3-1-2003

Concert: Ithaca College Symphony Orchestra & Chamber Orchestra, Concerto Concert

Ithaca College Symphony Orchestra
Ithaca College Chamber Orchestra
Jeffrey D. Grogan

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‘It is my plan to build a school of music second to none.’

—William Grant Egbert (1867–1928)
Founder, Ithaca Conservatory of Music

SCHOOL OF MUSIC

ITHACA
ITHACA COLLEGE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
and
ITHACA COLLEGE CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

Jeffrey D. Grogan, conductor

CONCERTO CONCERT

Roman Carnival Overture, op. 9 (1844)  Hector Berlioz
(1803–1869)

Violin Concerto, op. 14 (1941)  Samuel Barber
(1910–1981)

Allegro

Rebecca Geiger, violin

Élégie et Rondeau (1960)  Karel Husa
(b. 1921)

Joel Diegert, alto saxophone

Zigeunerweisen, op. 20 (1878)  Pablo de Sarasate
(1844–1908)

Brian Krauss, double bass

INTERMISSION

Concerto for Percussion and Orchestra (1994)  Joseph Schwantner
(b. 1943)

II. Lontano con elevazione
III. Ritmico con brio

Stephen Ballard, percussion

Symphonic Metamorphosis
on themes of Carl Maria von Weber  Paul Hindemith
(1895–1963)

I. Allegro
II. Turandot, Scherzo
III. Andantino
IV. March

Ford Hall
Saturday, March 1, 2003
8:15 p.m
Program Notes

Percussionist Stephen Ballard, a graduate student of Gordon Stout, is originally from Fairfax, Virginia. He received his bachelor’s degree in music education and performance from Ithaca College, and now serves as a music education graduate assistant. He is a former member and percussion instructor for the Crossmen Drum and Bugle Corps and percussion consultant for the world champion Syracuse Brigadiers Drum and Bugle Corps. As a member of the Santa Clara Vanguard Drum and Bugle Corps, he received runner-up placement in the 2001 DCI keyboard competition. He was a featured soloist in the Ithaca College 2002 Commencement Eve concert. He intends to pursue a public high school band teaching position in Fairfax, Virginia starting next fall.

Joel Diegert is a sophomore saxophonist double majoring in music education and performance. A student of Steven Mauk, he has performed with the Ithaca College Wind Ensemble since his freshman year, and plays lead in the Tuesday/Thursday Jazz Workshop. Last summer he gave a saxophone recital at SUNY Binghamton. At the end of his freshman year, he was awarded the Pi Kappa Lambda "Freshman" award "in recognition of outstanding achievement in the field of music as a member of the freshman class."

Rebecca Geiger graduated summa cum laude from the Eastman School of Music in 2002 with the degree Bachelor of Music in violin performance and music education. At Eastman she studied with Lynn Blakeslee and performed with the Eastman Philharmonia. She has appeared as violin soloist with the Orchard Park Symphony and the Lancaster Town Band. Currently a masters’ candidate at Ithaca College, she is a student of Susan Waterbury. She is on the faculty at the Ithaca Music Academy and plays with the Cayuga Chamber Orchestra.

Double bassist Brian Krauss, originally from Syosset, New York, is in his senior year of the double major program in performance and music education. He studies with Henry Neubert. Krauss is a member of the Binghamton Symphony, the Utica Symphony, is the first-call substitute for the Cayuga Chamber Orchestra, and has performed with the Ithaca Opera Company, the Southern Fingerlakes Orchestra, and the Colgate University Orchestra. He has performed with numerous ensembles at Ithaca College, including both orchestras, all the bands, the jazz ensemble, opera and musical orchestras, and in several pick-up orchestras.
Roman Carnival Overture

Hector Berlioz (1803–1969) had a deep fascination with and admiration for Shakespeare, an aspect of his artistic make up that permeated his musical and personal life. This love of literature extended to opera’s marriage of libretto and music with which Berlioz was eternally obsessed. Despite his grand notions and artistic ideals, he was never as successful in the opera house as he was in the concert hall, but he managed to complete several full-length operas and see them staged within his lifetime. The first of these, Benvenuto Cellini (1837), which itself obtained only four performances under his baton, is the basis for his concert piece Roman Carnival Overture (1844).

