

*SHEPHERD SCHOOL
CHAMBER ORCHESTRA*

LARRY RACHLEFF, music director

MATTHEW McDONALD, bassoon

Saturday, February 12, 2011

8:00 p.m.

Stude Concert Hall

Celebrating 1975-2010

35 Years

THE SHEPHERD SCHOOL OF MUSIC RICE UNIVERSITY

PROGRAM

Overture to "Così fan tutte",
K. 588

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
(1756-1791)

Bassoon Concerto in B-Flat Major,
K. 191

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Allegro

Andante ma adagio

Rondo: Tempo di Menuetto

Matthew McDonald, soloist
Cristian Măcelaru, conductor

INTERMISSION

Symphony No. 40 in G Minor,
K. 550

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Molto allegro

Andante

Menuetto: Allegretto

Allegro assai

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

Ying Fu,
concertmaster
Andy Liang
Eric Siu
Sol Jin
Heather Kufchak
Jiyeon Min
Mark Kagan
Creston Herron

Violin II

Chloé Trevor,
principal
Hannah Dremann
Katrina Bobbs
Genevieve Micheletti
Alyssa Yank
Jacqueline Murchie
Brooke Bennett

Viola

Roberto Papi,
principal
Lynsey Anderson
Timothy Rowland
Kathleen Magill
Dawson White
Rainey Weber

Cello

Emma Bobbs,
principal
Clara Yang
Hellen Weberpal
Matthew Kufchak
Annamarie Reader

Double Bass

Emily Honeyman,
principal
Daniel Smith
Nicholas Browne

Flute

Henry Williford
Natalie Zeldin

Oboe

Erica Overmyer
Michelle Pan
Geoffrey Sanford

Clarinet

Daniel Goldman
Natalie Parker

Bassoon

Galina Kiep
Briana Lehman
Thomas Morrison
Jeffrey Nesrsta

Horn

Katharine Caliendo
Rebekah Daley
Nicholas Hartman
Nicholas Wolny

Trumpet

Alexander Fioto
Douglas Surber

Timpani

Ethan Ahmad

Orchestra Manager and Librarian

Kaaren Fleisher

Production Manager

Mandy Billings

Assistant Production Manager

Ryan Retartha
Francis Schmidt

STRING SEATING CHANGES WITH EACH CONCERT.

WINDS AND BRASS LISTED ALPHABETICALLY.

PROGRAM NOTES

Overture to "Così fan tutte", Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart K. 588

The last of three operas written in collaboration with librettist Lorenzo Da Ponte, *Così fan tutte* was commissioned by Emperor Joseph II following a successful 1789 revival of *Le nozze di Figaro* in Vienna. Now considered a masterpiece of comic invention, the work's depiction of feminine fickleness was considered risqué and ultimately dismissed as frivolous during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This was partially because the action occurs within a day: Don Alfonso, a philosopher and cynic, persuades friends Ferrando and Guglielmo to test the fidelity of the women they love, Dorabella and Fiordiligi, by pretending to go to war and then returning in disguise as Albanians to woo each other's fiancée. The officers succeed with the help of the sisters' clever chambermaid Despina and reveal their true identities at a wedding banquet. All is forgiven in a sextet hymn to reason and enlightenment.

The opera is notable for its unusually broad range of orchestral colors, as the viola and clarinet are more prominent than before, and trumpets replace horns to create a silvery, mercurial quality previously unexploited in Mozart's operas. In contrast to his earlier operas, the overture features a transparency that makes it suitable for a smaller string ensemble.

The brief Andante opens with solo oboe, its lyricism prefacing the motif—played piano and then forte—that will later accompany Don Alfonso's epigram: "Così fan tutte" (loosely translated, "All women behave like that"). The effervescent sonata-form Presto is characterized by flighty short motifs tossed among the woodwinds singly and in pairs, a chattering conversation based on Don Basilio's line "Così fan tutte le belle" from *Figaro's* Act I trio, "Cosa sento!" The spirited progress of the overture is interrupted by fierce forte chords from the full orchestra and inclusion of the woodwinds' sequence in minor-key forms. A short coda based on the opening of the Andante brings the overture to a close.

— Note by Avi DePano

Bassoon Concerto in B-Flat Major, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart K. 191

Mozart wrote his *Bassoon Concerto* in 1774 at the age of eighteen. Before this, he had already written an astounding number of works including string quartets, divertimenti, symphonies, and even operas. The *Bassoon Concerto* was the first concerto he composed for a woodwind instrument, and, in fact, the first concerto he had written for any instrument other than the piano. This beautiful work is prized among bassoonists for its simplicity and its use of the instrument. In it, you will hear great leaps in register, soaring tenor melodies, and exciting bravura technique, all of which fit the bassoon's unique characteristics well. That said, it is a challenging piece that, like all of Mozart's

works, requires poise and balance of phrasing in order to deliver the piece with its subtle genius unharmed.

