2003-11-20

Boston University Chamber Orchestra, November 20, 2003

BOSTON UNIVERSITY
College of Fine Arts
School of Music

BOSTON UNIVERSITY CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

Sergey Khanukaev

Samuel Pascoe

conductors

Thursday, November 20, 2003 at 8:00 p.m.
Concert Hall at the College of Fine Arts
855 Commonwealth Avenue

BOSTON UNIVERSITY CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

Sergey Khanukaev and Samuel Pascoe, conductors

BARBER — Adagio for Strings

BRITTEN — Simple Symphony, Op. 4

I Boisterous Bourrée
II Playful Pizzicato
III Sentimental Saraband
IV Frolicsome Finale

Samuel Pascoe, conductor

INTERMISSION

MOZART — Symphony No. 29 in A, KV 201-186a

Allegro moderato
Andante
Menuetto
Allegro con spirito

Sergey Khanukaev, conductor

BOSTON UNIVERSITY CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

Violin I
Shiraz Ben Yehuda
Hilary Castle
Caitin Warbelow
Matthew Tobin
Caitlin Crabtree
Timothy McKendree
Elise Blake
Andrea Levine

Violin II
Helen Beke
Yevgeny Kutik
Malorie Blake
Robin Canfield
James Ross
A[illegible]el Ibanez
M[illegible]a Stephens

Viola
Clark Spencer
Christina Butler
Rebecca Schauer
Lauren Gage
Sarah Miller
Merrick Nelson

Cello
Seth Ament
Paul Zang
Charlsie Hanson
Kristen Antolik
Seth Raymond
Sarah Morris

Bass
Logan Coale
Maxwell Zeugner

Oboe
Meghan Hynson
Jennifer Feldman

Horn
David Gamble
Victoria Pozzato

SERGEY KHANUKAEV

Sergey Khanukaev, born in Russia, began his musical studies in 1969 at Moscow's Tchaikovsky Conservatory, where he studied piano and musicology with such outstanding musicians as Edison Denissov and Tovy Logovinsky. He continued as a postgraduate student at the Moscow Gnessin Musical Institute concentrating mainly on symphonic conducting, under the guidance of Maestro Yuri Simonov, and musicology. His research studies were dedicated to contemporary Russian music. Mr. Khanukaev finished his education attending Leningrad (St. Petersburg) Conservatory, where he studied with Mariss and Arvid Jansons. He graduated from the conservatory with an Honor Diploma in symphonic and operatic conducting. Since 1982, Mr. Khanukaev has conducted various orchestras in concerts throughout the former USSR, appearing in Moscow, St. Petersburg, Yaroslavl, and other venues.

Following his arrival in Israel in 1991, Mr. Khanukaev received the Israeli Government Scholarship for outstanding musicians, and also a scholarship and special prize at the Austrian International Conductors Competition. He has conducted leading Israeli orchestras and opera houses, including the Jerusalem, Tel- Aviv, and Haifa Symphony Orchestras, and the Israeli Symfonietta. He has also been musical director of the Israel "Camerata" and "Classica" orchestras, appearing with them widely in Israel and abroad in Germany and Belgium, having successful concerts in the framework of the Israel Festival and other countries. His recordings with the Jerusalem Symphony, "Camerata", and "Classica" Orchestras are presented on Israel Broadcasting Authority. Mr. Khanukaev has premiered the works of many modern Russian, Israeli, and American composers. Currently, he continues his doctorate at the Boston University School of Music, under the supervision of Professor David Hoose.

SAMUEL PASCOE

Samuel Pascoe is a doctoral student in orchestral conducting at Boston University, where he studies with Professor David Hoose. Born in Mexico City, Mr. Pascoe graduated from the National Autonomous University of Mexico in 1991 as a piano performance major. He then continued to complete his master's degree in choral conducting with a composition emphasis from Westminster Choir College in Princeton, New Jersey, where he studied with Joseph Flummerfelt and Stefan Young.

