

Program Notes

Bassoonette (2011)

Mitch Limori, Bassoon

I've always loved the sound of this very expressive instrument. There are a couple of jazz devices (licks) in this piece. One is the quick triplet which is often an embellishment in a jazz melody. Another is the "self-accompaniment" effect in the adagio section which is an homage to the great saxophonist Sonny Rollins.

New Found Truth (1972*-2010) **Maria Choban, Piano**

Last year while rummaging around in a box of old jazz lead sheets I wrote in the 70's I found one page of something I had started as a jazz solo piano piece. What I had written was 9 measures of melody - which occurs right after the introduction in the current piece. I decided to extend the melodic idea and create a piece that somewhat resembles a ternary piece (basically A-B-A) but doesn't follow the tonal rules. Here, after the second introduction of the opening bars, the B section develops and builds until the third statement of the opening bars returns. Then the altered version of A is again stated and the piece ends dramatically.

Distance (2010)

Nova String Trio

Distance was a project where I was interested in replicating the Doppler effect. For example when an object making a sound approaches (like a train whistle at a train crossing) how the pitch and volume changes and then changes back after passing. I chose strings because of their ability to create smooth glissandi (slides). In this case I did have a structure in mind-the sound and volume building to exactly half-way through the piece and then receding in the same way.

Brief Moments (2010)

Nancy Wood, Soprano

Paul Safar, Piano

I had never written music for voice before nor had I much inclination to do so. After attending many Cascadia Composers concerts and hearing different singers I realized the interpretive possibilities that particular singers could produce and I decided to try writing a piece for a vocal and piano. I have writtten poetry for many years and I remembered a poem I wrote in 2004 that was close to my heart. I wanted to do something different than simple piano accompaniment so I decided to make it more like a duet.

Brief Moments

*In the brief moments that fall between the cracks in reality
Where I look into the eyes of love
and find the innocence I once barely knew
Before it was stolen,
My heart shatters into a million fragments
that fall to the ground like fruit beyond its time
and there begins to glow.
I feel the loss so terribly until the ashes cool
And one of those many seeds begins to grow my new heart,
Only then, am I able to venture another peek into that narrow chasm.*
March, 2004

Toccanata (1970*-2011)

Maria Choban, Piano

The first page of this 3 movement piece is the same story as "New Found Truth". Originally started as a solo jazz piano piece scratched out in pencil on a yellowing sheet of music paper. It inspired me to play with the idea and it just took off.

- I. **Allegro** is a quasi-sonata form where after pretending to go back for a repeat of the 1st theme it goes to an altered 2nd theme and directly into a development section. The recapitulation starts with the 2nd theme and ends the movement with a brief quote of the 1st theme.
- II. **Adagio** rather contemplative and moody all the while slowly builds toward a very forceful anti-climax and then settles back into a somewhat doleful ending.
- III. **Allegro con Brio** This is the fiery toccata part of the piece which while having a continuous ostinato in the midrange of the piano has a "conversation" between the bass and treble. Ultimately there are quotes from the other movements as it comes to its aggressive finish.

Experimentality (2010)

Nova String Quartet

This is my first string quartet (thus the name). It begins and ends with a 12 tone row but is unsystematic for the most part. There is a main theme that is interspersed between episodes featuring different textures and colors. It always comes back somewhat transformed and the sections are set off by short pauses (silence).

Jazz Sonata for Soprano Sax & Piano (1985*-2009-2010)

Blake Lyman-sax, Art Resnick-Piano

The exposition of the 1st movement was a separate jazz piece I performed in 1985. I had also a jazz waltz I had written around the same time that I rewrote as the 2nd movement. As it turns out this has been a major collaboration. The numbers 5 and 3 hold a special role in all the movements. All three movements contain sections of improvisation over a harmonic base.

