

The Smithsonian Associates Presents

20th CENTURY CONSORT

November 7, 1998

Marion and Gustave Ring Auditorium, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden

The Smithsonian Associates presents

20th Century Consort

Christopher Kendall, Artistic Director

David Hardy, cello Lisa Emenheiser Logan, piano Lucy Shelton, soprano

Susan Schilperoort, manager Jennifer Traczynski, electronics Curt Wittig, electronics Marcus Wyche, stage manager



Saturday, November 7, 1998
Pre-Concert Discussion 4:00 p.m.
Concert 5:00 p.m.
Marion and Gustave Ring Auditorium
Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden

The 20th Century Consort's 1998-99 performance series is sponsored by The Smithsonian Associates and funded in part by The Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation, The Aaron Copland Fund for Music, the National Endowment for the Arts and the Friends of the 20th Century Consort.



Pre-Concert Discussion

Christopher Kendall, Artistic Director, 20th Century Consort Dora Hanninen, Theorist, University of Maryland School of Music Curt Wittig, recording engineer

Program

| "Celebrating Elliott C's 90th with a Finn Half His Age" | | | | | |
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| Lonh | | | | | |
| Ms. Shelton, Ms. Traczynski, Mr. Wittig | | | | | |
| Cello Sonata | | | | | |
| I. Moderato | | | | | |
| II. Vivace, molto leggiero | | | | | |
| III. Adagio | | | | | |
| IV. Allegro | | | | | |
| Mr. Hardy, Ms. Logan | | | | | |
| Intermission | | | | | |
| Petals Kaija Saariaho | | | | | |
| Mr. Hardy, Ms. Traczynski, Mr. Wittig | | | | | |
| Of Challenge and of Love Elliott Carter | | | | | |
| 1. High On Our Tower (And Above Black from "The Night Mirror") | | | | | |
| 2. Under the Dome (from "Powers of Thirteen") | | | | | |
| 3. Am Klavier (at the Piano, from "Blue Wine") | | | | | |
| 4. Quatrains from Harp Lake | | | | | |
| 5. End of a Chapter (from "In Place") | | | | | |

Ms. Logan, Ms. Shelton

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



Program notes

by Steven Ledbetter

Over the course of his long career, Elliott Carter has become, if anything, more prolific with the passing decades, as befits a composer who started rather slowly and carefully, finding his own unique voice only as he entered his forties. Now on the verge of becoming a nonagenarian (on December 11), he continues to surprise the musical world with the originality and fecundity of his invention. Indeed, he is only now composing his first opera—a comic opera, at that, with the entirely suitable title *What Next?*—for performance in Berlin under the direction of Daniel Barenboim.

Carter's career has taken him from a youthful friendship with Charles Ives, who encouraged him to pursue music, to his present pre-eminent stance among American composers. His early works, though, many of them choral, were based on a close familiarity with the great musical traditions stretching back to the Renaissance. His education was as broad as any composer's has ever been, including study at Harvard, where he read widely in modern literature, German, and Greek, and pursued studies in mathematics as well. He was strongly influenced by Stravinsky and by early music (thanks in part to having had a roommate at Harvard who was an Elizabethan specialist), but drew very little from the line of German expressionism that was then considered avant garde. Still, for all the influences evident in much of his elegantly crafted early scores, there were elements that foreshadowed his mature style, too. Even in his a cappella choral music one frequently finds different rhythmic gestures interacting in different layers heard simultaneously, a fundamental characteristic of all his music.

He is best known for a cumulative series of large-scale instrumental compositions, starting with the *Cello Sonata* of 1948, that have redefined and dramatized the relationships between instruments in a musical ensemble and have expanded notions of rhythm and time.

