



University Symphony Orchestra

2011–12 Season

154th Concert

Sunday 6 November 2011

Dalton Center Recital Hall

3:00 p.m.

BRUCE UCHIMURA, Conductor
MARTHA COUNCELL-VARGAS, Flute Soloist

“ Beautiful Places ”

Paquito D’Rivera
b. 1948

Gran Danzón (The Bel-Air Concerto)

Martha Councill-Vargas, Flute

Violin I: Youyang Qu, Yumhali Garcia, Ishtar Hernandez,
Abderrahman Anzaldua

Violin II: Melissa Taddie, Naomi Droge, Hyun Young Kim

Viola: Daniel Cortes, Sean Brennan

Cello: Zachary Boyt, Warren Oja

Bass: Brett Armstrong

Flute/Piccolo: Stephanie Marzolf

Oboe/English Horn: Jarred Small

Clarinet: Erik Johnson

Bassoon: Jason Ostrander

Tenor Saxophone: Thomas Prolux

Horn: Paul Clifton

Trumpet: Adam Stowe, Ross Wixon

Trombone: Nathan Musch

Tuba: Travis Netzer

Timpani: Christopher Guthrie

Percussion: William Alderman, Kellen King, Ryan Jonker

Harp: Eleanor Wong

Piano: Helen Lukan

intermission

Bedrich Smetana
1824–1884

The Moldau (Vltava) from *Má Vlast (My Country)*

Felix Mendelssohn
1809–1847

Symphony Number 3 in A Minor Opus 56 (“Scottish”)

I. Andante con moto – Allegro un poco agitato – Assai animato

II. Vivace non troppo

III. Adagio

IV. Allegro vivacissimo – Allegro maestoso assai



The WMU Symphony Orchestra would like to thank Stephanie Hovnanian for her expertise. Please visit our website www.wmich.edu/music/orchestra for additional concert dates and information or join our Facebook page.

If the fire alarm sounds, please exit the building immediately. All other emergencies will be indicated by spoken announcement within the seating area. The tornado safe area in Dalton Center is along the lockers in the brick hallway to your left as you exit to the lobby behind you. In any emergency, walk—do not run—to the nearest exit. Please turn off all cell phones and other electronic devices during the performance. Because of legal issues, any video or audio recording of this performance is prohibited without prior consent from the School of Music. Thank you for your cooperation.

PROGRAM NOTES

Compiled by Bruce Uchimura

D’Rivera, *Gran Danzón (The Bel-Air Concerto)*

The danzón, created in 1879 by Miguel Failde, a cornet player from the city of Matanzas, is a direct descendant of the Cuban danzas and contradanzas that were played in ballrooms back in Cuba’s colonial past. In those days the typical dance orchestra was comprised of one cornet, two violins, two clarinets in C, an ophicleide or valve trombone (sometimes both!), a couple of timbales, and a guiro. Later on, at the beginning of the 20th century, the Charanga orchestras, also called Francesas (French), appeared on the scene and included one or several violins, a piano, double bass, timbales, guiro, and flute.

Since then, several generations of flutists—among them Antonio Arcaño, José Fajardo, Richard Egües, Pancho el Bravo, Johnny Pacheco, Joaquín Oliveros, Oriente López, Nestor Torres, and Eddy Zervigón—have contributed enormously to the stylistic development of this musical form. It was their fresh and peculiar way of playing the flute that inspired the present work. At a certain point in my career I had lots of fun playing the flute with some dance groups, using what I had learned from them. When Marina Piccinini asked me to write a flute concerto for her, I immediately thought of basing the piece on the Cuban flute, a wooden instrument of five keys and six holes that has played a major role in the typical orchestras of my country as well as in the development of the national dance, the danzón.

The central theme of this concerto is based on the rhythmic cell of the danzón, the cinquillo cubano, and on la clave, which is the foundation of almost all Cuban music. However, other national patterns and elements of African origin are to be found throughout the piece, as well as small phrases and quotations that are reminiscent of old folkloric and popular themes. The second most important instrument in this work is the humble guiro (gourd) combining with the Cuban timbales (drums) and contrabass to provide the rhythm-machine that moves the Charanga as well as the feet of the dancers in the ballroom (and probably in the concert hall, too!).

