

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

present

The 20th Century Consort

Christopher Kendall, Artistic Director and Conductor

Thomas Jones, percussion
Lisa Emenheiser Logan, piano
Sara Stern, Flute

Guest Artist

Lucy Shelton, soprano

Saturday, October 20, 1990

Lecture-discussion 4:30 p.m.

Concert, 5:30 p.m.

**Marion and Gustave Ring Auditorium
Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden**

The 20th Century Consort's 1990-91 performance series is supported in part by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, a Federal agency.

The participation of composers in this season's programs is made possible in part by generous grants from MEET THE COMPOSER's Composers Performance Fund, which is supported by the National Endowment for the Arts; the American Society for Composers, Authors, and Publishers (ASCAP); Broadcast Music, Inc. (BMI); and the Getty, MacDonald, Metropolitan Life, Xerox, and Dayton Hudson Foundations.

THE PROGRAM

LECTURE-DISCUSSION

Edward P. Lawson, Chief, HMSG Department of Education
Christopher Kendall, Artistic Director, 20th Century Consort
Robert Beaser, composer

CONCERT

NIGHT VISION

Variations (1982)

Robert Beaser
(b. 1954)

Ms. Logan, Ms. Stern

Night Music (1972)

Richard Rodney Bennett
(b. 1936)

Ms. Shelton

INTERMISSION

Percussion Duo (1979)

Charles Wuorinen
(b. 1938)

Mr. Jones, Ms. Logan

Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird (1979)

Lukas Foss
(b. 1922)

Ms. Shelton, Mr. Jones, Ms. Logan, Ms. Stern

The audience is invited to join the artists in the Plaza lobby after the concert for a wine-and-cheese reception, sponsored by the Friends of the 20th Century Consort.

Please note:

The taking of photographs and the use of recording equipment
are strictly prohibited.

Restrooms are located in the lower lobby adjacent to the escalators.

1990-91 Concert Series – 20th Century Consort

October 20

Night Vision

Music by Robert Beaser, Richard Rodney Bennett,
Lukas Foss, and Charles Wuorinen

December 1

Magic Numbers

Works by Mario Davidovsky, Paul Hindemith,
Charles Ives, and Allan Schindler

January 12

Nonsense Implements

Music by Bohuslav Martinu, Darius Milhaud,
Francis Poulenc, and Igor Stravinsky

March 23

Ideas of March

Compositions by Ingolf Dahl, Bruce MacCombie,
and Nicholas Maw

May 11

Landscapes

Stephen Albert's *Distant Hills* and
Aaron Copland's *Appalachian Spring*;
David Fromm's *Down to a Sunless Sea*

Programs subject to change

20th Century Consort

Christopher Kendall, *Artistic Director*

Alyce Rideout, *Manager*

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James D. Allnutt, *Production Assistant*

Susan Chalifoux, *Reception Coordinator*

Curt Wittig, *Recording Engineer*



Smithsonian Institution

Robert McC. Adams, *Secretary*

James T. Demetron, *Director*, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden

Janet W. Solinger, *Director*, Resident Associate Program

Marcus L. Overton, *Manager*, RAP Performing Arts

The Resident Associate Program is the continuing education, cultural, and membership arm of the Smithsonian Institution for metropolitan Washington, and relies on the support of its more than 54,000 members to support its activities. The Program brings distinguished performing artists to the Washington area in more than 100 performances annually. Please telephone 357-3030 for membership information.



NIGHT VISION

CHARLES WUORINEN: Percussion Duo

A prolific composer, an energetic conductor and pianist, and a passionate spokesman for new music, Charles Wuorinen remains a fervent proponent of serially-organized music in a time of confused and rapidly changing aesthetics. Although his 1970 Pulitzer Prize (for Time's Encomium) was the first ever awarded for an electronic composition, by far the bulk of his large output is for traditional instruments, shaped by a rigorous serial technique in which he frequently derives duration as well as pitch content from the basic set.

