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The South Beach Chamber Ensemble Review

by Roger Martin on May 05, 2010



Tony Seepersad, Luis Fernandez, Michael Andrews, & Rafael Ramirez.

Concert Review

MUSIC IN BEAUTIFUL SPACES

Picture this: six o'clock on a South Beach evening, clear skies, warm breezes, tropical fragrances amidst the lush growth. We enter the all-white, simple meeting room of the Miami Beach Botanical Garden. Rows of white chairs and we are sitting four and a half feet away from Luis Fernandez. He's playing the violin. Entrancing.

There are sliding glass doors in this room and through them we can see the gardens. Two cats stroll by, enjoying the evening. Poor cats, they're missing the music.

It's Simple Symphony by Benjamin Britten being performed by the South Beach Chamber Ensemble.

Next to Luis sits violinist Tony Seepersad, Michael Andrews playing the cello and Rafael Ramirez with his viola. The musicians, as is the audience, are casually dressed, because this is a casual affair. Not that you think that when you watch the performers' faces. They are in love with their art, and it shows. Founded by Michael Andrews in 1997, the Ensemble's program this evening features Early 20th Century English composers and starts with Britten, and then Edward Elgar's String Quartet in E minor, Op 83.

Cuban poet Carlos Pintado has written three poems, reading one before each movement of the Elgar. He reads in Spanish, but English translations are provided. The first stanza:

"The ship sails away and I am the traveler

Who stares at me from the ship

Or more than the traveler himself I am his rising hand

by the evening light and against the the sky."

Despite the music, or perhaps because of it, it is a quiet evening, relaxing, refreshing. It's music in the home. At intermission the audience wanders the gardens, mingling with the musicians, and then the performance concludes with Ralph Vaughn Williams' "Fantasie on a Theme" by Thomas Tallis and the St Paul Suite by Gustav Holst.

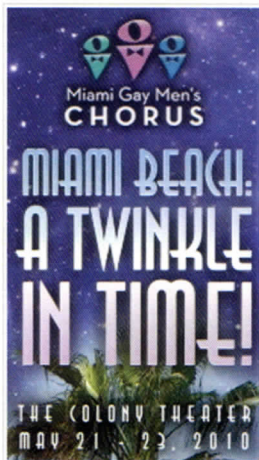
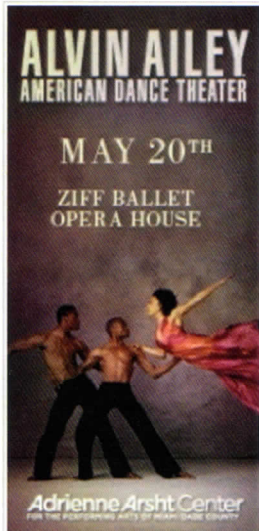
There is a simple reception in the garden to end the evening. Bottles of wine and dark chocolate truffles.

I'm not a music critic; far from it. I watched Lady Gaga's Telephone video with Beyoncé (the uncensored version) this afternoon and thought it was swell, so maybe I'm not qualified to tell you how well the musicians played, but I'm saying it anyway. Music is to be enjoyed and that's what the South Beach Chamber Ensemble gave us. Pure enjoyment. I know I'll be going back.

Miami Beach Botanical Garden is located at 2000 Convention Center Drive in Miami Beach. For more information regarding their music series call 305.673.7256 or visit www.mbgarden.org. For more information on The South Beach Chamber Ensemble call 305.673.2183 or visit www.sobechamberensemble.org.

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Poesía de Carlos Pintado inspira quinteto musical

SARAH MORENO

smoreno@elnuevoherald.com

Cuando este domingo, como parte de la serie *Music in Beautiful Spaces*, el South Beach Chamber Ensemble estrene en el Jardín Botánico de Miami Beach el quinteto que la compositora norteamericana Pamela Marshall creó inspirándose en poemas del escritor cubano Carlos Pintado, se reunirán también en este momento mágico de la palabra y la música el poeta francés Gérard de Nerval, el narrador norteamericano H.P. Lovecraft y las elusivas musas.

"Mi poesía es muy inglesa, muy de penumbra", describe Pintado, que dice combinar el rigor y la música de la métrica con temas muy contemporáneos.

"El endecasílabo tiene un ritmo muy fijo pero muy musical, que obedece a un límite, un acento y una cadencia", añade el poeta, que la tarde del

domingo superará su timidez natural e intercalará la lectura de sus poemas con la interpretación del South Beach Chamber Ensemble (SBCE), cuyo director, Michael Andrews, presentó a Marshall la poesía de Pintado.

