

Group gives jubilant performance

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Under the direction of Maestro Juan Pablo Izquierdo, the Carnegie Mellon Philharmonic gave a breathtaking performance last Saturday night in Rangos Hall. With half the program consisting of a Beethoven symphony also performed last week for their Homecoming concert, the Philharmonic proved it is not only capable of portraying great breadths of emotion, but is capable of doing so consistently.

Take two of Beethoven's Third Symphony, the *Eroica*, proved to be just as heartfelt as the first performance. Perhaps more distinct the second time around were the intensity of the pianissimos in the first and second movements. Maintaining a full sound is often difficult to accomplish at such a low dynamic, but the orchestra retained its sound even as the volume decreased.

The showcase of horns in the third movement added much to the majestic tone of the piece, and at times the sound appeared to be emanating from every corner of the hall. The fourth movement highlighted excellent handling of difficult counterpoint, and the flow of the movement was not lost on the contrasting phrases.

The orchestra changed gears in the second half of the program, and devoted the final portion of

the concert to folk dances by Bela Bartok and Manuel de Falla.

Bartok's *Roman nepi tancok* moved very quickly and appeared more as one single movement with allegro and andante interludes rather than a piece divided into six separate movements. The strings were clean and bright, providing a beautiful background for a jubilant clarinet entrance. The clarinet/string echoes contributed a light, carefree effect to the piece, and the notes almost seemed to bounce off of one another. The flute solo flowed nicely over the long tone base of strings, clarinets, and bassoons, and added a true folk feel to the work. The final movement was overflowing with energy as the basses provided a fervent pulse to the movement. The presto tempo was wonderfully executed, and the orchestra maintained control despite the fast-moving pace.

Manuel de Falla's *Three Cornered Hat* was a lively finish to the orchestra's performance. The first movement, "The Neighbor's Dance," showcased the orchestra's ability to carry across sudden changes in mood. The tone frequently changed from light, airy passages to majestic, energized phrases, but the orchestra was able to maintain its intensity in both cases.

The second movement, "The Miller's Dance" began with a vibrant horn entrance which gave

way to a beautiful English horn solo, played with wonderful facility and vibrato. This movement in particular showcased the orchestra's skill with dynamic. The orchestra created very sudden fortissimos which appeared to come out of nowhere. The French horns stood out with their classic round sound, and the precise oboe solo contrasted beautifully with the energy of the horns. The culmination of the movement built from slow, soft passages and then accelerated into heated passages accentuated by the addition of percussion at the end.

The last movement of the *Three Cornered Hat* brought the concert to an energetic finish. The orchestra played the presto tempo with excellent technical facility. The whirlwind passages completed the almost magical mood set by the first two dances. After hearing the other portions of the piece, the *Final Dance* became less of its own entity, as it had been in the Homecoming concert, and more of a final chapter. The energy literally poured off the stage, and the final chords reverberated throughout the room.

The concert was an astounding mix of calm, peaceful movements and bright, energetic dances, with the intensity of the orchestra drowned out only by the audience's applause.