The first movement is a playful "Allegro" that is marked by a pronounced opening statement and joyful conversation between the solo bassoon and orchestra. In the second movement, Mozart writes what seems to be, if it weren't for the bassoon, an aria from an opera. The third movement is unique because of its marking "Tempo di Menuetto". This tempo direction, instead of a more common "Allegro" or other traditional marking, is a delightful invitation from Mozart to play this movement as if it were music for a ballroom.

This piece belongs to a group of pieces that helped Mozart lay the groundwork and refine his musical language for the concertos and more widely known works he would write in his later years. Those pieces, such as the late piano concertos, the **Clarinet Concerto**, and the **Symphony No. 40** which is next on this program display the workings of a complete master.

— Note by Matthew McDonald

Symphony No. 40 in G Minor, K. 550 Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

The completion of his last three symphonies — **K. 543 in E-flat Major**, **K. 550 in G Minor**, and **K. 551 in C Major**, the "Jupiter" Symphony — within a two-month period during the summer of 1788 was a remarkable feat for Mozart that remains unexplained: none of them was written on commission. The **Symphony in G Minor** is Mozart's penultimate, utilizing a reduced orchestra without trumpets or timpani and a key associated with expressions of ardent melancholy, as in *Die Zauberflöte's* "Ach, ich fühl's, es ist verschwunden" and the **Viola Quintet, K. 516**. Admired by critics in its initial performances in France and Germany for its graceful slow movement and overall melancholy, only in the late nineteenth century was the symphony praised for its passionate character.

Without introduction, the violins plunge into the famous opening subject, urgent and uneasy, accompanied by divisi violas, and this sets the tone for the entire sonata-form movement. The contrasting theme in B-flat major is all pathos and beautifully scored in subtle dialogue between strings and woodwinds. The slow second movement, songlike and decorative in its melodic variations that are interrupted by repeated two-note Seufzer or sighs, recalls *Zauberflöte's* sweet Act I duet "Bei Männern, welche Liebe fühlen." The steely, brief Menuetto, despite the courtly grace usually typical of its genre, evokes a bitter struggle, with counterpoint taking precedent. Mozart's harmonic plan also creates pathos in the Menuetto's pastoral Trio, the only part of the symphony that settles on G major. The famously fiery finale reprises the dark G minor key of the first movement and establishes a constant opposition between strings and full orchestra. This movement's development stands out among all of Mozart's works, perhaps for its highest degree of tension and

even fury. A grand fugato breaks out, a struggle intensifying between strings and winds in sharper keys furthest removed from the tonic. The recapitulation and return to G minor is not so exhilarating as angst-ridden. The coda is extended by several measures that, unlike the first movement, betray no hint of appeasement or resignation. Except for a momentary interruption by the chromatic second subject, the music rages on relentlessly to the end.

– Note by Avi DePano

BIOGRAPHY

Matthew McDonald is the principal bassoonist of the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra. Prior to his appointment there, he was the co-principal bassoonist of the ProMusica Chamber Orchestra in Columbus, Ohio. Mr. McDonald has performed as soloist with the Huntsville Symphony Orchestra, the Curtis Symphony Orchestra, and the Cleveland Orchestra, and has been a part of festival orchestras including the Schleswig-Holstein Festival Orchestra, and the Tanglewood Music Center.

Born in Huntsville, Alabama, Matthew first began studying with Hunter Thomas, and later with Benjamin Kamins. A graduate of the Young Artist Program at the Cleveland Institute of Music and the Curtis Institute of Music, his other teachers include Barrick Stees, Bernard Garfield, and Daniel Matsukawa. Last year, Matthew pursued a Master of Music degree at the Shepherd School with Benjamin Kamins.

Along with soprano Susanna Phillips, Matthew co-founded Twickenham Fest, a chamber music festival in Huntsville, Alabama which had its inaugural summer in 2010. Besides playing the bassoon, Matt enjoys poetry and wine.

UPCOMING ORCHESTRA EVENTS

Saturday, Mar. 12, 8:00 p.m. – SHEPHERD SCHOOL SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
Larry Rachleff, conductor PROGRAM: Berlioz - *Overture to Benvenuto Cellini*;
Rachmaninoff - *Piano Concerto No. 3 in D Minor, Op. 30* (Andrew Staupe, soloist;
Cristian Măcelaru, conductor); and Lutoslawski - *Concerto for Orchestra*.
Stude Concert Hall. Free admission.

March 17, 19, 21, and 23 – SHEPHERD SCHOOL OPERA and SHEPHERD
SCHOOL CHAMBER ORCHESTRA present *Our Town* by Ned Rorem (Texas
premiere); Richard Bado, conductor; Mary Duncan, stage director. Wortham
Opera Theatre at the Shepherd School. All performances at 7:30 p.m. Admission
(general seating): \$12; students and senior citizens \$10.
For tickets call 713-348-8000.



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