

CU ★ PRESENTS

CU Symphony Orchestra

Gary Lewis, conductor
Dr. L. Subramaniam, violin
Paul Erhard, double bass
John McKeever, guest conductor

*Latecomers will be seated at the discretion of
the house manager.*

7:30 p.m., Tuesday, Feb. 11, 2020
Macky Auditorium



College of Music
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO **BOULDER**



Program

Alborada del gracioso

Maurice Ravel
(1875-1937)

John McKeever, guest conductor

Violin and Double Bass Concerto *

Lakshminarayana Subramaniam
(b. 1947)

Movement I

Movement II

Movement III

Lakshminarayana Subramaniam, violin
Paul Erhard, double bass

— Intermission —

Symphony No. 5 in C minor, Op. 67

Ludwig van Beethoven
(1770-1827)

I. Allegro con brio

II. Andante con moto

III. Allegro

IV. Allegro

* *World premiere*

Program notes

Alborada del gracioso

Alborada del gracioso began life as one of a set of five pieces for piano, *Miroirs*, that upheld the somewhat controversial reputation Ravel had acquired in his early career—though this had more to do with other pieces in the set, such as the enigmatic *Oiseaux tristes*. *Alborada* is the most straightforward of the five and has always had an independent life as a recital piece.

Straightforwardness, however, is a relative matter with Ravel. The work's title implies a morning piece, designed to wake lovers, and performed by a jester. The music consists of

a rhapsodic, extended song, framed by two bouts of dance music. From the start, even in the piano version, the “Spanish” rhythms are a touch exaggerated, the song parodistically mournful, and the conclusion—after a frantic wind-up—a kind of sarcastic laugh. But all that was to develop further when Ravel came to orchestrate it over a decade later.

The circumstances were that the ballet impresario Serge Diaghilev, who in the meantime had premiered Ravel's *Daphnis and Chloë*, decided to put together a new work for London to a mixed score: the *Menuet*

pompeux by Chabrier, Fauré's *Pavane* and Ravel's *Alborada*. He asked Ravel to make orchestral versions of his own and Chabrier's pieces, and presented the ballet, under the title *Les Ménines* (after the painting by Velázquez), at London's Alhambra Theatre in 1919.

At first the music seemed—and seems—like a faithful transcription of the piano original, full of Ravel's now-expected flair and brilliance, the bassoon taking on the notional singer's role and giving it an additional pathetic depth. But the more you listen, the more different it sounds. Exaggeration and parody are much more dominant: surely this huge orchestra is an over-the-top treatment for a simple piano piece? The world, and Ravel, had changed. A war (in which Ravel served) had intervened. His music was never the same again. This is the *Alborada* revisited by the composer of *La valse* and, as in that disturbing deconstruction of the Viennese waltz, there now lurks a dark despair beneath the scintillating surface. —Program note by Robert Maycock

Violin and Double Bass Concerto

The world premiere of the L. Subramaniam Double (two soloists) Concerto for violin and double bass was composed for tonight's performance with the University of Colorado Symphony Orchestra. Tonight, musical history is being made in Boulder with two musical traditions sharing the stage as the Carnatic violin and the Western double bass come together for the world's first-ever double concerto for Indian violin and double bass.

In three movements, this double concerto blends elements of Carnatic Music, the classical raga music of Southern Indian and Western classical music. The virtuosic Carnatic violin and the lyrically singing double bass converse through the many expressive moods of the

work. The first movement is based on the Carnatic raga *Sarasangi*, which to Western ears sounds like the major scale altered with the minor sixth scale degree. This raga has the uplifting quality of major scale with a poignancy of the minor sixth, first heard as the ninth note of the main melody. A traditional Carnatic classical raga performance opens with a section known as an Alap, a meditative unfolding of the notes of the raga, devoid of any sense of regular beat, accompanied only by the tambura drone that provides the harmonic framework of the raga's tonal center. The 4-stringed Tambura drone is a long-necked instrument heard for the full duration of every Indian music concert, cycling through the tonic, fifth and high tonic notes to create the tonal ambience of the fixed tonal center characteristic of Indian music.

The first movement, in a loose rondo form of A B A' C A, opens with an Alap introduction played by the solo violin and double bass presenting the notes of the raga *Sarasangi*. This Alap may well be the first time ever that an Alap has preceded a double concert. The Alap leads to the orchestral entrance playing the A section's slowly unfolding melody that is both passionate, victorious, and hopeful in spirit. Energetic arpeggios of the B section move the music from the opening tonal center of D to the tonal center of F-sharp, where the main theme returns in a canon-like dialogue between the violin and double bass. The C section is a lively dance in the orchestra with a rhythmic pattern 3+3+2+2+2 accented by the tambourine. The main melody then returns to be heard twice, first in the solo violin and orchestra, with the solo double bass playing a commentary, and then in the double bass and orchestra while the solo violin comments with impressive acrobatics.

