The St. Olaf College Department of Music presents

THE
ST · OLAFF
ORCHESTRA
NORTHFIELD · MINNESOTA · USA

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JERE LANTZ, guest conductor

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Sunday ~ March 8, 2009 ~ 3:30 pm
Skoglund Center Auditorium ~ Northfield, Minnesota
Prelude and Liebestod from *Tristan and Isolde*  
Richard Wagner (1813-1883)

Rarely are music and metaphysics discussed in the same breath, but in no compositions are they more closely related than in those by Richard Wagner. The shattering impact of the philosophy of Arthur Schopenhauer on the composer served to fundamentally alter his view of the nature of reality such that he ceased work on his massive four-part *Ring* cycle to reevaluate his own aesthetics. Arguing that the world is merely a representation of an endlessly striving and unthinking force he calls the “will,” Schopenhauer concluded that all of existence is inherently tragic in that it is characterized by a relentless and eternally unsatisfied yearning. The result of this electrifying and transformative worldview in the composer is what became *Tristan und Isolde*.

Adapted from a medieval myth of ill-fated love, the opera conveys the title character’s eternal lusting for each other through what was at the time an unprecedented dissonant and avant-garde musical language. In many ways a microcosm of the work as a whole, the “Prelude” is characterized by pervasive chromaticism mixed with improperly functioning harmonies in seemingly endless succession, creating an uncomfortable level of unease and dissatisfaction through its avoidance of any strong tonal centers (indeed, there were reports of audience members fainting during initial performances of this work). But whereas the “Prelude” is symbolic of the painful *sehnsucht* of the two title characters, the “Liebestod” is by contrast a depiction of metaphysical transcendence. Coming to a full realization of the tragic nature of reality following the death of Tristan, Isolde renounces the interminable striving of Schopenhauer’s “will” by renouncing her own will to live. Isolde, in a moment of ecstasy, descends into death to reunite with Tristan “in the heaving swell, in the resounding echoes, in the universal stream of the world-breath—to drown, to founder unconscious—utmost rapture!”

—E. R.

*“Piangerò” from Giulio Cesare*  
George Frideric Handel (1685-1759)

George Frideric Handel’s opera *Giulio Cesare* was premiered in London in 1724. Although he is most well known today for his sacred music, his fame in England was largely due to his operatic achievements. “Piangerò” is from the third act of the opera. At this point in the narrative Ptolemy, the King of Egypt, has captured and imprisoned his sister Cleopatra, who wishes to overthrow him and rule in his place.

The scene is a recitative and aria da capo, a form often employed in late Baroque opera. The opening serves to tell the story, while the subsequent text reflects the situation at hand. The aria is in two parts that are starkly contrasted through mode and tempo. The form derives its name from the return (da capo) of the first section at the end. Traditionally, this repeat provided an opportunity for the performer to demonstrate improvisational skill and virtuosity.

—I. C.

Prelude to Act I from *La traviata*  
Giuseppe Verdi (1813-1901)

Giuseppe Verdi wrote *La traviata* (*The Fallen Woman*) just a few months prior to its premiere in March 1853. Two of the three main singers in the premiere were incapable of suitably performing their roles, leading Verdi to refuse further performances for over a year.

The prelude to Act I provides a rough outline of the story in reverse order. The opening chromatic figure in the violins corresponds to music from the third Act, in which Violetta—the fallen woman of the title—is dying of consumption. The next melody heard in the first violins is love music that forms the basis of Violetta’s Act II aria, “Amami, Alfredo.” The prelude ends
with a duet between the celli and first violins, as the celli play the Act II love theme and the violins play figures associated with Violetta in the first act.

~ I. C.

“Come per me sereno… Sovra il sen” from *La sonnambula*  
Vincenzo Bellini (1801-1835)  
*La sonnambula (The Sleepwalker)*, by Vincenzo Bellini, was premiered at the Teatro Carcano in Milan on March 6, 1831. The two main roles of the ill-fated lovers Amina and Elvino were sung by two of the greatest Italian singers of the time, soprano Giuditta Pasta and tenor Giovanni Battista Rubini. “Come per me sereno… Sovra il sen” is Amina’s first aria in the work, sung just before her betrothal to Elvino. In it she expresses the joys of love and her gratitude towards her adopted mother, Teresa.

The piece is a *scena ad aria*, a form that was widely used in mid-nineteenth century opera. It begins with a recitative section, omitted this afternoon, followed by the lyrical *cavatina* in a slow duple meter—the beginning of the piece for many concert performances. Also in duple meter, the closing *cabaletta* is faster and more virtuosic than the *cavatina*, and—much like the Handel aria—provides an opportunity for the leading lady to show off her vocal abilities.

~ I. C.

