

Next Week at the National Gallery of Art

Alexandria Symphony Orchestra
Alessandra Marc, soprano

Music by Richard Strauss, Tchaikovsky, and Wagner

May 3, 2009
Sunday Evening, 6:30 pm
West Building, West Garden Court



For the convenience of concertgoers
the Garden Café remains open until 6:00 pm.

The use of cameras or recording equipment during the
performance is not allowed. Please be sure that cell phones,
pagers, and other electronic devices are turned off.

Please note that late entry or reentry of
the West Building after 6:30 pm is not permitted.

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National Gallery of Art

Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra
Brass Ensemble

Presented in honor of
Pride of Place: Dutch Cityscapes of the Golden Age

Preconcert talk by Benjamin C. S. Boyle at 3:15 pm
Composer, *Hudson Sinfonia*

May 1, 2009
Friday, 3:30 pm
East Building Auditorium

Admission free

Presented with support from the American Friends of the
Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Amsterdam Partners
(www.iamsterdam.com) and the Royal Netherlands Embassy

Program

Giovanni Gabrieli (c. 1554/1557–1612)
Canzon duedecimi toni

Johannes Brahms (1833–1897)
Intermezzo op. 118, no. 2 (arr. David Purser)

Sir William Walton (1902–1983)
Spitfire: Prelude and Fugue (arr. Elgar Howarth)

Antonio Lotti (1667–1749)
Crucifixus (arr. Elwood Williams)

INTERMISSION

Benjamin C. S. Boyle (b. 1979)
Hudson Sinfonia

Richard Wagner (1813–1883)
Eine Sonate für das Album von Frau MW (WV 85)
(arr. Herman Jeurissen)

Hans Werner Henze (b. 1926)
Selection from *Ragtimes & Habaneras*

Derek Bourgeois (b. 1941)
Concerto Grosso (last movement)

Other works to be announced from the stage

The Musicians

ROYAL CONCERTGEBOUW ORCHESTRA

The RCO is a symphony orchestra of international renown, recently named the “world’s greatest orchestra” in the December issue of *Gramophone* magazine. The Orchestra has gained its unique international position with its “velvet” strings, “golden” brass, and the exceptional and personal timbre of the woodwinds, accompanied by longstanding collaboration with each of its six chief conductors and the unique acoustic properties of the Concertgebouw’s main hall.

During the fifty years of Willem Mengelberg’s tenure, many composers, including Claude Debussy, Gustav Mahler, Richard Strauss, and Igor Stravinsky, conducted the Concertgebouw Orchestra several times. Composer-performers Béla Bartók, Sergei Prokofiev, and Sergei Rachmaninoff performed their own works as soloists. This crucial bond with contemporary composers continues with John Adams, Luciano Berio, Hans Werner Henze, Bruno Maderna, Luigi Nono, and Peter Schat.

The Orchestra is famous for its interpretations of the late romantic repertoire. The Mahler tradition, begun with the many performances Mahler himself conducted at the Concertgebouw, achieved great heights during the Mahler Festivals in 1920 and 1995. Another festival is scheduled for 2010–2011. With the arrival of Mariss Jansons as chief conductor in 2004, a new phase has started, with continued interest in composers such as Mahler, Bruckner, and Richard Strauss, as well as major twentieth-century composers such as Dmitri Shostakovich and Olivier Messiaen. In 2010, the RCO and Maestro Jansons will perform at Carnegie Hall, the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, and the New Jersey Performing Arts Center.

RCO BRASS ENSEMBLE

In 2003, when the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra did not make its usual yearly tour to the United States, the American Friends of the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra invited the orchestra's brass section to give concerts and master classes on the east coast. The tour was so successful that the brass section decided to perform together more often as the RCO Brass Ensemble. The RCO Brass aims to show music students and audiences the versatile repertoire of brass instruments in various combinations. These formations can vary from quartet to a large ensemble of twenty players, sometimes complemented by percussion. Four pieces have been commissioned expressly for the ensemble, and the RCO Brass released its first CD in 2008 under the RCO Live label.

The ensemble has organized joint concerts with the brass sections of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and the Rotterdam Symphony. In the United States, the ensemble has appeared at Williams College, Northwestern University, Drake University, Grinnell College, and the Rockefeller University. For information about individual performers, please visit: www.RCOfriendsUSA.org.

