



**GRAND VALLEY
STATE UNIVERSITY**[®]

**DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC,
THEATRE, AND DANCE**

Symphony Orchestra
Joel Schut, conductor

7:30 P.M.
Wednesday, November 15, 2023
Louis Armstrong Theatre
Haas Center for Performing Arts
GVSU Allendale Campus

Program

...and then the Universe exploded (2017)

Olivia Kieffer (b. 1980)

Concerto for Oboe (1982)

Vladimir Werner (1937-2010)

Marlen Vavříková , soloist

Vltava from Má Vlast (The Moldau) (1874)

Bedřich Smetana (1824-1884)

Conga del Fuego Nuevo (2005)

Arturo Márquez (b. 1950)

Symphony Orchestra Personnel

Names are listed in alphabetical order to emphasize the contribution of each player

Violin I

Genevieve Balivet
Esther Bard
Erin Gibbons
Rachel Glanton
Andrew Kales**
Jeffrey Mom
Jocelynn Pierce
Avery Trimble
Aveline Schienke

Violin II

Noah Abdelkader*
John Chikwe
Rebekah Doody
Henry Hilbelink
Breanna Lane
Daniel Lesinski
Priscilla Martin
Danielle Meyers
Emma Young

Viola

Sam Bryant
Matt DuRose
Morgan Hare
Cruz Peña*
Jeffrey Rast

Cello

Giselle Balivet
Jordan Bancino*
Ava Chupack
Emalie DeBoer
Jake Doctor
Grace Jenkins
Madigan Lautzenheiser

Cello cont.

Aiden Mack
Reece Nesbitt
Bridget Parlmer
Maria Rocha
Kristin Vis

Double Bass

Cullen DeCou*
Julia Droscha
Jeremiah Jackson

Piccolo

Grace Morrison

Flute

Christian Glascock*
Abigail Walsh+

Oboe

Natalie Feldpausch*
Natalie Kline

Clarinet

Conrad Cassar*
Mason Ouzts

Bass Clarinet

Nick Sparks

Bassoon

Simon Furton
Dakon VanDusen*

Horn

Richard Britsch+
Delaney Nation
Michael Scobey+
Evan Supplee

Trumpet

Max Gradisher*
Lewis Kailing
Tate Szilagyi

Trombone

Clair Jansma
Matthew Keith
Dylan Schoolcraft*

Tuba

Michael Ring

Timpani

Zachary Haverkamp

Percussion

Dyami Campos
David Hempstead
Brandon Klein
Greg Secor+

Piano

Andrew Lenhart+

Harp

Beth Colpean+

*Section Principal

**Concertmaster

+Guest Artist

Program Notes

Olivia Kieffer - ...and then the Universe exploded

...and then the Universe exploded is a wild and joyful piece originally composed for the Reinhardt University Symphonic Winds in 2017, and arranged for the Lakeland Civic Orchestra in 2018.

The beginning source material comes from an unrealized concept album I started back when I was writing electronic beat music, called “Everything Everything All of the Time.” This feeling of everything seeming to happen at once, and all the time, has not disappeared in my life; I am no stranger to fairly continuous life changes. In the first section of the piece, the musicians build layers of joy upon each other. The second section features a (very polite yet bombastic) Battle of the Bands, which abruptly segues into the entire ensemble shouting a Countdown to the End of the World. In its essence, this piece is about the end of everything. We often think of the end of things that we love as a loss, or bittersweet at best. But sometimes, the end is the most beautiful.

