presents a

Doctoral Recital

Justin Bland, trumpet
Erin Kennelly, soprano
AJ Merlino, percussion
Donald Malpass, piccolo/alto flute
Michelle Lee, piano
Phil Parsons, trumpet
Fred Stone, horn
Keith Larsen, trombone
Saxon Lewis, tuba

PROGRAM

Roger C. Vogel
(b. 1947–)

Carlos Velez
(b. 1980–)

Arnold Schoenberg
(1874–1951)

INTERMISSION

Eric Ewazen
(b. 1954–)

Anthony Plog
(b. 1947–)

Animal Ditties VII
The Duck
The Praying Mantis
The Cow
The Rhinoceros
The Camel
The Octopus
The Squab
The Firefly
The Wasp
The Cuckoo

...to cast a shadow again
Stopped by the stream
Luminescent moonlight startles me
Two bees are fighting or courting
That didn't take too long
Everyone says it snowed last night
Hands underwater on my body
Cordite surrounded you
Lie down and cry

This recital is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Doctor of Musical Arts in Applied Music.

Justin Bland is a student of Steven Trinkle.

Friday, November 9, 2012 7:30 p.m.
Dr. Arturo Rando-Grillot Recital Hall
Lee and Thomas Beam Music Center
University of Nevada, Las Vegas
Program Notes

The Frog, He Fly...Almost
This setting of The Frog, He Fly...Almost was written for trumpet and soprano alone. The piece is angular and is meant to be humorous; the motives presented in the trumpet and voice evoke the movements of a frog. Much agility is needed by both performers and very quick mute changes help to give the work a wider color palate.

Mass Miniatures
Initially conceived as a series of short character pieces for high-pitched instruments, each movement of Mass Miniatures explores a variety of musical colors within the context of chants taken from the mass ordinary. In addition, all four movements are unique sound worlds, evoking concepts such as light, darkness, time, and resonance. Working with a primarily treble palette proved to be a particular challenge, therefore, auxiliary instruments (such as the marimba and alto flute) were used to balance the soprano-dominant textures.

The Introit serves as a processional to the piece, opening with a rapid fanfare in the piccolo trumpet that expands to each instrument. Filled with energy and exuberance (along with a little whimsy and wit), this movement was designed to contrast the other movements, which are decidedly more melodic and contain text. It also provides the instrumentalists with an opportunity to showcase their technical prowess. Dark and distant, the Kyrie resembles a lament with its dolorous modal writing and low marimba scoring. Around the melancholy repeating harmonic foundation provided by the marimba, the soprano coloratura weaves a somber dialogue in the Aeolian mode – a stark contrast to the sprightly and vivacious Introit. Opening with bright, resonant bell-tone percussion instruments, the sonic atmosphere of the Agnus Dei is that of light and temporal suspension. The “starlight” provided by the percussion supports the sinuous melodic line played by the alto flute, which expands into a contrapuntal chorale for all four players. Concluding Mass Miniatures, the Alleluia combines traits from the Kyrie and Agnus Dei, colored with additional chromaticism, musical effects, and dynamic variety.

Mass Miniatures was commissioned by my friend Justin Bland, and the references to early music, as well as the use of soprano and sopranino instruments were inspired by him.

-Carlos Velez

Nachtwandler
Schoenberg’s Nachtwandler was not successful at its initial performance. The unusual scoring Schoenberg’s Nachtwandler is inspired by the text of the piece which describes a group of people following a trumpeter and a drummer. The text also gives Schoenberg many opportunities to use word painting, which he takes full advantage of throughout the work. While the melody sung by the soprano is relatively simple, the composer is able to make the accompanying ensemble music complex. Perhaps this is why the piece was not successful at its first (and thus far only) performance.

...to cast a shadow again
.....to cast a shadow again (1991) was commissioned by the St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble and premiered by Chris Gekker (trumpet), William Sharp, and Colette Valentine in New York in 1992. The poetry, written by Katherine Gekker, forms a cycle in which the excitement, power, and mystery of love ultimately leads to the tragedy and empty loss of love. The trumpet serves as a type of Greek chorus, commenting upon and highlighting the deeply felt and emotional words.

-Eric Ewazen

Animal Ditties VII
Although advertised as a work for brass quintet and narrator, each movement of Animal Ditties VII ends up being performed as brass quartet with narrator. This is because each member of the quintet is required to narrate two out of the ten movements while the other four members play. The change of narrator adds variety in scoring of the quartet and makes the piece more fun for both the performers and audience. The piece is not meant to be taken seriously. It is light and quirky, and each short, humorous movement is based on the poetry of Ogden Nash.