UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA

Orchestra

Mythological Zoo

Ajtony Csaba, Conductor
Evan Hesketh, Graduate Conductor

Saturday, April 2, 2016 • 8:00 p.m.
University Centre Farquhar Auditorium
University of Victoria
Adults: $15 / Students & seniors: $10
Béla Bartók (1881–1945)
Dance Suite, Sz. 77
I. Moderato
II. Allegro molto
III. Allegro vivace
IV. Molto tranquillo
V. Comodo
VI. Finale. Allegro

INTERMISSION

Claude Debussy (1862–1918)
Prélude à L’après-midi d’un faune *

Cooper Reed, flute solo

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840–1893)
Romeo and Juliet (Fantasy-Overture) *

*Conducted by Evan Hesketh in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Music degree in Conducting Performance.
Béla Bartók: Dance Suite, Sz. 77

Dance Suite was composed for a festival concert held in November 1923 to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the merging of the two cities, Buda and Pest, into one metropolis: Budapest. Two other leading composers of the time were commissioned to write for the same occasion, Zoltán Kodály delivered Psalmus Hungaricus and Ernő Dohnányi wrote Festival Ouverture, performed by the orchestra of Budapest Philharmonic Society under the baton of Dohnányi. The premiere was not particularly well received, however the overwhelming success of a second performance in 1925 with the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra in Prague secured a place in the international concert repertoire for both the orchestral and solo piano version of the Dance Suite.

Since 1905 Bartók had collected and transcribed several hundred traditional melodies from Hungary to Turkey. The Dance Suite revives the baroque concept of the suite, using dance tune-like pseudo-quotations that paraphrase tunes from the Romanian (Wallachian), gypsy, Hungarian and Arabic folklore. The 2/4, 4/4 and psalmodizing melodic structures sound original, however they are all Bartók’s own invention.

A brief melodic Ritornell (an Interlude that remains unchanged) frames the entire composition, appearing at the end of the first, second and fourth movements, and in the Finale.

The development of motives is remarkably consequent through the movements. The first movement is based on minor and major seconds, featuring the idea of the Giouco delle coppie from the Concerto for Orchestra 20 years later; the second movement begins with a theme ‘riding’ a minor third, and the bagpipe-like melody in the third movement reaches the perfect fourth. The fourth movement refers to the Bartókian archetype “music of the night”, and is organized around pentatonic scales reaching perfect fifths. The first, second and the ‘chase’ of the Finale strongly allude to The Miraculous Mandarin that was finished in 1924.

The Dance Suite is a virtuoso composition that showcases in a wildly aphorismatic, humorous and playfully grotesque manner elements and ideas that later unfold in Bartók’s large-scale works.

– Ajtony Csaba

Claude Debussy: Prélude à L’après-midi d’un faune

After attending the Paris Conservatoire and deciding to pursue composition rather than an unlikely career as a concert pianist, Debussy’s music was still largely unknown in the late 1800s. Although initially influenced by Wagner, fin de siècle Paris provided new inspiration for the composer. Discoveries such as the Javanese gamelan at the Universal Exposition of 1889 and contact with important Symbolist writers spurred Debussy to explore new timbres and forms.

The inspiration for Debussy’s Prélude is Stéphane Mallarmé’s symbolist poem, L’après midi d’un faune. Unlike traditional programmatic works, Debussy’s composition is not a strict sonic depiction of specific events from the poem; rather, it is an impression of the sensual reminiscences of the faun. Premiered in 1894, this enigmatic work was so enthusiastically received by its Parisian audience that the conductor, Gustave Doret, later recounted: “I had no hesitation in breaking the rule forbidding encores.”

In the Prélude, Debussy eschews conventional musical form and employs elusive tonality to capture the fluid nature of time and narrative in Mallarmé’s poem. For example, the opening flute solo – a reference to the reed pipe-playing faun – is at first presented without accompaniment and thus denied a harmonic context; the same motive is
subsequently imposed over shifting harmonies, lending it an ephemeral quality. Debussy also uses a feeling interruption to create a sense of spontaneity. While most of the music unfolds with a seamless, organic ease, occasional sparkling bursts of energy appear from nowhere, perhaps alluding to the spirited nymphs that arouse the passion of Mallarmé’s faun.

Despite its brevity – the work is only around 10 minutes in length – the Prélude à l’après midi d’un faune is one of Debussy’s most well known compositions and considered by many to be a seminal work of the early modern period. In the words of Pierre Boulez: “The flute of the Faun brought new breath to the art of music; what was overthrown was not so much the art of development, as the very concept of form itself.”

