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THE BERGONZI
STRING QUARTET

GLENN BASHAM, VIOLIN
SCOTT FLAVIN, VIOLIN

PAMALA MCCONNELL, VIOLA
ROSS HARBAUGH, CELLO

ASSISTING ARTIST
TAO LIN, PIANO

SUNDAY, AUGUST 17, 2008 at 3:00 P.M.

GORDON HALL

MUSIC MOUNTAIN

FALLS VILLAGE, CT

SEVENTY-NINTH YEAR
2008

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SUNDAY, AUGUST 17, 2008

THE ARTISTS

THE BERGONZI STRING QUARTET

The Bergonzi String Quartet, so named for the illustrious violin maker Carlo Bergonzi, has generated enormous excitement around the globe for its superb blend of seasoned and sensitive string virtuosi. Since 1992, the Bergonzi String Quartet has been Quartet-in-Residence at the University of Miami and for the internationally acclaimed Festival Miami. And in 1994, the ensemble was named “Visiting Quartet” at the prestigious Society of the Four Arts in Palm Beach.

Hailed by the critics as “electrifying” and “masterful,” the ensemble has become one of Florida’s and America’s most important cultural assets. In addition to their series of concerts in Miami and their North American tours, the ensemble has toured the Netherlands and Italy.

Reflecting South Florida’s diverse cultural community, the Bergonzi often explores the marvelous quartet repertoire of Villa-Lobos, Ginastera, Surinach, Piazzolla, and others. Prior to joining the ranks of the Bergonzi, the players were members of the New World, Rowe, and Chester quartets.

TAO LIN, PIANO

Tao Lin’s appearances in North America, Asia and Europe have brought unanimous critical accolades and praise for his subtle, intimate pianism and brilliant technique. A versatile musician, he is equally at home as soloist, recitalist and chamber musician.

Excellent facility and keen musical intelligence, his Schumann and Brahms were broad and searching, his Beethoven was crisp, crystalline, and exhilarating.
-Miami Herald

That Tao Lin delivered some of the most virtuoso piano playing heard at Arendal City Hall in a long, long time, if ever, was the verdict of

the experts after the concert.

-Agderposten, Norway

As a soloist, he has performed with the Moscow Chamber Orchestra, Winnipeg Symphony, Miami Chamber Orchestra, Knoxville Civic Orchestra, University of Miami Symphony, Harid Philharmonia, and Lynn University Chamber Orchestra. A devoted chamber musician, Mr. Lin has concertized throughout the United States as a founding member of the Berlin Piano Quartet. He has also appeared in concerts with the Miami, Bergonzi, Alcon, and Rosalyra String Quartets as well as with distinguished musicians such as Ida Haendel, Charles Castleman, Roberta Peters, Eugenia Zukerman, and Philip Quint.

Recent and upcoming engagements include concerts in California (Santa Rosa, Yuba City, Gualala, Orange County, and La Jolla), New York (Rockefeller University, Chautauqua Institute), Washington DC (The National Gallery of Art), Arkansas (Little Rock), Alabama (Mobile), and Florida (Miami, Sanibel, and Lake Worth).

Mr. Lin was awarded top prizes in the competitions of the National Society of Arts and Letters, the Music Teacher's National Association, Palm Beach International Invitational amongst others. He was also a finalist in the 1st International Piano-e-Competition and the 1st Osaka International Chamber Music Competition as a member of the Shanghai Trio.

He is currently Head of the Collaborative Piano Program at the Conservatory of Music at Lynn University, which offers both a Master of Music and Performer's Certificate in Collaborative Piano. During summer months, he serves as the official collaborative pianist for Bowdoin International Music Festival.

Mr. Lin has worked with a series of distinguished teachers including Joseph Kalichstein, John Perry, Leon Fleisher, Rita Sloan, Stephen Hough, Ivan Davis, David Northington and Roberta Rust. He has recorded for the Piano Lovers and Romeo Records labels.

PROGRAM NOTES

STRING QUARTET IN C MAJOR, K. 465 “DISSONANCE”
by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

The genesis of the six Mozart quartets dedicated to Haydn, of which we will hear the last, the C Major Quartet, can be found in 1781, when Mozart first met Haydn and heard his string quartets of Opus 33. Alfred Einstein wrote that this experience was “one of the profoundest Mozart experienced in his artistic life.” Inspired by the older composer, Mozart undertook the composition of these 6 quartets, saying “I have learned from Haydn how to write quartets.”

On February 12, 1785, Joseph Haydn visited the Mozart home. A quartet made up of Leopold and Wolfgang and the Barons Anton and Bartholomaus Tinti, played the last 3 of these 6 quartets dedicated to Haydn, K. 458, 464 and 465. At the end of the audition, Haydn said to Leopold: “Before God and as an honest man, I tell you that your son is the greatest composer known to me either in person or by name. He has taste, and what is more, the most profound knowledge of composition.”

