

Program Notes by Leonard Garrison

7:30 p.m., Saturday, June 7, 2014

Dance (1973)

Wilke Richard Renwick

Wilke Renwick (b. 1932) played horn in the Denver Symphony Orchestra for thirty-two years. His very brief *Dance*, the best selling piece for brass quintet ever composed, features rhythms in irregular meter patterned after Greek folk dances.

Trois Chansons de Charles d'Orléans (1898, 1908)

Claude Debussy

Claude Debussy (1865-1918) forged a new, specifically French direction in music and eschewed traditional forms and rules of harmony. The *Three Songs of Charles d'Orléans* are the only *cappella* choral pieces that he composed, here presented in a transcription for brass quintet. Debussy's songs are based on poems by Charles Duc d'Orléans (1394-1465), member of the Valois branch of the French royal family and prisoner of the English during the Hundred Years' War. Debussy's texture strikes a balance both between homophonic (chordal) and contrapuntal writing and between Renaissance and early twentieth-century styles. "Dieu! qu'il la fait bon regarder!" ("God! But She Is Fair!") is ethereal and subdued. "Quand j'ai ouy le tambourin" ("When I Heard the Tambourine"), is livelier, taking its rhythm from drumming patterns. "Yver, vous n'estes qu'un villain" ("Winter, You're Naught but a Rogue") is the most dramatic, illustrating the rough treatment humans receive from winter.

Pour les enfants (1999)

John Harmon

Moonflower (1999)

[Note by John Harmon] *Pour les enfants* was inspired by the total dedication of Hildegard Petermann, a wonderful, old-school piano teacher in our village. Literally hundreds of young students crossed her threshold to learn piano and, as three of our boys were also students, I humbly tried to pay homage and give thanks to her with this nostalgic waltz.

Commissioned for Russian pianist Victoria Mushkatkol, *Moonflower* projects the overall mood of a nocturne and was inspired by the flower of the same name, one that blooms only during the night. It is somewhat contemplative in style with considerable chromatic shifts while reworking the main theme.

Grand Sonata in E-flat Major for Piano with Cello Obligato, Op. 64

(arrangement of the String Trio, Op. 3)

Ludwig van Beethoven

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827) wrote the String Trio, Op. 3 for violin, viola, and cello in Bonn or in his early years in Vienna, as it was published in 1796. Later, either Beethoven or his publisher authorized an arrangement for piano with cello as Opus 64. With six movements including two minuets, the Trio is in the form of a divertimento. Tonight's performance features

a further arrangement that replaces the cello with viola. This movement is set in rondo form, with the playful main theme returning several times, alternating with contrasting material.

Fantasy on George Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess*

Earl Wild

[Note by Del Parkinson] The virtuosic pianist Earl Wild (1915-2010) was long enamored of the music of Gershwin. His “Fantasy on George Gershwin’s *Porgy and Bess*” is based upon the 1935 opera. This opera was important to Gershwin because he wanted to be known as a serious composer, not just a writer of popular American songs. The lullaby *Summertime*, written in the style of an African American spiritual, is introduced by Clara; after Clara’s death, Bess sings this haunting melody as she takes over the care of Clara’s baby. *Bess, You Is My Woman*, the opera’s emotional pinnacle, is a love duet in which Porgy and his beloved Bess vow that they now belong together. Sadly, tragedy ensues.

Sonata in B-flat Major, RV 47 for cello and basso continuo

Antonio Vivaldi

Euphonium soloists often “steal” repertoire from other instruments, above all the cello. Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741) is, after Johann Sebastian Bach, the baroque composer most known to the general public, principally through his set of four violin concertos, *The Four Seasons*. Vivaldi spent most of his life in Venice, where he led the music program at the *Ospedale della Pietá*, an orphanage for girls. The girls were trained as musicians, and their orchestra was famous throughout Europe. Vivaldi wrote prolifically in almost every baroque genre, including operas, sacred choral works, solo and trio sonatas, and above all, about 500 concertos. The present Sonata in B-flat Major is cast in *sonata da chiesa* (“church sonata”) form, traditionally in four short movements in alternating slow and fast tempos.

