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**Chamber Music Society of Louisville**  
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**76th Season**

**Three Hundred Fifty-Sixth Concert of the Society**  
**Juilliard String Quartet**  
**October 13, 2013 - 3:00 p.m.**  
**Comstock Concert Hall**

**Three Hundred Fifty-Seventh Concert of the Society**  
**Los Angeles Guitar Quartet**  
**November 17, 2013 - 3:00 p.m.**  
**Comstock Concert Hall**

**Three Hundred Fifty-Eighth Concert of the Society**  
**ATOS Trio**  
**February 23, 2014 - 3:00 p.m.**  
**Comstock Concert Hall**

**Three Hundred Fifty-Ninth Concert of the Society**  
**Elias String Quartet**  
**March 16, 2014 - 3:00 p.m.**  
**Comstock Concert Hall**

**Three Hundred Sixtieth Concert of the Society**  
**The Debussy Trio with Suzanna Guzmán**  
**April 15, 2014 - 3:00 p.m.**  
**Comstock Concert Hall**

# Juilliard String Quartet

## October 13, 2013

*Der Kunst der Fuge/Art of the Fugue*  
Contrapuncti I - IV

Johann Sebastian Bach  
(1685-1750)

Toward the end of his life Bach, became engaged in large-scale projects focused on demonstrating compositional techniques. He revised and polished the “48,” his two volumes of preludes and fugues, and examined canonic writing in the *Goldberg Variations*, an exploration of the *stile galant*, or contemporary style. Next he set out to write a set of fugal variations in which he intended to explore the fugal techniques of *stile antico*, or ancient style. For this work, *Der Kunst der Fuge*, he preferred the term *Contrapunctus* to designate the individual numbers, and, in a nod to the Italian tradition of the previous century, notated the work in open score. His intention was to compose a work—using a single subject—that used all possible fugal combinations, such as double and triple invertible counterpoint at the octave, tenth and twelfth in a progressively elaborate exposition. In short, “The governing idea of the work,” as Bach specialist Christoph Wolff put it, “is an exploration in depth of the contrapuntal possibilities inherent in a single musical subject. “Bach fell ill with a fatal disease before he could finish this culminating experiment with a monothematic instrumental work; the unfinished torso consists of 14 fugues and 4 canons, in an order that increases in complexity.

In his preface to the 1752 edition of *Art of the Fugue* Friedrich Wilhelm Marpurg reflects on the temerity of the Master’s endeavor. For him, no one surpassed Bach “in the deep and thoughtful execution of unusual, ingenious ideas, far removed from the ordinary run, yet spontaneous and natural,” and he defends this apparently arcane project with the comment that “a melody which only agrees with canons of taste obtaining at a particular time and place has value only so long as that taste prevails. Natural and cogent thoughts maintain their worth in all times and places.” Gerhard Hertz, comments that for Marpurg, Bach was “not the last representative of an outmoded epoch that [his] contemporaries saw, but a ‘Master of timeless validity’.”

The first four contrapuncti are expository, that is, they are simple 4-voice fugues on the single theme. *Contrapunctus I* is demonstratively straightforward; *Contrapunctus II* introduces a dotted rhythm in the “French” style into the counterpoint. In *Contrapuncti III* and *IV* the theme has been inverted, that is, the melodic direction of the notes in the original theme is reversed, and Bach begins to extend his elaboration. In *III*, after the exposition of the theme in each of the four voices, the intervals in the theme are filled in with running lines, and in *IV*, all sorts of subtle variations abound as Bach extends the episodic elaborations. At one point he combines a syncopated version in the original key of D minor in the soprano voice with a statement in F major in the alto; he also varies the harmonic movement to such a degree that *IV* is just about twice as long as any of the first three. *Contrapuncti I-IV* don’t reveal much of Bach’s plan for the whole work, but they do capture the essence of the composition, the longing for the past and the deep roots of Western music tradition.

In his renowned study of Bach’s music, Albert Schweitzer wrote that “for Bach there was really only one style—that suggested by the phrasing of the stringed instrument—and . . . all other styles are only modifications of this basic style.” While Bach composed the original manuscript of *Art of the Fugue* in open score, that is, on four staves, the work was meant to be played on a keyboard instrument—and arguments pro and con about which keyboard (harpsichord or organ) have flourished over the years. However, it seems only natural—if Schweitzer is correct—that this score would find its way to a quartet of strings, providing the opportunity to appreciate the independence of the parts and to follow the unfolding logic and drama of the fugal construction.

**String Quartet No. 3, “Whereof man cannot speak . . .”**

Jesse Jones  
(b. 1978)

Jesse Jones has an interesting background. He grew up in the high desert plains of northwest New Mexico, in view of the Shiprock volcano. Home-schooled, Jones’s early intention was to become a concert pianist, but an injury during his teen-age years altered that goal. Eventually he developed skills as a mandolin player, and as a member of a small innovative band, he began composing. Eventually this activity led to the study of musical composition while a college student at the University of Oregon. Recently, having completed his DMA in composition at Cornell working under the direction of Steven Stucky, he has begun teaching at the University of South Carolina.

Jesse Jones has received numerous awards including ones from the American Academy in Rome, Aspen Music Festival, American Academy of Arts and Letters, Tanglewood Music Center, Ithaca College and Cornell University. Commissions from ensembles such as the Juilliard String Quartet now ensure that his calendar is full.

Jesse Jones writes the following about his String Quartet No. 3, "Whereof man cannot speak . . ."

In his famous *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, 20th-century philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein coined the phrase "Whereof man cannot speak, thereof he must be silent." Growing up, I often heard a variant of this terse aphorism, usually from my mother, whose motto in life (among many others) was, "If you don't know what you're talking about, you best not say anything at all." This was usually her esoteric way of saying, "Son, you're full of it and you know it, and you aren't going to pull that over on me," but she also used it effectively to remind herself and her family that guarding both tongue and temper is smart and virtuous, especially when words fall short and emotions run high.

My mother died right around the time I began work on this string quartet, and in the wake of her passing I found myself experiencing many intense emotions, most of which I could not fully explain in words. And music it was, the writing of this my third string quartet, which helped assuage those emotions of loss, heartbreak, yearning, and even anger, eventually leading to a type of catharsis and spiritual acceptance.

"Whereof man cannot speak . . ." is thus a musical expression of all those feelings for which I could find no words. This piece is played continuously, without pause, but can be divided into five main sections or episodes, which mirror what I would describe as my personal grief cycle: 1) a still, blurry sadness, 2) a faster fluttering of more playful memories, 3) a yearning lyricism, countered by dancing buoyancy, 4) an all-consuming frustration and anger, and finally 5) a progression into peace and acceptance.

Drawing on all the resources of the string quartet Jones fashions the trajectory of an emotional journey through recall and avoids formal structures: the program is the structure of the work. Pervasive use of extended techniques throughout the work reinforces the sense that the expanded forces, pitches, sounds, are not extraneous or added on, but are the basic and real language of the work. This is the more noticeable as none of the works available to hear on the internet (interviews, YouTube and so on) use extended techniques and pitches to this degree. Unfortunately his Violin Concerto (composed for the first violinist of the Juilliard String Quartet), is not yet available for listening.

The work uses tonality treated as though it is heard from a distance; microtones blur and neutralize the harmonic and melodic material. Small elements quoted (a fragment of the "Dies irae," bits of tunes most likely shared by mother and son, shadowy chorales) together with extensive passages of meticulously crafted writing for the strings, achieve a palette that's expressive of the extreme states of mind called for by the composer's program. Throughout the score, the performers are coached with meticulous instructions, starting with "very fragile and delicate - absolutely-static -*sempre non vibrato*"; then 16 measures later: *libero* - not too busy, but wispy, like faint tendrils of smoke"; at m. 21, "very quiet & still, like the beginning, but soon leading ahead to new ground"; and at m. 30, "wistful - a chorale in a haze." And so it goes, all the subtle, delicate changes in texture captured and directed by the commentary, until at the end when the open fifth from the opening returns: "slow as possible - smooth as glass - painfully still, like the beginning."

When asked in an interview about the influences on his work, Jones cited the composers Messiaen, Dutilleux, Bartók, Ligeti and Schnittke, but then added that there are two additional equally important ones: first he recalled his early exposure to the "sun-burnt deadness" of the vast landscape of New Mexico, and then he mentioned that he also was preoccupied with an idea about the soul, the possibility of its independent existence, that is, before, during, and after life on earth. Perhaps these composers have a certain personal appeal to a young person who grew up in the southwest, far from the centers of urban styles and developments, in tune with the timeless rhythms that are so much a part of the desert.

