WASHINGTON NATIONAL CATHEDRAL 1997 SUMMER FESTIVAL

presents

20th Century Consort Christopher Kendall, Artistic Director and Conductor

at Washington National Cathedral on Tuesday, June 24, 1997 at 7:30 pm

Admission Free

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20th Century Consort

Christopher Kendall, Artistic Director and Conductor

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Organum

Ms. Logan, Mr. Newman

Carl Ruggles (1876-1971)

Stephen Albert

(1941-1992)

Cathedral Music

Concerto for Four Quartets

I Tempo quasi rubato

II Moderato

III Allegro brillante

IV Pesante

V Allegro scherzando

VI Andante mysterioso

VII Tempo quasi rubato

Mr. Barnett, Ms. Bean, Mr. Chapman, Mr. Fearing, Mr Feasley, Mr. Garlick, Mr. Hardy,

Mr. Huling, Mr. Jones, Mr. Kendall, Ms. Levalier, Ms. Logan, Mr. Newman, Mr.

Rodriguez, Ms. Sternstein, Mr. Whaley, Mr. White

Please remain seated while a freewill offering is received. We appreciate your generous support. A brief intermission will follow.

Organum

Iohn Harbison

Mr. Barnett, Mr. Jones, Mr. Kendall, Ms. Levalier, Ms. Logan, Mr. Newman

Three Meditations from Mass for Cello and Piano

(1918-1990)

Meditation No. 1: Lento assai, molto sostenuto

Meditation No. 2: Andante sostenuto

Meditation No. 3: Presto

Mr. Hardy, Ms. Logan

Stepping Stones: a ballet

1. Introduction

- 2. Meeting
- 3. Alone
- 4. Interlude
- 5. Love and Celebration

Ms. Logan, Mr. Newman

The Summer Festival is supported by a grant from the Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation, and gifts from the Friends of Cathedral Music and individual donors.

No, photography, flash or video, is permitted during the performance. No recording devices are permitted. Please turn off all beepers, pagers and alarm watches as these disturb the members of the audience around you. Thank you for your cooperation. Phones and restrooms are reached via the rear of the nave at the Northwest Cathedral entrance.

Leonard Bernstein

Joan Tower

TONIGHT'S PERFORMERS

Ronald Barnett, percussion Carol Bean, flute David Kane, electric organ Scott Fearing, French horn William Feasley, electric guitar Glenn Garlick, cello David Hardy, cello John Huling, trombone Thomas Jones, percussion Dotian Levalier, harp Lisa Emerheiser Logan, piano Edward Newman, piano Carlos Rodriguez, electric piano Adria Sternstein, flute David Whaley, French horn Tim White, trumpet

20th CENTURY CONSORT

The 20th Century Consort was founded in 1975, and in 1978 was invited to become resident ensemble for contemporary music at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. Under the direction of Christopher Kendall, Director of the School of Music at the University of Maryland, the ensemble has presented an annual subscription series at the Smithsonian, often relating its programs to the collections and special exhibitions of the Institution's museums.

Called a "triumph for 20th century music" by the Washington Post, the Consort has been hailed by critics - and by a large and devoted following - for its innovation and superbly balanced programs and its virtuoso performances. Consort artists include principal players in the National Symphony Orchestra, along with prominent musicians from Washington, D.C. and elsewhere.

In addition to its Smithsonian series, the Consort has toured nationally in the United States, and has recorded for the Delos, Nonesuch, CRI, Centaur and Smithsonian Collection labels, along with a current project of the music of Nicholas Maw on ASV. The Consort has an international repertoire, and has given world premieres of works by numerous leading American composers.

PROGRAM NOTES by Steven Ledbetter

CARL RUGGLES (1876-1971) Organum

The oldest written music in the European tradition was music for the church - at first single-line plainsong melodies of extraordinary flexibility and variety, and then the earliest polyphonic music, combining two or three, and eventually four or more, lines. Polyphonic music probably began more or less accidentally, when singers with higher and lower voice ranges started to perform a melody on different pitches, and then continued in parallel motion. The rich sonorities thus produced created a wonderful effect in the spacious arcs of the Romanesque churches of the time, and musicians, encouraged by the result, experimented with ways to control the musical effects, such as having one voice hold each note of a plainsong melody for a long time while another voice improvised against it, or (finally) creating - and writing down two completely independent melodies that could be sounded together. All of our art music ultimately sprang from these early sources, which produced a kind of music called organum. For centuries, organum was either forgotten or, more recently, held to be of purely historical interest for music students investigating the origins of the musical styles of Western Europe. But our century has also seen the rise of a great historicizing movement. Composers, for the first time, have access to virtually all of the music ever written down, music of every style and period and form, and they have frequently found it worthwhile investigating elements of music composed hundreds of years ago.

