

The Smithsonian Associates Presents

21st CENTURY CONSORT

December 6, 2008

Nan Tucker McEvoy Auditorium,
Smithsonian American Art Museum

The Smithsonian Associates and
The Smithsonian American Art Museum
present

21st Century Consort

Christopher Kendall, Artistic Director
Boyd Sarratt, Manager

Elisabeth Adkins, Violin
Lisa Emenheiser, Piano
Rachel Young, Cello

David Greenspan, Recording Engineer
Curt Wittig, Director of Recording Emeritus



Saturday, December 6, 2008
Pre-Concert Discussion 4:00 p.m.
Concert 5:00 p.m.
Nan Tucker McEvoy Auditorium
Smithsonian American Art Museum

The 21st Century Consort's 2008-2009 Season is sponsored by
The Smithsonian Associates and The Smithsonian American Art Museum and
funded in part by generous contributions from The Argosy Foundation
Contemporary Music Fund, The Cafritz Foundation, The Aaron Copland Fund
for Music, The DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities, and the Board
and Friends of the 21st Century Consort.



The Smithsonian Associates

Pre-Concert Discussion

Christopher Kendall with Theresa Slowik

Program

Natural Affinities:
Georgia O'Keefe and Ansel Adams

Piano Fantasy Aaron Copland
Ms. Emenheiser

INTERMISSION

Petals Kaija Saariaho
Ms. Young

...a circle around the sun/Moon Jig Augusta Read Thomas
Ms. Adkins, Ms. Emenheiser, Ms. Young

Big Sky/Holding a Daisy/And... They're Off. Joan Tower
Ms. Adkins, Ms. Emenheiser, Ms. Young



The audience is invited to join the artists in the lobby for an informal
post-concert reception, sponsored by the Board and Friends of the
21st Century Consort.

Program Notes

On Ansel Adams

1906 Adams' nose is broken during an aftershock of the great San Francisco earthquake and remains crooked throughout his life.

1914 Adams teaches himself to play the piano, showing great aptitude and eventually aspiring to become a concert pianist.

- Heather Hole

The boy was a self-taught prodigy in music who hated classrooms (he was dyslexic and hyper-active before these impairments became easily diagnosed) and was removed from school at the age of thirteen.

- Richard B. Woodward

Piano Fantasy

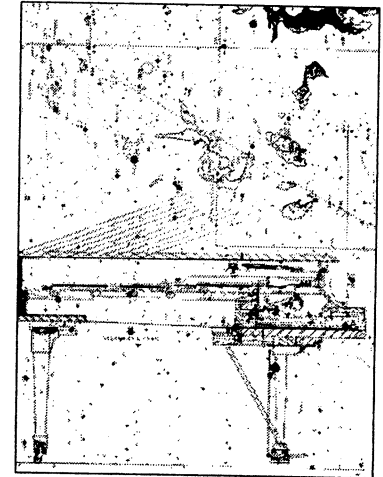
Aaron Copland

Aaron Copland's name is, for many, synonymous with American music. It was his pioneering achievement to break free from Europe and create a concert music that is recognizably, characteristically American. At the same time, he was able to stamp his music with a compositional personality so vivid as to transcend stylistic boundaries, making every work — from the easily grasped to the demanding — identifiable as his alone.

From his early studies in piano he proceeded, at age 17, to study harmony, counterpoint, and sonata form with Rubin Goldmark, whose staunchly conservative outlook inspired Copland to rebellious investigation of the music of Debussy, Ravel, Mussorgsky, and Scriabin. In 1920, he set out for Paris, modernism's home in the years between the wars. Among the many vital legacies of his stay in Paris were his association with his teacher and mentor Nadia Boulanger; a growing interest in popular idioms; and the insight that there was as yet no American counterpart to the national styles being created by composers from France, Russia, and Spain. He became determined to create, in his words, "a naturally American strain of so-called serious music."

As President of Juilliard, William Schuman requested a major piece from his close friend in celebration of the school's fiftieth

anniversary. Copland thought the Juilliard anniversary an ideal occasion for the premiere of *Piano Fantasy*, which he was composing in honor of William Kapell. Copland admitted that it was difficult to write, "particularly the fast sections." He explained, "My purpose was to suggest the quality of fantasy, a spontaneous and unpremeditated sequence of events that would carry the listener along, while at the same time exemplify clear, if somewhat unconventional, structural principles." Although the work was not ready by the date for which it was commissioned, Schuman arranged a special concert for the premiere by the pianist William Masselos. Copland commented, "Lucky for me that the president of Juilliard was a composer!"



On Georgia O'Keeffe

...of all things earthly it is only in music that one finds any analogy to the emotional content of these drawings, to the gigantic swirling rhythms and the exquisite tenderness so powerfully and sensitively rendered—and music is the condition toward which according to Pater, all art constantly aspires. Well, plastic art in the hands of O'Keeffe seems now to have approximated that.

