Department of Music
College of Fine Arts

presents a

Master's Recital

Justin Raines, composer

PROGRAM

The Passing of Autumn

Conducted by Andrew Smouse

Two String Quartets

I. Fugal Fragment
II. Premonitions

The Mad Hatter Suite

I. Down the Rabbit Hole
II. Alice and the Tea Party
III. Off With His Head!

Narrated by Locq Fortune

INTERMISSION

Haiku Garden

I. Frosted Pansies
II. Stargazers
III. The Mosquitoes

Conducted by Andrew Smouse

Christmas Cantata

I. Oh Come, Emmanuel
II. Hodie Christus natus est
III. In dulci jubilo

Conducted by Philip Lenberg

This recital is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Master of Music in Theory/Composition.

Justin Raines is a student of Virko Balay.

Sunday, January 30, 2011  5:30 p.m.  Dr. Arturo Rando-Grillot Recital Hall
Lee and Thomas Beam Music Center
University of Nevada, Las Vegas
Program Notes

The Passing of Autumn for Pierrot Ensemble is a concert overture composed in March of 2010. The piece was created for a reading session for the Da Capo Chamber Players, a visiting ensemble from New York. It has many contemporary elements including meter changes and the use of quartal harmony. Outside of the reading session, this will be the world premiere.

As a student composer at UNLV, we get the opportunity to compose for visiting ensembles. Two String Quartets, however, was composed for a local ensemble who performed a concert with music from several students. The first movement (Fugal Fragment) is just that. It is the beginning of a fugue in four parts, but it does not follow through completely, rather building in an arc format dynamically. The piece is short, but may be considered for expansion in the near future. Movement two (Premonitions) was based on a theme I have been developing for over a year. The aggressive diminished leaps in the cello really set the mood in this otherwise ominous movement. I found it really worked well with a string quartet.

The Madera Winds from Las Cruces, New Mexico commissioned The Mad Hatter Suite for the 2010 North American Saxophone Alliance (NASA) Conference in Augusta, Georgia. The piece draws themes from both the Lewis Carol story and the Disney adaptation. Woven into the musical texture are small, but significant musical motives including the words “tea” which are drawn from the “ti” solfege syllable with the note names “e” and “a”, as well as the word “head” using the “b-natural” as the letter “h” and of course, the note names that follow. Another recognizable theme is God Save the Queen, which is meant to symbolize the notorious Queen of Hearts and her fury.

Haiku Garden started off as no more than a birthday gift. My dear friend and poet Ann Palormo used to post nightly haikus on Facebook. The evening of her birthday, I sent her a setting of her haiku “Stargazers,” and the next thing I know, I have set two more and they were premiered in New Mexico by the New Mexico State University Singers in November, 2010. The poems I chose were:

Frosted pansies wait
For the sun’s warming rays to
Lift their head and smile

Get out, take a walk
The mosquitoes will be there
To welcome you home

Mars, the moon, Venus
Light the sky as darkness falls
Stargazers, look up

The Christmas Cantata was a commission from the El Paso Conservatory of Music and the El Paso Brass Quintet from El Paso, Texas. For their concert, they chose the biblical texts, and I set them to music. Oh Come, Emmanuel is based on the original texts, but set to new music. I do, however, quote the original version near the end. Hodie Christus is in Latin and begins as a lullaby, growing complex as the movement progresses. In dulci jubilo is a strophic piece in the German language. I chose strophic because the melody is easy to catch and hum. It is that kind of work that will have people singing and whistling as they leave your show.