Since 1993, Mr. Pascoe has been a full-time professor at the National School of Music of the National Autonomous University of Mexico, where he teaches chamber music and theory. In 1998, he was appointed music director of the university's symphony orchestra, a position he held until 2001. He was also the conductor of the Coro de Madrigalistas, a professional choir of the National Institute of Fine Arts in Mexico City, and of the KONTEMPO Ensemble, a contemporary chamber ensemble. He has served as the Music Director of the Academia de Mexico Chamber Orchestra, and has been a regular guest conductor of the AMEN Choir, with whom he has performed numerous oratorios.

As a composer, Mr. Pascoe has won several awards, including a second and fourth place [illegible]he annual National Choral Composition Competition in Mexico. Some of his compositions [illegible]e been recorded on the Urtext label, including his *Trio No. 1* for string trio, *Lyric Piece* for cello and piano, and a commissioned piece for soprano, two oboes, cello, bass, and marimba.

PROGRAM NOTES

Samuel Barber (1910–1981)
Adagio for Strings

The *Adagio*, now almost invariably played in its orchestral version, comes from the slow movement of Barber's *String Quartet No. 1* Op. 11 (1936), and must be counted among the most familiar pieces of American concert music; it has become a popular classic and even exists in a choral version. The music has something of the archaic dignity of Renaissance polyphony; a rhapsodic ascending phrase is repeated, inverted, expanded and embellished before rising to a brittle climax, then fading into silence. The gradual build-up and slow release of tension--the archetypical "arch" form--gives the work an inexorable quality. In the quartet it serves the work well, giving point and focus to its neighboring movements, though somewhat upstaging them by its eloquence.

The orchestral version, first performed in 1938 by the NBC Symphony Orchestra and Arturo Toscanini (on the same occasion as Barber's *First Essay for Orchestra*), conveys both tranquillity and grief, and has frequently been chosen to mark occasions of public mourning; it was, for instance, played at the funerals of FDR, JFK and Princess Grace, and has appeared in the soundtrack to a number of poignant films, including *The Elephant Man* and *Platoon*. Since then it has frequently been heard all over the world, and was one of the few American works to be played regularly in the Soviet Union during the cold war.

It is, however, not necessary to regard the *Adagio* as a lament. The work is an intense meditation by a composer who, in his twenty-sixth year, already possessed the confidence and craftsmanship to make a powerful personal statement with clarity and sincerity. Its poignancy, simplicity, and dignity have been praised by such composers as Ned Rorem, Roy Harris, William Schuman and Aaron Copland.

-Roy Brewer

Benjamin Britten (1913–1976)
Simple Symphony

At the age of twenty, perhaps feeling nostalgic, Britten set about recasting a handful of old piano tunes and song melodies from his pre-teen years into a four-movement work for string orchestra. Entitled *A Simple Symphony* (1933 - 34), the work contains the irresistible charm of youth projected as an array of musical colors that, although combined in a relatively sophisticated manner, retain at least the impression of innocence. The symphony's widespread popularity can be attributed to several factors, among the most significant of which is its idiomatic string writing -- scoring of such technical ease that amateur ensembles and student orchestras can feel confident in undertaking it. Perhaps the real reason for the work's appeal, however, is the way that Britten refuses to wholly subordinate the pleasantly cliché-ridden fruits of his youth to the more sophisticated musical syntax that, by the mid-1930s, was emerging as the driving force behind such works as the choral *Te Deum* (1934) and the orchestral *Variations on a Theme of Frank Bridge* (1937).

However near and dear these melodies may have been to Britten's heart, he clearly felt it necessary to apply a substantial amount of touch-up as he forged them into a symphonic form. For example, the colorful twists and turns of the first movement, "Boisterous Bourée," do not really represent Britten as a child composer as much as they do a maturing composer's desire to reawaken the spirit of an earlier time. However, the movement does retain a certain juvenile spirit, especially in its heavy emphasis on the melodic contours and rhythmic cadences of English folksong.

The Presto possibile "Playful Pizzicato," with its rounded, wittily arpeggiated theme, is just what its title would seem to indicate. The trio section makes effective use of an irregular phrase structure (i.e., empty bars shape the gestures into three-bar groups). Its material is derived from a 1924 Scherzo for piano and a song that apparently dates from later in that same year.

