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Boston University Symphony Orchestra, May 2, 2000

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*Boston University School for the Arts
Music Division*

—presents—

BOSTON UNIVERSITY
SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

DAVID HOOSE, *conductor*
AKIKO FUJIMOTO, *conductor*
MICHALIS ECONOMOU, *conductor*

OLIVER DE CLERCQ, *horn*
AURELIEN SABOURET, *cello*
DANIEL HAN, *violin*

XX

Tuesday, May 2, 2000 at 8:00 p.m.
The Tsai Performance Center
685 Commonwealth Avenue
Boston, Massachusetts

BOSTON UNIVERSITY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

DAVID HOOSE, *conductor*
Director of Orchestral Activities

AKIKO FUJIMOTO, *conductor*
Master of Music, '01

MICHALIS ECONOMOU, *conductor*
Doctor of Musical Arts, '04

FEATURING CONCERTO/ARIA COMPETITION WINNERS:

OLIVER DE CLERCQ, *horn*
Bachelor of Music, '00

AURELIEN SABOURET, *cello*
Master of Music, '00

DANIEL HAN, *violin*
Bachelor of Music, '00

Tuesday, May 2, 2000
8:00 p.m.

PROGRAM

Concerto No. 2 in E-flat
for Horn and Orchestra, K. 417

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
(1756-1791)

Allegro maestoso
Andante
Rondo

Oliver de Clercq, *horn*
David Hoose, *conductor*

Variations on a Rococo Theme, Op. 33

Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky
(1840-1893)

Moderato assai quasi andante
Thema: Moderato semplice
Var. I: Tempo della thema
Var. II: Tempo della thema
Var. III: Andante sostenuto
Var. IV: Andante grazioso
Var. V: Allegro moderato
Var. VI: Andante
Var. VII and Coda: Allegro vivo

Aurelien Sabouret, *cello*
Akiko Fujimoto, *conductor*

Electra (1999)

Michalis Economou

for flute, 3 trumpets, trombone, 4 percussionists,
piano, 2 mezzo-sopranos and two string orchestras

(b. 1973)

Vanessa Conlin, *soprano*
Maria D'Amato, *soprano*
Michalis Economou, *conductor*

—Intermission—

Presentation of 1999-2000 Departmental Honors

Violin Concerto in D minor, Op. 47

Jean Sibelius
(1865-1957)

Allegro moderato
Adagio di molto
Allegro, ma non tanto

Daniel Han, *violin*
David Hoose. *conductor*

THE CONCERTO/ARIA COMPETITION

Each year, in hundreds of performances that range from solo recitals, chamber music concerts, operas, to orchestral and choral concerts, the Division of Music of Boston University's School for the Arts celebrates the inquiring minds and thrilling talents of its instrumental, vocal, and composition students. Once a year, however, a very few students are chosen to represent the work of all their colleagues in a special, culminating concert of the Boston University Symphony Orchestra. Selected by competition, first by their respective departments and then by an independent panel of highly respected musicians in the Boston area, these students are among the most gifted and advanced of the school. Their work in confronting the challenges of the concerto and aria repertoire serves as an ongoing inspiration to the entire school, students and faculty alike.

—David Hoose

1999-2000 DEPARTMENTAL HONORS

Music History and Literature

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Katherine Meifert

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Advanced Opera Workshop: Alison Tupay
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Continuing Merit: Susan Hagen
Continuing Merit: Daniel Han

Wind, Brass, Percussion Performance

Anne Wong
Oliver de Clercq
Gregory Spiridopoulos

Choral Conducting

Continuing Merit: Kirstina Rasmussen

Instrumental Conducting

Michalis Economou
Akiko Fujimoto

PROGRAM NOTES

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

Concerto No. 2 for Horn, K. 417

Evidence indicates that Mozart wrote all four of his horn concerti with the same soloist in mind, Joseph Leutgeb, an associate of Leopold Mozart in the court orchestra of Salzburg some time around 1763. His friendship with the Mozart family continued for almost the whole of Wolfgang's life. Leutgeb apparently moved to Vienna in 1777 to carry on his wife's family business and continue his musical career. From correspondence we know that he played in the orchestra under the younger Mozart for *The Abduction from the Seraglio* (Vienna, 1782). Teasing comments in crayon on the scores of Mozart's horn concerti attest to the jocular nature of their friendship, while the difficulty of the solo parts bear testimony to Leutgeb's artistry.

Mozart's concerto writing compares to that of his operatic and concert arias, both demonstrate his genius in reconciling virtuosity with the needs of dramatic expression. Few composers to this day can equal Mozart's deployment of prodigious melodic invention for both the soloist and orchestra. A fluid rhythmic sense and voluptuous orchestral fabric support and seemingly provoke the soloist with vivacity and ease.

