

University Symphony Orchestra
Student Showcase

Tuesday, March 12, 2024 at 7:30pm
Lagerquist Concert Hall, Mary Baker Russell Music Center

Pacific Lutheran University
The College of Professional Studies and School of Music, Theatre & Dance present

University Symphony Orchestra
Student Showcase

Asieh Mahyar, *conductor*

Tuesday, March 12, 2024 at 7:30pm
Lagerquist Concert Hall, Mary Baker Russell Music Center

Welcome to Lagerquist Concert Hall.
Please disable the audible signal on all watches and cellular phones for the duration of the concert.
Use of cameras, recording equipment and all digital devices is not permitted in the concert hall.

PROGRAM

Stormlight.....Lennon Green (b. 2000)
I. Shallan

Concerto for Tenor Saxophone and Orchestra..... Robert Ward (1917-2013)
I. Lento
II. Allegro

Kaelyn Marie Morgan, *tenor saxophone*

INTERMISSION

Piano Concerto No. 3 in D Major, op. 50 (“Youth”)..... Dimitri B. Kabalevsky (1904-1987)
I. Allegro molto
II. Andante con moto

Natalia Parmly, *piano*

La regatta veneziana..... Gioachino Rossini (1792-1868)
I. Anzoleta avanti la regata
II. Anzoleta co passa la regata
III. Anzoleta dopo la regata

arr. Bruno Moretti

Isabella Daltoso, *soprano*

Program Notes

***Stormlight* (2023) by Lennon Green**

Stormlight is a three-movement tone poem for orchestra. It is inspired by the composer's favorite book series, Brandon Sanderson's *Stormlight Archives*. Each movement explores a different main character of the series; it showcases their victories, tragedies and all-around personalities. "I. Shallan" - This movement is an ode to the character Shallan, whose story begins when she leaves her home for the first time in her life. From there her story unfolds into a journey of self-discovery, in which she comes to understand that the morals and lessons she learned while growing up cannot be universally applied, and that she must open her mind and come to terms with the sometimes harsh realities of the outside world in order to survive outside the bubble of her hometown. The returning themes in this piece are made to reflect Shallan's spunky and curious personality, alongside the key events in her story. Simple, expressive motifs will develop into *Stormlight's* most thrilling story beats, including the crashing of waves on an ocean adventure, the thirst for knowledge, wondrous magic, and even betrayal and murder.

***Concerto for Tenor Saxophone and Orchestra* (1983) by Robert Ward**

This concerto came about at the urging of saxophone player James Houlik. Shortly after Ward accepted a position at the North Carolina School of the Arts. Houlik assured Ward that he was a "great composer, and that great composers should play their part in enlarging the rather slim repertory for the saxophone." Ward's response, this concerto, not only redresses the prejudice against the saxes as a whole, but helps cure an imbalance among the family, as most saxophone concertos are for some reason written for alto sax.

Ward originally planned a chamber work with tenor sax. On learning that the Charlotte (N.C.) Symphony was interested in premiering a new work by Ward, he quickly changed the plan to a concerto, wrote a fourteen-minute work in two movements and dedicated it to James Houlik, Charlotte (N.C.) Symphony and its conductor Leo Driehuys. A composer for saxophone has two basic choices: whether to allow musical references to the saxophone's popularity as a jazz instrument, or to emphasize its strong lyrical and classical qualities. Ward's choice was dictated by his activities as a bandsman in the U.S. Seventh Infantry Division during World War II, whose standard band also had a swing band and a hot combo. Ward had written music for his mates, and recalled a lyrical theme he had written for the swing band. He had been haunted by it ever since and sought a suitable "permanent home" for it in a substantial piece, and found that place in the saxophone concerto. This led to some of the other themes having a jazz or blues favor. The result, then, is a brilliant work for saxophone and orchestra, classical music that permits exposure of the instrument's "classical" qualities but even more strongly uses its power as a great jazz instrument.

– Joseph Stevenson

***Piano Concerto No. 3 in D Major, op. 50 ("Youth")* (1952) by Dimitri B. Kabalevsky**

Kabalevsky's most lasting achievement was in the field of music education, notably his development in later years of a program for music in schools. His *Third Piano Concerto*, 'Dedicated to Soviet Youth', completes the trilogy of instrumental concertos for young people, preceded by his *Violin Concerto* and his *First Cello Concerto*. Like the *Third Piano Concerto*, the *Rhapsody for Piano and Orchestra*, based on the composer's own song, *School Years*, is an optimistic, uncomplicated work depicting scenes of happy childhood. Rimsky-Korsakov's *Piano Concerto*, built on a Russian folk-song collected by Balakirev, is an inventive and virtuoso work whose single unbroken movement structure is copied from Liszt's *Second Piano Concerto*.