The Finnish composer Kaija Saariaho (born in Helsinki, 1952) is half Elliott Carter's age, but she has attained a singular position in the musical world for her own very personal approach to the art. Saariaho

grew up in a family devoted to the visual arts, and, although her musical talent was discovered early and led to violin study in childhood, and later organ and piano, she was also immersed in painting and design, subjects that she studied formally in Helsinki. Though there are other examples of composers who also had artistic training (Felix Mendelssohn was a fine landscape painter, though he never intended to be more than an amateur, and Edward MacDowell was actually offered a full scholarship to the Paris École de Beaux-Arts before he chose definitively to make his life in music), the situation is nonetheless rather rare. It may be too facile to say that Saariaho's sensitivity to aural color is somehow connected to her early training in the visual arts, but it is an idea that comes easily to mind when listening to her music. Indeed, she has said that one of the first specific original musical ideas that she conceived was of something "nervous and yellow." When she decided to become a composer, she began studies with Paavo Heininen in Helsinki; after four years of detailed technical study, she attended the summer course at Darmstadt twice, beginning in 1980, where she encountered the most recent French music (by Tristan Murail, for example), with which she felt far more closely attuned than with post-serial German music. In Darmstadt she met Brian Ferneyhough, whose evident understanding of what she wanted to do with her music induced her to study with him in Freiburg for two years, though already in the second year she found herself drawn increasingly to Paris. She moved definitively to Paris in 1982 and established a close connection with IRCAM, the "research center" for new music directed by Pierre Boulez. She continues to live in Paris and produces a large part of her music, especially in its technological elements, at IRCAM.

KAIJA SAARIAHO

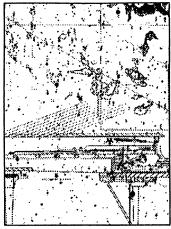
Lonb, for soprano and electronics

Though much of her earlier music had been vocal, Saariaho essentially gave up the human voice for over a decade after her arrival in Paris. She worked with computers and synthesizers, and found ways to fuse these in her work with acoustic instruments. She has composed orchestral works as well, and—not surprisingly, given her background in the visual arts—taken part in multimedia presentations as well, of which the most recent is the ballet *Maa* (1991).

But in 1996 she returned emphatically to the human voice, composing an orchestral song cycle, *Château de l'âme* for the Salzburg Festival, where it was premiered by Dawn Upshaw. She followed this

up with another work for Upshaw, for soprano voice and electronics. This was *Lonb*, premiered in Vienna at the Wien Modern Festival the same year. (Clearly ready to continue with composition for the voice, she has accepted a commission for an opera, *Love from Afar*, for performance at the Salzburg Festival in 2001.)

Lonb is a setting of a poem in the langue d'oc of Medieval southern France by the poet-composer Jaufré Rudel, a troubador active in the middle of the twelfth century. Almost the only known fact of



Rudel's life is that he took part in the disastrous Second Crusade (1147-1148). Seven of his poems survive, four of them (including the one set by Kaija Saariaho in *Lonb*) with music. A central theme of Rudel's work, clearly apparent in every stanza of *Lonb*, is a yearning for a distant love (the very title is the Occitan equivalent of the French *long*, here meaning "distant"). At least two interpretations of this distant love have been suggested—one, the "purer" understanding that the poet longs for Jerusalem, which he aims to see as part of the crusade (this view was clearly expressed by the Minnesänger Walther von der Vogelweide, who adapted Rudel's song into his own famous "Palästinalied," yearning to see the Holy Land, about 1200). The earthier view of the poem derives from information provided in a contemporaneous life of Rudel, which states that the object of his passion was the Countess of Tripoli, though no such name or person is identified in any of his surviving poems.

In her modern setting, Saariaho creates a vocal line that captures the spirit, the purity, and the expressiveness of Medieval song, embedding it in a framework of electronics that seems to link both olden and modern times. This description might suggest nothing more than a glitzy gimmick, an updating of the past with irrelevant technology, yet the result always seems entirely appropriate to the expressiveness of the song. The aural background contains vocal elements (spoken words from the text, whispers) as well as bell sounds (a sonority entirely appropriate for music arising from a Medieval inspiration) and sounds that are clearly electronic in origin and from our century. In this striking context, the 850-year-old yearning for a distant love expressed in Rudel's poem comes alive again in a melodic line that soars into a lyrical expression of longing that is still instantly recognizable to the human ear and heart.

