

upcoming concerts

Monday, April 27, 2015

Myriad Trio
Debussy: Nuage from "Nocturnes", Reverie
Liebermann: Sonata for Flute & Harp
Salzedo: Chanson dans la nuit, arr. Phillips
Delius: Florida Suite, arr. Cavaterra

Monday, May 11, 2015

Brahms: *Sonatensatz* in C minor, WoO 2 for Violin and Piano
Gernsheim: Piano Quintet No. 2 for in B minor, Op. 63
Brahms: Piano Quintet in F minor, Op. 34

For more information about tickets, contact the
San Diego Symphony ticket office at 619.235.0804 or via the web at:
<http://www.sandiegosymphony.org/concertcalendar/cameralucida.aspx>

Tonight's concert will be broadcast Saturday, April 25th at 7:00 pm on
kpbs-fm 89.5 or streaming at kpbs.org

Artistic Director - Charles Curtis
Executive Coordinator - Colin McAllister
Program notes - Lukas Schulze
Recording engineer - Tom Erbe
Production manager - Jessica Flores

For more information:
<http://www.cameralucidachambermusic.org>

Cellist **Charles Curtis** has been Professor of Music at UCSD since Fall 2000. Previously he was Principal Cello of the Symphony Orchestra of the North German Radio in Hamburg, a faculty member at Princeton, the cellist of the Ridge String Quartet, and a sought-after chamber musician and soloist in the classical repertoire. A student of Harvey Shapiro and Leonard Rose at Juilliard, on graduation Curtis received the Piatigorsky Prize of the New York Cello Society. He has appeared as soloist with the San Francisco, National and Baltimore Symphonies, the Symphony Orchestra of Berlin, the NDR Symphony, the Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, the Orchestra de la Maggio Musicale in Florence, the Janacek Philharmonic, as well as orchestras in Brazil and Chile. He is internationally recognized as a leading performer of unique solo works created expressly for him by composers such as La Monte Young and Marian Zazeela, Éliane Radigue, Alvin Lucier, Christian Wolff, Alison Knowles and Tashi Wada. Time Out New York called his recent New York performances "the stuff of contemporary music legend," and the New York Times noted that Curtis' "playing unfailingly combined lucidity and poise... lyricism and intensity." The current season includes solo concerts at New York's Issue Project Room, the Museum of Contemporary Art Los Angeles, the Sub Tropics Festival in Miami, the Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit, the Angelica Festival in Bologna and El Nicho Aural Festival in Mexico City as well as solo recitals in Brussels, Metz and Paris. This spring Curtis will premiere a new cello concerto by Cassandra Miller with the BBC Scottish Symphony in Glasgow and with the Orchestra del Teatro Comunale di Bologna. Curtis is artistic director of Camera Lucida.

Reiko Uchida was born in Torrance, California and is a graduate of the Curtis Institute, Mannes College of Music, and the Juilliard School. Her recording String Poetic with Jennifer Koh, was nominated for a 2008 Grammy Award. She has performed concertos with the LA Philharmonic, and the Santa Fe, Greenwich, and Princeton symphonies. As a chamber musician, she has played at the Marlboro, Santa Fe, Tanglewood and Spoleto music festivals and has collaborated with Anne Akiko Meyers, Thomas Meglitoranza, Sharon Robinson, Jaime Laredo, as well as the Borromeo, St. Lawrence and Tokyo string quartets. As a youngster, she performed on The Tonight Show Starring Johnny Carson. She is a past member of Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center Two and studied with Claude Frank, Leon Fleisher, Edward Aldwell, Sophia Rosoff and Margo Garrett. Ms. Uchida currently lives in New York City where she is an associate faculty member at Columbia University.

camera lucida

Chamber music concerts at UC San Diego

2014-2015 season

Sponsored by the Sam B. Ersan Fund at the San Diego Foundation

Monday, April Thirteenth
Two Thousand and Fifteen
7:30pm

Sonata No. 1 for Viola and Piano
in F minor, Op. 120, No. 1

Johannes Brahms (1833-97)

Allegro appassionato
Andante un poco Adagio
Allegretto grazioso
Vivace

intermission

Quatuor pour la fin du temps
(Quartet for the End of Time)

Olivier Messiaen (1908-92)

- I. *Liturgie de cristal* / Crystal Liturgy
- II. *Vocalise, pour l'Ange qui annonce la fin du Temps* /
Vocalise, for the Angel who announces the end of time
- III. *Abîme des oiseaux* / Abyss of Birds
- IV. *Intermède* / Interlude
- V. *Louange à l'Éternité de Jésus* / Praise to the Eternity of Jesus
- VI. *Danse de la fureur, pour les sept trompettes* /
Dance of fury, for the seven trumpets
- VII. *Fouillis d'arcs-en-ciel, pour l'Ange qui annonce la fin du Temps* /
Tangle of Rainbows, for the angel who announces the end of time
- VIII. *Louange à l'Immortalité de Jésus* /
Praise to the immortality of Jesus

