

## U of T works true to form

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In few disciplines are the differences between York University and the University of Toronto as marked as in music composition. The former stands for minimalism, mixed media, and all varieties of fringe experimentation; the latter stands for discipline, good musical grammar, and adherence to mainstream Western esthetics regardless of tonal language.

U of T staff members ran true to form in a concert of recent works Saturday night in the Edward Johnson Building's Walter Hall. Six composers were represented, and six distinct styles emerged.

The most satisfying number was Concerto for 14 Instruments (1982) by the Latvian-born composer Talivaldis Kenins, who seems to be able to inject genuine personality into a relatively familiar Bartokian, mid-century idiom. Themes were intrinsically interesting, rhythms sophisticated, and colorings (for eight strings and six winds) often captivatingly brilliant. Best of all, it was possible to detect real shades of feeling in each of its effectively contrasted four movements.

Lothar Klein's Canadiana for Two Pianos was also very approachable, albeit partly due to the infectious folk rhythms it borrowed and the bright performance it received from the two-piano team of Leslie Kinton and James Anagnoson. Walter Buczynski's Sonata for Violin and Piano, though a little rambling and colorless in its middle parts, began and ended with wittily nostalgic melodies that might have dropped from the pen of a latter-day Gabriel Faure.

On the minus side, Edward Laufer contributed a dull and chilly serial octet (called Concertino) and John Hawkins three blandly semi-tonal Songs for Tenor and Harp (James McLean and Gianetta Baril). The concert's most copiously annotated work, John Beckwith's Case Study, was, not surprisingly, the least notable. Five musicians, reworking a very old theme indeed, brought normally extraneous "ritual procedures" — packing, unpacking, lubricating, and cleaning instruments — into the actual arena of the concert performance. At one point, a violinist rose from her chair, popped a cigaret into her mouth, and started to play knock-knock on the cellist's instrument case. Meaningful.