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Concert: Ithaca College Chamber Orchestra

Ithaca College Chamber Orchestra

Jeffery Meyer

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SCHOOL OF MUSIC

ITHACA COLLEGE CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

Jeffery Meyer, conductor

with

**Susan Waterbury, violin
Nicholas DiEugenio, violin**

**Ford Hall
Wednesday, November 18, 2009
8:15 p.m.**

ITHACA

PROGRAM

Overture to Egmont, Op. 84

Ludwig van Beethoven
(1770-1827)

Concerto in E-flat (Dumbarton Oaks)

Igor Stravinsky
(1882-1971)

- I. *Tempo giusto*
- II. *Allegretto*
- III. *Con moto*

INTERMISSION

Moz-Art à la Haydn

Alfred Schnittke
(1934-1988)

Susan Waterbury, violin
Nicholas DiEugenio, violin

Dances of Galanta (Galántai táncok)

Zoltan Kolday
(1882-1967)

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Program Notes

Overture to *Egmont*

I am about to write to [Goethe] myself with regard to *Egmont*, for which I have written some music solely from my love for his poetry, which always delights me. Who can be sufficiently grateful to a great poet,-- the most precious jewel of a nation!

In this heartfelt letter Beethoven wrote to Bettina Brentano on February 10, 1811, he reveals not only his deep admiration of Goethe but also the context in which he wrote the Overture to *Egmont*. This commonly performed Overture is only a small portion of over forty-five minutes of incidental music Beethoven composed to accompany Goethe's play, *Egmont*. The play is set in the mid 1500's during the Spanish occupation of the Netherlands. As the Spanish Inquisition tightened its hold on the Netherlands to eradicate Protestantism, Count Egmont, an officer of the Emperor, refused his support. For that he was charged with treason, thrown in jail, deserted by his closest friends, unable to see his lover Klara, and finally beheaded. His death, however, roused the Netherlands to rebel against Spain and free themselves from Spanish rule.

After the opening fermata, the overture begins with a rough, oppressive statement in the strings and seems to represent the voice of the Spanish Inquisition. It is answered by a lyrical response in the woodwinds perhaps symbolizing the peasants plea for freedom. As the overture continues, the introduction spirals into a restless Allegro and the battle between the forces of freedom and oppression wages on. The Allegro section ends with the beheading of Egmont (symbolized by an abrupt descending 4th in the violins) followed by an eight-bar funeral hymn in the woodwinds. Freedom, however, has the final word. The overture ends with the "Siegessymphonie" (victory symphony), which also appears at the end of play's incidental music, symbolizing the victory of freedom.

Concerto in E-flat (Dumbarton Oaks)

The Dumbarton Oaks is a grand Federal-style house just outside Washington D.C.. Mr. and Mrs. Robert Woods Bliss purchased the estate in 1933 and hosted regular musical events there. They later commissioned Stravinsky to write a chamber piece for their 30th wedding anniversary which Stravinsky titled after the estate.

The piece draws its inspiration from perfect structure of the estate but more significantly from Bach, specifically the Brandenburg concertos. Stravinsky described *Dumbarton Oaks* as "a little concerto in the style of the *Brandenburg* Concertos." "I played Bach very regularly during the composition of the concerto," Stravinsky later recalled, "and I was greatly attracted to the *Brandenburg* Concertos. Whether or not the first theme of my first movement is a conscious borrowing from the third of the *Brandenburg* set, however, I do not know."

Indeed, the spirit of Bach pervades the work. The piece is in three continuous movements, two fast movements surrounded by a slow movement similar to most of Bach's concertos. The work is a typical concerto grosso with each member of the ensemble acting both as a soloist and an ensemble member. The first movement is lively, full of rhythmic activity, and has meter changes nearly every three to four bars as is typical of Stravinsky. The slow second movement provides some relief from the rhythmically driven first movement. The third movement returns to the energetic character of the first movement with irregular meters, bustling rhythmic activity, and counterpoint again much like Bach. Stravinsky affectionately remarks, "What I can say is that Bach would most certainly have been delighted to loan it to me; to borrow in this way was exactly the sort of thing he liked to do."

