

PROGRAM NOTES

By Robert Margo

Italy is the ancestral home of the mandolin, spiritually and literally. It was in Italy that the "mandolino" and "mandoline" first made their appearances in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The mandolino had six courses (double strings) tuned mostly in fourths while the mandoline had four courses tuned in fifths like the modern mandolin (or violin). Vivaldi wrote his "mandolin" works such as the familiar RV 425 for the six course instrument although these are frequently performed on the modern mandolin. Originally for violin (from the collection of concerti known as "L'estro Armonico") the "Concerto in A Minor" also transfers beautifully to the modern mandolin.

By the mid nineteenth century the mandolin had fallen into disuse in European art music but remained popular as a folk instrument in Italy. A revival ensued in the late nineteenth century, and the mandolin soon became one of the most widely played instruments in the Old and New Worlds. Virtuosos burst on the scene, tutors written, ensembles of all sizes and types formed, and vast quantities of music published. Perhaps the greatest of all the early twentieth century mandolinists was the Italian Raffaele Calace who performed widely and also personally constructed some of the finest instruments of the era. If this were not enough Calace composed many of the mandolin's greatest works, perhaps none greater than a series of unaccompanied preludes -- immensely attractive musical jewels, fiendishly difficult, of which No. 10 is one of the most spectacular.

If mandolin and guitar conjures up an image of the proverbial tourist version of "O Sole Mio" the combination is also responsible for chamber music of a very high order. Silvio Ranieri, who was born in Italy but spent most of his creative life in Belgium, was a performer of the first rank and an important composer. Ranieri's "Burlesca" is characteristic of his music, full of rapid scales, elegant phrases, and Italianate charm. Fabrizio Guidice's "Serenata" is a modern work in a traditional style while Kaze Nagaoka's "Kaze" draws on popular musical idioms of Brazil.

At the other end of the ensemble spectrum resides the mandolin orchestra, modeled after the bowed strings variety. Calace dreamed of a time when mandolin family instruments would figure prominently into symphonic music, a dream that despite important counter-examples from Mahler to Boulez has yet to be realized. However, orchestras of plucked string instruments thrive today in Europe, the United States, and Japan, and much new music has been written. Today's concert features one of the classics of the modern repertoire, Hermann Ambroisus' "Suite No. 6" written in a friendly, neo-baroque style. Jose Luis Barroso's "Concierto de Media Luna" evokes a Spanish atmosphere with its allusions to flamenco harmonies and rhythms. The concert also highlights a remarkable new work, Victor Kioulaphides' "Concerto per orchestra a pizzico", composed for the Dutch ensemble Het Consort and given its United States premiere in February by the Providence Mandolin Orchestra. Written for the Providence Mandolin Orchestra, Clarice Assad's "Song for My Father" is filled with the subtle harmonies and infectious rhythms of the composer's native Brazil.

Born in Savona, Italy, Carlo Aonzo is one of the world's premier performers on mandolin. From a musical family, his first teacher was his father, and he went on to study with Ugo Orlandi at the Cesare Pollini Conservatory of Padua. He has received numerous awards including the Vivaldi prize of the Vittorio Pizianti National Mandolin Competition in Venice and first prize in the Walnut Valley National Mandolin Contest in Winfield, Kansas. Aonzo has toured throughout northern Europe, Italy, and the United States as a soloist or with chamber ensembles and orchestras. He has recorded Paganini's complete works for mandolin on period instruments ("Integrale per Amandorlino e Chitarra Francese"). Other recordings with guitarist Beppe Gambetta and mandolinist David Grisman have featured the works of early twentieth century Italian composers ("Serenata" and "Traversata"). For Mel Bay Publishers he has recorded a video concert ("Carlo Aonzo: Classical Mandolin Virtuoso") and his work was also featured in "Mandolin 2000".

