

Program Notes

Variations on a Harmonic Theme

(Amice M. Calverley, 1896 – 1959)

Amice Calverley was born in London, England, in 1896. She studied art at the Slade School of Fine Art and piano with James Friskin. After moving to Oakville with her family in 1912, Calverley continued her musical studies at the Toronto Conservatory of Music with the famed Canadian composer Healey Willan. In 1922, she received a scholarship from the Royal College of Music in England where she had the opportunity to study with Ralph Vaughan Williams. In Oxford she met the archaeologist Leonard Woolley who encouraged her to pursue archaeological drawing, and in 1927 she became involved with the documentation being done by the Egypt Exploration Society of the Temple of Seti I at Abydos. Calverley completed five volumes on Egyptology that are considered epic achievements in the field.

Although in her lifetime she sojourned at Abydos longer than any other place, she continued her musical interests, as well as making films documenting folklore in Greece and the Balkans between and after the wars. Upon Calverley's return to Oakville after WWII, she remodelled her home and began to hold chamber music concerts there. Her compositions included numerous songs, two string quartets and an opera. Calverley passed away unexpectedly on April 10, 1959.

Variations on a Harmonic Theme was written in the 1920's when the composer was a student of Ralph Vaughan Williams. At this point in our research, the only performance we know of was around that time, conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. He was one of the early 20th century's most important conductors, and the fact that he conducted it, is a very positive statement about the quality of the piece. The work begins with the theme announced in solid chords by the strings. It proceeds through eleven variations which are by turns romantic, charming, coquettish, brooding and lyrical. The level of compositional technique is very high and we are proud to rediscover this lost gem by a deserving Oakville composer. This may well be the North American premiere of this wonderful piece.

Violin Concerto No.4 in D Major, K. 218

(Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, 1756 – 1791)

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was born on January 27, 1756 in Salzburg, Austria to Leopold and Anna Marie Mozart. At the time of Mozart's birth, Leopold was employed by the Archbishop of Salzburg as the vice-Kapellmeister of his orchestra. When Leopold realized that his son was a child prodigy, he decided to showcase Mozart's talents all over Europe. However, this did not help Mozart in securing a decent employment in the Viennese court later in his life. In fact, at the time of his death, he was so deep in debt that he had to borrow money from his close friends to pay his bills. Mozart died on December 5, 1791; the cause of his death is unknown. During his lifetime, Mozart wrote over 600 compositions including 27 piano

concertos, 5 violin concertos, numerous operas, 41 symphonies, several sonatas for piano and violin, and his final work, *The Requiem*.

All Mozart's violin concertos were written between 1773 and 1776 in Salzburg, Austria when he was the concertmaster of the Archbishop of Salzburg's orchestra. The Concerto in D major, K.218, is scored for solo violin, 2 oboes, 2 French horns, and strings; the autographed score is kept in *Biblioteka Jagiellonske*, in Krakow, Poland.

This concerto has three movements and follows the Italian concerto style (Fast-Slow-Fast). The first movement has a majestic opening. The violin part is very challenging even though Mozart was not as accomplished on the violin as he was on the piano. It has been suggested that Mozart revised the concerto when Antonio Brunetti, the violinist who replaced Mozart as the concertmaster of the Salzburg Orchestra, showed interest in performing it. The second movement is lyrical and charming with a subdued orchestral accompaniment. The finale movement is a rondo which begins with rhythms similar to the French Contredance and then follows by a jig-like second section.

It Is What It Is

(Charles Demuynck 1958)

Looking at instrumental music, it's my understanding that some composers begin with a specific concept in mind and then proceed to express that concept... I don't work that way at all, I begin writing and then see how the piece turns out. Some of my compositions I would have been content to give some very neutral title, as I did in my student days, such as Short Piece for Small Ensemble, which Oakville Chamber Orchestra played several years ago. Some of you may recall that when Masterworks of Oakville premiered my orchestra piece *Alerion* in 2010, we had a contest among audience members to determine the title. The results were very interesting to me and I was please with the final choice of *Alerion* but I had no inclination to give the piece a title myself. However with the composition you're hearing today, it became clear at some point in the middle of the process of writing that "It Is What It Is" would be the title. Some may regard this as a curious title, with its slight negative connotations; although catchy, it may not pass the grade with a panel of marketing consultants. It's intended to address the ancient philosophical problem of suffering, which all of us must confront to some extent in our lives. You'll note that the piece has a mostly very positive feeling, and the piece does intend to make a positive statement (we are in Oakville after all, and Oakville suffering is of the mildest sort). The piece has a jazz influence and hence the slightly flippant title.

I'd like to thank the Oakville Chamber Orchestra for commissioning this piece, all of our players for playing it, and particularly Bob Wong who had the idea for me to write it.

