



CHRIS ROGERSON, *composer*



KANSAS CITY STAR:

"Michael Stern and the Kansas City Symphony introduced a new commission by young composer Chris Rogerson. What a privilege to hear the magic of the live performance of it, and the encore performed by Yo-Yo Ma of another Rogerson work."

THE NEW YORK TIMES:

"I heard the influence of Fauré, Copland, Ligeti and Sondheim, yet from its captivating opening the music seemed the manifestation of a confident new musical voice."

THE WASHINGTON POST:

"At the ripe old age of 23, composer Chris Rogerson revealed a confident, fully-grown composing talent."

GRAND RAPIDS PRESS:

"His music is evocative, spacious, expansive, and bold."

OBERON'S GROVE (New York):

"Rogerson's String Quartet was thoroughly engaging and engrossing. The Hymn movement is gorgeous...gorgeous, I tell you, with achingly beautiful harmonies. The work was a very pleasing discovery and left a lasting impression."

Young Concert Artists Composer-in-Residence, 2010-2012 • 2012 Charles Ives Scholarship

2011 MacDowell Colony Fellow

2011 New York Youth Symphony First Music Winner • 2011 Jacob Druckman Award (Aspen Music Festival)

New York Arts Ensemble 2010 Composition Competition Winner • 2009 Presser Music Award

2008 ASCAP Foundation Morton Gould Young Composer Award

2007 National Foundation for the Advancement of the Arts Award Winner

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CHRIS ROGERSON, composer

Composer **Chris Rogerson** has been hailed as a “confident, fully-grown composing talent” (*The Washington Post*) whose music has “virtuosic exuberance” and “haunting beauty” (*The New York Times*). He has received commissions and performances from orchestras including the San Francisco Symphony, Atlanta Symphony, Kansas City Symphony, Milwaukee Symphony, and Houston Symphony.

As the 2010-12 Young Concert Artists Composer-in-Residence, two of his works premiered in the YCA Series in New York at Merkin Concert Hall and at the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC. He served as Composer-in-Residence and Artistic Advisor at the Amarillo Symphony from 2014-2017, where the Symphony premiered his orchestral work “Dolos Sielut” as well as his clarinet concerto “Four Autumn Landscapes” with soloist Anthony McGill. Mr. Rogerson’s music has also been performed by the VERGE ensemble, the Prism Saxophone Quartet, Third Angle New Music Ensemble, the Norfolk Contemporary Ensemble, and the New York Youth Symphony at Carnegie Hall. He has held residencies at the MacDowell Colony, Yaddo, and Copland House, and was a Fellow at the Aspen Music Festival, where he won the Jacob Druckman Award.

Recipient of the 2012 Charles Ives Scholarship from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, Mr. Rogerson has also won BMI Student Composer Awards, the New York Art Ensemble Composition Competition, the Presser Music Award, the ASCAP’s Morton Gould Young Composer Award, and prizes from the National Foundation for the Advancement of the Arts and the National Association for Music Education. He is a co-founder and Artistic Director of Kettle Corn New Music, a concert series held at the DiMenna Center in New York City.

Born in Amherst, NY, Mr. Rogerson started playing the piano at the age of two and the cello at eight. He studied at the Curtis Institute of Music, where he currently serves on the Musical Studies Faculty, the Yale School of Music, and Princeton University with Jennifer Higdon, Aaron Jay Kernis, Martin Bresnick, and Steve Mackey. Mr. Rogerson has participated in composition master classes with John Corigliano, Osvaldo Golijov, Michael Tilson Thomas, William Bolcom, Krystof Penderecki, and Christopher Theofanidis.



NEWS *from Young Concert Artists, Inc.*

Chris Rogerson, *composer*

The★Star
THE KANSAS CITY STAR

PERFORMING ARTS

BY Martha Field
March 29, 2018

Symphonic joy

The jubilant sounds emanating from the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts last weekend were breathtaking. The brilliant cellist Yo-Yo Ma, conductor Michael Stern and the marvelous Kansas City Symphony treated all who could fit into the auditorium to an exhilarating performance.

Ma's love of music, musicians and transporting his passion brought audience members to their feet.

Stern and the orchestra introduced a new work by young composer Chris Rogerson about sleep and our wonderful world. It was so approachable that one wanted a CD to take home, although no CD could repeat the magic of the live performance of it or the encore of another Rogerson cello work by Ma. Then the orchestra took us on a surround-sound experience of Ottorino Respighi's "Pines of Rome," nightingale and all.

What a privilege for all in Kansas City to have this available to us — and to have it become a part of us.

