



SOUTHWESTERN
UNIVERSITY

Sarofim School of Fine Arts

Department of Music
146th Concert Season
Concert No. 22

Hai Zheng, cello

A Recital to Celebrate American Composers

Kiyoshi Tamagawa, piano

Bruce Cain, baritone

Sunday, January 23, 2022 at 3:00pm | Alma Thomas Theater

PROGRAM

Romance of Hsiao and Ch'in (1995-98)

Chen Yi
(b. 1953)

Meditation No. 1, from Three Meditations from MASS (1971)

Leonard Bernstein
(1918-1990)

La Pluma del Aura (2019)
dedicated to Mrs. Jane Sibley

Sam Lipman
(b. 1973)

Troubled Water: based on the spiritual *Wade in the Water* (1967)

Margaret Bonds
(1913-1972)

INTERMISSION

Songs for Baritone and Cello (1997)

Bonjour mon coeur
Mia Benigna Fortuna
Musikanten Sein
Weep weep weep
Ya Es Tiempo

John Biggs
(b. 1932)

Rhapsodie, Op. 25

Bertram Lincoln Shapleigh
(1871-1940)

Dreaming (Four Sketches, Op. 15, no. 3)

Amy Marcy Cheney Beach
(1867-1944)

Theme from *Schindler's List* (1993)

John Williams
(b. 1932)

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Laura Sewell '95, Director of the Sarofim School of Fine Arts Administration
Alexandra Slaid '20, Fine Arts Coordinator & Faculty Administrator
John Ore, Director of Technical Operations
Kiyoshi Tamagawa, Professor of Music & Program Editor
Grace Sexton, Sarofim Student Leader

PROGRAM NOTES

***Meditation No. 1, from Three Meditations from MASS**

Leonard Bernstein

Bernstein's MASS (*A Theatre Piece for Singers, Players and Dancers*) was composed at the request of President Kennedy's widow for the inauguration of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. on September 8, 1971. In the MASS there are three interludes called *Meditations*; the first two are orchestral while the third involves a vocal soloist and choir. In 1972 Bernstein arranged the two orchestral *Meditations* for solo cello and piano. Later he created a third *Meditation* for solo cello and orchestra derived from various parts of the MASS, and at the same time he orchestrated the piano part for the first two *Meditations*. In this form the *Three Meditations* were premiered at the Kennedy Center in 1977, the composer conducting the National Symphony Orchestra with cellist Mstislav Rostropovich as the soloist. In the MASS, the first Meditation follows a section called "Confession" in which Rock and Blues Singers confess that what they say they don't feel, and what is real they don't know, discussing their shortcomings in a lively "pop" style. In contrast to this style, *Meditation I* is painfully intense in its seriousness, alternating cries of anguish with periods of pensive meditation.

La Pluma del Aura

Sam Lipman

Program notes by Sam Lipman

La Pluma Del Aura means 'feather of the buzzard.' In March 2019, we lost a great person, perhaps the greatest figure the Austin Arts Community has ever known: Mrs. Jane Sibley. Although I never met Jane, through a series of conversations with members of her family and close friends and her autobiography *Jane's Window*, I came to know her as a true force of nature, a powerful woman who stopped at nothing to get things done, who amongst many accomplishments single-handedly saved the Austin Symphony. So what's with the buzzard feather? Read on...

Mrs. Hai Olefsky, who you hear performing 'cello tonight, had her life's course affected by the generosity of Mrs. Sibley, whose fundraising efforts led Hai to Moscow as the first female Chinese cellist invited to the Tchaikovsky Competition. Jane was a dear friend to Hai's mentor and late husband, the great American cellist Paul Olefsky. In her last few years Jane made sure to never miss Hai's concerts, showing up to her recitals and solo appearance with the Austin Civic Orchestra, and even in her wheelchair to Hai's CD release and birthday party and her daughter Maxine's wedding reception. Hai wanted to commission a work that would commemorate Jane's greatness, her tenacity, her spirit. So, about that feather. Throughout her biography, Jane pays homage to the great West Texas buzzard (turkey vulture). She famously never appeared without one fashionably-placed buzzard feather in her hairdo. And so this work begins with the 'cello playing eerie sounds of a buzzard circling high above. It's answered by broad strokes in the piano, representing the massive, seemingly neverending plains of Jane's native West Texas. This hostile music eventually yields to our main theme, a warm melody that speaks not only of Jane's love of the land, of family, of her way of life, but also of Hai's deep gratitude to the one who helped shape the course of her life. This charming melody gathers force upwards into an excited theme of flight, soaring on the blustery West Texas wind that permeates Jane's biography, of spirit seeking spirit, a flight that eventually settles into Jane's high spirit and passion that conquered her skeptics, broke down barriers, and ultimately got the job done. This music then floats downward through a melancholy typical of the 'Greatest Generation,' of one who knew too well the harsh realities of life in the wilderness, the sadness of a mother who lost two of her three children. After a brief return of the main theme, we conclude with the eerie tones of the buzzard, now freely wandering the heavens.

