Emerging Artists Alumni Series

Featuring:

Sydney Tetarenko, clarinet (B.Mus ‘13)
Jiten Beairsto, violin (B.Mus ‘14)
Emily Burton, cello (B.Mus ‘11)
Natalie Lo, piano

Saturday, January 7, 2017 • 8:00 p.m.
Phillip T. Young Recital Hall
MacLaurin Building, University of Victoria
Admission by donation
Quatuor pour la Fin du Temps

I. Liturgie de cristal
II. Vocalise, pour l’Ange qui annonce la fin du Temps
III. Abîme des oiseaux
IV. Intermède
V. Louange à l’Éternité de Jésus
VI. Danse de la fureur, pour les sept trompettes
VII. Fouillis d’arc-en-ciel, pour l’Ange qui annonce la fin du Temps
VIII. Louange à l’Immoralité de Jésus

INTERMISSION

Contrasts, Sz. 111

I. Verbunkos (Recruiting Dance)
II. Pihenö (Relaxation)
III. Sebes (Fast Dance)
FOREWORD

Today, music students are about as likely to encounter Messiaen and Bartók in a musicology textbook as a concert hall. Perhaps these composers deserve some of the blame: this is music that is often easier to analyze than to perform. Messiaen, especially early in his career, was exceptionally keen to explain his compositional systems, and Bartók was, for a while, held in higher esteem as an ethnomusicologist than as a composer. The similarities continue: both composers were fascinated by complex rhythms, symmetrical constructions, modal harmonies, and, most significantly, the music of non-Western European cultures. All of Bartók’s music finds its roots in the folk music of his native Hungary, while Messiaen absorbed influences from all across the globe. To take but one example, the complex rhythms found in the Quartet, which have perplexed a great many classically-trained musicians, are standard fare in Indian music.

None of this adequately explains why so many performers — and audiences — do in fact choose to brave the difficulties and experience this music live. Nor, for that matter, does it explain how the two pieces programmed tonight are so spectacularly different in affect. Messiaen’s Quartet is most often ethereal and serene, with tempi oscillating between slow and impossibly slow. Its harmonies, while highly unusual, strike the listener as lush more than discordant. Its gaze is inevitably skyward — either towards birds, as in the clarinet movements (I. and III.) or towards God, as in the solo string movements (V. and VIII.). In those string movements especially, we can hear what sustains this piece most of all over the course of eight movements and fifty minutes: incredibly long, beautiful melodies and the love they represent.

Bartók’s Contrasts, meanwhile, is driven by one quality the Quartet lacks: play. Play on the part of the composer, undoubtedly, but even more on the part of the performers. Despite all the academic fascinations held within, Contrasts is a fantastically fun way for players to show off their chops. The outer movements, both dances, are viscerally thrilling, if occasionally obnoxious. To my ears, it is a celebration of humanity, as earth-bound as the Quartet is otherworldly.

There is, however, one other unifying thread that ties these two works together; one that offers what might be the most important way in for the listener: a common purpose. Both works were composed facing the spectre of war and Nazism, albeit much more literally in the case of Messiaen. In what is probably the most dramatic origin story of any piece of classical music, he composed and premiered the Quartet in 1940-41 while imprisoned in a prisoner-of-war camp in Germany. Contrasts was composed only a couple years earlier; shortly before Bartók, horrified at what he saw taking place in Europe, chose to flee to the United States and entered an extended period of compositional unproductivity. The music itself is of lasting power and importance, but so is the simple fact that two great artists, confronted with the worst of humanity, chose to continue making great art.

— Jiten Beairsto
I. Crystal liturgy. Between three and four in the morning, the awakening of birds: a solo blackbird or nightingale improvises, surrounded by a shimmer of sound, by a halo of trills lost very high in the trees. Transpose this onto a religious plane and you have the harmonious silence of Heaven.

II. Vocalise, for the Angel who announces the end of Time. The first and third parts (very short) evoke the power of this mighty angel, a rainbow upon his head and clothed with a cloud, who sets one foot on the sea and one foot on the earth. In the middle section are the impalpable harmonies of heaven. In the piano, sweet cascades of blue-orange chords, enclosing in their distant chimes the almost plainchant song of the violin and cello.

III. Abyss of the birds. Clarinet solo. The abyss is Time with its sadness, its weariness. The birds are the opposite to Time; they are our desire for light, for stars, for rainbows, and for jubilant songs!

