

Music

AT MEMORIAL

Donald F. Cook Recital Hall
M. O. Morgan Building
Monday, March 8, 2004 at 7:00 p.m.

David B. Chafe piano

Suite for Piano

Prelude
Nocturne
Dance

O. Morawetz
(b. 1917)

Ballroom Breakfast Suite

Twix Tango
Cheerios Cha-cha
Wheaties Waltz
Rice Krispy Rag

M. Snelgrove
(b. 1962)

Excursions, Op. 20

Un poco allegro
In slow blues tempo
Allegretto
Allegro molto

S. Barber
(1910-1981)

intermission

Billy the Kid: Excerpts from the Ballet

The Open Prairie
In a Frontier Town
Cowboys with Lassos
Mexican Dance and Finale
Billy and his Sweetheart
Celebration After Billy's Capture
Billy's Demise
The Open Prairie Again

A. Copland
(1900-1990)

Ian D. Sutherland, piano



Memorial
University of Newfoundland

Oskar Morawetz settled in Toronto in 1940 after leaving his native Czechoslovakia following the Nazi occupation. He has enjoyed a distinguished career as a professor of music at the University of Toronto, and has become among the most notable composers in Canada. His 1969 "Suite for Piano" demonstrates twentieth-century harmonies and great rhythmic vitality through accentuation and frequently changing time signatures, all the while maintaining a high regard for traditional structures, tonality and melody. His careful placement of accents and dynamic markings preserve the rhythmic vitality and enhance the expressiveness of the piece. His exploration of the piano's full register allows for heightened drama in the Prelude, greater depth of emotion in the haunting Nocturne, and a dramatic buildup to the climax in the lively Dance.

The "Ballroom Breakfast Suite" is the tongue-in-cheek title given to Newfoundland musician teacher Michael Snelgrove's four-dance piece for solo piano composed in 2003. This innovative serial (cereal) suite (sweet) demonstrates the rhythmic vitality of some well-known dance styles intensified by unusual musical elements inherent in serial composition such as strongly dissonant harmonies and unpredictable melodic contours. Snelgrove achieves a sense of order and meaning with strong rhythms, recurring themes and playful titles. David Chafe and Michael Snelgrove are fellow students in the first graduating class of the MUN School of Music masters program. Tonight's performance marks the premiere of this piece.

Samuel Barber's "Excursions," composed in 1944, was his first large-scale work for solo piano. Each of its four movements represents a recognizable American musical style. The first movement in the boogie-woogie style evokes the forward, steady motion of a train with a constant, yet driving bass line underlying a very busy melodic line. The second movement offers rest from the first with a contemplative, slow blues. The third is a romantic theme and a set of faster variations on the American cowboy song "Streets of Laredo", which in turn is a nice segue into the joyous hoedown of the finale.

Aaron Copland's arrangement of "Billy the Kid" for two pianos is derived from scenes of the ballet he co-wrote in 1938 with choreographer Eugene Loring and based on the Walter Noble Burns book, "The Saga of Billy the Kid." Copland's use of more than a dozen American folk songs not only depicts the life of one of the most infamous and intriguing figures in American history, but also vividly represents a portrait of the western American landscape both geographically and culturally. The opening procession across a sparse landscape is brought back at the end, which suggests that Billy's rebelliousness, capture, escape, and eventual death are merely a part of the vast panorama of history in the Wild West and, by extension, of America itself. Some dramatic twentieth-century harmonies interwoven with nineteenth-century American folk melodies define and help explain the appeal of Copland's neoclassical style.