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# Mathematics aside, 'Bamboula' adds up to exciting music

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COLORADO SPRINGS — Ending a month of residence at Colorado College, Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Charles Wuorinen introduced his "Bamboula Squared" to Rocky Mountain audiences.

The performance took place in Pikes Peak Center and was part of the Colorado Springs Symphony's regular concerts. I attended Sunday afternoon.

As Wuorinen explained during a pre-concert seminar sponsored by Colorado College, "Bamboula Squared" takes its generating force from some mathematical equations by Benoit Mandelbrot. These have to do with trying to account, mathematically, with the "chances" of nature. It isn't so much the math that attracted Wuorinen as the combination of math as applied to nature.

"Bamboula" — and Wuorinen and the program notes never explained the title — does use a serial row as its starting point, but not in the Schoenbergian sense. It also uses a computer-generated tape of

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electronic sounds which plays simultaneously with the orchestra. The sound blends well with the instruments. The tape sounds are rather like a harpsichord and, dulled harp in timbre.

Why a tape? Because a tape, unlike an orchestra, can splay out 3,000 notes in a minute's lapse. But this is hardly the content of Wuorinen's piece.

Big and splashy, rhythmically exciting and, mirabile dictu, using an orchestra effectively (a major failing among contemporary composers), "Bamboula" packs a punch quite independent of its large component of instrumentalists.

Wuorinen's influences are many and diversified. As he said, "There's even some Arabian coffee house music, but no one has pointed that out yet."

It has the potential to be a popular piece. And it is no louder and no more dissonant, when all is said and done, than the oversized "Vari-

ations on a Theme of Purcell" by Benjamin Britten, which followed it.

However, there was another compelling reason to make the trip south: that was cellist Lynn Harrell playing Schumann's Concerto in A Minor. The performance, as announced by the orchestra's regular conductor, Charles Ansbacher, would be dedicated to the memory of Leonard Rose, Harrell's teacher who died Friday.

The concerto, like much of Schumann, shows decided deficiencies of orchestral technique. Nor is the solo writing particularly graceful, jumping as it does in huge two-, even three-octave leaps. But when played with the bravura Harrell brings to performance, it is an exciting piece; a proper setting for a virtuoso. Harrell also offered the sarabande from Bach's Suite for Solo Cello as an encore, also in memory of Leonard Rose.

To open the afternoon concert was Schumann's "Manfred" Overture. That made rather more Schumann than one really wanted to hear.