THE ST. OLAF ORCHESTRA
STEVEN AMUNDSON, CONDUCTOR

WITH GUEST ARTISTS

KATHRYN ANANDA-OWENS, PIANO
AND
DAVID CARTER, CELLO

FRIDAY, JANUARY 15, 7:30 P.M.
BOE MEMORIAL CHAPEL
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The Program

“Ricercare” from *Musical Offering*, BWV 1079

J.S. Bach (1685-1750)

arr. Anton Webern

Although Bach achieved great standing as an organist, modern listeners might be surprised to know that in his lifetime he was not widely recognized as a composer, and many saw his music as old-fashioned. Less than a dozen of his compositions were printed before his death, but by the end of the 19th century many of his manuscripts had been published, and he had accumulated a towering status as a polyphonic genius. Close study of Bach’s works, which Wagner would call “the most stupendous miracle in all music,” became almost a rite of passage for later generations of composers.

One such composer was Anton Webern, a pioneer of serial 12-tone technique in the mid-20th century. Webern’s teacher, Arnold Schoenberg, introduced in his *Theory of Harmony* (1911) the idea of *Klangfarbenmelodie* or “tone-color melody,” where variation in timbre could replace or compliment variation in pitch to create a melodic line. Webern took this idea to heart and in 1935 applied it to an orchestration of the 6-part keyboard ricercare (a contrapuntal form that preceded the fugue) from Bach’s notable late work the *Musical Offering*. Webern fragmented the subject, heard in the opening line, into short motives and assigned them to different instruments, creating a parade of colors that unfolds as the ricercare develops.

Webern’s orchestration is not random — in his own words, the “instrumentation attempts to reveal the motivic coherence … Beyond that, of course, it is supposed to indicate the character of the piece as I feel it. What music it is! To make it accessible at long last, by trying through my orchestration to express my view on it, was the ultimate object of my bold undertaking.” Webern’s remarkable achievement is to recast Bach as something completely new without changing a single note.

*Concerto in A minor for Piano and Orchestra*, Op. 54

Robert Schumann (1810-1856)

I. Allegro affettuoso

Kathryn Ananda-Owens, piano

As a young piano student of Friedrich Wieck, Robert Schumann was captivated by the flashy concerti of composers like Paganini that served as exhibitions of virtuosic display. In 1830, he began sketches of a showpiece of his own — his first piano concerto. However, a hand injury soon cut his performing career short and he abandoned the sketches, turning to music criticism, where he became editor of Liepzig’s *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* (*New Journal of Music*). Schumann’s reading and study changed his outlook, and he began to condemn empty virtuosity and bravura in modern music, advocating instead the study of older music. Schumann found in the concertos of Bach, Mozart, and Beethoven the beauty of interplay between soloist and orchestra, and he imagined in an 1839 article “the genius who will show us a brilliant new way of combining orchestra and piano, [able to exploit] his instrument and his skill, while at the same time the orchestra, rather than merely looking on, should be able to interweave its numerous and various characters throughout the scene.”

Two years later, in 1841, Schumann set out to achieve that goal, drafting a *Fantasy in A minor for piano and orchestra*. Although the piano is dominant, Schumann achieved a new kind of integration between soloist and orchestra, weaving them seamlessly together from the very beginning in a captivating dialogue that is both dramatic and lyrical. Reacting against the short, loosely related sections of some virtuosic concertos, he also sought to unify the thematic material throughout the piece, from the opening Allegro to the cantabile Andante espressivo to the brilliant march-like conclusion. In 1845, the *Fantasy* became the first movement of his *Piano Concerto*, premiered in 1846 by his wife Clara. This year, as we celebrate the 200th anniversary of Schumann’s birth, we appreciate the contribution this impressive piece makes to the Romantic generation and the genre of the concerto.
Air for Violoncello and Orchestra

David Carter, cello

Aaron Jay Kernis (b. 1960)

Aaron Jay Kernis, who turns 50 today, was born in Philadelphia, where he taught himself violin, piano, and composition and absorbed a diverse range of musical influences, from rap and Latin music to Debussy and Romantic music. Kernis’ formal training under such teachers as John Adams and Charles Wuorinen led him to employ strict compositional processes in his early compositions, but he soon moved toward a freer, more emotionally direct style, pursuing “his own personal vision of what is beautiful, flowing easily from moments of dissonance to moments of lyrical resolution.” This style has earned him admiration and critical recognition, including the Pulitzer Prize (1998) and the Grawemeyer Award (2002). Kernis has also been active in this area as composer-in-residence with the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra and New Music Advisor to the Minnesota Orchestra.