***Did I Ever Tell You I Adore You?* (2013)**

John Harmon

[Note by John Harmon] Two years ago, Ryan Kenny commissioned a piece in honor of his and Megan’s tenth wedding anniversary. She was surprised last year at Red Lodge with the piece, which he calls “Have I Told You Lately that I Adore You?” As the title suggests, all three movements are very romantic.

Megan chose to play the middle section, *The Longing*, which captures the pain of separation during Ryan’s assignment in Afghanistan. When a furlough brings him home for a short time there is a buoyant return to the opening theme of *Sweet Beginning*. But, alas ... his return to duty brings back the more melancholy mood as *The Longing* comes to a close. The last movement is titled *The Deepening*.

***Fantasy for Tuba* (1971)**

Malcolm Arnold

Malcolm Arnold (1921-2006) was an English composer of tongue-in-cheek but well-crafted tonal music. His composition teacher at the Royal Conservatory of Music was Gordon Jacob, who likewise held steadfast against the currents of post-World War II modernism. Early in his career, Arnold was principal trumpet of the London Philharmonic Orchestra but then

concentrated solely on composing, generating a large body of film scores (he won an Academy Award for the music to *Bridge on the River Kwai*), ballets, operas, works for orchestra and band, and chamber music. He wrote a *Fantasy* for each orchestral instrument. The present work takes advantage of the tuba's complete range and juxtaposes simple melodic material with virtuoso flourishes.

Hungarian Dances, WoO 1

Johannes Brahms

The twenty-one *Hungarian Dances* by Johannes Brahms (1833-1897) are enduringly popular, especially in their orchestral versions. Brahms originally published the dances in four books for piano four-hands, two in 1869 and two in 1880. Later, he orchestrated three dances, and other composers, including Antonín Dvořák (1841-1904), have orchestrated the rest. Brahms called them arrangements and refused to assign opus numbers to the dances, hence the WoO, *Werk ohne Opuszahl*, or work without opus number. He freely mixed Hungarian or Magyar music with Roma (then known as "Gypsy") music and heard all of these tunes played by Hungarian bands in Hamburg. No. 6 typifies the frequent changes of tempo in Hungarian music. No. 7 is a slower, elegant dance. No. 12 is full of virtuoso passagework. No. 5 is the most famous of this set, again featuring dramatic tempo changes.

Sunday, June 8, 2014

***Quatre Variations sur un thème de Domenico Scarlatti* (1950)**

Marcel Bitsch

Marcel Bitsch (1921-2011) studied at the Paris Conservatory and subsequently taught counterpoint there. Like many twentieth-century French composers, he favored wind instruments, and most of his works are for flute, clarinet, saxophone, trumpet, horn, or bassoon. He also published analyses of the works of Johann Sebastian Bach. His *Four Variations* are based on a theme from Scarlatti's keyboard Sonata in D Major, K. 21/L. 363. Scarlatti's many single-movement sonatas are forerunners of the classical sonatas of Haydn and Mozart.

***Andante and Allegro* (1935)**

Joseph Édouard Barat

Joseph Édouard Barat (1882-1963) was a bandmaster in the French Army. He composed the *Andante and Allegro* in 1935 for the annual trombone competition at the Paris Conservatory and dedicated it to the trombone teacher, Henri Couillaud. For most of the twentieth century, similar *morceaux de concours* or contest pieces were written annually for every wind instrument and were performed by each student in a public exam. Like all of these works, the *Andante and Allegro*, presented here on euphonium, challenges the performer to rise to heights of lyricism and technical display.

Sonata for Cello and Piano in F Major, Op. 6

Richard Strauss

Richard Strauss (1864-1949), Germany's leading post-Wagnerian composer, is best known for his many operas, orchestral tone poems, and songs. His chamber works are less numerous and less known. The Sonata, Op. 6 is an early work, begun in 1881 and revised in 1882-1883. He wrote it for Czech cellist, Hans Wihan, who was later to give the first performance of Antonin Dvořák's Cello Concerto. Strauss's piece shows the influence of Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Schumann, and Wagner and is conceived on a grand scale. It displays the richness of harmony and soaring lyricism we associate with Strauss and treats the cello and piano as equal partners. The first movement is bold, the second intimate, and the third playful.

