

ARC Ensemble with Peter Barrett

Sunday, September 29, 2013 at 3:00 pm

This is the 352nd concert in Koerner Hall

ARC Ensemble (Artists of The Royal Conservatory)

Marie Bérard, violin

Benjamin Bowman, violin

Erika Raum, violin

Steven Dann, viola

Bryan Epperson, cello

David Louie, piano

Dianne Werner, piano

Peter Barrett, baritone

Se-Doo Park, cello

PROGRAM

Igor Stravinsky: *Suite italienne*, for violin and piano

I. Introduzione

II. Serenata

III. Tarantella

IV. Gavotta con due variazioni

V. Sherzino

VI. Minuetto – Finale

Erika Raum & David Louie

Giacomo Puccini: *I crisantemi* (*Chrysanthemums*)

Andante Mesto

Erika Raum, Marie Bérard, Steven Dann, Bryan Epperson

INTERMISSION

Hugo Wolf: *Italian Serenade*, for string quartet

Erika Raum, Marie Bérard, Steven Dann, Bryan Epperson

Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco: Piano Quintet No. 1 in F Major, Op. 69

I. Lento e sognante

II. Andante

III. Scherzo

IV. Vivo impetuoso

Dianne Werner, Benjamin Bowman, Erika Raum, Steven Dann, Se-Doo Park

Although all the works on today's program have an Italian source, not all of them can claim a purely Italian heritage. Stravinsky's *Suite italienne* is the most complicated and intriguing of these works with multiple identities. The Suite began life as a ballet: *Pulcinella*, a collaboration with the impresario Sergei Diaghilev, the dancer and choreographer Léonide Massine, and Pablo Picasso, who designed the sets and costumes. Stravinsky subsequently arranged the score for violin and piano, in collaboration with the violinist Samuel Dushkin – there is a later version for cello and piano, as well as an arrangement for violin and cello created by Jascha Heifetz and Gregor Piatigorsky.

As is customary, the piece is described in our program as “composed after themes of Giovanni Battista Pergolesi.” But the attribution is largely spurious. In 1980 research confirmed that Count Unico Wilhelm van Wassenauer, a Dutch diplomat and musician, had composed the Italianate *Concerti Armonici*, works originally published by and attributed to the violinist and composer Carlo Ricciotti, and subsequently to Pergolesi. Stravinsky's Suite also has its origins in the music of the equally obscure Domenico Gallo, Carlo Ignazio Monza, and Alessandro Parisotti. Stravinsky's spiky musical language, his “wrong notes,” and occasionally acerbic harmonies move the piece even further away from its musical roots.

I crisantemi (*Chrysanthemums*), a threnody on the death of Amadeo Duke of Aosta, the eldest son of Victor Emmanuel II, was composed in a single night in January 1890. Many European societies associate chrysanthemums with bereavement, no more so than in Italy, where, as the “flower of death,” it is left in remembrance at the graveside, hence Puccini's title. During the last century, the piece was primarily known in a version for string orchestra, but its two principal melodies are most often heard as part of the opera *Manon Lescaut*, composed shortly after *I crisantemi*'s completion. The piece, together with a handful of other short works for string quartet, are the only chamber music Puccini composed.

Robert Ascoli's translations of Shelley's poetry were introduced to Italian readers in 1905 and Ottorino Respighi was drawn to several of them: *La sensitiva* (*The Sensitive Plant*) and *Aretusa*, both composed with orchestral accompaniment, and *Il tramonto* (*The Sunset*) with string quartet. Completed in 1914, the romantic and affecting text describes the death of a young man – “One within whose subtle being [...] Genius and death contended” – and the resigned, enduring grief of his doomed lover. Its emotion is perfectly captured in Respighi's translucent musical textures and searching chromatic harmonies, and its scoring, for string quartet rather than orchestra, imbues the work with an added intensity and intimacy. *Il tramonto* was premiered in May 1915 in the hall of Rome's Accademia di Santa Cecilia, where Respighi taught composition, performed by its dedicatee, the legendary mezzo Chiarina Fino-Savio, a frequent collaborator whom Respighi revered.