[Program Note by Charles Demuynck](#)

Sì, mi chiamano Mimì from **La Bohème**

(Giacomo Puccini 1858-1924)

Sì. Mi chiamano Mimì,
ma il mio nome è Lucia.
La storia mia è breve.
A tela o a seta
ricamo in casa e fuori...
Son tranquilla e lieta
ed è mio svago
far gigli e rose.
Mi piaccion quelle cose
che han sì dolce malia,
che parlano d'amor, di primavere,
di sogni e di chimere,
quelle cose che han nome poesia...
Lei m'intende?
Mi chiamano Mimì,
il perché non so.
Sola, mi fo
il pranzo da me stessa.
Non vado sempre a messa,
ma prego assai il Signore.
Vivo sola, soletta
là in una bianca cameretta:
guardo sui tetti e in cielo;
ma quando vien lo sgelo
il primo sole è mio
il primo bacio dell'aprile è mio!
Germoglia in un vaso una rosa...
Foglia a foglia la spio!
Così gentile il profumo d'un fiore!
Ma i fior ch'io faccio,
Ahimè! non hanno odore.
Altro di me non le saprei narrare.
Sono la sua vicina che la vien fuori
d'ora a importunare.

Yes, they call me Mimi,
but my true name is Lucia.
My story is short.
A canvas or a silk
I embroidered at home and abroad.
I am happy and at peace
and my pastime
is to make lilies and roses.
I love all things
that have gentle sweet smells,
that speak of love, of spring,
of dreams and fanciful things,
those things that have poetic names
Do you understand me?
They call me Mimi,
I do not know why.
Alone, I make
lunch by myself.
I do not go to church,
but I pray a lot to the Lord.
I stay all alone
there in a white room
and look upon the roofs and the sky
but when the thaw comes
The first sun is mine
first kiss of April is mine!
A rose germinates in a vase...
Leaf by leaf, I wait for!
That gentle perfume of a flower!
But the flowers that I make,
Alas! no smell.
Other than telling you about me, I
know nothing.
I am only your neighbour who comes
out to bother you.

O mio babbino caro from **Gianni Schicchi**
(Giacomo Puccini 1858-1924)

O mio babbino caro,
mi piace, è bello bello,
vo'andare in Porta Rossa
a comperar l'anello!
Si, si, ci voglio andare!
E se l'amassi indarno,
andrei sul Ponte Vecchio
ma per buttarmi in Arno!
Mi struggo e mi tormento,
O Dio! Vorrei morir!
Babbo, pietà, pietà!
Babbo, pietà, pietà!
O Mio Babbino Caro

Oh my dear papa,
I like him, he is handsome.
I want to go to Porta Rossa
to buy the ring!
Yes, yes, I want to go!
And if my love were in vain,
I would go to Ponte Vecchio
and throw myself in the Arno!
My struggle and my torment,
Oh God! I want to die!
Papa, mercy, mercy!
Papa, have mercy, have mercy!
Oh my dear papa.

Mein Herr Marquis from ***Die Fledermaus***
(*Johann Strauss Jr. 1825-1899*)

Mein Herr Marquis, ein Mann wie Sie
Sollt' besser das verstehn,
Darum rate ich, ja genauer sich
Die Leute anzusehen!
Die Hand ist doch wohl gar zo fein,
hahaha.
Dies Füsschen so zierlich und klein,
hahaha.
Die Sprache, die ich führe
Die Taille, die Tournüre,
Dergleichen finden Sie
Bei einer Zofe nie!
Gestehn müssen Sie fürwahr,
Sehr komisch dieser Irrtum war!
Ja, sehr komisch, hahaha,
Ist die Sache, hahaha.
Drum verzeihn Sie, hahaha,
Wenn ich lache, hahaha!
Ja, sehr komisch, hahaha

Ist die Sache, hahaha!
Sehr komisch, Herr Marquis, sind
Sie! Mit dem Profil im griech'schen
Stil
Beschenkte mich Natur:
Wenn nicht dies Gesicht schon
genügend spricht,
So sehn Sie die Figur!
Schaun durch die Lorgnette Sie dann,
ah,
Sich diese Toilette nur an, ah
Mir scheint wohl, die Liebe
Macht Ihre Augen trübe,
Der schönen Zofe Bild
Hat ganz Ihr Herz erfüllt!

My Lord Marquis , a man like you
should better understand that,
Therefore I advise you to look more
accurately at people!
My hand is surely far too fine, hahaha .
My foot so dainty and small, hahaha.
In a manner of speaking
My waist, my bustle,
The likes of things you'll never find
on a maid!
You really must admit,
This mistake was very funny!
Yes, very funny, hahaha,
This thing is, hahaha.
You'll have to forgive me, hahaha,
If I laugh, hahaha!

Yes, very funny, hahaha
This thing is, hahaha!
Very comical, Marquis, you are!
With this profile in Grecian style
being a gift of nature;
If this face doesn't give it away,
Just look at my figure!
Just look through the eye-glass, then,
ah,
At this outfit I am wearing, ah
It seems to me that love
Has clouded your eyes,
The chambermaid image
Has fulfilled all your heart!
Now you see her everywhere,
Very funny indeed, is this situation!
Yes, very funny, hahaha
This thing is, hahaha.

