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School of Music

Boston University Concert Programs

2011-10-27

Boston University Chamber Orchestra, October 27, 2011

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Boston University College of Fine Arts
School of Music
presents

Boston University Chamber Orchestra

John Page and Konstantin Dobroykov, conductors

Thursday

October 27, 2011

8:00pm

Concert Hall

Founded in 1872, the **School of Music** combines the intimacy and intensity of conservatory training with a broadly based, traditional liberal arts education at the undergraduate level and intense coursework at the graduate level. The school offers degrees in performance, composition and theory, musicology, music education, collaborative piano, historical performance, as well as a certificate program in its Opera Institute, and artist and performance diplomas.

Founded in 1839, **Boston University** is an internationally recognized private research university with more than 32,000 students participating in undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs. BU consists of 17 colleges and schools along with a number of multidisciplinary centers and institutes which are central to the school's research and teaching mission. The Boston University **College of Fine Arts** was created in 1954 to bring together the School of Music, the School of Theatre, and the School of Visual Arts. The University's vision was to create a community of artists in a conservatory-style school offering professional training in the arts to both undergraduate and graduate students, complemented by a liberal arts curriculum for undergraduate students. Since those early days, education at the College of Fine Arts has begun on the BU campus and extended into the city of Boston, a rich center of cultural, artistic and intellectual activity.

Boston University College of Fine Arts
School of Music

Boston University Chamber Orchestra

John Page and Konstantin Dobroykov, conductor

The 18th concert in the 2011–12 season

October 27, 2011

Concert Hall

Arvo Pärt
(b. 1935)

Cantus in Memory of Benjamin Britten

Béla Bartók
(1881–1945)

Divertimento for Strings

~Intermission~

Franz Schubert
(1797–1828)

Quartet, "Death and the Maiden,"
orchestrated by Gustav Mahler

Allegro
Andante con moto
Scherzo: Allegro molto
Presto

John Page, conductor

John Page began his conducting career with the National Symphony Orchestra of Ireland in 2000. Prior to this he attended King's College London, University College Dublin, Trinity College Dublin and Harvard University. He studied conducting with Gerhard Markson and at the renowned Canford summer school with George Hurst. In Ireland, his 2002 performances of Viktor Ullmann's *The Emperor of Atlantis* with Opera Theatre Company garnered the prestigious Irish Times Opera of the Year award and he was subsequently invited to give a Lyric FM broadcast concert with the NSOI.

In 2003, Mr. Page moved to the US and was appointed Zander Fellow to the Boston Philharmonic Orchestra. He became Music Director of the NEC Youth Chorale in 2004, and developed close links with the Walnut Hill School conducting three of their annual Gala performances in Boston and New York. From 2005 to 2009, he was Assistant Conductor to the Boston Philharmonic.

While living in England, John Page worked with Modern Band at the Royal Opera House and Surrey Opera. He also assisted Benjamin Zander in his Philharmonia recordings of Mahler's First, Third and Sixth Symphonies and the Grammy-nominated recording of Bruckner's Fifth Symphony all released by Telarc.

In 2006, Mr. Page joined the Faculty of New England Conservatory as Resident Conductor and Music Director of the NEC Sinfonietta and later, NEC Symphony. Highlights included collaboration with Maxim Shostakovich in a performance of his father's Ninth Symphony in 2006, a gala performance of Stravinsky's 1919 *Firebird* Suite in 2007, in conjunction with Boston Ballet and conducting the Boston premiere of Gunther Schuller's *Five Etudes* for Orchestra in 2010.

More recently, John Page was Director of Large Ensembles for the New York City based Mimesis Ensemble, a group dedicated to the performance of music by living composers. He has performed with them in the Kennedy Center, Washington DC, and Symphony Space, New York, as well as conducting numerous studio recordings. In 2009, he travelled home to his native Northern Ireland to conduct the BBC Ulster Orchestra.

In spring 2011, Mr. Page was a Visiting Associate Professor at Boston University assuming the duties of Director of Orchestral Activities. He was appointed Music Director of the Portsmouth Symphony Orchestra, New Hampshire in 2011 and has been invited to conduct the Portland Symphony

Orchestra, Maine. He is also the Artistic Director of the newly formed PARMA Orchestra which began an ongoing series of recordings in June 2011.

