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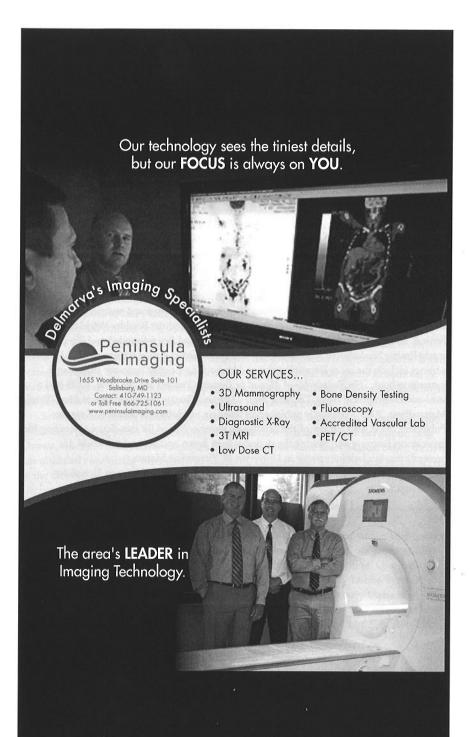


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ABOUT THE ARTISTS



Christopher Yohmei Blasdel

Christopher Yohmei Blasdel began the shakuhachi and studies of Japanese music in 1972 with Goro Yamaguchi. In 1982, he received an M.F.A. in ethnomusicology from Tokyo University of Fine Arts and received his professional name "Yohmei" from Yamaguchi in 1984. Performing in Japan and around the world, Blasdel is one of the foremost world performers and educators in shakuhachi and Japanese music. His playing maintains a balance between traditional shakuhachi music, modern compositions and cross-genre work with

musicians, dancers, poets and visual artists.

Blasdel's discography includes Striking Light, Striking Dark (2015), a collaboration with vocalist Sasha Bogdanowitsch of the poetry by Pablo Neruda, Sam Hamill, Ranier Marie Rilke, John Logan and others set to original music; Navarasa, a collaboration with shakuhachi and acoustic bass (2010); Breath Play (2007); Visionary Tones (2005); and several other CDs of traditional and contemporary music. He has composed and performed music for NHK documentaries and various films. He co-organized the Boulder World Shakuhachi Festival '98 and the Sydney Shakuhachi Festival 2008, and he co-founded and directed the yearly Prague Shakuhachi Festival in 2006 and continued as senior advisor until 2016. His writings include the most comprehensive and best-selling English language shakuhachi instruction book, The Shakuhachi – A Manual for Learning (Printed Matter Press, 2008) and a semi-autobiographical essay, The Single Tone – A Personal Journey through Shakuhachi Music (Printed Matter Press, 2005 – originally published in Japanese as Shakuhachi Odessei by Kawade Publishers, 2000, and winner of the prestigious Rennyo Award for non-fiction), detailing his experiences learning and playing the shakuhachi in Japan and around the world. He presently teaches Japanese music at University of Hawai'i at Manoa.

Blasdel holds a fourth-degree black belt in Aikido and resides between Honolulu and Tokyo.

ABOUT THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



Jeffrey Schoyen

Dr. Jeffrey Schoyen maintains an active and varied career as a cellist, conductor and educator. As director of the Salisbury Symphony Orchestra, he brings extensive performance experience to the podium. He has been a member of the Opera Orchestra of New York, Pittsburgh Opera Orchestra, Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra and principal cellist of the Filarmonica del Bajio in Mexico. In addition, he has performed with the Pittsburgh Symphony and the Orchestra of St. Luke's in New

York City. Schoyen has worked under the direction of Marin Alsop, Maxim Shostakovich, Philippe Entremont, Lukas Foss, Robert Spano, Michael Tilson Thomas, David Zinman, Keith Lockhart and Klauspeter Seibel. He has performed in venues such as Carnegie Hall, Alice Tully Hall and Salzburg's Mozarteum, and he has played concerts with soloists Luciano Pavarotti, Sherrill Milnes, Itzhak Perlman, Yo-Yo Ma, Emanuel Ax, Ghena Dimitroya, Gabriela Benackova, Mary Chapin Carpenter and Stevie Wonder, among others.

Schoyen has studied cello with some of the world's foremost teachers, including Lawrence Lesser, Timothy Eddy and William Pleeth. He holds a D.M.A. from Stony Brook University. An active performer, Schoyen has given concerts throughout the United States, Germany, Mexico, Spain and Ecuador. As cellist of the Allegheny Ensemble, he performs regularly on series in the mid-Atlantic region. A baroque cellist as well, Schoyen has performed with ARTEK and other period instrument groups.

