

HOUGHTON COLLEGE

GREATBATCH SCHOOL OF MUSIC

presents

Hannah A. Messerschmidt

Collaborative Piano

in

Graduate Recital

Assisted by

Ellenore Tarr, Mezzo-soprano

Dan Zambrano, cello

Alyssa Pyne, flute

Chantalle Falconer, piano

Recital Hall

Center for the Arts

Monday, October 15th, 2018

8:00 p.m.

Program

La Courte Paille

Francis Poulenc

I. Le sommeil

(1899-1963)

II. Quelle aventure!

III. La reine de coeur

IV. Ba, Be, Bi, Bo, Bu

V. Les anges musiciens

VI. Le carafon

VII. Lune d'avril

Ellenore Tarr, mezzo-soprano

Sonate pour violoncelle & piano

Claude Debussy

I. Prologue

(1862-1918)

II. Serenade

III. Finale

Dan Zambrano, cello

Intermission

Duo for Flute and Piano

Aaron Copland

I. Flowing

(1900-1990)

II. Poetic, somewhat mournful

III. Lively, with bounce

Alyssa Pyne, flute

Drum Shed: The Uncertainty of Two Pianists

M. Jerome Bell

(b. 1993)

Chantalle Falconer, piano

Program Notes

Francis Poulenc (1899-1963) was a French composer who was largely self-taught. He was one of the leading group of the neo-classical movement, which rejected the overstated emotions of Romanticism. Poulenc wrote about two hundred melodies (songs) in his lifetime, as well as solo piano works, ballets, and chamber music. **La Courte Paille** is the last of Poulenc's song cycles. It was composed for the soprano Denise Duval, and was dedicated to her and her six-year-old son, Richard Schilling. The poems are taken from two collections by the Belgian poet Maurice Carême, and are all written as nursery rhymes; as something to sing to a child at bedtime. Therefore, the words are playful and often full of what adults would consider nonsense. The text of the song cycle ranges from the Queen of Hearts, to a flea pulling an elephant in a carriage, and even a play on words with a carafe and a giraffe! Poulenc writes that "these melancholy and impish pieces are to be sung without pretension. They should be sung with tenderness. That is the most certain way to touch a child's heart".

Claude Debussy (1862-1918) was a French composer, and he is often considered the first Impressionist composer (although he hated the term). Debussy's **Cello Sonata in D minor** was part of a large set he had planned – "Six sonatas for various instruments". The Sonata for cello and piano was completed first, in just a few months, with the Sonata for flute, viola and harp following quickly afterward. However, Debussy completed only three such sonatas; the third, (for violin and piano), was the last work he completed before he died of cancer. Debussy saw these compositions as an affirmation of French culture and strength after World War I.

The Cello Sonata combines Debussy's modernism with older influences throughout – combining a sonata form with modern techniques such as sudden (and frequent) tempo changes, as well as switching between tonality and atonality. The "Prologue," initiated by an introductory fanfare in the piano, relies on a specific melodic-rhythmic figuration that originates in the music of the French Baroque. The cello then introduces a theme that is taken from a Baroque operatic lament, and introduces a theme that alternates between minor and major tonalities. The second movement of this composition is largely influenced by the poem

“Pierrot Lunaire”, which many know thanks to Schoenberg’s famous musical setting. This movement imitates the strained sounds of a singing puppet, accompanied by the stylized strumming of a guitar, and leads into a “Finale” that offers a large mixture of instrumental effects.

Aaron Copland (1900-1990) is one of the most well-known American composers. His typical style of open, changing chords with folk-like tunes are considered by many to be representative of American music. The **Copland Duo for Flute and Piano** was written for William Kincaid, the principal flautist of the Philadelphia Orchestra for over forty years. When he died in 1967, a group of Kincaid's students and admirers approached Copland about commissioning a work for flute in his memory. Copland took almost four years to fulfill the commission, but in 1971 he completed the Duo for Flute and Piano, which was premiered by Elaine Shaffer, one of Kincaid's students, and pianist Hephzibah Menuhin. Copland once described the Duo, one of his last compositions, as "a work of comparatively simple harmonic and melodic outline, direct in expression and meant to be grateful for the performer." In his own words, no amateur flute player could handle this piece! He writes that “the first movement opens with a solo passage for flute.... after what might be termed a development, it returns in reverse order to the music of the opening pages. The middle movement is the least complex...it has a rather sad and wistful mood. The last movement, in free form, is in strong contrast, because it is lively, bright, and snappy”.