<http://www.kansascity.com/opinion/letters-to-the-editor/article207363699.html>

The Omer Quartet @ Merkin Hall



Above: The Omer Quartet

New York, NY - Tuesday December 11th, 2018 - **Young Concert Artists** presenting **The Omer Quartet at Merkin Hall**. These young players had made an excellent impression in a 'calling card' performance, playing Piazzolla with accordionist Hanzhi Wang at her YCA debut concert at Zankel Hall in October. Their program tonight was expertly planned: book-ended by works of the masters of the string quartet genre (Haydn and Beethoven), with some delicious Debussy and a highly enjoyable piece by Chris Rogerson (who was a YCA Composer-in-Residence from 2010 to 2012), the Omer Quartet scored a genuine triumph.

Haydn's *Quartet No. 2/Op. 20 C-Major*, from 1772, was an ideal way to open the evening, its light and bustling start later bringing on big swirling motifs. The Omers weave lovely subtleties into the music, with tiny pauses giving a touch of suspense. A minor-key, tempestuous mid-section draws some fiery playing, which turns wistful. A soft glow infuses the return to major, with a gentle end.

The *Capriccio: Adagio* starts with the players in unison, finessed with etched-in trills. Throughout this, and the ensuing *Minuetto*, the Omers' integrated harmonies and perfectly-judged tempi gave us music-making at its finest. The Haydn closes with a sprightly fugue that leads to a final burst of energy.

Claude Debussy's *String Quartet in G minor, Op. 10*, is a coloristic treasure trove; it veers from darkish and subtle to fast and furious in the opening *Animé et très décidé*. The music is becalmed before rising to a dramatic end.

In the ensuing *Assez vif et bien rythmé*, gentle plucking supports a dance for the viola, played by Jinsun Hong. Mason Yu's violin and Alex Cox's cello dance in turn, with more gentle *pizzicati* moving on to a delicate finish.

The *Andantino, doucement espressif*, is the heart of the matter. Second violinist Erica Tursi passes a pensive theme over to Ms. Hong's viola. Then Mr. Yu commences a haunting violin solo over dense, perfumed harmonies. Mr. Cox's cello is heard in a yearning passage; Ms. Hong's viola has another melody, with the other voices commenting. Ms. Tursi's violin gets dreamy. As passion rises, Mr. Yu's violin soars onto silken heights. The music turns wonderfully sensuous.



A deep cello prelude opens the concluding *Très modéré - Très mouvementé*, which soon becomes enlivened. Swerving from lyrical to animated, with a rising rhythmic acceleration, to an exultant ending.

In the Debussy, we have been able to savour the artists of the Omer Quartet as individual voices. Taking the lead, Mason Yu displays astonishing intensity and power whilst at all times maintaining a gorgeous sheen on his tone.

Composer Chris Rogerson (left) charmingly spoke of how humbled he felt to be featured on a program alongside Haydn, Debussy, and Beethoven; Mr. Rogerson described his own *String Quartet No. 1* as "modest." **I found it to be thoroughly engaging and engrossing.**

I hear an awful lot of 'new' (or recent) music, and I have to admit that, while much of it shows astute craftsmanship and is sometimes pleasing in a quirky way, very little

of it leaves a lasting impression or makes me want to hear it again. Mr. Rogerson's string quartet is thus a very pleasing discovery.

The music clocks in at twelve minutes, and left me wishing there had been a couple more movements. Such as Mr. Rogerson has given us, each of the three has a title: **DUEL**, **HYMN**, and **DANCE**; the music does what the titles say.

Slashing motifs and a pulsing cello mark the start of **DUEL**. It's brisk and driven. There's a violin solo with just a hint of jazz; dynamics are very much in play as the swordsmen feint and parry. There's a relentless energy, whether loud or soft: an ever-forward impetus. It ends suddenly.

HYMN is gorgeous...gorgeous, I tell you. The harmonies are achingly beautiful as they bend and shift thru slow modulations. The second violin, cello, and first violin each sing forth over blendings of lustrous colours. The tempo increases somewhat; the violin heads heavenward. Superb playing made it all the more inspiring.

DANCE springs up on a 3-note motif; the energy calms to some poignant harmonies over deep cello. It's over all too soon. It seemed to me that the Rogerson *String Quartet #1* is ready-made to be a ballet. I'm sending news of it on to Claudia Schreier.

Igor Stravinsky described Beethoven's *Grosse Fuge*, Op. 133, as "...an absolutely contemporary piece of music that will be contemporary forever..." and thus it seemed this evening: fresh, daring, ahead of its time. Originally conceived as the finale for his Quartet #13, the composer was persuaded by his publisher that it the music was too off-putting and he traded it out for something more conventional, retaining the *Grosse Fuge* as a stand-alone piece.