Air was originally composed in 1995 for violin and piano (a commission for Joshua Bell); it was arranged soon after for orchestra, and five years later, arranged for cello and orchestra. Kernis dedicated the piece to his wife Evelyne Luest, a concert pianist. Characteristically, the piece is full of vivid imagery; bright timbres, ascending melodic lines, and high registers. The composer offers the following note: “Air is songlike and melodic, and it is the ‘purest’ and sparsest piece I’ve written in a few years. It contains many hymn- or chant-like elements, and though rooted in E♭ major, it retains a kind of plaintive quality more reminiscent of minor or modal tonalities. Formally, it combines a developing variation form with a simple song form.”

Adagio for Strings

Samuel Barber (1910-1981)

Born 100 years ago near Philadelphia, Samuel Barber displayed promise as a young composer in a generation trying to make a name for American music. He entered the Curtis Institute at age 14, where he studied with Rosario Scalero, and in his twenties won a Pulitzer scholarship (1935) and the Prix de Rome (1936). However, his breakthrough chance came in 1938. A few years earlier, Barber had made the acquaintance of Arturo Toscanini — then the conductor of the New York Philharmonic—when he was welcomed warmly on a surprise visit to Toscanini’s summer villa in Italy. On a subsequent visit, Toscanini told Barber that he would like to perform one of his works — a consequential request since Toscanini, with very few exceptions, did not play contemporary music or American music.

In early 1938, Barber sent the conductor the Adagio for Strings (a re-orchestration of the slow movement of his 1936 String Quartet in B minor), but was offended when Toscanini returned the score without comment. Later that summer, Toscanini sent word through a friend that he did in fact intend to premiere the piece, and had sent it back simply because he had already memorized it (reportedly, he did not look at the score again until the day before the performance). The premiere came in November of that year with the NBC Symphony Orchestra in New York, reaching a radio audience of millions across America. Adagio for Strings has since become Barber’s most popular piece, gripping listeners with its starkness and intensity as its long opening violin melody is varied and passed around the orchestra.

“You never are in any doubt about what this piece is about,” says music historian Barbara Heyman. “There’s a kind of sadness and poetry about it. It has a melodic gesture that reaches an arch, like a big sigh...and then exhales and fades off into nothingness.”
“The Promise of Living” from *The Tender Land*  
Aaron Copland (1900-1990)

*The Tender Land* Suite includes orchestral arrangements of music from Aaron Copland’s only opera, *The Tender Land*, which was commissioned by Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein in 1953 and premiered in April 1955. The libretto, written by Copland’s friend Erik Johns (pen name Horace Everett), is inspired by the well-known documentary book *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* by James Agee. The opera takes place on a midwestern family farm in the 1930s, where Laurie Moss, just about to graduate from high school, lives with her mother and grandpa. It is spring harvest time, and two wanderers arrive looking for work. Although Ma and Grandpa Moss are hesitant, the family agrees to let them stay.

The first act culminates with all five characters singing together the hopeful “Promise of Living.” The song, based on the revivalist tune “Zion’s Walls,” combines two distinct melodies (one in quarter notes, the other in 6/8), which are presented individually and then combined as all five voices enter and build to a climax. The text celebrates optimism for the future — a bountiful harvest, a loving family, and a peaceful, open relationship with their neighbors — as they sing:

The promise of living, with hope and thanksgiving,  
is born of our loving, our friends and our labor.

The promise of growing, with faith and with knowing,  
is born of our sharing, our love with our neighbor.

Using “The Promise of Living” as the basis for its finale, the orchestral suite echoes the song’s progression from a simple folk melody to a powerful conclusion, expressing hope in the enduring power of a peaceful American life marked by thankfulness and love.

