

Saturday, March 6, 2004 at 8:00pm

Miller Theatre at Columbia University, New York City

COLUMBIA BACH SOCIETY SPRING CONCERT

with Jennifer Kim, 2004 Concerto Competition Winner

David Rosenmeyer, music director

Jennifer Kim, violin soloist

12 Contredanses, WoO 14

Beethoven (1770-1827)

Contredanse No. 1 in C major
Contredanse No. 2 in A major
Contredanse No. 3 in D major
Contredanse No. 4 in B flat major
Contredanse No. 5 in E flat major
Contredanse No. 6 in C major
Contradanse No. 7 in E flat major
Contredanse No. 8 in C major
Contredanse No. 9 in A major
Contredanse No. 10 in C major
Contredanse No. 11 in G major
Contredanse No. 12 in E flat major

Concerto for Violin No. 1 in G Minor, Op. 26

Max Bruch (1838-1920)

Allegro moderato
Adagio
Finale: Allegro energico

- Intermission -

Symphony No. 41 in C Major, K. 551, "Jupiter"

Mozart (1756-1791)

Allegro vivace
Andante cantabile
Menuetto: Allegretto
Molto allegro

Bach Society personnel

violin I

Yumi Cho, BC
Sage Cole, BC
Monica Davis, CC *
Sasha Liberis, BC
Earl Maneein, Mannes
Eric Siu, Mannes

violin II

Catherine Dailey, CC
Emilie-Anne Gendron, CC *
Jennifer Kim, CC
Hannah McKee-Kennedy, BC
Christopher Rojas

viola

Alisa Forman, BC
Julia Moline, CC *
Kenny Wang, MSM

cello

Jonathan Bent, CC
Robert Jacobs, CC
David Tam, CC
Laura Usiskin, CC *

bass

Kathryn Lewis, CC
Charles Ritter
Jeff Lehmberg, Mannes *

flute

Sarah Rajtmajer, CC
Matthew del Guzzo, CC
Ifat Zur, Mannes

oboe

David de la Nuez, GSAS
Jeanette Zyko, MSM

clarinet

Andrew Nightingale, CC
Delia Raab-Snyder, Mannes

bassoon

Danielle Ohsiek, Mannes
Lisa Ricciuti

horn

Audrey Frantz, Mannes
Matt Muehl-Miller, Juilliard

trumpet

Mark Stopek

timpani

Jeremy Levine, Mannes

program notes

by Peter Mondelli

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

12 Contredanses for Orchestra, WoO 14

The genre of the contredanse came to prominence in France in the late 17th century. Its origins lie in the English country dance – thus the French name is best understood neither as a literal “counter-dance” nor as a translation of the English title, but rather as a modified transliteration of the original title. In the 18th century, the contredanse became the most popular of French dances.

Beethoven composed his Twelve Contredanses between 1791 and 1802. By this time, the popularity of the genre was waning. When compared to the more canonic Beethoven “masterpieces” – such as the symphonies, sonatas, concertos, etc. – these country dances may at first seem like something of an anomaly. Beethoven did, however, have something of a populist side that most commentators either ignore or attempt to explain away. Examples of what Nicholas Cook designates as the “other Beethoven” (*19th Century Music*, Summer 2003) include Wellingtons Sieg and numerous collections of folksong arrangements. But is there a way of combining these “two Beethovens” into one coherent whole?

The Contredanses offer a critical insight in this regard. The melody of the seventh dance is the melody at the heart of the finale of Beethoven’s *Eroica* Symphony of 1803. The genesis from the former to the latter, however, is tellingly more complex. In 1802, Beethoven composed two other works which developed the same theme: the ballet *Prometheus* and the *Eroica Variations* for solo piano. One way of making sense of this thematically centered nexus of compositions is to consider them transfiguration of a country dance. The contredanse evolves into ballet – an “elevated,” artistic dance – which subsequently becomes “pure” music which is developed both systematically in the Variations and freely in the Symphony. One could even assert that the presence of a French dance at the heart of the symphony is directly connected to the *Eroica*’s original dedication to Napoleon Bonaparte in celebration of the emerging French republic.

This transformation of the commonplace is a recurring theme in Beethoven’s oeuvre. His opera *Fidelio* depicts the elevation of a domestic gesture, namely marital dedication, into a heroic act. The *Diabelli Variations* make a similar presentation in more abstract terms, exploring the full musical implications of a simple tune. These Contredanses are not curiosities standing in the midst of masterpieces; they are masterpieces that were never fully worked out – the kernels of unwritten variations, ballets, and symphonies.