The Omer Quartet did a fabulous job with it, relishing all the weirdness and playing like gods and goddesses. The audience was vigorously receptive, calling for two encores. Cellist Alex Cox announced the first - a "very short" Kurtág piece, slow and mysterious, that ended abruptly just as we were starting to savour it. And then a Haydn *Vivace*, full of comfort and joy.

I'll look forward to my next encounter with The Omer Quartet.

~ Oberon

December 12, 2018 https://oberon481.typepad.com/oberons_grove/

The New York Times

The Week in Classical Music

Dec. 14, 2018

Our list of our favorite albums of the year and the New York debut of a young string quartet were among the highlights.



Last year was a big one for the Omer Quartet. The group took second prize in the Trondheim Competition in Norway and [first prize in the auditions held by Young Concert Artists](#), which presented the Omer in its New York debut at [Merkin Concert Hall](#) this week. These four musicians, who came together at the Cleveland Institute of Music, certainly rose to the occasion. They opened with a poised, mature and ebullient account of Haydn's String Quartet in C (Op. 20, No. 2); gave a glowing, vividly dramatic performance of Debussy's String Quartet in G minor; and [brought out the punchy energy of Chris Rogerson's String Quartet No. 1, written in 2009, when its composer was just 20.](#) To end, the intrepid players (Mason Yu and Erica Tursi, violins; Jinsun Hong, viola; Alex Cox, cello) tore through the contrapuntal tangles of Beethoven's Grosse Fuge, a fearless rendering of this astonishing piece. You can see them on this 2017 video giving an arresting performance of Bartók's Third String Quartet, my favorite of that composer's six quartets. *ANTHONY TOMMASINI*



Chris Rogerson, *Composer*

The New York Times

Joining the Conversation

The Composers Concert, with David Hertzberg and Other Young Masters

-Anthony Tommasini | The New York Times | February 18, 2015

All composers are influenced by, and even steal from, admired predecessors. This is a proven and honorable creative practice. The challenge is to fold such influences into your own musical voice.

This issue arose on Tuesday at Merkin Concert Hall during an inspiring program of recent works at the annual Composers Concert presented by Young Concert Artists. The outstanding performers included veteran guest artists and winners of Young Concert Artists competitions.

The evening opened with the New York premiere of Benjamin C. S. Boyle's "Sonata-Cantilena" for flute and piano. Mr. Boyle, 35, writes that his piece "celebrates the influences" of Barber and Poulenc. In this four-movement work, you recognize the French Neo-Classical elegance of Poulenc's style and harmonically bittersweet hints of Barber. The sonata is skillfully written and sincere. Still, the music is permeated with Poulenc and after a while becomes predictable. It was played vividly, however, by the impressive flutist Mimi Stillman and the fine pianist Charles Abramovic.

The next piece was a premiere: David Hertzberg's "Orgie-Céleste" for clarinet, violin and piano. In this riveting work, Mr. Hertzberg, 24, demonstrates that a gifted young composer can be inspired by masters and still speak with a vibrantly personal style.

The music abounds in echoes of composers Mr. Hertzberg seems to have had in his ear, especially Messiaen, Schoenberg and Morton Feldman. Yet the sound and dogged exploration of the work's ideas come across as utterly original. It opens with an episode in which the piano plays restless runs with hints of bird calls. The violin is consumed with cosmic harmonics, while the clarinet fixates on haunting two-note figures. The music goes through bursts of wildness, yet never loses its mystical aura. The eminent pianist Ursula Oppens, joined by the violinist Paul Huang and the clarinetist Narek Arutyunian, who were both featured in the Young Concert Artists gala concerto concert last year, gave an exhilarating performance.

There were also three short works by the composer and violist Kenji Bunch. First, Mr. Bunch and the pianist Monica Ohuchi (who are married) played a quizzical duo, "I Dream in Evergreen." Then Ms. Ohuchi brought her commanding pianism to Mr. Bunch's eruptive Étude No. 4 for piano. Finally, Mr. Bunch played a solo viola piece, "Étouffé," with the instrument unconventionally tuned to evoke Cajun music — wails, sliding double stops, dance riffs and drones.

The program ended with the New York premiere of "Summer Night Music," for piano quartet, by another accomplished young composer, Chris Rogerson. In this episodic piece in four movements, I heard the influence of Fauré, Copland, Ligeti and Sondheim. Yet, from its captivating opening — with the piano playing rustling runs, the violin and viola trading searching phrases and the cello repeating a calming riff — the music seemed the manifestation of a confident new musical voice. The performance by the renowned artists of Opus One (the violinist Ida Kavafian, the violist Steven Tenenbom, the cellist Peter Wiley and the pianist Anne-Marie McDermott) was superb.



