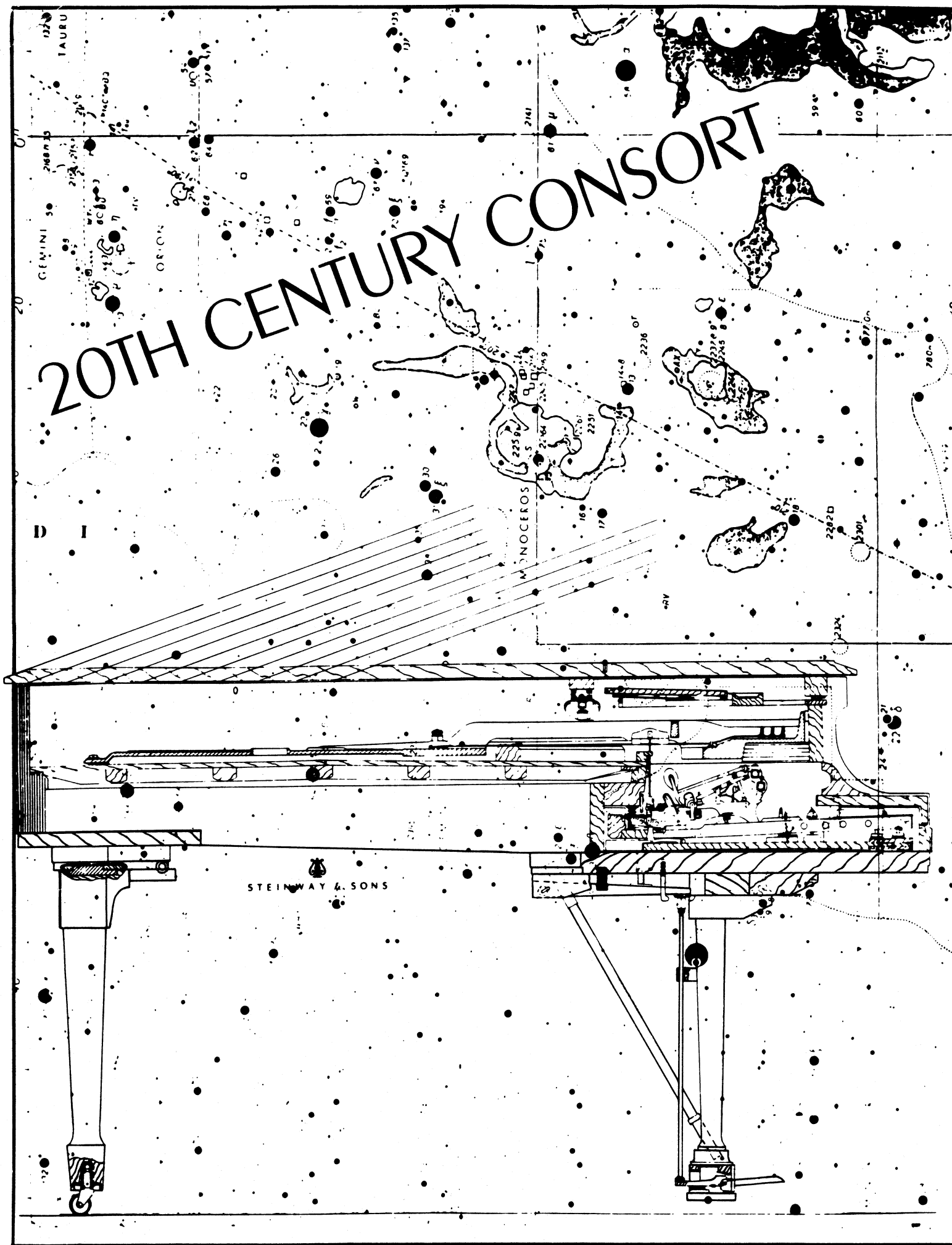
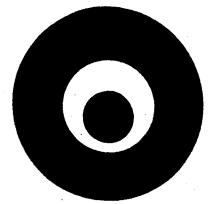


20TH CENTURY CONSORT





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



20th CENTURY CONSORT
Christopher Kendall, Artistic Director and Conductor

Elisabeth Adkins, violin
David Flowers, trumpet
David Hardy, cello
Thomas Jones, percussion
Loren Kitt, clarinet
Dotian Levalier, harp

Lynne Levine, viola
Lisa Emenheiser Logan, piano
Orrin Olsen, French horn
Harold Robinson, contrabass
Sara Stern, flute
Charles Weatherbee, violin

Guest Artists
Mark Bleeker, tenor
Maria Jette, soprano

* * *

Saturday 2 November 1991
Marion and Gustave Ring Auditorium
Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden

Lecture-discussion/4:30 p.m.