String Quartet in G Major D 887, Op. Post. 161

Franz Schubert  
(1797-1828)

**Allegro molto moderato**

**Andante un poco moto**

**Scherzo. Allegro vivace - Trio. Allegretto**

**Allegro assai**

A late work, Schubert finished the score of this last quartet in the month of June, 1826. As such, it falls between the wondrous quartet in D minor, "Death and the Maiden," and the very special quintet in C Major, and, with them, is in the company of the great C Major Symphony—all accomplished and original works for instrumental ensembles. Schubert, the composer *par excellence* of song, developed the art of instrumental composition more slowly, but in the end, mastered it.

In performance the G Major string quartet, probably more than any other, requires the undivided attention of both performers and audience, as the balance between lyricism, harmonic adventure and dramatic structure is more demanding, more strenuous than, say, in the quintessentially romantic "Death and the Maiden." With the G Major quartet, Schubert returns to the classical principle in which the forceful expression of an idea in the material generates the form. In this case, it's a force produced by the clash between the major and minor of the opening gesture. Done twice: first a G Major chord, *piano*, explodes as G minor, *fortissimo*; then D Major is turned into D minor, with the same explosive force. This opposition—which is not at all like Schubert's usual shifting between major and minor—played out over time gives the movement a classical unity and at the same time, a spaciousness. As Rosen says: "What is remarkable is the rebirth of classical conviction that the simplest tonal relationships can alone provide the subject-matter of music."

Also remarkable is how the momentum released in the chords in the first measures is not lost. Carried through to the last measures of the first movement, this conflict is a fundamental issue inherent in every movement of the work in some way. Given Schubert's extraordinary ability to find variety and melodic wealth in discreet formulas, form and content are essentially balanced throughout. In the first movement, it's as though the internal borderlines of the sonata form are expanded, as if the free-wheeling ensemble polyphony makes the movement work as a solid whole. Often exuberant, the ideas never quite overreach the unifying guiding idea. Even the slow movement, a beautifully lyric, full-blown sonata rondo form that expands into rarified harmonic areas when the anguished central theme unexpectedly explodes, is disciplined and avoids diffusion.

With the delicate rustling in the third movement, a scherzo in B minor—its trio in G major—Schubert moves away from the dotted rhythm of the previous movements in preparation for the exuberant last movement. This takes the form of a long and complex treatment of a sonata rondo, in which Schubert unleashes all of the inventive force of his imagination, creating a harmonic kaleidoscope that is with his unfailing instinct -- kept under control -- to the very end.

For various reasons, coming to the final movement—an extended rondo and sonata—I cannot resist the temptation (because he got it so right) to quote Schumann's famous comparison of Schubert's "heavenly length" to "that of a thick novel in four volumes—perhaps by Jean Paul who also was never able to reach a conclusion, and for the best reason: to permit the reader to think it out for himself. How refreshing, this feeling of abundance! With others one always dreads being disillusioned at the end and saddened by disappointment."

- Notes © Dr. Jean Christensen

The pre-concert discussion of the concert by the Juilliard String Quartet will be presented by Dr. Jack Ashworth, Professor of Music History and accomplished keyboardist, in room 130, School of Music, 2-2:45 PM. All are invited and welcome to attend.

# Los Angeles Guitar Quartet

## November 17, 2013

### Cumba-Quín

Carlos Rafael Rivera

Carlos Rafael Rivera, who spent his youth in locations as diverse as Washington, DC, Miami, and Central America, naturally draws from a variety of musical sources, most prominently Afro-Cuban music. Since his graduation with a Master's Degree in composition from the USC Thornton School of Music (where he met and became close friends with LAGQ) he has gone on to establish himself as an important new voice in contemporary American and Latin composition. He has received awards from BMI, ASCAP, and recent commissions include works for LAGQ, Chanticleer, and the Miami Symphony. He describes himself as a "folkloric musical essayist," and has said of this piece, "*Cumba-Quín* derives its onomatopoeic title from a vocal imitation of the sounds produced by conga drums played against claves in rumba style. The guitars assume the roles of different percussion instruments such as *claves*, *palitos*, and *congas*, utilizing special wooden rings worn on the left hand help to produce some of these sounds. Through use of the *guaguancó* (4/4) and *columbia* (6/8) forms of rumba used make the piece pulsate with the colorful, visceral, and ritualistic aspects of the Afro-Cuban tradition."

### Pulcinella Suite

Igor Stravinsky  
(1882-1971)

In 1919, following the successes of Igor Stravinsky's collaborations with Les Ballets Russes (*Firebird*, *Petrushka*, and *The Rite of Spring*), Serge Diaghilev proposed that Stravinsky compose a new score based on the music of Baroque composer Giovanni Battista Pergolesi (1710-1736). Based on characters from the Italian *commedia dell'arte*, the ballet also featured set designs by Pablo Picasso. Stravinsky's settings of these delicate and graceful dances marked the composer's first venture into "neo-classicism", a style that would become a hallmark of his later works. While his arrangements avoided the use of modernism in general, Stravinsky insinuated his personal style here and there, most notably in the bi-tonality of the Minuet and polyrhythms in the rousing Finale. He must have been very pleased with his simple and precise adaptations of these Italian dances; in 1922 he created an 11-movement concert suite drawn from this score, and later adapted it for violin and piano in the *Suite Italienne*.

The seven movements adapted here for guitar quartet attempt to maintain the crystalline sonorities of Stravinsky's orchestration, while exploring the inherent folkloric qualities of the guitar's colors. The Overture utilizes a treble-dominated texture, with continuo-like chord voicings in the accompaniment, while the rustic violin solos are captured with the use of open-string strums. Working at the extremes of the guitar's tessitura, high harmonics imitate the open harmonics of the violin in the lovely *Serenata*, while low pizzicato evoke the duet between trombones and double-bass in the jocular *Vivo* movement. In the Finale, melodies in the upper reaches of the fretboard attempt to capture the blaring trumpet line that brings the piece to its satisfying conclusion.

### Two Mexican Pieces

Aaron Copland  
(1900-1990)

The son of immigrant parents, Aaron Copland lived to become the most celebrated of American composers. His popular reputation in the United States is founded on his thoroughly American ballets, *Billy the Kid*, *Rodeo* and *Appalachian Spring*, while a great variety of other compositions won him an unassailable position in American concert-life. In the course of his composing and conducting career, Copland made many visits to Central and South America; and, from *El Salon Mexico* of 1933-1936 onwards, the rhythms and colors of the region have enlivened several of his shorter works. The second and third of his *Three Latin American Sketches* were originally presented, under the title *Two Mexican Pieces*, at the 1959 Festival of Two Worlds in Spoleto, Italy. The first movement, *Paisaje Mexicano* (Mexican Landscape) features a wonderful mix of lyric and languid atmosphere. The second, *Danza de Jalisco*, is based on the *son*, a traditional dance form from Veracruz. Using the alternation of 6/8 and 3/4 meters which typifies much Spanish and Latin-American music, Copland's own distinctive voice is evident in the use of open harmonies, broad textures and exotic percussion.

## Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2

Franz Liszt  
(1811-1886)

Hungarian-born Franz (Ferenc) Liszt was a unique “sibling” indeed amidst a formidable “brotherhood” of composer/performers (such as Chopin, Paganini, Kreisler, and Rachmaninov, to name a few) whose music and peerless virtuosity on the piano made him an international superstar of his time. As was common and, most likely, expected of a composer such as Liszt, he dove deeply into his ethnic roots for those pearls that would make his music truly and unmistakably Hungarian. Bela Bartok would later praise Liszt and his music, particularly the Hungarian Rhapsodies, calling them “perfect creations”, while at the same time hastily pointing out that the material Liszt was using was essentially Gypsy, and not entirely Hungarian.

The second of Franz Liszt’s Hungarian Rhapsodies is one of his better-known works. It was originally composed in 1847 as a solo piano piece dedicated to the Count László Teleky, and published in 1851. An orchestral version followed soon thereafter. Most of his rhapsodies, including this one, are comprised of two parts: a slower and expressive part which Liszt marks *Lassan* (*lassu*), and a final section marked *Frisska* (*friss*) which builds up in intensity into a frenzied swirl. On a contemporary note, the piece has become a staple of animation soundtracks, appearing in such cartoons as the Bugs Bunny “Rhapsody Rabbit” episode, Tom and Jerry’s “Cat Concerto”, Woody Woodpecker’s “Convict Concerto”, and many others.

