

Myriad Trio

presented by the uc san diego department of music
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two thousand and eleven

Myriad Trio

Demarre McGill, flute

Che-Yen Chen, viola

Julie Smith, harp

Trio Sonata III in G Major, BWV 1038

J.S. Bach (1685-1750)

Largo

Vivace

Adagio

Presto

At Dusk

Arthur Foote (1853-1937)

The Eye of Night

David Bruce (*1970)

Movement I

Movement II

Movement III

Movement IV

intermission

Elegiac Trio

Arnold Bax (1883-1953)

Sonate

Claude Debussy (1862-1918)

Pastorale

Interlude

Final

About Tonight's Program

Trio Sonata III in G Major, BWV 1038

Despite the fact that the trio sonata was an extremely popular 'classical' genre of the Baroque period, only four trio sonatas by Bach have survived. Most likely his works in this field have proved particularly vulnerable to the ravages of time. All evidence suggests that he did indeed write assiduously in this form, but when his musical estate was divided amongst his four sons, much of the chamber music ended up in the hands of poor custodians of their father's priceless musical legacy. The **Sonata in G Major BWV 1038** is partly based on the Violin Sonata BWV 1021 and most likely was a collaborative effort between Bach and one of his sons. Dating from the early 1730's, it was probably intended for one of the weekly concerts of Bach's Collegium Musicum. This version of the G Major Trio Sonata was arranged for flute, viola and harp by the Myriad Trio.

At Dusk for Flute, Viola and Harp

American composer Arthur Foote (1853-1937) is sadly one of the most overlooked composers of the 19th-20th century. In comparison to composers like Aaron Copland, some might characterize his music as highly "Romantic" and "European" in style, as Foote's works are often lyrical and expressive, with a clear and formal structure. A native of Boston and raised within a rich family tradition of ministers and devout Unitarians, Foote frequently performed church music as a child which undoubtedly influenced him in his writing of numerous anthems and pieces for organ. However, Foote is best remembered today for his instrumental chamber music compositions. Characterized by simpler, melodic lines, his chamber music seems to have a timeless, yet nostalgic quality, certainly evident in his work, **At Dusk**. Inspired by the groundbreaking *Sonate* by Debussy, **At Dusk**, written in 1920, is Foote's demonstration that he could blend the sonorities of the three diverse instruments just the same. The opening melody of the piece transports the listener to another time and place, where a dream-like middle section distracts just long enough for the original melody to sound like an old friend, upon its return at the end of the piece.

The Eye of Night for Flute, Viola, and Harp (notes by the composer):

About the Performers

The Eye of Night was commissioned by Art of Elan & the Myriad Trio in San Diego and is dedicated to Gordon Brodfuehrer. It is a series of four tender movements, each in their own way a kind of nocturne. The night, and in particular the night sky, has long held a fascination for me. We all know the awe-inspiring site that awaits us if we are lucky enough to find ourselves away from the city lights in front of a cloudless night sky – I think the awe we experience on such occasions is not just because of the beauty and grandeur of the spectacle – but because it's one of the few times we are directly faced with the vast mystery of the universe. I have made an oath to myself that at least once every year I will make a pilgrimage to somewhere where I am able to lose myself in such a spectacle. Continuing a source of inspiration from one of the songs in my song-cycle for Dawn Upshaw, "The North Wind was a Woman," I have been drawn to the image, first discovered in a short story by Aimee Bender, of the night sky as a giant eye looking down on us, unblinkingly. The image fascinates me because it captures the complexity of feelings one experiences when staring up into space – it is friendly, familiar and constant, whilst at the same time being overwhelming, dizzying and quietly terrifying.

The first of the movements has a dark atmosphere, that falls somewhere between sensual and plaintive. The melodic flute lines draw inspiration from the ornamental style of Indian bansuri flute playing. The second, very short movement has a sweeter atmosphere, showing a more tender and blissful side of night. The third, while still in a largely *piano* or *pianissimo* dynamic register, is more active and flowing. The final movement is a lullaby, or 'song without words,' inspired by William Blake's "Cradle Song" where he imagines the 'little sorrows' and 'quiet desires' of a sleeping baby.

