

Kellie Cheer

Assisted by:

Gail Novak, piano

Masaru Sakuma, piano

Chaz Salazar, flute

First Masters Recital

ASU Organ Hall

Sunday, April 26, 2015, 2:30PM

ASU Herberger Institute
FOR DESIGN AND THE ARTS

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

School of Music

Program

Charme

Gérard Grisey
(1946-1998)

Fantasiestücke, Op. 73

I. Zart und mit Ausdruck
II. Lebhaft, leicht
III. Rasch und mit Feuer

Robert Schumann
(1810-1856)

Masaru Sakuma, piano

****There will be a 10-minute intermission****

Concerto for Clarinet

Aaron Copland
(1900-1990)

Gail Novak, piano

Tarantelle, Op. 6

Camille Saint-Saëns
(1835-1921)

Chaz Salazar, flute; Masaru Sakuma, piano

Out of respect for the performers and those audience members
around you, please turn all beepers, cell phones and watches to their
silent mode. Thank you.

Notes

Gérard Grisey studied under notable composers including Oliver Messien, Henri Deutuilleux, Gyorgy Ligeti, Iannis Xenakis, and Karlheinz Stockhausen from 1965 to 1974 at the Paris Conservatory and in Darmstadt, Germany. He was awarded the Prix de Rome in 1972 for his first pieces of spectral music.

"Spectral music" is a term that Grisey is credited with coining, although he disowned this label later in his life. The spectral technique was developed in the 1970's by Grisey and his colleague at the Institute of Research and Coordination of Acoustics and Music (IRCAM), Tristan Murail. The spectral approach derives from making compositional decisions based on sonographic representations and mathematical analyses of sound spectra. The composer then focuses on manipulating the data identified in these analyses, transforming them, and interconnecting them. The final result is a timbral representation of sound being treated as computer-based noises and audio signals. Going along with his accredited spectral technique, Grisey was fascinated by musical processes that unfolded extremely slowly, making musical time a key element in his works. He also loved to experiment with the combination of tone color and noise spectrums.

Robert Schumann wrote *Fantasy Pieces for clarinet and piano, Op. 73* relatively late in his life over two days in 1849. Although originally written for clarinet and piano, Schumann directed that the clarinet part could also be performed on viola or cello. He initially called the short works "*Night Pieces*" before deciding on the final title "*Fantasy Pieces*," which he used for a number of other compositions (Op. 12, Op. 111, Op. 124). The three miniature pieces allow and require expressive phrasing to achieve "fantasy-like" characteristics. The first piece is reminiscent of Schumann's depression in the slow, lyrical, tense lines. It begins in A minor and hints at a hopeful A Major, but quickly gets knocked down again into minor tonality. The second piece is in A Major with a central section in F Major featuring chromatic dialogue between the two instruments. The final piece is in A Major and drives forward as Schumann writes in the score "faster and faster," resulting in a feeling of fiery passion symbolic of Schumann's inspiration. The song cycle in its entirety is similar to that of Schumann's manic depression and mood swings.

After bandleader Paul Whiteman advocated for jazz in the concert hall, *Rhapsody in Blue* by George Gershwin was premiered in 1924, creating a whole new genre of classical music by fusing popular jazz and classical music together. In the coming years, it became a trend for bandleaders to commission pieces from classical composers. Both Benny Goodman and Woody Herman (commissioned the *Ebony Concerto*, 1945) approached **Aaron Copland** about a commission around the same time. Copland decided to write for Benny Goodman and began composing his *Clarinet Concerto* in 1947 while on a goodwill tour in South America. He was working on other projects and seemed to procrastinate on the completion of the *Clarinet Concerto*. He even used some pre-composed material for the middle section of the slow movement- a theme from his film score in "*The Cummington Story*." He was greatly inspired by the South American culture during his composition of the Concerto, and used a melody that he had heard on the radio while on tour for the second theme, heard in the fast movement.

The finished *Clarinet Concerto* contains two contrasting movements linked together by an extensive cadenza that introduces themes developed in the second movement. After much persuasion, an unconfident Benny Goodman finally premiered the *Clarinet Concerto* on NBC Radio in 1950. However the public premiere took place three weeks later featuring Ralph McLane as the soloist. Despite a lukewarm reception from the public and critics, Copland's *Clarinet Concerto* has become one of his most performed works internationally. It has even been the inspiration for ballets over the years including *The Pied Piper* in 1951 and a 1990 ballet entitled, *Strays*.

The "tarantella" is known as the dance that cures the bite tarantula. If one dances hard enough, the victim will work out the poison. Originating in southern Italy, the tarantella is meant to be a furious jig including devilish stomping and wild whirling. **Camille Saint-Saëns** wrote this dark 6/8 tarantella in 1857 when he was only 22 years old and arranged it for full orchestra and soloists, although the piano reduction is more widely performed. He also transcribed this same work for two piano soloists. A simple 4-bar figure opens the work and can be heard throughout as the soloists play a deranged melody over the motive. The slow middle section makes you think you are safe from the spider, however the motive comes back in the recapitulation and the piece closes with an apparent tarantula attack.