The Architecture of a Hit Comedy: Safdie’s ‘Private Jokes, Public Places’

BY KRISTIN STERLING

Oren Safdie intended to follow in the footsteps of his father, noted Canadian architect Moshe Safdie. But during his last semester at Graduate School for Architecture, Planning and Preservation (GSAPP) ’90, he took an elective course taught by Canadian architect Moshe Safdie. “I found myself laughing out loud,” said Chaikelson. “It was the best thing I did during that time. Every three years we put on a show of student work, and had some pretty great people get their first shot there.” Safdie said. “Amanda Peet got her first acting job there, Ethan Hawke, Cara Buono, Nick Sandow and many others worked there.”

Safdie has also written several other plays, including Jews & Jesus and Laughing Dogs, and a film script, You Can Thank Me Later.

A Musical Odyssey: Student’s Work Premieres in France

BY KRISTIN STERLING

On Dec. 19, when most Columbia students will be completing finals and heading home for the holiday break, Marcelo Toledo, GSAS ’04, will be at the Pompidou Center in Paris, where one of Europe’s foremost new-music groups will perform his dissertation piece—a composition for chamber orchestra, at its world premiere.

In 2000, while Toledo was working on his dissertation he applied to a competition organized by the Institute of Research and Coordination in Acoustics-Music (IRCAM) and the Ensemble Intercontemporain in Paris, both founded by French composer Pierre Boulez. Toledo’s work was selected from more than 500 entries.

“The competition is highly competitive and it is a great opportunity to have a new composition performed in France by one of the most important contemporary music ensembles,” Toledo said. The Ensemble Intercontemporain, who are known for their close collaboration on new music with IRCAM, a unique cultural and educational institution devoted to the promotion of technology and music through a close collaboration between researchers and composers. A graduate music composition student from Argentina, Toledo titled the piece Par el encuentro en los abismos after a line from a poem by the Argentine poet Juan L. Ortiz. “I consider Ortiz the poet of the exteriors, of the almost imperceptible—a poet who explored like no one else the transitory, yet eternal aspect of things,” he said.

Describing his musical style, Toledo said that it is “an exploration/journey into a world of complex sounds and noises produced on selected traditional instruments—a river of several layers of sound, each one with its own speed, process, texture and density generating a more complex matter in permanent transformation.”

“What is unusual about this composition,” he continued, “is the almost complete absence of definitive pitch as we know it in traditional music. In fact a number of my recent compositions have been engendered by the assumption in order to create a coherent, expressive and well-structured piece of music that is not essential to work with pitch-oriented sounds.”

It took Toledo six months to create the work, which is crafted for 24 musicians. He dedicated the composition to his wife, Laura, and the world premiere to the memory of Edward Said, described by Toledo as “a vital, indispensable mind and spirit in a time of cruelty, chaos and nonsense.”

AP’s Kathleen Carroll Elected to Pulitzer Board

BY CAROLINE LASHAM

Kathleen Carroll, the executive editor and a senior vice president of the Associated Press (AP), has been elected to the Pulitzer Prize Board.

Carroll has served as executive editor for AP since 2002 and as senior vice president since September 2003. Before joining the news organization 25 years ago, she studied journalism at the University of Texas at Arlington and worked as a reporter for The Dallas Morning News.

Carroll has been a member of the Associated Press Managing Editors Board of Directors and the APME board’s executive committee. She has also been a member of the Associated Press Managing Editors’ Board of Directors and the APME board’s executive committee.

She joins the Pulitzer Board in the 88th year of the awards. The 2004 Pulitzer Prizes will be announced on April 5 and presented on May 24 at Columbia University. Columbia University awards the prizes after their determination by the Pulitzer board. Members of the board serve a maximum of nine years.

For more information, visit the Pulitzer Prize Web site at www.pulitzer.org.