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A TRADITION OF INNOVATION

Faculty Recital Series

2011-2012 Season

Monday, March 5
Sara M. Snell Music Theater
7:30 PM

Music of Faculty Composers

Tarantasia (2011)

Gregory Wanamaker

Christopher Creviston, Alto Saxophone
Hannah Gruber, Piano

Thr(e.e. cummingS)ongs (2002)

Paul Siskind

I. there is a
II. hist whist
III. it may not always be so;and I say
Lonel Woods, Tenor
Jill Rubio, Flute
Douglas Rubio, Guitar

O the White Towns (2003)

David Heuser
Text by Olga Cabral

Lonel Woods, Tenor
François Germain, Piano

Penumbra (2011)

David Heinick

Carol Cope Lowe, Bassoon
David Heinick, Piano

First Performance

2011 • 2012

CRANE

Quatrains of Omar Khayyam (2012)

Timothy Sullivan

Lorraine Yaros Sullivan, Mezzo Soprano
Julianne Kirk Doyle, Clarinet
Carol Cope Lowe, Bassoon
Charles Guy, Tuba
Shelly Tramposh, Viola
Timothy Sullivan, Piano

First Performance

An Aura for Lennie (2010)

Paul Steinberg

Kenneth Andrews, Flute
Raphael Sanders, Clarinet
John Lindsey, Violin
Mathias Wexler, Cello
Catherine Meunier, Marimba
David Heinick, Piano
Brian Doyle, Conductor

Program Notes

Gregory Wanamaker

Tarantasia (2011)

Tarantasia is quite simply a fantasy-variations on original tarantella-style themes. Part of a set of *Twisted Dances* ranging from *B'woogie* to *Mosh* and all grooves in between, *Tarantasia* is the most traditionally conceived of the set, featuring chromatic virtuoso passages for the saxophonist and the pianist interrupted by spacey multiphonics over a muted bass. It is intended as an encore piece, but is suitable as a recital opener.

Paul Siskind

Thr(e.e. cummingS)ongs (2002)

My *Thr(e.e. cummingS)ongs* was commissioned in the fall of 2002 by Sweet, Fair, and Wise: Carl Johengen, Jill Rubio, and Douglas Rubio. Although I have written musical settings of poetry by a wide variety of modern poets, this is my first setting of poetry by E.E. Cummings. Attempting to set Cummings' work to music always seemed like a daunting challenge to me; like many people, I was only familiar with the famous quirky poems, the ones with fragmented grammar and twisted syntax. These had always struck me as not working well as texts for musical setting; the visual grammatical quirks would lose all of their meaning and charm when sung, rendering the poems merely unintelligible.

The stream of life runs ah! so swiftly by,
A gleaming race 'twixt bank and bank —we fly,
Faces alight and little trailing songs,
Then plunge into the gulf, and so goodbye.

To all of us the thought of heaven is dear—
Why not be sure of it and make it here?
No doubt there is a heaven yonder too,
But 'tis so far away—and you are near.

Men talk of heaven—there is no heaven but here;
Men talk of hell—there is no hell but here;
Men of hereafters talk, and future lives—
O love, there is no other life—but here.

So since with all my passion and my skill,
The world's mysterious meaning mocks me still,
Shall I not piously believe that I
Am kept in darkness by the heavenly will?

But yours the cold heart, and the murderous tongue,
The wintry soul that hates to hear a song,
The close-shut fist, the mean and measuring eye,
And all the little poisoned ways of wrong.

So I be written in the Book of Love,
I have no care about that book above;
Erase my name, or write it, as you please—
So I be written in the Book of Love.

How wonderfully has the day gone by!
If only when the stars come we could die,
And morning find us gathered to our dreams,
Two happy solemn faces, and the sky.

Paul Steinberg

An Aura for Lennie (2010)

“An Aura for Lennie” was written for “AURA”, the new music ensemble of the University of Houston. It was composed in 2010 and premiered in the same year at the Moores Opera House in Houston. Dr. Rob Smith, the conductor of “AURA” is a former student of mine and in consultation with him I discovered that the concert was to be one of “Tributes” to various individuals. Being the age I am, and growing up in the New York City metropolitan area, it was impossible not to have been influenced by Leonard Bernstein. Consequently I decided at Rob’s suggestion, to write a chamber work, which attempts to catch the spirit of Bernstein. The instrumentation consists of Flute, Clarinet, Violin, Cello, Marimba and Piano.

However, as I looked for poems for this commission, I discovered a side of Cummings' work that I did not know: a highly lyrical style. I was very surprised to find that the famous quirky poems are really only a small (but infamous) example of his work, and that most of his work is immensely lyrical and romantic, including many rather traditional sonnets. And in these lyrical contexts, the grammatical quirks now seemed to heighten, rather than undermine, the musical potential of the poems.

