

Excessive Noise: Fine Arts Library Concert Series
in collaboration with the *You Are Here* event series

Saturday, March 22nd 2014, 6:00 PM

Fine Arts Library at University of Texas at Austin

Italian Sketchbook

Russell Podgorsek

I. *a Venezia, il capriccio cavato*

II. *a Milano, il vecchio tedesco*

III. *a Taranto, il fabbricante di specchi*

Lani Hamilton, Amy Harris, violin;
Renata van der Vyver, viola; Liz Lee, cello

We choose to go to the Moon

Robert Honstein

Megan Ihnen, soprano
Liz Lee, cello

The Big Onion

I. Chicagoexplosion

Jeffrey Hayman

II. Mirrored Depths

Lane Harder

III. Waterways (1-3)

Russell Podgorsek

IV. Multicolored Lines

Chris Prosser

V. Waterways (4-6)

(Podgorsek)

VI. Chicago, 1835

Michael Mikulka

VII. Waterways (7-9)

(Podgorsek)

Frank Jenkins, Anna Park, cello

Special thanks those who have helped make this concert,
and the series, possible:

Laura Schwartz, David Hunter, Francesca Giannetti, Beth
Kerr, Boris Brodsky, and the rest of the Fine Arts Library
Staff, Calla Smith-Dowling, Katherine Strickland,
Jason Sick, Aaron Choate, Mason Jones, Travis Willmann,
Meghan Sitar,
and the University of Texas Libraries

(cont.)

String Quartet

Maurice Ravel

I. *Allegro moderato. Très doux*II. *Assez vif. Très rythmé*

Leigh Wallenhaupt, Lindsay Klecka, violin;

Daniel Gee viola; Jonathan Carbin, cello

Paisaje Texano con Fuego

Carlos Rios

Thales Smith, Carlos Rios; guitar

Prayer by the Seashore

Kohei Kondo

Katie Clark, bassoon

Sonata pian' e forte

Giovanni Gabrieli

Aaron Ney, Erin Farrar, trumpet;

Katie Phelps, Jamie Sanborn, Michael Mikulka, horn;

Samantha Owens, Amanda Lester, trombone;

Ross Jenkins, bass trombone

Multicolored Lines - Chris Prosser

The inspiration for my cello duet came from a map of the Chicago subway system, which is called the "Chicago L," (L is short for "elevated"). I found this map interesting because of the various colored train routes, or lines, that traverse the cityscape. This idea of multicolored lines, but more specifically "coloring a line" became the central focus of the piece. You will hear a melodic line introduced by the first cello, which is developed in three successive variations. Each variation is colored in a different way by using various bowing and performance techniques. At the end of the piece, you will hear the train slowing down and coming to a stop.

Maps: RTA System Map, Chicago Metropolitan Area.

Paisaje Texano con Fuego - Carlos Rios

In this piece I try to depict a simple, dry, and somewhat beautiful landscape, similar to the one going from Austin to Dallas. A small spark ignites a fire, and the landscapes is changed. However, it soon recovers its original form.

Maps: Vegetation types of Texas and Austin, Texas; sheet no.52 and no.37.

Waterways - Russell Podgorsek

Waterways was inspired by the Profile and Index Map of the Illinois Waterway. The Profile shows water levels along the route and corresponds to the descending melodic line in the Introduction. The Index Map charts the entire course of the waterway but it is broken up into nine sections, hence both the structure (nine variations - which can be played contiguously or broken up in the program: I-III, I-VI, and VII-IX) and the syntax of the piece (the musical "flow" being "broken up" by rests and half cadences). Given the nature of water and since the waterway is one body but represented in nine segments, each variation as well as each set of three are variations of one another.

One of Frank's requests was that this piece have some pedagogical value to it for use with private students. As such, the first part is intended for the teacher while the second, though just as musically sophisticated, should be less technically challenging and is intended for the student. Furthermore, each group of three variations becomes progressively more complex and reliant on deeper knowledge of one's instrument and music in general. I had numerous teaching points in mind but one overarching concept that governed the composition of the piece - inversion/reversal and exchange - was inspired by the historical fact that the Chicago River portion of the waterway was made to reverse its flow around the turn of last century by a system of locks in order to connect it to the rest of the waterway and thus improve trade.

