

CU ★ PRESENTS

2021-22 Season



College of Music
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO BOULDER

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Spring 2022

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AT THE PERFORMANCE

- Please refrain from using electronic devices during the performance. Feel free to view this program on your device at any time prior to the performance, during intermission or after the performance ends.
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CU ★ PRESENTS is the home of performing arts at the University of Colorado Boulder.



The mission of the **University of Colorado Boulder College of Music** is to inspire artistry and discovery, together.



The College of Music acknowledges that the university sits upon land within the territories of the Ute, Cheyenne and Arapaho peoples. Further, we acknowledge that 48 contemporary tribal nations are historically tied to Colorado lands.

University Chamber Orchestra

Gary Lewis, conductor

Renee Gilliland, conductor

Annika Socolofsky, vocalist

7:30 p.m., Thursday, March 10, 2022

Grusin Music Hall

Program

The Hebrides Overture, Op. 26

Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

Renee Gilliland, conductor

Don't say a word

For amplified solo voice and chamber orchestra

Annika Socolofsky (b. 1990)

Annika Socolofsky, voice

Gary Lewis, conductor

Strum

Jessie Montgomery (b. 1981)

Gary Lewis, conductor

—Intermission—

Symphony No. 2 in D major, Op. 36

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

I. Adagio Molto - Allegro con brio

II. Larghetto

III. Scherzo: Allegro

IV. Allegro Molto

Gary Lewis, conductor

Program notes

The Hebrides Overture, Op. 26

Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

Felix Mendelssohn once stated, “It is in pictures, ruins and natural surroundings that I find the most music.” Perhaps no work and no surrounding were as equally matched for compositional success as Mendelssohn’s trip to Scotland and the writing of his *Hebrides Overture*. Mendelssohn was a child prodigy who came from a well-off family, thereby enabling him to travel often. He greatly enjoyed his various sojourns throughout Europe, and the 1829 walking tour of Scotland with his friend, Karl Klingemann, was no exception. Mendelssohn was only 20 years old when he and Klingemann traveled to the Hebrides Islands, off the west coast of Scotland, and later to Fingal’s Cave, on the Island of Staffa. After seeing the stunning scenery in the Hebrides, he composed the opening bars of his overture, sending it to his sister Fanny with the following note, “In order to make you understand how extraordinarily the Hebrides affected me, I send you the following, which came into my head there.” The following day he and Klingemann ventured to Fingal’s Cave (named after the character Fingal, from a third-century Gaelic tale), having to row there in a skiff, and sat at the mouth of the awe-inspiring, sea-level, basalt-rock formation and marveled. Mendelssohn was dreadfully seasick on his trip to the cave, but was able to appreciate the magnitude of the formation nonetheless. Klingemann wrote that Mendelssohn “[got] along better with the sea as an artist than as a human being with a stomach.”

Mendelssohn completed the first draft of his *Hebrides Overture* in Rome, toward the end of 1830. He was unhappy with his first attempt and continued to revise the work for the next three years. Of particular distress to Mendelssohn was the middle section about which he said, “The forte, D major middle section is very silly and the entire so-called development tastes more of counterpoint than of whale oil, seagulls and salted cod.” Whale oil notwithstanding, the work premiered on May 14, 1832, by the London Philharmonic Orchestra. Mendelssohn was still not happy with the work, and revised it further until it was finally published in 1833. The two titles (*Hebrides* and *Fingal’s Cave*) provide an interesting dilemma—it is believed

that a publisher added the *Fingal's Cave* title, thinking it would be a more recognizable name than *The Hebrides*. Further complicating matters, it seems the score and orchestral parts contain differing names, some indicating *Fingal* and some *Hebrides*.

Mendelssohn's work was a new type of overture which emerged during the 19th century, referred to as the concert overture. Concert overtures are not drawn from a stage work or opera, but rather, are stand-alone works to be programmed as an overture in a concert hall. Other composers of famous concert overtures include Berlioz, Tchaikovsky and Brahms.