Mozart often tailored his writing to the specific abilities of his singers and instrumentalists. Leutgeb numbered among the few solo horn players of the time who had developed a stopped note technique and utilized overblowing to access additional notes of the bass clef, both of which Mozart calls for in this concerto. Interestingly, Mozart's subsequent horn writing for Leutgeb reflects the gradual decline of the older man's technique. In his next concerto, Mozart would omit the high notes so integral to K. 417 and eventually no longer score below low 'g' for his aging friend

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893)

Variations on a Rococo Theme, Op. 33

Two diametrically opposed movements arose during the blossoming of Russian music in the second half of the nineteenth century. Anton and Nicolai Rubinstein, the respective founders of the St. Petersburg and Moscow Conservatories, sought to introduce western "professionalism" into Russian music making. In the other camp stood a group of composers passionately committed to a style derived from Russian folk music and free from Germanic influence—the Mighty Handful: Balakirev, Cui, Borodin, Mussorgsky, and Tchaikovsky-Korsakov. As a master of both styles, Tchaikovsky presaged much of Stravinsky's and Prokofiev's later accomplishments. The *Variations on a Rococo Theme*, Tchaikovsky's tribute to Mozart (his favorite composer of the classic age), incorporate the feel of Russian folksong into the elegant theme.

Tchaikovsky wrote the *Variations on a Rococo Theme* for cello and piano in 1876 for his friend, Wilhelm Fyodorovich Fitzenhagen, the noted cellist of the Conservatory Quartet. Working toward the premiere of the first version, Fitzenhagen judiciously revised portions of the solo part, which Tchaikovsky incorporated into the autograph score. Two years later, however, Fitzenhagen made substantial changes to the rest of the score, including a reordering of the variations, when he was entrusted with its publication while Tchaikovsky was abroad. Although furious at Fitzenhagen's meddling, Tchaikovsky allowed Fitzenhagen's version to remain in the 1889 publication of the full orchestral score, possibly because his friend was dying. The version most often heard in today's concert halls is the one incorporating the cellist's changes to the solo part.

Displaying only a touch of the sentimentality often associated with Tchaikovsky's music, the Variations reveal instead a witty and elegant classicism. The effortless unfolding of the eight variations always includes the opening melody of the cello, however varied and virtuosic the guise.

—Karen Ruymann

Michalis Economou (b. 1973)

Electra, for flute, 3 trumpets, trombone, 4 percussionists, piano, 2 mezzo sopranos. and 2 string orchestras

Born in Greece in 1973, Michalis Economou studied musicology at Athens University as well as violin, theory, and composition at the National Conservatory of Athens. He also studied orchestral conducting with David Hoose at Boston University, earning his Master of Music degree in 1999. Currently he is pursuing a DMA in composition at Boston University studying with Theodore Antoniou and Lukas Foss. He is the winner of six composition competitions including the 1998 ALEA III International Composition Competition. Since January 2000, Mr. Economou has become the principal conductor of the Athens Municipal Symphony Orchestra and the principal guest conductor of the Greek Radio and Television Contemporary Orchestra.

Electra was written in the winter of 1999 with a view to Sophocles' tragedy of the same name. Mr. Economou's intention was not to produce a sterile representation of the ancient tragedy, but to focus on Electra's inner world while she laments her father and her brother.

The Chorus is antiphonal and consists of two string orchestras which do not confine themselves to a mere musical presence, but participate actively in the development of the drama. The off-stage mezzo, a fragment of Electra's broken heart, declares her

presence inarticulately and antiphonally at the dramatic climax. The work uses both ancient and modern Greek intending to present Electra not as an isolated, individual part, but as an embodiment of eternal and durable principles, feelings and ideas. This work was awarded second prize in the Dimitri Mitropoulos International Composition Competition.
—Michalis Economou

Jean Sibelius (1865-1957)

Violin Concerto, Op. 47

During his childhood, Jean Sibelius (1865-1957) had dreamed of becoming a virtuoso violinist. He began lessons at age fourteen and later entered the Music Institute of Helsinki in 1885 with a career as a performer in mind. However, circumstances—possibly stage fright, though it did not seem to affect him as a conductor—prevented him from achieving his goal, and Sibelius instead focused on his composition career.

The Violin Concerto in D minor, op. 47, the only concerto that he wrote, displays a clear juxtaposition of the composer's two musical sides. It is extremely virtuosic, with similarities to Mendelssohn's concerto of 1844 where the violin often leads the orchestra. Both concertos begin with a statement of the main theme by the soloists over an undulating accompaniment, and both have cadenzas that play an integral, developmental part in the structure of the respective first movements. Sibelius' concerto was premiered in Feb. 1904 by the Helsinki Philharmonic with Viktor Nováček as soloist and Sibelius himself conducting. Although the reception of the concerto was mostly favorable, a leading Finnish critic, Karl Flodin, harshly attacked it:

... Permit me to say that the concerto is boring, a thing which one so far could not say of a composition by Jean Sibelius, however strange it may have appeared in the beginning.

