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Paul Haas
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SEASON 59.5

The TBSO Presents Northern Winter

March 26, 2021 – 6:30 p.m.

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Northern Winter

March 26, 2021 6:30 p.m.



Duo in C major

Jean Sibelius
(1865-1957)

Lindsey Herle, violin and Marlena Pellegrino, viola

Shade

Jocelyn Morlock
(b. 1969)

Marc Palmquist, cello and Kevin Brohman, vibraphone

Spiegel im Spiegel

Arvo Pärt
(b. 1935)

Thomas Cosbey, violin and Kevin Brohman, vibraphone

As you pass by a reflective surface

Linda Catlin Smith
(b. 1957)

String Quartet No. 10, "Winter Birds"

R. Murray Schafer
(b. 1933)

Thomas Cosbey and Michelle Zapf-Bélanger, violins; Geena Salway, viola;
Peter Cosbey, cello; Kevin Brohman, narrator

Programme Notes

Duo in C Major

Composer: Jean Sibelius (1865-1957)

Composed: 1891-92

Length: About 6 minutes

Until relatively recently, the early, unpublished works of Finnish composer Jean Sibelius were entirely unknown. In 1982 Sibelius's family finally donated all of their manuscripts to the library at the University of Helsinki, which allowed scholars to catalog and begin to publish numerous works that Sibelius had written in his youth. The warm and lyrical Duo in C major for violin and viola was composed during a time that he was working on a large choral symphony and visiting his aunt in the coastal town of Lovisa. While there Sibelius gave some private lessons in violin playing, ensemble playing and musical theory, and the Duo is thought to have been composed for teaching purposes.

Shade

Composer: Jocelyn Morlock (b. 1969)

Composed: 1998

Length: About 9 minutes

shade (n.) – shelter from the heat and glare of sunlight; comparative darkness or obscurity owing to interception of the rays of light; the shadows that gather as darkness comes on; netherworld, hades; a disembodied spirit.

Shade begins with a short cadenza for the cello. The vibraphone part enters tentatively and gradually becomes an equal part of the texture, gathering energy as it progresses. For the second section of the piece, hard mallets are used on the vibraphone to create an austere bell-like timbre to accompany the more dramatic cello line. In the final section, the cello and vibraphone parts are permanently divided. As the melody of the cello reaches higher and higher, that of the vibraphone descends continuously and repeatedly to the end of the piece.

Written by Jocelyn Morlock

Spiegel im Spiegel

Composer: Arvo Pärt (b. 1935)

Composed: 1978

First performed: December 1978 with violinist Vladimir Spivakov and pianist Boris Bekhterev in Moscow.

Length: About 7 minutes

Spiegel im Spiegel (Mirror in the Mirror) is one of the best known and most performed pieces by Arvo Pärt and also one of his last compositions before his departure from Estonia for Berlin.

The musical material of *Spiegel im Spiegel* is presented with utmost clarity and strictness. It only consists of the melody of the solo instrument and the three-note piano accompaniment. The structure of the piece follows a strict formula, where no note is left to chance. The title directly reflects what is happening in the music: each ascending melodic line is followed by a descending mirror phrase. Initially, the melody consists of only two notes, with another note being added with each of the following phrases, thus creating a seemingly endless continuum.

After each distancing, the melody returns to the central pitch of A, which, according to the composer, is like "returning home after being away". The piano part accompanies the melody part at each step like a "guardian angel", as the composer himself likes to say. In addition to the accompaniment, the piano part includes tintinnabuli notes – like little bells that alternately sound above and below the melodic line, following a fixed formula.

This seemingly simple composition poses a great challenge to a musician in bringing the music alive during the performance. The composer believes that first and foremost, the musician has to have something to say to himself or herself and to others: "Everything redundant must be left aside. Just like the composer has to reduce his ego when writing the music, the musician too must put his ego aside when performing the piece." Purity and innocence are the qualities valued by the composer in the performance of his music.

From the composer's website

As you pass by a reflective surface

Composer: Linda Catlin Smith (b. 1957)

Composed: 1991

Length: About 6 minutes

I composed this brief quartet for the Accordes String Quartet in Toronto; the work has also been performed by the Modern Quartet and has been recorded by the Penderecki Quartet. In this work, I think of the string sound as a changeable surface, reflecting an elusive image. The title comes from a letter I received from someone far away.

Written by Linda Catlin Smith

String Quartet No. 10, "Winter Birds"

Composer: R. Murray Schafer (b. 1933)

Composed: 2005

Length: About 18 minutes

Winter Birds (my Tenth String Quartet) was written during January and February 2005 at my farm in central Ontario. This is the quietest time of the year with much snow and temperatures that descend at night to 20 or 25 degrees below zero Celsius. There are few birds and animals; only the occasional howl of a wolf or coyote and a few visitors to the bird feeders: chickadees and sparrows, occasionally a blue jay or mourning dove. Winter Birds is an attempt to suggest the night and morning of this winter soundscape outside my window, not in real time but in the compressed form of a string quartet.

Written by R. Murray Schafer

Coming soon! Last 2 Concerts of Season 59.5

April 9

Brass 'n Brahms

Nelhybel's Trio for Brass demonstrates the composer's well-known skill for writing sharply incisive passagework for brass, as well as plaintive, almost Kurt Weill-like lyricism.

Brahms' magnificent Sextet for Strings, No. 2 is one of the best-loved works of all chamber music repertoire. It is inspired music – both serious and complex, but also beautiful and romantic.

Simply Beethoven

Celebrating a chamber music genius. Beethoven's Duo for flutes, commissioned by a close friend, is a little-known gem. The attractive and skillfully effective Variations on La ci darem la mano from Mozart's Don Giovanni and the buoyant and good-natured String Quartet no. 10, affectionately known as the "Harp" quartet, round out a simply delightful concert.

Watch them all online at tbso.ca/tbso-live-concerts



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