Christopher Kendall
Edward P. Lawson, Chief, HMSG Education Department
Stephen Albert and Jon Deak, composers

The participation of composers is made possible by generous grants from **Meet The Composer**, through the Composers Performance Fund, which is supported by the American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers (ASCAP), and the Getty, Xerox, Metropolitan Life, and Dayton Hudson Foundations.

Concert/5:30 p.m.

The 20th Century Consort's 1991-92 performance series is funded in part by the National Endowment for the Arts, a Federal agency, and the District of Columbia Commission on the Arts.

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The audience is invited to join the artists in the Plaza lobby for an informal post-concert reception, sponsored by The Friends of the 20th Century Consort.

THE PROGRAM

Halloween (1911)

Charles Ives
(1874-1954)

Ms. Adkins, Mr. Weatherbee, Ms. Levine, Mr. Hardy, Ms. Logan

Charles Ives completed Halloween on 1 April 1906, basing it in part on materials originally created for a never-completed string quartet. Scored for four strings and piano, Ives also allowed the option of performance with multiple strings on a part. The first public performance took place as part of a Martha Graham dance concert under Albert Stoessel's direction in New York's Alvin Theatre on 22 April 1934.

Ives gave the best possible description of this work in the autobiographical fragments that he worked on for many years under the heading "memos" (he considered the more elegant term, "memoirs," only suitable for "such dignitaries as bank presidents.") Here, as edited by John Kirkpatrick (Charles E. Ives, Memos [W. W. Norton & Company, 1972]), is his description of the work:

In this piece I wanted to get, in a way, the sense and sound of a bonfire, outdoors in the night, growing bigger and brighter, and boys and children running around, dancing, throwing on wood--and the general spirit of Hallowe'en night--(and at the end, the takeoff of the regular coda of a proper opera, heard down the street from the bandstand.)

He accomplished the translation of a visual/aural effect into the music with some techniques unusual for 1906, but not without a touch of humor in the bandstand parody.

No composer ever worked in such isolation from the musical world as Ives. He actively avoided the concerts of most distinguished artists because they only played what he called "silk underwear music," and was particularly incensed by the refined playing of the Kneisel String Quartet, the most important chamber ensemble in the country at the time. Despite the fact that the Kneisels introduced many then-new compositions to American audiences and gave world premieres of dozens of American works, Ives considered them too "nice," a word that he always spoke with contempt. Perhaps that is why, having created a number of musical ideas intended for a second string quartet, he eventually recast most of them into other forms.

Halloween turned out to be one of the pieces in which Ives took the most pride. It was also one of the few that he actually had a chance to hear not long after he composed it by hiring players from New York's theatre orchestras (who were, to his mind, more flexible and open than musicians in the major symphony orchestras) to play it through. The reading of Halloween with "a little orchestra from a theatre just off the Bowery" went very well, and the players enjoyed the joke. Moreover, Ives said, "I happened to get exactly

the effect I had in mind, which is the only (at least an important) function of good workmanship." Despite the fact that the work is essentially a musical joke, Ives insisted that it was "one of the most carefully worked out (technically speaking), and one of the best pieces (from the standpoint of workmanship) that I've ever done."

Consider, then, his contempt for Albert Stoessel, the violinist and conductor who led the first public performance in 1934. Ives himself did not even bother to attend the performance, but friends reported to him that Stoessel beat time mechanically as if he had no idea what the piece was all about. "He not only didn't see the joke, but didn't know they were jokes, and not nice music...Even Herbert Hoover could get it, and the average listener always gets it."

Even as late as 1934, evidently, conservative conductors found it difficult to follow a piece in which the four string parts, while thoroughly diatonic, play in different keys. The parts enter one after another, in canon, at unexpected time intervals, but building a texture that grows ever more dense and active as the musical bonfire grows to its operatic coda of a climax.

Sonata No. 2 in A minor, Op. 27 (1924)
for unaccompanied violin

Eugène Ysaÿe
(1858-1931)

Ms. Adkins

Prelude
Malinconia (Melancholy)
Danse des Ombres (Sarabande, Dance of the Shades)
Les Furies (The Furies)

The Belgian violinist Eugène Ysaÿe was not only one of the most influential instrumentalists of this century (he was principally responsible for the modern approach to the instrument with a big tone and a nearly constant use of vibrato), he was also a conductor and composer of considerable ability. Though he never studied composition formally, Ysaÿe produced eight violin concertos (mostly virtuoso products of his youth, which he never published), an opera, Piére li houïou [Peter the Miner], in Walloon (the Belgian French dialect), various shorter works for violin and orchestra or violin and piano, and several chamber compositions. But far and away his most substantive creative work went into the six sonatas for unaccompanied violin, published as Op. 27 in 1924. He is reputed to have sketched the entire set in a single 24-hour sitting, though, of course, the works were revised and polished before publication. Ysaÿe dedicated each of these half-dozen pieces to a different younger colleague, and each is inspired by the dedicatee's manner of playing the instrument. The Second Sonata bears a dedication to Jacques Thibaud.

