

NICHOLAS ROERICH MUSEUM

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Sunday, April 8, 2018, at 5 p.m.

Ana Glig, piano Monika Woods, clarinet

PROGRAM

Keyboard Sonata in D minor, K.9

Domenico Scarlatti (1685-1757)

Keyboard Sonata in D major, K. 29

Fantasy in F minor, op.49

Frédéric Chopin (1810-1849)

Expectation

Guram Bzvaneli (b. 1934)

Scherzo

Mery Davitashvili (1924-2014)

Poem

Otar Taktakishvili (1924-1989)

Khorumi

Mery Davitashvili (1924-2014)

Ballade No. 2 in F Major, Op. 38

Frédéric Chopin (1810-1849)

12 Pieces from Songbook

Giya Kancheli (b.1935)

Intermission

Sonata for clarinet in B-flat & piano op. 167

Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921)

I. Allegretto

II. Allegro animato

III. Lento

IV. Molto allegro

Sonatina for Clarinet and Piano H. 356

Bohuslav Martinů (1890-1959)

Praised for her ability to “capture hearts” by Musical America, **Ana Glig (Gligvashvili)** has performed in solo and collaborative recitals within the United States as well as Europe. Recipient of the Alfred Cortot’s price for the best interpretation of romantic music at Tbilisi International Competition (Georgia), Ana Glig was also awarded the second price at the Tel-Hai International Concerto Competition, Israel.

A graduate of New York University and The New School, Mannes, Ana Glig studied piano performance with E. Andjaparidze, V. Rosenbaum, etc. At New York University she also served as an adjunct piano faculty member.

Ana Glig recently relocated from New York City to Cape Cod, Massachusetts, where she met a clarinetist Monika Woods. The two quickly connected through their shared passion for a Hungarian composer Franz Liszt and their interest in classical music built from folk musical material, and for unearthing classical music’s delightfully quirky pieces.

“Chosen by the clarinet”, Transylvanian born Hungarian clarinetist, and symphony soloist winner, **Mónika Woods**, was noted for her “tender and insightful playing” and “exquisite musicianship” in a review by Keith Powers, which also stated “her soft passages sounded like whispers, and when she played with force, it was with complete confidence.”

Monika was featured as a guest artist by Cape Symphony and became the 2013 New England Concerto Competition first prize winner. As a natural gesturalist and born educator, the strains of Béla Bartók caught the ear of Monika Woods at an early age and so she inherited the music bug. Soon after she attended a High School for the Arts.

Diligent undergraduate study in clarinet performance earned her a prestigious spot at the “Gh. Dima” Music Academy in Cluj-Napoca, Romania, where she graduated with high honors and a Masters in Stylistics of Clarinet Performance. Monika is founder of Open Mic Classical (www.openmicclassical.org), an organization promoting classical music. For more on Monika, visit her website at www.klarinetista.com



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Program notes:

Domenico Scarlatti's over 550 keyboard sonatas expanded the technical and musical possibilities of the Harpsichord, a leading instrument in the Baroque era.

Keyboard *sonata in D minor* was published in London in 1738 and was one of Scarlatti's 30 sonatas from the volume *Essercizi per gravicembalo*, the first publication ever to feature Scarlatti's keyboard sonatas. The sonata is a lyrical work, which opens with a wistful theme, combining elegance and gentle playfulness. Its graceful manner and stately charm suggest a regal presence, as if the Court has gone on holiday in the country. In the second half of the work, Scarlatti develops the expository material, maintaining much the same mood but darkening the main theme a bit. This little gem has a mesmerizing quality to its beauty and serenity.

Sonata in D major, however, brings contrasting tempo and mood. Fast paced sixteenths that alternate between the two hands display pianistic virtuosity, brilliance and vigor. In the D major sonata Scarlatti manages to create an almost orchestral-like sonority by means of registral and timbral changes. Like many other Scarlatti sonatas, the second half of the D major sonata uses the expository material to elaborate further; improvisatory at times it goes through the new tonalities and blends in with the playfulness of the major/minor interchange.