- I. **Allegro non troppo** alternates between 5/4 and 3/4 time, the 1st theme in 5 and the 2nd in 3. While giving the impression of having tonal centers, they are but brief respites that quickly move on.
- II. **Waltz Adagio** is entirely in 3/4 time but the ostinato in the in the first few bars is a compound rhythm of 5 against 3 beats.
- III. **Allegro con Brio** alternates between aggressive chaos and calm. Again 5 in the rhythm is the time signature of the intense sections and 4/4 time in the reflective parts. 2/3rds of the way through we hear a return to the ostinato figure at the beginning of the 1st movement-then the coda containing quotes from both the 1st and 3rd movements and a quiet fading out of the original figure with improvisation.

The Jazz Trio Pieces

Beneath the Sea (1982)

This is one of the few programmatic pieces I've ever written. Changing rhythms and colors give me the impression of shifting currents. While not specifically influenced by Ravel, as one of my favorite composers, I dedicate this to him.

Monkeyshines (2002)

Sort of a smile in the direction of Thelonius Monk who forged his own way all the way. I wrote this after getting inspired by a song that pianist McCoy Tyner wrote about Monk.

Perry Mason Loses a Case (2004)

I'll never forget that Perry Mason theme. It was that "noirish" sound that I kind of thought of for the intro. And I wanted to write something where the bass played unison figures with my left hand.

Ala Ornette (2005)

In this case I was attempting to imitate Ornette Coleman's style of writing. He was an alto saxophonist and composer that worked with colors and textures in improvisation instead of the more traditional melodic ideas over a set of chord changes. Some of the first "free" playing. The idea here is to improvise using melodic fragments from the written part (the song itself) without referring to any specific harmony weaving them together in some sort of cohesion. Since there is no written harmony each player blends with the others to create a tapestry that fuses together.

Performers

In order of appearance

Mitch Limori-bassoon

Born and raised in Kanagawa Pref. Japan. Bachelor of Music (oboe performances) from Eastman School of Music in Rochester, NY in 93. Multi instrumentalist (over 50 instruments and 20 styles), multi lingual (10 languages), surrealist painter, woodwind repair technician. Currently adjunct professor of Willamette University (oboe), Lewis & Clark College (oboe, banjo, mandolin, ukulele), University of Portland (oboe,), George Fox University (oboe, bassoon, banjo, mandolin), Corban College (oboe). Principal oboe with Salem Chamber Orchestra & Washington Chamber Orchestra. Has performed with Oregon Symphony Orchestra, Third Angle, Columbia Symphony Orchestra and Portland Taiko. Frequently appear as a soloist with Willamette Master Chorus and other local groups.

Maria Choban-piano

Maria Choban has produced and released four cds on her recording label, Alitisa. Her mission through Alitisa is to promote the music of contemporary Greek and American composers, mirroring her own background as a full blooded Greek born and raised in America. Choban has performed and lectured in the US and in Europe, living in Greece for 2 years researching Greek Classical Music. She is a fiery, focused performer who also sometimes champions the work of white-dead-guy composers. She is one of the founders of the South West Music School in Beaverton, Oregon. She maintains her own teaching studio and she writes the most controversial classical music blog on the net <http://alitisa.com>

Nova String Quartet

Casey Bozell-1st violin

Casey Bozell is a freelance musician and teacher in the Portland Metro area. She holds positions with the Portland Opera Orchestra, Oregon Ballet Theater, and is assistant concertmaster of the Linfield Chamber Orchestra. Casey is the violin and viola professor at both Concordia and Corban University. More info can be found at www.caseybozell.com

Lucia Conrad-2nd violin

Lucia Conrad is the concertmaster of Willamette Falls Symphony in Oregon City, as well as Associate Principal 1st Violin in the Salem Chamber Orchestra. Lucia has appeared in both the United States and Europe as a soloist and chamber musician. She is a member of Classical Revolution PDX, and has also played locally with the Rose City Chamber Orchestra, Oregon East Symphony, and Portland Columbia Orchestra. More info can be found at www.luciaconrad.com

Michelle Mathewson-viola

Michelle Mathewson, violist, is a native of California and currently performs as Principal Violist with the Oregon Ballet Theatre Orchestra and acting Principal Violist with the Portland Opera Orchestra. Michelle also plays with the Portland Chamber Orchestra and is the founder of the Delphinium String Quartet. She earned her Bachelors and Masters degrees in Viola Performance from the University of Cincinnati - Conservatory of Music.

