

Johnny Q. Student
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Peninsula Symphony
Date of Event: 5/01//14

Instructors comments in italicized brackets: *[this is a very good concert report written by a non-musician. It is his second report, whereby he shows the sophistication he has gained from his experience in the class; The writer of this Report had much to say about most movements; your comments can be slightly more brief]*

Program:

Academic Festival Overture, Op. 80 by Johannes Brahms

Cello Concerto in B minor by Antonin Dvorak Nocturnes by Claude Debussy

Daphnis et Chloe, Suite No. 2 by Maurice Ravel

Academic Festival Overture, Op. 80

Objective Description

This piece opened with much melodic imitation; however, the imitation was not produced by simply repeating the melody but rather by an entirely different section or timbre repeating the melody with their own unique sound. Thematic transformation was also inscribed into the music; the opening theme was brought back and manipulated several times throughout the song. Some unusual aspects of this song can be heard in accordance with its time period. For example, the meter didn't stay the same; it was duple in the beginning and triple in the end. Secondly, the dynamics of this piece were all over the map, and there were climatic rises in dynamics that would lead to a brief resolution. This piece was also homophonic and played by the full orchestra.

[note the author's use of the word "song" (underlined by me) in this and following paragraphs— "songs" are sung by singers, without singers, we have a composition, a movement, a piece, a work, but not a song]

Subjective Response

The melody of this piece was enjoyable to listen to because it conveyed a sense of excitement throughout. More importantly, however, is the fact that the components changed enough to keep one interested for a longer length of time. For example, near the end of the song the meter changed, a subtle difference, yet it recaptures the curiosity of the audience. This stately dance makes one ask himself "What will happen next?" This was a great piece to open with.

[since this is a single-movement piece, the author has only one objective paragraph, followed by a subjective response]

Cello Concerto in B minor

Objective Description

Allegro: Just like the last piece, the fast-paced first movement of this concerto opened with an imitation of the melody among different sections of the orchestra. Multiple cadenzas were evident in this movement and the soloist, Min-Ji Kim, could easily be seen playing double and even triple-stops. No part of this song was played at any time without string accompaniment, and the strings were mostly all played vibrato. Although dynamically this song was diverse, it was held at a constant level during solo sections of the song. The texture of this movement often alternated between homophonic and polyphonic, and at the end a fermata was played given distinct resolution to the song. One interesting thing about this piece is the how the way the notes are played affects the melody; staccato couldn't describe the sound well, perhaps syllabic would be a better description.

Adagio ma non troppo: This movement contained the first full cello solo in which a gradual increase in orchestral accompaniment brought the piece back to full orchestra. The flute was a new timbre that took prominence in this piece for the first time which is the mostly likely reason that the dynamics were soft throughout this movement. Once again, the piece was supported by the string sections which played both pizzicato and vibrato. Very unusual in this piece, however, is the sudden stops in the string sections which would start up again later as if they had never stopped at all.

Finale - Allegro moderato: This movement opened with a fast-paced (vivace) melody and quadruple meter. Everything varied throughout this movement; the dynamics were all over the map, the tempos varied considerably, and the melody was constantly developing. Polyphony lasted throughout the piece and halted only during solo sections. This movement ended the entire concerto with a recapitulation of its opening theme which leads to a dramatic climax and ending.

[note that this is a multi-movement piece, so there are not subjective responses between each movement, but rather only at the end of the entire piece]

[also note that the author has provided titles for each movement from the program. You should also do this]

Subjective Response

This piece was very exciting. The tempo kept patrons on the edge of their seat wanting to get up and dance. The most attracting aspects of this piece are, however, the various and sundry changes and intricacies that took place throughout the song. This included irregular stops, ever-changing dynamics, multiple tone colors, and thick texture. Though mostly exciting this piece did have some sleepy parts in the second movement and middle section of the third movement. A very refreshing characteristic of the song was the very Czech-sounding melody in the third

movement, in which one feels transported to Eastern Europe. Enjoyable too, in this concerto, was the cello soloist's dress which was radiant and a pleasure to view.

Nocturnes

Objective Description

Nauges: This piece opened up slowly and moved between monophonic and polyphonic texture. Along with the slow opening were a very slow melodic progression and a meter that was unintelligible. The harp was a new timbre introduced in this piece, and the most prominent instrument was the bassoon.

Fetes: The second half of this song had quite different characteristics than those of the first. For example, the melody was presto, the dynamics were rapidly changing, and meters were more intelligible. There were sometimes sudden stops in the song and themes quickly shifted from one to the other without a bridge. The whole of this piece was generally polyphonic and well supported by the orchestra.

Subjective Response

The first half of this song entitled "Nauges" was very modem in its conception. This aspect does not lend itself well to be enjoyable however; the piece seemed to lack any organization whatsoever and left the listener wanting more. It's slow, droning, and little melodic progression left many sleepy and much to be desired. The second half of this ensemble, however, was bright, exciting, and fun - this was because of the fact that a melody was finally developed. Yet once again, patrons were let down with an anticlimactic ending that left many wanting more.

Daphnis et Chloe, Suite No. 2

Objective Description

This piece consisted of three movements which were played non-stop therefore this in itself was an aspect of the music. The beginning of the suite opened with flutes and harps playing rapid ascending scales in monophony and in a medium dynamic range. Eventually the dynamics would build up acting as a bridge to a new theme development, as did many loud crescendos create dissonance. Characteristic of twentieth century music timbres other than strings had prominence in this piece, such as the bassoon and all other woodwinds. Very unique to this piece was the practice of what I call rolling orchestra. In this rolling orchestra the melody while being played would quickly move from one instrument section to another and cycle again producing a wavelike effect.. Toward the end of the suite an obvious recapitulation of the opening theme brought a welcome repetitive quality to the song and the entire orchestra was used to produce a climax in the song and resolve any dissonances.

[the writer chose to begin the subjective response on the following page, rather than have the heading alone at the end of the page—you should also keep headings and text together]

Subjective Response

Although this song opened quite slow and boring, much like the Debussy work before it, it had a wave-like and floaty quality that was pleasing to the senses and very calming. The very way the orchestra was playing the (song was fun to actually watch as they practiced rolling the orchestra. However, the greatest excitement came toward the end of the suite when a presto tempo and all the timbres of the entire orchestra came together to the very triumphant climax at the end. This song started off soft and slow and worked itself up to a more dramatic ending, in this since the song was perfectly structured and very stable.

Overall assessment of program

All in all, I would have to say that I really enjoyed myself at this concert. The music repertoire contained music that represented more than just one era and this left little more to be desired. The group was highly polished and very professional in appearance and behavior - I would definitely recommend this symphony to a friend. Not only did this concert enlighten me to the songs of the romantic era, I learned to drop my ethnocentricities and find that sometimes more modern music can be enjoyable as well.

[note that there is a subjective Response for the piece, then an Overall Assessment for the entire program]