Graduating Composers Concert

Program

The Doubter’s Procession (2012)  Kimberley Shepherd

Jamie Hook, organ
Sara Page, flute
Aleksandra Tremblay, flute
CJ Colville, clarinet
Matt Kaufhold, clarinet
Alice Maundrell, alto saxophone
Ashton Nesbeth, alto saxophone
Alastair Crosby, cello
Emmanuel Ortega, cello
Alex Jang, conductor

Still life (2012)  Jillian Hanks

(i)  (composer and choreographer)

Selina Gonzalez, dancer
Lindsay Suddaby, tap dancer
Jiten Beirsto, violin
Will Chen, violin
Lea Kirstein, viola
Jacinta Green, cello
Brooke Wilken, piano
Aaron Mattock, marimba

Sinfonia (2012)  Liova Bueno

Kiiri Michelsen, voice
Mindy Buckton, flute/piccolo
Susan Kinniburgh, oboe
Jacquie Cable, soprano saxophone
Libby Concord, clarinet
Nathan Friedman, bass clarinet
Lanny Pollet, bassoon
Sam Brunton, french horn
Alfons Fear, trumpet
Aubrey Kelley, trombone
Rob Phillips, timpani
Jess La Forte, percussion
Jay Schreiber, percussion
Alex Jang, mandolin
Alexander Dunn, guitar
Douglas Hensley, guitar
Eva Hodge, piano
Ben Wilson, violin
Tyson Doknjas, violin
Barry Leung, viola
Alastair Crosby, violoncello
Alexander Rempel, contra bass

Iain Gillis, conductor

Saturday, March 24, 2012, 8:00pm
Phillip T. Young Recital Hall
MacLaurin Building, University of Victoria
Free Admission
Kimberley Shepherd is from the class of Professor Christopher Butterfield and Dániel Péter Biró

Jillian Hanks is from the class of Professor John Celona

These programmes are presented as part of the requirements for the Bachelor of Music in Composition program.

Liova Bueno is from the class of Professor John Celona

This programme is presented as part of the requirements for the Master of Music in Composition program.

Reception to follow in the Lounge.

Program Notes

Still Life

Music and dance have always been a very big part of my life. I recently became interested in finding a way to fuse the two, and the result is this piece. My goal was to create a piece where the music is integral to the dance and the dance is integral to the music; one cannot exist without the other. The dance acts as a visual instrument, in conjunction with the heard musical instruments. Still life is a synthesis of the two things I love most.

Sinfonia

EQUIVOCACION DE LOS ANGELES
- Hector Inchaustegui Cabral (1912-1979)

Eran ángeles fuertes,
con las manos curtidas
y dientes de caballo
detrás de la sonrisa.

Colgaron el Mal en una rama,
y la tierra tirando,
y la cuerda tirando,
hicieron del mundo una sinfonía.

Eran ángeles fuertes,
abiertos los dedos de los pies,
simples como el agua,
rudos como el hierro.

Potente músculos en el ala,
la frente despejada,
las manos, de ajusticiar,
THE MISTAKEN ANGELS

They were strong angels, with calloused hands and teeth like a horse behind their smiles.

They hung Evil on a branch, and pushing the earth, plucking the string, from the world they made a symphony.

They were strong angels with toes splayed, they were simple as water, rough as iron.

With powerful muscles in their wings, unclouded brows, executioner's hands, hard and remorseless.

They were two equals, Almost as if a lucent mirror between them were to reflect each the other, two contained in one thought, twin yellow flames, a single light.

In the end, in a land worth dying for, they halted their heavy step; the little bird stopped its song, and from them wafted a perfumed breeze.

They were strong...

