

## PROGRAM NOTES

Image: The tortured individual spirit in an officially godless collective, seeking solace in the practice of ancient, banned religion. Hope as the only illusion left to provide any warmth to the soul.

### **Dance It Away (Rondo Finale)**

This movement rarely lets up: a varied rondo of rustic dance tunes, with pseudo-virtuoso touches, like a klezmer or gypsy band. The momentum spills over in a Jewish-sounding extension, and this hits the top--a sped-up, rhythmic, accompanied reprise of the opening prologue from Movement I, which spins into a fast, crazed coda on the rondo tune and a wild-eyed, splashy end.

Images: Even under tyranny, people can still toss back a schnapps, sing an old song, clear a circle, show off some footwork. Life's a struggle, we've got trouble, let's dance it away. In the middle, up jumps the little smuggler fellow, who, with the door-knocking motif as his drummer, dances a step, brags to us how he escaped with his life. One tune returns as a goose-step march of the old State Police, but we thumb our nose at them. The dance speeds up. Manic energy gets us through it--this time.

In *Green Violinist, 1924*, Chagall evoked his homeland. The artist's nostalgia for his own work was another impetus in creating this painting, which is based on earlier versions of the same subject. His cultural and religious legacy is illuminated by the figure of the violinist dancing in a rustic village. The Chabad Hasidim of Chagall's childhood believed it possible to achieve communion with God through music and dance, and the fiddler was a vital presence in ceremonies and festivals.

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**Season 114, Program 48**



UNIVERSITY OF  
OREGON

# SCHOOL OF MUSIC AND DANCE

**Patricia McCarty**  
viola

**Cary Lewis**  
piano

**Beall Concert Hall**  
Monday, February 2, 2015 | 7:30 p.m



**Sonata No. 3 in G Minor, BWV 1029** Johann Sebastian Bach  
 Vivace (1685-1750)  
 Adagio  
 Allegro

**Romance in F Major, Op. 50** Ludwig van Beethoven  
 (1770-1827)

**Sonata in E-flat Major, Op. 120, No. 2** Johannes Brahms  
 Allegro amabile (1833-1897)  
 Allegro appassionato  
 Andante con moto – Allegro

## INTERMISSION

**Torn Curtain,  
 Suite for Viola and Piano** (1990-91) David Avshalomov  
 (b. 1946)  
 The Old Tunes  
 Menuetto [premiere performance]  
 Ballade  
 Incident (in the Town Square)  
 Night Prayer  
 Dance It Away (Rondo Finale)

and sevens and nines--establish a busy theme built on repeating cells, interrupted and resumed. The interruptions consist of a low knocking noise in the piano, and an odd repeated tritone in the viola, which slides by quarter-tones later. Things get more violent; the viola emits squealing cries over crashing hand-clusters in the piano.

Images: This little fellow, a smuggler, a con man, politically powerless but canny; he likes jazz. Things are coming unraveled for him. The jig is up. Angry striking miners from up-country have come to the main square in the Capital to restore order and put down hooligans. The Security Police are going door to door. He's scampering coolly down side streets to avoid them. At intersections, he hears distant sirens. His shoes are shiny, good Spanish leather. He skitters and turns, he grins, he's almost free; he tiptoes, turns the corner, and BAM!--they get him.

### Night Prayer

This movement is an anguished, yet ultimately hopeful nocturne, tracing pain, worry, prayer, release, resignation, with a glimmer of hope at the end. The pianist establishes dream bells, high, tiny, distant, dissonant, pulsing slowly. The spirit is being pulled thinly to waking. The violist spins a slow, writhing melody over a plodding, rising bass line in the piano. Tune and harmony turn, arrive at a destination, the soundscape widens, and you are motionless in the open space of a huge resonant sanctuary.

