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2024-25



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The University of Colorado Boulder, Colorado's flagship university, honors and recognizes the many contributions of Indigenous peoples in our state. CU Boulder acknowledges that it is located on the traditional territories and ancestral homelands of the Cheyenne, Arapaho, Ute and many other Native American nations. Their forced removal from these territories has caused devastating and lasting impacts. While the University of Colorado Boulder can never undo or rectify the devastation wrought on Indigenous peoples, we commit to improving and enhancing engagement with Indigenous peoples and issues locally and globally.

Symphony Orchestra

Legends, Myths, and Heroes

Gary Lewis, conductor

Louis Saxton, cello

7:30 p.m., Thursday, Nov. 21, 2024

Macky Auditorium

PROGRAM

Seven O’Clock Shout

Valerie Coleman (b. 1970)

Schelomo, Hebraic Rhapsody for Cello and Orchestra

Ernest Bloch (1880-1959)

Louis Saxton, cello

Intermission

The Firebird Suite (1919 Version)

Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971)

1. Introduction – The Firebird and its Dance – Variation of the Firebird
2. The Princesses’ Khorovod (Rondo)
3. Infernal Dance of King Kashchei
4. Lullaby
5. Finale

PROGRAM NOTES

Seven O’Clock Shout

Valerie Coleman (b. 1970)

Seven O’Clock Shout is an anthem inspired by the tireless frontline workers during the COVID-19 pandemic, and the heartwarming ritual of evening serenades that brings people together amidst isolation to celebrate life and the sacrifices of heroes. The work begins with a distant and solitary solo between two trumpets in fanfare fashion to commemorate the isolation forced upon human kind, and the need to reach out to one another. The fanfare blossoms into a lushly dense landscape of nature, symbolizing both the caregiving acts of nurses and doctors as they try to save lives while nature is transforming and healing herself during a time of self-isolation.

—Program note by composer

Schelomo, Hebraic Rhapsody for Cello and Orchestra

Ernest Bloch (1880-1959)

The Hebrew word for Solomon, *Schelomo* is one Swiss composer Ernest Bloch’s most famous and respected works. In 1915, Bloch met with Russian Jewish cellist Alexandre Barjansky and his sculptor wife Katia. Taken aback by Barjansky’s abilities, he immediately began writing a “poem” for cello and large orchestra. This work would be one of the last pieces in Bloch’s Jewish Cycle, a period of his compositional output in which he tried to express “the soul of the Jewish people.” Grateful for Bloch’s Jewish-inspired music, Katia Barjansky gifted Bloch with a wax figure of King Solomon. Although there was no direct programmatic nature in mind, Bloch was considering setting the music of the cello poem to the texts of *Ecclesiastes* before receiving the gift from Katia. After receiving the statue, Bloch assigned more programmatic elements to the already written music, stating the role of Solomon is played by the cello, with the orchestra being the world that distracts and tempts. After the premiere, Bloch would write, “If one likes, one may imagine that the voice of the solo cello is the voice of the King Schelomo. The complex voice of the orchestra is the voice of his age ...

his world ... his experience. There are times when the orchestra seems to reflect his thoughts as the solo cello voices his words.”

The solo cello starts the piece on a single note, followed by a rhythmically free, rhapsodic descent as the orchestra joins. This free rhapsodic music is juxtaposed with a more languid rhythmic texture that will become the dialogue for the entire piece. In contrary to most concerto expectations, the role of the orchestra is far less accompanimental and far more in direct dialogue with the soloist. The dialogue between cello and orchestra ranges from peaceful and lamenting to forceful and conflicting in the middle section. The turbulence slows, and a traditional Hebrew song can be heard in the winds, instigated by the bassoon. The cello at first rejects the melody, but eventually joins the orchestra in conversation while the music builds again. As the piece moves to a close, an optimistic melody is introduced in the cello and violins, accompanied by shimmering winds and celeste. However, a violent surge of orchestral outburst happens once more, arriving at the climax of the piece. The music fades again, and a pessimistic cello moves downward in register to arrive on a low D, showing the ultimate futility of the struggles against the orchestra.

