

UNIVERSITY OF
Redlands
CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC

SENIOR RECITAL

Michael Medina-Castillo, trombone

Sunja Kim, piano

Thursday, November 9, 2023 - 7:00 p.m.

FREDERICK LOEWE PERFORMANCE HALL

Red Sky Anthony Barfield (b.1983)

Morgen! Richard Strauss (1864-1949)
arr. Ilan Morgenstern

Matthew Tashima, vibraphone

Intermission

Three Swedish Tunes Mogen Andresen (b.1945)

I. Who Can Sail Without The Wind?

II. And Soon It Will Blossom

III. Walking Tune from Appelbo

Thomas Francis, trombone

Jase Gooden, trombone

Ernest Lopez, trombone

Tuba Concerto in F Minor Ralph Vaughn-Williams (1872-1958)

I. Prelude: Allegro Moderato

II. Romanza: Andante Sostenuto

Bridge Over Troubled Water Paul Simon (b.1942)
arr. Timothy Cunningham

Daniela Gonzalez, soprano

Alejandro Ruiz, piano

“Red Sky” - Anthony Barfield (b.1983)

Anthony Barfield is an active composer, trombonist, and audio engineer in New York. Since his arrival in the music scene, he has garnered acclaim for his lyrical compositions and innovative approach to music. His reputation extends beyond traditional genres, as he has gained recognition for his exceptional wind band compositions, frequently commissioned by notable soloists like Joe Alessi, Principal Trombonist of the New York Philharmonic, and ensembles such as the University of Kentucky Wind Ensemble. His versatile talent has also seen him perform with various symphonies and jazz bands, showcasing his adaptability and creativity.

Barfield is a graduate of trombone performance from Manhattan School of Music and Juilliard where he is currently an audio engineer.

“Red Sky” is an exciting adventure that begins and ends with an unsettling rumble, bookending a journey filled with excitement, rhythmic diversity, and rich stylistic nuances. This contemporary composition incorporates modern writing techniques, offering a dynamic and energetic experience that diverges from the standard repertoire.

Inspired by the concept of the Big Bang Theory, Anthony Barfield’s “Red Sky” transcends its musical realm to convey a profound message. In Barfield’s words, “Red Sky paints a picture of the Big Bang Theory and space, matter, and energy, but it also has a deeper meaning: that we are all the same as human beings, and to realize that wherever we are in the world, in this large universe, that we’re all connected.” This piece serves as a reminder of our shared humanity, inviting listeners to contemplate our place in the universe.

“Red Sky” is a showcase of Anthony Barfield’s innovative spirit, blending scientific concepts and art to create a captivating musical narrative that resonates on both intellectual and emotional levels. It invites us to explore the universe’s wonders while celebrating our shared humanity.

“Morgen!” - Richard Strauss (1864-1949) arr. Ilan Morgenstern

Richard Strauss (1864-1949) is celebrated for his contributions to the late-Romantic and early 20th-century music. Among his notable compositions are the “Four Last Songs,” which he wrote as a wedding gift to his wife, Pauline de Ahna. “Morgen!” (“Tomorrow” in German) is one of the songs from this final opus, originally composed for soprano voice and piano. In this unique arrangement by trombonist Ilan Morgenstern, the piece takes on a new dimension, featuring the enchanting combination of trombone and vibraphone. The text of “Morgen!” is drawn from a poem by John Henry Mackay, a German-born Scottish writer and poet. The lyrics express a sense of optimism, hope, and the promise of a new day. It conveys a deep sense of love and anticipation as if looking forward to a bright and beautiful future. The text reads as follows.

Tomorrow! (German-English Translation)

And tomorrow the sun will shine again
and on the way that I will go,
she will again unite us, the happy ones
amidst this sun-breathing earth,
and to the beach, wide, wave-blue
will we still and slowly descend
silently we will look in each other’s eyes
and upon us will sink the mute silence of happiness

“Three Swedish Tunes” - Mogens Andresen (b.1945)

Mogens Andresen is a Dutch trombonist, composer, and arranger. He serves as Head of Brass for the Royal Danish Academy of Music and was the Bass trombonist for the Royal Danish Symphony. Andresen has studied trombone across the Western world in such places as Copenhagen, London, and Chicago. He is also the co-founder of the Royal Danish Brass which has toured across Europe Japan and the US. As an active arranger and composer, he has written and arranged many pieces of brass music that derive from traditional music of Western cultures as well as written method books for trombone and history on brass instruments. “Three Swedish Tunes” is one of three trombone quartets based on traditional Western European folk tunes. The others are “Three Danish Tunes” and “Three Norwegian Tunes”. Each of the movements from this work presents distinct colors and varies from daunting melodies in the first movement to beautiful harmonies in the second movement and ending with a light-hearted dance in the third.

1. “Who can sail without the Wind?”

The first movement is based on a folk song and lullaby by the same name. The song is based on a common theme found in songs of sailors - to be separated from loved ones. The translated text reads as follows.

Translated text (Swedish-English)

Who can sail without the wind,
who can row without oars,
who can leave a parting friend
without shedding tears?

I can sail without the wind,
I can row without oars,
but I can’t leave a parting friend
without shedding tears.

The movement opens with a solo bass trombone playing the melody portraying the question of the first stanza of the folk song. This initial solo serves as a prelude, inviting the listener into a world of musical storytelling. As the piece progresses, you start to feel our character’s emotions. As we transition into the Lento section the harmonies display much dissonance as our character fights his emotions. The music slides between tension and resolution, creating a display of emotions that holds the audience. This shifting emotional language leads to a sudden acceleration, propelling us into the Allegro section which represents our character’s frustration with himself that leads to a sudden ritardando and back into the original melody in the 1st trombone this time accompanied by the ensemble and is representing the answer to the beginning question and our character faces his grief and ends on a grim dissonant chord. The movement ends on a suspended moment of reflection.

