



NOVEMBER 2, 1985

**The Smithsonian Resident Associate Program
and
The Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden
present**

THE 20TH CENTURY CONSORT

Saturday, November 2, 1985

Symposium: 3:00 p.m.

Concert: 5:30 p.m.

Auditorium

Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden

The beginning of the 20th Century Consort wasn't the biggest news of 1975. That was the year of *Jaws* and *Watership Down*, the year Mitchell, Haldeman, and Ehrlichmann were sentenced, and the year we finally got out of Vietnam. It was also the year Patty Hearst was apprehended by the FBI and the Boeymonger named a sandwich after her. Dmitri Shostakovich died that year, the 10¢ first class mail rate ended forever, and America was gearing up for its Bicentennial.

On the other hand, there was an overflow audience and excellent press for that first 20th Century Consort concert on October 25, 1975, and the decade since hasn't been bad either!

Among the 100 or so composers whose works we have performed since that concert, none has meant more to us than Stephen Albert, George Crumb, and Joseph Schwanter, all three figuring prominently in Consort performances, broadcasts, and recordings. Each has, in our view, had a profound role in defining the direction of American musical composition in this last quarter of the 20th century.

We are delighted to represent each of these composers with a characteristic and powerful work on this evening's program, and we're pleased, too, that you could join us on this important occasion. What better way to celebrate our 10th Anniversary!

Christopher Kendall
Artistic Director

Alyce Rideout
Manager

The participation of composers Stephen Albert, George Crumb, and Joseph Schwanter in today's symposium and performance was made possible in part by a grant from **Meet The Composer**, with support from the National Endowment for the Arts, American Express Foundation, ASCAP, BMI, Bristol-Myers Company, CBS Inc., Dayton Hudson Corporation, Equitable Life Assurance Society of the U.S., Exxon, Fromm Music Foundation, Grace Foundation, L.A.W. Fund, Inc., Metropolitan Life Foundation, NBC Co. Inc., Paul Foundation, Inc., and the Helena Rubenstein Foundation.

The receptions following this season's concerts are sponsored by the Friends of the 20th Century Consort. For information on how you can become a member of this important group working to further the cause of contemporary music, telephone 298-7545, or write to the 20th Century Consort, 1235 Potomac Street, N.W., Washington D.C. 20007.

THE PROGRAM

SYMPOSIUM

Stephen Albert, composer
George Crumb, composer
Joseph Schwantner, composer

CONCERT

Sparrows (1979)

Carmen Pelton, soprano
Elisabeth Adkins, violin
James Francis, viola
David Hardy, cello
Sara Stern, flute

Joseph Schwantner
(b. 1943)

Loren Kitt, clarinet
Lambert Orkis, piano
Thomas Jones, percussion
Dotian Carter, harp
Christopher Kendall, conductor

Celestial Mechanics (1979) (Makrokosmos IV)

George Crumb
(b. 1929)

I Alpha Centauri
II Beta Cygni
III Gamma Draconis
IV Delta Orionis

Lambert Orkis and James Primosch, piano
Jan Orkis, assistant

INTERMISSION

Into Eclipse (1981)

Stephen Albert
(b. 1941)

Prologue and Riddle Song
Oedipus I
A Quiet Fate
Ghosts
Oedipus II

David Gordon, tenor
Elisabeth Adkins, violin
Jane Stewart, violin
James Francis, viola
David Hardy, cello
Francis Carnovale, contrabass
Christopher Kendall, conductor

Sara Stern, flute
Loren Kitt, clarinet
Lambert Orkis, piano
Thomas Jones, percussion
David Flowers, trumpet
Daniel Carter, horn

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

Joseph Schwantner: Sparrows

Joseph Schwantner composed *Sparrows* for the 20th Century Consort in 1979, just before receiving the Pulitzer Prize for Music for his orchestral score *Afternoons of Infinity*. A selection of 15 haiku by the 18th-century poet Issa comprises the text of *Sparrows*. Rather than reflecting the aesthetic of the haiku, with its pinpointed images, Schwantner's music absorbs the significance and character of these images, naturalistic and universal, and sets them in music of broad lyricism, forming a series of "dream-states." The condition of these states moves through passages of luxuriant harmonies, austere dissonance, exuberance and finally a gentle hopefulness. Schwantner draws freely on wildly divergent stylistic antecedents to realize the poetic imagery; the listener hears strains of Renaissance dance and Baroque polyphony. In the process of reconciling the contrasting musical styles to this work's continuity, Schwantner manages to make them his own.