Chris Rogerson, *composer*

Jacksonville *REVIEW*

Chef Majkut Serves Up a Winning Feast as Rogue Valley Symphony Opens Its Season

Lee Greene | Jacksonville Review | October 4, 2014

Five years ago when Martin Majkut took over the reigns as Music Director of the Rogue Valley Symphony, he quickly transformed a moribund little local orchestra into a top notch regional symphony orchestra, offering new pieces of music as well as a fresh outlook and insight into the standard classical repertoire, drawing quality musicians into the orchestra and "A" list soloists to join in its performances, and demonstrating an uncanny knack for assembling compelling and exciting concert programs.

Majkut put together a remarkable program of 3 pieces for this first concert of the season. He began with a contemporary piece, *Oaken Sky*, by 26 year old composer, Chris Rogerson, who is the hot new commodity now in contemporary composers among major American orchestras. His works have been or will be played recently by the Amarillo Symphony, New World Symphony, Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, New Jersey Symphony, Spokane Symphony Orchestra, Kansas City Symphony, Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, and now the Rogue Valley Symphony. *Oaken Sky* was the perfect piece to open the program, and the new season. At 7 minutes, it was like a delectable appetizer at a fine epicurean restaurant, showing off what the kitchen can do, and whetting the appetite for all that would come after. Rogerson employs the full orchestra: woodwinds, brass, strings, harp, celesta, timpani and a warehouse of various percussion instruments all have significant parts to play, providing opportunities to show off each of the orchestra's different sections. The piece can best be described as Impressionist Music, setting an atmosphere and conveying mood, rather than presenting a detailed tone-picture. The composer describes the work saying "Imagine it's night and you are standing under a tree looking at the stars. Some of the light . . . is blurred by the branches . . . I try to create this "blurry" effect . . . in addition to moments of pure clarity." While providing a nice taste of what the orchestra can do, the piece is light and airy, just as a good appetizer ought to be.

For the second piece, Majkut managed to snare one of the hottest violin soloists on the scene today, Bella Hristova, and to persuade her to join the Symphony in performing one of the most impressive and difficult violin concertos, Prokofiev's Violin Concerto No. 1. Prokofiev composed the piece during an illicit love affair and poured all of his passion into this composition and especially the solo violin part. Hristova, a young musician with a growing international career, has won multiple competitions, prizes & grants, and has performed extensively as a soloist with orchestras, including with Pinkas Zuckerman at Lincoln Center, with Jaime Laredo at Carnegie Hall, with the Mississippi Symphony, City of London Sinfonia, Orquesta Sinfonica de Venezuela, Estonian National Symphony Orchestra, and Canada's National Arts Center Orchestra. Ms. Hristova was superb playing Prokofiev's Violin Concerto No. 1 Friday evening, executing fast moving passages and playing at the high range of her instrument flawlessly, while conveying all of the intense passion that Prokofiev had invested in this piece. The orchestra was excellent in playing their parts for this piece too, with violas, clarinet, other woodwinds, and violins all contributing significant and outstanding performances, all producing a moving and memorable recital. So Chef Majkut's second course of the evening was a tasty and satisfying dish.



NEWS

from Young Concert Artists, Inc.

Chris Rogerson, *composer*

THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

Spokane Symphony season opens with modern, classical works

Larry Lapidus | The Spokesman-Review | September 22, 2014

In the inaugural concert of the 2014-15 Spokane Symphony season on Saturday at the Martin Woldson Theater at the Fox, music director Eckart Preu wasted no time in demonstrating how he and the orchestra came to win a prestigious award for adventurous programming. Rather than choosing to open with a cheerful overture by Rossini, Preu offered a serious recent work, "Noble Pond," a 2009 composition by the gifted American composer Chris Rogerson.

In "Noble Pond," Rogerson crystallizes his emotional response to a news story about the accidental death of a young boy hit by a stray bullet while fishing with his father at a pond near Noble, Oklahoma. Although this did seem an eccentric choice to kick off a musical season, it actually proved ideal. The piece employs a large orchestra and requires great skill and control. It begins with the faintest wash of color and grows steadily, as one instrument after another, led by the passionate playing of principal cello John Marshall, raises its voice to lament the tragic unreliability of life.

At its conclusion, the audience remained silent for a few moments before bursting into enthusiastic applause, a testament to its profound impact. It illustrates the power of new music as well as old to transform and enrich our lives, a theme the orchestra has undertaken for the current season.