## Music in Four Sharps (On Dowland’s “Frog Galliard”)

Ian Krouse  
(b. 1956)

Ian Krouse has established a reputation as one of the most important contemporary American composers writing today, and his output includes choral, symphonic, flute, organ, string quartet and vocal works. He is most recognized, however, for his impressive body of pieces for guitar and guitar ensemble, and his long collaboration with LAGQ has resulted in a number of ground-breaking pieces, including the flamenco-inspired *Bulerías* and *Baroque/Rock Labyrinth on a Theme of Led Zeppelin*. *Music in Four Sharps* has undergone a number of incarnations, first being written as a guitar duet (Portrait of a Young Woman) for the Pearl/Gray Duo in 1992, then recomposed as a piece for solo guitar and string quartet, and finally arranged for four guitars in 2012. Its inspiration is the “Frog Galliard”, one of the most famous dances by the Elizabethan lute master John Dowland. As the composer notes, this piece is exclusively in the key of E Major, with no accidentals. Ian Krouse set it as a kind of compositional conceit to write a piece in which no notes stray from the key of four sharps, while maintaining its musical interest and integrity.

## “World Tour”

This set of pieces inspired by the music of various indigenous musical cultures reflects LAGQ’s deep interest in the global influence of the guitar. A number of these pieces were created for their first two recordings on the Sony Classics label in the 1990’s which opened up new territories of exploration for the four guitarists.

## Gongan

William Kanengiser  
(b. 1959)

William Kanengiser writes about *Gongan*:

“Many years ago, the quartet was invited to play at a festival in Singapore. On a free night, we attended a performance by an Indonesian dance ensemble, accompanied by a traditional “Gamelan” orchestra. It was my first direct experience hearing gamelan music, and I was entranced by the sonorities of the instruments and the hypnotic character of the music. A few years later, in planning the repertoire for a recording of “world music” pieces, I wondered if this music could somehow translate to the guitar. I immersed myself in listening to recordings, and searched for just the right piece to arrange for four guitars. Ultimately, I wrote an original work, inspired by the rhythms and scales of the Indonesian style. The most notable aspect of the piece is the use of preparations

on the guitar strings (metal clips, plastic discs, mutes, small bells, etc.) to evoke the sound of the traditional gongs, percussion, and mallet instruments of the Balinese gamelan. The title, *Gongan* is a term describing the recurring rhythmic pattern of the low gongs that serve as a foundation for all the upper voices.”

## **Djembe**

**Andrew York**  
(b. 1958)

*Djembe* is one of a number of African-inspired pieces by celebrated guitar composer and former LAGQ member Andrew York. Named for a large African drum with a deeply resonant sound, and this piece was written with an optional djembe accompaniment. In addition to evoking a joyous Afro-pop guitar sonority, York experiments with the antiphonal possibilities of four guitars, achieving a “digital delay” effect by having three guitars echo each other in rapid succession.

## **Spring Snow**

**Gerald Garcia**  
(b. 1949)

Born in Hong Kong and raised in England, Gerald Garcia studied Chemistry at Oxford University and now lives in Oxford where he enjoys cooking, computer music, Taoist Yoga and conducting the odd chamber orchestra. His *25 Etudes Esquisses* for guitar solo have been recorded for NAXOS by John Holmquist and his music has been played and recorded by David Russell, Craig Ogden, the Amadeus Duo, the Eden-Stell Duo, Xue Fei Yang, the Los Angeles Guitar Quartet and John Williams.. Mr. Garcia wrote the following about the two pieces:

“This work was written for the Los Angeles Guitar Quartet on hearing the news that they were to perform their Beijing debut in June 2008. ‘Spring Snow’ is a traditional pipa solo (the pipa is a plucked instrument which ended up in China, having begun its journey in the Middle East) from the 14th century and is almost monothematic in structure, with an obsessive four bar riff which branches out in many directions later on in the piece. I have turned it into a chamber work by adding several sections and elongating others as well as introducing a percussive element which is implied in the original. The work requires extensive use of pipa techniques such as tremolo, crossed string percussive effects and heavy string bending.”

## **La Fiesta de la Tirana**

**Horacio Salinas**  
(b. 1951)

Horacio Salinas is the leader of the brilliant Chilean folk ensemble “Inti-Illimani”, and Scott Tennant arranged a number of their pieces for LAGQ. *La Fiesta de la Tirana* is meant to portray a religious procession, in which a parade is led up the mountain with an image of the Virgin Mary (La Tirana) at the front. The piece begins quietly, as if from a distance, and gradually gets closer and closer. Some of the traditional instruments imitated are the *charango* (a small guitar with an armadillo-shell body), *caja* (large drum), and pan-pipes, achieved by scraping the nail across the wound bass strings.

## **Samba Novo**

**Baden Powell**  
(1937-2000)

Baden Powell de Aquino is regarded as one of the most virtuosic and influential Brazilian guitarists of the 20th century. He was amazingly prolific, recording over 55 albums and writing hundreds of songs. While he was proficient in traditional classical guitar, he pioneered the chordal and melodic style of Brazilian guitar textures now associated with the style. He was not a fan of the more “watered-down” (as he put it) *bossa nova* style made popular by Carlos Antonio Jobim in the 1960’s, and this piece, *Samba Novo* (new samba) is an attempt to return the samba to it’s driving, energetic roots. This arrangement was created by the contemporary 7-string virtuoso Marus Tardelli for the celebrated Quartetto Maugani, and it leaves room for free improvisation in between choruses.

## **Celtic Fare**

**Scott Tennant & Simon Jeffes**  
**(b. 1962)(1949-1997)**

*Celtic Fare* is a two-movement work; the second part contains an arrangement of the tuneful "Music for a Found Harmonium" by Simon Jeffes of the legendary folkmusic group The Penguin Café Orchestra. This jaunty piece was originally composed on a portable keyboard instrument, frequently used for yoga meditation chanting, and its popularity increased after it was featured in the soundtrack to the hit film "Napoleon Dynamite". Scott Tennant arranged this piece for guitar quartet, tuning his guitar in the traditional "DADGAD" open tuning. Still, he felt that the piece needed more material to make a satisfying set. So he wrote a lyrical introduction entitled "Daya's Spin" which reminded him of the gyrations of a particularly lovely yoga instructor, and expanded the fast movement by writing a second section, entitled "The Cat-Cow Reel". The "cat-cow is a yoga pose that was especially fascinating as demonstrated by Daya. As Scott says, "Yoga-Celt was born!"

- Notes © William Kanengiser

The pre-concert lecture will be given by Dr. Stephen Mattingly, Professor of Guitar at the School of Music in room 130 from 2 to 2:45. All are welcome to hear the presentation.

# ATOS Trio

## February 23, 2014

The history of music in Russia is fascinating as it was not until the late 17th century that the Russian Court began to take an interest in western music, and until the late 18th or early 19th century this music was a foreign commodity. Until that point in time, the rich traditional music culture and orthodox chant had filled the needs for musical expression.

The development of the new Russian music (like that of literature) fell into two groups, one dedicated to assimilating the western Romantic musical style (mostly in Moscow), the other, more radical, focused on pan-Slavic expression (in St. Petersburg). These two strong currents of ultra-traditional conservatism and radical innovation co-existed until the Stalinist anti-modern campaigns of the 1930s. It's more complicated than that of course, but it's germane to the program of the ATOS Trio, as it reflects the divide being fashioned in two equal parts, the first half chosen from the 19th century and the second from the modernist repertoire of the 20th century. The one common denominator is the demand for high level of technical virtuosity—every one of the composers on the program was an accomplished pianist; Rachmaninoff, who dominated the stage during his life-time, is considered one of the greatest pianists to have lived.

