

*SHEPHERD SCHOOL
CHAMBER ORCHESTRA*

LARRY RACHLEFF, music director

SUSAN LORETTE DUNN, soprano

GWEN SEATON, bassoon

Thursday, April 22, 2010

8:00 p.m.

Stude Concert Hall

RICE UNIVERSITY

the
Shepherd
School
of Music

PROGRAM

**Concertino for Bassoon
and Orchestra, Op. 12**

Ferdinand David
(1810-1873)

Gwen Seaton, soloist
Cristian Măcelaru, conductor

From River Songs (1992)

Betty Beath
(b. 1932)

River - Mother, River - Child

*Young woman by the river, arms extended, swings her child;
suspended, he admires the ferry, painted nursery-blue and white.
The child's eyes reflect the river, images of cloud and sky;
mangroves share a dream of tides, while the morning floods
with light.*

Boy and the River

*I come here in the mornings before school, and in the afternoons.
Today I found a sand crab underneath that rock. I put him back.
The river looks like scales of fishes, don't you think? Or sand.
The ripples look like sand patterns at low tide. Or the clouds, some-
times. When it gets dark, the river bank has many golden eyes.*

River Nocturne

*Only the river, lipping, lapping, empty dinghy rocking. Sinister
deeds happen here. I smell fear. No mom, but I've never seen the
evening star so piercing. It is like the eye of Cyclops, watching.*

Swift Tide

*Swift tide gleaming with last light, surges down stream to the
bay spinnakers are gathered in like seabirds' wings. Frangipani
scented breeze ruffles water, tousles leaves, the city fades, then
like a torch ignites.*

Susan Lorette Dunn, soloist

INTERMISSION

**Symphony No. 41 in C Major,
K. 551 "Jupiter"**

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
(1756-1791)

*Allegro vivace
Andante cantabile
Menuetto - Allegretto
Molto allegro*

*The reverberative acoustics of Stude Concert Hall magnify the slightest
sound made by the audience. Your care and courtesy will be appreciated.
The taking of photographs and use of recording equipment are prohibited.*

SHEPHERD SCHOOL CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

Violin I

Tema Watstein,
concertmaster
Myoung-Ji Jang
Chloé Trevor
Xiaoxiao Qiang
Luke Hsu
Heather Kufchak
Joanna Park

Violin II

SoJin Kim,
principal
Jude Ziliak
Tracy Wu
Jacqueline Murchie
Mark Kagan
Tara Slough
Carmen Abelson

Viola

Marissa Winship,
principal
Amy Mason
Roberto Papi
Alicia Valoti
Blake Turner
Rainey Weber

Cello

Cherry Kim,
principal
Micah Claffey

Cello (cont.)

Lachezar Kostov
Rosanna Butterfield
Eva Lymenstull

Double Bass

Patrick Staples,
principal
Nicholas Cathcart
Amalia Bandy

Flute

Garrett Hudson
Aaron Perdue
Henry Williford

Oboe

Clara Blood
Kristin Kall
Michael McGowan
Erica Overmyer
Emily Snyder

English Horn

Clara Blood

Clarinet

Erika Cikraji
Daniel Goldman
Jared Hawkins
Natalie Parker

Bassoon

Tracy Jacobson

Bassoon (cont.)

Galina Kiep
Matthew McDonald
Jeffrey Nesrsta

Horn

Tyler Holt
Matthew Muehl-Miller
Nicholas Wolny
Alena Zidlicky

Trumpet

Kristy Eagan
Roberto Lares

Harp

Juliana Beckel

Piano and Celeste

Christina Giuca

Percussion

Aaron Guillory
Rebecca Hook
Christian Slagle

Orchestra Manager and Librarian

Kaaren Fleisher

Production Manager

Mandy Billings

Assistant Production Manager

Francis Schmidt

STRING SEATING CHANGES WITH EACH CONCERT.
WINDS AND BRASS LISTED ALPHABETICALLY.

PROGRAM NOTES

Concertino for Bassoon and Orchestra, Op. 12 . . . Ferdinand David

Ferdinand David, born in Hamburg, Germany, was known mainly for his impressive career as a violinist. A close friend of Felix Mendelssohn's, he was appointed to the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra as concertmaster, a position he held from 1835 until his death. During Mendelssohn's time as Music Director of the Gewandhaus Orchestra, he was inspired by David to write his famous **Violin Concerto in E Minor, Op. 64**. David kept in close correspondence regarding the composition's development and premiered the work in 1845 to a wildly enthusiastic crowd. As a composition student, David studied with Louis Spohr, who provided a link with the progressive Mannheim School of the late eighteenth century. While his most famous work is the **Concertino for Trombone and Orchestra**, David also wrote an opera, two symphonies, several chamber works, and many *Lieder*.