ELLIOTT CARTER (b. 1908)

Cello Sonata

Carter is best known for a cumulative series of large-scale instrumental compositions that begin with the Cello Sonata composed for Bernard Greenhouse in 1948. In this work he began his tendency to redefine and dramatize the relationships between instruments in a musical ensemble and have expanded notions of rhythm and time. Seeking after a sense of "focused freedom," a way of creating music in which the various instruments are in fact coordinated while seeming to be freely improvising against one another, he developed a device of interlocking rhythmic relationships—often quite complex—that has come to be called "metrical modulation." In principle the technique has been used for centuries by composers who specify that one line or section of a piece move at a prescribed relationship to another. But in older music the relationship is usually half-time or double-time, so that the overall effect remains more or less the same. Carter superimposed more complex relationships on one another, giving the effect of two different musics moving at different speeds.

An equally important characteristic of Carter's mature music has been his sense of each instrument as a character in a kind of ongoing drama. When the instruments are fundamentally different in their sonority or manner of tone production (as the piano and cello in the 1948 sonata), he emphasizes that very difference, rather than trying to minimize as most earlier composers had done. The cello, above all, primarily produces sustained sounds, something the piano is incapable of. The two very different instruments retain their own personalities, like very different characters in a play, who oppose one another in fundamental ways but must, in the end, find a way to coexist.

The first movement, *Moderato*, presents the instruments in their most characteristic guise, with the cello playing a warm, long-phrased melody against an almost metronomic ticking in the piano. But the situation never stays the same way for long, as interruptions occur in various ways. Carter describes the Vivace as "a breezy treatment of a type of pop music... Actually it makes explicit the undercurrent of jazz technique suggested in the previous movement by the freely performed melody against a strict rhythm. The cello's soaring melody dominates the *Adagio*, and the final *Allegro* again hints fleetingly at pop rhythms. It changes speed many times in its course, finally ending at the tempo of the work's opening, but now with the piano and cello each taking on the character of the other.

KAIJA SAARIAHO

Petals, for cello and electronics

Quite frequently Saariaho creates a new work by beginning with an idea or an element from a piece previously composed, now given a new context or carried in a new direction. *Petals*, an eight-minute work for cello and electronics, thus grew out of a work written for the Kronos Quartet, *Nymphea* (with the subtitle *Jardin secret III*, 1987), which also called for electronics. She thought of the smaller piece as a "petal" taken from the larger one and reconsidered, thus coming up with the title. Taking the sound materials previously analyzed and developed in the quartet piece, she created *Petals* in a few days in January 1988. The work exists in two versions, one for unaccompanied cello, the other for cello with the accompanying electronics.

The composer provided the following commentary on the work for a recording by Karttunen:

Petals (1988) for solo cello was written fast in only a few days, but evidently after a long unconscious preparation. The material comes directly from Nymphea for string quartet and electronics. The name of the piece is derived from this relationship.

The opposite elements here are fragile, coloristic passages which give birth to more energetic events with clear rhythmic and melodic character. These more sharply focused figures pass through different transformations, and finally merge back to less dynamic but not less intensive filigration. In bringing together these very opposite modes of expression I aimed to force the interpreter to stretch his sensibility.

Petals was inspired by the playing of Anssi Karttunen and is dedicated to him. The first performance was at the Musica Nova festival in Bremen the 19th of May 1988.

ELLIOTT CARTER

Of Challenge and of Love

In the early years Carter composed a small body of songs, and he has recently returned to the genre for a single song cycle. Following the Hart Crane setting Voyage, in 1945, Carter wrote no more songs for a half-century. It was Lucy Shelton who requested the songs that became Of Challenge and of Love, commissioned by the Aldeburgh Festival, where they were premiered by Ms. Shelton and pianist John Constable on June 23, 1995. Regarding this cycle of five settings, the composer wrote:

John Hollander's poetry has fascinated me for many years because of its poetic skills, its awareness of our cultural past, and its wide-rang-

Lonh (From Afar)

I.

