartet for the End of Time</i> The Abyss of the Birds | Olivier Messiaen (1908-1992) |
| <i>Sonata in E flat, Op. 120, No. 2</i> Allegro Amabile Appassionato, ma non troppo Allegro Andante con moto- Allegro non troppo | Johannes Brahms (1833-1897) |
| <i>Suite for Violin and Piano</i> I. Majestically; vigorously (suggested by Richmond Barthe's "African Dancer") II. Slowly and expressive (suggested by Sargent Johnson's "Mother and Child") III. Rhythmically and humorously (Suggested by Augusta Savage's "Gamin") | William Grant Still (1895-1978) |
| <i>Two Dances for Clarinet, Trumpet and Piano</i> Rag Tango Slow Drag | Walter Hartley (b. 1927) |
| <i>Suite for Violin, Clarinet and Piano</i> Introduction Scherzo Dialog Final | Alexander Arutiunian (b. 1920) |

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Notes

Olivier Messiaen, a devout Catholic, was a French soldier during World War II and was captured and held in a German internment camp in Silesia in 1940. He wrote the *Quartet for the End of Time* for himself and three other prisoners who were musicians. The work, scored for violin, clarinet, cello and piano, was premiered at the camp on January 15, 1941.

The title of the piece refers to the account of the apocalypse, or the end of time as we know it, and the beginning of eternity, as is recorded in the *Revelation of St. John the Divine*, chapter 10. Many people believed that the apocalypse surely must be at hand as the atrocities of World War II unfolded.

The third movement of Messiaen's quartet, the *Abyss of the Birds*, is scored for clarinet alone. It is a combination of slow, somber melodies that represent the desolation and weariness of time and bright technical interjections that are meant to be the sounds of birds transcending the earth and time itself in their flights.

It is impossible to consider the clarinet music of Brahms without mentioning the impact that Richard Mühlfeld had on it. Mühlfeld was the principal clarinetist of the Meiningen Orchestra. After hearing Mühlfeld play, Brahms was so inspired that he wrote a trio with cello and piano and a quintet with strings as well as two sonatas for Mühlfeld, despite the fact that he had been in retirement for nearly a year and never had written any chamber music for the clarinet before.

The *Sonata In E flat major, Opus 120, No. 2*, composed in 1894, is the last of Brahms' four works for clarinet. The first movement is a graceful sonata form with an intriguing use of polyrhythm. Movement two is a ländler, a rustic country dance that involved hopping and foot stamping but later evolved into an elegant ballroom dance. Movement three is a theme with variations. The theme has the character of a folk tune and the variations exhibit remarkable rhythmic intricacy. The movement finishes with a flashy, exciting coda.

William Grant Still studied composition with George Chadwick and Edgard Varèse, and experienced many "firsts" for an African-American. He was the first African-American composer to have a symphony premiered by a major orchestra (Rochester Philharmonic), the first to have an opera performed by a major company (New York City Opera), the first to conduct a major orchestra (Los Angeles Philharmonic), and he had works performed by orchestras in Berlin, London, and Tokyo. He worked in Hollywood as an arranger of film music, and received two Guggenheim Fellowships and numerous honorary doctorates.

A violinist himself, Still dedicated the Suite for Violin and Piano to the violin and piano duo of Louis and Annette Kaufman, who premiered it in Boston in 1944. Still attempted in the Suite to invoke the flavor of African music through use of modes, drawing inspiration from three African-American visual artists. The first movement contrasts a raucous dance theme with a bluesy middle section. The lyrical second movement is also known in an arrangement he made for string orchestra titled "Mother and Child," and the final movement is mischievous and jazzy.

Walter Hartley received all of his musical education at the Eastman School of Music.

He taught theory, composition and piano at the National Music Camp (now Interlochen Arts Camp) at Interlochen, Michigan and is Professor Emeritus of Music at State University College, Fredonia, New York. He has produced a prodigious number of works and has contributed greatly to wind instrument repertoire, particularly that of the saxophone.

The *Two Dances for clarinet, trumpet and piano* are delightful pieces reminiscent of ragtime. They are rhythmically enchanting, full of amusing "mis-steps" and interesting timbres that are made even more varied by the use of the muted trumpet.

Alexander Arutiunian is an Armenian composer who achieved world renown for his trumpet concerto, a staple of that instrument's literature. He wrote the *Suite* for the Verdehr Trio in 1992.

The combination of violin, clarinet and piano has several well-known pieces in its repertoire, including Bartok's *Contrasts* and Stravinsky's own transcription of *L'Histoire du Soldat*. The Verdehr Trio, in residence at Michigan State University, has been in existence for nearly 30 years and has commissioned over 200 new works, making a standard chamber music group of this combination of instruments.

Arutiunian's trio is rich with Armenian dance rhythms and harmonies. The first movement features long, increasingly ornate melodies that are traded off among the players. The *Scherzo* is light and cheerful in character with imitative sections. The *Dialog* is a brief conversation between the clarinet and violin that leads into the *Finale*. This final movement has three sections. The lyrical middle section is sandwiched between the rousing technical displays that begin and end the movement.

“African Dancer”
by Richmond Barthe



“Mother and Child”
by Sargent Johnson

“Gamin”
by Augusta Savage



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