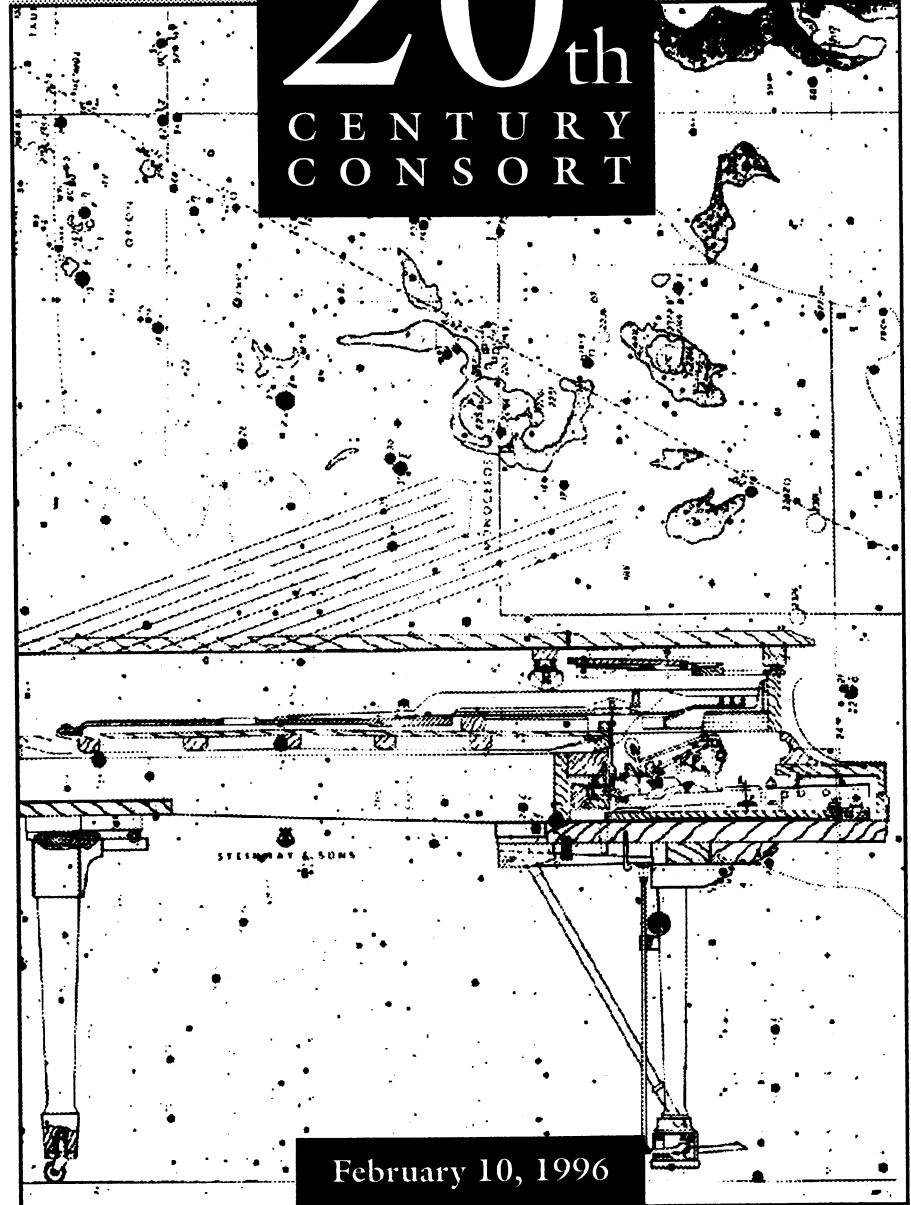


The Smithsonian Associates
presents

20th CENTURY CONSORT



February 10, 1996

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presents



20th Century Consort

Christopher Kendall, Artistic Director and Conductor

Elisabeth Adkins, violin
Phyllis Bryn-Julson, soprano
David Hardy, cello
Thomas Jones, percussion
Lisa Emenheiser Logan, piano
Loren Kitt, clarinet
Sara Stern, flute



Saturday, February 10, 1996
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,
and the Smithsonian Office of the Provost.

