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University of Richmond Orchestra

Fred Cohen *music director*

Program

Five Courtly Dances from *Gloriana* Benjamin Britten

1. March
2. Coranto
3. Pavanne
4. Morris Dance
5. Lavolta
6. March

Sean Linfors *conductor*

Bass Concerto (world premiere) Walter Ross

1. Drammatico-Allegro fantastico
2. Grazioso
3. Allegro energico

Mark Bernat *contrabass*

intermission

Symphony No. 1 "Spring" Robert Schumann

1. Andante un poco maestoso-Allegro molto vivace
2. Larghetto
3. Scherzo
4. Allegro animato e grazioso

April 8, 1997 Camp Concert Hall, University of Richmond

April 9, 1997 Blackwell Auditorium, Randolph-Macon College

PERSONNEL

VIOLIN I

Jannine Habermann, Roseland NJ
Henry Chang, Ridgeland, Ms
Lauren Kim, Richmond Va
Julie Hayes, Richmond, Va
Jessica Lee, Richmond Va
Jack Gauntlett, Midlothain Va
Erin Shiffler, Richmond Va
Weigang Li*

VIOLIN II

Aaron Aunins, Chesterfield Va
Mark Graves, Gretna, Va
Kristin Harder, Independence, Mo
Mason Morris, Lynchburg Va
Judy Shim, Richmond Va
Sherkyla Staples, Chesterfield Va
Kimberly Whister, Orchard Park
NY
Amy Zajick, Seoul, South Korea
Yi-Wen Jiang*

VIOLA

Miriam Albin, Springfield, Va
Molly McElroy, Skaneateles, NY
Richard Stone, Richmond Va
Honggang Li*

CELLO

Elizabeth Thompson, Carlisle Pa
Lydia Gies, West Chester Pa
Brennan Graham, Hamilton Oh
Karen Jameson, Richmond Va
Jessica Lai, Midlothian Va
Heather Scott, Clearwater Fl
Tara Regan, Mahopac, NY
Jim Wilson*

* member, Shanghai String Quartet

BASS

Leslie Rose, Richmond Va
Damian Muller, Richmond Va
Paul Miller, Richmond Va

FLUTE

Mary Beth Indelicato, Bethlehem Pa
Julie Newman, Pittsburgh Pa

OBOE

Linda Teisher, Lebanon, NJ
Jennifer Magee, Cherry Hill NJ

CLARINET

Jan Hohl, Getzville, NY
Steve Ahearn, West Hartford, Ct

BASSOON

Eugene Stickley, Richmond Va
Marley Walsh, Darien Ct
Dianna Fiebert, Richmond Va

FRENCH HORN

Jon Gibson, Richmond Va
Kristie Welsh, Richmond Va
Edward Aunins, Chesterfield Va
Mary Beth Hall, Richmond Va

TRUMPET

Sean Linfors, Charlotte NC
Dana Rajczewski, Darien Ct
William Ross, Richmond Va

TROMBONE

Christian White, Media Pa
Glenn Neely, Richmond Va

TIMPANI

John Hubbard, Richmond Va

PERCUSSION

Bryan Harris, Richmond Va
Scott Proffitt, Jackson Ms
Jennifer Magee, Cherry Hill NJ
Mary Beth Indelicato, Bethlehem Pa

Walter Ross is Professor of Composition at the University of Virginia and former chairman of the music department. He has written over one hundred works, most of them for wind instruments in a variety of combinations, including two trombone concertos along with ten other concertos for wind instruments, a piano concerto, a symphony for chorus and orchestra, a one-act opera, and many songs. His works are published by Boosey & Hawkes, Tezak Verlag (West Germany) and Dorn Publications (Massachusetts) among others. Twelve compositions have been recorded commercially on CRI, Albany, Golden Crest, and Crystal among other labels. In 1972 Boosey & Hawkes nominated him for a Pulitzer Prize.

Ross was born in Lincoln, Nebraska in 1936. He began his musical studies on the French horn at the age of twelve. His first four years at the University of Nebraska were in mechanical engineering, but after working in machine design for a short time, he returned to the University to study musical composition under Robert Beadell. He went to Buenos Aires in 1965 with a fellowship from the organization of American States to study under Alberto Ginastera at the Instituto Torcuato di Tella. Upon returning to the United States he finished his Doctor of Musical Arts Degree at Cornell University where his composition teachers were Karel Husa and Robert Palmer. He also studied briefly with Roger Sessions and Mario Davidovsky.

He has received several awards and prizes for his music including annual awards from the American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers since 1972, a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to write *A Jefferson Symphony* for the national bicentennial, and recently First Prize from the International Trombone Association contest for a work for trombone ensemble.

Mark Bernat trained at the Julliard School and was engaged by Zubin Mehta for the Israel Philharmonic upon completion of his diploma. He has taught such distinguished institutions as the Oberlin Conservatory and the University of Texas at Austin. An internationally recognized promoter of the contrabass, Mr. Bernat's transcription of the complete J. S. Bach Suites for Solo Cello (transcribed for the contrabass) are available on International Music. His recording of the Suites will be available on MAD records during spring '97.

Benjamin Britten's opera *Gloriana* was written on the occasion of the coronation ceremonies of Queen Elizabeth II. The relationship between the first Queen Elizabeth and the Earl of Essex served as the opera's focal point. The audience and critics reacted unfavorably at the premiere performance. Ten years later, the opera appeared in concert format.

These *Five Courtly Dances*, taken from Act II, scene iii, are typical dances of the 19th century. In a manner consistent with Britten's emphasis on the functionality of his music, he insisted on learning the dance steps before writing the music.

notes by Sean Linfors

On January 23, 1841, **Robert Schumann** wrote in his household account, "Spring Symphony begun." On January 25 he added, "Symphony fire-sleepless nights--on the last movement." The following day he completed his comments: "Hurrah! Symphony finished!"

Robert had been married to Clara for about a year at this point, and she added (in their marital diary/household account):

"Today, Monday [January 25], Robert has almost finished his symphony; it appeared mostly during the night--my poor Robert had already spent a few sleepless nights on it. He calls it the 'Spring Symphony'--tender and poetic, as all of his musical thought is!--A poem about spring by [Adolf Böttger] gave the initial impetus for this creation. Tuesday, Robert finished his symphony; begun and completed, then, in four days. If only an orchestra were here! I must confess to you, my dear husband, that I would not have credited you with such facility--I respect you more and more!!!"

Here is Böttger's "poem about spring":

*Oh spirit of clouds, heavy and drear, that flies threateningly over land and sea,
Your grey veil hides at once Heaven's clear eye,
Your mists loom from afar And night envelops the star of love:
Oh spirit of clouds, moist and drear, Why have you banished all my
happiness,
Why do you summon tears to my face And shadow to the light of my soul?
Oh turn, turn from your course--
In the valley spring bursts forth!*

Though often played by the large orchestras of the modern era, the Spring Symphony was written for the Gewandhaus ensemble of the 1840s: eight first violins, eight second violins, five violas, five cellos, four basses, plus a complement of brass, woodwinds, and percussion.

notes by Fred Cohen