

Student Composes Heavy Metal For UT Studio Orchestra

KNOXVILLE, Tennessee (October 16, 2009) - The Trans-Siberian Orchestra has passed up Knoxville on their 2009-2010 Winter tour, but that leaves room for composer and guitarist Johnny Newman to make his mark. Boasting classical training in music composition, orchestration, and jazz big band arranging, Newman combines his education in classical music and love for heavy metal for a November concert with the University of Tennessee Studio Orchestra.

As a student finishing his degree in music composition under the direction of Dr. Kenneth Jacobs at the University of Tennessee, Johnny Newman is graduating on a high note. After a successful premier of the heavy metal composition “Polly Wants a Rhythm” this past April, Rusty Holloway, director of the UT Studio Orchestra, has agreed to perform several of Newman’s heavy metal compositions at his senior recital at the University of Tennessee Music Hall on November 2nd. And contrary to popular belief, Johnny’s brand of heavy metal is more intelligent than you may think.

His composition, “Polly Wants a Rhythm,” has the UT Studio Orchestra playing in two separate time signatures for its developmental section while his other compositions, such as “Desideratum I” and “In Love,” contain harmonic passages that are reminiscent of Hungarian composer Bela Bartok. And Newman has most certainly not been slacking off; he has spent the entire semester orchestrating his compositions for the orchestra as well as rehearsing his music with them. Also on the program are a few of Newman’s electronic & multimedia works. These compositions are based on noise-based sampling and synthesis, much like the work of Karlheinz Stockhausen and Edgard Varese, which are accurately synced with abstract art and film.

The music of Johnny Newman is definitely that of a rising composer and performer whose work is especially strong in the combination of heavy metal, symphonic orchestration, and 21st century music composition and performance techniques. In a city that claims fame to jazz, hard rock, classical, and experimental electronic music; this concert is a serious illustration of art by a young composer who has been exposed to all these compositional genres. His concert, “Impassioned: Symphonic Metal & Multimedia,” is at the University of Tennessee Music Hall on November 2nd at 8:00 p.m.

For more information, contact Johnny Newman at
booking.jnewman@gmail.com or at ***(865)660-2834***.

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