La compositora, que lleva varios años incluyendo la literatura en sus piezas y que está aprendiendo español, encontró en estos versos un "misterio" y una "elegancia" que la intrigan.

El primer movimiento del quinteto se inspira en *Las noches de Mortefontaine*, poema en alejandrinos que pertenece al libro *Los bosques de Mortefontaine* (Bluebird Editions, 2007). Pintado "lector alucinado" desde la infancia— se topó por casualidad con un ensayo de Nerval, que



EL POETA CARLOS PINTADO.

FOTO: CORTESÍA: GABRIEL LIZARRAGA

hablaba de ese "lugar idílico, lleno de fantasías, fuentes y estatuas", que el poeta francés convirtió en refugio de su niñez huérfana.

"El poema recrea ese ambiente onírico", informa Pintado, añadiendo que el pintor Camille Corot también se inspiró en los magníficos para-

"La música tiene un mood oscuro", describe Marshall, mencionando a su vez otra sección de la composición que tiene "un tono melódico que transmite paz, tratando de imitar el sonido de una guitarra".

Tres sonetos publicados en *Habitación a oscuras* (Editorial Vitruvio, Madrid, 2007) inspiran los restantes movimientos. *The Colours Out of Space*, tomado de un título de Lovecraft, fabula de dónde provienen los colores.

"Capta la atmósfera de claroscuros, de penumbra, de contornos que se pierden [de la obra de Lovecraft]", explica Pintado.

Yo no te nombro, musa, es una especie de "invocación-refutación" a las musas, según el poeta, que reconoce que la inspiración no siempre

se hace presente para el artista.

"Creo que ha estado contigo y después te das cuenta de que nunca estuvo", añade.

El último, *Escrito en 1988*, fue el primer poema que realmente convenció a Pintado, que desde los 14 años escribía sonetos.

"Es un catálogo de pedidos; pido una sombra, una oscura mansedumbre, la vida, la suerte, la eternidad, templos, ciudades, Parnasos", enumera.

Ganador del Premio de Poesía Sant Jordi 2006, que se otorga en Cataluña, Pintado mantiene una incesante actividad. Publica en internet la revista literaria *La zorra y el cuervo*, que coordina junto al poeta George Riverón. En el 2008 ambos se unieron a Heriberto Hernández para fundar

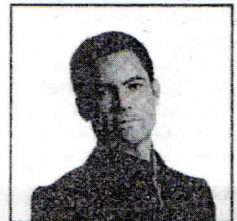
la editorial Bluebird.

En el 2010 verá la luz la antología *La rosa de Cole-ridge*, con poemas de autores de lengua inglesa que Pintado seleccionó y tradujo al español. También se publicará próximamente su poemario *El azar y los tesoros*.

South Beach Chamber Ensemble estrena el quinteto de Pamela Marshall inspirado en poemas de Carlos Pintado, domingo, 6 p.m., Miami Beach Botanical Garden, 2000 Convention Center Drive; martes 19, 8 p.m., en Andy Gato Gallery, Barry University, Thompson Hall (2do piso), 11300 NE 2 Ave., Miami Shores; miércoles 20, ArtSouth, 250 N Krome Avenue, Homestead.

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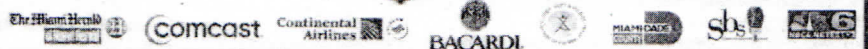
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[SUMMARIZED FROM "EL NUEVO HERALD" SECTION: GALERIA/APPLAUSE PAGE 5/D
DATE OF PUBLICATION: MAY 9, 2009]

Poetry of Carlos Pintado inspires musical quintet, by Sarah Moreno

This coming Sunday, when as part of the Music in Beautiful Spaces series the South Beach Chamber Ensemble premieres Pamela Marshall's quintet inspired by the poetry of Cuban writer Carlos Pintado, the written words of Gerard Nerval, H.P. Lovecraft and the elusive muses will all come together in that magical moment.

"My poetry follows a very English form, filled with mystery and shadow," described Pintado who combines the rigor and musicality of meter with very contemporary subjects. "The format has a very fixed but musical rhythm which obeys a cadence." Additionally, the poet will have to overcome his natural shyness as he reads his poems before the South Chamber Ensemble (SBCE), plays each movement.

