

Third Annual Concert of Music by Bill Robinson

Nelson Music Room, East Duke Building, Duke University
Tuesday, February 28, 2012 8:00 PM

An Introduction to Tonight's Festivities

Bill Robinson (b. 1955)

Grand Serenade

for Clarinet, Cello, and Piano

(Nov. 9, 2007—Jan.20, 2008, last movement added July 14—Aug. 15 2008)

Fred Jacobowitz, clarinet; Bonnie Thron, cello; Thomas Warburton, piano

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| I. Overture | <i>Allegro</i> |
| II. Romantic Interlude | <i>Largo</i> |
| III. Serious Scherzo | <i>Capo di tutti Capi</i> |
| IV. Grand Finale with Loose Canons | <i>Allegro con brouhaha</i> |

Ananda Sonata

for Violin and Piano

(May 12—June 16, 2007)

Eric Pritchard, violin; Thomas Warburton, piano

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| I. Hard Times | <i>Allegro non troppo</i> |
| II. Allah | <i>Adagio alla mantra</i> |
| III. Prime Times | <i>Highly Eccentric</i> |

Intermission

Clarinet Sextet

for Clarinet in A, Two Violins, Viola, and Two Cellos

(November 26, 2009—February 22, 2010)

Fred Jacobowitz, clarinet; Eric Pritchard and Mary Kay Robinson, violins; David Marschall, viola; Bonnie Thron and Nathan Leyland, cellos

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| I. A Small Still Voice | <i>Adago con queso</i> |
| II. Faster, Higher, Louder | <i>Paprika</i> |
| III. Curious Interlude | <i>Oregano I, Oregano II</i> |
| IV. A Fearful Earful | <i>Gorgonzola</i> |

About *Grand Serenade*

Fred Jacobowitz asked me to consider writing something he could play with his wife Bonnie Thron. He noted that there are several couples in the area of clarinetists married to cellists, so it seemed like a very good idea. So, this piece is dedicated to Fred and Bonnie. There were originally three movements, but after the premiere Bonnie and Fred asked me to add a finale.

Any of the four movements can stand alone in performance; the first and last are especially well-suited for this.

About *Ananda Sonata*

Ananda-Eric Pritchard asked me to write a violin sonata for his recitals early in 2008, and as I had none in my catalog, it sounded like a very good idea. One of my early compositions was a sonata for violin and piano, written during my first year of college (1973 at Eastman), but it was immature and derivative and has not survived. This work, on the other hand, is fully mature and ready for consumption.

I'm not by nature a programmatic composer, so the first movement is not intended to have a literal title; however I've had a pretty tough time much of my life and in some way, a good deal of my music cannot help but reflect some of this. After I had written most of the first movement that it seemed right to call it "Hard Times". The second movement is intended as a kind of mantra; quite a few of my works are best heard with a repeated series of words mentally set to the music, and this is no exception. Since Ananda is involved with Sufism, it was most appropriate to use *Allah* as the mantra. And the last movement started off in 12 but then I knocked off a note leading to 11 per measure, then decided to continue the prime number meter idea and ended up with most meters in 5, 7, 11, and 13. In addition there are some fancy compound rhythms and some tricky playing, especially for the piano. The technical requirements for the first movement are moderate and the middle is easy, but the last movement does require real proficiency. If this results in only the first or second movements, or both, being performed at a future concert, this is perfectly acceptable.

About *Clarinet Sextet*

I have written two chamber works previous to this including clarinet; *Quartet for a New Beginning*, for clarinet, violin, cello and piano, and *Grand Serenade*. These combinations worked well for the kind of music that I write. While most of my chamber music includes piano, sometimes I like to get away from it for a bit. At first I intended to write a clarinet quintet for the usual clarinet and string quartet, but from the first few measures the music insisted on an extra cello. So—I went with the flow.

For no particular reason, the tempo markings are all taken from food. Except for the first movement's "Adagio con queso", none give an idea as to tempo, requiring musicians to refer to the metronome markings, which I much prefer.