The Concertino for Bassoon and Orchestra is a Romantic Era piece written in two movements. The opening Andante cantabile embodies the graceful strength of a male ballet dancer, giving the soloist the opportunity to sing freely while retaining great control. Part of the charm of this first section is provided by a variety of interjections, their nature ranging from coy to imploring to forceful. After a climatic high note, cadenza, and tender coda, the Andante ends and the orchestra introduces the Presto agitato, full of tension and comic relief. The soloist takes on the persona of a lively tenor in a Rossini-like opera, almost interrupting the tutti with an explosive entrance yet remaining light in character throughout. While most of the Presto is full of this exuberant, lively spirit, there are also moments where the more sensual nature of the Andante is recalled, bringing the music to a near standstill before the phrase has ended. As the finish approaches, a final confirming statement leads into a coda, even more agile than the opening presto and pushing forward to a conclusion through rising chromatics. Though not a piece to be taken too seriously by the listener (or the performer), David's **Concertino** is enjoyed for its charm, grace, and light humor, making it a worthy addition to the solo repertoire for the bassoon.

— Note by Gwen Seaton

River Songs Betty Beath

River Songs is a cycle of seven songs, a setting of a poem sequence, **The River**, by Queensland poet Jena Woodhouse. There are two arrangements of *River Songs*. The first, for soprano voice and piano, was completed in 1991; the second, for soprano voice and orchestra, was completed in 1992.

The idea for *River Songs* developed out of the poet's awareness of the river and her response to its presence in her life. She says: "Living and working close to the river has given me a sense of how the character of Brisbane's heart and many of its suburbs have been shaped and colored by their interaction with the river."

The river in this cycle is presented as a physical presence. Its character is identified by swelling tides, twisted mangroves, light, birds that swoop, busy ferries and the people that ride in them. It carries connotations too, of life itself... the miraculous continuity of time and generations. Although events and moments of an individual life may appear distinct from other lives, that life ultimately becomes part of an onward flow. The river becomes an image of both change and continuity, and of time, which can embody past, present, and future in a single moment. Jena Woodhouse expresses these thoughts and feelings in her poems. I had an immediate response to them, perhaps because I too live by the Brisbane river... a river that winds through our city and gives it much of its character.

The work was given its first international performance at the Johann-Sebastian-Bach-Gymnasium, Mannheim, on November 29, 1996, in *Postkoloniale Klänge Musik aus Australien, Kanada, und Neuseeland*. *River Songs* has also been released on JAD/EMI with Janet Delpratt as soloist and the Queensland Symphony Orchestra conducted by Richard Mills.

I am particularly pleased that the first American performance of *River Songs* will be given by Susan Lorette Dunn. I first met Susan when she was a student of mine at St. Margaret's Girls' School in Brisbane, Australia. Over the years we have developed a long standing friendship and musical collaborations in which Susan has recorded and premiered much of my vocal music.

The four songs from *River Songs* chosen for this performance are: *River-Mother*, *River-Child*; *Boy and the River*; *River Nocturne*; and *Swift Tide*.

— Note by the composer

Financially distressed, overworked, ill, and directed down the path that would lead to his death three years later, Mozart composed his three final symphonies within a period of six weeks during the summer of 1788. Due to fewer commissions, publications, and opportunities for performance, Mozart's income in 1788 was the lowest it had been in seven years, sixty-six percent lower than his best years. Indeed, Mozart never again advertised a public performance in Vienna, nor did he write another symphony after the forty-first. Dated in Mozart's thematic catalog for August 10, it was probably intended for later performance at the Trattnerhof Casino or on a planned trip to London. The exact date of its premiere is unknown, although it probably took place in Leipzig, Frankfurt, or Vienna.

The revolutionary aspects of the "Jupiter," its grandiose proportions, elaborate developments, and harmonic instabilities met with a somewhat hesitant public. Conventional Vienna accused Mozart of self-indulgence, conceit, and of composing too scientifically. From its lukewarm reception, the symphony's popularity steadily grew; by 1891, Mozart's "Jupiter" and Requiem were listed among the most frequently performed works in Europe.

The symphony is filled with the dotted rhythms and figures of the French court, used extensively in eighteenth-century operas, cantatas, oratorios, and liturgical works to represent nobility or godliness. Perhaps it was this quality which inspired the London patron Johann Peter Salomon to dub Mozart's forty-first symphony the "Jupiter," a nickname which first appeared on concert programs in 1819.

The personification of Mozart's genius is displayed in the last movement, his unwitting farewell address to the symphonic genre. Its first theme (*do-re-fa-mi*) is a familiar motive derived from Gregorian chant and found in works from Palestrina to Brahms. Mozart used this melody in several of his works. It can also be found in his *Missa brevis, K. 192*, in which his treatment of the theme exactly mirrors its use in the "Jupiter" Finale. Mozart's contemporaries reproached him for "[pushing] things too far" in this movement. For one thing, it is far more substantial than previous fourth movements and represents the heroic sum of all that musically preceded it in the vein of later works such as Beethoven's Fifth and Ninth Symphonies. More notably, however, Mozart transcended the aesthetics of the period through the use of fugal counterpoint. In the exposition, five themes are presented which recur throughout the development and recapitulation; in the coda, Mozart creates a fugato by combining them in five-part invertible counterpoint. This movement gathered the most criticism of the four; the public considered it "out-dated" rather than recognizing its genius. Contemporary critics called it "insolently fugal."

