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Upcoming Concerts

University Chorale Invitational; February 22, 7:30 PM, Meany Theater
Guest Artist Recital; John Murphy, piano, February 22, 8:00 PM, Brechemin
Soni Ventorum Wind Quintet; March 1, 8:00 PM, Brechemin Auditorium
Studio Jazz Ensemble; March 4, 8:00 PM, Meany Theater



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The School of Music
presents the 59th program of the 1990-91 season.

CD 14960

The University Symphony Orchestra

599
1991
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Peter Erös

Director

J. S. Bach

SUITE NO. 2 in B-MINOR

Felix Skowronek, Flute

Diane Thome

THE RUINS of the HEART

Emilie Berendsen, Mezzo-Soprano

Ludwig van Beethoven

SYMPHONY NO. 7

Thursday, February 21, 1991
8:00 PM, Meany Theater

DATE #11,755

CASS #11,756

Program

DAF Suite No. 2 in B-Minor, BWV 1067 (1729) ... JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

ID 2

- Overture
- Rondeau
- Sarabande
- Bourees I & II
- Polonaise & Double
- Menuet
- Badinerie

Felix Skowronek, Flute

ID 3 The Ruins of the Heart (1724) DIANE THOME
for Soprano, Orchestra, and Tape
(World Premiere)

Emilie Berendsen, Mezzo-Soprano

CASS SIDE A
SIDE B

Intermission

ID 4 Symphony No. 7 in A-Major, Op. 92 (1812) ... LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN

- Poco Sostenuto — Vivace
- Allegretto
- Scherzo
- Finale — Allegro con brio

Program Notes

The term *overture* has its root in the French word *ouvert*, meaning an "opening" or "beginning." As a musical form, *overtures* are used as openings of theatrical productions, the first piece of a concert, or as the first movement in a suite of pieces.

Jean-Baptiste Lully (1632-1687), dean of French composers, is credited with the establishment of the *overture* as a musical form. The first of three parts (let's call it "A") is slow, melody dominated (homophonic), stately, and full of uneven (dotted, iambic) rhythms. The second part, "B," begins with a simple voice, followed in imitation by other statements of that theme. Depending on the composer, "A" is usually repeated, making a tidy ABA form.

Bach's autograph score for this suite in B-minor is lost, making it impossible to date the work. A set of parts, partially in Bach's own hand, is all the evidence we have, putting this composition around 1739. In that year Bach resumed leadership of the Collegium Musicum, a Leipzig performing organization of student and professional musicians founded by Georg Philipp Telemann (1681-1767) during his Leipzig sojourn. Bach worked with many of these musicians regularly in the course of instrumental music needed for services at Saint Thomas Church.

The suite in B-minor is named for its opening movement, **Overture**. It is in three parts, ABA. The first is slow, iambic in rhythm, but is anything but melody dominated. Scarcely a measure goes by without some kind of imitation, rhythmic or melodic, throughout the texture of voice parts. The faster, contrapuntal sections begins at measure 21, a fugue on a lively theme. In measure 55, Bach hands long segments to the flute solo, making a mini-concerto. The closing section ("Lentement," slowly) brings us back to a restatement of the opening, but with a twist. The meter is now 3/4 instead of the former 4/4, and the flute plays a descant over the theme in the first violins. In each of Bach's four overtures for orchestra, the opening movement surpasses in length all the subsequent movements combined.

The *Rondeau* is actually a Gavotte (a dance rhythm in duple meter beginning on the last two quarter notes of the measure). Its title, *Rondeau*, indicates the melodic structure: ABACA'BA. All of that in 52 short measures!

Sarabande is a slow dance step in 3/4 time. Listen for the strict imitation between the top (flute/violins) and bottom (celli/basses) of the orchestra at the interval of one measure.

Bourees I & II bring us back to a quick, duple meter. Bouree II is given over to the flute and continuo, followed by a reprise of Bouree I.

Polonaise & Double are slower, in a sturdy 3/4 meter. The Polonaise, ("Polish dance"), seldom found in baroque suites of dances, is included here perhaps because of the contrast in moods that it brings between the Bourrees and the Badinerie. The sweet Double finds the theme of its partner given to the continuo instruments while the flute spins a delicate web of shining virtuosity.

In closing, the *Badinerie* (French for "frivolity") is a frisky, energetic display of fireworks for the flute, with some of the motor rhythms of the melody reflected in the bass line.

— *Stephen Long*

The Ruins of the Heart was inspired by Edmund Helminski's beautiful translations of texts by the 13th-century Persian, Jelaluddin Rumi, widely regarded as the greatest Sufi poet of all time. The texts used represent my selected excerpts from the original translation rather than any single complete poem, and are embedded throughout the orchestral music using the soprano in the dual roles of narrator and singer. As the piece evolves dramatically, the vocal and orchestral music gradually become more intertwined.

Having previously explored combinations of tape and live performance in a number of small chamber compositions, I was interested in composing an orchestra/tape work in which the tape would function both as a quasi-acoustic complement and as a powerfully contrasting counterpart to the live instrumental and vocal music. The three tape sections which are interpolated and overlapped with the orchestral music were synthesized by a Spectral Synthesis "Synth-Engine" digital signal processing system, using AudioVision and SynthEngine Sampler software. A variety of natural and synthetic sounds were sampled and extensively transformed by this system. I wish to thank Ted Wolfe and Mark Doenges of Spectral Synthesis in Woodinville, Washington, for their generous assistance and for the opportunity to beta-test the system, Robert Austin who was my collaborator in the production of the tape, and Gary Louie for his technical assistance during this performance.

The Ruins of the Heart was commissioned by Peter Eros and the University Symphony. It was completed in November, 1990.