Tonight's Musicians

Fred Jacobowitz received his Bachelors and Masters degrees from the Juilliard School, where he studied with the late Leon Russianoff. He made his New York Debut at Carnegie Recital Hall (now Weill Hall) as winner of the Artists International Competition. He was a featured soloist on radio stations WBAI and WQXR in New York City, with the Goldman Band, and in recital throughout the Metropolitan New York area. As a chamber musician, he has participated in the Marlboro Music Festival and played in the Verrazano Winds Woodwind Quintet in Brooklyn, New York. Mr. Jacobowitz was Principal Clarinetist in the Annapolis (Maryland) Symphony Orchestra from 1989-2002. He is equally at home in the worlds of Classical, Jazz and Folk, having performed and recorded with his Kol Haruach Klezmer Band (www.kolharuach.com) and his duo, Ebony and Ivory (www.ebonyandivory.ca). He has performed as recitalist and soloist throughout the US and Canada and in Panama. Mr. Jacobowitz now resides in Raleigh, NC, where (when not performing out of town) he teaches and freelances, and he can often be heard playing concerts with his wife, North Carolina Symphony Principal Cellist Bonnie Thron. He runs his own business, Case Closed (www.case-closed.us), fixing musical instrument cases and is a sometime Little League Baseball Umpire.

Nathan Leyland, cello, attended the Manhattan School of Music, where he studied with Nathanael Rosen. Before moving to the Triangle, he was principal cellist of the Des Moines Symphony and member of the Pioneer String Quartet. Leyland has performed as soloist with symphony orchestras in Ohio, New York and Connecticut, and as recitalist and chamber musician in much of the United States. He is currently an active freelancer in North Carolina, performing with the Chamber Orchestra of the Triangle, Mallarme Chamber Players, the Carolina Ballet Orchestra among others.

David Marschall has been a member of the North Carolina Symphony since 1987. He was appointed Associate Principal Viola in 2007, and this season he is serving as Acting Principal Viola. Since 1990, he has spent his summers playing in the orchestra of the Santa Fe Opera. David is a member of the chamber ensemble Quercus, and he is a member of New Music Raleigh, an ensemble dedicated to the music of living composers. He performs regularly in the Peace College Chamber Music Series and with the Mallarme Chamber Players.

David has also served as Principal Viola for the Baltimore Chamber Orchestra and the Columbus Pro Musica Chamber Orchestra. He was a member of the New Orleans Symphony, the Innsbruck (Austria) Symphony, the Des Moines Metro Opera, and the Colorado Philharmonic.

A native of Columbus, Ohio, David studied first at Ohio State, and he received his Master's degree from the Peabody Conservatory, where he studied with Karen Tuttle. His viola was made in 2009 by Grubaugh and Seifert of California. David's wife, Amy, teaches German and English at Raleigh Charter High School, and they have two sons, Philip and Owen.

Eric Pritchard, violinist, has been a member of Ciompi Quartet since 1995 and was formerly the first violinist of the Alexander and Oxford Quartets. Mr. Pritchard has taught at Miami University, San Francisco State University, City University of New York and the North Carolina School of the Arts. He was winner of the National Federation of Music Clubs Award in Violin as well as the first-prize winner at the Portsmouth (England) International String Quartet Competition and the Coleman and Fischhoff national chamber music competitions. He has performed widely as a recitalist and as soloist with the Boston Pops and orchestras in Europe and South America. His major teachers were Eric Rosenblith, Josef Gingold, Ivan Galamian and Isadore Tinkleman and he holds degrees from Indiana University and the Juilliard School. He has performed many works by Bill Robinson since 2006, and has made this series of concerts possible.