John Page returns frequently to Ireland to record with the Irish Film Orchestra; among his most recent recordings is the platinum disc winning PBS show, *Celtic Woman*. In December 2011, Mr. Page will conduct the first *Celtic Woman Symphony Tour* visiting thirteen US cities and many major American orchestras including the Atlanta Symphony, Minnesota Orchestra, Buffalo Philharmonic, Pittsburgh Symphony and Colorado Symphony.

Konstantin Dobroykov, conductor

Bulgarian conductor Konstantin Dobroykov was born into a family of musicians. He started his musical education at the age of six at the Dobrin Petkov School of Music, majoring in Percussion Performance with a minor in Piano Performance. During his eleven years of studies in his home country, he was the winner of a number of competitions, and became the recipient of numerous awards and honors, both in Bulgaria and abroad.

In 2002, Mr. Dobroykov was awarded full scholarship and full ride to attend the Idyllwild Arts Academy in California to complete his high-school education, where he studied percussion with Professor Erik Forrester from the University of Southern California. Two years later, Mr. Dobroykov was awarded full scholarship, full ride, and the Dean of the Conservatory Scholarship (2004–2008) to attend the Oberlin Conservatory of Music, studying percussion with the legendary Professor Michael Rosen and orchestral conducting with Maestra Bridget-Michaele Reischl. His artistic achievements and academic standing earned him the Phi Kappa Lambda Prize for Musicianship, in addition to being elected a member of the Society of Phi Kappa Lambda upon graduation in 2008.

After earning his Bachelor of Music degree, Mr. Dobroykov graduated the University of North Carolina: School of the Arts (UNCSA) in 2010. He received his Master of Music degree in Orchestral Conducting, and was awarded the certificate for Excellence in Scholarship. While at UNCSA, he studied with Maestro Ransom Wilson and was the recipient of both the West Story Fellowship and the Robert Franz Conducting Fellowship.

Konstantin Dobroykov is currently a candidate for the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Orchestral Conducting at Boston University, studying with Maestro David Hoose, and receiving additional studies with Ann Howard Jones, John Page, and Gunther Schuller.

Program Notes

Arvo Pärt

Cantus in Memory of Benjamin Britten, for strings and one bell

Arvo Pärt was born in Paide, Estonia, on September 11, 1935; he now lives in Tallinn, Estonia. He composed the Cantus in Memory of Benjamin Britten in 1977, shortly after Britten's death in December 1976. The score calls for orchestral strings and one orchestral chime. Duration is about 6 minutes.

Arvo Pärt was born in Estonia during the last years of the republic before Soviet domination took over for several decades. His widespread acclaim in Europe and the United States in the early 1980s came particularly as the result of a hugely popular recording of his Third Symphony. He had been educated at the conservatory in Tallinn, graduating in 1963. His early work showed the expected influence of Prokofiev and Shostakovich, but he broadened his stylistic range and scope with two award-winning large-scale works: the children's cantata *Meie aed* ("Our Garden") and the oratorio *Maailma samm* ("Stride of the world"). He was the first Estonian composer to use the twelve tone technique (Necrology, 1959), then not allowed in countries of the Soviet bloc. He was awarded official prizes for some works, and attacked for others, particularly the *Credo* for piano, chorus, and orchestra, which was banned because it contained the text, "I believe in Jesus Christ." Composing widely in orchestral, vocal, and chamber forms, his early works often employed serial organization of pitch and rhythm, as well as collage effects.

The twelve-tone phase passed into a long period of artistic silence, during which he undertook profound study of Franco-Flemish choral music of late Medieval and early Renaissance, from Machaut to Josquin. In the Third Symphony of 1971 he revived old polyphonic forms and ideas from Gregorian chant. His studies led by 1976 to his rediscovery of the triad and the possibilities of extreme simplicity. Soon afterward he and his family emigrated to Vienna, then moved to Berlin.

Regarding his commemoration of Britten, Pärt has written:

In the past years we have had many losses in the world of music to mourn. Why did the date of Benjamin Britten's death—December 4, 1976—touch such a chord in me? During this time I was obviously at a point where I could recognize the magnitude of such a loss. Inexplicable feelings of guilt, more than that even, arose in me. I had just discovered Britten for myself. Just before his death I began to appreciate the unusual

purity of his music—I had had the impression of the same kind of purity in the ballades of [the Medieval composer] Guillaume de Machaut. And besides, for a long time I had wanted to meet Britten personally—and now it would not come to that.