Mendelssohn's *Hebrides* Overture is not programmatic, in the sense that it does not follow a narrative or tell a story; but it is thoroughly evocative of the sea and the scenery Mendelssohn experienced during his time in the Hebrides and *Fingal's Cave*. The opening motive that Mendelssohn sketched and sent to his sister after viewing the Hebrides is a mysterious, arpeggiated fragment outlining the key of B minor. The motive is repeated several times, rising higher and higher. It begins in the lower depths of the orchestra for maximum drama, with the bassoon, viola and cello receiving the melodic material. As the theme rises, the violins take over, while the lower voices begin an undulating pattern of sixteenth notes that is present throughout most of the work, representing the ebb and flow of the sea, while dramatic crescendos and sforzandi allude to crashing sea waves upon rocks.

The second theme is a more sprawling and soaring melody in the major mode, and as the always quotable Sir Donald Francis Tovey stated, is "the greatest melody Mendelssohn ever wrote." This second theme is again introduced by the lower instruments (bassoons and celli), maintaining the mysterious nautical tone of the overture. The opening motive is later transformed to a martial rhythm in the orchestra before beginning a somewhat jauntier section filled with dotted rhythms and staccato statements. This section begins with very soft iterations of the opening fragment answered by militaristic figures from the winds. It then modifies and truncates the opening motive into short staccato statements passed throughout the orchestra before the clarinet returns the peaceful ambiance with its statement of the expansive second theme, leading directly into the extended coda. The work ends with a repeated, haunting

statement of the opening motive in the clarinet, passed onto the flute that has the last word with its ascending B minor arpeggio, accompanied by pizzicato strings. —*Program note by Lori Newman*

Don't say a word

For amplified solo voice and chamber orchestra

Annika Socolofsky (b. 1990)

Don't say a word for amplified voice and chamber orchestra was commissioned and premiered by the Knoxville Symphony Orchestra.

When I look around myself for an idea, when I feel as though I have nothing to work with, when I feel as though I am nothing, when I've been made to feel that I am nothing, I look to my community of strong women and queers for inspiration. Our stories are tales of strength, perseverance, fire and drive. And as the tides of history churn, gaining momentum, it's no longer dangerous to declare that now it's our turn—the time for all of us who have been “othered” to rise up.

The text for this piece is: “Hush now, baby. Don't say a word. Now it's time for the other's turn.” —*Program note by Annika Socolofsky*

Strum

Jessie Montgomery (b. 1981)

Strum is the culminating result of several versions of a string quintet I wrote in 2006. It was originally written for the Providence String Quartet and guests of Community MusicWorks Players, then arranged for string quartet in 2008 with several small revisions. In 2012 the piece underwent its final revisions with a rewrite of both the introduction and the ending for the Catalyst Quartet in a performance celebrating the 15th annual Sphinx Competition.

Originally conceived for the formation of a cello quintet, the voicing is often spread wide over the ensemble, giving the music an expansive quality of sound. Within *Strum* I utilized texture motives, layers of rhythmic or harmonic

ostinati that string together to form a bed of sound for melodies to weave in and out. The strumming pizzicato serves as a texture motive and the primary driving rhythmic underpinning of the piece. Drawing on American folk idioms and the spirit of dance and movement, the piece has a kind of narrative that begins with fleeting nostalgia and transforms into ecstatic celebration.

—*Program note by Jessie Montgomery*

Symphony No. 2 in D major, Op. 36

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

By the age of twenty-six, an incessant ringing in his ears already troubled Beethoven. Six years later, in 1802, his doctor suggested a rest, away from the din of the city, in the little town known as Heiligenstadt (now a part of Vienna). While there, he wrote to his brothers Carl and Johann that he was finally compelled to face the prospect of a lasting malady (whose cure will take years or, perhaps, be impossible)

“... Ah how could I possibly admit such an infirmity in the one sense which should have been more perfect in me than in others, a sense which I once possessed in highest perfection, a perfection such as few surely in my profession enjoy or have enjoyed.”

