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REVIEW

Imani quintet shows its versatility in fest concert

Imani Winds, a virtuosic collective, performed Tuesday evening at the Cotuit Center for the Arts, as part of the ongoing Cape Cod Chamber Music Festival.

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Imani Winds performed Tuesday night in Cotuit as part of the Cape Cod Chamber Music Festival. Pierre Lider



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### In Concert

What: Imani Winds, with Brian Zeger

Presented by: Cape Cod Chamber Music Festival

When: Tuesday night (festival runs through Aug. 26)

Where: Cotuit Cen...

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COTUIT – Wind quintet brings a unique sound-world to the chamber music experience. Two voices sit low in the register: bassoon and horn. Two voices sit high: flute and oboe, gliding above. Clarinet ranges up and down (mostly up), visiting both worlds.

The possibilities have intrigued composers and given rise to excellent ensembles. Like Imani Winds, a versatile and virtuosic collective that performed Tuesday evening at the Cotuit Center for the Arts, as part of the ongoing Cape Cod Chamber Music Festival.

The wind quintet instrumentation lends itself to both classical music and jazz-flavored compositions, and Imani explored both in this performance. Composers themselves, its members opened with hornist Jeff Scott's "Startin' Sumthin," a smart, episodic syncopation that warmed up the audience and the players.

Maurice Ravel's piano tribute "Le Tombeau de Couperin" has been re-orchestrated for many different instrumental settings, including a symphonic version by the composer himself. Mason Jones, the late principal horn of the Philadelphia Orchestra, created a nimble version for wind quintet that the Imanis offered here.

"Tombeau de Couperin" has four movements of starkly contrasting character. The prelude is hardly an introduction but more like the beginning of a race, with all five players jumping in. The second movement fugue has all the classical elements of that form, except its mood. Dark and unnerving, it passes around its melody in inventive ways, but sits bleakly in minor mode the entire time.

The menuet, a waltz-tempo movement featuring oboe (Toyin Spellman-Diaz) and clarinet (Mark Dover), introduces gentle ideas, and a lively rigaudon, a peasant dance form, relieves the doom and calm with collective energy. Flutist Valerie Coleman led the way out of the darkness with several fleet passages.

Francis Poulenc's Sextet for Piano and Winds offered the chance for pianist Brian Zeger, former CCCMF artistic director, to join the action. The sextet has the energy of lively 20th-century Paris – out of sorts rhythms, jazzy textures, comic undertones and galloping solos. Zeger laid an underlying piano line, as if he were accompanying a vocalist. A ragtime or stride vibe energizes the finale, which sometimes feels like an amalgam of different styles, and other times feels like a satire on classical idioms. The playing was alert and engaged.

Anders Hillborg's music has begun to take hold on the American concert stage, and that's a good

**By Keith Powers**  
Contributing writer

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thing. The Swedish composer (born 1954) has multiple orchestral works, each engagingly musical, and his Six Pieces for Wind Quintet is no different.

Each movement shifts focus. The centerpiece, an "out" bassoon solo (don't hear those much – energetically turned out by Monica Ellis), comes straight from John Coltrane or McCoy Tyner.

Recent compositions by Lalo Schifrin ("La Nouvelle Orleans," a three-movement re-creation of that city's funeral processions) and one section from Marcelo Zarvos' "Changes" – a choro, an expressive, uptempo Brazilian form – brought this expansive, engaging recital to a close.

Almost. Imani encored with an improvisation on Zarvos' choro movement, a lively demonstration of this versatile ensemble's blend of talents.

The Cape Cod Chamber Music Festival continues through Aug. 26. The next program is Thursday, at the First Congregational Church in Wellfleet and features the estimable Emerson String Quartet.

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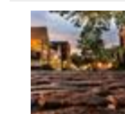
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Sat Aug 6, 7:00 pm

WED THU FRI SAT SUN MON TUE

Wednesday, August 3, 2016



All New England Fine Art Exhibit

12:00 am

Cape Cod Art Association



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