Graduate Recital: Jonathan Rainous, composition

Jonathan Rainous

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Graduate Recital:
Jonathan Rainous, composition

Ford Hall
Saturday, April 20th, 2019
7:00 pm
Program

Prelude in G-sharp Minor* (2017)
Joon Sang Ko, piano

Fanfare No. 1 (2018)
Hayden Bustamente and Shaun Rinkunas, trumpets
Charolette Povey, horn
Johanna Wiley, trombone
Jon Aldave, tuba

Oh, My Father...* (2019)
Text adapted from Matthew 26:36-42 by the composer
Melodia Mae Rinaldi, soprano
Jeffrey Taylor, baritone
Rowan Whitesell, violin
Jeffrey Elrick, bass clarinet

Suite for Flute and Clarinet (2017)
I. Opening
IV. Allegretto
V. Interlude No. 2
VI. Playful
VII. Closing
Krysten Geddes, flute
Thea Hollman, clarinet

Prologue, from Untitled (2018)
Text by the composer
Melodia Mae Rinaldi, soprano
McKinny Danger-James, alto
Seamus Buxton, tenor
Michael White, bass-baritone
Rowan Whitesell and Peter McGarry, violins
Maria Dupree, viola
Elizabeth Carroll, cello
Emani Barber, double bass
Jonathan Rainous, conductor
Vignette No. 1* (2017)
Leandra Stirling, flute
Kathleen Cadorette, oboe
Jeffrey Elrick, clarinet
Christian DeFreese, horn
Eden Treado, bassoon

I. Darkness
II. Dawn
III. Routine, Routine, Routine
IV. The Grind (Really) Begins
James Yoon, euphonium

Sleep* (2019)
Text by the composer
Monica Ramich, soprano
Matthew Benjamin Barnard, Rowan Whitesell,
Peter McGarry, Lauren Branch, violins
Maria Dupree, viola
Elizabeth Carroll, Colleen d'Alelio, David Shane, celli
Emani Barber, double bass
Kin Szeto, conductor

*Premiere

This recital is in fulfillment of the degree Master of Music in Composition.
Jonathan Rainous is from the studio of Dr. Jorge Villavicencio Grossmann.
Program Notes

Prelude in G-Sharp Minor

Written in an afternoon and revised over a month, this piece is modeled after the books of preludes and fugues written by J.S. Bach and Dmitri Shostakovich. Like Shostakovich, I have elected to use the compositional techniques of my time instead of Bach's time.

Fanfare No. 1

This short fanfare was written as part of the Ithaca College Symphony Orchestra Fanfare Project and was premiered at the beginning of the September 30, 2018 symphony concert. As in many of my pieces, time is fractured and constantly interrupted as musical material is augmented, distorted, deconstructed, and put in new rhythmic contexts.

Oh My Father...

The piece Oh, My Father... was partially inspired by works such as Harvey's *Death of Light / Light of Death*, where contemporary musical techniques are used to give a fresh artistic perspective on ancient, Biblical topics. The topic here is the prayer of Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane, specifically as recorded in Matthew 26:36-42. Jesus, knowing the agony of His crucifixion which was soon to come, prays repeatedly for this burden to be lifted from Him. Yet, the atmosphere continues to close in, and his excruciating death is inevitable. His prayer ends, "Thy will be done."

Christ's words are given to the baritone, an 'average' male voice type to illustrate the common nature of Jesus' humanity. He was not a king, but an everyday carpenter. I have imagined God groaning with Christ, responding merely "Oh, my Son" or "Do not fear," and have given these words to the soprano, to illustrate the extremely high tension and sorrow I imagine God felt as He had to abandon His Son.

Suite for Flute and Clarinet

This suite is an early experiment with large scale forms, as the whole piece is modeled after the concept album. Additionally, it was an opportunity to explore the sonic potential of two largely monophonic instruments, experiments which continued with Pieces for Two Violins, No. 1 and Pieces for Two Violas, No. 1, both also from 2017. In this 'sonata' for two woodwinds, four short, fleeting movements (odd numbers) are interspersed with much more substantial movements (even numbers). All of them are inspired by peaceful, pastoral scenes, though there is not a specific program. Each movement's material relates to at least one other movement.
and the movement Closing. These linkages can be thought of as the slow morphing of one type of countryside to another while one traverses the American Midwest.

"Prologue" from Untitled

The "Prologue" is a scene from an untitled, work-in-progress opera about the behind-the-scenes workers during the civil rights movements of the 50's and 60's. The four singers in this scene are an Americanized version of the Greek Muses. In democratic fashion, all four voice parts are represented in the ensemble and their names (SATB) are North, South, East, and West, drawn from the spirit of exploration which characterizes early American history.

In the Prologue, the Muses are 'waking up' from a long slumber, taking stock of the historical moment in which they find themselves, and setting the stage for a hero to appear and spur justice. During the rest of the opera, the Muses will freely move between dramatic functions, sometimes serving as narrators, recurring characters, bit parts, or even as the Chorus. At any one point, there could be any mix of these functions spread among the Muses. The main character in this biopic opera is not in this scene.

Vignette No. 1

My quirky Vignettes series begins with this klezmer-inspired, off-kilter piece. The main melody, presented first by the oboe, is slightly varied while the primary development occurs in the background in all the other instruments while the bassoon limps along. A peaceful middle section uses the harmonies implied by melody to give everyone a chance to breathe. The melody returns quite quickly and is played in short canon leading to a chaotic, abrupt ending.

Nashville Mornings

Nashville Mornings, begun in 2015, was only recently finished. "Darkness" was inspired by the moments before first light, before there is any light from the new day, when one's locale is (usually) quiet and still. "Dawn" is about first light, moving progressively from the range of darkness to something brighter and more melodic. "Routine, Routine, Routine" depicts someone who is emphatically not a morning person (such as the composer) stumbling through their morning routine then rushing out the door. The final movement weaves together elements from the previous three movements together as the day's work begins. The work is for a performer willing to add theatric flair. Some directions are in the score, but the rest is up to the performer's interpretation.
Sleep

Sleep was originally conceived in a flash of inspiration late one night when I couldn't fall asleep. After much mental sketching and revision, it was finally written down in a 48-hour period this spring. The opening musical material, highly dissonant like a cry in the night, is expanded by the soprano in a cantus firmus style, being transformed from something upsetting to something soothing.

This piece is dedicated to my unborn daughter, expected to enter the world early this September.

Lyrics to Sleep

Sleep, my darling;
Rest, my love;
Leave your worries,
Cares fall off.

All is quiet;
Still, the room.
Drift off gently,
Eyes
go
   dim...

Sleep in peace; sleep in peace!

Hear the breathing;
Slow and calm.
Rest now, my baby,
And sleep
   sleep
   sleep...