Lanqand li jorn son lonc en mai m'es bels douz chans d'auzels de loing e qand me sui partitz de lai remembra-m d'un'amor de loing vauc de talan enbroncs e clis si que chans ni flors d'albespis

no-m platz plus que l'inverns gelatz.

П

Ja mais d'amor no-m gauzirai si no-m gau d'est'amor de loing que gensor ni meillor non sai vas nuilla part ni pres ni loing tant es sos pretz verais e fis que lai el renc dels sarrazis

fos eu per lieis chaitius clamatz.

III.
Iratz e gauzens m'en
partrai
qan veirai cest'amor de loing
mas non sai coras la-m veirai
car trop son nostras terras loing
assatz i a portz e camis
e per aisso non sui devis
mas tot sia cum a Dieu
platz.

IV.

Be-m parra jois qan li qerrai
per amor Dieu l'amor de loing
e s'a lieis plai albergarai
pres de lieis si be-m sui de loing
adoncs parra-l parlamens fis
qand drutz loindas er tant
vezis
c'ab bels digz jauzirai
solatz.

I.

When the days are long in May
the sweet song of birds from afar
seems lovely to me
and when I have left there
I remember a distant love.
I walk bent and bowed with desire,
so much so that neither song nor
hawthorn flower
please me more than the icy winter.

II.

Never will I enjoy love
if I do not enjoy this distant love,
for a nobler or better one I do not
know
anywhere, neither near nor far.
So high she is, it is true, real price,
that there, in the kingdom of the
Saracens,
I wish to be proclaimed her captive.

Sad and joyous I will separate from her when I see that distant love, but I know not when I will see her for our lands are too far away.

There are so many passages and paths and in this I am not a seer, but let everything be according to

IV.

fair

God's will.

I will feel joy for sure when I ask her for the love of God, the distant love, and if it pleases her I will live near her even if I am from far away. Then will come our faithful meeting when I, the faraway lover, will be so near that I will console myself with her

V.
Ben tenc lo Seignor per verai per q'ieu veirai l'amor de loing mas per un ben que m'en eschai n'ai dos mals car tant m'es de loing ai car me fos lai peleris si que mos fustz e mos tapis fos pelz sieus bels huoills remiratz.

VI.

Dieus qe fetz tot qant ve ni
vai
e fermet cest'amor de loing
me don poder qu-l cor eu n'ai
q'en breu veia l'amor de loing
veraiamen en locs aizis
si qe la cambra e-l jardis
mi resembles totz temps palatz.

VII.
Ver ditz qui m'apella lechai
ni desiran d'amor de loing
car nuills autre jois tant no-m plai
cum jauzimens d'amor de loing
mas so q'eu vuoill m'es tant ahis
q'enaissi-m fadet mos pairis
q'iu ames e non fos amatz.

Mas so q'ieu vuoill m'es tant ahis totz sia mauditz lo pairis qe-m fadet q'ieu non fos amatz. V.
I really trust in the Lord,
through whom I will see the distant
love,
but for something that fails me
I have two sorrows, for she is so far
away.
Ah, if only I were a pilgrim there,
so that my stick and my bundle
could be seen by her lovely eyes.

VI.
God, who made everything and comes and goes, and who formed this distant love, grant me the power of my heart soon to see the distant love truly in a propitious place and that the room and garden always appear as palaces to me.

VII.

He speaks true who calls me avid and desirous of the distant love, for no other joy pleases me like the pleasure of the distant love.

But what I want is forbidden to me, so my godfather endowed me that though loving, I will not have been loved.

