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EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
department of music

presents

EASTERN
symphony
ORCHESTRA

STAGESTRUCK

Eastern Symphony Orchestra

Richard Robert Rossi, conductor

with special guest artists: Jeffrey Brown, piano,
Regina Rossi, soprano, and Concerto Winner Eric Luminais, flute

February 22, 2015
4:00 PM

Dvorak Concert Hall
Doudna Fine Arts Center

Sponsored in part by the Charleston Area Charitable Foundation

STAGESTRUCK

PROGRAM

Since all performances are recorded live and because noise can be very distracting to performers on stage, we ask your assistance in maintaining as quiet an atmosphere as possible. Please remember to turn off cell phones and pagers. Flash photography may be used between music selections only, and if you find it necessary to leave during the performance, wait until the end of a movement or during applause. We appreciate your cooperation in making this an enjoyable performance for everyone. Thank you.

WELCOME

Concerto in A Minor, Op. 16..... Edvard Grieg (1843-1907)
 Allegro molto moderato
 Adagio
 Allegro moderato molto e marcato
 Jeffrey Brown, piano

INTERMISSION

"Quando Me'n Vo Soletta" (Musetta's Waltz)..... Giacomo Puccini (1858-1924)
 from *La Bohème* Regina Rossi, soprano

"Glitter and be Gay" from *Candide*..... Leonard Bernstein (1918-1990)
 Regina Rossi, soprano

"And this is My Beloved" from *Kismet*..... Robert Wright (1914-2005)
 & George Forrest (1915-1999)
 Marsinah (soprano), Regina Rossi
 Poet (baritone), Cameron Craig
 Wazir (baritone), Timothy Renner
 Calith (tenor), Thomas Taylor IV

CONCERTO WINNER

Concertino for Flute and Orchestra, Op. 8..... Otar Gordeli (1928-1994)
 Eric Luminais, flute

"Not While I'm Around" from *Sweeney Todd*..... Stephen Sondheim (b. 1930)
 Regina Rossi, soprano arr. by Paul Johnston

"Not for the Life of Me" from *Thoroughly Modern Millie*..... Jeanine Tesori (b. 1961)
 Regina Rossi, soprano
 Richard Robert Rossi, piano
 Julia Ford, bass
 Dan Brickner, drum set

PROGRAM

The Girl in 14G..... Jeanine Tesori (b. 1961)
Regina Rossi, soprano

PROGRAM NOTES

EDVARD GRIEG

Piano Concerto in A Minor, Op. 16

Born: June 15, 1843, in Bergen, Norway

Died: September 4, 1907, in Bergen

Work composed: 1868

World premiere: April 3, 1869, in Copenhagen; Edmund Neupert, piano

Edvard Grieg wrote his Piano Concerto, his most ambitious and celebrated composition, in the summer of 1868, during a quiet rural vacation. The composer had recently returned to his native Norway from Germany, where he had studied at the Leipzig Conservatory. In Leipzig, Grieg had encountered the music of Mendelssohn and Schumann. Their work had made a strong impression on Grieg, and his early compositions show him emulating the style and forms of the German Romantics.

Once back in his homeland, however, Grieg began to discover the beauties of Norway's folk music. This was hardly a unique development. The 19th century was an era of strong nationalist movements throughout Europe; patriotic sentiments prompted many composers to re-examine indigenous music and incorporate elements of this into their works. Grieg's formulation of a distinctly Nordic idiom would eventually make him the musical voice of Scandinavia during the last third of the 19th century. But in 1868, the 25-year-old composer had only begun his exploration of native Norwegian songs, and he was still very much under the Teutonic influence of the Conservatory. His Piano Concerto, therefore, exhibits a certain Norwegian flavor in its themes but otherwise lies firmly within the tradition of Romantic concerto composition. Grieg even intimated that he modeled his work on Schumann's Piano Concerto in the same key. Still, its great melodiousness gives evidence of a distinctive musical personality, and the concerto has enjoyed longstanding favor among concert audiences.