***Aeon: A Miniature Suite for Bassoon and Piano* (2012)**

Daniel Baldwin

Daniel Baldwin (b. 1978) holds a BA from Northwestern Oklahoma State University and an MM from Kansas State University and is currently pursuing a DMA at the University of Nebraska in Lincoln. His primary composition teachers include Eric Richards, Craig Weston, Max Ridgway, and Eric Ewazen. He is Director of Bands and Orchestra and Assistant Professor of Instrumental Music and Composition at Tabor College. His music has been programmed at Carnegie Hall, the Masterworks Festival, Midwest Clinic, the MENC National Convention, and international festivals of clarinet, horn, trombone, and double reeds associations.

[note by Daniel Baldwin] *Aeon: A Miniature Suite for Bassoon and Piano* was written at the request of my very good friend, Carl Rath, who wanted a piece based on the very evocative wildlife photographs of Montana artist, Dick Forehand. We chose the title of the work together,

Carl provided the photographs and movement titles, and I proceeded to set them to music.

In the opening movement, *Rutting-Mating Call*, the moose is calling for a mate. The fanfare-like calls by the bassoon over rolled bitonal chords in the piano is inspired by the image of the moose standing in a field surrounded by fog and mist. All at once the moose finds a mate and the pursuit begins. They finally catch each other, and the rutting begins ... and ends.

Movement two, *Birth-New Life*, is a tender lullaby and love song to new life.

Movement three, *AAH!-Simple Pleasures*, is a comedic jaunt in the style of PDQ Bach and Victor Borge, portraying a very simple pleasure in an over the top way. After the *Carnival of the Animals* introduction, the music portrays the bear enjoying the day out for a stroll. Then comes the itch. The bear moves towards a tree where he begins to begins to scratch. This simple pleasure allows the bear to go back to enjoying the day.

Movement four, *Soaring-The Good Life*, portrays an eagle soaring against a breathtaking blue Montana sky. Could anything be more beautiful?!!

The finale, *Perseverance-Enduring Life*, is a commentary on the winter of life and life surviving winter. Just as we think life will end from the extreme depressing cold, spring arrives and new life is waiting to spring up once again.

Aeon was premiered by Carl Rath at the forty-first International Double Reed Conference at Miami University of Ohio.

D'un Matin de printemps (1918)

Lili Boulanger

Nocturne (1911)

Cortège (1914)

Lili Boulanger (1893-1918) was the first woman composer to win the prestigious Prix de Rome in 1912. Her influences were Massenet, Fauré, and Debussy, but her experiments in harmony and instrumental color went beyond her models. She was often ill throughout her short life and was survived by her sister Nadia Boulanger (1887-1979), a composer and conductor who taught many leading American composers, including Leonard Bernstein, Elliott Carter, Aaron Copland, Roy Harris, Walter Piston, and Virgil Thompson.

All three short pieces in this set are written for either violin or flute and piano, and Boulanger wrote versions of *D'un Matin de printemps* ("Of a spring morning") for orchestra and piano trio. *D'un Matin de printemps* changes mood quickly, while the *Nocturne* is exquisite and restrained, and the *Cortège* ("Procession") is joyous.

Dance of the Sandhill Cranes (2014)*

John Harmon

[Note by John Harmon] One of the more dramatic signs of spring in Wisconsin wetlands is the return of the sandhill cranes. Their early morning calls are unique and, though awakened earlier

than expected—I'm talking 5:30 a.m.—just knowing they are back buoys the spirit! *Dance of the Sandhill Cranes* honors their return and the uplifting sense of renewal they bring.

Tuesday, June 10, 2014

***Vignettes for Trumpet and Percussion* (2005)**

James M. Stephenson

The works of Chicago-area composer James Stephenson (b. 1969) have been performed by leading American orchestras and around the world. His growing catalog now boasts concertos and sonatas for nearly every wind instrument, in addition to the violin and piano. Stephenson is also active in the concert band world, with premieres occurring at major venues such as the Midwest Clinic, Texas Music Educators Association, and American Bandmasters Association convention, the latter with the “President’s Own” United States Marine Band. His landmark educational work, *Compose Yourself!*, has now been performed over 250 times since its creation in 2002. Stephenson’s arrangements have been performed, recorded, or broadcast by virtually every major orchestra in the country. Stephenson is currently Composer-in-Residence with the Lake Forest Symphony in Illinois.

