

FACULTY RECITAL

MICHAEL WEBSTER, clarinet

BRIAN CONNELLY, piano

LEONE BUYSE, flute

Wednesday, February 17, 1999

8:00 p.m.

Lillian H. Duncan Recital Hall

RICE UNIVERSITY

the
Shepherd
School
of Music

PROGRAM

***Dance Preludes for Clarinet
and Piano (1954)***

Witold Lutoslawski
(1913-1994)

Allegro molto
Andantino
Allegro giocoso
Andante
Allegro molto

Honami (for solo flute) (1990)

Wil Offermans
(b. 1957)

***Sonata in F minor for Clarinet
and Piano, Op. 120 No. 1***

Johannes Brahms
(1833-1897)

Allegro appassionato
Andante un poco adagio
Allegretto grazioso
Vivace

INTERMISSION

Syrinx (for solo flute) (1913)

Claude Debussy
(1862-1918)

***Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune*
(*Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun*)
(arranged for flute, clarinet, and piano
by Michael Webster, 1994)**

Claude Debussy

Slavonic Dance Suite No. 1

Antonin Dvořák
(1841-1904)

(arranged for flute, clarinet, and piano
by Michael Webster, 1999; Premiere)
Presto (Op. 46 No. 8)
Moderato, quasi Menuetto (Op. 72 No. 14)
Allegretto grazioso (Op. 72 No. 12)
Poco allegro (Op. 46 No. 6)

PROGRAM NOTES

Dance Preludes for Clarinet and Piano Witold Lutoslawski

Witold Lutoslawski was born in Warsaw in 1913 and became the Polish counterpart to Hungary's Béla Bartók. Although he did not engage in the exhaustive study of his native folk song that Bartók did, he followed Bartók's lead in utilizing folk material in a highly individual, acerbic, yet tonal fashion. The **Dance Preludes**, now forty-five years old, appeared in two versions — one for clarinet, harp, piano, percussion, and strings, and the other for clarinet and piano. The five short movements, alternating fast and slow, are among the most attractive examples of "modernized" folk music, in which folk-like tunes compete with odd meter patterns and polytonal conflicts while stubbornly maintaining their original simplicity. Tonal and rhythmic games abound, most notably a blues-like juxtaposition of major and minor, use of the octatonic scale (alternating whole and half steps) for tonal ambiguity, and independent metric grouping between the two instruments.

Honami Wil Offermans

Dutch flutist and composer Wil Offermans has performed and given master classes on extended techniques around the world. His **12 Etudes for the Contemporary Flutist** (Zimmermann) received an award in 1993 from the National Flute Association. Offermans explains that **Honami**, an invented word combining the Japanese characters for "ear" (of corn) and "wave," refers to what one sees when wind blows across a mature rice field. In such a scene, wind is the cause, the rice field is the medium, and the wav-ing motion the result. In **Honami**, the flutist's breath becomes the cause, the score is the medium, and the sound of the flute is the consequential result. Among the contemporary techniques used are altered fingerings, flutter tonguing, harmonics, multiphonics, wind tones, glissandi, and singing; at all times these give the effect of a timbral improvisation, and on occasion the effect of a shakuhachi, the Japanese end-blown bamboo flute of Chinese origin. Throughout this short, meditative work, inhalation and exhalation are of prime importance.

Sonata in F minor, Op. 120 No. 1 Johannes Brahms

Brahms always loved the clarinet. Along with the horn, he gave it special prominence in his orchestral scores, and it is no surprise that after having written a horn trio, he turned his attention to chamber music with clarinet. But it took a special encounter with an extraordinary clarinetist to serve as catalyst for his clarinet chamber music after he had already declared that he was retiring from composition in 1890. Had he not met Richard Mühlfeld, principal clarinetist of the Meiningen Orchestra, in 1891, we can only conjecture as to whether or what Brahms might have composed. The **Trio, Op. 114, Quintet, Op. 115, and Clarinet Sonatas, Op. 120**, are directly attributable to the inspiration he received from "Fräulein Klari-nette," as he jokingly referred to Mühlfeld, his portly friend and frequent companion of his later years. He sent the two sonatas to Mühlfeld as a gift

in 1894, performed them with him, and demonstrated an uncanny ability to bring out the best from the clarinet, from the sweeping line of the opening theme, through the poignant expression of the second movement, the graceful ländler of the third, and the intense drive of the finale. He also knew how to bring out the best from the piano in a score written for himself that achieves a perfect partnership between the two instruments, a partnership that mirrors the deep friendship of the sonatas' first performers.

