

Cedille Records
1205 W. Balmoral Ave.
Chicago, IL 60640
(773) 989-2515
www.cedillerecords.org

Press contact: Nat Silverman
Nathan J. Silverman Co. PR
2906 Central St. #250
Evanston, IL 60201-1283
Phone/Fax: (847) 328-4292
Email: natsilv@aol.com

News

Release date: Nov. 13, 2015

Alondra de la Parra Conducts World-Premiere Recording of Stacy Garrop's 'Mythology Symphony' on New Cedille Album

**Dramatic five-movement work was commissioned
by Detroit and Albany Symphony Orchestras
and Chicago College of Performing Arts**

Stacy Garrop's *Mythology Symphony*, a dramatic, lyrical, five-movement work inspired by female characters of Greek legend, receives its world-premiere recording in a performance led by *Billboard*-charting international conductor Alondra de la Parra on a new Cedille Records album devoted to the flourishing Chicago-based composer's orchestral music.

The album *Mythology Symphony: Orchestral Works by Stacy Garrop*, available November 13, features de la Parra conducting the CCPA Symphony Orchestra in the title work. Peabody Conservatory-based Markand Thakar conducts the CCPA Chamber Orchestra in world-premiere recordings of Garrop's *Thunderwalker* and *Shadow*. Both orchestras are conservatory ensembles at Roosevelt University's Chicago College of Performing Arts, where Garrop is associate professor of composition (Cedille Records CDR 90000 160).

'Overarching stories'

The album presents Garrop's major orchestral output from 1999 to 2013.

"Although these three works were composed over a 14-year span," Garrop writes in the album's liner notes, "they share several inherent traits: a strong sense of drama, a lyrical language, and overarching stories that govern the formal structures of each work."

-more-

Each movement of *Mythology Symphony* is a free-standing piece in which a solo instrument or group of instruments represents a character in a classic tale.

Garrop wrote *Mythology Symphony* (2007–2013) progressively over six years, beginning with a 2007 Detroit Symphony Orchestra commission that yielded *Becoming Medusa*, which ultimately became the symphony's first movement.

Medusa, the once-beautiful woman who was turned into a hideous creature by a jealous goddess, is represented by a solo violin. Garrop scored it that way as a tribute to the musicianship of Emmanuelle Boisvert, the Detroit Symphony's long-serving female concertmaster, a rarity at the time. The movement opens with dissonances depicting Medusa's unfortunate fate, then flashes back to a lyrical, happier time, followed by her sultry seduction of the God Poseidon in Athena's temple and the tragic consequences of being caught in the act by the enraged goddess.

An oboe plays the title character in *Penelope Waits*, one of two movements commissioned by the Chicago College of Performing Arts. Faithful Queen Penelope awaits the return of her husband, Odysseus, from the Trojan War in this quiet movement, which employs a chamber-size contingent of the orchestra.

The Lovely Sirens and *The Fates of Man* were commissioned by the Albany Symphony Orchestra as part of Garrop's 2009–2010 residency, which also included a performance of *Becoming Medusa*. Garrop credits the orchestra's music director, David Alan Miller, for suggesting she create a mythology-themed symphony by adding movements about other mythic females. The Sirens, temptresses whose singing lures sailors to their doom, are represented by a woodwind melody, the sailors by low brass. As the drama intensifies, the entire orchestra issues Morse code SOS distress calls of short and long rhythms. In *The Fates of Man*, a dying man, depicted by a cello, appeals to the three Sisters of Fate to prolong his life, but they refuse.

The concluding movement, *Pandora Undone*, another CCPA commission, has a flute in the role of the curious young Pandora, who opens a mysterious box and unleashes an assortment of evils into the world.

Garrop conjures her own mythological world in *Thunderwalker* (1999). She didn't initially set out to write a programmatic piece, she said in an interview with Cedille Records. While completing the first movement of what would become *Thunderwalker*, she added a thundersheet to the climax. That sparked the idea for the present three-movement work, which summons a sky-dwelling thunder god "whose footsteps fall loudly among the clouds."

