## **Richard Cumming**

## INTRODUCTION and BARCAROLLE

for Chamber Orchestra

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Richard Cumming (9 June 1928 – 25 November 2009), composer of more than sixty theater scores, studied with Ernest Bloch, Arnold Schoenberg, and Roger Sessions. The catalog of his music includes works for chamber groups, chorus and vocal ensembles, opera, orchestra, solo piano, strings, voice, film, radio, and television. Born in Shanghai in 1928 he was raised in Manila and went to school on the US west coast. A student at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music he studied piano with Lili Kraus and Rudolf Firkusny and toured much of the US, Canada, Europe and the Far East as soloist, Assistant Conductor of the Santa Fe Opera and accompanist for numerous instrumentalists and singers. He wrote music for New York's Phoenix Theater, the Milwaukee Repertory Theater, the Loretto-Hilton in St. Louis, California's Marin Shakespeare Festival, Esso Repertory Theater (nationwide TV), and the Trinity Square Repertory Company, Providence, RI where he was composer-in-residence from 1966. In 1968 that company was the first professional American regional theater to be invited to the Edinburgh Festival, where Cumming received worldwide acclaim with his score for their premier production of Norman Holland's "Years of the Locust." His compositions earned awards from ASCAP, the Ford Foundation, Meet the Composer, the National Endowment for the Arts, National Federation of Music Clubs, Rhode Island State Council on the Arts, Rubin Opera, and Wurlitzer Foundation, among others.



Robert "Bob" Marcellus was born in Omaha, Nebraska, on June 1, 1928. He began his musical studies with piano lessons at the age of four. He took up the clarinet at eleven and began serious study of the instrument with Earl Handlon of the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra at twelve. His family moved to Washington, D.C., in 1944, and in the fall of that year, he started commuting to New York City once a week for lessons with Daniel Bonade, former first clarinetist of the Cleveland and Philadelphia Orchestras. He became second clarinetist of the National Symphony Orchestra in Washington in 1945. In 1946, he enlisted in the Air Force and played in the Air Force Band in Washington for three years. He returned to the second chair in the National Symphony in 1949 and was promoted to first a year later. Here, he remained until he was appointed principal clarinet in the Cleveland Orchestra at the invitation of George Szell in 1953. He was principal clarinetist of the Cleveland Orchestra, under George Szell, from 1953 to 1973. Towards the end of his career he lost his sight from diabetic retinitis. At his death he was a beloved and universally respected and admired artist and pedagogue whose conservative and highly disciplined approach to instrumental technique influenced generations of clarinetists. Pablo Casals called him "the ideal clarinetist."



John Browning (May 23, 1933 – January 26, 2003) was an American pianist known for his reserved, elegant style and sophisticated interpretations of Bach and Scarlatti and for his collaboration with composer Samuel Barber. Browning was born to musical parents in Denver, Colorado, in 1933. He studied piano from age 3 with his mother and, at the age of 10, was accepted as a student by Rosina Lhévinne. He appeared as a soloist with the Denver Symphony Orchestra later that same year. In 1945 his family moved to Los Angeles, California. He began his studies at the Juilliard School in New York with Rosina Lhévinne in 1950. He won the Leventritt Competition in 1955 and made his professional orchestral debut with the New York Philharmonic in 1956. In 1962 he gave the premiere of Samuel Barber's Pulitzer Prize-winning Piano Concerto, which was written for him, in connection with the opening of Lincoln Center. Browning developed a busy career, giving some 100 concerts a season. His last public appearance was at the National Gallery of Art in Washington in April 2002. His last performance of all was to an invited audience at the United States Supreme Court in May 2002. He died (from heart failure) at the age of 69 some eight months later in Sister Bay, Wisconsin.

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