Fantasy in F minor (1841) is fairly remarked as “the crown of Chopin’s work”. *Fantasy* belongs to the sphere of such epic-dramatic genres in the Chopin oeuvre as the ballades and the scherzos. Chopin employed the name “*Fantasy*” to describe the work that broke from the conventionally defined genres (e.g. Polonaise-fantasy in A flat major, op.61). The *fantasy in F minor* referred to a genre developed during the eighteen century, cultivated by Mozart and later by Schubert. The term "fantasy" implies a certain freedom from artistic rules and a peculiar, elegiac and romantic expression.

Through its narrative it insistently draws the listener into an expansive musical tale. But can we answer the question as to what this tale is about? Among the various interpretations of many commentators and music critics we find the conviction that Chopin's work might be an echo of improvisations on national themes and Polish song named ‘*Litwanka*’. The ‘*Litwanka*’ was sung by the whole of Poland and the Great Emigration - the community of exiles, who fled Poland in the wake of November uprising during the Russian-Polish war 1830-31.

In fantasy, two kinds of musical material unfolds: the experience of the composer and the experience of the improviser. The opening material of the *Fantasy* marked *Tempo di marcia* is juxtaposed with its lyrical counterpart, which despite its submissive character maintains a march-like rhythmical contour.

“Today I finished fantasy-and the sky is beautiful, a sadness in my heart –but that's alright. If it were otherwise, perhaps my existence would be worth nothing to anyone.”

The fantasy despite of its seriousness and tragic flair conveys certain optimism, which may have been composer's belief that “ Poland was not lost forever, and that some day ...she would rise again.”

Georgian piano music is less familiar to the American audience. Composers such as Davitashvili, Taktakishvili, Bzvaneli and Kancheli lived and worked during the Soviet period. One of the common features among many of the Georgian composers was their continuous attempt to revive the traditional Georgian folk music and combine the folk elements with their individual musical works. This was important for preservation of the Georgian national identity, especially shortly after Soviet regime dissolved.

Composer Guram Bzvaneli was famous for his jazz quartet, which was historically the first independent musical collective during Soviet history. Bzvaneli's *Expectation* for solo piano derived from his “*Georgian Sketches*” for symphony orchestra (1978).

The opening of the piece sets up the mood to introduce the lyrical, melancholic melody. As the piece progresses, favoring with its underlying polyphonic layers and chords, it becomes enriched with classical and jazzy elements.

Composer Mery Davitashvili created various musical genres during her lifetime. She was particularly recognized for her contributions to revival of the children's music in Georgia. Among Davitashvili's piano music *Khorumi* takes particular place.

Derived from traditional Georgian folk, the *Khorumi* was historically a war dance, which originated in the region of Adjara (Southwestern part of Georgia). Dance brings to life the Georgian army of the past centuries in order to depict the various war related scenes. In traditional dance, *Khorumi* introduces the Initial 'prelude' to the war, gradually calling and unfolding the army to the battlefield and later showcasing the breathtaking exit of the army. The dance incorporates in itself the themes of search, war and celebration of victory, courage and glory of Georgian soldiers. Its distinctive movements and precision of line creates the sense of strength and awe. *Khorumi* is typically accompanied with the traditional Georgian drum (doli) and bagpipe (chiboni) and is characterized by unique element; specific five-beat meter rhythm (3+2, 2+3), which is also recognizable in Davitashvili's piano piece.

In *Khorumi* as well as *Scherzo*, rhythmical vigor is masterfully combined with vastness of the more lyrical, pastoral episodes.

Otar Taktakishvili was a diverse figure in the history of Georgian music. He was a composer, musicologist and teacher of the Soviet period. Taktakishvili composed different musical genres (symphonies, piano concertos, violin concertos, operas and instrumental music as well as vocal music). While studying at Tbilisi State Conservatory he composed an anthem of the Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic, later he became a professor of a Tbilisi State conservatory and artistic director of the Georgian State Chorus. He was also a chairman of the Georgian composers' union and minister of Culture of the Georgian Republic. During his career he also served as a member of the international music committee UNESCO. Taktakishvili was awarded the title of People's artist of the USSR, which was common to be granted to many Soviet artists, including the composer Mery Davitashvili. Taktakishvili's *Poem* is one of the highlights of Georgian piano literature. In *Poem*, masterful pianism is combined with lyrical-dramatic elements of music, portraying the picturesque image of placidity and vastness. With its melodic contour poem might be compared to such Georgian folk gems as "*Tsintskaro*".

