

*SHEPHERD SCHOOL
SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA*

LARRY RACHLEFF, Music Director

Friday, October 30, 1998

8:00 p.m.

Stude Concert Hall

RICE UNIVERSITY

the
Shepherd
School
of Music

PROGRAM

Ekklesia (1996) (Premiere)

Justin McCarthy
(b. 1973)

Marlon Chen, conductor

Till Eulenspiegels Lustige Streiche, Op. 28

Richard Strauss
(1864-1949)

Alastair Willis, conductor

INTERMISSION

Suite from "The Miraculous Mandarin"

Béla Bartók
(1881-1945)

In consideration of the performers and members of the audience, please check audible paging devices with the ushers and silence audible timepieces. The taking of photographs and use of recording equipment are prohibited.

SHEPHERD SCHOOL SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Violin I

Heather LeDoux,
concertmaster
Nathaniel Farny
Caroline Pliszka
Fia Mancini
Melinda Graves
Mary Katrina Pierson
Anne Huter
Alessandra Jennings
Brinna Brinkerhoff
Azure Abuirmeileh
Jonathan Godfrey
Emma Philips
Abigail Karr
Sasha Callahan
Michael Arlt
Ivan Hodge

Violin II

Caroline Semanchik,
principal
Martha Walvoord
Tammie Gallup
Erin Bowman
Yuel Yawney
Jocelyn Adelman
Ari Maron
Stephan Ellner
Gosia Leska
Jessica Gagne
Kristi Helberg
Alda Schwonke
Chaerim Kim
Linling Hsu
Pamela Yu
Philip Estrera

Viola

Mai Motobuchi,
principal
Anna Bach-y-Rita
Daniel Sweaney
Carol Gimbel
Kimberly Buschek
Emily Rome
Tawnya Popoff
David Filner
Eva Sheie

Viola (cont.)

Yuko Watanabe
Miranda Sielaff
Misha Galaganov

Cello

Erin Breene,
principal
Katherine Schultz
Emma Sponaugle
Jing Li
Karen Maddox
Jacob Charkey
Anne Francis
Liz Lee
Elizabeth Glennon
Clara Lee
Sara Stalnaker
Livia Stanese

Double Bass

David Molina,
principal
Antoine Plante
Matthew Medlock
Erin Bewsher
Dacy Gillespie
Lander McLees
Kjetil Laukholm
Holly Butenhoff
Juan Carlos Peña

Flute

Martha Councill
Kirstin Eade
Lisa Jelle
Caroline Kung
Merrie Siegel

Piccolo

Kirstin Eade
Caroline Kung
Merrie Siegel

Oboe

Margo Carlson
Julie Gramolini
Yuh-Pey Lin
Omri Raveh
Rosemary Yiameos

English Horn

Omri Raveh

Clarinet

Carrie Budelman
Angella Hedrick
Rochelle Oddo
Alexander Potiomkin

E-flat Clarinet

Alexander Potiomkin

Bass Clarinet

Rochelle Oddo
Molly Mayfield

Bassoon

Glenn Einschlag
Shawn Jones
Damian Montaña
Amy Yang

Contrabassoon

Glenn Einschlag
Shawn Jones
Damian Montaña

Horn

Jennifer Aynilian
Kristina Crago
Jeffrey Garza
Miguel Garza
Austin Hitchcock
Eric Reed
Jeffrey Rogers
Shane Smith
Martina Snell
Jason Snider

Trumpet

David Dash
Kenneth Easton
Thomas Hooten
Jamie Kent
Arthur Murray
Brian Seitz

Trombone

Paul Fleischman
Kathryn Giorgio

Trombone (cont.)

Karen Marston
Jeremy Moeller
Patrick Raichart

Bass Trombone

Karen Marston
Michael Palmer

Tuba

Jacob Cameron
Carson McTeer

Harp

Laurie Meister

Piano

László Kenéz
Beverly Min

Celeste

Beverly Min

Timpani and Percussion

John Address
Andrew Buchanan
Adam Green
Patrick Kelly
Trent Petrunia
Tobie Wilkinson

Orchestra Manager

Martin Merritt

Orchestra Librarian

Karen Slotter

Stage Assistants

Jacob Cameron
Thomas Hooten
Karen Marston
Andrew Raciti

Library Assistants

Jonathan Burnstein
Holly Butenhoff
Mary Katrina Pierson
Damian Montaña
Matthew Medlock
Ayëla Seidelman

WINDS, BRASS, AND PERCUSSION LISTED ALPHABETICALLY.

STRING SEATING CHANGES WITH EACH CONCERT.

