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FRIDAY, OCTOBER 2, 2015, 8 PM
PARAMOUNT THEATRE, OAKLAND

MASON BATES
*Devil’s Radio* (West Coast Premiere)

SERGEI PROKOFIEV
Violin Concerto No. 2 in G minor, Op. 63
1. Allegro moderato
2. Andante assai
3. Allegro ben marcato
Kenneth Renshaw, violin

INTERMISSION

JOHANNES BRAHMS
Selections from *Liebeslieder Waltzes*, Op. 52
(selections conducted by Lynne Morrow, celebrating 10 years as Oakland Symphony Chorus Director)

1. Rede Mädchen, allzu liebes
Speak, dear girl, whom I love too much
2. Am Gesteine rauscht die Flut
The tide rushes over the rocks
4. Wie des Abends schöne Röte
Like the lovely blush of the evening
5. Die grüne Hopfenranke
The green hops vine
8. Wenn so lind dein Auge mir
When you look at me with those mild, loving eyes
9. Am Donaustrande, da steht ein Haus
On the Danube, there stands a house
11. Nein, es ist nicht auszukommen
No, there is no getting along with people

SERGEI RACHMANINOFF
*Symphonic Dances*, Op. 45

1. Non allegro
2. Andante con moto tempo di valse
3. Lento assai; Allegro vivace

Michael Morgan, Music Director and Conductor

Season Media Sponsors: Oakland Magazine, KDFC, East Bay Express
Season Guest Artist Accommodations provided by: Oakland Marriott City Center
The 2015/16 season of Oakland Symphony is generously funded by the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation; the California Arts Council, a state agency; the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency; and the City Council and the City of Oakland’s Cultural Funding Program.
Praised for his “round and luminous sound, subtle phrasing, clear articulation, and flawless intonation” (La Libre Belgique) and for his “natural and honest sense of communication” (Strad Magazine), American violinist Kenneth Renshaw has appeared as soloist with orchestras throughout the world, including the National Orchestra of Belgium, the Orchestre de Chambre de Wallonie, the Lithuanian National Orchestra, the China Philharmonic, the China NCPA Orchestra, the Jenaer Philharmonie, the Staatskapelle Weimar, the California Symphony, the American Philharmonic, and the Orquesta de Festival Ushuaia.

He has given sold-out recitals at major European music festivals (the Menuhin Festival Gstaad, the Perlman Music Program, and Li Lin at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music). He is currently studying at the Juilliard School with Mr. Perlman and Mr. Lin as a recipient of a Kovner Fellowship. He has been generously loaned violins from the Juilliard School, Bein&Fushi/The Stradivarius Society of Chicago, Reuning&Sons, and the Perlman Music Program. Kenneth was Concertmaster of the internationally-acclaimed San Francisco Symphony Orchestra from 2008–2010; he made his solo debut in Davies Symphony Hall as winner of the orchestra’s concerto competition in 2010. He has studied with Donald Weilertstein at the Perlman Music Program, and Li Lin at New England Conservatory, Itzhak Perlman and Mr. Lin as a recipient of a Kovner Fellowship. He has been generously loaned violins from the Juilliard School, Bein&Fushi/The Stradivarius Society of Chicago, Reuning&Sons of Boston, Christophe Landon Rare Violins, and the Maestro Foundation of Southern California. Upcoming engagements include a debut recital at the Louvre Museum in Paris, chamber music performances at the Caramoor Center for Performing Arts, and a concerto appearance in the opening night concert of the Oakland Symphony.
**ALICIA VENABLES, VIOLIN**

Canadian born violinist Alicia Venable, winner of the 2012 National Chamber Class at the Canadian National Music Festival, has had solo engagements with the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, Okanagan Symphony Orchestra, and also the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra as a 2011 Morningside Music Bridge Concerto Competition finalist. 

She has participated in world-renowned summer music festivals such as the senior Young Artists Programme in Ottawa and community settings, both in Oakland and the San Francisco Bay Area and beyond. These services are offered in schools during the school day, after school, and in community settings, both in Oakland and the San Francisco Bay Area, and on a national basis in the United States (New York, Mississippi and Louisiana), as well as internationally. Such activities are used as educational, artistic and therapeutic/wellness interventions primarily targeting under served populations. As an Oakland-based organization, TFS focuses on uplifting, inspiring and empowering the youth of Oakland.

Today’s Future Sound uses music production and media arts as vehicles through which to empower youth as artists and community members while fostering their well-being as individuals.