The title *Gran Danzón* was borrowed from Astor Piazzolla’s *Le Gran Tango*. The subtitle *The Bel Air Concerto* was Piccinini’s idea; she knows of my passion for those classic automobiles of the 1950s, about which I’ve often dreamt. Now I am the proud owner of a rebuilt 1957 Chevrolet Bel Air, which I drive around when not on tour.

Finally, this is my best way of paying tribute to the legendary danzoneros of the island Columbus called “la tierra mas Hermosa que ojos humans vieran”—“the most beautiful land that human eyes will ever see.”

– Paquito D’Rivera

Smetana, *The Moldau* from *Má Vlast*

Bedrich Smetana composed six orchestral tone poems that celebrated his Bohemian-Czechoslovakian roots between 1874 and 1879. Each tone poem depicts some aspect of his country's history, folk culture, natural wonders, or legends. Though individually composed and premiered, the six tone poems were premiered as a set named *Ma Vlast (My Country)* in 1882. Like Antonin Dvorak, Smetana was a serious composer that was determined to infuse his Czech musical heritage into his compositions.

The most popular tone poem from the set is *The Moldau* or *Vltava*, the mighty river that runs throughout areas of Bohemia. In Smetana's own description of the music:

The composition describes the course of the *Vltava*, starting from the two small springs, the Cold and Warm *Vltava*, to the unification of both streams into a single current, the course of the *Vltava* through woods and meadows, through landscapes where a farmer's wedding is celebrated, the round dance of the mermaids in the night's moonshine: on the nearby rocks loom proud castles, palaces and ruins aloft. The *Vltava* swirls into the *St John's Rapids*; then it widens and flows toward Prague, past the *Vyšehrad*, and then majestically vanishes into the distance, ending at the *Labe* (or *Elbe*, in German).

Smetana was a gifted orchestrator and masterfully uses the orchestral instruments to musically depict all of the wonders of the river.

Mendelssohn, *Symphony No. 3 in A Minor*

On his visit to Scotland in 1829, a young Felix Mendelssohn was impressed by its unique folk culture, history filled ruins, and its brooding landscape. He was inspired to begin his "*Scottish Symphony*." By the age of 20, Mendelssohn was already quite a celebrity in musical circles. He was one of Europe's finest composers, an accomplished piano virtuoso, as well as a charming and personable intellectual.

The *Symphony No. 3 in A Minor* was actually the last symphony that Mendelssohn wrote and completed in 1842. It was premiered in Berlin by the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra and also in London. Both performances were well received by the public as well as by Queen Victoria, to whom Mendelssohn dedicated the symphony.

It is a multi-movement work that is performed without pause. The first movement evokes the misty Scottish landscape with a theme presented by violas and clarinet. It soon moves into a more dance-like melody that develops into an even more energetic rhythmic section. The development contains a chromatic passage for the orchestra that sounds like the stormy seas and wind of Scotland's coast.

Mendelssohn was a composer that liked to be inspired by sights, sounds, places, history, and culture. Though he occasionally quoted authentic songs and themes in his works, the music to the *Scottish Symphony* is original except in the final coda, where a German *Festgesang* or triumphal hymn is used.

The solo clarinet plays a bouncy, folk-like theme as the material for the second movement, which sounds like a spirited romp through the Scottish Highlands. In contrast, the third movement features a beautiful and romantic theme alternating with a "fate knocking" motive.

The finale begins with an anticipatory thump, and French horns outline the pulse of the last movement. Most of the music sounds a lot more bacchanalian than Scottish and is relentless in its energy. The music finally winds down by a hauntingly beautiful duet between clarinet and bassoon, which prepares the way to the final and joyful coda.

