

ORCHESTRA SEATTLE ■ SEATTLE CHAMBER SINGERS
GEORGE SHANGROW, MUSIC DIRECTOR
2009-2010 SEASON

HOT AND COLD

Sunday, May 2, 2010 ■ 7:00 PM
First Free Methodist Church

Orchestra Seattle
Seattle Chamber Singers
George Shangrow, *conductor*

MURL ALLEN SANDERS
(b. 1950)

She Blows Hot and Cold
(2010 – World Premiere performance)
Peggy Kurtz, soprano

MARIO CASTELNUOVO-
TEDESCO
(1895-1968)

Guitar Concerto No. 1 in D Major, Opus 99
(1939)
Allegretto
Andantino alla Romanza
Ritmico e cavaleresco
Michael Partington, guitar

INTERMISSION

MANUEL de FALLA
(1876-1946)

El sombrero de tres picos
(*The Three-cornered Hat*) (1917)
Introduction
Part One
Afternoon
Dance of the Miller's Wife (Fandango)
The Grapes
Part Two
The Neighbour's Dance (Seguidillas)
Dance of the Miller
The Corregidor's Dance
Final Dance
Melissa Plagemann, mezzo-soprano

Please disconnect signal watches, pagers and cellular telephones. Thank you.
Use of cameras and recording equipment is not permitted in the concert hall.

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Melissa Plagemann has been praised by audiences and the press for her "clear, burnished voice" (Tacoma News Tribune) and "attractively expressive mezzo" (Crosscut Seattle). She performs frequently with the finest musical organizations throughout the Pacific Northwest, and is rapidly becoming known for the passion and musical intelligence she brings to performances on opera and concert stages alike. Recent performances include Handel's Messiah with the Tacoma and Auburn Symphonies, Saint-Saëns' Christmas Oratorio with Orchestra Seattle, The Nutcracker and West Side Story Suite with Pacific Northwest Ballet, Rosina with the newly formed Vashon Opera, and performances with the Second City Chamber

Series, the Affinity Chamber Players, and at the American Harp Association national conference. She is on the faculty at Pacific Lutheran University.

Michael Partington is one of the most engaging of the new generation of concert guitarists. Praised by Classical Guitar Magazine for his "lyricism, intensity and clear technical command," the award-winning British guitarist has performed internationally as a soloist and with ensembles to unanimous critical praise. Audiences are put at ease by his charming stage manner and captivated by his musical interpretations. His innate rhythmic understanding and sense for tonal color

combine to form some of the most memorable phrasing to be heard on the guitar.

Mr. Partington began playing guitar at age 6 while growing up in Wales, gave his first public performance at age 7 and won his first competition at age 9. He has trained with many of the world's greatest guitarists, including Oscar Ghiglia, Eliot Fisk, Eduardo Fernandez, Manuel Barrueco and David Russell, who commented on his "exquisite good taste and fluid perfection."

Mr. Partington has appeared throughout the USA, UK, Canada, Russia, and Scandinavia in solo recital, with orchestra, and in chamber ensembles on the concert stage and on live radio. His North American appearances include the first solo guitar recital in Seattle's Benaroya Hall.

An advocate of new music, he has commissioned and premiered works by Stephen Goss, Bryan Johanson (*The Underdog*, premiered with Orchestra Seattle in 2005), Toshio Hosokawa, Angelo Gilardino, Tom Baker, Kevin Callahan and others. He is a frequent performer and teacher at festivals, and performs with flautist Paul Taub in Duo Dinamici. Mr. Partington is frequently invited to adjudicate local, national and international competitions in the US and Canada. His recordings are available on the Rosewood Recordings, Present Sounds and Cadenza Music labels. He lives in Seattle where he is director of the Guitar Program at the University of Washington.

PROGRAM NOTES

She Blows Hot and Cold

Muri Allen Sanders (b. Seattle, June 28, 1950)

Muri Allen Sanders, free-lance musician, composer, teacher, and recording artist, plays pop, rock, zydeco, country, jazz, blues, and various ethnic styles of music, and has been active in the Seattle area music scene and across the United States, Canada, England and Japan for some 30 years. He performs and records regularly with his own bands, as a soloist, and with numerous bands in the Northwest on the piano, accordion, Hammond B-3 organ, electronic keyboards, and harmonica, and as a singer. He has worked with such diverse artists as Chuck Berry, Etta James, Peter Duchin, The Von Trapp Children, Theodore Bikel, Leslie Gore, Barbara Lamb, Susan Pascal, Pearl Django, and Kelly Harland, among many others, and with Orchestra Seattle and the Seattle Chamber Singers, the Everett Symphony, and Cascade Symphony. He remains in demand as a workshop presenter and as a recording musician for film scores, advertisements, and CDs.

