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April 1, 2016

Senior Honors Euphonium Recital

by

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2016

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An abstract of  
a thesis submitted to the Faculty of Emory College of Arts and Sciences  
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Department of Music

2016

## Abstract

### Senior Honors Euphonium Recital

By Rohin Aggarwal

On Saturday, March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2016 at 2:00pm, I performed a full solo recital accompanied by Dr. Elena Cholakova on piano. In total, the recital consisted of approximately an hour of music. My program consisted of the following pieces:

- Sonata in F-minor by Georg Telemann
  - I. *Triste*
  - II. *Allegro*
  - III. *Andante*
  - IV. *Vivace*
- Symphonic Variants by James Curnow
- Sonata "Vox Gabrieli" by Stjepan Sulek
- Night Song by Ron Nelson
- Concerto for Euphonium by Philip Wilby
  - II. Dance: *Zeibékikos*

The recital took place in Emerson Concert Hall of the Schwartz Center for Performing Arts.

Senior Honors Euphonium Recital

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## Acknowledgements

First, I would like to thank the Friends of Music at Emory for their grant supporting my honors recital.

I would also like to thank Dr. Elena Cholakova for being an amazing accompanist and for supporting me throughout my four years in the Emory Music Department. In addition, I am very grateful to Xiaochen Chen for turning pages for Dr. Cholakova and smashing plates at the end of the final piece in the program.

Next, I would like to acknowledge and thank Dr. Adam Frey for his unending support, mentorship, and guidance over the past four years. I have learned so much from him as he encouraged me to develop my artistic abilities and express myself through music. I would also like to thank my committee members, Dr. Paul Bhasin, Dr. Kristin Wendland, and Dr. Simon Blakey, for agreeing to watch and give feedback on my recital and the recital program.

Finally, I would not have gotten to this point in my undergraduate career without the support and encouragement of my family and friends at Emory University. I have grown so much as a result of their friendship, kindness, love, and the amount of time and energy they have invested into attending my musical performances.

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# MUSIC AT EMORY CONCERT SERIES

2015–2016 SEASON

**ROHIN AGGARWAL, EUPHONIUM  
SENIOR HONORS RECITAL**

ELENA CHOLAKOVA, PIANO

**SATURDAY, MARCH 19, 2016, 2:00 P.M.**

**EMERSON CONCERT HALL  
SCHWARTZ CENTER FOR PERFORMING ARTS**



## PROGRAM

Sonata in F Minor (1729)

- I. *Triste*
- II. *Allegro*
- III. *Andante*
- IV. *Vivace*

Georg Philipp Telemann  
(1681–1767)

Symphonic Variants (1984)

James Curnow  
(b. 1943)

## INTERMISSION

Sonata “Vox Gabrieli” (1973)

Stjepan Sulek  
(1914–1986)

*Night Song* (1995)

Ron Nelson  
(b. 1929)

Concerto for Euphonium (1996)

- II. Dance: *Zeibékikos*

Philip Wilby  
(b. 1949)

This recital is supported in part by a grant from the Friends of Music at Emory.

## PROGRAM NOTES

### Sonata in F Minor (1729)

Before becoming a prominent composer in Germany during the Baroque era, Georg Philipp Telemann was already a child prodigy and had taught himself how to play several instruments, including the flute, oboe, violin, double bass, and many others. Credited by the *Guinness Book of World Records* as being history's most prolific composer, Telemann wrote more than three thousand compositions. While today Telemann is best known as a composer, he was also a musical theorist, a poet, a novelist, and the author of three separate autobiographies.

His Sonata in F Minor was originally written for the bassoon and continuo (a keyboard and bass instrument accompanying) but was later transcribed for several other tenor-range instruments, including the trombone and euphonium. As the name suggests, the first movement, entitled *Triste*, contains a slow and mournful melody; the second movement, *Allegro*, contrasts this with a more energetic and ornamented melody based on that from the first movement. The third movement is slow and expressive, transitioning into the fourth and final movement, which ornaments the original motive in a quick and lively fashion. As this is the only piece on the program written before the twentieth century, there is sure to be a sense of familiarity in the Sonata in F Minor that listeners may not find throughout the rest of the recital.

### Symphonic Variants (1984)

James Curnow may not have the same claim to fame as Georg Philipp Telemann in many music circles today, but he is definitely well-known in that of wind instrumentalists. An American-born composer and euphonium player, Curnow received his formal musical training at Wayne State University (Detroit, Michigan) and at Michigan State University (East Lansing, Michigan), where he studied euphonium performance and conducting. He has been commissioned to write more than two hundred works for concert band, brass band, orchestra, choir, and a variety of vocal and instrumental chamber ensembles. Among his most recent honors are inclusion in *Who's Who in America*, *Who's Who in the South and Southwest*, and Composer of the Year (1997), an honor bestowed by the National Music Teachers Association.

The Tokyo Symphony Orchestra commissioned *Symphonic Variants* for Euphonium and Orchestra, and Curnow later wrote a transcription of the piece for euphonium and wind band. Upon its completion, *Symphonic Variants* was revered as one of the most technically and artistically difficult pieces written for the instrument. The piece features the vast pitch range of the euphonium, along with its versatility and ability to produce a variety of tone colors. It can be argued that *Symphonic Variants* has played a crucial role in the emergence of the euphonium as a key member of the wind instrument family.

