Lauren Simenson

Zeitgeist Coffee Concert

September 22, 2017

(music)

**Lauren Simenson**: What you just heard was a portion of the new music ensemble Zeitgeist who performed during the most recent Frances Cohler Coffee Concert that takes place in the Abbott Concert Hall in UWRF’s Klieinpell Fine Arts Building.

This composition titled OCT 21 2015, uses time and meter to create this dramatic composition. The timing and sound of this piece was inspired by the time travel in the Back to the Future movies. Zeigeist musician and UWRF professor Pat O’Keefe tells the audience about the upcoming music in the concert.

**Pat O’Keefe:** The next two pieces you are going to hear are both by a really wonderful American composer, named Lou Harrison. One of the sort of remarkable things about his music is he was one of the first, not the first, but one of the first, Americans to travel to Asia and spend a lot of time in Asia, studying different Asian music styles. The first piece we are going to do is a very short little duet called ‘Music for Remy”, you can think of this as a miniature.

(music)

**Lauren Simenson**: The next five short pieces, titled the “Varied Trio” were notable because the compositions often had notes of strong Asian influences, and used unconventional instruments, such as rice bowls and metal pans, to achieve a thoroughly non-traditional sound.

(music)

**Pat O’Keefe:** The composer of this last piece is Chinury Ung, he’s a Cambodian-American composer. Everybody in the ensemble has to vocalize while they’re playing, so singing or speaking at the same time. Even I have to do it, have to be singing or speaking while playing the clarinets at the same time. Where the music is all melody driven, so everybody is playing the melody but every instrument is ornamented and embellishing the music in a different way that is idiomatic to their instrument. I think about that when I think of Chinury’s pieces, they are very heterophonic. We are all sort of playing these melodic vines and embellishing it in our own way. It’s a very wonderful piece, there’s a lot to listen to. It’s very thick so let your ear just move around the ensemble because there are lots of details there. This is Chinury Ung’s…‘Nimmitta’.

(music)

That was Zeitgeist performing the final composition in their Coffee Concert, ‘Nimmitta”. After the concert I talked to two students in the audience to find out why they attended and their reaction to this new music genre. Here is what Marissa Altendorfer and Judson Hilton had to say.

**Marissa Altendorfer:** I’m a music major here at UW-River Falls and I have to have eight concerts for my applied voice lessons.

**Judson Hilton:** Um I thought it was quite amusing because I had never heard a type of music like that. But it also felt kind of weird because of the tone it set.

**Lauren Simenson**:I caught up with UWRF professor and Zeitgeist musician Pat O’Keefe to find out what he hopes the audience took away from their performance.

**Pat O’Keefe:** We hope that people realize that, you know, creating new music is a very important and vital thing that anyone can do it. And whoever is inspired to create music, we play music like this, but there’s lots of different way to create new music. We just wanted people to be inspired to enjoy newly created music and maybe inspire them to create their own.

**Lauren Simenson**: The Frances Cohler Coffee Concerts are at noon in the Abbott Concert Hall. The next one takes place October 6 and is free and open to the public. For the full concert schedule go to the music departments event page on the UWRF.edu website. For the Falcon News Service, I’m Lauren Simenson.