

Dalton Wed@7:30pm: *Live and Interactive!*

2011–12 Season

7th Concert

Wednesday 14 September 2011

Dalton Center Recital Hall

7:30 p.m.

Johannes Brahms
1833–1897
arr. R. Silvestri

TWO PIANISTS: NINA SCHUMANN & LUÍS MAGALHÃES

Variations on a Theme by Paganini Opus 35

Book I

Variation I: Non Troppo presto

Variation II

Variation III

Variation IV: Tranquillo

Variation V

Variation VI: Vivace

Variation VII: Con fuoco

Variation VIII: Sempre con fuoco

Variation IX: Meno mosso

Variation X: Tranquillo

Variation XI: Andante

Variation XII: Scorrevole

Variation XIII: Vivace e leggero

Variation XIV: Deciso, brillante

Book II

Theme: Non troppo presto

Variation I

Variation II: Poco animato

Variation III: Scherzando

Variation IV: Poco allegretto

Variation V: Vivace

Variation VI: Poco più vivace

Variation VII

Variation VIII: Allegro

Variation IX

Variation X: Feroce, energico

Variation XI: Vivace

Variation XII: Un poco andante

Variation XIII: Un poco più andante

Variation XIV: Presto, ma non troppo

Serge Rachmaninoff
1873–1943

Suite Number 2 Opus 17

I. Introduction: Alla marcia

II. Valse: Presto

III. Romance: Andantino

IV. Tarantella: Presto

Aaron Copland
1900–1990
arr. Leonard Bernstein

El Salón México

Witold Lutoslawski
1913–1994

Paganini Variations for Two Pianos

Historically, most distinguished performers of classical music travelled beyond their home to pursue mastery of their respective instruments in Europe or the United States. Some left for short periods before they returned to make significant musical contributions in the country of their birth. Others remained abroad for extensive periods, spanning their entire performing careers, before returning home to retire. Yet others settled in their adopted countries where their talents were rewarded with opportunities and recognition not readily forthcoming in their home country. In what is a rich historical tapestry of musical migration, intercontinental transmission of performing practices and kaleidoscopic influences, there is very little precedent for South African-Portuguese exchange.

The Magalhães-Schumann Piano Duo (TwoPianists), institutionally based at Stellenbosch University, is therefore cultural history in the making. Luís Magalhães was born in Lousado in Portugal, and grew up in its environs. He started playing the piano at the age of five and received tuition from Eduardo Rocha, José Alexandre Reis, Pedro Burmester and Vladimir Viardo, as well as master classes from, amongst others, Paul Badura-Skoda and Alicia de Larrocha. By the time he went to study piano at the University of North Texas in 1999, Magalhães was already a seasoned recitalist, concerto and chamber music performer. He had also won several prizes at national and international competitions. It was at North Texas where he met his duo-partner, Nina Schumann, at the beginning of 1999. A Resident in Los Angeles before then, she had come to study with Viardo at the University of North Texas in 1996 after having met him during master classes in South Africa in 1995. Previously she had studied with Lamar Crowson and Vitaly Margulis, winning every major South African competition and scholarship and establishing herself locally as one of the most promising musicians of her generation.

At the beginning of 1999, Schumann was appointed Associate Professor in piano at Stellenbosch University, and she started commuting between North Texas and the town of her birth. The result of mutual professional admiration and personal attraction in equal measure, the Magalhães-Schumann Piano Duo was founded in that same year. It soon achieved international recognition, with performances across the USA, Germany, South Africa, Portugal, Austria, Switzerland, and Japan being praised for their display of synchronicity and technical prowess, expressive feeling and insight. To be sure, the character of this artistic collaboration is determined by a receptive empathy between two very different pianists. Playful charm intermingles with fastidious realization of text, delicate accuracy with impressively sonorous sound, percussive brilliance with meticulously formed singing lines. Tempting as it is to describe this fusion culturally as one between an old world steeped in tradition and a new world vibrantly responsive, the comparison doesn't work aesthetically.

What is evident from the enthusiastic reception of Magalhães-Schumann performances, however, is that the forging of such a broad register of pianistic ability from two contrasting styles results in a sound and interpretative depth of sumptuous richness. And because music is never divorced from worldly circumstance, the fascination of this artistic dialogue must surely also derive in part from the Magalhães-Schumann marriage, and the universally recognizable spark that ignited and continues to sustain it.

This concert is a Bullock Performance Institute (BPI) presentation. BPI events are made possible through the cooperation and support of several community fine arts units: the Donald P. Bullock Music Performance Institute; WMUK National Public Radio; the Western Michigan University College of Fine Arts and School of Music; and WMU's chapters of Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia and Sigma Alpha Iota music fraternities.

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