Elegiac Trio

English composer Arnold Bax (1883-1953) was perhaps one of the earliest "Impressionist" composers, even though he spent much of his time in Ireland, writing in a style that also suggested a strong Celtic influence. This **Elegiac Trio** was composed in the spring of 1915, the same year that Debussy was



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writing his sonata for this same unique combination of instruments, but was composed not long after the tragic Easter Uprising in Ireland, an event in which several of Bax's friends were killed. The opening of the piece is rather dream-like, as if one is reminiscing of an earlier, more joyful time. The actual "elegy" (song for the dead) portion of the piece comes only towards the end, with the flute playing a slow and mournful figure over and over again, until all three instruments join together in a peaceful resolution.

Sonata for flute, viola and harp

A highly influential figure in turn-of-the-century Europe, French composer Claude Debussy (1862-1918) has often been labeled as an Impressionist composer, along with his younger colleague Maurice Ravel, although he hated his works being categorized as such. But like Impressionist artwork, Debussy's compositions are filled with a variety of muted colors and tones, often with no obvious structure or form. His melodic lines come across like flourishes of paint on a canvas, and his harmonies sound foreign, as if they originated in an exotic land. He was one of the first major European composers to use Eastern-sounding chords in his music, which entered his compositional style after his hearing Javanese gamelan music at the world fair in Paris. **Sonata** for flute, viola and harp was written quite late in his life and was one of the first major chamber music compositions for this unique combination of instruments. Written in three movements, this haunting work begins as if telling a story, with all three instruments serving both as narrators and atmosphere.

Winner of a 2003 Avery Fisher Career Grant, flutist **Demarre McGill** has performed concerti with the Chicago Symphony, Philadelphia Orchestra, Pittsburgh Symphony, San Diego Symphony, Baltimore Symphony and Milwaukee Symphony, among others. An active chamber musician, Mr. McGill is a member of the Jacksonville, Florida based Ritz Chamber Players and has been a member of Chamber Music Society Two, the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center's program for emerging young artists. He has been featured on a PBS "Live From Lincoln Center" broadcast with the Chamber Music Society performing Bach's Brandenburg Concerto #2 as well as on an Angel Records CD playing Bach's Brandenburg Concerto #5 with pianist Awadagin Pratt and the St. Lawrence String Quartet. Mr. McGill has participated in the Music from Angel Fire, Santa Fe, Kingston, Cape Cod, Music@Menlo, Bay Chamber Concerts, Mainly Mozart, La Jolla and Marlboro music festivals. He has also performed on the Ravinia Festival's "Rising Star" series, the A&E Network Series "The Gifted Ones," and was special guest on the Mr. Roger's Neighborhood television program. Currently principal flutist of the San Diego Symphony, Mr. McGill has held the same position with The Florida Orchestra and the Santa Fe Opera Orchestra. He also served as acting principal flutist of the Pittsburgh Symphony during the 2005-06 season. In addition to his performance schedule, Mr. McGill is the co-founder and Artistic Director of Art of Élan, a chamber music organization in San Diego that aims to expose new audiences to classical music. Mr. McGill received his Bachelor's Degree in Flute Performance from The Curtis Institute of Music where he studied with Julius Baker and Jeffrey Khaner. He continued his studies with Mr. Baker at the Juilliard School, where he received a Masters of Music degree.

