

COMPOSITION STUDIO RECITAL
 Anthony Suter, director

Friday, March 25, 2016 - 8 p.m.
 FREDERICK LOEWE PERFORMANCE HALL

The Smile

Jesse Russell

Jesse Russell, voice
 Thandiwe Sukuta, piano

The following two pieces are performed together as a set.

Dauidsbündlertänze for Piano
 II. Innig

Robert Schumann

ASCH for solo piano

Andres R. Luz

Takakuni Migimatsu, piano

Quintet for Brass (2016)

Andres R. Luz

I. Grinding, Twisting Steel

Brandon Hansen, trumpet 1
 Kenny Taber, trumpet 2
 Hannah Vagts, horn
 Julia Broome-Robinson, trombone
 Ross Woodzell, tuba

A Piece for Violin and Piano

Geoffrey Halgas

Geoffrey Halgas, violin
 Lara Urrutia, piano

The Sonic Pilgrimage for Saxophone Quartet Nicolai Gervasi-Monarrez

I. --

Interlude 1

II. --

Interlude 2

III. --

Kelsey Broersma, soprano saxophone
 Nicolai Gervasi-Monarrez, alto saxophone
 Grant Gardner, tenor saxophone
 Manuel Perez, baritone saxophone

SELECTED PROGRAM NOTES

The Smile

Jesse Russell

The Smile is a piece that displays different emotions and facial expressions that one would put on throughout their life. The text comes from an English Poet, William Blake, and compliments the music by showing how putting on a number of different faces can hide the true meaning of what one is physically presenting. For example, if someone is smiling, that doesn't automatically mean that they are happy. When researching Blake I found that his most influential poetry was written after his brother's death. I sense the pain and confusion of emotions in this poem:

*There is a Smile of Love
 And there is a Smile of Deceit
 And there is a Smile of Smiles In which these two Smiles meet
 And there is a Frown of Hate And there is a Frown of Disdain
 And there is a Frown of Frowns Which you strive to forget in vain
 For it sticks in the Hearts deep Core
 And it sticks in the deep Back bone
 And no Smile that ever was smil'd But only one Smile alone
 That betwixt the Cradle & Grave
 It only once Smil'd can be But when it once is Smil'd
 There's an end to all Misery.*

The poem stretches the boundary of what separates appearance from reality, and the way that the music and text go together shows the passion from William Blake.

ASCH for solo piano

Andres R. Luz

In Robert Schumann's piano suite, *Carnaval, Op. 9* (1831/5), the "ASCH" motif is a musical cryptograph that Schumann uses to refer to himself as signified by the German note names A-S-C-H, or A, E-flat, C, and B. (This association becomes clear upon consideration of the full form of the composer's name: Robert **A**lexander **S**chumann). Similarly, the construction of *ASCH for solo piano* (2015), makes a reference to Schumann's second piece, *Innig*, from *Davidsbündlertänze* for piano, op.6, one of disintegration on one hand and on the other hand, a focused study on the characteristic musical objects within *Innig*. *ASCH for solo piano* is therefore an abbreviation and a cryptogram drawn from Schumann's original.

Quintet for Brass (2016)

Andres R. Luz

I. Grinding, Twisting Steel

Grinding, Twisting Steel, is characterized by fast, harsh textures evoking unrelenting and grunting masses of the durable, sturdy alloy. The mood is at first oppressive and then brooding and menacing. The idea for the piece was conceived in late 2014 from banter between my fellow graduate colleagues and my composition professor at seminar when we noted that there were not very many well-known compositions that begin with shrill sonorities unfolding at a breakneck pace, such as Bartók's *The Miraculous Mandarin Suite*. Here is my tongue-in-cheek contribution for that discussion topic, composed 1.5 years later.

The Sonic Pilgrimage for Saxophone Quartet Nicolai Gervasi-Monarrez

My main goal for this project was to successfully write a piece in four-part harmony. I wasn't sure what it would turn into or how long it would be, but I just wanted to write a complete piece of original music. As I gained more ground each week, my passion for composition was realized and the goal became more than simply writing a piece. This project became the mark of the beginning of the road to finding my voice as a composer. In the end, what I ended up creating was an exciting episodic journey played out over the course of three movements and two brief interludes. The titles both alludes to the musical concept as well as my own quest to find my sound. The first movement is a post minimal piece written in a moderately fast 7/8 meter. The tenor starts it off by establishing the steady groove on a concert Bb drone. As the piece progresses the textures become increasingly dense

and the complexity of the rhythms intensify. This process goes around full circle until it is reduced down to the thin textures that began the movement. Both interludes play out as short and rowdy transitions that feature the bari saxophone playing extended bebop like phrases that are answered by the rest of the group. The second movement is a slower melodramatic ballad that begins with an alto saxophone solo. The movement revolves around a single florid 16th note line that is passed through the voices and accompanied by thick contrapuntal harmony. The music gradually diverges from this idea and delves into a softer melancholic development before returning to a fragmented version of the original motif that concludes the movement. The second interlude mirrors the first but doubles in rowdiness. It also features a fanfare section that alludes to the final act. The first half of the third movement is in a faster 7/8 meter that echoes the first movement with a darker and more ominous tone. The soprano takes the lead with a singing melody immediately after the introduction with the alto countering with rhythmic gestures. The tenor and bari act as one for the majority of the movement giving us a beefy rock like bass groove in open 4ths. This section builds up leading to a grand halt in momentum until the rest of the piece takes a left turn and goes into a grand waltz cannon that concludes the piece with flair.

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