Mr. Sanders is adjunct faculty at Cornish College of the Arts in Seattle and received a 2009 ASCAP plus award for his concert compositions from the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers. Most recently, he has performed his jazz-

influenced 2003 Accordion Concerto No. 1, written for and premiered with Orchestra Seattle, with Cascade Symphony and the Everett Symphony and his 2007 Accordion Concerto No. 2 with Orchestra Seattle in its world premiere performance.

Sanders began to play the accordion at age six and received his first professional engagements at twelve. His earliest accordion influence was Stan Boreson, a local children's television personality, accordionist, and comedian still active in Seattle, and another was the Lawrence Welk show. His musical education was provided by many wonderful and inspirational teachers, including Doug Middendorf, his childhood accordion teacher, and John Wittwer, a superb pianist in the traditional jazz and ragtime styles, who introduced him to jazz piano and the "American Songbook." Sanders was recruited to play jazz piano in the big bands of Nathan Hale High School and Seattle Community College by John Moawad, another high-energy motivational teacher, and he also performed in rock bands. He earned a B.A. in music education from the University of Washington.

(biographical sketch compiled by Lorelette Knowles from the composer's notes; see www.murallensanders.com)

She Blows Hot and Cold is a piece dedicated to the memory of my mother, Ella May Sanders, who died January 2, 2008.

I received a grant from the Seattle Mayor's Office of Arts and Cultural Affairs City Artist program to write the piece. My thanks to the folks at the Office of Arts and Cultural Affairs and to George Shangrow, Orchestra Seattle and the Seattle Chamber Singers for performing it.

You may notice the episodic nature of the piece and the many varied styles and moods that occur, sometimes simultaneously. It is a study in contrasts as implied by the title. *She Blows Hot and Cold* is a sentence from a description of my mother by her best friend, LaPriel Leishman, who said: "Oh, you know May, she blows hot and cold." She was describing my mother's sometimes irritating habit of liking something one day and not the next.

The piece recalls for me some of the saddest moments in her dying days and some of the brightest joyful moments of her life. She led a charmed life in many ways with lots of lucky accidents and happiness. She didn't plan ahead much and lived in the moment much of the time, particularly in the last ten years of her life with Alzheimer's disease.

I thank my mother for inspiring this piece, even now contributing to my growth as an artist, musician and human being. If it provides anything for you, the listener, I am doubly grateful.

– Notes by the composer

THE TEXT

When the season comes to pass and it whispers in the night,
There is nothing you can do, perhaps shed a little light,
And maybe even raise a smile.
All is like a dream, dark dream.
But your tears will never stop it and soothing words won't hasten.
She is hot and cold. She blows hot and cold.
You let her go. You say goodbye.

– Murl Allen Sanders, 2010

Guitar Concerto No. 1 in D Major, Op. 99 **Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco (1895–1968)**

Born in Florence to a prominent Jewish family, prolific Italian composer Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco first achieved fame due to the advocacy of Alfredo Casella, who championed his works for solo piano. Throughout the 1920s, Castelnuovo was active as a music critic and accompanist, as well as a composer. Jascha Heifetz and Gregor Piatagorsky performed his works for violin and cello, respectively, and he wrote concertos for each of them. Although the musical establishment deemed him a "futurist" early in his career, Castelnuovo's idiom was largely conservative. He wrote later that he "never believed in modernism, nor in Neo-Classicism, nor in any other 'isms'" and that he took to heart Manuel de Falla's warning to him about "graphic contrivances" in music.

