

MUSIC PROGRAM – UCI Symphony Fall 2023

Dr. Geoffrey Pope, conductor
Dr. Rosalind Wong, piano

PROGRAM

Popul-Vuh: Four Mayan Dance Scenes for Orchestra (2005)

Carlos Rafael Rivera
1970 -

- Mvt. I First Creation
 Appearance of the Gods of Sea and Sky
 The Sowing of the Earth from the Sea
 The Dawning of all Creatures
 Conversation with the Gods
 Departure of the Gods
- Mvt. II Birth of the Hero Twins
 The Forbidden Tree
 Blood Moon's Unexpected Appearance
 She is Beckoned
 She is Seduced
 Conceives the Hero Twins
- Mvt. III Third Creation
 Creation of the Stick People
 They Prosper but are Ungrateful
 The Angered Gods Flood the World
- Mvt. IV Xibalba
 Summoning of the Hero Twins to The Gates of Xibalba
 The Ballgame
 The Sacrifice of the Hero Twins

Piano Concerto in D minor, op. 7 (1935)

Vítězslava Kaprálová
1915 – 1940

- Mvt. I Allegro entusiastico
Mvt. II Largo
Mvt. III Allegro

Dr. Rosalind Wong, piano

Intermission

Symphony No. 4 in E minor, op. 98 (1885)

Johannes Brahms
1833 – 1897

- Mvt. I Allegro non troppo

Mvt. II Andante moderato
Mvt. III Allegro giocoso
Mvt. IV Allegro energico e passionato

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

Popol-Vuh: Four Mayan Dance Scenes for Orchestra

Carlos Rafael Rivera

The *Popol-Vuh* is the Mayan People's *Book of the Dawn of Life*. It is a story at least as fantastic as those of Greek and Arthurian lore, telling us how it is that gods were able to create humankind after three unsuccessful attempts. Alongside the creation narrative, the *Popol-Vuh* tells us of the adventures of the Hero Twin deities through the underworld of Xibalba, their sacrifice in avenging their parents' death, and their final rise, each as the Sun and Moon. Both of these stories share parallel timelines, ending with the Hero Twins' appearance in the horizon as dawn to the successfully created human being.

--Dr. Carlos Rafael Rivera

Piano Concerto in D minor, op. 7

Vítězslava Kaprálová

The 1938 Festival of the International Society for Contemporary Music began with a concert by the BBC Symphony, broadcast to the United States and elsewhere over short-wave radio. The opening work launched a week of performances of the foremost composers of the day—including Béla Bartók, Olivier Messiaen, Aaron Copland, and Benjamin Britten. The work chosen to open the concert, the Military Sinfonietta by Vítězslava Kaprálová, was conducted by the composer herself, then only twenty-three years of age.

The death of Kaprálová just two years later marked the loss of one of the twentieth century's most promising composers. Should she have lived longer, it is likely her stature and legacy would have eclipsed those of many of her better-known male colleagues.

For further perspective, the Piano Concerto in D minor was Kaprálová's final *student* work at the Brno Conservatory. At fifteen, she had been the first woman accepted into the composition and conducting double-major, and by the time of the Piano Concerto it was evident that her musical vocabulary and ensemble sensibilities would exceed those of chamber and solo music. As musicologist Karla Hartl astutely points out, it is likely that her newness to composing for full orchestra was compensated for by her experience with the orchestra as a student of conducting. Kaprálová's adeptness—with the orchestra as a multifaceted instrument and designing its complex interactions with the piano, as well as her management of these disparate forces as a conductor—is testament not only to her own abilities, but also the level to which composition and conducting training can augment one another.

As to the sound world the concerto inhabits, Kaprálová's place and time exposed her to a much wider array of styles than those born even two decades before. In particular, Brno's First Republic cosmopolitanism and the Weimar assimilation of American jazz provided the rhythmic and harmonic building blocks for the parts of Kaprálová's musical language that exceeded the academic. It is unfair to the piece to describe solely it in relation to other works or other composers' styles, but given how rarely it is performed, I will take the chance of reductively describing its sound as something of a fusion of Rachmaninov and Gershwin (with some austerity from Paul Hindemith, perhaps).

The design of the piece is similarly cosmopolitan. A rhapsodic first movement begins with frequent orchestral eruptions, tempo changes, and cadenzas. This is followed by a short, brooding second movement that nods to antiquated musical forms and techniques. The finale starts without, spritely and erudite, with clear jazz and Bohemian folk inflections.

The musical rewards of the piece are evident even in a single listen. Of its challenges, Kaprálová wrote the following to a friend: "Please think of me on Monday and keep your fingers crossed. I have a concert and must now spend hours every day at rehearsals which were delayed till the last minute."

More information on the extraordinary life and music of Vítězslava Kaprálová can be found at The Kaprálová Society (<http://kapralova.org>).

--Dr. Geoffrey Pope

LIST OF PERFORMERS

Violin 1

Matthew Yee, concertmaster
Phillip Wang, assistant concertmaster
Selina Hsieh
Jun Zhu
Lucas Kang
Lauren Gauvin
Linden Jao
Jadan Ip
Joshua Mori
Simon Li
Michael Jang
John Le Mai

Violin 2

Anthony Wang, principal
David Jou
Rong Hu
Jared Pepito
Brian Calaguas
Alicia Clasquin
Annie Lin
Anna Komorita
Annika Vinekar
Shayna Sparks
Cindy Tayagua
Mia Murasaki
Arushi Pattar
Guy Deeprompt
Chelsea Hays

Viola

Ashley Chong, co-principal
Adam Tassos
Lawrence Cheung
Megan Eng
Luke Li
Sarah Soza

Cello

Ellie Chae, principal
Benjamin Stern
Allison Liu
Annie Gu
Scott Schik
Marcus Chen
Yilin Cae
Alex Zhuang
Adalmina Sarkar
Peter Krapp

Contrabass

Chelsea Wang, principal
Gavin Lyu
Eric Ashkarian
Kaleb Hsieh
Abel Esparza

Flute

Savanna Nygard, principal
Minami Mori
Kelly Choi

Piccolo

Minami Mori

Oboe

Jeffrey Shen, principal
TBA

English Horn

TBA

Clarinet (rotating)

Qifan Zhang
Taesung Hwang
Midori Dragics
Bella Bravo

E-flat Clarinet

Bella Bravo

Bass Clarinet

Midori Dragics

Bassoon

Caleb Martinez, principal

Chris Lopez

Horn (rotating)

Hugo Ziche Zheng

Ethan Nguyen

Jennifer Moritaka

TBA

Trumpet

Bryce Schmidt, principal

Wanze Lin

Trombone 1

Kory Ha, principal

Michael Rushman

Haven Beares

Bass Trombone

Haven Beares

Timpani

Haley MacKay

Christina Cheng

Percussion (rotating)

Haley MacKay

Katelyn Lin

Christina Cheng

Harp

Brianna Chang

Celesta

Sihan Ruan

Librarian/Teaching Assistant

João Martins

Contractor

June Satton

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