



The Smithsonian Associates  
presents

# 20th Century Consort

December 3, 1994

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presents

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## 20th Century Consort

Christopher Kendall, Artistic Director and Conductor

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Loren Kitt, clarinet  
Lisa Emenheiser Logan, piano  
Anthony Stark, Managing Director

**Saturday, December 3, 1994**  
**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 1994-95 performance series  
is funded in part by  
the National Endowment for the Arts, a Federal agency,  
the Aaron Copland Fund for Music,  
and the Smithsonian Office of the Assistant Provost  
for Arts and Humanities.

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  
**Smithsonian**  
ASSOCIATES

### Lecture-Discussion

Christopher Kendall, Artistic Director, 20th Century Consort,  
Mark Kuss

### Concert

"Paradox Lost"

#### *Three Pieces*

Mr. Kitt

IGOR STRAVINSKY

#### *Le Tombeau de Ravel*

Valse-Caprices  
(played without pauses)

ARTHUR BENJAMIN

Introduzione. Allegro Molto

1. Poco lento 2. Presto, volante  
3. Andante, semplice 4. Allegro vigoroso  
5. Allegretto, preciso 6. Lento, intimo

Finale. Non troppo allegro

Ms. Logan, Mr. Kitt

#### *Première Rhapsodie* (played without pauses)

CLAUDE DEBUSSY

Revenement lent

Le double plus vite-scherzando  
Modérément animé (scherzando)

Même mouvt

Plus animé

Ms. Logan, Mr. Kitt

### Intermission

#### *Power Synth.*

Allegro (one movement)

MARK KUSS

Ms. Logan

#### *Wings*

Mr. Kitt

JOAN TOWER

#### *Sonatina*

I Allegro con brio

II Andantino

Mr. Kitt

III Furioso

MALCOLM ARNOLD

# The Program

## IGOR STRAVINSKY

### Three Pieces for clarinet solo

The three solo clarinet pieces are a kind of graceful thank you note written by Stravinsky in 1919 for presentation to Werner Reinhart, who had financed the first production of *L'Histoire du Soldat* (*The Soldier's Tale*) the preceding year. The choice of medium for the piece was simple: Reinhart himself played the clarinet, and so naturally his own instrument was called for. Stravinsky had already demonstrated his predilection for the clarinet and his ability to write wonderfully imaginative parts for that instrument in *The Soldier's Tale*, not to mention the earlier *Berceuses du Chat* (*Cat's Cradle Songs*), for contralto and three clarinets. Stravinsky's work brilliantly exploits various characteristic features of the clarinet: the first piece emphasizes the lower register in a tranquil mood, with flexible changing meters in flowing eighth-notes. The second moves with rhythmic freedom to elaborate arabesques, while the third is rhythmically lively in the manner of his earlier "Ragtime" and "Tango" movements in *The Soldier's Tale*, sounded in irregular meters, mostly in a sustained high register.

## ARTHUR BENJAMIN

### *Le Tombeau de Ravel*, for clarinet and piano

Australian-born Arthur Benjamin (1893-1960) spent most of his life in England, where he entered the Royal College of Music in 1918. Though he was a "serious" composer and taught at his alma mater from 1926, his music often partook of elements of various popular styles, of which the Latin American element was the most significant. (By far his most famous and successful piece was *Jamaican Rumba*, originally for two pianos, later orchestrated.) He was Benjamin Britten's piano teacher, and became a successful composer of film scores. The *Tombeau de Ravel* (1958) follows an old French tradition of composing a "funeral monument," or *tombeau*, in memory of a friend or artist whom the creator particularly admires.

Benjamin's *tombeau* takes the form of a suite, evidently conceived as an homage to Ravel's *Valses nobles et sentimentales*, for either viola or clarinet with piano. (The composer notes in his score that the viola/clarinet line sometimes differs between one version and the other, to take advantage of the special character of either instrument—most frequently in the passage work—with the result that "it cannot be said that either is a transcription of the other.") The progression of the score can be followed without difficulty from the following list of tempi for the six waltzes, the introduction, and the finale.

