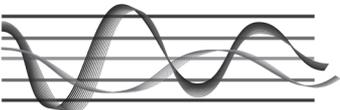


School of Music
Faculty of Fine Arts
University of Victoria

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For Rudolf Komorous: A 90th Birthday Celebration

School of Music faculty, alumni and special guests perform works by Czech-Canadian composer Rudolf Komorous, in celebration of his 90th birthday and the 50th anniversary of his appointment to UVic.

We acknowledge and respect the Lekwungen peoples on whose traditional territory the university stands and the Songhees, Esquimalt and WSÁNEĆ peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.

Wednesday, December 8, 2021 • 12:30 p.m.

Phillip T. Young Recital Hall
MacLaurin Building, University of Victoria
Admission by donation

PROGRAM

Music by Rudolf Komorous (b. 1931)

Olympia (1965)

Christopher Butterfield
Owen Underhill

Monody (2021)
(World premiere)

Patricia Kostek, clarinet

Cold Mountain Songs (1987)

Cathy Fern Lewis, soprano
Hannah Craig, cello

Sine titulo (2021)
(Canadian premiere)

Lanny Pollet, piccolo
Sandra Pohran Dawkins, oboe
Russell Bajer, English horn
Patricia Kostek, clarinet
Liam Hockley, bass clarinet
Katrina Russell, bassoon
Christopher Butterfield, conductor

Special thanks to the Dean of Fine Arts, the School of Music, Kristy Farkas, Stephen Parkinson, and Knight Limousine Service.



RUDOLF KOMOROUS was born December 8, 1931 and educated in Prague, Czech Republic. He studied composition with Pavel Borkovec in Prague during the 1950s, also excelling as a bassoon player. His playing won him first prize at the Concours International d'Exécution Musicale in Geneva, Switzerland, in 1957. This led to a two-year term (1959–61) teaching bassoon and chamber music in China at the Beijing Academy and Central Conservatory of Music. He was also the principal bassoonist in the Prague Opera.

Komorous's involvement with the Czech avant-garde in the 1950s and '60s led to a close association with painters and sculptors. He was a member of an interdisciplinary, avant-garde scene known as the 'Šmidra Group'. Heavily influenced by Dada, surrealism and American abstract expressionism, their motto was the "aesthetics of the bizarre" through which common materials could be transformed into something sublime, mysterious or even magical. In 1961 Komorous co-founded Musica Viva Pragensis, which was regarded as one of Europe's leading new music ensembles during the eight years of its existence.

In 1969, following the Soviet invasion of his country, Komorous emigrated with his family to Canada. After teaching for two years at Macalester College in St. Paul, Minnesota, he joined the faculty of the School of Music at the University of Victoria. From 1971–1989 Komorous taught music composition and theory at UVic and later served as the School of Music's Director. Many of his students went on to become successful composers, so much so that Eastern Canadian composers began to refer to their country's avant-garde scene as "The Victoria Mafia." From 1989 he served as Director of the School for the Contemporary Arts, Simon Fraser University.

Komorous's catalogue of compositions includes works for orchestra (5 Sinfonies), solo instruments, voice and chamber ensembles. He also has worked in the electronic music field and was the founder of the University of Victoria's Electronic Music Studio. His compositions have been featured at music festivals including the Venice Biennale, Warsaw Autumn, Donaueschingen, and Prague Spring. His two operas were produced in Vancouver, Toronto, Victoria, Montreal, Buffalo, and New York City. His works have been published by Universal Edition, Vienna and E.C. Kerby, Toronto. Several of his compositions are available on CD.

Komorous refers to himself (perhaps jokingly) as "the last avant-garde composer". The minimalism of his early works is to him "the true minimalism", completely dissimilar to the later busy music which, to his dismay, was labeled "minimal". At the beginning of the seventies, following a short period of searching for laws of proportions in music, he started exploring the possibilities of writing new melodies and harmonies that structurally work in unusual ways. In Komorous's opinion art should not change for the sake of cheap "novelties" but the change should be dictated by ever changing traces of real life.

Komorous is retired and lives in Victoria.