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Senior Recital

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CHAPMAN UNIVERSITY

Hall-Musco Conservatory of Music

presents a

Senior Recital

Priscilla Peraza, viola
Stephanie Calascione, viola

Clara Cheng, piano

March 13, 2016 ■ 8:00 P.M.

Salmon Recital Hall

Program

Sonata No.3 in G minor, BMV 1029

I. Vivace

II. Adagio

III. Allegro

Johann Sebastian Bach
(1685 – 1750)

Priscilla Peraza, viola

Sonata for Viola and Piano

I. Allegro Moderato

II. Larghetto, ma non troppo

Stephanie Calascione, viola

Mikhail Glinka
(1804 – 1857)

Elegy for Viola and Piano

Elliot Carter
(1908 – 2012)

Priscilla Peraza, viola

~Intermission~

Infanta Marina, op. 83

Vincent Persichetti
(1915 – 1987)

Stephanie Calascione, viola

Suite Hébraïque

I. Rapsodie

II. Processional

III. Affirmation

Ernest Bloch
(1880 – 1959)

Priscilla Peraza, viola

Le Grand Tango

Astor Piazzolla
(1921 – 1992)

Stephanie Calascione, viola

Le Grand Tango (1982)

Astor Piazzolla was born in Mar del Plata, Argentina in 1921. He was a child prodigy on the bandoneon and loved tango music. He lived most of his childhood in New York where his musical development continued, but soon moved back to Buenos Aires, Argentina in 1934. Piazzolla continued performing here and was commissioned to arrange tangos for a local bad leader. In the midst of all of the tango music, he also continued to study classical music and even composed a symphony which got him the opportunity to study in Paris. His teacher, Boulanger, encouraged him to continue writing tangos and a year later Piazzolla ended up back in Buenos Aires where he formed many groups including the Quinteto Nuevo Tango and develop the “nuevo tango” style. His compositions were not like the traditional tangos and were not originally accepted in his home country because of his use of fugue, chromaticism, extended instrumentation, and jazz elements. They were highly regarded in Paris and the USA only at first but later became accepted by Argentina and Piazzolla became known as the savior of tango.

Le Grand Tango was written in 1982 after Piazzolla’s return to Paris. The piece was originally written for cello but now the adaptation for viola is just as common. It incorporated the characteristics of Nuevo tango which is a combination of the traditional tango style with rhythmic elements of jazz. Although the piece as a whole is just a single movement, it is divided down into 3 main sections: Tempo di tango, Libero e cantabile (free and singing), and giocoso (humorous). The first section establishes the strong accented tango rhythms that are so crucial to the piece. The second section is slower and allows for more motion and dialogue between the viola and the piano. The piece ends with humorous, energy supported by the viola’s many double stops, glissandos and slides all while still maintaining the tango feel.

-Program Note by Stephanie Calascione

This recital is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Bachelor of Music in Music Education, Instrumental degree. Ms. Peraza is a student of Robert Becker.

This recital is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Bachelor of Arts, Music degree. Ms. Calascione is a student of Robert Becker.

The rumpling of the plumes
Of this creature of the evening
Came to be sleights of sails
Over the sea.

And thus she roamed
In the roamings of her fan,

Partaking of the sea,
And of the evening,
As they flowed around
And uttered their subsiding sound.

-Program Note by Stephanie Calascione

Suite Hébraïque (1951)

Ernest Bloch was born and raised in Switzerland, but he was considered an American composer. He did most of his compositional and violin studies in Geneva, Brussels, and Paris. These places provided a substantial influence in his composing. For some years, Bloch helped with his father's business while composing and conducting on the side. In 1916, he found success when he traveled to the United States. He was able to secure a teaching position at the David Mannes College of Music and a contract with the music publishing company G. Schirmer. From that point on, he received numerous recognitions and awards for his works as well as teaching positions at the Cleveland Institute of Music, the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, and University of California Berkeley. Bloch returned to Switzerland in the 1930s where he had a pronounced compositional output, numerous conducting engagements, and premieres at festivals all throughout Europe. Yet, as a recognized Jew amid the growing anti-Semitism throughout Europe, he returned back to the United States in 1940 as a safeguard and to maintain his citizenship. He remained at the University of California Berkeley until his retirement in 1952. (Kushner)