Michael Andrews, the director of the Ensemble, introduced Marshall to the poetry of Pintado. The composer has been including literature in her pieces for years and found an "elegant mystery" in his poems that intrigued her.

The first movement of the quintet is inspired by "Mortefontaine Nocturne" a poem from his book *The Forests of Mortefontaine* (Bluebird Editions, 2007). The poem was inspired by an essay of Nerval that speaks of an "idyllic place, full of fantastical fountains and statues" which the French poet turned into a sonnet to his lost youth. "The music has a dark mood," explained Marshall mentioning another section of the composition that has a "melodious tone that transmits peace as it attempts to imitate the sound of a zither."

Three of his sonnets published in *Habitaciones a Oscuras* (Editorial Vitruvio, Madrid, 2007) inspired the following movements, followed by "The Colours out of Space" (a title taken from an H.P. Lovecraft fable). "It captures the atmosphere of chiaroscuro, shadows, contours lost to the darkness from the original work by Lovecraft," explained Pintado.

The Quintet ends with "Yo no te nombro musa" [I will not name you muse] - a kind of invocation and denial of the muses by the poet who recognizes that inspiration is not always present. This last poem, "written in 1988" was the one that finally convinced the poet, writing sonnets since age 14, to dedicate himself to his craft. He is the winner of the Sant Jordi Poetry Award 2006 from Catalonia. Pintado remains incessantly prolific - he publishes an on-line literary magazine *La Zorra y el Cuervo* along with poet George Riveron. In 2008 they both joined Humberto Hernandez to create Bluebird publishing. His anthology, poems by English speaking authors translated into Spanish, *La rosa de Coleridge* is due out in 2010. His next book of poetry, *El Azar y los Tesoros* will be published shortly.

NEIGHBORS

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MB14 **The Miami Herald**



ALEXIA FODERE/FOR THE MIAMI HERALD

BEAUTIFUL MUSIC

The South Beach Chamber Ensemble brings classical works to gardens and museums with its Music in Beautiful Spaces concerts. Cellist Michael Andrews, violinist Thomas Moore and pianist Ciro Fodere will perform at the **Miami Beach Botanical Garden** next month. **PAGE 3**

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SETTING THE SCORE

A CELLIST AND HIS FORMER TEACHER TAKE MUSIC TO UNUSUAL PLACES ACROSS MIAMI-DADE

BY PAMELA DUQUE
pduque@MiamiHerald.com

More than a decade ago, cellist Michael Andrews wanted to start a chamber ensemble — and was hunting for fellow musicians.

Little did he know he would reunite with his old music professor.

"I was looking for a violinist, and a friend told me he knew one and that his name was Thomas Moore," Andrews said. "I didn't believe it was going to be him."

Since 1997, the two men have been performing with other musicians as part of the South Beach Chamber Ensemble.

The chamber's premier event is the Music in Beautiful Spaces series — which brings chamber music to non-traditional venues such as museums and gardens.

Their next Music in Beautiful Spaces performance will take place March 1 at 6 p.m. in the Miami Beach Botanical Garden. At 8 p.m. March 3, they will play at Barry University's Andy Gato Gallery — a performance that will mark their new title as the university's ensemble in residence.

"People can enjoy beautiful places with the music," said Miami pianist Ciro Fodere, who joined the ensemble three years ago. "They have the music but they also have beautiful gardens outside, and I think that's unique."

The South Beach Chamber ensemble has also worked with Florida International University, University of Miami, the New World Symphony. They recently signed a one-year partnership with Barry University's Department of Fine Arts and will perform during theatrical productions as well as ensemble-only performances.

The March 3 performance will use a piano donated by Sandra Walsh, professor of nursing at Barry University,



PHOTOS BY ALEXIA FODERE/FOR THE MIAMI HERALD

THE PLAYERS: Members of the South Beach Chamber Ensemble, above, from left, cellist Michael Andrews, violinist Thomas Moore and pianist Ciro Fodere rehearse, below. The ensemble brings its music to beautiful settings such as museums and gardens. It next plays March 1 in the Miami Beach Botanical Garden.



in memory of her late father.

"We are very excited to launch this partnership," Andrews said. "We know their commitment for excellent in arts, and we support that."

In May, the ensemble will

return to the university and the Miami Beach Botanical Garden — and also play at Homestead's ArtSouth, a converted church now used as an artists' community.

