

MARGARET
McGillivray



MICHAEL DAUPHINAIS, PIANO

DMA Solo Recital
24 September 2012

7:00 pm

Grace-St. Paul's Episcopal Church

PROGRAM NOTES



PROGRAM

Sonate pour cor et piano, Op. 7 (1942)..... Jeanne Vignery
I. Allegro (1913-1974)

II. Lento ma non troppo

III. Allegro ben moderato

Suite for 'Cello, No. 5 in c minor, BWV 1011 Johann Sebastian Bach
III. Courante (1685-1750)

IV. Sarabande

Cor-Jupitre, from Six thèmes solaires Denis Gougeon
(b. 1951)

Intermission

Tré poemi (1986/87/89) Volker David Kirchner
I. Lamento d'Orfeo (b. 1942)

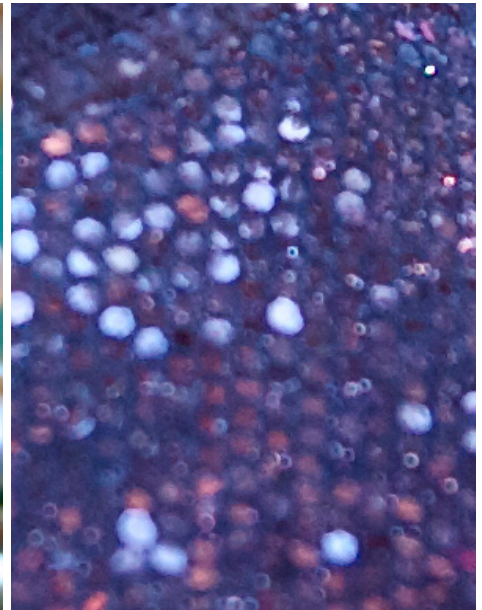
II. Danza

III. La Gondola funebre

Under the Apple Boughs Keith Bissell
(1912-1992)

Nocturno, Op. 7 Franz Strauss
(1864-1905)

An exploration of light and dark



This recital is presented by Ms. McGillivray in partial fulfillment of Doctor of Music Arts degree from the University of Arizona.

Introduction

In putting together this recital, I wanted to represent both old and new music; the familiar with the unfamiliar. There is no universal theme other than these are either pieces I have loved playing in the past or have wanted to play for a very long time. The works chosen represent some of the lighter aspects of solo horn writing and some show the music and the musician at their most dark and painful. It was very important to me that living composers were represented, as well as female composers. While the repertoire for horn is somewhat limited (compared to that of a pianist or singer, for example), it is always my goal to present pieces that not only

create musical balance, but also a fresh breath of new possibilities.

Jeanne Vignery **Sonate pour cor et piano, Op. 7**

Belgian composer Jeanne Vignery came from a musical family: both her mother and grandfather were composers. After studies in theory, harmony and counterpoint at the Royal Conservatory in Ghent, Vignery studied violin in Paris, as well as harmony with Nadia Boulanger and analysis with Paul Dukas. She was forced to give up the violin due to muscle weakness and became devoted solely to composition. From 1945 until her premature death in a train crash in 1974, Vignery was a lecturer at the Conservatory in Ghent.

The Sonata for Horn and Piano was probably written in 1942, though we don't have any definitive proof that it wasn't written earlier in Vignery's career. It received the Emile Mathieu prize for composition later in 1942. Dedicated to M. Maurice van Bocxstaele, Professor of Horn at the Ghent Conservatory, it is one of a small number of chamber works by Vignery and her only composition for horn. The three movements are traditional in form and use an impressionistic language, reminiscent of Ravel and Fauré. The pianist is an equal partner throughout the work.

The first movement opens with brilliant fanfares in the horn part, followed by mischievous stopped

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horn passages and noodling chromatic passages throughout the first part of the exposition. The lyrical B section is heard first in the piano in G-flat major, to which the horn responds with an equally lovely countermelody. The development explores these ideas in further depth and the recapitulation includes a brilliant coda that brings the movement to a flashing finale. The second movement is marked *Lento ma non troppo* and is in a three-part form. Where the first movement is a study in optimistic athleticism, the second is gentle, almost melancholic in its nature. The piano introduces the main theme with a two-measure syncopated gesture, which continues under the horn's reply. In the contrasting middle section, a more chromatic melody is again introduced in the piano and answered by the horn. The opening theme is restated in its most powerful guise yet and the movement ends as it all began, with a clear outline of d minor and the syncopated gesture in the piano. The last movement is clownish and fun, with colorful articulations and lots of stopped horn use. A polka-like accompaniment in the piano adds to the jocular mood, banishing the seriousness of the middle movement and bringing the piece to a playful close.

Johann Sebastian Bach Suite for 'Cello, No. 5 in c minor, BWV 1011

The fifth Suite for 'Cello was originally written in *scordatura* (in Italian, it literally means mistuning) with Bach asking the cellist to tune the A-string down to G. In modern

times, a normalized version is almost always included in every edition of the suites, alongside the original version. In the *scordatura* version, some of the chords are able to be technically more complex than with normal tuning, but some of the melodic passages can be trickier.

What does this mean for a horn player? Basically, there is a little more room to maneuver the structure of the chords that Bach used without changing the counterpoint and harmony. This is a good thing when transcribing from one instrument to another and allows leeway to the hornist in adapting such a foreign technique. It probably still doesn't make it any easier to play the *Courante* while trying to capture both the vigor and the harmony that Bach intended. That being said, the *Courante* from the fifth suite is melodically powerful and a joy to play, even at its most angry.

