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UNLV Symphony Orchestra

Taras Krysa

University of Nevada, Las Vegas

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University of Nevada Las Vegas
College of Fine Arts
Department of Music
presents

UNLV
Symphony
Orchestra

TARAS KRYSA
MUSIC DIRECTOR/CONDUCTOR

Opening Concert 2007-2008

Sunday Afternoon
October 7, 2007  2:00PM

Artemus Ham Hall
Located on Campus of UNLV
4505 Maryland Pkwy

UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA LAS VEGAS
El Salón México marks Aaron Copland's (1900-1990) entrance into his populist phase, when he wanted to find a broader audience for contemporary music by using simpler harmonic melodies, often based on folk tunes, in a more accessible but still sophisticated manner. The work's genesis was a visit to Mexico in 1932, when composer Carlos Chávez brought Copland to a popular dance club called El Salón México. Copland described the scene, and its inspiration to him, in his autobiography:

- Perhaps my piece might never have been written if it hadn’t been for the existence of the Salón México. I remember reading about it for the first time in a tourist guide book: “Harlem-type nightclub for the peepul [sic], grand Cuban orchestra. Three halls: one for people dressed in your way, one for people dressed in overalls but shod, and one for the barefoot.” When I got there, I also found a sign on the wall which said: “Please don’t throw lighted cigarette butts on the floor so the ladies don’t burn their feet.”... In some inexplicable way, while milling about in those crowded halls, one really felt a live contact with the Mexican people — the electric sense one sometimes gets in far-off places, of suddenly knowing the essence of a people — their humanity, their separate shyness, their dignity and unique charm.

Copland determined he would write a “musical potpourri” that would convey his impression of the Mexican people. He realized that as an outsider he might miss the mark: “I felt nervous about what the Mexicans might think of a ‘gringo’ meddling with their native melodies.” But he discovered he needn’t worry when, “at the first of the final rehearsals that I attended... as I entered the hall the orchestral players, who were in the thick of a Beethoven symphony, suddenly stopped what they were doing and began to applaud vigorously.” The work was premiered by Chávez conducting the Mexico Symphony Orchestra on August 27, 1937, and was a critical and popular success.

In creating his potpourri, Copland borrowed at least nine Mexican folk tunes from two collections he received during his trip, El Folklore y la Musica Mexicana edited by Ruben Camposs and Cancionero Mexicano by Frances Toor. Most of the tunes use meters of 6/8 or 3/4 time, sometimes in alternation. Copland applied standard folk music practices throughout the work, such as harmonizations in parallel thirds and sixths, slides in pitch, clarinet cadenzas, string glissandos, and some call-and-response constructions.

The work consists of an introduction and four major segments, alternating slow-fast-slow-fast. A trumpet solo following the introduction is the longest quoted melody from Compos’s collection, a tune called El Mosco. A slow “Mexican hat dance” segues into a lyrical, broad melody that ends with a repeated trumpet call, announcing the second, faster segment. This builds to a crashing close, followed by the so-called “siesta” section, introduced by a solo clarin-
violin called "siesta" section, introduced by a solo clarinet and violin. Lyrical, "sleepy" melodies alternate, followed by an insistent, rocking melody that gradually increases in tempo. The finale builds in rhythmic intensity and melodic complexity, when, as Copland writes, "I present the folk tunes simultaneously in their original keys and rhythms. The result is a kind of polytonality that achieves the frenetic whirl I had in mind before the end, when all is resolved with a plain unadorned triad."

The Symphony No. 4 of Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827) is probably the least known of his symphonic works. For today's listener, who knows all of Beethoven's symphonies, it takes some historical imagination to appreciate how his contemporaries successively received these new works and how the composer continually challenged their expectations. From our perspective, the legendary brilliance in particular of the Third, Fifth, and Ninth symphonies inevitably tends to eclipse the symphonies around them and obscure how novel other works were when they were first performed.

One critic from the time offered the following opinion about the Fourth: "That the composer follows an individual path in his works can be seen again in this work; just how far this path is the correct one, and not a deviation, may be decided by others. To me the great master seems here, as in several of his recent works, now and then excessively bizarre, and thus, even for knowledgeable friends of art, easily incomprehensible and forbidding."

Biographical and historical accounts often tend to skip over the Fourth and jump ahead to the famous Fifth. Indeed, Beethoven's Fourth is the least known and performed of all his symphonies.