Anthony Burr, clarinet
Jeff Thayer, violin
Che-Yen Chen, viola
Charles Curtis, cello
Reiko Uchida, piano



Johannes Brahms—*Sonata for Viola and Piano in F Minor, Op. 120, No. 1*

In 1890 Brahms announced his intention to retire. It was by sheer luck that, during a trip in 1891 to an arts festival in Meiningen, he happened to hear the clarinetist Richard Mühlfeld, whose playing so bewitched Brahms that he set about writing several major works for clarinet: the Clarinet Trio, the Clarinet Quintet, and two sonatas for clarinet and piano. The sonatas, published as Op. 120, were the last chamber pieces Brahms wrote. Along with the other Mühlfeld pieces, they quickly became central to the clarinet repertoire, and have remained so ever since. Shortly thereafter, Brahms was approached by a publisher requesting a transcription for viola; these were completed in 1895. Thus Brahms supplied the first major sonatas for two separate instrumental genres (clarinet with piano and viola with piano) with the same compositions.

The *F minor Sonata* is an intense and concentrated work from a period in which Brahms' music seemingly moved in two opposite directions. On one hand, textures are often dense and highly contrapuntal; the distinction between expository and developmental materials is often difficult to discern. This comes from Brahms' technique of “developing variation” - the immediate and constant alteration and playing out of all the implications of a basic melodic idea - which lends the music a hurried, unstable quality, almost as if the composer is rushing to arrive at all of the possible conclusions that might be drawn from his original thematic material. And yet, on the other hand, the individual movements of the sonata are characterized by extreme contrasts of character, tempo, and affect, set apart from each other, in emotional terms, with the utmost clarity.

The first movement *Allegro appassionato* is unyielding and serious, with the second theme, a gently rocking gesture, appearing suddenly and only briefly. The exposition ends without the typical cadential caesura, pushing us into the development section without warning, though the reappearances of the second theme and its accompanying placidity provides important structural markers. The tiniest of codas—as much an exhalation as an autonomous passage—attempts to dispel the stormy energy. There is an arresting openness—simple, spare, almost like a child's music box—to the texture of the *Andante un poco adagio*. After the character of the first movement, this music seems almost frozen, moving slowly, as if by ritual, through the diatonic, descending melody. The topic of the third movement *Allergretto grazioso* is dance. Dynamics and register are used with surprising power in the first section, as the slightest change takes us from the parlor to the public square, transforming an elegant private waltz into a country *Ländler*. The *Vivace* is remarkably affirmative, and begins with an introductory phrase apparently already in process, which the clarinet joins only at the end. The episodes of this *rondo* are especially winning, heavily contrapuntal, and full of numerous slippery harmonic details that reward attentive listening.

Olivier Messiaen—*Quatuor pour la fin du temps*

By virtually any measure, the *Quatuor pour la fin du temps* (*Quartet for the End of Time*) must be understood as one of the several most important pieces of 20th century music. Though not as well-known as the *Rite of Spring* (compared to Stravinsky, Messiaen remains an exotic, elusive figure), its premiere was at least as significant an event, if not more so, as this piece integrates the circumstances of its origin as no other modern work before it had done, fusing aesthetics and eschatology, creating content out of context. Its materials and methods, too, were to have as heavy an impact as Stravinsky's ballet on the directions music was to take in subsequent generations. Like a number of those pieces of modern art that radically alter the landscape, this work demands from us a new set of interpretive criteria, as it offers new approaches to gesture, meaning, and the perception of musical time.

The hard details of the Quartet's genesis are well-known: a member of the French army, Messiaen was captured by the Germans near Nancy in June 1940 and placed into a prisoner-of-war camp (Stalag 8A) in Görlitz, Silesia. En route to the camp, Messiaen showed the clarinetist Henri Akoka, also a prisoner, sketches for what would become the Quartet's clarinet solo, *Abîme des oiseaux*. At the stalag, Messiaen wrote a small trio for Akoka and two other musicians, violinist Jean le Boulaire and cellist Étienne Pasquier. This piece developed into the *Quatuor*, with the trio joined by Messiaen himself at the piano. The premiere was given on January 15, 1941, outdoors, in the rain, in front of about 400 fellow prisoners of war. Messiaen was later to remark, ““Never was I listened to with such rapt attention and comprehension.” The work is in 8 movements, each with a title that refers to passages from the Book of Revelation that Messiaen, a devout Catholic, quotes in the preface:

And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud: and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire ... and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever and ever ... that there should be time no longer: But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished (Revelation 10:1–2, 5–7)

The movements in the *Quatuor* make up a catalog of many of the 20th century's most important musical innovations: highly developed rhythmic and melodic modes, plastic and asymmetrical (often un-notated) metrical patterns, harmonies that themselves create timbres, musical representations of the sounds of the natural world, and, importantly, contrasts between dynamic and static musical behaviors that control musical time in an entirely new manner. Elements of this piece (and frankly, direct quotes) can be heard in the music of Cage, Carter, Ligeti, and countless younger composers who continue to consult the score as a source for compelling and engaging musical ideas.