### *Trio élégiaque in G minor (1892)*

**Sergei Rachmaninoff**  
(1873-1943)

**Lento lugubre - Più mosso - Più vivo - Con anima - Appassionato - Risoluto -  
Tempo I (Più mosso) - Più vivo - Appassionato - Alla marcia funebre (Lento lugubre)**

In one movement, the work traces a basic sonata form, with the sections well-defined by tempo changes as indicated above, each one precisely characterized by its emotional gesture and motion. The broadly sweeping melodies are carried forward by the clever rhythmic design and supported by the subtle accompaniments, all of which is shared equally by the instruments in a work that exudes radiant textural clarity. The *Trio* is a masterly, youthful work—Rachmaninoff's first independent composition—of the sort of melancholic Russian romanticism inherited from Tchaikovsky, laced perhaps by a bit of nostalgia with the nod to Chopin in the funeral march.

### **Trio No. 1 in D minor, Op. 32**

**Anton Arensky**  
(1861-1901)

**Allegro moderato  
Scherzo. Allegro molto  
Elegia. Adagio  
Finale. Allegro non troppo**

Although Arensky trained in St. Petersburg under Rimsky-Korsakoff, nothing in this work indicates that as a composer he was influenced by the folk or Slavic music tradition. A piece of formal chamber music, it fits right into the body of music literature inspired by Tchaikovsky and other Romantic composers of the European Romantic tradition.

Starting with the opening of the first movement, Arensky proves his understanding of the instrumental combination by his complementary balance of instrumental resources: accompaniment figures are interesting, and gracefully fill out the harmonic space, and the division of thematic material is never mechanical or arbitrary. It is clear that Arensky's primary concern in managing the thematic elements is a well-balanced working out of the formal structure, and the distribution and variation of the thematic ideas keeps things moving forward. In the opening, the full thematic statement in the violin leads directly to the entry of the cello in the subdominant, but the interaction between the two strings, shortens the cello's answer, and leads right back to the tonic and the consequent statement, now in the piano. The transition (*Più mosso*), which is more figurative than melodic, takes the harmony to the relative major and a new upwardly mobile theme. Eventually, the closing brings large chords and sweeping arpeggios, a particularly welcome change. In the development, the instruments trade statements, with the strings usually working together to balance the heightened activity of the piano.

Be prepared in the second movement for some pyrotechnics! Rhythmically intricate and colorful—in the parallel major key—it possesses (I almost hate to say it) Mendelssohnian spriteliness, but the character is different. The piano is certainly the featured character in the Scherzo, while in the Trio (*meno mosso*) the strings carry the tune, sometimes imitating one another, other times playing in octave unisons.

The third and fourth movements belong together, as they really are a set of variations, although the theme of the Finale is transformed sufficiently to justify setting it off as the capstone to the whole composition. The opening of the third movement, *Elegia*, begins with the theme as the tune of a funeral march: first count silent (or empty), second count a dotted rhythm (drum roll), third and fourth counts as a sustained chord (prolong drum roll). The strings have the melodic interest throughout the passage, but in the second contrasting segment they take on a murmuring character while the piano carries a harmonically slow-moving, rhythmically repetitive, line. The rest of the movement is a series of variations on these two ideas, sustaining the gentle elegiac character. This is changed, however, with the Finale, where Arensky moves the dotted figure of the funeral march to the first beat with large full chords in the piano that spark an immediate response in the strings. At the conclusion of this variation Arensky returns to the contrasting quiet theme of the *Elegia* and then briefly recalls the opening *adagio* of the first movement, before one last moment of brilliance in the coda.

### **Three Folk Dances, Op. 13b**

**Allegro moderato**

**Lento**

**Allegro**

**Alexander Veprik**

**(1899-1958)**

Ukrainian-born Alexander Veprik was a distinguished composer and teacher in Moscow during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Following training in Warsaw and Leipzig, St Petersburg and Moscow, he became a teacher at the Moscow Conservatory and eventually rose to the position of Dean. In 1923 he was actively involved in establishing the Society for Jewish Music, which flourished for a time, but eventually disappeared under the Stalinist regime in the 1930s. One of the composers who refused to condemn Dmitri Shostakovich's *Lady Macbeth* (in 1938), Veprik was imprisoned by Stalin for some years (1950-54). His compositions (a number are available on YouTube) are highly emotional works, with an unusual mixture of Jewish and modernist characteristics.

Originally composed for solo piano (1928) and later arranged for trio by the composer, the three dances, though very modest, have a certain integrity and charm. The instruments have balanced roles, playing out the clear-cut forms with uncomplicated rhythmic patterns. Because of its exotic scale the third dance has more of an oriental cast than the other two.

### **Trio No. 2 in E Minor, Op. 67**

**Andante; moderato**

**Allegro con brio**

**Largo**

**Allegretto**

**Dmitri Shostakovich**

**(1908-1974)**

It always seems pertinent when thinking about Shostakovich to remember his difficult and changing relationship with Soviet Russia. Throughout his career, which was launched in the early 1920s, buffeted by the government's trials and tribulations, he fell into and out of favor according to the current evaluation of his music *vis à vis* socialist realism. It is generally accepted that in order for him to survive as an artist working in the limiting context of communist "supervision," he needed to project a powerfully affirmative spirit and conceal anything that resembled its opposite. Shostakovich's deliberately ambiguous style enabled his audience to experience complex emotions—fear, loss, and loathing—without risk. But his own taking of this risk apparently caused him much anxiety.

The Second Piano Trio, op. 67, was composed in 1944, during the second phase of WW II that followed the defeat of the Germans at Stalingrad. The first devastating critique that the composer had suffered at the hands of the regime in 1936 (over his opera *Lady Macbeth*) was in the past, and the musical scene in Moscow, where he had settled, was active and varied despite the pervasive difficulties. The Trio is an intense work in which any number of musical turns of phrase that are truly characteristic of this composer co-exist with elements that might have been a response to the idealized and stylized realism expected by official policy. Already the fact that the work is in four movements indicates a certain formality, a "comfortable" observation that is immediately dispelled when it opens with a tense, eery tune, pitched high in the cello's treble register with a rhythmic motif that appears throughout the movement: long-short-short-long (or sometimes, just short-short-long). After a noble-sounding,

and unsentimental exposition with all parts in canon, the mood begins to shift, and segment by segment it becomes more animated. When it eventually calms back down, the initially disturbing atmosphere has been dispelled, pushed aside for the time being. Underneath it all, the opening rhythmic pattern can often be heard; it never goes completely away and survives—greatly augmented—in the final cadence: shooooort-shooooort-looong.

The second movement is a fast galop. Full of raucous fun, it lopes along in a heavy triple meter with lots of interplay between the instruments, each one in turn jockeying for top position. Contributing mightily to the high spirits is the key signature of F-sharp Major which contributes a certain “edge” to the overall sound. Constantly shifting harmonic movement slips and slides (even if briefly) into distantly-related key areas like B-flat Major or G minor. A trio-like section in E minor sounds quite like a square dance. Pure Shostakovich, it seems to be the genuine article. There is so much packed into the movement that it feels longer than its (not quite) 3 minutes!

The third movement is a passacaglia, a variation movement with the harmonized bass line in the piano supplying the foundation: the bass circles slowly through an eight-measure phrase with the last harmony serving as the first one for the next reiteration. As the measured chords of the theme trace a complex—but smooth—harmonic curve, the fifth chord in the series jolts the senses. Listen for the bitter, jarring note in the succession of chords, even as the music marches on without taking any apparent notice: the message is clear. After five very plain variations in the strings over the same unrelenting and unreconciled chord progression in the piano and an extended cadence, the last chord—the prime mechanism for continuity—leads directly into the last movement, an Allegretto in E Major, the parallel key to the E minor of the opening movement.

The fourth movement starts as a jaunty, innocent dance tune in 2/4, with steady *umpah* accompaniment, but takes on a variety of guises—in turn silly, then aggressive, grim or tragicomic. Suddenly, the cello rises out of the melee with an impassioned cry, its lament wails down and up the scale as the piano repeats over and over the tones of a broken chord, as though frozen or emotionally drained. Eventually bits of the jaunty tune intrude and force a cooling down, only to be followed by a struggle for power that begins low: eerily the lament now *pp*, pitched high in the strings, with the piano rumbling in octaves below, begins a climb in register and dynamics that finally reaches a frenzied high point. Tunes in 2/4 trade off with others in 3/4 and 5/8 in a mix that includes torn fragments of the lament, developing an almost unbearable intensity. Finally everything collapses into streaming 32nd notes in the piano that set in motion an intense review of the opening tune of the first movement with the violin muted, but *ff*. The muted cello, high, loud and *espressivo*, and the piano eventually follow in canon, and when the tempo slows at last, the not-quite innocent-sounding steady eighths return one last time in the strings, and the piano takes its turn with the droll 2/4 tune as the movement winds down.

