

Chamber music earns ballpark cheers

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Music and Dance



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The music students hooted and hollered for their teachers Thursday evening, and their enthusiasm enhanced the atmosphere of the Chamber Music Milwaukee opener at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. An intriguing program of 20th-century music and excellent performances gave the rest of us something to hoot and holler about, too.

Flutist Caen Thomason-Redus, oboist Margaret Butler, clarinetist Todd Levy, bassoonist Ted Soluri and horn player Gregory Flint brought superb intonation, balance and blend to bear on two agreeable, expertly scored works: Mario Lavista's "Cinco danzas breves" (1994) and Samuel Barber's "Summer Music" (1955).

Thomason-Redus joined percussionists Carl Storniolo and Scott Wenzel in Lou Harrison's First Concerto for Flute and Percussion (1939). The distinct characters of the buoyant first movement, the mysterious second, and the witty, twittering finale stood in sharp relief.

Steve Reich's "Clapping Music" (1972) has been clapped by hand and banged out on all sorts of objects. Thursday, Storniolo and Wenzel used African-style slit drums and pedal-operated metal percussion, to lend ringing color to this percolating rhythm piece.

Soprano Tanya Ruck, whose voice seems to grow richer and more lustrous each time I hear it, sang Heitor Villa-Lobos' "Bachianas Brasileiras No. 5." Ruck brought both swaying melisma and the passionate, rapid-fire articulation of this music to full flower, as eight cellists added visually and sonically extravagant support.

This program, at the UWM Zelazo Center, opened the year-long American Sounds Project. The next event, a concert by sfSound, starts at 7:30 tonight in the UWM Recital Hall.

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