A simple quiet melody like a priest's chant is answered by an explosion of massive bells in the piano, and the viola roars the chant again in choral harmony. At the tragic crash of the cadence, anxieties are released like fluttering bats. The two instruments intertwine in threads of repeated notes and spinning triplets, then the voices separate, one winding down, the other floating up. The rhythm slows, the tension relaxes, evaporates, and a point of return is reached. The second part of the opening melody recurs, the plodding accompaniment now going back down the hill. Distant, faint echoes of the bells are heard, and finally a lullaby reassures for a while, cut off by a brief stinging echo of the middle outburst. A bitter-sweet cadence gives rest.

### The Old Tunes

Image: An itinerant bard playing old songs and dances, trying to revive a dying melos from a distance. The ending is blunt, stoic.

**Menuetto** [omitted for the premiere and first recording, premiered today at Hill & Hollow]

This is a crude old-fashioned minuet and trio (pseudo-baroque shapes in a quasi-Oriental modal style, with ornamented repeats), putting the piano in the role of plucked string bass at the start. The high viola harmonics in the trio are like the tears of trapped children. Pounding away at the repeat of the dance tune, fattening it with portentous non-traveling harmonies, does not make the dance any less awkward. The cadence is pure resignation.

Images: the Roumanian orphans, a legacy of the old regime, herded into ugly concrete buildings, wards of the state, the healthy ones destined to be commodities, the halt and sick unlikely to live. Their sad eyes peer at you through tiny, barred, high windows. They are forced to dance for visitors. They are too hungry to hope.

### Ballade

The viola offers several dry, solemn, phrases, in a baroque-dance dotted rhythm, with crunched arpeggios on the beats. The piano gives bittersweet falling answers, with subtler rolled arpeggios; at the cadence, it establishes a wistful romantic mood. Now the viola sings a high, sad, old-fashioned love tune, rising to a long held note under which the pianist pounds up to the climax; it then winds the mood down, turns, and repeats the starting dance, dream-like, the instruments now trading roles. A gentle ending.

Images: An old peasant dances alone, a simple clump-shoe dance, awkward but dignified. He recalls an old romance. (As a hapless, lovelorn youth, he lamented an unattainable beauty.) He dances again, remembering a partner long dead.

### Incident (in the Town Square)

A sneaky little scherzo, over before you know it. Fast polymeters--fives

In repertoire from Bach to Keith Jarrett, violist **PATRICIA McCARTY** has been acclaimed on five continents for performances communicating “*a dark tone analogous to the quality of a fine tawny port*” [Strad], and “*the fine blue-flamed torch of her mind*” [Ottawa Citizen]. She has appeared as soloist with the Detroit, Houston, Kyoto and Shinsei Nihon symphonies, Boston Pops, Orchester der Beethovenhalle Bonn, l’Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Turiae Camerata of Valencia, and in recitals including New York, San Francisco, Boston, Detroit, Valencia, Geneva, Caracas, and a debut at London’s Wigmore Hall hailed by the *Times* to be “*an outstanding exhibition of string playing of the highest American class.*” Her recordings for Northeastern, ECM and Ashmont labels have received accolades including Gramophone’s “Critics’ Choice” and Strad “Selection CD.”

Winner of the First Silver Medal and Radio Prize in the Geneva International Competition when she was eighteen, Ms. McCarty graduated the following year *magna cum laude* from the University of Michigan, where she studied with Francis Bundra. She has also been awarded two National Endowment for the Arts Solo Recitalist Grants and the John Knowles Paine Award for performance of new American music. Former assistant principal violist of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, Ms. McCarty has performed chamber music at festivals including Aspen, Tanglewood, Sarasota, Bowdoin, Australia String Academy and Hokkaido. She currently teaches at the Meadowmount School of Music and resides in the Adirondacks with her husband, violist Ronald Wilkison.

