

4-5-2009

Senior Recital: Heather Stebbins, composition

Department of Music, University of Richmond

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THE UNIVERSITY OF RICHMOND
DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

Presents

Heather Stebbins

SENIOR COMPOSITION RECITAL

Sunday, April 5, 2009
7:30 p.m.
Camp Concert Hall



Program Notes

Confessions, Reactions (2006)

Confessions, Reactions is subdivided into five main sections, four of which are technically and aesthetically unique. The first section is the initial spark, while each subsequent section functions as a musical reaction to the preceding section. Although each section is distinct, continuity is maintained by closely-linked harmonic content. This piece received the 2007 International Alliance of Women in Music Ellen Taaffe Zwilich Prize.

A Path Through the Gloaming (2008)

During the weekly drive to my cello lessons as a child, my grandfather and I would talk about the many different words for 'evening.' Our personal favorite was the word 'gloaming'. *A Path Through the Gloaming* explores the notion of using different words, or in this case musical materials, to describe the same object or event. In this piece, a basic musical event is heard in several different transformations. Each statement reflects some type of rhythmic, harmonic, or timbre alteration while maintaining a close relationship to the original material.

Interpretations (2009)

Interpretations is a two-movement set of solo piano pieces based on a series of silk-screen prints created by my talented roommate and friend, Soizic Ziegler. The two movements are inspired by her prints titled 'Reservoir' and 'Shift.' 'Reservoir' explores the notion of a reservoir being a generator for some other structure. A reservoir is a distinct "object, but it also depends on this other structure in order to maintain its function. I interpreted this concept musically by exploring the dependence of melodic and chordal movement on a specific harmonic pattern. 'Shift' examines the idea of a shift in perspective and once again, the dependence of two structures. In the print, an ornate figure is seen both independently and again when coupled with another structure. When seen alone, one's perspective of the object is very narrow, while when coupled with the other object, one's perspective broadens. I explored this notion musically by composing an ornate figure that can be heard both by itself and as dependent on a harmonic foundation.

Interpretations is dedicated to Soizic.

CONTINUED...

Heather Stebbins

SENIOR COMPOSITION RECITAL

Program

Confessions, Reactions (2006)
eighth blackbird, sextet

A Path Through the Gloaming (2008)
Michael Maccaferri, *clarinet*
Matt Albert, *violin*
Nick Photinos, *cello*

Interpretations (2009)
I. Reservoir
II. Shift
Elliot Case, *piano*

Blood is the Color Red, Love is the Color Red (2006)
Isaiah Oliver, *video*

Still Intersections (2008)
Matthew Duvall, *vibraphone*

Rush me to Shadows (2007)
Heather Stebbins, *cello*

Program Notes, Continued

Blood is the Color Red, Love is the Color Red (2006)

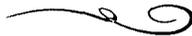
This piece is my sonic response to the video created by Isaiah Oliver. The visual aspect of the work inspired a very ambient and dream-like sound world. The film becomes more intense and chaotic as it progresses, and the sounds follow suit. Perhaps surprisingly, even though Isaiah and I have never met, we were able to create a cohesive work.

Still Intersections (2008)

The concept for *Still Intersections* derives from the sound environment of my home in Baltimore. My parents own a set of gorgeous wind chimes, and the relationship between their persistent sounding and the surrounding nature is especially meditative. This composition is in essence an intersection of that relationship and my personal musical response. While the melodic and harmonic material are only loosely based on that of the chimes, the timbre and ambience of both the acoustic and electronic elements of the piece reflect the reverent quality of this particular soundscape. *Still Intersections* is dedicated to my parents.

Rush me to Shadows (2007)

The cello is often considered one of the more elegant instruments; even so, it is capable of making harsh, often obtrusive, noise. *Rush me to Shadows* explores both facets of the instrument exclusively and in union by juxtaposing pre-recorded samples and composed, live acoustic cello. The piece begins with a chaotic rush of sound in both the electronic and acoustic components. They eventually settle into an ambient exploration of tone color, but this mellow sound world is soon transformed into another chaotic dive into the cello's more unnatural side.



I would like to thank Mike Burns and the Modlin Center staff for their generous help putting the technical aspect of this recital together, the Music Department faculty's support and expertise, Elliot Case for performing Interpretations, all of the members of eighth blackbird for their extraordinary talent and musical knowledge, my friends and family for their endless support, and mostly, Dr. Ben Broening for being my composition professor and mentor for the past four years. I would have been unable to achieve my goals as a composer and musician without his knowledge, support, and kindness as a teacher.