In 1844, Berlioz was in the midst of concert tours throughout continental Europe in an attempt to promote his international career as a composer and conductor. Abroad, particularly in Germany, he found sympathetic ears for his music that were not apparent at his home in Paris. His sentiments on the state of music in Paris are colorfully illustrated in his own words from this time:

‘[Paris], where [music] is sublime and second-rate, lordly and cringing, beggar and king; where it is at once glorified and despised, worshipped and insulted. In Paris music too often speaks to morons, barbarians and the deaf. You see it walking freely and without restraint, or barely able to move for the clammy fetters with which Routine shackles its powerful limbs. In Paris music is a god – so long as only the skinniest sacrifices are required to feed its alters.’

Roman Carnival Overture’s unfettered revelry is infused with Berlioz’s unpredictable personality of sudden dynamic changes and contrasting moods. As a concert overture it was not intended to replace the original Overture to Benevenuto Cellini, but rather stands as a work of its own, heralding in the excitement of fantastic Roman festivities to any program it introduces. It was premiered under Berlioz’s direction on February 3, 1844.

Violin Concerto

Samuel Barber’s (1910 – 1981) innovative dexterity in the reworking of 19th-century tonality and form led him to be one of the most celebrated American composers of the 20th century. With an education and professional career that emphasized his strong baritone voice, Barber’s music contains a vocal lyricism that is a defining characteristic of his compositional style. The Violin Concerto (1939) is a stunning example of his use of these elegiac, long-lined melodies. This aspect of his writing sets him apart from many of his contemporaries who were more influenced by the experimental developments in music during the 1920’s and again after World War II.
In 1939 Barber was commissioned by Samuel Fels, a soap tycoon, to write a violin concerto for his adopted son Iso Briselli who was a fellow student of Barber’s at the Curtis Institute some five years earlier. Barber proceeded to Switzerland where he resided for several months and then traveled on to Paris where the Nazi threat required all Americans to return home. During this time in Europe he completed the first two movements and presented them to Briselli who immediately criticized them as being too simple and easy. Barber assured him that these tension-building movements led to a virtuosic finale and proceeded to compose a tour-de-force perpetual motion. Briselli denounced the movement as being impossible to execute and Fels refused to pay the rest of the commission. The third movement was of course performable and the entire concerto received its first performance by Herbert Baumel and the Curtis Institute orchestra in 1939 with conductor Fritz Reiner. The official public premiere was given by Albert Spalding with the Philadelphia Orchestra under the baton of Eugene Ormandy on February 7, 1941.

Élégie et Rondeau

Karel Husa is an internationally known composer and conductor. An American citizen since 1959, Husa was born in Prague, Czechoslovakia, on August 7, 1921. After completing studies at the Prague Conservatory he traveled to Paris where he studied at the Paris Conservatory with Nadia Boulanger and Arthur Honegger. He also studied extensively with Jaroslav Ridky and renowned conductor André Cluytens. In 1954 Husa was appointed to the Cornell University faculty; during his tenure at Cornell, Husa also lectured at Ithaca College (1967-1986). Among many recognitions world wide, Husa has received the Guggenheim Fellowship, a commission from the Koussevitsky Foundation, the Czech Academy for the Arts and Sciences Prize, and the Lili Boulanger Award. In 1969 Husa received the Pulitzer Prize in Music for his String Quartet.

The first saxophonist to commission a work from Husa was the famous German virtuoso Sigurd M. Rascher. Rascher wrote Husa in 1958 to invite him to his recital at New York’s Carnegie Hall and also to state that he would be happy to perform any composition Husa wrote for him. Husa learned of Rascher’s reputation while living in Europe and found the idea of writing a solo work for saxophone intriguing. By this time, Rascher had achieved phenomenal success not only as a classical saxophonist, but also had built up a reputation as a pioneer extending the range of the saxophone. Through his efforts in the altissimo register – any note above a written F2 – Rascher demonstrated that the saxophone could produce a range of more than four octaves. The use of this extended range became an important compositional
device for building and resolving tension in both Élégie et Rondeau and the Concerto.

