Beyond the Double Bar

Many listeners will hear a piece of music in concert and think, “That’s great! I wonder if there are other pieces like it that I might enjoy.” Beyond the Double Bar suggests further listening based on the music of each Masterworks and Small Stage concert, along with links to YouTube videos of recommended performances. If you have questions, comments, or suggestions about Beyond the Double Bar, please e-mail Dr. David Cole at dccole@swflso.org

Masterworks I – Saturday, November 4, 2017

If you enjoyed Aaron Copland’s Fanfare for the Common Man, you might like:

- Joan Tower: Fanfare for the Uncommon Woman
  The first in a series of six fanfares of the same name, Fanfare for the Uncommon Woman was Tower’s response to a commission from the Houston Symphony. Tower dedicated the work to conductor Marin Alsop and said that the work honors “women who take risks and are adventurous.”
  Tower: Fanfare for the Uncommon Woman – Leonard Slatkin, St. Louis Symphony
  Tower: Fanfare for the Uncommon Woman

- Richard Strauss: Vienna Philharmonic Fanfare
  Written for the Vienna Philharmonic’s 1924 fundraising ball to support the musician’s pension fund, this work for large brass ensemble and two sets of timpani has been played at every subsequent Vienna Philharmonic fundraiser.
  Strauss: Vienna Philharmonic Fanfare – Brass of the Vienna Philharmonic
  Strauss: Vienna Philharmonic Fanfare

- Carl Ruggles: Angels (brass version)
  Originally scored for six trumpets, Ruggles revised it later for four trumpets and two trombones. Like Copland’s work, Angels builds upon small amounts of melodic material, but lyrical rather than dramatic. The unrelentingly dissonant textures sound both passionate and serene.
  Ruggles: Angels – Studio Brass Ensemble, Michael Tilson Thomas
  Ruggles: Angels

If you enjoyed Dmitri Shostakovich’s Violin Concerto No. 1, you might like:

- Benjamin Britten: Violin Concerto, Op. 15
  Britten’s concerto is almost like Shostakovich’s, but shorn of the final movement: it consists of a brooding opening movement, a sinister scherzo and a heartfelt passacaglia, with the final two movements connected by a cadenza. Written eight years before Shostakovich’s concerto, the piece has so many foreshadowings of the later work, one wonders if Shostakovich had heard it before composing his own.
  Britten: Violin Concerto – Janine Jansen, Orchestre de Paris, Paavo Järvi
  Britten: Violin Concerto
Sergei Prokofiev: Violin Concerto No. 2 in G minor, Op. 63
This concerto marks the transition between Prokofiev’s *enfant terrible* youth and the more conservative style that developed (or was forced upon him) upon his return to the Soviet Union. The castanets in the obstreperous rondo finale may be a gesture towards the venue of the world premiere, Madrid.

Prokofiev: Violin Concerto No. 2 – Julia Fischer, Bavarian Radio Symphony, Pablo Heras Casado

Alfred Schnittke: Violin Concerto No. 4
One of the greatest Russian composers after Shostakovich, Schnittke grabs bits and pieces of a plethora of styles, runs them through his musical Cuisinart and reassembles them in this intense roller-coaster ride of a violin concerto. By turns lyrical, gritty, Romantic, ultramodern and anguished, it gives the impression of a conventional violin concerto disintegrating before our very ears.

Schnittke: Violin Concerto No. 4 – Gidon Kremer, Berlin Philharmonic, Christoph von Dohnányi

If you enjoyed Antonín Dvořák’s Symphony No. 9, “From the New World,” you might like:

One of several late tone poems written after the “New World” Symphony, *The Noonday Witch* draws its inspiration from an old Czech folk tale. Persuasive in its musical argument and masterfully orchestrated, it needs to be heard far more often and not just on Halloween pops concerts.

Dvořák: *The Noonday Witch* - Sir Charles Mackerras, Czech Philharmonic

Josef Suk: Symphony No. 2 in C minor, Op. 27, *Asrael*
Dvořák’s son-in-law, Josef Suk, wrote music indebted to the melodic style of his father-in-law, but strongly influenced by the harmonic innovations of Wagner and Debussy. His *Asrael* Symphony, named after the Old Testament angel of death, is his response to a double blow of fate: the death of his father-in-law and the death of his beloved wife within a year of each other. The final *Adagio* is a long lament in the manner of Tchaikovsky’s *Pathetique* Symphony.

Suk: *Asrael* Symphony – Sir Charles Mackerras, Czech Philharmonic

Leoš Janáček: Sinfonietta
More of a 5-movement suite than a small symphony, Janáček’s Sinfonietta grew out of a commission for a fanfare to open a gymnastics competition. The scale of the orchestra is anything but small; the regular orchestral forces are strengthened by a total of 12 trumpets and two bass trumpets. Janáček’s distinctive style, based largely around ostinato figures and passionately lyrical melodies, rejects conventional forms and gestures. Each movement grows organically out of itself and yet the entire work is both aesthetically balanced and emotionally satisfying.

Janáček: Sinfonietta – Sir Charles Mackerras, Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra