

Correspondences

Patrick:

I was up until 3AM listening and attempting to analyze and decipher your "Harlem" Sonata. It is a truly fascinating composition. After familiarizing myself with the score I saved it as an audio file in Finale and used windows media player to listen to it. In music technology so much attention is given to the science of sound and studying sound waves. So to me it was utterly amazing to see the soundscape, the visualization of the peaks and valleys of this music composition. I noticed an intense amount of anxiety, like a city in turmoil.

The sound wave visualizations in media player almost literally give the illusion of skyscrapers heaving and writhing in despair, panting and extremely agitated, which was quite uncanny. The final section leaves you bereft of strength, breathless and tormented. The composition reflects the agitation and terror that in the most basic sense can almost literally take one's breath away, which the Italian musical term "affannato" conveys. In fact, the noun affannate literally means "breathless". I may be totally off track with this assessment but noticing the date on the score one cannot help but surmise that this is a painful memorial to the 9-11 tragedy.

Warmest regards,
Larry

Greetings My friend,

Charles Jones invited me to Steinway Hall to hear his program for the 31 of May. I arrived too late to hear the Beethoven, but was in time for Harlem sonata and the Carnival of Schumann (both masterfully played!). Charles confessed he was concerned I would run from the room after hearing my sonata. Far from the truth, indeed. Hearing a master of the piano play this storm was revealing and shatteringly inspiring. He has a commanding technique and equally a natural feeling for the poetry in the piano, not an easy task for a percussive instrument. He complained that his performance had problems he had never had before playing for me. I certainly didn't hear any. I was too involved. I think it may be the nature of his artistry and his own inner standard.

What I experienced brought back the initial feelings that drove the music. I told Charles later when we were dining that for me I forget music after it is written. I know the notes and the presence but its life passes quickly. I explained to Charles that if I composed a music inspired by a lovely spring morning, the music becomes music, the portrait remains ephemeral. When an artist makes the score his or hers and I have the opportunity to listen, what returns is the feeling of the spring morning as though it was new and

inexperienced. I cease owning the music and own instead a spring morning. That being said, you can well imagine what I experienced listening to this 9/11 work in the hands of Charles Jones. Whether this is just my experience or a universal experience remains to be seen. I was concerned Charles was experiencing the same, being a New Yorker and one who shared 9/11. No. His task learning it was his experience. He had recorded it for himself and told me that the third movement, "Candles for Natalie's Friday", had begun to affect him emotionally. He feels this is the center of the work, the first movement's drama, the playful second movement, and the driven last movement framed by the inner pathos of "Candles for Natalie's Friday".

I had a hard time sitting still turning the pages for him. The hours of 9/11 returned. I owned them, not the music, as if it had happened there at Steinway Hall. Today the experience remains, 24 hours later. It is a Pandora's Box! What have I done? Charles has embraced this work 100% and I have dedicated it to him. He deserves the dedication. I deserve the personal nightmare I have unleashed. I do hope you can be there May 31. Someone will have to hold Charles up after playing this monster, and hold me up taking responsibility for its existence.

regards,
patrick