Maps: Charts of the Illinois waterway.

Italian Sketchbook - Russell Podgorsek

Italian Sketchbook is made up of movements whose extramusical content is in some way Italian and is thus cast in an 18th century Italian style concerto form. The first two movements began life as string quartet sketches but came to full fruition in other media, and have been restored to their original form. *Il capriccio cavato* is a "capriccio" in the sense that the Venetian artist Canaletto used the term, by incorporating known buildings into fantasy landscapes (in this case, musical elements from pieces such as Schoenberg's and Adams' Chamber Symphonies, Daugherty's Bells for Stokowski, etc. into the musical fabric of the movement). It is *cavato*, or "carved" as in *soggetto cavato*, from the names of two cherished musical colleagues. *Il vecchio tedesco* is a theme and variations based on a folksong-like melody by a fictional composer, Vilem Stezka (a German speaker living in Italy), who I invented as a vehicle for scholarly commentary in my doctoral dissertation. *Il fabbricante di specchi*, a tarantella, began life as a sketch for saxophone quartet, which I then hoped to write as a part of a double-quartet for strings and saxophones, but completed as the final movement of this work. Not only does the reflective metaphor suit this movement's transformation to strings, but it also provides for motivic and melodic inversions ("vertically" and "horizontally") as well as an extramusical foundation for the diametrically opposing key centers (C-F#, D-Ab). This movement is partially inspired by Primo Levi's short story, "The Mirror Maker", set in Italy, which I imagined was specifically Taranto, the city after which the tarantella is named.

Maps: Italy (North Part), Italy 1:250,000; Venezia sheet, Town plan of Taranto, and Town plan of Milan.

We choose to go to the Moon – Robert Honstein

On September 12, 1962 President Kennedy gave a speech declaring America's goal of sending a manned mission to the moon by the end of the decade. On May 2, 2011 President Obama announced that US Special Forces had killed Osama Bin Laden. Soon after that announcement, tweeter, astrophysicist, and director of the Hayden Planetarium, Neil De Grasse Tyson tweeted:

Two American goals that took a decade, and more than \$100 billion to achieve: 1) Walk on the Moon 2) Find Bin Laden. It is a chilling comparison. Reflecting on Mr. Tyson's commentary I was drawn to Kennedy's words and decided to set a small portion of his speech:

We choose to go to the moon. We choose to go to the moon in this decade and do the other things, not because they are easy, but because they are hard, because that goal will serve to organize and measure the best of our energies and skills, because that challenge is one that we are willing to accept, one we are unwilling to postpone, and one which we intend to win.

Maps: Photomap of the moon and Lunar designations and positions.

The Big Onion

Chicagoxplosion – Jeffrey Hayman

The map was the red satellite map of the Greater Chicago Area. This translated into a piece in the following way: I saw the city starting blue and dense in the downtown area, and gradually spread outward through the red and then the sparse green/gray exterior of the urban area. Thus, the piece begins loud, dissonant, scrunched in the middle, and as the piece goes on it generally spreads out in range and becomes less dense, dissonant, and becomes sparse and quiet, much like the green, checkered exterior of the Chicago area.

Chicago, 1835 – Michael Mikulka

The piece is divided into 3 distinct sections:

Section 1 - The most salient characteristic of the map for me: the rivers running through the city. The shape is traced by the contour of the cellists' lines.

Section 2 - The details: the small squares and rectangles defining the plotted land. Starting from the top left and working downward and to the right, the shape of the plots is represented by the duration of the cellists' notes.

Section 3 - The mood: aged, earnest, and melancholy, the character is depicted through a waltz-like melody inspired by Chopin and Schumann.

Maps: Chicago by Jas. S. Wright.