

## PROGRAM NOTES

**Vernalis – Quintet for Clarinet and Strings** is a programmatic work in three movements. Each act seeks to portray memoirs in the coming and passing of any given spring.

*I: Lententide.* The piece begins with a somber homage to the Lenten season. Initially unaccompanied, the string quartet weaves an image of the biting chill of the days of late winter to early spring by the way of solemn, heavily contrapuntal depictions of the first five weeks of the liturgical period of penitence. The arrival of the clarinet into the texture signals the onset of Holy Week. Shortly thereafter the piece shifts emphasis onto the secular celebration of the season of renewal through two folk dances: the Greek *kalamatianós* and the Irish jig.

*II: Garlands.* The second gesture of *Vernalis* is that of a cool morning breeze after the damp of the first rain of spring. Dense, meandering harmonies establish an isolated copse, while hints at the sounds of British folk melodies reverberate in the distance.

*III: Aestas.* Lastly, the piece ends with omens of the onset of summer. A cyclical ostinato passed between instruments hints at the surging heat in the months to come, while raucous syncopated melodies and quasi-fugal motifs depict the begrudging exchange of nature passing from one season to the next.

–Gabriel Elder

**This Side of the Glass.** The instrumentation of this work was inspired by Max Bruch's Eight Pieces, op.83 for clarinet, viola, and piano. As you will hear, the clarinet and viola do complement one another, especially in their lower registers, as well as in harmony. This work was challenging in its developmental process as all of the material derives from a section towards the later part of the piece. This initial composed body of material instantly became canon to me as I felt any further material would need to lead up to and follow it. I essentially worked backwards.

As far as harmonic content I could not resist the urge to include some of my favorite tendencies which primarily involve tones just a half step away from a simple major chord. For example, Fi, Le, and Ti (scale degrees 5, 6, and 7) against the backdrop of a familiar major harmony always evokes a sound I often associate with space and astronomy.

–Nicholas Pietromonaco

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Season 114, Program 92



UNIVERSITY OF  
OREGON

SCHOOL OF MUSIC AND DANCE

## COMPOSITION ONE class recital

New Chamber Works  
by Students of Terry McQuilkin

Beall Concert Hall  
Sunday, May 31, 2015 | 8 p.m.



**Tales from the Old Country**

- I. Andante
- II. Andante moderato

Andrew Williams

TBA, Violin I  
 Ruby O'Connor, Violin II  
 Kailie DeBolt, Viola  
 Kevin Hendrix, Cello

**Summer Baby**

Sean Flynn, Viola  
 Kevin Hendrix, Cello  
 Lin Zhong, Piano

Zhu Wang

**Ruminations**

- I. Andante, Allegro
- II. Lento

Anne Wolfe, Violin I  
 Ruby O'Connor, Violin II  
 Sean Flynn, Viola  
 Gabriel S kyrms, Cello

Justin Graff

**Going to Tehran**

- I. Train
- II. Azan
- III. Tehran

Christopher Ives, Violin I  
 Lesslie Nuñez, Violin II  
 Christina Tatman, Viola  
 Nora Willauer, Cello  
 Rhys Gates, Bass

Pedram Diba

**INTERMISSION****Elements**

- I. Air
- II. Earth
- III. Fire
- IV. Water

Austin Mahar

Nora Willauer, Cello  
 Thomas Wagenet, Guitar  
 TBA, Piano

**Vernalis**

- I. Lententide
- II. Garlands
- III. Ignus

Gabriel Elder

Chelsea Oden, Clarinet  
 TBA, Violin I  
 Elizabeth Thornton, Violin II  
 Kailie DeBolt, Viola  
 TBA, Cello

**This Side of the Glass**

Nicholas Pietromonaco

Courtney Sams, Clarinet  
 TBA, Viola  
 Nicholas Pietromonaco, Piano

**Sartorius**

Thomas Wagenet

Christine Senavsky, Violin  
 Chas Barnard, Cello  
 Bronson York, Bassoon  
 Thomas Wagenet, Guitar  
 TBA, Cello

**Tales from the Old Country** is a two-movement piece meant to showcase one (unidentified) country's musical development over the years. Breaking the piece into multiple movements better allowed for this exploration. The movements are untitled because I felt it lent a better sense of continuity - as though no matter how divergent they became they would still evoke the same land and its long musical history.