The relative neglect of the work began in Beethoven's own time. In 1814, when he was at the height of his popular fame and success, a critic for the leading music journal in Europe commented that there were available extended discussions of his works, adding "the master's [Fourth] Symphony in B-flat major has certainly already been briefly and strikingly described several times, but has never been exhaustively reviewed. Does it deserve less than any of the others?" It seems that then, as now, the Fourth was overshadowed. As a perceptive critic remarked in 1811: "On the whole, the work is cheerful, understandable, and engaging, and is closer to the composer's justly beloved First and Second symphonies than to the Fifth and Sixth. In the overall inspiration we may place it closer to the Second." Beethoven wrote the Fourth during the late summer and fall of 1806, while staying in the palace of Count Franz von Oppersdorff in upper Silesia, far away from the bustle of Vienna. The Count employed his own orchestra, which performed the Second Symphony for Beethoven, who soon agreed to write a new symphony for the Count, to whom it was eventually dedicated.

The Fourth was premiered at a private concert in the Lobkowitz Palace in Vienna, in March 1807, on a program that also included the first performance of the Fourth Piano Concerto (with the composer at the keyboard) and the Coriolan Overture. There was little published commentary at the time. One of the first reviews, in January 1808, generally praised the Symphony: "The first Allegro is very beautiful, fiery, and rich in harmony, and the minuet and trio also have a distinct, original character. In the Adagio one might sometimes wish that the melody were not so much divided up among the various instruments." By the end of Beethoven's life, once contemporaries were accustomed to how far the composer had expanded the boundaries of music, they viewed the Fourth as classical fare. One critic opined: "There are no words to describe the deep, powerful spirit of this work from his earlier and most beautiful period."

Although Beethoven had not used a slow introduction in the Third Symphony, for the Fourth he returned to one, as he had in his first two symphonies and as were often found in the later symphonies of Haydn, his former teacher. The kind of feature some critics found "bizarre" was the jabbing dissonances the build up in the introduction before a rousing Allegro vivace, rich with melodies.

The Adagio is an expressive and relaxed rondo in E-flat major. The third movement (Allegro vivace), combines elements of Scherzo and Minuet and has the trio section played twice, which creates a five-part structure instead of the usual three-part form. The Symphony concludes with a dazzling perpetual motion Allegro, ma non troppo that nods again to Haydn. Award-winning composer and pianist John Musto is regarded as one of the most versatile musicians before the public today. His richly allusive and eclectic style wedded to an exacting compositional technique has won him critical and audience acclaim throughout the world.

John Musto was born in Brooklyn in 1954 and received his first musical training with his father, a jazz guitarist. After pursuing his musical education as a pianist at the Manhattan School of Music with Seymour Lipkin, he continued his studies with Paul Jacobs.

Mr. Musto was a finalist for the 1997 Pulitzer Prize for his orchestral song cycle Dove Sta Amore. He has also garnered two Emmys and two CINE Awards for his scores written for television. In 2000 he was awarded a Rockefeller Fellowship at Bellagio, Italy. Mr. Musto has been featured on the Great Performers series at Lincoln Center and the Composer Portrait series at Columbia's Miller Theater.
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The cycle Dove Sta Amore has a symmetrical form: the outer songs are dance-like, and frame the piece with two different kinds of questioning, one ambivalent, and one re-assuring. The second and fourth songs are lullabies, and the central one, the blackly comic The Hangman at Home, has the densest and most complex texture.

Maybe
Maybe he believes me, maybe not.
Maybe I can marry him, maybe not.
Maybe the wind on the prairie,
The wind on the sea, maybe,
Somebody somewhere, maybe, maybe, can tell.
I will lay my head on his shoulder
And when he asks me I will say yes,
Maybe.

Sea Chest
There was a woman loved a man
as the man loved the sea.
Her thoughts of him were the same
as his thoughts of the sea.
They made an old sea chest for their belongings together.

The Hangman at Home
What does the hangman think about
When he goes home at night from work?
When he sits down with his wife and
Children for a cup of coffee and a
Plate of ham and eggs, do they ask
Him if it was a good day's work
And everything went well or do they
Stay off some topics and talk about
The weather, baseball, politics
And the comic strips in the papers
And the movies? Do they look at his
Hands when he reaches for the coffee
Or the ham and eggs? If the little
Ones say, Daddy, play horse, here's
A rope - does he answer like a joke:
I seen enough rope for today?
Or does his face light up like a
Bonfire of joy and does he say:
It's a good and dandy world we live
In. And if a white face moon looks
In through a window where a baby girl
Sleeps and the moon-gleams mix with
Baby ears and baby hair - the hangman -
How does he act then? It must be easy
For him. Anything is easy for a hangman,
I guess.

How many little children sleep
To wake, like you, only to weep:
How many others play who will
Like you, and all men, weep and kill.

And many parents watch and say,
Where--they weep, where--they play
It never shall befall them so:'
But in each one the terror grows
By all he loves, by all he knows,
"Soon they must weep; soon they shall kill.
No one wills it, but all will."