Syrinx Claude Debussy

Debussy composed **Syrinx** in 1913 as incidental music for Gabriel Mourey's play, **Psyché**. It is the first piece for unaccompanied flute written in the twentieth century by a major composer. First performed by Louis Fleury, to whom it is dedicated, this small treasure immediately disappeared into Fleury's private collection, where it was found after his death in 1926. Marcel Moyse subsequently edited the piece, which Debussy had titled **La flûte de Pan**; it was then published in 1927 by Jean Jobert, who chose the title **Syrinx** to avoid confusion with a song in Debussy's **Chansons de Bilitis**. In Greek mythology, Pan (god of shepherds, flocks, forests, and fertility) was part man and part goat, thus physically resembling a satyr or faun. When Pan chased the beautiful nymph Syrinx along a river bank, Syrinx called to her father, god of the river, to save her, and was transformed into a reed at the water's edge. Saddened, Pan then sat down and fashioned a special instrument from different lengths of reeds. This flute was called a panpipe, or syrinx. Among scholars there is disagreement as to where **Syrinx** was meant to be performed in the play; some say at the end, during Pan's death, whereas others believe the music was heard during the first scene of the final act.

Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune Claude Debussy

In 1894 Debussy completed an eight-minute orchestral work inspired by Mallarmé's dramatic poem **The Afternoon of a Faun**. In 1912 Sergei Diaghilev produced this piece as a ballet with Nijinsky dancing the principal role and providing the choreography. The work has enjoyed over a century of popularity largely because of its extraordinary delicacy, lush instrumental textures, and beautiful shape. Generations of flutists have coveted opportunities to perform the famous opening solos, which rank among the greatest in the entire orchestral repertoire. Numerous arrangements exist for flute and piano, but all are disappointingly bland. By adding a clarinet to his transcription, Michael Webster has offered a much more colorful alternative, which was published by International Music in 1994 as part of a centennial tribute. The addition of a clarinet allows for a wide range of timbral variety and a dialogue characteristic of the orchestration. A more surprising quality of this instrumentation is that one hears Debussy's extraordinary harmonies with a fresh ear, perhaps more clearly than in the original. They are more sharply etched, rather like one of Monet's sunnier views of the Rouen Cathedral compared to the darker ones.

Slavonic Dance Suite No. 1 Antonin Dvořák

More than any other work, the **Slavonic Dances, Op. 46**, spread Antonin Dvořák's fame beyond the confines of his native Czech fatherland. Between 1874 and 1877, Dvořák received several prizes from the annual Austrian State Stipendium, a competition for which Johannes Brahms was a judge. Late in 1877, Brahms sent Dvořák's **Moravian Duets** to his publisher, Simrock, who immediately commissioned the **Slavonic Dances** for piano, four-hands, hoping they would achieve the same kind of success as had Brahms' **Hungarian Dances**. Simrock was not disappointed. Not only did the eight **Slavonic Dances** achieve instant wide-spread recognition in both their original and orchestrated versions, but Dvořák was inspired to write and submit to Simrock many new and wonderful works which established his international reputation. Almost immediately, Simrock urged Dvořák to write a second set of dances, but he did not respond until 1886 with eight more **Slavonic Dances, Op. 76**. **Slavonic Dance Suite No. 1** is taken primarily from the four-hand version, using dances from both Op. 46 and Op. 72.

— Notes by Michael Webster and Leone Buyse

BIOGRAPHIES

A multi-faceted musician, MICHAEL WEBSTER is known as clarinetist, conductor, composer, arranger, and pedagogue. Formerly principal clarinetist with the Rochester Philharmonic and the San Francisco Symphony, he has also appeared as soloist with many orchestras, including the Philadelphia Orchestra and the Boston Pops. He has performed with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, the 92nd Street Y, the Tokyo, Cleveland, Muir, Ying, Leontóvych, and Chester String Quartets, and the festivals of Marlboro, Santa Fe, Angel Fire, Norfolk, Steamboat Springs, Chamber Music West and Northwest, Victoria, Stratford, Domaine Forget, Park City, and Sitka, among others.