The work is one of several now often performed that came out of Pärt's artistic silence in the 1970s. It is a moving threnody based on the simplest of ideas—a melody that slowly descends, step by step, starting in the high strings and picked up by the lower instruments. A solitary bell, like a funeral chime, initiates the halting, dragging procession. The mood grows ever more somber as more, and lower, instruments enrich the kaleidoscopic sound of one descending line overlaid on another. At the same time, the rhythmic motion becomes gradually slower, as if a procession of mourners is reluctantly to take leave of an honored master.

—Steven Ledbetter

Béla Bartók

Divertimento for Strings

Bartók's *Divertimento* is tremendously positive in character, save for the anguished outbursts within the second movement. Its general ebullience is in stark contrast to Bartók's situation, hounded from public life by the oppressive Hungarian-Nazi regime and facing an uncertain future in the U.S. However, in the summer of 1939, the great benefactor of twentieth century music, Paul Sacher, provided Bartók not only with a third commission for the *Divertimento* (*Music for Strings Percussion and Celesta*, and the *Sonata for Two Pianos and Percussion* were the others), but also an idyllic retreat in the Swiss Alps where he could work without depressing reminders of European catastrophes. Completing the piece in August, Bartók composed the *Divertimento* in what seems an impossibly short time of two weeks. Sacher performed the work in Basle during the next season. It was to be the last piece from its composer until the Concerto for Orchestra in 1943, and marks the end of his European period.

Bartók's *Divertimento* behaves more, at times, like a concerto grosso, juxtaposing soli passages for the principals with strong tutti statements. In its first movement, this is clearly connected to neoclassical procedure, but in the finale its origin is in the peasant round dance in its most rambunctious form. Here the soloists suggest figures which are immediately taken over by the group. Any attempt to keep this piece on a "serious" track is derailed. A "fugue lesson" is interrupted and ultimately abandoned in favor of an improvising violinist. The proceedings are set aside for a pizzicato poke

in the aristocracy's ribs. High and low humor reigns throughout. In the dark central movement, one of his "night music" pieces, Bartók's precise chromatic geometry is almost overwhelmed by the even darker forces of its interior.

—Richard Cornell

Franz Schubert

String Quartet in D minor, D. 810, "Death and the Maiden," arranged for string orchestra by Gustav Mahler

Franz Peter Schubert was born in Liechtental, a suburb of Vienna, January 31, 1797, and died in Vienna on November 19, 1828. He composed the D-minor string quartet, nicknamed Death and the Maiden because its slow movement quotes an 1817 song of that title, in the spring of 1824. Gustav Mahler arranged the quartet for string orchestra and conducted the slow movement (the one based on Schubert's song) for the first time on November 19, 1894, on one of the Hamburg New Subscription Concerts which he gave while a conductor at the Hamburg Opera. The first complete performance of this version was given by the American Symphony Orchestra, under the direction of Moshe Atzmon, on May 6, 1984. The score calls for the full complement of symphonic strings. Duration is about 40 minutes.

What happens when one great composer arranges the work of another? There are all kinds of possibilities, from so subtle that even an experienced listener can scarcely recognize the difference to so great that one would be hard put to recognize a similarity between the two versions. The arrangements we encounter most commonly in symphony concerts are orchestrated versions of piano works (Ravel's treatment of Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition* being the most prominent example). Sometimes—though less frequently than we used to—we encounter "updated" versions for a modern orchestra of pieces composed before the end of the Baroque era, when orchestras were far smaller and were mostly string-based with a handful of other instruments normally appearing as featured soloists (the various Handel arrangements by Sir Hamilton Harty are perhaps the most frequently encountered of those).

Gustav Mahler, one of the greatest masters of the orchestra at the turn of the century, was also one of the finest conductors, and he rather frequently arranged (perhaps it is more accurate to say "touched up") works by masters that he admired greatly, including Beethoven, Ninth Symphony, and *Egmont* and *Coriolan* Overture found themselves adapted to his needs. In the case of the orchestral works, the changes are largely limited to reinforcement of the wind parts so that they would balance the large string ensembles of

the late nineteenth century; where Beethoven might have two horns, for example, Mahler would put two on each part. In other words, such changes were more a matter of balance than of compositional color or of detailed treatment of phrasing and articulation.