Composed on a joint commission from pianist James Avery and percussionist Steven Shick, both then on the faculty at the University of Iowa (where they gave the first performance on 20 October 1979), the work limits the percussionist to the mallet instruments, vibraphone and marimba, and emphasizes the percussive qualities of the piano rather than its lyrical potential. In other words, he conceived the partners in the duo as more similar than different, and the resulting work emphasizes crispness of attack over, say, legato quality. The piano has a certain advantage in greater range; but the percussionist gains in having two different timbres at his disposal in the vibraphone and marimba. "Through this device," the composer remarks, "real equality between the two players is achieved." In general, the marimba produces sounds of short duration, while the vibraphone can sustain tones or chords to a considerable length. The pianist must create both effects. As a result the three instruments in the hands of two players seem to modulate in attack and sonority from one to another, producing a rich kaleidoscope of colors in the course of the work's 14-minute length, laid out in what the composer describes as "an unproblematic single movement."

RICHARD RODNEY BENNETT: Nightpiece

Having composed a respectable string quartet by the age of 15, Richard Rodney Bennett soon began writing 12-tone music before the technique was taken seriously in England. After graduation from the Royal Academy of Music, he went to Paris on a French government scholarship for two years of study with Pierre Boulez. This had unexpected results: Boulez's cerebral approach sparked in Bennett a kind of romantic backlash in the form of expansive scores. Large works — symphonies, operas, and concertos — dominated his output in the 1960s, and he made a name as a composer of film scores (three Academy Award nominations, including "Murder on the Orient Express") and worked extensively as a jazz pianist.

In the 1970s, Bennett composed a series of works for chamber ensemble entitled Commedia in which he treated the instruments dramatically, each projecting its own personality in the music. But the same decade saw the composition of Nightpiece, which is nearly unique among Bennett's works in that, except for the human voice, it entirely avoids traditional acoustical instruments. It is virtually his only composition employing recorded tape.

The choice of medium came about partly because of the nature of the text he chose to set, a "nightmare poem" by Baudelaire, and partly because he had spent a period in residence at the Peabody Conservatory and while there he worked in the electronic studio of Jean Eichelberger Ivey. The title of the poem is Les Bénéfaits de la Lune (The Moon's Benefits), from Poèmes en Prose.

Bennett made the tape part himself on a VCS-3 synthesizer, using prerecorded tapes of portions of the poem spoken and whispered. These were combined in overlays and manipulated to produce a phantasmagorical mood that serves as counterpart and accompaniment for the singer.

An English translation of the poem follows.

Les Bénéfaits de la Lune
(The Moon's Benefits)

To Miss B —

The Moon, which is caprice itself, looked through the window while you were sleeping in your cradle, and said to herself, "I like that child."

And she unctuously descended her stairway of clouds, and silently passed through the windows. Then she lay on top of you with a mother's agile tenderness, and she placed her colors on your face. So your pupils have remained green, and your cheeks extraordinarily pale. In fact your eyes became so weirdly enlarged by contemplating that visitor. And she grasped your throat so tenderly that you have forever maintained the longing to cry.

Meanwhile the Moon, through her joy's expansion, filled the whole bedroom like a phosphorescent atmosphere, like a luminous poison; and all that living light was thinking and saying, "You will be influenced eternally by my kiss. You will be beautiful the way I am. You will love what I love and what loves me: water, clouds, silence, and night; the sea limitless and green; water shapeless and multiform; places where you will not be; lovers you will not understand; monstrous flowers; aromas that give you delusions; cats fainting on pianos and moaning like women, in a husky and gentle voice.

"And you will be loved by my lovers, courted by my courtiers. You will be the green-eyed queen of men whose throats I also grasped with my nocturnal caresses; of those who love the sea, the limitless sea, tumultuous and green, water shapeless and multiform, places they are not, women they do not understand, sinister flowers resembling censers of an unknown religion, aromas that disturb the will, and wild and voluptuous animals which are the emblems of their madness!"

And that, fiendish dear spoiled child, is why I am not lying at your feet, seeking in your entire person the reflection of the fearsome Divinity, of the fateful stepmother, of the nursemaid poisoner of all lunatics!

ROBERT BEASER: Variations for Flute and Piano

Now in his third year as composer-in-residence to the American Composers Orchestra, Robert Beaser studied music, literature, and political philosophy at Yale, earning a doctorate there in 1986. At 22 the youngest composer to win the Prix de Rome from the American Academy in Rome, he studied there for a year with Goffredo Petrassi. His work has appeared with increasing frequency in major music centers, and he is currently completing works for the Chicago Symphony, and for the New York Philharmonic's 130th season.