The second movement is much more reflective in nature, presented in the style of an Alap,

devoid of any sense of regular beat. The long held chords in the orchestra imitate the traditional Indian tambura drone. This movement, with the tonal center of D, is in the Carnatic raga *Keeravani*, which to Western ears sounds like the harmonic minor scale, having the minor 3rd and 6th, and the major 7th. The entire movement, including the solo cadenzas, has a very free quality as the violin and double bass carry on a deep conversation.

The concerto concludes with a rhythmically energetic and rambunctious third movement that uses a blend of Western minor scales. The entire movement is in a rapid 5/8 meter with the notes grouped 2+3, an accompanimental pattern heard at the very beginning in the violins, violas, cellos and basses of the orchestra. Carnatic music is known for the sophisticated mathematical calculations where contrasting rhythmic patterns are juxtaposed against the predominant rhythmic pattern, here the 5 1/8th note beat cycle. In this movement, an extended passage played by the violin and double bass soloists, and then by the orchestra, uses a phrases of nine 1/16th notes superimposed over the 5/8 meter. The concerto concludes with a rousing coda section that superimposes a five 1/16th note figure against the five 1/18th note figure. —Program note by Paul Erhard

Symphony No. 5 in C minor, Op. 67

Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, more than any work in the musical repertory, is the archetypal example of the technique and content of the form. Its overall structure is not one of four independent essays linked simply by tonality and style, as in the typical 18th-century example, but is rather a carefully devised whole in which each of the movements serves to carry the work inexorably toward its end. The progression from minor to major, from dark to light, from conflict to resolution is at

the very heart of the "meaning" of this work. The triumphant nature of the final movement as the logical outcome of all that preceded it established a model for the symphonies of the romantic era. The psychological progression toward the finale—the relentless movement toward a life-affirming close—is one of Beethoven's most important technical and emotional legacies, and it established for following generations the concept of how such a creation could be structured, and in what manner it should engage the listener.

The opening gesture is the most famous beginning in all of classical music. It establishes the stormy temper of the Allegro by presenting the germinal cell from which the entire movement grows. Though it is possible to trace this memorable four-note motive through most of the measures of the movement, the eminent English musicologist Sir Donald Tovey has pointed out that the power of the music is not contained in this fragment, but rather in the "long sentences" that Beethoven built from it. The key to appreciating Beethoven's formal structures lies in being aware of the way in which the music moves constantly from one point of arrival to the next. The gentler second theme derives from the opening motive, and gives only a brief respite in the headlong rush that hurtles through the movement. It provides the necessary contrast while doing nothing to impede the music's flow. The development section is a paragon of cohesion, logic and concision. The recapitulation roars forth after a series of breathless chords that pass from woodwinds to strings and back. The stark hammer-blows of the closing chords bring the movement to its powerful end.

The second movement is a set of variations on two contrasting themes. The first theme, presented by violas and cellos, is sweet and

lyrical in nature; the second, heard in horns and trumpets, is heroic. The ensuing variations on the themes alternate to produce a movement by turns gentle and majestic. The Scherzo returns the tempestuous character of the opening movement, as the four-note motto from the first movement is heard again in a brazen setting led by the horns. The fughetto, the “little fugue,” of the central trio is initiated by the cellos and basses. The Scherzo returns with the mysterious tread of the plucked strings, after which the music wanes until little more than a heartbeat from the timpani remains. Then begins another accumulation of intensity, first gradually, then more quickly, as a link to the finale, which arrives with a glorious proclamation, like brilliant sun bursting through ominous clouds. The finale, set in the triumphant key of C Major, is jubilant and martial. The sonata form proceeds apace. At the apex of the development, however, the mysterious end of the Scherzo is invoked to serve as the link to the return of the main theme in the recapitulation. It also recalls and compresses the emotional journey of the entire Symphony. The closing pages repeat the cadence chords extensively as a way of discharging the work’s enormous accumulated energy.

Concerning the effect of the “struggle to victory” that is symbolized by the structure of the Fifth Symphony, a quote that Beethoven scribbled in a notebook of the Archduke Rudolf, one of his aristocratic piano students, is pertinent. The composer wrote, “Many assert that every minor [tonality] piece must end in the minor. Nego! On the contrary, I find that ... the major [tonality] has a glorious effect. Joy follows sorrow, sunshine—rain. It affects me as if I were looking up to the silvery glistening of the evening star.”