Drum Shed: The Uncertainty of Two Pianists (2015) was composed by one of my very close friends, M. Jerome Bell. Bell is a 2015 (undergraduate) and 2018 (masters) graduate from Houghton College, earning degrees in music composition and choral conducting. This piece is part of Bell’s Drum Shed series, where he implements the Drum Shed technique (a virtuosic playing style within the African-American church tradition) into the context of art music. Drum Shed: The Uncertainty of Two Pianists is based off of a musician who improvised an entire piece by asking the audience to suggest random pitches, and created a motive based off of those random pitches. That motive is juxtaposed with a motive derived from a musical setting of “Uncertainty of a Poet” by David Thomas.

We would like to thank the Houghton College administration for its faithful support of the Greatbatch School of Music.

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Hannah Messerschmidt, a student of Dr. Sharon Johnson, is performing this recital in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Masters of Music degree in Collaborative Piano.

As a courtesy to the performer and your fellow audience members, please be certain that all cell phones, watch alarms, and pagers are either turned off or set for silent operation. Flash photography can be very disconcerting to performers and is not permitted during the performance. Thanks for your cooperation.

La Courte Paille

I Le sommeil

Le sommeil est en voyage,
Mon Dieu! où est-il parti?
J'ai beau bercer mon petit;
Il pleure dans son litcage,
Il pleure depuis midi.
Où le sommeil a-t-il mis
Son sable et ses rêves sages?
J'ai beau bercer mon petit;
Il se tourne tout en nage,
Il sanglote dans son lit.
Ah! reviens, reviens, sommeil,
Sur ton beau cheval de course!
Dans le ciel noir, la Grand Ourse
A enterré le soleil
Et ralumé ses abelles.
Si l'enfant ne dort pas bien,
Il ne dira pas bonjour,
Il ne dira rien demain
A ses doigts, au lait, au pain
Qui l'accueillent dans le jour.

II Quelle aventure!

Une puce dans sa voiture,
Tirait un petit éléphant
En regardant les devantures
Où scintillaient les diamants.
Mon Dieu! mon Dieu!
quelle aventure!
Qui va me croire, s'il m'entend?

L'éléphaneau, d'un air absent,
Suçait un pot de confiture.
Mais la puce n'en avait cure,
Elle tirait en souriant.
Mon Dieu! mon Dieu!
que cela dure
Et je vais me croire dément!

Soudain, le long d'une clôture,
La puce fondit dans le vent
Et je vis le jeune éléphant
Se sauver en fendant les murs.

Sleep

Sleep is on vacation.
My God! Where has it gone?
I've rocked my little one in vain;
he cries in his crib,
he's been crying since noon.
Where has sleep put
its sand and its wise dreams?
I've rocked my little one in vain;
he turns, all sweaty,
he sobs in his bed.
Ah! return, return, sleep,
on your beautiful race horse!
In the black sky, the Big Bear
has buried the sun
and re-lit his bees.
If baby doesn't sleep well,
he won't say "good morning,"
he won't say anything tomorrow
to his fingers, to the milk, to the bread
that greet him with the day.

What an adventure!

A flea was pulling a little elephant
along in its carriage,
while looking at the shop windows
where diamonds sparkled.
My God! my God!
What an adventure!
Who'll believe me, if they hear me?

The little elephant casually
licked at a jar of jam,
but the flea didn't care;
she pulled along, smiling.
My God! my God!
How hard this is!
And I think I must be crazy!

Suddenly, near a fence,
the flea blew over in the wind,
and I saw the young elephant
save himself by knocking down the walls.

Mon Dieu! mon Dieu!
la chose est sure,
Mais comment le dire à maman?

My God! my God!
it's really true,
but how can I tell Mommy?

III. La reine de cœur

Mollement accoudée
A ses vitres de lune,
La reine vous salue
d'une fleur d'amandier.
C'est la reine de cœur.
Elle peut, s'il lui plait,
Vous mener en secret
Vers d'étranges demeures
Où il ne'st plus de portes,
De salles ni de tours
Et où les jeune mortes
Viennent parler d'amour.