The *Sarabande* is an entirely different story. In all six of Bach's suites for unaccompanied 'cello, there are only five movements that contain no chordal accompaniment and the *Sarabande* from the fifth suite is one of that number. It is also the most famous of all the movements of this suite. Mstislav Rostropovich has described the *Sarabande* as the essence of Bach's genius. Paul Tortelier described it as an extension of silence. It was played by Yo-Yo Ma at the first anniversary of the attacks on the World Trade Center. The *Sarabande* has become many things to many people. There is despair in this movement and it is

pervasive, but there is also hope and love.

Denis Gougeon Cor-Jupitre from Six thèmes solaires

Denis Gougeon is a contemporary Québécois composer and is professor of composition at l'Université de Montréal. His music and writing defy labels and he prefers to describe himself as a "knitter of sounds."

Cor-Jupitre is part of a larger cycle inspired by the solar system, *Six thèmes solaires*, which was commissioned in 1992 for the Canadian Music Competition's biennial Stepping Stones/Tremplin International competition. Gougeon assigned a planet to every instrument participating in the competition and composed each movement to showcase the virtuoso technique and musical sensitivity of that instrument.

For the horn, Gougeon chose Jupiter, the king of the gods in Roman mythology and the largest planet in the solar system. The piece is organized into three distinct sections. The opening is improvisatory in feel, with stopped horn thunderbolts, flutter tongue and a mysterious lyrical passage. The middle of the piece is fast, rhythmic and with a pulsating bass line that is more reminiscent of rock 'n' roll than the concert hall. Multiphonics, where the hornist sings and plays at the same time, are prominent in the final section and after a few more stopped horn thunderbolts, the planet fades off in the distance.

PROGRAM NOTES

Volker David Kirchner ***Tré Poemi***

Kirchner, a German violist and composer, does a musical balancing act with his *Tré Poemi* for horn and piano: the piece pays homage to Romantic character pieces while maintaining a very modern approach to horn tone colors and technique. Composed from 1986 to 1989, *Tré Poemi* is actually derived from a song cycle for horn, piano and baritone, which is a setting of Rainer Maria Rilke's *Sonnette an Orpheus*. The first movement has often stood alone as a single complete piece. *Tré Poemi*, as it exists today, was written for the German horn soloist Marie-Luise Neunecker. The *Lamento* was premiered at New York's Town Hall on the March 24, 1987 and the *Danza* was premiered in Karlsruhe on May 6, 1988.

The interaction of the horn and piano are intimately important to the texture of the piece. For instance, in the first movement, *Lamento*, the horn plays directly into the body of the grand piano, changing the resonance of both instruments as a result. The composer also plays with echo effects, notably in the second movement, *Danza*, which escalates in carefully considered stages and is not always the wildly rearing beast it seems to be. The final movement, *La gondola funebre*, is achingly slow and uses a wide tonal range in both piano and horn.

Keith Bissell ***Under the Apple Boughs***

Bissell was a Canadian composer, educator and conductor who was credited with bringing the *Orff-Schulwerk* method to schools in the Toronto area after a

sabbatical year of study in Munich in 1960. His works tend to be firmly diatonic but contain a very interesting use of dissonance. Keeping in mind the Orff view that "significant musical development is based in the first place on an awareness of one's own roots", Bissell's music also draws from folk elements and the elements of nature.

In *Under the Apple Boughs*, Bissell was at his naturalistic best. Drawing inspiration from the Canadian landscape and the poetry of Dylan Thomas, the lines from *Fern Hill* are painted throughout this short work:

Now as I was young and easy
under the apple boughs
About the lilting house and happy
as the grass was green,
The night above the dingle
starry,
Time let me hail and climb
Golden in the heydays of his
eyes,
And honoured among wagons I was
prince of the apple towns
And once below a time I lordly had
the trees and leaves
Trail with daisies and barley
Down the rivers of the windfall
light...

And honoured among foxes and
pheasants by the gay house
Under the new made clouds and
happy as the heart was long,
In the sun born over and over,
I ran my heedless ways,
My wishes raced through the
house high hay
And nothing I cared, at my sky blue
trades, that time allows
In all his tuneful turning so few and
such morning songs
Before the children green and
golden
Follow him out of grace.

Nothing I cared, in the lamb white
days, that time would take me

Up to the swallow thronged loft by
the shadow of my hand,
In the moon that is always rising,
Nor that riding to sleep
I should hear him fly with the
high fields
And wake to the farm forever fled
from the childless land.
Oh as I was young and easy in the
mercy of his means,
Time held me green and dying
Though I sank in my chains like
the sea.

Franz Strauss ***Nocturno, Op. 7***

The famous 19th-century conductor, Hans von Bülow, once said about Franz Strauss: "The fellow is intolerable, but when he blows his horn you can't be angry with him." Strauss' position in music history is well-assured: not only was he Richard Strauss' father and primary musical influence, but he was the premier horn player of his generation and Richard Wagner's solo hornist. Despite the musically-inventive times in which he lived and worked, the elder Strauss was a musical conservative. Strauss thought he belonged more to the era of Haydn and Mozart than the expansiveness of Wagner or the heightened emotions of Mahler. Nevertheless, he was famous for playing fabulously well, regardless of how he felt about the composer or composition.

In the *Nocturne*, Strauss shows us his ideal musical world. There is a gorgeous, singable melody, a refined piano accompaniment, clear three-part ternary form and satisfying cadences. Horn players since then have agreed with him, possibly even thanking Papa Strauss for giving us our very own masterpiece in the Romantic German lieder tradition

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many Thanks to:

Todd Stubbs, Maren & Callum McGillivray-Stubbs, Daniel Katzen, Ed Reid, Kelly Thomas, Joan Watson, KiKi Fenik, Grace-St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Faith Presbyterian Church, Sierra Vista Community Chorus, Mr. and Mrs. Edward Farmilant, Katie Whitmire, Jimmy's Chicago Dog and Zelt Spätburgunder.