

Compact Disc  
C43



2018  
4-20

UW Chamber Orchestra  
David Alexander Rahbee,  
Music Director and Conductor  
  
with  
  
Melia Watras, viola

7:30 PM  
April 20, 2018  
Brechemin Auditorium

CD #18,000

PROGRAM

- 1 remarks, Watras
- 2 Lachrymae, op.48a, reflections on a song of Dowland ..... 15:17 ..... Benjamin Britten (1913-1976)  
Melia Watras, viola
- 3 remarks, Rahbee
- 4 Siegfried Idyll ..... 17:30 ..... Richard Wagner (1813-1883)
- 5 remarks, Rahbee
- 6 Italian Serenade (orchestral version) ..... 7:59 ..... Hugo Wolf (1860-1903)

*(there is no intermission on tonight's program)*

UW MUSIC  
2017-18 SEASON

UW CHAMBER ORCHESTRA (members of UW Symphony)

David Alexander Rahbee, Music Director and Conductor

Mario Alejandro Torres, Gabriela Garza, & Lorenzo Guggenheim, assistant conductors

Ryan Farris, Orchestra Assistant

# Principal, Wagner

§ Principal, Wolf

Flute

# Rachel Reyes, Music Performance

§ Sarrah Flynn, Music Performance

Audrey Cullen, Music Performance

Oboe

# Sam Rockwood, Music Performance

§ Logan Esterling, Music Performance

Clarinet

#§ Mo Yan, Music Performance

Marie Gallardo, Music Performance

Bassoon

§ Lucas Zeiter, Music Performance

# Julien Tsang, Music Performance

Horn

# Bradley Leavens, Music Performance

§ Kelly Brown, Music Performance

Nate Lloyd, Music Performance

Christine Sass, Music Performance

Trumpet

# Ross Venneberg, DMA

Violin 1

Judith Kim, concertmaster, Music Performance

Tyler Ki, Business

Eric So, Pre Engineering

Alisha Lu, Business Administration

Allion Salvador, Alum

Jonathan Kuehn, Alum

Violin 2

Renee Zhang, Biology / Music Performance

David Huentelman, International Studies

Jonathan Ramos, Biology

Alex Hawker, Cornish College of the Arts

Samara Williams, Biochemistry

Claire Wong, Biology

Viola

Kyle Thiessen, principal, Psychology and Music Major

Eugene Chin, Music Performance

Emily Hennings, MCD Biology

Elena Allen, Music Performance / Biochemistry

Cello

Ryan Farris, principal, Music Performance

Peter Tracy, Music Performance

Evan Howard, Music / Biomedical Engineering

Bass

Mason Fagan, Music Performance

Logan Grimm, Communication

Reduced orchestra for Britten:

Violin: Judith Kim, Emily Acri, Renee Zhang, Tyler Kim

Viola: Kyle Thiessen, Eugene Chin, Ernily Hennings,  
Elena Allen

Cello: Ryan Farris, Peter Tracy

Bass: Mason Fagan, Logan Grimm

PROGRAM NOTES, by Logan Esterling

BENJAMIN BRITTEN (1913-1976)

Lachrymae: Reflections on a song of John Dowland, op. 48a

Benjamin Britten's *Lachrymae: Reflections on a song of John Dowland* op. 48 was written for his friend William Primrose, widely regarded as the best violist of the 20th century. The piece premiered in 1950 and was originally for viola and piano, which was followed in 1976 by Britten's arrangement for viola and string orchestra. Britten pays homage to English musical heritage, as he often did, by drawing on themes of the famous English composer John Dowland. Specifically, Britten draws the principal theme from Dowland's song *If my complaints could passions move*, which opens with the line "If my complaints could passions move, or make love see wherein I suffer wrong." The piece begins with a brief ghostly introduction. The main theme rumbles from the lowest depths of the orchestra as the viola anxiously trembles above. Britten masterfully uses theme and variations to develop Dowland's melody. After ten variations Britten finally returns to a completed iteration of the main theme, which surfaces from the anxious variations with a sense of calm release. He also quotes Dowland's *Flow my Tears*, for one of the variations, hence the connection to the title, *Lachrymae* (Tears).

RICHARD WAGNER (1813-1883)

Siegfried Idyll

Richard Wagner wrote *Siegfried Idyll* in 1870 as a birthday present for his wife Cosima, the daughter of Franz Liszt. The piece is much more intimate in nature as compared to Wagner's known style of grand and elaborate scores. The intimate chamber setting draws the listener in as the piece expands from nothingness into a luscious display of Wagner's love. The best words about the piece come from the diary of Cosima:

"As I awoke, my ear caught a sound, which swelled fuller and fuller; no longer could I imagine myself to be dreaming: music was sounding, and such music! When it died away, Richard came into my room with the children and offered me the score of the symphonic birthday poem. I was in tears, but so were all the rest of the household. Richard had arranged his orchestra on the staircase, and thus was our Tribschen consecrated forever."