But in each one the terror moves
By all he knows, by all he loves,
"Soon they will weep; soon they will kill.
No one wills it, but all will."

*Dove Sta Amore...*

Dove sta amore
Where lies love
Dove sta amore
Here lies love
The ring dove love
in lyrical delight
Dove sta amore
Hear love's hillsong
Love's true willsong
Love's low plain-song
Too sweet pain-song
In passages of night
Dove sta amore
Here lies love
Dove sta amore
The ring dove love
Dove sta amore
Here lies love

Stephanie Thorpe, soprano, is a Doctor of Musical Arts candidate at the University of Nevada – Las Vegas where she studies voice with Dr. Tod Fitzpatrick. As a recent winner of the UNLV Concerto Competition, Stephanie is honored to perform John Musto's Dove Sta Amore at the opening concert of the UNLV Symphony Orchestra 2007-08 Season. A winner of the 2006 Nevada District National Association of Teachers of Singing Artist Award (NATSAA), she was also a 2004 Regional Finalist in the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions. She received a Master of Arts degree from the University of Iowa and a Bachelor of Arts degree from Briar Cliff University. She has performed in master classes with many renowned teachers and performers including: Dawn Upshaw, George Shirley, Cynthia Munzer, Dr. Mei Zhong, Dr. Clifton Ware, and others. Some of Stephanie's stage credits include: Die Konigin der Nacht, Die Zauberflöte, Susanna, Le nozze di Figaro; Zerlina, Don Giovanni; Adina, Lélisir d'amore; Mariane, Tartuffe; and Gianetta, The Gondoliers. Stephanie is a member of the College Music Society, Phi Kappa Phi, and the National Association of Teachers of Singing.

Taras Krysa was born in Kiev, Ukraine to a musical family and began his formal studies as a violinist at the Moscow Conservatory. After moving to the United States in 1989, Mr. Krysa continued his studies at Indiana University and Northwestern University earning masters degrees in both violin performance and orchestral conducting. His conducting teachers have included Victor Yampolsky, Jorma Panula and David Zinman. As a violinist, Mr. Krysa has held positions with the New World Symphony and the St. Louis Symphony Orchestras. In recent seasons Mr. Krysa's conducting appearances have included the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, National Ukrainian Symphony Orchestra, Orchestra van het Oosten, New World Symphony, St. Petersburg Symphony, Moscow Soloists, Slovak Sinfonietta, Spoleto Festival Chamber Orchestra, Kiev Chamber Orchestra and the Lublin Philharmonic Orchestra. He has made three critically acclaimed recordings for the Brilliant Classics label. In addition, Mr. Krysa has served as Principal Conductor of the Ukrainian State Symphony Orchestra and currently serving as Music Director of the Henderson Symphony Orchestra. Taras Krysa was appointed as the Director of Orchestras at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas in August of 2006.
UNLV Symphony Orchestra Personnel

Flute
Amy Davis
Asuka Kawashima
Clare Fransoi
Fanah Zoldghadr

Oboe
Alex Hayashi
Lee Jong Yong

Clarinet
Heidi Boothe
Aki Oshima
Kanade Oi

Bassoon
David Adams
Eric Foote
Jonathan Steveson
Leigh Anne Duncan

Horn
Richard Brunson
Bryce Nakaoka
Fred Stone
Christopher Case
Diane Elton

Trumpet
Megumi Kurokawa
Phillip Garber
Cara Sommers
Travis Higa

Trombone
James Nelson
Hitomi Shoji
Jeff Hines

Percussion
Jeremy Merouck
Paul Schmidt
Stephen Ferradino
Haley Etchison
Melaney Scarberry

Violin I
Sandro LaFudi
Alexis Quiroz
Megan Wingert
Barbara Ellis
Christina Riegert
Zachary McBride
Kellon Davis
Amanda Gentile
Mina Park

Violin II
TK
Angela LaBella
Angie Lee
Andrew Ferral
Alexander Damenski
Alyson Maddelon
Marla Huizar

Viola
Meriatta Oviatt
John Pollock
Izzy Trinkle
Gerard Polanco
Danielle Thomas
Vasheral Carter
Amany Wilson
Michael Karagiozis
Brittney Kimball
Stephen Osbourne

Cello
Aleks Tengesdal
Annie Sparacino
Robert Chavez
Leigh Wardle
Alyssa Larsen
Jessica Lael
Joe Griego
Thomas Choi
Courtney Waldron
Courtney Thomas
Nicole Johnson
Kathryn Runyon-Walker
Alyssa Ledesma

Bass
Willie Harrington
Hayden Bryant
Korey Mueller

Assistant Conductors
Phillip Lemberg
Richard Brunson