The evening took a more cheerful turn with the appearance of the piano team of Sivan Silver and Gil Garburg. An earlier scheduled appearance was canceled after Garburg sustained an injury from a fall. Apparently, no long-term harm was done, as he and Silver (they are husband and wife) were swept up by the audience in a veritable lovefest of enthusiasm and affection. They performed two works, the Concerto No. 2 in C major for Two Keyboards and Strings by J.S. Bach (1730), and Felix Mendelssohn's Concerto in E major for Two Pianos and Orchestra of 1823.

Some piano duos try to match their tone and phrasing so perfectly that no one can detect which of the pair is playing. Silver and Garburg are not such a duo. While their sensitivity to each other's playing is supernaturally acute, they are quite different in technique and artistic character. Silver's tone is intense and sharply focused. In contrast, Garburg's technique is elegantly poised and relaxed, caressing the keyboard to produce a tone that is warm and velvety. The result is a delightful interplay of color and character, enabling the audience to hear more in the music than would have been possible with a more homogenized performance.



NEWS *from Young Concert Artists, Inc.*

Chris Rogerson, *composer*

THE BUFFALO NEWS

Young string quartet opens season well

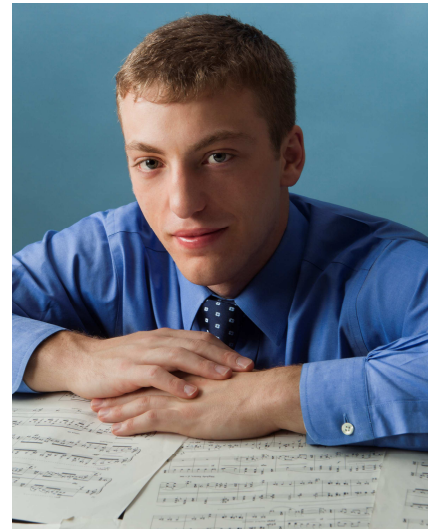
Garaud MacTaggart | The Buffalo News | October 9, 2013

The 90th season of the Buffalo Chamber Music Society opened Tuesday night with a young string quartet, a young composer and a couple of works by older composers that were receiving their first performance in the BCMS concert series.

Amy Schroeder, first violinist of the Attacca Quartet, has roots in Western New York, as does Chris Rogerson, whose String Quartet No. 2 was commissioned by the BCMS and received its world premiere by the Attacca Quartet. By meshing those facts and those folks into one concert, the evening became draped with all the emotional trappings of a homecoming, as Schroeder and Rogerson paid tribute to their mentors and the early musical experiences in the area that helped shape them into the artists they've become. It was a love fest, and the music heard was worthy of it all.

In many ways, Rogerson's work was the centerpiece of the night. After the composer came onto the stage and said a few words, the piece began the second half of the concert. There were a lot of ideas packed into the score. On one hand you could talk about its density, how tightly woven the first movement was and dwell on the piquant rhythms, acerbic textures, and oddly danceable momentum driven by those factors, but the bottom line goes directly to how consistently interesting it was. For fans of late 20th century music it was not a difficult piece to listen to; in fact, there was much that was beguiling. It would be interesting to hear it a second time.

Standing ovations followed the first half, the Rogerson quartet and the ending of Mendelssohn's piece – as much for the music as for the performance.



Chris Rogerson (Photo: Christian Steiner)



NEWS *from Young Concert Artists, Inc.*

Review of Merkin Hall Debut in the Young Concert Artists Series

Chris Rogerson, *composer*

The New York Times

Saying Hello With youthful Exuberance

Benjamin Beilman and Yekwon Sunwoo at Merkin Concert Hall

Steve Smith

The New York Times

March 13, 2012

For two young musicians out to make a lasting first impression, it would be hard to pick a more appropriate selection of pieces than those chosen by the violinist Benjamin Beilman and the pianist Yekwon Sunwoo on Monday evening at Merkin Concert Hall.

The event, presented by Young Concert Artists, included three works by young men striving for effect beyond their years, as well as two pieces by composers in their twilight, recalling youthful pleasures.

The concert nominally belonged to Mr. Beilman, who at 21 has accumulated an impressive tally of awards: in 2010 alone, a bronze medal at the International Violin Competition of Indianapolis; first prize at the Montreal International Musical Competition; and three individual performance prizes as a winner of the Young Concert Artists International Auditions.

Mr. Beilman's handsome technique, burnished sound and quiet confidence in Mozart's Sonata in E flat (K. 302) showed why he has come so far so fast. But Mr. Sunwoo, who initially connected with Mr. Beilman at the Curtis Institute in Philadelphia, was no mere supporting player. His playing was crisp and effervescent, with crystalline trills; in a work that demanded parity, he was an ideal foil.