Providence MANDOLIN Orchestra

Mark M. Davis, Director

With Special Guest Artist

CARLO AONZO

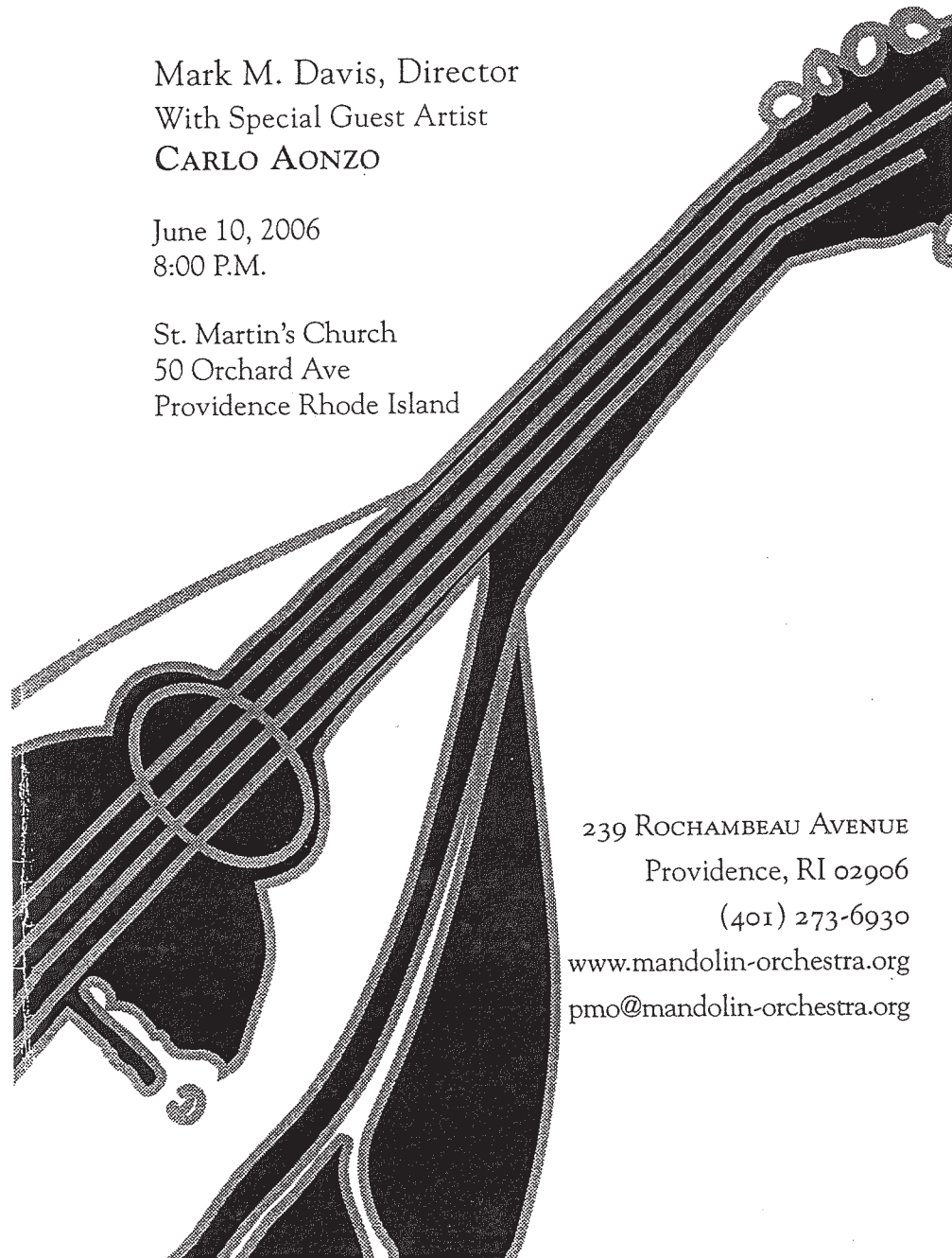
June 10, 2006

8:00 P.M.

St. Martin's Church

50 Orchard Ave

Providence Rhode Island



239 ROCHAMBEAU AVENUE

Providence, RI 02906

(401) 273-6930

www.mandolin-orchestra.org

pmo@mandolin-orchestra.org

Providence
MANDOLIN
 Orchestra

THE PROVIDENCE MANDOLIN ORCHESTRA
 Mark Davis, Director

I.

- Suite No. 6Hermann Ambrosius
 Prelude
 Minuet
 Sarabande
 Gavotte-Trio
 Badinerie
- Concierto de Media LunaJose Luis Barroso
 Recuerdos
 Elegia
 Danza
- Concerto per orchestra a pizzicoVictor Kioulaphides
 Sinfonia
 Notturmo
 Rondo
- Concerto in C Major (RV 425)Antonio Vivaldi
 Allegro Moderato
 Largo
 Allegro Moderato

Carlo Aonzo, mandolin

II.

- Prelude No. 10, Op. 112Raffaele Calace
 Carlo Aonzo, mandolin
- BurlescaSilvio Ranieri
- SerenataFabrizio Giudice
 Allegretto
 Andante
 Allegro non troppo
- KazeKatsumi Nagoaka
 Allegretto malinconico
 Aria
 Allegro ritmico
- Song for My FatherClarice Assad
- Concerto in A Minor, Op. 3, No. 6 (RV 356)Antonio Vivaldi
 Allegro
 Largo
 Presto

Carlo Aonzo, mandolin
 Mark Davis, guitar

Carlo Aonzo, mandolin

First Mandolin

Joshua Bell, Concertmaster
 Michael Capelli
 Yvette Cote
 Robert Margo
 Chang Lee

Mandola

Steve Caddick
 Mack Johnston
 Will Melton
 Gayle Raposa

Guitar

Mark Armstrong
 Christine Chito
 Beverly Davis
 Scott Hacker

Second Mandolin

Lynne Freed Bell
 Owen Hartford
 Paul Wilde

Mandocello

Duane Golomb
 Dan Moore
 Matt Synder

Bass

Bob Asprinio
 Gino Cicchetti
 Dave Parr



The Providence Mandolin Orchestra was founded by the late Hibbard Perry in 1971. Since then, it has become one of the leading American mandolin ensembles, with regular appearances throughout the Eastern United States, Canada, and Western Europe. With well over two hundred pieces in its repertoire, the PMO features a wide range of musical styles from Renaissance dances to Baroque concertos, turn-of-the-century nostalgia, and avant-garde expressions. The group's unique tonality has inspired exciting new works by Clarice Assad, Will Ayton, Owen Hartford, Eva Kendrick, Barbara Kolb, Robert Martel, Michael Nix, Stephen Funk Pearson, and many others. The Orchestra is under the direction of Mark Davis. Mr. Davis pursues an active career as a solo performer, educator, and conductor. Mark Davis directs a multi-level guitar ensemble program at the Wheeler School in Providence RI.

The Providence Mandolin Orchestra gratefully acknowledges the support of the D'Addario Foundation