But what I want is forbidden to me, so may my grandfather be cursed who made me not to be loved.

ing modern expressivity. So when Lucy Shelton (whose performances of my work are superb) and the Aldeburgh Festival proposed that I write a cycle of songs for her, I accepted with great pleasure. The choice of texts from many of Hollander's books and a typewritten script of "Quatrains from Harp Lake" (which John tells me is the Sea of Galilee) is basically focussed around the character of the latter poem, with its brief, vividly contrasting quatrains that have an undercurrent of irony and deep anxiety; which is also found in the other four poems in different ways. The score was composed in the last months of 1994 in New York City.

The title of the cycle comes from a passage in the third song, Am Klavier (At the piano), in which Hollander uses the image of music played on an instrument as a metaphor for mature love. In his notes to Lucy Shelton's recording of the cycle, Richard Wilson points out that the five poems that Carter has selected and arranged here depict "a journey marked by deepening love and devotion," and adds the thought that—though the composer himself has made no such biographical reference in writing about the piece—it is hard to avoid seeing it as a response to his marriage (in 1939) to Helen Frost-Jones as their relationship approaches its sixtieth year.

HIGH ON OUR TOWER

High on our tower
Where the winds were
Did my head turning
Turn yours,
Or were we burning
In the one wind?

Our wide stares pinned To a spinning world, We burned; my head, Turning to yours On that white tower, Whirled high in fire. All heights are our Towers of desire; All shaded places Our valleys, enclosing Now darkening places Of unequal repose.

How tower-high were Our whitest places Where my head widely Turned into yours In the spaces of spinning In burning wind!

How dark and far Apart valleys are...

UNDER THE DOME

That great, domed chamber, celebrated for its full choir Of echoes: high among its shadowed vaults they cower Until called out. What do echoes do when they reply? Lie, lie, lie about what he cried out, about their own Helplessness in the face of silence. What do they do To the clear call that they make reverberate? Berate, berate it for its faults, its frangible syllables. But in this dear cave we have discovered on our walks Even a broken call resounds in all, and wild tales We tell into the darkness return trimmed into truth. Our talk goes untaunted: these are the haunts of our hearts, Where I cry out your name. Hearing and overhearing My own voice, startled, appalled, instructed, I rejoice.

AM KLAVIER (At the Piano)

The evening light dies down: all the old songs begin
To crowd the soft air, choiring confusedly.
Then above that sea of immense complexities
The clear tenor of memory I did not know
I had enters; like a rod of text held out by
A god of meaning, it governs the high, wayward
Waves of what is always going on in the world.
All that becomes accompaniment. And it is
What we start out with now: this is no time
To pluck or harp on antiquities of feeling.
These soft hammers give gentle blows to all their strings,
Blows that strike with a touch of challenge and of love.
Thus what we are, being sung against what we come
To be a part of, rises like a kind of light.

QUATRAINS FROM HARP LAKE

The thrumming waves of the lost lake had gone
Into some kind of hiding since the spring.
His long yawn ceased to deafen, then switched on
The sixty-cycle hum of everything.

3

Once we plucked ripened fruit and blossoms all Together from one branch, humming one note. Spring from the water, shining fish, then fall In one unbroken motion into my boat!

¥

The river whistled and the forest sang,
Surprised, then pleased, that something had gone wrong.
The touches of your hands, your silence, rang
Changes on the dull, joyous bells of song.

¥

They stood tall, loving in the shade; the sunny Air withdrew from them in a sudden hush. The strong-arm tactics of the oak? The honey-Dipped diplomacies of the lilac bush?

¥

In from the cold, her reddened ears were burning With what the firelight had been saying of her. This final urn is wordless now, concerning Her ashes and the ashes of her lover.

¥

Under their phrases meaninglessness churn'd; Imprisoned in their whispers lay a yell. Down here we contemplate the deftly-turned Newel-posts of the stairway up to hell.

¥

High on the rocks some Ponderosa pine Must overlook the jagged valley's floor. What then must one have witnessed to divine That death was just a side-effect of war?