PROGRAM NOTES

Ekklesia, the Greek word for “cathedral,” is a piece in one movement. The work is comprised of three sections: the first is slow and contrapuntal; the second is faster, percussive, and more rhythmic; the third is again slow, but more static, and reminiscent of the first.

The composition is set for full orchestra, including winds and brass in threes, two percussionists, and piano. Two musical ideas pervade the work and serve as its foundation. The first is an original motive, introduced early on by the trumpet. The second idea, which contributed heavily to the selection of a religious title, is the hymn tune **For The Beauty of The Earth**. This idea can initially be heard in the solo cello within the first section of the piece, subsequently in the tubular bells, and finally in the strings in the last section of the work, leading to its conclusion.

— Note by the composer

Composer Justin McCarthy, currently a doctoral candidate at Boston University, received his Bachelor of Music degree magna cum laude in Piano Performance and Composition from The Shepherd School of Music in 1996, concurrent with a Master's degree in Composition. Mr. McCarthy's teachers have included Paul Cooper, Lukas Foss, Bruce MacCombie, and Ellsworth Milburn. His works have recently been performed on the Longy Faculty Artist Series in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and at St. Mark's School in Southborough, Massachusetts. Mr. McCarthy has studied piano with Robert Roux and C. Dean Shank, and is presently employed as Music Director at First Church Unitarian in Littleton, Massachusetts, where he serves as organist and choirmaster. Internationally, his compositions have been heard in the Czech Republic, Ireland, and the Philippines.

Till Eulenspiegels Lustige Streiche, Op. 28 . . . Richard Strauss

Were it not for the poor reception of Strauss's first opera *Guntram*, the work we know as **Till Eulenspiegels Lustige Streiche** (Till Eulenspiegel's Merry Pranks) may very well have been an opera. Strauss had been searching for suitable librettos as early as October of 1893, finally deciding on the story of Till Eulenspiegel that November. However, the prospect of a full-scale opera on the subject presented significant difficulties for Strauss particularly in the characterization of Till. In a letter to an unknown recipient, Strauss says of Till, “the folk tale offers only a joker, who is too shallow for the stage — on the other hand, giving the character more depth and making him more misanthropic creates problems of its own.” Ultimately the problem would be resolved by portraying Till through the sounds of the orchestra and letting the audience decide for themselves.

When asked by conductor Franz Wüllner for an elucidation of the plot behind the piece, Strauss replied by telegram, “Analysis impossible for me. All wit spent in notes.” Strauss would later provide more detail into the specific events portrayed in **Till Eulenspiegels Lustige Streiche**, and based on his later writings as well as the folk tales and children's stories featuring Till, the program of the work can be seen as follows:

Once upon a time, there was a knavish fool named Till Eulenspiegel. He was a wicked goblin always up to no good. Till hops on a horse and rides through the town of Schilda, overturning market carts and angering the ladies of the town. After successfully escaping, Till hides in a mouse's hole. Till returns to town, this time disguised as a priest and “oozing unction and morality.” Till is discovered, and because of his mockery of religion, he suddenly

begins to fear his own death. Till takes to wooing women, exchanging dainty courtesies with the ladies. But when his advances are ignored, Till vows revenge on the human race. The philistine professors enter, with whom Till engages in confusing rhetoric through the issuing of his theses. Finally after much argument, Till ends the debate with a grimace for the professors. His pranks increase at a whirlwind rate, becoming both more brazen and more malicious. Finally, Till is put on trial, during which at first, he whistles to himself nonchalantly, later pleading for mercy. His pleas are ignored and Till is sentenced to death and hanged. At this point Strauss inserts a short epilogue where the "once-upon-a-time" music from the opening reappears, before giving way to a triumphant return of Till's motive, signifying Till's resurrection and immortality.

Perhaps more than any other, *Till Eulenspiegel* ensured Strauss's popularity throughout Europe. The work was greeted with almost universal praise from even the harshest of critics. However, Till's sense of puckish humor would later be misrepresented by members of the New German School as a broad-based attack on musical conservatism, a view that was sure to have angered the composer.

— Note by Robert Elfline

Suite from "The Miraculous Mandarin" Béla Bartók

In 1917 after the success of Béla Bartók's first ballet *The Wooden Prince*, plans were being made at the Budapest Opera to revive his much-neglected opera *Bluebeard's Castle*. In order to create a Bartók triple-bill, the composer hastily accepted a commission for an opera with a libretto to be written by Sándor Bródy, one of the foremost playwrights in Hungary. Bródy would prove to be a less than able collaborator, however, allowing the commission to remain unfulfilled for more than a year. Considering this amount of time, and Bartók's desire to have a completed work for the Budapest Opera as soon as possible, it is not surprising then, that the composer would turn to other sources for a subject.