Thibaud was notoriously devoted to the music of Bach; each morning his warm-up regimen included the prelude from Bach's E Major

Partita. Ysaye humorously alludes to this "obsession" in the title he gives to his opening movement, a prelude developed with innovative and demanding technique into a technically brilliant movement that also draws upon the Dies irae melody, which recurs throughout the sonata. The ensuing movements are equally original, each growing out of some aspect of Bach's writing for unaccompanied violin, yet transported into the 20th century in its virtuosic demands. Malinconia (Melancholy) is a poignant song, quietly and lyrically sustained. The Sarabande, Danse des Ombres (Dance of the Shades), recalls Bach's instrumental suites of dance types; it alternates pizzicato and arco playing. The final movement, Les Furies, is an impassioned conclusion calling for enormous dexterity, bringing the sonata to an end with a wonderful flourish.

Pause

TreeStone (1984)

Stephen Albert
(b. 1941)

I Am Leafy Speaking
A Grand Funferall
Seabirds
Tristopher Tristian
Fallen Griefs
Anna Livia Plurabelle

Ms. Jette, Mr. Bleeke

Ms. Adkins, Mr. Weatherbee, Ms. Levine, Mr. Hardy, Mr. Robinson
Mr. Flowers, Mr. Kitt, Mr. Olsen, Ms. Stern, Mr. Jones, Ms. Logan
Mr. Kendall

Trained at the Eastman School of Music, the Philadelphia Musical Academy, and the University of Pennsylvania, Stephen Albert has studied with Elie Siegmeister, Darius Milhaud (at Aspen), Bernard Rogers, Joseph Castaldo, and George Rochberg. He taught on the faculties of Stanford University, Smith College, and Boston University, then for a number of years devoted himself solely to composition, earning his living as a dealer in rare stamps and philatelic history. He received the 1985 Pulitzer Prize for his symphony RiverRun, spent two years as composer-in-residence with the Seattle Symphony Orchestra, and later joined the composition faculty at Juilliard.

TreeStone is one of several Albert compositions inspired by the work of James Joyce. In 1977 he used excerpts from Finnegan's Wake for To Wake the Dead, a song cycle for soprano and chamber ensemble. He returned to Joyce's book five years later when he became intrigued by the allusions to the old tale of Tristan and Isolde ("Yet is it but an old story, the tale of a TreeStone with one Ysold....") With its companion piece RiverRun (both works were composed in 1984), TreeStone shares musical materials differently organized. In TreeStone the text adumbrates the medieval legend intertwined with images of Dublin life and the visions of the Liffey River, which meanders through the city.

The cycle is built of six movements, some explicitly dealing with the Tristan legend, others with life in Dublin, all woven into a complex vision that includes both tragedy and comedy, hinting at a cyclical view of history. The river is represented at first by the soprano, a "feminine" voice, though at the end the river's "masculine" voice takes over in a philosophical mode. "I Am Leafy Speaking" is the soprano voice of the river reminiscing with the city of Dublin ("Dyoublong"). "A Grand Funferall" describes the funeral of the doomed lovers, though with surprisingly rowdy elements (as Joyce's punning twist of the word "funeral" suggests that is "fun for all.") "Seabirds" transports us to the moment of Tristan and Isolde's fateful first kiss, which seals the tragedy to come. "Tristopher Tristian" is a dialogue between an older and a younger washerwoman gossiping about ancestors as they do their laundry on the banks of the river -- ancestors who are, in fact, the fated lovers. "Fallen Grieffs" continues the dialogue in a climactic surrealist depiction of the lovers' end, united in death. "Anna Livia Plurabelle" brings darkness over all; the washerwomen fear that life is drawing to a close and they will leave nothing behind them. As night falls, the older woman is transformed into a tree, the younger into a stone on the opposite side of the river -- forever connected and forever separated by the ever-flowing river.

INTERMISSION

Lucy and the Count (1981)
in three scenes

Jon Deak
(b. 1943)

Ms. Adkins, Mr. Weatherbee, Ms. Levine, Mr. Hardy, Mr. Robinson

Born in Hammond, Indiana, Jon Deak grew up in an artistic environment -- his father was a sculptor, his mother a painter, and he himself has worked in sculpture. But music seized his attention: he studied double bass and composition at Oberlin, Juilliard, the Conservatory of Santa Cecilia in Rome, and the University of Illinois. The greatest influences on his work have come from Salvatore Martirano and John Cage, and from the Soho "performance art" movement of the late 1960s and early 70s. Since 1970, Deak himself has been a member of the double bass section of the New York Philharmonic. Spending much of his professional life as a performer, rather than as an academic -- the more common role held by composers these days -- has no doubt contributed to his interest in performance art, an interest that has led to creations that involve more than simply the notes on the page, that come alive only in the person of the executants.

