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Concierto de la Banda Sinfonica de la Universidad de Louisville

Miguel Etchegoncelay

Seguramente el excelente concierto dado por el Wind Ensemble de la Universidad de Louisville, bajo la batuta de Frederick Speck, quedara como uno de los mejores momentos de esta 13. edicion de la conferencia internacional WASBE.

El auditorio del INEC (Ireland National Events Centre) estaba colmado por un publico deseoso de escuchar lo que en el programa de mano se anticipaba como muy interesante. Nombres como Penderecki, Takemitsu o Husa, no pueden dejar a nadie indiferente. La banda de Louisville cumplio con creces ofreciendo un concierto excepcional, mostrando una gran destreza tecnica y una realizacion sonora muy equilibrada. Cabe destacar que este grupo esta acostumbrado a abordar este tipo de literatura, y que las grandes dificultades tecnicas del programa no parecieron afectarlo. Cada obra requirio una disposicion o un organico diferente. Cuando se realizan demasiados cambios escenicos en un mismo concierto, la atmosfera musical se ve interrumpida. No obstante este detalle tecnico, la gran variedad sonora propuesta por Louisville permitio capturar la atencion del publico en cada nueva intervencion.

El programa comenzo con « La'i » del compositor de origen tibetano Bright Sheng, para dar paso a una de las obras centrales de la noche, el estreno europeo de « Three Spanish Songs » del joven compositor Matthew Tommasini (1978). La obra es un ciclo de tres canciones basadas en poemas de Leopoldo Lugones, Ruben Dario y Jose Marti.

« Olas grises », « Nocturno » y « Sueño despierto », respectivamente, proveen la base para un tratamiento orquestal refinado, tan solo 11 instrumentos de viento, mas harpa, piano, contrabajo y percusion, creando una atmosfera de gran tension lirica. La solista invitada fue Edith Davis Tidwell. La obra de Tommasini esta muy lograda y constituye un gran aporte al repertorio.

La dos obras siguientes « Entrata » de Krzysztof Penderecki (1933) y « Day Signal » de Toru Takemitsu (1930 – 1996), escritas para grupo de metales, fueron tocadas sin interrupcion, creando un contraste interesante entre la verticalidad del primero contra la espacialidad del segundo. Remarcable la calidad sonora del grupo de metales de Louisville.

Frederick Speck (1955) no solo concibio y dirigio todo el programa, sino que mostro sus dotes de compositor con su obra « Night Moves », para pequeño ensemble, marimba y cello solistas. Greg Byrne y Paul York fueron los solistas invitados.

La primera parte del programa concluyo con la magnifica « Partita » de Robert Linn.

Luego de una pequeña pausa, el concierto continuo con « Blaze » de Steve Rouse (1953) para dar paso a otro momento esperado de la velada, el estreno europeo de « Cheetah » (2007) la reciente composicion de Karel Husa, encargo de la Universidad de Louisville.

La obra es una metфора musical del gran felino en vias de extinsion. Todos los elementos caracteristicos del lenguaje musical de Husa estan condensados en solo 7 minutos de gran intensidad.

Luego de la obra de Husa, el caracter del concierto giro hacia lo mas ligero y humoristico, con « The fourth of July » (1947) de Morton Gould, increiblemente virtuosa a pesar de su tematica ironica, y dos obras de Charles Ives « They are there ! » (1942) con la participacion del maestro invitado Dennis Johnson, y la transcripcion de « The Alcotts » de Richard Thurston.

El concierto bien hubiera podido terminar en este momento, aunque Speck ofrecio todavia una version luminosa de « Fascinating Ribbons » (2001) de Joan Tower (1938) para redondear una actuacion remarcable, de un nivel tecnico y musical excepcionales y de una gran exigencia intelectual para el auditorio. Un *tour de force* enorme.

Concert of the Symphonic Band of the University of Louisville

By Miguel Etchegoncelay, Argentina

The excellent concert of the University of Louisville Wind Ensemble, under the direction of Frederick Speck, will definitely be remembered as one of the best moments of this Thirteenth Edition of the WASBE International Conference.

The INEC (Ireland National Events Center) concert hall was packed with an audience with great expectations. Names such as Penderecki, Takemitsu, or Husa attracted everyone's interest that evening. The University of Louisville Wind Ensemble more than satisfied those expectations by offering an exceptional concert. This ensemble showed great technical skill and excellent instrumental balance. It is worth mentioning that this ensemble is accustomed to this kind of literature and that the great technical challenges of the pieces in the program were not an issue for this group of musicians. Each piece required a different stage set up, and sometimes too many set up changes in a concert can affect the musical flow. In spite of this logistical requirement, the great sonorous variety achieved by this ensemble allowed it to capture the audience's interest with each new piece.

The concert opened with *La'i*, a work by a composer of Tibetan origin, Bright Sheng. This piece was followed by one of the central pieces of the evening, the European premiere of *The Three Spanish Songs* by the young composer Matthew Tommasini (1978). This work is a cycle of three songs based on poems of Leopoldo Lugones, Ruben Dario and Jose Marti.

"*Olas Grises*," "*Nocturno*," and "*Sueño Desperto*" provide the foundation for a refined orchestral treatment that creates an atmosphere of great lyrical tension. The piece uses an ensemble of eleven wind instruments, harp, piano, string bass and percussion. The guest soloist was Edith Davis Tidwell. The work of Tommasini is captivating, and it constitutes a great contribution to the repertory.

The next two pieces, *Entrada*, by Krzysztof Penderecki (1933) and *Day Signal*, by Toru Takemitsu (1930-1996) utilized an ensemble of brass instruments. These pieces were played without interruption, creating an interesting contrast between the verticality of the first and the spatial quality of the second. The sound quality of the brass ensemble of University of Louisville was remarkable.

Frederick Speck (1955) not only conceived of and conducted the concert, but he also demonstrated his gifts as a composer with his piece *Night Moves* for small ensemble, marimba and cello. Gregory Byrne and Paul York were the guest soloists.

The first part of the program concluded with the magnificent *Partita* by Robert Linn.

The concert continued after a small intermission with *Blaze* by Steve Rouse (1953) and another awaited moment of the evening, the European premiere of *Cheetah* (2007). This recent composition by Karel Husa was commissioned by the University of Louisville. The piece is a musical metaphor of the great endangered feline. All the characteristic elements of Husa's musical language are condensed in seven minutes of great intensity.

After Husa's work, the concert shifted to a lighter and more humorous character with Morton Gould's *The Fourth of July* (1947), an incredibly virtuosic piece despite of its ironic subject. Two other works followed, Charles Ives's *They Are There!* (1942) with the participation of guest conductor Dennis Johnson, and Richard Thurston's transcription of *The Alcotts*.

The concert could have ended at that moment; yet, Speck offered a brilliant version of *Fascinating Ribbons* (2001) by Joan Tower (1938). This piece closed a remarkable performance of an exceptional technical and musical level, and was intellectually demanding for the audience. It was an enormous tour de force.

Translated by Juan Carlos Ortega