[note by James Stephenson) I composed these eight *Vignettes* (7 + “Encore”) for Eric Berlin and Eduardo Leandro for performance at the International Trumpet Guild Conference in Bangkok, Thailand in 2005. The only requests I was given before writing these were to be aware of Mr. Leandro’s traveling needs (in other words: aside from the marimba and vibes, which would already be in Thailand, I shouldn’t include too many percussion instruments that would need to be carried all the way there), and to use several different trumpets, including Mr. Berlin’s “flumpet.”

Eric and I were at the New England Conservatory together, and, in fact, it was our living quarters that inspired the main ingredient of these *Vignettes*. I remember very often hearing the sound of Eric practicing below me in the dormitory, and thus I decided to use the musical form of a “lower neighbor” as my driving force for most of the eight short pieces in this set.

The pieces are arranged only by the order in which they were composed; I leave the decision up to the performer to arrange them according to their preference. I also would imagine that several mini-“suites” could be derived from this set, depending again on the performer’s wishes.

***Bass 'n' Brass Trio* (2013)**

Douglas Hill

Recognized as one of only twenty international hornists in Michael Meckna's book *20th Century Brass Soloists*, Douglas Hill (b. 1946) is Emeritus Professor of Horn at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where he taught and performed from 1974 through 2011. He is a Past President of the International Horn Society and performed and recorded extensively with the Wisconsin Brass Quintet, Wingra Woodwind Quintet, Spoleto Festival Brass Quintet, the New York and American Brass Quintets, the Rochester Philharmonic, New Haven Symphony, New York City Ballet, Contemporary Chamber Ensembles of New York and Chicago, Aspen Festival Orchestra, Henry Mancini and Andy Williams Orchestras, and the Madison Symphony. His extensive publications include *Extended Techniques for the Horn* (1981/1996), scores of original compositions and numerous pedagogical etude books. *Thoughtful Wanderings: Compositions by Douglas Hill*, is a double CD, including over two hours of Hill’s varied compositions.

[Note by Douglas Hill] *Bass ‘n’ Brass Trio” for Horn, Trombone, and String Bass* was

completed in the fall of 2013 and composed at the request of the artist/performer Aaron Miller, a member of the Jazz program and the Double Bass instructor at BYU-Idaho. This four-movement work emphasizes numerous jazz and Latin-jazz elements while including options for moments of improvisation. The dark tone colors of these instruments allow for richly blended chords and mutual melodic strength and are treated as equals throughout. Incidental percussion instruments and a few percussive requests are also included to provide variety and rhythmic emphasis. “Jazzette” begins with the rich, blending qualities of these three instruments, alternating with an original jazz waltz composed after having played the Thieleman standard, “Bluesette”, enjoying its lilting playfulness. “Sambassa” is a melodic, light-hearted bossa nova complete with percussive compliments, and an opportunity for the bass to solo over the samba-like rhythms of the claves with stopped-horn punctuations. “Meanderings” gently weaves its smooth melodic lines through varied modal settings. The abilities of these three instruments to glide across pitches eventually dominate and the rich blending qualities create a meandering blur. “Bang-Tango” starts off with a shout from each of the performers, then alternates freely among rambunctious motives, luxurious melodies, darkly blended harmonies, and fun-loving percussive interjections.

Cello Sonata No. 2 in G Minor, Op. 117

Gabriel Fauré

Gabriel Fauré (1845-1924) was a transitional figure in French music, progressing from the romantic style of his teacher Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921) to the chromatic, coloristic, and sometimes unresolved harmonies of the “impressionist” composers Claude Debussy (see the opening Saturday notes) and Fauré’s pupil Maurice Ravel (1875-1937). As director of the Paris Conservatory from 1905-1920, Fauré revamped the old-fashioned curriculum to include modern music. He is best known for his many fine songs, especially “Après un rêve” (“After a Dream”), but also excelled as a composer of incidental, choral, piano, chamber, and orchestral music.