Those who know Carl Ruggles's fiercely independent music may find it hard to believe that he once intended to study with Dvorak! Born into an old New England family, Ruggles began playing the violin (an instrument he had himself made out of a cigar box) at the age of six. Before long, though, he received a real instrument and pursued it seriously. He worked in theater orchestras in Boston during his late teens, attended concerts of the Boston Symphony Orchestra (then less than fifteen years old), and occasionally played chamber music with members of the orchestra. His violin teacher Felix Winternitz had him play before Fritz Kreisler, who suggested that he go to Prague for further study of the violin and composition work with Dvorak. The plan fell through owing to the death of a financial sponsor, and Ruggles remained in the Boston area, where he took lessons in composition from the father figure of American music, John Knowles Paine, the Harvard professor who had been the first person to hold a chair in music in an American university.

During his twenties, at the turn of the contury, Ruggles made a living in a variety of ways engraving music for a Boston publisher, writing reviews for a newspaper in Cambridge, giving music-club lectures on such modern composers as Wagner, Franck, d'Indy, and especially Debussy. In 1907 he moved to Winona, Minnesota, where he taught at a school and founded an Ten years later he settled in New York, where he hoped to interest the Metropolitan Opera in his opera-in-progress The Sunken Bell, based on a play by Gerhart Hauptmann. In New York he met Edgard Varèse and became part of a circle of advanced composers in which he was able to hear some of his larger compositions. When Henry Cowell established his New Music Edition in 1927 to publish the work of contemporary composers, Ruggles's Men and Mountains and Portals for string orchestra comprised the first issue. One of the subscribers to the series was another American of highly individual bent, Charles Ives, who appreciated Ruggles's willingness to work with a predominantly dissonant harmonic idiom. As Ives once remarked, "Beauty in music is too often confused with something that lets the ears lie back in an easy chair." And it was evidently at an early performance of Men and Mountains in New York that Ives turned angrily to a member of the audience who booed the piece and exhorted him to "stand up before fine strong music like this" and "take a good dissonance like a man!"

Ruggles began spending his summers in Vermont and finally settled there for the rest of his long life. His last important compositions came in the 1940s, when he was about seventy; after that he turned more and more to painting, which occupied him until his death at ninety-five.

Organum is one of the late works of Carl Ruggles, composed slowly over the middle 1940s, though the actual composition mostly took place in 1944. The first information we have about the piece comes from a letter that Ruggles sent to Charles Ives in the spring of 1944, informing him, "For the past two months I've been experimenting with an Invention for Orchestra. Its [sic] the rhythmic physiognomy of the 2nd part that intrigues me. Perhaps I'm stumbling on something new." And he enclosed a musical example to illustrate what he was doing. The passage in question (which now makes up measures 5-12 of the finished work) consisted of two energetic melodic lines in octaves, the second of which was a kind of canonic imitation of the first. "Kind of" because, although the pitches of line 1 were repeated in line 2, the rhythms were often quite different (in contrast to "normal" canons, like "Row, row, row your boat," in which each following line is an exact repetition of the leader). Ruggles was especially concerned with the independence of his polyphonic lines, far more than with the harmonic combinations that they made.

While the work was still in a sketch stage, Ruggles showed it to Varèse, who proposed the title *Organum* because it was concerned with canon and made heavy use of intervals of the fourth and fifth. In this last respect it was like the medieval organum, but in general the work has little in common with early examples of polyphony. Still, Ruggles liked the title and adopted Varèse's suggestion.

He completed the work, in its original orchestral form, by the end of 1944. But then came the problem of getting a performance. Few conductors wished to risk a piece as novel as *Organum*, and those who were particularly enthusiastic about Ruggles's music, like Lou Harrison, did not often have an orchestra at their disposal. In late October 1946, Harrison suggested that Ruggles should arrange *Organum* for two pianos, because he knew some pianists who might be interested in the piece. Ruggles agreed, and produced the smaller version by early 1947. This finally had its first performance in New York on April 20, 1947 at a recital of the New Music Society series with pianists Maro Ajemian and William Masselos.

By the time *Organum* saw the light of day, Ruggles had gone over the score closely with John Kirkpatrick, who had made a number of suggestions, mostly along the line of "normalizing" some of the difficulties (mostly tiny details) to clarify the broad motion of the piece. Both Ives and Ruggles, Kirkpatrick said, had obstreperous, independent personalities that worried when people started agreeing with them too much. In any case, *Organum* stands as a granite monument of independent linear counterpoint, precisely the kind of music thinking Ruggles despaired of finding in most new music.

