

Program Notes – Schoenberg Serenade

Premiere: February 17, 2006, Ordway Center for the Performing Arts, with The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra

Music by Schoenberg, "Serenade," Opus 24, for Chamber Ensemble and Bass

Choreography by James Sewell

Costumes by Mary Hansmeyer

Commissioned by The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra

Original Cast:

Penelope Freeh

Brittany Fridenstine

Sara Hoenes

Joseph Herrera

Benjamin Johnson

Justin Leaf

Nicolas Lincoln

Sally Rouse

James Sewell

"*Serenade*," Opus 24, is a chamber work for clarinet, bass clarinet, mandolin, guitar, violin, viola, cello, and bass voice. Schoenberg completed the composition in April 1923; it received its premiere at a private home in Vienna, May 2, 1924.

Choreography has potential to connect people to aspects or structures of music that they might find challenging. This ballet is a formal exploration of a 12-tone work by Arnold Schoenberg from 1924. Ideally, the dance serves as a window into the music and as a way to organize it for listeners. Just as Schoenberg's structures produce aural dissonance, I was inspired to allow the dance structures to produce some visual dissonances.

— James Sewell, 2006