

Arts & Entertainment

Lorenz's Sculpture Shows 'Counter Balance' of Design

By MARYLOU MORANO
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

AREA – The mystery of sculpture, like any other art form, lies in its interpretation.

"Counter Balance," a stoneware clay sculpture exhibit by Elaine Lorenz recently held at Union County College's Tomasulo Gallery, was as intriguing in its design, as it was challenging in its interpretation.

Most of Ms. Lorenz's sculpted objects resembled torsos frozen in one position or another. Lifelike in size, it's not hard to imagine that they do, indeed, represent parts of the human body.

Ms. Lorenz's work, however, challenges the viewer to look beyond the obvious into a deeper interpretation. For example, at first glance, "Secrets," a 23-inch high sculpture, appears to be three upper leg-lower back forms in close arrangement. But the work's title, as well as its form, suggests there is something hidden in the juxtaposition.

"The sculptures shown in this exhibition express my interest in nature's generative forces, rather than her destructive side," Ms. Lorenz said. "These pieces are an expression of

sensuous joy and a connection with the earth and renewed life." One sculpture entitled "Ben's



Ben's Legacy

Legacy," is Ms. Lorenz's tribute to her father's influence on her work. It consists of an abstract human form from which emerges a piece of driftwood.

All of the sculptures in "Counter Balance" are created from stoneware clay fired to more than 2000 degrees. The sculptures represent a variety of

finishes. Some pieces are glazed, others are stained and still others remain their natural clay color.

Ms. Lorenz holds a Master of Fine Arts degree from Vermont College of Norwich University. She has taught beginning and advanced sculpture and ceramic sculpture at William Paterson University in Wayne.

In addition to several solo and group exhibits in New Jersey, Ms. Lorenz's work has been exhibited in New York City, Coming, Long Island and Denver.

In 2005, Ms. Lorenz received a State Sculpture Commission for the N.J. Environmental Center Headquarters at DeKorte Park in Lyndhurst.

To see photos of Ms. Lorenz's sculpture, visit elainelorenzart.com.

The next exhibit at Tomasulo Gallery is a solo show of figurative oil paintings by Jen Mazza, which will run from now until February 15. Tomasulo Gallery is located on the first floor of the Kenneth Campbell MacKay Library on the Union County College Cranford Campus. For exhibit hours, call (908) 709-7155.

See it all on the web in color www.goleader.com

Three Musical Worlds Intersect At Morristown Comm. Theater

By VICTORIA McCABE
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

AREA – At the Morristown Community Theater two weekends ago, the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra presented an intersection of three distinct musical worlds – the classicism of Beethoven, the minimalism of John Adams and the Russian romanticism of Tchaikovsky. Audience members witnessed not only three excellent and vastly different musical works but also some stunning displays of musicianship from both a world-class violin soloist and the NJSO's own string players.

Beethoven wrote the Eighth Symphony, a lighthearted, cheerful work and a personal favorite of the composer, in 1812 and premiered it in 1814 shortly after his Seventh Symphony.

The Eighth would live in the shadow of the Seventh both in 1814 and in posterity, a fact that Beethoven lamented. When asked why audiences preferred the Seventh to the Eighth, the composer reportedly said, "because [the Eighth] is so much better!" The NJSO played Beethoven's cherished work competently in its fourth performance of the piece in as many days; the first movement's violin passages felt a bit laborious at first, but a lovely cello tone quality over a fluid passage and a staccato viola anchor seemed to spark the musicians and inject the liveliest Beethoven wanted into the piece.

The orchestra nailed the intense buildups; tremolos gave the piece momentum and a wild energy. Sustained wind chords held together the movement's development section as the strings bounced around, fueled by nice dynamic swells.

The real surprise of the Eighth comes right after the first movement's soft ending. Instead of a traditional slow movement, Beethoven writes a short *Allegretto Scherzando* meant to emulate a metronome, a then-brand-new invention. A staccato pulse drives the piece – violins and strings lay out a

light melody over the continuous beat. A lush wind melody echoed by the strings resonated particularly well.

Languid melodies interject the stately flow of the third movement *minuetto* when a horn interlude enters over staccato cello arpeggios. The cellos were a bit muddled at first, but they settled in as beat keepers before the whole orchestra entered in around them and transitioned back

change on a minor stage" (cue the cymbal for the music nerd pun). "I was going to talk about Beethoven," he said, "but Beethoven says it all."

Wagner introduced Manahan, the music director of the New York City Opera and a former acting director of the NJSO, before the orchestra's strings performed contemporary composer John Adams' "Shaker Loops." The maestro discussed the minimalist movement to which Adams has contributed. The school of thought developed as a reaction to the complexity of the 12-tone music of the 1950s, and Manahan several times drew laughs from the audience during his explanation of the genre – "stretching minimal material over a maximum amount of time," he smiled – before offering a more reflective take on it.

"It's like looking at shapes of clouds," he said. "They don't look like they're moving, but if you close your eyes for 10 seconds, they have."

"Shaker Loops," scored for chamber string orchestra, opened like an undefined flurry of sound – the second violins and violas traded heavy accents back and forth, heightening the feeling of being lost within the music with the erratic-sounding placement of the accents. The piece was immediately demanding; the musicians needed complete concentration to keep from losing their place in the swirling soundscape, and they did so without bogging down the music. Suddenly, all the sections lined up rhythmically and then began to spiral outwards, creating a torrent of activity that suddenly disappeared.

In the second movement's wash of sounds, bits of high harmonies punctuated the tonal fabric and then, after a breath, the strings sustained a soft, lush harmony without any *vibrato* effects, creating a sound beautiful and soothing in its simplicity. Occasional deeper tones, especially from the violas, would ground the sound, but for the most part it soared ethereally.

A magnificent cello solo in the instrument's high register glided over the string drone to usher in the third phase of the work, "Loops and Verses," and the strings slowly reintroduced a pulse. The moment belonged to the cello section – the second-chair cellist harmonized with her stand partner before the whole section came back in. As the violas took over the melody, the basses joined the cellos in a thunderous outburst.

The second and first violins started hitting intense accented notes to draw the work into its fourth and final segment, "A Final Shaking," and the whole chamber orchestra began to



Jennifer Koh

into the lively minuet melody.

In the Eighth's final movement, there are so many wonderfully exuberant things going on in each section that, seeing the work performed live, it was hard to know where to look. Guest conductor George Manahan really gave himself to the music, throwing his whole body into accented beats, opening his arms wide while letting lyrical passages soar up and through the theater. The musicians, in turn, released unbridled energy all the way through the movement's closing coda – a triumphant series of ending-cadence chords strung together in true Beethovenian celebration.

Principal bassoonist and occasional NJSO emcee Robert Wagner addressed the audience during the "major stage



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CONTINUED ON PAGE 19

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