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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.

Chamber Orchestra

Finding Light

Renee Gilliland, conductor

7:30 p.m., Thursday, March 13, 2025

Grusin Music Hall

PROGRAM

Dark with Excessive Bright

Missy Mazzoli (b. 1980)

Susan Cahill, bass

Memory of a Broken Wing

Enrique Ponce (ASCAP) (b. 1990)

For those who perished at Theresienstadt,

Featuring themes by Renee Noel Gilliland.

Andrea Segar, violin

J. David Reid, piano

Intermission

Symphony No. 3, op. 36, G minor

Louise Farrenc (1804-1875)

- I. Adagio—Allegro
- II. Adagio cantabile
- III. Scherzo: Vivace
- IV. Finale: Allegro

PROGRAM NOTES

Dark with Excessive Bright

Missy Mazzoli (b. 1980)

While composing *Dark with Excessive Bright* for contrabass soloist Maxime Bibeau and the Australian Chamber Orchestra, I continuously listened to music from the Baroque and Renaissance eras. I was inspired in no small part by Maxime's double bass, a massive instrument built in 1580 that was stored in an Italian monastery for hundreds of years and even patched with pages from the Good Friday liturgy. I imagined this instrument as a historian, an object that collected the music of the passing centuries in the twists of its neck and the fibers of its wood, finally emerging into the light at age 400 and singing it all into the world. While loosely based in baroque idioms, this piece slips between string techniques from several centuries, all while twisting a pattern of repeated chords beyond recognition. "Dark with excessive bright," a phrase from Milton's *Paradise Lost*, is a surreal and evocative description of God, written by a blind man. I love the impossibility of this phrase, and felt it was a strangely accurate way to describe the dark but heartrending sound of the double bass itself. *Dark with Excessive Bright* was commissioned by the Australian Chamber Orchestra and the Aurora Orchestra in London. In 2019 I arranged the work for solo violin and string orchestra.

—Note by Missy Mazzoli

Memory of a Broken Wing

Enrique Ponce (b. 1990)

For those who perished at Theresienstadt,
Featuring themes by Renee Noel Gilliland.

Theresienstadt, a place of profound sorrow and enduring resilience, stands as a poignant reminder of the human spirit during the darkest days of World War II. Hidden behind the guise of a “model Jewish settlement,” this ghetto and concentration camp in the Czech town of Terezín witnessed immense suffering and loss.

Yet, amidst the despair, Theresienstadt became known for its rich cultural life. Artists, musicians and intellectuals, though imprisoned, created works of art, music and literature that spoke of their enduring spirit and hope. Their creativity, born from both pain and aspiration, continues to inspire and remind us of their courage.

This flourishing of culture within the ghetto was not merely an act of defiance but also a profound assertion of identity and humanity. Through concerts, lectures and performances, the inmates of Theresienstadt kept their traditions and intellectual life alive, offering solace and a sense of normalcy amidst the chaos.

As we remember Theresienstadt, we honor the memory of those who perished and celebrate the resilience of those who found light in the darkest of times. Their artistic legacy stands as a testament to the unbreakable human spirit and the power of creativity to transcend even the most dire circumstances.

This commemorative work is dedicated to those who perished, ensuring their voices and stories live on through the power of art.

—Note by Enrique Ponce

Symphony No. 3, Op. 36, G minor

Louise Farrenc (1804-1875)

The recent popularity of Louise Farrenc's Symphony No. 3 is indicative of the 21st-century revival of this French composer's music. The current increase in programming this piece, however, belies the hurdles that were present in producing an orchestral work in 19th-century France, when the symphony was out of favor and the opera ruled supreme. When the barriers Farrenc surmounted as a female composer are added to this equation, the positive reception of the symphony during her lifetime holds even greater significance.

Farrenc (née Jeanne-Louise Dumont) was known primarily as a composer of piano works. She entered the Paris Conservatoire at age 15 to pursue piano performance, the more typical domain of female musicians at that time. Women were not yet allowed to study composition formally, but she was able to arrange for private lessons with composer and professor Anton Reicha, developing a style with German Romantic and Classical influences. She paused her studies at age 17 when she married flautist Aristide Farrenc and they embarked on a concert tour together. Eventually, they settled back in Paris, where her husband opened a successful publishing company, also helping to further her compositional career with the publication of many of her piano works, starting in 1825.

Farrenc returned to the Conservatoire to become a professor of piano, remaining there for 30 years and with her daughter Victorine among her prized pupils. Her professorship is recognized as historically significant for at least two reasons: she was the only woman to hold a permanent post of her rank during the entire 19th century, and she is an early example of a woman asking for, and receiving, equal pay to that of her male colleagues, which she did following the successful premiere of her *Nonet* in 1850. While Farrenc continued teaching until two years before her death at age 71, the latter part of her career changed course after the tragic death of her daughter due to illness in 1859. Farrenc turned away from composition and performance, and she and her husband focused on compiling a multi-

volume musical anthology as part of their interest in historical keyboard revival initiatives.