2. “And soon it will be blossom time”

The reflective second movement represents Midsummer, a Swedish festival meant to celebrate the summer solstice. This movement is written like a day, the piece starts in the morning and develops through the morning into the noon/afternoon where you will find more dramatic dynamics, wondrous harmonies, and rhythmic feel that leads into the “freely” section that represents the blossoming of the flowers as everyone develops their own individual yet interconnected lines. Then the “evening” starts with a chorale and takes us into bed.

3. “Walking Tune from Appelbo”

The third and final movement is based on a Swedish Polka that originates from Appelbo, a small town in the province of Dalarna in Sweden. This fun and light-hearted dance are meant to be played at the tempo of a “stately walk”. The movement opens grandly and slowly decays into the 1st trombone’s entrance of the first theme. As the melody is passed around between each player it continues to develop and leads into the 2nd theme. While the melody is developing so is the accompaniment as it becomes increasingly more intricate rhythmically and harmonically. The work finally ends with a sense of content and a grand resolution.

“Tuba Concerto in F minor” - Ralph Vaughn-Williams (1872-1958)

Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958) is widely regarded as one of the most important British composers of the 20th century, known for his ability to capture the essence of English folk music and landscape in his compositions. His Tuba Concerto, composed in 1954, is a remarkable testament to his versatility as a composer and his commitment to showcasing the tuba as a solo instrument within the orchestral repertoire.

Vaughan Williams wrote the Tuba Concerto at the suggestion of Philip Catelinet, The principal tubist of the London Symphony who sought to expand the limited solo literature available for the instrument. The concerto is a three-movement work that retains Vaughan Williams’ signature pastoral and lyrical style while highlighting the tuba’s unique timbral qualities.

I. Prelude: Allegro moderato

The concerto begins with a march-like accompaniment to the initial flowing melody that introduces the listener to the instrument’s rich and expressive potential. As the movement progresses, the soloist engages in a musical dialogue with the piano, creating a sense of anticipation and excitement.

II. Romanza: Andante sostenuto

The second movement, Romanza, is a lyrical and heartfelt interlude. Here, Vaughan Williams showcases the performer’s ability to sing with a warm and expressive tone, evoking a sense of nostalgia and longing. The piano provides a lush harmonic backdrop, allowing the soloist to shine.

“Bridge Over Troubled Water” - Paul Simon (b.1942)

Arr. Timothy Cunningham (b.2000)

Inspired by the Swan Silvertones’ track “Oh Mary Don’t You Weep,” Paul Simon wrote “Bridge Over Troubled Water” in 1969, a time of grief and conflict in the US. The nation was recovering from the tragic assassinations of civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. and Senator Robert Kennedy the previous year. The US was also in Vietnam and the Nixon Administration was in power, yet Simon’s song rose to be a powerful anthem for a struggling nation.

The message of the song is of unwavering support and friendship as referenced through the imagery of being the “bridge” for someone navigating through hardship. The line “Sail on Silver Girl” is a reference to Paul Simon’s wife at the time, Peggy Harper, but can also be interpreted as anyone facing hardships in life. Paul Simon originally wrote this song to be sung by Art Garfunkel, his partner in their folk-rock duo Simon and Garfunkel but regretted it as the song gained popularity. Simon states “He didn’t want to sing it...He couldn’t hear it for himself. He felt I should have done it. And many times I’m sorry I didn’t do it.”

“Bridge Over Troubled Water” was released as the title track for their last studio album as a duo in 1970 and quickly rose to the #1 spot in the US Billboard Hot 100 and UK Singles Chart upon its release. Paul Simon and Art Garfunkel split up and focused on their own independent career. Simon continued his Solo career releasing 15 studio albums and 4 live albums.

This unique arrangement, “Bridge Over Troubled Water” takes on a new form as it evolves into a captivating dialogue between the vocalist and the trombonist. Departing from the original, this take on the power ballad introduces a compelling interplay of two characters, each lending their unique voice to the story. It opens with a lead-in from the trombone that teases the melody and piano interjections underneath. The piano, while maintaining staging true to the original, adds rhythmic depth. The melody is traded between the two voices, creating a dynamic exchange, before uniting in a climactic finale. Combining powerful text with beautiful melodies, this unique interpretation breathes fresh life into a classic, echoing the song’s message of compassion and unity.

Original Lyrics:
When you're weary
Feeling small
When tears are in your eyes
I'll dry them all

I'm on your side
Oh, when times get rough
And friends just can't be found
Like a bridge over troubled water
I will lay me down
Like a bridge over troubled water
I will lay me down

When you're down and out
When you're on the street
When evening falls so hard
I will comfort you
I'll take your part
Oh, when darkness comes
And pain is all around
Like a bridge over troubled water
I will lay me down
Like a bridge over troubled water
I will lay me down

Sail on Silver Girl
Sail on by
Your time has come to shine
All your dreams are on their way
See how they shine
Oh, if you need a friend
I'm sailing right behind

Like a bridge over troubled water
I will ease your mind
Like a bridge over troubled water
I will ease your mind

This recital is given in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Bachelor of Music degrees in Music Performance and Music Education.
Michael Medina-Castillo is a student of Phillip Keen.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We are gathered on the land of the Serrano and Cahuilla peoples, and we acknowledge the important contributions of this community, their elders both past and present, as well as future generations. The University of Redlands Conservatory of Music is committed to continuing to learn about the land we inhabit, the people who have been displaced from this land, and building community with its original caretakers.