— Evan Hesketh

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky: Romeo and Juliet (Fantasy-Overture)

Tchaikovsky’s Fantasy-Overture on Romeo and Juliet, considered to be his first masterpiece, is a compact and evocative representation of an immensely popular source of musical inspiration. While living in Moscow and struggling to find his voice, Tchaikovsky began corresponding with fellow Russian composer, Mily Balakirev. In 1869, Balakirev suggested Shakespeare’s tragedy as the subject for a concert overture; his advice was extensive, including a proposal of keys for the overture’s themes and an explanation of how to incorporate elements of the play into a sonata–allegro framework.

Such prescriptiveness might not normally be conducive to inspired composition, but Tchaikovsky took well to the proposal and composed a work that shows a mature command of form, harmony, melody, and drama. While the original version that premiered in 1870 was unsuccessful, several revisions over the next decade resulted in the 1880 version that we know today.

The work opens with a solemn chorale that begins a substantial introduction. Imbued with a sense of inescapable fate, the length and overall slow pace of the opening conveys a feeling of timelessness or universality, echoing the prologue to Shakespeare’s play.

The main body of the overture has two distinct themes. The first hot-blooded allegro giusto depicts the fight between the Montagues and Capulets with fast moving notes, rapid dialogue between winds and strings, and abrupt interjections that evoke the clanging of swords. As this first theme recedes into the distance, the love theme emerges with a tender solo for viola and English horn in the lush key of D-flat major.

After a gently rocking closing section that peacefully fades away, the development begins with quiet agitation. Here, Tchaikovsky intertwines elements of the first theme with the chorale from the introduction, deftly increasing the tension using repetition coupled with chromatically rising key areas. A final, desperate statement of the chorale by the trumpets leads directly into the recapitulation, where Tchaikovsky saves the most extensively orchestrated and passionate version of the love theme for its return. As this theme seems poised to repeat, the Montague-Capulet feud interrupts and drives the work toward a sombre coda. Despite the tragic ending of the story, a final statement of the overture’s opening chorale emerges in B major, and the work concludes with the feeling that above all, love triumphs.

— Evan Hesketh
BIOGRAPHIES

Evan Hesketh

Evan Hesketh began studying violin at age seven with Yasuko Eastman, who also introduced him to the viola a few years later. He holds a Bachelor of Music degree from the University of Victoria, where he studied violin with Ann Elliott-Goldschmid and viola with Joanna Hood and Yariv Aloni. Further studies led to a Master of Music degree at the Cleveland Institute of Music under the tutelage of Robert Vernon, Jeffrey Irvine, and Kirsten Docter. Evan has played in masterclasses for Pinchas Zukerman, James Dunham, Roger Tapping, Atar Arad, and Steven Dann.

An award-winning chamber musician, Evan was a member of the Ariadne String Quartet, prizewinners at the 2012 Fischoff Competition, and the 2012 Coleman Competition. Quartet studies have been with members of the Lafayette, Cleveland, Cavani, Miro, Juilliard, Brentano, and Schoenberg quartets.

Currently, Evan studies conducting at the University of Victoria on a full scholarship with Ajtony Csaba. He has conducted the UVic Orchestra, Victoria Civic Orchestra, and festival orchestras in Maine and New Hampshire.

Ajtony Csaba

Ajtony Csaba, born in Cluj, Romania, began his studies on the cello and later piano and composition in Budapest at the Academy of Music. He began studying conducting in Vienna and Budapest with Uroš Lajovic, Peter Eötvös, Zoltán Pesko, Zsolt Nagy, Lucas Vis and Antoni Wit. He was awarded many prizes as a conductor and composer; and was a semi-finalist in the first competition for opera in Cluj, Romania.

Csaba has had numerous concerts in Hungary and Austria with orchestras including UMZE, Sinfonietta Baden, Webern Sinfonietta, Savaria Symphony Orchestra, and Danubia Orchestra. In the 2003/04 season he was the assistant conductor and tutor of the Academy Orchestra Budapest and in 2005 was invited to be the assistant conductor of the Hungarian National Philharmonic Orchestra with their contemporary program. He made his conducting debut in the Viennese Musikverein with the RSO (Radio-Symphonieorchester, Wien) in 2007.

Since 2006 Csaba has served as the chief conductor of the Central European Chamber Orchestra, and led the orchestra on a tour in China (performances including halls in Shenzhen, Lanzhou and in the Parliament in Beijing), with return engagements in 2007 and 2009. Ajtony Csaba has been the leader of the Vienna Jeunesse Choir since 2007. In 2008 he conducted at the Darmstadt Summer Courses for New Music and was assistant at the Salzburg Festspiele. In 2008 he conducted the EuroMed Youth Orchestra in Damaskus, Syria.