Like Stravinsky's *Suite italienne*, the musical origins of Hugo Wolf's witty and elegant *Italian Serenade* are difficult to identify. But the source of the work's inspiration can be traced to the popular novella by Joseph Eichendorff, *Aus dem Leben eines Taugenichts* (*From the life of a good-for-nothing*), which provided the text to *Der Soldat*, a song Wolf composed around the same time. The works have related melodic material and Eichendorff's narrative, an account of the travels a young violinist and his ultimate union with a grandee's adopted daughter also includes a description of a serenade performed in an Italian castle. Wolf probably found appealing parallels to his own life in Eichendorff's story: parental dominance and defiance, habitual wandering, and a hand-to-mouth existence. The *Serenade* itself, apart from the guitar-like strumming of the introduction, has a conversational quality that suggests a teasing exchange between lovers. It is said that the source of the principal theme is an antique Italian melody, which would have originally been played on the *piffero*, a double-reed instrument native to the northern Apennines and related to the shawm.

The *Serenade* was written over three days and completed on May 4, 1887. When Wolf arranged the work for chamber orchestra some five years later, he hoped to expand the piece to a three, possibly four movement suite. But though there are sketches for two further movements, the completion of the work was frustrated by his chronic depression and, ultimately, the syphilis-induced madness which culminated in his breakdown in 1897, and ultimately his death in 1903.

Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco was a hugely prolific composer blessed with gifts that enabled him to produce music appropriate to any mood and genre on demand and at speed. This facility endeared him to the Hollywood studios, and over the course of just 15 years Castelnuovo-Tedesco

supplied music for over 130 movies, although many of them draw on library (or “stock”) music which did not acknowledge his authorship. He taught at the Los Angeles Conservatory of Music from 1946 and his legacy is incalculable. His students include André Previn, Jerry Goldsmith, Henry Mancini, John Williams, and Nelson Riddle, all, like Tedesco himself, tremendously adept and creative orchestrators. Castelnuovo-Tedesco was born in 1895 into a Jewish, Florentine family whose Tuscan history can be traced to the sixteenth century. His opera *La mandragola* (*The Mandrake*), which won the prestigious *Concorso Lirico Nazionale* and was premiered at Venice’s hallowed Teatro La Fenice, made his name in Italy. The 1930s saw performances of his works in America, notably the violin concerto, *I profeti* (*The Prophets*), and the cello concerto which were premiered by Jascha Heifetz and Gregor Piatigorsky respectively, both with the New York Philharmonic under Arturo Toscanini. By 1938 and the introduction of *Il manifesto della razza*, Mussolini’s version of Germany’s race laws, Castelnuovo-Tedesco’s European career had come to a precipitous halt, his music banned from radio, publication, and public performance. With the help and influence of Heifetz and Toscanini, Castelnuovo-Tedesco and his family sailed to New York from Trieste on July 13, 1939, six weeks before the invasion of Poland and the start of the war. They settled in Beverley Hills, where Castelnuovo-Tedesco lived until his death in 1968.

The Piano Quintet, Op. 69 was premiered in 1932 at the International Festival of Music in Venice, the same year as Manuel de Falla’s *Master Peter’s Puppet Show* (the two composers had travelled to the Festival together.) Castelnuovo-Tedesco himself performed the piano part with the Quartetto Poltronieri, and the composition remained one of his favourites:

“Among all my chamber works of this period, the best, without any doubt is the first Quintet. It is emotional, robust and (in a certain sense “romantic”). [...] In Venice, there were varying opinions: some [...] preferred the two outer movements, others (such as De Falla, Segovia, and myself) had a predilection for the central movements. The whole work was a great success, so much so that we had to repeat the Adagio and the Scherzo (something very unusual in a modern music festival). This phenomenon renewed itself constantly in the long tour that followed.” (*Una vita di musica: un libro di ricordi*, Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco)

The Piano Quintet, which was published in 1934, possesses the suave Mediterranean charm, the harmonic adroitness, and the lightness of touch that together distinguish Castelnuovo-Tedesco’s most effective pieces. Its disappearance from the repertoire is a by-product of post-war musical intolerance, rather than the consequence of any intrinsic failing in the work itself.