The first movement follows a Baroque tradition. Namely that it is set in ternary form (A - B - A') - a staple of the period - and uses of the standard string quartet (which in truth is borrowed from the Classical Era). The chord progression follows traditional rules but implements flavors such as secondary dominants and augmented sixths. However, just as a story may not necessary be reflective of the truth, "Tales" signifies that this is an imitation of the style rather than a completely faithful recreation of it.

The second movement moves beyond the 18th century into a relatively more modern period. Although the first movement focused on the first violin, like much Baroque music, I made a point to give each instrument the melody throughout this movement. This movement is markedly freer of the restraints of the first and embraces a more emotive expression."

--Andrew Williams

**Summer Baby.** I was born during the summer, so it is my favorite season. Of all the seasons, summer seems to be the most energetic one. I named this piece after it because it possesses the same energetic vibe. The repetitive theme, pizzicato parts in strings, and fast sixteenth notes bring out the dynamic energy of this piece. The keys in this piece are mostly major; they give a positive, brightening effect. The timbre of the viola is warm and mild even in higher registers. The rhythm and tempo are also very vibrant. The time signatures and the form are simple and straightforward. In general, this piece has refreshing, happy, and positive features that truly embody what summer is about.

--Zhu Wang

**Ruminations.** The word "ruminations" was originally used to describe cows chewing their cud, but this work was not inspired by the digestive habits of farm animals. More recently, rumination has referred to deep and seemingly inescapable periods of contemplation.

The first movement of this piece is an attempt to synthesize the styles of several composers whose work I admire: the slower sections allude to the harmonies of Estonian composer Arvo Pärt, and the faster sections to the counterpoint of J.S. Bach and the melodies of Dmitri Shostakovich.

The second movement opens in a fashion similar to the somber parts of the first movement, but gradually transitions into a bright and hopeful ending. In this latter part the influence of contemporary Icelandic musicians is strong, specifically post-rock group Sigur Rós and composer Ólafur Arnalds.

-Justin Graff

## PROGRAM NOTES

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**Going to Tehran** is a three-movement string quintet, which is based on my childhood experiences growing up in Iran, where twice a year (for Persian New Year and the summer) my family and I would take the train to go from my hometown of Kerman to the Iranian Capital (Tehran). Each movement reflects significant moments in the trip.

The first significant part of the trip was being on the train for 15-18 hours, so I named the first movement "Train". This movement captures a lot of the sounds and rhythms I heard on the train.

At 4 or 5 am the train crew would wake everyone up for prayer time, so people that wanted to pray could get off and pray. After that, we could continue the trip. This is the second significant moment of the trip. I named the second movement "Azan". Azan is the Islamic call to Prayer, and it is usually sung. Every time it is prayer time all mosques in town have someone sing Azan through their speakers, so all people in town would know it is prayer time. Different people might sing the Azan with different melodies. I picked the Azan melody I heard the most growing up and composed the second movement based on it.

The third and last significant part of this trip was our arrival in Tehran. To this day, Tehran has been the busiest and most crowded city I have been in. I named the last movement "Tehran" and this movement captures a very crowded city with a lot of air pollution, lots of people, cars, and traffic.

–Pedram Diba

**Elements.** Each of the four movements of this piece is based off of octaves and fifths. This represents the raw nature of each element as these intervals are the first two in the overtone series.

*Air* begins light-heartedly with fast-moving arpeggios imitating the sound of wind. The piece gets more dramatic and overwhelming near the end as the air falls towards the earth.

In *Earth*, there are many textures that represent the creeping and crawling of earth waking up. There are also a few brief transition from Eb Dorian to Gb Lydian, which represent a sunrise and the earth warming up.

*Fire* is by far the ugliest and most tragic of the movements. The cello is the main soloist in this movement and acts as the victim to the burning dissonance created in the piano and guitar beneath it.

*Water* is the final movement because it represents the power and versatility of the ocean. It transitions from the cello's ominous low C's to a lighter shimmering sound expressed in all instruments that represents the water's surface.

–Austin Mahar

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