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At Salisbury University

Spring Concert

Saturday, May 9, 2009



FEATURING VIOLINIST
KIA-HUI TAN

8 p.m.

Holloway Hall Auditorium

Dr. Jeffrey Schoyen, Conductor

Mozart's *Violin Concerto in A major, K. 219*

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Kia-Hui Tan

Violinist Kia-Hui Tan has performed as concerto soloist, recitalist and chamber musician on five continents including at London's Barbican Hall and New York's Carnegie Weill Recital Hall. Described in *The Strad* as a violinist whose virtuosity was astonishing, she has broadcast live on radio, television and the Internet, recorded soundtracks for film and theatre, and freelanced with many orchestras in the U.K. and U.S., often as concertmaster. A keen advocate of new music, she has performed music of more than 40 living composers and premiered over two dozen solo and chamber works, some of which have been released on CD.

Recently appointed assistant professor of violin at The Ohio State University School of Music, Tan has served as faculty at Cornell University, University of Toledo, The Cleveland Institute of Music, Cleveland Music School Settlement, and the International Summer Music Festival and School in Colombia. She frequently accepts invitations to present master classes, adjudicate competitions/auditions and guest conduct youth/college orchestras. Continually expanding her solo repertoire of approximately 200 works, she particularly enjoys collaborating with composers and presenting new or unjustly neglected masterpieces. Her current research and performing interests include the complete works of Eugene Ysa and the vastly unexplored repertory for unaccompanied solo violin.

Tan studied piano, violin, music theory and composition from an early age in her native country Singapore and earned the Licentiate of the Royal Schools of Music (U.K.) diploma at age 14. She was awarded scholarships to the Guildhall School of Music and Drama (London) and The Cleveland Institute of Music, where she was conferred the Doctor of Musical Arts in 2001. She has won numerous prizes for violin, chamber music, new music and academic scholarship, and attended various summer camps in the U.S. (Encore, Meadowmount and Norfolk), U.K. (Britten-Pears/Aldeburgh and IMS/Prussia Cove) and Japan (Pacific Music Festival). Her principal teachers included David Takeno, David Updegraff and Stephen Shipps.

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SALISBURY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

At Salisbury University

Spring Concert

Saturday, May 8, 2009

8 p.m.

Holloway Hall Auditorium

PROGRAM

Overture to King Stephen, op. 117 L.V. Beethoven

Violin Concerto No. 5 in A major, k. 219 W.A. Mozart

I. Allegro aperto

II. Adagio

III. Rondeau, Tempo di Menuetto

Kia-Hui Tan, violin

INTERMISSION

In circles of blue Jerry Tabor

Commissioned by the Salisbury Symphony Orchestra

World Premiere

Symphony No. 3 in D major, d. 200 F. Schubert

I. Adagio maestoso-Allegro con brio

II. Allegretto

III. Menuetto & Trio, Vivace

IV. Presto vivace

Hungarian Dances J. Brahms

No. 5 Allegro

No. 7 Allegretto

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Overture to King Stephen, op. 117
Ludwig Van Beethoven (1770-1827)

As the Napoleonic wars turned 19th-century Europe inside out, members of the nobility and the well-to-do found themselves with increasingly fewer locations at which to spend their summer holidays. Because it was in neutral territory, Teplitz (Teplice, now in the Czech Republic) became the destination of choice for numerous Viennese aristocrats and other citizens. It was here, in the summer of 1811, that Beethoven quickly composed the incidental scores to both *König Stephan (King Stephen)*, Op. 117, and *Die Ruinen von Athen (The Ruins of Athens)*, Op. 113, setting to music texts written by August von Kotzebue.

Both works had been commissioned for the opening of the new imperial theater in Budapest on February 10, 1812. The occasion was patriotic, and though *King Stephen* is ostensibly a tribute to an earlier Hungarian king (the work's subtitle is "Hungary's First Benefactor"), it actually pays homage to the then-current Austro-Hungarian Kaiser, Franz.

The overture, in the key of E flat major, is the only section of *King Stephen* that is still regularly performed. Marked Andante con moto—Presto, it opens with a brief brass outburst that initiates a slow introduction. The main theme is a syncopated, arpeggiated tune that almost immediately dissolves into a transition to a new key. An arching melody in which each note is of equal duration heralds the second theme group; the closing theme is similarly built of equal note values. Typically, overtures in sonata-allegro form forego a repeat of the exposition, and *King Stephen* is no exception, though a return of the introductory material momentarily suggests that a return of the exposition will follow. Woodwinds initiate the development with part of the first theme, and an exhilarating dynamic expansion from pianissimo abruptly halts at total silence before the recapitulation. A further key change marks the beginning of a coda that further develops themes from all three parts of the exposition.