Bill Robinson, composer, was born in Denton, Texas in 1955. He started piano lessons at age three and violin at nine. He moved to Massachusetts in 1961. Composition started in 1972 at Phillips Academy, Andover. After that came a year at Eastman School of Music, then many years

at UNT in Denton Texas, earning a BM in composition in 1984. Bill came to North Carolina in 1987.

Bill came to Raleigh in 2001 to study physics at NCSU, and earned a BS in 2004, and a PhD in 2010. He has constructed a novel plasma confinement experiment and is now a lecturer on the physics faculty at NCSU.

Bill has recorded eleven CDs, and has a website at billrobinsonmusic.com that has all his scores and recordings. In 2011 he wrote his *Autobillography*, which is available in print, downloadable at his website billrobinsonmusic.com, and also recorded as an audio book.

Mary Kay Robinson, violinist, is a 1968 graduate of the Juilliard School, where she studied with Dorothy DeLay and Ivan Galamian. She studied chamber music with Felix Galimir, Donald Weilerstein, Josef Gingold and members of the Guarneri String Quartet. She furthered her education with studies with Glenn Dicterow, Gregory Fulkerson and Gerald Beal. Her first job after graduation was as violin instructor at the University of Tennessee, in her hometown of Knoxville, where she filled in for her former teacher, William Starr, who was on sabbatical in Japan. She was a member of the University of Tennessee String Quartet and later held a similar position in the University of Maryland String Quartet.

Mary Kay was member of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra from 1969 to 1973, where she also participated in many chamber music concerts with her orchestra colleagues. Later she joined the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra and substituted for many years with the New York Philharmonic Orchestra. She has played chamber music with many illustrious musicians including Paul Neubauer, Kerry McDermott, Muneko Otani, Dan Foster, Yehonatan Berrick, Fred Sherry, Steve Balderston, and Peter Lloyd, Andres Cardenes, and David Harding.

She has toured with Solisti New York and spent many summers playing with the OK Mozart Festival, Grand Teton Music Festival, and Bellingham Festival of Music. All the while she has maintained an active private teaching studio and worked on the ground floor of a joint project with the NJ Symphony and the Newark city schools, bringing string teaching to second, third and fourth graders. She helped develop the NJ Symphony's Outreach program, which today carries music to people all over the state of NJ from hospitals and nursing homes to museums, libraries and schools. In 2008 she taught at Duke University as well as maintaining a private studio. Also that year, she performed Bill Robinson's *Sonata for Solo Violin #4* at Brevard, NC.

Bonnie Thron; Principal cellist of the North Carolina Symphony, Bonnie has been a concerto soloist with many orchestras in North Carolina, New England, Maryland and Panama. She has been a soloist and frequent collaborator with the Brussels Chamber Orchestra during their summer North Carolina residencies. Bonnie plays with the Mallarme Chamber Players and was involved in their latest cd release "Songs for the Soul" which consists of music by African American composers. Formerly a member of the Peabody Trio and the Denver Symphony, she also performed with the Orpheus Chamber Ensemble and Speculum Musicae in NYC. She has been a frequent guest artist with the Apple Hill Chamber Players in her home state of New Hampshire and participates every August in the Sebago Long Lake Music Festival in Harrison, Maine. As well as degrees from the Juilliard School, Bonnie also has a BSN from the Johns Hopkins School of Nursing and worked for several years as a nurse in Baltimore.

Thomas Warburton, pianist, has lived and performed in the Triangle area since the fall of 1969. In 2005 he retired after 36 years on the music faculty of the University of North Carolina. He has performed in solo and collaborative recitals in a variety of venues, especially California, Michigan, Ohio, and New York. He has been associated with the Mallarmé Chamber Players since 1993 and appears on three of their recordings including a recent CD of T. J. Anderson's Spirit Songs with Bonnie Thron. He regularly substitutes as organist for churches in Durham and Chapel Hill. He has given first performances of music by a variety of American composers including T. J. Anderson, William Albright, Sydney Hodkinson, and most recently Allen Anderson, who wrote "Some Ragged Spots" for him in 2009.