Mahler's version of Schubert's *Death and the Maiden* quartet is a rather different case. Here, as with Wilhelm Furtwängler's version of Beethoven's *Grosse Fuge*, a work conceived for four solo instruments is presented by a large ensemble with multiple players on each line. Anyone who knows this music in its original form may well agree with the Viennese critic Josef Sittard, who wrote of Mahler's original performance of this version that Schubert's "divine music" had been robbed "of its natural intimacy." And yet it is worth noting that Mahler (and Furtwängler, for that matter) chose large works that already had some element of straining at the seams. Certainly Beethoven's *Grosse Fuge* has never been anyone's idea of a cuddly composition to curl up with, and Schubert's *Death and the Maiden* is similarly most aggressively outgoing, symphonic, even "Beethovenesque" works.

Mahler made his arrangement in a published C.F. Peters Edition score of eight of Schubert's quartets, plus the Quartettsatz. There are various markings throughout the volume, as if he were planning to make string orchestra arrangements of other quartets, too, but the only one he actually finished and (partially) performed was that for the D-minor quartet. (This fact was discovered when the composer's daughter Anna Mahler gave this music to the Mahler specialist Donald Mitchell, who, with David Mathews, prepared the edition to be performed here.)

Mahler's main purpose in making these arrangements was surely to make an extraordinary work better known to the large audiences that thronged orchestral concerts, as opposed to the much smaller audiences for chamber music performances. In addition, the making of such arrangements allowed him, as a performer, to put his mark on music that he deeply loved, and music that he otherwise could not have touched (his own instrument was the piano).

Aside from occasional added dynamics and a few octave doublings, Mahler's main contribution was to decide where the double-bass players should play along with the cellos (thus enriching the texture by adding sound a full octave lower), where they should drop out, and where they should play a simplified version of the cello line, as a kind of punctuation, adding depth of sound without complicating the texture. Though Mahler certainly completed his arrangement of the Schubert quartet, he only performed its most famous movement. Perhaps it was the negative criticism

of Sittard that dissuaded him from planning a complete performances or of arranging any of the other quartets on which he had begun to make some markings suggesting larger-scale performance.

Schubert's quartet gets its familiar nickname from a brief but deeply moving song, *Der Tod und das Mädchen* (*Death and the Maiden*), D. 531, that Schubert wrote in February 1817 to a poem by Matthias Claudius, in which a young girl becomes reconciled to Death, who sings gently lulling strains to soothe her anguish. The song (and its key of D minor) reappeared in Schubert's output seven years later to become the basis for the slow movement of his last string quartet but one, composed early in 1824, and that movement has given the nickname to the entire work.

The D minor quartet is, like some of the most familiar Beethoven, defiant and abrupt in its gestures, somber and even tragic in expression. The opening phrase, an imperious fortissimo gesture with driving triplets, quickly continues in hushed tones, but the triplet figure remains the moving element, marching forward and climbing tensely higher until it bursts out explosively. A short transition (with a more lyrical treatment of the triplets) leads to the new theme, almost a Rossinian operatic duet for the two violins beginning in F but moving to an A-minor cadence that treats the second them contrapuntally against a vigorous running sixteenth note pattern. Soon both these ideas are combined with original triplet figure to end the exposition in A major. The development begins with the "operatic" tune, but gradually the tensely nervous triplet figure takes over and leads to the fortissimo statement of the first theme, ushering in the recapitulation. The movement moves for a time to D major, with an air of reconciliation, but finally ends, by way of an expressive harmonic twist, in the minor.

The second movement is a set of variations on material drawn from the piano introduction to "Death and the Maiden," eight bars of solemn chords suggesting that death comes as a welcome release, and Death's reply to the girl's terrors (the rather operatic music given to the "maiden" is not used in this version). The six variations, all but the fourth in the minor key, are noble and restrained, avoiding flashy gimmickry for its own sake. The movement ends with a brief coda.

The Scherzo is impetuously vigorous from the opening measure, setting off from a fierce syncopated phrase, which comes to dominate the movement. The Trio is one of the few places in the piece where Schubert allows a more tranquil mood and a brightening to the major, but even here references to D minor recur.

The Finale's racing tarantella rushes headlong almost throughout. When the music seems ready to settle into F major, the tarantella rhythm pauses for a second, as if breathless, and continues with a kind of chorale melody, but it is soon combined with the rushing 6/8 pattern. Except for the momentary pauses before the chorale like theme, the pace never slackens. At the end it even picks up to a Prestissimo conclusion, just as the tarantella itself was supposed to be continuously redoubled in energy until the dancers dropped from exhaustion. A propos of this conclusion, J.A. Westrup has commented, "One can imagine that even those who knew Schubert well were surprised by this extraordinary display of energy from the little man whom they knew as Schwammerl (Tubby)."