Translated by: Kiiri Michelsen

The sinfonia de camara (“chamber symphony”) is a comparatively new genre: the precedent and still most-performed example in the international repertory is Arnold Schoenberg’s Kammersymphonie, op. 9 (1906). The genre’s non-programmatic title has predominantly indicated a reduction of the performing forces that are associated with the symphony of that genre’s recognized masters — among them Mozart, Beethoven, Brahms, Franck, Mahler, Nielsen, and Shostakovich — without any corresponding diminution of the aesthetic aims of the work. It is this serious-mindedness that sets the “chamber symphony” apart from the more casual “sinfonietta.” Liöva consistently and graciously acknowledges his musical predecessors and philosophical influences. The Sinfonia is his respectful and critical response to the history of the symphony that we have inherited today. It is at once openly traditional and emphatically modern. We hope that this performance may be an audible reminder that traditional and modern modes of thought are not mutually antagonistic. Rather, when tempered by passion, intellect, industry, and humility, the traditional and the modern stand in a relationship of dynamic equilibrium whose flexibility and generative power is considerable.

To speak in terms of architecture, the Sinfonia is a stabilized and smooth mixture of 1) sonata form, 2) cyclical form, and 3) the madrigal. The principal form is governed by a neoclassical sonata design: changes in tempo, texture,
and orchestration delineate the various sections – akin to movements in a standard symphony – of this single-movement work. The first theme, spun out immediately from the downbeat in the strings, piano, and treble winds results from the elaboration of a three-note cell. The contrasting second theme is first presented by bassoon, trombone, and cello in unison. The tam-tam (large gong) marks the end of the exposition proper: this is only a subsection of three-section (=movement) design. The sonata’s lengthy development begins with a dense working out of the first theme, first by (rhythmic) diminution in the winds, then by (metrical) augmentation in the strings. A rapid staccato figure in the brass is first introduced just before the transition between those processes. A polyrhythmic tutti ensues: the metre rapidly contracts toward silence through an ultra-compact, homorhythmic codetta for brass and pitched percussion to bring the first section to a close.

The slow, second section (=movement) of the sonata form – a continuation of the development – is introduced by harmonics in the guitars. The components of the second theme are added to the developmental crucible in the brief passage that prepares the entrance of the human voice, that primordial matter of Liova’s craft (and even of Music and of human communication, I would argue). A translation of the text, by the Dominican writer Hector Inchaustegui Cabral (1912-1979), is provided. The first line of the poem is treated to considerable repetition and elision; the madrigalian influence may be heard already in the way the guitar parts are now closely imitative, now become one. When the poem is allowed its autonomy, the music proceeds to a new subsection.

Rhythmic ostinatos are wedged between the barlines by the congos (in 2/4) and guitars (variously in 2/4, 3/4, or 6/8). A free development of the first theme, introduced by bass clarinet, accompanies a vocalise that is inserted between before the last line of the poem’s second stanza. As the words give way to pure tones, the vernacular rhythms break down the regular metre. The ostinatos are subjected to their own brief development (by fragmentation), then are re-introduced, whole once again, in reverse order. A developmental recitation of the poem (“tirando”) has its madrigalian counterpart in the rapid passage work of contracting expanding tuplets in the upper winds. A brief caesura prepares the way for the codetta to the development comprising an oblique wedge between Scotch-snap winds and off-beat guitar arpeggios, unpitched percussion, and low strings.

The guitar harmonics return to signal the rounding off of the ternary (ABA’) slow section in particularly elegant fashion: a short accompanied invention à 3 leads seamlessly into a brief 7-part canon on a subject derived from the first theme. This miniature binary pair, itself a delicate study in instrumental timbre, also functions as a retransition to the recapitulation in the overarching sonata form.

The recapitulation, true to “sonata logic” (sonata form is more a mode of musical thought than it is a form in the sense of a mold to be filled) resolves and sublimes the musical problems of what has gone before. The three discrete sections of this one-movement sonata form and the three parts of sonata form (exposition – development – recapitulation) are once again re-aligned. The first and second themes return in their original order: they are immediately identifiable, but they are changed as a direct result of the proceedings of the lengthy development. The ostinatos return, but effect new ostinatos of different rhythmic configurations and on new instruments. The asymmetrical meters of the exposition and development do not return. The basic materials of the two codettas are combined to form a short coda to the Sinfonia, a study in diaphanous orchestration and economy of means.

Iain S. Gillis
Victoria, BC
March 2012