

NEW WORKS FOR CLARINET VIOLA AND PIANO

A MUSICAL CELEBRATION

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TROY1384

Trio Con Brio

Gary Whitman clarinet Misha Galaganov viola John Owings piano

Elena Sokolovski

Venice Suite Concerto Grosso for 3 Soloists and 9 Instruments

Eric Ewazen

Trio for Clarinet Viola and Piano



THE MUSIC



Russian-born composer **Elena Sokolovski** has made Israel the center of her life and work since 1995. She graduated in 1994 with excellence in Composition and Music Theory from the Moscow State Conservatory named for P.I. Tchaikovsky. In 2005 she received the Composers' and Authors' Society (AKUM) award in the category "Best new musical creation for the year 2005."

Elena Sokolovski's music combines the rich musical culture in which she grew up with an openness for new nuances of sound, creating her own personal language — lyrical, balanced and restrained. Her uncompromising approach breaks away from traditional structures of harmony and melody, without the need for extreme effects. The erasure of borders between tonality and atonality, modality and the avant-garde, is handled with a sense of proportion and great taste.

Sokolovski has composed vocal, orchestral and chamber music for various ensembles — sometimes treating the combination of instruments in non-conventional ways. Her compositions have been featured at international festivals, including the "Russian Harp" Festival in Moscow, in Israel by a number of orchestral and chamber ensembles, as well as in the USA, Germany, Austria, Greece and Yugoslavia.

The work by Elena Sokolovski on this CD has an intriguing title — Venice Suite: Concerto Grosso for Three Players and Nine Instruments. Indeed, each musician plays several instruments: E flat clarinet, clarinet in A, and bass clarinet; viola and vibraphone (played with a double bass bow); piano, harpsichord, celesta, and glasses filled with wine, using chopsticks to produce the sound of small bells. The composer instructs the musicians to drink the wine at the end of the piece!

This extraordinary music draws bright and whimsical paintings of Venice, where the young Venetian weavers weave lace and young glassblowers create glass masterpieces. We see the Venetian canals and the carnival, feel the freshness of the morning and meet with visions of the night (first and second parts).

The unique combination of European dance rhythms — allemande, courante, gigue and tarantella — creates a magical image of the ancient city. But above all breathes the faintly mournful rhythm of the sarabande, reminiscent of the possible death of the beautiful city in the sea waters. Thus the third part is titled "Do not sink!" The piece ends with a quiet coda — a bright hymn sounding the hope for a long and happy life for the unique city that is one of the world.

—Elena Sokolovski (English translation by Marina Filatova, Doctor of Arts, Professor of Music Theory at the Tchaikovsky Conservatory, Moscow)



Eric Ewazen's music, numbering more than 200 compositions, has been performed by distinguished soloists, chamber ensembles, vocalists, wind ensembles and orchestras around the world. His music can be heard on some 70 commercially released CDs, by some of the greatest recording artists of the 20th/21st centuries, including performers from the New York Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony, Philadelphia Orchestra, Boston Symphony, and the

Cleveland Orchestra. His compositions for brass, percussion and, increasingly, woodwinds and wind ensembles have become staples of the repertoire. He has been a guest at more than 150 colleges and universities worldwide, including 30 different countries and 47 of the 50 United States.

Ewazen has been Vice-President of the League of Composers-International Society of Contemporary Music, and has been a faculty member of The Juilliard School since 1980. He received his Bachelor of Music degree from the Eastman School of Music in 1976, and his Master's and Doctoral degrees from Juilliard in 1978 and 1980.

Trio for Clarinet, Viola and Piano was commissioned by the Texas Christian University School of Music for their faculty trio, Trio Con Brio. The premiere of the piece took place in Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall in March 2005. The work is gratefully dedicated to my friends in this wonderful ensemble, with special thanks to the Director of the TCU School of Music, Richard Gipson.

Of course, one of the most famous trios for this combination of instruments is the great Mozart "Kegelstatt" Trio (K. 498). The beauty and playfulness of Mozart's piece and the elegant classical structure of the work became the inspiration for my Trio.When I think of the clarinet and the viola, with somewhat similar ranges, I think of a rich color, sonorous and resonant. I emphasized this color with the two instruments often joining together in lyrical duets, or allowing the viola to play chordal harmony with double stops as the clarinet plays rising and cascading gestures throughout its range. The first movement, in classical sonata form, is somewhat melancholy with the instruments exchanging solos, while the pianist provides a harmonic, churning accompaniment. The second movement treats the two solo instruments as genuine singers, again in a resonant duet, as the pianist continues to play sweet harmonies underneath. The final movement is a classical rondo, using a lively main theme full of rhythmic energy and changing meters — a nod to my own Ukrainian/Polish heritage. Those Eastern European dance rhythms and modal melodic gestures influence the lively sound of this movement that continues to swirl and grow ever more exciting until a grand, joyful finale.