Such was his despair that he even contemplated suicide. He wrote a short postscript:

“Thus do I take my farewell of thee... O Providence—grant me at least but one day of pure joy—it is so long since real joy echoed in my heart.”

All of this happened at the same time that he wrote the symphony that Hector Berlioz insists is “smiling throughout.” About the only solemn moment in the Beethoven’s Symphony No. 2 is the slow introduction that starts the whole thing off. The second movement, one of the longest slow movements of any Beethoven symphony, is noble and pastoral in character, full of song-like themes. The third movement is a scherzo (Italian for “joke”) and is Beethoven’s

first attempt at converting the stately minuet into something more crackling in tempo and humorous in character. The humor continues in the last movement.

Critical reaction to this symphony at its premiere was mixed. People simply thought that it was bizarre and felt that Beethoven was “striving for effect and straining for that which is new and remarkable.” One critic called it “a gross enormity, an immense wounded snake, unwilling to die, but writhing in its last agonies and, though bleeding to death, furiously beats about with its tail in the finale.”

Fortunately, Beethoven never sent the Heiligenstadt Testament to his brothers, and never followed through with his despair. Perhaps more than anything, this symphony is a testament to Beethoven’s ability to transcend his own problems in order to create beauty. —*Program note by John Varineau*

Personnel

Click or tap on bold and underlined text to view biographies or websites.

Gary Lewis, conductor

Annika Socolofsky, vocalist

Renee Gilliland, conductor

Renee Gilliland conducts the University of Colorado Boulder Campus Orchestra where she is pursuing a Doctor of Musical Arts under the instruction of Maestro Gary Lewis. She is also the assistant conductor of the CU Symphony, Chamber and Philharmonia Orchestras as well as the assistant and cover conductor of the Boulder Philharmonic Orchestra. Previously, Gilliland was the music director of the Anschutz Medical Campus Symphony Orchestra in Aurora, Colorado and associate conductor of the Denver Philharmonic Orchestra. She was awarded an Artist Diploma in orchestral conducting from the University of Denver where she was the assistant conductor of the Lamont School of Music Symphony and Opera Theater Orchestras. Gilliland enjoys exploring new repertoire with orchestras and learning from musicians of diverse backgrounds.

University Chamber Orchestra

Violin

Payton Andrews
Dmitri Ascarrunz
Victor Avila-Luvsangenden
Laena Batchelder +
Seth Bixler
Alan Chan
Corbin Glover
Larina Gray
Veda Hingert-McDonald *
Alisa Johnson
Zhiqi Liu
Anna Lugbill
Noah Michael-Carlson
Soria Nguyen
Elijah Pouliot
Lucy Rissman
Bebe Seidenberg
Rosalee Walsh
George Willis
Jonathon Winter
Brandon Wu
Joy Yamaguchi

Viola

Finn Cruit
Len Eppich
Madeline Guyer
Cameron Halsell
Bryce Kayser
Aaron Lockhart +
Elizabeth Macintosh
Daniel Moore +
Emma Reynolds
Ashley Santore
Andy Sprinkle
Gina Stonikas
Regina Vendetti +

Cello

Ethan Blake +
Nicole Chung
Peyton Magalhaes +
Louis Saxton
Eric Vasquez
Joshua Vierra
Matthew Wiest

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Joey Aigner
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Victoria Bakewell
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Maeve Celedon +
Isaiah Holt
Jake Thurston +

Flute

Rachelle Crowell
Lauren Flaten
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Taysia Petersen
Lisa Read

Clarinet

Charles Burnside
Ashley Civelli

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Sheridan Sturm
Madison Triplett

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Abigail French
Ethan Watson

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Mitchell Row
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CU ★ PRESENTS



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Event details are subject to change, but the CU Presents website will always be up-to-date.

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UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO BOULDER

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