

GREAT FALLS SYMPHONY 2016 - 2017

Chamber Music Series

The Chinook Winds *presents*

CHANGING COLORS

Norman Gonzales, FLUTE · Lauren Blackerby, OBOE · Christopher Mothersole, CLARINET
Dorian Antipa, BASSOON · Mike Nelson, HORN

2:00pm Sunday, October 23	7:00pm Tuesday, October 25
First Congregational UCC	C.M. Russell Museum

PROGRAM

GYÖRGY LIGETI (1923-2006)

Six Bagatelles (1953)

- I. Allegro con spirit
- II. Rubato. Lamentoso
- III. Allegro grazioso
- IV. Presto ruvido
- V. Adagio. Mesto (Béla Bartók in memoriam)
- VI. Molto vivace. Capriccioso

JEAN-PHILIPPE RAMEAU (1683-1764)

Gavotte and Six Doubles

trans. Ryohei Nakagawa

INTERMISSION

DAVID MASLANKA (b. 1943)

Quintet for Winds No. 2 (1986)

SIMON SHAHEEN (b. 1955)

Dance Mediterranea

arr. Jeff Scott

This concert is generously sponsored by the **Great Falls Symphony Association**.

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PROGRAM NOTES

Ligeti (1923—2006)

György Ligeti was born to a Hungarian Jewish family in Romanian Transylvania. At the age of six, he moved with his family to the Romanian city of Cluj where he lived until being sent to a labor camp following the Hungarian annexation of the region. His parents and brother were sent to Auschwitz where only his mother survived.

Following the war, Ligeti studied at the Liszt Ferenc Academy in Budapest after which he spent a brief period researching the folk music of Transylvania. He then returned to the academy to teach harmony, theory, and counterpoint from 1950 until 1956. During this time, his music was fairly conservative likely because of the restrictions of the Communist government. However, he was not prevented from experimenting with what would become his style of micropolyphony. Following Soviet suppression of the Hungarian revolution, he fled in 1956 to Vienna, leaving many of his manuscripts behind as he felt they were unimportant.

Once in Vienna, Ligeti could immerse himself in the avant-garde movement and study the music of Boulez and Stockhausen. While he did employ 12-tone writing in some of his pieces and composed some of the earliest electronic music, Ligeti continued to develop his unique style of micropolyphony. This technique employs slowly evolving, dense orchestration which at times obscures the polyphony and is heard instead as gently shifting textures. This may be best exemplified in his 1961 orchestral work, *Atmosphères*, which contributed significantly to his international stature as a composer and was included along with other of his works in the sound track to Stanley Kubrik's film, *2001: A Space Odyssey*.

The *Six Bagatelles* are taken from an eleven-movement work, *Music Ricercata*, that Ligeti originally wrote for piano from 1951 until 1953. The term “ricercar” most often refers to fugal writing (as composed by Bach) but it more literally means “to seek out.” In this way, a motive or theme can be developed and explored through repetition and variation. Only the eleventh piece of Ligeti's original piano work employs fugal writing, but the more literal interpretation of “ricercar” may be applied to the entire work. Ligeti imposed one notably strict rule for his composition: the first movement would use only two pitch classes (two notes but in multiple octaves) and each subsequent movement would add a single pitch class until the final movement used all twelve tones. The result is a work of short movements, each of which explores a short motive of increasing harmonic and melodic complexity.

Because the *Six Bagatelles* for wind quintet opens with what was originally the third movement of the work for piano, the quintet begins by using four pitch classes. This is a lively and brief movement which acts as a fanfare that announces the ensemble in a way that obscures the simplicity of only four notes being present. It closes with a final humorous punctuation from, of course, the bassoon. Perhaps the best display of Ligeti's exploration of defined pitch classes is found in the third movement where long, lyrical melodies are spun out over an unceasing seven note ostinato. Following ever increasing complexity in rhythm as well as harmony, the entire piece is closed out just as the first movement was, only this time the bassoon and clarinet share in the fun together.

—notes by Dorian Antipa

Rameau (1683—1764), trans. Ryohei Nakagawa

Ryohei Nakagawa's transcription of Jean-Philippe Rameau's Gavotte with Six Doubles happens to be very similar to György Ligeti's *Six Bagatelles*. Both were originally written for keyboard (Rameau wrote for harpsichord while Ligeti wrote for piano) and later adapted for woodwind quintet. They are both comprised of short, contrasting sections which join together to form a balanced overarching structure.

While the *Six Bagatelles* have their own distinct themes, the Gavotte with Six Doubles is based on one theme which spirals out in a wide and imaginative array of variations. The oboe gives the first statement of this theme, beginning the Gavotte, and it is passed around by the other instruments. Because of the diverse textural qualities at the disposal of a woodwind quintet, the theme is restated and developed as we explore even more of the differences between variations than would be possible in the original harpsichord piece. There are features for every instrument, and a virtuosic bassoon part and emphatic restatement of the theme brings the piece to its conclusion.

—notes by Lauren Blackerby

Maslanka (b. 1943)

Quintet for Winds No.2 was written in 1986 for the Manhattan Wind Quintet, which gave the premiere performance in January 1987 at the Weill Recital Hall in New York City. Like Quintet for Winds No.1, it is in three movements, yet the progression of attitudes is quite different. The movement through the entire piece shifts by degrees from an assertive, technically demanding character to music that is quite placid and ethereal.

The first movement is, for the most part, aggressive and driving. Its exposition consists of a number of relatively brief ideas sharply intercut. The center of the movement is a complete fugue employing a number of traditional devices including retrograde, inversion, and retrograde-inversion of the subject, rhythmic augmentation and diminution, and stretto. The recapitulation consists of a quiet and thoughtful reworking of the introduction to the movement and an evolution of one of the short ideas from the exposition.

The second movement has an underlying attitude of mystery and elusiveness. The pleasant and lulling quality of the opening gives way to a much more emotional and demanding music. The recapitulation further evolves the soothing character of the beginning, and the coda affects a mysterious disappearance.

The third movement is a chaconne, a continuous set of variations over a brief repeated harmonic pattern. This radically simple harmonic scheme, laid out in whole notes, persists undisturbed until the coda. Above it unfold, a solo, a duet, a trio, then a drive to the movement's climactic point. The music then subsides to a restatement of the opening oboe solo, followed by a chorale-like coda that summarizes the entire piece.

—notes by David Maslanka

Simon Shaheen (b. 1955), arr. Jeff Scott

Simon Shaheen is a Palestinian oud player and composer born in the village of Tarshiha in the Galilee. He learned to play the oud (a large, tear drop shaped Middle Eastern lute) from his father at a young age and later studied violin at the Conservatory for Western Classical Music in Jerusalem. Shaheen moved to New York to pursue a graduate degree and has toured across the world and continues to work with schools and universities across the United States as a “champion and guardian of Arab music.” Recently, Shaheen has devoted more of his energy to his band, Qantara. “The band, whose name means arch in Arabic, brings to life Shaheen's vision for the unbridled fusion of Arab, jazz, Western classical, and Latin American music, a perfect alchemy for music to transcend the boundaries of genre and geography.”

Dance Mediterranea can be heard in its original form on the 2001 recording debut by Qantara titled *Blue Flame*. The work, as arranged by Jeff Scott of the Imani Winds in New York, provides an exciting avenue for the wind quintet to explore a style of music seldom experienced by classical musicians. After a slow and evocative flute introduction, the piece quickly erupts into a raucous dance that calls on Mediterranean rhythms, Middle Eastern style melodies, American jazz influences, and improvised solos by the upper winds.

—notes by Dorian Antipa
(quotes from simoneshaheen.com)