Robert Rival, composer

2017 ORCHESTRAL GUIDE

Archival recordings & perusal scores available upon request: info@robertrival.com

Lullaby (5’)
2222/4200/1perc/hp/cel/str

“...gentle textures and flowing themes occasionally yield surprising harmonic turns and briskly changing meters.”
—Allan Kozinn, New York Times

“...a work of quiet rapture and refined sensibility...elegant concision...”
—Jack Sullivan, American Record Guide

Performed at Carnegie Hall by the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra. Released on CD. Video interview.

Whirlwind (8’)
2(II=Picc)222/4231/timp+2perc/hp/str

“...clever and evocative...”
—Richard Todd, Ottawa Citizen

Dazzling & colourful, nimble yet expansive, inspired by the flocking flight of Bohemian waxwings.

Narrated slideshow by the composer, “Inside the Composer’s Workshop: Whirlwind: From Sketch to Score”, on the making-of with over 5,000 youtube views.

Achilles & Scamander (8’)
2(II=Picc)222/4231/timp+2perc/hp/str

Dramatic & powerful, after a battle episode in Homer’s The Iliad.

“...positive, upfront writing, with no postmodern baloney of any kind. Yes, you can program Canadian music and make it work.”
—A. Kaptainis, Montreal Gazette

“...oeuvre spectaculaire...”
—Christophe Huss, Le Devoir

The Fury of Achilles by Charles-Antoine Coyelp

Spring (8’)
strings

Performed coast to coast, from the Victoria Symphony to the Hamilton Philharmonic to Symphony Nova Scotia.

“...vividly evoked memories of a young (and foolish) Danny Gaisin kayaking down New York’s Ausable River during the early melting snow run-off. The echoing through the chasm; the brief calmness where the river eddies and then the rush of the rapids all were inferred within the music.”
—D. Gaisin, Ontario Arts Review

Spring Walk by Chantal-Andrée Samson
The Great Northern Diver (11’)
2+Picc.2.2+E-flatCl+BsCl.2/
4221/timp+4perc/hp/str
—or—
2(II=Picc).2.2(II=BsCl,EbCl).2/
4231/timp+3perc/hp/str

“...created the almost silent vastness of Canada and the individual wail of the loon.”
—Munster Express
(Waterford, Ireland)

A tribute to Canada’s national bird, the common loon. The four movements—A Starlit Lake, Diving, Wailing, Taking Flight—incorporate the loon’s haunting wails, tremolos and yodels. Spatially separated clarinets mimic loons calling to one another from lake to lake.

Northwest Passage Variations (12’)
2(II=Picc)222/4231/timp+1perc/str

Twelve meditations on the popular, sweeping tune by Canadian folk legend Stan Rogers.

“...stirring and dramatic...”
—Brendan Shand, sudbury.com

“Rival chose to follow the tradition of folk-songs variations pioneered by such English composers as Vaughan Williams...a brass band gave us the tune, and thereafter the ghost of the sea-shanty underpinned the variations. Undulations of the sea were effectively evoked by rising and falling strings. A solo violin variation was played with feeling by Robert Uchida, and the variations ended with a hymn-like rendition of the tune.”
—Mark Morris, Edmonton Journal

Symphony No. 1*
“Maligne Range” (19’)
2(II=Picc,Alto)+Picc.2+EH.2+EbCl.2+
Cbn/4331/timp+2perc/str

A single movement traces the breathtaking topography of the famous trail in the Canadian Rockies.

“[a] high level of technical craftsmanship...By technical craftsmanship, I mean an impressive control of long spans of musical time, using the rhetorical and even programmatic strategies of late 19th- and early 20th-century European composers. I mean, too, a very fine command of the orchestra...a formidable achievement.”
—Steven Stucky (2005 Pulitzer Prize in Music)

*Claim the world premiere!

Symphony No. 2
“Water” (24’)
2(II=Picc)222/4231/timp+2perc/hp/str

In three movements that evoke the Canadian west coast: expansive ocean, delicate rainforest & thundering waterfalls. Narrated slideshow by the composer.

“...this new symphony paints moods...The opening movement plants itself firmly in the American 20th-century symphonic tradition, its longer, noble theme, more colour than melody, reminiscent of, say, Hanson—and all firmly tonal. Similarly, the dance-like opening of the final movement recalls Copland...The second movement...concentrates on texture and colour, and as such is effective and appealing, with lovely effects at the end, as the rain drops whisper into nothing.”
—Mark Morris, Edmonton Journal

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