Shadow (2001) emerged from Garrop's 2001 stay at the Yaddo artist colony in Saratoga Springs, N.Y. and the influence of visual artists and photographers she met there, plus snapshots she took on the grounds. Translated into sound, "jagged bits of color and motion" become "overlapping lines of counterpoint, shifting textures, and intersecting blocks of music," she writes. What was intended to be a light, colorful work turned darker when the composer learned of the death of an old friend. The work takes its title from a story about the community's founding family, whose personal tragedies also figured in Garrop's thinking.

Mythology Symphony: Orchestral Works by Stacy Garrop was funded in part by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Recording Dates and Venue

The album was produced by James Ginsburg and engineered by multiple Grammy nominee Bill Maylone March 5–7, 2014, and January 29–30, 2015, at Benito Juarez Community Academy Auditorium, Chicago, Ill.

Stacy Garrop

Stacy Garrop's music has been performed by the choir Chanticleer; the Detroit Symphony, Albany Symphony, Grant Park, and Minnesota Orchestras; and the Avalon String Quartet, Biava Quartet, Lincoln Trio, and Fifth House Ensemble, among many other groups.

Garrop's music "excites the enthusiasm of performers and audiences alike" (*Pittsburgh Tribune-Review*). She has "a sharp ear for instrumental color and narrative form: She can tell a story" (*Detroit Free Press*). *Gramophone* calls her a composer whose work displays "vision and breadth." The *Journal of the International Alliance of Women in Music* proclaims, "Without question, Garrop is poised to make significant and lasting contributions to [the] world of classical music."

Mythology Symphony: Orchestral Works by Stacy Garrop is the ninth Cedille Records album to include one or more of Garrop's works, the second devoted exclusively to her music, and the first by any label to comprise her orchestral output. More about the composer at garrop.com and her blog, composerinklings.com.

The Conductors

Heralded by Plácido Domingo as "an extraordinary conductor," Alondra de la Parra was just named music director of Australia's Queensland Symphony Orchestra. She has led more than 70 orchestras around the globe including some of the most prestigious orchestras of France, England, Germany, Italy, the U.S., Japan, Brazil, Sweden, and Russia, including the Orchestre de Paris, London Philharmonic Orchestra, RSB Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra, and Milan's Cameristi della Scala. Her upcoming debuts include concerts with the Tonhalle Orchester Zurich as well as her subscription debut with Tokyo's NHK Symphony.

Her 2010 debut recording, *Mi Alma Mexicana* (My Mexican Soul), with her Philharmonic Orchestra of the Americas on Sony Classical, made *Billboard's* classical album chart in the U.S. and went platinum in Mexico. More information at alondradelaparra.com.

A former assistant conductor of the New York Philharmonic, Markand Thakar is music director of the Baltimore Chamber Orchestra, with which he has recorded for Naxos, and co-director of graduate conducting at the Peabody Conservatory at Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, Md. His website is markandthakar.com.

Cedille Records

Marking its 26th anniversary during the 2015–2016 season, Grammy award-winning Cedille Records (pronounced say-DEE) has been dedicated to showcasing the most noteworthy classical artists in and from the Chicago area since its debut in November 1989.

The audiophile-oriented label releases every new album in multiple formats: a physical CD; a 96 kHz, 24-bit, studio-quality FLAC download; and a 320 Kbps MP3 download.

An independent nonprofit enterprise, Cedille Records is the label of Cedille Chicago, NFP (formerly The Chicago Classical Recording Foundation). Sales of physical CDs and digital downloads cover only a small percentage of the label's costs. Tax-deductible donations from individual music-lovers and grants from charitable organizations account for most of its revenue.

Headquarters are at 1205 W. Balmoral Ave., Chicago, IL 60640; call (773) 989-2515; e-mail: info@cedillerecords.org. Website: cedillerecords.org.

Cedille Records is distributed in the Western Hemisphere by Naxos of America and its distribution partners, by Select Music in the U.K., and by other independent distributors in the Naxos network in major international classical music markets.

###

MYTHOLOGY SYMPHONY: ORCHESTRAL WORKS BY STACY GARROP
(Cedille Records CDR 90000 160)

Mythology Symphony (40:12)

**CCPA Symphony Orchestra,
Alondra de la Parra, conductor**

Thunderwalker (12:19)

Shadow (8:32)

**CCPA Chamber Orchestra,
Markand Thakar, conductor**