Introduction, Allegro molto

1. Poco lento (with an expression of melancholy)

2. Presto, volante

3. Andante, semplice

4. Allegro, vigoroso

5. Allegretto, vreciso

6. Lento, intimo

Finale. Non troppo allegro

Like Ravel's waltzes, this work plays quite freely with tonality through side-slipping chromaticism and high-calorie chords, but remains firmly grounded at the important structural points, and returns to close with the material of the Introduction.

## CLAUDE DEBUSSY

### *Première Rhapsodie* for clarinet and piano

In 1909 Debussy was able to witness the triumphant success of *Pelléas et Mélisande* in London and to read the first French biography of him. At the same time he was appointed to the advisory board of the Paris Conservatoire. Against these professional triumphs, though, must be noted the first appearance of the cancer that killed him nine years later. He was frequently forced to take cocaine and morphine to relieve the harrowing pain of the disease. Late in the year he began work on a piece requested for the spring examinations at the Conservatoire, a work for clarinet and piano. This became the *Première RHapsodie*, more frequently heard in the orchestral dress that the composer created simultaneously. As befits a work designed to test the abilities of the candidates for graduation, it runs through all the technical possibilities of the instrument—from the songlike to the virtuosic—while maintaining overall a wonderfully dreamlike character.

## MARK KUSS

### *Power Synth.*

Mark Kuss (b. 1960) grew up in New England and studied at the New England Conservatory, then moved to Seattle, where he earned his master's degree at the University of Washington. While there he was president and artistic director of the Seattle Composers Forum (during that time, his *L'homme armé* was performed by the 20th Century Consort). Since then his *Contralumina* and *Leaves* have also been heard on this series. He is now working on his doctorate at Duke University in North Carolina. As the youngest composer on this program, Kuss is a member of a generation of musicians for whom music history classes include excellent recordings and performances of Medieval and Renaissance music, unlike similar classes a generation earlier, when the quality of the

available recordings was more likely to arouse derision than admiration from the student. His contact with older music shaped some of the works that have previously been performed by the 20th Century Consort. *Power Synth.* (the composer expressly includes the period as part of the title) clearly draws its conception from more modern sources. As the composer explains:

*Power Synth.* was written very quickly over this past summer. It is a musical response to certain ideas and terms I have encountered in recent literary criticism. One of these terms, "simulacrum," obsessed me while I was working on the piece. This term, originally associated with manufacturing, describes the state in which the "reproduction" becomes more authentic than that which it is a copy of. We encounter this every day. It is the "imitation crab meat" which we consume from those industrial-style salad bars found at our workplace, or that true-to-life "woodgrain effect" found in the formica countertops in our kitchens.

The music of *Power Synth.* is rather accessible. The piece can be viewed as a re-translation back to the piano of certain effects that are only possible on the Synthesizer. *Power Synth.* is filled with allusions to very specific Synthesizer techniques; among these are the use of the "mod" wheel and "skyscraper chord" doublings. In addition, the music of *Power Synth.* refers back to certain musical effects associated with the Synthesizer bands of the 1970s and '80s. The piece will be best understood if viewed as "Liszt, Gershwin, and Ginastera" as seen through the eyes of "Emerson, Lake, and Palmer."

## JOAN TOWER

### *Wings*, for unaccompanied clarinet

In recent years, Joan Tower has emerged as one of our most significant composers. Her first orchestral work, *Sequoia*, had the distinction of being the only American work on the 1982 United Nations Day concert of the New York Philharmonic under Zubin Mehta, following performances on their regular subscription series at Lincoln Center, and it quickly entered the repertory. She spent three years (1985-88) as composer-in-residence at the St. Louis Symphony as part of the Meet-the-Composer Residency program, and *Silver Ladders*, composed during that period, won the 1990 Grawemeyer Award for Music Composition.

Born in New Rochelle, N.Y., in 1938, Joan Tower grew up in South America, where her father worked as a mining engineer. When she returned to the United States, she attended Bennington College and Columbia University, and founded the Da Capo Players (winner of the Naumburg Award for Chamber Music in 1973), of which she was the pianist for 15 years, until her composing career took off so brilliantly. (Indeed, she once joked that she used to be known as a pianist who com-

posed; now she is a composer who also plays the piano.)

Her many grants include some from the Guggenheim Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, the American Institute & Academy of Arts & Letters, the Koussevitzky Foundation, and the Fromm Foundation. She has also been the subject of a nationally broadcast TV documentary produced by WGBH-TV, which won Honorable Mention at the American Film Festival. Joan Tower has taught at Bard College since 1972. She is currently Asher Edelman Professor of Music there.

