

2-7-2010

Graduate Recital: Jesse Livingston, conductor

Ithaca College Symphony Orchestra

Jesse Livingston

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ITHACA COLLEGE

SCHOOL OF MUSIC

GRADUATE RECITAL
ITHACA COLLEGE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Jesse Livingston, conductor
Jeffery Meyer, director

with

Michael Tsang, piano
High School Competition Winner

Ford Hall
Sunday, February 7, 2010
8:15 p.m.

ITHACA

PROGRAM

Route 66 (1999)

Michael Daugherty
(b. 1954)

Piano Concerto No. 2, op. 22

Charles-Camille Saint-Saëns
(1835-1921)

I. Andante Sostenuto

Michael Tsang, piano

Romeo and Juliet, Fantasy-Overture

Pyotr Il'yich Tchaikovsky
(1840-1893)

Graduate Recital presented in partial fulfillment for the degree
Master of Music in Conducting.

Jesse Livingston is from the studio of Jeffery Meyer.

Photographic, video, and sound recording and/or transmitting devices are not permitted in the Whalen Center concert halls. Please turn off all cell phone ringtones.

Program Notes

Route 66

Michael Daugherty describes *Route 66* thus:

"Musical ideas come to me when I drive my car down an empty American highway. There is freedom of movement and space to reflect. I meditate on my experiences as a composer of contemporary concert music, a keyboard player in jazz, funk, and rock bands, a percussionist in drum and bugle corps, an improviser on synthesizers for silent film, an organist for county and state fairs, a pianist in cocktail bars. *Route 66* is a musical reflection on America, as seen through my rear view mirror. Warning--objects in mirror are closer than they appear.

From my perspective, icons are fascinating because they seem close, but are meaningful only by means of temporal and spatial distance. They create emotion because they are always in motion, never in the same place; their meanings shift to create multiple points of view. Icons can be people, places, or things: Elvis Presley, James Cagney, Jackie O, Liberace, Barbie dolls, Motown, pink flamingo lawn ornaments, Route 66. Such icons have personal meanings for me, and a wide range of associations within contemporary American culture. As a composer, I am inspired by these and other icons to imagine exciting new sounds with traditional orchestral instruments. Drawing on a wide range of musical traditions, I bring the excitement and energy of American popular culture to the concert hall.

In *Route 66* I create an intricate structure that is dramatic and memorable, using a wide palette of timbres, lively rhythms, and contrapuntal complexity. Whether I am playing jazz piano or composing concert music, I like to deviate from the middle of the road. Through an unconventional use of American icons, I open a door to listeners, inviting them to bring their own emotions and associations into the musical experience."

Piano Concerto No. 2, Movement 1

Composed in a mere three weeks, Piano Concerto No. 2 by Camille Saint-Saëns is proof that it does not always take long to write an enduring musical work. Pianist/composer/conductor Anton Rubenstein asked Saint-Saëns to organize a concert in Paris for the spring of 1868. However, the concert venue was booked for three weeks from the time he began organizing the concert. Saint-Saëns decided to use this short period of time to write a new work for the occasion: his second piano concerto. The piece was

premiered with Rubenstein conducting and the composer at the keyboard but with little success. Saint-Saëns had little time to practice the piece and many reacted negatively to its drastic changes in mood.

Rather than beginning with an orchestral introduction, the work begins with a lengthy cadenza similar to the improvisational character of a Bach fantasia. The movement is primarily dominated by the soloist, the orchestra mainly providing harmonic support and isolated chords for punctuation. The main theme was written by Gabriel Fauré, a pupil of Saint-Saëns, taken his motet, *Tantum ergo*. After a hurried glance at the work, Saint-Saëns exclaimed, "Give this to me. I can make something of it!"

Despite its unsuccessful beginning, this concerto has become a standard piece in the piano repertoire. Even in its day, its enduring qualities were not unnoticed as pianist/composer Franz Liszt remarked:

"I want to thank you again for your second concerto, which I greatly applaud... You take into just account the role of the pianist without sacrificing anything of the ideas of the composer, which is an essential rule in this class of work... The totality of the work pleases me singularly. It ought to meet with success in every country."

Romeo and Juliet, Fantasy-Overture after Shakespeare

Throughout the 19th, 20th, and 21st centuries, Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* has captivated dozens of composers and Tchaikovsky was no exception. More than twenty operas have been written about *Romeo and Juliet* as well as ballets, incidental music, and musical theater adaptations such as Bernstein's *West Side Story*. This overture, first performed in 1870, is a self-standing work, that is, not part of a larger theatrical work such as a ballet or opera. As such, it seeks to capture the main themes of the play rather than tracking the plot, similar to Beethoven's literary-based overtures *Egmont* and *Coriolan*.