Of course, all music is really performance art; the printed score is not the work, only a blueprint of it. But Jon Deak's Lucy and the Count is a performance score in a different sense: the work has a visual and theatrical element that transcends the customary relationship of pitch and rhythm. It is a kind of "story theatre"

in which the performers relate episodes from Bram Stoker's famous novel Dracula (who is, of course, the "Count" of the title; "Lucy" is his principal victim.)

On several occasions Deak has turned to an old story -- whether folk tale or, as here, a work of literary fiction. Other examples in his output include The Ugly Duckling and The Bremen Town Musicians. These works, like Lucy and the Count, are based in part on speech rhythm turned into music. The words of the tale are turned into music, which sometimes takes over the storytelling entirely and sometimes supplies the background to declamation. The instrumentalists evoke words "woven into the music as a sound event." As the composer has explained, he is sometimes "more concerned with the sound event than with the meaning of the words."

Written in 1981 for the Apple Hill Chamber Players, this 18-minute work calls for string quartet with the addition of a double bass, which plays the leading role. The text, adapted by the composer and Richard Hartshorne from Stoker's novel, is read by the bass player before each of the three scenes; the second scene in particular, employs Deak's technique of "instrumental speech." Since its premiere, Lucy and the Count has become Jon Deak's most successful composition, having had in the last decade 500 or 600 performances "at least" in the composer's estimation.

Program Notes by
STEVEN LEDBETTER

* * *

20th Century Consort

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Alyce Rideout, Manager
James D. Allnutt, Production Assistant
Susan Chalifoux, Reception Coordinator
Curt Wittig, Recording Engineer

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Resident Associate Program

The continuing education, cultural, and membership arm of the Smithsonian Institution for metropolitan Washington, RAP relies on the financial support of its more than 61,000 memberships to fund its activities, including the presentation of distinguished performing artists and ensembles in more than 100 performances annually. Please telephone 202/357-3030 for membership information.

20th CENTURY CONSORT
1991-92 Concert Series

November 2

Halloween

Charles Ives: Halloween
Eugène Ysaÿe: Violin Sonata No. 2
Stephen Albert: TreeStone
Jon Deak: Lucy and the Count

December 7

Tet a Tet

Aaron Copland: Sextet
David Froom: Piano Quartet
Nicholas Maw: Flute Quartet
Paul Schoenfield: Elegy, Rag, and Boogie,
for one piano, four hands

January 25

Suite Music

Benjamin Britten: Suite for Solo Cello
Donald Crockett: Celestial Mechanics
Kamran Ince: Hammer Music
Peter Warlock: The Curlew

February 29

Leap Era

Guest Artists:

The Folger Consort
Mark Kuss: Contralumina
Ian Krause: Tientos
David Liptack: Ancient Songs
Ryohei: Meditations

April 4

Avant Folk

Luciano Berio: Folk Songs
George Crumb: An Idyll for the Misbegotten
Paul Schoenfield: Six British Folk Songs
Shulamit Ran: Apprehensions

LUCY AND THE COUNT

Scene Two - The Dinner Party

Dr. Van Helsing (viola): I tell you, Dr. Seward - it's a fact!

Dr. Seward (cello): Oh, ho ho ho - preposterous, really!

Dr. Van Helsing: Jonathan, what do you think?

Jonathan Harker (violin II): I don't know, all this talk of the
undead - it's all so supernatural
and everything, I just don't know
what to say -

Dr. Van Helsing: Well! I suggest we ask an authority. May I
present - the Count!

All: Ahhhh!

The Count: Goot eeveningk.

Harker: Er....Count?

Count: Yes?

Harker: Have you seen cases of the dead coming back to ...
(nervous laughter)

Dr. Seward: Wait! Why do we all laugh?

Count: Because you are all so innocent! ... Let me tell you ... (The Count waxes eloquent, presenting his opinion in the form of a dashing Transylvanian Tango, with special attention paid to a blushing Lucy.)

All: Bravo! Bravo! Marvelous! (etc.)

Count: Thank you, thank you. (The Count continues his flirtatious innuendoes with Lucy....)

Lucy (violin I): Ha, Ha - OH!

Others: Lucy! What is it?

Lucy: Oh, nothing - just a scratch. (But the Count cannot resist the sight of blood on Lucy's finger. He puts it to his lips. Execrable sucking sound is heard.)

Others: See here, Count! What's the meaning of this!?

Count: Huh! - Oh, nothing. (Slurp, slurp)

Others: What??

Count: (Innocently) Just cleansing the wound ... heh, heh

Others: Oh! hmmm

(The incident is left unresolved as the guests awkwardly try to change the subject.)