In the past seasons Csaba conducted the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Ensemble Tsilumos at the Montreal New Music Festival and the Brazilian SiMN Festival in Curitiba, and the Hungarian Symphony Orchestra Miskolc.

Csaba has served as music director of the University of Victoria Orchestra and Sonic Lab since 2010, where he also teaches conducting and the history of conducting.
VIOLIN 1
Aliyata Foon-Dancoes*
Chloe Kim*
Matthew Logan
Linda Dann
Jilaine Orton
Ross Ling
Shijin Kim
Jasmine Mather

VIOLIN 2
Raina Saunders*
Amy-Lynne Toth*
Jessica d’Oliveira
Brittany Tsui
Serena Jack
Michele Hoskin
Emily MacCallum
Francine Hsu

VIOLA
Josh Gomberoff*
Fahlon Smith
Calvin Yang
Sarah de Nieverville*
Melissa Toth
Eric Mitchell

CELLO
Ella Hopwood*
Shiun Kim
Chloe Kersen
Olivia Brotzell
Claire Dresselhuis*
Bryan Lin
Alex Klassen
Tara Rajah

DOUBLE BASS
Brock Foerster*
Blake Palm
Carroll Mackenzie

PICCOLO
Jillian Broughton

FLUTE
Cooper Reed*
Bailey Finley
Jillian Broughton

OBOE
Katrina Bligh**
Patrick Conley

ENGLISH HORN
Patrick Conley

CLARINET
Erin Onyschtschuk*
Sunny Chu

BASS CLARINET
Dominic Thibault

BASSOON
Eric Boulter*
Wilson Kyne
Lee Whitehorn

DOUBLE BASSOON
Lee Whitehorn

HORN
Sam MacNally*
Sarah Mullane
Justin Malchow
James Waddell

TRUMPET
Ian VanGils*
John Hamblett

TROMBONE
Megan White*
Heidi Worrall
Trevor Hoy

TUBA
Dayna Waller

PIANO/CELESTE
Thomas Nicholson
Laura Altenmueller

HARP
Josh Layne*

TIMPANI
Tristan Holleufer

PERCUSSION
Julia Albano-Crockford
Hans Verhoeven
Kyle MacLean

LIBRARIANS
Betty Allison
Bahar M. Harandi

STAGE MANAGERS
Tristan Holleufer
Paul Joo

ASSISTANT
Evan Hesketh

* Principal
+ Community Member
UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday, April 3, 8:00 p.m. (Admission by donation)
UVIC VOCAL JAZZ ENSEMBLE: Spring Showcase: Dreams I Left Behind
Wendell Clanton, director
The UVic Vocal Jazz Ensemble performs original and inspiring arrangements in a fun-filled audience engaging evening.
Phillip T. Young Recital Hall

Monday, April 4, 12:00 p.m. (Admission by donation)
AFRICAN PERCUSSION CONCERT
The thirty-member percussion ensemble from MUS 108 African Hand Drumming perform a repertoire of rhythms on djembe, balafon and dundun.
Phillip T. Young Recital Hall

Monday, April 4, 7:30 p.m. (Admission by donation)
UVIC CHAMBER SINGERS: B³, In Love & Praise
Featuring all eighteen Ländler (folk dance) style compositions from Brahms’ Liebeslieder Waltzes, Op. 52, Bach’s Lobet den Herrn, BWV 230 and two unaccompanied sacred Bruckner motets — Ave Maria, WAB 6 and Vexilla Regis, WAB 51. With School of Music pianists Thomas Nicholson and Ethan Hill and cellist Ella Hopwood.
Centennial United Church (612 David Street at Gorge Road E.)

Monday, April 4, 8:00 p.m. (Free Admission)
GRADUATING RECITAL: Louise Hung, piano
Pianist Louise Hung presents her Bachelor of Music graduating recital.
Phillip T. Young Recital Hall

Tuesday, April 5, 12:30 p.m. (Admission by donation)
VIOLIN CLASS RECITAL
Featuring students from the studio of Sharon Stanis.
Phillip T. Young Recital Hall

Tuesday, April 5, 4:30 p.m. (Free Admission)
GRADUATING RECITAL: Shelley Shen, voice
Vocalist Shelley Shen presents her Masters of Music graduating recital.
Phillip T. Young Recital Hall

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University of Victoria
School of Music

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