

David Lockington (1956 – )  
Ceremonial Fantasy Fanfare for ArtPrize

Written: 2009

Movements: One

Style: Contemporary

Duration: 5 minutes

Grand Rapids audiences of course know of David Lockington's work as a conductor. Many have enjoyed the opportunity to hear him perform on his cello. However, not many know of his work as a composer. Last year's inaugural year of ArtPrize gave audiences the opportunity to hear a new work by our music director on the Grand Rapids Symphony's Rising Star series. Tonight, Ceremonial Fantasy Fanfare for ArtPrize gets a reprise as ArtPrize enters its second year.

David Lockington began his musical life singing in a musical show when he was nine. He started playing cello when he was ten and had his "first attempts at composition" when he was sixteen. His first completed compositions were "vitriolic revenge songs for a lost love based on a text by John Donne" that he wrote when he was a student at Cambridge.

When describing his influences, Lockington lists the film composer Michel LeGrand, then Dmitri Shostakovich, Gustav Mahler, Samuel Barber and Arnold Schoenberg (but now "less atonal"). He describes his current musical style as "mid-century romantic with a few minimalist overtones." Describing his method of composing Lockington says: "I sometimes think I have a different piece in me than what comes out. When I start to write, if I turn away any fears about being judged, what comes out is the essence of my personality or experience at that moment. For the most part I think it is lyrical, colorful, romantic and soulful. Ultimately, it is all one—unless you are trying to be obtuse or pretentious. I think my sense of creativity is naturally fairly organic with room for spontaneity. Even when composing—when everything is taken out of real time—those same qualities show up. There's temperament in there but with a solid structure."

The theme that pervades Ceremonial Fantasy Fanfare for ArtPrize comes from the musical notes that can be derived from the letters in GRAND RAPIDS. David Lockington goes on to explain that the theme: "... effortlessly created a heroic fanfare-like motif based on musical intervals of fourths and fifths. I also had a sound image of colored paint being thrown at a canvas and slowly dripping down. That gesture is represented in the first climax after the opening fanfare. After that, the musical material is shaped and molded as a painter or sculptor would fashion their work. I also wanted the main theme to have a dynamic seriousness to it so that the ending would feel like a triumphant resolution. At the end, various melodic strains are combined creating a contrapuntal confluence of musical ideas."

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