— *Diane Thome*

With every breath the sound
of love surrounds us,
and we are bound for the
depths of space, without seeing.

Empty your head of grief
and drink from the stream.
The grave is a veil before the
gathering of paradise.

This is love: to fly toward a secret sky,
to cause a hundred veils to fall each moment.

This is the time of union,
The time of eternal beauty.

Inside my Self I discover
the scent of the Friend in every breath
Why not hold this Self close every night?

Poet: Jelaluddin Rumi
Translator: Edmund Helminski

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The compositions of Diane Thome span a variety of media, among them music for small and large ensemble, chamber and full orchestra, solo, choral, and tape music, and electronic chamber compositions which combine the resources of the electronic medium with those of live performance. Many of these works have been presented in Europe, Australia, Canada, China, Israel, and throughout the United States, including performances by the International Viola Congress, the Pittsburgh New Music Ensemble, the International Women's Arts Festival in New York City, the National Computation Conference at the University of Illinois, the Philadelphia Composers Forum, the International Computer Arts Festival, the Philadelphia Electronic Music Symposium, the Dartmouth Music Festival, and many others. Her collaborative works include **Night Passage**, an environmental theatre piece presented in the pavilion of the Moore College of Arts in Philadelphia, as well as compositions for dance and film. Recently her music has been presented by the Seattle Symphony, the Bay Area Women's Philharmonic, the International Computer Music Conference, and Kol Israel Radio.

The first woman to receive a Ph.D. in Music from Princeton, she also holds an M.F.A. in composition, an M.A. in Theory and Composition from the University of Pennsylvania, and two undergraduate degrees with distinction in piano and composition from the Eastman School of Music. She has received fellowships from the Woodrow Wilson Foundation, Columbia University (honorary), the University of Pennsylvania, Princeton, Tanglewood, and Inter-American University in Puerto Rico. Among her teachers are Dorothy Taubman in piano, Robert Strassburg, Roy Harris, Darius Milhaud, A. U. Boscovich, and Milton Babbitt in composition. Her numerous grants include two NEA Composer Fellowships, awards from the National Federation of Music Clubs, the

Martha Baird Rockefeller Fund for Music, the American Music Center, the Jerome Foundation, Meet-The-Composer, and the National League of American Pen Women. Currently Professor of Theory and Composition in the School of Music at the University of Washington, Diane Thome is a member of American Composers Alliance and Broadcast Music, Inc.

The **Seventh Symphony** has been the subject of program notes by many writers, famous and not so famous, who have turned golden sounds into purple prose. Robert Schumann (composer and critic, 1810-1856) discovered in the second movement a "wedding party in a country village." The eminent Richard Wagner (1813-1883) called the entire work "the apotheosis (deification) of the dance," providing license for American danseuse Isadora Duncan (1878-1927) to dance it in concert. Hermann Bischoff (composer, 1868-1936), who had some critical things to say about Wagner, felt that it brought to mind "autumnal merry-makings of the gleaners and vine-dressers, the tender melancholy of a love-lorn youth, the pious canticle of joy and gratitude for nature's gifts and the final outburst when joy beckons again and the dance melodies float out upon the air and none stands idle." Dr. Carl Iken, who is known primarily for extensive 'word paintings' of Beethoven's symphonies, went on at length about the Seventh, seeing in it a scenario of political revolution, complete with all attendant struggles. But it was Sir Donald Francis Tovey (British composer and scholar, 1875-1940) who cleared the air by declaring, "The symphony is so overwhelmingly convincing and so obviously untranslatable, that it has for many years been treated quite reasonably as a piece of music, instead of an excuse for discussing the French Revolution."

Beethoven opened his Seventh Symphony with an extended (62 measures) introduction, the words *Poco sostenuto* — "a little sustained" — providing the clue for character and tempo. The four note motive, heard first from the oboe and passed around the orchestra, is a roll-call of tone colors present. The mood shifts into an exuberant *Vivace*, achieved with breath-stopping suspense in a hushed dialog between the high woodwinds and the violins on a single note (E).

Movement two, marked *Allegretto* — "cheerful, somewhat lively" — is a set of variations on a 16-measure theme, one of the most enduring of all orchestral literature. At the symphony's first public hearing, the audience was so enthusiastic about the second movement that it had to be encoored before the third and fourth could be played.

The *Scherzo* is in three parts, ABA, in 3/4 meter. The opening and closing "A's" are Presto — loosely translated, "very fast, indeed!" In contrast, the Trio, "B," is slower in meter and written with longer note values, giving an overall effect of serene calm. Hazel Gertrude Kinscella (musician, educator, 1895-1960) credits the Trio melody as Beethoven's quotation of "Abbe Stadler's Pilgrim Hymn" from Lower Austria.

Philip Hale of Boston (jurist, musician, critic, 1854-1934) calls the Finale "a wild rondo on two themes," one of which, says Kinscella, "is the melody of an old Irish folk song, *Norah Creina*." Beethoven wrote *Allegro con brio* — fast, merrily, with driving force — asking for, and getting, "unbuttoned joy!"

The premiere of the Seventh Symphony was in Vienna on December 8, 1813 at a concert organized by Johann Nepomuk Maelzel (inventor of the metronome, 1772-1838) for the benefit of the disabled Austrian and Bavarian veterans of the battle of Hanau. Sharing the program was another new work by Beethoven, **Wellington's Victory** commemorating Wellington's defeat of the French army in Spain in June, 1813.

— Stephen Long

The University Symphony Orchestra

Peter Eros, Conductor

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Matthew Weiss
Susie Kim
Sunny Lee Kim
Anne Marie Hoffman
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Simon Shiao
Jeff Yang
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Mary Clark
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