

Spring 4-29-2011

Marshall University Music Department Presents a Graduate Recital, Adam Rhodes, clarinet

Adam Rhodes
Marshall University

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DEPARTMENT of MUSIC

presents a

Graduate Recital

Adam Rhodes, clarinet

accompanied by

Alanna Cushing, piano

Dr. Elizabeth Reed Smith, violin

and

The MU Clarinet Quartet

Friday, April 29, 2011

Highlawn Presbyterian Church

5:00 p.m.

This program is presented by the College of Fine Arts through the Department of Music, with the support of student activity funds. For more information about this or other music events, please call (304) 696-3117, or view our website at www.marshall.edu/cofa/music.

Program

Sonata for Clarinet and Piano

Leonard Bernstein
(1918-1990)

I Grazioso

II Andantino---Vivace e leggiero

Alanna Cushing, piano

Fantasy for Bb Clarinet and Piano

Luke Rosen
(b. 1979)

Alanna Cushing, piano

Send in the Clowns

Stephen Sondheim
(b. 1930)
arr. Gareth Brady

The MU Clarinet Quartet

Adam Rhodes, clarinet

Rebecca Adkins, clarinet

Emilea Burgh, clarinet

Ryan Striker, bass clarinet

*** 10 Minute Intermission ***

Premiere Rhapsodie

Claude Debussy
(1862-1918)

Alanna Cushing, piano

Contrasts for violin, clarinet and piano

Bela Bartok
(1881-1945)

I Verbunkos (Recruiting Dance)

II Piheno (Relaxation)

III Sebes (Fast Dance)

Alanna Cushing, piano
Dr. Elizabeth Reed Smith, violin

Program Notes

Benjamin David "Benny" Goodman (May 30, 1909 – June 13, 1986)

You may know him as the "King of Swing", "The Professor", "Patriarch of the Clarinet", or the "Swing's Senior Statesman". However, Goodman was not just your run-of-the-mill, self-taught jazz musician. His ability to actually read music set Goodman apart from his contemporaries. Early on in his career, Goodman studied classical music with Franz Schoepp and then later with the famed Reginald Kell, a world-renowned British classical clarinetist who performed with the London Philharmonic and the Royal Philharmonic. Kell completely renovated Goodman's technique---which enabled Goodman to extend his musicality to bridge jazz and classical music. The "King of Swing" continued performing until nearly the end of his life in both of these genres. In addition to his earliest classical endeavor, Bela Bartok's *Contrasts for Violin, Clarinet, and Piano* (1938), Goodman commissioned many other art music compositions, including Aaron Copland's *Concerto for Clarinet and String Orchestra with Harp and Piano* (1947), Leonard Bernstein's *Prelude, Fugues and Riffs* for solo clarinet and jazz ensemble (1949), and Morton Gould's *Derivation for Clarinet and Band* (1956). The pieces I am executing today are also works performed, premiered, or commissioned by the infamous "Professor".

Sonata for Clarinet and Piano

Leonard Bernstein dedicated his *Sonata for Clarinet and Piano*, his first published work, to the clarinetist David Oppenheim, whom Bernstein met at the legendary Tanglewood School. The *Sonata* originated as a composition written during his studies at the Curtis Institute. At a time when Bernstein had yet to decide in which direction to take his career, the *Sonata* emerged as a promise of great compositional endeavors to come. The lyrical first movement of the sonata displays stylistic characteristics akin to his teacher Paul Hindemith, and the second movement of this work flaunts the Americanistic jazzy syncopations one fully expects of Bernstein and which presents us with a foreshadowing of his exhilarating and wildly acclaimed *West Side Story*.

Fantasy for Clarinet and Piano

Luke Rosen is a professional musician and composer who is responsible for this stimulating new work. Written with the styles and tastes of Goodman in mind, *Fantasy for Clarinet and Piano* is an exciting, innovative piece composed for Alanna Cushing and myself. I am grateful to Mr. Rosen for lending his musical talents to this undertaking and extending to me the opportunity to perform this work. Goodman never experienced the gratification of playing Rosen's music, but his memory is sewn throughout.