Lecture-Discussion

Christopher Kendall, Artistic Director, 20th Century Consort,
Stephen Dembski, Mark Kuss, Bruce MacCombie, Composers

Program "Untitled"

Trio Mark Kuss
1. Sonata
2. Fake World-Music I
3. Fake World-Music II
4. Hymn

Ms. Adkins, Mr. Hardy, Ms. Logan

The Show Stephen Dembski

Ms. Adkins, Ms. Bryn-Julson, Mr. Jones,
Mr. Kitt, Ms. Logan, Mr. Kendall

Intermission

Three Designs
for three players Bruce MacCombie

Mr. Hardy, Mr. Kitt, Ms. Logan

Trio No. II (in One Movement) Leon Kirchner

Ms. Adkins, Mr. Hardy, Ms. Logan

The Program

MARK KUSS
Trio

Mark Kuss (b. 1960) grew up in New England and studied at the New England Conservatory, then moved to Seattle, where he took 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 Twentieth-Century Consort). Since then several of his works—*Contralumina*, *Leaves*, and *Power Synth*—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 the study of music included both early music and cultures outside the sphere of Europe and America. He and his generation benefitted from music history classes that had 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 Twentieth-Century Consort. And he has also come of age when the musical world expanded to encompass almost every human culture and the recognition that we all hear (and even make) music in more ways and of more types than we often recognize ourselves. His new trio is a particular example of this breadth of musical input, as he himself explains:

My piano trio is in four movements. The first is slow, the second and third are fast, and the last is slow. The entire piece is tied to issues of high and low culture.

The first movement of the piece is in sonata form. The first and second themes are based upon typical early modernist-style cadenzas for cello and violin respectively. Hidden behind these themes are two advertising melodies, the Armour hot dog tune and the Roto-Rooter theme. A development ensues. The two advertising tunes supplant the cadenzas in the recapitulation and are finally displayed and harmonized with teleological pride.

The second movement is what I have come to call “fake world music.” It has a non-Western quality to it which is the result of the conscious manipulation of instrumental colors, quasi-pentatonic pitch materials, and asymmetrical rhythms. I especially enjoyed toying with the idea of musically stylized “folk-like simplicity,” but I haven’t a clue as to what culture the piece may refer to.

The third movement is also “fake world music,” but its references are distinctly western. This is music for fiddle, dulcimer, and guitar. I have always liked fiddle music for its fearlessness—two chords and a scale, and, man, you can go to town for hours.

The last movement is a little like a hymn. I made a field recording of two little kids at a local public school. They sang the song “Cotton-eye Joe,” and played recorders between each verse. They seldom actually sang the right notes of the song, but what they did I found disturbingly beautiful. All I did was to employ my over-educated background to supply a smooth harmonization to their abrupt shifts in key. Somehow it all seemed like a metaphor for something a little awful.

—Mark Kuss

STEPHEN DEMBSKI
The Show

Stephen Dembski (born in Boston, 1949) grew up in Massachusetts; he holds degrees from Antioch, Stony Brook, and Princeton. He has taught at Princeton, Bates, and Dartmouth, and is currently responsible for the advanced composition program at the University of Wisconsin at Madison. His time is divided between Wisconsin and New York City, which has been his base since 1973.

He has represented the United States at international festivals in France, Germany, Denmark, Poland, and England; at home, his honors include three commission-fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, a fellowship from the George A. and Eliza Gardner Howard Foundation, and the Goddard Lieberman Award of the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters. In 1990, his orchestral setting of Wallace Stevens' last poem was recognized by the Premio Musicale Città di Trieste (Italy) and recorded for compact disc by the Polish Radio and TV Symphony Orchestra. Other CD's include

one on CRI devoted solely to his music, and a recording of Gregory Fulkerson's performance of his violin sonata, to be released in 1996.