-Note by Olivia Kieffer

Vladimir Werner – Concerto for Oboe

Vladimir Werner (1937-2010) belongs to the generation of composers who were active contributors to Czech culture during the twentieth century. Concerto for Oboe was awarded the Leos Janacek Prize in 1982, and while it was performed by a prominent Moravian oboist Vitezslav Winkler, he was the only oboist to record it for the Supraphon Label (LP). Due to its limited accessibility, this concerto has not been recorded for almost three decades and its recording from 1984 is only available in Czech libraries. Vladimir Werner was born and raised in Brno, the second largest city in the Czech Republic. Like many musicians of that time and region, his writing was influenced by Leos Janacek, who established the Brno Conservatory, where Werner studied and taught. Werner’s music was also inspired by his admiration for Bohuslav Martinu, Arthur

Honegger, and Igor Stravinsky, which we can hear in his Oboe Concerto. Tonight's performance marks the US Debut of this work as well as a recording project by the GVSU Symphony Orchestra this month with Blue Raven Records.

-Note by Marlen Vavříková and Joel Schut

Bedřich Smetana - Vltava from *Má Vlast* (The Moldau from My Country)

Every visitor to Prague carries away certain cherished memories of the many splendid vistas this magnificent city has to offer. One of my favorite venues is the ornate Karl's Bridge that spans the Vltava (Moldau) River. The bridge itself, with its venerable history and statues, offers delights to the eye in every direction. One of the more romantic views is the one that is directed toward the ancient ruins of the castle Vyšehrad, by tradition a site that once served as the seat of the Kings of Bohemia. And if one is familiar with it, how can you fail at such a moment call to mind the majestic strains of Smetana's music?

Vltava, or The Moldau as it is better known throughout the world, is the second of the cycle of six tone poems that comprise *Má vlast* (My Homeland). The composition of the cycle took place over a seven year span (1872-79), with Vltava appearing in 1874 (the same year, incidentally as another famous piece of eastern European nationalism—Mussorgsky's mighty *Pictures at an Exhibition*). The conception of *Má vlast*, as well as some of its musical material, arose while the composer was at work on *Libuše*, a nationalistic opera. The six symphonic poems that comprise *Má Vlast* present, according to John Clapham in the *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, a “conspectus of selected aspects of Czech legend, history and scenery.” The primary theme of the first poem, entitled *Vyšehrad*, is quoted toward the end of *Vltava*.

Smetana himself provided a kind of guide that leads the listener through the four principle sections of *Vltava*:

Two springs [depicted by flutes and clarinets] pour forth their streams in the shade of the Bohemian forest, the one warm and gushing, the other cold and

tranquil. Their waves, joyfully flowing over rocky beds, unite and sparkle in the rays of the morning sun. The forest brook, rushing on, becomes the River Vltava (Moldau) [the memorable melody played by the strings]. Coursing through Bohemia's valleys, it grows into a mighty stream. It flows through dense woods from which come joyous hunting sounds [fanfares in the brass section], and the notes of the hunter's horn drawing ever nearer and nearer. It flows through emerald meadows and lowlands, where a wedding feast is being celebrated with songs and dancing [duple meter Polka in strings and winds]. By night, in its glittering waves, wood and water nymphs hold their revels [shimmering tune played by strings and flutes]. And these waters reflect many a fortress and castle—witnesses of a bygone age of knightly splendor, and the martial glory of days that are no more. At the Rapids of the St. John the stream speeds on [reprise of Vltava main theme, followed by agitated full orchestra], winding its way through cataracts and hewing a path for its foaming waters through the rocky chasm into the broad riverbed [Main theme in the major mode], in which it flows on in majestic calm toward Prague, welcomed by the time-honored Vyšehrad [hymn-like appearance of theme from the first poem of Má vlast], to disappear in far distance from the poet's gaze.

Much discussion has taken place about the origin and fate of the extraordinarily attractive principle theme of Vltava. Some have suggested that it comes from a Swedish folksong, which is possible since Smetana lived and worked in the late 1850s in Göteborg. Indeed, many Czechs know it as a folksong. Still others have noted the similarity of Hatikvah (The Hope), the unofficial national anthem of Israel, to this splendid tune, although the Encyclopaedia Judaica traces Hatikvah to a Rumanian folksong. The moral of the story here may be that we should beware of defining national musical themes in too narrow a fashion. After all, how many people realize that, despite its name, the Polka comes from Bohemia (Czech Lands), and not Poland?