Max Bruch (1838-1920)

Violin Concerto No. 1 in G Minor, Op. 26

Although some of its musical ideas date from as early as 1857, the majority of Max Bruch’s first Violin Concerto was composed in 1865-6. Bruch’s early musical training and lifelong dedication on the genres of “absolute” music placed him closer to the traditional compositional ideologies of Robert Schumann and Johannes Brahms than to the more progressive music of Franz Liszt, Richard Wagner, and the New German School. Brahms, Clara Schumann, and Joseph Joachim admired Bruch’s music. Joachim, perhaps the first modern academic violinist, proved an invaluable resource during Bruch’s revisions of the score. Just as he later helped Brahms with the violin writing of his concerto, Joachim offered Bruch advice grounded in his unparalleled knowledge of his instrument’s technique. The revisions were completed in 1868 – it is this version which has entered the repertory of generations of violinists.

While revising the score with Joachim, Bruch faced a dilemma of classification. He was unsure whether the work should be called a concerto. The first movement was originally titled *Introduzione – Fantasia*; Bruch toyed with the idea of rechristening the entire concerto as a fantasia. His reason for doing so may have been related to the unusual form of the opening movement. Bruch dispenses with the traditional double exposition sonata form, replacing it with his own original variant in which the exposition is extended, development is eliminated, and the recapitulation is an abbreviated gesture rather than a full

traversal of the opening material. The title which Bruch ultimately gave this movement, *Vorspiel* (*Prelude*), captures the gravitas and tension of this movement through its abstract dramatic connotations.

The second movement is a lyrical jewel – an exercise in compositional restraint and control. Bruch here displays a mastery of melodic and harmonic tension and a sensitivity to form. It serves as a perfect foil to both what came before and what comes after. The vibrant finale displays a clear gypsy character and an unrestrained sense of joy, as if in celebration of the dispersal of the dark, tragic tones of the opening movement.

Wolfgang Amadè Mozart

Symphony No. 41 in C major, K. 551, “Jupiter”

Completed on August 10, 1788, the Jupiter was Mozart’s final symphony. The work audibly exists between two musical worlds. One is the Classical world with its expressive, gesture-driven “gallant” style. The other is the Baroque world, with its strict, contrapuntal “learned” style. The majority of the descriptive discourse about this unquestioned masterpiece is couched in these dichotomous terms. Like most dichotomies, however, the gallant-learned distinction falls to pieces upon reflection. There are unquestionably characteristics of the former in the latter and vice versa. The distinction is nonetheless plainly perceivable, and therefore not worth abandoning as long as we can recognize that the barrier between the two is permeable. What makes Mozart’s Jupiter symphony a masterpiece is not that it straddles this divide; what makes it a masterpiece is how it keeps its balance.

The first movement presents a disparate collection of gallant style themes, all of which have a rather extroverted character, organized in sonata form. The fanfares of the first thematic group give way to a more song-like second group. An unexpected, clamorous outburst in C minor is hastily and easily transformed into the opera buffa gestures of the closing group. The development recombines fragments and gestures from the exposition into harmonic sequences. The entire movement maintains this extroverted, fragmentary character, balancing it clearly and skillfully against a strict harmonic and thematic framework. In the second movement, Mozart presents the other side of the gallant style. The themes here are more lyrical and more homogeneous, the instrumental textures more subdued. These elements combine to lend an introspective character to the movement. As in the first movement, the themes and harmonies are organized clearly in sonata form. The extroverted and the introspective converge in the minuet of the third movement. The whimsical chromatic descents of the winds and strings meet the brass and timpani in a manner that is more complementary than contrasting. The trio of the third movement opens with a final cadence. This gesture permeates the section, essentially immobilizing it harmonically. The interruptions of this harmonic stasis gain prominence through contrast. It is during these interruptions that the main theme of the finale is first stated.

The learned style comes to the fore in the celebrated fourth movement. Combining elements of sonata form and fugue, the fourth movement reworks the gallant themes and gestures of previous movements, placing them in a contrapuntal network that is at times unrelenting in its intricacies. The entire movement thus shows signs of macrocosmic and microcosmic self-reflectivity – macrocosmic in that the themes themselves are clearly related to previous material, microcosmic in that the themes are uncompromisingly treated in imitative, canonic, and fugal manners. This use self-reflective constructions reaches its limit in the final minute of the piece. The two principle themes are presented in a double fugue which quickly escalates into a pan-thematic, five-part, fully invertible canon. Elaine Sisman argues that the aural incomprehensible density of the writing here points beyond the distinction between the learned and gallant styles to the notion of the sublime. “It reveals vistas of contrapuntal infinity. The coda thus creates cognitive exhaustion born of sheer magnitude. It makes vivid the mathematical sublime” (*Mozart: The ‘Jupiter’ Symphony*. Cambridge: Cambridge, 1993).

