

FACULTY RECITAL

THE WEBSTER TRIO

LEONE BUYSE, flute and piccolo

MICHAEL WEBSTER, clarinet

ROBERT MOELING, piano

Wednesday, September 7, 2011

8:00 p.m.

Lillian H. Duncan Recital Hall

RICE UNIVERSITY

the
Shepherd
School
of Music

PROGRAM

Eight Bohemian Sketches (1955) *Karel Husa*
(b. 1921)
Overture
Rondeau *arr. Michael Webster*
Melancholy Song
Solemn Procession
Elegy
Little Scherzo
Evening
Slovak Dance

Pavane, Op. 50 *Gabriel Fauré*
(1845-1924)
arr. Michael Webster

Performed in memory of Stanley Hasty (1920-2011)

Fantasy for flute and piano, Op. 79 *Gabriel Fauré*

Round Top Trio † *Anthony Brandt*
(b. 1961)
for flute, clarinet and piano (2003)

Dedicated to Alain Declert

INTERMISSION

Lord of the Heavens (2009)* † *Richard Toensing*
(b. 1940)

Hungarian Dance Suite No. 1 *Johannes Brahms*
(1833-1897)
No. 6: Vivace
No. 16: Con moto *arr. Michael Webster*
No. 14: Un poco andante
No. 13: Andante grazioso
No. 5: Allegro
No. 7: Allegretto
No. 21: Vivace

**premiere*

† written for the Webster Trio

The reverberative acoustics of Duncan Recital 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.

PROGRAM NOTES

Eight Bohemian Sketches Husa - Webster

After music studies in his native Prague, Karel Husa was awarded a French government grant for study in Paris, where his composition teachers were Nadia Boulanger and Arthur Honegger. In 1953 he emigrated from Paris to the USA, joining the music faculty of Cornell University in Ithaca, New York. His **String Quartet No. 1** (1948) brought him international recognition, and he later received numerous awards, including a Guggenheim Fellowship and a Pulitzer Prize. His catalog contains many chamber and keyboard works as well as music for chorus and orchestra. Two works for wind ensemble have become classics for that medium: **Apotheosis of this Earth** (1970) and **Music for Prague** (1968) which, along with its orchestrated version, has become his most-performed work.

Eight Bohemian Sketches was originally composed for piano, four hands and titled **Eight Czech Duets**. Written in Ithaca in 1955, these pieces extend the literature for an instrumental combination that, although popular in the 18th and 19th centuries, had essentially been abandoned. Karel Husa further intended the pieces to serve an educational purpose for young performers. Unusual rhythmic patterns and melodies derived from Czech folk music characterize the work, which received its premiere in the spring of 1956 at Cornell University. In 2002 Michael Webster, veteran transcriber of piano four-hand music for flute, clarinet, and piano, discussed the possibility of transcription with the composer and received his enthusiastic approval. **Eight Bohemian Sketches** was premiered by the Webster Trio at Ithaca College on July 2, 2003 with the composer in attendance, and has been published by Schott.

Pavane, Op. 50 Gabriel Fauré **Fantasy, Op. 79**

Composed in 1887, Fauré's hauntingly beautiful **Pavane** has enjoyed ongoing popularity for well over a century. The original instrumentation was for strings with pairs of woodwinds and horns; shortly after the premiere Fauré added a part for invisible chorus at the recommendation of his patron, the Comtesse de Greffuhle. The Ballets Russes added **Pavane** to its standard repertoire in 1917, creating a work known as both **Les Jardins d'Aranjuez** and **Las Mininas**.

Fauré joined the faculty of the Paris Conservatory in 1896, succeeding Jules Massenet as Professor of Composition. Two years later he was asked to compose the *morceau de concours*, or examination piece, for the flute studio's 1898 concours (final examination). Opening with a slow, lyrical section and featuring a brilliant, virtuosic second half, the **Fantasy** follows a typical template for the *morceau de concours*, which was designed to test each student's interpretive abilities as both an instrumentalist and a musician.

Round Top Trio Anthony Brandt

Music of the last hundred years has given birth to many novel musical ensembles, such as the Webster Trio's unusual grouping of flute, clarinet and piano. Such new combinations create an inherent demand for repertoire: I am honored to join the other composers who have written for tonight's marvelous performers.

Round Top Trio opens with a brash statement by the clarinet; this short proclamation is the basis for the entire work. The opening theme recurs in many forms: in fragments, in contrapuntal imitation, expanded or compressed.