-Note by David Levy

Márquez Marquez - Conga del Fuego Nuevo

A native of the Mexican state of Sonora, Márquez is known for his adroit incorporation of Mexican musical forms and styles into his compositions. One of Mexico's eminent contemporary composers, he is widely popular for the accessibility and attractiveness of his compositions. Educated at the Conservatorio Nacional in Mexico, he went on to graduate study in California and Paris. Recipient of an impressive list of honors, his works include a commission from the San Antonio Symphony, a cello concerto, and a homage to Emiliano Zapata, the Mexican revolutionary. His father was a traditional mariachi musician, but early on, like so many young composers, the son composed in the latest, modern styles, often in the usual dissonant and obscure manner. But, he later gravitated to a personal idiom that made full use of traditional Mexican urban music—but not necessarily “folk” music.

“Conga” variously refers to groups of musicians, to a kind of drum, and to a specific dance, as well. All are popular in Latin-American countries, especially in the street carnivals of Havana and Santiago de Cuba. These musical groups are part of the *camparsas* that parade down the streets in jubilant, often riotous carnival celebrations. The term, “conga” has a long and somewhat ambiguous history, but it likely stems from the dance taken to Cuba by black slaves from the West Indies.

The dance is characterized by a strong pulse on the beat for three beats, followed by a syncopated “thump” just before the fourth beat. In the late 1930s and 1940s the US seemed obsessed by the conga: think of Desi Arnaz, Xavier Cugat, the nightclub conga lines in RKO musicals, and even Warner Brothers cartoons. Here, Márquez has taken this somewhat passe dance and infused it with new life in a brilliant symphonic setting. Lyrical melodies seem to “float” above the welter of syncopated rhythms churned out by the large battery of Latin percussion. Who could resist?

-Note by William Runyan

GVSU Music Faculty

Christopher Belland	Samuel Gould	Danny Phipps
Rachael Bergan	Adam Graham	Bill Ryan
Ryan Blok	Dan Graser	Dale Scriemer
Richard Britsch	Letitia Jap	Joel Schut
Mark Buchner	Gary June	Dan Scott
Arthur Campbell	Olivia Kieffer	Greg Secor
Paul Carlson	Andrew Lenhart	Kathryn Stieler
Sookkyung Cho	Pablo Mahave-Veglia	Paul Swantek
Greg Crowell	Helen Marlais	Kevin Tutt
Michael Drost	Barry Martin	Marlen Vavříková
Lisa Feurzeig	John Martin	Abigail Walsh
Andrew Focks	Sarah Mo	Mark Williams
Tim Froncek	Chuck Norris	Alex Wilson
Beth Gibbs	Victoria Olsen	Ruth Wilson
Patricia Gordon		Molly York

Upcoming MTD Events

- November 16 at 7:30PM – CORNOcopia. SVS, PAC
November 17 at 7:30PM – Opera Theatre Presents: *Rent*. KBB, PAC
November 18 at 7:30PM – Opera Theatre Presents: *Rent*. KBB, PAC
November 18 at 2:00PM – Dr. Cho’s Studio Project: Mozart Concerti. SVS,
November 19 at 7:30PM – Opera Theatre Presents: *Rent*. KBB, PAC
November 20 at 7:30PM – Saxophone Studio Recital. SVS, PAC
November 27 at 7:30PM – Faculty Artist: Sookkyung Cho. SVS, PAC
November 29 at 7:30PM – Chamber Music Ensemble. SVS, PAC
November 30 at 7:30PM – Guest Artist: Melody Quah. SVS, PAC
December 1 at 7:30PM – Opera Theatre Presents: *Rent*. KBB, PAC
December 2 at 2:00PM – Dr. Cho’s Studio Recital. SVS, PAC
December 2 at 7:00PM – Fall Dance Concert. LAT, PAC

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