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**Concert: Ithaca College Chamber Orchestra**

Ithaca College Chamber Orchestra

Jeffery Meyer

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ITHACA COLLEGE CHAMBER ORCHESTRA
Jeffery Meyer, conductor

Ford Hall
Wednesday, March 5, 2008
8:15 p.m.
PROGRAM

Suite No. 1 for Small Orchestra

I. Andante
II. Napolitana
III. Española
IV. Balalaika

City Life (Heckscher Composition Prize Winner)

Jeffrey Hass
(b. 1953)

Symphony No. 3, S. 3 (The Camp Meeting)

I. Old Folks Gatherin'
II. Children's Day
III. Communion

INTERMISSION

Suite No. 2 for Small Orchestra

I. Marche
II. Valse
III. Polka
IV. Galop

Le Tombeau de Couperin

I. Prélude
II. Forlanelle
III. Rigaudon
IV. Menuet

Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971)

Charles Ives
(1874-1954)

Jeffrey Hass
(b. 1953)

Maurice Ravel
(1875-1937)

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.
French composer Maurice Ravel (1875–1937) first conceived the work that would become Le Tombeau de Couperin as a Suite Françoise for piano solo in 1914. This original idea was delayed by the outbreak of World War I, when Ravel (like most patriotic Frenchmen) wanted to serve his country. After attempting to enlist in the infantry and the Air Force, the thirty-nine year old composer successfully enlisted in the Military Transport Corps where he witnessed the many horrors of war. One year after assuming his post, Ravel fell ill with a severe case of dysentery and was forced to take a leave of absence. During this time a discouraged and weakened Ravel learned of his mother's death; this news combined with his recent war experiences led the composer to lie dormant. For nearly a year, he composed no music.

After World War I ended, many French citizens looked at their own country's history to find fundamental elements that could bring them back into unity. Ravel connected with his French heritage by paying homage to prolific French-Baroque composer François Couperin (1668–1733). Composing Le Tombeau de Couperin also healed some personal wounds from the war for Ravel, as each movement is dedicated to a close friend killed in combat. On the self-designed cover page for the work Ravel even included a hand-drawn funerary urn to further depict the memorial nature of the work.

The work's musical vocabulary and neo-classical structure employ movements whose names and styles directly reflect a Baroque dance suite. The opening Prelude features the oboe in continuous sixteenth note passages, imitating the ornamentation style of seventeenth-century French harpsichord performance practice. The second movement imitates an Italian Forlane, a dance featuring dotted rhythms and off-beat accents. The Minuet incorporates fragments of the oboe melody from the Prelude into a slow triple meter movement featuring modal harmonies. The final Rigaudon contains a lively duple-meter dance from the Provence region of France.

In 1919, Ravel again proved himself to be a master of orchestration when he re-penned Le Tombeau de Couperin for chamber orchestra at the request of Rolf de Mare. The orchestral premiere was performed by the Pasdeloup Orchestra of France on February 28, 1920.

Charles Ives (1874–1954) lived in a post-Civil War, pre-Rock and Roll America where the most popular music included hymnody and patriotic tunes. Because he spent the majority of his professional life not as a composer but as a very successful insurance salesman, Ives was able to experiment compositionally without needing to rely on the public’s opinion for a paycheck. Ives investigated concepts like
quarter tones and bi-tonality while incorporating many elements of vernacular life into his own music. In Symphony No. 3, Ives used several hymns to aurally depict a facet of mid-nineteenth century Evangelical America – the Camp Meeting.

The Camp Meeting tradition was established around the same time that Europeans began to settle the Americas. Protestant ministers organized mass meetings around the country in a central location (usually somewhere rural and away from town centers), where people could worship, pray, and listen to sermons given by many different ministers. Attendees generally came from towns that were either too small, too remote, or too poor to fund the building of a church.

Ives used three hymns as the basis for composition in this work, and switched between chorale texture, fugal texture, and polyphony, similar in fashion to an improvising organist at a Sunday service. In fact, Ives's inspiration for this work (like others including his Variations on America) grew out of his tradition as church organist. Each movement uses cumulative form, a device very typical to Ives's compositions. Well-known songs are taken out of context and fragmented before the tune can be discerned later in the movement.

The first movement, *Old Folks Gatherin'* contains a fugue based on "O, For a Thousand'Tongues to Sing," a hymn by Lowell Mason. Ives presents the other material including beautifully lyric lines in the woodwinds and high strings within an extremely tonal context. The movement ends quietly with a chorale.