The Show, adapted from an illustrated story by Donald Barthelme (1931-1989) that originally appeared in *The New Yorker* and was later reprinted as "The Flight of Pigeons from the Palace" in a collection of his called *Sadness*, received its world premiere by the Twentieth-Century Consort in this series in February 1986, with Carmen Pelton as the soprano soloist. The text deals with the plight of avant-garde art in any medium: the need on the part of the artist to keep attracting the public with a new "marvel". As Barthelme puts it, "The supply of strange ideas is not endless." *The Show* is a thirteen-minute work for soprano, clarinet, violin, piano, and percussion that sets Barthelme's story; the idea for the piece originated with Christopher Kendall. It was commissioned by the Twentieth-Century Consort with assistance from Chamber Music America.

Dembski was greatly taken with the black humor of the text, as well as its narrative style, which offered many different approaches for musical interpretation. His score is constructed of fragments in song or dance styles in which the soprano must negotiate a range of vocal styles from "normal" speech that is rhythmically notated to speech that has musical contours (like Schoenberg's *Sprechstimme*) to full-fledged lyrical song. This is an unusual work for Dembski, whose output has been largely instrumental and abstract; in *The Show*, he demonstrates his responsiveness to the rhythm and the affective sense of the text, and to its quirky humor as well.

[The "Flight of Pigeons from the Palace" is from *Sadness* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux), copyright 1970 by Donald Barthelme; it originally appeared in *The New Yorker*, and is used by permission.]

BRUCE MACCOMBIE

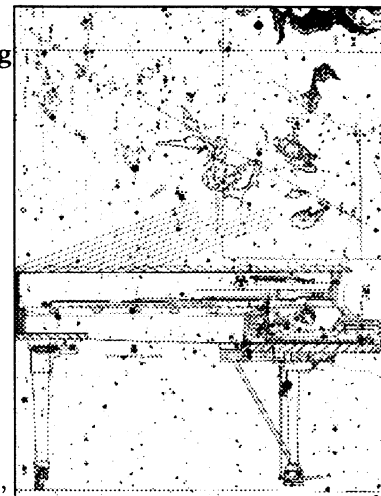
Three Designs for three players

Bruce MacCombie (born in Providence, Rhode Island, 1943) grew up in Massachusetts and studied composition with Philip Bezanson at the University of Massachusetts, where he earned both bachelor's and master's degrees. He earned his doctorate at the University of Iowa in 1971 and also studied in Germany with Wolfgang Fortner. After four years in Europe, he returned to the United States to take a position in music theory at Yale in 1975 and to join the composition faculty there the following year. In addition to his teaching and composing, Bruce

MacCombie organized an annual series of six new-music concerts at Yale during his years there. From 1980 to 1985 he was Vice President and Director of Publications for the music publishing firm of G. Schirmer. In March 1986, he became Dean of The Juilliard School, and took up his present position as Dean of the Boston University School for the Arts of in 1992.

The characteristic "American" qualities found in the syncopations and freedoms that arose in that demotic music called ragtime and later jazz have, not surprisingly, exercised a continuing influence on many serious American composers, beginning with Copland and others in the 1920s. As jazz developed (sometimes enriched by the more complex harmonic ideas of mid-century concert music), it continued to bring about further effects on concert music as well. Any attempt to assemble a listing or performances of works composed "under the influence" of jazz would be enormous indeed, given the many ways that jazz influence might be felt. Bruce MacCombie's *Three Designs for Three Players* was first heard on such a program, limited to Yale composers, in 1976. As he writes:

The piece deals in part with the interplay between conventionally notated and improvised musical gestures. This compositional procedure comes especially to the fore in the second movement, where the players mix jazz elements and various gestures derived from the outer movements, while at the same time determining the formal "design" of the movement by means of musical cues.