The "Sentimental Saraband" unfolds in a straightforward ternary (ABA) form, its somber main theme first announced by the violins over a stubborn G pedal in the cellos and basses. A second melody, originally part of a waltz, is, by comparison, quite translucent, as are the gently repeated chords of the coda.

After an introduction made up of naively dramatic open fifths, the "Frolicsome Finale" takes off with a subject that recalls the cello theme of the "Boisterous Bourée"; the chromatically descending inner lines are, however, unique to this final movement. After a contrasting second theme, the first idea undergoes development. Soon enough a recapitulation arrives, during which the second theme is cast in an almost heroic light. A grand pause ushers in the kinetic coda.

-Blair Johnston

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791)
Symphony No. 29 in A

After the burst of symphonic writing during 1772 and 1773, each of which produced seven new symphonies, Mozart's activity in the field diminished. Over the next two years only three new works appeared, of which K. 201 is the most remarkable. It is dated April 6, 1774 -- a period of Mozart's life singularly lacking in documentary detail. Until December, when he went to Munich to supervise the forthcoming premiere of his opera buffa *La finta giardiniera*, the entire year was spent in Salzburg; there are thus no family letters from this period. Mozart was now finally salaried as joint concertmaster (with Michael Haydn, brother of the more famous Joseph) at the Salzburg court, for which he composed a number of sacred works in addition to two large-scale occasional serenades (one of which, K. 204 in D, was later reduced to four movements to serve as a symphony).

Notwithstanding its major key, *Symphony No. 29* has many of the same serious and intense qualities as its immediate chronological predecessor, the Symphony No. 25 in G minor, K. 183, composed the previous fall. The opening Allegro is unusual among Mozart's symphonies for its inclusion of a quiet introduction; the forward drive of the main part of the movement is maintained by repeated note and tremolando figurations. Both the Andante and the Minuet which succeed it are characterized by the use of dotted-rhythms which give the muted strings of the former a mood of dignified eloquence, and the Minuet rare energy. The final Allegro con spirito includes hunting-horn calls. Mozart's biographer Alfred Einstein described this finale as "the richest and most dramatic Mozart had written up to this time." One might indeed go further and suggest that K. 201 is overall the finest symphony Mozart had yet composed. He obviously thought sufficiently highly of the work to continue using it in Vienna; it was one of four symphonies he requested his father Leopold to send to him after settling in the city (letter of January 4, 1783).

-Brian Robins

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UPCOMING EVENTS AND PERFORMANCES

Monday, November 24, 8:00 pm

Boston University
Symphony Orchestra, Symphonic Chorus,
and Chamber Orchestra
Benjamin Britten *War Requiem*
Ann Howard Jones and David Hoose, conductors
All Saints Choir of Boys, Ashmont
Jeremy Bruns, conductor
Kelly Kaduce, soprano
Mark Goodrich, tenor
William Sharp, baritone
Symphony Hall, Boston

Monday, December 1, 8:00 pm

Muir String Quartet
Beethoven *Quartet in A Major, Op. 18, No. 5 and*
Quartet in Bb Major, Op. 130
Tsai Performance Center

Wednesday, December 3, 8:00 pm

Percussion Ensemble Concert
Jon Bisesi, director
Dan Bauch, assistant director with Ayako Yoda, piano
Works by Harrison, Van Brink, Pape, Mulhly, and Cage
Concert Hall

Monday, December 8, 8:00 pm

ALEA III
Lament for John
Colleagues and friends of Professor John Daverio
composed and perform new works dedicated to his memory.
Artists include Amlin, Zazofsky, Papdakis, Ruske, and Bisesi
Tsai Performance Center

Thursday, December 11, 8:00 pm

Boston University Wind Ensemble
David Martins, conductor
Malcolm Arnold *Tam O'Shanter Overture, Op. 51*
Edgar Varese *Octandre*
Anthony Iannacone *After a Gentle Rain*
The Dark Green Glistens with Old Reflections
Sparkling Air Bursts with Dancing Sunlight
Gordon Jacob *More Old Wine in New Bottles*
Eric Whitacre *Ghost Train*
Tsai Performance Center

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