3-30-2014

Bullycide- Shanghai Quartet with Orion Weiss and DaXun Zhang

Office of Arts + Cultural Programming

PEAK Performances at Montclair State University

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No food or drink is permitted in the theater.
The taking of photographs or videos and the use of recording equipment are not permitted.
In consideration of both audience and performers, please turn off all electronic devices.

Duration: 1 hour 45 minutes, including one 15 intermission.

**PROGRAM**

**String Quartet in D Minor (“Quintet”), op. 78, no. 2, Hob. III:76**
Franz Joseph Haydn (1732–1809)
Allegrò
Andante e piú tosto allegretto
Menuetto: Allegro ma non troppo
Finale: Vivace assai

**String Quartet in E Minor**
Giuseppe Verdi (1813–1901)
Allegrò
Andantino
Prestissimo
Scherzo–Fugue: Allegro assai mosso

~ ~ Intermission ~ ~

**Northeast Premiere!**

**Bullycide** (2013)

David Del Tredici (b. 1937)

Part I: Overture
Cadence/Fantasy
Grand Fugue in 5 Voices
Transition

Part II: The Names
Strangled Voices: Lament and Rage
Dreams for the 5
In Peace
Postscript

Bullycide is commissioned by La Jolla Music Society for SummerFest, Peak Performances at Montclair State University, and Chamber Music Northwest.

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Montclair State’s Office of Arts & Cultural Programming (ACP) presents and produces leading artists of the world in dance, music, theater, and opera. Under its signature series Peak Performances, ACP has produced works such as Zinnias: The Life of Clementine Hunter by Robert Wilson, Bernstein Johnson Reagion, Tosha Reagon, and Jacqueline Woodson; Dog Days by David T. Little and Royce Vavrek; Harry Partch’s Oedipus; and Ridge Theater’s The Difficulty of Crossing a Field by David Lang. In addition, ACP has commissioned works by Bill T. Jones, Kronos Quartet, Jan Fabre, Liz Leaman, Wayne McGregor, Laurie Anderson, Rome Castelluccio, Richard Alston, Susan Marshall, Fred Hersch, and David Gordon.

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**Orion Weiss, piano**
**DaXun Zhang, double bass**

**Northwest Premiere!**

**Bullycide** by David Del Tredici

March 30, 2014 / 3:00 p.m.
Alexander Kasser Theater

**Shanghai Quartet with Orion Weiss, piano**
**DaXun Zhang, double bass**

**Shanghai Quartet**

Wei Tang, violin
Yi-Woo Jiang, violin
Honggang Li, viola
Nicholas Tsavaras, cello

**Guest Artists**

Orion Weiss, piano
DaXun Zhang, double bass

**The 2013/14 season is made possible in part by funds from:**

The National Endowment for the Arts
The New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Department of State, a Partner Agency of the National Endowment for the Arts
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Zinnias: Slot Machine

**Northeast Premiere!**

**Bullycide** by David Del Tredici
Bullycide (2013)

It has been my mission in the last few years to create a body of musical compositions that unambiguously celebrate the gay experience—happy, sad, hopeful, or bleak. Works of mine such as Gay Life, S/M Ballade, Queer Hosannas, and Wondrous the Merge are examples. There have been times, when real-life events have served as inspiration. One such event was the brutal murder of Matthew Shepard in 1998. This shocked me as so did most people of feeling. At the same time, I sensed it was a moment for musical memorial. When I found the Jaime Manrique poem ‘philosopher, a 10-minute song for baritone and piano was born.

Years later, real life touched me again. This time, it was the suicide of the young gay victim Tyler Clementi, his desperate act prompted by the relentless bullying of schoolmates. When I mentioned this to my close friend, composer Dennis Tobin, a composer friend, he said: “But David, did you not know that, in the last six months, four other young gay men had also committed suicide?” I did not. Then he named each of the other victims, as though they had been dear friends. I was stunned by this—not only for the fact itself, but by the intensity with which my young friend had spoken their names.

At that moment, an arrow seemed to pierce my own heart, and I was flooded with painful memories of bullying in grammar and high school. I remembered that awful feeling of being treated as “defective.” I remembered the physical attacks, often in the form of slaps and fists (at the back of my skull), where a teacher’s back was turned. And then I heard on the news or read in a book somewhere the word “bullycide.” I thought the term perfectly encapsulated this new phenomenon: a teenager’s suicide due to bullying.

With such stimulation, I could feel a new piece stirring and I set to composing, finding it unnatural this time to wait for a poet’s line as inspiration. I would memorialize these souls that could no longer honor their friends. I would celebrate the lives of the five young men, tracing with music what was and what might have been.

Bullycide was composed in two chunks of time: from November 15, 2010, to February 1, 2011, and from October 14, 2012, to December 12, 2012. The first page of the score bears the inscription, “Written in memory of 5 gay boys who committed suicide: Tyler Clementi, Billy Lucas, Asher Brown, Zack Harrington, and Seth Walsh.” The score is dedicated to my mate, Angellos Malefakis.

Bullycide is a piano sextet—that is, a string quartet plus piano and double bass. Schubert’s “Trout” Quintet, op. 114, served as a model as it has the same instrumentation (minus one violin). Bullycide is in one continuous movement, divided into two parts. The entire work lasts about 30 minutes.

A new work about the different sections of Bullycide:

Part I
The piece begins with solemn yet passionate music in a dotted, march-like rhythm. The strings lead the way while the piano interjects. This music reappears at important junctures throughout the piece.

The Cadence/Fantasy provides an opportunity for the pianist to be a virtuoso; beneath the many flourishes, a new theme is introduced.

The Grand fugue in F# is a major point of arrival. The theme, now fully formed, appears as the subject of the fugue. Why five voices? In my mind, each fugal entry represents one of the five lost youths. (“Things in five” happen again and again in Bullycide.)

The transition (in D♭) leads to a grand pausa.

Part II
The theme begins with some melodrama. The strings, playing a ghostly canon in a minor key version of the fugue theme, whisper the names of the five Bullycide victims. At the end of each name is the added response “Gone!” As you hear the melody implied—yet unpronounced—by the strings, the pedal is sustained and the piano’s legato line is played as a glissando.

Throughout the work, cues are given to the pianist to play those names of the victims, as though they had been dear friends. The pianist does this in his own way.

The climax of the piece, heard on the news or read in a book somewhere the word “bullycide.” I thought the term perfectly encapsulated this new phenomenon: a teenager’s suicide due to bullying.

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