The UBC Symphony Orchestra
Jonathan Girard, conductor

The Chan Centre for the Performing Arts
Friday, February 7, 2020 7:30pm

Alexina Louie (b.1949)
The Ringing Earth: A Festive Overture for Large Orchestra

Óscar Navarro (b.1981)
“Leyendas” for Clarinet and Symphony Orchestra
(world première – performed without pause)
I. The Abbey of the Spirits
II. The Mysterious Itinerant Circus
III. The Legend of the Forbidden Kiss

Jose Franch-Ballester, clarinet

❖ Interval ❖

Richard Strauß (1864-1949)
Tod und Verklärung (Death and Transfiguration), Op. 24

We acknowledge that the University of British Columbia is situated on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the Musqueam people.
**UBC Symphony Orchestra**

**Violin I**
Ayumi Yaesawa, *concertmaster*
Daniel Tsui
Kurt Chen
Eleanor Yu
Clara Sui
Catie Akune
Adrian Kwan
Noelle Kelbert
Justine Lin
Shijin Kim
Yoojung Choi
William Paradise
Sophia Cho

**Violin II**
Yiyi Hsu *
Jeremy Ho
Robin Neuvonen
Virginia Cinelli
Andy Kim
Chi Kwan Chan
Victoria Rose
Elsa Maneval
Hannah Xiang
Alex Zhang

**Viola**
Caroline Olsen *
Alexander Beggs
Lucy Strauss
Christian Bailey
Teddy O’Donnell
Hyeonbeen Ha
Francesca Kohn
Yichen Cao

**Violoncello**
Kimberley Kistler *
Lyla Lee
Brontë Wagar
Aireleen Zhu

**Horn**
Ray Wu *
Maddie Davis
Anson Wai
Hanna Van Inwegen

**Trumpet**
Matheus Moraes *
Spencer Service
Malcolm Shier

**Trombone**
Andrea Norman *
Rei Ikeda

**Piccolo**
Emily Richardson

**Flute**
Emily Richardson *
Kelly Li
Vicky Zhang

**Oboe**
Marie Park *
Katelynn Whittle
Haley Blomquist
Tiana Ropchan

**Bass Horn**
Haley Blomquist

**Clarinet**
Bernandino Assunçao *
Alec Kan

**Bass Clarinet**
Mo Yan

**Bassoon**
Kyle Cleland *
Eric Li
Katharine Scheerer

**Contrabassoon**
Katharine Scheerer

* denotes principal player
As the Director of Orchestras at the University of British Columbia School of Music, Jonathan Girard dedicates himself to raising the standard of orchestral training in Canada. Recent performance highlights for the UBC Symphony Orchestra include Mahler’s *Das Lied von der Erde*, Debussy’s *La Mer*, Berlioz’ *Symphonie Fantastique*, and Holst’s *The Planets*.

As a recent Peter Wall Scholar, Girard focused his research on creating unique interdisciplinary orchestral performances that connect orchestral music with important societal issues. Last year, he collaborated with multidisciplinary artist Deborah Carruthers on *Slippages*, a symphonic improvisatory composition from a graphic score informed by scientific data sets from glaciers. This April, Girard will lead a performance of *Earth Symphony*, a collaboration with composer Chris Chafe (Stanford University) and UBC oceanographer Philippe Tortell, based on the sonification of climate data sets.

Girard is the president of the College Orchestra Directors Association Western Division (CODA). Their annual international conference in Vancouver is being held this weekend, and we are delighted to welcome its members to this performance!

Girard is the founder and director of the UBC Chamber Orchestra Festival, which brings together talented young musicians, emerging conductors, and distinguished faculty to work together in an intense cooperative performance environment. It was developed in partnership with the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra Orchestral Institute (VSOI), where Girard is also on the conducting faculty.

Girard is in the midst of a multi-year Centrediscs recording of concerti by British Columbia composers. A recording of UBCSO’s performance of John Luther Adams’ first symphonic work *A Northern Suite* will shortly be released on the Cantaloupe label.