The opening measures are among the most arresting in any concerto. Following a dramatic timpani roll, the piano unleashes a cascade of sonorous A-minor chords. This motif, important though it is, is only a prelude to the initial theme of the first movement,

PROGRAM NOTES (CONT'D)

a melody announced by the orchestral winds, who then pass it to the soloist. The orchestra—more specifically, the cellos—also introduces the warmly romantic second theme, and again the piano promptly takes up the call. Elaboration of these ideas leads eventually to a cadenza for the soloist, and the movement concludes by recalling the cascading chords with which it began.

In contrast to the dramatic character of the first movement, the Adagio is based on a melody sung with hushed reverence by the muted strings. A brief transition leads without pause to the finale. Here the influence of Nordic folk music, which would become so important to Grieg's later work, does color the music. The principal theme gives the impression of an energetic Norwegian dance, while the movement's central section takes us out of doors, a melody introduced as a striking flute solo seeming the song of a peasant girl.

Scored for solo piano; 2 flutes, the second doubling on piccolo; pairs of oboes, clarinets and bassoons; 4 horns; 2 trumpets; 3 trombones; timpani and strings.

© 2007 Paul Schiavo

"Quando me'n vo soletta" from *La Bohème*

Puccini was born into a musical family, taking organ lessons from his father until he was five years old. By the turn of the century, Puccini was the most popular of all opera composers. His first great success was *Manon Lescaut*. That was followed by *La Bohème*.

At the time it was written (1896), the word *Bohème* commonly meant "Gypsy." It has since become synonymous with what we now call "hippie life." It is a tragic story of a group of artists and intellectuals sharing a garret in Paris.

It's Christmas Eve, and they are out of money, firewood, food, and wine. It is too cold for the artist, Marcello, to hold his brush. Rodolfo, the poet, burns his work to get some heat. Then, Schaunard, the musician, surprises them with all they need to celebrate, because of a landfall from an English lord. As they start for the street, Rodolfo stays behind to tidy up, at which moment there is a knock on the door, and the neighbor, Mimi, enters, looking for a match. Rodolfo invites her to accompany them all to a tavern.

At the tavern, Musetta appears. She is an old flame of Marcello, and is eager to re-light his fire. She is a great admirer of herself, and sings the aria *Quando me'n vo soletta*.

PROGRAM NOTES (CONT'D)

Quando m'en vo, quando m'en vo soletta per
la via la gente sosta e mira, e la bellezza mia
tutta ricerca in me, ricerca in me da capo a
piè...

As I wander through the streets,
the people stop and stare and
drink in my beauty from head to
foot...

"Glitter and be Gay" from *Candide*

The original version of *Candide* – Leonard Bernstein's fourth music-theatre piece, after *On the Town*, *Trouble in Tahiti* and *Wonderful Town* – was taken off after only short runs in Boston and New York in 1956. His next musical, *West Side Story*, achieved no fewer than 734 performance on its initial production on Broadway just a year later. The difference was that, in keeping with the eighteenth-century origins of the libretto, the score of *Candide* was basically classical, with various applications of local colour, rather than popular American in idiom. A thorough revision, which added three librettists or lyricists to the original tally of five – not including Voltaire, the author of the *Candide* story on which the whole thing is based – did not much improve matters. Since then, however, it has made its way into the operatic repertoire, not least successfully at Scottish Opera (in an adaptation by John Wells) in 1988.

Most prominent among the operatic elements of *Candide* is "Glitter and be Gay", which awards the soprano heroine one of the most brilliant arias of its kind. Introduced by a cor anglais solo, it doesn't sound very gay at first, as Cunegonde laments in slow waltz time the fallen-woman situation to which events have reduced her. But then, with a change of tempo she finds consolation in it – the champagne, the dresses, the jewellery – and resolves to be bright and cheerful. The slow waltz-time returns but once again she revels in her sapphires, her gold, her diamonds, this time in even more glittering and even more challenging coloratura.

