University of Texas at El Paso

From the SelectedWorks of Dominic Dousa

Fall October 14, 2011

Solo Composition Recital (October 14, 2011)

Dominic Dousa, *University of Texas at El Paso*

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THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO DEPARTMENT OF

Music

Faculty Recital Series

Dominic Dousa, *composer/piano*

with

Gregory Luffey, *soprano saxophone*
Melissa Colgin-Abeln, *flute*
Mark Schuppener, *violin*

Friday, October 14th, 2011
Fox Fine Arts Recital Hall 7:30pm

PROGRAM

A View from Within — Dominic Dousa (b. 1973)

Gregory Luffey, soprano saxophone
Dominic Dousa, piano

Two Pieces for Flute and Piano

I. *Into the Winter Night*
II. *Running with the Wind*

Melissa Colgin-Abeln, flute
Dominic Dousa, piano

INTERMISSION

Sonata for Violin and Piano

I. *From a Distant Frontier*
II. *Echoes of Spirits Near and Far*
III. *The Open Road Ahead*

(Premiere performance)

Mark Schuppener, violin
Dominic Dousa, piano

PROGRAM NOTES

A View from Within
Composed October 1999; Rochester, MN / Mt. Pleasant, MI
Performance time: Approximately 11 minutes

Composed during the late autumn in the upper Midwest, *A View from Within* reflects the autumnal moods associated with this time of year and the landscapes of this region. A dance-like middle part is framed by flowing, lyrical outer sections. The title refers to the general introspective feeling that permeates the piece through its various moods.

Two Pieces for Flute and Piano
Composed November 2007-January 2008; Santa Teresa, NM / Rochester, MN
Performance time: Approximately 15 minutes

In May of 2008, Dr. Melissa Colgin-Abeln and I presented two concerts in Paris, as well as a preview concert in El Paso. It was for these occasions that I composed the *Two Pieces for Flute and Piano*. Written primarily during my Christmas-break visit back to Minnesota in 2007, *Into the Winter Night* was inspired by thoughts of the cold nighttime landscapes of the north. The opening section has a barren feeling, yet is marked by the peacefulness of the still, sleeping land. A more animated section follows, as if one's thoughts have awakened from the awe-inspired reverie. Variations on these two sections alternate until the piece concludes with a dark, but calm tone.

Running with the Wind evokes the vigor and energy of running free and unfettered, both literally and figuratively. Perhaps some of these feelings were inspired by the vigor and excitement that many times I have enjoyed going for a run amid the wide-open vistas in the upper Rio Grande valley near my home in Santa Teresa. At several points in the piece, the rhythmic energy slackens, as though one has taken a short breather to compose oneself, reflect, and take in the world around. Toward the end, the vibrant rhythmic texture returns, bringing the piece to a rousing and affirmative close.

Sonata for Violin and Piano
Composed July-September 2011; Santa Teresa, NM
Performance time: Approximately 38 minutes

Dominic Dousa

This summer, as Dr. Mark Schuppener and I had discussed plans for a new work that we would present on tonight's recital, we initially thought of a shorter work or set of pieces to complement other older compositions that we would perform on the program. As I began to work on the composition, it quickly grew into a larger-scale piece fitting for an entire half of a recital.

Although the three pieces were originally not conceived as a traditional sonata, their style, form, and character reflect this genre (the faster-slower-faster tempo scheme and the formal structure of the individual movements). The overall moods of the work spring from a favorite inspiration of mine — the wide open landscapes of the Great Plains and Rocky Mountains. These feelings are expressed musically through a style that tends toward the expansive, in its melodies, the development of themes and ideas, and in the breadth of form of the pieces.

The opening movement, *From a Distant Frontier*, features lyrical melodies that are marked by a darker tone. Not long before beginning this piece, I had visited the picturesque region northwest of Santa Fe called the Piedra Lumbre (sometimes translated as the valley of "Shining Stone") and later read a history of its legends and of the people who lived in this isolated region over the centuries. I was left with the impression of a land of stark beauty, but also of a place that could be harsh and merciless, where survival required an iron will and sense of determination. This awe-inspiring, yet foreboding sentiment pervades the entire movement.

The slower second movement, *Echoes of Spirits Near and Far*, begins with a quiet, austere stillness, like that of a place that reverberates with the spirit of those who had come before. A more animated section follows, with declamatory, recitative-like sections alternating with lyrical melodies. In this part, the thoughts and reflections which seemed more distant in the opening now become concentrated, immediate, and intense. The quiet, somber calm returns to conclude the movement.

The final movement, *The Open Road Ahead*, brings a bright, self-assured atmosphere, with a relaxed feeling throughout. From the opening melody to the more rhythmically vivacious themes to the broadly arching main theme of the middle section, a mood of joy and contentment prevails. The first few bars of the opening melody came to me in the summer of 2010 while driving through the plains of the Texas Panhandle on a warm, radiant sunny late afternoon, after a morning of clouds and rain. Like the sunshine on the open plains that day, this movement provides a warm glow and optimism to conclude the sonata after some of the more pensive, "cloudier" feelings of the opening movements.

This composition is the first I have written since my marriage to my lovely wife, pianist Nayeli. Her beautiful soul has brightened my life, and it is with love and affection that I dedicate this piece to her.

