



Paul Aiken | Camera

Cellist Judith Glyde, at left, and clarinetist Daniel Silver rehearse Paul Moravec's 'Tempest' Fantasy in the Grusin Music Hall in the Imig Music Building.

Sounds of a 'Tempest'

CU stages fantasy based on Shakespeare

By Wes Blomster

Camera Classical
Music Critic

It all started when Patrick Stewart tired of life in outer space and came back to earth.

In 1995 Stewart played Prospero in Shakespeare's "Tempest" in New York's Public Theater.

He played the role, a critic noted, "with white hot fury."

Composer Paul Moravec, in the audience, found Stewart "extraordinary" and went home and began the work that brought him the Pulitzer in 2004: "Tempest Fantasy."

"I had a great time and I was inspired by the play," says Moravec, in Boulder to offer an introduction to his score before it is performed on this week's "Faculty Tuesday" series at the University of Colorado.

For the event violinist Lina Bann is joined by colleagues Judith Glyde, cello, Alexandra Nguyen, piano, and Daniel Silver, clarinet, at 7:30 p.m. in Grusin Hall.

Bann first heard the Fantasy, when the Trio

If you go

What: Paul Moravec's "Tempest" Fantasy

When: 7:30 p.m. Tuesday

Where: Grusin Hall, CU Music Building

Tickets: Free

Info: 303-492-8008

Solisti performed it at a California festival.

"I was riveted by the piece, by its driving energy and gorgeous lyricism," she says. "The Fantasy appeals to me on many levels. It is a supremely well-crafted piece, and it is challenging and satisfying.

"It's fun to play and it communicates directly to the listener without pandering."

Bann, mastermind behind the Boulder staging, first played the Fantasy with the VERGE ensemble at the Corcoran Gallery in Washington and again a month later at a function for the National Endowment for the Arts for which Moravec was a guest.

For Boulder, however, Bann was eager to move

See CU, 3D

ing more regularly at a Broomfield restaurant, until she

recognizing how much talent I had for being a girl, took me

the men's Reno Open championship in Nevada and landed

Haddad, also a world-champion pool player.

CU stages Shakespeare-based fantasy

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beyond a mere performance of Moravec's music.

"I knew that Shakespeare had been Paul's inspiration, and that made me want to explore how we might weave his music and the drama together," she says. "Paul told me that others had integrated the drama with the score, and the Carolina Ballet choreographed it."

She was aware, however, of the risks involved.

"With any great work of music superposing words or visuals on it is tricky," she says. "It can be a difficult balancing act."

Bann sought help from Bud Coleman, chairman of CU's Department of Theatre and Dance, who found her an able collaborator in doctoral candidate Daniella Vinitzki.

"Daniella is incredibly sensitive to this balance," Bann says. "And she has assembled a group of equally talented people to stage this production."

Vinitzki, a veteran of several seasons with the Colorado Shakespeare Festival, has written a monologue focused on "The Tempest" that will be dovetailed with the score. She further plans to bring movement to the performance.

"Lina has given me a lot of freedom," Vinitzki says. "But for me priority goes to the music."

"I want to create the atmosphere of the score on stage."



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Violinist Lina Bahn, at left and cellist Judith Glyde rehearse Paul Moravec's 'Tempest' Fantasy.

Vinitzki wrote her monologue for Miranda, the only woman in the "Tempest," whom she sees as the key figure in the play.

"She's a young and imaginative woman," Vinitzki says. "She's compassionate and emphasizes Shakespeare's concern for redemption in the drama."

Bann's instrumental ensemble will share the stage with Vinitzki's fellow students Alexandra Lewis and Stephanie Kobes, for whom the director has created "an imaginary island."

(The work will be given a fuller staging in the ATLAS Black Box in the spring semester.)

The "nest egg" of the score

was the "Ariel" Fantasy that Moravec wrote as a solo work for his friend Maria Bachmann, violinist in the Trio Solisti.

"Maria liked it," the composer says, "and suggested that I expand it to a suite for violin and piano."

Moravec calls the Fantasy "a musical meditation on various characters, moods, situations and on-lines from 'The Tempest.'"

"Rather than trying to depict these elements in programmatic terms, the music simply uses them as points of departure for flights of purely musical fancy," he adds.

The completed score was dedicated to the Trio Solisti, who - with the help of clarinet

ist David Krakauer - recorded it for Naxos.

Moravec is listed as a "new tonalist," a composer who began his career when music was moving away from the academic aura of post-Webern serialism.

He sees himself as neither embarrassed nor paralyzed by tradition.

Ask about his approach to composition, Moravec responds that "all musical works have to work musically. There must be in them an internal musical logic. If that is not there, they are not valid."

Moravec, currently head of the music department at Adelphi University, has taught at Harvard, Columbia, Dartmouth and Hunter College.