Sarabande
Suite

An MFA Thesis Performance
by
Lauren Grant

April 29, 2018
Mark Morris Dance Center
James and Martha Duffy Performance Space
This performance, along with a related written thesis, serves as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Fine Arts in Dance from Montclair State University. In this project, I apply the principles of musicality inherent in my approach as a performer and teacher toward a choreographic endeavor.

The dance and musical form, sarabande, serves as a vehicle for this choreographic process. In one regard, I tend to the concepts of beat, tempo, meter, accent, duration, articulation, rhythm, and phrasing during movement invention to supply my dance with intrinsic drama. Intermixed with this rhythmically rooted methodology is an influence from knowledge developed through academic research about the sarabande’s origins, migration, and transformation through time and locale. The final choreographic product invites a conversation among historical, musicological, and compositional elements and aims to shed light on this multilayered musical form while providing meaning and delight beyond the pure facts of music and movement.
Choreography______________________ Lauren Grant
Dancer__________________________ Lauren Grant
Pianist___________________________ George Shevtsov
Violinist________________________ Georgy Valtchev
Stage Manager/Technical Director____ Johan Henckens
Costume Consultant/Constructor____ Stephanie Sleeper
Lighting Designer__________________ Nick Kolin

Music:

1. Johann Sebastian Bach
   French suite #2 in C minor BWV 813, Sarabande

2. Jean-Baptiste Lully
   Le Bourgeois gentilhomme, Sarabande (Air des Espagnols)

3. Edvard Grieg
   Holberg suite, Sarabande

4. Georg Frideric Handel
   Suite in D minor HWV 437, Sarabande

5. Enrique Granados
   Danzas Españolas Para Piano No.3, Zarabanda
Lauren Grant, honored with a New York Dance and Performance “Bessie” award for her career with the Mark Morris Dance Group, has danced with MMDG since 1996, appearing in over 60 of Morris’ works. In addition to staging Morris’ repertory on his company and at universities, Grant teaches ballet and modern technique for numerous professional dance companies and schools around the globe. Her writing has been published in the journal Dance Education in Practice, Ballet Review, Dance Magazine, and InfiniteBody. She also serves as a panelist for the New York State Council on the Arts. Grant holds a BFA in dance from NYU’s Tisch School of the Arts and is currently pursuing her MFA in dance at Montclair State University where she is also an adjunct instructor and a member of the National Honor Society for graduate and professional students. She is a recipient of the prestigious American Association of University Women Career Development Grant, the Sono Osato Scholarship for Graduate Studies, and the Caroline Newhouse Grant—all in support of her academic pursuits. Originally from Highland Park, IL, she lives in Brooklyn, NY with her husband David Leventhal (former MMDG dancer and current Dance for PD* Program Director) and their son, born in 2012.

Pianist George (Yegor) Shevtsov enjoys a multifaceted career as a solo performer, chamber musician, recording artist, collaborator and educator. His performances have been singled out for their “Mozartian elegance,” “perfect lucidity” (The New York Times) and “superb musicianship” (The Miami Herald). His recent concerto engagements have included appearances at Fajr Festival (Iran), Symphony Space (New York), Tokyo Bunka Kaikan (Japan), the National Theater in Taipei (Taiwan), and Auditorio de Ciudad de León (Spain), as well as collaborative and solo recitals in Italy, United Kingdom, and across the United States. His recording of the piano music of Claude Debussy and Pierre Boulez was selected by rhapsody.com as one of the top 25 classical albums of 2013. He is featured on three recent recordings, Reiko Füting’s Gelöschte Namen (September 2015) and Red Light New Music’s Barbary Coast (July 2015) and Dmitri Tymoczko’s Rube
Goldberg Variations (2017). His current recording project is solo piano music by James Newton.

George Shevtsov’s most significant artistic associations have been with Red Light New Music, a ground-breaking contemporary music collective; Mark Morris, a world-renowned choreographer; New World Symphony, America’s orchestral academy founded by Michael Tilson Thomas; American Ballet Theatre, one of the world’s premier ballet companies; Mischa Bouvier, an award-winning baritone; avant-garde composers Reiko Fueing, Yoav Gal, Andrew Noble and Scott Wollschleger. He has also appeared in concert with members of many renowned ensembles, such as the American String Quartet, Mivos Quartet, Talea, International Contemporary Ensemble, Bang on a Can, red fish blue fish, Alarm Will Sound, Argento Ensemble, Wet Ink Ensemble and Manhattan Sinfonietta, among others. Among the composers who have heard George Shevtsov perform their works are Pierre Boulez, John Luther Adams, Elliott Carter, Charles Wuorinen, Georg Friedrich Haas, Steve Reich, Louis Andriessen and George Crumb.

George Shevtsov has been coached by some of the world’s finest musicians, such as Daniel Barenboim in his Beethoven Sonata Workshop at Carnegie Hall, Emmanuel Ax, Claude Franck, Garrick Ohlsson, James Levine, Ursula Oppens, Carol Wincenc, Martin Katz, Jeffrey Swann, Andre-Michel Schub, Craig Rutenberg, Dawn Upshaw, Christine Brewer and Yo-Yo Ma.

George Shevtsov is on the faculty of the Manhattan School of Music and the MSM Precollege Division. He currently studies flamenco in the studio of Soledad Barrio. More information on vegorshevtsov.com

Georgy Valtchev has performed on some of the world’s most prestigious stages as a soloist with orchestras, in recitals and as a chamber musician. In the United States he has appeared at Lincoln Center’s Alice Tully Hall, New York’s Carnegie Hall, Kennedy Center in Washington DC, the 92nd Street Y, and Chicago’s Cultural Institute. In Europe he has appearances in venues, such as Wigmore Hall and the Barbican Centre in London, La Cité de la Musique in Paris, Amsterdam’s Royal Carré Theatre, Teatro Arcimboldi in Milan, and Bulgaria Hall in Sofia. He has toured Asia, Australia and Israel with performances in Beijing Cultural Arts Center, Guangzhou
Opera House, Sydney Opera House, Tel Aviv Opera house, Taipei Cultural Center Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Suntory Hall in Tokyo.

A dedicated collaborative musician, Mr. Valtchev enjoys frequent performances with distinguished international artists and ensembles in the United States and Europe. As principal member of the Mark Morris Dance Group musicians, he frequently travels around the world. Mr. Valtchev has been honored to lead, as guest concertmaster, several major symphony orchestras, most notably the London Philharmonic and the Royal Symphony Orchestra of Madrid.

Born in the ancient city of Plovdiv in Bulgaria, Georgy began his violin studies at age 6 and received his basic music education from the State Music Schools in Plovdiv and Sofia. He achieved his first international success at age sixteen when he won the Grand Prize of the "Kocian" International Violin Competition in then Czechoslovakia. After a short study at the State Music Academy in Sofia, he was accepted as student of the renowned violin professor Ms. Dorothy Delay at the Juilliard School in New York where he was awarded full scholarships for the duration of his studies for the Bachelor and Master of Music degrees. He has been honored with a number of awards, among them the First Prize of the Ducrest International Competition and the Special Prize of the Tibor Varga International Violin Competition.

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