Richard Strauss's comparably youthful Sonata in E flat (Op. 18) suggests in its heated first movement the furrowed brow (and moist palms) of a novice striving to make a big splash: a quality aptly conveyed by Mr. Beilman's sweeping bravura and Mr. Sunwoo's grand responses. A chaste, muted middle movement gives way to a boisterous finale, in which the Strauss of the symphonic poems bounds forth in heraldic dotted rhythms.

Chris Rogerson, at 23 a composer in residence with Young Concert Artists, based his "Once" on the prologue to "The Long Goodbye," Meghan O'Rourke's memoir recounting her grief over the death of her mother. Airy, soft-spoken ruminations are limned with ominous clouds, wrong-note pangs and themes abruptly cut short; in the finale Mr. Rogerson deftly evokes flickering fireflies and children scampering to catch them. Heard in its New York premiere, the work was sympathetically played and warmly received.

Unaccompanied, and playing from memory with vigor and unfussy precision, Mr. Beilman brought out rusticity and nostalgia in Prokofiev's imaginative late Sonata for Solo Violin. Rejoined by Mr. Sunwoo, he closed the concert with another autumnal work, Kreisler's sumptuous "Viennese Rhapsodic Fantasia," providing an affectionate account of Kreisler's "Liebeslied" as an encore after a robust, prolonged ovation.



NEWS *from Young Concert Artists, Inc.*

Review of *That Blue Repair* with the New York Youth Symphony

Chris Rogerson, *composer*

The New York Times

Premiere for Cello and Orchestra, Inspired by a Poem

Zachary Woolfe
The New York Times
March 12, 2012



Hiroyuki Ho for the New York Times
New York Youth Symphony, with Jay Campbell on cello, and Ryan McAdams conducting, on Sunday afternoon at Carnegie Hall

Through its invaluable First Music program, the New York Youth Symphony has commissioned works from more than 100 emerging composers since 1984. The orchestra's concert on Sunday afternoon at Carnegie Hall brought the premiere of "That Blue Repair," a kind of mini-concerto by Chris Rogerson.

Born in 1988, Mr. Rogerson is just a couple of years older than many of the players, who executed the gleaming piece with confidence, and Jay Campbell, an adventurous cellist and an undergraduate at the Juilliard School, who performed the solo part with subtle power and rich tone.

The 10-minute work begins with glistening high strings eventually countered by a gloomy undercurrent. The brooding and glimmering alternate, subsiding into a low rumble as the soloist starts a lyrical line upward. The orchestra surges sympathetically underneath him.

There are inspired, well-devised touches throughout. As Mr. Campbell went higher and higher up the fingerboard, his line was suddenly taken over by the winds at the same pitch. Mr. Rogerson has a gift for transitions, for moving us from moment to moment, section to section, while maintaining the coherence of the whole.

The soloist re-enters, more impassioned this time, with a burst of faster, spikier passagework, before receding again, accompanied by beautiful bell-like riffs in the harp. The weakest part of the work follows, a murky section of standard post-Romantic dissonant waves under the quivering solo cello. It feels a little like film music.

But the ending is lovely: gossamer, calligraphic runs up and down the cello, barely audible over uneasy chords that resolve into the same high, quiet shimmer with which the work began. You got the moving sense of a slow attempt at restoration, as in lines from a poem by Joan Hutton Landis that inspired Mr. Rogerson: "these worked lines, their tearing out,/their weaving up, that blue repair —."

In Bartok's Concerto for Orchestra, which followed "That Blue Repair," there is a similar sense of a work building, breaking and re-erecting itself. The orchestra played with strength: in the second movement, the shivery, muted melodies vanished and reappeared out of nothing, and the third movement's dark parody of the first notes of Pachelbel's Canon had both weight and shadowy nostalgia.

While the overture from Mozart's "Marriage of Figaro," which opened the concert, felt jittery and brash, as if the players' nerves were still settling, the orchestra members were coolly controlled and responsive in the Bartok, with an especially shining and assured performance from the brasses.



