Modern Music Ensemble

Monday, May 23, 2016
7:30 pm – Meany Studio Theater
PROGRAM

CD 1 - #17, 503

   Luke Fitzpatrick, violin
   Allion Salvador, violin
   Vijay Chalasani, viola
   Hye Jung Yang, cello
   Zack Myers, piano

2. Feuilles à travers les cloches (1998) ................................ Tristan Murail (b. 1947)
   Natalie Ham, flute
   Luke Fitzpatrick, violin
   Isabella Kodama, cello
   Steven Damouni, piano

   Natalie Ham, flute
   Ivan Arteaga, clarinet
   Isaac Anderson, vibraphone
   Lauren Wessels, harp
   Ania Stachurska, piano

4. Les Sept crimes de l'amour (1979) ................................... Georges Aperghis (b. 1945)
   Séquence I
   Séquence II
   Séquence III
   Séquence IV
   Séquence V
   Séquence VI
   Séquence VII
   Emerald Lessley, soprano
   Ivan Arteaga, clarinet
   Isaac Anderson, percussion

INTERMISSION
Quasi Hoquetus (1985) .......................................................... Sofia Gubaidulina (b. 1931)
Luke Fitzpatrick, viola
Jamael Smith, bassoon
Steven Damouni, piano

String Quartet (1964) ............................................................ Witold Lutoslawski (1913-1994)
  Introductory Movement
  Main Movement
Luke Fitzpatrick, violin Vijay Chalasani, viola
Allion Salvador, violin Hye Jung Yang, cello

Program Notes by Luke Fitzpatrick Except Where Noted

Pièce pour piano et quatuor à cordes (1991) by Olivier Messiaen is one of the last works Messiaen wrote before his death. It was composed for a concert honoring music publisher Alfred Schlee’s 90th birthday. This same concert also featured newly composed works by Ligeti, Boulez, Berio and Schnittke, among others, that were written specifically for this occasion. Pièce pour piano et quatuor à cordes features a large quasi-palindromic structure that contains a continuously flowing middle section where Messiaen returns to the sounds of the garden warbler, a bird whose song helped shape (and name) his 1970 solo piano piece La fauvette des jardins.

Tristan Murail’s Feuilles à travers les cloches (1998) draws its title from Cloches à travers les feuilles, a piece for solo piano in Debussy’s Images. Feuilles à travers les cloches (Leaves through the bells) superimposes different instrumental combinations to represent leaves and bells throughout the piece. The bells are generally characterized by piano strikes that are reinforced with violin pizzicato, while the leaves are heard as more diffusive sounds. The connection to nature is further reinforced by Murail’s spectral language.

The music of Japanese composer Toru Takemitsu (1930-1996) is known for its suspension of regular meter and acute sensitivity to register and timbre. These features are beautifully
represented in his *Rain Spell*, first performed by the Sound Space Ark on January 19, 1983. Throughout the piece, the clarinet and flute sing intertwining melodies, separately or together, with sound that is colored with multiphonics and air. The harp, piano, and vibraphone surround these melodies with muted sounds, harmonics, percussive chords, arpeggios, and glissandos. All together, sound flows like water through each instrument without regular meter, creating a resonant soundscape that subtly weaves the spell of rainfall.

–Natalie Ham

Sofia Gubaidulina was born in Chistopol, part of the former Soviet Union, in 1931. Gubaidulina’s mysticism is expressed by her use of unique timbres and attention to numerology in her music. In *Quasi Hoquetus* (1985), Gubaidulina uses various forms of musical hockets between the viola, bassoon and piano to create the structure of the piece. The resonance of the piano is explored with combinations of both natural and artificial harmonics on the viola and multiphonics played by the bassoon. These resonances are balanced out by Gubaidulina’s characteristic use of dissonance.

*Les Sept crimes de l’amour* (The seven crimes of love) was written in the spirit of instrumental theater. The musical score indicates the positions that the three protagonists gradually adopt throughout the seven movements. The positions were carefully plotted into the action to produce the sounds imagined by the composer. Some accessories (including symbolic as an apple), alternate uses of instruments (the body of the clarinet without a mouthpiece, the zarb as a megaphone…) also contribute to the scenic aspect of the piece.

–Daniel Durney (translated by Ania Stachurska, from the George Aperghis website)

Witold Lutoslawski’s *String Quartet* was written in 1964 and premiered by the LaSalle Quartet in 1965. Lutoslawski was influenced both by Alexander Calder’s mobile structures and an early recording he had heard (by chance) of John Cage’s *Concert for Piano and Orchestra*. The *String Quartet*’s Introductory and Main Movement contain a series of mobiles that are to be played individually and not in direct relationship with what the other players of the quartet may be doing. Lutoslawski achieves this effect by writing signals from various instruments to trigger movement from each mobile. By controlling the quartet’s structure, as well as pitch content, Lutoslawski is able to produce a deeply moving aleatoric work.