



College of Music

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO **BOULDER**

Faculty Tuesday Series

An Evening of American Music

Eckert-McDonald Duo

Erika Eckert, viola

Margaret McDonald, piano

with

Nadya Hill, soprano

7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 19, 2017

Grusin Music Hall

Imig Music Building

Be engaged. Be inspired. Be here.

Be Boulder.

Program

Sonata for Viola and Piano (2001)

Flow
Drift
Breathless

Libby Larsen (b. 1950)

Sonata for Viola and Piano (1990)

Calmly
Declamatory

Jennifer Higdon (b. 1962)

— Intermission —

The River Merchant's Wife: A Letter (2016) "World Premiere"

Nadya Hill, soprano

Robert Spillman (b. 1936)

Rhapsodic Sonata (2011, revised 2015)

Caritas
...fair as the moon, bright as the sun...
Blithesome Spirit

Margaret Brouwer (b. 1940)

The River Merchant's Wife: A Letter

While my hair was still cut straight across my forehead
I played about the front gate, pulling flowers.
You came by on bamboo stilts, playing horse,
You walked about my seat, playing with blue plums.
And we went on living in the village of Chokan:
Two small people, without dislike or suspicion.

At fourteen I married My Lord you.
I never laughed, being bashful.
Lowering my head, I looked at the wall.
Called to, a thousand times, I never looked back.

At fifteen I stopped scowling,
I desired my dust to be mingled with yours
Forever and forever and forever.
Why should I climb the look out?

At sixteen you departed,
You went into far Ku-to-yen, by the river of swirling eddies,
And you have been gone five months.
The monkeys make sorrowful noise overhead.

You dragged your feet when you went out.
By the gate now, the moss is grown, the different mosses,
Too deep to clear them away!
The leaves fall early this autumn, in wind.
The paired butterflies are already yellow with August
Over the grass in the West garden;
They hurt me. I grow older.

If you are coming down through the narrows of the river Kiang,
Please let me know beforehand,
And I will come out to meet you
As far as Cho-fu-Sa.

Poem by Li Bai, trans. Ezra Pound

Program Notes

Sonata for Viola and Piano

Composed for James Dunham, *Sonata* is in three movements. I adopted the formality of the sonata much in the same way an architect accepts the shell of a building and rehabilitates the interior. While I often draw influences from extra-musical influence, this work is about viola and piano, nothing more, nothing less. —*Libby Larsen*

Sonata for Viola and Piano

The *Sonata* was composed in 1990. It explores the wonderful colors for the viola, and also allows for substantial dialogue with the piano. As I was writing this work, I was mindful of other viola sonatas (Hindemith, Clarke) and was undoubtedly influenced by some of the flute music that I have played (the Prokofiev *Sonata* and the Copland *Duo*). —*Jennifer Higdon*

The River Merchant's Wife: A Letter

The poet Li Bai, also known as Li PO, lived from 701 to 762 during the Tang Dynasty, and is regarded as one of the

world's greatest poets in any language. Although many of his famous poems concern his own feelings (and drinking habits), *The River Merchant's Wife* shows his skill in writing in different voices and situations. The poet Ezra Pound found many of his poems translated into Japanese by Arthur Fenelosa (another American) and included several in a small collection called "Cathay" in 1914. The form is quite irregular; I have punctuated the pauses between stanzas with a small bell. —*Robert Spillman*

Rhapsodic Sonata

Rhapsodic Sonata portrays musically a person who is on an internal journey. In *Caritas* the viola begins with a mood of questioning and anger. The chant, *Ubi Caritas* is quoted near the end of the movement. ...*fair as the moon, bright as the sun...* is simply a love song. Again, *Ubi Caritas* returns near the end of the movement. *Blithesome Spirit* is buoyantly playful, mischievous, and sometimes a bit jaunty. —*Margaret Brouwer*

Biographies

Formed in 2004, the **Eckert-McDonald Duo** has performed a number of recitals throughout the United States. In October 2016, they performed in Cremona, Italy at the International Viola Congress, at Palazzo Tornabuoni in Florence, and presented a recital and masterclasses at the Johann Sebastian Bach Musikschule in Vienna, Austria. The Duo can be heard on the Meridian Label performing Luis Jorge González's *Sonata Elegiaca*, and recently recorded the viola/piano sonatas of Libby Larsen, Jennifer Higdon and Margaret Brouwer for Azica Records, to be released summer 2018.