The 22 measure introduction to the first movement has given the work the nickname “Dissonance” because music lovers in the 1780’s believed that it contained “wrong” notes. However, it was Haydn himself, who said: “Well, if Mozart wrote it, he must have meant it.”

The Gordon String Quartet, Music Mountain’s founding quartet, first played this piece on August 28, 1932.

QUINTET FOR PIANO AND STRINGS, OPUS 57

by Dmitri Shostakovich (1906-1975)

Shostakovich had a close working relationship with the members of Russia’s Beethoven String Quartet, and he entrusted the

premieres of most of his fifteen quartets to them. Early on, while preparing the first quartet, the group asked Shostakovich to write a quintet for piano and strings that they might play together. Shostakovich readily agreed; he composed the quintet during the summer of 1940 and performed it with the group in Moscow on November 23, 1940. So enthusiastically was it received by the audience that the performers were forced to repeat the Scherzo and Finale, establishing a custom that is sometimes observed today and leading one wit to observe that the work has five movements- of which there are seven! That same year the Quintet was awarded the Stalin Prize of 100,000 rubles, perhaps the largest sum ever paid for a piece of chamber music.

The first movement is a three-part form, the first section containing the thematic germ of the entire composition. The central section highlights the viola and cello in a lyric vein, to which the other strings are presently added. The second movement, a slow moving fugue, is played with mutes giving a murmuring effect. The mood is one of calmness and restraint. A scherzo follows, offering a sharp contrast. The tune assigned to the piano is folk-like in character. (Some claim it is actually a Russian folksong). The exuberant main theme leads to a variety of scale-like passages. A second theme strikes yet another note with its capricious humor. The intermezzo recaptures some of the mood of the first two movements, but with a more lyrical approach. After building to a climax and then slowly dying away, the movement leads directly to the Finale. This is built on two themes which are tonally related. The first in the upper register of the piano accompanied by pizzicato strings.

The first Music Mountain performance of the Quintet was on July 21, 1946, almost exactly 62 years ago. The performers were the Gordon String Quartet, Music Mountain's founding quartet, and the wonderful Russian-born pianist, Ray Lev.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR STRING QUARTET

by Scott Flavin (1967-)

LIEBST DU UM SCHÖNHEIT

(“If you love for Beauty’s sake, then love not me.”)

by Clara Schumann (1819-1896)

This lovely song was composed the year after Clara and Robert Schumann were married. Clara’s father and mentor was Frederich Wieck, with whom she studied piano and composition. By the time she was in her teens she showed great promise as a composer but she later lost the confidence to continue and she ceased to write music at age thirty-six.

Her’s is a remarkable story. She was one of the great pianists of her time. She and Robert had seven children, whom she supported by concertizing after Robert’s final insanity and death in 1856. She was also a friend of Joachim, with whom she often gave joint recitals.

“I have this week sat down to compose a great deal and have set four poems by Ruckert for my dear Robert” (One of which was *Liebst du um Schönheit*)... Quoted from the June 1941 Marriage Diary that they kept.

The Schumann friendship with Brahms is the stuff of legend. Brahms continued to be Clara’s friend, and she, sometimes his muse, long after Robert’s death. The Hollywood film, “Song of

Love” with Katharine Hepburn as Clara, though perhaps well-intentioned, manages to get most of this intriguing story gloriously wrong. – *Dave Wilson*

LAUE SOMMERNACHT (“Balmy Summer Night”)

by Alma Schindler Mahler

Known as the most beautiful woman in Vienna, Alma Schindler Mahler had a habit of marrying influential and artistic men. Her father was a landscape painter and she received extensive training in literature, music, and art from an early age. She first tried composing at the age of six, but gave it up at the request of Gustav Mahler early in their marriage. *Laue Sommernacht* (“*Balmy Summer Night*”) comes from her *FunfLieder*, with text by Gustav Falke. The piece, rich with harmonic interest throughout, ends on the dominant which communicates the unresolved yearning felt in the last verse.

MINNELIED, OPUS 71, NO. 5

by Joannes Brahms (1833-1897)

Minnelied or Minnesong, with text by Ludwig Holty, is the fifth of a group of art songs that make up Opus 71. Brahms wrote two hundred such songs in all. By this time he was well into his forties and for another composer this might be considered a late work. But many of Brahm’s major works, though they may have been incubating, had not yet been presented. These songs came almost ten years after the Requiem and a year after his first symphony (sometimes called Beethoven’s Tenth). He had by this time achieved fame as a pianist and composer. 1877 was the year he declined an honorary doctorate from the University of Cambridge because he would not make the trip which included crossing the English Channel. He would accept one, however, from the University of Breslau two years later, composing the Academic Festival Overture as a gesture of appreciation.