Troubled Water

Margaret Bonds

Program notes by Dr. John Michael Cooper

Margaret Bonds (1913-72) grew up on the South side of segregated Chicago, the daughter of a politically progressive father and a mother who was an accomplished pianist, organist, and teacher, a founding member of the National Association of Negro Musicians. Accordingly, Margaret, a virtuoso pianist who received Bachelor's and Master's degrees from Northwestern University, devoted much of her career to dissolving the separation of the music of Black Americans from the European concert tradition - often collaborating with iconic Harlem Renaissance poet Langston Hughes (1902-67) on these projects.

Troubled Water is an example of Bonds's synthesis of Black vernacular and European concert traditions. It uses the African American spiritual "Wade in the Water" as the basis for a dramatic and virtuosic musical fantasy strongly influenced by jazz. It was born as a composition titled "Group Dance on 'Wade in the Water,'" scored for piano solo with audience participation, that eventually became the last movement of a difficult *Spirituals Suite* for piano solo; Bonds published it in that form in 1968. In the meantime, she had arranged it for cello and piano for Hughes's surrogate mother and her own close friend in Harlem, Ethelda ("Toy") Harper, a cellist. This arrangement, still unpublished to this day, is the version performed tonight, in an edition by SU musicologist Michael Cooper. *Troubled Water* is cast in three sections that convey both the original fervency of the ancestral melody encouraging believers to rely on their baptismal faith in God's deliverance from the plight of racial injustice, and the tune's secret coded message that encouraged Blacks fleeing racial oppression to get off of the land roads and travel in nearby water to escape their persecutors. The first section presents the spiritual in its original form in the minor mode over an agitated accompaniment in the piano, and the second is more relaxed, combing a major-mode version of the melody over glittering cascades in the piano. But this lighter central section then yields to the final section, which repeats the spiritual in more complex form in ever-increasing intensity up until the coda, a strongly rhythmic obsession on the spiritual's opening phrase. The triumphal tone of the ending evokes breaking free from oppression and reclaiming freedom - for Black Americans, and for Black American music alike.

***Rhapsodie, Op. 25**

Bertram Lincoln Shapleigh

Among composers respected in their time but almost completely forgotten today is Bertram Lincoln Shapleigh. Born in 1871 in Cambridge, Massachusetts, Shapleigh studied composition with G. W. Chadwick at the New England Conservatory. After a period of residency in England from 1902 to 1917, he returned to the United States, where he served as a representative of the German music publishing firm Breitkopf und Hártel. He died in 1944. He is remembered today, if at all, by a book of verses *Music of the Spheres* and by *Rhapsodie* for cello and piano published by Breitkopf und Hártel (hence the German spelling of the title). The work is written in a highly Romantic idiom, suggesting that the composer was much influenced by the music of Brahms. It is similar in style to Amy Beach's "Dreaming," also heard at today's concert. While interest in the music of Beach, his New England contemporary, is on the rise, it seems unlikely that Shapleigh will be remembered by any work other than his *Rhapsodie*. It was a favorite of famed cellist Paul Olefsky; it is played in his memory on this recital by his widow Hai Zheng.

***Dreaming (Four Sketches, Op. 15, no. 3)**

Amy Marcy Cheney Beach

Amy Cheney was born in Henniker, New Hampshire in 1867. A child prodigy, she developed rapidly both as pianist and composer. While in her teens, she was featured in a Boston Symphony concert as soloist in Chopin's F minor piano concerto. The same year (1885) saw her marriage to Dr. Henry Harris Aubrey Beach, a highly respected Boston surgeon. Thereafter she appeared in concerts and other events as "Mrs. H. H. A. Beach." At the request of her husband she greatly curtailed her public performances; she turned to composition instead, writing many songs and much piano music. In 1892 she published her *Four Sketches*, Op. 15, for piano, the third of which is called *Dreaming*. Beneath the title she added a quotation from Victor Hugo: "Tu me parles du fond d'un rêve" ("You speak to me from the depths of a dream"). Thirty-five years later she arranged the piece for cello and piano, the version heard at today's concert. *Dreaming* is composed in a late-Romantic harmonic idiom, in a style suggestive of Brahms and Wagner. It is written in a free three-part design, ABA, with the second A beginning in a distant key and gradually returning to the tonic by way of a powerful climax. (The original piano setting is in G-flat major, but the cello version is in F major, a much more comfortable key for the cellist.)

***Special thanks to Dr. Ellsworth Peterson for sharing his program notes from the Georgetown Festival of the Arts concert series**