IV. Interlude. Scherzo. Of a more outgoing character than the other movements but related to them, nonetheless, by various melodic references.

V. Praise to the Eternity of Jesus. Jesus is considered here as the Word. A broad phrase, “infinitely slow,” on the cello, magnifies with love and reverence the eternity of the Word, powerful and gentle, “whose time never runs out.” The melody stretches majestically into a kind of gentle, regal distance. “In the beginning was the Word, and Word was with God, and the Word was God.”

VI. Dance of fury, for the seven trumpets. Rhythmically, the most characteristic piece of the series. The four instruments in unison imitate gongs and trumpets (the first six trumpets of the Apocalypse followed by various disasters, the trumpet of the seventh angel announcing consummation of the mystery of God). Use of added values, of augmented or diminished rhythms, of non-retrogradable rhythms. Music of stone, formidable granite sound; irresistible movement of steel, huge blocks of purple rage, icy drunkenness. Hear especially the terrible fortissimo of the augmentation of the theme and the changes of register of its different notes, towards the end of the piece.

VII. Cluster of rainbows, for the angel who announces the end of Time. Here certain passages from the second movement recur: The angel appears in full force, especially the rainbow that covers him (the rainbow, symbol of peace, wisdom, and all luminous and sonorous vibration). – In my dreams, I hear and see ordered chords and melodies, known colors and shapes; then, after this transitional stage, I pass through the unreal and submit with ecstasy to a gyrating vortex of superhuman sounds and colours. These swords of fire, this blue-orange lava, these sudden stars: there is the tangle, there are the rainbows!

VIII. Praise to the Immortality of Jesus. Large violin solo, counterpart to the violoncello solo of the 5th movement. Why this second eulogy? It is especially aimed at the second aspect of Jesus, Jesus the Man, the Word made flesh, immortally risen for our communication of his life. It is all love. Its slow ascent to the acutely extreme is the ascent of man to his god, the child of God to his Father, the being made divine towards Paradise.
And I repeat anew what I said above: “All this is mere striving and childish stammering if one compares it to the overwhelming grandeur of the subject!”

Original descriptions by Olivier Messiaen, translation from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quatuor_pour_la_fin_du_temps

Contrasts (1938)
Béla Bartók (1881–1945)

Though this work was officially commissioned by jazz clarinetist Benny Goodman, it was Hungarian violinist Joseph Szigeti who originated talk of a new work with Bartók. The original performance omitted the second movement and named the work “Rhapsody;” but following this premiere, Bartók retitled the piece and performed the full three movements alongside Goodman and Szigeti. This piece demonstrates the folk influences that are so much a part of Bartók’s unique compositional style.

I. Verbunkos. This movement is composed in the style of a Recruiting Dance, used to recruit citizens to the army. Hence it has a steady, measured rhythm, and memorable melody, which is heavily embellished upon. Many characteristics of the music are derived from military marches.

II. Pihenö. Titled relaxation, this movement is atmospheric and lacks a clear, steady pulse, in stark contrast to the surrounding material.

III. Sebes. Notably featuring scordatura or “mistuned” violin to emulate the sound of a folk musician, this fast dance drives to the very end, making only a small detour into a more lyrical (but still forward moving) section with additive Bulgarian rhythms.

— Sydney Tetarenko

BIOGRAPHIES

SYDNEY TETARENKO

Sydney Tetarenko (B.Mus ’13) is a clarinetist currently residing in Vancouver, British Columbia. She is a musician with great passion for both performing and educating.

Sydney completed her Bachelor of Music with distinction, majoring in clarinet performance at the University of Victoria under the tutelage of Professor Patricia Kostek, and has a Masters in Orchestral Music Performance from the University of British Columbia, from the studio of Jenny Jonquil. Sydney has performed with the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, Vancouver Metropolitan Orchestra, Vancouver Island Symphony Orchestra, Victoria Chamber Orchestra, and Chilliwack Symphony Orchestra, among many others. Sydney also plays in chamber groups of all sizes and instrumentation, most notably the Fireside Quintet, of which she is a core member.