The mood of Élégie is similar, in Husa’s opinion, to both the books of elegiac poetry by the existentialist poet Rainer Maria Rilke (1875-1926) as well as much of the elegiac poetry emanating from ancient Greece. Élégie was originally conceived by Husa as a solo work for piano written as a memorial for his mother; but following Rascher’s invitation, Husa began to see that the piece would ‘Lend itself well to the saxophone.’

Husa begins the work with a soft, lingering ‘meditation’ by the solo saxophone. The piano enters quietly in the third measure to accompany this flowing line. Through changing meters, accelerandos, and increasingly agitated rhythms, Husa builds the piece to a climax that sends the saxophone up into the altissimo register. According to Husa, this climatic moment occurs two-thirds through the piece, or in the Golden Section. Husa then returns the piece to the original meditative mood as the music ‘falls down gradually in the lower notes until it disappears in the very low register of the piano, coming backwards to the beginning opening notes of the saxophone.’

Rascher premiered this version of Élégie on 12 June 1960 at the Eastman School of Music, Rochester, New York.

To complement this slow movement, Husa added a lighter, faster movement he simply called Rondeau. This movement has a similar sense of building towards climax, positioned here as the conclusion of the work. Husa uses dynamics, rhythm and harmony to create continuously increasing energy. The Rondeau begins pianissimo in both the saxophone and the piano. Through the five pages of this movement, Husa, almost imperceptibly, heightens the dynamics so that both instruments are almost playing fortissimo by the end. This gesture is coordinated with corresponding rhythmic intensification. As the movement begins, rhythmic cells are rather separated and may appear unrelated. As it progresses, Husa brings the rhythms closer together so that they make up distinguishable motifs and eventually form intricate, virtuosic passages. The harmonies of this movement follow a similar pattern of evolution. The harmonies “expand from simple sounds such as single notes and diads to chords that become more complicated.” Rascher premiered the two movements together on 12 December 1960 at London’s Wigmore Hall. Husa subsequently orchestrated the piece, and Rascher premiered this version 6 May 1962 with the Cornell Symphony Orchestra under the direction of the composer.

Jacob Hardesty
Zigeunerweisen

Zigeunerweisen ("Gypsy Airs"), written by violin virtuoso Pablo de Sarasate (1844–1908), is one of the most well loved violin concertos. The youthful, Spanish prodigy made an international name for himself traveling about Europe and North and South Africa giving concerts and enchanting composers and audiences alike. Among the composers who dedicated works to him are Bruch (Violin Concerto no. 2 and Scottish Fantasy), Saint-Saëns (Concertos nos. 1 and 3; Introduction et Rondo capriccioso), Lalo (Concerto in F minor and Symphonie espagnole), Joachim (Variations for violin and orchestra), Wieniawski (Concerto no. 2) and Dvořák (Mazurka op. 49). Sarasate’s technique was exquisite and his intonation impeccable making it possible for him to play almost anything. This virtuosity reveals itself in his compositions, which were intended to showcase his incredible facility. The Gypsy melodies of Zigeunerweisen, with their haunting and alternately fiery moods, lend themselves nicely to this task. Tonight this piece will be performed on the double bass.

Concerto for Percussion and Orchestra

Joseph Schwantner (b. 1943) was born in Chicago and received his musical and academic training at the Chicago Conservatory and Northwestern University, completing a doctorate in 1968. Previously, he served on the Yale, Eastman and Juilliard faculties. In May 2002, he was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Letters.

Schwantner was composer-in-residence with the Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra as part of the Meet the Composer/Orchestra Residencies Program funded by the Exxon Corporation, the Rockefeller Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts. He has been the subject of a television documentary entitled, Soundings, produced by WGBH in Boston for national broadcast.