NEWS *from Young Concert Artists, Inc.*

Review of Kennedy Center Premiere in the Young Concert Artists Series

Chris Rogerson, *composer*

The Washington Post

Young Musicians Shine at Terrace Theater Recital

Joe Banno
The Washington Post
February 17, 2012

It seems like every third review you read these days is remarking on yet another prodigiously talented violinist who's appeared on the classical music scene. Thursday's Young Concert Artists Series recital at the Terrace Theatre introduced a local audience to the latest in this spawn of violin phenoms, the 21-year-old Benjamin Beilman, whose sweet, warm, slightly throaty tone gave considerable pleasure in sonatas by Mozart and Richard Strauss. The illusion of tossed-off ease Beilman created in Prokofiev's daunting Op 115 Sonata for Violin Solo was mightily impressive — why isn't this enthralling work programmed more often? — and he found just the right balance of virtuosity, elegance and schmaltz in a pair of Fritz Kreisler bonbons.

But Beilman wasn't the only young artist to shine Thursday. The superlative, 22-year-old pianist, Yekwon Sunwoo, made just as strong an impression as his string-playing partner. Indeed, such was the wisdom in his animated, light-filled playing of the keyboard parts in the Mozart and Strauss sonatas that it was hard to draw one's attention away from the piano.

And, at the ripe old age of 23, composer Chris Rogerson premiered his piece, "once", inspired by Meghan O'Rourke's memoir, "The Long Goodbye." Evincing the open-chorded, prairie serenity of Copland, and spiced with angular intrusions of rapid-fire, upper-harmonic figures in the violin writing, the work — in a reading of tremendous heart and technical control from Beilman and Sunwoo — revealed a confident, fully-grown composing talent.



NEWS *from Young Concert Artists, Inc.*

Chris Rogerson, *composer*

The New York Times

Young Hands Tackling Chopin's Intimidating Études

Vivien Schweitzer

The New York Times

March 9, 2011



Jennifer S. Altman for The New York Times
Charlie Albright, in his New York debut, performing on Tuesday evening at Merkin Concert Hall.

At 22 the American pianist Charlie Albright already boasts a daunting résumé. An economics and pre-med undergraduate at Harvard and a master's student at the New England Conservatory of Music, he recently won two prestigious prizes: the Young Concert Artists auditions and the Gilmore Young Artist award.

Judging by his excellent New York debut on Tuesday evening at Merkin Concert Hall, presented by the Young Concert Artists series, he's handling his workload just fine. Mr. Albright sailed through Chopin's Opus 25 Études with a jaw-dropping technique, his hands blurring over the keyboard in No. 10, "Octaves," and making easy work of the thirds in No. 6. Virtuosity meshed with a distinctive musicality throughout, evident in his playful approach to No. 3, "Cartwheel" and the soulful introspection he brought to No. 7, "Cello." He teetered on the edge of danger in the arpeggio whirlwind of No. 12, "Ocean," an exciting conclusion to the program.

Mr. Albright began the concert on an introspective note with Janacek's "Sonata 1.X.1905," written as a tribute to a young factory worker killed that year during demonstrations in what is now the Czech Republic. Mr. Albright's intelligently wrought interpretation deftly conveyed both the melancholy and passionate elements of this enigmatic piece.

Young Concert Artists is celebrating its 50th anniversary this season; as part of the festivities the organization has paired alumni with fledgling performers in their debut recitals.

The veteran pianist Anne-Marie McDermott was the guest artist here, joining Mr. Albright for a sparkling rendition of Mozart's Sonata in D for two pianos (K. 448).

He also offered the premiere of "Til It Was Dark" by Chris Rogerson, Young Concert Artists' composer in residence. Mr. Rogerson introduced the work, which he said was inspired by his memories of summers with friends. The virtuosic exuberance and bell-like sonorities of "Break," the first movement, evoked school bells and scampering children. The wistful, chromatic harmonies of "Important Things," the gentle third movement, suggested more solemn youthful moments.

As an encore Mr. Albright offered a warm-blooded performance of Liszt's arrangement of Schumann's "Widmung."



Chris Rogerson, *composer*

The New York Times

New Portraits of Grieg and Wanderlust

Vivien Schweitzer

The New York Times

June 6, 2010



Hiroyuki Ito for The New York Times

Chamber music concerts focusing on contemporary works often attract small audiences. But the organizers of the Tribeca New Music Festival needed to find a larger space this year after events sold out during the last two seasons at the Flea Theater downtown.

The four-event festival began on Saturday evening at Merkin Concert Hall with an engaging concert by the stellar Jack Quartet, whose young members are vigorous and committed purveyors of new fare. Preston Stahly, the artistic director of the New York Art Ensemble, which presents the festival, hosted the event, during which each composer spoke briefly about his or her work.

The success of the festival, which was founded in 2001, no doubt stems both from high-quality performances and from its eclectic, anti-elitist “avant pop” programming ethos. The New York Art Ensemble’s Web site (nyae.org) says: “Old academic habits die hard, and many students today are still getting caught in the old ‘my way or the highway’ mind-set. Much of academia still lives in denial.”