© Gerald Larner

Kismet Synopsis

Book by Charles Lederer and Luther Davies: based on a play by Edward Knoblock:
Music and Lyrics by Robert Wright and George Forrest from the themes of Alexander Borodin

Ziegfeld Theatre, Broadway - 3 December, 1953 (583 perfs)
Stoll Theatre, London, 20 April, 1955 (648 perfs)

A day in the life of a glib-tongued street poet in old Baghdad. He accidentally inherits the city's most lucrative begging site, is captured by brigands from whom he tricks a small fortune in gold, hands most of it to his beloved daughter to spend on baubles, bangles and beads, purchases slave-girls and bids for a palace, gets arrested for theft

PROGRAM NOTES (CONT'D)

and condemned to have his right hand lopped off, briefly reconciles an erring father and a hard-hearted son, thus winning a reprieve-and the lustful affection of the shapely wife of the Wazir of Police-undertakes to prevent the marriage of a love-sick Caliph, no less, and finally murders the aforementioned Wazir. Since he finds himself about to become the Caliph's father-in-law, he pronounces the only fitting sentence for such a crime, and is banished to a lonely oasis with Lalume, the Wazir's recent, willing widow, to spend the rest of his days compensating for her deprivation. For a street poet in old Baghdad, some days were like that.

Sweeney Todd Synopsis

In the Victorian London, the barber Benjamin Barker is married to the gorgeous Lucy and they have a lovely child, Johanna. The beauty of Lucy attracts the attention of the corrupt Judge Turpin, who falsely accuses the barber of a crime that he did not commit and abuses Lucy later after gaining custody of her. After fifteen years in exile, Benjamin returns to London under the new identity of Sweeney Todd, seeking revenge against Turpin. He meets the widow Mrs. Lovett who is the owner of a meat pie shop who tells him that Lucy swallowed arsenic many years ago, and Turpin assigned himself tutor of Johanna. He opens a barber shop above her store, initiating a crime rampage against those who made him suffer and lose his beloved family.

by Claudio Carvalho, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Thoroughly Modern Millie Synopsis

Thoroughly Modern Millie is a high-spirited musical romp that has all of New York dancing the Charleston. It's the zany new 1920's musical that has taken Broadway by storm!

Taking place in New York City in 1922, *Thoroughly Modern Millie* tells the story of young Millie Dillmount, who has just moved to the city in search of a new life for herself. It's a New York full of intrigue and jazz - a time when women were entering the workforce and the rules of love and social behavior were changing forever. Based on the popular movie, the stage version of *Thoroughly Modern Millie* includes a full score of new songs and bright dance numbers.

Filled with frisky flappers, dashing leading men and a dragon-lady of a villainess audiences will love to hate, *Thoroughly Modern Millie* is a perfectly constructed evening of madcap merriment. And with the role of Millie Dillmount, musical theatre has found a new heroine for the ages in *Thoroughly Modern Millie*.

BIOGRAPHIES

Jeffrey Brown, piano

Jeffrey Brown has concertized extensively throughout the United States, Europe, and Asia as a solo recitalist, chamber musician, and soloist with orchestras. Recent performance highlights include the Dame Myra Hess Series in Chicago, the Kennedy Center in Washington D.C., a recital tour of the U.S. and Canada sponsored by the Metropolitan Opera Guild of New York, and a series of recitals in China.

He is a graduate of the Eastman School of Music, where he earned the Performer's Certificate, the Master of Music, and the Doctor of Musical Arts degrees. He studied with Natalya Antonova and served as her teaching assistant, and he pursued chamber music studies with Jean Barr. His early training was with Jane Allen at the University of Missouri. As a winner of the Eastman Concerto Competition, he performed the Barber Piano Concerto with the Eastman Philharmonia. He has also been a prizewinner in the Kosciuszko Chopin Competition, the Corpus Christi International Young Artists' Competition, and the Iowa International Piano Competition.

He has presented masterclasses and lectures at universities and conservatories throughout the United States, and he has served on the faculties of the Eastman International Young Artists Piano Competition and Festival and the American Institute of Musical Studies in Graz, Austria. He is Associate Professor of Piano at Western Illinois University where he teaches piano, piano literature, and piano pedagogy.

Regina Rossi, soprano

We are thrilled to have Regina Rossi back after her debut with the ESO in 2002 when she shared the stage with her father, Anthony Rossi performing songs from *Kismet*, one of several Broadway shows her parents performed together on tours. As a tribute to them she will reprise "And This is My Beloved" at this performance.