*Wings* was composed for Laura Flax, who gave the first performance in New York in December 1981. (Ten years later she also prepared a version for saxophone.) As in other works by Tower, its title is evocative without being prescriptive; it suggests the soaring into flight of a great bird. Beginning with low, sustained notes, the work soars, glides, alternately lifts and dips, reaching finally the airiest heights.

## MALCOLM ARNOLD

### *Sonatina for Clarinet and Piano*

Malcolm Arnold has been one of the most frequently performed English composers of this century, a practical musician who came out of the orchestra's trumpet section to become a busy, wide-ranging composer. He has passed freely between the worlds of the symphony orchestra and the jazz club, commercial light music, and films (among his most widely known scores is the Academy Award-winning music to *The Bridge on the River Kwai*). His sense of humor led to a commission from Gerard Hoffnung (for the first Hoffnung Festival, one of the masterpieces of musical wit and satire) for *A Grand, Grand Overture*, which had obligato parts for vacuum cleaners, floor polishers, and rifles. His output includes everything from such joke pieces to operas and symphonies. His musical style is suited to the task at hand. Though he was quite uninterested in the kinds of modern developments that he (like many performing musicians) referred to as "paper music," he did not simply write in the hearty roast-beef tradition of his English forebears, but occasionally made use of row techniques in developing and shaping his material.

The *Sonatina* for clarinet and piano is designed to be as much fun to play as it is to listen to. Arnold composed it in 1951, as one of a series of short duo sonatas for various wind instruments (there are sonatinas for flute, oboe, clarinet, and recorder, as well as larger sonatas for flute, violin, and viola). He composed the work for a clarinetist who went on to much greater renown as a conductor, Colin Davis, who gave the first performance, with pianist Geoffrey Corbet, in London's Gallery of the Royal Society of British Artists on March 20, 1951, just two months after the work's completion. The three short movements are laid out in a fast-slow-fast pattern. It flows easily throughout, with particular rhythmic energy in the emphatic outer movements.

—Notes by Steven Ledbetter

# About the Artists

**CHRISTOPHER KENDALL**, Artistic Director. In addition to his involvement with the 20th Century Consort, Mr. Kendall is founder and lutenist of the Folger Consort. Currently, Mr. Kendall is the director of the Music Division at Boston University School for the Arts. He regularly conducts the symphony and chamber orchestras at the Juilliard School in New York, and from 1987-1992 he served as Associate Conductor of the Seattle Symphony Orchestra. His recent guest conducting appearances include the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony in Canada, Music Today Ensemble, San Francisco Chamber Symphony, and the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center. Mr. Kendall has recorded on the Delos, Nonesuch, Bard, and Smithsonian Collection labels.

**LOREN KITT**, clarinetist, is principal clarinetist of the National Symphony Orchestra and a graduate of the Curtis Institute of Music. Prior to joining the National Symphony in 1970, he performed with the Buffalo Philharmonic and was principal clarinetist of the Milwaukee Symphony. He has also been a Professor of Music at Oberlin Conservatory and is currently on the faculty of the Peabody Conservatory. In addition to his activities with the 20th Century Consort, Mr. Kitt is heard frequently in Washington with the Theater Chamber Players of the Kennedy Center, the Library of Congress Summer Music Festival, and he has performed with the Emerson String Quartet in their series at the Smithsonian.

**LISA EMENHEISER LOGAN**, pianist, is a graduate of the Juilliard School where she received both Bachelor's and Master's of Music degrees as a student of Ania Dorfmann. She has performed in recitals at Alice Tully Hall, Avery Fisher Hall, Carnegie Recital Hall, and appears frequently at the Kennedy Center and National Gallery. She has appeared as soloist with both the Baltimore Symphony and the Richmond, Virginia Symphony. As an established chamber musician, Ms. Logan has performed across the globe with such artists as Julius Baker, Eugenia Zuckerman, Ransom Wilson, Jean-Pierre Rampal, and Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg. She has recorded for Pro Arte Records, VAI Audio, and Delos. Ms. Logan is the pianist of the Opus 3 Trio.