The range of atmosphere and color is drawn from an ensemble whose aural resources are thoroughly and imaginatively employed. The voice is supported by three groups of instruments: woodwinds, strings (tuned down one half-step to add a peculiar richness to the overall sound), and a combination of piano, harp, and percussion. The percussionist's timbral contribution is further enhanced by the string player's use of antique cymbals, which are bowed to produce the other-worldly accumulation of sounds accompanying "the River of Heaven."

The instrumentalists are further called upon to sing quietly at key points throughout the work. This "choir" accompanies the text's opening and closing references to sparrows—in the first instance an exotic effect creating a sense of mystery and imminence, but by the end, familiar, poignant, and somehow reassuring.

— Christopher Kendall

Sparrows for soprano and chamber ensemble

Come then, come hither; Play your games and bide with me, Motherless Sparrow.	What loveliness! Seen through a crack in the wall The River of Heaven!
The plum tree blossoms; The nightingale sings; But I am alone.	By night sacred music And into the flare of the torches Float crimson leaves!
The autumn wind! Even the mountain's shadow Trembles before it.	Radiant moon! Tonight, must you too Hasten thither?
Through this world of ours The butterfly's existence — Such a hastening!	And, when I die, Be thou guardian of my tomb, Grasshopper.
Wild Geese, hush your cry! Wherever you go it is the same — The floating world!	Cry not, insects, For that is a way We all must go —
A note from the bell — A cry from the waterfowl — And the night darkens!	A glimpse of the Moon — A note from the Nightingale — And the night's over!
Heedless that the tolling bell Marks our own closing day — We take this evening cool.	Greet the new sky With consonance of harmonies — Right to the Sparrows!
The night is dim. But over the falls that ran with wine Stands the moon.	

From the Autumn Wind, translation © 1957 by Lewis MacKenzie

George Crumb: *Celestial Mechanics* (*Makrokosmos IV*)

Created in April, 1979, and subsequently recorded by the 20th Century Consort for the Smithsonian Collection, *Celestial Mechanics* is the fourth in a series of works entitled (or subtitled) *Makrokosmos*. The first two works were scored for solo piano, and the third (*Music for a Summer Evening*) for two pianos and percussion. Mr. Crumb writes: "I had long been tempted to try my hand at the four-hand medium, perhaps because I myself have been a passionate four-hand player over the years. The best of the original four-hand music — which includes, of course, those superb works by Mozart, Schubert, and Brahms — occupies a very special niche in the literature of music. The idiom, a strange hybrid of the pianistic and orchestral, lends itself readily to a very free and spontaneous kind of music — one thinks of any of the collections of dances of various types and of the predilection for the 'fantasy' genre. The present work, therefore, comprising a suite of 'cosmic' dances composed in a rather 'fantastic' style, falls squarely within the tradition.

"My sole departure from tradition occurs at two points in the score where I have enlarged the medium to six hands; and so, in the whimsical manner of Ives, the page turner must contribute more substantively to the performance than is her wont.

"The title *Celestial Mechanics* is borrowed from the French mathematician Laplace. The titles for the four movements (added after the music was completed!) are the beautiful names of stars of the first through the fourth magnitude. The majestic movements of the stars does indeed suggest the image of a 'cosmic choreography' and, in fact, I briefly considered opting for an alternate title (proposed by my brother, punster that he is) — *The Celestial Ballroom*."

Alpha Centauri is a binary star located above the pattern in the constellation Centaurus, the Centaur. Worshipped for its unusual brightness by the Egyptians, who called it Serket, Alpha is of interest to today's astronomers as the star nearest our solar system — 92,892,000 miles away. Beta Cygni is found in Cygnus, the Swan, and may also be binary. Its gold and azure coloring makes it one of the most striking of the stars. Gamma Draconis, in Draco, the Dragon, is a double star which was used for navigation in ancient times, being closer to the pole than any other bright star about four thousand years ago. It is still circumpolar. Delta Orionis is another double star, found in Orion, the Hunter. Astrologers considered it of importance as portending good fortune.