Described by the Strad Magazine as a musician whose "tonal distinction and essential musicality produced an auspicious impression", Taiwanese violist **Che-Yen Chen** (also known as "Brian Chen") has established himself as a prominent recitalist, chamber, and orchestral musician. He is the first-prize winner of the 2003 William Primrose Viola Competition, the "President prize" of the 2003 Lionel Tertis Viola Competition. Currently the principal violist of San Diego Symphony, Mr. Chen has appeared as guest principal violist with Los Angeles Philharmonic, San

Francisco Symphony, and Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra. He has performed throughout the US and abroad in venues such as Alice Tully Hall, Merkin Hall, Weill Recital Hall, Carnegie Hall, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Jordon Hall, Library of Congress in D.C., Kimmel Center, Taiwan National Concert Hall, Wigmore Hall, and Snape Malting Concert Hall, among numerous others. A founding member of the Formosa Quartet, the first prize and the Amadeus prize winner of the 10th London International String Quartet Competition, Mr. Chen is an advocate of chamber music. He is a member Myriad Trio, Camera Lucida, Lincoln Center Chamber Music Society Two, the Jupiter Chamber Players, and has toured with Musicians from Marlboro after three consecutive summers at the Marlboro Music Festival. A participant at the Ravinia Festival, Mr. Chen was featured in the festival's Rising Star series and the inaugural Musicians from Ravinia tour. Other festival appearances include the Kingston Chamber Music Festival, International Viola Congress, Mainly Mozart, Chamber Music International, La Jolla Summerfest, Primrose Festival, Bath International Music Festival, Aldeburgh Festival, Seattle Chamber Music Society Summer Festival, Taiwan Connection, and numerous others. Mr. Chen has also taught and performed at summer programs such as Hotchkiss Summer Portal, Blue Mountain Festival, Academy of Taiwan Strings, Interlochen, Mimir Festival, and has given master-classes at the Taiwan National Arts University, University of Missouri Kansas City, University of Southern California, University of California Santa Barbara, and McGill University. Mr. Chen began studying viola at the age of six with Ben Lin. A four-time winner of the National Viola Competition in Taiwan, Mr. Chen came to the US and studied at The Curtis Institute of Music and The Juilliard School under the guidance of Michael Tree, Joseph de Pasquale, and Paul Neubauer. Mr. Chen had served on the faculty at Indiana University-South Bend, University of California San Diego, San Diego State University, McGill University, where he taught viola and chamber music.

Principal Harpist of the San Diego Symphony, **Julie Ann Smith** is one of the most prominent young harpists today, performing as both an orchestral musician and concert artist. Gaining international recognition for her performing style and diverse repertoire, Ms. Smith was the Silver medalist winner in the 2004 USA International Harp Competition and Bronze medalist in 2001. She made her National Symphony Orchestra debut in 2003 and has been honored in numerous competitions throughout the country. She is an active recitalist

and soloist with orchestras across the country, enchanting audiences with her dramatic presence and engaging style. Her appearances include performances with the San Diego Symphony, the New World Symphony Orchestra, the South Dakota Symphony, the West Los Angeles Symphony, the Corpus Christi Symphony Orchestra, the National Repertory Orchestra, and the Cleveland Institute of Music Orchestra. She has been the featured recitalist for the 2006 American Harp Society National Conference, the 2007 USA International Harp Competition and guest artist for the 2010 Young Artist Harp Seminar in Rabun Gap, GA. Equally experienced as a chamber and orchestral musician, Ms. Smith collaborates with renowned musicians across the country. A founding member of the San Diego-based Myriad Trio, she regularly appears in chamber concerts and festivals and has performed abroad in Italy and Japan. During the 2006-07 season she was the Acting Principal Harpist of the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra and prior to that held the position of Principal Harpist for the New World Symphony Orchestra. As a teacher, Ms. Smith maintains a harp studio and works with students of all ages. A trained instructor in the Suzuki method, she has served on faculty at Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp and regularly gives master-classes across the county. Ms. Smith released her first album, *The Rhapsodic Harp*, which is available from her website, www.harpjas.com. Attending the Cleveland Institute of Music, she received her Bachelor's and Master's degrees in harp performance where she studied with Yolanda Kondonassis. Her other primary teachers have included Alice Chalifoux and Patrice Lockhart. A native of Hastings, NE, Ms. Smith began studying the harp at age eleven.