

Musica Nova

CLASSICAL Conductor **Brad Lubman** leads new-music ensemble **Musica Nova** in works by Robert Morris, Winnie Cheung, and Sebastian Currier on Wednesday, February 12.

The works by Morris and Currier have the same title: *Broken Consort*. In the late-17th century, musicians used the term "broken consort" to refer to a mixture of different families of instruments. Back then, such mixed ensembles accompanied plays, banquets, and outdoor entertainments.

Since Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire* of 1912, the mixed ensemble has become one of the primary vehicles for adventurous 20th-century composers. Currier's *Broken Consort* is what some might call post-modern: It taunts the listener with gestures of conventional tonal music, but builds other expectations with its rhythmic and sonic propulsion. Morris's *Broken Consort* is an intricate labyrinth in which supple melodies weave around one another until they seem to converge in fantastic displays of exuberance. Moments of mysterious calm evolve effortlessly into fireworks. These phenomena reinvent themselves many times over throughout Morris's imaginative work.

The concert takes place on Wednesday, February 12, in Eastman School of Music's Kilbourn Hall, 26 Gibbs Street, at 8 p.m. Free. 274-1100.

— Josh Mailman

Eastman Wind Ensemble

CLASSICAL On Wednesday, February 5, **Paul Shewan** will conduct the **Eastman Wind Ensemble** in a program that includes Copland's *Inaugural Fanfare* (1969), selected movements from Mozart's *Serenade in B-flat*, "Gran Partita," K. 361, and Messiaen's *Colors of the Celestial City* (1963).

Ivanka Driankova will play the fiendishly virtuosic solo piano part of *Colors*. In *Colors*, the piano is at the forefront of an unusually active percussion ensemble. (Messiaen takes his cue from Bartók in treating piano as a percussion instrument.) The opening of *Colors* juxtaposes massive sheets of sustained sound from winds and brass with animated, violent chirping from the piano and percussion. As the piece evolves, through a series of boldly chiseled sections, the piano-percussion group and the wind-brass group interact with each other in a myriad of beautifully intricate textures and rhythms. The resulting sounds evoke everything from a jungle full of wild animals to the eternity of a supernatural cosmos: the physical and the metaphysical all wrapped up in one package.

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— Josh Mailman

Ossia

CLASSICAL Two upcoming concerts feature a composition by Caleb Burhans. On Thursday, February 6, the new-music group **Ossia** will perform Burhan's *Om: concerto for electric guitar, bass, and orchestra*, with Grey McMurray playing electric guitar, Colin Chatfield playing bass, and Clay Greenberg conducting. Ossia member, oboist Sonja Thoms, also presents the *Concerto for Oboe and Orchestra* (1990) by Ellen Taaffe Zwilich, the first woman to win the Pulitzer Prize in music (for her *Symphony No.1* of 1982).

Zwilich describes the concerto as a dramatic situation, in which a protagonist, in this case, Thoms, engages in dialogues with members of the orchestra. Within the orchestra itself, oboe, oboe d'amore, and English horn work together as close family members of the oboe soloist. Ming-Hsiu Yen's *Sailing to the Horizon for Orchestra*, inspired by the Taiwan earthquake of 1999 and the September 11 tragedy, is also on Ossia's program.

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Caleb Burhan's *Going Home to Venus* (2002) is featured in another concert on Sunday, February 9. Veteran modern-music violist **John Graham** presents a mixed program of contemporary works for viola with percussion, organ, piano, and electronic sounds, along with arrangements of Albeniz's music. That concert takes place in Kilbourn Hall, at 3 p.m. Tix: \$5. 274-1100.

— Josh Mailman

Eastman School ensembles

CLASSICAL One of the most unusual concerts this summer takes place in one of the most unusual venues in Rochester. Ensembles comprised of students, alumni, and faculty of the Eastman School perform 20th-century Russian works in the All-Purpose Room.

The dates of the four works on the program seem to reach toward the outer edges of the 20th century, avoiding the Stalin years like a plague: Two works from 1914-15 by Stravinsky and Prokofiev are countered by works from 1968 and 1985 by Shostakovich and Gagnidze respectively. A mixed chamber ensemble accompanies versatile vocalist **Heather Gardner** in Stravinsky's rarely performed *Pribaoutki* (joke songs); **Truman Bullard**, who is the Eastman School's summer resident expert on Russian music, joins three other bassoonists for Prokofiev's *Humoresque Scherzo*; Eastman's **OrBuGaM Quartet** tackle the twelfth of Shostakovich's 15 string quartets, which have been compared to Beethoven's; and bassoonist **Lynn Hileman** performs in the post-Shostakovichian trio by Gagnidze, a contemporary Georgian composer. They will all play at the All-Purpose room, a promising contemporary art and music exhibition space that recently opened in a building at the Public Market.

The concert takes place on Wednesday, July 30, in the All-Purpose Room, 8 Public Market, at 7 p.m. Free. 423-0320, www.allpurposeroom.org.

— Josh Mailman

Omri Shimron

CLASSICAL Brahms's *Piano Concerto No. 1 in D minor*, Op.15, his first large-scale orchestral work, erupts suddenly, with a laser-focused intensity unprecedented in the concerto literature. With a duration of about 20 minutes, the first movement alone is virtually a symphony in itself. The first movement's stormy atmosphere then gives way to spacious warmth and rugged, earthy humor in the second and third movements. On Monday, February 3, Hochstein School of Music piano faculty member **Omri Shimron** will perform the Brahms concerto, and **Nancy Strelau** will conduct.

In past recitals, Shimron has proven to be an impressive and versatile soloist, equally at home with Bartók as with Bach. This time, Shimron represents the late 20th century with three works by living Hungarian composer Gyorgy Ligeti. Ligeti's *Études for Piano* have become a touchstone of contemporary music pianism. Shimron will perform two études from Book I (1985): No.4, *Fanfares*, and No.5, *Rainbow*, as well as the wryly humorous *vivace capriccioso* from *Musica Ricerata* of the early 1950s. *Fanfares* is an ear-bending perpetual motion study. Its rhythmic and registral acrobatics are the musical counterpart to M.C. Escher's illusory drawings. *Rainbow*, by contrast, is a gentle journey through lavender crystal harmonies.

Omri Shimron performs on Monday, February 3, at the Hochstein Performance Hall, 50 North Plymouth Avenue, at 7:30 p.m. Free. 454-4596.

— Josh Mailman