How Bartók arrived at the choice of *The Miraculous Mandarin*, a ballet-pantomime in one act, is unclear and unusual given its controversial themes of sex and violence. The libretto, by the young Hungarian playwright Menyhért Lengyel, had been published in the January 1, 1917, issue of *Nyugat* (West), a radical literary journal of which Bartók was a subscriber. Another subscriber to the journal was Ernő von Dohnányi, who may have urged the composer to set a pantomime to music, considering the fact that Dohnányi's wife was emerging as one of the foremost pantomime actresses in Europe. Whatever the reason, Bartók began work upon receipt of Lengyel's permission in March of 1918. The story is as follows:

Three thugs have recruited Mimi, a prostitute, to lure unsuspecting men into her room where the thugs will emerge from hiding, beat the men and steal their money. Mimi lures the first victim, an aging dandy who fancies himself a lover. When he makes a pass at Mimi, she inquires if he has any money. When he says that he doesn't, the thugs appear and drive the old man away. Mimi lures a second victim to the room, a young student. After discovering that he also has no money, the thugs again drive him away. Finally Mimi lures a well-dressed Mandarin to the room. At first, she is startled by his strange demeanor and cold, unblinking stare. She dances for him, gradually building up to an intensely provocative display. The Mandarin undergoes a sudden transformation and begins to chase Mimi about the room. The thugs appear and pin him down on the bed. After stealing his money and jewelry, they smother the Mandarin with the bedclothes. However, the Mandarin is not dead. The thugs catch him again and stab him, but the

Mandarin does not die. Finally, they string him up by the chandelier to hang him, but the Mandarin just hangs there cast in an eerie greenish glow. It is only after he is cut down and Mimi gives herself to him that his wounds begin to bleed and the Mandarin dies.

Due to its content, the work remains one of the most controversial in the literature. It was given twice in Prague and Cologne (where the conductor was officially censured following the performance) but not even attempted in Budapest until 1931 for a celebration of Bartók's fiftieth birthday. However, following the dress rehearsal, the work was officially banned, a policy that prevented another revival in 1941. The work would not be heard in Budapest until 1946, a year after Bartók's death. In an effort to salvage something from his efforts, Bartók arranged a concert suite from the ballet in 1928, which is the version on tonight's program.

— Note by Robert Elfline

BIOGRAPHIES

MARLON CHEN is currently in his first year as a graduate conducting student of Larry Rachleff at The Shepherd School of Music. A native of Taiwan, Mr. Chen immigrated to the United States at the age of eight. A Houston resident for sixteen years, he attended the High School for the Performing and Visual Arts. He studied clarinet at the University of Michigan and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in music in 1995.

ALASTAIR WILLIS received his Bachelor of Arts (Honors) degree in music at Bristol University in England where he first began conducting. He conducted the university's chamber choir and chamber orchestra in successive years. From 1993 to 1995 he gained valuable experience as Musical Director of the Ripieno Choir and as assistant conductor of several youth orchestras in and around London. In 1995 he was awarded the Salveston Baton prize. Last year he attended the Conductors' Institute of South Carolina as a Fellow, and he was also the runner-up in the Sixth British Reserve Insurance Conducting Competition. His most recent achievement was being awarded one of three conducting fellowships to study at the Aspen Music Festival this past summer. Mr. Willis is currently in his third year as a graduate conducting student of Larry Rachleff at The Shepherd School of Music.

UPCOMING ORCHESTRA CONCERTS

Sunday, November 1, 8:00 p.m. - SHEPHERD SCHOOL CHAMBER ORCHESTRA
Larry Rachleff, conductor; Marlon Chen, guest conductor
PROGRAM: Ives **The Unanswered Question**; Beethoven **Symphony No. 1 in C Major, Op. 21**; and Joan Tower **Flute Concerto** (Christina Jennings, soloist).
Stude Concert Hall. Free admission.

Friday, December 4, 8:00 p.m. - SHEPHERD SCHOOL SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
Larry Rachleff, conductor; Alastair Willis, guest conductor
PROGRAM: Wagner **Overture to "Rienzi"**; Falla **Suite No. 2 from "The Three-Cornered Hat"**; and Brahms **Piano Concerto No. 1 in D minor, Op. 15** (Yoshikazu Nagai, soloist). Stude Concert Hall. Free admission.

Sunday, December 6, 8:00 p.m. - SHEPHERD SCHOOL CHAMBER ORCHESTRA
Larry Rachleff, conductor; Alastair Willis, guest conductor
PROGRAM: Webern **Concerto, Op. 24**; Haydn **Cello Concerto in C Major, Hob. VIIb:1** (Desmond Hoebig, soloist); and Schubert **Death and The Maiden** (arranged for string orchestra by Gustav Mahler).
Stude Concert Hall. Free admission.