Shostakovich might have ended the Trio here, but instead he brings the passacaglia theme for one last pass through of its series of chords, its “structural” flaw still plainly evident—an unchangeable, unalterable unforgettable fact of life. A brief recap of the 2/4 tune closes out the work.

- Notes © Dr. Jean Christensen

A pre-concert discussion of works on the program will be led by Dr. Dror Biran, Professor of Piano at the School of Music, beginning at 2 PM in room 130. All are most welcome to attend.

# Elias String Quartet

## March 16, 2014

*Premier Quartour en sol mineur, Op. 10*

Animé et très décidé

Assez vif et bien rythmé

Andantino, doucement espressif

Très modéré; Très mouvementé et avec passion; Très animé

Claude Debussy  
(1862-1918)

This string quartet was Debussy's only essay in the genre, though when he designated it as the "first," he apparently had the intention of composing more. 1892-93, the year of composition fell in the middle of an important and complex period in the formation of the composer's personal idiom. By 1892 he had gone on his second pilgrimage to Bayreuth, and he was still very involved with Wagner's music. But also by this time, he had been through some of the seminal experiences of his life; he had listened to the Javanese gamelans at the World Exposition, and, for the first time, he had heard choral music of the high renaissance, masses by Palestrina and Victoria. He had composed songs using poems by Baudelaire and Paul Verlaine, and, inspired by Mallarmé, had begun his work on *Prélude pour l'après-midi d'un faune*. Having completed the string quartet, he began work on his opera, *Pelléas et Mélisande*, a project that was to take many years to complete. None of these salient facts, nor, indeed, anything else in his life at this time—a commission, for instance—seems to indicate that he would be inclined to compose a string quartet, a work ostensibly in traditional forms far removed from the rich imagery of Baudelaire, symbolist poetry of Maeterlinck, or the operas of Wagner. More than one author presumes that his objective was just that: to compose a work with no literary base nor visual allusions.

Outwardly at least, the work possesses the skeletal frame of the "classic" string quartet. The four movements follow the usual plan: the first movement cursively approaches a sonata-like form; the second scherzo-like movement with its fleet pizzicatos and basic rondo form is followed by a pensive third movement with suggestive muted strings. The fourth movement that begins under the dim shadow of the third, progressively brightens its 12/8 gigue-like dance and ends with an extravagant flourish.

So much for the external aspects of the traditional framework, because what is striking here is the composer's inventive work with the thematic material, as well as the economical treatment of the whole form that is both cyclical and thematically varied. But there is almost no thematic development as such. The work is a brilliant mosaic. Its constituent parts are fashioned from the constant renewal of only two or three basic shapes—resulting in numerous tunes, each cut from the same material, but different in hue and design. Then, by adopting aspects of the Phrygian mode, the most distinctive of all the church modes, Debussy avoids the polarity of the tonic-dominant axis and is able to invent new melodic harmonies by combining and recombining changed versions of the same idea. Freed from the confines of classic subject-counter-subject formulas of the major-minor tonal system, Debussy dispenses with the expectation of the conversational question-answer phrase structure that had characterized string quartet writing since its early development.

Though Debussy composed only one string quartet, its inspired treatment of the strings and compositional ideas were perpetuated in the quartets of Bartók who acknowledged its importance on his own development.

*Officium breve*

in memoriam Andreæ Szervánszky, op. 28 (1988/89)

György Kurtág

(b. 1926)

I Largo - II Più andante - III Sostenuto, quasi giusto - IV Grave, molto sostenuto -

V (*Fantasie über die Harmonien des Webern-Kanons*) Presto - VI (*Canon a 4*) Molto agitato - VII

*Canon a 2 (frei, nach op.31/VI von Webern)* Sehr fließend - VIII Lento -

IX Largo - X and Xa (*Da capo al fine*) [Webern: *Kanon a 4 (op. 31/VI)*] Sehr fließend - L'istesso

tempo - Sehr fließend - XI sostenuto - XII Sostenuto, quasi giusto - XIII Sostenuto, con slancio

- XIV *Disperato, vivo* - XV *Arioso interrotto (di Endre Szervánszky)* Larghetto

*Officium breve* is one of many works composed by György Kurtág as a memorial to someone with whom he felt deep connections. Such words as *Homage*, *Grabstein*, *Omaggio*, *Requiem*, figure frequently in the titles of his works, and many single movements within the works bear reference to others acknowledging a connection, an understanding, something shared or traded. The *Officium breve*, which has been compared to a Catholic liturgy is

a memorial to a respected composer, Andrea Szervánszky (1911-1977), professor of composition at the Budapest Academy of Music from 1949 until his death. Like Kurtág his early compositional style was influenced by Bartók. In 1959, Szervánszky became acquainted with dodecaphony, and, again like Kurtág, he was especially impacted by the work of Anton Webern; his *Six Orchestral Pieces* (1959) was perhaps the first 12-tone work in Hungary. Kurtág felt a particular connection with Szervánszky for all of these associations, details of which are reflected in many layers in his opus 28, *Officium breve*.

The central feature of *Officium breve* is precisely the musical connections that Kurtág makes between himself, Szervánszky, Bartók and Webern; he quotes and alludes to his own and to Szervánszky's work (and thereby to Bartók), quotes and alludes to Webern's work, and then interlaces these movements with compositions of his own in a multi-layered structure. His aspiration is to remember and to pay homage.

There are multiple ways of working out the interrelationships between these small pieces, as connections exist simultaneously on many different levels. In particular, the simple elements—pure, open fifths, grinding seconds, rising-falling cadential lines, and ostinatos, pedal points in varied tempos and diverse character relate in multiple ways so as to point to parallels between the two composers, and to the importance of their common Hungarian heritage from Bartók, as well as to shared inspiration from Webern. And these small elements are the real substance of Kurtág's art where every note counts; his is an art that takes nothing for granted.

One approach to the work is to hear the 15 pieces as three groups of five. Thus the first group sets out the principal connections: a prayerful introduction of pure, rarified open fifths and cadence (I-II), the first allusion to Szervánszky—a sighing arrangement of one of his tunes in a Webernesque quasi-palindrome (III), an essay in crunching Bartókian seconds (IV), and Kurtág's own inventive fantasy on the harmony of the Webern canon from Op. 31 (V). All the major elements for the designated purpose are present in these first five.

The second segment explores more deeply important associations to Bartók and Webern: a Webernesque 4-part canon (VI), Kurtág's canon, freely based on Webern (VII), a drawn-out cadence of evolving seconds evoking the importance of Bartók (VIII), and, then—pure Kurtág—a rising chromatic scale with muted viola's slow vibrato decorating the line with microtones (IX). The tenth piece is the center of gravity of the entire work: Kurtág's arrangement of a mensural canon from Webern's last work, a Cantata (Op. 31/vi) which is a setting of a text by Hildegard Jone, "Gelockert aus dem Schoße in Gottes Frühlingsraum" / "Released from the womb into God's spring space." Note that these two canons are performed as a *da capo*, X first and last and Xa in the middle. The gentle sway comes as a "mirrored reflection" to the earlier allusion to Szervánszky in III from the first group.

The last segment of 5 pieces, builds and culminates in the most dramatic number of all, XIV. At the heart of XI is Kurtág's penchant for creating music from "hardly anything, with so little material and only because what happens to it transforms nothingness into movement" (Paul Griffiths). This drama is created from an ostinato focused entirely on middle C. Number XII returns to III with an uncomplicated variation on the wistful simplicity of the little piece by Szervánszky, engaging, this time, all four instruments. The next two are again in Kurtág's court, with XIII revisiting the open fifths of the very opening, but now more complicated and expressive. XIV, then, is a dramatic Bartókian essay on seconds in all their guises. It begins with narrow seconds (*forte - fortissimo*) and with five well-defined phrases it moves forward and expands: at the point of the golden mean in the piece (most assuredly an allusion to Bartók), Webernian major 7ths and minor 9ths ring out at the height of almost-unbearable tension, concluding with a cadence of pure crunching minor seconds that drive XIV to a frenzied final. In XV Kurtág channels Szervánszky with a quote from an "Arioso" from his Serenade for string orchestra. The melody of falling fourths and fifths trace a line that yearns toward fulfillment, but Kurtág leaves off before that moment, harnessing the mysterious power of the incomplete to evoke the eternal as memorial.

