

GRIFFIN CONCERT HALL / UNIVERSITY CENTER FOR THE ARTS

CSU UNIVERSITY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA PRESENTS



EXHIBITIONS

with guest cellist Barbara Thiem

Conducted by Maestro Wes Kenney

APRIL 27 & 28, 7:30 P.M.

Colorado State University

SCHOOL OF MUSIC, THEATRE AND DANCE

CSU UNIVERSITY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

EXHIBITIONS

WES KENNEY, Conductor

With Special Guest **BARBARA THIEM**, Cello

MASON BATES

(b. 1977)

Mothership (2011)

Joe Hoffarth, Saxophone

Adam Bell, Clarinet

Tim Sanchez, Percussion

Aiden King, Trombone

Lighting Design by Jorrey Calvo

ERNST BLOCH

(1885-1977)

Schelomo (1917)

Barbara Thiem, Cello

INTERMISSION

MODEST MOUSSORGSKY, arr. RAVEL

(1839-1881)

Pictures at an Exhibition

(1874, 1922)

- I. *Promenade – Gnomus – Promenade*
- II. *Il vecchio castello (The Old Castle) – Promenade*
- III. *Tuileries*
- IV. *Bydlo (Cattle) – Promenade*
- V. *Ballet des poussins dans leurs coques (Ballet of Chicks in Their Shells)*
- VI. *Samuel Goldbenberg und Schmuyle*
- VII. *Limoges – Le Marché (The Marketplace at Limoges)*
- VIII. *Catacombæ : Sepulcrum Romanum (Roman Sepulchers) – Cum mortuis in lingua mortua (With the Dead in a Dead Language)*
- IX. *La Cabane sur des pattes de poule : Baba-Yaga (The Hut on Fowls' Legs)*
- X. *La grande porte de Kiev (The Great Gate of Kiev)*

Paola Zamario plays a violin made by David Reeve in memory of William Schwartz, CSU Music Professor for 53 years, and founder of the Fort Collins Symphony.

The instrument is a gift of the maestro's family to the School of Music, Theatre, and Dance.

PROGRAM NOTES

***Mothership* (2011)**

Mason Bates

Born: 23 January 1977

Mason Bates is an American composer who has received high acclaim for his integration of electronic music into the orchestral repertoire. He holds degrees from Columbia University and the University of California-Berkeley where he studied with notable composers such as John Corigliano, Samuel Adler, and Edmund Campion. His work has led to many opportunities including a composer residency with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. He was also the first composer in residence at the John F. Kennedy Center of the Performing Arts in Washington D.C. His electronic orchestral compositions have been especially well received within the classical community. Bates is also an avid DJ, under the name DJ Masonic, who curates large musical events around the world. Through his project Mercury Soul, he seeks to bring not only classical music to new audiences, with collaborations of orchestras and club venues, but also pop music to the classical crowd as well. His mix of classical literature and technology led to the YouTube commission of *Mothership* for their YouTube Symphony project at the Sydney Opera House. Millions of views later, the piece found its way to performances from many major symphonies around the globe.

Mothership is described by the composer as “an energetic opener that imagines the orchestra as a mothership that is ‘docked’ by several visiting soloists, who offer brief but virtuosic riffs on the work’s thematic material over action-packed electro-acoustical orchestral figuration.” The work features a rather standard ensemble configuration with the addition of electronic accompaniment performed by a single computer user through a simple application designed by the composer. The electronics add a programmatic style to the orchestra with sounds that Bates imagined would reflect the mothership’s lift off, landing, door opening, and engine revving, along with many interesting pop style beats that give the piece a modern groove and energy from beginning to end. Another unique feature is multiple “docking episodes” that feature soloists (two rhythmic and two lyrical) who improvise riffs within given parameters. The soloists’ instrumentation is left to the conductor’s discretion, but the original premiere utilized electric guitar, bass guitar, violin, and zither (box shaped German guitar). The composer indicates that the piece is a symphonic scherzo with a double trio, but with the energetic rhythms of techno music rather than standard waltz rhythms. *Mothership* was premiered by the YouTube Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Michael Tilson Thomas at the Sydney Opera House on March 20, 2011.

— program note by Christopher Nadeau

***Schelomo* (1917)**

Ernst Bloch 1885-1977

Schelomo or *Rhapsodie Hebraique* was written in 1915 as part of a “Jewish Cycle” before Bloch left from Switzerland for the US. It was then premiered in New York in 1917, as it turns out on May 3, exactly 100 years ago!