æ

He'd long since put his feet into that part
Of life from which they could not be withdrawn.
Late blossoms danced, then shook and took to heart
Summer's long shadows falling on the lawn.

è

Words of pure winter, yet not pinched nor mean:
Blue truth can handle a good deal of gray.
Dulled, but incontrovertibly still green,
The noble laurel holds the cold at bay.

END OF A CHAPTER

But when true beauty does finally come crashing at us through the stretched paper of the picturesque, we can wonder how we had for so long been able to remain distracted from its absence.

-John Hollander

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About the Artists

DAVID HARDY, cello, 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 on the faculty at the University of Maryland School of Music and is the cellist of the Opus 3 Trio. His playing can be heard on recordings under the Melodia, Educo, and Delos labels.

CHRISTOPHER KENDALL, Artistic Director and Conductor, is Director of the School of Music at the University of Maryland and founder and lutenist of the Folger Consort. From 1987 to 1992, he was Assistant, then Associate Conductor of the Seattle Symphony, and from 1993-1996 directed the music programs at Boston University and the Boston University Tanglewood Institute. Guest conducting engagements include the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, the Da Capo Chamber Players, Boston's Collage and Dinosaur Annex, New York Chamber Symphony, 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, ASV, and Smithsonian Collection labels.

LISA EMENHEISER LOGAN, piano, is a graduate of the Juilliard School, where she received both Bachelor and Master 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.

LUCY SHELTON, soprano, is an internationally recognized exponent of 20th century repertory. Numerous works have been composed for her by leading composers, including Stephen Albert, Joseph Schwantner, Oliver Knussen and Elliot Carter. She has performed widely in the U.S. and Europe with orchestras such as the Chicago Symphony, Los Angeles Philharmonic and London Symphony Orchestra, and has appeared in per-

formances of chamber music with András Schiff, the Guarneri and Emerson String Quartets, the Da Capo Chamber Players, and Lincoln Center Chamber Music Society among many. Her performances can be heard on Bridge Records, Deutsche Grammaphone, Virgin Classics and others.



The 20th Century Consort gratefully acknowledges the generous support of the Friends of the 20th Century Consort:

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20th Century Consort 1998-99 Concert Series **Upcoming Concerts**

| December 12, 19 | 998 | NOT | the | Messiah |
|-----------------|-----|-----|-----|---------|
|-----------------|-----|-----|-----|---------|

Lawrence Moss Richard Wernick Dao Ditties Kaddish Requiem

Jon Deak

The Passion of Scrooge, or

A Christmas Carol

Flutes of Fancy February 20, 1999

Nicholas Maw

Paul Schoenfield **Bruce Wolosoff**

Night Thoughts Slovakian Childrens' Songs

Ghost Dances

Stephen Jaffe

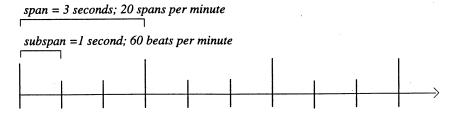
Three Figures and a Ground

Good Book April 10, 1000

The Yellow Pages Michael Torke Kathryn Alexander Song of Songs Song of Songs Karen Tanaka Song of Abigail Roger Marsh

Elliott Carter's practice of "metric modulation"

Example 1a



Example 1b

one "measure" = 3 seconds; 20 measures per minute

one beat = 1 second; 60 beats per minute



Example 1c

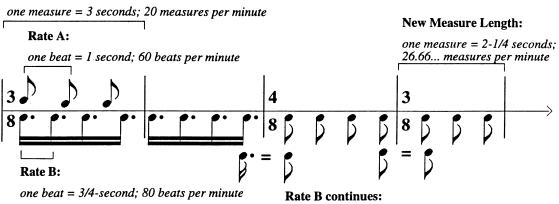
one measure = 3 seconds; 20 measures per minute

Rate A: one beat = 1 second; 60 beats per minute



Rate B: one beat = 3/4-second; 80 beats per minute

Example 1d



one beat = 3/4-second; 80 beats per minute