Dieter Ratzlaf-cello

Dieter began playing cello when he was 7 years old. He grew up in a musical family--his Mother is a pianist, Father a singer and sister a violinist. He played in the Portland Youth Philharmonic from 1986-89 and soon after attended Willamette University receiving a Bachelor's Degree in Economics and German. He continued to study the cello at Willamette and later attended The San Francisco Conservatory of Music where he received a Master's Degree of Cello Performance. He has received numerous awards including first prize in the Mu Phi Epsilon scholarship competition and first prize in the Missoula Symphony Young Artist Competition. He has participated in Master Classes with renowned Artists such as Anner Bylisma, David Finckel and Yo-Yo Ma. He currently performs with the Portland Opera Orchestra, the Oregon Ballet Theater Orchestra and Vancouver Symphony in Vancouver Wa.

Nancy Wood-soprano

Nancy Wood's musical career has included singing in jazz clubs, performing in vaudeville shows and musical theater and even singing back up in a country western band. After years of classical study, (and singing anything and everything she could) she has found her vocal home interpreting works by living composers. She has performed works by many Cascadia Composers, including Jeff Winslow, Tomas Svoboda, Dan Senn, Jack Gabel and Gary Noland. She has been blessed to have had 2 song cycles composed specifically for her.

Paul Safar

Paul Safar is a versatile composer/performer and music educator living and working in Eugene, Oregon. In addition to being a private piano instructor for twenty years, Paul also performs as an accompanist to the soprano Nancy Wood. Paul and Nancy are the co-founders and artistic directors of Cherry Blossom Musical Arts, a performing arts non profit organization that produces original, collaborative, live performances. Having received his B.Mus from the Conservatory of Music in Cincinnati, Ohio, Paul often draws upon his classical music training while incorporating various popular styles. Paul's most recent large scale work is his first stab at orchestral writing, a "Concerto for Electric Guitar" premiered in February 2011. Paul is a member of Cascadia Composers.

Blake Lyman

Saxophonist and composer Blake Lyman has performed worldwide. Originally from Sacramento, California, Blake began saxophone at age 8, and has since performed at such venues as Avery Fisher Hall at Lincoln Center, the Monterey Jazz Festival, and the Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles.

While attending the University of Chicago (B.A. Economics, 2005) Blake performed throughout Chicago with members of Chicago's AACM, and studies at the London School of Economics allowed him to perform extensively in that city. Having graduated from the California Institute of the Arts in 2007, he now resides in Portland, OR.

Dan Schulte

Native Oregonian Dan Schulte has been an active performing bassist in the Pacific Northwest for 30 years, appearing at festivals, teaching at various colleges, playing creatively with intensity and passion. Mr Schulte has been on staff at Portland State University for 15 years, and freelances extensively in orchestra pits, playing Principal bass with Portland Center Stage for the last 3 seasons. He has periodically collaborated with Mr Resnick since the mid 1990's in different settings. He plays a bass made recently by renowned Eugene bass Luthier Seth Kimmell.

Jonas Oglesbee

After completing a degree in Jazz Studies at Indiana University, he has returned to Portland OR where he grew up. Jonas has performed and/or recorded with Frank Glover, Rob Dixon, Melvin Rhyne, The Buselli Walarab Jazz Orchestra, Pat Harbison, David Baker, Jeremy Allen, David Valdez, The Marcus Reynolds/Farnell Newton Quintet, The Art Resnick Trio, among others.