UNLV Symphony Orchestra
Taras Krysa, conductor
Janis McKay, bassoon

PROGRAM

John Adams
(b.1947)

W.A. Mozart
(1756-1792)

Robert Schumann
(1810-1856)

Short Ride in a Fast Machine

Concerto for Bassoon in B-flat Major, K. 191
I. Allegro
II. Andante ma adagio
III. Rondo: Tempo di menuetto

Symphony No. 2 in C Major, Op. 61
I. Sostenuto assai: Allegro ma non troppo
II. Scherzo: Allegro vivace
III. Adagio espressivo
IV. Allegro molto vivace

Tuesday, October 26, 2010
7:30 p.m.
Artemus W. Ham Concert Hall
Performing Arts Center
University of Nevada, Las Vegas
Janis McKay
Bassoon

Janis McKay is associate professor of bassoon and principal bassoon of the Las Vegas Philharmonic Orchestra. She also performs as principal bassoon for the Classical Music Festival in Austria and as Contrabassoon for the Reno Philharmonic.

McKay has held positions and performed with numerous orchestras including the Pro Musica Chamber Orchestra, the Chautauqua Symphony Orchestra, the Columbus Symphony Orchestra, the Reno Chamber Orchestra, the Canton Symphony Orchestra, the Moscow Radio Symphony Orchestra, the Charleston (WV) Orchestra, the Springfield (OH) Symphony Orchestra, the Wheeling Symphony Orchestra, and the Louisville Orchestra among many others. A busy free-lance musician in Las Vegas, Dr. McKay has performed and/or toured with such artists as Placido Domingo, Luciano Pavarotti, Andrea Bocelli, Charlotte Church, John Williams, Celine Dion, Gloria Estafan, Don Henley, Stevie Nicks, Metallica, Stevie Wonder, and Tony Bennett.

She has been a featured soloist with the International Music Festival in the Ukraine, with the Classical Music Festival touring Austria and Hungary, and with the Las Vegas Philharmonic. She may be heard on Summit, d’Note, Starkland Records, and First Edition recordings.

McKay received her D.M.A. from The Ohio State University, the Master of Music degree from the University of Louisville, and a Bachelor of Music degree from the University of Georgia. Her major teachers were Christopher Weait, Matthew Karr, and William Davis. Dr. McKay previously taught at Baylor University, Capital University, the Ohio Wesleyan University, and Wright State University. She was also a faculty member of the Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp.

Taras Krysa
Music Director & Conductor

Taras Krysa was born in Kiev, Ukraine and began his formal studies as a violinist at the Moscow Conservatory. After moving to the United States, Mr. Krysa continued his studies at Indiana University and Northwestern University, both in violin and conducting. His conducting teachers have included Victor Yampolsky, Jorma Panula and David Zinman. As a violinist, Mr. Krysa has performed with the New World Symphony Orchestra and St. Louis Symphony Orchestra.

His conducting appearances have included the National Ukrainian Symphony Orchestra, Orchestra van het Osten, New World Symphony, St. Petersburg Symphony, Moscow Soloists, Slovak Sinfonietta, Spoleto Festival Chamber Orchestra, Kiev Chamber Orchestra and the Lublin Philharmonic Orchestra. He has made three critically acclaimed recordings for the Brilliant Classics label. In addition, Mr. Krysa has served as Principal Conductor of the Ukrainian State Symphony Orchestra, which he led on several European tours with an appearance at the Concertgebouw Hall

Currently Taras Krysa is serving as the Director of Orchestras at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, Music Director of Henderson Symphony Orchestra, and Artistic Director of Las Vegas Sinfonietta.
Program Notes

John Adams
Short Ride in a Fast Machine
The score calls for two flutes, two piccolos, two oboes, English horn, four clarinets, three bassoons, contrabassoon, four horns, four trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, auxiliary percussion, and strings. Duration, 4 minutes.

Short Ride in a Fast Machine is a joyfully exuberant piece, brilliantly scored for a large orchestra. The steady marking of a beat is typical of Adams's music. Short Ride begins with a marking of quarter-notes (woodblock, soon joined by the four trumpets) and eighths (clarinets and synthesizers); the woodblock is fortissimo and the other instruments play forte. Adams sees the rest of the orchestra as running the gauntlet through that rhythmic tunnel. About the title: "You know how it is when someone asks you to ride in a terrific sports car, and then you wish you hadn't?"

Short Ride in a Fast Machine features the usual minimalist earmarks: repetition, steady beat, and, perhaps most crucially, a harmonic language with an emphasis on consonance unlike anything in Western art music in the last five hundred years. Adams is not a simple—or simple-minded—artist. His concern has been to invent music at once familiar and subtle. For all of their minimalist features, works such as Harmonium, Harmonieleiter, and El Dorado are full of surprises, always enchanting in the glow and gleam of their sonority, and bursting with the energy generated by their harmonic movement.

W.A. Mozart
Bassoon Concerto in B-flat, K. 191
In addition to the solo bassoon, the score calls for two oboes, two French horns, and strings. Duration, 19 minutes.

Mozart was just 18 years old when he wrote the Bassoon Concerto in B-flat major. The lion's share of Mozart's concerto output features the piano as soloist, but he did write four concertos for horn, five for solo violin and two for solo flute. (There are also concertos featuring two instruments, or small groups of instruments, and single concertos for clarinet and oboe, among others.)

