Composers Forum

Sunday, December 10, 2017 at 2pm
Lagerquist Concert Hall, Mary Baker Russell Music Center
Welcome to Lagerquist Concert Hall. Please disable the audible signal on all watches, pagers and cellular phones for the duration of the concert. Use of cameras, recording equipment and all digital devices is not permitted in the concert hall.

PROGRAM

String Quartet No. 1 ........................................................................................................................................................................................................ Carl Johnson
     Movement 4, Fight

The Sapphire String Quartet
     Sarah Swift and Kate Schneider, violins;
     Sophie Robinson, viola; Kaitlynn Turner, cello

This is the 4th movement in my string quartet and is the most energetic by far. It starts with the cello and the viola pounding away with the violins soon to follow in their footsteps. The piece continues in loud rhythmic sections and quickly transitions to some quiet moments, but always returns to the heavy, energetic feel that was introduced at the beginning. If the A section of this piece is a heavy rhythmic battle, the B section is a slower chromatic fight. The B theme builds to a high moment where the first and the second violin trade off a high held note and small motifs are played underneath in the remaining violin, viola and cello. It then picks back up into the original A tempo and rhythm and dives right back into the main theme presented in the A section. The original fight has returned! The battle then quickens and moves to a crunched time signature and rushes to the end! But is the fight won?

Combat........................................................................................................................................................................................................ Brett Rodriguez

     Marissa Dallaire, oboe; Alex Justice, horn;
     Sarah Swift, violin; Kyle Siemers, cello

This piece is meant to capture the feeling of an adventure-style video game. I envision it as a main theme, and plan to compose complimentary pieces with other roles in the same “game” using the main motives and thematic elements of this piece.

Four Dances for Solo Piano.................................................................................................................................................................................. Rachel Sandell

     I. Waltz
     II. Minuet
     III. Sarabande
     IV. Tango

     Rachel Sandell, piano

This first collection of compositions gave me a fun way to explore the construction of melody and its corresponding harmony using traditional dance styles. With well-known beats providing the framework for rhythm, these pieces are simple enough for a beginning student of piano to play: a faster-paced waltz, followed by two slower dances, and finally a steady but mysterious tango.
### Boy and Girl

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Maybe the dancing</th>
<th>But somebody’s thinking</th>
<th>And what kind of person</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kept me from thinking</td>
<td>Can keep us from seeing</td>
<td>Must I try to be</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Of what becomes of us off the floor</td>
<td>What we need is so much more</td>
<td>To swing your heart right to left</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>And in the hours</td>
<td>If I saw through your eyes</td>
<td>But like every boy and girl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proceeding the sunrise</td>
<td>I know I’d see a man</td>
<td>We’ll fall in time again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You make much more sense to me</td>
<td>Falling helplessly into your hands</td>
<td>(We can never quite understand)</td>
</tr>
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*Boy and Girl* was inspired by the emotional differences between love and lust. After experiencing heartache, I composed this piece of music to convey the feeling of lust/love. The melody uses a pop-inspired chord progression with heavy jazz 7th chords which creates a ballad/romantic style. The lyrics are a collection of poetry which I wrote over a period of months while I was involved in a relationship, hence the title *Boy and Girl.*

### When I Stand on the Shore

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thomas Morisada, tenor</th>
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<tr>
<td>Stephen Hein, piano</td>
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*When I stand on the shore, I wonder where you are*  
*Somewhere in that fathomed room behind*  
*The waves like doors that slowly swing ajar*  

*Dappled stones at my feet are smeared with tar,*  
*Sucked by the undertow they jostle and grind*  
*While I stand on the shore, wondering where you are*  

*Beyond the raging surf, beyond the bar,*  
*In your green chamber you hide, forever blind*  
*To the waves like doors that slowly swing ajar*  

- Judith Barrington (b. 1944)

As an assignment earlier this semester, I was given this poem by Judith Barrington to be the basis of a melody composed for a solo voice. I wanted to create a melody that gave a sense of sorrow and longing to the audience. Using melodic structures inspired by traditional hymns, this melody is written in a minor key in order to display the sadness and loneliness that this poem evokes.

### Stardust

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Storm Tucker, guitar</th>
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<tr>
<td>Carl Johnson, electric fiddle</td>
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*This piece was inspired by the intricate design of our Universe, symbolized in the overlapping concepts of the abundance of celestial unity. Stardust illustrates the idea that we are connected to the most distant star in our galaxy, and our composition derives from the same basic material. When God said “Let there be light,” out flew the first elements at the speed of light, helium and hydrogen, which are the basis to all of creation. Our energy communicates with all of the creation around us in a way we cannot visually interpret. Music interacts in a similar way. Imagine the vibration of each note and rhythm touching not only each of us, but the trees and Earth and stars, felt holistically by our universe and our Creator. Stardust sheds light on the gift of creation and when experienced, connects us with our Creator in the most powerful form of expression, the creation of music.*
A Little While ................................................................. Christina Ruth Nelson

Natalie Breshears, soloist
Natalie Breshears, Aria Manning, Mackenzie Taylor, 1st soprano
Claire Pahlmeyer and Emily Shane, 2nd soprano
Rosemary Bennett, Cecilia Lewis, Alyssa Lyngaas, alto
Andrew Riecke and Ben Soderling, tenor
Brennan Brichoux, Karl Eickhoff, Ben Merrill, Ethan Moon, Alex Stahl, bass

A little while when I am gone
My life will live in music after me,
As spun foam lifted and borne on
After the wave is lost in the full sea.

A while these nights and days will burn
In song with the bright frailty of foam,
Living in light before they turn
Back to the nothingness that is their home.

- Sara Teasdale (1884-1933)

The melody for A Little While was inspired by a conversation with Ēriks Ešenvalds at the U.S. premiere of his Nordic Light Symphony in March 2017. I had been thinking back on the conversation and found myself humming a tune, featured as the soprano solo, and sketched out an additional melody. I later came across A Little While by Sara Teasdale (1884-1933) and was amazed to discover that her text fit with the melody I had already written. Teasdale writes about one’s life living on in music after death, describing the song as spun foam in the sea continuing on though the wave has disappeared. Throughout this piece, you will hear shifts from minor to major and the use of dissonance to create a sense of uncertainty. These elements resemble the journey from feeling discouraged after losing someone we love to gaining the strength to move on while carrying their memory in our hearts.