—Program note by Richard E. Rodda

Personnel

Dr. L. Subramaniam is hailed as “The Paganini of Indian Classical music” and “the God of Indian Violin.” Constantly propelled from Singapore to Paris, from Delhi to Los Angeles, he has won over audiences with the elegance and virtuosity of his style. He is dedicated to the service of Karnatic music, the tradition he inherited from his Father and Guru, Professor V. Lakshminarayana. Dr. Subramaniam’s parents, Lakshminarayana and V. Seethalakshmi, were the driving force behind their son and the reason he chose a life in music. His career as a childhood prodigy brought him into contact with the greatest musicians and he soon imposed himself as a master of the violin. At a very young age, he was honored with the title “Violin Chakravarthy.”

Dr. Subramaniam is the only musician who has performed/recorded Carnatic classical music, Western classical music, both orchestral and non-orchestral, and composed large scale works for major orchestras, scored for films. Since 1973, Dr. Subramaniam has made historic collaborations and recordings with people like Yehudi Menuhin, Stephane Grappelli, Jean-Pierre Rampal, Ruggiero Ricci, Arve Tellefsen, Herbie Hancock, Joe Sample, Stanley Clarke, George Duke, Al Jarreau, Jean Luc Ponty, Earl Klugh, Larry Coryell, Corky Siegel, Tony Williams, Billy Cobham, John Surman, Maynard Ferguson and Ravi Coltrane. He is the founder/director of the Lakshminarayana Global Music Festival, the biggest global music festival in India. The festival, held annually in India, has brought some of the greatest artists from around the globe together onto one stage. Dr. Subramaniam has produced, performed, collaborated and conducted close to two hundred recordings.

Dr. Subramaniam has established himself as the foremost Indian composer in the realm of orchestral composition. In 1983, he crossed other frontiers, that of western classical tradition. *The Double Concerto for violin and flute* combines western scales and micro intervals. *Spring–Rhapsody* is a homage to Bach and Baroque music. He has composed works for the world's greatest orchestras including The New York Philharmonic Orchestra and Zubin Mehta (*Fantasy on Vedic Chants*), Los Angeles Philharmonic, Swiss Romande Orchestra (*Turbulence*), The Kirov Ballet (*Shanti Priya*) and The Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra (*The Concerto for Two Violins*). His live concert with the Berlin Opera (Global Symphony) was broadcast simultaneously over 28 nations for millions of people. His compositions have also been used in various stage presentations by leading ballet companies, including the Cleveland San Jose Ballet Company and the Alvin Ailey Company. Dr. Subramaniam's orchestral works (concertos, symphonies, other) have received more than 200 live performances. He has composed music for several films, including *Salaam Bombay* and *Mississippi Masala* and was the featured soloist for Bernardo Bertolucci's *Little Buddha* and *Cotton Mary*.

Passionate about music, Dr. Subramaniam was also dedicated to science. He received his MBBS degree from Madras Medical College and registered as a General Practitioner doctor. Subsequently, he did his Master's Degree in Western classical music at California Institute of Arts, finally deciding to dedicate his life to music. He has received several awards and honors, including the coveted Padma Bhushan and Sangeet Natak Akademi Award for The Most Creative Artist from the President of India. In recognition of his contribution to the World of Music, he has been conferred with Honorary Doctorates (DLit) by Bangalore University,

University of Madras and Sheffield University. More about Dr. Subramaniam at indianviolin.com

Subramaniam's performance with the CU Symphony Orchestra is funded by:

- Roser Visiting Artist Endowment Grant (CU)
- Graduate Committee on The Arts & Humanities GCAH (CU)
- Colorado Fine Arts Association (CFAA)

Paul Erhard enjoys a career full of musical variety, performing as a soloist, orchestral bassist, chamber musician and jazz bassist. Performing throughout the United States, Europe and Asia, his playing and teaching are a synthesis of American and European styles, combined with elements of music from India. Erhard has served as a jury member alongside many of the world's most eminent double bassists for major solo competitions in the U.S., Europe and South America. Erhard has given master classes at Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, Cleveland Institute of Music, Indiana University, Interlochen Center for the Arts, Juilliard and more. Erhard performed the Virgil Mortari Double Bass Concerto at Lincoln Center in New York, with conductor Isiah Jackson, as the winner of the 1984 Juilliard Double Bass Concerto Competition. He has collaborated with the Dvořák Quintet, Schubert Trout Quintet and the Grammy-winning Takács Quartet. Erhard is principal double bass of the ProMusica Colorado Chamber Orchestra and the Boulder Bach Festival. Erhard was also principal bass of the Soviet Émigré Orchestra, the Albany Symphony and Queens Philharmonic and assistant principal bass of the Kalamazoo Symphony. Erhard was the bassist in the EMPS Jazz Trio in Munich, Germany. Back in the U.S., he was the bassist in the Eastman Jazz Ensemble 1, conducted by Rayburn Wright; the Ken Morgan