Evidence seems to suggest that Mozart wrote more than one bassoon concerto, but the one in B-flat major is the only one now known. When Mozart completed this composition, bassoons were designed somewhat differently from the way they are now. There were about a dozen fewer keys on the instrument in the Classical period, and its range was a bit narrower as well. Some musical characterizations of the instrument portray it as stuffy, or perhaps even clumsy at times, but Mozart's writing for the bassoon is graceful and light.

Marked Allegro, the first movement displays an effervescent lyricism that shows off the possibilities of the bassoon. One can also hear some of the more subdued tones of the instrument's lower register juxtaposed against the levity of the oboes. The horns also make repeated appearances with high fanfares. The second movement, with the unusual tempo marking of Andante ma Adagio (literally, "walking pace, but slow" rather than a simple adagio), features something of a conversation between soloist and woodwinds over the texture of the consistently soft strings. The melody played by the bassoon seems to prefigure the aria "Porgi amor" ("Oh, Love") from Mozart's Le nozze di Figaro (The Marriage of Figaro). Finally, the Rondo di Menuetto displays a quick meter in three that allows the bassoon to dance around the texture of the orchestra. Throughout the piece, we hear the clipped notes of staccato passages, deft and agile lines, and register changes. This is truly a masterpiece for the bassoon, and it is no wonder that it is still the work by which many players are measured.

Robert Schumann
Symphony No. 2 in C, Op. 61
By the time he wrote his C major Symphony No. 2, Robert Schumann had already completed his Symphony No. 1; his Overture, Scherzo, and Finale; and the first version of his D minor Symphony (which eventually became his Symphony No. 4). He had a lot of experience under his belt as an orchestral composer. Nonetheless, his creative life was imperiled. He had begun to show signs of serious mental and physical illness, and by August 1844 he hit rock bottom. Clara Schumann wrote of her thirty-four-year-old husband: "Robert could not sleep a single night. His imagination painted him the most fearful pictures. Early in the morning I usually found him bathed in tears. He quite gave himself up." Schumann's phobias and mood-swings began to rule his existence following that attack.

Through much of 1845 he remained unproductive, but then came the day when he wrote, in a letter to Felix Mendelssohn, "Drums and trumpets in C have been blaring in my head. I have no idea what will come of it." What would come of it, we imagine, was the fanfare-like motto that opens the Symphony No. 2 and recurs in that work's Scherzo and near the end of its finale. Getting the notes on paper was not easy at first, but gradually he recovered the will to continue. Writing again to Mendelssohn, in September 1845, he reported: "All writing is a severe strain on me... I itch and twitch every day in a hundred different places. A mysterious complaint—whenver the doctor tries to put his finger on the thing, it seems to take wings. But better times will come again; and to look at my wife and children is joy enough." Suddenly, in the second week of December, Schumann's creative juices started to flow, and in the space of about three weeks he composed the symphony, at least in its essentials. He approached the orchestration as a separate step of the composition process and turned to the task early in the new year. But his physical and psychological problems resurfaced. In February 1846 he experienced a continual ringing and roaring in his ears, so debilitating that he was forced to take a break from work. Hoping that a vacation might bring some reprieve, he traveled with Clara to the town of Mäzen, not far away. As bad luck would have it, their quarters afforded a view of a nearby insane asylum. This inspired a further panic in Robert, since, of his many phobias (blindness, heights, death, poison, metal dishes, and so on), the fear of insanity was among the most intense—and, it would turn out, the most well-founded. Schumann worried that audiences would notice traces of what he called the "black period" in which he wrote this symphony, but this is not an autobiographical study in illness or depression. There is, overall, a feeling of hard-won affirmation and triumph.
# UNLV Symphony Orchestra

*Taras Krysa, Music Director*

## First Violins
- Sandro Ladu
- Matthew Tsai
- Christina Riegert
- Amanda Gentile
- Elaine Thomas
- Michael Burkhardt
- Edward Mendiola
- Tracy Bu
- Samantha Alterman
- Megan Hermansen

## Cellos
- David Warner
- Courtney Waldron
- Anthony Rodriguez
- Rob Chavez
- Dominique Jackson
- Bradley Taylor
- Jeremy Russo
- Adrian Smallwood
- Eddie Yue
- Cynthia Javier

## Bassoons
- Kim Chai
- Brandon Durham
- Emily Grady
- Brian Marsh

## French Horns
- Fred Stone
- Kyle Tolstyka
- Chris Kase
- Erin Paul
- Jordan Rush

## Second Violins
- Svetlin Belneev
- Brandie Frias
- Debra Yavitz
- Belinda Martinez
- Robert Hunt
- Marla Huizar
- Angela Labella
- Stefanie Martin
- Kish Hipsak
- Anna Childs

## Basses
- Blake Riley
- Korey Mueller
- Ryan Bell
- Hayden Bryant
- Zuriel Santoyo

## Trumpets
- Travis Higa
- Allison McSwain
- Kendall Demavivs
- Aaron DeLaHuerta

## Violas
- John Pollock
- Carlos Guzman
- Rahmaan Phillip
- Youngmee Merrick
- Joe Cha

## Flutes
- Emilee Wong
- Kristen Mosca
- Jessica Kahal
- Asuka Kawashima

## Trombones
- Russell Koester
- Dustin Stevens
- Saxon Lewis

## Oboes
- Alex Hayashi
- Matt Guschl
- Chris Fujiwara
- Tamara Leake

## Tuba
- Garrison Gilham

## Clarinets
- Aki Oshima
- Kanade Oi
- Bryan Wente
- Tallyn Wesner

## Percussion
- Melanie Scarberry
- Melody Loveless
- Charlie Gott