### String Quartet in E minor, Op. 59, No. 2

**Allegro**

**Molto Adagio**

**Allegretto. Maggiore**

**Finale. Presto**

**Ludwig van Beethoven**

(1770-1827)

The three "Razumovsky" quartets, composed in 1806, belong to the extraordinary period in Beethoven's development when his compositions take on greater character and become more personal. The apparent catalyst for the change is his realization that his deafness would consign him to an existence isolated from other living persons. In the Heiligenstadt Testament, he declares that only one thing held him back from ending his life,

Art—and the impossibility of not accomplishing all that he felt capable of. The works that follow this moment of despair, the *Eroica*, the *Waldstein* and *Appassionata* sonatas for piano, and the “Razumovsky” quartets, have a new unmistakable complexity, and abundance; they are no longer genre pieces where the principal reference is to earlier works of the same sort. Wagner writes in his *Art Work of the Future* that Beethoven’s achievement was to create a “harmonic melody,” one that is “divorced from speech in distinction to the rhythmic melody of dance, and capable—though merely borne by instruments—of the most limitless expression together with the most unfettered treatment.” He continues: “In long connected tracts of sound, as in larger, smaller or even smaller fragments, it [the harmonic melody] turned beneath the Master’s hand to vowels, syllables and words and phrases of a speech in which a message hitherto unheard, and never spoken, yet could promulgate itself.” Wagner was also at pains to insist that though we can “marvel at the wholly new world found in these works—when comparing them to earlier ones we find that outwardly they are quite identical in form,” as in the present case: a four movement work with a fast-moving sonata form, a slow-sustained sonata rondo, a bright scherzo-trio, and a furious rondo finale.

Be prepared: the opening plays out in abrupt confrontations of sound and silence. First, two chords, *forte*, flash outward followed directly by a whole measure of silence. Then, moving down an octave, *pianissimo*, an arpeggio traces the same upward line and finishes with a downward flourish. Another measure of silence. Abruptly, and just a half-step higher (the Neapolitan relationship), an immediate repetition, *pianissimo*, of the same arpeggio and flourish, followed by—a measure of silence. And now those three notes of the arpeggio, first one set, then more—quickly following—pile upwards, until reaching almost as high as the chords at the beginning, when they dissolve into running, fluid 16ths and come to an abrupt stop, *forte*, on two chords. Once again the outer pitches flash out in both directions and then—a measure of silence. This is no ordinary antecedent, but that is just what it is. Still in the key of E Minor, Beethoven returns to the register of the opening chords for the consequent; and retracing that upward reach in the first violin—but this time in a lyrical guise—the phrase, now supported by flowing 16ths, dissolves into a transition which will take us to the key of the relative, G Major.

Dramatic and dynamic, the transition brings into play many features that will assume important roles in the rest of the movement: great extensions upwards and downwards, arpeggios and scales rising to peaks precipitating abrupt falls, a rhythmical scrub-brush texture pushing ahead with forward motion, sudden accents marking important new harmonic twists, until arrival (on a low D, *sf*, in the cello) of a second theme that is apparently calmer, but, in fact, equally restless. It continues relentlessly to move, rising and falling, on flowing scales or arpeggiating 16ths. At this point the beginning of the movement until now manages to feel transitory and always in forward motion, when—out of nowhere—suddenly a long series of syncopated chords intrude, halting all forward motion for an extended passage of 7 measures. Beginning *pianissimo*, these chords are played crescendo and culminate, *forte*, in a boisterous closing theme with arpeggios that plunge precipitously, a return to the downward flourish of the opening measures. So much for the exposition.

The nervous, fragmented character of the material introduced in the exposition resists a comprehensible, general description. All the small details—the single measures with two chords and single measures of silence; the restless, transitory 16ths; abrupt dynamics; expanding registers and passages of consolidating syncopations—become a matrix from which Beethoven makes an exposition that, because of the short nervous character of much of the material, seems more like a transition. However, the wonder of it is that all these elements return—some greatly disguised or altered, some not—in the subsequent movements. The outline of the opening line in the first violin, an “e” that rises to the fifth degree, “b,” and falls back to “e,” is the same traversed in the opening of the second movement, albeit many times slower. Syncopations abound in the third movement, the Neapolitan relationship reappears in all the movements, arpeggios and all the rest. Eventually, the imitative and fugal elements in the 3rd and 4th movements transfer the direction of force toward the end of the work.

With the second movement, a very slow, sustained hymn in E Major, the parallel key to the first movement, Beethoven captures the inspiration that “occurred to him,” according to his pupil Carl Czerny, “when contemplating the starry sky and thinking of the music of the spheres.” Every element in the sustained movement conspires to communicate his vision of the universe and its meaning for humankind, as he noted in his diary: “the moral law within us and the starry sky above us—Kant.” First he sustains the subdued quality from the end of the first movement. Hardly ruffling the surface, taking up the last pitch in the first movement, the violin continues in essentially the same key on E (but now E Major), with the admonition to the players: *Si tratta questo pezzo con molto di sentimento* - “this piece must be played with much feeling.” An uninterrupted stream of melody traces the shifting forms of the sonata movement without ever disturbing the calm and contemplative quality of the opening. After one last broad, fully harmonized statement of the chorale, the peaceful end comes as a triplet figure winds its way down through the instruments, and loses itself in the cello.

The quick, dancing Allegretto that follows—now back in E minor—is witty and vivacious with its nearly empty first beat and “hop” on the second, extended beat in the first violin. It is full of clever surprises and restless humor, a good preparation for the seemingly “possessed” Maggiore that follows. In a near manic pursuit of the “thème russe” (a condition of the commission), Beethoven sends one statement after another coursing through the ensemble: viola, 2nd violin, cello, 1st violin. A running triplet counterpoint barely seems to keep up as the texture thickens or thins with each entry of the theme, and culminates in a high-energy canon that aggressively surges upwards before gradually melting into the gentler mood that effects the return to the Allegretto. Beethoven instructs the performers to play—after this repeat—both the Maggiore and the Allegretto once more before moving on to the last movement.

Each of the first three movements in this quartet poses challenges in following Beethoven’s thought and the Finale even more so, as the task of solving the puzzle here is beyond simple rationalization. The opening theme, heard time and again throughout this extended sonata that is also a rondo, seems to be not in the key of E Minor, but in C Major—at least for the first 7 measures before the brief 2-measure cadence in e minor, which immediately turns back to—C Major! And so it continues throughout a very insistent and complex movement. Of course this is the best means Beethoven had to avoid the monotony of having all movements in the same key; it might have been quite impossible to compose a movement strong enough to avoid the feeling that all movements in the same key was too much of a good thing. And indeed, this is Beethoven in the highest of good spirits: confounding listeners and players first with this “out of key” tune and then shortly after the second episode insisting on a devilishly difficult tossup of a 3-note motive taken from the theme that runs riot through the ensemble. This immediately conjures up a composer who loves a good contest. An unusually gentle melody for the principal contrasting segments, a serious fugal episode in the development, and a weighty coda in which the theme is finally forced to make an appearance in the tonic E minor, all assures that this rousing finale can be compared to Beethoven’s best finales of the period.

- Notes © Dr. Jean Christensen

Mr. Matthew Ertz, Music Cataloger, Dwight Anderson Music Library, will lead the pre-concert discussion in room 130, 2-2:45. All are welcome to attend.

# The Debussy Trio with Suzanna Guzmán

## April 13, 2014

### In the blue glen

Lento - Allegro energico

Presto e leggero or Rustico

Malinconico

Allegretto amabile

David Evan Thomas  
(b. 1958)

Born in Rochester, New York, David Evan Thomas studied at Northwestern University, the Eastman School, and with Dominick Argento at the University of Minnesota. His work has been commissioned by the Minnesota Orchestra and Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, honored by the American Academy of Arts and Letters.

The composer writes;

Some ten miles on foot, and over a mile as the condor flies down from the rim of the Grand Canyon, Monument Creek has created an extraordinary playground: a narrow flume of bluish stone polished smooth as bone. I once spent an hour dabbling in that place—free, off the clock, out of sight—and it serves in memory as a metaphor for creative play. *In the blue glen* was an anonymous commission, in which the only instructions were: write what you wish. Debussy invented the combination of flute, viola and harp in one of his last works, but its origins lie in the trio sonata: two contrasting melody instruments with a chording, rhythmic companion.