Sydney maintains a private clarinet studio and also teaches clinics at schools in the Victoria, Sooke and Calgary areas. She is currently the clarinet instructor at the Mozart School of Music.
**JITEN BEAIRSTO**

Jiten Beairsto (B.Mus ‘14), a Vancouver native, is currently enrolled in the Master of Music program at the University of British Columbia under the instruction of David Gillham. At the University of Victoria he studied with Sharon Stanis and won the UVic Concerto Competition in 2012. He has participated in the National Youth Orchestra of Canada and has performed with ensembles such as the Victoria Symphony and the Galiano Ensemble. Jiten’s academic and professional interests extend far beyond classical music: he has completed a Bachelor’s degree in English and French literature and earns part of his living as a rope access technician.

Like many classical musicians, Jiten enjoys performing a wide variety of genres, from symphonies to musical theatre, but none more so than chamber music, a passion he certainly attributes to his time spent studying with the Lafayette String Quartet.

**EMILY BURTON**

Emily Burton (B. Mus ‘11) grew up in Vernon, BC and attended the University of Victoria to earn degrees in both Cello Performance and Biochemistry. At UVic, she studied with Professor Pam Highbaugh-Aloni. Her musical studies have taken her to the Aspen Music Festival, Morningside Musicbridge in Shanghai, and the Quartet Program in New York. She has performed concertos with the Okanagan Symphony, Kamloops Symphony and UVic Orchestra. Emily is currently living in Vancouver and is in her 3rd year of pharmacy school at UBC.

**NATALIE LO**

Natalie Lo is a recent graduate of the University of British Columbia, where she has received her Bachelor Degree in Piano Performance, having studied with Dr. Corey Hamm. Upon graduation from UBC, she was awarded the Director’s Graduation Prize in Piano Performance. She has been highly successful in her competitive career including First and Top prizes at the Vancouver International Russian Music Festival, the Seattle International Piano Competition, the Canadian Music Competition, and the Stravinsky Awards Piano Competition of North America. Most recently, Natalie found success as a finalist at the Shean Competition, winning Fourth prize as well as the award for the Best Performance of the Test Piece. Natalie has been awarded the Youth Arts Award by the City of Richmond in recognition of her artistic achievements and her contributions to the cultural community. She has also been invited to perform at various showcases and charities, including the Vancouver 2010 Olympics.

Natalie has performed concerti with various orchestras including the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, the Vancouver Metropolitan Orchestra, the Seattle Symphony Orchestra, the Philharmonia Northwest of Seattle, and the UBC Symphony Orchestra. Natalie will be performing with the Vancouver Metropolitan Orchestra once again in their 2016/2017 concert season with Saint-Saëns’ second piano concerto.
UPCOMING EVENTS

SUNDAY, JANUARY 8 | 2:30 PM ($10-$20)
Faculty Concert Series: The Brass Menagerie
Scott MacInnes, trombone & Paul Beauchesnes, tuba
Music by Vaughan-Williams, Pryor, Ewazen, Morricone and more.
Proceeds will benefit the Eugene Dowling Scholarship for Tuba and Euphonium.
Phillip T. Young Recital Hall

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 11 | 12:30 PM (Free Admission)
First Year Graduate Recital: Betty Allison, soprano
Soprano Betty Allison presents her first year Masters of Music graduate recital.
Phillip T. Young Recital Hall

FRIDAY, JANUARY 20 | 8 PM (Free admission)
Orion Series in Fine Arts presents
Melia Watras, viola & Michael Jinsoo Lim, violin
Melia Watras is Professor of Viola and Chair of Strings at the University of Washington. Watras is also a composer and founding member of the Corigliano Quartet. She will be joined by Pacific Northwest Ballet Concertmaster and violinist of the Corigliano Quartet, Michael Jinsoo Lim, in a recital featuring works by Hindemith, Watras, and Mozart.
Phillip T. Young Recital Hall

SATURDAY, JANUARY 21 (Free admission)
Orion Series in Fine Arts presents
Masterclass (10:15 AM) and Concert (12 PM)
Lorna McGhee, flute
Scottish-born Lorna McGhee was appointed principal flute of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra in 2012 and is principal flute of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra.
Reception to follow
Phillip T. Young Recital Hall

SATURDAY, JANUARY 21 | 2:30 PM (Admission by donation)
Saxophone Class Recital
Featuring students from the studio of Wendell Clanton.
Phillip T. Young Recital Hall

Tickets available at the UVic Ticket Centre (250-721-8480), online (www.tickets.uvic.ca) and at the door.

To receive our On the Pulse brochure and newsletter by email, contact: concert@uvic.ca

finearts.uvic.ca/music/events