WESTERN UNIVERSITY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
THE ENIGMA I WILL NOT EXPLAIN
Thursday, December 8, 2022
7:30 p.m., Paul Davenport Theatre
Simone Luti, conductor

Piano Concerto in G major
I. Allegro non troppo
II. Adagio assai

Soloist: Terrence Wu, piano
2022 Maritsa Brookes Concerto Competition Winner

Glauben Sie es wird sich aufklären ?

Bóléro

-Intermission-

Variations on an Original Theme (Enigma), Op. 36
Theme – Enigma: Andante
Var. I – L’istesso tempo “C.A.E.”
Var. II – Allegro “H.D.S-P.”
Var. III – Allegretto “R.B.T.”
Var. IV – Allegro di molto “W.M.B.”
Var. V – Moderato “R.P.A.”
Var. VI – Andantino “Ysobel”
Var. VII – Presto “Troyte”
Var. VIII – Allegretto “W.N.”
Var. IX – Adagio “Nimrod”
Var. X – Intermezzo: Allegretto “Dorabella”
Var. XI – Allegro di molto “G.R.S.”
Var. XII – Andante “B.G.N.”
Var. XIII – Romanza: Moderato “***”
Var. XIV – Finale: Allegro “E.D.U.”

Maurice Ravel
(1875-1937)

Omar Daniel
(b. 1960)

Maurice Ravel
(1875-1937)

Edward Elgar
(1857-1934)
Ravel (1875 - 1937)
Piano Concerto in G major
World premiere: January 14, 1932

In 1931, Ravel completed this piece. He described it as: “Written very much in the same spirit as those of Mozart and Saint-Saëns. The music of the concerto should be, lighthearted, brilliant, to avoid profundity or dramatic effects.” Originally, Ravel intended to be the soloist for the piece. Yet poor, frail health prevented him. In 1932 at Salle Pleyel, Paris, he had the dedicatee, French pianist Marguerite Long, premier the piece with him as the conductor.

The first movement, Allegramente, features a classical plan that embraces two quick sections and one slow section. The piano establishes its presence right away, in contrast with the cheerful, jaunty piccolo tune. The languid theme played by the piano later in the movement is reminiscent of Gershwin’s Rhapsody in Blue. Towards the end, the piano moves up and down in virtuosic melodic flights, ending the movement swiftly with enthusiasm.

“One bar at a time” was how Ravel described the slow, Adagio assai, movement. He had taken the model from the Larghetto of Mozart’s Clarinet Quintet. The entire movement is described as spontaneous, with a natural flow. The piano enters with a long, slow waltz. Nearing the end of this long melodic line, the flute and other woodwinds gently make their presence known. The orchestra slowly plays a series of ascending chord progressions, countering the piano’s harmonies. In the end, the English horn brings back the opening melody, with the piano adding decoration above it.

Glauben Sie es wird sich aufklären? (1993)
for orchestra
by Omar Daniel

Glauben Sie es wird sich aufklären? was inspired by a chapter from Anne Dandurand's novel Un coeur qui craque. The chapter describes the reminiscences of the main character in the novel, a woman writer. She recollects a Berlin to Paris train excursion where experiences a chance encounter with a stranger. The encounter has given her a brief moment of intimacy in a world that seems composed only of horrors, for after the encounter has ended we discover that the woman has come from a hospital which treats victims of the Chernobyl disaster. The chapter ends with the following lines:

Comment peut-elle, comment puis-je encore rêver dans ce siècle de cauchemars? ‘Glauben Sie es wird sich aufklären?’: pensez-vous que le ciel va s’éclaircir.*
How can she, how can I still dream in this century of nightmares?
‘Glauben Sie es wird sich aufklären?’: do you think the sky will clear?*

I was particularly attracted to the superimposition of the intimate encounter with the desperation and sadness of the final passage of the chapter. Can a creative work that alludes to horrors also be beautiful?

Glauben Sie es wird sich aufklären? was composed for the Esprit Orchestra of Toronto in 1993, commissioned with the financial assistance of the Toronto Arts Council `Grants to Composers'.

