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Senior Recital: Jamilah McLaren, flute

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SENIOR RECITAL

Jamilah McLaren, flute

assisted by
Parker Roe, tenor
Joanne Kong, piano

MARCH 27, 2004, 3:00 PM
PERKINSON RECITAL HALL
Three Irish Folksong Settings

I. The Salley Gardens
II. The Foggy Dew
III. She Moved Through the Fair

Jamilah McLaren, flute
Parker Roe, tenor

"John Corigliano’s collaborations with mainstream musicians and institutions, his occasional forays into film scoring, his commitment to intelligibility and his mostly tonal early works have sometimes obscured the extent of his technical range and his often-daunting progressivism (Grove)." Corigliano’s first period, which he described as a “tense, histrionic outgrowth of the “clean” American sound of Barber, Copland, Harris and Schuman”, extended from 1963 until 1976. The Oboe Concerto (1975) and, more definitively, the Clarinet Concerto (1977), introduced by Leonard Bernstein and the New York Philharmonic Orchestra, inaugurated a change in style, in which Corigliano abandoned his earlier restriction to conventional notation and embraced an architectural method of composition with the use of abstract dramatic designs often sketched through words and/or images. His works also contained control, inclusion and inflection of a wide range of musical materials (i.e. tonal, microtonal, timbral, serial, aleatory).

Corigliano’s Three Irish Folksong Settings are in keeping with the Irish folk music tradition. Although folk songs are often learned by ear and then performed with embellishments and freedom left up to the performer, these notated folk songs duplicate the improvisatory nature Irish folk music often has. Elements of nature such as birds and flowing water can be heard throughout these pieces. Close your eyes and join us in Ireland.
Sonata in E minor BWV 1034  
I.  Adagio ma non tanto  
II. Allegro  
III. Andante  
IV. Allegro  

Jamilah McLaren, flute  
Joanne Kong, piano  

Although he acquired fame as a keyboard virtuoso, it was virtues and accomplishments as a composer that earned Johann Sebastian Bach a unique historical position by the end of the 18th century. His genius combined outstanding performing musicianship with supreme creative powers in which forceful and original inventiveness as well as technical mastery and intellectual control, are perfectly balanced. Bach’s musical language and style was distinctive and varied resulting in music that surpassed technical mastery. His works are regarded as having “surmounted the techniques, the styles and the general achievements of his own and earlier generations and lead to new perspectives which later ages have received and understood in a great variety of ways (Grove).”  

Bach’s Sonata in E Minor is purely a test of stamina and control. The piece follows the slow- fast- slow- fast movement model that sonatas often have. Each movement has its own difficulties- the faster movements with the arpeggios, long passages that are to be played seamlessly, and brief tonal changes, while the slower movements are expressive, also played seamlessly and with a floating quality. When the piece ends, pleasure will be felt by the audience as well as by the fatigued performer.
Considered incredibly advanced beyond his years, American composer Lukas Foss began composing when he was seven years old, and at age 22 he won wide acclaim for the cantata The Prairie on Carl Sandburg’s poem. Although Foss studied piano, conducting flute and orchestration with teachers such as Isabelle Vengerova, Fritz Reiner, Louis Moyse and Felix Wolfes respectively, his compositional studies with Hindemith would become most evident in his works. Foss’s development as a composer can be divided into three main periods, with a transitional phase of controlled improvisation. The first period (1944–60) was predominantly neo-classical and eclectic, represented by such works as his early concertos, various choral works, and the orchestral Symphony of Chorales based on chorales by Bach. The transitional phase began in 1956 when Foss decided to experiment with ensemble improvisation, primarily for the benefit of his students at UCLA where he later founded the Improvisation Chamber Ensemble and formulated what he called “system and chance music;” a kind of controlled improvisation. This experience led to a profound change in Foss’s compositional techniques as he abandoned tonality and fixed forms and opted for serialism, indeterminacy and graphic notation. In the 1980s and 90s, Foss revisited the more conservative neo-classicism and Americana of his first period, composing again in traditional instrumental and choral genres, but not forgetting the experimental techniques of his second period.

Three American Pieces was written in 1944 during Foss’s neo-classical/ Americana period. Although this piece was written before Foss abandoned more traditional modes of composition, this piece demonstrates a very modern sound demonstrated by the flute and piano parts. The first piece
“Early Song” contains jazz like qualities with syncopated rhythms, meter changes, flutter tonguing and an improvisatory feeling. Foss includes repeated motifs throughout “Early Song” but alters the repetition with meter changes, which adds a level of unpredictability to the piece.

Fantaisie Pastorale Hongroise
I. Molto Andante
II. Andantino Moderato
III. Allegro

Jamilah McLaren, flute
Joanne Kong, piano

Franz Doppler (1821-1883)

Flautist, composer and conductor [Albert] Franz Doppler came from a family of musicians. In his early career, Doppler made a living performing concert tours with his brother Karl Doppler and being principle flautist in the German Town Theatre from 1838 and in the Hungarian National Theatre from 1841. Until the 1850s when he would resume touring with his brother, Franz Doppler wrote a series of operas notably influenced by Italian styles, (e.g. Donizetti) with elements of Russian (Benyovszky), Polish (Vanda) and Hungarian music. From 1865, Doppler taught flute at the Vienna Conservatory. He is known as being a skillful orchestrator, and his transcriptions of some of friend Franz Liszt's Hungarian Rhapsodies have become well known.

The Hungarian elements in this virtuoso piece are very hard to miss as Doppler was very much influenced by Hungarian music. Each movement revisits brief motifs heard in earlier parts of the piece creating a very cohesive composition. This piece contains sweeping cadenzas, tempo changes, new themes within each movement and flashy embellishments that add to its improvisatory nature.