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Faculty Concert, Michelle LaCourse, Wednesday, October 18, 2000

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*Boston University School for the Arts
Music Division*

—presents—

FACULTY CONCERT

MICHELLE LACOURSE, *viola*

NADINE SHANK, *guest artist, piano*

xx

Wednesday, October 18, 2000 at 8:00 p.m.
The Tsai Performance Center
685 Commonwealth Avenue
Boston, Massachusetts

Boston University School for the Arts
Music Division
—presents—

MICHELLE LACOURSE, *viola*
NADINE SHANK, *guest artist, piano*

Wednesday, October 18, 2000
8:00 p.m.

PROGRAM

Romance Ralph Vaughan Williams
(1872-1958)

Sonata for Viola Solo, Op. 25 No. 1 (1922) Paul Hindemith
(1895-1963)

Breit—

—Sehr frisch und straff

Sehr langsam

Rasendes Zeitmass. Wild. Tonschonheit ist Nebensache

Langsam, mit viel Ausdruck

Truffles (2000) James Grant
(b. 1954)

Grand Marnier

Crème de Menthe

—*brief intermission*—

Sonata (1919) Rebecca Clarke
(1886-1979)

Impetuoso

Vivace

Adagio; Allegro

100 Years of Music for Viola and Piano "Lush, Wild, and Romantic"

Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)

Romance

Ralph Vaughan Williams' long life covered nearly every field of musical composition. Most of his music is strongly national in flavor, and much of his musical output through the mid 1930s can be characterized as pastoral, lush, or somewhat "soothing" in nature. The date of the *Romance's* composition is unknown. The manuscript was one of several which were found among Vaughan Williams' papers after his death. It is generally assumed that the piece was written for the great British violist Lionel Tertis, for whom the composer wrote *Flos Campi* (1925) and the *Suite* (1934). The *Romance* was first performed on January 9th, 1962, by violist Bernard Shore and pianist Eric Gritter.

Paul Hindemith (1895-1963)

Sonata for Viola Solo, Op. 25 No. 1 (1922)

The career of Paul Hindemith included extensive performing as a viola soloist and member of the Amar Quartet; an enormous output of varied composition; authorship of numerous noted written works; a commitment to teaching that took him from Berlins' Hochschule für Musik to planning and establishing a system of music education for the Turkish government to an appointment at the Yale University School of Music as well as at the University of Zurich; and extensive activities as a conductor. Nazi authorities denounced his music as "un-German," which led to his leaving Germany for a brief residency in Switzerland, after which Hindemith made his home in the United States, with the Yale appointment in 1940. While in the United States, he taught for two summers at the Berkshire Academy in Stockbridge, Mass., and delivered the Charles Elliot Norton Lectures at Harvard University during the 1949-50 terms. He later became an American citizen, though he returned to Switzerland in the 1950s, reducing his teaching and devoting himself more to his composing and writing. Hindemith's contribution to the viola repertoire includes four unaccompanied sonatas, four works for viola and piano, and four works for viola solo with orchestra. The *Sonata Opus 25, No. 1* was dedicated to Czech violist Ladislav Cerny.

James Grant (b. 1954)

Truffles (2000)

The music of James Grant has been heard throughout North and South America, Europe, Australia, New Zealand and Japan. During recent seasons, his orchestral music has been featured on programs by the Louisville Orchestra, Minnesota Pops Orchestra, Muncie, Fairfax and Central Florida

Symphony Orchestras, and the San Jose, Kansas City, Missouri and Lawrence Chamber Orchestras, among others. Grant attended Hampshire College in Amherst, Mass., and holds a DMA from Cornell University. He was formerly on the faculty of Middlebury College in Vermont, and is now a full-time composer and lecturer living and working in Rehoboth Beach, Delaware. His *Chocolates (torch songs for the viola and piano)* was premiered here by Ms. LaCourse and Ms. Shank in 1998, as was the viola/piano version of his *Waltz for Betz* in 1999. *Truffles* (not the mushrooms, but the filled chocolate confections), like *Chocolates*, is written in a language and style recalling the passionate tuneful ballads and jazz improvisations of the American 40s and 50s. The piece was commissioned by and is dedicated to Michelle LaCourse. This evening marks the work's premiere.

Rebecca Clarke (1886-1979)

Sonata (1919)