Program notes by Michael Murchison, ’10
The Artists

Pianist Kathryn Ananda-Owens
Winner of first prize in the 1993 Neale-Silva Young Artists Competition, pianist Kathryn Ananda-Owens enjoys an active career as a performer and teacher. A laureate of the American Pianists Association Biennial Fellowship Competition, she made her Asian debut in 1997 under the auspices of the government of Macao. She has performed as a soloist with the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, toured Central Europe as piano soloist with the St. Olaf Orchestra and has appeared as a collaborative pianist at Lincoln Center. A founding member of the New Horizons Chamber Ensemble, Dr. Ananda-Owens performed for several years as the pianist of the Melius Trio and collaborated with members of the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra in the inaugural concerts of the North American Bridge Festival. She received degrees from Oberlin College, Oberlin Conservatory, and the Peabody Conservatory of Music at Johns Hopkins University, from which she received her doctorate and where she studied with Julian Martin. While at Peabody, Ananda-Owens was named recipient of the Clara Ascherfeld Award.

Performances by Dr. Ananda-Owens have been broadcast on radio and television on three continents and recorded for the Centaur, Limestone, St. Olaf Records, and Westmark labels. Recordings include the recently-released world premiere recording of Amy Beach's “Variations on Balkan Themes” for two pianos, with St. Olaf College piano faculty member Christopher Atzinger. Dr. Ananda-Owens’ recent lectures include appearances at the Juilliard School on the subject of Mozart cadenzas and at the Music Teachers National Association annual conference in Toronto, Ontario, where she spoke on the biomechanics of piano performance. Dr. Ananda-Owens is Associate Professor of Music at St. Olaf College, where she has been a member of the piano faculty for the past twelve years and taught in the Great Conversation program and for the Center for Integrative Studies. She is a member of the Performing Arts Medicine Association, and currently serves on the association's Education Committee. In her spare time, she competes with her six-year-old Icelandic Sheepdog, Viva, in canine agility events in Minnesota and Wisconsin.

Cellist David Carter is Professor of Music at St. Olaf College. He holds degrees from the University of Minnesota, Indiana University and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Dr. Carter's principal cello teachers include Robert Jamieson, Gary Hoffman, Janos Starker and Tsuyoshi Tsutsumi.

Though legally blind as a result of the retinal disease choroideremia, Dr. Carter maintains an active performing and teaching schedule. He is cellist of the Melius Trio, Artistic Director of the Bridge Chamber Music Festival, and recently served as Cello Editor for the Minnesota String Teachers Association newsletter, StringNotes. Dr. Carter has served as Principal Cellist of the Wichita Symphony, performing as soloist with that ensemble in addition to the Minnesota Orchestra and the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra. He has been on the faculty of Wichita State University, as well as the Rocky Ridge Music Center and currently the Red Lodge Music Festival and the Interlochen Summer Music Camp.

Dr. Carter can be heard on two recordings on the Centaur label, in “3 Pieces for Solo Cello” by Phillip Rhodes and works by Amy Beach, and on the Limestone label with the Melius Trio in trios by Mendelssohn, Clarke and Peter Hamlin. He performs on either a cello by G. B. Ceruti (1810, Cremona) or, for tonight's performance, on a cello by David Folland (2008, Northfield, Minn.).
THE ST. OLAF ORCHRTA
STEVEN AMUNDSON, CONDUCTOR ~ TERRA WIDDIFIELD, MANAGER

VIOLIN I
Anna Bakk, Medina, Minn.
Greta Baur, Minneapolis, Minn.
Lars Berggren, Lindberg, Va.
Green Bouvard, Waverly, Iowa
Madeleine Brumback, Blackburg, Va.
Michaela Gansen, Cedar Falls, Iowa
Kiersten Hoidal, Park Ridge, Ill.
Katherine Jones, Woodland Park, Colo.
Olivia Krueger, Omaha, Neb.
Laurel Lynch, Ester, Alaska
Emily Mullaney, Gilbert, Iowa
††Hannah Reitz, Northfield, Minn.