Farrenc's large-scale orchestral compositions were part of her later oeuvre, with two overtures written in 1834 and three symphonies written in the 1840s. They all remained unpublished during her lifetime but were performed multiple times across Europe. She wrote her Symphony No. 3 in G minor in 1847, but it was not performed until two years later by the Société des Concerts du Conservatoire; the delay was perhaps due to the reluctance in French musical circles to produce symphonic works. Over the course of the next few years, however, it was performed again in Paris as well as in Geneva and Brussels.

The intensity of the symphony is palpable from the start. After an oboe ushers in a slow introduction, tinged with dark melancholy, the ensemble delves into a swirling triple meter for a robust statement of the main theme in unison strings. The movement develops energetically, picking up the pace even more with a final burst of energy in the coda. In contrast, the second movement *Adagio* opens with a smooth, lyrical clarinet melody, supported by horns, bassoon and timpani. This movement provides a simple and elegant interlude, building gradually but overall remaining serene and unruffled. The third movement *Scherzo* begins with quiet tiptoeing in the strings but has a forward momentum and excitement constantly bubbling below the surface, paused only during the central woodwind trio. The decisive unison strings that open the final movement signal a return to a darker, bold energy. The ensemble pursues the twists and turns of thematic development with a vigor worthy of this romantic-inflected symphony, ending with three triumphant final chords.

—Note by Pamela Feo

PERSONNEL

Renee Gilliland, conductor

Susan Cahill, bass

Andrea Segar, violin

Enrique Ponce

Enrique Ponce is an award-winning composer whose music has been featured in numerous film and video game projects both in the United States and abroad. Ponce holds a Master of Music degree in scoring for film, television, and video games from the Berklee College of Music in Valencia, Spain. At Berklee, Ponce honed his skills with industry professionals, mastering the orchestral recording process. He has had the privilege of recording and conducting his music with renowned film orchestras in the U.K., Hungary, Macedonia and Spain. Recognized for his compositional creativity and orchestral zest, Ponce's music has won and been nominated for awards at film festivals across the United States. Most notably, he received the Best Original Score award at the Los Angeles CineFest for his score to the animated short *Twilight Prophecy* in 2017.

Ponce holds a bachelor's degree in commercial music from the University of Texas at El Paso, where he studied piano with Dena Kay Jones. Having shown an interest in music from an early age, Ponce began studying piano and composition at the age of 12. He started formal composition lessons at 16 with composer Dominic Dousa, who continued to mentor him throughout his degree. Ponce was a finalist and runner-up in the annual Concerto & Aria competition in 2010 and was elected to perform in UTEP's honor recital, which features the most accomplished music students. In 2013, he showcased his compositions and was presented with the Most Outstanding Music Student award.

Under the guidance of composers Lucio Godoy, Alfons Conde, and Vanessa Garde, Ponce participated in remote recording sessions with the Budapest Art Orchestra and performed his original ethnically inspired works in a live concert setting.

After completing his studies in Europe, Ponce returned to his hometown of El Paso, where he continues to actively score new projects. His local collaborations include work with PBS Digital Studios, PRC Productions, Bored Film Studios, Xigma Games, and JonGon Productions. Internationally, Ponce has scored televised productions in Thailand and assisted with compositions and recording sessions in Kuwait and Venezuela. Within the United States, Ponce has worked extensively with Materia Collective, a record label specializing in the production and licensing of video game music. Through Materia Collective, he has released several albums, including those officially licensed by SquareEnix and Nintendo.

In recent years, Ponce has earned numerous accolades for his work. He won second place in the instrumental category of the International Songwriting Competition in both 2019 and 2020, standing out among over 19,000 entries each year. His music has also been nominated for Best Original Score in the Pinnacle Film Awards, Mindfield Film Festival, Buenos Aires International Film Festival and Hollywood Songwriting Contest, among many others. You can listen to Ponce's music on Apple Music, Spotify, and Google Play Music, or by [visiting his website at enriqueponcemusic.com](http://enriqueponcemusic.com).

J. David Reid

J. David Reid is a Doctor of Musical Arts candidate (piano performance) at the University of Colorado Boulder studying under Jennifer Hayghe. Reid holds a master's degree in piano performance from the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music. Reid is a charismatic performer/collaborator and dedicated pedagogue; he has also served as vice president of the CU Boulder Collegiate Chapter of MTNA in the 2021-2022 academic year. Current projects include a solo recital exploring themes of game, playfulness and imagination through solo piano works of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

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