



Indy's **alternative** voice

## Butler ArtsFest: Indianapolis Chamber Orchestra

by Chantal Incandela – April 14, 2014



April 11, 2014 at the Schrott Center for the Arts



*James Aikman*

The [Indianapolis Chamber Orchestra](#) presented a solidly performed, excellent program at this year's Butler ArtsFest, playing well-known classical works alongside 20th and 21st century compositions, one of them a world premiere.

The concert began with Johann Strauss' Emperor Waltzes, arranged for a seven piece ensemble (two violins, viola, cello, flute, clarinet, and piano) by Arnold Schoenberg. At times the woodwinds were overpowered, but otherwise, it was a spirited, and lively reading.

Christopher Theofandis' intriguing and provocative Concerto for Bassoon and Chamber Orchestra followed, with virtuoso bassoonist, Martin Kuusmann. No matter if it was a long, lyrical passage, or all sorts of acrobatics, Kuusmann nailed it, not just technically, but musically as well, with intention and vision sewn in to each note. It was a breathtaking performance. The orchestra sometimes overpowered him, but generally provided good support.

ICO commissioned Composer-in-Residence [James Aikman](#) to write a piece in honor of the ICO's 30th year, and the result was a three movement work, Triptych: Musical Momentum. The world premiere of this work was exciting; Aikman's writing is mature, refined and highly engaging.

The first movement, Prelude, began with the harp, sounding almost like chiming bells, then various sections entering in, with an exciting sense of anticipation. The second moment, The Particle Garden, was meant to employ a prerecorded tape, but there was evidently no sound on it, leaving me curious as to its content. The rhythmically vigorous finale, Fanfare, was spirited and celebratory. I look forward to hearing the work again; it will be on a CD released next year in celebration of the ICO's 30th year.

The evening was rounded off with Mozart's Symphony no. 36, "Linz". Conductor Kirk Trevor had clear ideas in terms of shaping the work, and the orchestra came through with him for a refreshing performance. There were balance issues at times, and inconsistencies with note lengths and bowing articulations in the violins, but they didn't take too much away from the performance.