2-5-2011

Graduate Recital: Robin Alfieri, violin

Robin Alfieri

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Graduate Recital:
Robin Alfieri, violin

Mary Holzhauer, piano and harpsichord
Rachel Fannick, piano
Bradley Pipenger, clarinet

Hockett Family Recital Hall
Saturday, February 5, 2011
4:00 p.m.
Program

Suite in A major, BWV 1025
Fantasia
Courante
Entrée
Rondeau
Sarabande
Menuet
Allegro

J.S. Bach after Silvius Leopold Weiss
1685-1750, 1686-1750

Serenade for Three
Dances
Songs
Variations

Peter Schickele
b. 1935

Rachel Fannick, piano
Bradley Pipenger, clarinet

Intermission

Concerto in A major, KV 219
Allegro aperto

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
1756-1791

Sonata in D major, Op. 94b
Moderato
Presto
Andante
Allegro con brio

Sergei Prokofiev
1891-1953

This is a Graduate Recital in partial fulfillment of a Master of Music in Suzuki Pedagogy. Robin Alfieri is from the studios of Nicholas DiEugenio and Sanford Reuning.
Program Notes

Suite in A Major, BWV 1025

*Suite in A major*, which has been attributed to J.S. Bach (1685-1750), was originally written by Silvius Leopold Weiss (1686-1750). Weiss was regarded as the greatest lutenist of the Baroque period and was a contemporary of Bach. Weiss’ music was not quite as contrapuntal as Bach’s simply because of the nature of the lute for which he mostly wrote. Most of Weiss’ hundreds of surviving works are six movement sonatas for the lute. Weiss’ practice was to improvise a prelude or fantasia before the sonatas. Most of these were never written down.

Bach arranged Weiss’ 47th sonata as a duet for harpsichord and violin (now often called *Suite in A major, BWV 1025* by J.S. Bach). The lute part was arranged for the harpsichord and new material was created for the violin. Bach also constructed a Fantasia to precede the sonata, which was completely original although it uses lute motifs that may stem from Weiss’ writing.

When listening to this piece, you will hear stylized dances from the time. Interestingly, the Sarabande seems to emphasize the second beat with silence rather than the typical sense of landing on the second beat during this dance. The Courante is the most virtuosic movement for the violin with written out embellishments later in the movement while the Allegro is extremely virtuosic for the harpsichord.

Serenade for Three

Peter Schickele (b. 1935) is best known as P.D.Q. Bach. Under this moniker, he composes a great deal of humorous music often based on or as a play on popular classical music. He has composed well over 100 works for orchestra, choral groups, various chamber groups, voice, movies, and television. He is a well-known and prolific modern American composer. Possibly because of his goofy musical side, Schickele has been involved in recordings of music that is especially appealing to children such as Prokofiev’s *Sneaky Pete (aka. Peter) and the Wolf* with Schickele narrating. He clearly is a man who paved his own way having been distinguished as the only music major to graduate from Swarthmore in 1957 and going on to study and teach at Julliard. Today he continues to put on travelling programs of his goofy music that are well attended.

*Serenade for Three* is one of Peter Schickele’s more “serious” works and was commissioned for the Verdehr Trio. It was premiered in 1993 in New York City. Each movement of this chamber work is
descriptively named. The first movement is all about color. The clarinet, violin, and piano are required to blend together as one instrument. The first motive can be heard again and again, but it is slightly different each time. Often the octaves that the clarinet and the violin play in are swapped in order to bring a different line to the listener’s ear. The second movement is serene. The binding element in this movement is a repeated E flat from the piano. Over top of this, the violin and clarinet weave a delicate song texture. The third movement is based on part of P.D.Q. Bach’s (as you will recall, this is actually Peter Schickele) Oedipus Tex (Dramatic Oratorio for soloists, chorus and orchestra) recorded in 1990. The part of this oratorio that it is taken is the “Howdy There” Aria that the character Oedipus Tex sings. In the third movement, especially, you will be able to listen to five separate sections. In the first, all of the instruments weave the motives that will be expanded upon. The second, third, and fourth sections are devoted to each instrument in turn. First, the clarinet creates an arpeggiated melody. The third section exploits the violin with folk or fiddle like figures. The fourth section is for solo piano and is reminiscent of boogie-woogie piano music. The last section brings everyone together again for a flourished finish.