Were it not for the prodding of Russian composer Mily Balakirev, the piece probably would not have been written. Although Balakirev was a relatively unsuccessful composer, he had a gift for spotting talent and mentoring young composers. Such was Balakirev's relationship to Tchaikovsky, particularly during the composition of *Romeo and Juliet*. He presented the play to Tchaikovsky as early as 1869 and subsequently gave guidelines to the structure of the piece. Then, in a mere six weeks, Tchaikovsky

composed the first edition of the overture. The work was subsequently revised numerous times under the guidance of Balakirev until a final version was completed in 1780.

The overture is in sonata-allegro form with an introduction and a coda. The introduction begins with a somber, hymn-like theme in the low woodwinds, perhaps alluding to Friar Laurence who wed Romeo and Juliet. The grief stricken dissonances and dark colors in the introduction immediately create the foreboding atmosphere of the tragedy. Throughout the piece, three themes are preminent: the "Hymn Theme" theme heard at the beginning, the "Battle Theme", symbolizing the fierce rivalry between the Montagues and the Capulets, and the famous "Love Theme". The latter two themes are often played back and fourth warring against one another. This seems to symbolize the dire conflict between Romeo and Juliet's love for one another and the vicious feud between their rival families. At the end of the recapitulation, the "Battle Theme" prevails and an abrupt timpani roll signals the death of the two lovers. Surprisingly, this is not the end of the story in Tchaikovsky's opinion. Although the coda begins with something like a funeral march, it is followed by a warm woodwind chorale in B major. One might expect a dismal ending to such a story, but the love theme returns transformed and the piece ends in B major, perhaps signifying the reuniting of the two lovers in the afterlife.

Performer's Biographies

Michael K. Tsang is 16 years old. He studies piano with Marina Lupinacci in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Michael has participated in many piano competitions. He was winner in the Bartok-Kabelevsky-Prokofiev International Young Artists Competition, the International Young Artists Competition in Washington DC, and the Long Island Conservatory International Piano Competition.

In the Duquesne Young Artists Competitions in Pittsburgh, Michael captured first place in all age categories – age groups 9, 12, 15 and 18. He was the winner in the Pittsburgh Concert Society Young Artists Competition in 2004 and the Pittsburgh Philharmonic Symphony Concerto Competition in 2009.

In 2006, Michael received second place in the Junior Division of the Ithaca College Piano Competition. In October 2009, he won first place in the Ithaca College Piano Concerto Competition High School Division.

In the MTNA competition, Michael received first place in junior division in 2007; this year, he came first in the senior division. He will represent Pennsylvania again next January in New York.

In quest of excellence, Michael has had opportunities to play in master classes conducted by renowned international soloists Emmanuel Ax, Lang Lang, and the late Master Gyorgy Sandor. In 2005, Michael had the distinct honor to be the sole performer at the opening session of the annual conference of the National Guild of Community Schools of the Art. Currently, Michael is the pianist for the Pittsburgh Youth Symphony.

In addition to piano playing, Michael also plays violin for his school's Honor Orchestra. He is a fourth degree black belt in Tae-kwon-do and a member of his school's track and field team.

Jesse Livingston's first interest in conducting was sparked when he was fifteen by Dr. Thomas Erdman, director of bands at Elon College North Carolina, who guest conducted his high school wind ensemble. In the spring of 1999, he began private conducting lessons with William Henry Curry, resident conductor of the North Carolina Symphony. Throughout high school years, Jesse had the opportunity to conduct the Triangle Youth Philharmonic, school musicals, and his high school choir.

In the fall of 2002, he began his undergraduate studies at the Oberlin Conservatory of Music as a trumpet performance major. However, after two years he changed his degree focus to Dalcroze Eurhythmics, an approach to teaching and learning music that focuses on body movement. During his senior year at Oberlin, he studied conducting privately with Bridget Reischl, director of orchestras at the Oberlin Conservatory. He then attended the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where he studied privately with Tonu Kalam, Professor of Music at UNC, and was the assistant conductor of the UNC Symphony Orchestra.

In the fall of 2008, Jesse began a master's program in Orchestral Conducting at Ithaca College studying privately with Dr. Jeffery Meyer, director of orchestras at Ithaca College. He serves as an assistant conductor for the Ithaca College Symphony Orchestra, Ithaca College Chamber Orchestra, and co-music director and founder of the Ithaca College Sinfonietta.