The composer was infirm when he wrote the Cello Sonata No. 2. The restlessness of the first movement gives way to a somber second movement, the composer’s transcription of his own *Chant funéraire* (“Funeral Song”) for military band. In a complete contrast of mood, the third movement, as characterized by Fauré’s friend Vincent d’Indy, is “perky and delightful”—not the type of music one expects from a frail man.

***Trois Aquarelles* (1915)**

Philippe Gaubert

Flutist, conductor, and composer Philippe Gaubert (1879-1941) was in the highest echelon of French musicians in the early twentieth century. He was conductor of the Paris Opera and of the *Société des concerts du Conservatoire*, the most important French orchestra from 1828 to 1967, and professor of flute at the Paris Conservatory. His compositions are mostly for flute and of course extremely well written for the instrument, in a style mixing influences of César Franck (1822-1890) and Claude Debussy. He wrote the *Trois Aquarelles* or “Three Watercolors” in the trenches of World War I. The first, “Par un clair matin” (On a clear morning), shows his penchant for connecting distant harmonies.

***Oh Them Rats is Mean in My Kitchen* (1985)**

Stephen Hartke

Winner of the 2013 GRAMMY Award for Best Contemporary Classical Composition, Stephen Hartke (b. 1952) is Distinguished Professor of Composition at the Thornton School of Music of the University of Southern California. He has composed works for clarinetist Richard Stoltzman, violinist Michele Makarski, the Hilliard Ensemble, the New York Philharmonic, Glimmerglass Opera, the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, Carnegie Hall, the Harvard Musical Association, the IRIS Chamber Orchestra, the Kansas City Symphony, the Library of Congress, the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the National Symphony Orchestra, and the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, among others. He has won the Rome Prize from the American Academy in Rome, two Koussevitzky Music Foundation Commission Grants, a Guggenheim Fellowship, and the Academy Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters.

[note by Stephen Hartke] *Oh Them Rats Is Mean In My Kitchen* was composed as a gift for Michelle Makarski and Ronald Copes in 1985 while I was living in Brazil on a Fulbright grant. One of the chief results of that stay abroad was a sharpening of my awareness of those elements in my musical thought that are distinctly American and reflect my experience as a listener in this culture. I found myself prompted to compose a scherzo-fantasy in homage to early blues, transforming its characteristic wailing and energetic speech-song into the seemingly incongruous medium of the violin duo. The title is the first line of Blind Lemon Jefferson's *Maltese Cat Blues*, although I first became aware of it in a version sung by Tennessee blues singer Sleepy John Estes. In addition to suggesting some of the more pictorial writing of the third movement, the line also provides the rhythmic basis for an important motif in the final movement.

Grand Quintet in A Minor, Op. 81

Friedrich Kalkbrenner

German-born pianist, composer, and piano manufacturer Friedrich Kalkbrenner (1785-1849) was the most important pianist of the generation between Muzio Clemento (1752-1832) and Franz Liszt (1811-1886). He studied at the Paris Conservatory and, after brief stints in Austria, Germany, and London, returned to France for most of his career. He wrote a widely studied piano method and taught many pupils. He was friends with Chopin and had an inflated sense of his own standing among the great composers. Virtually all of his music involves the piano. The present quintet, for an unusual combination of instruments, focuses, as one might expect, on virtuoso piano writing. It only exists in its 1826 publication and is therefore seldom performed.

Wednesday, June 11, 2014

***Eclogues, Op. 206* (1966)**

Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco

Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco (1895-1968) was born in Florence. As a result of meeting great Spanish guitarist Andrés Segovia in 1932, he became one of the most prolific and important composers for the guitar. Because of his Jewish ancestry, Castelnuovo-Tedesco immigrated to Los Angeles in 1939 to escape the worsening situation in Europe. In California, he worked as a film composer and taught a generation of composers including André Previn and John Williams.

The title *Eclogues* refers to short Latin pastoral poems. The instrumentation evokes instruments that shepherds played, the harp or lyre, the reed pipe, and the rustic flute. The mood of the first movement is simple and tranquil. The second movement is a *saltarello*, an animated Neapolitan dance in compound time. The third movement explores various subgroupings of the instruments. The last movement is a lively dance in duple meter.

***Gemini Variations, Op.73* (1965)**

Benjamin Britten

Benjamin Britten (1913-1976) was the dominant figure of mid-twentieth-century British music. He held to an independent course at a time when modernism reigned supreme on the European continent and is best known for his many operas (especially *Peter Grimes*, 1945), the *War Requiem* (1962), and the *Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra* (1945).