— Simon Wynberg, Artistic Director, ARC Ensemble, 2013

Il tramonto

Già v’ebbe un uomo, nel cui tenue spirto
 (qual luce e vento in delicata nube
 che ardente ciel di mezzo-giorno stempri)
 la morte e il genio contendeano.
 Oh! quanta tenera gioia,
 che gli fè il respiro venir meno
 (così dell’aura estiva l’ansia talvolta)
 quando la sua dama, che allor solo conobbe
 l’abbandono
 pieno e il concorde palpar di due creature
 che s’amano,
 egli addusse pei sentieri d’un campo,
 ad oriente da una foresta biancheggiante ombrato
 ed a ponente scoperto al cielo!
 Ora è sommerso il sole; ma linee d’oro
 pendon sovra le cineree nubi,
 sul verde piano sui tremanti fiori
 sui grigi globi dell’ antico smirnio,
 e i neri boschi avvolgono,
 del vespro mescolandosi alle ombre.

The Sunset

There late was One within whose subtle being,
 As light and wind within some delicate cloud
 That fades amid the blue noon’s burning sky,
 Genius and death contended.
 None may know
 The sweetness of the joy which made his breath
 Fail, like the trances of the summer air,
 When, with the lady of his love, who then
 First knew the unreserve of mingled being,
 He walked along the pathway of a field
 Which to the east a hoar wood shadowed o’er,
 But to the west was open to the sky.
 There now the sun had sunk, but lines of gold
 Hung on the ashen clouds, and on the points
 Of the far level grass and nodding flowers
 And the old dandelion’s hoary beard,
 And, mingled with the shades of twilight, lay
 On the brown massy woods - and in the east

Lenta sorge ad oriente
 l'infocata luna tra i folti rami delle piante cupe:
 brillan sul capo languide le stelle.
 E il giovine sussura: "Non è strano?
 Io mai non vidi il sorgere del sole,
 o Isabella. Domani a contemplarlo verremo
 insieme."
 Il giovin e la dama giacquer tra il sonno e il
 dolce amor
 congiunti ne la notte: al mattin
 gelido e morto ella trovò l'amante.
 Oh! nessun creda che, vibrando tal colpo,
 fu il Signore misericorde.
 Non morì la dama, né folle diventò:
 anno per anno visse ancora.
 Ma io penso che la queta sua pazienza, e i
 trepidi sorrisi,
 e il non morir... ma vivere a custodia del
 vecchio padre
 (se è follia dal mondo dissimigliare)
 fossero follia. Era, null'altro che a vederla,
 come leggere un canto da ingegnoso bardo
 intessuto a piegare gelidi cuori in un dolor
 pensoso.
 Neri gli occhi ma non fulgidi più;
 consunte quasi le ciglia dalle lagrime;
 le labbra e le gote parevan cose morte tanto
 eran bianche;
 ed esili le mani e per le erranti vene e le
 giunture rossa
 del giorno trasparia la luce.
 La nuda tomba, che il tuo fral racchiude,
 cui notte e giorno un'ombra tormentata abita,
 è quanto di te resta, o cara creatura perduta!

"Ho tal retaggio, che la terra non dà:
 calma e silenzio, senza peccato e senza passione.
 Sia che i morti ritrovino (non mai il sonno!)
 ma il riposo,
 imperturbati quali appaion,
 o vivano, o d'amore nel mar profondo scendano;
 oh! che il mio epitaffio, che il tuo sia: Pace!"
 Questo dalle sue labbra l'unico lamento.