Andrews, a Wisconsin native who now lives in

Miami Beach, and Moore first met at the University of Wisconsin. Andrews was a student, and Moore was professor of violin and chamber music. Their group plays chamber music by German composer Felix Mendelssohn,

If you go

South Beach Chamber Ensemble's Music in Beautiful Spaces concert series

■ **Miami Beach:** 6 p.m. March 1 at the Miami Beach Botanical Garden, 2000 Convention Center Dr. Cost: \$15; \$10 students and seniors.

■ **Miami Shores:** 8 p.m. March 3 at Barry University's Andy Gato Gallery, 11300 NE Second Ave. Cost: \$15; \$10 students and seniors; free for Barry students and faculty with valid ID.

■ **For information:** Call 305-673-2183 or go to www.sobechamberensemble.org.

Argentine composer Astor Piazzolla and Brazilian composer Heitor Villa-Lobos, among others.

Andrews, who started playing the cello at age 8, has been part of the Orquesta Filarmónica de Caracas in Venezuela and has played in several philharmonics in Florida.

He then decided to found the ensemble.

"It just fell into place," Andrews said. "And it's an ensemble and not a trio, or quartet, because it gives room to perform more musical options."

Moore, who has also performed in Europe, South Africa, Canada and South America, lives in Miami and is currently professor of violin and chamber music at the New World School of the Arts.

"Our music is hauntingly beautiful," Moore said.

The ensemble performs in small, intimate venues for a "much more personal experience," Andrews said.

"People can expect great music they've never heard before," Andrews said. "It's going to be American music from the South and North and unusual, interesting music."

Please go to the Knight Arts Blog link or read article below.

<http://www.knightarts.org/community/miami/south-beach-chamber-ensemble-explores-the-piano-trio-american-style>

South Beach Chamber Ensemble explores the piano trio, American-style
Published on May 2, 2012 by Gregory Stepanich in Miami, Music, Knight Arts Blog

Michael Andrews grew up in Wisconsin going frequently to art museums and galleries, with a mother and an aunt who both were art teachers.

One day his musical life as a cellist and his art upbringing came together when he saw the great Cleveland Quartet play a concert at New York's Mary Boone Gallery.

"It broke down the barriers for people who think classical music, and especially string quartets, are boring or elitist. Just being in a beautiful space was more inviting," Andrews said. "And so I thought 'Music in Beautiful Spaces' would be a great title for a series."

In 1997, Andrews formed the South Beach Chamber Ensemble to do just that, and for 15 years now the group has been performing programs called "Music in Beautiful Spaces."

On Tuesday night, Andrews and three other musicians – pianist Ciro Fodere and violinists Luis Fernandez and Tony Seepersad – played the first of three "Beautiful Spaces" concerts they'll give this week devoted to piano trios by American composers (Fernandez and Seepersad alternate in the violin seat). Tuesday night's concert was at Barry University's Andy Gato Gallery, and Thursday night the four will play at the new Coral Gables Museum. They'll close the series Sunday afternoon at the Miami Beach Botanical Garden.

Andrews, 60, who began his cello career in Venezuela, founded the ensemble after returning to music from 13 years in the restaurant industry in New York and South Florida, including several years of work as a pastry chef at The Raleigh Hotel in Miami Beach.

"One of the perks of being on my board is that I cook dinner for them," said Andrews, who also teaches with the Miami Music Project. "We have dinner and a board meeting, and that's how I entice them to stay on the board."

The programs Thursday and Sunday include the "Piano Trio of Leonard Bernstein," written when the composer was just 19 and a student at Harvard, and the "Café Music" of Paul Schoenfield, written in 1986 and probably the composer's most popular work. The series also includes the premiere of "Orion Trio," a work by Andrew Logan, a recent graduate of the New World School of the Arts.

Logan's piece is dedicated to the memory of his father Henry, a Miami artist and poet who founded the "Palmetto Review" and the Art Factory, and who died in October. Andrew Logan writes in his program note that the three movements of the trio "are named after the stars in Orion's belt," referring to the constellation.

“The pianist, cellist and violinist are the ‘three wise men,’ as the stars are also often called, who have had to make music of my irregular notation, vague, esoteric dynamics, and last-minute revisions.”

Andrews said the piece is relatively tonal and “very dramatic,” and at one point evokes Philip Glass in its steady-state harmonic background. “And then there’s an homage to his father with a section that’s a funeral march,” he said.