~ INTERMISSION ~

**Symphony 4, Movement III**  
Charles Ives (1874-1954)  
Charles Ives’ Fourth Symphony can be rightly viewed as a summation of his life’s work in being an amalgamation of Americana, transcendentalism, and his iconoclastic compositional language. Continuing a theme explored in many of his works, he remarked that the “program” of the symphony was “that of a searching question of ‘What’ and ‘Why’ which the spirit of man asks of life,” which is posed in the first movement and answered in the following three.  

Composed while Ives was a student at Yale, the third movement, *Fugue*, made its debut in his First String Quartet (1897-98), and was later arranged for orchestra in the 1920s. The movement is built on a number of hymn tunes that are combined contrapuntally into a sort of homogenous harmonic web, making the identification of many of the themes a somewhat labored process at best (sensitive ears will be able to pick out “Joy to the World” among several others). Clearly influenced by his job as a church organist in his youth, this movement is the ecclesiastical response to the first movement’s unanswered question, as the stream of consciousness like interweaving of the hymn tunes seem to speak to a sort of spiritual transcendence over the dogmatic rules of fugal writing, which is evidenced by the highly emotive nature of this movement.

~ E. R.

**Firebird Suite (1919)**  
Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971)  
While he led a long compositional career, Igor Stravinsky is still renowned for his three early ballet scores, works that firmly established him among the musical innovators of the early twentieth century. Although *Firebird* does not display the same propensity for originality as the other two works, Stravinsky’s skill lies in his successful integration of many diverse compositional styles, including the Russian nationalist and impressionist movements.  

*The Firebird* was premiered at the Opéra in Paris in June 1910 with Sergei Diaghilev’s Ballet Russe. Stravinsky extracted portions of the original forty-five minute ballet score into a suite in 1910, which he re-orchestrated in 1919. It is the later version of the first suite that is most often heard in concerts, with the longer 1945 suite being performed less frequently. The first suite is in six sections and follows the story of the Firebird, Prince Ivan, the Princess of Unearthly Beauty and the evil King Katschei.
The chromatic six-note arpeggios in low strings that open the work are the basis of much of the music, especially that of the Firebird. Stravinsky employed the traditional associations of diatonicism with humans and chromaticism with the supernatural.

The music of the *Firebird’s Dance* and the variation on it come from Ivan’s chase of the Firebird in the ballet. This section shows the influence of the Impressionist schools, especially in the highly complex rhythms and emphasis on the instrumental colors.

It is in the *Dance of the Princesses* that Ivan and the Princess of Unearthly Beauty—the thirteenth to be imprisoned by Katschei—meet and fall in love. Ivan’s love compels him to follow the princesses into the evil castle, despite their warnings.

*The Infernal Dance of King Katschei* portrays the enchanted dance forced upon the king and his subjects by the Firebird, which earlier promised Ivan’s help in exchange for its release. Driving syncopated rhythms pervade this section, which returns to highly chromatic harmonies after the recent diatonicism.

The *Berceuse* is the Firebird’s lullaby for Katschei and his followers. Once they are sleeping, Ivan smashes the egg that contains the King’s soul, destroying his kingdom and freeing the princesses.

Often performed separately from the rest of the work, the *Finale* is the most familiar music in the suite. It is a folk-like, diatonic celebration of the victory of Ivan over Katschei—described by the British scholar Hugh Ottaway as “both a valediction to things colourfully Russian…and a foreshadowing of the later Stravinsky in his statuesque, ‘hieratic’ vein.”

~ I. C.

Program notes by Isaac Chaput ’10 and Erik Radio ’09

### Jere Lantz ~ Biography

Currently, Jere Lantz serves as Music Director of the Rochester Symphony Orchestra and Chorale, the Minneapolis Pops Orchestra, and the Minnetonka Choral Society, and as choir director at Westminster Presbyterian Church in Minneapolis. In Minnesota, he has also served as Music Director of the symphonies of St. Cloud, Mankato, and Winona as well as the Minneapolis Chamber Symphony. He has been Associate Music Director of the Minnesota Opera and founding Music Director of the Minnesota Opera Touring Company. As a guest conductor, he has led concerts with the Minnesota Orchestra, Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, Bach Society and Minnesota Chorale.

Beyond Minnesota, Lantz has appeared with the Saint Louis Symphony, Rochester (NY) Philharmonic, New Hampshire Music Festival, and the orchestras of Kansas City, Santa Cruz, Huntsville, Syracuse, Shreveport, and Chattanooga, among others. Internationally, he has directed orchestras in Medellin, Colombia, and Shenzhen, Wuhan, and Peking, China. In 2008 he conducted concerts in Scotland and Italy.

Known for spreading the news about good music to audiences wherever he performs, Lantz has spoken at international symphony orchestra conferences, before the Minnesota state legislature and in countless radio and television interviews. A former board member of the Conductors Guild and the American Composers Forum, he was named 2003 Artist of the Year by the Southeastern Minnesota Arts Council.