**HEADS UP**

Every year, Heads Up hosts a tuition-free summer program and this year, they partnered with Today's Future Sound to host a Software Engineering Course.

The students performing in the lobby are from the Heads Up Program and represent Oakland public schools!

Officially started in 1987, Heads Up is a Head-Royce School partnership (HRS) with the Oakland Unified School District (OUSD). The program runs year-round and provides underserved middle-school students of color from OUSD with challenging and enriching programming. We do this with the intention of supporting students in their academic success and helping to facilitate a deeper appreciation and commitment to the city of Oakland.

**TODAY’S FUTURE SOUND**

Today’s Future Sound (TFS) is a fiscal project of Friends of Oakland Parks and Recreation, a 501c3 based in Oakland, CA. TFS was founded by producer/beat maker Ben Durazzo in 2010 while teaching in schools in Berkeley and Oakland. Dr. Elliott Gann joined in 2012. TFS currently teaches music production, beat making, and DJ’ing to youth and the general public in the San Francisco Bay Area and beyond. These services are offered in schools during the school day, after school, and in community settings, both in Oakland and the San Francisco Bay Area, and on a national basis in the United States (New York, Mississippi and Louisiana), as well as internationally. Such activities are used as educational, artistic and therapeutic/wellness interventions primarily targeting under served populations. As an Oakland-based organization, TFS focuses on uplifting, inspiring and empowering the youth of Oakland.

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**ART ASK FOR MORE**

The less art kids get, the more it shows.

Did You Know?
Young people who participate in the arts for at least three hours each week through at least one full year are:

- 4 times more likely to be recognized for academic achievement
- 3 times more likely to be elected to class office within their schools
- 4 times more likely to participate in a math and science fair
- 3 times more likely to win an award for school attendance
- 4 times more likely to win an award for writing an essay or poem

Get involved:
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**BRAHMS LIEBESLIEDER WALTZES TRANSLATION**

The texts of the *Liebeslieder* ("Love Songs") are taken from "Polydora, ein weltpoetisches Liederbuch," or "a world poetry song book." It was written in 1855, by the German poet and philosopher Georg Friederich Daumer (1800-1875).

This collection of translations and imitations of folk poetry, primarily Russian, Polish, and Magyar (Hungarian), has as its predominant sentiments the many facets of love.

1. Speak, dear girl, whom I love too much,  
   Who has thrown into my cool heart, with just a look,  
   These wild, hot feelings!

2. I will come when the stars say hello.
3. The tide rushes over the rocks,  
   Driven violently.  
   Those there, who don’t know how to sigh,  
   Learn it from loving.

4. I, a poor girl, would glow  
   To please One, one special person,  
   In bliss forever.

5. The green hops vine,  
   It winds down to the earth.  
   The young, lovely girl,  
   Her thoughts are so sad.

Listen, green tendrils!  
Why don’t you lift yourself up to the sky?  
Listen, lovely girl.  
Why is your heart so hard?

How would the vine suspend itself  
If no support offers it strength?  
How will the girl be happy  
When her Love is far away?

8. When you look at me with those mild, loving eyes  
   Every last disturbing cloud flies away.  
   The beautiful glow of this love,  
   Don’t let it vanish!  
   Never will another love you as faithfully as I do.

9. On the Danube, there stands a house,  
   There, a rosy girl looks out.  
   The girl is well cared for;  
   Ten bars of iron are placed in front of the door.  
   Ten bars of iron, this is a fun game;  
   I will blast them like glass.

11. No, there is no getting along with people.  
   Everything they know gets a toxic interpretation.  
   If I’m cheerful, they say I cherish loose morals.  
   If I’m quiet, they say I’m going crazy about love.
PROGRAM NOTES

MASON BATES (B.1977)

As an undergraduate, Bates studied with John Corigliano, David Teldeschi, and Samuel Adler at the Juilliard School, and received a doctorate in composition from the University of California, Berkeley, in 2008. He was a DJ and techno artist in Oakland, and is now composer-in-residence with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

Devil’s Radio was commissioned by the Sun Valley (Idaho) Summer Symphony, which gave the world premiere on August 16, 2014, with Alasdair Neale conducting. In his program note, Bates writes: “Rumor is the Devil’s radio, goes an evocative Southern phrase, and ever since hearing it, I’ve fantasized about a fanfare with equal parts darkness and groove. What began life as a brief piano étude quickly swelled way beyond its bounds, and the opportunity to write for a massive orchestra in Sun Valley seemed the perfect chance to give the Devil his due.”