12 Pieces from Songbook are selections of miniature pieces arranged for solo piano by a Georgian composer Giya Kancheli. Throughout his life Kancheli have actively composed music for Georgian theatre and cinema and worked closely with various Georgian and Soviet movie producers and screenwriters (Georgiy Daneliya, Robert Sturua, Eldar Shengelaia). *The 12 pieces from Songbook* is part of Kanchelis' 33 musical themes, originally composed for theatre and cinema and later transcribed for solo piano. According to the composer these are his most "*beloved musical images*" specifically selected and crafted for piano. Rather simplistic in nature, 12 pieces allow interpretational freedom. Composer himself suggests that his indications of tempi and dynamics should not be taken literally by performers, but to be treated rather liberally.

A beacon of the neoclassical movement with its classical lines, showcasing the clarinet's distinctive timbre, and versatility, Saint Saëns clarinet sonata was dedicated to Auguste Perier, a fine player of astonishing technique.

Very few know that besides being a musician and composer Saint Saëns was also a traveler, and enthusiastic archeologist who died in Algeria in 1921. Known as the French Mendelssohn, he had written music that appealed to audiences for its clarity of texture written to delight rather than to shock.

Saint Saëns wrote sonata for clarinet and piano when he was 85 years old, in 1921, which happened to be his last year of life: "I am using my last energies to add to the repertoire for these otherwise neglected instruments", "giving seldom considered instruments an opportunity to be heard", providing 3 monumental

works for the sonata literature of clarinet, bassoon and oboe. In each sonata the piano is skillfully integrated with the wind instrument.

The Sonata for clarinet and piano is framed in a hauntingly lovely melody that opens the first movement and closes the fourth movement.

Our favorite slow movement with its minor-key solemnity, uses only the lower register of the clarinet in its first section, matched with the lower sonorities of the piano. This is in contrast to the following passage, as arpeggiated piano chords lead to material gently confined to the ethereal upper register of the clarinet.

Born in Czechoslovakia, Bohuslav Martinů spent his first 11 years living with his family at the top of this small Bohemian town's hundred-foot bell tower. This separation from the town and its activities, the view from above, seemed to set the tone for the rest of his life.

He debuted in the United States after the prime leader of new symphonic music in Paris (1921-29), and conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra (1924-1949), Serge Koussevitzky premiered Martinů's symphonic triptych "La bagarre" in 1927 (work inspired by Lindbergh's landing, the first solo aviator to cross the Atlantic). Martinů is compared with Prokofiev and Bartók in his innovative incorporation of Central European ethnomusicology into his music, for he continued to look to his Bohemian and Moravian roots for musical ideas.

Martinů wrote the Sonatina for Clarinet and Piano in 1956, during his second stay in the United States, and only three years before his death.

In the Sonatina, as in much of his works, Martinů refrained using standard musical forms. The piece is written as one continuous movement made up of contrasting sections. Martinů keeps the clarinet part an eighth note ahead of the piano part in the counterpoint that dominates the music, thus creating a tricky effect. The Sonatina demonstrates a solid understanding of the clarinet's abilities and strengths, with its rich palette of tone-colors. It is filled with dance and march rhythms, unexpected syncopations, and virtuosic runs alternated with more lyrical parts.

The first movement is a test of rhythmic coordination, with complex cross rhythms between the clarinet and piano. The second movement uses the entire compass of the clarinet in a flowing melody. The third movement features dazzling trills and other showy techniques, like syncopation, pointed articulations, and arpeggiated patterns, which add excitement and bravura. The piece supports the passionate strength of Martinů's Czech roots, and his neoclassical style.