A holder of degrees through the doctorate from Yale University, Lantz is excited about being back on a campus again, looking forward very much to his second concert with the St. Olaf College Orchestra.
THE ST. OLAF ORCHESTRA
JERE LANTZ, CONDUCTOR ~ RICHARD ERICKSON, MANAGER

VIOLIN I
Taryn Arbeiter, Rapid City, S.D.
Anna Bakk, Medina, Minn.
Allison Bengfort, Davenport, Iowa
Green Bouzard, Waverly, Iowa
Isaac Chaput, Mansfield Center, Conn.
Katherine Chatelaine, Owatonna, Minn.
Michael Gansen, Cedar Falls, Iowa
Helen Hassinger, La Crosse, Wis.
Katherine Jones, Woodland Park, Colo.
Laurel Lynch, Ester, Alaska
Emily McLaughlin, Lindstrom, Minn.
Nicolle Parks, Blaine, Minn.
††Hannah Reitz, Northfield, Minn.
Zachary Scanlan, Ham Lake, Minn.
Ean Ulrich, Owatonna, Minn.
Emily Vigne, Monktown, Vi.

VIOLIN II
Sarah Aune, Middleton, Wis.
Madeline Brumbach, Blacksburg, Va.
Janelle East, Spicer, Minn.
**Jennifer Fagre, Cloquet, Minn.
Mikaylin Heine, Westminster, Colo.
Jonathan Henn, Golden Valley, Minn.
Kiersten Holand, Park Ridge, Ill.
Olivia Krueger, Omaha, Neb.
Lauren Kurtz, Mankato, Minn.
Joseph Mitchell, Minneapolis, Minn.
**Catherine Monson, Austin, Minn.
Molly Poppenheim, Milwaukee, Wis.
Katelyn Reid, Northfield, Minn.
Katrina Schmitt, Naperville, Ill.
**Anna Schoessler, Penfield, N.Y.
Bern Youngblood, La Grande, Ore.

VIOLA
**Geoff Carlisle, Happy Valley, Ore.
Rebecca Dyer, Mount Pleasant, Iowa
Kara Erstad, Minnetonka, Minn.
Katherine Fitzgerald, Monument, Colo.
Mary Elise Hahn, Cedar Falls, Iowa
Brita Johnson, Anchorage, Alaska
Dayna Jondal, Austin, Minn.
Laura Menard, Lexington, Ky.
Anna Nelson, Waukesha, Wis.
Julia Ortner, Bloomington, Minn.
*Emily Pflaum, Rapid City, S.D.
Zachary Teska, Loveland, Colo.

CELLO
Amy Chatelaine, Owatonna, Minn.
Sarah Gingerich, Conway, Ark.
Beau Gray, Fargo, N.D.
**Briana Griffin, Newton, Kan.
**Hilary James, Golden, Colo.
Elizabeth Knapp, Anchorage, Alaska
Erik Radio, Shoreview, Minn.
Pual Sauey, Reedsburg, Wis.
Stephen Sokoloski, Maplewood, Minn.
Maura Timmerman, La Crosse, Wis.
Rachel Wiers, Cincinnati, Ohio
Laura Zimmermann, Racine, Wis.

BASS
James Bayless, Iowa City, Iowa
*Bayard Carlson, Sioax Falls, S.D.
Peder Garnaas-Halvorsen, St. Paul, Minn.
Jonah Hacker, Madison, Wis.
Carl Haskins, Lancaster, Wis.
**Bryan Runck, Lambert, Minn.

FLUTE/PICCOLO
**Rebecca Lambrecht, Neenah, Wis.
Megan Makeever, Bozeman, Mont.
Megan Ehresmann, St. Cloud, Minn.

OBOE
Megan Dvorak, Hayward, Wis.
Ashley Enke, Omaha, Neb.
**Lauren Seidel, Minneapolis, Minn.

CLARINET
**Lauren Cook, Lincoln Neb.
Aaron Harcus, Minneapolis, Minn.
Alicia Reuter, Seattle, Wash.

BASS CLARINET
Alicia Reuter, Seattle, Wash.

BASSOON/CONTRABASSOON
**Josh John, Beaverton, Ore.
**Esther Terpenning, Boulder, Colo.

HORN
Timothy Dwight, Brooklyn Park, Minn.
Jordan Kling, Ashland, Ore.
**Ben Reffing, Bozeman, Mont.
Clayton Smith, Norcross, Ga.
Andrew Watt, St. Paul, Minn.

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Joshua Castillo, Lakeville, Minn.
**Garrett Klein, Port Orchard, Wash.
Jaclyn Melander, Mounds View, Minn.
TROMBONE
**Michael Murchison, Laurel, Md.
Benjamin Sink, Manchester, N.H.
Katherine Virkler, Columbia, Mo.

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Dan Larson, Minnetonka, Minn.

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D.J. Erickson, Bloomington, Minn.
Christina Koch, El Segundo, Calif.
**Amanda Thorstad, Sun Prairie, Wis.
Alex Van Rysselberghe, Lake Oswego, Ore.

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Erin Bonawitz, Myrtle Beach, S.C.
Anna Hagens, Middleton, Wis.

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