



Program Notes

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By Chris Morrison

Daniel Kellogg (1976-)

Rush

Daniel Kellogg currently serves as Assistant Professor of Composition at the University of Colorado at Boulder. His music has been commissioned by the National Symphony, the Borromeo Quartet, Soli Deo Gloria, Inc., the Ensemble Orchestral de Paris, and the Colorado Symphony. Premieres of his works have featured the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Takács Quartet, the University of Colorado Wind Symphony, the Ying Quartet, the President's Own United States Marine Band, the Aspen Contemporary Ensemble, and eighth blackbird. Mr. Kellogg has received a number of awards, including two Charles Ives Awards from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and six ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composer Awards. Born in Wilton, Connecticut, Mr. Kellogg received his Bachelor's degree from the Curtis Institute, and Master's and Doctoral degrees from the Yale School of Music. He is in his third year as composer-in-residence with the South Dakota Symphony, having also recently concluded a Music Alive residency with the Green Bay Symphony.

Rush, scored for a chamber-sized orchestra, is a four-minute rouser of a concert opener. Strings begin with a playful, rhythmically intricate figure that builds in intensity with brassy outbursts. That opening figure then emerges in other instruments, as winds and brass contribute their commentary. The music builds up a head of steam, with syncopated rhythms and colorful orchestration that takes the musical line quickly from strings to woodwinds to brass, with solo contributions from numerous instruments. Fanfare figures from the brass over a swirl of other activity bring the work to an exciting close.

Christopher Theofanidis (1967-)

Rainbow Body

An emerging star in the composing world, Christopher Theofanidis has had his music played by the National Symphony, London Symphony, Oslo Philharmonic, Monte-Carlo Philharmonic, Moscow Soloists, Atlanta Symphony, Houston Symphony, and California Symphony (where he was composer-in-residence from 1994-96). He also served as Composer of the Year for the Pittsburgh Symphony for its 2006-7 season. Born in Dallas, Texas, Mr. Theofanidis has received the Rome Prize, a Guggenheim Fellowship, the Barlow Prize, six ASCAP Morton Gould Prizes, a Fulbright Fellowship to France, a Tanglewood Fellowship, and The American Academy of Arts and Letters Charles Ives Fellowship. He has also served as a delegate to the US-Japan Foundation's Leadership Program. In 2007 he received a Grammy Award nomination for best composition for his chorus and orchestra work, *The Here and Now*. A former faculty member of the Juilliard School, Theofanidis currently teaches at the Peabody Conservatory at Johns Hopkins University.

Rainbow Body is Theofanidis's "greatest hit" to date. Written in 2000 for the Houston Symphony, it attracted considerable attention, and received dozens of further performances, when it won the 2003 London Masterprize competition. In an essay at his website, Theofanidis explains that *Rainbow Body* was conceived as "the coming together of two ideas – one, my fascination with Hildegard of Bingen's music (the principal melody of *Rainbow Body* is based on one of her chants, 'Ave Maria, O Auctrix Vite'), and two, the Tibetan Buddhist idea of 'Rainbow Body,' which is that when an enlightened being dies physically, his or her body is absorbed directly back into the universe as energy, as light." The chants of the medieval abbess, composer, author, scientist, and polymath Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179), says Theofanidis, "have very memorable contours which set them apart from other chants of the period. They are wonderfully sensual and set up a very intimate communication with the divine."

The work begins quietly, with a sense of mystery heightened by the emphasis on the lower registers of the orchestra. Then Hildegard's air appears, played straightforwardly by the strings at first, then repeated twice with more intensity each time. On several occasions, including that first statement of the Hildegard melody, one can hear what Theofanidis calls a "halo" or "wet acoustic" effect, creating the sort of aura around the music one might encounter in a cathedral through the sustaining of notes and the use of certain combinations of instruments. After the melody is heard, a free fantasy on elements of the theme ensues; the development turns stormy, with ominous brass and percussion, and string tremolos. But Hildegard's theme emerges several times, as Theofanidis puts it, "as a kind of plateau of stability and peace within an otherwise turbulent environment." Towards the end the music turns quiet, as a march rhythm gradually asserts itself and the music builds to a powerful final statement of Hildegard's theme by the full orchestra.

Carl Orff (1895-1982)

Carmina Burana

While he produced a considerable body of compositions, and children all over the world still learn the basics of music through his educational method, Carl Orff is still largely remembered for one early, but extremely popular, work, *Carmina Burana*.

Orff was a creative child, who was writing stories and music for his own puppet shows by the age of ten. He studied piano, organ, and cello, but his parents wouldn't let him study the drums, his favorite instrument. Through the late 1910s and 1920s, Orff held conducting posts in Munich, Mannheim and Darmstadt. In 1924, he co-founded the Güntherschule in Munich, where music, dance and gymnastics were taught using compositions and instruments specially created by Orff. This system, eventually codified into Orff Schulwerk, eventually made him one of the world's experts on children's music education. Later in his career Orff moved to what he called "fairy tale opera" like *Der Mond (The Moon)*, (1939), and his fascination with ancient Greek drama resulted in musical settings of *Antigone* (1949) and *Prometheus* (1966).

These works, however, came after a dramatic stylistic shift on Orff's part. Early on, his music showed the influence of some of the more progressive composers of the day, like Claude Debussy and even Arnold Schoenberg. But, influenced by his study of early music as well as his work with children, Orff came to feel that music is a fundamental aspect of human nature – that, starting at an early age, people respond directly and profoundly to simple melodies and easily perceived rhythms. With *Carmina Burana*, Orff rejected the complexity of his earlier works. As

he later wrote, “The more fundamental and simple the statement, the more immediate and powerful its effect.” In fact, after *Carmina Burana*’s premiere, Orff told his publisher to destroy all his previous works: “with *Carmina Burana*, my collected works begin.” It subsequently became the first work of a trilogy, *Triumphs*, that also includes *Catulli Carmina* (1943) and *Trionfo di Afrodite* (1951).

