

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA
DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC**

USA Piano Camp 2016

Faculty Recital

Sharon Hudson, piano

Sonata No. 2, *Concord, Mass., 1840-1860*

Charles Ives (1874-1954)

Emerson

Hawthorne

The Alcotts

Thoreau

Nicole Carrion, flute

The Ninety-third Concert of Academic Year 2015-2016

RECITAL HALL

LIDLAW PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

Tuesday, June 14, 2016

3:00 p.m.

Dr. Sharon Hudson joined the University of Mobile music faculty in 2010, where she teaches piano and theory. She previously taught at the University of South Alabama and at Brescia University (KY). She received her MM and DMA degrees from the University of Illinois, where she was awarded teaching, research, and accompanying assistantships. There, she won the 21st Century Piano Commission contest in 2002 and played frequently with the New Music Ensemble. An avid performer of new music, recent performances have included Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire* with Mihaela Buhaiuc, songs of Poulenc and Larsen with Kathryn Hedlund, and Antheil's *Ballet mécanique* with the U of I Percussion Ensemble.

Excerpts from Ives' own notes for his Sonata No. 2 "Concord, Mass., 1840-1860", as published in *Essays Before a Sonata*. London: Calder and Boyars, 1969.

Emerson:

Though a great poet and prophet, he is greater, possibly as an invader of the unknown, — America's deepest explorer of spiritual immensities, — a seer painting his discoveries in masses and with any color that may lie at hand—cosmic, religious, human, even sensuous; a recorder, freely describing the inevitable struggle in the soul's uprising—perceiving from this inward source alone, that every "ultimate fact is only the first of a new series"; a discoverer, whose heart knows, with Voltaire, "that man seriously reflects when left alone," and would then discover, if he can, that "wondrous chain which links the heavens with earth—the world of beings subject to one law..."

There is an "oracle" at the beginning of the *Fifth Symphony* [of Beethoven] — in those four notes lies one of Beethoven's greatest messages. We would place its translation above the relentlessness of fate knocking at the door, above the greater human-message of destiny, and strive to bring it towards the spiritual message of Emerson's revelations—even to the "common heart" of Concord—the Soul of humanity knocking at the door of the Divine mysteries, radiant in the faith that it *will* be opened—and that human will become the Divine!

Hawthorne:

[Hawthorne] would sing of the relentlessness of guilt, the inheritance of guilt, the shadow of guilt darkening innocent posterity... This fundamental part of Hawthorne is not attempted in our music (the 2d movement of the series) which is but an "extended fragment" trying to suggest some of his wilder, fantastical adventures into the half-childlike, half-fairylike phantasmal realms.

Alcotts:

As one walks down the broad-arched street, passing the white house of Emerson—ascetic guard of a former prophetic beauty—he comes presently beneath the old elms overspreading the Alcott house. It seems to stand as a kind of homely but beautiful witness of Concord's common virtue... Here is the home of the "Marches" — all pervaded with the trials and happiness of the family and telling, in a simple way, the story of "the richness of not having."... And there sits the little old spinet-piano Sophia Thoreau gave to the Alcott children, on which Beth played the old Scotch airs, and played at the *Fifth Symphony*.

Thoreau:

And if there shall be a program let it follow his thought on an autumn day of Indian summer at Walden—a shadow of a thought at first, colored by the mist and haze over the pond:

Low anchored cloud,
Fountain head and
Source of rivers....
Dew cloth, dream drapery—
Drifting meadow of the air....

but this is momentary; the beauty of the day moves him to certain restlessness—to aspirations more specific—an eagerness for outward action, but through it all he is conscious that it is not in keeping with the mood for this "Day." As the mists rise, there comes a clearer thought more traditional than the first, a meditation more calm. As he stands on the side of the pleasant hill of pines and hickories in front of his cabin, he is still disturbed by a restlessness and goes down the white-pebbled and sandy eastern shore, but it seems not to lead him where the thought suggests—he climbs the path along the "bolder northern" and "western shore, with deep bays indented," and now along the railroad track, "where the Aeolian harp plays..."

...the poet's flute is heard out over the pond and Walden hears the swan song of that "Day" and faintly echoes.... Is it a transcendental tune of Concord? 'Tis an evening when the "whole body is one sense," ...and before ending his day he looks out over the clear, crystalline water of the pond and catches a glimpse of the shadow-thought he saw in the morning's mist and haze—he knows that by his final submission, he possesses the "Freedom of the Night." He goes up the "pleasant hillside of pines, hickories," and moonlight to his cabin, "with a strange liberty in Nature, a part of herself."