In Rochester, Mr. Webster directed the Society for Chamber Music for eleven years and taught at the Eastman School, from which he had earned three degrees. He was a member of the conducting faculty of the New England Conservatory and taught clarinet both there and at Boston University. He served as Music Director of the Wellesley Symphony Orchestra and guest conducted several Boston-area orchestras before becoming an adjunct professor of conducting at the University of Michigan. He is the founder of Chamber Music Ann Arbor, which presents SpringFest every May. With his wife, flutist Leone Buyse, and pianist Katherine Collier, he plays in the Webster Trio, which is devoted to performing and expanding the repertoire for flute, clarinet, and piano; the group's first compact disc, "Tour de France," has recently been released by Crystal Records. As a composer and arranger, he has been published by G. Schirmer and International and recorded by C.R.I. In September 1997, Mr. Webster joined the faculty of The Shepherd School of Music, where he is Associate Professor of Clarinet and Ensembles. He is also Artistic Director of the Houston Youth Symphony and Ballet.

BRIAN CONNELLY, Artist Teacher of Piano at The Shepherd School of Music, is an unconventional artist of exceptional range and accomplishment in both historical and modern repertoires. In recent seasons, he has performed works as diverse as the entire *Vingt Regards sur L'Enfant-Jesus* for solo piano by Olivier Messiaen, the complete song cycles of Schubert, quintets of Brahms and Schumann, fortepiano works (on original instruments) of Mozart, and the Etudes of Debussy. He has shared solo recitals with jazz pianist Marcus Roberts and with Pulitzer Prize winning composer William Bolcom, and appears frequently with preeminent artists such as violinist Sergiu Luca, cellist Gary Hoffman, flutist Carol Wincenc, clarinetist Charles Neidich, and bass Michael Schopper. Mr. Connelly performed nearly 150 solo and chamber works for the acclaimed Da Camera during its first six seasons. His long association with renowned saxophonist Laura Hunter led to premieres of major works by William Albright, Paul Cooper, William Bolcom, Ross Lee Finney, Arthur Gottschalk, Laura Karpman, and Richard Lavenda, among many others. Mr. Connelly has performed Schoenberg's complete *Book of the Hanging Gardens* with mezzo-soprano Katherine Ciesinski and the chamber ensemble CONTEXT.

In September 1997 LEONE BUYSE joined the faculty of The Shepherd School of Music as Professor of Flute and Chamber Music. Previously Professor of Flute at the University of Michigan, she relinquished her position with the Boston Symphony Orchestra in 1993 to pursue a more active teaching and solo career after twenty-two years as an orchestral musician. Acting principal flutist of the Boston Symphony Orchestra since September 1990, she was invited by Seiji Ozawa to join the orchestra in 1983 as assistant principal flutist and principal flutist of the Boston Pops. Before moving to Boston she served as assistant principal flutist of the San Francisco Symphony and played piccolo and flute with the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra. The only American finalist in the 1969 Geneva International Flute Competition, Ms. Buyse has appeared as soloist with l'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, the Boston Pops, the San Francisco Symphony, the Utah Symphony, the Rochester Philharmonic, and the New Hampshire Music Festival, of which she was principal flutist for ten years. She made her debut as soloist with the Boston Symphony at Tanglewood in August of 1993, performing Leonard Bernstein's *Halil* under John Williams.

Widely recognized as one of America's foremost flute pedagogues, Ms. Buyse has taught at the New England Conservatory, Boston University, Tanglewood Music Center, the Boston University Tanglewood Institute, and as a visiting associate professor at the Eastman School of Music. This summer she will join the faculty of the Aspen Festival. She has presented recitals and master classes at universities, conservatories, and festivals across the United States, as well as in Canada, New Zealand, and Japan, and travels widely as an adjudicator and clinician. Her solo recordings include "The Sky's the Limit," on the Crystal label and "Contrasts," a Boston Records release.