The Bernstein trio, although an early work, has much of the composer’s characteristic style already in place, Andrews said. “What I like about it is it’s full of his personality, his quirkiness, his fun and his rhythm,” he said, adding that there’s a tempo change almost every half-page. “It’s surprising and delightful.”

Schoenfield’s “Café Music” was inspired by the composer’s experience as a house pianist in a Minneapolis steakhouse, and references a good deal of popular music. “It’s a real crowd-pleaser,” Andrews said. “There are blues, jazz and swing elements, and the slow movement is gorgeous. It’s like a languid afternoon on a riverboat in New Orleans.”

In addition to the trio concerts, the ensemble is making appearances this Saturday and next, this time with violist Rafael Ramirez, in 20-minute concerts at the Normandy Village Farmers Market in Miami Beach. The project is called Mozart on the Move, and it features the musicians playing Mozart and other pieces in unexpected places such as Macy’s, Whole Foods and the Score gay bar on Lincoln Road.

“Last year we did about 12 performances, and we connected with about 3,000 people,” Andrews said. “We played everything from Mozart to Lady Gaga.” This year, they’ve added arrangements of Coldplay’s “Yellow” and a song by The Shins to their roving repertoire.

“We really want to inspire people to think about what we do in a new way,” he said. The free popup concerts are set for 11:30 a.m., noon and 12:20 p.m. this Saturday, and at 11:30 a.m. and noon May 12.

Additionally, this will be the seventh year of South Beach Up North, in which Andrews mounts free chamber music concerts in his hometown of Wausau, Wis., in mid-July. And the group also will be working with Fort Lauderdale-based puppeteer Jim Hammond on a presentation called “Mozart Meets Gaga” at Miami Beach Senior High on Sept. 30.

All of it adds up to a way of thinking about classical music that is very much in keeping with the modern approach to outreach and barrier-breaking.

“It’s all music. Music is music,” Andrews said, whether it’s a string quartet or a house music rave. “There is a history of music, and we’re part of that, but we’re happy to interest people in new ways... It’s all connected.”

The South Beach Chamber Ensemble plays at 7:30 p.m. Thursday at the Coral Gables Museum and at 4 p.m. Sunday at the Miami Beach Botanical Garden. Tickets are \$20 for adults and \$10 for students and seniors if bought online; \$25 and \$15 respectively at the door. For more information, call 305-673-2183 or visit sobechamberensemble.org.

Contact: Terri Lynn 954 677 1030

Please call if you would like to schedule an interview with Michael Andrews, Executive Artistic Director, South Beach Chamber Ensemble.

MIAMI BEACH STUDENTS GO GAGA FOR MOZART

The highly anticipated world premiere of *Mozart Meets Gaga* will come to life on Sunday, September 30 at the Miami Beach Senior High School Auditorium.

According to the show's musical director this is a theatrical first. "When you take Gaga's music and Mozart's strings quartet, coupled with enthusiastic students and combined with dozens of puppets, anything can happen," said Michael Andrews, Executive Artistic Director, South Beach Chamber Ensemble.

Building on last year's breakthrough project, *Mozart on the Move* (a Knight Foundation Arts Challenge finalist) The South Beach Chamber Ensemble created an interactive experience about the mythical time when composer/pianist Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart met Lady Gaga in Vienna during the 18th century.

The South Beach Chamber Ensemble, in collaboration with Jim Hammond, Puppet Designer & Managing Director/CEO of Puppet Network together with the Visual and Performing Arts Academy of Miami Beach Senior High School, is creating a multi-dimensional musical-visual experience for modern families.

Using Hammond's modern interpretations of ancient European and Asian Shadow Puppetry, the walls around the Chamber Ensemble will come alive to spark the audience's imagination, bringing Mozart's magic and wild visuals to contemporary kids with ever evolving aesthetic palates.

WHAT: *Mozart Meets Gaga*-world premiere for children of all ages. See what happens when puppets and Mozart create magic a la Gaga.

COST: FREE WHERE: Miami Beach Senior High School Auditorium
2231 Prairie Avenue
Miami Beach, Florida

WHEN: Sunday, September 30, 2012

TIME 2:00 PM

South Beach Chamber Ensemble is partially funded by a city of Miami Beach Gala Grant. The mission of the South Beach Chamber Ensemble is to promote and perform chamber music in all its diverse forms, from its origins in the distant past, to the varied cultural creations being produced today, bringing together performers, composers and audiences to experience the beauty and intimacy of the human spirit.