Nun sehen Sie sie überall,
Sehr komisch ist fürwahr der Fall!
Ja, sehr komisch, hahaha
Ist die Sache, hahaha
Dum verzeihn Sie, hahaha,
Wenn ich lache, hahaha!
Ja, sehr komisch, hahaha,
Ist die Sache, hahaha

You'll have to forgive me, hahaha,
If I laugh, hahaha!
Yes, very funny, hahaha
This thing is, hahaha!

They Can't Take That Away From Me from **Shall We Dance**
(George Gershwin; Arr. Lippman)

The way you wear your hat
The way you sip your tea
The memory of all that
No, no, they can't take that away from me

The way your smile just beams
The way you sing off-key
The way you haunt my dreams
No, no, they can't take that away from me

We may never, never meet again

On this bumpy road to love
Still I'll always, always keep the memory of...

The way you hold your knife
The way we danced till three
The way you've changed my life
No, no, they can't take that away from me
No, they can't take that away from me.

East of the Sun and West of the Moon
(Brooks Bowman Arr. Lippman)

East of the sun and west of the moon
We'll build a dream house so lovely
Near to the sun in a day, near to the moon at night,
We'll live in a lovely way dear
Living our love in memory
Just you and I, forever and a day,

Love will not die, we'll keep it that way,
Up among the stars we'll find

Summertime from **Porgy and Bess**
(George Gershwin; Arr. Carroll)

Summertime,
And the livin' is easy
Fish are jumpin'
And the cotton is high
Your daddy's rich
And your mamma's good lookin'
So hush little baby
Don't you cry
One of these mornings
You're going to rise up singing
Then you'll spread your wings
And you'll take to the sky
But till that morning
There's a'nothing can harm you
With daddy and mamma standing by
Summertime,
And the livin' is easy
Fish are jumpin'
And the cotton is high

Your daddy's rich
And your mamma's good lookin'
So hush little baby
Don't you cry

Flower Duet from **Lakmé**
(Leo Delibes 1815 – 1910)

Lakmé: Viens, Mallika, les lianes en
fleurs jettent déjà leur ombre
sur le ruisseau sacré qui coule, calme
et sombre, éveillé par le chant des
oiseaux tapageurs

Mallika : Oh, maitressé. C'est l'heure
où je te vois sourire, l'heure bénie où
je puis lire dans le cœur toujours ferme
de Lakmé!

Lakmé and Mallika :
Dôme épais, le jasmin
à la rose s'assemble,

Come, Mallika, the flowering
creepers are already casting their
shadow on sacred flowing stream,
calm and dark, awakened by the
singing of the boisterous birds.

Oh, governess. It is the hour when I
see you smile, the blessed hour
when I can read in always-closed
heart of Lakmé!

Rive en fleurs, frais matin,
nous appellent ensemble.
Ah! glissons en suivant
le courant fuyant.
Dans l'onde frémissante
d'une main nonchalante!
Gagnons le bord,
où la source dort eu
l'oiseau chante.

Dôme épais, blanc jasmin,
nous appellent ensemble!

Lakmé: Mais, je ne sais quelle crainte
subite s'empare de moi quand mon
père va seul à leur ville maudite, je
tremble, je tremble d'effroi!

Mallika: Pour que le Dieu Ganeça le
protège, jusqu'à l'étang où s'ébattent
joyeux
les cygnes aux ailes de neige, allons
cueillir les lotus bleus.

Lakmé: Oui, près des cygnes aux ailes
de neige, allons cueillir les lotus bleus.

Lakmé and Mallika :

Dôme épais, le jasmin
À la rose s'assemb.,
rive en fleurs, frais matin,
Nous appellent ensemble.
Ah! glissons en suivant
Le courant fuyant;
Dans l'onde frémissante !
D'une main nonchalante,
gagnons le bord,
où la source dort eu
l'oiseau chante.

Dôme épais, blanc jasmin,
Nous appellent ensemble!

Under the dense canopy where the
jasmine blends with the rose.
The flowering bank and the fresh
morning call us together.
Come, let us drift down the fleeing
current.
On the rippling surface,
of a nonchalant hand,
Come, let's go to the shore
where the spring sleeps and the bird
sings.

Dense canopy, white jasmine,
call us together!

But, an eerie feeling of distress
overcomes me when my father goes
into their accursed city
I tremble, I tremble with fright!

In order for him to be protected by
Ganesh, let us pick blue lotuses from
the pond where the snow-winged
swans joyfully play.

Yes, near the snow-winged swans,
let's go and pick the blue lotus

Under the dense canopy where the
jasmine blends with the rose.
The flowering bank and the fresh
morning call us together.
Come, let us drift down the fleeing
current.
On the rippling surface,
of a nonchalant hand,
Come, let's go to the shore
where the spring sleeps and the bird
sings.

Dense canopy, white jasmine,
call us together!