LEON KIRCHNER

Trio No. II (in one movement), for violin, cello, and piano

Leon Kirchner (b. Brooklyn, New York, 1919) moved with his family to California when he was a child, so he received most of his education there at a time when the cultural life in Los Angeles was marked by the presence of Schoenberg, Stravinsky, and a host of writers and other cultured emigrés from Europe. He attracted the attention of

Ernst Toch, who suggested that he study composition with Schoenberg at UCLA. He later worked also with two of the other great American composer-teachers of this century, Ernest Bloch in Berkeley and Roger Sessions in New York. After military service, Kirchner finished his M.A. degree at Berkeley. He spent the years 1948-50 in New York, where he received the first wide acclaim for his music. Over the years he won important awards for his three string quartets and for his first piano concerto. From 1950 to 1961 he lived again on the west coast, teaching at the University of Southern California and at Mills College. He moved to Harvard in 1961, where he became Walter Bigelow Rosen Professor of Music, retiring in 1989. He served on several occasions as composer-in-residence at Tanglewood.

It has happened on a number of occasions in his career that Kirchner has taken a piece composed in one medium or for one purpose and recomposed, or adapted, or extended, or rethought it into a different medium. This happened, for example, when he used material from the opera *Lily* (based on the first half of Saul Bellow's novel *Henderson, the Rain King*) to make a flute composition for Paula Robison, or when he converted *For Solo Violin*, written for a competition, into *For Solo Cello* and then enlarged it into a work for violin and cello. Similarly, when he contributed to a series of small orchestral variations on Leonard Bernstein's "New York, New York," performed at Tanglewood on the occasion of Bernstein's seventieth birthday, his piece began with a rather extended introduction that made reference to two of his own musical gods—"Arnold and Igor," as he likes to say (that is, Schoenberg and Stravinsky). Following the concert, Bernstein told Kirchner, "I know you: you're going to take the first two minutes, and you're going to use it to write your own piece." And, with *Music for Orchestra II*, that is just what he did.

Something similar happened in the composition of the Piano Trio No. 2. In 1992 he composed a cello concerto, entitled *Music for Cello and Orchestra*, for Yo-Yo Ma and the Philadelphia Orchestra; they premiered the work, under the baton of David Zinman, on October 16, 1992. This concerto, one of Kirchner's strongest and most moving compositions, is built in a single movement that moves (in broad terms) from vigorous and dynamic virtuosity to a transparent clarified lyricism.

The Kalichstein-Laredo-Robinson Trio had been urging Kirchner to write a new work for piano trio, a companion piece to the splendid trio he had composed nearly forty years earlier, in 1954.

Sensing that the cello concerto contained materials that would serve well for a piano trio, and under considerable time pressure for the commission, Kirchner proposed to the trio, with the permission of Yo-Yo Ma, that he would base a work on the concerto. This proposal was accepted, and the commission went forward. The Kalichstein-Laredo-Robinson Trio gave the first performance on December 14, 1993, at the 92nd Street Y in New York.

Much of the basic material in the Trio No. II comes from *Music for Cello and Orchestra* with relatively little change. But its treatment, naturally, and the assignment of the material to the three instruments, must differ considerably from a work in which there is one principal soloist set off against a large orchestral ensemble. And while the piano can, to some degree, become a surrogate for the orchestra, the two string parts require some balance in their responsibilities. The rethinking of one work in terms of another therefore calls forth a significant violin part that serves as comrade and counterpoise to the cello part. In this substantially reconsidered form, what had been beautifully conceived for cello and orchestra (with skillfully calculated balance between the two forces, always the single most difficult compositional problem in the genre of the cello concerto) now becomes a full-fledged work of chamber music with three equally significant parts. What remains unchanged is the broad sweep of the musical argument leading to the clarity of the touching lyrical conclusion.

