

Raleigh Civic
Symphony
 Randolph Foy
Music Director
 Chamber
Orchestra

Beethoven • Lutosławski • Tchaikovsky

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Raleigh Civic Symphony

Stewart Theatre, NC State University
 Tuesday, November 27, 2001 at 8:00 p.m.

Program

Overture to Egmont (op. 84, 1809) Ludwig van Beethoven (1770 – 1827)

Novelette for Orchestra (1979) Witold Lutosławski (1913 – 1994)

- i. Announcement
- ii. First Event
- iii. Second Event
- iv. Third Event
- v. Conclusion

————— *Intermission* —————

Symphony no. 2 in C minor (1873, '79) Pyotr I. Tchaikovsky (1840 – 1893)

- i. Andante sostenuto; Allegro vivo
- ii. Andante marziale, quasi moderato
- iii. Scherzo
- iv. Finale

Notes

Ludwig van Beethoven: Overture to Egmont



No subject could have touched Beethoven more deeply than defiance of tyrannical rule. Thus, when in 1809 he was invited to write incidental music for the Vienna Court Theater's revival of Goethe's drama, *Egmont*, he quickly accepted the commis-

sion, not only because of his great admiration for the poet but also because of the theme of the play.

Egmont deals with the 16th-century subjugation of the Netherlands by Spanish rule; their betrayal, agony, the seeds of their growing defiance, a dream of victory, and a call to revolution. (Kolodin). The leader of the Dutch resistance, Count Egmont, has been captured by the Spanish Duke of Alva, imprisoned, and condemned to execution. On his

last night, Egmont's love, Clärchen, appears to him as the "Goddess of Freedom," predicting that his martyrdom will spark courage in the hearts of the people who will rise to overthrow the tyranny of Spanish rule. In death, Egmont will become victorious.

Beethoven's overture projects the essential conflict of the play in three musical sections. A slow introduction is punctuated by massive chords in the rhythm of a sarabande (a reference to the Spanish?). These are followed by a lyrical motive (longing of the people?) reiterated to the point of near-extinction, only to be transformed into the center of the action – an *allegro* main section that follows. The *allegro* is driven forward by syncopated accents and the sarabande rhythm at a much faster pace. After a dramatic pause and quiet comments from the woodwinds, a final triumphant "Victory Symphony" emerges.



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Witold Lutosławski: Novelette

Witold Lutoslawski: (1913 – 1994) ; Warsaw, Poland
Novelette: 1978-79, written for Mistaslav Rostropovich and
the Washington National Symphony

“Good contemporary music can be characterized exactly as good music in general. I respect composers who think clearly and precisely, who know how to build organic musical forms, who have perfect technique, who are able to surprise and move us ... In my opinion, Lutoslawski is one of the great composers of this century.”

Esa-Pekka Salonen
conductor and composer



Background

Witold Lutoslawski's early works emerged in the shadow of the post-WWII communist crackdown of all artists, with his First Symphony being banned in 1948. He survived the dark period by writing children's songs, and finally benefited from the artistic thaw in the late 1950's, developing a more progressive style in symphonic and chamber music. The newly established Warsaw Autumn Festival of New Music, a radio broadcast of a John Cage work involving chance operations, and a trip to teach at the Tanglewood (Massachusetts) music festival in 1962 brought new contacts, new insights, and a maturing of style.

Style: Pitch – individual notes

Lutoslawski is a master of harmony, but not in the conventional tonal sense. His style is a free atonality in which limited groups of pitches and intervals are employed for a section, giving that event a particular harmonic color, sometimes quite dissonant and in other segments, almost tonal. But if atonality is what we notice first about Lutoslawski's *Novelette*, it is his organization of time that is the real key to understanding the work.