The work begins meditatively, with two searching melodic lines animated by the pulsing harp. Once under way, a sonata movement ensues with varied repeat, development and full-throated climax. A scherzo allows the melody instruments a moment's play before taking off downstream. The "trio" begins, à la Haydn, as a rustic duo. In da capo, the various elements combine in superimposed meters. The eddies of the melancholy third movement allow for expressive solos, duos and trios, as well as several fountains. The climax is less substance than feeling, less idea than song. The movement ends in detachment, but proceeds without pause to the finale as the harp introduces a simple, rocking tune, beginning with the interval of a falling fourth.

Thanks to harpist Kathy Kienzle, whose advice has been invaluable in shaping the harp part. *In the blue glen* received its premiere on February 28, 2006, in Saint Paul, Minnesota by Ms. Kienzle, with Michele Frisch, flute and Kerri Ryan, viola.

### Set of Songs

Ralph Vaughan Williams  
(1872-1958)

Take, O take those lips away  
When icicles hang by the wall  
In the spring

According to William Austin, the composition of songs, as well as the editing and making of arrangements for congregational singing (*The English Hymnal* in 1906, and *Songs of Praise*, and the *Oxford Book of Carols* in 1925) "contributed something profound to Vaughan Williams's style, but something peculiar, not readily understood. His discovery of the dignity and vitality of his national heritage helped him define his own character and inspired him to make the most of techniques that were barely adequate for his ideal purposes."

"Take, O take those lips away" from Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure*, IV/i, is a somber song, marked Lento, in E minor, and "When icicles hang by the wall" from *Loves Labour Lost* V/ii, is a less somber one, marked Allegro, in F minor. Both are from *Three Songs from Shakespeare*, composed in 1925, an important and formative year for Vaughan Williams, which culminated in the composition of his Fourth Symphony, a watershed work. "In the spring," is a later setting (1952) of a text by William Barnes (1801-1886) from his *Poems of Rural Life in the Dorset Dialect* in response to a request from the Barnes Society. Marked Lento moderato, the unusual text poses some challenge to both singer and listener, but a close look at it uncovers a lovely text that celebrates both spring and a desired maid.

Take, O Take - Shakespeare

Take, O take those lips away  
That so sweetly were forsworn  
And those eyes, the break of day  
Lights that do mislead the morn  
But my kisses bring again seals of love  
But sealed in Vain

When Icicles Hang by the Wall - Shakespeare

When icicles hang by the wall  
And Dick the shephaerd blows his nail  
And Tom bears logs into the hall  
And milk comes frozen home in a pail.  
When blood is nipped and ways be foul  
Then nightly sings the starling owl  
Tu who. Tu whit. Tu who. – a merry note  
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

When all aloud the wind doth blow  
And coughing drowns the parson's saw  
And birds sit brooding in the snow  
And Marian's nose looks red and raw.  
When roasted crabs hiss in the bowl.  
Then nightly sings the starling owl  
Tu who. Tu whit. Tu who. – a merry note  
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

In the Spring - William Barnes

My love is the maid ov all maidens, though all mid be comely.  
Her skin's lik the jess a my blossom a-spreading in the Spring.  
Her smile is so sweet as a beaby's young smile on his mother  
Her eyes be as bright as the dew-drop a-shed in the Spring.

My grey leafy pinks o the garden now bear her sweet blossoms.  
Now deck wi a rose bud O briar her head in the Spring.  
O light roll en wind blow me hither the vaice ov her talken.  
O bring vrom her veet the light doust, She do tread in the spring.

O zun meake the gil cups all glitter in goold all around her.  
An meake o the deaisys white flowers a bed in the Spring,  
O whistle gay birds up beside her in drongway an woodlands  
O zing swingen lark now the clouds be avled in the Spring

An who, you mid ax, be my praies a meaken so much o  
An oh! Tis the mad I'm a hopen to wed in the Spring

***Cinco Canciones Insólitas / Five Peculiar Songs***  
**for Mezzo-Soprano, Harp, Flute, and Viola**

**Ian Krouse**  
**(b. 1956)**

The subtitle of this work, "Five Texture, Color Studies on Texts of Federico García Lorca," provides clues for listening to the music, because like other composers, Ian Krouse has responded to the rich imagery and suffused meaning in Lorca's poetry to exploit the coloristic possibilities of the ensemble. For the voice, Krouse writes a melody for each text that is repeated throughout, changing each stanza with shifting instrumental combinations,

altered ornamentation in the voice, and rhythmic variety. Perhaps Lorca's origin instigated the musical language that evokes traditional Andalusian musical genres in which the voice (*cante flamenco*) and guitar (*toque flamenco*), and dance (*baile flamenco*), have well-defined stylistic elements such as the scale based on the exotic phrygian mode (with its interval of a half-step between first and second degree), mixed meters (3+3+3+2+2+2 or 3+2), complex, changing subdivisions of the beat, and rich ornamentation that often enhances the "plasticity" of the rhythm. While the vocal line stays within the tonal realm, the individual instruments often use extended techniques and expanded tonal resources.

I.

Canción de los romeros

Ne te pude ver  
cuando eras soltera,  
mas de casada  
te encontraré.  
Te desnudaré,  
casada y romera,  
cuando en lo oscuro  
las doce den.

Song of the pilgrims

I could never see you  
when you were single,  
but now you are married  
I will find you.  
I'll strip you naked,  
wife and pilgrim,  
when, in the shadows,  
the clock strikes twelve.

From *Yerma*

Canción de la criada

Giraba,  
giraba la rueda  
y el agua pasaba.  
Porque llega la boda,  
que se apartan las ramas  
y la luna se adorne  
por su blanca baranda.

Song of the house-maid

Turning,  
the wheel was turning  
and the water was flowing.  
Because the wedding approaches,  
let the branches spread open  
and the moon adorn herself  
upon her white veranda.

Cataban,  
cantaban los novios  
y el agua pasaba.  
Porque llega la boda,  
que relumbre la escarcha  
y se llenen de miel  
las almendras amargas.

Singing,  
the lovers were singing  
and the water was flowing.  
Because the wedding approaches,  
let the frost sparkle  
and the bitter almonds  
be filled with honey.

Galana,  
galana de la tierra,  
mira cómo el agua pasa.  
Porque leega tu boda  
recógete las faldas  
y bajo al ala del novio  
nunca salgas de tu casa.  
Porque el novio es un palomo  
con todo el pecho de brasa  
y espera el campo el rumor  
de la sangre derramada.

Lady,  
lady of the earth,  
look how the water is flowing.  
Because your wedding approaches  
gather your trousseau  
and go under the wing of your groom  
never to leave your house.  
Because your groom is a dove  
with a breast of embers  
and the fields await the murmur  
of the blood that will be spilled.

Giraba,  
giraba la rueda  
y el agua pasaba.  
¡Porque llega tu boda  
deja que relumbre el agua!

Turning,  
the wheel was turning  
and the water was flowing.  
Because your wedding approaches  
how the water is glistening!

From *Bodas de Sangre/Blood Wedding*

Zorongo

Tengo los ojos azules,  
tengo los ojos azules  
y el corazoncito igual  
que la cresta de la lumbre.

De noche me salgo al patio  
y me harto de llorar  
de ver que te quiero tanto  
y tú no me quieres ná.

Esta gitana está loca,  
pero loquita de atar,  
que lo que sueña de noche  
quiere que sea verdad.

Las manos de mi cariño  
te están bordando una capa  
con agremán de alhelies  
y con esclavina de agua.

Cuando fuiste novio mio  
por la primavera blanca,  
los cascos de tu caballo  
cuatro sollozos de plata.

La luna es un pozo chico,  
las flores no valen nada,  
lo que valen son tus brazos  
cuando de noche me abrazan.

From *Cantares Populares*

A la vera de agua

A la vera de agua,  
sin que nadie la viera,  
se murió mi esperanza.

Esta copla está diciendo  
lo que saber no quisiera.  
Corazón sin esperanza  
¡que se lo trague la tierra!

From *Mariana Pineda*

III.

Zorongo

I have blue eyes,  
I have blue eyes  
and a little heart  
like the cresting flame.

I go out to the patio at night  
and weep until I can no longer  
for I know I love you so  
and you do not love me at all.