Program notes by Dominic Dousa.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Dominic Dousa, a native of Rochester, Minnesota, has been a member of the faculty of the UTEP Department of Music since August of 2004. There he has taught courses in 2nd-year theory and aural skills, seminars on specialized topics in theory, and all levels of composition. Before coming to UTEP, Dr. Dousa held teaching positions at St. Mary's University in Winona, MN (aural skills, music appreciation) and Rochester (MN) Community and Technical College (business & economic statistics). He holds degrees in music from Ball State University (D.A.), Central Michigan University (M.M.), and Harvard University (A.B. *summa cum laude*) and in statistics from Iowa State University (M.S.). He also has studied composition in Prague. His primary composition teachers include Jody Nagel, David Gillingham, and Milan Slavický.

Dousa's compositions have received performances at recitals, festivals, and conferences in the U.S., Canada, Mexico, Peru, China, France, the Czech Republic, and Finland. Two of his song cycles, *With a Song in My Heart* and *Six Songs on the Poetry of Langston Hughes*, are available on the CD "With a Song in My Heart" by Blue Griffin Recording. This CD features art songs set to texts of African American poets. He has works published by Dorn Publications and TRN Music Publisher.

In addition to his activities as teacher and composer, Dousa has remained active as an accompanist and chamber musician. He has performed in numerous recitals at various universities and concert venues with faculty, guest artists, and students and served as an official accompanist for the 4th Annual International Singing Competition in Trujillo, Peru in August of 2000.

Gregory Luffey joined the music faculty at UTEP in 2009 after a 20-year career performing in United States Air Force Bands. He received his Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Jazz Studies and Saxophone Performance from Virginia Commonwealth University. While at VCU, Mr. Luffey studied with jazz patriarch Ellis Marsalis, as well as with Skip Gailes, Keith Young, and Charles West. Mr. Luffey's jazz and classical training enabled him to win a position in the United States Air Force Band program, in which he performed and recorded extensively in the U.S. and Europe. While overseas, he performed for many Heads of State including Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, George H.W. Bush, and Bill Clinton. In addition to performing for dignitaries, he has performed for sold out audiences in the finest concert halls in Europe, including Royal Albert Hall in London and The Gewandhaus in Leipzig. Mr. Luffey can be heard on 25 Department of the Air Force Recordings.

Melissa Colgin-Abeln is Associate Professor of flute and music literature at UTEP and principal flutist of the El Paso Symphony Orchestra. She earned the Bachelor of Music degree from the University of Alabama and M.M and D.M.A. degrees from the University of Texas at Austin. She also has studied flute privately for one year in Paris, France, and on a performance fellowship at the Yale School of Music. Her major teachers include Sheryl Cohen, Raymond Guiot, Torkil Bye, Karl Kraber, and Bernard Goldberg. Dr. Colgin-Abeln has held positions with the Sinfonica Orquesta Autonoma de Guadalajara, Mexico, and the American Wind Symphony Orchestra, with whom she was featured as a soloist for concerts and subsequent recordings. In 1987, she was a winner of the Pittsburgh Concert Society Young Artist Competition. In Europe, she has made recital appearances with the Atelier Series and *Concerts Accueil Musical* in Paris, the Norwegian Broadcasting Corp. (Radio Oslo), and the Classical Music Festival/Haydn *Festspiel* in Austria. Active as a soloist with the El Paso Symphony, she has performed Mozart Concertos (K. 313, K. 299) and the Hanson *Serenade*. Additionally, she performed with the Borusan Istanbul Philharmonic Orchestra in cities across Turkey in 2000. Dr. Colgin-Abeln has published articles for the journals of the National Flute Association, Flute Talk, and the Marcel Moyse Society, on topics such as C. P. E. Bach's Solo Flute Sonata, Solos de *Concours* of the Paris Conservatoire, and a short memoire of study in Paris. Her most recent research topic, *The Memory Map*, resulted in a publication in Flute Talk in 2009 and has led to invitations to lecture at three NFA annual conventions and a growing number of American universities.

Mark Schuppener joined the faculty at the UTEP Department of Music in the fall of 2009. He holds degrees in violin performance from the University of Michigan (D.M.A. and M.M) and the University of Wisconsin at Madison (B.M.). His principal teachers include Aaron Berofsky, Paul Kantor, and David Perry. He previously held teaching positions at Spring Arbor University, the Ann Arbor School for the Performing Arts, and at the University of Michigan School of Music, Theatre, and Dance. He also has taught at the Eastern Music Festival and School in Greensboro, NC and the Point-Counterpoint Chamber Music Camp in Vermont.

Dr. Schuppener enjoys a multi-faceted career as a devoted instructor, soloist, chamber musician, and seasoned orchestral musician. In Michigan, he was concertmaster of the Dearborn Symphony Orchestra and the Plymouth Symphony Orchestra. He has also played in the Madison Symphony Orchestra, the Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra, and the orchestras of the Aspen Music Festival and School, and currently performs with the El Paso and Las Cruces Symphony Orchestras. As an orchestral musician, he has performed in Spain, the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Austria, as well as in the U.S. with notable popular artists such as Aretha Franklin and Mannheim Steamroller. Schuppener has extensive experience as a youth symphony conductor, clinician, adjudicator, and private studio teacher. He currently is a staff conductor of the El Paso Symphony Youth Orchestras and assistant conductor of the UTEP Symphony Orchestra. His students have attended nationally recognized summer music festivals and university music programs. As a soloist, Schuppener has performed Barber's *Violin Concerto*, the Beethoven *Triple Concerto*, the Bach *Concerto for Two Violins*, and the world premiere of Christopher Dietz's *Violin Concerto*. He is the founding Artistic Director of the Ann Arbor Camerata, a chamber ensemble based in Michigan. Other chamber music highlights include being a selected performer in the Fischoff National Chamber Music Competition and performing with the Michigan Chamber Players.