Faculty Recital Series: Linden Duo

Kimberly McCoul Risinger, Flute

Angelo L. Favis, Guitar

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It makes use of the Arabian-derived Hizaz scale and explores the connection between Balkan music and flamenco. The *rachenitsa* is a Bulgarian wedding dance in 7/8 time, which is often played at virtuosic breakneck speeds. Though based on a newly composed melody within a more lyrical flavor and varied harmonic context than is the norm, my version nonetheless tries to retain the drive and energy of the traditional dance. —Alan Thomas

**Kopanitsa** (called in some regions Gankino) is the name for a family of lively folk dances from western Bulgaria written in 11/8 meter. Some dancers count the steps in terms of “quick” and “slow” beats, the pattern being quick-quick-slow-quick-quick (counted as 2-2-3-2-2). The name comes from the verb *kopam*, which means “to dig” or “to hoe,” so the name is sometimes translated as “little digging dance.” Kopanitsas and gankinos are line dances done with dancers in a curved line facing in, either holding hands with arms down or (in kopanitsas) holding the belts of the neighboring dancers. Many of them are "called" dances, with several patterns of steps. Dancers repeat one pattern until the leader on the right end of the line calls another pattern.

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**Charles W. Bolen Faculty Recital Series**

**Kemp Recital Hall**
September 30, 2014
Tuesday Evening
7:30 p.m.

This is the twelfth program of the 2014-2015 season.
Program

Please turn off all electronic devices for the duration of the concert. Thank you.

Sonata in A Minor, D.821 (“Arpeggione”)  
Allegro moderato  
Adagio  
Allegretto  

Franz Schubert  
(1797-1828)

Acrobats (2002)  
In the Wings  
Flashback  
Up in the Air  

David Leisner  
(born 1953)

Anim Z’mirot (2008)  

Matthew Halper  
(born 1966)

from Balkan Songbook (2007)  
    Haj, Mene Majka (2011)  
    Rachenitsa (2012)

Alan Thomas  
(born 1967)

Kopanitza de Kalantchatska (2008)  

Boris Gaquere  
(born 1977)

David Collier, cajon

Notes

In Nathan Englander's debut short story collection, For the Relief of Unbearable Urges, there is a story called "the Tumblers." In it, a group of Polish Jews during World War II is herded onto trains bound for the concentration camps, but instead, quite by chance, they board a train full of circus performers who are on a tour to entertain the Nazis. The story is set in an atmosphere where fateful decisions about life or death are made in an instant, by a nod of the head or the toss of a coin. Acrobats is set in the same atmosphere and begins where the short story ends: with the reluctant, disheveled performers about to go on stage, barely having a clue of what they are supposed to do, but knowing that their lives depend on it. The piece is not intended to be a narrative description of these moments, but rather an imagined evocation of the inner mental and emotional activity during them. In the first movement, "In the Wings," the acrobats wait offstage with nervous anticipation, distracted by thoughts darting here and there - premonitions of themes of the second and third movements. This is interrupted by a "Flashback," the middle movement, a sudden memory of the pain, struggle, and near-death that have brought them to this moment. The performers finally go "Up in the Air" in the final movement, twisting, flipping, and soaring in all manner of risky acrobatics. Just before the end, the guitar remembers an old Yiddish folk song, “Oyfn Pripetshik,” a recollection of deep Jewish roots in a contemporary world of assimilation. The piece concludes with a return to the precarious acrobatics. –David Leisner

Anim Z’mirot is an arrangement of Matthew Halper's voice and piano setting of a lesser-known Hebrew prayer. The prayer is sometimes referred to as the “Hymn of Glory” and is associated with the Sabbath morning liturgy. The translation of the title is “I make sweet songs.”

My Balkan Songbook began life with a commission from the outstanding Cavatina Duo. The idea was to create an original composition using pre-existing material from a folk song. As I worked on the piece and began listening to more of the music from the region, I became increasingly drawn to the incredibly rich musical culture of the Balkans. Though of course the music varies greatly from country to country (and within individual countries), common traits emerge in the use of complex asymmetrically meters and modally-based scales and harmonies. Haj, mene majka is based on a Bosnian song and is in a fast 9/8 meter.