– Naxos

***La regata veneziana* (1835) by Gioachino Rossini, arr. Bruno Moretti**

Among Rossini's *Péchés des vieillesse* ("Sins of Old Age"), an ironically titled collection of 150 songs and instrumental pieces written during the composer's supposed retirement, is the song cycle *La regata Veneziana*, based on three poems by Count Carlo Pepoli in the Venetian dialect. The Count was an amateur poet and a frequent guest of Rossini's. Indeed, the composer was already familiar with Pepoli's texts. Many years earlier, he set a number of the Count's poems in his *Les soirées musicales*. The three poems used here tell of a young woman, Anzoleta, who watches and cheers on her lover, Momolo, in a Venetian regatta, or gondola race.

In the first song, *Anzoleta avanti la regata* (“*Anzoleta before the regatta*”), Anzoleta excitedly encourages Momolo to win the race and reminds him that she will be watching from an overlooking balcony. Beginning in A-flat major, the cascading melody with which the song begins captures the scene of the Venetian canals and the impending contest. Anzoleta’s melody, however, enters in the minor mode creating a sense of urgency in her encouragement, but returns to the major expressing her confidence that he will win the race.

The middle song *Anzoleta co passa la regata* (“*Anzoleta during the regatta*”) begins in an agitated A minor with a syncopated bass line against quick sixteenths above. Anzoleta watches breathlessly from her balcony and when the boats come within sight, she sees Momolo in second place. Worried he may not catch the leader, she encourages him onward from her watchful post. Momolo eyes his beloved watching him and then with renewed vigor overcomes the leader, pulling farther and farther ahead of the rest of the gondolas. The vocal line throughout the first three stanzas of the song eloquently captures Anzoleta’s anxiety over Momolo winning the race. However, in the final stanza, her fears disappear in a shift to A major. The vocal melody changes from nervousness to excitement while the prior syncopated bass becomes a burgeoning source of anticipation. After Anzoleta’s final words, the music begins to fade away as the boats continue on with Momolo in the lead.

In the final song, *Anzoleta dopo la regata* (“*Anzoleta after the race*”), Anzoleta rewards her lover, Momolo, with kisses for winning the gondola race and boasts that all of Venice is talking about him. A lilting tune in the piano opens the song with festivity. Over a waltz-like accompaniment, the voice enters with a flirtatious melody and seductive chromatic appoggiaturas as Anzoleta offers the victorious Momolo kiss after kiss. The music then becomes more declamatory and shifts suddenly away from the tonic of F major through the keys of A minor and D-flat major during Anzoleta’s boast of Momolo’s victory and fame. She returns to her coquettish melody in the final stanza as she offers him yet another kiss, but concludes the song triumphantly as she declares Momolo the greatest of all gondoliers.

We will perform an arrangement of the song cycle for orchestra and voice by Bruno Moretti.

– Joseph DuBose

About the Artists

Listed in order of appearance

Lennon Green is a fifth-year composition major and computer science minor attending Pacific Lutheran University. Though Lennon has composed for choir and solo voice before, *Stormlight* is his first ever instrumental piece. Lennon has worked with PLU's University Chorale, Choir of the West, Knight's Chorus and Steel Band ensembles.

Kaelyn Marie Morgan is a PLUS year music education major attending PLU with a focus in secondary instrumental music. She has been playing tenor saxophone in the PLU Wind Ensemble for three years, and played in the University Jazz Ensemble for the previous four. After leaving PLU, she hopes to gain some experience in the classroom and on the podium before attending a graduate level conducting program with the ultimate goal of conducting professional ensembles. She would like to dedicate this performance to Prokofiev, Shostakovich, Rachmaninov, Gershwin, Hindemith, and all of the other great composers who knew that the saxophone doesn't just belong in the jazz band, but in the symphony orchestra, too.

Natalia Parmly is a senior from Federal Way, Washington pursuing a major in piano performance. She has been playing the piano since she was five years old, and currently studies with Dr. Lark Powers. Besides pursuing her degree, Natalia works as a piano teacher at a music studio in the beautiful Brown's Point area of Northeast Tacoma, and as a piano accompanist in the Pacific Northwest.

Mezzo-Soprano **Isabella Daltoso** will earn her Bachelor of Music degree in vocal performance this May from PLU, where she is an Agnes Berge Smith Music Scholar and the James D. Holloway Scholar for her class. With PLU Opera, Isabella has performed as Sesto in *Giulio Cesare*, Dritte Dame in *Die Zauberflöte*, Prince Orlofsky in *Die Fledermaus*, and Ruth in *Pirates of Penzance*. Most recently, Isabella sang Dinah in Bernstein's *Trouble in Tahiti* with PLU Opera and Northwest Sinfonietta. She has been seen at Vashon Opera as Praskovia/Lolo in *The Merry Widow* and in the Chorus of *Cavalleria Rusticana*. Isabella was a recent young artist at Chicago Summer Opera, where she performed the role of Goffredo in Handel's *Rinaldo*. In spring of 2023, Isabella traveled to Vienna, Austria, where she participated in the IES Abroad Music Program as a member of the Music Performance Workshop. Isabella will sing Little Buttercup in PLU Opera's upcoming production of *HMS Pinafore*. Isabella is a student of Janeanne Houston.

