



Pro Arte

CHAMBER ORCHESTRA OF BOSTON



2000-2001 Subscription Season



An encounter
with great music
and the musicians
who bring it to life.

Program November 26, 2000

Isaiah Jackson, Principal Conductor
Gunther Schuller, Principal Guest Conductor

Gunther Schuller, conductor
Edwin Barker, double bass

Sunday, November 26, 2000
3:00 pm Sanders Theatre

Concertino for Contrabass and Orchestra Theodore Antoniou
Prestissimo
Cantilena
Presto
(b. 1938)

Edwin Barker, double bass

Concerto in D major for Double Bass and Orchestra Johann Baptist Vaubal
Allegro moderato
Adagio
Allegro moderato
(1739-1813)

Edwin Barker, double bass

Failing: A Very Difficult Piece for String Bass Tom Johnson
(b. 1939)

I N T E R M I S S I O N

Symphony in F major, The Rescue of Andromeda by Perseus Carl Ditters Von Dittersdorf
Adagio non molto
Presto
Larghetto
Finale: Vivace-Tempo di Minuetto
(1739-1799)

From Holberg's Time, suite in the old style for string orchestra Edvard Grieg
Prelude: Allegro vivace
Sarabande: Andante
Gavotte: Allegretto
Air: Andante religioso
Rigaudon: Allegro con brio
(1843-1907)

Pro Arte Chamber Orchestra is very grateful to Cambridge Trust Company for their generous support of this concert.

The Pro Arte Chamber Orchestra's concerts are recorded for educational purposes through the generosity of WGBH. Your courtesy in not talking during the performance is greatly appreciated.

Today's program is funded, in part, by the Massachusetts Cultural Council and the Cambridge Arts Council, a local agency supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.





EDWIN BARKER, double bass

Double bassist Edwin Barker is recognized as one of the most gifted bassists on the American concert scene. Acknowledged as an accomplished solo and ensemble player, Mr. Barker has concertized in North America, Europe, and the Far East.

Edwin Barker has performed and recorded with the Boston Symphony Orchestra, the Boston Symphony Chamber Players and with Collage, a Boston based contemporary music ensemble. He is also a frequent guest performer with the Boston Chamber Music Society in Boston's Jordan Hall. Edwin Barker performed the world premiere of James Yannatos' Bass Concerto (which was written especially for him) with Alex. III and subsequently with Collage. He was the featured soloist at the New England premiere of Gunther Schuller's Bass Concerto, conducted by the composer, with the Pro Arte Chamber Orchestra of Boston, MA. Barker's major teaching affiliations include the Tanglewood Music Center, Boston University, and the New England Conservatory of Music.

Mr. Barker graduated with Honors from the New England Conservatory in 1976 where he studied double bass with Henry Portnoi. That same year, while a member of the Chicago Symphony, he was appointed at age twenty two to the position of principal bassist of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Mr. Barker continues to tour and perform internationally with the Boston Symphony Orchestra and the Boston Symphony Chamber Players.

Mr. Barker was invited to inaugurate the One-Hundredth Anniversary Season of the Boston Symphony Orchestra with a solo performance of the Koussevitzky Bass Concerto; a performance the Boston Globe praised as having possessed "everything that makes great artistry - tone, technical equipment, temperament, repose, a keen sense of rhythm, and fine conception." Other solo engagements include appearances at Ozawa Hall at Tanglewood, the Festival of Contemporary Music at Tanglewood, Carnegie Recital Hall's "Sweet and Low" series, and recitals at major universities and conferences throughout the world. His other engagements have included solo appearances with the Boston Classical Orchestra as well as with the Boston Symphony Orchestra in Boston and in Europe. In July, 1995, Mr. Barker was chosen by Maestro Sir Georg Solti to lead the bass section of the United Nations' orchestra "Musicians of the World," an orchestra comprised of prominent musicians from the world's finest orchestras.

Edwin Barker's solo CD recordings include *Three Sonatas for Double Bass*, on Boston Records, and James Yannatos' *Variations for Solo Contrabass*, Albany Records.

Edwin Barker's other double bass teachers have included Peter Mercurio, Richard Stephan, and Angelo LaMariano.

THEODORE ANTONIOU (b. 1938) Concertino for Contrabass and Orchestra

Concertino for Contrabass and Orchestra was written in 2000 for Edwin Barker (principal contrabassist – Boston Symphony Orchestra), the Pro Arte Chamber Orchestra of Boston, and Gunther Schuller. Therefore I had at least three very important reasons to write this piece with enthusiasm. Edwin Barker is a wonderful musician and a unique virtuoso. Pro Arte is a very professional orchestra founded by a group of talented musicians with ideals. Many of the members of this orchestra are colleagues, present collaborators or former students of mine. Gunther is a great friend, a wonderful colleague and, for many years, mentor of many fantastic things around and for music. Another reason is that the day of the premiere on November 26, 2000 is a celebration for Gunther's 75th birthday and my work is a very small contribution to this great musician.

The orchestration and the duration of the piece were determined according to the specifics of the event (mainly the orchestration and the length of the rest of the program). The form is rather free. However, it keeps many characteristics of the concerto and mainly the protagonistic role of the solo and the dialogue between solo and orchestra.

The *Concertino* has three short movements. The first movement, *Prestissimo*, is based on the very fast virtuoso passages of the solo interrupted by melodic fragments and short contacts of the orchestra. The second movement, *Canzona*, is a large melody, partially based on a movement of a very old piano piece of mine. The contrabass plays often in a very high register, something Edwin does very beautifully. The third movement, *Presto*, exposes some contemporary techniques of the solo and it is rather free in form. – T.A.

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Theodore Antoniou's interest in music surprised his family, which was not musical, and his teachers, who expected that he might become an engineer. But he began studying music at the age of six and received his diplomas from the National Conservatory in Athens, where he undertook special projects in violin, composition, harmony, and fugue. In addition he began early on to organize performances of new music, an activity in which he has remained indefatigable. He has been involved in the founding and direction of the Hellenic Group of Contemporary Music in Athens, the Alea II New Music Ensemble at Stanford University, and other new-music ensembles in Utah and Philadelphia. For a decade, from 1974, he was involved with the contemporary music program at Tanglewood, becoming the Assistant Director for Contemporary Music Activities. He is currently Professor of Music at Boston University and director of the ensemble Alea III, which he founded there.

Following his studies in Athens, Antoniou received a German scholarship for study in Munich, where he remained from 1961 to 1966. He returned to Greece then, but not for long: The accession of the military junta in 1967 interrupted his activities in his homeland. He spent a year in Berlin, but during a visit home he performed one of a pair of pieces entitled *Protest I* and *Protest II*, which were openly critical of the new regime. The next morning he had to escape to the United States to avoid the police. During the rule of the junta, Antoniou composed several works inspired by political events in the world—*Events I, II, and III*—including a Fromm Foundation commission that introduced him to audiences at Tanglewood. In recent years he has lived in the United States but has spent considerable stretches during the summers in Greece, often traveling with the musicians of his Alea III ensemble.

Antoniou's earliest compositions were influenced by Greek traditional and folk music, though he has adopted new techniques ranging from Schoenbergian twelve-tone approaches to controlled improvisation. His output is large and wide-ranging, with a particular emphasis on the theater, including incidental scores to many classic and modern Greek dramatists, as well as Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, Anouilh, and Sean O'Casey, and a number of scores for film and television. The