Growing out of the clarinet's statement, the opening section is generally active, caustic and intense. The flute and clarinet engage in a constant wrestling match, grabbing away each other's lines. This eventually yields to a tranquil middle section, in which the theme reaches its most plaintive and patient form. The restlessness of the opening is a distant memory. But the relief does not hold, and the music is inexorably drawn back to its origin. Suggestions and references to the opening section begin to accumulate. Finally, the main theme returns in its original form—briefly, but more determined than ever—and the piece ends forcefully.

The work's rhetoric is rooted in many traditional features—from its evident thematicism to its strong contrasts and clear overall shape. These are made contemporary by the unique timbral qualities of the ensemble, by the music's unsettled transformations, and by a musical language which combines dissonant, clustered sonorities with more tonal harmonies and that organizes itself in unusual ways.

— Note by the composer

Lord of the Heavens Richard Toensing

Richard Toensing retired in 2005 from his position as Professor of Composition at the University of Colorado in Boulder, where he had taught since 1972. During his tenure at CU he served as Director of the University's Electronic Music Studio, New Music Festival, New Music Ensemble and for seventeen years as Chair of the Composition/Theory Faculty. Recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship, Columbia University's Joseph H. Bearnese Prize, and a commission from the National Endowment for the Arts, Toensing has three times been a fellow at the MacDowell Colony and earned his MM and DMA degrees at the University of Michigan as a student of Ross Lee Finney and Leslie Bassett.

Lord of the Heavens is a meditation on selected verses from **Psalm 8**:

“O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!

Who hast set thy glory above the heavens.

Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou hast ordained strength...

When I consider the heavens, the work of thy fingers,

The moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained,

What is man, that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man,
that thou visitest him?

For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels,
thou hast crowned him with glory and honor.

O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!”

Lord of the Heavens is cast in five sections, alternating slow, long-breathed passages (where the main theme is played by the clarinet) with quicker, more fragmented music where the full ensemble takes equal shares in the musical discourse. Throughout the work emphasis is placed on the resonant qualities of the piano (including passages where the wind instruments play into the piano strings, producing sympathetic vibrations), the brilliance of the clarinet in its high register, and the agility of the flute and

piccolo at both soft and loud dynamics. The work was written in the late summer and fall of 2009, and is dedicated to my friend Michael Webster and the Webster Trio.

– Note by the composer

Hungarian Dance Suite No. 1 Johannes Brahms

Vienna acted as a cultural magnet for composers of the 18th and 19th centuries. Johannes Brahms was one of many who settled there, and due to proximity with Budapest, became influenced by Hungarian music.

Brahms' seminal performing experience had been as piano accompanist for the famous Hungarian violinist, Eduard Reményi (1830-1898), on tour during the 1852-53 season. He brought that background with him when he moved to Vienna in 1862 and incorporated overt references to the Hungarian style in such works as the **Piano Quartet in G minor, Op. 25** (1861), the **Viola Quintet in G major, Op. 111** (1890) and the **Clarinet Quintet in B minor, Op. 115** (1891). He also wrote 21 Hungarian Dances, published in four books, two each in 1869 and 1880, originally for piano, four-hands. All of them were orchestrated by Brahms, Dvořák, and some lesser-known composers, and became immensely popular during Brahms's lifetime.

Bittersweet is the word that best characterizes Hungarian music. It tends to be happy and sad at the same time, or to vacillate quickly between contrasting moods. Among these seven dances, chosen for their interesting key relationships and contrasting moods, only **No. 14** (the shortest) does not have significant changes of tempo to dramatize quickly changing moods. Popular Hungarian dance forms are interspersed: in **No. 5** and **No. 13** the *csárdás*, a fast dance in two beats; in **No. 21** the *sebes*, an even faster dance; and in **No. 16** the *dumka*, alternating fast and slow. Dances **No. 14** and **No. 13** feature three-measure phrases, and jolly **No. 7** includes the "snapped" rhythm (quick note on the beat) in typical Hungarian fashion. Major and minor scales are often colored by raising the fourth step, creating Lydian mode in major (**No. 6** and **No. 7**) and the "gypsy" scale in harmonic minor (**No. 6** and **No. 16**). There is even reference to the Hungarian hammered dulcimer, called *cimbalon*, in the tremolos of **No. 14**.