**CARY LEWIS** is in constant demand as a collaborative pianist for soloists and chamber music groups. He joined William Preucil (concertmaster of the Cleveland Orchestra) and Dorothy Lewis as members of the Lanier Trio, which was featured on NPR’s *Saint Paul Sunday* broadcast. Their recording of the complete Dvorak Trios was honored by TIME magazine as one of the ten best music recordings of any kind in 1993. With degrees from the University of North Texas as well as a doctorate and Performer’s Certificate from the Eastman School of Music, he was a Fulbright scholar for two years in Vienna. His teachers included Eugene List, Brooks Smith, and Dieter Weber. He has performed at Carnegie Hall, Bargemusic, the Library of Congress, the White House, the Kennedy Center, Wigmore Hall in London, the National

Philharmonic in Warsaw, and in other music capitals of the United States and Europe. Dr. Lewis is retired from the faculty of Georgia State University in Atlanta and is now based in Portland, Oregon. He is the director of chamber music for the Astoria Music Festival, and in recent years he has participated in festivals in Montana, Colorado, Michigan, Maine, Hawaii, St. Croix, and Turkey, with additional concerts in Australia, Southeast Asia, and South America. He has recorded works from the standard literature as well as music by American composers on the Turnabout, Vanguard, Educo, Coronet, Crystal, Orion, Musical Heritage Society, ACA, Albany, MSR Classics, and Gasparo labels.

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**DAVID AVSHALOMOV** is a distinguished third-generation classical composer and orchestral conductor, and an accomplished vocalist. He was born in New York City in 1946, grew up in Oregon, and has for some time been based in Santa Monica, California. He represents a musical lineage whose story stretches from the Caucasus to Siberia, through China, to the US. He began composing and conducting in high school, and wrote (and conducted) his first compositions for his high school chorus. He earned degrees in music from Harvard and the University of Washington, with further studies at Peabody, Aspen, and Tanglewood. In college he was a professional chorister and a regular oratorio and motet soloist. He served a tour of duty in the Singing Sergeants of the USAF Band, also as soloist and arranger. For over 20 years, Avshalomov worked professionally as a conductor of orchestras, choruses, bands, and opera. In 1980 he founded the Santa Monica Chamber Orchestra, which he led for a decade. He has toured in the Far East and Europe, and recorded his own music and that of his grandfather in Russia. His conducting work has garnered listings in *Who's Who in Music* and *Who's Who in the West*.

As a composer, David Avshalomov creates his works in an accessible modern romantic, neo-tonal style that balances a lyric gift with a characteristic rhythmic vitality. His composition teachers included Charles Jones (at Aspen), John Verrall, Robert Suderberg, and William Bergsma (at University of Washington). He has composed works for solo voice, choruses, orchestra,

band, chamber ensembles, and solo instruments, in forms ranging in scale from songs and incidental pieces to full-length oratorio and his 2014 opera based on Steinbeck's *The Pearl*. His compositions have been performed professionally across the U.S., in Europe, and in Russia, and have been recorded on the Albany and Naxos labels.

In Avshalomov's words, "*Melody is the thread of my daily life. I still find new paths through old musical forms, and fresh expression based in folk idioms, and drawing on old melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic roots.*"

## TORN CURTAIN

Suite for solo viola with piano accompaniment (1990-91) by David Avshalomov. Written for my brother Dan in resonance with Eastern Europe and Russia 1989-90.

(Notes by the composer)

This work started with a hint from my brother Dan that he might favor a solo piece written for him. A prologue-soliloquy came to me almost immediately; then a number of tunes that felt Roumanian, Hungarian, Russian, Czech. I accepted the expressive mold into which they fell, and wrote out the first movement sketch as a series of purely melodic episodes. Parts of the suite unabashedly echo composers going back as much as a century--but I handle the shaping and sequencing of melody and structure in my own way.

As I worked to clarify the forms, I became aware that the emotions flowing through these tunes paralleled my personal reactions to what was then going on in Eastern Europe as the Iron Curtain began to shred, revealing great damage and pain in the social and cultural fabric of those regions. By grasping unconsciously for old melodic roots I sought to express solidarity with the new struggle which those former subject peoples now addressed. This music, however, is not based on their indigenous musics, nor on art musics connected to those roots. It can be better heard as an attempt to travel as a musical visitor along their beaten tracks, wearing a borrowed old cloak of their style to keep my American self warm. These are songs of empathy and powerless compassion--from a stranger.