Nadya Hill, a Colorado native, has been featured as a vocal and violin soloist with various orchestras across the country. She received degrees in voice and violin from the University of Michigan, and is a recent graduate from the CU Boulder College of Music. She appeared frequently in lead roles in the Eklund Opera Productions, and premiered and recorded *Otherwise: Poems of Jane Kenyon* by Robert Spillman, with the composer at the piano. Hill is currently the Orchestra Director at the Rocky Mountain Academy of Evergreen and the head of orchestral strings at the Rockley Family Foundation.

Libby Larsen, the first woman to serve as a resident composer with a major orchestra, has held residencies with California Institute of the Arts, Arnold Schoenberg Institute, Philadelphia School of the Arts, Cincinnati

Conservatory, Minnesota Orchestra, Charlotte Symphony, Colorado Symphony. She was a recipient of a Lifetime Achievement Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters.

Jennifer Higdon, one of America's most acclaimed and most frequently performed living composers, is the recipient of the Pulitzer Prize for Music for her *Violin Concerto*; and a Grammy Award (Best New Contemporary Classical Recording) for her *Percussion Concerto*. She currently holds the Milton L. Rock Chair in Composition Studies at The Curtis Institute of Music.

Robert Spillman, Professor Emeritus, was Chair of the piano faculty and Music Director of the Opera Program at the University of Colorado at Boulder. Professor Spillman was also Co-Director of the Opera Center at the Aspen Music Festival. He received the Robert L Stearns Award of the Alumni Association of the University of Colorado in 2004 in recognition of his service and career.

Margaret Brouwer received a Meet The Composer Commissioning/USA award, and an Arts and Letters Award in Music from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. She served as head of the composition department and holder of the Vincent K. and Edith H. Smith Chair in Composition at the Cleveland Institute of Music from 1996 to 2008.

Chopin on the Viola

our next Faculty Tuesday concert

7:30 p.m., Tuesday, Sept. 26, 2017
Grusin Music Hall

Greet autumn with the sounds of Geri and David revealing the beauties of the Chopin Sonata transcribed for viola and piano, along with the colorful and scintillating "True Divided Light" by David Carlson. Schumann's *Adagio and Allegro* begins the program with a joyous start!



CU PERFORMING ARTS
music

Upcoming Faculty Tuesdays

Transformations

7:30 p.m., Tuesday, Oct. 3, 2017
Grusin Music Hall
Nims/Reger

Musical Postcards

7:30 p.m., Tuesday, Oct. 10, 2017
Grusin Music Hall
Thornton/McDonald/Thornton/Tetreault/Chellis

Wind Camerata

7:30 p.m., Tuesday, Oct. 17, 2017
Grusin Music Hall
Ishikawa/Jennings/Cooper/Silver/Myer

Finnish Celebration

7:30 p.m., Tuesday, Oct. 24, 2017
Grusin Music Hall
Bird/Erhard/Hsu/Ishikawa/Korevaar/
McDonald/Rhodes/Silver/Thornton

Schubert and More!

7:30 p.m., Tuesday, Oct. 31, 2017
Grusin Music Hall
Wetherbee/Korevaar

Masques and Dances!

7:30 p.m., Tuesday, Nov. 7, 2017
Grusin Music Hall
Kellogg/Cooperstock/Hsu/Ishikawa/
Nims/Requiro/Rhodes/Silver/Spera

ClimateKeys

7:30 p.m., Tuesday, Nov. 14, 2017
Grusin Music Hall
Hsu/Cooperstock/Nims/Mestas

Signs Games+Messages

7:30 p.m., Tuesday, Nov. 28, 2017
Grusin Music Hall
Rhodes/Walther/Requiro/Korevaar

Learn more at colorado.edu/music

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