Jazz Unit in Kalamazoo and the University of Colorado Faculty Jazz Quintet. Erhard performs in two ensembles he formed that fuse Western and Indian music: Sand Around Infinity and Atmic Vision. He earned his master's and doctoral degrees from The Juilliard School and

his undergraduate degree from Eastman School of Music. Prior to Eastman, he studied for two years at the Hochschule für Musik in Munich. He is the founder and director of the Rocky Mountain International Double Bass Festival.

CU Symphony Orchestra

Violin

Mariama Alcantara
Ingrid Anderson
Jackson Bailey
Laena Batchelder
Kimberly Bill
Seth Bixler
Grace Hemmer
Robbie Herbst
Ryan Jacobsen
Mackenzie Hoffman
Hannah Kennedy
Paul Kim
Jenna Kramer
Soria Nguyen
Yukina Ono
Natalie Smith
Caitlin Stokes
Julia Taylor
Sophia Thaut
An Tran

Viola

Ariel Chien
Jaryn Danz
Jessica Kus
Thomas Maeda
Tyler McKisson
Stephanie Mientka
Sela Park
Conrad Sclar
Gina Stonikas

Cello

Ethan Blake
Jessica Lee
Gabriel Ramos
Jake Saunders
Emily Taylor
Nelson Walker
Matthew Wiest

Double Bass

Luis Granda
Isaiah Holt
Evan Indge
Portia Pray
Jason Thompson
Jordan Walters

Flute

Kaleb Chesnic
Rahel Crowell
Claire Gunsbury
Grace Law
Mara Riley

Oboe

Brittany Bonner
Grace Stringfellow
Clayton Williams

Clarinet

Jacob Eichhorn
Randel Leung
Zachary Mast
Gleyton Pinto

Bassoon

Anthony Federico
Gyungsun Im
Kaitlin Zadow
Victor Zhang

Horn

Maggie Barnes
Dilon Bryan
Megan Hurley
Natalie Miller
Benjamin Shafer

Trumpet

Ben Chapman
Max McNutt
Ian Mertes

Trombone

Sebastian Alvarez
Alison Orthel
Kenny Ross
Declan Wilcox
Aaron Zalkind

Tuba

Patrick Young

Percussion

Chris Eagles
Mallory Graves
Jake Henneford
John Sevy
Nathan Siegel
Andrew Quinlan

Harp

Jenna Allen
John McColley

Upcoming performances

🎫 Ticketed events 📺 Live broadcast at cupresents.org

Wednesday, Feb. 12

CU Philharmonia Orchestra

Celebrating voices of classicism and unity

7:30 p.m., Grusin Music Hall 📺

Feb. 13-15

The 25th Annual Putnam County

Spelling Bee

The musical by Finn, Sheinkin and Feldman

Music Theatre, Imig Music building

Thursday, Feb. 13

Concert Jazz Ensemble and

Jazz Ensemble II

Spotlighting women composers in jazz

7:30 p.m., Macky Auditorium 📺

Sunday, Feb. 16

Spring Festival of Choirs

7:30 p.m., Grusin Music Hall

Tuesday, Feb. 18

Faculty Tuesdays

Charles Wetherbee, violin

7:30 p.m., Grusin Music Hall 📺

Wednesday, Feb. 19

Pendulum New Music

7:30 p.m., ATLAS Black Box

Sunday, Feb. 23

Honors Competition Finals

12:30 p.m., Grusin Music Hall

Tuesday, Feb. 25

Music and Diversity Lecture

Aaron Dworkin and Afa Sadykhly Dworkin

11 a.m., Grusin Music Hall

Faculty Tuesdays

Mike Dunn, tuba

7:30 p.m., Grusin Music Hall 📺

Wednesday, Feb. 26

Thompson Jazz Studies Combos

7:30 p.m., Grusin Music Hall 📺

Thursday, Feb. 27

Early Music Ensemble

Vocal

7:30 p.m., Grusin Music Hall

Friday, Feb. 28

Wind Symphony and Symphonic Band

7:30 p.m., Macky Auditorium 📺

Events are subject to change:

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