Violin Concerto No. 5 in A major, K. 219
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

Each of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's successive violin concertos is longer and more epic than the one that preceded it, and by the time he reached the last of the authentic ones, the *Violin Concerto No. 5 in A major, K. 219* (the "Turkish" Concerto), Mozart had managed to create something very nearly in line with the instrumental concerto of the next century. Though the piece itself is clearly within the classical chamber concerto tradition, its scale (better than 25 minutes, usually) and the degree of its technical demands mark the work as something new for the violin. Many pieces with equal or greater raw physical demands had already been composed by the time of the *Concerto No. 5*, but none of them has survived the test of time, and certainly none is as formidable a piece of music—it is not without reason that this is the only one of the five to regularly receive as much attention from musicologists and historians as do the crown jewels of Mozart's piano concerto catalog. A warhorse of the student repertory and a staple of the professional's diet, this may well be the most frequently played violin concerto ever written.

The dramatic scope of the *Concerto No. 5* is truly impressive: it is very nearly an opera in concerto guise, with the soloist as protagonist. Mozart no longer asks the soloist to be content merely to slip into the first movement after the orchestra has made the requisite exposition of the main material, but instead actually stops the Allegro aperto movement altogether at the point of the solo violin entry and provides a wonderfully rich six-measure Adagio. The Allegro aperto almost immediately begins anew, but the fact that the solo violin had the power to halt the entire ensemble at so unlikely a juncture remains fresh in the mind throughout the rest of the concerto—and it is worth noting that even as that Allegro aperto opening music takes off again, the violinist supplies a completely new melody, a high-flying, electrifying one, to go along with it.

The Adagio is a superb movement, longer by a considerable span than the slow movements of the previous four concertos. The melody tumbles along sublimely, and in the central portion we are treated to one of the most astoundingly beautiful passages ever conceived.

Mozart turns again to the French Rondo finale that he used in the third and fourth violin concertos for his third movement (Tempo di menuetto). In a French Rondo, the basic movement is interrupted in mid-stride by a section that contrasts with it in every way, and it is from this contrasting section—a wild, frenzied Allegro—that the "Turkish" Concerto gets its nickname.

In circles of blue (composed 2008, commissioned by the SSO)
Jerry Tabor (b. 1966)

(Notes by Jerry Tabor)

In circles of blue reflects my experimental approach to making music, but it also incorporates my roots as a jazz musician. In fact, this composition represents my attempt to get back to what inspired me to become a musician in the first place. Always fascinated with harmony and wishing I could "live in the sound" of it, I composed *In circles of blue* to create one dimension of the sound world in which I wish I could live. Every sound in the piece was chosen because it resonates within me in a particular way. The process of finding these sounds is just as important to me as the discovery of them. It was this experimental perspective that

compelled me to incorporate the process of discovery in the structure of the composition (much the way Charles Olsen did in his poetry). Thus, a cycle emerges in which the music returns to and intensely explores harmonies that were previously presented only in passing. The meditative nature of the music that this process engenders—the way the harmonies reemerge and “hang” in time, almost motionless—is for me like standing in front of a painting by Mark Rothko. His huge canvases engulf the viewer so that all the inner workings of each color field become the primary focus. Likewise, the monolithic soundscapes of *In circles of blue* require us to look inside the sounds because we can't very easily see the outside of them.

The large fields of sound found in the music also seem to eschew a sense of time. An acknowledgement of that is built into the very announcement of chords throughout the piece. The beginnings and endings of harmonic statements are often written to be “messy,” not at all together within each ensemble. But at times this messiness is filtered out and the harmonies are presented with “clean edges.” Going one step farther is the way the chords sometimes interrupt one another, which requires the utmost precision in the ending of one harmony and the beginning of the next. While the music seems to totally lack a sense of time, these moments of temporal clarity, as they “bubble” up to the surface, reveal that time is actually the backbone of the structure.

As a composer who resides deeply within the American experimental tradition I hope anyone listening to *In circles of blue* will not expect anything of the music, but instead simply allow the sounds to pour over him/her for the purpose of discovering and rediscovering—along with me—what makes these sounds who they are. *In circles of blue* was commissioned by Dr. Jeffrey Schoyen and the Salisbury Symphony Orchestra. I express to them, and to Derek Bowden, my deepest gratitude for their interest in, and support of, my music.