-Eric Ewazen

THE PERFORMERS

Gary Whitman is Professor of Clarinet and Division Chair of Woodwinds at Texas Christian University in Fort Worth, Texas. Active as a recitalist, he has performed at ClarinetFest conferences in Arizona, Oklahoma, Texas, Utah, Maryland, Missouri, California and Nebraska, as well as at international conferences in France, Belgium, Sweden, Canada, and Portugal. He has also presented master classes in Mexico, Peru, Belgium, Puerto Rico, and China. He has performed new works by Eric Ewazen in Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall, Osvaldo Golijov and Sebastian Currier at the "Cliburn at the Modern" series in Fort Worth, and Till MacIvor Meyn in the Shanghai Concert Hall. He is a member of the Texas Clarinet Consort and the Fort Worth Symphony, where he performs as the bass clarinetist in the classical subscription series, the Pops, and the Fort Worth Opera Festival in Bass Performance Hall. In 2004, TCU conferred upon him the Dean's Award for Research and Creativity and in 2009, the College of Fine Arts Award for the Chancellor's Distinguished Achievement as a Creative Teacher and Scholar. Having served as Past-President of the International Clarinet Association, Gary Whitman is an artist-clinician for the Buffet Group USA, Inc. and Rico Reeds.

Misha Galaganov, viola professor at TCU, has performed as a soloist and given master classes in Russia, China, Italy, Israel, Czech Republic, Mexico, Holland, Belgium, Germany, Austria, and the USA. He has performed solo and chamber music in many prestigious venues, such as Carnegie Hall and Shanghai Concert Hall. Galaganov received his Doctor of Musical Arts degree from Rice University. His viola and violin students now have successful solo, teaching, and orchestra careers in the USA, Asia, Europe, and Latin America. Galaganov is the founder and coordinator of the following chamber music programs: Fort Worth Greater Youth Orchestra chamber music (2002 – 2006); Chamber Music Roundup festival for students and amateurs; Chamber Music Roundup Academy; and Oklahoma Summer Arts Institute student chamber music.

John Owings, Herndon Professor of Music and Chair of Piano at TCU, consistently wins enthusiastic praise from audiences and critics for his exciting pianism and sensitive artistry. Since his debut with the San Antonio Symphony at age 15, he has appeared as soloist with orchestras and given solo recitals throughout the United States, Latin America, Europe and the Far East. An experienced chamber music performer, Mr. Owings has played six Weill Hall recitals with violinist Fritz Gearhart, and has performed with the Chester, International, and Miró string quartets. Gold medalist of the first Robert Casadesus International Piano Competition in Cleveland, Mr. Owings has also won the Vianna da Motta International Competition in Lisbon, the London Liszt Society Competition, and the Musical Arts Competition in Chicago. His CD recordings of music by American composers, the music of Robert Casadesus, and the piano works of Julius Reubke have received outstanding reviews. In 1993, TCU conferred upon him its highest honor — the Chancellor's Award — in recognition of his performances of the 32 Beethoven Piano Sonatas.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Recording, mixing, editing and mastering: Jim Jackson Piano technician: James Williams
Cover art: Trio Con Brio © Donray

Venice Suite was recorded in August 2009 at Ed Landreth Auditorium, Texas Christian University.

The Trio for Clarinet, Viola & Piano was recorded in March 2006 at PepsiCo Recital Hall, Texas Christian University.

Venice Suite is available directly from Elena Sokolowski. Eric Ewazen's Trio is published by Theodore Presser.

TRIO CON BRIO

ELENA SOKOLOVSKI & ERIC EWAZEN

A MUSICAL CELEBRATION

Elena Sokolovski

Venice Suite, Concerto Grosso for 3 Soloists and 9 Instruments (2006) {32.07}

PART I

- 1 Morning in Venice {1:18}
- 2 Venetians and Lace of Venice {1:04}
- 3 Curanta {1:54}
- 4 Venetians and Glass of Venice {1:22}
- 5 Sarabanda {3:48}

PART II

- 6 Night in Venice {2:34}
- 7 Canals of Venice. Allemanda {2:37}
- 8 Carnival in Venice. Giga {2:23}
- 9 Night in Venice {1:21}

PART III

- 10 Don't sink! {10:01}
- 11 Morning's Venice {3:45}

Eric Ewazen

Trio for Clarinet, Viola and Piano (2005) {23:53}

- 12 I. Allegro appassionato {7:35}
- 13 II. Andante teneramente {10:03}
- 14 III. Allegro ritmo {6:15}

TOTAL TIME = 56:00

Trio Con Brio

Gary Whitman *clarinet* Misha Galaganov *viola* John Owings *piano*



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