

Crumbville: Lincoln celebrates the celestial music of George Crumb

BY DANELL MCCOY
Staff writer

Titled after poems and distant stars, the compositions of George Crumb have served as the instrumental version of the psychedelic culture of the 1960s and '70s.

By scoring a soundtrack to that spacey time in American history, George Crumb's music is considered a major voice of 20th-century musical culture. On Thursday, Lincoln will pay tribute to the contemporary composer and his works.

Titled "A Celebration of the Music of George Crumb," activities will include day long broadcasts of his music on Nebraska Public Radio, a lecture and an evening concert. The celebration was planned for the visit of Crumb scholar Steven Burns from the University of Colorado.

Burns will spend his day in Lincoln giving talks and playing the music of the legendary composer, now age 70.

Crumb's compositions throughout his career contain many poetic references. His biggest influence was the Spanish poet Federico Garcia Lorca.

"Poetry is central to practically all of his pieces," said Joseph Kraus, an associate professor of music theory at NU.

Many of his pieces contain extracts from the poems themselves.

Burns, who is currently working on a book analyzing Crumb's works, was studying the artist's compositional processes when Kraus visited him in Boulder, Colo.

"Burns was the one who basically tuned me into Crumb's work," Kraus said. "In my sophomore music theory class, we only cover Crumb for one day. Burns worked with me to create a day to recognize Crumb's work."

Born in West Virginia, the composer received his bachelor's in music from Mason College of Music in Charleston, W.Va. in 1950, and received his master's at the University of Illinois.

He soon left the United States to study under Boris Blacher at the Hochschule für Musik in Berlin.

After returning, he found work as a professor of music at the University of Colorado, where he taught until his retirement two years ago.

Thursday's celebration begins at 10 a.m. when Burns

appears as a guest on NPR (KUCV-FM 90.9). Burns will play a variety of Crumb's music throughout the day and the station plans to broadcast a previously conducted interview with the composer.

At 2 p.m., a lecture titled "The Evidence of Things Not Seen: Analysis, the Creative Process, and George Crumb's 'Apparition'" will be given by Burns in Room 110 of Westbrook Music Building.

In the lecture, Burns will analyze Crumb's works, using sketches and sketch materials that Crumb had used while composing his music. These sketches are used in order to understand the graphic scores of Crumb's works.

"His scores are very interesting," Kraus said. "Instead of being written from left to right, the staves have instead been written in a circle, like a wheel."

The celebration's finale starts at 8 p.m. in Kimball Recital Hall, 12th and R streets.

Julie Simson, mezzo-soprano, and Tanye Gille, piano, will perform Crumb's famous piece "Apparition."

Composed in 1979 for Jan DeGaetani and Gilbert Kalish, this was Crumb's first work made for solo voice and piano. The text and music for the works are based on Walt Whitman's "When Lilacs in the Dooryard Bloom'd," a set of poems written during the weeks following the assassination of Abraham Lincoln.

"It's a reflection on the theme of death and dying," Kraus said. "But it looks at death in a mystical light."

The second piece will be performed by Mark Clinton and Nicole Narboni, duo-pianists at the NU School of Music. The piece, titled "Celestial Mechanics" was composed in 1979, and is the fourth in a series titled "Makrokosmos." "Celestial Mechanics" contains four parts, named after stars of the first through the fourth magnitude.

"This piece is kind of mystical," Kraus said. "Crumb likes to experiment in untraditional colors in terms of piano and voices. He uses different instrumental combinations that create new effects for the listener."

Both pieces will be performed using an amplified piano.

"The music that is produced is very interesting," Kraus said. "It's very colorful." Both the lecture and the concert are free and open to the public.



Mark Wahlberg (left) and Chow Yun-Fat star in the gratuitous cop thriller "The Corruptor" directed by James Foley.

Action movie 'corrupted' by studio intervention

BY CLIFF HICKS
Senior editor

The minute I got up after watching "The Corruptor," I could easily imagine what must have happened in some boardroom somewhere in the process of bringing "The Corruptor" to the silver screen.

Film Review The Facts

Title: "The Corruptor"
Stars: Chow Yun-Fat, Mark Wahlberg
Director: James Foley
Rating: R
Grade: C+
Five Words: Damn the Hollywood system trappings.

