Program Notes

In *Prayer for Ukraine*, composer Mykola Lysenko sets music to a poem by Oleksandr Konysky. Konysky wrote his patriotic poem in Kyiv in the winter of 1885 at a time when the Imperial Russian government was suppressing the use of the Ukrainian language. Lysenko, a leading national composer, quickly set the poem to music, and the song became a kind of spiritual anthem for the country, often sung to close church services, council meetings, and major national functions. (Last month the Ukrainian Chorus ‘Dumka’ of New York performed it during the ‘cold open’ on *Saturday Night Live.*)

Teresa Carreño was born in Caracas, Venezuela, and later emigrated to New York City. She was best known as a virtuoso piano soloist, touring the US and Europe as well as South America. Her compositional output was predominantly piano pieces for her own recitals and teaching. This afternoon's charming *Andante* is the opening movement of a Serenade for Strings, never published or performed during her lifetime.

In 1875 Dvořák was enjoying great public success, and was much in demand for new works. Busy with his Symphony No. 5, his opera *Vanda*, and chamber music projects, he apparently wrote the *Serenade for Strings* in twelve days! It is a delightful and virtuosic work, and has remained one of the composer’s most popular offerings.

Grace Williams was regarded by her contemporaries as the most notable female composer from Wales (admittedly a small cohort). After university in Wales, she moved to London to study at the Royal College of Music, where she was a pupil of Gordon Jacob and Ralph Vaughan Williams. She left no ‘program’ or dedication for her poignant and pungent *Elegy for Strings*, but it held enough personal meaning for her that she returned to it for revisions four years after its initial composition.

Tchaikovsky’s *Serenade for Strings* is a clear nod to his idol, Mozart, in terms of structure and form especially. The work is cast in the ‘traditional’ four movements, with lively outer movements, the dance movement (here a waltz where Mozart would have a minuet) coming second, and the songful ‘slow’ movement (here actually a Larghetto, not a Largo or Adagio) coming third. The serenade opens with a broad introduction in advance of the main Allegro, and this music will return to ‘interrupt’ the headlong rush of the Finale, in a way that brings a thematic unity to the entire work. The serenade is one of Tchaikovsky’s most beloved works, and has never been out of the international repertoire since its premiere in 1881.
Our Mission

The BB&B Society presents imaginatively programmed orchestral concerts, with the goal of providing an intimate musical experience for the audience. Performances are held in historic Faneuil Hall, a setting that imparts a close connection among the audience and the orchestra and soloists.
Our History

The Bach, Beethoven, & Brahms Society (BB&B) was formed in the spring of 2016 by Steven Lipsitt and the musicians of the former Boston Classical Orchestra. Determined to save a beloved and time-honored tradition of great, expertly performed orchestral concerts presented in one of America’s most historic spaces, Boston’s Faneuil Hall, these artists established a Board of Directors and a network of colleagues who are dedicated to the goals of musical excellence and an intimate listening experience. Following debut concerts in March and April of 2016, and thanks to the generosity and loyalty of supporters, BB&B presented a full 2016 – 2017 season of subscription concerts to excited, enthusiastic audiences. Sharing the stunning musical virtuosity of its own professional musicians, world-class guest soloists, and a level of quality that has been the hallmark of concerts in its Faneuil Hall home for many years, BB&B renewed old friendships and developed new ones, laying the groundwork for a bright future as Boston’s newest professional orchestra.
The musicians of the BB&B Orchestra are among the Boston area’s finest and most experienced freelance instrumentalists. A core group of the musicians has been playing together for many years, which gives the orchestra a deep rapport and an ability to focus on the substance of making music from the very beginning of the rehearsal process.

When not playing with BB&B at Faneuil Hall, these musicians can be heard performing with the Boston Pops Esplanade Orchestra, Boston Lyric Opera Orchestra, Boston Ballet Orchestra, Handel and Haydn Society, Emmanuel Music, A Far Cry, BMOP, and many others throughout New England. Many are also active in the pit for shows at the Colonial, Emerson Majestic, Huntington, Shubert, Boston Opera House, and Wang Center theaters. These dedicated and versatile musicians teach privately and at area music schools, including New England Conservatory, Boston University, Boston Conservatory, Longy School of Music, Berklee College of Music, Harvard, MIT, Wellesley, and Smith, among others. All BB&B orchestra players are members of the Boston Musicians’ Association, Local 9-535 of the American Federation of Musicians.
Mykola Lysenko  
(1842 - 1912)  
Prayer for Ukraine (1885)

Teresa Carreño  
(1853 - 1917)  
Andante (1895)

Antonín Dvořák  
(1841 - 1904)  
Serenade for Strings, op. 22
I. Moderato  
II. Tempo di Valse  
III. Scherzo. Vivace  
IV. Larghetto  
V. Finale. Allegro vivace

--------------------------------------    intermission   -------------------------------------

Grace Williams  
(1906 - 1977)  
Elegy (1936/1940)

Pyotr Tchaikovsky  
(1840 - 1893)  
Serenade for Strings, op. 48
I. Pezzo in forma di sonatina:  
Andante non troppo — Allegro moderato  
II. Valse: Moderato — Tempo di valse  
III. Élégie: Larghetto elegiaco  
IV. Finale (Tema russo):  
Andante — Allegro con spirito
Founding conductor Steven Lipsitt is widely recognized for his ability to combine precision and passion, intelligence, and invigoration. His performances have been hailed as “a major triumph...the orchestra performed beautifully”; “an incisive performance”; “an eloquent account of this remarkable score”; “conducted with intelligence and energy”; “Lipsitt and his players brought it all to vibrant life”; “Lipsitt’s rendering carried the pace and warmth of someone with an intimate knowledge of the score”; “Lipsitt conducted the orchestra as if the music were in his blood”.

First Prize Laureate of the inaugural “Dimitris Mitropoulos” International Conducting Competition in November 1996, Steven Lipsitt made his Russian debut with the St. Petersburg Philharmonic in 1997, and has been guest conductor of orchestras in North America, South America, Europe, and Asia. Foreign critics have hailed his “exalted and well-structured interpretations” (Paris) and “soaring conductor-debut” (Zurich) and praised his “technically and expressively balanced interpretations”, observing that “his technical precision makes possible the realization of his expressive framework” and “the drama and the familiar playful Mozartean mood were combined in ideal proportions” (Athens).

Music director of the Boston Classical Orchestra for seventeen seasons (1999 – 2016), Steven Lipsitt brought that professional chamber orchestra to the front ranks of Boston’s musical life with freshly designed, vividly realized programs of four centuries of music. Audiences and critics remarked his “razor-sharp intelligence, balanced by a generosity of spirit,” his “committed, vigorous, and often driving performance,” his “impressive demonstration of talent and discipline,” and the fact that “the program was put together with imagination and taste” and “this orchestra and Lipsitt are capable of taking on big challenges.” Steven Lipsitt’s work has twice been recognized as the “Best in Classical Music” by The Boston Globe’s year-end wrap-up.
Bach, Beethoven, & Brahms Society Orchestra
March 27th, 2022

Violins
Roksana Sudol       Lena Wong
Colin Davis         Beth Welty
Cynthia Cummings    Annegret Klaua
Stacey Alden        Rohan Gregory
Rebecca Katsenes    Piotr Buczek
Elizabeth Whitfield Lino Tanaka

Violas
Dani Rimoni
Noralee Walker
Jennifer Shallenberger
Abigail Karr Cross

‘Cellos
Michael Curry
Jolene Kessler
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PO Box 470528
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www.bbbsociety.org
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