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G FORCE

Sincerely diverse

Violinist-composer Daniel Bernard Roumain brings his eclectic style to the Pops.

By Alex Spanko
Globe Correspondent



BOSTON POPS Daniel Bernard Roumain, violin

Symphony Hall

June 19 at 8 p.m.; June 20 at 3 p.m.

Tickets: \$20-\$99.

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A. I started playing the violin when I was 5 years old, as a student in the South Florida public school system. And my parents are from Haiti, and for a lot of Haitian parents, a music education is part of your total education. I always found a way to balance violin lessons and

composition lessons with hanging out with my friends, and playing, literally, in a garage, in a garage band, and metal bands and things that weren't so formal. So, I think my career is a good reflection of a kind of a South Floridian sensibility, where you go to school during the week and you hung out with your friends and go to clubs on the weekends.

Q. So that's where you get your more popular influences, the clubs?

A. Sure. When I was 17, I started working for 2 Live Crew.

Q. Wait, you worked with 2 Live Crew? Doing what?

A. I got their coffee, and I opened up letters from fans, and I eventually started doing some very minor production work and grunt work. You know, playing bass lines on certain tracks. Just real basic production stuff that everybody in the room was involved with. . . . I've always been around classical musicians and rock and hip-hop musicians.

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Q. What was it like working with Lady Gaga on “American Idol” last year?

A. It was great. It was just another opportunity to work with somebody who has always been a friend, and is, I think, a really very talented and very serious singer-songwriter, and has a real vision for her work.

Q. You don’t think that kind of popular collaboration is risky — that you might lose respect from the classical community?

A. I’ve never really worried about or been wanting to impress the quote-unquote “classical music establishment,” because I’m part of the establishment. . . . You really can’t worry too much about those things because then I think you’re pandering, you know, I think you’re starting to do something that’s a little insincere.

Q. Let’s talk a bit about “The Woodbox,” which you’re premiering with the Pops.

A. This is the first time I’ve taken one of my more commercial projects — my latest CD, on the Thirsty Ear record label, is called “Woodbox: Beats and Balladry,” and it’s electronica. It’s electric violins, and DJs, and synthesizers, and all that kind of stuff. So that album took about a year to put together, and I listened to it almost every day, and one day I realized: Wow, some of the melodies on this album would be great with a four-string acoustic violin and a completely acoustic orchestra. . . . I’m really excited because it’s a way for me to rethink my own work.

ALEX SPANKO