

Faculty Tuesdays

Musical Inspirations and Other Influences:
Rebecca Clarke and Antonín Dvořák

Erika Eckert, viola
Margaret McDonald, piano
Claude Sim, violin
Meta Weiss, violoncello

*Latecomers will be seated at the discretion of
the house manager.*

7:30 p.m., Tuesday, Nov. 5, 2019
Grusin Music Hall
Imig Music Building



Program

Passacaglia for viola and piano (1941)

Rebecca Clarke
(1886-1979)

Two Pieces for viola and cello (1918)

- I. Lullaby
- II. Grotesque

Rebecca Clarke

Dumka for violin, viola and piano (1941)

Rebecca Clarke

Piano Quartet No. 2 in E flat Major, Op. 87 (1889)

- I. Allegro con fuoco
- II. Lento
- III. Allegro moderato
- IV. Finale. Allegro ma non troppo

Antonín Dvořák
(1841-1904)

Program notes

The short pieces for duos are windows onto little worlds where Clarke expresses real stories not unlike one would write in a thoughtful travel diary. —Elisabetta Righini

In **Passacaglia (on an old English Tune)**, Clarke employs pre-existing material to provide structure and connection with tradition. It is based on a hymn, *Veni creator*, included in the 1906 *English Hymnal* compiled by Ralph Vaughan Williams. Although the hymn is attributed to Thomas Tallis, that attribution is not confirmed by research. The hymn serves as an organizing element often more underlying rather than in the foreground. Clarke herself gave the first performance of the *Passacaglia* on March 28, 1941, in New York City. The success of that concert led to the work's publication; it was her last piece to be printed (in her lifetime). It is possible that the death of Frank Bridge on January 10, 1941, may have motivated Clarke to write this melancholy work, the one most steeped in British tradition of all her pieces. —Liane Curtis, President of The Rebecca Clarke Society

Clarke probably composed the **Two Pieces for Viola and Cello** as a concert vehicle for herself and the English cellist May Mukle, with whom she frequently performed. The Lullaby is one of several compositions in this genre (the others are for violin or viola and piano); it suits admirably the ranges and characters of the instruments and shows Clarke's skill at making time stand still. The *Grotesque* demonstrates her rhythmic ingenuity and her lively sense of instrumental color, and suggests that her admiration for Bloch did not blind her to the charms of the early Stravinsky. —Christopher Johnson

Dumka, for violin, viola and piano, reveals Clarke as steeped in traditions of nineteenth-century chamber music (of course Dvořák's *Dumky Trio* comes to mind). Dumka refers to a traditional Slavonic lamenting song: it was adopted for use as an instrumental form retaining the sombre mood, but also featuring contrasting sections of high-flung emotions. Formal clarity and polytonal harmonies infuse a modernist, neo-classical ethos, while the high-string contrasts of roiling emotions illustrate the passions of a luscious romanticism tinge with ethnic flavor. No information illuminating the origins of this piece are known, but one possible influence is that in the early 1940s Clarke was involved in editing and proof-reading a book on Bohuslav Martinů, a Czech composer who wrote several instrumental *Dumkas*. —Liane Curtis

Towards the end of the 19th century the piano quartet was established as a separate sophisticated chamber music genre. With Brahms' strong support of Dvořák's music, the publisher Fritz Simrock asked him for a further contribution to the genre. The second **Piano Quartet in E-flat Major, Op. 87** was composed in the summer of 1889 during a torrent of creativity: "My head is so full, if a human being could only write it all down straight away! [...] It is unexpectedly easy and the melodies simply flow towards me. Thanks be to God!" These words could describe the quartet itself, a work with characteristic carefree tone and clear nationalistic colouring. —Bärenreiter-Verlag

Personnel

Violist **Erika Eckert** has served on the faculties of the Brevard Music Center; the Cleveland Institute of Music; Baldwin Wallace University; Perlman Music Program; the Quartet Program; Takács String Quartet Seminar; the North American Viola Institute at the Orford Center for the Arts in Quebec, Canada; the Chautauqua Institution in New York—where she coordinated the chamber music program for the Music School Festival Orchestra for three summers—and more. As co-founder and former violist of the Cavani String Quartet, Eckert performed worldwide and won first prizes at both the Walter W. Naumburg Chamber Music Competition and the Cleveland Quartet Competition and appeared on NBC, CBS, ABC, PBS and National Public Radio. Eckert has recently performed as guest violist with the Takács Quartet and numerous faculty recitals at the University of Colorado Boulder, while soloing with the Music in the Mountains Purgatory Festival Orchestra, Four Seasons Chamber Orchestra, the University of Colorado Boulder Symphony Orchestra and more. Performing engagements have included the 400th Galileo Anniversary at the American Academy in Rome, El Paso Pro Musica International Chamber Music Festival, Australian Festival of Chamber Music, Garth Newell Music Festival, Bravo! Vail and Music in the Mountains Chamber Music Festival, among others. Performing chamber music recitals at the International French Horn, Flute and Double-Reed Conventions and solo performances at SEAMUS and ICMC electronic music national and international conferences, she has also coordinated the chamber music program at the American String Teachers Association International Workshops in Brisbane, Australia, and Stavanger, Norway, and presented viola master

classes at universities across the U.S. Eckert serves on the board of the Rocky Mountain Viola Society and as an adjudicator for the National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts (NFAA) Arts Recognition and Talent Search, appearing in their Academy Award-nominated documentary, *Rehearsing a Dream*.