The increasingly anti-Semitic policies of Italy's Fascist government during the 1930s came to a head in 1938. "My music was suddenly banished from Italian radio," Castelnuovo wrote later, "and some performances of my works were cancelled." Aided by Heifetz and conductor Arturo Toscanini, the composer emigrated to the United States in the summer of 1939, first settling in New York, where he premiered his new piano concerto with the New York Philharmonic the following season. Two years later, he settled in Los Angeles, taking a job with Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer. Over the next two decades he would compose, arrange and orchestrate music (often uncredited) for dozens of films at MGM and at Columbia, Twentieth Century-Fox and other studios. He also continued to compose works for the concert stage, including many operas, overtures and songs on Shakespearean themes. Perhaps his most enduring legacy came through teaching: his students numbered among them a long list of A-list Hollywood talent who came to prominence in the 1950s and '60s, including Henry Mancini, Jerry Goldsmith, Nelson Riddle, André Previn and John Williams.

Today, Castelnuovo-Tedesco's reputation rests largely on his works for guitar, his first concerto for the instrument being among the most frequently performed concertos in the repertoire after those of Joaquín Rodrigo. In fact, Castelnuovo's Concerto

No. 1 and Rodrigo's more famous *Concierto de Aranjuez* (performed by Michael Partington and Orchestra Seattle in May 2004) were composed at virtually the same time (begun in 1938 and finished the following year) and under similarly trying circumstances. Castelnuovo's concerto premiered first, however, making it the first notable guitar concerto of the 20th century.

Castelnuovo's Guitar Concerto No. 1 came at the behest of the legendary instrumentalist Andrés Segovia, who presented the world premiere in October 1939 in Montevideo, Uruguay. The composer scored the work for rather small forces (single woodwinds plus a second clarinet, one horn, timpani and reduced string section) "to give more the appearance and color of the orchestra, rather than the weight." Castelnuovo later wrote about the work: "Strangely enough, although it was written at the most tragic period of my life, it is one of my most serene compositions."

The first movement represents a tribute to the Italian composer Luigi Boccherini (1743–1805), who himself composed several notable works for guitar, and prior to the recapitulation features a cello solo in acknowledgement of Boccherini's own instrument. Segovia described the slow movement, marked *Andantino alla romanza* and based on three Italian folk songs, as the composer's "tender farewell to the hills of Tuscany, which he was about to leave." The composer described the final movement, marked *Ritmico e cavalleresco* (rhythmically and in knightly fashion), as "more Spanish in character, rhythmic and bold, in the mood of an old ballad."

The Three-Cornered Hat **Manuel de Falla (1876–1946)**

Composer Manuel de Falla first came to the attention of the Spanish musical establishment due to his 1905 opera *La Vida breve*, which won him top prize in a composition contest, but failed to result in a premiere of the work. Falla then traveled to Paris, where he remained for seven years until the outbreak of World War I, gaining guidance from Debussy, Ravel, Dukas and others. Upon returning to Madrid, a successful performance of *La Vida breve*, which had premiered in Nice in 1913, earned him national fame.

Falla had long desired to create a stage work based on the novel, *El Sombrero de tres picos* (The Three-Cornered Hat) by Pedro Antonio de Alarcón y Ariza. The book had already served as the basis for a now-forgotten 1896 opera by Hugo Wolf, *Der Corregidor*, but Falla sought to develop a ballet, and created a pantomime with chamber-ensemble accompaniment, first performed in Madrid on April 7, 1917. The impresario Sergei Diaghilev, who traveled to Spain for the premiere, encouraged Falla as he reworked it into a two-act ballet for full orchestra.

After the end of the War, Diaghilev's Ballet Russes premiered the work on July 22, 1919, in London.

Ernest Ansermet conducted, with choreography by Léonid Massine (who also danced the role of the Miller) and set design by none other than Pablo Picasso. Falla composed the brief introduction to his ballet a mere 24 hours before the premiere, at the request of Diaghilev, who wished to provide the audience an opportunity to admire Picasso's drop curtain.

The work opens with a brass fanfare against pounding timpani, yielding to a voice singing in the distance:

Casadita, cierra con tranca la puerta; que aunque el Diabolo esté dormido a lo mejor se despierta!

Little house, bolt your door; the devil may now be sleeping, but you can be sure he will awaken!

As the curtain rises, a Miller and his young Wife tend grapes near their mill and play with a caged blackbird. When the Miller encourages the bird to chirp twice to announce that it is now two o'clock, the blackbird responds first with three whistles and then with four. The Miller becomes angry, to the amusement of his Wife, who offers the blackbird a grape and repeats the Miller's instructions, to which the bird now responds with two whistles—the Wife rejoices.