La reine vous salue;
Hâtez-vous de la suivre
Dans son château de givre
Aux doux vitraux de lune.

IV. Ba, Be, Bi, Bo, Bu

Ba, be, bi, bo, bu, bé!
Le chat a mis ses bottes,
Il va de porte en porte
Jouer, danser,
Danser, chanter -
Pou, chou, genou, hibou.
"Tu dois apprendre à lire,
A compter, à écrire,"
Lui crie-t-on de partout.
Mais rikketikketau,
Le chat de s'esclaffer
En rentrant au château:
Il est le Chat Botté!

V. Les anges musiciens

Sur les fils de la pluie,
Les anges du jeudi
Jouent longtemps de la harpe.

The Queen of Hearts

Softly leaning
on her window-panes of moon,
the queen gestures to you
with an almond flower.
She is the Queen of Hearts.
She can, if she wishes,
lead you in secret
into strange dwellings
where there are no more doors,
or rooms, or towers,
and where the young dead
come to talk of love.

The queen salutes you;
hasten to follow her
into her hoar-frost castle
with smooth stained-glass moon windows.

Ba, Be, Bi, Bo, Bu

Ba, be, bi, bo, bu, bé!
The cat has put on his boots;
he goes from door to door,
playing, dancing,
dancing, singing -
Pou, chou, genou, hibou. *
"You ought to learn to read,
to count, to write,"
everyone calls out to him.
But rikketikketau,
the cat bursts out laughing,
returning to his castle:
He is Puss in Boots!

The musician angels

Upon the threads of the rain
the Thursday angels
play on the harp for a long time.

Et sous leurs doigts, Mozart
Tinte, délicieux,
En gouttes de joie bleue
Car c'est toujours Mozart
Que reprennent sans fin
Les anges musiciens
Qui, au long du jeudi,
Font chanter sur la harpe
La douceur de la pluie.

VI. Le carafon

"Pourquoi, se plaignait la carafe,
N'aurais-je pas un carafon?
Au zoo, madame la giraffe
N'a-t-elle pas un girafon?"
Un sorcier qui passait par là,
A cheval sur un phonographe,
Enregistra la belle voix
De soprano de la carafe
Et la fit entendre à Merlin.
"Fort bien, dit celui-ci, fort bien!"
Il frappa trois fois dans les mains
Et la dame de la maison
Se demande encore pourquoi
Elle trouva, ce matin-là
Un joli petit carafon
Blotti tout contre la carafe
Ainsi qu'au zoo le girafon
Pose son cou fragile et long
Sur le flanc clair de la girafe.

VII. Lune d'Avril

Lune, belle lune, lune d'Avril,
Faites-moi voir en m'endormant
Le pêcher au cœur de safran,
Le poisson qui rit du grésil,
L'oiseau qui, lointain comme un cor,
Doucement réveille les morts
Et surtout, surtout le pays
Où il fait joie, où il fait clair,
Où, soleilleux de primevères,
On a brisé tous les fusils.
Lune, belle lune, lune d'avril,
Lune.

And beneath their fingers, Mozart
tinkles, deliciously,
in drops of blue joy
since it is always Mozart
which is played endlessly
by the musician angels
who, all day Thursday,
make their harps sing
the sweetness of the rain.

The baby carafe

"Why," lamented the carafe,
"couldn't I have a baby carafe?
At the zoo, Mrs. Giraffe -
doesn't she have a baby giraffe?"
A wizard who was riding by
astride a phonograph
recorded the beautiful
soprano voice of the carafe
and played it for Merlin.
"Very well," said he, "very well!"
He clapped his hands three times
-And the lady of the house
still asks herself why
she found, that morning,
a pretty little baby carafe
leaning up against the carafe
just as in the zoo, the baby giraffe
leans its long and fragile neck
against the smooth flank of the giraffe.

April moon

Moon, beautiful moon, moon of April,
make me see in my dreams
the peach tree with a heart of saffron,
the fish that laughs at sleet,
the bird that, far away, like a horn,
sweetly wakens the dead
and above all, above all, the country
where there is joy, where it is bright,
where, sunny with springtime,
they have broken all the rifles.
Moon, beautiful moon, moon of April,
moon.

Sources for Program Notes:

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Bell

All information from the composer himself :)