

CU ★ PRESENTS

2022-23 Season



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UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO BOULDER

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CU ★ PRESENTS is the home of performing arts at the University of Colorado Boulder.



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Faculty Tuesdays

Images of Nature

Andrew Cooperstock, piano

Abigail Nims, mezzo soprano

David Requiro, cello

7:30 p.m., Tuesday, Feb. 21, 2023

Grusin Music Hall

Program

A Quiet Afternoon (1951)

Ned Rorem (1923-2022)

- I. A Quiet Afternoon
- II. A New Game
- III. The Little Boy Lost
- IV. The Little Boy Found
- V. Lonesome Waltz
- VI. The Tiny Tin Dancers
- VII. Near the Strange Garden
- VIII. A Trick
- IX. Evening Rainbow

Andrew Cooperstock, piano

Four Songs

Ned Rorem

Clouds (1968)

I Strolled Across an Open Field (1948)

Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening (1990)

Early in the Morning (1958)

Abigail Nims, mezzo soprano

Andrew Cooperstock, piano

***Oiseaux tristes* (“Sad Birds”) (1905)**

Maurice Ravel (1875-1937)

***Dragonflies* (1929)**

Florence Price (1887-1953)

***On a Quiet Lake* (1929)**

Florence Price

***Lo zio acquatico* (“The Aquatic Uncle”) (2022)**

Michael Ippolito (b. 1985)

***Une Barque sur l’océan* (“A Boat on the Ocean”) (1905)**

Maurice Ravel

Andrew Cooperstock, piano

***The Work at Hand* (2015)**

Jake Heggie (b. 1961)

Part Three: The Slow Seconds

Abigail Nims, mezzo soprano

David Requiro, cello

Andrew Cooperstock, piano

***Histoires naturelles* (“Natural History”) (1906)**

Maurice Ravel

- I. *Le Paon* (“The Peacock”)
- II. *Le Grillon* (“The Cricket”)
- III. *Le Cygne* (“The Swan”)
- IV. *Le Martin-Pêcheur* (“The Kingfisher”)
- V. *La Pintade* (“The Guinea-fowl”)

Abigail Nims, mezzo soprano

Andrew Cooperstock, piano

Program notes

The final days of winter bring the promise of spring, bittersweet perhaps with memories of recent loss coupled with hope for renewal. Tonight's program features images of nature and the cycle of life. With Ned Rorem's scenes of childhood for piano solo and landscapes depicted through song, we honor the American composer, who nearly lived to celebrate his 100th birthday this year. A premiere of a watery piece by Michael Ippolito is grouped with images of wings and water by Florence Price and Maurice Ravel. Jake Heggie's powerful *The Work at Hand* is inspired by poetry of Laura Morefield, and her struggle with terminal illness. Finally, we return to Ravel, who with words by Jules Renard describes four birds and a cricket in ways that might seem all too familiar to humans: the grandiose yet insecure peacock, the OCD cricket, the graceful yet gluttonous swan, the brilliantly blue kingfisher who takes a fishing pole for a branch, and the pugnacious hunchbacked guinea-fowl.

Four Songs

Music by Ned Rorem (1923-2022)

Clouds (To David Diamond)

Poetry by Paul Goodman (1911-1972)

So effortlessly
we are not given to move on earth
as these in heaven clouds,
nor without desire
to tend whither the airs conspire.
The clouds exaggerate and pile
into heights of mile on mile.
In the breathing o' the universe
they drift asunder and disperse.

I Strolled Across an Open Field

Poetry by Theodore Roethke (1908-1963)

I strolled across
An open field;
The sun was out;
Heat was happy

This way! This way!
The wren's throat shimmered
Either to other
The blossoms sang

The stones sang
The little ones did
And the flowers jumped
Like small goats

A ragged fringe
Of daisies waved;
I wasn't alone
In a grove of apples

Far in a wood A nestling sighed;
The dew loosened
Its morning smells

I came where the river
Ran over stones:
My ears knew
An early joy

And all the waters
Of all the streams
Sang in my veins
That summer day

Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening

Poetry by Robert Frost (1874-1963)

Whose woods these are I think I know
His house is in the village though;
He will not see me stopping here
To watch his woods fill up with snow

My little horse must think it queer
To stop without a farmhouse near
Between the woods and frozen lake
The darkest evening of the year

He gives his harness bells a shake
To ask if there is some mistake
The only other sound's the sweep
Of easy wind and downy flake

The woods are lovely, dark and deep
But I have promises to keep
And miles to go before I sleep
And miles to go before I sleep

Early in the Morning

Poetry by Robert Hillyer (1895-1961)

Early in the morning
Of a lovely summer day
As they lowered the bright awning
At the outdoor café
I was breakfasting on croissants
And café au lait
Under greenery like scenery
Rue François Premier
They were hosing the hot pavement
With a dash of flashing spray
And a smell of summer showers

When the dust is drenched away
Under greenery like scenery
Rue François Premier
I was twenty and a lover
And in Paradise to stay
Very early in the morning
Of a lovely summer day

The Work at Hand (2015)

Poetry by Laura Morefield (1960-2011)

Music by Jake Heggie (b. 1961)

And then:

there are slow seconds like these,
when the single square of window reveals
pine tree needles
bursting into branches,
making their stubborn way through a furrowed trunk.