## **Sonata “Vox Gabrieli” (1973)**

Born in modern-day Croatia, Stjepan Sulek was a composer, conductor, violinist, and music teacher during the twentieth century. He received his diploma from the Zagreb Academy of Music and began teaching violin at the Zagreb Conservatory in 1939, composition in 1948, and orchestration in 1953. In 1945, his works began to be played worldwide, and in 1948 he became a member of the Croatian Academy of Arts and Sciences, as well as a member of Department of Music for the academy in 1954.

Originally written for the trombone, the Sonata “Vox Gabrieli” was commissioned by the International Trombone Association and became a world best seller upon its publication in 1973. The title literally means “Voice of Gabriel,” referring to the archangel who has been depicted biblically as the angel of death, the prince of fire and thunder, and the messenger of God. Sulek portrayed these various depictions of Gabriel through his Sonata, which contains music that is sometimes peaceful and at other times very forceful, giving the illusion of despair and uneasiness.

## **Night Song (1995)**

Ron Nelson studied composition at the Eastman School of Music (Rochester, New York), one of the most highly respected professional schools of music in the United States. He studied with many top composition teachers and composers of his time and went on to further his studies at the Paris Conservatory under a Fulbright Grant. Nelson began teaching at Brown University in 1956 and retired from there as professor emeritus in 1993. One of his most famous compositions is his *Passacaglia* (Homage on B–A–C–H), which was the first piece to win all three wind band composition prizes in one period.

*Night Song* is not among Nelson’s most famous works, but this does not reflect on the quality of the piece. Written as a tribute to one of his composition teachers, Howard Hanson, *Night Song* contains a truly romantic and melodic sound that begins in a soft manner before escalating to a dramatic, high-range climax, which eventually dissolves into silence at the end. Through its soothing and mellow texture, the piece showcases the lyrical and dynamic abilities of the euphonium.

## **Concerto for Euphonium (1996)**

British composer Philip Wilby was a violinist in the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain before pursuing compositional studies at Keble College at the University of Oxford. He joined the staff at Leeds University at the invitation of Alexander Goehr in 1972. Wilby’s teaching activities have taken him to Dartington and Canford Summer Schools; Bavaria, Norway; and the United States.

Completed on New Year’s Eve 1995, Wilby’s concerto has already established itself as one of, if not the, greatest concerto for the instrument written so far. Its extended length seeks to explore that fine combination of sustained lyricism and explosive virtuosity. The second movement, a Greek dance entitled *Zeibékikos*, is characterized by fast, technical passages, two-octave glissandos, fierce grace notes, and rapid meter changes. By far one of the most enjoyable euphonium pieces to witness and perform, *Zeibékikos* ends with a surprising finish.

## PERFORMER BIOGRAPHIES

**Rohin Aggarwal**, euphonium, is a senior at Emory College studying for a bachelor of science degree in chemistry and a bachelor of arts degree in music performance. He is from Macon, Georgia, where he participated in his high school's marching and concert bands, as well as the Macon Youth Symphony Orchestra, District Honor Band, and All-State Band. He participates in the Emory Wind Ensemble, and he was the 2015 runner-up of Emory's Concerto and Aria Competition. Aggarwal has also been involved as an executive board member of Volunteer Emory, the Hindu Students Association, the Emory Department of Music's Student Advisory Board, and Omicron Delta Kappa. He will be pursuing a degree in medicine beginning in July at Mayo Medical School. Aggarwal would like to thank his teacher, Adam Frey; his accompanist, Elena Cholakova; his family; and his friends for their invaluable support throughout his time at Emory.

Bulgarian pianist **Elena Cholakova** has appeared as a soloist and chamber musician in Eastern and Western Europe, South America, and the United States. She has given solo recitals at the Liszt Academy and the United States Embassy in Budapest, Hungary; Bulgaria Hall and Sofia Conservatory in Sofia, Bulgaria; Aosta Concert Hall in Aosta, Italy; Fellbach Musicschule in Fellbach, Germany; Fazioli Salon in Chicago, and many more. Her performances have been broadcast live on NPR, Atlanta's WABE, Chicago's classical music radio station WFMT, and on Bulgarian TV and radio. As a member of the Atlanta Chamber Players, Cholakova has appeared in the International Chamber Music Festival in San Miguel de Allende, Mexico; has regularly performed in Atlanta's premier Spivey Hall; and has premiered commissioned works by leading American composers. Cholakova was featured in the Highlands-Cashiers Chamber Music Festival in North Carolina as well as the International Days of Music Festival in Plovdiv, Bulgaria. Cholakova is a recipient of the Rislov Foundation Scholarship from the University of Michigan, awarded to musicians nationwide, for their high achievements in music. A dedicated educator, Cholakova's students have won top prizes at a number of national and international competitions. Cholakova has both an MMus and a DMus from Northwestern University.



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**COUGH DROPS** In lobby, courtesy of Margery and Robert McKay.

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**EVENT AND PROGRAM INFORMATION** Available online at [arts.emory.edu](http://arts.emory.edu).

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**Bottom (left to right):** Gary Motley, *Bill Head*; Christopher O'Riley, *Wendy Lynch*; audience view from stage, *courtesy of Emory Concert Choir*; Emory University Symphony Orchestra, *Tony Benner*.