The broad and burning moon lingeringly rose
 Between the black trunks of the crowded trees,
 While the faint stars were gathering overhead.
 "Is it not strange, Isabel," said the youth,
 "I never saw the sun? We will walk here
 To-morrow; thou shalt look on it with me."
 That night the youth and lady mingled lay
 In love and sleep - but when the morning came
 The lady found her lover dead and cold.
 Let none believe that God in mercy gave
 That stroke. The lady died not, nor grew wild,
 But year by year lived on - in truth I think
 Her gentleness and patience and sad smiles,
 And that she did not die, but lived to tend
 Her aged father, were a kind of madness,
 If madness 'tis to be unlike the world.
 For but to see her were to read the tale
 Woven by some subtlest bard, to make
 hard hearts
 Dissolve away in wisdom-working grief;
 Her eyes were black and lustreless and wan:
 Her eyelashes were worn away with tears,
 Her lips and cheeks were like things dead -
 so pale;
 Her hands were thin, and through their
 wandering veins
 And weak articulations might be seen
 Day's ruddy light. The tomb of thy dead self
 Which one vexed ghost inhabits, night and day,
 Is all, lost child, that now remains of thee!

"Inheritor of more than earth can give,
 Passionless calm and silence unreprieved,
 Where the dead find, oh, not sleep! but rest,
 And are the uncomplaining things they seem,
 Or live, a drop in the deep sea of Love;
 Oh, that like thine, mine epitaph were - Peace!"
 This was the only moan she ever made.



ARC Ensemble

The Grammy-nominated ARC Ensemble (Artists of The Royal Conservatory) has rapidly become one of Canada's pre-eminent cultural ambassadors. Its members are Royal Conservatory senior faculty members and alumni with distinguished individual careers. The ARC Ensemble has performed in major venues throughout North America and Europe, and its recordings and concerts are broadcast around the world. Highlights of its 2013-14 season include concerts in London, Amsterdam, Los Angeles, and New York, as well as performances at Ontario's Stratford Festival, and the release of the ensemble's fourth CD (on Chandos), which is devoted to the chamber music of Paul Ben-Haim. The ARC Ensemble has secured a reputation for its commitment to the vast corpus of music lost due to political suppression or shifts in musical fashion. Its "Music in Exile" series, dedicated to composers expelled by the Third Reich, has met with acclaim in Tel Aviv, Warsaw, Rome, Budapest, New York, and London. A number of 20th century masterworks have entered the musical canon as a result of the ARC Ensemble's work.



Peter Barrett

Baritone

Canadian baritone Peter Barrett has appeared on stages around the world. A graduate of the Canadian Opera Company Ensemble program, he has performed many roles with the company, including Dr. Falke in *Die Fledermaus*, Jailor in *Dialogues of the Carmelites*, Harlequin in *Ariadne auf Naxos*, Marcello in *La bohème*, Lieutenant Colonel Denisov/General Rayevsky in *War and Peace*, Šapkin in *From the House of the Dead*, Le Dancaire in *Carmen*, Papageno in *The Magic Flute*, Nick in *The Handmaid's Tale*, Sid in *Albert Herring*, and Baritone 1 in *The Nightingale & Other Short Fables*. This fall, he appears as Ned Keene in the COC's production of *Peter Grimes*. Other opera credits include Dr. Malatesta in *Don Pasquale* (Metropolitan Opera), the King in *Transformations* (Wexford Festival), Figaro in *Il barbiere di Siviglia* (Opera Lyra Ottawa), and Marcello (Minnesota Opera). Mr. Barrett returns to the Metropolitan Opera for their 2013-14 season. In demand for concert and oratorio work, he has performed with the National Ballet of Canada, Aldeburgh Connection, Luminato Festival, Newfoundland Symphony, and Mendelssohn Choir. Mr. Barrett has performed with ARC in London (England), Vancouver, and Toronto, and is thrilled to be performing with this esteemed ensemble once again.

Mr. Barrett is a graduate of The Glenn Gould School. He studied under Roxolana Roslak and Peter Tiefenbach, and tonight marks his Koerner Hall debut.