Beyond Messiaen's technical innovations, the significance of the *Quatuor pour la fin du temps* comes in large part out of the relationship of the compositional locale to the music itself. The work is widely understood as an example of personal and artistic protest—the act of creation in the midst of oppression and captivity. In support of this image, numerous lugubrious elements of the story have been highlighted—the rickety piano, a cello with three strings, a silent audience in surprising, cosmic sympathy with the music. But it can be argued that the transcendence of the music comes out of its autonomy from, even disregard for, its surroundings. The notion of the work as a diversion from, rather than indictment of, the composer's imprisonment is borne out by Messiaen's own statement: “I would instead say that I composed this quartet in order to escape from the snow, the war, captivity, and myself. The greatest benefit that I gained from it was that, in the midst of three hundred thousand prisoners, I was probably the only one who was free.” This is joyous music, much of it; and its ebullience loudly attests as much to the *impossibility* of artistic internment as to courage in the face of it.

about the performers

Anthony Burr is an Associate Professor of Music at the University of California, San Diego. As a clarinetist, composer and producer, he has worked across a broad spectrum of the contemporary musical landscape with groups and artists including: Alvin Lucier, Jim O'Rourke, John Zorn, Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, Laurie Anderson and many others. Ongoing projects include a duo with Icelandic bassist/composer Skúli Sverrisson, The Clarinets (a trio with Chris Speed and Oscar Noriega), a series of recordings with cellist Charles Curtis and a series of live film/music performances with experimental filmmaker Jennifer Reeves. He has produced and/or engineered records for La Monte Young, Charles Curtis, Skúli Sverrisson, Ted Reichman and many others. Upcoming releases include a new Anthony Burr/Skúli Sverrisson double CD with guest vocalists Yungchen Lamo and Arto Lindsay and a recording of Morton Feldman's Clarinet and String Quartet. His primary clarinet teachers were Chicago Symphony principal Larry Combs and David Shifrin.

Violinist **Jeff Thayer** is currently the concertmaster of the San Diego Symphony as well as concertmaster and faculty member of the Music Academy of the West (Santa Barbara). Previous positions include assistant concertmaster of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, associate concertmaster of the North Carolina Symphony, and concertmaster of the Canton (OH) Symphony Orchestra. He is a graduate of the Cleveland Institute of Music, the Eastman School of Music, and the Juilliard School's Pre-College Division. His teachers include William Preucil, Donald Weilerstein, Zvi Zeitlin, Dorothy DeLay, and James Lyon. He has appeared as soloist with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, the San Diego Symphony, the Jupiter Symphony, the North Carolina Symphony, the Canton Symphony Orchestra, the Pierre Monteux School Festival Orchestra, the Spartanburg Philharmonic, the Cleveland Institute of Music Symphony Orchestra, The Music Academy of the West Festival Orchestra, the Williamsport Symphony Orchestra, the Nittany Valley Symphony Orchestra, and the Conservatory Orchestra of Cordoba, among others. Through a generous loan from Irwin and Joan Jacobs and the Jacobs' Family Trust, Mr. Thayer plays on the 1708 “Sir Bagshawe” Stradivarius.

Taiwanese-American violist **Che-Yen Chen** has established himself as an active performer and educator. He is a founding member of the Formosa Quartet, recipient of the First-Prize and the Amadeus Prize winner of the 10th London International String Quartet Competition. Having served as principal violist of the San Diego Symphony for eight seasons, he is principal violist of the Mainly Mozart Festival Orchestra and has appeared as guest principal violist with Los Angeles Philharmonic, San Francisco Symphony, Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra and Canada's National Arts Centre Orchestra. Chen is currently on the faculty at USC Thornton School of Music and California State University, Fullerton and has given master-classes in major conservatories and universities across North America and Asia. In August 2013, the Formosa Quartet inaugurated the annual Formosa Chamber Music Festival in Hualien, Taiwan. Modeled after American summer festivals such as Marlboro, Ravinia, the Taos School of Music, and Kneisel Hall, FCMF is the product of long-held aspirations and years of planning, and represents one of the quartet's more important missions: to bring high-level chamber music training to talented young musicians in Taiwan and first-rate music to Taiwanese audiences.