Schoyen's interest in conducting began at Tanglewood, where he was awarded cello fellowships playing under the guidance of conductors such as Leonard Bernstein, Seiji Ozawa, Andre Previn, Aaron Copland, Gunther Schuller and Kurt Masur. Since then, he has attended conducting workshops in Madison, Chicago and Toronto, and he has served as the director of the Slidell Community Orchestra and the Kearney Area Symphony Orchestra. He has collaborated with artists such as Jennifer Hope Wills, Dominic Armstrong, The Capitol Quartet, Dan Kamin, Sarah Jackson, Gary Louie, Anton Miller, Rita Porfiris and Charlotte Paulsen.

Schoyen has taught at the University of Nebraska at Kearney and at the University of Dayton, and he has presented conference lectures on topics ranging from Performance Practice to Kinesiology in String Playing. His transcription and edition of Giuseppe Maria Jachinni's Opus 3 Concerti da Camera has been published by Lorica Press. A frequent guest conductor/clinician, he is professor of music at Salisbury University, where he teaches conducting and score reading, string methods, cello, bass, and various other courses. During the summer, Schoyen serves on the faculty of Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp in Twin Lake, MI.

PROGRAM

Kirby's 20th Anniversary Medley......Hirokazu Ando (b. 1969) arr. Andres Soto Shizue, Fantasy for ShakuhachiJoseph Swensen (b. 1960) and String Orchestra Prologue. Adagio Espressivo. Andante. Molto Agitato. Adagio Molto e Espressivo. Epilogue. Christopher Yohmei Blasdel, Shakuhachi The Legend of Zelda 25th Anniversary MedleyKoji Kondo (b. 1961) arr, Andres Soto ● INTERMISSION ● Fêtes

PROGRAM NOTES

Shizue Fantasy for Shakuhachi and String Orchestra (1995)

by Joseph Swensen (b.1960)

"The inspiration for Shizue came long before the world commemorated the end of World War II in 1995. My mother's sister, Shizue Okamoto, had been killed by the Hiroshima bomb and the story of her short life and brutal death has occupied my imagination for years. The war years were dreadful ones for my mother's family. As Japanese immigrants to Hawaii in the early 20s, my grandparents were, in reality, neither Japanese nor American. But when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, they were completely trapped between two identities. Of my grandfather's children at the time of the attack, two were students in Japan (one being Shizue), three were students on the American mainland, and two were still young living at home in Hawaii (one being my mother). My uncles were drafted into opposing armies and my grandfather was imprisoned by the Americans at a concentration camp in Arizona for the duration of the war. When it was all over, my grandfather's successful business and his joyous spirit were crushed. He died just a few years following his release from the camp and I was born shortly thereafter to his youngest daughter in New York City. Shizue is by no means a political work. It is a purely human story about the innocence of a lonely young girl and about a family torn apart by the violent events which continue to shape our world. Shizue is structured in four main sections, played without pause. There are also two extended areas in which the soloist must improvise. Thematically, all melodies in this work are in some way related to, or engendered by, the ancient Japanese folksong ... Sakura (Cherry Blossoms)." Joseph Swensen July 1995

Turandot, incidental music, J. 75 (Op. 37)

Carl Maria von Weber (1786-1826)

The orientalism of Carlo Gozzi's play, *Turandot*, fascinated German audiences; in 1804, Schiller translated the play for the German National Theater at Weimar. For the premiere of Schiller's translation in September 1809, Weber contributed an overture and six instrumental pieces. The overture is the most extensive contribution to the incidental music, and it consists of 136 measures, in contrast to the much shorter length of each of the remaining numbers. The other numbers include a "Marcia" (no. 2); a "Marcia maestoso" (no. 3); three very short pieces labeled "Moderato" (nos. 4-7); and a "Marcia funebre" (no. 7). For each of the six pieces after the overture, Weber indicated specific text cues for their insertion in *Turandot*.

He had composed several years before the Overtura chinesa (1804), which set the tone for this play. The overture and most of the other incidental music are based on a single oriental theme that Weber had found in Jean-Jacques Rousseau's Dictionnaire de la Musique (1768). This "air chinois," as Rousseau labeled it, is characteristically pentatonic, and sounds almost like a cliché of a Chinese-style melody. In Weber's setting, the oriental elements are prominent and supported by his harmonies. The orchestration of the tune in Weber's incidental music for Turandot also supports the exotic nature of the music.

Weber used Rousseau's "air chinois" as the principal theme of the overture and brought the idea back in each of the subsequent pieces of incidental music. In this manner, Weber allowed music to serve as a unifying device within Schiller's translation of *Turandot*. At the same time, his careful placement of the music at specific text cues makes the incidental music less arbitrary in its execution. Music supports the play to contribute to an overall impression, not just its own effect.