Moz-Art à la Haydn

The German-born Russian composer **Alfred Schnittke** began his musical studies in Vienna very early, when he was only twelve years old and quickly fell in love with music. "I felt every moment there," he wrote, "to be a link of the historical chain: all was multi-dimensional; the past represented a world of ever-present ghosts, and I was not a barbarian without any connections, but the conscious bearer of the task in my life." His experiences in Vienna also turned his attention to composers such as Mozart and Schubert. These two figures, rather than Tchaikovsky or Rachmaninoff, would become his compositional reference point, one that is essentially classical

Moz-Art à la Haydn, although certainly not neo-classical, is a clear reference back to the *classica* era. The piece is built using snippets from various works by Mozart but draws primarily from Mozart's K. 446, an unfinished collection of musical sketches. Schnittke also quotes Mozart's "Haffner" symphony as well as the opening melody from the G minor symphony. That explains the "Moz-Art" portion of the title. The "à la Haydn" refers Schnittke imitating Haydn's "Farwell" symphony by having the players walk off stage at the end. The piece ends humorously with the conductor left alone on stage, beating time to silence.

Dances of Galanta

Hungarian composer **Zoltan Kodaly** was deeply influenced by folk music, Hungarian folk music in particular. Similar to Bela Bartok, he became an avid ethnomusicologist collecting reams of folk songs native to Hungary. *Dances of Galanta* (1933), however is more than just a sampling of folk tunes Kodaly collected from around Hungary. Galanta, a small Hungarian town, is where the composer spent much of his early childhood. The folk music in *Dances of Galanta*, therefore, had deep personal significance to Kodaly. He writes in the preface:

The author spent the most beautiful seven years of his childhood in Galánta. The town band, led by the fiddler Mihók, was famous. But it must have been even more famous a hundred years earlier. Several volumes of Hungarian dances were published in Vienna around the year 1800. One of them lists its source this way: "from several Gypsies in Galánta." May this modest composition serve to continue the old tradition.

The wide variety of styles found in *Dances of Galanta* encompasses a wide spectrum of experiences found in folk life. The opening cello line is broad, full of bravura but yet simple and sincere. As the piece develops, the listener is transported through scenes of Hungarian peasant life: children playing in the streets, wild gypsy dances, and the town drunk stumbling home late at night. These scenes communicate the inherent festivity and free spiritedness of Galanta life.

Performer Biographies

Praised by the Cleveland Plain Dealer for his "invigorating, silken" playing and "mysterious atmosphere," violinist **Nicholas DiEugenio** leads a versatile musical life performing composers from Buxtehude to Carter. He has performed as soloist with Interlochen's World Youth Symphony Orchestra, Long Bay Symphony, Cleveland Pops, CIM Orchestra, National Repertory Orchestra, and the Cleveland Bach Consort. As a founding member of the Biava Quartet, Mr. DiEugenio was a prizewinner at the Fischhoff National Chamber Music Competition. He has also been a member of the iO Quartet, and is now violinist of the Lorien Trio. Mr. DiEugenio has premiered chamber works of Yevgeniy Sharlat, Stephen Gorbos, Matthew Barnson, and Timo Andres, and has performed works of living American composers in Carnegie's Weill Hall, Merkin Hall, Seattle Town Hall, and Rouletté. Other venues have included the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center and Brooklyn's BargeMusic. A

member of the violin faculty of the ENCORE School for Strings from 2005-07, Mr. DiEugenio has taught undergraduate students at Yale, and is Assistant Professor of Violin at the Ithaca College School of Music. He holds degrees from the Cleveland Institute of Music (BM, MM) and the Yale School of Music (Artist Diploma, MMA).

Susan Waterbury earned a Master of Music degree from the Eastman School of Music and a Bachelor of Music from The Ohio State University School of Music which named her "Distinguished Alumna of 1995". She studied violin with Donald Weilerstein, Jens Ellerman, Michael Davis and Walter Levin and was coached extensively in chamber music by the Cleveland, Tokyo, Emerson, and Juilliard Quartets.

From 1995-99 Waterbury was associate professor of violin at the University of Memphis where she taught violin and performed with the Ceruti String Quartet. From 1995-2000, Waterbury was Artist-in-Residence and Co-Artistic Director for the Garth Newel Music Center in Hot Springs, VA where she performed chamber music concerts year-round.

Waterbury was a founding member of the Cavani String Quartet for 11 years. As a member of Cavani, she performed and taught regularly for concert series and festivals throughout the U.S. and abroad. The Cavani Quartet garnered many awards including first prize in the 1989 Walter W. Naumberg Chamber Music, and the Cleveland Quartet and Carmel Chamber Music competitions as well as earning prizes at the Banff International, Chicago Discovery, Coleman, and Fischhoff competitions.