Girard maintains a busy guest conducting schedule with orchestras in North America, Europe, and South America, and has also held conducting positions with the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra, University of Northern Iowa School of Music, and Portland (ME) Opera Repertory Theatre. He is in high demand as a musical adjudicator, coach, and clinician. Girard completed his DMA at the Eastman School of Music as a student of Neil Varon.
Jose Franch-Ballester serves as Assistant Professor of Clarinet and Chamber Music at the University of British Columbia School of Music. Originally from Spain, Mr. Franch-Ballester is considered one of the finest classical soloists and chamber music artists of his generation. He has been hailed for his “technical wizardry and tireless enthusiasm” (The New York Times), his “rich, resonant tone” (Birmingham News), and his “subtle and consummate artistry” (Santa Barbara Independent). The recipient of a prestigious Avery Fisher Career Grant in 2008, and winner of both the Young Concert Artists and Astral Artists auditions, he is a solo artist and chamber musician in great demand.

As a concerto soloist Mr. Franch-Ballester made his New York debut in 2006 with the Orchestra of St. Luke’s at Lincoln Center. He has also performed with the BBC Concert Orchestra, Louisville Orchestra, Princeton Symphony Orchestra, Santa Barbara Chamber Orchestra, Wisconsin Philharmonic, Louisiana Philharmonic, Hilton Head Symphony Orchestra, Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra, and various orchestras in his native Spain.

Mr. Franch-Ballester’s recordings include a Deutsche Grammophon CD of Bartók’s *Contrasts* with members of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center. In 2010 he was awarded the Midem Prize for “Outstanding Young Artist,” which aims to introduce currently unsigned recording stars of the future to the classical recording industry. “Jose Franch-Ballester & Friends,” a CD of chamber music released by iTinerant Classics in 2011, includes the premiere recording of Oscar Navarro’s *Creation* and works by Brahms, Stravinsky, and Paul Schoenfield. Mr. Franch-Ballester can also be heard on “Piazzolla Masterworks,” a CD recorded with cellist Young Song and pianist Pablo Zinger that contains works by Astor Piazzolla.

An avid proponent of new music, he performed the world premiere of Jake Heggie’s *Winter Roses* in 2004 with mezzo-soprano Frederica von Stade at Camerata Pacifica. During the 2011-2012 season, he premiered two new works by Spanish composers: the *Il Concerto* by Oscar Navarro, with the Orquesta Sinfónica del Principado de Asturias in Oviedo, Spain; and *Concerto Valencia* by Andrés Valero-Castells, with the Orquesta de Valencia. Mr. Franch-Ballester’s commitment to new music has led him to commission and work with such contemporary composers as Kenji Bunch, Paul Schoenfield, Edgar Meyer, William Bolcom, George Tsontakis, Andrés Valero-Castells, Oscar Navarro, and Huang Ruo. Mr. Franch-Ballester is a Backun Artist.
The Ringing Earth
Alexina Louie

It was an honour to have been commissioned to write the music for the official opening of Expo 86 hosted by my hometown of Vancouver. My piece was to be the first work on the Opening Gala Concert attended by international government officials, Prime Minister Brian Mulroney, as well as Their Royal Highnesses, Prince Charles and Princess Diana.

As well, I was asked to compose three fanfares for the event – one that greeted The Royals to The Orpheum Theatre, one to accompany them up the interior staircase to the balcony area where they were to be seated, and one as a ‘call-back’ brass fanfare to signal the end of intermission. This ‘call-back’ was used throughout the months of Expo 86 for all events at The Orpheum.

A joyful event hosted by my city required a festive overture. What would the Earth sound like if it was a bell ringing with joy?

The Ringing Earth was my response – a short exuberant work in three parts (fast - slow - fast). I am particularly fond of the contrasting middle section with the theme played by the clarinet, vibraphone and harp. I wanted this section to reveal both the tenderness I felt for the earth as well as my feelings about its fragile nature.

On a personal level, I was thrilled to have been presented to the Royal Highnesses at the end of the evening. The premiere of The Ringing Earth was performed by The Vancouver Symphony, the orchestra I heard many times when I was a student at the University of British Columbia. Mario Bernardi conducted the piece in the Orpheum, the same theatre where, as a child, I used to watch films. The event remains one of the highlights of my career. It was such fun!