Style: Time – beats and free segments

Small-scale time in Lutoslawski's works is of two types:

1. Conventional beats, often audible, sometimes with regular meters and sometimes irregular, or alternating meters (the First Event starts as y, E|SX, z, x, E|SX, x, etc.)
2. Cued, free-sounding un-pulsed events. The latter is an innovative approach credited to Lutoslawski in 1960 that he called **limited aleatorism**. The term refers to the use of chance, but actually “indeterminate rhythm” might be a better description, as these events often involve small groups of players acting as soloists playing in an independent, rhythmically free manner. Lutoslawski says “I am looking for ways of stimulating the personal artistic initiative of each and every member of the orchestra to approach the interpretation of his own part – to a large extent – as a soloist...”

Style: Form – music as drama

Lutoslawski's later orchestral works such as *Novelette* are most easily understood in terms of **dramatic scenarios**. Rather than employing a typical four-movement form of a symphony, Lutoslawski uses numerous shorter movements of lighter, inconclusive nature, culminating in a longer final movement that assumes the dramatic weight of the work. At first, the dramatic events seem unconnected and lacking direction, and then finally the more lengthy concluding movement draws

themes and gestures together toward a cathartic experience.

“Mobiles ... are passages of collective *ad libitum* in which the parts contain discrete repeated fragments. The aural result is analogous to the visual effect when a mobile of Alexander Calder is viewed from different angles. The relation of part to part and part to whole is constantly changing, familiar fragments of sound returning in ever-new contexts.”

Steven Stucky
Lutoslawski and His Music

Novelette movements

The dramatic scenarios in *Novelette* are all abstract, non-specific. No program or story line is provided by the composer. What the composer does provide is a rich tapestry of musical scenarios, highly evocative, opening the door to imaginative listening. The images suggested here are only possibilities. Supply your own.

- I. **Introduction:** Bold chords rush toward a climax (also the ending of the piece!) Solo strings slide quietly to form the backdrop of two solos: first piccolo, then marimba, introducing odd tunes that recur throughout the piece. A taste of the “chase,” then groups leave the unresolved scene *ad lib*.
- II. **First Event:** A night chase? A distorted folk dance? A clarinet solo emerges (bird calls?), harassed by the brass. Nightmarish mocking (these characters are all harmless, no?) The bass clarinet ends, grumbling about the whole scene.
- III. **Second Event:** Comic relief, provided by three solo characters (what kinds of creatures are the English horn, clarinet, bassoon?). The orchestra eventually enters as pompous referee and commentator. The piccolo bird has the last word.

IV. **Third Event:** The night chase (?) is resumed, this time with higher stakes. The melodic theme from the Introduction returns in violins, then trumpets.

V. **Conclusion:** All the characters and events thus far introduced are woven into this culminating event. Slowly unfolding solos (harp, bass clarinet) lead to interwoven threads of melody in the violins. The accumulating woodwind solos move freely as the violins gather intensity in interwoven threads of melody. As the scene changes become more rapid and the intensity increases, the focus turns to bundles of violin solo lines (seven players), first *cantabile* (singing), next *scherzando* (fleeting), then *appassionato* (with passion). Flutes begin a long, steady climb to the final climax – a mass of *fortissimo* activity, some frantic, some lyrical, in which each player moves independently toward his/her end. Some *crescendo* with increased activity, some *decrescendo* and slowly dissolve. The masses have left and a few brave individuals are left on the scene to reflect on what has happened in personal solos. When all have left, the opening chords return (a new beginning?)

“These works [by Lutoslawski] possess the beauty of a giant organism, like a tree, or maybe a forest. We are moved by the logic of the form and the inevitability of growth. We perceive the music in shapes and lines, overall characteristics of the musical texture, and contrasts between movement and static situations ... Lutoslawski found a perfect answer to the centuries-old dilemma of form and content ...”

Esa-Pekka Salonen
conductor and composer

Tchaikovsky: Symphony no. 2

“Tchaikovsky ... created instrumental music that has as its subject the narrative of ... interior emotion and feeling in the encounter with everyday life. In Tchaikovsky’s hands, the apex of music as a realist art takes as its subject the individual’s inner life.”