A new music enthusiast, Waterbury has worked with many composers, including Steven Stucky, Donald Erb, Joan Tower, Ellen Zwilich, Jennifer Higdon, Michael Doherty, Kamran Ince, Sally Lamb, Christopher Rouse, Gordon Stout, and John Adams.

In recent summers, Waterbury taught and/or performed for The Quartet Program, Zeltsman Marimba Festival, the Adriatic Chamber Music Festival (Termoli, Italy), Deia International Music Festival, (Mallorca, Spain), Tuckamore Festival (Newfoundland, Canada), Bennington Music Conference (Vermont), and Garth Newel Music Center (Virginia).

Born in Chicago, **Jeffery Meyer** (DMA, MM, SUNY Stony Brook; BM, Lawrence Conservatory) began his musical studies as a pianist,

and shortly thereafter continued on to study composition and conducting. He is the Director of Orchestras at the Ithaca College School of Music, as well as the founder and Artistic Director of the St. Petersburg Chamber Philharmonic in St. Petersburg, Russia and the Artistic Director of the Water City Chamber Orchestra in Wisconsin.

Called "one of the most interesting and creatively productive conductors working in St. Petersburg" by Sergei Slonimsky, in recent concert seasons, he has been seen conducting, performing as piano soloist and chamber musician, as well as conducting from the keyboard in the United States, Canada, Russia, and throughout Europe and Asia. He has appeared with ensembles such as the Milwaukee Symphony, Syracuse Symphony, Philippine Philharmonic, Cayuga Chamber Orchestra and the Orchestra Sinfonico "Haydn" di Bolzano e Trento. As a pianist, he performs frequently as part of the piano-percussion duo /Strike/. He has been broadcast on CBC Newfoundland, has recorded and performed with the Philadelphia Virtuosi (Naxos), and has been heard as a soloist at the Aspen Festival. During the 2001-2002 academic year he lived and studied in Berlin and Leipzig as the recipient of a DAAD grant in music. He has been distinguished in several international competitions (2008 Cadaqués Conducting Competition, 2003 Vakhtang Jordania International Conducting Competition, 2003 Beethoven Sonata International Piano Competition) and was a prizewinner in the 2008 Tenth International "Antonio Pedrotti" Conducting Competition.

Concert Calendar

November

19 8:15 Jazz Ensembles; Michael Titlebaum and Tom Killian,
musical directors

December

2 7:00 Piano Chamber Ensembles; Charis Dimaras, coordinator
8:15 Jazz Ensemble; Michael Titlebaum, musical director; John Bailey,
trumpet

3 7:00 Faculty Chamber Recital, "2009 Anniversaries of Haydn and
Mendelssohn"

8:15 Percussion Ensemble; Gordon Stout, director

5 Noon All-Campus Band; Daniel Isbell, conductor and Campus Choral
Ensemble; Jennifer Haywood, conductor

8:15 Symphony Orchestra; Jeffery Meyer, conductor

6 3:00 "Winter Choral Concert"

8:15 Percussion Ensemble; Conrad Alexander, director

6 3:00 "Winter Choral Concert"

7:00 Faculty Chamber Recital: Wenquig Zhang and
Nathan Hess, duo-pianists

8:15 Percussion Ensemble; Conrad Alexander, director

7 7:00 Woodwind Chamber Music

8:15 Vocal Jazz Ensemble; Lauri Keegan, musical director

8 7:00 Collaborative Piano/Instrumental Duos; Charis Dimaras, director

8:15 Brass Choir; Keith Kaiser, conductor

9 6:00 "String Quartet Marathon"

8:15 Wind Ensemble; Col. Michael Colburn, Colonel Arnald Gabriel '50
HDRMU '89 Visiting Wind Conductor; Michael Galvan, clarinet

10 Noon Performance Studies in Early Music; Nicholas Walker,
director

8:15 Symphonic Band and Concert Band; Col. Michael Colburn,
Colonel Arnald Gabriel '50 HDRMU '89 Visiting Wind
Conductor

Ithaca College Concerts 2009-10 (admission charge)

February 13 Theodora Hanslowe, mezzo-soprano
March 26 Cameron Carpenter, organ