Whether it was Mozart's great turmoil or hope in 1788 which led him to cast aside the conventions of symphonic writing is not known. The symphony presents us with a portrait of Mozart at his creative apex; it is a work of such scope and consummation as to eclipse the musical bounds which framed it.

— Note by Angela Marroy

BIOGRAPHIES

SUSAN LORETTE DUNN studied at the Queensland Conservatorium of Music in Brisbane, Australia, graduating with both a Bachelor of Music degree and a Master's degree in Voice and Opera. She made her debut with Opera Australia performing the role of Tzeitel in *Fiddler On The Roof*. Her Opera Queensland debut was as Frasquita in *Carmen*. Other roles in her repertoire have included Lola in *Cavalleria Rusticana*, Dorabella in *Così fan Tutte*, Dido in *Dido and Aeneas*, Earth in *The Eighth Wonder*, Musetta in *La Bohème*, Valencienne in *The Merry Widow*, Mlle Dangeville in *Adriana Lecouvreur*, Stephano in *Romeo and Juliet*, Cornelia in *Damascus*, Laetitia

in *The Old Maid and the Thief*, *Lucy in The Beggars Opera*, *Catherine in Seeking True South*, and *The Water Nymph in The Golden Axe*.

Miss Dunn has performed and recorded as soloist with ABC Australia and with many of Australia's major orchestras. Miss Dunn has sung concert performances with the Rhode Island Philharmonic, the Chicago Philharmonic, the San Antonio Symphony, the Kansas City Symphony, the El Paso Symphony, the Dayton Symphony, the Grand Teton Music Festival, Connecticut's Summer Music Festival, the Interlochen Music Festival, the Sunflower Music Festival, the Cactus Pear Music Festival, the Martinů Philharmonic (Czech Republic), the Toledo Symphony, Camerata of San Antonio, and the Spokane Symphony. Miss Dunn has premiered Australian vocal works in concert both nationally and internationally, and has recorded Australian compositions for EMI/Jade. Composers David Heuser, Betty Beath, Stephen Lalor, and David Hush, have written for her.

Miss Dunn has won many major Australian singing competitions including the State and Commonwealth Finals of the ABC Instrumental and Vocal Competition, an Opera Foundation Scholarship, an Australia Council Grant for study in the United Kingdom, an Arts Queensland Personal Development Grant, and most recently a prestigious Winston Churchill Fellowship, where she worked with the New York Festival of Song in New York City.

Miss Dunn has performed major roles throughout Australia in musical theatre which include Leonard Bernstein's *Mass*, *Aspects of Love* (The Really Useful Company), *Baby* (Queensland Theatre Company), *Nonsense II* (Mixed Company), *Into The Woods* (Opera Australia), *Lucky Me* (Tropic Line Theatre Company), *A Little Night Music* (Sydney Theatre Company), *Kiss Me Kate* (Andrew McKinnon Concert Productions), and *Street Scene* (West End, London).

Additionally, she has both produced and performed as a soloist in concert performances of various musical theater productions in Australia.

Susan Lorette Dunn has been instrumental as an educator as well as maintaining her full-time performing career. She has held positions as lecturer at the Queensland Conservatorium of Music and the Queensland University of Technology in Brisbane, Australia, where she also devised programs in musical theatre skills. She is currently teaching and lecturing within the Voice and Opera Faculty of The Shepherd School of Music. Miss Dunn has also taught at the Opera Theatre and Music Festival of Lucca, Italy, and the Brevard Music Festival in North Carolina.

Susan Lorette Dunn currently lives in Houston with her husband, conductor Larry Rachleff, and their young son Sammy.

Born in Vancouver, Canada, GWEN SEATON is currently Second Bassoon with the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, a position she has held since 2009. She received her Master of Music degree earlier that year from The Shepherd School of Music, studying with renowned teacher Benjamin Kamins. Ms. Seaton also holds a Bachelor of Music degree from the University of British Columbia where she studied with Chris Millard and Jesse Read. Prior to joining the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, she played Second Bassoon with the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra during the 2007-08 season. She has also served as Acting Principal for the Vancouver Opera. Ms. Seaton was a member of the National Youth Orchestra of Canada (2002, 2003) and more recently attended the Music Academy of the West (2007, 2008), where she performed as a winner of their 2007 Concerto Competition. This evening Gwen Seaton performs as a winner of the 2009 Shepherd School Concerto Competition.



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