Stephen Albert: *Into Eclipse*

Contemporary man faces a bleak existence, confronting alienation and possible annihilation every moment. Yet mankind essentially remains optimistic, and tenaciously seeks to reestablish links with the past and with fundamental human values. In his compositions Stephen Albert examines just such values: archetypes and emotions that touch every human soul, and that reflect the deeper meaning of existence.

Albert's *Into Eclipse* is a thirty-minute, five-movement song cycle based on the modern British poet Ted Hughes's unusually nightmarish adaptation of the ancient Roman playwright Seneca's *Oedipus*. Seneca's version is itself considerably more gruesome and melodramatic than Sophocles's more familiar rendition of the celebrated Oedipus myth. Although Albert was often repelled by Hughes's graphic imagery, he realized that the play contained two fundamental, eternal principles: that the search for truth will destroy, and that man cannot control his destiny. Inspired by Hughes's powerful presentation of these philosophical principles, Albert selected five episodes from *Oedipus*, told from the viewpoints of the chorus of citizens, Oedipus, and Creon, and wove them into an epic tale, a "hero song," for tenor and chamber ensemble.

Into Eclipse (1981) evokes a world of brilliant colors and blinding sunlight. Although it was originally scored for full orchestra, Albert pared the ensemble to chamber size in order to create a more bell-like, hard-edged sound. The present chamber version is scored for solo tenor, flute, piccolo, E^b clarinet, B^b clarinet, A clarinet, trumpet, horn, harp, piano, strings, vibraphone, xylophone, glockenspiel, antique cymbals, chimes, timpani, bass drum, and triangle. Albert masterfully utilizes the ensemble's timbral possibilities, creating an atmosphere filled with illusion and anxiety, but without ever resorting to wordpainting. Particularly influenced by Mahler, Sibelius, Bartok, Debussy, Berg, Ives, and early Stravinsky, Albert's compositional style integrates melodic and harmonic structures. *Into Eclipse* juxtaposes kernels from the octatonic scale (which alternates half and whole steps) with the Dorian mode, serialized chromatic subsets and fragments from the pentatonic, whole tone, and chromatic scales. By manipulating intervals and symmetries within nearly identical chord patterns, Albert transforms fragments from one scale into another. As in modulations in tonal music, some patterns characteristically gravitate toward others made from similar intervallic structures. Albert's terse, reiterated melodies are constructed upon these

same principles. Together these interwoven horizontal and vertical patterns create a unified, freely-flowing musical environment.

An unearthly glissando hurls the listener into Stephen Albert's haunting, dream-like *Into Eclipse*. Evocative, tingling colors permeate the mysterious Prologue. Leit-motives which will later underscore Oedipus' horrible fate are already heard in the distance — reminding us that fate is omnipresent, is inescapable. After a brief pause, the agitated ringing of chimes begins the "Riddle Song." "Show us a simple riddle . . . show us, lift everything aside . . ." cry the citizens of Thebes to the mysterious Sphinx that is plaguing their city. "What has four legs at dawn, two at noon, three at dusk, and is weakest when it has most?" Relentlessly, the people press harder: "Show us a simple riddle . . . I will find the answer, is there an answer? . . . An overwrought Oedipus appears in the next song, "Oedipus I." ("And I was happy fleeing from my father . . . fleeing yes but unafraid . . . till I stumbled on this kingdom . . .") When the Delphic oracle told Oedipus that he would kill his father and marry his mother, he immediately vowed not to return to his parents in Corinth, the town he believed to be his native city. ("Fear came after me, it followed me . . . I would kill my father, and worse, that other worst! . . . the words stick, it is not possible . . . a double madness everyday closer . . .") But destiny cannot be controlled; in his attempt to escape fate Oedipus set out for Thebes, which, unbeknownst to him, was his actual birthplace. Before reaching Thebes, Oedipus killed an older man who had rudely challenged him at the fork of the road. ("Fear came with me, it followed me . . . and it grew till it now surrounds me . . . fear my shadow . . . I stand in it like a blind man in darkness . . .") That older man, however, was Laius, Oedipus' real father, who had years ago himself heard a prophecy that he would be killed by his son. Laius, too, took steps to prevent this, and ordered a shepherd to kill the child. But the shepherd had instead secretly given the infant Oedipus to a servant of the childless King Polybus of Corinth. ("Oedipus get out of this land, get away from these cries, this unending funeral . . .") Oedipus saved Thebes by solving the Sphinx's riddle, and the grateful Thebans made him king and awarded him the hand of Jocasta, Laius' widow. But despite this good fortune, Oedipus is consumed by fear and paranoia; an oppressive atmosphere smothers him. ("The truth is

not human, it has no mercy . . .") Yet Oedipus is determined to know the truth — at any cost.