Send in the Clowns

Send in the Clowns captivates audiences even today as the most stunning work from Stephen Sondheim's critically acclaimed musical *A Little Night Music*. Although the song features a beautifully gentle melody, subtle yet compelling rhythmic syncopations, and a gorgeously thick harmonic underpinning, what Frank Sinatra termed "a perfect marriage of words and music" is truly revealed in the ironic lyrics of the song. Here is a sampling:

Just when I'd stopped opening doors,
Finally knowing the one that I wanted was yours,
Making my entrance again with my usual flair,
Sure of my lines,
No one is there.
Don't you love farce?
My fault, I fear.
I thought that you'd want what I want.
Sorry, my dear.
But where are the clowns?
Quick, send in the clowns.
Don't bother, they're here.

Several years prior to the opening scene of *A Little Night Music*, the attractive, young actress Desirée has one of her many sexual encounters with a man named Fredrik, who falls madly in love with her. He proposes to Desirée, but she declines. They part ways, but she is secretly pregnant with Fredrik's child. Later, Fredrik marries another beautiful young lady---even though, by this point, he is much older. Desirée and Fredrik meet once again in Act I when he is introduced to her daughter, the suggestively named Fredrika. Fredrik explains to Desirée that even though he is now married to his lovely young wife, she refuses to consummate the marriage and insists on preserving her virginity. Desirée and Fredrik then rekindle their relationship. In Act II, Desirée realizes her deep love for Fredrik and proposes to him in order to rescue him from his marriage. He declines her offer and declares his commitment to his wife. Fredrik apologizes for misleading Desirée and departs swiftly, whilst Desirée is left with her intense regret and sadness. She is mad at herself, her life, and her choices and then performs the beautifully ironic *Send in the Clowns*.

Premiere Rhapsodie

Dedicated to the French clarinet professor Prosper Mimart, Claude Debussy's *Premiere Rhapsodie* originated as a set of two works composed as "test" pieces for the 1910 Prix de Rome competition at the elite Paris Conservatoire. Although Debussy was unabashed about criticizing the conservatory's harmony method, system of public competitions, and even the Prix de Rome itself, he delighted in the impressive caliber of its woodwind students. Debussy originally composed the *Premiere Rhapsodie* as a piece for clarinet and piano but later reworked the accompaniment into an orchestral setting. A painstakingly sluggish worker for the entirety of his life, Debussy racked up an immense debt which forced the reclusive composer into touring Europe as a conductor and pianist from 1907 through 1914 despite his deteriorating health and marriage. By the time Debussy reached St. Petersburg, he was baffled by "the consternation into which the *Rhapsodie* has plunged the Russians. [This] seems to me rather excessive, especially as this piece is one of the easiest on the ear I've ever written...! Are they now regarding the clarinet as an instrument of revolutionary propaganda?"

Contrasts for violin, clarinet and piano

On January 9, 1939, Goodman premiered the *Rhapsody for Clarinet and Violin* by Hungarian composer Bela Bartók at a Carnegie Hall recital with famed violinist Joseph Szigeti, who had commissioned the piece. Szigeti requested pianist and composer Bela Bartok for a work that Szigeti, Bartok, and Goodman could perform as a group. Szigeti even went as far as providing Bartok with recordings of various jazz trios featuring Goodman to indicate the clarinetist's stylistic preferences. In response, Bartok provided a three-movement work, which extended twice Szigeti's requested duration and also explored the innate "contrasts" in the timbral differences of the instruments as opposed to blending the sonorities into a homogenous ensemble.

This recital is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Master of Arts degree in performance. Mr. Rhodes is a student in the clarinet studio of Dr. Don Williams and formerly studied with Dr. Ann Marie Bingham.

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