There was nothing academic about the visceral program on Saturday, which opened with Jeff Myers’s striking “Dopamine,” a harmonically rich work written during what Mr. Myers called 10 days of “ravenous composing.” Insistent cello motifs underpinned melodies in the upper strings, punctuated by energetic outbursts and elegiac passages.

There was a sense of Shostakovichian paranoia in the first movement of Mick Rossi’s String Quartet No. 3, which came next. The cello had an athletic workout during the first movement, full of frantic, scurrying figures. The repetitive second movement long outstayed its welcome; perhaps reflecting Mr. Rossi’s background as a frequent collaborator with Philip Glass, descending string motifs recurred incessantly over viola pizzicatos.

Chris Rogerson won the New York Art Ensemble’s 2010 competition for composers 21 and younger for his well-made String Quartet No. 1, here in its New York premiere. There were echoes of Bartok in the slashing figures of “Duel,” the vigorous first movement. Passages of haunting beauty in “Hymn,” the solemn second movement, gave way to “Dance,” the lively finale.

Lisa Bielawa based “The Trojan Women,” an expressive quartet, on a score she wrote for a production of Euripides’ tragedy of the same name. JoAnne Akalaitis, the director, asked Ms. Bielawa to compose music that reflected different types of grief.

So “Hecuba,” the first movement, unfolds with stately sorrow. “Cassandra,” the second, dissolves into anguished intensity, and “Andromache,” the finale, delves into introspective pathos.

The concert ended with David Crowell’s cinematographic and Minimalist “Open Road,” an inspired work that evoked Mr. Crowell’s frequent road trips out West.

The Jack Quartet performed with dedication and understanding throughout the evening.



Chris Rogerson, *composer*

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BPO Offers a Fitting Dedication to Victims of Clarence Plane Crash

Mary Kunz Goldman

The Buffalo News

February 22, 2009

Saturday, the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra dedicated Beethoven's "Emperor" Concerto to the victims of the recent airline crash and their families. This is the sort of piece that is good for something like that. As Music Director JoAnn Falletta put it in a brief speech, the music is intensely spiritual.

For this occasion, Andre Watts was the perfect pianist.

Watts plays as if he has the weight of the world on his shoulders. He walks out on stage with hardly a glance at the audience — that's his style, and he pulls it off. He wears the old-fashioned tails, which I love. He sits down heavily on the piano bench, brow furrowed, head down.

His performance Saturday was deeply satisfying. It was the culmination of a program that tended toward gravity, although there were moments of light. Opening the program was "A Prayer for Spring," by the young Amherst composer Chris Rogerson, currently a student at the Curtis Institute. Bravo to him for creating a piece people could enjoy on first hearing. This five-minute piece charmed.

It had a recurring motif that began the piece and then was tossed around the orchestra. Rogerson has a flair for using the instruments' various colors — the woodwinds shone, and a discreet piano part, too, added to the spectrum. It could make you think of film music, John Williams in particular. At the end of it, I heard someone saying he wished it were longer. That is high and rare praise in the world of contemporary music.

Excerpts from Prokofiev's ballet "Romeo and Juliet" followed. This was a wonderfully uncompromising performance, full of dark drama. The first doom-filled chords were jarring and terrible, and trombones, saxophone, horns and tuba went in to contribute ferocious tones. It was thrilling.

Lovely in contrast were the light-hearted sections, where the interplay among flutes and other woodwinds was impeccably timed. But with the Death of Tybalt, we were back in the darkness again. People were so carried away they applauded before the piece was over. I wonder if Watts, overhearing all this backstage, built on the brooding mood. His Beethoven was full of shadows. Even in the first movement, playing those twinkly passages in the high treble, he gave every note weight and import. He emphasized the rhythms and accents. You could see him — and sometimes hear him — stamping his feet.

He ignored the scattered applause at the end of the first movement. Squarely in the zone, he launched the caressing passages that begin the second. This is music Beethoven designed to draw tears out of you, and it was especially affecting in the hands of this introverted artist. The orchestra was with him. The later return of the theme, backed by the flutes, was cathartic and beautiful.

Watts handled the transition to the finale beautifully, giving nothing away. Blasting into the third movement, he didn't exactly crank it. Instead, he created the illusion of volume, leaning into the accents. He is a great Beethoven player — not too much pedal or too much noise. He knocked it back at key moments and paced the crescendos skillfully, keeping the audience right there with him. Jesse Kregal handled the timpani-anchored coda — a trick Beethoven borrowed from Mozart — with tremendous finesse.

The last notes of this mighty team effort drew the listeners to their feet.