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May 6 – May 12, 2011

Belen to play Dillon... and Elias!

News of the Three Rivers Performing Arts Institute

by Bill Haxton

Acclaimed contemporary American composer Lawrence Dillon will be featured in tomorrow evening's concert. Rapidly emerging as one of the most potent modern composers, he's been honored by the National Endowment for the Arts, the American Music Center, the Pew Charitable Trusts and many more.

Though contemporary, Dillon's music is easily approachable, written to create recognizable effects and emotion. The concert pieces are all from a new Naxos CD of Dillon's violin works, recently recorded by virtuoso Danielle Belen, who will be on hand to autograph copies.

Dillon's *Façade* creates a powerful metaphor for the human condition. The initial theme is a comforting Romantic melody that flows reassuringly along for about two minutes. Then comes the first punctuated sign of disintegration. From here, the theme falls apart into isolated fragments, wary, watchful, apprehensive. Then a mirror image of the original theme reappears; this time strained and fragile.

In *Fifteen Minutes*, there are over a dozen short but accurate emotional sketches that evoke exactly what their titles suggest — *Grand Entrance*, *Runaway*, *Foolery*, *Carried Away*.

In one piece, Danielle makes the violin sound like two songbirds calling across an expanse of forest. Toward the end, in the short segment called "Dissonance," there's a wonderfully funny piece in which the violin part is doubled with a kazoo.

The second half opens with one of the most powerful, moving, and difficult violin pieces ever written: J.S. Bach's majestic *Chaconne* from the *Partita in D Minor*. Brahms said of this piece, "On one stave, for a small instrument, Bach writes a whole world of the deepest thoughts and most powerful feelings. If I imagined that I could have created, even conceived the piece, I am quite certain that the excess of excitement and earth-shattering experience would have driven me out of my mind."

3RPAI
CONCERT SERIES
DANIELLE BELEN
Saturday, May 7, 7 pm
Community Presbyterian Church
Three Rivers
Admission: \$12
Free for youth under 18

Danielle will also perform a recent composition by Three Rivers composer Ken Elias, the delightful Scherzo from his Sonata for Violin and Piano 2011. In Ken's words, "Awhile back, Danielle asked me if I'd ever thought about composing something for violin. I asked her if she would collaborate with me, since my knowledge of violin is limited, and she agreed. I'm extremely grateful to her for this opportunity, and for performing part of the work!"

The program closes with Pablo Sarasate's energetic Introduction and Tarantelle, a virtuosic composition that has been bringing audiences to their feet for over a hundred years.

Bill Haxton is a resident of Three Rivers and principal in the newly formed Three Rivers Performing Arts Institute.