Ernest Bloch was consistently exploring different musical, personal, and spiritual identities. This included his Jewish identity, as inherited from his mother. Bloch did not regularly practice the Jewish religion but it was present in many of his early works, known as his 'Jewish cycle' (Kushner). *Suite Hébraïque* is reflective, encompassing Jewish melodies. The first movement, "Rapsodie", is improvisational in quality. It utilizes the stylistic technique of *sotto voce*, meaning "quiet voice", which acts as an echo for several musical motives. The second movement, "Processional", depicts a Jewish ceremony of stately priests walking to the Holy Temple in Jerusalem (Schiff). A change of melody and color in the middle section portrays the chanting of priests. The last movement, "Affirmation", is the affirming of the faith and humanity of the Jewish culture (Schiff). Overall, the piece has melodic minor tonalities, short rhythms, and contrasting sounds.

-Program Note by Priscilla Peraza

Program Notes

Sonata No.3 in G minor, BMV 1029

Shockingly, Johann Sebastian Bach was a lesser known composer in his lifetime, until Felix Mendelssohn revived his music in the early nineteenth century. Born into a musical family, he began his musical studies at an early age. After both his parents passed away at the age of nine, he went to live with his elder brother, an organist, where he continued his musical studies and became well known as a virtuoso organist. He went on to work at churches such as St. Michael's and St. Thomas; he also worked for individuals such as the Duke of Saxe-Weimar and the court of Anhalt-Cöthen. Although his job description varied, it usually consisted of musical directing, playing organ, and composing. He composed many genres such as cantatas, concertos, sonatas, suites, masses, and oratorios. During his final position at St. Thomas, he composed over 250 works in total. He was first married to Maria Barbara until her death in 1720. He got remarried to Anna Magdalena Wilcken in 1721. Between both marriages, he had nineteen children but only nine children survived beyond adolescence (Wolff). Several of his children went on to be composers, notably Johann Christian, Wilhelm Friedmann, and Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach. Unlike their father, they went on to write in the early Classical style and became better known, until Felix Mendelssohn brought to light the works of J.S. Bach. Today, Bach is recognized as one of the most influential composers of all time. His compositional counterpoint, pedagogical benefits, and unforgettable melodies are what make Bach extremely important and special in the musical world.

This sonata is originally written for its period instruments: the viola da gamba (a six-stringed fretted instrument), and the harpsichord. Now, several transcriptions are available, including viola and piano, the transcription being performed today. Throughout the piece, both the piano and viola have independent and important lines but together design an immaculate counterpoint. The viola and right hand of the piano serve as the melodic line and the left hand is the supporting basso continuo. The first movement, "Vivace", is a quick-paced movement characterized by the motive played in the opening statement of the movement. The movement is in ritornello form where piano and viola imitate each other. Thus, this statement has more of a soloist character rather than a sonata, where both piano and viola are equal (Williams). The second movement, "Adagio", is a slower movement with long melodic lines in binary form. The viola and piano engage in a conversation, playing melodic lines back and forth to each other. The last movement, "Allegro", is a brisk movement consisting of a three-part fugue represented by a repeated-note subject (Williams). Unlike the first movement, no line is more crucial over the other but instead intertwine in complex counterpoint.

-Program Note by Priscilla Peraza

Sonata for Viola and Piano (1825)

Mikhail Glinka was born in the rural town of Novospasskoye Russia to a very noble family. He is often referred to now as the “father of Russian music” as he is one of the very first Russian composers that had spread the nationalistic sounds to the western world. As a child, some of the very first exposure that Glinka had to music was from his family servants who would often times sing Russian folk songs and would teach him about the Russian tradition. He gained further experience with music by playing the piano, violin, and piccolo and by participating in his uncle’s surf orchestra as a child. He attended a boarding school, received a very formal education, and later got a job as a civil servant, much like many of the other upper class children, but in 1828 he took a leave of absence for health reasons and traveled to Italy. This was a turning point for Glinka’s musical development as he was exposed to the Italian compositional style and met several famous composers such as Donizetti, Mendelssohn, and Berlioz. Before leaving on this trip to Italy, Glinka completed 2 movements of the sonata for viola and piano. He intended on writing a third movement but, after his travels, his musical styles had developed and he ended up abandoning the rest of the piece.