Thus, the two outer songs in my set are lyrical in style, befitting the text as well as the nature of the instrumentation of the trio. In fact, the climactic moment of the third song brings back material from the first song, further unifying the style of the set. In contrast, the middle song highlights the more familiar, quirky style of Cummings' poetry. This also allowed me to explore some of the coloristic effects also available in the trio.

David Heuser

O the White Towns (text: Olga Cabral) (2003)

O The White Towns

Olga Cabral

O the white towns with picket fences,
and the green lawns, in the blue hills –
the courthouse bells are tolling, tolling
as for a pestilence:
and schoolbells ring an hour late,
a century late, to empty halls,
and the schoolhouse fortress stands besieged, ringed round with bayonets.

O the white towns with white courthouses
under oaks that stand for a hundred years –
who is the enemy? Where is the stranger?
Why do the lock-lipped people stand
under the oaks in the courthouse square,
with ashen jaws and haunted air?
Show us, good folk, the enemy
that has come to despoil the September sun,
rot the white fences of your trim towns
and rock your cardboard pillars down –
show us, good folk, the enemy
that has brought you here at bay.

Low hang their heads. . . tight clench the fists.
A smell of fear, rank as a beast's
runs through the crowd – and fingers lock
on primeval club: an empty bottle: a hidden gun
snatched from its rusted mausoleum
on an ancestral wall:
and a man on the steps points – *there!*

And the crowd breaks with a yell
as the last floodgates give
and the full roaring tide of hate
sweeps onward to the schoolhouse gate.

There, in his strength, is the dreaded enemy:
two black children, clean and scrubbed
as the new September morning:
a child of ten and a child of eight
hand in hand at the schoolhouse gate:
two black children, very small
to face that shouting, dreadful wall
of faces chalk-white, paper-white,
obsessed with storm.

Children, children – why do you come
this dangerous road, this forbidden road
this morning in September?
Today's the day I came to learn.
Took a notion to go to school
and teach white folks the Golden Rule.
And if they slam the door
and lock me out, there's more of me, and more.

O you white towns with picket fences,
with your green lawns and you blue hills –
nothing will ever be the same!
Look behind the cardboard porches:
peer through the slits in the tight drawn shutters:
in the ancestral gloom
fear sifts, like a thin gray ash
staining the polish, staining the air –
but a man sits alone with his shame
and a woman sobs to herself.
The mindless mob is running outside,
the sick of soul are jeering at children,
but behind the shutters is anger and shame –
and nothing will ever be the same.

David Heinick

Penumbra (2011)

In an eclipse, the penumbra is the outer area of partial shadow between the central full shadow and the still-illuminated area; artists use the term more generally to refer to an area in which light and shade blend. This piece was written in late 2011 for Carol Cope Lowe.

Timothy Sullivan

Quatrains of Omar Khayyam (2012)

From the *Rubaiyat* by Omar Khayyam, translated by Richard Le Gallienne

Wake! for the sun, the shepherd of the sky,
Has penned the stars within their fold on high,
And, shaking darkness from his mighty limbs,
Scatters the daylight from his burning eye.

Good friends, beware! the only life we know
Flies from us like an arrow from the bow,
The caravan of life is moving by,
Quick! to your places in the passing show.

While still thy body's breath is warm and sweet,
Follow thy pleasures with determined feet,
Ere death, the coldest lover in the world,
Catches thee up with footsteps still more fleet.

Set not thy heart on any good or gain,
Life means but pleasure, or it means but pain;
When Time lets slip a little perfect hour,
O take it—for it will not come again.

Each day a leaf falls withered from the tree
Whose leaves make up the life of thee and me,
The leaves are counted and the last is there—
Ready to fall before thy destiny.

For, have you thought how short a time is ours?
Only a little longer than the flowers,
Here in the meadow just a summer's day,
Only today; tomorrow—other flowers.

In order to ensure a pleasant concert experience for both performers and audience, please refrain from:

- Entering or leaving during the performance.
- Bringing food or drink into the concert hall.
- Taking flash photographs.
- Using electronic devices (please remember to turn off your cellular phone, pagers and watches that chime on the hour).

Children who are able to sit quietly during the performance are welcome to our concerts.

Tape/video recording of performances is strictly prohibited without permission of the performers!

Thank you!

In Case of Fire Emergency

In case of fire, leave the building immediately by walking to the nearest safe exit. Once outside, please move fifty feet away from the building and safely away from emergency traffic. Do not return to the building until authorities indicate that it is safe to do so.

Please bear with us during the construction phase of the new Performing Arts Building. Parking is limited in front of Snell Theater. Additional parking may be found in Lot 2 or Lot 1, near the front entrance of Raymond Hall.