* Reprinted with the permission of the author
Ravel  (1875 – 1937)
Bóléro
Composition: 1928
World Premier: November 20, 1928 by Paris Opéra, conducted by Walther Straram

The theme of Bóléro came with a sudden emergence. Ravel was on vacation at Saint-Jean-de- Luz, with music critic Gustave Samazeuilh. One morning, before they left for a pre-breakfast swim, Ravel went to his piano and played a melody. He described the melody having a sense of insistence. Prior to his vacation, Ravel promised Ida Rubinstein a new work for her ballet troupe. The melody he played, ended up being the main theme of Bóléro. In the ballet troupe, Bóléro was choreographed to feature a Gypsy woman dancing on a table in a Spanish tavern. Bóléro begins with solo instruments taking turns playing the main melody line. Gradually, groups of instruments join in to play the melody together. Throughout the entire piece, the snare drum taps an insistent and constant rhythm. As the piece progresses, each instrument has a turn performing the main melody before joining in with the accompanying rhythms and harmonies. When the music seems to have no way out of this continuous melodic line, Ravel suddenly plunges the piece into a new key briefly, before returning to the original key and ending triumphantly.

Elgar  (1857-1934)
Enigma Variations
World premiere: 1899

Each movement of this piece is based off one of Elgar’s friends. Who better to explain than Elgar himself? He wrote the following in a set of concert notes in 1911:

“This work, commenced in a spirit of humour & continued in deep seriousness, contains sketches of the composer’s friends. It may be understood that these personages comment or reflect on the original theme & each one attempts a solution of the Enigma, for so the theme is called. The sketches are not 'portraits' but each variation contains a distinct idea founded on some particular personality or perhaps on some incident known only to two people.”

As Elgar states, just as each of his friends were different, so too are the movements. Each one varies wildly in length, style, and thematic material. Some, like the second variation, are slightly anxious sounding, while others are boisterous, like the seventh variation. Perhaps the most famous of them all is variation nine, titled Nimrod. It is extremely introspective with glorious singing long lines. It begins quietly with mostly strings playing the melody. The brass and woodwinds gradually join in as the movement builds to the absolute climax before quickly and softly fading away.
WESTERN UNIVERSITY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Violin 1
+Menelaos Menelaou
Chia-Hsuan Chen
Patricio Flores
Jillian Yang
Sanaz Lordfard
Theodore Chow
Hijun Lee
Kevin Ye
David Chen
Alexander Matwijiw
Addy Sanchez
Yuanyi Wang
Jerry Ma
Mary Gonsalves
Erin Van Dyke

Violin 2
*Yanet Secades
Jeanny Jung
Ellie Smallman
Jacqueline Huang
Helen Faucher
Alison Chen
Samantha Luke
Scott Crossley
Maryalice Di Gaetano
Bret Trampleasure
Brooklyn Harriman
Kate Roberge
Tala Nabhani
Dhishan Kandala
Lerissa Mowatt

Violas
*Tasman Tantasawat
Colman Yang
Miriam Elsawi
Meika Sonntag
Lexi White
Zack Guo
Maria Camila Lopez
Lara
Cynthia Le
Mary-Maria Bourdeau

Cellos
*Ethan Allers
Eve Thompson
Nicholas Lago
Saige Soares
Ariana Fusco

Basses
*Jude Melanson
Jayden O’Costa
Skylar Cress

Flutes/Piccolo
*Yiwei Yang
*Asta Coffey
*Katie Kirpatrick
Natassia Stellatos

Oboes/English Horn
*Jessica Arenas
*Biz Tucker
Margaret Hancox
Tinson Lee

Clarinetts
*Mian Wei
Johnny Tan
Alexia Koras

Bassoons
*Andrea Ferencova
*Weiyi Han

Saxophone
Paula Kokot
Chase Griffin

Horns
*Ryan Duffy
*Eric Phong
Christine van’t Voort
Lela Burt

Trumpet
*Jazzmine Van Veld
*Christopher Reyes
Yanshen Dong
Alex Drozd

Trombone
*Sidnee McLeod
Andrew Brooks
James Winchell

Percussion
*William Kim
Ryan Breen
Meagan Foster
Max Harris
Patrick Linardic

*Principal Player
+ Concertmaster

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