Carmina Burana is probably the most famous piece of music composed and premiered in Nazi Germany. While it did receive some criticism for the erotic nature of some of the texts, the work was extremely popular from its first performance, on June 8, 1937 at the Frankfurt Opera. The nature of Orff’s relationship with the Nazis is a matter of controversy. He took considerable heat for taking up a Nazi project that many others rejected: the composition of a new incidental score for Shakespeare’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, after Felix Mendelssohn’s famous music was banned. After World War II, Orff claimed that in fact he had been involved with the resistance movement within Germany. This has been widely disputed, but American denazification authorities ultimately classified him as “gray acceptable,” which enabled him to continue working.

Carmina Burana actually means “Songs from Beuern,” or more specifically Benediktbeuern, a village in the Bavarian Alps thirty miles south of Munich. The Benedictine monastery there, founded in the eighth century, had an extensive library. Among its riches was a manuscript of 300 or so poems dating from the thirteenth century. These poems – erotic, sensuous, pious, and humorous by turns, mostly written in Latin with a few in German, Greek and French – were written by Golliards, a band of students, lapsed monks and priests, and other nonconformists that have been likened to the hippies of the 1960s.

Orff first encountered these poems in an English translation. He found these celebrations of nature, food, drink and sex fascinating, “not old but valid; the time element disappears and only the spiritual power remains.” A young law student, Michel Hofmann, was enlisted to help turn a group of the poems into a libretto, and hence was born *Carmina Burana*. The work’s subtitle, by the way, is “Secular songs for singers and choruses to be sung together with instruments and magic images.” The mention of “magic images” is a reminder that Orff conceived *Carmina Burana*, and most of his subsequent works, as “total theatre” combining music, dance, speech, and stage action; however, *Carmina Burana* is generally only encountered in the concert hall today.

About an hour in length, *Carmina Burana* is in three major sections – *In Spring*, *In the Tavern* (which includes the internal scene “On the Lawn”), and *The Court of Love* – framed by a short prologue and finale.

Fortune, Empress of the World

Far and away the most famous excerpt from *Carmina Burana* is the opening “O Fortune,” a grand hymn telling of the Wheel of Fortune that lifts people up only to cast them down again. It has become almost ubiquitous in film scores and television commercials. “I bemoan the wounds of fortune,” with its exciting brass fanfares and declamatory vocal writing, shares the momentum of its predecessor.

I. *In Springtime*

This section begins with two gentle paeans to the onset of spring, “The merry face of spring” for small chorus and “The sun warms everything” for baritone. “Behold, the pleasant spring” has a playful, almost childlike exuberance. A little fanfare heralds the subsection “On the Lawn,” which begins with a rustic “Dance.” “The noble woods are burgeoning” features both small and large choruses in a sweet-tempered lament for a departed lover. “Shopkeeper, give me color” tells of a woman purchasing makeup in hopes of attracting a young man. After a “Round Dance,” the chorus enters and things really liven up. Two statements of “Those who go round and round” frame a statement of longing of one lover for another, “Come, come, my love!” An exciting brass fanfare opens “If all the world were mine,” a song in praise of the erotic attractions of the Queen of England.

II. *In the Tavern*

This quartet of songs in praise of gluttony opens with the turbulent baritone aria “Burning inside” – carried away by his violent, unpredictable emotions, he decides in the last of his five stanzas to give into “vice” and “pleasures of the flesh.” The strange “Once I lived on lakes” is the lament of a swan – the tenor singing very high in falsetto – on being roasted over a fire, with the chorus interjecting “Misery me! Now black and roasting fiercely!” Just percussion and brass back the chorus in “I am the abbot.” “When we are in the tavern” is a raucous set of thirteen toasts to seemingly everyone who drinks, from “libertines” to “dispersed monks” to the “penitent.”

III. *The Court of Love*

The longest section of *Carmina Burana* is dedicated to love. The soprano is introduced in the sweet opener “Cupid Flies Everywhere,” where she expresses her loneliness to the comments of the boy’s chorus. Then the baritone – singing in high falsetto in a manner Orff described as “tender but always exaggerated” – takes his lamenting turn in “Day, night, and everything.” The soprano returns to taunt the baritone, describing a girl in a red dress in “A girl stood,” only for the baritone to continue his lamentations in “In my heart.” Now six male singers leeringly consider the joining in bed of the girl and boy in “If a boy with a girl.” “Come, come, O come” continues the theme of love-making; the combination here of chorus with two pianos and six percussionists calls to mind one of Orff’s biggest musical influences, Igor Stravinsky. The pretty “In the balance” has the soprano torn between modesty and desire, but giving in to the latter. “This is the joyful time” is a lively consideration of youthful love. Finally the soprano, in her highest register, submits entirely in the concluding “Sweetest one.”

Blanziflor and Helen

The culmination of this consideration of love is “Hail, Most Beautiful One,” one of the few fully-harmonized sections for the chorus, a grand hymn to the ennoblement of love as personified by Blanziflor (heroine of a medieval epic), Helen and Venus.

Fortune, Empress of the World

The work concludes with a reprise of the opening “O Fortuna,” with its decisive reminder of the unpredictability of fate: “since fate strikes down the strong man, everyone weep with me.”