Britten wrote the rarely performed *Gemini Variations*, based on a theme by Hungarian composer Zoltán Kodály, in 1964 for Zoltán and Gábor Jeney, twelve-year-old twin brothers whom he met in Budapest. Each twin played the piano, and one the flute and the other the violin. In the original version, Britten used all possible combinations of their instruments—solos, duets, and passages for piano four hands. Later, he created a second version to be played by four musicians. This piece is reminiscent of his famous *Young Person's Guide*, which also explores a variety of textures and characters through a series of variations and concludes in a riotous fugue.

Brandenburg Concerto No. 2 in F Major, BWV 1047

Johann Sebastian Bach

In 1719, Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750) travelled from Köthen, where he was Kapellmeister (Director of Music), to Berlin to purchase a harpsichord for his employer, Prince Leopold of Köthen. In Berlin, he met Christian Ludwig, Margrave of Brandenburg-Schwedt. Two years later, Bach sent the Margrave *Six Concerts à plusieurs instruments* (Six Concertos for Several Instruments), now known as the Brandenburg Concerti. These concertos explore the widest range of instrumental combinations and are Bach's reformulation of the *concerto grosso*, a genre featuring orchestra with a small group of soloists as developed by Arcangelo Corelli (1653-1713).

The second Concerto is for a unique solo group of trumpet, recorder (now usually performed on flute), oboe, and violin with strings and basso continuo. First among these equals is the trumpet, which in the baroque was a much lighter and more agile instrument; however, Bach's high virtuoso parts were a challenge for even the best trumpeters of the time. The outer movements are in *ritornello* form, in which the beginning theme returns regularly as confirmation of the

various keys that Bach explores. In between *ritornelli* are various episodes in which the solo instruments take turns. The middle movement is a more intimate and plaintive quartet for solo flute, oboe, violin, and basso continuo, allowing the trumpet and orchestral strings to rest.

Quartet No. 1 in C Minor, Op. 15

Gabriel Fauré

Although the piano quartet has a thinner history than the piano quintet or trio, Mozart, Schumann, and Brahms wrote superb works for this combination, and Fauré's two contributions are among the most distinguished. His music is always distinctly French, but the opening movement of this piece has the depth and richness of Brahms. The second movement provides virtuoso display for four members of the ensemble and is cast in traditional scherzo-trio-scherzo form, with greater lyricism in the Trio. The extreme sadness of the slow movement is perhaps the composer's reaction to his broken engagement with Marianne Viardot just prior to the composition of the Quartet. The Allegro molto contrasts an agitated theme with a lyrical one in ascending scales, and both themes combine for a brilliant ending in C major.

Saturday, June 14, 2014

Slang (1994)

Libby Larsen

Libby Larsen (b. 1950) is one of America's most performed living composers. She has created a catalogue of over 400 works spanning virtually every genre from intimate vocal and chamber music to massive orchestral works and operas. Grammy Award winning and widely recorded, she is constantly sought after for commissions from major artists, ensembles, and orchestras around the world and has established a permanent place for her works in the concert repertory. As a vigorous, articulate advocate for the music and musicians of our time, in 1973 Larsen co-founded the Minnesota Composers Forum, now the American Composers Forum, which has become an invaluable aid for composers in a transitional time for American arts. A former holder of the Papamarkou Chair at the Library of Congress, Larsen has also held residencies with the Minnesota Orchestra, the Charlotte Symphony and the Colorado Symphony

According to the composer, *Slang* is "A one movement work in three sections for clarinet, violin, and piano. The title refers to the use of both jazz and boogie slang and twentieth-century 'new music' slang throughout the composition."

Quintet in E-flat Major, Op. 44

Robert Schumann

Robert Schumann's Piano Quintet is one of the most popular pieces in chamber music and indeed has been frequently performed at the Red Lodge Music Festival. By pairing the string quartet with the piano, Schumann (1810-1856) created a new genre, and his work served as a model for Brahms, Dvořák, Franck, Shostakovich, and others.