Tender is the word that springs to mind when thinking of the

composer's art songs. They offer a contrast to the heroic sweep of his great symphonic works. *–Notes by Dave Wilson*

SIEMPRE EN CLAVE (“Always in Rhythm”)

by Rene Touzet (1916-2003)

With this delightful piece we are far removed in time and space from Brahm's enchanted forest of the previous selection. Touzet, a Cuban piano prodigy, composed this work, one of several he would call Danzas Cubanas, for his piano teacher when he was quite young. “This was my first attempt to write the genre. I played it to Maestro Ernesto Lecuona and he said to me, ‘Senor Touzet, continue composing,’ and I followed his suggestion.” Though his first love was classical piano music he was driven by financial necessity to begin his professional career playing in a Latin jazz band. While doing so he began composing many works of popular music. His considerable composing and pianistic talents took him to the United States where he worked in bands led by, among others, Desi Arnaz and Xavier Cugat. He eventually formed his own band and later chose to settle in Miami. He said that living in Miami made him feel closer to his beloved Cuba. Like his fellow countryman, Ernesto Lecuona (of “Malaguena” fame) many of Touzet's popular works are beautifully suited for the concert hall. *– Notes by Dave Wilson*

DER ERLKONIG (ERL KING OR THE EVIL SPIRIT)

by Franz Schubert (1797-1828)

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Goethe's poem is a drama not unlike "Death and the Maiden," except that the characters are a father riding with his young son in his arms. The son sees an apparition, the Erl King, who tempts him, "Come away with me, I'll play games with you... My daughters will care for you... will dance and sing you to sleep."

Son: "Father, do you hear what the Erl King promises me?"

Father: "Be calm, my child; it is only the wind rustling the leaves in the old willows..."

Erl King: "If you don't come willingly, I shall use force."

Son: Father, the Erl King is seizing me, hurting me!

The father's attempts to distract the child are in vain. At the end of their journey, the child lies dead in his father's arms.

Schubert's masterful accompaniment here represents the horse's hoofbeats.

The singer's assignment is four-fold: he must characterize vocally the father, the son, the Erl King and, at the end, a narrator who declares the child to have died, with the final words: "In seinen Armen das Kind war tot." ("In his arms, the child was dead.")

To explain the incredibly youthful genius of the composer, one need only heed the words of an early teacher: "I have nothing more to teach him; he has been taught by God."

—Notes by Elliot Levine

GLITTER AND BE GAY

by Leonard Bernstein (1918-1990)

This aria is from the musical, "*Candide*," based on Voltaire's novella. Sung by Cunegonde, it is a mixture of the joy that any woman would experience when the finest in clothing and jewelry are lavished upon her, together with shame and regret because of how she earned them. (In the words of Mae West, "Goodness

had nothing to do with it.”).

It is a coloratura tour-de-force comparable to the Queen of the night aria in Mozart’s *Magic Flute*. Singers who have sung it range from Barbara Cook who introduced it in the show’s 1956 debut, to the contemporary Renee Fleming.

The lyrics by Richard Wilbur include such phrases as: “Harsh necessity brought me to this gilded cage (note the “steal” from “She’s only a bird in a gilded cage.”)... honor lost... shame! ... reproach... If I’m not pure, at least my jewels are.”

The technical problems for the singer include three E-flats above high C, many high C’s, and D-flats. These hurdles led Bernstein to provide alternative phrases at several points in the score. If all that weren’t enough, Cunegonde is required to dance around the stage during this number, adorning herself with jewelry.

The “Ha-ha” section is used instrumentally in the show’s overture, at one time the most popular of Bernstein’s output. This was the only part orchestrated by the composer: the rest, by Hershey Kay.

Candide was the brainchild of Lillian Hellman, who originally conceived it as a play with incidental music. Bernstein urged her to do it as a comic operetta, which had assists by many lyricists including Dorothy Parker. One number, “I Am Easily Assimilated,” has lyrics by Bernstein and his wife, Felicia Montealegre.

Candide celebrated its fiftieth anniversary in Paris: the following year at La Scala in Milan; and the English National Opera in 2008. By now it may well be regarded as a classic, and all surviving artists may take justifiable pride in their contributions.

—Notes by Elliot Levine

NEXT WEEKEND'S CONCERTS

SATURDAY, AUGUST 23 at 6:30 P.M.

DAVID ROGERS AND IMAGINARY HOMELAND

Combines the Best of Contemporary Jazz
with West African Instruments, Melodies and Rhythms

SUNDAY, AUGUST 24 at 3 P.M.

BLAIR STRING QUARTET

SALLY PINKAS, PIANO

Beethoven, String Quartet in F Major, Opus 18 #1

Ives: Quartet #1 "A Revival Service"

Dohnanyi: Piano Quintet in C Minor, Opus 1

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