Director James Foley tells them that he's going to make a crime-drama film, and that Chow Yun-Fat and Mark Wahlberg are going to play the leads. Before he gets a chance to get another word out, one of the executives pipes up. "There's going to be a lot of action and shooting and stuff, right?"

Foley pauses a moment. "Well, I hadn't planned on much..."

"You have to have some," chimes in another suit. "Audiences won't go see Chow Yun-Fat without lots of shooting!"

And, because they're the suits, and they're the ones with the money, Foley buckles like a belt and throws in a 10-minute carfight, as well as two or three gratuitous gunfights.

That right there, ladies and gents, was what killed "The Corruptor." At the root of it, "The Corruptor" is a solid crime-drama about cops, gangs and the loyalties of each. There's also a good portion of blurring between the lines of right and wrong.

The main problem with the film is that the action sequences stick out like a sore spot on an otherwise fairly good piece of cinema.

For example, in a moment of good dialogue between the veteran cop (Yun-Fat) and his new partner (Wahlberg), director Foley has them break into an incredibly long car chase that immediately kills any sort of interest that was being created between the two characters.

The blame can't fall on Yun-Fat for this, because he's having the time of his life putting on a great performance, despite his English still not being perfect. You also can't put the blame on Wahlberg. Despite the fact that I've never cared for him before, I'll grudgingly admit he's reasonably good here.

Most of the blame has to fall on Foley's head, because of all the ridiculous action sequences. There's also whole lot of long lingering tracks and pans that just cut right into the flow of the picture, because they don't fit with the rest of the show. Ditch them, too.

And someone has got to stop writers from putting any more of these damn cliches throughout any drama film. There's a scene where a naked illegal alien is found in a trash bin, and none of the cops other than Wahlberg care all that much.

You can roll your eyes in a chorus, it's OK. Despite all of these flaws, Yun-Fat and Wahlberg put on a pair of great performances that carry the film the whole way.

Wait for the cheap seats or, better still, the video rental, even if you're a Yun-Fat fan. Otherwise, you can't fast forward to the good bits.

Dropped Notes

Jazz ensemble wins spot on public radio

BY DANELL MCCOY
Staff writer

After a performance at the Kansas State University Jazz Festival on Feb. 13, the NU Jazz Ensemble was selected to perform for the international broadcast "Jazz Set."

"Jazz Set" is a program that is aired on National Public Radio (KUCV-FM 90.9) with contemporary jazz great Branford Marsalis as its host.

"It is somewhat a first," said Gene Smith, professor and director of jazz activities at NU. "Any time a depart-

ment gets national exposure, it's a big deal."

The festival at Kansas State was dedicated to pioneer jazz vocalist Sarah Vaughan. With that in mind, the jazz ensemble chose to play "Out of Nowhere," and dedicate the song to her because "her voice really came out of nowhere," said Smith.

Besides performing, the students also participated in workshops and other activities offered at the festival.

"Besides the chance to perform, there are large educational aspects," said Smith. "That was one reason we decided to go."

The jazz ensemble will be broadcast alongside music from the Vanguard Jazz Orchestra, and popular jazz artists Carmen Bradford and Kevin Mahogany.

The jazz ensemble wasn't the only musical talent from NU to receive recognition at the festival. Sophomore music education major Cory Biggerstaff received a \$1,500 scholarship to the Berklee College of Music Summer Jazz Program.

The jazz ensemble's performance from the festival will be broadcast the week of April 1. Call Nebraska Public Radio, (402) 472-2200, for times.

Chicks and Dudes seek like-minded people
Jeremy Turpin and McLain Dorsey were tired of reading about clubs that they felt they couldn't belong to.

So Turpin and Dorsey came up with an idea for a club that anyone could join. They called it Chicks and Dudes Who Go Watch Movies.

"We wanted an organization that anyone could join to meet new people and do activities as a group," Turpin said.

The club, which had its first meeting March 6, requires no membership fees but club members will have to pay their own admission costs into the activities. These may also include laser tag, bowling or rollerblading.

"Everyone is welcome," Turpin said. "There is no commitment really. It's just for people to get together and go see movies or have fun."

The club will meet every first and third week of the month in the Abel 13 boys' television lounge.

For more information, contact Turpin or Dorsey at (402) 436-8513.