While Weber's incidental music to *Turandot* may be less famous than his other contributions to music for the stage, the pieces here have renewed prominence in the 20th

century. Over a century after Weber composed the music for *Turandot*, Paul Hindemith would use the "air chinois" theme in his own *Symphonic Metamorphoses on Themes of Carl Maria von Weber (Sinfonische Metamorphosen Carl Maria von Weber'scher Themen)*, completed in 1943. In the latter work, Hindemith explores the theme in the second of four symphonic movements that pay homage to the music of Weber.

Trois Nocturnes

By Claude Debussy (1862-1918)

One often encounters Fêtes, the second of Debussy's three nocturnes for orchestra, in both the concert hall and on recordings. The first of the trio, Nuages, is also popular, but the last, Sirènes, is less frequently heard, not least because it requires the addition of a wordless female chorus. Fêtes, without doubt, is the most colorful of the three, offering both imaginative orchestration and an uncomplicated, direct expressive manner that engage most listeners on first hearing.

The work opens with a lively rhythm in the strings that recalls early Wagner. Clarinets scamper about and soon flutes and bassoons join in above the rhythm, now carried by the lower strings. The mood is playful and bright here, with several motifs appearing, the festive music brimming with numerous ideas. Soon, the tempo slows and a deliberate rhythm is presented by drums and harps amid otherwise hushed sonorities. The music builds mysteriously at first, then grows more colorful and exotic. At the same time an insistent, even proudly militaristic manner gradually takes hold, before the music finally erupts mightily. The material from the opening reappears, but elements from the middle section linger in the main and subsidiary lines. The mood verges on further eruptions but finally becomes tranquil, and then the piece ends quietly, but not before a few final echoes from the middle section are given. Notes taken from classicalarchives.com and allmusic.com

Symphonic Poem of Three Notes

By Tan Dun (b.1957)

"The three solfège pitches LA, SI* and DO have always reminded me of the abc phenomenon the meaning of things starting, of beginning and the origin of everything. I was fascinated by how this idea became a metaphor for man and nature's life and spirit. One day, I received a phone call from the Teatro Real Opera in Madrid, they were planning a surprise 70th birthday celebration for Plácido Domingo and called me to ask whether I could write a work for the occasion. Instantly, I said yes! Since working with Plácido on my opera The First Emperor, he has truly become one of my dear friends. When first imagining the piece, I thought it very celebratory to use Plácido's name as part of the music – when you rap his name "Plácido" it sounds like LASIDO. I used the notes LASIDO/A-B-C to form the musical theme of this symphonic poem. The beginning of the piece echoes the start of new life, like a dream it unfolds with the sounds of birds, incense, wind and rain - the tubular chimes start to sing and LA SI DO appears for the first time. This theme then unfolds in a variety of textures: symphonic rapping, instrumental and vocal hip-hop, blowing sounds, and stones. Through the course of the piece, the industrial brake drums and car wheel sounds join in representing nature and life growing and progressing into cities and societies. The climax erupts with the rapping and shouting of PLA CIDO and falls with chanting and foot stamping as these three notes return back to nature, back to the origin and back to the future. Fortunately in the end, I had help from the Audi Summer Festival in Shanghai to finally finish the piece and I called it Symphonic Poem of Three Notes in celebration of my friend Pla-ci-do." Notes taken from www.tandun.com

(*Note: In the major Romance and Slavic languages, the syllables Do, Re, Mi, Fa, Sol, La and Si are used to name notes the same way that the letters C, D, E, F, G, A and B are used to name notes in English.)

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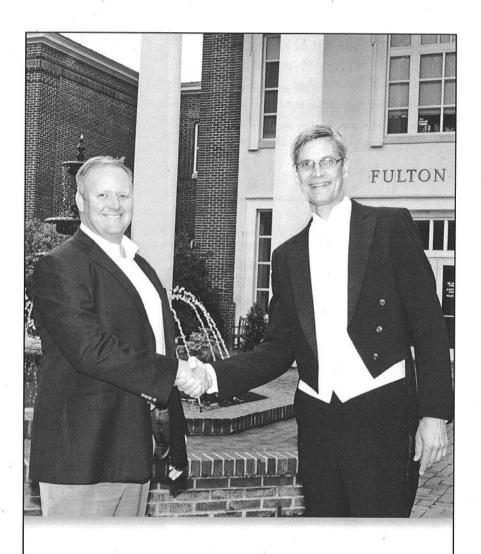
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