About the Conductor

Passionate about performing music from different cultures, Asieh Mahyar is the interim Director of Orchestral Studies at Pacific Lutheran University where she conducts the PLU Symphony Orchestra. Ms. Mahyar is a candidate in Doctor of Musical Arts in orchestral conducting at Michigan State University, where she studied with Octavio Más-Arocas and Katherine Kilburn. She received her MM in orchestral conducting from University of Massachusetts-Amherst under the mentorship of Morihiko Nakahara, and Kristo Kondakci. Ms. Mahyar obtained her BM degree in choral conducting from Komitas State Conservatory of Yerevan, Armenia with Hovhanness Mirzoyan where she continued further studies in orchestral conducting to learn more from Ruben Asatryan.

Coming from Iran and being one of the very few female conductors from her country, Ms. Mahyar has broad experience working with ensembles at all levels in different countries. At Michigan State University, she was the Assistant Conductor for the MSU Symphony Orchestra, MSU Concert Orchestra, Musique 21 contemporary music ensemble, and the MSU Opera. There she performed with all of the ensembles, including conducting opera productions. Previously, Ms. Mahyar served as Teaching Assistant at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst, where she worked with the UMass Symphony Orchestra and All University Orchestra. She has served as Assistant Conductor of the Tchaikovsky Music College of Yerevan, Armenia, and worked with youth orchestras, including the Warner Middle School Orchestra, MI, National Music Festival Orchestra, MD, and student orchestras at the Eastern Music Festival, NC. Ms. Mahyar's broad conducting experience includes working with professional and community orchestras such as the Grand Rapids Symphony Orchestra, MI, Marquette Symphony Orchestra, MI, and the Jackson Symphony, MI. She works equally with instrumental and vocal ensembles and has conducted choirs, including the MSU Practicum Choir, MI, Komitas State Conservatory Choir, Yerevan, Sorayesh Choir, Iran, and conducts opera productions actively.

Ms. Mahyar has been selected to participate in prestigious conducting workshops and conferences including the Cabrillo Music Festival with Christian Macelaru and Octavio Más-Arocas, the National Music Festival with Richard Rosenberg, Eastern Music Festival with Gerard Schwarz, the Conducting Institute with Miguel Hart-Bedoya, Conductors Retreat at Medomak with Kenneth Kiesler, and the Choral Conducting Workshop with Antanina Kalechyt.

University Symphony Orchestra

Asieh Mahyar, *conductor*

Flute

Katherine Gunter+
Blake Leahy+
Kade Levien+
Eva Reuter-crona+

Oboe

Ainsley Fuerst+
Jayden White+

Clarinet

Joseph Alvarez, *bass*
Abigail Caprye
Caitlin Collins+

Bassoon

Thomas Tafoya, *contrabassoon*
Syd Thayer-O'Brien+
Tyler Woo+

Horn

Benjamin Birmingham+
Benjamin Coats+
James Gibson+
Aleia Truman

Trumpet

Devin Bianchi-Rivera+
Jess Mason+
Connor Kaczkowski+

Trombone

Joshua Green+
Sabien Kinchlow-McConnaughey+
Sarah Zundel, *bass trombone*

Tuba

Cassidy Stanhope

Harp

Elizabeth Landis**

Percussion

Kyle Gough
Rory Lacy
Evan Nakanishi+
Joey Wilcher

Violin I

Justin Singh*
Pablo Arellano Cardenas
Lydia Downs
Cora Beeson
Janelle Barlow
Joan Fort

Violin II

Evelina Bozhko+
Kyra Kehm-Goins
Gabriel Casey-Aguinaga
Isabella Werth

Viola

Alyson Rake+
Kindra Gonsalves
Anna Tangedahl
Emily Bratcher

Cello

Ellen Coburn+
Jeffrey Buetow
Marisa Robbins
Nathaniel Bratcher
Kellen Gonsalves
Elliott Capron
Cayla Low
Noah Montgomery
Ralizza Rosales
John Coughlan
Bronwyn Poppen-Eagan

Double Bass

Campian Roberts+
Cameron McLennan
Declan Long

*Concertmaster

**PLU faculty member

+Section leader

Jess Mason, *librarian*

Alyson Rake, *stage manager*