The Firebird Suite (1919 Version)

Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971)

Known for its colorful orchestration, rhythmic complexity, and portrayal of Russian folklore, Stravinsky's ballet *Firebird* found immediate international success. Following the 1910 premiere of the ballet, Stravinsky rescored the work in 1911 as an orchestral suite. In 1919, Stravinsky reworked the suite into the version that is most often performed today. The suite opens with an enchanted garden motive, a slow churning melody heard in the bass voices. The introduction gives way to the Firebird's dance, a lively and rhythmic movement with sweeping gestures to portray the grace of the Firebird. Variations on the *Firebird* theme follow, with complex rhythmic conversations between strings and woodwind. The Rondo of the princesses is heard next, a beautiful lilting movement that offers contrast

to the more sweeping and rhythmic *Firebird* music. After the *Rondo*, the music moves to the most violent and turbulent movement—the Infernal Dance. This movement depicts the evil sorcerer Kastchei and his enchanted realm, marked by dissonant harmonies and striking orchestral colors. The Berceuse, or lullaby, follows the infernal dance, featuring a hypnotic bassoon solo. Finally, a single horn call starts the Finale, as the last movement builds to a legendary climax.

PERSONNEL

Hyperlinks are bold and underlined; click or tap for more information.

Gary Lewis, conductor

Louis Saxton, cello

Louis Saxton is an emerging cellist and music educator based in Boulder, Colorado. A recent graduate of the University of Colorado Boulder with a Bachelor of Music in cello performance, Saxton specializes in chamber music and solo performance. Saxton received multiple awards during his time at CU Boulder, including being named the Pressor Scholar for the 2024 year and the Outstanding Graduating Senior from the CU Boulder College of Music.

Driven by a belief that music is a universal language capable of transcending boundaries, Saxton is especially passionate about championing the works of underrepresented composers and performing in many styles including lots of improv with local abstract artists, and folk/old-time bands. In his performances, there is an aim to amplify voices that challenge conventions and inspire audiences to reflect on deeper societal issues. Offstage, Saxton teaches private cello lessons, working with high school orchestras, enjoys gardening and landscaping, bakes sourdough, is currently obtaining his Yoga Teacher Certification, and runs a small business with a vision of cultivating beauty in all forms—even amidst discord.

Looking ahead, Saxton aspires to pursue a graduate degree in either a graduate quartet program or a master's in music performance, with the goal of teaching as a professor someday. Saxton hopes to balance a life between music and a connection to nature, bridging the worlds of art and earth.

Saxton is currently performing and playing on a cello loaned to him by the Fink family. This outstanding instrument was made by Christopher Dungee in Boulder Colorado, 1992.

Symphony Orchestra

Violin

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Ryannah Blackman
Alyssa Byrne
Anna Cummings
Alex Earle
Jordan Grantonic
Michael Han
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Logan Indge
Elizabeth Kaszycki
Lauren Lier
Sarah Payton
Laura Pérez Rangel
Leah Pernick
Concertmaster/Principal
Eli Pouliot
David Schwartz
Bebe Seidenberg
Andrew Storey
Emilie Tupper
Kisa Uradomo
Concertmaster/Principal
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Nelio Zamorano

Viola

Thomas Chafe
Principal
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Devin Cowan
Finn Cruit
Becky Donoho
Len Eppich
Zoe Fernandez
Alejandro Gallagher
Bryce Kayser
Aaron Lockhart
Taylor Sapanara

Cello

Mackenzie Baca
Julian Bennett
Elise Cole
Amy Delavoryas
Julia Emery
Marti Flickinger
Kate Fornshell
Lance Johnson
Logan Kuhlman
Heewon Lee
Principal
Nia Lepore
Peyton Magalhaes
Erik Okel
Everlin Roark
Caleb Seifert
Cole Sutherland

Double bass

Joey Aigner
Ella Bajcsi
Gabriel Brownlowe
John St. Cyr
Principal
Cooper Elliott
Claire Koch
Sasha Mackoff
Willem Rohwer
Jack Turner

Flute

Corvina Graham
Sam Nixon
Nova Rognerud
Mallory Wood
Natalie Zeles

Oboe

Lauren Breen
Laura Lambrech
Grace Stringfellow
Luka Vezmar

Clarinet

Caden Craig
Harold Gomez-Montoya
Nikhila Narayana
Ben Rathje
Juan Tovar

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Larissa Harrison
Ben Mangonon
Laynie Metsker
Madison Triplett

Horn

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