—Steven Ledbetter

Boston University College of Fine Arts
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**Boston University Symphony Orchestra
and Symphonic Chorus**

Monday, November 21, 8:00pm
Symphony Hall

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Ann Howard Jones, conductor
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Saturday, November 5, 8:00pm

Sound Icon presents the US premiere of Wolfgang Rihm's hour-long Concerto Seraphin for 16 players. Salvatore Sciarrino's *Introduzione all'Oscuro* and the winning work of the Sound Icon/Boston University composition competition round out the program.

Sound Icon

Concert Hall

Friday, November 11, 8:00pm

Boston University Choral Ensembles

Ann Howard Jones, Stephen Stacks,
and Rachel Carpentier, conductors

Marsh Chapel

Friday, November 11, 8:00pm

Boston University Percussion Ensemble

Samuel Solomon, director

Concert Hall

Sunday, November 13, 8:00pm

Faculty Recital Series: *Mere Being*

A Concert of Music by Rodney Lister

Penelope Bitzas, mezzo-soprano

James Demler, baritone

Jim Petosa, narrator

Charles Blandy, tenor

Martin Near, countertenor

Sarah Bach, soprano

Rebecca Fischer, violin

Concert Hall

Wednesday, November 16, 8:00pm

ALEA III

Charles Ives: The Astonishing Pioneer

Gunther Schuller, conductor

Tsai Performance Center

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 Diana Dansereau *
 André de Quadros *
 Jay Dorfman *
 Andrew Goodrich *
 Lee Higgins *
 Ron Kos *
 Warren Levenson
 Roger Mantie *
 Brian Michaud
 Richard Nangle
 Sandra Nicolucci *

CONDUCTING

David Hoose *
Ann Howard Jones *
 Scott Allen Jarrett
 David Martins
 Jameson Marvin, *choral lit.*
 John Page, *guest*

OPERA INSTITUTE

Phyllis Curtin ++
Sharon Daniels *
 Melinda Sullivan-Friedman
 Frank Kelley
 William Lumpkin *
 Jim Petosa
 Betsy Polatin
 Jeffrey Stevens *
 Nathan Troup
 Allison Voth *

STAFF PIANISTS

Michelle Beaton
 Eve Budnick
 Matthew Larson
 Phillip Oliver
 Lorena Tecu
 Noriko Yasuda
 Molly Wood

Department Chairs
 represented in **bold**

* full-time faculty

++ Emeritus

SCHOOL OF MUSIC PRODUCTION DEPARTMENT

J. Casey Soward, *Manager of Production and Performance*
 Michael Culler, *Head Recording Engineer*
 Diane McLean, *Stage Manager*
 Anne McMahon, *Recording Engineer*
 Dawson II, *Scheduling and Programs Coordinator*
 Sessa, *Librarian*
 Martin Snow, *Keyboard Technician and Restoration*

COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS ADMINISTRATION

Benjamin Juarez, *Dean, College of Fine Arts*
 Robert K. Dodson, *Director, School of Music*
 Jim Petosa, *Director, School of Theatre*
 Lynne Allen, *Director, School of Visual Arts*

SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Richard Cornell, *Associate Director*

SCHOOL OF MUSIC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Susan Conkling, *Music Education*
 Richard Cornell, *Music Studies*
 Robert K. Dodson, *Director*
 Phyllis Hoffman, *Applied Studies and Performance*
 Ann Howard Jones, *Ensembles*
 David Kopp, *Director, Graduate Studies*
 Michelle LaCourse, *Chair, Applied Studies*
 Shaun Ramsay, *Assistant Director for Admissions and Student Affairs*
 John Wallace, *Director Undergraduate Studies*

BOSTON UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MUSIC UPCOMING EVENTS AND PERFORMANCES

Boston University Symphony Orchestra and Symphonic Chorus

Monday, November 21, 8:00pm
Symphony Hall

Verdi Requiem

Ann Howard Jones, conductor
Michelle Johnson, soprano
Daveda Karanas, mezzo-soprano
Clay Hilley, tenor
Morris Robinson, bass

Schoenberg A Survivor from Warsaw

David Hoose, conductor
Frank Kelley, narrator

Tickets: \$25 (\$10 student rush)
www.BostonSymphonyHall.org or 617.266.1200

