

Notes on Tonight's Concert

Late in his life, **Alberto Ginastera** grouped his work into distinct phases: “Objective Nationalism,” “Subjective Nationalism,” and “Neo-Expressionism.” *Pampeana no. 3*, from 1954, termed a “symphonic pastorale” by the composer, straddles the final two categories; the subject matter concerns the great plains stretching south of Buenos Aires and eastward to the Andes, but the extra-musical associations with the setting are less concrete than in his earlier works, and the musical means are more abstract. The opening ascent in solo cello and bass, for example, courses over the fourths of the guitar’s open strings, and the rhapsodic oboe/trumpet solo in the movement’s impressionistic central section recall the improvisations of gaucho music, but the intervening fugal counterpoint based on a twelve-tone subject has no folk-music analogue, and echoes of Stravinsky’s *Firebird* Lullaby might be heard in the paired phrases for full orchestra in the first and third movements. Both of these outer movements end very inconclusively, with unresolved harmony and melody; more generally, in these outer movements Ginastera’s Pampas are a brooding, vaguely sinister place, perhaps suggestive of the political difficulties the composer had at this time with the repressive regime of Juan Perón. (The work was in fact given its premiere by the Louisville Symphony.) The middle movement, by contrast, is a furious dance, with shifting 6/8-3/4 accents and the tremendous rhythmic vitality familiar from many of Ginastera’s other works. A contrasting central trio passage couples a smooth horn theme with dancing strings.

As the founder of the Mexico City’s National Symphony Orchestra and a director of the National Conservatory of Mexico, **Carlos Chávez** was the most important figure in establishing and nurturing a Mexican school of composition. He traveled widely, visiting Europe and spending several long sojourns in the United States; in 1958-59 he was chosen to present the Norton Lectures at Harvard. Sadly, his final years were marked by failing health and finances.

Chávez took an active interest in Mexico’s indigenous music, encouraging its collection while at the National Conservatory and incorporating elements of it into his compositions. His **Symphony no. 2** (*Sinfonía india*) is one of the few pieces of his that quote actual indigenous melodies, however. The work was first performed by the CBS Orchestra in January of 1936 (he was invited to conduct a composition of his own with the orchestra, and he chose to write a new work for the occasion.) Though cast in a single movement, there are intimations of a multi-movement structure as well as of an arch form. The basically key-centered tonal focus and animated mixed meters of the work’s introductory passage (let’s call this Section A) follow the precepts of many Neo-Classical works of the period. The repeated-note main theme (Section B), first heard in violins and oboe and later in the full winds, comes from from the Huichol people of western Mexico. Another mixed-meter transitional passage (Section C) intervenes here, then we hear more lyrical melody introduced by E-flat clarinet (Section D)—the “second” theme in Chavez’s loose sonata-form scheme, as this one eventually returns transposed to the home key—is drawn from the Yaqui people. A central slow section takes the place of a slow movement proper; its stepwise theme comes from Sonora state, and is repeated several times with increasing force before the “recapitulation” begins. The opening sections recur in order B-C-D-A, then a whirling coda based on a melody from the Seri people (from coastal Sonora) ensues, gradually building in intensity as the tune is repeated.

In 1892 **Antonín Dvořák** came to an agreement with Jeannette Thurber, the founder of the National Conservatory of Music in America in New York, to teach at the institution for three years (the negotiations and the recently exhibited signed contract itself were detailed in a New York Times article in August). His salary of \$15,000.00 was 25 times what he made in Prague, and allowed him summers off. One of his students at the conservatory was Harry T. Burleigh, later a renowned arranger of African-American spirituals; he played double bass in the conservatory orchestra and served as its librarian, and would also serve as a copyist for the orchestral parts of the New World Symphony. He later recounted introducing Dvořák to the spiritual, noting that the gentle second theme for solo flute in the symphony’s first movement quotes “Swing Low, Sweet Chariot.” Other source material for Dvořák included Longfellow’s poem “Song of Hiawatha,” upon which he drew for the second movement (the dirge depicts the hero’s death) and the scherzo (an Indian dance, with insistent tom-tom, though one hears a passing resemblance here at the outset to the scherzo of Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony as well.)

The New York Philharmonic commissioned the work in 1893, and the first performance was in December of that year, with Anton Seidl as conductor. The audience response was enthusiastic; each movement garnered great applause, which the composer felt obliged to stand and acknowledge. The work also ignited a debate about the proper course of American music, many facets of which we can look back on only in shame and embarrassment. Some critics (and implicitly Dvořák himself, though some of his quoted comments on the issue have since been shown to be fabricated) encouraged composers to look to non-European source material for inspiration, while others saw this as an outrageous notion (one writer, Boston’s Philip Hale, termed Dvorak a “negrophile.”)

Whatever the sources of Dvořák's themes, a consistent mood of expansiveness animates the work. European visitors to America at this time were struck by the vast open spaces, and Dvořák was no exception. He wrote of Iowa (where he spent the summer of 1893 in the Czech community of Spillville), "It is very wild here. There are only endless acres of field and meadow. That's all you see. You don't meet a soul. And so it makes one sometimes very sad, sad to despair." The stern opening of the finale speaks to the harshness of this environment, while the gentle second theme perhaps to the homesickness of the emigrant.