- William Murrell Fisher, 1917

What distinguishes Miss O'Keeffe is the fact that she has discovered a beautiful language with unsuspected melodies and rhythms...

- Lewis Mumford, 1927

Singing has always seemed to me the most perfect means of expression. It is so spontaneous. And after singing, I think the violin. Since I cannot sing, I paint.

- Georgia O'Keeffe, 1922

[O'Keeffe's] work calls for us to celebrate the power of music and dance in combination with the visual arts.

- Katherine Hoffman, 1997

Petals

Kaija Saariaho

Kaija Saariaho is a prominent member of a group of Finnish composers and performers who are now, in mid-career, making a worldwide impact. Born in Helsinki in 1952, she studied at the Sibelius Academy there with the pioneering modernist Paavo Heininen and, with Magnus Lindberg and others, she founded the progressive 'Ears Open' group. She continued her studies in Freiburg with Brian Ferneyhough and Klaus Huber, at the Darmstadt summer courses, and, from 1982, at the IRCAM research institute in Paris—the city which has been her home ever since.

At IRCAM, Saariaho developed techniques of computer-assisted composition and acquired fluency in working on tape and with live electronics. This experience influenced her approach to writing for orchestra, with its emphasis on the shaping of dense masses of sound in slow transformations. Significantly, her first orchestral piece, *Verblendungen* (1984), involves a gradual exchange of roles and character between orchestra and tape. And even the titles of her next, linked, pair of orchestral works, *Du Cristal* (1989) and *...à la Fumée* (1990)—the latter with solo alto flute and cello, and both with live electronics—suggest their preoccupation with colour and texture.

Through IRCAM, Saariaho became allied with the French 'spectralist' composers, whose techniques are based on computer analysis of the sound-spectrum of individual notes on different instruments. This analytical approach led her to the regular use of harmonies resting on long-held bass notes, microtonal intervals, and a precisely detailed continuum of sound extending from pure tone to unpitched noise—all features of one of her most frequently performed works, *Graal théâtre* for violin and orchestra or ensemble (1994/97).

The composer writes:

Petals for solo cello was written abruptly in a few days, but evidently after a long unconscious preparation. The material stems directly from *Nymphéa* for string quartet and electron-

ics. 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 the less intensive filiguration. In bringing together these very opposite modes of expressions I aimed to force the interpreter to stretch his sensibility.

...a circle around the sun / Moon Jig **Augusta Read Thomas**

Augusta Read Thomas (born in 1964 in New York), was Composer-in-Residence with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra (1997-2006) and, until 2008, Chair of the Board of the American Music Center, on which she has served for the past five years. Starting in September 2006, Thomas resigned from her position as the Wyatt Professor of Music at Northwestern University to devote her time exclusively to composition. At the age of 33, she received tenure from the Eastman School. Her work is exclusively published by G. Schirmer Inc. She studied at Northwestern University, Yale University and at the Royal Academy of Music. Seven years after graduating from the Royal Academy of Music, she was elected an Associate of the Royal Academy of Music (ARAM, honorary degree). In 1998 she received the Distinguished Alumni Association Award from St. Paul's School in Concord, New Hampshire. In 1999, she received the Award of Merit from the President of Northwestern University.

The composer writes:

...a circle around the sun... for piano trio (a work in progress) was commissioned by The Children's Memorial Foundation in honor of George D. Kennedy for the Amelia Piano Trio. The work was given a private performance at a party celebrating Mr. Kennedy in thanks for his generous contributions to and support of the Children's Hospital in Chicago.

My favorite moment in any piece of music is the moment of maximum risk and striving. Whether the venture is tiny or large, loud or soft, fragile or strong, passionate, erratic, ordinary or eccentric...! Maybe another way to say this is the moment of exquisite humanity and raw soul. All art that I cherish has an element of love and recklessness and despera-

tion. I like music that is alive and jumps off the page and out of the instrument as if *something big is at stake*.

This work's title refers to Mr. Kennedy. He gives energy to children in need, like a circle around the sun, giving strength and warmth. The music starts with a G (G for George) when, slowly, orbits of sonorous and fragile notes unfold and spiral outward creating a gracious and vibrant resonance. After 60 seconds, the piece bursts forth with a good deal of energy, like a sun-flare or like children scattering on a playground in all directions and later returns briefly to the opening materials on the pitch G.

Moon Jig is a kind of cross between Jazz (Monk, Coltrane, Tatum, Miles, etc.) with Bartok, Brahms, and Stravinsky. The piano part starts with (and returns four times with) a low register jig, which is an earthy rather asymmetrical, punchy, rhythmic, walking-bass. The second section (which is also repeated 4 times) is always led by the strings who play long animated and expressive lines.