Symphony No. 3 in D major, D. 200

Franz Schubert (1797-1828)

When compared to the estimable boatload of vocal music he composed in 1815—nearly 150 lieder, three singspiels and numerous choral works—Franz Schubert's instrumental output for the same year seems rather unimpressive. However, his second and third symphonic essays count among the total, and one might rightly conclude that these two splendid and sizeable works make up for any imbalance of musical direction. The *Symphony No. 3 in D major, D. 200* was begun during late May and finished just under three months later, with the bulk of the work being done during July. Like each of the other early symphonies (the six written before the “Unfinished” Symphony of 1822), it was not published during Schubert's lifetime; only after it appeared in the first Schubert complete works edition in 1884 did it become an object of widespread attention.

Schubert places a slow introduction before the main body of the first movement. Perhaps more than any other episode of the *Symphony*, this shows Franz Joseph Haydn's indirect hand in the youthful Schubert's style: long-sustained octaves, complete with timpani roll, precede gradually shifting harmonies that, in true late Haydn fashion, migrate into a sullen D minor. The burst back into the major mode at the start of the Allegro con brio is a welcome one, and the fleet-footed tune that unfolds has the character of a peasant's dance to it; its infectious rhythms spread to the subsidiary melody as well. The Allegretto that follows is in ternary form; the central episode takes off on a clarinet solo, to which the strings lend a gentle “oom-pah” support—one of Schubert's most characteristically Viennese touches.

Filled with accented upbeats, the minuet (marked *Vivace*) is a particularly energetic example of its species. The oboe and bassoon get a nice duet during the German dance-like trio. The finale (*Presto vivace*) is a five-minute plunge headlong into the frantic (but good-naturedly so) world of the tarantella.

Hungarian Dances

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

Brahms originally published his *Hungarian Dances* as two batches of piano duets in 1869 (numbers 1-10) and 1880 (the remainder). They were quite successful at the time, but they've become best known in their later orchestral guises. Just how firmly Brahms' name can be attached to this music is a matter of some small argument. Brahms himself dressed only numbers 1, 3 and 10 in orchestral garb, and he refused to take credit for the melodies in the keyboard versions; he referred to them merely as arrangements. Yet the resulting dances are fairly far removed from their original Magyar folk and Gypsy forms—Brahms didn't quite understand the difference between the two—and tend to be more elegant and well crafted than the more commercial café-style music that most strongly influenced Brahms here. Numbers 11, 14, and 16 seem to be wholly original pieces.

Almost all the pieces depend on sudden contrasts between restraint and explosive energy, but the two original groups of pieces (actually, each group consists of two sets of dances) have rather distinct characters. The first 10 dances are, in general, the more lively, while the final 11 tend to emphasize the melancholy aspects of Hungarian music.



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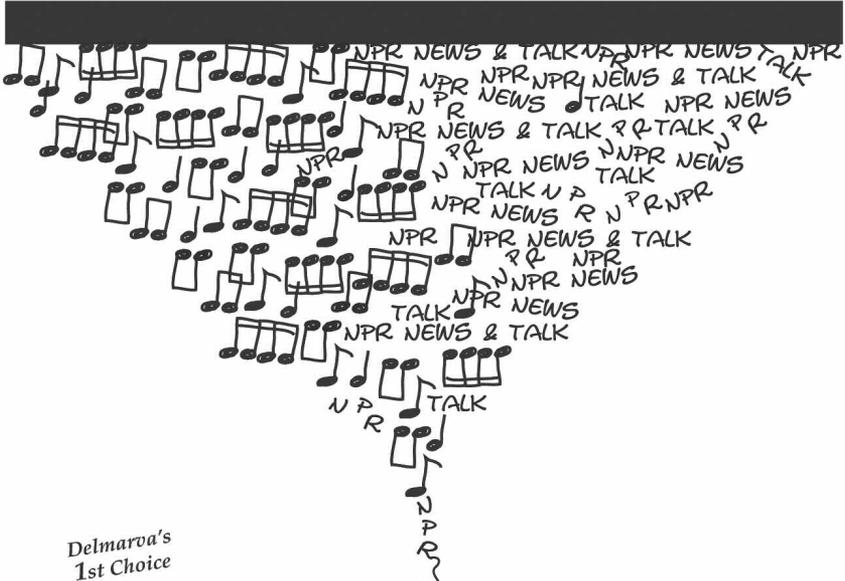
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