Composed in the fall and winter of 1981-82, Variations for Flute and Piano is cast in three movements, each of which comprises five variations. The theme of the work commences with an easily recognizable melody in which the first six notes make up three pairs of minor thirds. Following the theme's presentation, the first movement is clearly laid out as a set of strongly contrasting variations, as their markings indicate: I. Brutale; II. Lontano; III. Maestoso e rubato; IV. Vivace con bravura; and V. Coda—Deliberato. The composer notes that, "...the underlying argument of the movement comes from the developing conflict between the gentle, diatonic material and its more spectral, chromatic opposites."

The second and third movements also contain five variations each, but their more consistent overall character tends to conceal the fact somewhat. The middle movement is cast as a lyrical nocturne with a cadenza, while the finale, marked Con fuoco, "develops in a quasi sonata-allegro fashion." Actually there is more variety in these two movements than this description would seem to indicate, for the basic expressive contrast continues, but writ large over the span of the whole movement rather than between the small segments. The evanescent coda of the last music finally comes to an end with a rather whimsical and surprising matter-of-factness.

LUKAS FOSS: Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird

From his earliest years, when he demonstrated precocious musical gifts as a child in his native Berlin, Lukas Foss has always been interested in the whole range of musical possibilities. His compositions themselves are the record of an inquiring mind, one that loves music and absorbs ideas and procedures connected with it from all over, transmuting them with the philosopher's stone of his own imagination into new guises. From the spacious, almost romantic rhetoric of The Prairie (a 1944 setting of Sandburg poems) to the improvised interludes of Time cycle, through the Stravinskyian Parable of Death to the cheerfully twisted passages of the Baroque Variations, Foss's diverse pieces, ranging widely in mood and character, share an extraordinary technical aplomb controlled by a searching, open musical mind that has never lost its sense of wonder.

Each of the 13 sections of Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird contains a concrete image involving a blackbird. In fact, Wallace Stevens' 1923 poem (one of the most often set to music in modern American poetry) resembles, in many respects, Japanese haiku, in that the imagery is drawn from the natural world with penetrating precision, and that the often seemingly unrelated images are set against one another as if to invite the reader to find a connection.

Writing about the work shortly after its 1978 commissioning by Chicago radio station WFMT, Foss said, "Stylistically, Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird is an odd combination of the tonal lyricism of my early music and the experimental sonorities of my recent work." And though he doesn't say as much, the cycle seems to be as much a reflection of Japanese musical aesthetic as Stevens' poem is of the haiku tradition — spare, coolly evocative, built up of precise events that often seem juxtaposed as if to invite (or demand) the invention of a link between them. At the same time, the music is filled with mysterious effects and humorous touches echoing these elements in the poem.

The text of this work follows.

THIRTEEN WAYS OF LOOKING AT A
BLACKBIRD
by Wallace Stevens

1

Among twenty snowy mountains,
The only moving thing
Was the eye of the blackbird.

2

I was of three minds,
Like a tree
In which there are three blackbirds.

3

The blackbird whirled in the autumn winds.
It was a small part of the pantomime.

4

A man and a woman
Are one.
A man and a woman and a blackbird
Are one.

5

I do not know which to prefer,
The beauty of inflections
Or the beauty of innuendoes,
The blackbird whistling
Or just after.

6

Icicles filled the long window
With barbaric glass.
The shadow of the blackbird
Crossed it, to and fro.
The mood
Traced in the shadow
An indecipherable cause.

7

O thin men of Haddam,
Why do you imagine golden birds?
Do you not see how the blackbird
Walks around the feet
Of the women about you?

8

I know noble accents
And lucid, inescapable rhythms;
But I know, too,
That the blackbird is involved
In what I know.

9

When the blackbird flew out of sight
It marked the edge
Of one of many circles.

10

At the sight of blackbirds
Flying in the green light,
Even the bawds of euphony
Would cry out sharply.

11

He rode over Connecticut
In a glass coach.
Once, a fear pierced him,
In that he mistook
The shadow of his equipage
For Blackbirds.

12

The river is moving.
The blackbirds must be flying.

13

It was evening all afternoon.
It was snowing
And it was going to snow.
The blackbirds sat
In the cedar-limbs.

