



A CONCERT OF WORKS BY

Karim Al-Zand

William Bolcom

Arthur Gottschalk

Arvo Pärt

Wednesday, October 3, 2001

8:00 p.m.

Lillian H. Duncan Recital Hall

RICE UNIVERSITY

the
Shepherd
School
of Music

PROGRAM

Mozart – Adagio (1992, rev. 1997)

Arvo Pärt
(b. 1935)

The Concord Trio

Andrew Jennings, violin (guest)

Norman Fischer, cello

Jeanne Kierman, piano

Sonatina Casada (2001) (Premiere)

Arthur Gottschalk
(b. 1952)

Two Birds

Flirtations

Two Dancers

Leone Buyse, flute

Michael Webster, clarinet

Suite for Violin and Violoncello (1997)

William Bolcom
(b. 1938)

Prelude

With energy

Stately, slow

Very fast and skittish

Street Dances

Andrew Jennings, violin

Norman Fischer, cello

INTERMISSION

Parizade and the Singing Tree (2001) (Premiere)

Karim Al-Zand
(b. 1970)

a folk tale for narrator and ensemble

*Part I. In which Parizade seeks the Singing Tree
and hears the Dervish's warning.*

*Part II. In which Parizade climbs the mountain
and endures the travails of the ascent.*

*Part III. In which Parizade hears the wondrous
song of the Singing Tree.*

*Part IV. In which the music of the Singing Tree
proves to be magical.*

Randolph Lacy, narrator (guest)

Leone Buyse, flute

Norman Fischer, cello

Thomas LeGrand, clarinet (guest)

Jeanne Kierman, piano

Kenneth Goldsmith, violin

Richard Brown, percussion

Michael Webster, conductor

PROGRAM NOTES

Mozart – Adagio Arvo Pärt

Arvo Pärt, born in Paide, Estonia, and now living in Berlin, has always been a composer apart. Perhaps it would not seem unusual for a composer in the 1960s to use serial or aleatory (chance) techniques, but in the Soviet-dominated country of Estonia, it was unusual indeed. By the mid-1970s, through the efforts of Alfred Schnittke and other modernist masters, a certain glasnost crept into new Soviet music – but Pärt had already moved on. As his country was rejoining the Western music scene, its leading composer seemed to be withdrawing from it to an inner world of spiritual explorations, characterized by centuries-old harmonic modes and sounds and by a quest for simplicity, stability, and peace. In recent years, however, listeners all over the world have discovered his music and joined him on that quest.

The Helsinki Festival commissioned Pärt's *Adagio* for the Kalichstein-Laredo-Robinson Trio, which gave the first performance on September 6, 1992, in Helsinki. The work is in memory of the Russian violinist Oleg Kogan (1946-1990), a close friend of the composer and an admired interpreter of Mozart. When he revised the piece in 1997, Pärt changed the title to *Mozart – Adagio*, acknowledging that he began with a composition by Mozart: the second movement of his F major piano sonata, K. 280.

This music by the eighteen-year-old Mozart achieves profound expression with only a few notes, a lament in F minor following the sonata's emotionally ambiguous first movement in the major key. The sonata's second movement is in concise sonata form, with the briefest of development sections and no coda. Its themes consist mainly of a melancholy pastoral theme in siciliano rhythm and a more comforting one in A-flat major. In his reworking, Pärt frames Mozart's original at beginning and end with hushed, dissonant string chords, but otherwise preserves its structure bar for bar, while "hearing" the music in his own way.

— Note by David Wright

Sonatina Casada Arthur Gottschalk

Sonatina Casada (literally "married sonatina") was written in 2001 for virtuosos Leone Buyse (flute) and Michael Webster (clarinet), who are married and perform internationally with pianist Robert Moeling as The Webster Trio. The three movements are entitled "Two Birds," "Flirtations," and "Two Dancers." The first movement explores extremely tight homophony and various parallelisms, the second is highly contrapuntal and throws melody and accompaniment rapidly back and forth between the two instruments. The third movement is energetic and rhythmic, and visits some Latin dance forms within its rondo-like architecture.

— Note by the composer

Arthur Gottschalk is currently Professor of Composition and Theory and Chair of the Composition and Theory Department at The Shepherd School of Music.

Suite for Violin and Violoncello William Bolcom

Suite for Violin and Violoncello was written at the request of Sergiu Luca for himself and cellist Rolf Dieltiens; Sergiu told me not to spare the players — this is a bravura piece for two virtuosi. The form alludes in a general way to the Baroque dance suite. The Suite has been performed often by the above players as well as by Andrew Jennings and Norman Fischer, who handle the uncompromisingly difficult passagework with equal panache.

— Note by the composer

William Bolcom is currently the Ross Lee Finney Distinguished University Professor of Music and the Chairman of the Composition Department at The University of Michigan.

Parizade and the Singing Tree Karim Al-Zand

The narrated text for *Parizade and the Singing Tree* is based on a story from the collection of folk tales known as “The Thousand Nights and A Night” (Alf laylah wa-laylah) — or the so-called “Arabian Nights.” *Parizade’s* tale is not one of the better-known fables in the collection, and it is often omitted in popular published versions of the work. The provenance of the story, as with many of the tales in the collection, is unclear. One of the earliest appearances of the *Singing Tree* is in Sir Richard Burton’s encyclopedic edition of the “Nights,” a translation which runs to some sixteen volumes.

As is common in the long, episodic tales of the collection, *Parizade’s* encounter with the *Singing Tree* is a story embedded within a larger narrative, one entitled variously by translators as “The Sisters Who Envied their Cadette,” or “The Talking Bird, the Singing Tree, and the Golden Water.” I have adapted the story somewhat for the present work. The language used is largely my own, though I have borrowed the archaic tone (and a quaint phrase here and there) from the Burton translation and those of Edward William Lane and Jonathan Scott (1863 and 1909).

The music evolves in tandem with *Parizade’s* exploits: sometimes it propels her forward, at other times it is a reaction to the predicaments she faces. Recurring characters and events are given musical expression, and these motives reinforce, foreshadow, and interpret the story of the young adventurer.

— Note by the composer

Karim Al-Zand is currently Visiting Assistant Professor of Composition and Theory at The Shepherd School of Music.

UPCOMING SYZYGY CONCERT

David Starobin, guitar (guest) George Crumb, percussion (guest)

Program: Crumb - *Mundus Canis* (1998) (five humoresques for guitar and percussion); and works for solo guitar by Elliott Carter, Simon Bainbridge, William Bland, Bryan Johansen, David Liptak, Dusan Bogdanovic, and others.

Friday, November 16, 8:00 p.m. Duncan Recital Hall, Free admission