STEPHEN ALBERT 1941-1992) Cathedral Music

Stephen Albert began his musical career with the traditional early formal experiences. In his teens he began to study composition with Elie Siegmeister and Darius Milhaud, then continued to the Eastman School of Music, where his teacher was Bernard Rogers. In his early twenties he studied in Philadelphia with Joseph Castaldo and George Rochberg. At the time, Rochberg was a leading serialist composer, so this preparation would seem destined to lead Albert into the academy and to a career as a composer-professor, writing hermetic and complicated music

that few people cared to hear. But he consciously chose to avoid that route. He found himself outside what was regarded as the mainstream of contemporary musical development for choosing to avoid the mannered complexity characteristic of the music that was "in" when he was completing his studies. In the '60s, no composer who wished to be thought of as a serious artist dared think about what the listener might be capable of comprehending; intellectual rigor was praised more highly than the sound of the music. Composers cloistered themselves in tenured college positions and wrote music of daunting difficulty for performers and for listeners.

In order not to feel forced to compromise his vision of the kind of music he wished to write, Albert left academic life and the kinds of networking that went on there between composers and those performers who were willing to learn their music. He became, instead, a dealer in stamps, living quietly in Newton, Massachusetts, a suburb of Boston, and continuing to compose. When the awarding of the Pulitzer Prize for *RiverRun* was announced, many people active in Boston's musical life did not even know that the prize-winning composer lived there.

Stephen Albert's music was revealed to the general public, at least, by Mstislav Rostropovich, whose 1985 premiere of the symphony *RiverRun* with the National Symphony Orchestra put the composer on the map, particularly after the work won the Pulitzer Prize a few months later. He became composer-in-residence for the Seattle Symphony. And he finally found a welcome in the academy as well, when Bruce MacCombie, then dean of the Julliard School of Music, hired him to teach composition there. He had nearly finished a Second Symphony for the New York Philharmonic at the time of his death in an automobile accident. When the orchestration of the work was completed by one of his closest students and the piece was premiered by the New York Philharmonic, it revealed a composer on the verge of a wonderful new synthesis of harmonic ideas, underlining the loss that all lovers of music have suffered because of that fatal accident.

Cathedral Music , for four quartets and amplification, is one of the earliest works of Stephen Albert that reaches performance these days. Its title is not intended to suggest liturgical music in any way, but rather to recall a youthful musical experience that entranced the composer with its accustical quality. He saw a film about the great cellist Pablo Casals during the course of which Casals played one of the unaccompanied cello suites of J.S. Bach in an empty cathedral in Puerto Rico. The rich resonance of the sound that permeated the very echoes of the church when the air was set in motion by a single instrument in the hands of a master stayed with him; it lies as the basis of his conception in Cathedral Music, which calls for four different quartets: the first consists of two flutes and two cellos; the second of brass instruments, trumpet, two horns, and trombone; the third of two percussionists, harp, and guitar; the fourth of keyboards - electric organ, electric piano and two pianos. (The flutists and the trumpeter play alternative versions of their instruments, and the percussionists play the usual rich variety of instruments found in contemporary scores.) The composer specifies that the flutes, cellos, harp, and guitar "are to be amplified and slightly reverbed throughout (as if played in an empty cathedral)."

Cathedral Music is in seven sections:

- I. *Tempo quasi rubato*: Cello I leads the discourse with a motivic figure similar to that of one of the Bach unaccompanied suites and growing into ornate lines (the most important figure consists of the four notes C, E-flat, E-flat, C, the last pitch at the higher octave). Flute and electric piano offer light coloration.
- II. Moderato. Further development of the quasi-Bach figures, first movement in eighth-notes, then in regular sixteenths, with complementary lines from the electric piano and the two pianos.
- III. Allegro brillante. Flutes and cellos alternate rapid figuration in contrary motion. Improvised tremolos create a special color. A long crescendo leads to an attacca to the next section.

IV. Pesante. Heavy sustained piano chords back up the cello part.

V. Allegro scherzando. Lighter textures, altogether fleet in its movement.

VI. Andante mysterioso. Hushed and spacious.

VII. Tempo quasi rubato; flowing but dignified; steady. The original motif returns clearly in Cello I (though transposed up a fourth); the figure is picked up by the other instruments and carried to its dissolution.