THE ARTISTS

LUCY SHELTON

Both abroad and at home, this adventuresome and eloquent singer "with her characteristic mixture of intelligence, good taste, and vocal purity," as the New York Times' Donal Henahan has remarked, finds special satisfaction in bringing to life the works of our century. Just this last summer, she made three major European festival debuts: at the Berlin Festival, collaborating with pianist Andras Schiff in Kurtag's The Sayings of Peter Bornemisza; at the Adare Festival in Ireland, singing Stephen Albert's Flower of the Mountain (a work written for her); and at England's Aldeburgh Festival, giving the world premiere of Goehr's Sing, Ariel with Oliver Knussen conducting. During the 1990-91 season she participates in four premieres: Ned Rorem's The Schuyler Songs in a concert by the American Symphony Orchestra at Lincoln Center; James Primosch's Clouds of Unknowing with the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra under John Harbison's direction; Cleveland composer Baker's False Entrances, Fancies & Exits (a theater piece written for Miss Shelton); and Baley's Gospel Symphony (also written for her) to be performed in Lvov, the Ukraine.

Among other touring engagements and orchestral appearances this season, she will also complete a major recording project for Bridge Records, Arnold Schoenberg's Pierrot Lunaire, with the Da Capo Chamber Players. With her frequent 20th Century Consort colleague, Lambert Orkis, Miss Shelton has made two solo recital albums (Nonesuch), and with trumpeter Edward Carroll, she has recorded an album of Baroque arias.

A 1980 winner of the Naumburg International Vocal Competition, Lucy Shelton has now enjoyed a decade of acclaimed appearances with our major symphonies, chamber orchestras and ensembles, and her wide-ranging operatic activity continues to grow. She is, however, a dedicated recitalist, and the song literature continues to be central to her artistic life — as this evening's performance amply confirms.

CHRISTOPHER KENDALL

A man for all musical seasons — and eras — Christopher Kendall has guided the 20th Century Consort expertly through nearly a decade-and-a-half of successful growth, culminating in this 1990-91 season for which the Consort has a record number of subscribers exceeding 200! As attentive to the glories of our musical heritage as he is aware of the possibilities of the future, Mr. Kendall is the founder and lutenist of the internationally acclaimed Folger Consort; and for the last three seasons he has managed a bicoastal balancing act by commuting between Washington and Seattle, where he is Associate Conductor of the Seattle Symphony.

Into this already impressively filled schedule, he manages to insert guest conducting engagements around the country, including the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, the Mostly Mozart Festival, the Da Capo Chamber Players, Boston's Collage New Music ensemble, the New York Chamber Orchestra, and — nearer to home — the Annapolis Symphony.

THOMAS JONES

A graduate of the University of Maryland, Thomas Jones enjoys the flexibility of a freelance musician's career. Admired for his extraordinary ability to change stylistic "gears" with ease, Mr. Jones plays drums and percussion at the Kennedy Center, the National Theater, and at Wolf Trap. In addition to his longtime association with the 20th Century Consort, he is the timpanist for the Smithsonian Chamber Orchestra, and works regularly as the drummer in a variety of bands. He is among the musicians most in demand in the Washington area for recording studio work as well.

LISA EMENHEISER LOGAN

Ms. Logan is a graduate of the Juilliard School where she received both Bachelor's and Master of Music degrees as a student of Ania Dorfman. She has performed in recitals at Alice Tully Hall, Avery Fisher Hall, Carnegie Recital Hall, and appears frequently at the Kennedy Center and the National Gallery. As an established chamber musician, she has performed across the globe with such artists as Julius Baker, Eugenia Zukerman, Ransom Wilson, Jean-Pierre Rampal, and Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg. She has appeared as soloist with both the Baltimore and Richmond Symphonies, and her recorded performances may be heard on Pro Arte records.

SARA STERN

Although she is renowned as a chamber music specialist, Sara Stern's repertoire encompasses the full range of the the literature for her instrument. As solo flute with the 20th Century Consort, Ms. Stern has performed numerous contemporary compositions, including several important world premieres. She has also been engaged as Principal Flute of the Kennedy Center's Terrace Theatre Orchestra, the Eisenhower Theatre Orchestra, and the Virginia Chamber Orchestra. As flutist with the Rosewood Consort, Ms. Stern has toured extensively, and her concert collaborations with harpist Dotian Litton have enjoyed widespread popularity. A series of guest appearances with the Emerson String Quartet and a Carnegie Hall debut recital in 1989 established her as an artist of major stature in American music. Her recordings are available on the Smithsonian, Pro Arte, and Nonesuch labels.