—Program notes by Steven Ledbetter

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About the Artists

ELISABETH ADKINS, Violinist, is Associate Concertmaster of the National Symphony Orchestra. She received her doctorate from Yale University, where she studied with Oscar Shumsky. A versatile musician, she is active as a recitalist, concerto soloist, and chamber musician. Recent appearances include concertos with the National Symphony, the Springfield Symphony, and the Eclipse Chamber Orchestra, and recitals at the Kennedy Center, the National Gallery, and the Phillips Collection. She is a founding member of the American Chamber Players; her recordings with the group can be heard on Koch International Classics. The daughter of noted musicologists, her seven siblings include three violinists, two cellists, and a soprano; the family chamber group, the Adkins String

Ensemble, gave its debut concert in 1993 and is presently completing a CD recording.

PHYLLIS BRYN-JULSON, Soprano, is widely recognized - in Washington, D.C., nationally and internationally - as one of the leading sopranos of our time. She commands a remarkable amount of vocal literature spanning many centuries. Recent seasons have included performances with most of the prominent symphony orchestras in North America and across Europe, including the Boston Symphony Orchestra, The Milwaukee Symphony, and the New York and Los Angeles philharmonics. She has an extensive list of award-winning recordings among her credits, and has premiered numerous works by the century's most noted composers. Ms. Bryn-Julson is also a member of the Peabody Conservatory faculty.

DAVID HARDY, Cellist, achieved international recognition in 1982 as the top American prize winner at the Seventh Annual Tchaikovsky Cello Competition in Moscow. Mr. Hardy is a graduate of the Peabody Conservatory of Music. He has studied with Laurence Lesser, Stephyn Kates, Berl Senofsky and Mstislav Rostropovich, making his solo debut with the Baltimore Symphony at the age of 16. In 1981 he became the Assistant Principal Cellist of the National Symphony and the youngest member of that organization, and in 1994, he was appointed Principal Cellist. Mr. Hardy is the cellist of the Opus 3 Trio, and his playing can be heard on recordings under the Melodia, Educo, and Delos labels.

THOMAS JONES, Percussionist, graduated from the University of Maryland and is a freelance musician who enjoys playing many styles of music. He plays drums and is percussionist at the Kennedy Center, National Theater and Wolf Trap. He is the Timpanist with the Smithsonian Chamber Orchestra, Percussionist with the 20th Century Consort and works regularly as the drummer in a variety of bands. He has long experience in recording studios as a drummer and percussionist.

CHRISTOPHER KENDALL, Artistic Director and Conductor. In addition to his involvement with the 20th Century Consort, Mr. Kendall is Director of the Music Division at the Boston University School for the Arts, and founder and lutenist of the Folger Consort. From 1987-1992 he was Assistant, then Associate Conductor of the Seattle Symphony. Guest conducting engagements include the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, the Da Capo Chamber

Players, Boston's Collage New Music ensemble, New York Chamber Orchestra, Annapolis Symphony, Dayton Philharmonic, Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival, and the Symphony, Orchestra and Chamber Orchestra of the Juilliard School. His performances can be heard on the Delos, CRI, 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. Mr. Kitt was a featured artist with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center. He is heard frequently in Washington with the Theater Chamber Players of the Kennedy Center, The Romantic Chamber Ensemble, The Library of Congress Summer Music Festival, and is a regular guest performer with the Emerson String Quartet in their series at the Renwick Gallery.

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 and Richmond Symphonies. As an established chamber musician, Ms. Logan has performed across the globe with such artists as Julius Baker, Eugenia Zucherman, 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.

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Compiled December 2, 1995

20th Century Consort 1995-96 Consort Series Upcoming Concerts

March 16, 1996

Time Recycled

Bruce ADOLPHE: Machaut is my Beginning
Bruce WOLOSOFF: In Nomine
Peter Maxwell DAVIES: Antechrist
Ned ROREM: Book of Hours
Lucas FOSS: Time Cycle

April 20, 1996

20 Fingers/18 Feet

Joan TOWER: Stepping Stones
Paul SCHOENFIELD: Tango, Rag and Boogie
Bernd Alois ZIMMERMANN: Perspectives
Maurice RAVEL: La Valse