



COLLEGE OF MUSIC

University of North Texas
College of Music

Master's Recital | Wednesday, April 24, 2024 | 6:30 pm | Recital Hall

Chris Finch, euphonium
Shih-Yuan Chang, piano

Hear My Prayer (1844) Felix Mendelssohn (1809–1847)
arr. 2004 David Childs (b. 1981)

Stratos Concerto (2014) Johnathan Bates (b. 1995)
I. Charge of the Intergalactic Rocks
II. Sleeping Earth (from Outer Space)
III. Dance of the Spiral Galaxies

--Intermission--

Comng Home (2013) Nathan Daughtrey (b. 1975)
Zach Lewis, marimba • Lester Rushin, bells, suspended cymbals,
wind chimes • John Wayne Duke, vibraphone

Sparta (2003)Peter Meechan (b. 1980)
Lester Rushin, hi-hat • Zach Lewis, floor tom

Ephemeral (2014) Hannah White (b. 1992)
Lester Rushin, marimba

Hear My Prayer

The lyrical simplicity of its melodic line, combined with the plea of the title makes this one of the most intimate of Mendelssohn's works. Originally composed for soprano voice, chorus and organ, the music is always a dialogue between the individual and the Creator. The music is in two sections: the first I feel is passionate and represents the plea of the title. After the first section, the words from Mendelssohn's original, 'Lord hear me call! Lord hear me call!' can be heard rhythmically punctuated in the piano part before the final section of the music begins. This part of the work is serenely beautiful and known by many as the popular melody, 'O for the wings of a dove'. I consider the music here to represent a gentle prayer that ends blissfully and draws in the audience.

Stratos Concerto

I. Charge of the Intergalactic Rocks

Unpredictable in nature, this opening movement fizzles along through varying keys, styles, time signatures and many sudden changes of both volume and timbre. A large *senza misura* cadenza for the euphonium forms the central focal point of the movement, where many of the motifs used throughout the movement are introduced primarily or revisited in a new guise. This movement relies mostly on rhythmic and textural variety, rather than the melodic and harmonic nature of the latter movements.

II. Sleeping Earth (from Outer Space)

A calm and desolate setting forms the core of the second movement. The music aims to capture the view over the Earth from outer space, the silent beauty of the curvature of the planet and the sun beaming from behind.

III. Dance of the Spiral Galaxies

The rip-roaring finale showcases the soloist's flair and rhythm with a driving pulse from the first note to the last, climaxing in a grand reprise of the first movement. An opening theme played in the solo line, which is then repeated several times in the piano, forms the backbone of the movement as it is developed and changed from new ideas and textures.

Coming Home

Originally commissioned by euphonium player Christian Folk for euphonium and piano, *Coming Home* takes its title from the hymn 'Lord, I'm Coming Home' by William Kirkpatrick – a favorite of Christian's grandmother, Virginia Busbee, to whom the piece is dedicated. Melodic motives from the hymn can be found throughout the piece, with one full statement towards the end. The work divides into three major sections:

Fear & Anxiety

The unaccompanied euphonium at the beginning poignantly captures the feeling of being lost and alone. Even with the sparse interjections of the percussion ensemble, those anxious feelings are still difficult to overcome. As this section unfolds, there is a sense coming to a climax, but the music quickly died back down, smoothly transitioning into the next section.

Courage & Strength

Climbing fifths and quartal harmonies characterize this section, combined with a stronger statement of the thematic material from the opening of the piece. A grandiose climax is achieved before moving into the final section of the piece.

Peace, Acceptance, & Hope

Ascending figures in the vibraphone create an ethereal backdrop for the only full statement of the hymn. Christian's grandmother's name, Virginia, is uttered as a serial musical figure in the bells. This figure eventually becomes a music box-like accompaniment tinkering in the bells and vibraphone. Motives from the opening ensemble statements, combines with the falling-third 'Coming Home' motive, help bring the work to a peaceful conclusion.

Sparta

Sparta is a solo specially adapted from the euphonium concerto Three Stories – Three Worlds, featuring some of the second movement and the final movement. The section from movement II is entitled Discardation: Lament for Aerope. In Greek mythology, Aerope was the princess of the island known as Crete. Some accounts say she was sold off to foreign land while other accounts say she was killed by her father who threw her off a cliff. This section is a wonderful soaring melody that gives a sense of anguish. The final section taken from movement III entitled New Order: Flight to Sparta. Sparta was one of the most dominant Greek city-states that is remembered for their athletic and militaristic values. This section shows a bombastic flurry of notes featuring numerous meter changes. Following is a large cadenza where the soloist demonstrates range and rhythmic precision which leads us to energetic rips through the range of the instrument to finish.

Ephemeral

Ephemeral for euphonium and marimba was written by tenor horn soloist Hannah White, née Drage. The music is inspired by the Swiss based solo 'Duo Synthesis' which consists of euphoniumist Thomas Rüedi and percussionist Raphael Christen. The music begins with stillness, the arching melody intensifies before finally dying away with one simple note, giving the piece its title, Ephemeral – meaning 'short lived'.

*Nine hundred twenty-fifth program of the 2023–2024 season
Photography and videography are prohibited*