The Columbia Bach Society

Since its founding in 1999 by a group of Columbia University musicians, the Bach Society (orchestra and chorus) has become a major part of musical life both at Columbia and throughout Manhattan. Composed of Columbia students and other young musicians from around New York, the Bach Society presents several concerts both on and off campus during each academic year. The primary focus of the Bach Society's performance activities is the music, legacy, and influence of J. S. Bach. During three highly successful years under the direction of Columbia alumnus Ken-David Masur, the Society toured Germany, produced and performed Handel's opera *Acis and Galatea*, gave concerts at the 92nd Street Y and the University Club in Manhattan, and released its debut CD. In the fall of 2002, Ken Selden became the new music director and led the Society in four concerts of diverse orchestral, choral, and chamber music. Currently, the Bach Society is directed by David Rosenmeyer, who has planned an ambitious season complete with a semi-staged opera of *Dido and Aeneas*.



Jennifer Kim, violin, participates in the Columbia-Juilliard Exchange Program where she studies with Professor Hyo Kang at The Juilliard School and majors in economics at Columbia University. As a former National Symphony Orchestra (NSO) Youth Fellow, Jennifer was under the tutelage of Ricardo Cyncynates. She has won first place in Feuer, Langley Concerto, Bland, and the Bach Society Concerto Competitions and received honorable mention in the NSO Young Soloist Competition. She has been invited to perform at Millennium Stage, Terrace Theatre, and the Concert Hall of the Kennedy Center as well as at the FBI building, Capitol Hill, and various embassies throughout the District of Columbia. In New York City, she has made solo and chamber appearances at Miller Theatre, Weill Hall at Carnegie Hall, and Steinway Hall. Internationally she received high praises for solo performances in Vienna, Salzburg, and

Munich. As an avid ensemble player, she performs regularly with the Roxus Quartet and the Juilliard Chamber Orchestra. She has also performed chamber music at the ENCORE School for Strings, the Aspen Music Festival, and the Kent/Blossom Chamber Music Festival. Her orchestral achievements include concertmaster positions in the Columbia Bach Society Orchestra, the National Orchestral Institute 2003, and the American Youth Philharmonic.



Born in Argentina, **David Rosenmeyer** (music director) began his studies in Israel. After returning to Argentina, he graduated from the Orchestra Conducting Program at the UCA University and the Choral Conducting Program of Juan Jose Castro Conservatory of Music. In Buenos Aires, he studied piano with Susana Bonora. In 1995, he was awarded First Prize in the Argentine Ministry of Culture Conducting Competition, and in 1997, he won the First Prize in the National Congress of Argentina Conducting Competition (Chamber Orchestra). In 1996 and 2002, Rosenmeyer conducted the Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional of Argentina and appeared as a guest conductor with orchestras in Argentina, Brazil, and Chile. In May 2002 he was music director and pianist for the world premiere of *The Sandman* (an opera by Thomas Cabaniss, directed by David Herskovits in a production by Target Margin Theater). His work for the stage includes the composition of various scores including *Antigona*, for which he won Best Score in

the Mercosur International Festival in Brazil, 1997. He is presently a full scholarship MA candidate at Mannes College of Music, where he studies conducting with David Hayes, and theory with Robert Cuckson and Carl Schachter. While at Mannes, Rosenmeyer has conducted world premieres of compositions by faculty members Robert Cuckson and David Loeb, and in April 2003, led the Mannes Orchestra in Stravinsky's *Le Baiser de la fête*. Rosenmeyer has also received a grant from the Joyce Dutka Foundation.

The Bach Society Executive Board

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The Columbia University Bach Society would like to thank the following groups and individuals for their generous support:

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upcoming performances by the Bach Society

Friday, April 2nd at 8:30pm and Saturday, April 3rd at 9:30pm, 2004
Lerner Hall Auditorium
Purcell's *Dido & Aeneas*

Sunday, May 2nd, 2004 at 8pm
Lerner Hall, C555
Henryk Wieniawski's *Variations on an Original Theme for Violin, Op. 15*
featuring Emilie-Anne Gendron, 2004 Concerto Competition Winner

www.bachsociety.com

Donations/CDs/T-shirts

The Bach Society relies on the support of many generous donors. This year, we are making a concentrated effort to raise funds for the upcoming opera production of Purcell's *Dido & Aeneas* and would appreciate any assistance or donation you might be able to provide.

All donations are tax deductible.

T-shirts (baby tee, M, L, XL): \$10 each
white tees with black logo
black tees with white logo

CD: *J. S., C. P. E., & W. F. Bach - Bach Society - Columbia University - Ken D. Masur*: \$12

E-mail bach@columbia.edu with your order request and mailing information.

Please make checks payable to "The Columbia University Bach Society" or
"The Barnard College Bach Society."

If you would like to purchase a recording of tonight's performance, please e-mail your request to bach@columbia.edu, and we will e-mail details. Thank you for supporting the Bach Society!