Concerto in A major, KV 219
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791) was born into a musical family. From an early age, his father was responsible for Mozart’s education. This education was not limited to music, but Mozart excelled in music; he wrote his first compositions when he was five years old. Leopold Mozart, Wolfgang Mozart’s father, and his son travelled Europe visiting an exceptional number of important diplomats and people of important rank. Wolfgang Mozart was one of the most prolific composers ever, especially considering his short lifespan. Mozart studied in Salzburg for some time and it was here that he wrote the majority of his violin concertos when he was nineteen years old. It took him under one year to complete seven of his violin concertos.

Violin Concerto in A major, K. 219, is important in the cannon of violin music as a whole, but is especially important in Suzuki repertoire. This piece makes up the whole of the ninth Suzuki Method book and this along with the Violin Concerto in D major, also by Mozart, are the culmination of the method. Both of these concertos are extremely popular pieces to study especially when changing teachers and entering college. Mozart’s music is very exacting and must be played with the best possible intonation and precise articulation. Another part of what makes Mozart’s music particularly challenging is the importance of character. Despite his prolific output, Mozart is best known for his
operas and his love of character represented by music is evident in all of his music. In the first movement of the A major concerto you will be able to hear various musical characters which often only emerge for short periods of time; it is as if there is a dialogue represented by music.

Sonata in D major, Op. 94b
Soviet Russia during Sergei Prokofiev’s (1891-1953) time was extremely volatile. He lived through the first and second world war. During his life, including the wars, Prokofiev travelled extensively visiting England, France, America, and various other European countries. In fact, during the Second World War, he was evacuated along with all most important artists. During the war years, Prokofiev’s music was mostly reactionary and propaganda music with a greater focus on chamber works than at other times in his life.

David Oistrakh and Sergey Prokofiev were close friends and after Prokofiev’s first violin sonata was premiered, Oistrakh immediately began to hound him about writing a second one. In fact, Prokofiev did not write a second violin sonata but, at the suggestion of Oistrakh, he arranged the Flute Sonata op. 94 for violin. This work became the Violin Sonata, Op. 94b. The sonata premiered in 1944 with Oistrakh and Lev Oborin playing the violin and piano parts respectively. Violin Sonata No. 2 consists of four movements and is quite lyrical. In true Prokofiev style, you will be able to hear his daring harmonies and exacting articulations. Prokofiev’s music uses strongly Russian harmonic language and is highly exploratory in nature. Despite the unique harmonic language, you will be able to hear clear forms with returns of musical material from earlier in the movement.

The end of Prokofiev’s life was filled with fear. After a decree was passed in 1948 speaking ill of all Russian composers, he never quite recovered. Prokofiev acknowledged all of his alleged artistic errors. He, along with other composers, was accused by name for “formalistic distortions and anti-democratic tendencies” and for the “rejection of the principles of classical music.” Some of Prokofiev’s works were banned by the USSR and his wife was arrested and put in labor camps. Prokofiev was basically forced to write his music from this point on in a way that satisfied Soviet bureaucrats. He wrote letters of contrition to the authorities. Prokofiev never adapted to the new ideals in the Soviet, but remained popular outside of Russia. To this day, Russian music can be difficult to get a hold of because of the strict publishing laws in Russia and copyright laws here.
**Upcoming Events**

6 - 8:15pm - Ford - Symphony Orchestra, *Jeffery Meyer, conductor*

7 - 7:00pm - Hockett - *Alumni Recital*: Timothy Smith, trombone

8 - 7:00pm - Hockett - *Alumni Recital*: Joel Diegert, saxophone

10 - 7:00pm - Hockett - *Guest Recital*: Benjamin Moritz

14 - 8:15pm - Hockett - *Hockett Chamber Music Series*: Rhythm and Brass

15 - 7:00pm - Hockett - *Faculty Chamber Recital*: Jean Radice, organ

16 - 7:00pm - Ford - *Guest Concert*: Central Winds

18 - 8:15pm - Hockett - *Faculty Recital*: Nicholas DiEugenio, violin

19 - 8:15pm - Ford - *Boehmler Series*: Windscape

23 - 8:15pm - Ford - **Ticketed event** - *Ithaca College Concerts*: The Amelia Piano Trio with soprano Hyunah Yu

24 - 8:15pm - Ford - Percussion Ensembles

25 - 8:15pm - Ford - *Black History Month Concert*: The Catalyst Quartet

26 - 8:15pm - Ford - Wind Ensemble, *Stephen Peterson, conductor*

28 - 8:15pm - Hockett - Composition Premieres III, *students of Dana Wilson and Jorge Grossman*

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