An absolute calm envelops the third song, "A Quiet Fate." In this reflective moment the chorus contemplates the idea "if only fate were ours to choose, you would see me on quiet waters whose airs are gentle, a full sail but a light wind . . ." With overwhelming irony they innocently sing "no blast, no smashed ringing, no flogging downward into cliffs, undersurge, nothing recovered . . ." Yet the worst is still to come. ("Give me a quiet voyage . . . the only life, easily on to a calm end, surrounded by gains . . .") ("I see things in darkness moving . . . many pale masks lifted, sinking . . .") Creon describes his frightening encounter with the Delphic oracle in the climatic fourth song, "Ghosts." Enigmatic images are heard shimmering in the ensemble. "A growing sound a humming that seems to silence everything like a vast flock of autumn starlings, a rushing gloomy wind of twitterings beating up at the light . . . they come grabbing at the earth . . ." The murdered Laius, seeking revenge, has come to haunt his obsessed son Oedipus. ("I am the man you murdered, your father . . . I shall break your heart . . .") Oedipus' fate is now sealed. ("O men drive him away . . . his father will take the light . . .")

"Oedipus II," the fifth song, is the cycle's denouement. A sense of forlorn stillness prevails. ("All is well, I like this darkness . . . my father has been paid what he was owed, all is well . . . I wonder which God I've pleased, which of them has brought me peace . . . given me this dark veil for my head . . . pleasant, pleasant . . .") The supreme irony has occurred, in that both Oedipus and his father have ultimately achieved their goals: Laius has destroyed Oedipus, and Oedipus has learned the truth. ("That awful light that never let me rest and followed me everywhere . . . at last you've escaped it . . . it's abandoned you, it's left you to your new face, the true face of Oedipus . . .") Oedipus, now blinded by his own hand and sent into exile, is in permanent darkness because of his quest for the light. He has passed "into eclipse."

The chamber version of *Into Eclipse* was premiered in Washington, D.C. in 1982, by the 20th Century Consort with tenor soloist David Gordon, under the direction of Christopher Kendall.

— Mary Lou Humphrey

NOTES ON THE ARTISTS

Elisabeth Adkins is Associate Concertmaster of the National Symphony Orchestra. She has appeared as soloist with the Oklahoma Symphony, the Aspen Repertory Orchestra, and the Chamber Orchestra of New England. She has been a member of the Mostly Mozart Orchestra at Lincoln Center and the Y Chamber Symphony in New York. She is also a member of the Broadwood Trio.

Francis Carnovale is a graduate of the Curtis Institute. A faculty member at both Montgomery College and the University of Maryland, he is solo bassist with the Theatre Chamber Players of Kennedy Center and a member of the Kennedy Center Opera House Orchestra.

Daniel Carter is a member of the National Symphony Orchestra and solo hornist with the National Symphony Brass Quintet. He is a graduate of the Curtis Institute.

Dotian Carter is principal harpist with the National Symphony Orchestra and studied with Carlos Salzedo at the Curtis Institute. She has performed with the Philadelphia Lyric Opera, the Pennsylvania Ballet, and the Philadelphia Orchestra.

David Flowers is a member of the National Symphony Orchestra, the Contemporary Music Forum, and the National Symphony Brass Quintet. He is a graduate of the University of Michigan and received his D.M.A. from Catholic University.

James Francis has been a member of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra for the past 11 years. A native of Fresno, California, he studied with William Primrose at the Music Academy of the West, and with Joseph DiPasquale at the Curtis Institute; and has appeared with the Santa Fe Opera and the National Arts Centre Orchestra in Ottawa, Canada.

David Gordon performs in both orchestral and operatic repertoire. His engagements have included regular appearances with the Lyric Opera of Chicago, Houston Grand Opera, the Boston Symphony, and the orchestras of Dallas, Vienna, Baltimore, and Salzburg. He made his debut with the Hamburg State Opera as Nemorino in *L'Elisir d'Amore* last September, and returns to San Francisco Opera in 1986 as Beppe in *Pagliacci* and David in *Die Meistersinger*.

