

Entertainment

The result was a primitive crazy quilt of musical gestures.

Encounters finale soars

Encounters Concert No. 4
Convocation Hall
Sunday, March 2, 8:00 p.m.

review by John Charles

The final work in the Encounters series' final concert somehow managed to express what the whole series has been about.

Janacek's *Capriccio* pitted different kinds of music against each other, yoking them together to form wholly fresh combinations. Pianist Alexandra Munn played simple, nostalgic folk-song phrases, and the three trombones answered with lugubrious circus music. Then trumpeter Alvin Lowrey launched into a bright carefree melody. The result was like nothing else you've ever heard — a formula the four Encounters concerts have tried to emulate.

Munn, playing the tricky piano part written for left hand alone, was customarily bright and clean, while Marc Stocker's flute, which acts as a peace-bearing mediator among the warring instruments, soared sweetly. Trombonists Kathryn Macintosh, Colin Haydu, and Christopher Taylor were fine, handling some basement-deep sections cleanly. With Lowrey and Dawn Hage on trumpets, and John MacPherson on tenor tuba, the result was a primitive crazy-quilt of musical gestures that added up to something rich and complex.

The concert opened with 11 short piano works by "the Russian Chopin," Alexander Scriabin, written between 1887 and 1907, which deftly charted the development of his epigrammatic style. If there are traces of Chopin, it's the Polish master after a visit to an opium den, for Scriabin's languorous,



Malcolm Forsyth (inset) composed one of the pieces performed at the Encounters concert at Convocation Hall.

impressionistic, virtuoso pieces are part of the turn-of-the-century crisis in music and the arts. Ernesto Lejano played these haunted, beautiful works with the right spacious-

ness, never inflicting too rigorous a sense of structure on Scriabin's flights of fancy. The *Enigme, Op. 52, No. 2* was especially delectable. The program's other two works both featured baritones singing Victorian poems — but there the resemblance ended. Malcolm Forsyth's *The Dong With the Luminous Nose* (1979) had its world premiere and proved a thoroughly enjoyable piece.

The Dong falls in love with a "lovely Jumby girl," but she disappears, and the creature spends the rest of his forlorn existence asking everyone piteously if they've seen her. Rather than casting his work into a simple ballad structure, Forsyth has written several kinds of music, which makes it a mini-opera: stormy melodrama, a simple folk-tune to evoke the good old days, a desperate passage for viola, which suggests the emptiness of the Dong's present life, and a dark lamenting finale. Baritone Harold Wiens was accompanied by Michael Bowie, viola, and Robert Stangeland, piano — and though all were quite good, there's more fun to be had with it, and a large scale to the performance seems required. Wiens sounded fine, the whole work lying well for his handsome

voice. But tests were not provided, which meant that some words — and some humour — were lost.

Next to all this invention, Samuel Barber's *Dover Beach* (1931) seemed like the kind of faded, tasteful exercise Encounters deliberately ignores.

Although I'm an admirer of Barber's melodic gift (he died in 1981), I'm an even greater admirer of Matthew Arnold's bleak poem of 1867, which Barber's tidy, well-crafted piece trivializes.

It's one of Barber's first works, written for baritone and string quartet (Barber, a passable baritone himself, once made an historic recording of it), and he succeeded at solving the tasks he set himself. The music is clever, moody, attractive, and poignant. But the final result is philosophical salon music, as Barber's musical formulas don't re-create the poem freshly — as Benjamin Britten's songs, for example, nearly always do.

The performance by Leonard Ratzlaff and the Debut String Quartet was exemplary, however, with an honest conviction on Ratzlaff's part that was persuasive, and full-toned playing by the Debut.

An informal information session about sexual harassment, hosted by student and staff member of the President's Advisory Committee on Sexual Harassment (PACSH), will be held on the dates and times noted below:

Humanities Centre, Rm. HCL-2
Tuesday, March 4 3:30 p.m.

Corbet Hall, Rm 110
Tuesday, March 4 12:30 p.m.

Civil/Electrical Engineering, Rm 255
Wednesday, March 5 4:00 p.m.

Physical Education, Rm PE W-1
Wednesday, March 5 12:00 noon

Central Academic Bldg., Rm 265
Thursday, March 6 3:00 p.m.

Students' Union Bldg, Rm 150
Thursday, March 6 12:00 noon

Mechanical Engineering, Rm 3-1
Friday, March 7 4:00 p.m.

General Services, Rm B7-11
Friday, March 7 12:00 noon

A short film will be presented, and members of PACSH will be happy to answer questions about sexual harassment or about PACSH. All students and staff are welcome to attend any of these sessions.



The Album Playlist is based on Airplay — a combination of programmer preference and listeners' requests. Tune in every Sunday at 12:00 for the Alternative Countdown — the favorite albums, EP's, singles and tapes.

Albums

1. Langham Wheel — Again (demo)
2. Zamboni Drivers — Skating Ghost/Drained Of Blood (Signpost (Canada))
3. The Communards — You Are My Word (London/Polygram)
4. Fastbacks — Seven Days (demo)
5. 39 Steps — 39 Steps (Line Records (Canada))
6. U-Men — Stop Spinning (Homestead/Dutch East India)
7. The Silence — The Silence (Herb Jackson/Pollution Control)
8. Tramaine — In The Morning Time (A & M)
9. For Against — Autocrat/It's a Lie (Republic/Pollution Control)
10. Venus Envy — self-titled (Herb Jackson/Pollution Control)

Singles, EP's and Tapes

1. Various Artists — Undergrowth/85 (cassette) — (Undergrowth (Canada))
2. Loudon Wainwright III — I'm Allright (Rounder/Stony Plain)
3. Dead Kennedys — Frankenchrist (Alternative Tentacles (US))
4. Battlefield Band — On The Rise (Temple/Celtic)
5. Violent Femmes — The Blind Leading the Naked (Slash/WEA)
6. Clarence Gatemouth Brown — Pressure Cooker (Alligator/WEA)
7. Pharoah Sanders — Shukuru (Theresa (US))
8. Rhythm Mission — Wild Mood Swings (Mo-Da-Mu/Canada)
9. Public Image Limited — Album (WEA)
10. The Jesus and Mary Chain — Psychocandy (WEA)