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## DOUBLE TAKE

*Orchestral shows aren't reserved for the musically trained*

JEANNE FRONDA STAFF

If you don't know the difference between an adagio, a sonata and an allegro, then that's perfectly fine. This lack of knowledge about all things orchestral won't bar you from enjoying symphony shows. Music student Natalia Zielinski believes a trip to a symphony show is an event that everyone can relish.

"[Music] is really a universal way of telling stories. You can go anywhere on the planet and connect with other people. You can connect with other people and not really speak," said Zielinski.

"There's this idea that [going to the symphony] is so expensive and that you get to the [concert hall] in a limousine and then go and get your box seats," said the musician,

a fourth-year faculty of music student at the University of Manitoba. "[Some people] are probably thinking they will not fit in there."

Zielinski points out that going to a symphony show is more approachable and accessible than a lot of people perceive it to be, noting that a lot of fans travel to symphony shows the way people do to rock concerts: by public transit.

"Even if people [are curious about the symphony], then just come and see it to figure out whether or not it's something they would be into," said the violin student, who will be performing as a featured soloist with the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra in an upcoming free concert at the Fort Garry campus.

Graduate student Greg McLean agrees that there may be a barrier when it comes to orchestral music reaching more people.

"There are social stigmas attached to symphonic music," said the faculty of music student, who is studying conducting. "There's [sometimes] a psychological barrier, but you just have to

come in the door and listen to it."

Perhaps listening to a concerto or two will be made a little easier for some students, since the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra's concert at the University of Manitoba is not only free, but will also showcase music that is familiar to a lot of people — think Pink Floyd and maybe Brahms's Lullaby.

"Taking the [Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra] to the university is a bold move," said McLean.

But if you like Bugs Bunny, then perhaps you'll enjoy the University of Manitoba Symphony Orchestra's concert at the Great Hall. The show will also feature Zielinski as a soloist and its play list includes the familiar Beethoven

composition "Symphony #5" and the not-so-familiar "Rosini Overture to Semiramide," which is an overture to an opera.

"It's quite lively. Bugs Bunny would like [the overture]," joked McLean, who will be guest conducting the University of Manitoba Symphony Orchestra along with principal conductor Earl Stafford, who is also the Royal Winnipeg Ballet's music director and principal conductor.

"I think [this show] is an excellent moment and they can strut their stuff," said McLean. "It's exciting."

The Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra performs on Wed. Oct. 26 at 12 noon in the Multipurpose room, located on the second floor of University Centre. Admission is free.

The University of Manitoba Symphony Orchestra performs on Thurs. Oct. 27 at 8 p.m. at the Great Hall, located in University College. Tickets can be purchased at the door.



Violinist Natalia Zielinski.  
Photo by Lisa Waldner.



Vibeke Sorensen's Sanctuary

## SANCTITY OF SANCTUARY

*Vibeke Sorensen's art is peaceful but unconvincing*

K. JILL PETERS

"If a tree cries in the forest, does anybody hear?" This is one of the questions posed by artist Vibeke Sorensen's *Sanctuary*, an interactive architectural installation.

Sorensen, a current professor and fellow at Arizona State University, is an artist working in experimental new media. She uses new technological advances such as the Internet, digital imagery in both still and video format, computer graphics and animation to create her artwork. She has a lengthy history of collaboration with scientists in the development of new technologies that assist artists and scientists to communicate abstract and complex ideas more effectively.

*Sanctuary* explores light, space and the cross-cultural interpretations of 'safe haven,' focusing on the natural and spiritual. Sorensen's work is a blend of painting and photography, animation and documentary. *Sanctuary* incorporates thousands of images, sounds, texts and movies recorded around the world; it is a global narrative based on peace and understanding. Sorensen's travels to places such as Bolivia, Brazil and Canyon de Chelly in Arizona to document sacred rituals are a testament to her endeavour to share these experiences with others.

The word 'sanctuary' is defined as a sacred place, such as a church, temple or mosque, and a place of refuge or asylum. Sorensen's treatment of *Sanctuary* certainly suggests these ideas.

It is inevitable that we notice the interesting, yet odd, juxtaposition of "new media" within a traditional, timeless structure. It seems as though Sorensen is asking the viewer to re-examine the very idea and meaning of "sanctuary," yet she contradicts this goal somewhat by choosing a stereotypical construction for her sanctuary. This exhibition begs questions such as "What is required of a sanctuary?" and "Where can sanctuary be found?"

Visitors to this exhibition enter a dimly-lit room; the only light source consists of three large video screens in the centre of the space. Large tropical plants are evenly placed around the perimeter of the room. A table containing a single bowl filled with wa-

ter is intended to mark the beginning of our journey into *Sanctuary*. From the table, a bamboo mat stretches towards the triangular grouping of video screens, indicating a suggested path for the viewer. Travelling up a slight incline into this chamber, the viewer is encouraged to sit and watch *Sanctuary* come to life. Two copper-seated benches are provided, and, between them, a low table contains three small, potted plants. Overhead, a canopy of branches and twigs further enclose the space. Their aesthetic is echoed in the slender logs that act as frames for the video screens. On screen, imagery dominated by human forms, nature, landscape and architecture blend and move to the music that fills the air.

The contribution of original music by professor Shahrokh Yadegari of the University of California, as well as contributors Azam Ali, Greg Ellis and Keyavash Nourai, is an integral part of this installation. The dramatic element provided by this moving score enhances the overall experience. The simple, minimalist layout allows for a tranquil experience. The viewer is not distracted by a multitude of stimulus; the focus of the installation is clearly upon the screens that the artist uses to convey a message of peace and understanding. Sorensen's desire to create a space in which the viewer may reflect on the importance of this message does not go unnoticed in such a surrounding.

The size of the gallery is ideal for the installation of *Sanctuary*. The unmistakable walls and flooring of a gallery, however, make it somewhat difficult to truly transport the viewer to another place. Treatment of these surfaces influences the viewer's ultimate experience. The consideration of every variable is essential when producing an installation, yet the lack of consid-


eration given to the finishing touches is evident here. Hardware used to assemble the video screens, for instance, is easily seen by the viewer; an attempt to conceal these devices would have made the setting more convincing.

Sorensen clearly intends for us to enter and exit this installation with questions in mind. However, the valuable questions and issues at hand in *Sanctuary* have the potential to be overshadowed by a lack of understanding of the artist's full intentions. We can see that there are important cultural ideas at work through her on-screen imagery. We sense the monumentality of her message through the use of emotional and dramatic music. We understand the significance of that message both by the title of her work and through a structure we know to be sacred. All of these things are presented effectively to us.

But, if the intention is to examine a global narrative of peace and understanding based upon the artist's extensive research in spiritual practices throughout the world, this intrinsic understanding may elude the viewer. All this may be resolved in a single concise artist statement, which, unfortunately, has not been provided for *Sanctuary*.

*Sanctuary* initiates and solicits careful consideration on the part of the beholder. It is the initiation of an important message, the beginning of a valuable experience. I leave this *Sanctuary* with one significant question in mind: "Are we able to see the forest for the trees?"

*Sanctuary* is showing at Gallery One One One, located on the main floor of the Fitzgerald Building. It runs until Oct. 28.



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