

The Providence Mandolin Orchestra

Mark Davis, Director

Arts in the Village

Goff Hall, Rehoboth MA

Saturday, February 11, 2012, 8 PM

I.

Concerto # 3 (“Brandenburg”), BWV 1048
Allegro moderato – Adagio – Allegro/

J. S. Bach (1685-1750)

Sinfonia a pizzico (2009)
Overture: Allegro brillante
Canzonetta: Andante con moto
Scherzo: Presto assai
Finale: Allegro assai

Victor Kioulaphides

II.

Nocturne (2010)*

Frank Wallace

Neponset Valley Suite (2011)
River Bottom – Currents - Evening

Owen Hartford

Oblivion

Astor Piazzolla (1921-1992)
arr. R. A. Margo

Sky Colored Lake (1994)

Robert Martel

*US Premiere

Program Notes by Robert A. Margo

Of the six works by Bach known as the *Brandenburg Concertos*, #3 in G Major is the one most suited for and frequently performed on plucked strings. The arrangement performed this evening by the Providence Mandolin Orchestra assigns two of the three cello parts to classical guitar.

Born in Athens, Greece in 1961, the composer Victor Kioulaphides has produced a lengthy catalog of solo and ensemble works for mandolin that has enjoyed widespread critical and popular acclaim. Set in four movements, Kioulaphides’ *Sinfonia a pizzico* pays homage to Felix Mendelssohn in commemoration of the composer’s bicentennial (1809-2009). Kioulaphides writes that he “always felt that Mendelssohn’s light, delicate touch, his magical skill of conjuring up musical imagery, his consummate mastery of articulation would lend itself perfectly to plucked instruments. My *Sinfonia* is a large-scale, challenging, perhaps even daunting work: it develops one, single musical idea, all the way from the opening strains of the first movement to the concluding chords of the last movement.”

A prolific composer for modern classical guitar and an eminent performer on early plucked strings and modern guitar, Frank Wallace's *Nocturne* is his first large scale composition for mandolin ensemble. The ten minute work in one movement was jointly commissioned by the German mandolin ensemble, "JugendZupfOrchester Northrhine Westfalia" (JZO NRW), and by Robert Margo for the PMO. The work was premiered in Europe recently by JZO NRW and receives its first US performance this evening by the PMO.

Owen Hartford has written many works for the PMO over his long tenure with the group. His latest composition, in three movements, is the *Neponset Valley Suite*. The main theme of the first movement, "River Bottom", is undulated and jagged, while the second movement, "Currents", eddies back and forth between gentle harmonies and starkly chromatic lines in 13/8. Drawing on minimalist impulses, "Evening" alternates between 4/4 and 3/4 before the "River Bottom" theme returns.

Astor Piazzolla composed *Oblivion* for Marco Bellocchio's film *Enrico IV*, an adaptation of the classic play by Luigi Pirandello. With its soaring, nostalgic theme set against the insistent milonga rhythm, *Oblivion* is one of Piazzolla's most enduring and popular works. The concert closes with an old PMO favorite, Robert Martel's rock-influenced *Sky Colored Lake*, a staple of the modern repertoire for mandolin ensemble.

Director: Mark Davis

First Mandolin: Joshua Bell (concertmaster), Yvette Cote, Duane Golumb, Chang Lee, David Miller

Second Mandolin: Lynne Bell, Christine Chito, Owen Hartford, Paul Wilde

Mandola: Mark Chuoke, Mack Johnston, Robert Margo

Mandocello: Dan Moore, Matt Snyder

Guitar: Mark Armstrong, Beverly Davis, Michael Hession

Bass: Hiatt Knapp

The original **Providence Mandolin Orchestra** was founded in 1913 by William Place Jr., one of the leading virtuosos of the mandolin in the United States during the instrument's "Golden Age" of the early 20th century. The modern version of the PMO dates from 1971, when it was revived by Hibbard Perry. Since then the PMO has become the leading American mandolin ensemble with regular performances throughout the eastern United States and Western Europe. Currently the PMO is directed by **Mark Davis**, who pursues an active career as an educator, conductor, and performer. The PMO is dedicated to the performance of contemporary music, including pieces written for the ensemble. In the past five years the PMO has given US or world premieres of new works by Clarice Assad, Betty Beath, Richard Charlton, Owen Hartford, Victor Kioulaphides, Annette Kruisbrink, Stephen Lalor, Olaf Naslund, Robert Schultz, Emile Stopler, Caroline Szeto, Francine Trester, and Frank Wallace. Also over the past five years the PMO has embarked on an ambitious program of joint performances with leading European mandolin ensembles, including Het Consort (The Netherlands, directed by Alex Timmerman); the Ensemble a Plectre de Toulouse (France, directed by Alain Corvocchiola); the JZO NRW (Germany, directed by Christain de Witt); and the Orchestra of the International Mandolin Academy (Italy, directed by Carlo Aonzo).