The second movement, *Children's Day*, depicts children waking up to a new day during a Camp Meeting, and employs wild meter changes and driving rhythmic pulse, giving new and exciting spins to the well-known hymns "There is a Happy Day," and "There is a Fountain Filled with Blood." The movement ends in lighthearted determination with a plagal cadence.

The final movement, *Communion*, is the most meditative of the three movements and depicts Campers during the most crucial times during the Camp Meeting. Through hymns "Just as I Am," and "Erie," better known today as "What a Friend We Have in Jesus," Ives depicts conversion, confession, and the reaffirmed faith of the thousands attending the Evangelical event. As the work closes in quiet reverence and prayer, dissonant church bells ring out in the distance, reminding all in attendance that their deep spiritual journey will continue beyond the Camp Meeting.

The work was finalized in 1909 and Ives gave a copy to New York Philharmonic conductor Gustav Mahler (1860–1911) who planned to perform the work on the 1911 concert season. Because of
Mahler's untimely death, Ives's *Symphony No. 3* was not premiered until 35 years later, perhaps costing Ives great fame as a composer during his lifetime. The work was an immediate success at its premiere by Lou Harrison and the New York Philharmonic in 1946, and one year later won Ives the Pulitzer Prize for composition.

Igor Stravinsky (1882–1971) composed *Suites Nos. 1 and 2 for Small Orchestra* while residing in Paris and composing on a regular basis for Sergei Diaghileff and the Ballet Russes. Both works were orchestrated from their original piano duet form.

*Suite No. 1* was written sometime between 1917 and 1925, and *Suite No. 2* was completed in 1919, just one year before the premiere performance of Stravinsky's neo-classical ballet, *Pulcinella*. Both *Suites* are comprised of four "character piece" movements that are quite brief, each between one and two minutes in duration. *Suite No. 1* incorporates ostinato patterns into each dance that immediately establish mood and character. For instance, the clarinet ostinato in the lively 6/8 *Napolitana* movement provides life and humor to an oboe melody that is almost as quirky as the origin of the dance – defense against the poison of tarantula spiders.

*Suite No. 2* is a direct product of Stravinsky's neo-classical period, particularly the second *Waltz* movement. The *Waltz* builds from a two-measure ostinato and is scored for woodwinds and trumpets only. Stravinsky uses a peculiar melody in the flutes and seemingly alters time by employing considerable syncopation over the "boom-chick" rhythm in the clarinet. The *March, Waltz*, and *Polka* of *Suite No. 2* are each dedicated to contemporary composers Alfredo Casella, Erik Satie, and Sergei Diaghileff, respectively. Polyrhythms and colorful harmonies drawn indirectly from *L'Histoire du Soldat* (1918) resound throughout much of *Suite No. 2*. 
ITHACA COLLEGE CHAMBER ORCHESTRA
Jeffery Meyer, conductor

Violin I
Andrew Bergevin, concertmaster
Christopher Jones
Maeve O'Hara
Colin Oettle
Brenna Gillette
Natalie Brandt
Charlie Palys

Violin II
Kate Goldstein, principal
Mary Raschella
Timothy Ball
Gabriella Colkett
Sharon Mohar
Will Downey
Laura Sciavolino

Viola
Jaime Kibelsbeck, principal
Zachary Slack
Katie Kimble
Jennifer Meckler
Kathleen Stevens

Cello
Sara Bennett Wolfe, principal
T. J. Borden
David MacLeese
Laura Messina
Allison Rehn

Bass
Jane Lazarovic, principal
Jarrett Bastow
Joe Arcuri

Flute
Jacquie Christen, principal
Melissa Wertheimer

Oboe
Meghan Kimball, principal
Alicia Rockenhauser

Clarinet
Amanda Jenne, principal
Adam Butalewicz

Bassoon
Jeff Ward, principal
Jessica Tortorici

Horn
Lori Roy, principal
Michael Drennan

Trumpet
James Covington, principal
Ethan Urtz

Trombone
Alice Rogers, principal

Tuba
Bryan Lewis

Piano
Mary Holzhaufer

Timpani
Kaye Sevier

Percussion
Seth Nicoletti
Kaye Sevier
Andrew Boynton

Harp
Myra Kovary*

Graduate Assistant
Kevin Ryan

* guest artist