English by birth and educated in London, Rebecca Clarke's American ties began with her father, a Bostonian. Her father was also an amateur cellist, who saw to her early musical education, including family chamber music with young Rebecca on the violin. She attended the Royal Academy of Music, but was abruptly withdrawn by her father in her third year, when a harmony teacher proposed marriage. She then became the first woman student accepted at the Royal College of Music by Sir Charles Stanford (teacher of Vaughan Williams, Holst, Bridge, Ireland and many other English notables), and it was there that she switched to viola at Stanford's urging, (as she wrote) "because then you are right in the middle of the sound, and can tell how it's all done." Her viola teachers included the legendary Lionel Tertis. Clarke was later one of the first women to become a full time member of a professional orchestra in London, and was in demand as a soloist and chamber player as well. She was a regular at Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge's Berkshire Chamber Music Festival on South Mountain (in Pittsfield Mass.), beginning in 1918, and it was there, in 1919, that she entered the *Sonata* in a composition contest for new works featuring the viola. From a field of 72 pieces, Clarke's piece was tied with Ernest Bloch's *Suite* until Mrs. Coolidge was asked to cast a vote to break the deadlock. While, according to the contest's rules, only the name of the winner (Bloch) was to be revealed (all works being entered under pseudonyms), the jury asked that the runner-up be made known as well. Mrs. Coolidge was quoted (in Clarke's program notes) as saying, "And you should have seen their faces when they saw it was by a woman!" Clarke's career took her back and forth between England and America during the 1930's, and she found herself on American soil when the war broke out in Europe. English Immigration had deemed musicians to be unproductive mouths, and told her not to return at that time. In New York, she found an old classmate from the Royal College, and they eventually married, in 1944. Although she had an active

performing career, and had found notable success with many of her compositions, she soon gave up her playing as well as her composing, and lived the rest of her days in New York, until her death in 1979. The *Sonata for Viola and Piano* was first performed in Pittsfield on September 25, 1919, by violist Louis Bailly and pianist Harold Bauer.

Program Notes by Michelle LaCourse

MEET THE ARTISTS

Michelle LaCourse, violist, has appeared as soloist and chamber musician throughout the U.S. and Europe to high critical acclaim, and has received numerous performance awards and distinctions. She was formerly a member of the Lehigh Quartet, the Delphic String Trio and the Aeolian Trio, and has performed at numerous music festivals, including Aspen, Eastern, Winton, Bloomsburg, Sewanee, Skaneateles, Interlochen and Musicorda. As an orchestral musician, she has performed with the Baltimore Symphony, and has been principal violist and soloist of the Chamber Orchestra of Grenoble, France, and of the Concerto Soloists Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia. Ms. LaCourse holds Bachelor and Master of Music degrees, as well as the Artist Diploma, from the Peabody Conservatory of Music, where she studied with, and was teaching assistant to renowned pedagogue Karen Tuttle. She also studied with David Holland at the Interlochen Arts Academy and Robert Swan at Northwestern University. She has given master classes at music schools across the country and currently teaches viola and chamber music at Boston University, and during the summer months at Musicorda, at Boston University's Tanglewood Institute, and at the Interlochen Chamber Music Conference.

Nadine Shank, pianist, made her concert debut at age fifteen as soloist with the World Youth Symphony Orchestra of Interlochen, as winner of their concerto competition. She was also an award winner in the MTNA and National Federation of Music Clubs competitions. Ms. Shank earned degrees at the Oberlin Conservatory, receiving the Rudolph Serkin Piano Award, and at Indiana University, appearing as concerto competition winner with the Philharmonic Orchestra. Her teachers have included Menahem Pressler, Sanford Margolis, Karen Shaw and John Wustman. As a recitalist and chamber player, she has toured the U.S., England, Germany, Poland, the Netherlands, and the British and American Virgin Islands. She has recorded with saxophonist Lynn Clock for the CRI and Open Loop labels, and has also recorded a series of "Play-Along" CDs of standard clarinet and saxophone literature. With soprano Paulina Stark, she recorded "American-Jewish Art Songs" for Centaur. Ms. Shank is the orchestral pianist with the Springfield (MA) Symphony Orchestra, and is a Professor of Piano at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

UPCOMING EVENTS

October 19
8:00 p.m.

Faculty Concert
Scott Hartman, trombone
John Ferguson, piano
The Tsai Performance Center
685 Commonwealth Avenue

October 20-22
6:30 p.m.
October 22
3:00 p.m.

Opera Institute Fringe Festival
Trouble in Tahiti by Leonard Bernstein
Sharon Daniels, *director of opera programs*
William Lumpkin, *musical director*
Christian Smith, *guest stage director*
Admission: \$5; students free of charge
Boston University Studio Theatre 210
264 Huntington Avenue

October 23
8:00 p.m.

Faculty Concert
Horia Mihail, piano
The Tsai Performance Center
685 Commonwealth Avenue

October 26
8:00 p.m.

Boston University Symphony Orchestra
David Hoose, *conductor*
The Tsai Performance Center
685 Commonwealth Avenue

SPECIAL EVENT

Monday, November 20, 8:00 p.m.

Boston University Symphony Orchestra and the Men of Symphonic Chorus

David Hoose, *conductor*
Anthony di Bonaventura, *piano*
Sanford Sylvan, *baritone*

Yevgeny Yevtushenko, Albert Todd, *lecturers*

Beethoven: Concerto No. 3 in C minor for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 37
Shostakovich: Symphony No. 13, Op. 113, *Babi Yar*

Pre-concert lecture at 7:00 p.m.

Symphony Hall
301 Massachusetts Avenue

Admission: \$10, \$20, \$35
For tickets call SymphonyCharge: 617/266-1200

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