

The University of Michigan-Flint
Department of Music
presents

Russ Sauter, percussion
in
Senior Recital

Desmond Sheppard, piano

April 15th 2020, 7:30pm, 164 French Hall

Program

Inspirations Diabolique

Rick Tagawa (b. 1947)

1. Introduction
2. Dance
3. Adagio - Tarantella
4. Cadenza
5. Perpetual Motion

Arabesque I

Claude Debussy (1862-1918)
arr. Naoka Takada (b. 1988)

Concerto for Vibraphone and Orchestra
II. "Acalanto"

Ney Rosauero (b. 1952)

Intermission

October Night

Michael Burritt (b. 1962)

- I. Largo
- II. Allegro

"Delauney's Dilemma"

John Lewis (1920-2001)

In partial fulfillment of the Bachelor of Music in Performance degree program

The University of Michigan-Flint is a fully accredited member of the National Association of Schools of Music.

***Inspirations Diabolique* by Rick Tagawa**

Rick Tagawa is a graduate of the Juilliard School where he studied composition with Elliott Carter and Luciano Berio. While a graduate student in ethnomusicology at UCLA, he became interested in the traditional music of Uganda. This interest is reflected in several of his compositions, including *Inspirations Diabolique* – his only multi-percussion composition.

Inspirations Diabolique is a five-movement suite. The first movement features a slow introduction followed by a more energetic development of the thematic material presented in the introduction. Variations between meters of five and six is a feature of this movement. The second movement is an odd meter dance, with a motif that alternates between the meters of 4/8 and 5/8. As the movement progresses, the motif returns in the middle of phrases, creating metric tension that contrasts the trance-like nature of the repetitive rhythmic figures. The third movement, a personal favorite of mine, is a tarantella with an adagio introduction. It begins with an ominous backdrop created by swelling figures played on suspended cymbals. A slow and deliberate melody from the drums enters, emulating the eponymous menace – a tarantula. As the drums take over, the tense introduction of the movement transforms into an energetic dance, a hopeful antidote for the dreaded spider bite. The fourth movement provides a brief space for reflection following the climatic conclusion of the tarantella. A somewhat meandering first statement shortly finds its way to a driving preparation for the virtuosic finale. Perpetual Motion, the final movement, is rhythmically relentless. Mechanical precision is required from the performer in order to execute the constant stream of notes that make for a bombastic ending to a thrilling piece.

***Arabesque I* by Claude Debussy**

Claude Debussy is often thought of as the father of impressionist music, though he himself embraced that designation. Resistance towards the musical conventions of his time, and indeed convention itself, seemed to inspire Debussy's wildly original music and desire for his music to not be defined or pigeonholed into a category or tradition. By the time he had become a composer in his own right, he considered the symphony to be obsolete and sought alternatives in “symphonic sketches,” such as *La Mer*. Debussy was also a very accomplished composer in the realms of piano and chamber music. He is considered to be one of the most influential composers of the late-nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Arabesque I is one of the earliest examples of impressionist music. Written between 1888 and 1891, it is the first movement of his *Deux Arabesques*, L. 66. The piece opens with a compositional technique that would come to be used frequently by Debussy and his imitators: parallelism of triads. Debussy moves through discrete sections emphasizing various modes and keys in a way that evokes a montage of nature scenes. Studying the composition of this piece, it is not hard to understand how Debussy conceptualized the arabesque as “a line curved in accordance with nature.” By creating a musical kaleidoscope of moments with their own significance, rather than relating every part of the piece back to a theme or significant cadence, Debussy creates a wonderfully refreshing piece of music that seems almost more of nature itself than the music of his contemporaries.

***Concerto for Vibraphone and Orchestra* by Ney Rosauro**

Ney Rosauro is one of the most well-known names in the realm of mallet instrument composition. He was born in Brazil, where he studied composition and conducting at the Universidade de Brasilia before receiving a master's degree in percussion at the Hochschule für Musik-Würzburg, Germany, and a doctorate from the University of Miami. Many of the solos and ensemble pieces he has written have become standard percussion repertoire and his method books are also very popular. *Concerto for Vibraphone and Orchestra* is one of several works written for a variety of percussion instruments, including marimba and timpani. It is a favorite symphonic piece among percussionists.

"Acalanto," the concerto's gentle second movement, is based on the Brazilian lullaby "Tutu Maramba." The Brazilian influence can be heard in the polyrhythmic play between the melody and accompaniment figures throughout the piece. In this movement, the vibraphone becomes more distinct, yet milder with flowing self-accompaniment passages as the piano creates a harmonic canvas. The audience gets the sense that the soloist is in a relaxed and meditative space as rhythmic harmony precipitates in the background. As the soloist fades out of the picture, followed by the accompanist, we are left with a slow and singing vibraphone cadenza – the most vulnerable moment of the entire piece. The cadenza features one of Rosauro's favorite extended techniques for the instrument: using the opposite end of the mallet to achieve a "bell-like" effect. Following this interlude, a short development of earlier material transitions back to the second theme, on which the piece concludes.

***October Night* by Michael Burritt**

Michael Burritt is Professor of Percussion and chair of the Winds, Brass, and Percussion Department at Eastman School of Music, the same school from which he received the Bachelor and Master of Music degrees and a Performer's Certificate. Prior to his position at Eastman, Burritt was Associate Professor and Director of Percussion Studies at Northwestern University and Associate Professor of Percussion at Kent State University. He has been a featured artist at the Percussive Arts Society International Conventions nine times and is recognized as a leading name in percussion composition and education. He has written three concertos and numerous solo and chamber works for marimba and percussion, many of which have become standard repertoire. *October Night* is one of his more popular marimba compositions.

One of the first things a performer might notice about this piece is that it is dedicated Gordon Stout, another composer of a multitude of standard marimba repertoire. Stout was one of Burritt's teachers during his time at Eastman as a student, and his stylistic influence can certainly be heard in *October Night*. Burritt's inspiration for this piece was the famous Dylan Thomas poem, *Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night*, in which the poet pleads with his dying father to fight his fate. The two movements are meant to depict the conflicting emotions of grief and rage that are conveyed in the poem. The first movement is somber and takes the form of a chorale. The second movement is fast, intense and quite dissonant, utilizing melodic motifs of perfect fifths and major sixths separated by minor seconds and tritones. Both movements feature passages highlighting a technique called the "one-handed-roll" in which the performer oscillates quickly back and forth between two mallets in the same hand, creating the effect of sustaining the two notes.

"Delauney's Dilemma" by John Lewis

John Lewis was a jazz composer most known for his contribution of standard tunes and for being the pianist and founder of the Modern Jazz Quartet. This group was comprised of Lewis, Percy Heath on bass, Connie Kay on drums, and Milt Jackson on vibraphone. Jackson is from Detroit and began his career when he was discovered by Dizzy Gillespie, a famous bebop trumpeter, in 1945. To this day, he is one of the most well-known and influential vibraphone players in jazz. He is known for being one of the first players to achieve truly expressive phrasing on the (at the time) relatively new instrument.

"Delauney's Dilemma" is a song written by Lewis and first featured on the group's 1953 album *Django*. The song is a "Rhythm Changes" tune, meaning it utilizes the same harmonic progression as the George Gershwin jazz standard "I Got Rhythm." This is a very standard song form in jazz, however "Delauney's Dilemma" has the unique quirk: the "head," or the melody presented at the beginning of the song, is in a different key than the improvised solo section. This was a typical move by Lewis, who liked to combine jazz rhythms and harmonies with classical forms. I have always enjoyed the lighthearted, almost comedic quality of this melody, and I hope you will have as much fun listening to it as I do playing it.