During the century and a quarter since they were written, certain of the Hungarian Dances (such as **No. 5** and **No. 6**) have achieved incommensurable popularity in their orchestrated versions. This set attempts to revisit the original four-hand version and bring some of the lesser known but equally engaging dances to a wider public. It is published by International Music Company.

BIOGRAPHIES

LEONE BUYSE is the Joseph and Ida Kirkland Mullen Professor of Flute at Rice University. Previously a principal flutist of the Boston Symphony and Boston Pops and member of the San Francisco Symphony and the Rochester Philharmonic, she has appeared as soloist with those orchestras and also with the Utah Symphony and l'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande. She has performed with the Boston Symphony Chamber Players throughout Europe and Japan, with the Tokyo, Juilliard, Brentano, and Muir String Quartets, and in recital with Jessye Norman and Yo-Yo Ma. A renowned educator, she has taught at the New England Conservatory, Boston University, the University of Michigan, and the Aspen, Sarasota, and Norfolk music festivals, and has presented recitals and master classes across the United States and in Canada, Mexico, Panama, Brazil, France, the Netherlands, Japan, Australia, and New Zealand. Her solo recordings are available on the Crystal, Boston Records, Albany and C.R.I. labels. In 2010 Ms. Buyse received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the National Flute Association at its convention in Anaheim, California.

MICHAEL WEBSTER is Professor of Music at Rice University's Shepherd School of Music and Artistic Director of the Houston Youth Symphony, winner of five national awards in the last three years. Formerly Professor of Clarinet at Rice and principal clarinetist with the Rochester Philharmonic and the San Francisco Symphony, he has appeared as soloist with many orchestras, including the Philadelphia Orchestra and the Boston Pops. He has performed in all of New York City's major halls, with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, the 92nd Street Y, Da Camera of Houston, Context, the Tokyo, Cleveland, Muir, Ying, and Enso Quartets, and the festivals of Marlboro, Santa Fe, Chamber Music West and Northwest, Norfolk, Angel Fire, Park City, Sitka, and Orcas Island, among others. Webster has directed chamber music societies in Rochester and Ann Arbor and taught at the New England Conservatory, Boston University, and the Eastman School, from which he holds three degrees. He also has served as Music Director of the Wellesley Symphony and Adjunct Professor of Conducting at the University of Michigan. As a composer and arranger he has been published by G. Schirmer, International, and Schott and recorded by C.R.I., Crystal, Camerata, and Nami (Japan). Highly respected as a teacher, he is a member of the editorial staff of *The Clarinet* magazine, contributing a regular column entitled "Teaching Clarinet."

A native of The Netherlands, pianist ROBERT MOELING has gained international acclaim as a soloist, chamber musician and pedagogue. After coming to the United States as a Fulbright scholar, he subsequently held teaching posts at Bethany College, Concordia University, the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and the Wisconsin Conservatory. Currently he is a preparatory piano instructor at Rice University and visiting professor of piano and chamber music at Codarts, the University for the Performing Arts in Rotterdam, the Netherlands. His latest recordings include sonatas of Liszt and Brahms. Mr. Moeling has been a guest artist with the Amsterdam Chamber Music Society, Sitka Festival, Anchorage Winter Classics, Piatagorsky Foundation, and Park City International Festival, where his collaboration with Michael Webster and Leone Buyse began.

THE WEBSTER TRIO (www.webstertrio.com) was founded in 1988 by Michael Webster and Leone Buyse to expand and promote the repertoire for flute, clarinet, and piano through commissions, transcriptions, and research. Since 2000 Robert Moeling has been pianist for the trio, which has performed in The Netherlands, Portugal, and Panama as well as across the United States. Crystal Records has released the trio's **World Wide Webster**, a compact disc featuring works by Brahms, Debussy, Dvořák, and Louis Moreau Gottschalk. Other compact discs include **Tour de France** with pianist Katherine Collier (Crystal), and **Sonata Cho-Cho San** (Nami/Live Notes) and **From Vienna to Budapest** (Camerata Tokyo), both with Chizuko Sawa in Japan. All four discs feature Michael Webster's transcriptions of four-hand piano music for flute, clarinet, and piano. To date, International Music Co. has published six Webster compositions and transcriptions for flute, clarinet, and piano, including Debussy's *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune* (1994), *Carmen Rhapsody* (1997), Fauré's *Dolly Suite* (1999), Bizet's *Jeux d'enfants*, Brahms-Webster *Hungarian Dance Suite No. 1* (2001) and Debussy's *Petite Suite* (2009).



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