“Sometimes the music is coldly propulsive, as at the opening, which uses a kind of sparkling ‘musical lure’ in the upper woodwinds. But this is soon undercut by a bluesy bass line and energetic percussion, ultimately building into a soaring melody that’s best described as vainglorious. Indeed, the work has ample brightness to counter its dark corners, and in this way it can be heard as a fanfare our villain might write for himself, complete with grandiose flourishes and an infectious swing section. But this lightness quickly evaporates in the work’s final minutes, when thunderous hits in the low brass suggest a Goliath-sized figure throwing his weight around. He bows out with a wink and a nod, ever the gentleman.”

Violin Concerto No. 2 in G minor, Op. 63
SERGEI PROKOFIEV (1891-1953)

The best account of the origins of Prokofiev’s Second Violin Concerto comes from the composer himself. In his autobiography, he wrote: “In 1935, a group of admirers of the French violinist Robert Soëtans asked me to write a violin concerto for him, giving him exclusive rights to perform it for one year. I readily agreed, since I had been intending to write something for the violin at that time and had accumulated some material. As in the case of the preceding concertos, I began searching for an original title for the piece, such as ‘concert sonata for violin and orchestra,’ but finally returned to the simplest solution: Concerto No. 2. Nevertheless, I wanted it to be altogether different from No. 1, both as to music and style.”

The premiere took place on December 1, 1935, with violinist Soëtans and the Madrid Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Enrique Fernández Arbós. A special delegation visited Prokofiev afterwards to thank him for choosing Spain for the first performance.

“The Second Violin Concerto,” writes biographer Israel V. Nestyev, “is more serious, more philosophical than the First, which was written twenty years before. Here we no longer find those mocking, grotesque effects which had so astonished listeners…in the First Concerto. There are fewer harsh timbres and harmonies, and a more restrained and gentle play of tone colors. The Second Concerto is written in a simpler, more intimate style.…The virtuoso writing is also more modest, containing fewer unusual technical innovations, even though this time the composer did use some very complicated technical figurations with biting accents.”

Liebeslieder Waltzes, Op. 52
JOHANNES BRAHMS (1833-1897)

“Real family music” was Brahms’ description of the Liebeslieder Waltzes, a collection of 18 settings of poems from Georg Friedrich Daumer’s Polydora. They were composed and published in 1869 and first performed in Vienna, on January 5, 1870.

“Brahms and waltzes” exclaimed critic Eduard Hanslick when he saw the score. “The two words stare at each other in positive amazement on the elegant title-page. The earnest, silent Brahms, a true younger brother of Schumann, and just as North German, Protestant, and unworlly as he—writing waltzes!”

Brahms himself was pleased. He wrote to his publisher: “I must confess that it was the first time I smiled at the sight of a printed work—of mine! I will risk being called an ass if our Liebeslieder don’t give pleasure to a few people.”

Originally scored for soprano, alto, tenor and bass, with four-hand piano, the Op. 52 set was joined by Neue Liebeslieder Waltzer, Op. 65, in 1874. Conductor Ernst Rudorff persuaded Brahms to arrange a set for voices with orchestra, which included eight pieces from Op. 52 and one that was later included in the Neue Liebeslieder.

Symphonic Dances, Op. 45
SERGEI RACHMANINOFF (1873-1943)

“ ‘A few months before his death in 1943, Rachmaninoff complained of lacking the “strength and fire” to compose. When friends reminded him of the Symphonic Dances, he replied: “Yes, I don’t know how that happened. That was probably my last flicker.” Rachmaninoff’s “last flicker” was begun during the summer of 1940 on an estate in Long Island. By August, he wrote to conductor Eugene Ormandy: “Last week I finished a new symphonic piece, which I naturally want to give first to you and your orchestra. It is called Fantastic Dances.”

Meanwhile, Rachmaninoff had second thoughts about the title. “It should have been called just Dances,” he said, “but I was afraid people would think I had written dance music for jazz orchestras.” At one point he even considered titles for the three movements—“Midday,” “Twilight” and “Midnight”—but abandoned the idea in favor of the Italian tempo designations.

By the time Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra introduced the work on January 4, 1941, Rachmaninoff had settled on the title Symphonic Dances. At the end of the score, Rachmaninoff had written “I thank Thee, Lord!” It was his last major work. Two and a half years after its completion, he died in Beverly Hills, California.

— Program Notes by Charley Samson, copyright 2015