The first movement of the sonata, *Allegro Moderato*, maintains a very steady tempo throughout. With a concerto like demanding piano part, this movement features a very heartfelt and robust viola line. Glinka uses small doses of foreshadowing dissonances and false endings to grab the attention of the listener throughout this movement. He explores the dynamic range and ability of the instrument and uses varying tempi that eventually returns to the original theme. The *Larghetto* acts as a beautiful continuation of the first movement. In a slow triple meter, Glinka continues to explore the range of dynamic contrast of the viola while captivating the listener with beautiful melodies and hidden dissonances. Contrary to popular belief, Glinka did finish the second movement, it was the third movement that was incomplete however the melody from the supposed third movement Rondo was used in a children’s polka instead.

-Program Note by Stephanie Calascione

Elegy for Viola and Piano (1943)

Elliot Carter is a Pulitzer Prize-winning modernist composer of the twentieth and twenty-first century, writing over 150 pieces for numerous genres. Carter’s compositional teachers comprised of noteworthy composers such as Gustav Holst and Nadia Boulanger. His life was active, holding teaching positions at the Peabody Conservatory and The Julliard School. Later in his life he was commissioned to write works by recognized conductors such as Daniel Barenboim, Pierre Boulez, and James Levine. Charles Ives significantly influenced Carter in his compositional technique, and as a result he spent most of his life developing a complex compositional writing methodology. However in the 1980’s, he began to return to a more lenient style. Even past the age of 100, Elliot Carter continued to write abundantly. (Steinberg)

Elegy was written in 1943, very early in Carter’s compositional career, and it was revised for viola and piano in 1961. Still, Carter’s thorough and clear style was already evidently seen in how the piano and viola parts were marked. Nearly every note and phrase is marked with a specific dynamic or stylistic marking. Nonetheless, it remains in contrast to his other works as being primarily diatonic and melodic. The opening is reflective and meditative as the viola and piano share juxtaposing melodic lines. The piece throughout is built on the interval of a fourth to reach the climax of the piece, to which an ascending line of fourths climb to the highest note in the piece (Lowe). The viola closes the piece on a stationary note while the piano tranquilly concludes the motivic line.

-Program Note by Priscilla Peraza

Infanta Marina (1960)

Born in 1915, Vincent Persichetti was an American composer, pianist, and teacher. He began his musical studies at the age of 5 when he enrolled in the Combs Conservatory in Philadelphia as a pianist, organist, and double bassist. As a teenager, Persichetti gained a lot of performance experience through churches, recital, and some radio performances and began to write some of his first compositions. He graduated in 1935 and later entered the Philadelphia Conservatory as the head of theory and composition in 1941. In 1947 he became part of the faculty at the Julliard school where he became the chairman for the compositional department in 1963. He composed about 50 works in his lifetime with early influences of Stravinsky, Bartok, and Hindemith. After finding his own sound later on in life he began to characterize his compositions as either graceful or gritty. His use of lucid textures, gestures, and forms as well as polytonality, and pantonality is what puts his identity into the music. All of these characteristics can be heard in *Infanta Marina* a piece written for the viola and piano in 1960 during his time at Julliard.

Infanta Marina is one of 20 works of the song cycle *Harmonium* set to the poetry of Wallace Stevens. The viola work of this same name was taken from this song cycle as an expansion to the original song for voice. It takes the vocal lyricism of the original work and adds new treatments to give it the character of instrumental music. It features many string instrumental techniques such as double stops, arpeggios, pizzicato, and muted sections. The piece begins with solo viola and, once the piano comes in the, viola begins to work with the theme. It displays a rather contemplative feeling throughout but there are occasional agitations that give it the sensations that are painted so well in the poem.

Her terrace was the sand
And the palms and the twilight.

She made of the motions of her wrist
The grandiose gestures
Of her thought.