When the wind moves

like a feathered thing over my waiting skin.

When all I want is to unfold a small quilt
of sunlight onto the cool green and sit very still,
to let the light of heaven flow over me like honey
until my bones are on fire with the beauty of it all.

***Histoires naturelles* (“Natural History”) (1906)**

Poetry by Jules Renard (1864-1910)

Translations by Richard Stokes

Music by Maurice Ravel (1875-1937)

The Peacock

He will surely get married today.

It was to have been yesterday. In full regalia he was ready. It was only his bride
he was waiting for. She has not come. She cannot be long.

Proudly he processes with the air of an Indian prince, bearing about his person

the customary lavish gifts. Love burnishes the brilliance of these colours, and his crest quivers like a lyre.

His bride does not appear.

He ascends to the top of the roof and looks towards the sun. He utters his devilish cry:

Léon! Léon!

It is thus that he summons his bride. He can see nothing drawing near, and no one replies. The fowls are used to all this and do not even raise their heads.

They are tired of admiring him. He descends once more to the yard, so sure of his beauty that he is incapable of resentment.

His marriage will take place tomorrow.

And, not knowing what to do for the rest of the day, he heads for the flight of steps. He ascends them, as though they were the steps of a temple, with a formal tread.

He lifts his train, heavy with eyes that have been unable to detach themselves. Once more he repeats the ceremony.

The Cricket

It is the hour when, weary of wandering, the black insect returns from his outing and carefully restores order to his estate.

First he rakes his narrow sandy paths.

He makes sawdust which he scatters on the threshold of his retreat.

He files the root of this tall grass likely to annoy him.

He rests.

Then he winds up his tiny watch.

Has he finished? Is it broken? He rests again for a while.

He goes inside and shuts the door.

For an age he turns his key in the delicate lock.

And he listens:

Nothing untoward outside.

But he does not feel safe.

And as if by a tiny chain on a creaking pulley, he lowers himself into the bowels of the earth.

Nothing more is heard.

In the silent countryside the poplars rise like fingers in the air, pointing to the moon.

The Swan

He glides on the pond like a white sledge from cloud to cloud. For he is hungry only for the fleecy clouds that he sees forming, moving, dissolving in the water. It is one of these that he wants. He takes aim with his beak and suddenly immerses his snow-clad neck.

Then, like a woman's arm emerging from a sleeve, he draws it back up.

He has caught nothing.

He looks about: the startled clouds have vanished. Only for a second is he disappointed, for the clouds are not slow to return, and, over there, where the ripples fade, there is one reappearing.

Gently, on his soft cushion of down, the swan paddles and approaches...

He exhausts himself fishing for empty reflections, and perhaps he will die, a victim of that illusion, before catching a single shred of cloud.

But what am I saying?

Each time he dives, he burrows with his beak in the nourishing mud and brings up a worm.

He's getting as fat as a goose.

The Kingfisher

Not a bite, this evening, but I had a rare experience.

As I was holding out my fishing rod, a kingfisher came and perched on it.

We have no bird more brilliant.

He was like a great blue flower at the tip of a long stem. The rod bent beneath the weight. I held my breath, so proud to be taken for a tree by a kingfisher.

And I'm sure he did not fly off from fear, but thought he was simply flitting from one branch to another.

The Guinea-fowl

She is the hunchback of my barnyard. She dreams only of wounding, because of her hump.

The hens say nothing to her: suddenly, she swoops and harries them.

Then she lowers her head, leans forward, and, with all the speed of her skinny legs, runs and strikes with her hard beak at the very centre of a turkey's tail.

This poseuse was provoking her.

Thus, with her bluish head and raw wattles, pugnaciously she rages from morn to night. She fights for no reason, perhaps because she always thinks they are

making fun of her figure, of her bald head and dropping tail.
And she never stops screaming her discordant cry, which pierces the air like a
needle.

Sometimes she leaves the yard and vanishes. She gives the peace-loving
poultry a moment's respite. But she returns more rowdy and shrill. And in a
frenzy she wallows in the earth.

Whatever's wrong with her?

The cunning creature is playing a trick.

She went to lay her egg in the open country.

I can look for it if I like.

And she rolls in the dust, like a hunchback.

Personnel

*Text that is bold and underlined is a hyperlink and can be clicked or tapped for
more information.*

Andrew Cooperstock, piano

Abigail Nims, mezzo soprano

David Requiro, cello

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