

JUNE 26th



the firm 2006
six Adelaide concerts
concert two

The Firm dedicates this concert to author, social commentator Robert Mann for his sustained public contribution to holding the Enlightened humanist line in the face of present and ever encroaching barbarism.

Pilgrim Church provides wheelchair access via the rear (northern) doors.

Toilets can be accessed through the door on the left of the performance area.

Natsuko Yoshimoto
and James Cuddeford violins
Leigh Harrold piano

Programme

Winter Song

James Cuddeford

Sonatina

Raymond Chapman Smith

Shadows

Quentin Grant

piano 5.6.06 (under stars)

David Kotlowy

Fantasie Op. 47

Arnold Schönberg

Interval

Concealed Waves

James Cuddeford

Violin Sonata in Bb, K378

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Winter Song

James Cuddeford

“Winter Song” was composed in December 2005, in Japan. The month was unusually cold and wintry, with heavy snow. Somehow, I felt that this had a subliminal effect on the music that I was writing, as a sequence of harmonies are “frozen” and keep recurring throughout. At times the piano writing is like a cymbalom (Hungarian dulcimer), whilst the violin is predominantly lyrical and songlike.

The 5 minute piece was originally written as a concert opener for the Elder Hall Lunchtime Series in Adelaide.

Sonatina for violin and piano

Raymond Chapman Smith

1. Allegro
2. Andante sostenuto
3. Thema.
 - Vivace
 - Var. I Grazioso
 - Var. II Molto vivace
 - Var. III Adagio
 - Var. IV Presto

Shadows

Quentin Grant

Written with these three very fine players in mind the atmosphere of this single movement work is dark, melodramatic and romantic with the two violins given license to use their full expressive power over the troubled, spidery lines of the piano. There are moments that might suggest a cabaret, a gypsy band or perhaps a galloping moonlit ride on a love-smitten mule. . .

*Over the white pond
The wild birds have traveled on
In the evening an icy wind blows from our stars.*

*Over our graves
The unbroken brow of the night inclines.
Under oak trees we sway in a silver boat.*

*Always the town's white walls resound.
Under arches of thorns,
O my love, without direction,
We climb towards midnight.*

Untergang - George Trakl

I thank my God for graciously granting me the opportunity of learning that death is the key which unlocks the door to our true happiness.

Mozart

piano 5.6.06 (under stars)

David Kotlowy

The way out, this evening it's the turn of the way out, isn't it like a duo, or a trio, yes there are moments when it's like that, then they pass and it's not like that any more, never was like that, is like nothing, no resemblance with anything, of no interest. What variety and at the same time what monotony, how varied it is and at the same time how, what's the word, how monotonous. What agitation and at the same time what calm, what vicissitudes within what changelessness.

And I have no doubts, I'd get there somehow, to the way out, sooner or later, if I could say, There's a way out there, there's a way out somewhere, the rest would come, the other words, sooner or later, and the power to get there, and the way to get there, and pass out, and see the beauties of the skies, and see the stars again.

Samuel Beckett

(In celebration of his centenary.)

Fantasie Op. 47 'for violin with piano accompaniment'

Arnold Schönberg (1874-1951)

Schoenberg's last instrumental work, the *Phantasy*, Op.47 was completed in 1949 and forms, in its extraordinary intensity and eloquence, a kind of 'post-Holocaust' tryptych with the two masterworks that preceded it: the *String Trio*, Op.45 and *A Survivor from Warsaw*, Op. 46.

The phrasing of the *Phantasy's* title is significant: the violin is the dominant instrument throughout, and Schoenberg actually composed the whole violin line before writing a note for the piano. There could be few clearer illustrations of the primacy of *melody* in his music, and the *Phantasy* is one of his most uninhibited demonstrations of melodic prowess.

In this music of extreme expressive diversity, Schoenberg's concern to compress several movements into one attains its ultimate refinement.

There are five distinct sections, beginning with an impassioned, declamatory *Grave* which is clearly recapitulated in the last. The three central episodes each have their distinctive characters: a tender *Lento* melody, a dance-like *Grazioso* and a tough, vitally rhythmic *Scherzando*.

From Bach I learned:

1. *Contrapuntal thinking; i.e. the art of inventing musical figures that can be used to accompany themselves.*
2. *The art of producing everything from one thing and of relating figures by transformation.*
3. *Disregard for the 'strong' beat of the measure.*

From Mozart:

1. *Inequality of phrase-length.*
2. *Co-ordination of heterogeneous characters to form a thematic unity.*
3. *Deviation from even-number construction in the theme and its component parts.*
4. *The art of forming subsidiary ideas.*
5. *The art of introduction and transition.*

Arnold Schönberg 1931

Adversaries have called me a constructor, an engineer, an architect, even a mathematician - not to flatter me - because of my method of composing with twelve tones. In spite of knowing my Transfigured Night and Gurrelieder, though some people like those works because of the emotionality, they called my music dry and denied me spontaneity. They pretended that I offered the products of a brain, not of a heart.

I have often wondered whether people who possess a brain would prefer to hide this fact.

I have been supported in my own attitude by the example of Beethoven who, having received a letter from his brother Johann signed 'land owner', signed his reply 'brain owner'. One might question why Beethoven just stressed the point of owning a brain. He had so many other merits to be proud of, for instance, being able to compose music which some people considered outstanding, being an accomplished pianist - and, as such, even recognized by the nobility - and being able to satisfy his publishers by giving them something of value for their money. Why did he call himself just 'brain owner', when the possession of a brain is considered a danger to the naiveté of an artist by many pseudo-historians?

A.S. 1946

Concealed Waves - for 2 violins

James Cuddeford

Natsuko and I witnessed the effect of the great waves of the Boxing Day Asian Tsunami of 2004 when we were in Chennai, India, and ever since I have wanted to write a memorial piece. This single movement duo is dedicated to the many who suffered.

The violins constantly undulate and ripple in tremolando, bariolage and arpeggiando. The sounds are "sempre non statico", a phrase that appears often in the moving late works of Luigi Nono (my title references Nono's beautiful work for piano and tape "...serene waves suffered...").

"Concealed Waves" also refers to the distressing position I found myself in at the time of the work's composition (March-April 2006), for when one is surrounded by dishonesty and negative political games, musical creation itself becomes a strong positive political act.

The work was commissioned by Anthony Steel for the 2006 Coriole Music Festival.

Violin Sonata in Bb, K378 (Salzburg 1779-80)

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

1. Allegro moderato
2. Andantino sostenuto e cantabile
3. Rondeau. Allegro

People make a mistake who think that my art has come easily to me. Nobody has devoted so much time and thought to composition as I. There is not a famous master whose music I have not studied over and over.

Mozart

The composers and performers invite you to join us after the concert for complimentary drinks and a selection of Tortes by Gabriele.



Next Firm concert

Leigh Harrold *solo piano*,
playing a program of Mozart

Rondo in A minor, K511
Sonata in F major, K533
Sonata in D major, K284
Adagio in B minor, K540

Further information: www.firmmusic.com.au

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