In Bloch’s music from this cycle many techniques are found that pay homage to his heritage including the use of 4ths and 5ths both melodically and in parallel, irregular phrasing, motifs and rhythms derived from the Hebrew language, unresolved dissonances, and frequently changing meters/tempo.

The piece is cast in three sections of slow-fast-slow with a cello monologue that divides each of the transitions. Each section has a major climax of its own. Part one after an opening cello cadenza

introduces the first main melody, a lilting but mourning tune cast originally in compound triple meter. After a substantial build up and orchestra tutti, the cello re-enters with the first monologue. This is the start of part two where the bassoon and the oboe separately call out a melody with asymmetrical subdivisions and meters. This section depicts Solomon lamenting war while forces prepare for it. This faster section also builds to a mighty statement by the orchestra. The third and final section follows the second monologue and recaps the melodic material heard thus far.

The original intent was to set King Solomon's words from the Old Testament book of Ecclesiastes: "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity... I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit." For language reasons Bloch decided to use the voice of the cello and have the orchestra depict the world around King Solomon. The highly dramatic result has been a staple of the cello concerto repertoire ever since.

—program note by Barbara Thiem and Wes Kenney

Pictures at an Exhibition (1874/1922) Modest Mussorgsky 1839-81 arr. Ravel

Modest Mussorgsky was born into a wealthy Russian family. As a toddler, Mussorgsky spent a lot of time improvising on the piano, but did not begin formal lessons with his mother until the age of six. His father sent him to a cadet boarding school in St. Petersburg to become a part of the Russian guard, but Mussorgsky continued to focus on the piano. He made friends with several composers during his time in St. Petersburg and quickly became enraptured with composing his own works. While he produced much more piano music than other Russian composers did, vocal music and opera became his main focus. His most popular work during his lifetime was the opera *Boris Godunov*.

In 1874, depressed over the early death of his friend Victor Hartman, Mussorgsky turned to music. Hartman died of an aneurism and Mussorgsky placed blame on himself for not seeing the signs of his friend's ailment earlier. Hartman was most well known as an architect, but he contributed to many different types of visual arts throughout his life. *Pictures at an Exhibition* became Mussorgsky's way of immortalizing Hartman and his work. He decided to write a piano piece consisting of ten movements. Most of these movements are connected by a short piece of music called "Promenade." Mussorgsky's inspiration for *Pictures* came from a memorial show of the artist's best works. It mainly consisted of Hartman's architectural designs but also included paintings and other works. Mussorgsky chose some of his favorites to commemorate. He finished the musical manuscript in twenty days, writing out the full score instead of working in sections.

Pictures was a controversial piece from the very beginning and was not especially popular at the time of its publication. Many Russians resented that Mussorgsky chose to write the piece for piano, for piano music in late nineteenth-century Russia was not considered a respectable way to show nationalism. The new Russian school believed piano music represented German sentimentalism and that it belonged in the salon. Yet Mussorgsky rejected German ideals and style more extensively than any of his contemporary composers and regularly presented Russian folk songs within his music, strongly reflecting the ideas and philosophies of his country at the time.

Tapping into further controversy, *Pictures* raises the question of what is appropriate to do with someone else's work and what is not. *Pictures at an Exhibition* remains, to this day, one of the most edited and rearranged musical pieces. While the composition was originally written for

piano, orchestral versions have become especially popular. In Russian culture, orchestra was a more appropriate medium for Russian nationalism. Of the many orchestrations out there, Maurice Ravel's is by far the most often performed, perhaps because it stays truest to the original score. Ravel was commissioned to orchestrate *Pictures by Russian-born conductor Serge Koussevitzky* for a Paris concert. Many others have tried their own orchestrations but none seem to surpass Ravel's colorful interpretation.

