

The Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth

presents

Sounds Modern

Performing

Neighbor Notes:

modern chamber music by Mexican composers

Saturday, October 12, 2013, 2:00 pm

Modern Art Museum auditorium

Program

Danza de las bailarinas de Degas (1991-2)

Mario Lavista

Transmutante (2013-world premiere)

José-Luis Hurtado

Omaggio: a lullaby for sleepy monsters (2011)

Arturo Fuentes

Danza del Parque de las Acacias (2004, revised 2008)

Francisco Cortés-Álvarez

Tlapitzalli 2 (1987)

Hilda Paredes

Twittering Machines (2003)

Carlos Sanchez-Gutierrez

Performers

Christopher Deane, percussion

Andrew May, violin

Elizabeth McNutt, flute

Shannon Wettstein, piano

Sounds Modern Staff

Elizabeth McNutt, director

Andrew May, assistant director

Joshua Harris, publicity assistant

The next Sounds Modern event will be on March 1, in conjunction with the exhibition of works by Dallas-born artist David Bates. More information: <http://soundsmodern.org>

Program Notes

Choosing repertoire for this concert has been both educational and enjoyable. Almost none of this music is available from the usual sources. Thankfully, I had help. I especially would like to thank Ana R. Alonso-Minutti, not only for introducing me to Mario Lavista several years ago, but also for introducing me to Jose-Luis Hurtado (and telling him about my particular interest in open form scores). Thanks also to Jose-Luis, both for writing us a new work to premiere on this concert, and for introducing me to his composer friends Arturo Fuentes and Victor Ibarro. Sadly, Victor's work didn't fit our instrumentation, but I am glad to know of his work for future projects. Unlike much of the *Mexico Inside Out* exhibition, the works on this program avoid political statements and commentary. The works are very focused on craft and virtuosity (both compositional and performative), in contrast to some of the more everyday materials and subjects incorporated into works in the exhibit. Perhaps the current composers of Mexico are more interested art for art's sake. However, upon seeing the exhibit, I was immediately struck by the similarities between the Hurtado piece and the Damian Ortega commission for the exhibition, "Volcano." Hurtado's comments below unknowingly allude to the similarities between these newly commissioned works. – Elizabeth McNutt

Mario Lavista, *Danza de las bailarinas de Degas* for flute and piano

As suggested by the title (*Dance of Degas' Dancers*) for flute and piano is a tribute to the work of Edgar Degas, who dedicated much of his pictorial activity to capturing scenes of the movement of ballerinas. Thus, this duet emerged as an imaginary recreation of the music that Degas' ballerinas could be dancing to. The piece has a three-part structure, where the exterior sections explore imitative counterpoint in three voices. In this virtuosic *tour de force*, Lavista explores thematic gestures in irregular time, moving at great speed. There is a play on the perception of the meter created by patterns of accents. In the first section of the piece, the rhythmic force of the three melodic lines is persistent, while the sonority of two major thirds (which would be an augmented chord in traditional harmony) develops into the central sound of the piece. In the middle section, there is a contrast of textures: homophonic, chorale-like music where the flute uses multiphonics in perfect fifths inserted between the piano chords. This more introspective character does not go on for long; the rhythmic pulse of the beginning returns, and the counterpoint of three lines takes the piece to its conclusion. The work is dedicated to North American flutist Jill Felber, who commissioned the work. – Ana R. Alonso Minutti

José-Luis Hurtado, *Transmutante* for ensemble

I do not usually use any non-musical element or aspect to structure the piece, although this has been changing in the last couple of years. But I could say that "Transmutante" is a piece that is thought as a big always-transforming sculpture, a piece that could be of any dimension (tiny and monumental) of any color, form, or texture. Hence the title. – José-Luis Hurtado

Arturo Fuentes, *Omaggio: a lullaby for sleepy monsters* for flute and piano

I have written this piece as a tribute to the composer Franco Donatoni, *il mio caro maestro Franco*. Quickness is one of the aspects that could better define the way I construct my music. By thinking the quickness as a musical strategy, I approach the formation of textures and sonic colors. I imagine these textures and colors as a sonic cloud made of forms delicately interwoven. The flute and the piano in this piece try to recreate these clouds of moving sounds: I feel that the music changes while, at the same time, it remains in an immobile sky. I see a path. – Arturo Fuentes

Francisco Cortés-Álvarez, *Danza del Parque de las Acacias*

Danza del Parque de las Acacias evokes a complex series of images of a small park located in the chaotic and exciting Mexico City. By using compositional influences taken from Ligeti and Prokofiev mixed with a playful spirit; this piece depicts the rushed morning outings and leisurely evening strolls with a beloved dog in a place that is a lively and vibrant mosaic of people, stories and dreams. – Francisco Cortés-Álvarez

Hilda Paredes, *Tlapitzalli 2*

I wrote this duet in 1987 for a choreographic project at the Royal Academy of Dance. As in other scores I have written for dance, *Tlapitzalli 2* is a work conceived to be performed also without choreography. In this score I began to explore the possibilities of manipulating rhythm and structure influenced by my interest in the music of India. With *Tlapitzalli 2* I found for the first time that Indian rhythmic procedures can be applied and enriched

harmonically in Western music. I also transcribed and transformed one rhythmic phrase used in Kathak dance in the second section of the piece. *Tlapitzalli* is the náhuatl name for the Aztec flute which was made of clay. Two refers to the second piece of this title I wrote, and to the number of performers.— Hilda Paredes

Carlos Sanchez-Gutierrez, *Twittering Machines* for flute and piano

I have, for a long time, been fascinated by the ideas expressed by Paul Klee concerning the structure of art. Klee, himself a part-time musician, compiled many of the technical features of his work in a number of volumes of inspiring pedagogic value. Like several other composers, I have always felt attracted to what Klee could have called "twittering machines": the unpredictable mechanisms whose systematic—yet imperfect—behavior is not unlike the "processes" we often find in musical structures. I love to observe clockworks with missing or erratic parts; or a spider who laboriously tries to climb a wall, or one of those precarious robots built by Rodney Brooks, whose "function" is not to fulfill a task but, simply, to "exist". They are all twittering machines whose image, interestingly enough, often ignites my musical imagination. My musical "twittering machines", as expressed in this set of variations for flute and piano, is an uninterrupted chain of short musical perspectives: tangible, yet always imperfect, musical "mechanisms". — Carlos Sanchez-Gutierrez