Pianist **Margaret McDonald**, a native of Minnesota, is associate professor of collaborative piano at the University of Colorado Boulder. She joined the College of Music keyboard faculty in the fall of 2004. She helped to develop the college's graduate degree program in Collaborative Piano and the undergraduate collaborative curriculum. Praised for her poetic style and versatility, McDonald enjoys an active performing career and has partnered many distinguished artists, including the Takács Quartet, Glenn Dicterow, Zuill Bailey, Joshua Roman, Paula Robison, Carol Wincenc, Eugene Izotov, Ben Kamins, David Shifrin, David Jolley, Julie Landsman, Craig Morris, Paul Merkelo, Ian Bousfield, Joseph Alessi, Steven Mead and Velvet Brown. She has performed throughout the United States, Canada and Europe. McDonald is active throughout the country, giving master classes at institutions from coast to coast, including The Juilliard School, Indiana University, New England Conservatory of Music, University of Texas at Austin, University of Minnesota Twin Cities, Arizona State University, University of California Santa Barbara and Louisiana State University. She has released recordings with Michelle Stanley, flute; Velvet Brown, tuba; Aaron Tindall, tuba; and Erika Eckert, viola for the Potenza, Parma and Meridian record labels. McDonald has been a staff accompanist at the Meadowmount School for Strings in New York and an official accompanist at the Music Teachers National Association national competitions and the National Flute Association

annual convention. She spends her summers as a member of the collaborative piano faculty at the Music Academy of the West in Santa Barbara, California.

Claude Sim enjoys a varied career as a chamber musician, orchestral leader, soloist and multi-genre performing artist. He studied violin performance at the Oberlin Conservatory with Greg Fulkerson and Almita Vamos and viola with Roland Vamos. At age 21, he was appointed associate concertmaster of the Colorado Symphony under Music Director Marin Alsop. He was formerly associate principal second violin of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra and has served as guest concertmaster of the Kansas City Symphony, principal second violin of the National Arts Centre Orchestra of Ottawa and first violin with the Philadelphia Orchestra. Equally talented on violin and viola, Sim has been a grand prizewinner at the Fischhoff National Chamber Music Competition. He is the solo violinist of Extasis, the noted tango group with a studio album to its credit. Known for his multi-genre interests, Sim's jazz album *Time With You* presents a collection of standards from the Great American Songbook. Sim has performed with Hamilton star Leslie Odom Jr. and Odom's

jazz quintet as guest soloist. He has also shared the stage with Irish American fiddler Eileen Ivers, Warren Haynes (Allman Brothers Band, Gov't Mule), rock band Guster and iconic Denver rock band Devotchka, both live and on the album *100 Lovers*. He performed as a duo with Grammy Award-winning artist and banjo master Béla Fleck on a 2014 Colorado tour. Sim's performing career and concurrent teaching philosophy are driven by striving to be a complete artist and citizen. His previous teaching appointments include University of Colorado Denver and Colorado State University.

Meta Weiss made her international debut at the age of seven in Holland, and has established herself as one of the leading cellists of her generation. Her performances have taken her to venues worldwide, including Carnegie Hall, the Kennedy Center, Boston Symphony Hall, Royal Albert Hall, Sydney Opera House and Melbourne Recital Centre. Top prizewinner in numerous competitions, she has been hailed as "magnetic" (ArtsJournal) and "luminous" (Sydney Arts Guide). A graduate of Rice University and The Juilliard School, she is chamber music coordinator and senior instructor for the College of Music at the University of Colorado Boulder.

Upcoming performances

🎫 Ticketed events 🎧 Live stream at cupresents.org

Wednesday, Nov. 6

Percussion Ensemble

7:30 p.m., Grusin Music Hall 🎧

Graduate Wind Quintet

7:30 p.m., St. Aidan's Episcopal Church 🎧

Thursday, Nov. 7

**Concert Jazz Ensemble and
Jazz Ensemble II**

7:30 p.m., Grusin Music Hall 🎧

Nov. 10-11

Tesla Quartet

Grusin Music Hall 🎫

Monday, Nov. 11

Thompson Jazz Combos

7:30 p.m., Old Main Chapel

Tuesday, Nov. 12

Faculty Tuesdays

Beethoven Anniversary Preview

7:30 p.m., Grusin Music Hall 🎧

Wednesday, Nov. 13

Opera Brown Bag

First look at *It's a Wonderful Life*

Noon, Music Theatre

Early Music Ensemble

7:30 p.m., Grusin Music Hall 🎧

Thursday, Nov. 14

Chamber Music Showcase

7:30 p.m., Grusin Music Hall 🎧

Nov. 15-17

Eklund Opera Program

It's a Wonderful Life

An opera by Jake Heggie and Gene Scheer

Macky Auditorium 🎫

Saturday, Nov. 16

Chamber Music Showcase

2 p.m., St Aidan's Episcopal Church, 2425

Colorado Ave, Boulder

West African Highlife Ensemble

4:30 p.m., Grusin Music Hall 🎧

Sunday, Nov. 17

Japanese Ensemble

7:30 p.m., Grusin Music Hall 🎧

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at cupresents.org to verify.

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