The first "Promenade" represents Mussorgsky walking through the exhibit, experiencing the emotion of seeing his friend's work laid out in front of him. The first movement, "Gnome," depicts Hartman's design for a children's toy reminiscent of a nutcracker. However, instead of a soldier, as is typical, Hartman depicted a strong, Russian troll-like figure. The return of the opening figure throughout the movement represents the gnome stumbling as it runs away. The second promenade, echoing the melody of the opening promenade, provides a calm after the storm of the previous movement. "Old Castles" represents a sketch of a medieval fortress. The song-like quality of the melody harkens a troubadour singing front of the castle. Often Hartman would include people and figures in his sketches to show the scale of his work. While the sketch is supposed to depict an Italian scene, Mussorgsky draws on Russian folk influences throughout. The third promenade moves to a major key and consists of two quasi-imitative parts. The segment ends with octaves and unisons, in folk Russian fashion. "Tuileries," channels a sketch of children in a garden with their nurse. Like much of Hartman's work, the drawing has since been lost. Some believe the children were an afterthought in the original sketch. Mussorgsky, however, chose them as the subject for this movement, explaining the playful music. With no promenade present, the third movement moves right into the fourth, "Bydlo." The only description Mussorgsky ever gave was of "...a Polish cart pulled by large oxen." Since there is no record of such a piece in the Hartman exhibit, the origin of this movement is a mystery. Promenade four is a more brooding version of the melody heard in previous bridges and segues right into "Ballet of the Unhatched Chicks." When Hartman designed costumes for the St. Petersburg musical *Trilbi*, he dressed many of the boys and girls as canaries and eggs. The light, dancing feel of this movement brings the audience out of the previously established darkness. "Samuel Goldenberg and Schmuyle," represents two sketches Hartman gave Mussorgsky, one of a rich and one of a poor Jewish man. In this movement, Mussorgsky portrays the first with a low, strong, and powerful voice, while the second's voice responds in the high woodwinds. "Limoges" is Hartman's depiction of women arguing at a French market. Mussorgsky writes a busy texture to represent their yelling and chattering. "Catacombs" follows, creating a stark contrast. Mussorgsky had little to say about this movement other than, "...the skulls begin to glow."

The last two movements present one final contrast. "Baba-Yaga" refers to a sketch of a clock with legs that is covered in bird motifs. Baba Yaga is Russian fairy-tale character who lives in a cottage in the woods that sits on hen legs. The movement eerily alludes to a clock, with a constant ticking throughout. "The Great Gate of Kiev" was a Hartman competition design. The architect considered this his greatest work, and so it is fitting that Mussorgsky closed his own magnificent work with it. The entirety of *Pictures at an Exhibition* evokes many different ideas and images, just like a real exhibition. The connecting "Promenade" movements provide the common experience of individuals at a gallery appreciating art, each in his or her own way. Music is no different.

— program note by Theresa Bunger

COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

WES KENNEY, Conductor

JEREMY CUEBAS, Graduate Teaching Assistant

VIOLIN 1

Frangel López Ceseña, *Concertmaster*
Paola Zamario, *Asst. Concertmaster*
Casey Donohue
Katie Gardner
Daiki Kimizuka
Kadin Kostelic
Lily Lu
Josh Steinbecker
Graeson Van Anne

VIOLIN 2

Lydia Oates, *Principal*
Jeremy Cuebas, *Asst. Principal*
Dmitri Ascarrunz
Steven Hsu
Rawan Jarrar
Tori Weingarten
Ryan Wessel
Trey Yu

VIOLA

Sarah Chicoine, *Principal*
Ben Roth, *Asst. Principal*
Chealsea Bernhardt
Garret Durie
Kadi Horn
Hailey Moy
Xareny Polanco

CELLO

Julius Hochmuth, *Principal*
Jessie Salas, *Asst. Principal*
Tavon Boaman
Joshua Greiner

CELLO (cont.)

Chis Lewis
Abigail Nelson
Jaclyn Rising
Jacob Schafer
Sarah Souders
Paul Walcott
Lauren Wearsch
Emily Workman

BASS

Jordan Asker, *Principal*
Zuri Kargbo, *Asst. Principal*
Danny Irwin
Alexis Messnick
Stephen Morrison
Daniel Probasco
Michael Rinko

FLUTE

Theresa Bunger, *Principal*
SierraMarie Whigham

PICCOLO

Emma Stark

OBOE

Mylie Payne, *Principal*
Kyle Howe

ENGLISH HORN

Maggie Korbek

CLARINET

Becca Stapfer, *Principal*
Asa Graff
Lara Neuss

BASSOON

Tony Federico, *Principal*
Mikayla Baker
Blaine Lee

HORN

Ayo Derbyshire, *Principal*
Rachel Artley
Nicholas Gledhill
Andrew Meyers, *Asst.*
Emelie Pfaff
Isabel Waterbury

TRUMPET

Kyle Tong, *Principal*
Matthew Chanlynn
Max Heavner

TROMBONE

Will Gamache, *Principal*
Jon Hanlon
Peter McCarty

TUBA

Connor Challey

PERCUSSION

Chris Nadeau, *Principal*
Sarah Foss
Chris Hewitt
Joe Jones
Natasha Miller
Tim Sanchez