UNIVERSITY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Bruce Uchimura, Conductor

Violin I

- ① Youyang Qu, Concertmaster, Beijing, CHINA
- ① Yumhali Garcia, Mexico City, MEXICO
- ① Ishtar Hernandez, Miami FL
- Abderrahman Anzaldua, Chihuahua, MEXICO
- Philip Oja, Royal Oak
- Charlotte Munn-Wood, South Bend IN
- ①② Shu Wang, Beijing CHINA
- Audrey Jansma, Fremont
- ② Erin Zuchniewicz, Novi
- ③ Ariele Macadangdang, Kalamazoo

Violin II

- ② Melissa Taddie, Principal, Strongsville OH
- Naomi Droge, Ada
- Hyun Young Kim, Livonia
- Joseph Haroney, Dexter
- Veronica Cieri, Dearborn
- Anne Rhode, Farmington Hills
- Rachel Keck, Portage
- Brandon Pacheco, Mount Morris
- ④ Josephine Isaac, Alto

Viola

- Daniel Cortes, Principal, Winter Garden FL
- Sean Brennan, Wixom
- Mark Kleyn, Jenison
- Kristin Benes, Downers Grove IL
- Jonathan Boyd, Farmington Hills
- ② Laura Boekeloo, Portage
- Rebecca Dube, Ray Township
- Sara Sulecki, Dearborn
- Rachael Eid-Ries, Grand Rapids
- Connor Shannon, Holland

Cello

- Zachary Boyt, Co-Principal, Traverse City
- Warren Oja, Co-Principal, Royal Oak
- ⑤ Willis Koa, West Bloomfield
- Sam Boase-Miller, Galesburg
- Carrie Brannen, Wyoming
- Matthew Heyboer, Holland
- Irving Angulo, Santo Domingo, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC
- Katie Nicholls, Beverly Hills
- Allyson Perez, Santo Domingo, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC
- Taylor Crow, Saint Joseph

Double Bass

- Brett Armstrong, Principal, Grand Rapids
- Thalea Davis, Conley GA
- Andrew Rose, Kalamazoo
- Jeffery Utter, Canton NY
- Joe Willard, Royal Oak
- Steven Fernandez, Farmington Hills
- Craig Kowalsky, Commerce
- Mark Mehringer, Farmington Hills

Flute

- * Sandra Fernandez, Guayaquil, EQUADOR
- Stephanie Marzolf, Battle Creek
- Jory King, Westland

Oboe

- Jarred Small, Principal, Fraser
- Kayla Pingel, Farmington
- Sara Harris, English Horn, Clinton MD

Clarinet

- Ben Werne, Principal, Jasper IN

- ⑥ Danny Mui, Macomb
- Margaret Albrecht, Beverly Hills
- Kristyn Macqueen, Rockford

Bassoon

- Jason Ostrander, Principal, Oscoda
- Josh Hart, Mattawan
- Marco Juarez, Kalamazoo (assisting)

Trumpet

- Ross Wixon, Glenn Dale MD
- Adam Stowe, Clarklake
- ⑦ Bonni Lee Beebe, Paw Paw
- Mason Henderson, South Bend IN

Horn

- Paul Clifton, Co-Principal, Howell
- Jancie Philippus, Co-Principal, San Benito TX
- ⑦ Luke Walton, Palmyra NY
- Karin Yamaguchi, Novi

Trombone

- Nate Musch, Principal, Ann Arbor
- Erik Dancy, Kansas City MO

Bass Trombone

- Derek Lyp, Lambertville

Tuba

- Travis Netzer, Aberdeen SD

Timpani

- Will Alderman, Co-Principal, Plainwell
- Chris Guthrie, Co-Principal, Portage

Percussion

- Will Alderman, Principal, Plainwell
- Ryan Jonker, Kalamazoo
- Kellen King, Bay City

Harp

- Eleanor Wong (assisting)

Orchestra Staff

- Sam Boase-Miller, Manager
- Paul Clifton, Librarian

- ① KSO/WMU Artist Scholar
- ② Rhea Yeager Fetzer Scholar
- ③ Julius & Esther Stulberg Scholar
- ④ Michael Listiak Scholar
- ⑤ Herbert Butler Scholar
- ⑥ Tucky & Charles Elliott Scholar
- ⑦ Russell Brown Scholar

- * Member of Sigma Alpha Iota music fraternity for women