Following this criticism, Sibelius set out to revise the concerto, especially the first movement, which acquired a brand new cadenza, and the finale; the new, definitive version was premiered in March, 1906 with Hereman Grevesmühl as soloist. Flodin, once again, was unimpressed, but Sibelius this time decided against a further revision. His decision shows tremendous foresight, because his concerto has become a part of the repertoire on a par with the concerti of Mendelssohn, Tchaikovsky, and Brahms.

—Chris Dempsey

TEXT AND TRANSLATIONS

Michalis Economou

ELECTRA (based on the ancient Greek drama of Sophocles)

II. (193-196, modern Greek)

Chorus:

POS OURLIAKSE

TOTE STO GIRISMO TOU

STOUS PATRIKOUS KITONES MESA

SAN TON HTIPI SAN TA VARIA TA HALKINA PELEKIA

(Piteous was the voice heard at his return, and piteous, as thy sire lay on the festal couch, when the straight, swift blow was dealt him with the bleed of bronze.)

III. (201-208)

Electra:

O PASAN KINA PLEON AMERA

ELTHOUS' EHTHISTA DIMI

O NIX O DIPNON ARITON

EKPAGL' AHTHI

TOUS EMOS IDE PATIR THANATOUS EKIS DIDIMEN HIRIN

E TON EMON ILON VION
PRODOTON E M' APOLESAN

(O that bitter day, bitter beyond all that have come to me; O that night, O the horrors of that unutterable feast, the ruthless death-strokes that my father saw from the hands of twain, who took my life captive by treachery, who doomed me to woe!)

(209-212, modern Greek)

O MEGAS THEOS TOU OLIMPOU
NA TIMORISI ME TA IDIA TA PATHI
NA PATHOUN AFTI POU TA EKANAN
NA STEGNOSI I ZOI TOUS APO KATHE LAMPRO

(May the Great God of Olympus give them sufferings in requital, and never may their splendour bring them joy, who have done such deeds!)

V. (1160-1164)

Electra:

IMI MI

O DEMAS IKTRON FEV FEV

O PANTOTATAS IMI MI

PEPHEI HOS KELEFTHOUS FILTATH OS M' APOLESAS

APOLESAS DIT'

O KASIGNITON KARA

(Ah me, me! O piteuous dust! Alas, thou dear one, sent on a dire journey, how hast undone me, -undone me indeed, O brother mine!)

(1171-1173)

Chorus:

THNITOU PEFIKA PATROS ELECTRA FRONI

THNITOS D' ORESTIS OSTE MI LIAN STENE

PASIN GAR IMIN TOUT' OFILETE PATHIN

(Bethink thee, Electra, thou art the child of mortal sire, and mortal was Orestes; therefore grieve not too much. This is a debt which all of us must pay.)

VI. (1165-1170)

Electra:

TI GAR SI DEKSE M' ES TO SON TODE STEGOS

TIN MIDEN O SIN SI KATO

NEO TO LIPON KE GAR INIK' ISTH' ANO

METIHON TON ISON KE NIN POTHO

TOU SOU THANOUSA MI APOLIPESTHE TAFOU

TOUS GAR THANONTAS ORO LIPOUMENOUS

(Therefore take me to thy home, me who am us nothing, to thynothingness, that I may dwell with thee henceforth below; for when thou were on earth, we shared alike; and now I fain would die, that I may not be parted from thee in the grave. For I see that the dead have rest from pain.)

(1160, modern Greek)

ALIMONO

(Alas!)

VII. (86-91)

Chorus:

O FAOS AGNON

OGIS ISOMIR' AIR OS MI

OLA MEN THRINON ODAS

POLAS D' ANTIRIS ISTHOU

STERNON PLAGAS EMASOMENON

OPOTAN DNOFERA NIX IPOLIFTHI

(O thou pure sunlight, and thou air, earth's canopy, how often have ye heard the strains of my lament, the wild blows dealt against this bleeding breast, then dark night fails!)

BOSTON UNIVERSITY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

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Annie Chang
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Michael Williams*
Akil Marshall*
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Wang Xu*
Daniel Mullen
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Tia Roper#‡
Anne Wong^

Oboe

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Tong Cui^
Michael Dressler+#

Clarinet

Holly Hamilton#
Kelly Hayes
Juliet Lai^

Bassoon

Elah Grandel^
Adrian Jojatu#

* Mozart/Tchaikovsky strings

+ principal in Mozart

principal in Tchaikovsky

‡ principal in Economou

^ principal in Sibelius

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