

The works i have
chosen are the ones
below essay sample

[Art & Culture](#), [Artists](#)



BEETHOVEN - Coriolan Overture, Op. 62
HUGO GONZALEZ-PIOLI - The Love of Zero (Bassoon Concerto with Robert Florey's 1927 short silent film) (US premiere)
ANNA CLYNE - Within Her Arms
SHOSTAKOVICH - Cello Concerto No. 1 in E-flat major, Op. 107

The concert got underway with a rip roaring performance of Beethoven's Coriolan Overture. Here the LACO played with considerable technical panache and demonstrated an intricate and almost intimate understanding of the work which is one of the most difficult of Beethoven's overtures to bring off. The strong introduction showed off the LACO strings to excellent effect and the winds were also on top form. As the work developed, I sensed a building momentum to the Coriolanus tragedy which all came together in the final parts of the overture as the music tapers off into nothingness. I was viscerally impressed by the LACO and Jeffery Kahane's conducting which showed off the latter's skills especially in the powerful sections as well as the more pensive parts where he most certainly brought the orchestra together. The opening bars of the Overture are full of dissonances and motifs which demonstrate Beethoven's capability with the orchestra. The woodwind and strings mix perfectly together and one can sense the forward looking tendencies of the composer. The style is typically Romantic while the genre is the programme overture.

The next work on the programme was Hugo Gonzalez-Pioli's ' The Love of Zero'. Here Kenneth Munday played the solo part with visceral intensity showing that he was definitely one of the top interpreters of the piece. It is a highly original work based on Robert Florey's 1927 short silent film which was very original for its time and the music composed by Gonzalez Pioli is

surely very appropriate. Again I was extremely impressed by Jeffrey Kahane's conducting of this unfamiliar work which truly describes the intimacy of the silent film. Munday played the music with an innate feel and understanding of the solo instrument whilst the whole orchestra participated quite brilliantly in all the proceedings. It was a US premiere of the piece and as such was new to me but I can safely say that I was very satisfied by the whole work. Here one could observe some twelve note styles used in the scoring while the genre is again that of programme music.

The film is considered to be a real art form in more ways than one as art is obviously part of the whole setup of film. Films about artists are also important parts of the whole genre and the one which we will be discussing is El Greco, a recent film which also has music by Vangelis as its soundtrack. El Greco was a great Spanish artist who lived in the 16th century and who bequeathed Spain with a large number of important artistic works. Again the demonstration of string work is part and parcel of proceedings and the time and meterage are also important factors for the appreciation of the music. The quality of the work is excellent since it also includes considerable detail in the scoring of instruments.

The film focuses intrinsically on the painter's life as well as on other matters which develop accordingly and which show the artist's prowess and capability to paint large canvases almost effortlessly and without much trouble. He originally came from Crete and was also an artist of immense repute in more ways than one and among his works one must focus on the subtle use of colours and dark effects. The film is generally effective as it creates a sense of holiness and intrinsic beauty in all its parts and the artistic

theme is never far away.

The painting which will be considered here is Portrait of an Old Man where El Greco comes up with a strikingly real life image of the man in question which can even be said to be himself. The dark lines of the portrait demonstrate the intrinsic hues and glows with which El Greco's paintings are informed and the sense of emptiness and hollowness is never so far away.

El Greco is also portrayed as a rather restless character in the film as he appears to get himself into trouble quite regularly, in fact he is actually imprisoned and awaits torture at the hands of the inquisition on many occasions. Naturally enough the film also focuses extensively on his considerable contribution as an artist and also on his focus with regard to several paintings which appear to have a number of foibles and fascinations about them.

In 'The Dormition of the Virgin' which is also briefly referred to in the film, El Greco creates a sense of occasion and nobility in his portrayal of this important Biblical episode. Notwithstanding all this, the painting comes across as startlingly lifelike and full of intriguing mannerisms which convey a sense of superb occasion as well as deep inner thoughts. His use of colours is rather sparse and also very intriguing although one must add that his originality is also called into question many a time here. One can also observe the cadences and shifting of tonalities in this part of the score.

Another important painting which is referred to in the film is an early portrait of Giorgio Giulio Clovo who was one of the artist's earliest supporters apart from also being a rather intriguing subject for portraiture. Here again the solemn and noble expression of the subject is rather typical of El Greco who

actually also includes some intriguing elements such as the window with flowers in the background and the book being read by the subject.

El Greco's style is not always discussed at length in the film but we do know that he was probably one of the finest exponents of portraiture and in this regard he is also extremely strong and focused. The film continues to focus on certain elements of his character which include his strength as an artist of darkness as well as his intrinsic capability to shock and create sensationalism. Although El Greco came from Crete, he quickly managed to assimilate himself into the whole artistic world of Spain quite intriguingly and was also very much an avante gardist in this regard.

One cannot discount El Greco's contribution to art in general as he was truly one of the most important figures in the Renaissance. His incredible sense of occasion and fascinating portraiture is indeed well portrayed in the film which bears his name and as such everything moves forward with remarkable momentum and interest. It is truly an important film which demonstrates how art and artists in general develop and demonstrate the importance of creating their own intrinsic personal identity. El Greco is most definitely a case in point in this regard.

Anna Clyne is a modernist composer who hails from England but who now works completely in the United States. She has experimented with several forms of music including electro acoustic pieces but perhaps she is most famous for the short chamber work ' Within Her Arms' which was composed in 2009. It is an intimate piece with particular use of the cello and the orchestral accompaniment is sparse but no less telling. Alisa Weilerstein is a brilliant cellist indeed, she brings a no holds barred approach to the piece

which gains from repeated listening but I must say I was completely bowled over by the soloist's performance. She created a sense of intimacy with the audience which was intrinsically reflected in the thunderous applause gained as the work ended. I have to compare the work to music by Charles Ives where magnificent chaos' was the order of the day and this came across in the work. Her work is also similar in atonality to Schoenberg and Berg and one can immediately sense the twelve note variations in the middle of the work.

Finally we had a barnstorming performance of Shostakovich's Cello Concerto Nr 1. This work which is in the customary three movements contains several allusions to other music which I will discuss below. The beat of the work was also very well brought out by the soloist. Quality was never in any way compromised and the modernist style without being twelve note was excellently portrayed. Repetition and strophic form are also important here. Alisa Weilerstein played with incredible intensity and she brought a visceral quality to the composer's work. One was reminded of the Leningrad Symphony, another very problematic and angst driven work by the composer. In fact the cello rather reminds one of the 13th Symphony entitled Babi Yar which is reflective of the massacre of the same name which took place in the Second World War deep in the Ukranian heartland. Here the slow music created a sense of palpable intensity in the hall with the audience extremely silent and attentive. All in all this was quite a brilliant concert and both soloists and orchestra played quite magnificently.

Comparisons:

The three works that may be compared here are Beethoven's Coriolan Overture, Gonzalez-Pioli's Bassoon Concerto and Shostakovich's Cello Concerto. The latter has a style which is infused with jazz and this compares quite well with the second work on offer. Beethoven's overture is perhaps the one that is the most different of the two since it is schooled in the romantic style and is rather classical in outlook.

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