PIANO

Lily Cai

BIOGRAPHIES



WES KENNEY is now in his fourteenth year as Professor of Music and Director of Orchestras at Colorado State University. He conducts the CSU Symphony and Chamber Orchestra as well as CSU Opera productions, and teaches graduate conducting. Mr. Kenney has led the orchestra to many new milestones, including first ever at CSU performances of Mahler Symphonies *No. 1* and *No. 5*, two Strauss tone poems, the Bartok *Concerto for Orchestra*, and the Bruckner *Symphony No. 5*. In 2014 he was named music director of the Denver Young Artists Orchestra—the premier youth orchestra in the state of Colorado—and has taken that orchestra on tour through Italy, France, and Spain. Last June Mr. Kenney took DYAO to New York City for that orchestra's Carnegie Hall debut.

Mr. Kenney is also currently in his fourteenth season as music director of the fully professional Fort Collins Symphony. In the summer of 2004 he was named to an additional post of music director of Opera Fort Collins, helping that organization establish a full season of three productions a year. Mr. Kenney was named the 2009 Outstanding Teacher by the Colorado American String Teachers Association. He was also awarded the Grand Prize in the summer 2007 Varna (Bulgaria) International Conducting Competition. He traveled back to Bulgaria in 2008 for concerts in Vidin and to conduct *La Traviata* in Stara Zagora.

Mr. Kenney is a frequent guest conductor of professional and educational ensembles. Recent appearances include the Colorado Symphony, Colorado Music Festival, Lafayette Symphony (Ind.), and the Acadiana Symphony (La.). He has conducted New Mexico All-State, Virginia All-State, Alabama All-State, and next spring travels to N.H. for their All-State Orchestra. He also has credits that include concerts with orchestras in Europe and Asia. In Jan. 2018, Mr. Kenney will travel to Vietnam to conduct the Hanoi Philharmonic. He has given orchestra clinics in all corners of Colorado and is sought after for sessions at the Colorado Music Educators Association Conference. Mr. Kenney is a former president of the Conductors Guild and serves currently on their advisory board.

Mr. Kenney is also in demand as a conducting pedagogue. He recently taught alongside Jorge Mester in a Conductors Guild sponsored workshop at CSU. In the summer of 2011 he was a guest lecturer at the Conductor's Institute held at Bard College in upstate New York, teaching alongside founder Harold Farberman and American Symphony Orchestra Music Director Leon Botstein. He is also one of the founders of the CSU Summer Master's Degree program in conducting, designed to allow music educators the opportunity to earn a graduate degree while furthering their conducting studies and remaining in their current position.



BARBARA THIEM is an internationally acclaimed cellist who combines teaching cello and coaching chamber music with her active schedule of performances in Europe and the United States, playing recitals, solo with orchestra, and chamber music. She is a member of the Mendelssohn Trio and in the summers administers the International Summer Academy of Schloss Ort, Austria. She holds degrees from Cologne, Germany where she studied with avant-garde cellist Siegfried Palm, and from Indiana University where she was assistant to Janos Starker and was awarded the coveted Performer's Certificate. In addition to concertizing, she has recorded for many radio stations and has produced several cds among them a set of Bach suites for cello solo, *Complete Works by Felix Draeseke* for cello and piano with pianist Wolfgang Mueller-Steinbach, *Works for Cello and*

Organ with organist Robert Cavarra, and cello/bass duets with Gary Karr. She has published the translation of Gerhard Mantel's *Cello Technique* as well as a number of articles on good postural and practicing habits which appeared in the *ASTA* and *Suzuki* journals. She has also been involved in research as part of the Center for Biomedical Research in Music Therapy at CSU.

Presently she is teaching and performing at Colorado State University. In addition to studio teaching of cello and chamber music she is teaching a three semester course of cello pedagogy, as well as teaching in the Pre-College Chamber Music Program.

APPLIED FACULTY

Violin

Ron Francois
Leslie Stewart

Viola

Margaret Miller

Cello

Barbara Thiem

Bass

Forest Greenough

Flute

Michelle Stanley

Oboe

Andrew Jacobson

Clarinet

Wesley Ferreira

Bassoon

Gary Moody

Horn

John McGuire

Trumpet

Caleb Hudson

Saxophone

Peter Sommer

Trombone

Christopher Van Hof

Tuba / Euphonium

Stephen Dombrowski

Percussion

Eric Hollenbeck

Harp

Courtney Hershey Bress

Piano

Janet Landreth

Organ

Joel Bacon

Voice

Tiffany Blake
John Carlo Pierce
Chris Reed
John Seesholtz