Date du récital/Date of recital : May 3rd, 2017
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Classe de/Class of: Class of Brian Manker

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Program Notes

Thanks so much for coming to this recital. Here’s some information about the program for those who are interested.

**Simple Geometries (2017) by Jason Noble (b. 1980)**

Jason Noble composed this piece specifically to be performed in the dark with various types of live visuals. Simple Geometries is comprised of a glass harp, cello harmonics, and open strings. The score is organized in seven layers, resembling orbits in a solar system or orbitals in an atom. The performer moves through the layers following a system that includes a great deal of choice-- moving from one orbital to another through common tones-- picking which direction to move through a given layer-- choosing from a range of parameters specified in each layer regarding dynamics and bow placement. After moving forward and backward through all seven layers the piece loops and begins again with a recording of the first run-through accompanying the second run-through. This stacking occurs seven times. Then it happens in retrograde, losing layers until the piece ends with a the solo cello playing the rather sparse first layer.

I like Simple Geometries because the design of the piece is so physical in a cosmic sense. The score itself resembles some sort of galactic map more than a musical score. The use of the unadultrated harmonic series grounds the entire piece in physics and links the basics of sound projection and technique with the overall piece.

**Cello Sonata No. 2 in F Major (1886) by Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)**

I. Allegro vivace
II. Adagio affettuoso
III. Allegro passionato
IV. Allegro molto

Brahms wrote the second sonata while on vacation near Lake Thun, Switzerland, where
he sought solitude from distracting well-wishers and fans while composing and frequenting beer gardens. The piece is dedicated to Robert Hausmann, a cellist who widely performed the first cello sonata when it was first written.

Brahms’ second cello sonata is a major departure from the first-- starting not with a long, mourning melody, but with an explosion of heroic energy based on a two note theme that expands throughout the first movement. The second movement is either a copy, or close adaptation, of an unseen slow movement intended for the first cello sonata, written 20 years earlier. The third movement scherzo is, as Brahms’ close friend Elisabet von Herzogenberg described it, “agitated without rushing, legato yet and inwardly restless and propulsive.” The fourth movement is vastly different from the other three-- beginning with a joyful lyricism that is interrupted by a dramatic and intense second theme.

**Cello Sonata No. 4 in C major (1815) Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)**

I. Andante – Allegro vivace  
II. Adagio – Allegro vivace  

Beethoven was really the first great composer of cello sonatas, composing five full sonatas in addition to his work for cello and piano based on the the Magic Flute. The fourth sonata was released as a pair with the fifth-- the first half of Opus 102. Composed in 1815, the sonatas marked the beginning of Beethoven’s late period. Beethoven was coming to terms with his impending deafness at the time, frustrated in angry. Yet the sonata is largely positive. It is a short work, comprised of two movement-pairs, each beginning with a more meditative introduction followed by a more aggressive fast section.

For me, interpreting Beethoven’s sonatas an a special pleasure because he tends to avoid luscious melodies, choosing instead to focus on developing thematic material. This gives the performer greater room for interpretation, as experimenting with different articulations and patterns of emphasis does not run the risk of disrupting a long melody. Beethoven’s phrases are built more on delayed gratification-- for instance, refusing to let the cellist and pianist reach a full forte until after a significant number of failed crescendos in the Allegro vivace of the second movement.

**Fantasy Trio (1969) Robert Muczynski (1929-2010)**

Allegro energico  
Andante con espressione  
Allegro deciso  
Andante molto e sostenuto  

Muczynski was an American composer and pianist known for his compositions,
recordings, and teaching. Muczynski was comfortable in many worlds, happily composing strictly classical music as well as scores for films. In fact, the Fantasy Trio is dedicated to documentary film-maker Harry Atwood, who was a close friend and collaborator of the composer. Muczynski taught composition at University of Arizona, where he was asked to compose the trio by his colleagues, who found the current repertoire for clarinet trio severely lacking. Describing his own piece, Muczynski writes that, “it is my hope to write a piece that would have not only rewarding roles for the respective instruments but one that would contain satisfying interplay or ‘dialogue’ for the trio as well. The work alternates between rather terse rhythmic statements and sustained lyrical moments climaxing with a movement full of exuberance and unabashed joy. I enjoyed writing this music, and I’d like to think that some essence of that experience is conveyed to the listener.”

**Bibliography**