JOHN HARBISON (b. 1938) Organum

John Harbison (born in Orange, New Jersey, now living in Cambridge, Massachusetts) is a composer who has been interested in a wide range of music, early and modern. His favorite composers include Heinrich Schütz, whose work he conducted extensively with the Cantata Singers, an organization that he founded, and who strongly influenced his Pulitzer-Prize composition *The Flight into Egypt*, J.S. Bach, Stravinsky, and Gershwin, to name only four. But he has also revisited older music with intriguing and beautiful results. His song cycle *Words from Paterson*, which sets the poetry of William Carlos Williams, draws on the voice-leading techniques of the fourteenth-century for a fresh and original approach - quite astonishing in a work that captures so vividly the rhythms of the English-language poetry.

Organum was one of a series of works composed, on a commission from the University of Chicago, to celebrate the seventy-fifth birthday of Paul Fromm, one of this century's most important patrons of new music. The title, as the composer notes in his comments reproduced here, was chosen to represent something of the texture of the piece, which was akin to that of the Medieval organum, though this work is in no way liturgical, but is rather an immediate and human celebration. The composer writes:

"The piece is ceremonial, heard as one simultaneous sculpture in space. All the sounds are choir sounds, and the chords, enclosed within the melody (hence the title *Organum*) are like smooth surfaces turned to the light - at least so it was meant.

"In 1973, when he commissioned me to write *Elegiac Songs*, for Jan DeGaetani, I followed a dark inward course. In the present instance, offering something in return, I thought about Paul Fromm, his enthusiasm, encouragement, and simplicity, and this quiet celebration in bell sounds was the result."

LEONARD BERSTEIN (1918-1990) 3 Meditations from *Mass*

No doubt most of those who attended the first performance of *Mass* at the opening of the Kennedy Center on September 8, 1971, assumed (from its title) that the work would be essentially another in the long and distinguished line of Mass settings of which the European cultural tradition is so rich (and which Bernstein himself knew so well as a conductor), perhaps especially a work like Beethoven's *Missa solemnis*, which combines visionary ecstasy with structural strength. As a conductor, Bernstein was one of the greatest advocates the Beethoven score has ever had. Such a setting would have been perfectly suitable as a tribute to a Roman Catholic president. But Bernstein's music was always essentially theatrical, and *Mass* was not intended to be merely a concert work, but rather a treatment of the burning issues of American

society in the early 1970s placed within the context of the traditional elements of the Latin Mass that composers have been setting to music for at least 700 years. The resulting work treated theological questions of doubt and faith, dramatically cast to suggest the debates of the "God is dead" movement that was much discussed at the time, as well as war and peace, race relations, social and economic justice, and ecological concerns.

The full score of *Mass* moves between extremes of tension and a repose generated by the principal character of the evening, known simply as the Celebrant, who (in the composer's words) "tries to control the situation by saying, 'Let us pray,' and it is at these moments that the *Meditations* are played by the pit orchestra, while the entire company remains motionless in attitudes of prayer, or contemplates ceremonial dance." Not long after the premiere, Bernstein arranged the first two meditations for cello and piano for Mstislav Rostropovich, who performed them widely. In 1977 he enlarged the work by creating a third "meditation" out of several passages in the score, and orchestrating the entire piece, so that it could be performed by cello with either piano or orchestra.

The first two movements of the present work are fairly literal arrangements of two passages from Mass ("Meditation #1" between the Confession and the Gloria; "Meditation #2" following the Gloria and preceding the Epistle) with the leading role given to the solo cello. The second of these is a set of four short variations based on a brief eleven-note passage from the finale of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony (a highly chromatic passage that does not at once suggest Beethoven). During the course of the movement there are two brief, but quite recognizable quotations from the Beethoven work: the opening notes of the famous "Joy" theme, and the simple major chords to which are sung the word Brüder ("Brothers").

The third movement has more complex origins. It does not correspond to the passage labeled "Meditation #3," late in Mass, but is rather mostly a reworking of the music called the "Second Introit," which consisted of a lively choral dance in 9/8 time (but, typically of Bernstein, the meter is made vigorous and jazzy with alternations of 3/8 and 3/4); a chorale, "Almighty Father," in something of a simple congregational hymn-singing style; and Epiphany, an extended solo for oboe with percussion. For Three Meditations, Bernstein rewrote the oboe solo for cello, and placed Epiphany first (though it returns at the end to round out the movement).

JOAN TOWER (b. 1938) Stepping Stones

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., 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 fifteen years, until her composing career took off so brilliantly. (Indeed, she once joked that she used to be known as a pianist who composed; 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.