His work, Magabunda "four poems of Agueda Pizarro," recorded on Nonesuch Records by the Saint Louis Symphony, was nominated for a 1985 Grammy Award in the category, Best New Classical Composition and his A Sudden Rainbow, also recorded on Nonesuch by the Saint Louis Symphony, received a 1987 Grammy nomination for Best Classical Composition.

The Concerto for Percussion and Orchestra was commissioned by the New York Philharmonic in 1994 for its 150th anniversary. The first performance took place in Avery Fisher Hall at Lincoln Center on January 6th, 1995 with soloist Christopher Lamb. The combination of minimalist characteristics, rhythmic sophistication and diverse colors found in the orchestra is reflected in the idiomatic and dynamic solo performance.

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percussion writing. Schwantner’s *Concerto for Percussion* is an important and exciting addition to the canon of percussion literature.

**Symphonic Metamorphosis on themes of Carl Maria von Weber**

Like many European composers of his generation Paul Hindemith (1895 –1963) found his way to the United States at the beginning of World War II, escaping the growing conflict and artistic limitations set by the political and social climates of mid-century Europe. Arriving in 1940 he took several University teaching positions in New York and Massachusetts including posts at Buffalo and Cornell and looked for opportunities to have his music performed. A phenomenal pedagogue, it was not it long before Yale University offered him a permanent position on its music faculty, which he accepted and retained for more than a decade. Authoring several books on music theory and founding the Colligium Musicum, a society promoting historically informed performances of early music, his success as a teacher was rivaled only by his fame as a composer. Within a few short years of arriving in the United States, Hindemith’s music became more frequently performed than that of any other composer living in America.

*Symphonic Metamorphosis* (1943) was among the works that drew particular attention to Hindemith’s compositional craft, elevating him rapidly to the top of his field. The piece originated as a collaboration with Léonide Massine, a ballet producer, who envisioned a seemingly plotless series of dances accompanied by orchestrations of pieces by Carl Maria von Weber. The premise, the musical idea and particularly Salvador Dali’s set design, were all distasteful to Hindemith, but he agreed to the project in the hopes that it would help bring a public ear to his music. He was unwilling to make the strict orchestrations that Massine desired and insisted on his own musical revisions, a factor among many that eventually led to a dissolution of the collaboration.

The idea stuck with him however and he returned to his project three years later drawing on several of Weber’s four hand piano pieces that he and his wife Gertrud had enjoyed sharing together. The outcome of his artistic vision is a vibrant symphonic work displaying the virtuosity and brilliance of the American orchestra. Based on entire works of Weber’s, the movements contain multiple themes presented with contrasting accompaniments and combined together in masterful synthesis. The first movement derives its thematic material from *Huit Pièces pour le Pianoforte à 4 mains*, op. 60, No. 4 (1818) which Weber entitled ‘All’ Ongarese’ (in the Hungarian style), while the second movement is interesting in its theme and variation form with
themes taken from his overture to Turandot. This Overture is based on a Chinese melody entitled ‘Air Chinois’ which Weber found in Rousseau’s Dictionnaire de Musique. The Andantino that functions as the third movement presents musical ideas from Six Pièces pour le Pianoforte à quatre mains, op. 10, No. 2. First orchestrating them throughout the ensemble, as fragments of the melody are transferred from instrument to instrument, and then repeating the same theme with the inclusion of an overlaying, virtuostic, flute obligato. For the final movement Hindemith utilizes a March, No. 7 from the Huit Pièces pour le Pianoforte à 4 mains, op. 60 (the same set of works from which he drew the first movement’s thematic material). This March was marked by Weber as ‘Maestoso Marcia,’ Hindemith however quickens the tempo to create a powerful and effective Finale.

Symphonic Metamorphosis is a masterful example of Hindemith’s musical craft. Limiting himself to the melodic and harmonic scope of Weber’s four hand piano pieces, he draws on the diversity of the orchestra’s instrumentation and color to create variety and excitement.

