Music hosts all-female quintet

Ashly Hernandez, Staff Writer | Posted: Monday, February 5, 2018 12:24 pm

Music is dynamic, literally. It transcends.

Music has the ability to mean different things to each individual.

On that note, don’t knock off a genre of music until you experience it.

Cal Poly Pomona is hosting the Nouveau Classical Project Feb. 6, that will present the newest full concert program, “Currents,” and provide coaching opportunities to CPP music students.

Nouveau is French for “new,” as this group performs contemporary classical pieces.

CPP music department chair Peter Yates says this definition of contemporary is not the same, as this generation tends to use it for pop music.

“When we say contemporary, we say written music for classical, but not old,” Yates said.

“It’s new contemporary music for classical players.”

The NCP is a “Pierrot” ensemble from New York that began working with fashion designers for concerts, and has since then expanded.

“Pierrot” is a music ensemble consisting of flute, clarinet, violin, cello and piano.

A Pierrot ensemble could be accompanied by a singer, percussionist or could even double up on any of the woodwind, stringed or keyboard instruments used.

The ensemble is named after Arnold Shoenberg’s work, “Pierrot Lunaire,” for which the quintet of instruments was first utilized, and from then on, became a key ensemble for contemporary music groups in the twentieth century.

“It’s a miniature orchestra,” Yates said.
The NCP’s line-up of professional musicians includes Laura Cocks (flute), Mara Mayer (clarinet), Maya Bennardo (violin), Thea Mesirow (cello) and Sugar Vendil (piano).

The all-female quintet enjoys using female composers, but they do not omit male composers such as CPP faculty composer, Isaac Schankler.

Schankler received his Masters and Bachelors degrees in music, both in composition from the University of Michigan.

He also has a doctorate in musical arts in composition from the University of Southern California.

The NCP commissioned Schankler to compose a piece for this recent program: his piece is entitled “Artifacts.”

A free workshop will be held in the music recital hall from 2 p.m. to 3:30 p.m., where there will be a demonstration and deconstruction of Schankler’s “Artifacts,” and it is free and open to the public.

Music students also have the opportunity to work with the NCP professionals on repertoire, or pieces the students perform, ranging from the early nineteenth century to 2017.

This event will also be held in the recital hall from 11:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. in the afternoon.

A possibility for orchestral coaching will be available from 4 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. in the orchestra room.

Students will also have the opportunity to experience the full “Currents” concert at 8 p.m.

Tickets are $10 for CPP students and faculty, and general admission is $15.

The New York Times states the NCP is “leading this unlikely intersection of classical music and fashion.”

And VICE acclaims the group for “bringing a refreshing edge to the widely conservative genre.”

The NCP’s history of working with fashion designers has evolved their concerts settings into not only audio marvels, but also visual spectacles.

For those who enjoy the show or missed the chance to attend the concert, the NCP will have the music presented, including the “Currents” program with Schankler’s “Artifacts,” on SoundCloud.