HUGO WOLF (1860-1903)

Italian Serenade

Hugo Wolf was an Austrian composer who was best known for the over 300 art songs he wrote in his life, which are widely regarded as the height of 19th century German Lied. Wolf's instrumental music often displays a lighthearted and playful aspect of his personality. The *Italian Serenade*, written in 1887, was originally scored for string quartet. After many sketches of orchestrated versions, Wolf decided on an arrangement of the piece in one movement. He did not identify with absolute music and as a result he structured the form of the serenade as a narrative, which he never explained or wrote into program notes. The piece exudes wit and spirit as it flows between sections highlighting various sounds in the orchestra: bouncing strings, interrupting winds, lilting melodies, a passionate cello recitative, pizzicato drifting away into silence.

## BIOGRAPHIES:

Hailed by *Gramophone* as "an artist of commanding and poetic personality" and by *The Strad* as "staggeringly virtuosic," violist/composer **Melia Watras** has distinguished herself as one of her instrument's leading voices. She has performed in venues such as Carnegie Hall, Weill Recital Hall, and Alice Tully Hall, while achieving acclaim as an established recording artist. Recent highlights include the release of her latest disc from the Sono Luminus label, *26*, which features world premiere recordings of her own compositions, and video projects with violist Garth Knox (performing with Knox on his duos, *Viola Spaces for Two*) and video artist Ha Na Lee.

Watras's discography has received considerable attention from the press and the public. *The Strad* called *26* "a beautiful celebration of 21<sup>st</sup> century viola music." Soon after its release, the album debuted on the *Billboard* Classical Music Chart at #15. *Ispirare*, which features the world premiere recording of Pulitzer Prize-winner Shulamit Ran's *Perfect Storm* (written for Watras), made numerous Best of 2015 lists, including the *Chicago Reader's* ("Watras knocked the wind out of me with the dramatically dark beauty of this recording"). *Short Stories* was a *Seattle Times* Critics' Pick, with the newspaper marveling at her "velocity that seems beyond the reach of human fingers." Of her debut solo CD (*Viola Solo*), *Strings* praised her "stunning virtuosic talent" and called her second release (*Prestidigitation*) "astounding and both challenging and addictive to listen to."

Watras's compositions have been performed in New York City, Chicago, Seattle, Bloomington (IN), Denmark and Spain, by artists such as violist Atar Arad, cellist Sæunn Thorsteinsdóttir and violinist Michael Jinsoo Lim. Her music appears on her album *26* and has been recorded for another upcoming disc. Watras's adaptation of John Corigliano's *Fancy on a Bach Air* for viola is published by G. Schirmer, Inc. and can be heard on her *Viola Solo* CD.

Watras is violist of the Seattle-based ensemble, Frequency, for whom she has composed, and a member of Open End, with whom she has performed in France, Denmark and the United States and recorded for Albany Records. For twenty years, Watras concertized worldwide and recorded extensively as violist of the renowned Corigliano Quartet, which she co-founded. The ensemble's album on the Naxos label was honored as one of the Ten Best Classical Recordings of the Year by *The New Yorker*. Other chamber music explorations include improvising in concert with jazz innovators Cuong Vu and Ted Poor. She and Vu recently premiered and recorded a work of his for viola and trumpet.

A versatile performer, Watras has enjoyed collaborations with dance and theater. She appeared as violist/dancer in the premiere of Kathryn Sullivan's *At Home*, at the Merce Cunningham Studio in New York City. Music from her *Viola Solo* CD was featured in director Sheila Daniels's production of *Crime and Punishment* at Intiman Theatre, and she worked as music consultant for Braden Abraham's production of *Opus* at Seattle Repertory Theatre.

Melia Watras was born in Honolulu, Hawaii and began her musical studies on the piano at age 5. Soon after, she turned to the viola and made her debut at 16, soloing with the Dayton Philharmonic Orchestra. Her formal studies took her to Indiana University, where she studied with Atar Arad and Abraham Skernick, earning Bachelor's and Master's degrees and the prestigious Performer's Certificate. While at Indiana, Watras began her teaching career as Professor Arad's Associate Instructor, and was a member of the faculty as a Visiting Lecturer. She went on to study chamber music at the Juilliard School while serving as a teaching assistant to the Juilliard String Quartet.

Watras serves as Professor of Viola and chair of Strings at the University of Washington, where she currently holds the Adelaide D. Currie Cole Endowed Professorship and was previously awarded the Donald E. Petersen Endowed Fellowship and the Royalty Research Fund. Watras has given viola and chamber music classes at schools such as Indiana University, Cleveland Institute of Music, Strasbourg Conservatoire (France), and Chosun University (South Korea). She frequently returns to her alma mater, Indiana, to teach as a guest professor.

Watras currently resides in Seattle with her husband, Pacific Northwest Ballet concertmaster Michael Jinsoo Lim. She plays a viola made by Samuel Zygmuntowicz.

**David Alexander Rahbee** is currently Senior Artist in Residence at the University of Washington School of Music in Seattle, where he is Director of Orchestral Activities and teaches conducting. He is Music Director and Conductor of the University of Washington Symphony Orchestra and founder of the UW Campus Philharmonia. He is a recipient of the American-Austrian Foundation's 2003 Herbert von Karajan Fellowship for Young Conductors, the 2005 International Richard-Wagner-Verband Stipend, and the Acanthes Centre in Paris in 2007.