Members of the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra Brass Ensemble

conductor

Hans Leenders

trumpet

Peter Maseurs, Hans Alting, Bert Langenkamp, Hans van Loenen*

horn

Jasper de Waal, Fons Verspaandonk, Jaap van der Vliet, Sharon St. Onge

trombone

Jörgen van Rijen, Bart Claessens, Nico Schippers, Raymond Munnecom

tuba

Perry Hoogendijk

*Netherlands Radio Chamber Philharmonic

BENJAMIN C. S. BOYLE

Benjamin Boyle's compositions include opera, chamber music, art songs, sacred and orchestral music. Recent commissions include a choral work, *The Holly and the Ivy*, for the Chicago Lyric Opera Chorus, premiered to critical acclaim in December 2008, and a *Concerto for Organ and Orchestra*, for Hope College in Holland, MI, premiered by organist Huw Lewis in November 2007. His second set of choral settings of the *Lamentations of Jeremiah* premiered in November 2005. Other works, including *Ballade*, for pianist Magdalena Baczewska, and *Sonata-Fantasy*, have been performed at Carnegie's Weill Recital Hall, at the Kennedy Center, and Merkin Concert Hall in New York City.

From 2005–2007 Boyle was named Young Concert Artists Composer-in-Residence. During that time, Young Concert Artists commissioned two works from Boyle, which were premiered in its concert series: *Suite Sylvanesque* for solo harp and *Sonata for Cello and Piano*. Boyle holds the Young Concert Artists William B. Butz Composer Chair and a Ph.D. in composition from the University of Pennsylvania, a master of music degree in composition from The Peabody Conservatory, and a bachelor of music degree in piano from the University of South Florida, where he studied with Robert Helps. He also studied with Dr. Philip Lasser at the European-American Musical Alliance (EAMA) program at l'Ecole Normale de Musique de Paris, where he returns each summer as a faculty member. He has also studied with several other renowned composers, including Samuel Adler, Narcis Bonet, Lukas Foss, Nicholas Maw, Christopher Theofanidis, and David del Tredici. Boyle is an adjunct associate professor of music theory and composition at Westminster Choir College in Princeton, New Jersey.

Program Notes

Canzon duodecimi toni is taken from Giovanni Gabrieli's *Sacrae Symphoniae* (1597). It is composed for two choirs, but in this instance two groups of instruments are placed opposite each other and engage in dialogue. The music was most likely originally used for liturgical purposes in the Basilica of San Marco in Venice, where Gabrieli was the music director from 1586 to 1612.

The Brahms *Intermezzo* was arranged by David Purser, head of the brass and orchestral programs at the Birmingham Conservatoire. He was a founding member of the London Brass, and has played the trombone for many years with the Nash Ensemble, Sinfonia 21, and the London Sinfonietta.

William Walton devoted the years of World War II primarily to writing film and ballet scores. Films included the memorable *First of the Few*, a 1942 biopic about R. J. Mitchell, designer of the Spitfire fighter aircraft. Walton extracted *Spitfire: Prelude and Fugue* from the film score.

Antonio Lotti was an older contemporary of Johann Sebastian Bach. The text of the *Crucifixus* is taken from the *Credo* portion of the Mass.

Hudson Sinfonia was written in 2009 and received its world premiere April 29, 2009, at New York's Riverside Church. Commissioned by the American Friends of the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, it is dedicated to AF-RCO board member Harry Fields, "for building bridges between the Old World and the New." Composer Benjamin C. S. Boyle writes: "The work begins with a collection of fanfares in the horns and low trumpets, perhaps signaling the excitement and nervousness of the crew as they catch sight of New York Harbor in the distance. The low and high brass converse with sweeping gestures as the high waves carry the ship towards the shore. The excitement soon builds to a large climax as the ship finally arrives in sight of Manhattan Island. I have always found it very moving that F. Scott Fitzgerald described Manhattan through Hudson's eyes as 'the fresh green breast of the New World.' Indeed, the music is verdant and joyous here.

"Soon afterward, we retreat into a more introspective sound world as Hudson continues up the Hudson River in his futile search for the Northwest Passage. While maintaining the beauty and wonder in the new world around him, there is also disappointment and frustration that his long search is not complete. Finally, as the ship returns to New York Harbor and again takes to the open sea, a rousing climax is achieved, this time as a farewell to the land upon which Hudson will never again set his eyes."

The Wagner *Sonata* was originally written in A-flat major for piano, with the dedicatee (M.W.) being Mathilde Wesendonk, of his *Wesendonk Lieder*. The arranger, Herman Jeurissen (b. 1952), is the principal horn player of the Residentie Orchestra, The Hague.

Hans Werner Henze's *Ragtimes & Habaneras* comprises eleven short dances. Having originally written the work for brass band, Henze later rescored it for ten brass instruments. The work is full of humor, parody, and contrast.

Derek Bourgeois' *Concerto Grosso* was commissioned by the Philip Jones Brass Ensemble, which gave the piece its premiere at the Ensemble's farewell concert in 1979. The English-born Bourgeois (now living in Poughkeepsie, New York) described the last movement as "a crazy rumba."