This gypsy woman is going mad,  
going right out of her mind,  
for she wishes that the dreams,  
which she dreams at night, were true.

The hands of my tenderness  
are embroidering you a cloak  
with a trimming of wallflowers  
and a cape of water.

When you were my promised one  
in the white springtime,  
your horse's hooves  
were four sighs of silver.

The moon is a tiny well,  
the flowers are worthless,  
the only things that matter are your arms  
when they embrace me at night.

IV.

At the edge of the water

At the edge of the water,  
with no one to see it,  
all my hopes have died.

This song is speaking to me  
of that which I do not wish to know.  
A heart without hope  
must go into the earth!

Canción de cuna

El que está a la puerta  
que non entre agora,  
que está el padre en casa  
del neñu que llora.

Ea, mio neñin, agora non,  
ea, mio neñin, que está el papón.

El que está a la puerta  
que vuelve mañana,  
que el padre del neñu  
non fué a la montaña.

Ea, mio neñin, agora non,  
ea, mio neñin, que está el papón.

Cradle song

He who waits at the door  
must not come in now,  
for the father of the crying child  
is at home.

Oh, my child, not at this time,  
oh, my child, for papa is here.

He who waits at the door  
must return tomorrow,  
for the father of the child  
did not go to the mountains.

Oh, my child, not at this time,  
oh, my child, for papa is here.

From *Traditional Asturias*  
English translations by the composer.

*Sephardic Songs*

Ian Krouse

World Premiere especially written for the Chamber Society of Louisville  
Note: no score or commentary was available at the time of printing notes for the 2013-14 season

*La deuxième sonate pour flûte, alto et harpe*  
**Pastorale. Lento, dolce rubato**  
**Interlude. Tempo di Minuetto**  
**Final. Allegro moderato ma risoluto**

**Claude Debussy**  
(1862-1918)

Though ill in the last several years of his life, Debussy was remarkably productive. In addition to numerous arrangements, revisions, transcriptions of his earlier pieces, and on-going attempts to start new projects, he completed his ballet masterpiece, *Jeux, Trois Poèmes de Mallarmé, En blanc et noir* for two pianos, and in 1915, he prepared editions of the complete works of Chopin and of Bach's violin sonatas, composed two volumes of *Études* for piano (dedicated to Chopin) and began work on his *Six Sonates pour divers instruments*. He was able to complete only three of the planned six: the first for cello and piano, the second for flute, viola and harp, and the third for violin and piano. The fourth was to have been for oboe, horn and harpsichord, the plan for the fifth specified clarinet, bassoon, trumpet and piano, and, for the last, some combination of instruments and piano.

About this time as war was raging he posed a question and answered it in his typical witty and analytical prose:

Into whose arms will the future of French music fall? The young Russian school is offering us theirs; in my opinion they have become as little Russian as possible. Stravinsky himself dangerously leans toward Schönberg; otherwise it is, nonetheless, the most marvelous orchestral mechanism of our time. Well then, where is French music? Where are our old clavecinists who had so much true music? They had the secret of gracefulness and emotion without epilepsy, which we have negated like ungrateful children . . .

He also meant to answer it with his sonatas, the title page of which he famously inscribed, "Composées par Claude Debussy, Musicien Français," for with them he consciously meant to reinstate the colorful world of the old clavecinists, Rameau and Couperin, whose music he knew intimately, and whose "charm and subtle formalities" and "harmonic sensibility" he admired. For him, the music of the classic French thinker married reason and feeling, intellect and sensibility, clarity and poise. By no means did he intend to "ape" or parody the work of his admired predecessors from the Classical period, but rather to capture these characteristics in his

musical art: an expression that was firm and deliberate, crystallized, freed from pre-ordained schemes, but not formless or lacking logic. Stylistically, his ideal was a purity of sentiment; the music capturing the essence of natural life as it functions—without objective intellectual associations. He sought an authentic musical expression in the revitalization of the impact of gesture and melodic line.

These late works, though outwardly modest and accessible, have a noble quality and authenticity, a unity of time and space with an infinite variety of material. While accessible, the works reject functional schemes, and instead create shape and form directly from musical expression. Boulez comments: “All his life was a quest for everything that defies analysis, for a development which, by its very nature, incorporates the surprises that arise from our imagination. He distrusts architecture, in the old-fashioned sense of the term, and prefers structures that mingle rigor and freedom of choice.”

The unusual timbre of the ensemble calls for a good sense of proportion; transparency of lines is essential to balancing the three instruments that take us into another world—one only imagined, but vivid. Flute, harp and viola evoke the pastoral instrumentation of Balkan peasants playing panpipes, lyre and gusla, and the titles suggest an 18th-century sensibility. Tonality is quite fluid in all three movements. Modality in the melodic line may obscure the clear functioning of the harmonic movement, but as that is matched by the fluidity of the melodic lines in which one idea easily mutates into another, the constant sensation is that it all moves forward by means of the flexible rhythm.

In the opening of the first movement, the harp enters with a rising arpeggiated figure which the flute “catches,” joining the harp. Along the way, the harp drops out and the flute extends the figure to finish the cadence, but as the flute lingers on the last note, it is “caught” by the viola, which, then comes to a cadence three measures later. These rather disparate musical ideas have enough elements in common that they sound as though they “belong” together, but nothing points to one being based on or derived from another; Debussy’s freedom of invention works through transition; continuity takes over from development. “Everything suggests a superior polished kind of improvisation.” (Boulez)

The following brief description of the work must suffice as an introduction because an analysis of the work would have to be a tedious dissection of its features, amounting to almost nothing. The first movement, pastorale, is a work with three principal areas; its basic character is like a quasi-improvised introduction, one that provides the greatest variety of textures. The material in the first segment returns after the short vivacious mid-section with many small unique variations. The second movement, Interlude, has the character of a minuet, and accordingly, its principal idea stated at the beginning, appears in alternation with contrasting parts. The Finale is a robust movement that from the beginning until nearly the very end features a string of ostinato figures. When it does wind down there is a brief recall of the opening of the first movement, before the original *risoluto* tempo returns for a final reiteration of parallel triads in the harp—which recalls the cadence figure from the first movement. Flashing sixteenths lead to a brilliant end.

### ***There is Always Something to Do (for Morelle)***

**Moderately fast**

**Slow - Freely - As at the start**

**Very fast**

**Bruce Broughton**

**(b. 1945)**

Bruce Broughton’s principal work has been in commercial media. A veteran of the film industry, his numerous credits include TV main titles, major motion pictures, animated films, video games, even “cult” films. If you have been to a Disney Theme park, it is likely that you have heard his music. It’s immediately recognizable even for one who rarely goes to American movies, plays video games or attends theme parks. He has been nominated for an Academy Award and has won 11 Emmys. In addition to his commercial compositions, Bruce Broughton has an extensive work list of concert music for orchestra and concert band, chamber ensembles and soloists. *There is Always Something to Do* is the second work commissioned for the Debussy Trio.

Master of the musical idiom characterized as “Americana,” Broughton controls a range of specific treatments of musical elements typical of this style; from this source come the harmony, rhythmic language, fast and slow transitions, and variety of melodic lines that are basic elements in the work at hand. In an interview Broughton comments that he composes without a scheme, from the beginning to the end. Clearly the case at hand: one idea engenders another. The extended first movement begins with a straight-forward ostinato figure in the harp, accompanied by singular pizzes in the viola. The flute joins for a brief solo, and then all three instruments are

into a quick exchange for the first exposition: the pattern for the rest of the movement—quick interactive passages, an ostinato-like drive and varying melodic forms. Descending decorated scale patterns and running lines finally culminate in a cadenza-like solo in the flute, carrying the movement on to its final cadence. The second movement begins with a tune for solo harp, its gentle swing set off by the elongated second beat. The central section features the flute and viola in an interactive duo; ornamented solo lines and active complementary accompaniments. In the third segment the harp joins the others to repeat its initial solo, while the duo continues their melodic discoursing. The third movement is a quick-moving galop. In 6/8 time with the usual 3+3 division broken occasionally with 2+2+2 and quick flashes of runs to break the steady clip of 6 beats to the measure. A basically tonal composition, all three movements end on E-flat, either in octaves or with an open fifth.

- Notes © Dr. Jean Christensen

The pre-concert discussion will be led by Christopher White, composer and teacher of music history, in room 130 beginning at 2 PM. All are most welcome to attend.