Stepping Stones is a ballet score, originally composed for orchestra, but later adapted by the composer into the two-piano version heard here. Tower created the ballet jointly with choreographer Kathryn Posin, and it was first performed in Milwaukee on April 1, 1993. The two-piano version came in October 1995.

Traditionally a composer and a choreographer have worked separately, the one providing the music (sometimes to a pre-planned scenario), the other working out suitable dance steps to the already-composed music or else, as in the case of the classic ballet masters of the nineteenth century, ordering so many measures of 6/8 time in Adagio tempo, of whatever else was required to match the planned dance patterns. *Stepping Stones* began with an unusual collaboration in Joan Tower's back yard, in which the composer suggested some of the dance ideas and the choreographer some of the music. The basic idea had been to create a ballet about women; the final shape of the piece involved twelve women and six men. Half of the women, with different characters from quite young to fully mature, were elevated on stairs, which represented stages of the women's development; the remaining women, who danced on the floor, represented the "selves" of the women on the "stepping stones."

Once the basic ideas, and the opening section, had been worked out, composer and choreographer realized that continuing their collaboration in its original close way, though stimulating and fun, was taking an enormous amount of time. So they worked out a scenario for the rest of the ballet, and the work then developed in the more traditional way, with Tower composing the music, and Posin working out the dances. The women and their inner selves are introduced and have "a hopscotch session" (one of Tower's ideas); they encounter the six men; there is a trio for women and a love duet before the the final celebratory dance for the full company. Part of the action involves the building of a human chain that the women themselves sometimes break in rancor; sometimes the men disrupt it. "The dance is about struggling to rebuild the chain in the women's terms," the composer has explained. "The celebration which ends the ballet signifies that on some level the women and their selves and the men have been able to find a kind of unity."

Rhythm, which is a central feature of Tower's music, plays a predominant role here, sometimes very complex. Though the shaping of the dance was highly structural and mathematical, Tower told an interviewer that the music was largely intuitive. "I composed serial music for ten years, but I've gone totally the other way." At another point she commented, "I don't trust systems at all. Even A-B-A can be a straitjacket." The score, running nearly twenty minutes, is by turns muscularly athletic and lyrical, with a transcendent close.

WASHINGTON NATIONAL CATHEDRAL 1997 Summer Festival

For more information about Washington National Cathedral's 1997 Summer Festival, please call (202) 537-6200.

All events are free and open to the public. Free parking is available.

June	27 Friday 29 Sunday	7:30 pm 5 pm	Brass Spectacular with William Neil, Organ - nave Organ Recital: Nicholas White, Asst. Organist & Choirmaster, Washington National Cathedral
July	1 Tuesday 4 Friday	7:30 pm 11 am	Dance and Music: African Drummers and Dancers; Melvin Deal, Artistic Director - West Front Stage Annual Independence Day Organ Recital: Douglas Major, Organist & Choirmaster, Washington National Cathedral
	6 Sunday 15 Tuesday	5 pm 7:30 pm	Organ Recital: Jeremy Bruns, Shreveport, LA Concert: Cathedral Choral Society Summer Chorus and Gay Men's Chorus of Washington; Reilly Lewis, Conductor nave

Friends of Cathedral Music is an organization that supports the musical life of the Cathedral. This includes music at services, concerts like these in the Summer Festival, radio broadcasts, and tours by the Cathedral Choir of Men and Boys. Friends of Cathedral Music receive information about upcoming concerts and the opportunity to attend receptions with visiting artists and other special events. If you would like to help in this effort, please contact the Friends of Cathedral Music, Washington National Cathedral, Massachusetts and Wisconsin Avenues, NW, Washington, DC 20016. Tel: 202-537-5773

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The Right Reverend Ronald H. Haines, D.D Bishop of the Diocese of Washington

The Very Reverend Nathan Dwight Baxter, D.Min., S.T.D. Dean of the Washington National Cathedral

Washington National Cathedral is a house of prayer for all people and seeks to express the love of God in the welcome it extends to people of all faith traditions and backgrounds. The Cathedral seeks to involve all people in its worship, programs of outreach and diverse cultural offerings. Faithful to the tradition of deliberate support for the arts shared by all great cathedrals, Washington National Cathedral continues to commission works of art, encourage young artists in their development, and offer its grand space as a stage for artistic performances. The Cathedral also seeks to make the artistic life available to the community of Greater Metropolitan Washington through its many free or subsidized offerings. With its recently completed strategic plan the Cathedral has expanded its vision and increased its commitment for the support of the arts.

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We invite you to support the Cathedral's commitment to the arts by contributing generously to its work and ministry, and by becoming a member of the National Cathedral Association

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