Schumann tended to focus on one genre at a time. Originally he studied to be a concert pianist, and his early works were mostly for solo piano. Then in 1840 he wrote 168 songs. The year 1842 was devoted to chamber music, with the Piano Quintet, Piano Quartet, and three string quartets. He intended the quintet as a vehicle for his wife Clara Schumann (1819-1896); however, she fell ill before the first performance, and Felix Mendelssohn stepped in at the last minute to play the difficult piano part.

Rather than treating the piano as one of five equal voices, Schumann assigns it importance equal to the entire string group. In this first movement, the symphonic first theme contrasts with a second theme that is an intimate duet between cello and viola.

Las cuatro estaciones porteñas (Four Seasons of Buenos Aires)

Astor Piazzolla

Astor Piazzolla (1921-1992) revolutionized Tango music, making it a much more sophisticated and widely accepted art form. Born in Mar del Plata, Argentina, he grew up in New York City, where he learned to play the bandoneon, a type of accordion popular in South America. Moving to Buenos Aires, he became a virtuoso, playing with the leading tango orchestras of the 1930s. Wanting to become a more "serious" composer, he studied with Alberto Ginastera (1916-1983) and then in France with Nadia Boulanger. The result of his studies was *nuevo tango*, or new tango, combining counterpoint, complex rhythms, a broader range of harmonies, and jazz

elements.

Piazzolla first wrote *Las cuatro estaciones porteñas* as separate pieces at various times in the 1960s for his quintet of violin, piano, electric guitar, double bass, and bandoneon; later the pieces were collected together and arranged for a variety of ensembles. Performers often pair them with Vivaldi's *Four Seasons*. The two movements heard on this program are typical of *nuevo tango* style. In each, outer sections featuring driving, accented rhythmic patterns frame rhapsodic middle sections.

Partita (1948)

Irving Fine

Irving Fine (1914-1962) was born in Boston, studied at Harvard University with Walter Piston, and taught at Harvard and Brandeis Universities. He was one of many American composers to study with Nadia Boulanger in France and inherited her enthusiasm for the neoclassic music of Igor Stravinsky, whose influence is felt strongly in the *Partita*.

[Note by Irving Fine] The first [movement] has the character of a classical theme to be varied in the classical manner. The second movement is clearly a variation of its predecessor. The short meditative *Interlude* presents the basic material in its simplest form, but accompanied by warmer harmonies. The *Gigue* occupies the central position in the entire work and is, at the same time, the most extended movement. It is in sonata form, but has an abridged recapitulation, which ends abruptly in a foreign key. The movement entitled *Coda* has the character of an epilogue and solemn processional.

Music for Brass Instruments (1944)

Ingolf Dahl

Ingolf Dahl (1912-1970) was born in Hamburg and studied in Cologne, Zurich, and with Nadia Boulanger. He left Germany before World War II to work in Hollywood and became a leader in presenting contemporary music. From 1945 until his death, he taught at the University of Southern California, where his students included Michael Tilson Thomas. His style is under the sway of Igor Stravinsky (1882-1917), with whom he often collaborated. His *Music for Brass Instruments* is a high point of the brass repertoire. The opening movement strikes a note of seriousness and is a free elaboration of a Lutheran chorale upon which Bach based his famous Cantata No. 4, *Christ lag in Todesbanden*. The mood changes markedly in the lighter Intermezzo, with themes recalling western movies. The closing fugue is grandiose, employing numerous contrapuntal devices.

Marche slave in B-flat Minor, Op. 31

Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky

Calling this piece his "Serbo-Russian March," Tchaikovsky (1840-1893) demonstrated solidarity with all Slavic people. He wrote *Marche slave*, now commonly known by its French title, on commission for a concert in Moscow to benefit the victims of the Serbo-Turkish War (1876-78).

The work is programmatic. The dirge-like first section illustrates a low point in the war for the Serbs, using a Serbian folk song, "The Sun Does Not Shine Brightly." The mood then lifts as a

dancelike melody in a major key depicts Russians coming the aid of the Serbs, followed by a triumphant statement of “God Save the Tsar.” A brilliant return of the Serbian song leads to an even more exultant rendition of “God Save the Tsar” and a blazing coda. The work, originally written for full orchestra, is transcribed here for two pianos, eight hands.