VIOLIN II
Sarah Aune, Middleton, Wis.
*Olivia Bailey, Port Angeles, Wash.
Jonathan Henn, Golden Valley, Minn.
Lauren Kurz, Minneapolis, Minn.
Joseph Mitchell, Minneapolis, Minn.
Katherine Monson, Austin, Minn.
Megan Peterson, Grand Forks N.D.
**Sarah Rinehart, Northfield Minn.
Colleen Schaefer, Anoka Minn.
Amanda Secor, Port Dodge, Iowa
Arthur Sletten, Osceola Wis.
Bren Youngblood, La Grande, Ore.

VIOLA
Geoff Carlisle, Happy Valley, Ore.
Kara Erstad, Minneapolis, Minn.
*Katherine Fitzgerald, Monument, Colo.
Claire Folts, Hershey Penn.
Mary Elise Hahn, Cedar Falls, Iowa
Anna Nelson, Waubesa, Wis.
Julia Ortner, Bloomington, Minn.
Crystal Spontak, Fairbanks Alaska
Zachary Teska, Loveland, Colo.

CELLO
Ben Arbeiter, Rapid City S.D.
Sara Cattanach, Lake Elmo, Minn.
Amy Chatelaine, Owatonna, Minn.
**Sarah Gingerich, Conway, Ark.
Beau Gray, Fargo, N.D.
Elizabeth Knapp, Anchorage, Alaska
*Paul Sauey, Reedsburg, Wis.
Stephen Sokoloski, Maplewood, Minn.
Rachel Wiers, Cincinnati, Ohio
Laura Zimmermann, Racine, Wis.

BASS
Evan Anderson, Golden Colo.
**Peder Garnaas-Halvorson, St. Paul, Minn.
Andrew Nail, Bloomington, Minn.
Kara Sajaske, Elmhurst Ill.

FLUTE
**Megan Makeever, Bozeman, Mont.
Corinne Mona, Severna Park, Md.

OBOE
Ashley Enke, Omaha, Neb.
**Lauren Seidel, Minneapolis, Minn.

ENGLISH HORN
Megan Dvorak, Hayward, Wis.

CLARINET
**Aaron Harcus, Minneapolis, Minn.
Joe Sferra, Toledo, Ohio

BASS CLARINET
Joe Sferra, Toledo, Ohio

BASSOON
**Josh John, Beaverton, Ore.
~Gwendolyn Ohlemacher, Canton, Ohio

ADDITIONAL STRINGS
FOR BARBER AND COPLAND

VIOLIN
Nathanial Berry, Anchorage, Alaska
Lindsey Boucher, Duluth, Minn.
Eden Ehm, Decatur, Iowa
McKinley Green, Butler, Ohio
Catherine Oliver, Omaha, Neb.
Benjamin Peterson, Grand Forks, N.D.
Charlotte Sivanich, Mequon, Wis.

CELLO
Annabel Bavage, Coon Raids, Minn.
Lydia Bundy, Azusa Calif.
Kate Haughey, Billings, Mont.
Emmet Larsen, Watertown, Wis.
Alexandra Mastny, Lakeland, Minn.
Audrey Slote, Meadville, Pa.

HORN
Amy Glasow, Shoreview, Minn.
Melanie Paulsen, Center Junction, Iowa
Matthew Perry, Des Moines, Wash.
**Clayton Smith, Norcross, Ga.

TRUMPET
Neil Hubert, Tacoma, Wash.
**Garrett Klein, Port Orchard, Wash.
**Jacyn Melander, Mounds View, Minn.

TROMbone
Zachary Gingerich, Conway, Ark.
**Michelle Murchison, Laurel, Md.
Benjamin Sink, Manchester, N.H.

TUBA
Dan Larson, Minnetonka, Minn.

PERCUSSION
Andrew Belsaas, Rapid City S.D.
**Eri Isomura, Cooperage, Minn.
Alex Van Rysselberghe, Lake Oswego, Ore.

HARP
Joy Gunderson, Phoenix, Ariz.
**Anna Hayes, Middleton, Wis.

PIANO
Andrew Belsaas, Rapid City S.D.

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†† Associate Concertmaster
‡ Assistant Concertmaster
** Principal/Co-principal
* Assistant Principal
~ Librarian
§ Student Manager

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