When the Miller goes off to retrieve water from a well, a young dandy happens by and flirts with the Wife. The Miller stops his whistling to watch, but the orchestra continues his tune, which he finishes by whistling the last note (represented by solo piccolo); the Wife laughs.

The Corregidor, an elderly government official, approaches with his minions in tow. When he drops his gloves, the Wife retrieves them. Although clearly smitten with the Miller's Wife, the Corregidor continues on his way when his own wife becomes aware of his inappropriate attentions. As the Miller and his Wife return to work, the Miller flirts with a young milkmaid, causing the Wife to become jealous. The Miller assures his Wife that he loves only her; they kiss and make up.

The Corregidor, represented by solo bassoon, returns (now accompanied by a single attendant) in order to woo the Wife, who suggests to her husband that he hide behind a tree to watch what transpires. The Wife dances a fandango, which becomes increasingly passionate even as she pretends not to notice the Corregidor. The official eventually announces himself, marked by a sustained note from horns and a solo bassoon playing the *olé gaditano*, a dance from Andalucía. She now flirts openly with the old man, seductively offering him grapes. When the Corregidor chases after her and falls down, the Miller emerges from behind the tree, armed with a stick, pretending to think the official is a burglar. The Miller and his Wife then pretend to sympathize with the Corregidor, helping him up and dusting him off more

vigorously than necessary. Now aware of their game, the Corregidor becomes furious and leaves with his bodyguard, who shoots the Miller a menacing look. The couple continues dancing the fandango as the first act draws to a close.

The second act begins later the same evening during a St. John's Night celebration. At the mill, neighbors dance a *seguidillas* based on two Spanish folk tunes. The Wife asks the Miller to dance for the assembled visitors, and he responds with a *farruca*, a flamenco that becomes increasingly spirited until the Corregidor's bodyguards interrupt the festivities to arrest the Miller. The guards haul the man away over the protestations of his Wife, who—after her guests depart—retreats to her bedroom, alone. In the distance, she hears a song:

Por la noche canta el cuco, advirtiendo a los casados que corran bien los corrojos que el Diabolo está desvelado! Por la noche canta el cuco: cucú! cucú! cucú!

In the night the cuckoo sings, warning husbands to secure their latches, for the Devil is vigilant. In the night the cuckoo sings: cuckoo! cuckoo! cuckoo!

The clock strikes nine and the Wife puts out the lights and closes the curtains.

The Corregidor appears, again represented by solo bassoon, still intent on seducing the Wife. When the Corregidor falls into a stream, he emerges soaking wet and attempts to speak to the startled Wife, but she interrupts him by stamping her foot. Enraged, he chases after her, but when she threatens to shoot him, he cowers in fear, allowing her to escape.

The old man removes his wet clothes and his three-cornered hat, hanging them on a chair to dry, and jumps into the Miller's bed. The Miller, having escaped from the bodyguards, now reappears. Seeing the Corregidor's clothes and hat in his bedroom, he suspects the worst has transpired between the old man and the his Wife. Grabbing the pistol that his Wife dropped, he hatches a plan of his own: he dons the Corregidor's clothes and leaves a note, intimating that he will seek retribution by pursuing the Corregidor's wife.

The lengthy "Final Dance," a *jota*, begins as the Corregidor emerges from the bed, his clothes missing and the Miller's note providing new consternation. The Corregidor dons the Millers' clothes and leaves the mill, only to have his own guards arrest him, as they believe him to be the Miller. The Wife returns and—thinking the Corregidor is actually her husband—attacks the guards. The *mêlée* awakens the neighbors, who convene on the scene just as the Miller, dressed in the Corregidor's clothes, returns to find his Wife defending the Corregidor.

A free-for-all ensues, attracting the attention of even more of the townspeople, who assume the fracas is part of the St. John's Night festivity. Falla reprises various tunes from earlier in the ballet. Eventually the mistaken identities are sorted out, but not before the Corregidor is tossed in the air on a blanket, in the Spanish tradition.

— notes by Jeff Eldridge

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The Shilshole Bay Beach Club was a beautiful spot for the event, bidding was fast and furious, and a great deal of fun was had by all.

Please consider joining us next year - it's a GREAT party!

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