Dr. Rahbee has appeared in concert with orchestras such as the RTE National Symphony Orchestra of Ireland, Orchestre Philharmonique du Luxembourg, Kammerphilharmonie Berlin-Brandenburg, Orchestre de la Francophonie, Orchesterakademie der Bochumer Symphoniker, the Dresden Hochschule orchestra, Grand Harmonie, the Boston New Music Initiative, Seattle Modern Orchestra, Orquesta Sinfónica de Loja (Ecuador), Armenian Philharmonic Orchestra, Savaria Symphony Orchestra (Hungary), Cool Opera of Norway (members of the Stavanger Symphony), Schönbrunner Schloss Orchester (Vienna), the Whatcom Symphony Orchestra, the Kennett Symphony, and the Divertimento Ensemble of Milan. He collaborated twice with the Seattle Symphony in 2015, assisting for the performance and recording of Ives' Fourth Symphony, and as guest conductor for their Native Lands project. He has collaborated with several prominent soloists such as violinists Sarah Chang, Glenn Dicterow, David Chan, and Joseph Lin as well as pianists Ana Marija Markovina and Jonathan Biss. He has been a guest rehearsal conductor for numerous young orchestras, such as the New England Conservatory Symphony Orchestra, The Symphony Orchestras of the Hall-Musco Conservatory of Music at Chapman University, and the Vienna University of Technology orchestra, the Boston Youth Symphony Orchestras (BYSO), and Rhode Island Philharmonic Youth Orchestras (RIPYO). He has served on faculty of the Pierre Monteux School as Conducting Associate, has been resident conductor of the Atlantic Music Festival in Maine, and guest conductor at the Hawaii Performing Arts Festival.

Dr. Rahbee was an assistant at the Vienna State opera from 2002-2010. As part of his fellowship and residency at the 2003 Salzburg Festival, Dr. Rahbee was assistant conductor of the International Attergau Institute Orchestra, where he worked with members of the Vienna Philharmonic. He has been selected to actively participate in masterclasses with prominent conductors such as Kurt Masur, Sir Colin Davis, Jorma Panula, Zdeněk Mácal, Peter Eötvös, Zoltán Peskó, and Helmut Rilling, and counts Nikolaus Harnoncourt to be among his most influential mentors. From 1997-2001, David Rahbee was conductor of the Fidelio Chamber Orchestra in Cambridge, Massachusetts, selecting its talented young members from Harvard University, the New England Conservatory, and Boston University. From 1997 to 2000, he served as assistant conductor of the Atlantic Symphony Orchestra (formerly known as the Hingham Symphony) in Massachusetts.

Dr. Rahbee's principal conducting teachers were Charles Bruck and Michael Jinbo at the Pierre Monteux School. He holds a Bachelor of Music degree in violin and composition from Indiana University, a Master of Music degree from the New England Conservatory in orchestral conducting, and a Doctorate of Musical Arts from the University of Montreal in orchestral conducting. He has also participated in post-graduate conducting classes at the Universität für Musik und Darstellende Kunst, Vienna. His arrangements of various music for brass are published by Warwick Music, and his articles on the music of Gustav Mahler have appeared in journals of the International Gustav Mahler Gesellschaft, among others. Dr. Rahbee was a finalist for the American Prize, in the category of Orchestral Programming in the college/university division for the 2013-14 season and was awarded second place for the 2014-15 season of the University of Washington Symphony Orchestra.

## **The University of Washington Symphony Orchestra**

The UW Symphony is made up of music majors as well as students from departments all across campus. They rehearse twice weekly and perform at least two concerts per quarter. Under the leadership of Dr. Rahbee since the fall of 2013, the UW Symphony has performed over 130 works, spanning from the early baroque through contemporary, and collaborated with faculty and guest soloists, as well as members of the Seattle Symphony and other local organizations. The orchestra has often collaborated with two Grammy-award winning artists: Ludovic Morlot (Affiliate Professor of Conducting and Seattle Symphony Music Director) and Stephen Stubbs (Senior Artist in Residence). Other collaborations have included an opera on period instruments with Pacific MusicWorks, a concert with jazz studies faculty, as well as the annual performance with the combined university choirs. Concerts are given in Meany Theater, as well as various other locations on campus, and occasionally at Benaroya Hall. From time to time during the school year, the orchestra may split up into smaller groups under the title **UW Chamber Orchestras**.

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*Do you play an orchestral instrument? Are you a UW student? Students interested in joining the UW Symphony or Campus Philharmonia Orchestras may email Dr. Rahbee at [darahbee@uw.edu](mailto:darahbee@uw.edu). New enrollment occurs each quarter on a space-available basis.*

FUTURE CONCERTS of UW Symphony:

Friday April 27<sup>th</sup>, Meany, 7:30 PM

With Ben Lulich, clarinet

Music by Lutoslawski, Ravel and Haydn

Friday June 1<sup>st</sup>, Meany, 7:30 PM

With combined UW Choirs

Music by Debussy and Brahms