In purely musical terms, the symphony is remarkable for the density of thematic connections across the four movements. Dvořák brings back the opening movement's themes in a stormy passage near the end of the second movement and in the coda of the scherzo, and the finale is filled with quotes from the previous three movements. At the work's end we hear the customary decisive orchestral hammerstrokes, but the woodwinds linger on, like the mournful wind across the empty plains.

The Notre Dame Symphony Orchestra—Fall 2013

Violin I	Viola	Oboe/English Horn
Robin Lawler, concertmaster	Nicholas Muench, principal	Stephen High, principal
Leo Xu	Tara Pilato	Ellie Norby
Jen Ho	Minh Nguyen	Clarinet
Emily Campagna	Maureen Gavin	Sonia Urquidi, principal
Morgan Hallas	Connor Goodman	John McCready
Jisung Park	Emily Punzalan	Allison D'Ambrosia
Amity Wipson	Daniela Tomas	Bassoon
Alexa Rakoski	Courtney Schaefer	Mike Reinsvold, principal
Madeline Cook	Olivia Till	Camille Arnett
Jenna Ahn	Natalie Wozniak	French Horn
Michelle Kim	Matthew Colturi	Julia Steines-Berkemeier, co-principal
Paige Affinito	Madeline Inglis	Keaton Bloom, co-principal
Joy Tao	Cello	Edward Vogel
Steph Sonnick	Gavin Hsu, principal	Michael Prough
Isabel Cabezas	Alex Groesch	Trumpet
Vanessa Wall	Brian Hall	Adam Henderson, principal
Bonnie Leigh Cruser	Petra Rantanen	Madelyn Nelson
Madeline Chandra	Moira Horn	Anna Bosler
Violin II	Luke Tilmans	Trombone
Michael MacGillivray, principal	Ryan McMullen	Candace Castillo, principal
Brynelle Rozario	Robert Myak	Katie Laskey
Sarah Smith	Drew Martin	Christopher Syers
Patrick McCormack	Monica Henry	Tuba
Adrienne Bruggerman	Tamás Karáth	David Smith
Adelle Barte	Max Wipson	Percussion
Theresa Puhr	Will Carey	Alyssa Armendariz
Kevin Lee	Bass	Roman Gusdorf
Mariah Sasson	Ray Heberer	Michael Gregory
Peter Chung	Bob Martin	Anthony Villano
Josh Perozek	Michael Thompson	Olivia Gutgsell
Da Som Kim	Taylor Becht	Piano/Celesta
Adam Rene Rosenbaum	Flute/Piccolo	Michael Rodio
Chris Walker	Jessica Meaux, principal	
Nia McGill	Jennifer Cochrane	
Zack Horne	Maggie Van Zalen	
Sarah Tsai	Rachelle Gosioco	
Chinelo Onyeador	Harp	
Kelly O'Shea	Catya Carothers	
Wen Cong Toh		
Jessica Carter		

Upcoming Department of Music Events

Sun. Nov 24, 2013

EnsembleND with Notre Dame Vocale
2:00 PM/5:00 PM Philbin Theater, DeBartolo Performing Arts Center

Tricia Park, violin and viola; Karen Buranskas, cello; John Blacklow and Daniel Schlosberg, piano
Guest artists: Julia Richter, flute, Douglass Thompson, percussion
Carmen-Helena Tellez, conductor

Lutoslawski, *Subito* (1992); J.S. Bach, Prelude and Fugue BWV 886/849
Crumb, *Vox Balaenae* (1971); Feldman, *Rothko Chapel* (1971)

ND Symphonic Band and Symphonic Winds
3:00 PM Leighton Concert Hall, DeBartolo Performing Arts Center

Student Voice Recital - Emma Kusters and Elizabeth Curtin
3:30 PM Annenberg Auditorium, Snite Museum of Art

Fri. Dec 6, 2013/Sat. Dec 7, 2013

Notre Dame Chorale and Chamber Orchestra present Handel's *Messiah*
8:00 PM Leighton Concert Hall, DeBartolo Performing Arts Center

Sun. Dec 8, 2013

Student Voice Recital - Anastacia Wells
3:00 PM Annenberg Auditorium, Snite Museum of Art

University Band
3:00 PM Leighton Concert Hall, DeBartolo Performing Arts Center

ND Jazz Bands
7:00 PM Leighton Concert Hall, DeBartolo Performing Arts Center

Thu. Dec 12, 2013

Notre Dame Collegium Musicum
Monteverdi: *Missa In illo tempore*; motets from Mantua
7:00 PM/8:30 PM Reyes Choral and Organ Hall, DeBartolo Performing Arts Center

Sat. Dec 14, 2013

Notre Dame Glee Club Christmas Concerts
2:30 PM/6:00 PM/8:30 PM Leighton Concert Hall, DeBartolo Performing Arts Center
(proceeds to benefit the South Bend Center for the Homeless and the Food Bank of Northern Indiana)

For tickets to all DeBartolo Performing Arts Center events, please call **631-2800** or visit
<http://performingarts.nd.edu/>