As a professional singer, Regina's extensive performance career began at a young age when she was awarded a music/voice scholarship from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill - the largest one in its history, at the time. She was also the only undergraduate to sing with the University's Chamber Choir.

Early on she was in the original cast of the General Jackson Showboat at Opryland, USA, traveled the world as lead singer/dancer on many cruise lines, including Royal Caribbean, Royal Viking, and Holland America, and was honored to be a featured soloist with both The Eastern Symphony Orchestra (ESO) and The Virginia Beach Pops Orchestra.

BIOGRAPHIES

Her diverse singing voice has enabled Regina to star in lyric soprano roles such as Carlotta in *Phantom of the Opera*, Marsinah in *Kismet*, Guenevere in *Camelot*, and Marion in *The Music Man*. Her powerful belting voice and dance afforded her roles such as Cassie in *A Chorus Line*, Mrs. Kelly in *Annie Warbucks*, Ado Annie in *Oklahoma* & Sr. Leo in *Nunsense*. This production of *Nunsense* was at St. Vincent's Theater in Latrobe, PA and featured her brother, Dr. Richard Robert Rossi as musical director. It was during this production that Ms. Rossi achieved her Actor's Equity status. Regina also had the privilege to record the title role of Tsarina Alexandra on the original highlights CD for a pop opera titled *Rasputin*, starring Ted Neeley of *Jesus Christ Superstar*.

Having sung with the prestigious VA Chorale, Regina is also the lead singer with the Hotel Paradise Roof Garden Orchestra, performs leading roles with The Virginia Musical Theatre, and is the soprano section leader and soloist at First Presbyterian Church in Virginia Beach, VA.

In addition to her singing career, Regina is one of the most versatile voiceover talents for TV, radio, the corporate world, stage, educational videos, narrations and more, providing her services from her home ISDN studio. For the past several years, Regina has been the voice of Eddie for Fisher-Price's Little People LIVE Show, as well as Eddie for their Little People Fun Sounds Farm musical toy released in 2013. Some of her many other credits include Disney/AAA, Fisher-Price, Lowe's, Blue Cross/Blue Shield, OKI Data, Ritz-Carlton, Operation SMILE & Lufthansa Airlines, just to name a few. Locally many of you may have heard her voicing for both Meijer's and Ingall's Cancer Care Center. Check her out at www.ReginaRossi.com

Eric Luminais, flute

Eric Luminais is a senior flute performance major at Eastern Illinois University from Geneva, Illinois. This performance of Otar Gordeli's *Concertino for Flute and Orchestra* marks his first solo appearance with an orchestra as a result of winning EIU's 2014 concerto competition. He has performed with the Eastern Wind Symphony and Eastern Symphonic Orchestra throughout his time at EIU. He has been an active member of the Xi Upsilon Chapter of Phi Mu Alpha as well as the National Flute Association. Additionally, he enjoyed studying in Salzburg, Austria for one semester. He is currently completing auditions for graduate schools, where he hopes to continue his studies in flute performance.

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If you feel that you would like your child to participate and would like to be considered for the program please feel free to contact me. Thank you for supporting and having such an invested interest in the artistic growth of your child!

Sincerely,
Richard Robert Rossi
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Ovations

Sunday, April 19th • 4 p.m.

featuring the Eastern Symphony Orchestra

Beethoven Symphony No. 5 in C Minor, Op. 67

Premiere performance of *Three Pieces for Saxophone and Orchestra* by Paul Johnston. Sam Fagly, tenor saxophone. A Choral Tapestry: Choral Masterpieces Through the Ages including works by Bach, Händel, Haydn, Brahms, & Fauré.

Multi-Cultural Concert

Friday, April 24 • 7:30 p.m.

The EIU Choral Ensembles and Percussion Ensemble will perform an evening of Multi-Cultural music that spans the globe.

* * *

Repertoire subject to change.

For tickets and information visit the Doudna Fine Arts Center Box office: M-F at 217-581-3110,

doudnatix@eiu.edu or check out their website at: <http://www.eiu.edu/doudna/>

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