David Hardy is a graduate of the Peabody Conservatory. Presently assistant principal cellist with the National Symphony Orchestra, he was the top-ranking American prizewinner at the Seventh International Tchaikovsky Cello Competition in Moscow in 1982.

Thomas Jones is a free-lance percussionist. A member of the faculty at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, he is a graduate of the University of Maryland.

Christopher Kendall is artistic director of the 20th Century Consort, founder and lutenist for the Folger Consort, and artistic director of Millenium, Inc. A graduate of Antioch College and the University of Cincinnati, he studied conducting with Louis Lane and Thomas Schippers. He has appeared as guest conductor with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center and the Washington Sinfonia.

Loren Kitt is principal clarinetist for the National Symphony, with which he has also appeared as a soloist in works by Debussy, Mozart, Messiaen, and Copland. A graduate of the Curtis Institute, he was formerly a member of the faculty of the Oberlin Conservatory. His extensive chamber music activities include appearances with the Theatre Chamber Players of Kennedy Center and the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center.

Lambert Orkis has performed as soloist and chamber musician in concerts at the Kennedy Center, Lincoln Center, Spoleto Festival U.S.A., and the Martha's Vineyard Music Festival. Principal keyboardist of the National Symphony Orchestra, he also serves as Professor of Piano and Coordinator of the Master of Music Program in Piano Accompanying and Chamber Music at Temple University.

Carmen Pelton is a native of Wisconsin and a graduate of the Eastman School, where she was a student of Jan DeGaetani. Equally in demand for opera, orchestral, and recital engagements, Ms.

Pelton has become known for her performances of works by Virgil Thomson, including over 50 performances of the role of Susan B. Anthony in his opera, *The Mother of Us All*.

James Primosch is a composer as well as a pianist, whose composition teachers have included George Crumb and Mario Davidowsky. Following undergraduate work at Cleveland State University, he received his Master's degree at the University of Pennsylvania, where he studied piano with Andrius Kuprevicius and Lambert Orkis. At present, he is pursuing his Ph.D. in composition at Columbia University.

Jane Steward has been a member of the National Symphony Orchestra since 1981. Previously she was assistant concertmaster of the Maracaibo Symphony in Venezuela. She holds both graduate and undergraduate degrees from Yale University.

Sara Stern is a native of Washington, D.C. As solo flutist for the 20th Century Consort, she has recorded on the Smithsonian label and performed a number of world premieres of significant contemporary compositions, including Maurice Wright's *Solos for Flute and Electric Sounds*, which was commissioned for her by the Consort. She is also principal flutist of the Kennedy Center Terrace Theatre Orchestra.

PERFORMING ARTS EVENTS

Sponsored by the Resident Associate Program November

November 3/7:30 p.m.
Faces in a Single Tree
Readings by poet Robert Pack

Auditorium
Hirshhorn Museum & Sculpture Garden
7th Street & Independence Avenue, S.W.

November 12/8 p.m.
Langa and Manghaniyar
Traditional Music from India

Baird Auditorium
National Museum of Natural History
10th Street & Constitution Avenue, N.W.

November 16/8 p.m.
New York Chamber Soloists
Mozart, Haydn, Handel, Purcell

Baird Auditorium
National Museum of Natural History
10th Street & Constitution Avenue, N.W.

November 17/7:30 p.m.
The Music of Jelly Roll Morton
Jazz Series Premiere

Baird Auditorium
National Museum of Natural History
10th Street & Constitution Avenue, N.W.

November 24/7 p.m.
Lydia Artymiw, piano
Brahms, Schumann, Chopin, Debussy

Grand Salon
Renwick Gallery
17th Street & Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.

For information about these and other RAP activities, telephone 357-3030

Robert McC. Adams, *Secretary*, Smithsonian Institution
James T. Demetron, *Director*, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden
Janet W. Solinger, *Director*, Smithsonian Resident Associate Program
Marcus L. Overton, *Senior Program Coordinator*, RAP Performing Arts

Please note: The taking of photographs and the use of recording equipment are strictly prohibited.
Rest rooms are located at either side of the cloakroom in the lower lobby.