Notes compiled by Cayenna Ponchione
ITHACA COLLEGE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
Jeffrey Grogan, conductor

Violin I
Elizabeth Cary
Laura Centonze
Jennifer Colgan
Kiersten Cunningham
Lauren Dalrymple
Dan Demetriou
Amanda Freida
Amanda Hockenberger
Beth Ann LaBella
Dan Sender
Christian Simmelink
Alyson Whelan

Violin II
Katie Cavallaro
Annie Chen
Randi Filipo
Teresa Fiorenza
Neil Fronheiser
Sarah Geiger
Sonya Harper
Lindsey Leone
Jennifer O'Donnell
Maureen Pohlman
Jacquelyn Sica*
Jennifer Stepien
Dan Valente

Viola
Kate Cannizzaro
Jillian Fisher
Jaime Gould
Nina Missildine
Sayer Palmer
Jenna Pelkey
Joseph Prusch
Laura Raposo
Dana Rokosny*
Cassandra Stephenson
Loftan Sullivan
Annabelle Terbetski

Cello
Erin Bowers
Alana Chown
Laura Fitzsimmons
Alan Gallegos
Diana Geiger
Meredith Gollmer*
Chris Luxley
Leslie Lyons
Emily McBride
Elizabeth Meszaros
Kelly Nixon
Katherine Paul
Rebecca Stenborg
Christina Stripling

Bass
Jarred Eddy
Gregg Gianotti
Katherine Grasmeyer
Brian Krauss*
Josef Lorenz
Audrey Miller
John-Paul Norpoth
Patrick O'Connell
Ryan Reardon

Flute
Tamara Nelson
Melody Parker
Jennifer Trimble*

Oboe
Alex Hughes
Aaron Jakubiec*
Devon Young

Clarinet
Byron Ford*
Diana Hall

Bass Clarinet
Sarah Bennett

Bassoon
Nicholas Cantrell
Amanda Ginovsky*
Brian Jack

Horn
Katie Curran
Kira Kamensky
Carlie Kilgore
Joshua Phillips*
Kim Santora

Trumpet
Andrew Benware
Timothy Harkcom
Andrew Hoesl*
Jesse King

Trombone
Scott Hoffman
Jason Macy*

Bass Trombone
Eric Swanger

Tuba
Christian Carichner

Timpani
Annina Collier

Percussion
Laura Bilodeau
Brian Messier
Heather Thorn*
Larissa Venzie

Harp
Myra Kovary+

Piano
Joseph Pepper

Graduate Assistant
Cayenna Ponchione

*indicates principal player
+ guest artist

Personnel listed in alphabetical order to emphasize each member's personal contribution.
ITHACA COLLEGE CHAMBER ORCHESTRA
Jeffrey Grogan, conductor

Violin I
Tamara Freida
Neil Fronheiser
Amanda Gillespie
Amanda Hockenberger
Julianna Methven,* concertmaster
Daniel Sender

Violin II
Laura Centonze
Kiersten Cunningham
Teresa Fiorenza
William Hurley*
Maureen Pohlman
Jacquelyn Sica

Viola
Suzanne Miller
Laura Raposo
Dana Rokosny*
Cassandra Stephenson

Cello
Meredith Gollmer*
Leslie Lyons
Kelly Nixon
Christina Stripling

Bass
Brian Krauss*
John-Paul Norpoth
Ryan Reardon

Flute
Leslie Kubica*
Jennifer Trimble

Oboe
Aaron Jakubiec
Jamie Strefeler*

Clarinet
Eric Callahan
Byron Ford*

Bassoon
Stacey Bellott*
Amanda Ginovsky

Horn
Carlie Kilgore
Tyler Ogilvie
Joshua Phillips
Jeffrey Rubin*

Trumpet
Andrew Hoesl
Christopher Yee*

Trombone
Timothy Smith

Timpani
Mary Gardner

Percussion
Cayenna Ponchione
Nicholas Galanete
Taryn Lott

Piano
Joseph Pepper

Graduate Assistant
Cayenna Ponchione

* denotes principal player

Personnel listed in alphabetical order to emphasize each member's personal contribution.