-Alexina Louie

Also in 1986... Halley’s Comet reaches the closest point to earth • Phantom of the Opera premieres in London • IBM unveils the PC Convertible, the first laptop computer • The Human Genome Project is launched
"Leyendas" for Clarinet and Symphony Orchestra
Óscar Navarro

Óscar Navarro has a wealth of experience composing both concert and film music, but this new premiere is unique to his repertoire. “Leyendas” was conceived in the form presented this evening, complete with staging, animated visual projections, and lighting. The work is simultaneously cinematic and theatrical, with incredible demands placed on the soloist. We are fortunate to hear this world premiere given by clarinet virtuoso José Franch-Ballester, to whom Leyendas is dedicated. The soloist in this piece also serves as narrator and weaves together three stories, each imagined and written by Navarro for this work. These tales are enigmatic, piquant, and open-ended. “The Abbey of the Spirits” tells a story of tragedy and mystical resurrection. “The Mysterious Itinerant Circus” describes a bizarre menagerie that visits a small village and departs with an unexpected consequence. “Legend of the Forbidden Kiss”, is the story of love that may break a curse. For this project (and for the first time at UBC) we have partnered with the Department of Theatre and Film and the Department of Art History, Visual Art and Theory to create. It has been a project where students and faculty worked together to create compelling artistic content to support the. We hope you enjoy this immersive world premiere and allow it to transport you into a world of musical fantasy.

Tod und Verklärung, Op. 24 (Death and Transfiguration)
Richard Strauß

On his death bed in 1948, Strauß said to his daughter “It’s a funny thing, Alice, dying is just the way I composed it in Tod und Verklärung.” Strauß was remarkably successful during his lifetime, unlike many of his contemporaries who suffered extensively from censorship and constant impoverishment. He was a prominent conductor known for his interpretations of the works of his German predecessors in addition to his own music. Upon his mentor’s unexpected leave from the Meiningen Court Orchestra, Strauß was given the enormous task of preparing the group for the world premiere of Brahms’ Symphony No. 4. This occasion had a monumental impact on Strauß because Brahms himself conducted the premiere of the work, in addition to offering Strauß advice about his compositions. Strauß’ resulting adoration of Brahms can be recognized in works like the Burleske of 1886, just a few years before he began work on Tod und Verklärung. Strauß shifted his focus to writing tone poems in part as a result of meeting Alexander Ritter, a violinist in Meiningen, who pushed him to reach beyond the musical boundaries of the time. The rough programmatical sketch of Tod und Verklärung was written by Ritter, and details the life and death of an artist. Tod und Verklärung was composed when Strauß
was only twenty-five years old. The mature topic of the piece is striking considering his age, and that is a departure from his previous works centered on modernist ideals. Given that later works such as *Ein Heldenleben* and *Sinfonia Domestica* are introspective, it is even more remarkable that Strauß so vividly imagined the process of life and all of its turbulence at such a young age. Through Strauß' mastery, we arrive at an unimaginable destination of serenity and tranquility. The conclusion of the work depicts the soul of the artist being transported into a peaceful afterlife.

*Also in 1889... Columbia Phonograph is formed in Washington, D.C. • The Eiffel Tower opens in Paris • Thomas Edison shows his first motion picture • The Canadian Pacific Railway is completed from coast to coast*
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THANK YOU TO THE LEYENDAS CREATIVE TEAM!
Projections Designer: Jacob Wan
Projector: Kai Wong
Lighting Design: Jason Conroy
Production Manager: Zane Kistner
Faculty: Robert Gardiner, Professor, Department of Theatre
Manuel Piña, Associate Professor, Department of Art History, Visual Art & Theory
Visual Artists: Alexandra Brekkaas
Saya Oiwa
Veronica Sheng

PROGRAM NOTES
View program notes for today’s concert here:
music.ubc.ca/program-notes

UPCOMING PERFORMANCES

UBC Symphony Orchestra
Friday, March 13, 2020 at 7:30 p.m. (Chan Shun Concert Hall) • Jonathan Girard, conductor
Sibelius • Karelia Overture • Zane Kistner, graduate conductor
Nielsen • Clarinet Concerto • Bernandino Assunçao, clarinet
Brahms • Symphony No. 4

UBC Symphony Orchestra and UBC Symphonic Wind Ensemble
Friday, April 3, 2020 at 7:30 p.m. (Chan Shun Concert Hall) • Jonathan Girard, conductor
Tchaikovsky • Symphony No. 5

UBC Chamber Orchestra
Friday, April 17, 2020 at 7:30 p.m. (Roy Barnett Hall – UBC School of Music) • Jonathan Girard, conductor
Music on the Point – Music for the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day
Christopher Chafe • Earth Moment 86/50 world première
Copland • Appalachian Spring Suite (for 13 instruments)

Tickets available from tickets.ubc.ca, by telephone (604) 822-2697, or in person at the Chan Centre ticket office. Presented by the UBC School of Music

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