ITHACA COLLEGE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Jesse Livingston, conductor

Jeffery Meyer, director

Violin I

Charles Palys,
concertmaster
Alyssa Jutting
Matteo Longhi
Kristin Bakkegard
Misako Sakurai
Emily Frederick
Aimee Lillienstein
Isaac Shiman
Shena Griffith
Sadie Kenny
Samantha Hecht
Derek Voigt
Margaret Dagon
Jenna Trunk
Madeleine Wething

Violin II

Natalie Brandt*
Will Downey
Bryn Digney
Gabriella Colkett
Sarah Weber
Jason Calhoun
Austin Schlichting
Jessica Chen
Chris Sforza
Alexas Esposito
Nadine Cohen
Sarah Hoag
Claire Wilcox
Christopher Mattaliano

Viola

Zach Slack*
Michael Capone
Jackie Timberlake
Joshua Labman
Violet Goncarvos
Marissa Ledet
Kathleen Stevens
Stephen Gorgone
Meghan Seidner
Rosie Newton
Jennifer Meckler
Kinnaird McQuade

Cello

Allie Rehn*
Tristan Rais-Sherman
Phil Abbott
Peter Volpert
David MacLeese
Katie McShane
Brooks Griffith
Meredith Gennaro
Hannah Whitehead
Daniel Frankhuizen
Evan Hong
Thillman Benham
Jeremy von Deck
Ben Sharrin

Bass

Kyle Kresge*
Sara Johnson
Sam Verneuille
John Romey
Ben Dows
Matt Minteer
Jordan Morton
David Barton

Flute

Emily Wespiser*
Amelia Baran
Andrea Reges

Oboe

Jamie Davis*
Julia Perry
Virginia Dodge

Clarinet

Brianne Remaly*
Sarah Koop
Michael Colletti

Bassoon

Noah Wolfinger*
Mehgan Kininger
Lauren Jurczynski

Horn

Tyler Ogilvie*
Drew Welkie, assistant
Maureen Preston
Elizabeth Teucke
Megan Carpenter

Trumpet

Ethan Urtz*
Brian Binder
Christopher Tolbert
Eric Mahl

Trombone

Mark Neville*
Ryan Kuehhas
Michael Nave

Tuba

Joseph Wenzel

Timpani

Andrew Boynton

Harp

Myra Kovary**

Percussion

Julia Ross*
Benjamin Berry
Darren Lin
Elayne Harris

Keyboard

Josh Oxford

Graduate Assistants

Jesse Livingston
Chun-Ming Chen

* Principal

** Guest Artist

Concert Calendar

February

7	4:00 8:15	Ann Marie Wilcox-Daehn, mezzo-soprano Orchestra; Jesse Livingston, graduate conductor
8	8:15	Concert for Haiti
9	8:15	São Paulo University Percussion Ensemble
11	8:15	Percussion Ensembles; Gordon Stout and Conrad Alexander, directors
12	7:00	Faculty Recital: Randie Blooding, baritone
13	8:15	<i>Ithaca College Concerts 2009-10*</i> Theodora Hanslowe, mezzo-soprano
20	3:00	Saxophone Studio
21	8:15	Faculty Recital: Gordon Stout, percussion
23	7:00	Guest Recital: Gregory Oakes, clarinet
24	4:00	Master Class: Gregory Oakes, clarinet
25	7:00	Faculty Recital: John Stetch, jazz piano
26	7:00	Black History Month Concert: Sulley Imoro
27	3:00 7:30	Wind Ensemble; Steven Peterson, conductor USAF Academy Stellar Brass

March

2	7:00 8:15	Faculty Recital: Jennifer Kay, mezzo-soprano Symphonic Band; Elizabeth Peterson, conductor
3	7:00 8:15	Faculty Recital: Patrice Pastore, soprano Concert Band; Mark Fonder, conductor
5	3:00 7:00	Mary Hayes North Competition For Senior Piano Majors Faculty Recital: Charis Dimaras, piano
7	3:00	Orchestra; Jeffery Meyer, conductor-- Annual Concerto Program
8	7:00 8:15	Faculty Recital: Wenqing Zhang and Nathan Hess, duo-pianists Vocal Jazz Ensemble; Laurie Keegan, musical director and Jazz Ensemble, Michael Titlebaum, musical director
10	7:00	Faculty Recital: Deborah Montgomery-Cove, soprano, Brad Hougham, baritone, and Charis Dimaras, piano
11	7:00 8:15	Faculty Recital, Frank Gabriel Campos, trumpet African Drumming and Dance Ensemble; Baruch Whitehead, director
22	7:00	Faculty Ensemble: Ithaca Brass
24	7:00	Faculty Recital: David Unland, tuba
25	8:15	Women's Chorale; Janet Galván, conductor and Brass Choir; Keith Kaiser, conductor
26	8:15	<i>Ithaca College Concerts 2009-10*</i> Cameron Carpenter, organ
27	8:15	Choir; Lawrence Doeblor, conductor
28	4:00	Faculty Ensemble: Ariadne String Quartet
29	7:00	Guest Recital: Nathan Williams, clarinet
31	8:15	Concert Band; Mark Fonder, conductor and Horseheads High School Wind Ensemble

Ithaca College Concerts 2009-10 (admission charge)

September 11	Zuill Bailey, violoncello and Awadagin Pratt, piano
February 13	Theodora Hanslowe, mezzo-soprano
March 26	Cameron Carpenter, organ