Leon Botstein

Music as the Language of Psychological Realism



How *Russian* is Tchaikovsky’s music? This was an important question in 19th-century Russia as it developed a concert music tradition in the shadow of the formidable European tradition. The “mighty five” – Balakirev, Borodin, Cui, Mussorgsky, and Rimsky-Korsakov – favored the development of a truly Russian music that not only used folk tunes and legends but rejected Western European models of form and techniques. Tchaikovsky, the conservative, preferred to work within the accepted models and take them to further heights of expressiveness. His successes in Western Europe and America were clear indication to other Russian composers that his music was indeed not Russian enough.

The incorporation of Russian (actually Ukrainian, or “Little Russian”) folksongs in his second symphony was initially regarded as Tchaikovsky’s move toward the philosophy of the “Mighty Five.” However, this is not a folk-song symphony (only three are used), and is more a continuation of the composer’s development of traditional symphonic form.

The opening horn melody, a genuine Ukrainian tune *Down by Mother Volga*, dominates the slow introduction and returns again in the development section as a major force. The stormy allegro vivo

ends with a return of the horn theme – incomplete, even with the final statement by the bassoon.

In place of a slow movement, Tchaikovsky inserts a light march taken from a bridal march of his abandoned opera *Undine*. The graceful string melody that answers is a Russian folksong, *Spin, O My Spinner*.

A more traditional scherzo movement follows – filled with Beethoven-like drive and energy. The trio section in D|Z sounds like a folk song, but like the music of many 19th-century nationalists, it is an artful creation by the composer in the folk style.

The theme of the finale is a popular Ukrainian folk song, *The Crane*. After a slow statement of the theme, what follows is an artful set of variations by orchestration alone. The counter theme is an odd, lopsided syncopated melody that counters the square nature of the main theme. The increasingly close alternation of the two themes in a surprising cycle of keys is all that resembles a development, followed by a descent to a fortuitous gong note, and then a final *presto* bringing the work to a close.

— Program notes by Dr. Randolph Foy

Raleigh Civic Symphony

Randolph Foy, Music Director

Violin I

Dana Friedli, concertmaster
Nancy Atkins
David Cameron
Mike Freeman
Alana Kirby
Beth McCollum
Sayuri Noehl
Lisa Randolph
Megan Tirpak

Violin II

Sara Guelzow, principal
Jeff Cates
John Dolan
Francine Gatewood
Francine Hunter
Sarah Knowlton
Rachel Lilly
Julie Mayberry
Megan Remmers
Margaret Smith
June Tirpak

Viola

Laura Ehlers, principal
Tim Hwu
Erik Johnson
Natalie Killmon
Mildred Phelps
Hjordis Tourian

Cello

David Oh, principal
Tamara Anderson
John Boles
Nathan Finke
James Jatko
Albertine Kers
Kevin Lawence
Heather Maxwell
Maria Mack
Daniel Norden
Kerry Pumphrey

Bass

Josh Hines, principal
Heather Lewis
Laura McBride
Mark Underwood

Flute

Kim Allemang, principal
Cindy Chastain
Sallee Nelson

Oboe

Holly Cope, principal
Phillip Jefferson

Clarinet

Brent Smith, principal
Jim Williams
Janice Lipson

Bassoon

John Caldwell, principal
Charles Gragg

Horn

Michael Ehlers, principal
Ted Gellar
Melanie McIlvane
Helen Munt
Ryan Turner

Trumpet

Brian Lowry, principal
Joel Ebel

Trombone

Steven Anderson, principal
Brian Burroughs
Demetrius Siachames

Tuba

John Fuller

Piano

Jan Peery

Timpani

Candy Pahl

Percussion

John Antonelli
Ben Newsome
Aaron Snyder

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Upcoming Concerts

Symphony and Chamber Orchestra

*"American Reflections"
(revised program)*

Wednesday, February 6, 2002, at 8:00 p.m.
Stewart Theatre, NCSU

Symphony

*Bloch's "Schelomo"
with cellist Jonathan Kramer*

Sunday, April 21, 2002, at 8:00 p.m.
Stewart Theatre, NCSU

Chamber Orchestra

Sunday, April 28, 2002, at 3:00 p.m.
Talley Student Center Ballroom, NCSU

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