

ABOUT THE ORPHEUS DUO

Pianists **Mark Uranker** and **Althea Waites** have combined their talents and performing experience to form a keyboard ensemble, the Orpheus Duo. Both artists have concertized extensively as soloists and chamber musicians throughout the United States, Europe and Asia, and have been critically acclaimed for their performances of new music as well as familiar works from the traditional duo-piano repertoire.

Works written for the Orpheus Duo include those by composers Martin Herman, Carolyn Bremer, Robin Cox, Alan Shockley and Curt Cacioppo. Recent concerts have included music of Lloyd Rodgers, Poulenc, and Mr. Uranker's arrangement of dances from Manuel De Falla's *Three-Cornered Hat*.

Both artists are on the keyboard faculty at the Bob Cole Conservatory of Music at California State University, Long Beach, and are in demand for performances and masterclasses throughout the United States. They are currently preparing new music for a recording as a tribute to composers who have written and dedicated works to them.



SPECIAL THANKS

The Orpheus Duo would like to extend sincere thanks and appreciation to Yamaha Artist Services for the donation of their CFX concert grand piano for our faculty artist recital this afternoon. We are honored and delighted for their generous support of our work.

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**BOB COLE
CONSERVATORY
OF MUSIC**
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, LONG BEACH

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THE BOB COLE CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC AT
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, LONG BEACH AND THE COLLEGE OF THE ARTS PROUDLY PRESENT:



FACULTY ARTIST RECITAL

ORPHEUS DUO

ALTHEA WAITES & MARK URANKER
PIANO

SUNDAY, MARCH 8, 2020 4:00PM

GERALD R. DANIEL RECITAL HALL

PLEASE SILENCE ALL ELECTRONIC MOBILE DEVICES.

PROGRAM

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1792) arr. Federico Busoni
Overture to *The Magic Flute*

Frederic Rzewski (b. 1938)
Winnsboro Cotton Mill Blues

INTERMISSION

Johannes Brahms (1833-1891)

Sonata in F minor, Opus 34b

1. Allegro non troppo
2. Andante, un poco Adagio
3. Scherzo: Allegro
4. Finale: Poco Sostenuto. Allegro non troppo

PROGRAM NOTES

OVERTURE TO *THE MAGIC FLUTE* The Overture to *The Magic Flute*, as transcribed by Ferruccio Busoni for two pianos, is an excellent setting of Mozart's introduction to his final work for the opera stage which was composed in 1791, the year of his death.

The piece opens with three majestic chords followed by a solemn and slowly paced section which paves the way for a single theme which is fully developed in contrapuntal form.

There are several musical references to the number 3 in the overture, and because Mozart was a freemason, the symbolic number also occurs in the opera, i.e., 3 trials for the two lovers, 3 ladies from the royal court, 3 children, etc.

Busoni's transcription is probably the only version of the Overture for two pianos, and it is a brilliant and impressive introduction to one of the most popular and widely performed operas in the dramatic repertoire.

—Althea Waites

WINNSBORO COTTON MILL BLUES

*Old Man Sargent, sitting at the desk,
The damned old fool won't give us no rest.
He'd take the nickels off a dead man's eyes,
To buy Coca-Cola and Eskimo Pies.
I've got the blues,
I've got the blues,
I've got the Winnsboro Cotton Mill Blues.*

Winnsboro, South Carolina, like many towns in the Deep South, featured a cotton mill which operated for most of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Songs of struggle were composed and sung by the workers in the cotton mills, coal mines and farms of the area; they speak of workplace inequity, corrupt management, dangerous workplace conditions and mocked the stupidity and greed of those who owned the factories. The *Winnsboro Cotton Mill Blues* was written sometime in the 1930s and later became well-known after being recorded by Pete Seeger in 1956. Frederic Rzewski, an exceptionally gifted composer and pianist, used the industrial folk song as the basis for the last of his *Four North American Ballads for Piano*, written in 1979. He later arranged the piece for two pianos.

The piece begins with an astonishing sonic portrait of the cotton mill, with its hundreds of looms wheezing and creaking, starting up for the day. The work song is woven bit by bit into the texture as the piece unfolds. Except for a brief respite, the unrelenting whirr of the broken-down cotton mill is ever-present throughout the piece.

—Mark Uranker

SONATA IN F MINOR, OPUS 34 In 1864, Brahms arranged his Quintet for Piano and Strings in a version for two pianos. It is a work of epic proportions and clearly demonstrates the composer's complete mastery of form as well as his brilliant development of thematic material. There are considerable technical and musical challenges for the pianists because they share the parts which are played by the string quartet in the first version of the piece. Both versions of the work have been performed and recorded for many years, and are regarded as an integral part of the chamber music repertoire.

—Althea Waites