

Michael Gandolfi (b. 1956)

Greatest Hits, Vol. I (2000)

American composer Michael Gandolfi, born in Melrose, Massachusetts, was already a self-taught guitarist by age eight, took formal music instruction in his teens, and attended Berklee School of Music and the New England Conservatory. He has taught at Harvard, Philips Andover Academy, Tanglewood and the New England Conservatory, where he now chairs the Composition Department. Gandolfi's musical interests include contemporary concert works; theater and film music; jazz, blues and rock; and composition for children, such as his setting of the Pinocchio story. Here are his program notes, abbreviated only slightly.

Greatest Hits, Vol. I, was commissioned by the New England Philharmonic in 2000, at the end of my three year term as their Composer-in-Residence. Its tongue-in-cheek title is obviously drawn from popular-music compilation-recordings. In this case, *Greatest Hits, Vol. I* is an orchestration of two movements culled from chamber pieces of mine....

The All-Interval Tetrachord Blues, is a satirical exposé on some distinctions that exist between the concert and pop worlds. An all-interval tetrachord is a collection of four pitches, which contains all possible intervals. There are two such collections, both of which have been utilized in much music of our time. Typically, they are used in highly chromatic, intellectually rigorous music. However, one of these collections produces a basic blues melody, which I decided to exploit as a bridge between pop and concert music. In the spirit of Thelonious Monk's famous blues quote, "Wrong is Right" (in which he demonstrates that a "wrong-note" blues melody will sound right, if the wrong notes are applied judiciously), I juxtaposed quotes from great masters of the past, enabling them to participate in this ubiquitous structure of our time. Stravinsky, "the three B's," and Charlie Parker are represented.

The Talking Cricket, a major character in the Pinocchio story, regularly warns Pinocchio of impending danger. The piano-figures serve as a chorus of nocturnal, chirping crickets, over which the flute "speaks" the Talking Cricket's wise advice....

Samuel Barber (1910-1981)

Cello Concerto, Op. 22 (1945)

Samuel Barber was born in West Chester, Pennsylvania. He began to compose at age six, and at eight, after America joined the Allies in World War I, wrote his Opus N^o 1, *War Song*. The song he wrote for his high school class is still the West Chester High School anthem. In nine years at Philadelphia's Curtis Institute of Music, he majored in piano, voice, and composition and was a serious student of literature and languages.

Barber became a Europeanized American, accomplished in French, German, and Italian, with broad literary interests reflected in his choice of musical topics, among them *Dover Beach* and *Overture to The School for Scandal*. He was also a fine baritone and studied voice in Vienna as well as at Curtis. Half of his 200 compositions were songs, including his "lyrical rhapsody" on James Agee's nostalgic prose-poem, *Knoxville: Summer of 1915*, performed by the Concord Orchestra in October 1996.

During World War II, Barber served three years in the US Army and, after a tour of guard duty, was appointed composer for the Army Air Force. His Second ("Flight") Symphony (1944) was premiered by Serge Koussevitzky and the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Although he destroyed the symphony, he kept its second movement as a tone poem, *Night Flight* (1963), inspired by Antoine St. Exupéry's great novel and suggesting "the feelings of a lonely flier at night, whose only human contact is through the radio beam."

Cello Concerto, Op. 22 (1945). Barber composed concertos for violin, piano, and cello. The *Cello Concerto* was commissioned for the Russian cellist Raya Garbousova, and was also premiered by Serge Koussevitzky and the BSO.

I. *Allegro moderato*. A quiet flute-English horn duo and a series of woodwind figures introduce the soloist, whose *cantando* melody alternates with lively measures of sixteenths and triplet eighths.

II. *Andante sostenuto*. The languid principal theme, with its lilting dotted rhythm, is introduced by the soloist and repeated by winds and strings. The opening duet by solo cello and oboe is echoed by bassoon and accompanied by muted strings. The theme ends the movement in the orchestral cellos and basses.

III. *Molto allegro e appassionato*. The *finale* begins and ends with a loud orchestral figure. Solo cello introduces the principal themes. After a grand pause, orchestral cellos and basses, joined by violas, begin a repeated five-bar *basso ostinato* which recurs throughout the movement. Several cadenzas, with and without orchestra, display both technical virtuosity and melodic soul.

Franz Schubert (1797-1828) *Symphony No. 9 in C major ("Great")* (1826)

Of the great 19th century Viennese composers, only Schubert was born in that Austro-Hungarian Empire's capital. Vienna in the early 1800s suffered the uncertainty, hunger, and strict censorship of the Napoleonic wars, and Schubert's music offered peace and entertainment. "Pathos, the tears quickly dried, was not unwelcome, but nothing harrowing, no more Tragedy." (Biographer Maurice Brown)

Schubert's Viennese admirers knew him best for his songs. Over 600 of them gave him a meager living but left music its treasure of the *lieder* art. In only seventeen productive years, despite poverty and illness, he created over 900 compositions, many never performed in his lifetime. Numerous anecdotes describe the closets and trunks in which his music was later discovered, including chamber works, operas, religious choral works, and nine symphonies.

Symphony No. 9 in C major was called "**Great**" to distinguish it from Schubert's "Little" Symphony No. 6, also in C major but for a much smaller orchestra. Schubert never heard it performed. Robert Schumann uncovered it ten years later and sent it to Felix Mendelssohn for its premiere in Leipzig in 1839.

I. *Andante-Allegro ma non troppo*. French horns open with a hymn-like theme repeated by oboe. After development, a second lighthearted staccato subject in the woodwinds is answered by a somber trombone reminder of the earlier horn motif. The full orchestra ends with the opening theme in slightly altered rhythm.

II. *Andante con moto*. The opening's string accompaniment precedes a lyrical oboe melody, repeated by clarinet. The second subject is a flowing hymn-like theme by strings, ending with a lovely antiphonal duet for clarinet and oboe. A bell-like horn interlude reintroduces the opening theme. After a dramatic

pause, the cellos play a new melody in the rhythm of the first subject, joined by a delicate oboe counterpoint.

III. Scherzo (*allegro vivace*). The scherzo begins with a strongly accented melody for strings with cello countersubject. In the trio, a repeated horn call heralds the main theme in the character of an Austrian peasant dance.

IV. Finale (*Allegro vivace*). After an energetic opening, full orchestra introduces a flowing woodwind figure. The movement is punctuated by a strong four note figure with which the horns introduce the second subject, a quiet clarinet interlude repeated by the brass. Also of note in this movement is a brief salute by the clarinets to the chorale of Beethoven's 9th Symphony.

— Richard Porter