The work alternates 5 times total between these two sections: PIANO/TUTTI/PIANO/TUTTI/PIANO/TUTTI, etc. and yet as the repetitions proceed, the two musics eventually blend together. One straightforward example is that the string pizzicatos blend into the low register piano rhythms. This multifaceted merging process results in one long sweep of music rushing to the end in the highest registers of the trio, as if the *Moon Jig* leaped and reached skyward and its filaments become nimble and luminous like star glow.

Big Sky / Holding a Daisy / And... They're Off **Joan Tower**

Joan Tower's music is noted by a number of defining qualities: driving rhythms and colorful orchestrations influenced by the sounds and sensations of a childhood spent in South America; approachability for listeners and players alike, resulting from her engagement with the performers of her music (often written with specific musicians in mind) and her own performances as a pianist. Early works were serial in conception. In the 1970s she moved toward more tonal, Messiaen-like sonorities. She has written a number of works paying homage to composers such as Beethoven (*Concerto for Piano*), Stravinsky (*Petroushskates*), and Copland (*Fanfare for*

the Uncommon Woman). She was the first composer chosen for a Ford Made in America consortium commission, *Made in America*. Its top-selling recording won three 2008 Grammy awards, including Best Classical Contemporary Composition.

The composer writes:

Big Sky is a piece based on a memory of riding my horse "Aymara" around in the deep valley of La Paz, Bolivia. The valley was surrounded by the huge and high mountains of the Andes range; and as I rode I looked into a vast and enormous sky. It was very peaceful and extraordinarily beautiful. We never went over one of these mountains, but if we had, it might have felt like what I wrote in this piece. This slow seven-minute trio for violin, cello and piano was intended as a companion piece to a short and fast trio entitled *And... They're Off*. The common subject of these two works is horses—namely race horses. As a young girl—and like many young girls—I had an obsession with horses. When I was growing up in South America, my father bought me a racehorse. This was in Bolivia, where horses, even racehorses, were very cheap. I loved this horse and took very good care of it in our makeshift garage/stable.

Holding a Daisy (1996) was commissioned by the pianist Sarah Rothenberg for a recital she was giving in New York City. The image is of a Georgia O'Keefe flower painting, not as innocent as it appears.

About the Artists

ELISABETH ADKINS, violin, is Associate Concertmaster of the National Symphony Orchestra. She received her doctorate from Yale University, where she studied with Oscar Shumsky. She is active as a recitalist, concerto soloist, and chamber musician. Recent appearances include concertos with the National Symphony, the Baltimore Symphony, the Dallas Symphony, and 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, she and her seven siblings comprise the Adkins String Ensemble, which presents a concert series in Dallas and has recorded several CDs. Ms. Adkins is on the faculty of the University of Maryland School of Music.

LISA EMENHEISER, pianist, has been performing for the National Symphony Orchestra for the past 20 years as their Pops pianist and as acting principal keyboardist. A graduate of the Juilliard School, where she earned both Bachelor's and Master's of Music degrees, Ms. Emenheiser is a past winner of the "Young Artist in Recital" and "National Arts Club" competitions. Ms. Emenheiser has performed in recital at Alice Tully Hall, Avery Fischer Hall, Carnegie Recital Hall and has appeared in concerts at the National Gallery, Phillips Collection, Smithsonian Institute, Kennedy Center and at the embassies of France, Austria, Germany, Britain, Slovenia, and Spain. Ms. Emenheiser has appeared as soloist with the National Symphony Orchestra, the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, the Richmond Symphony, the Kennedy Center Opera House Orchestra, the Virginia Chamber Orchestra, the Fairfax Symphony, and was one of the featured soloists at the Kennedy Center's Piano 2000 Festival. Ms. Emenheiser was also a soloist for the Kennedy Center's "Journey to America" Festival held in 2002. Lisa was a featured soloist and commentator for the National Symphony Mozart Portrait concert series and also appeared on national television as an expert artist commentator and performer in the PBS documentary entitled "Exploring Your Brain." An established chamber musician, Ms. Emenheiser is the pianist for the 21st Century Consort and Opus 3 Trio. Ms. Emenheiser has recorded for the Pro Arte, VAI Audio, Centaur, Arabesque, Delos, AUR, and Cascades labels. A committed teacher, Lisa holds a private studio in her home.

CHRISTOPHER KENDALL, conductor, is Dean of the University of Michigan School of Music, Theatre & Dance, following nine years as Director of the University of Maryland School of Music from 1996-2005. Prior to 1996, he was Associate Conductor of the Seattle Symphony (1987-1993) then Director of the Music Division and Tanglewood Institute of the Boston University School of the Arts.

RACHEL YOUNG, cello, a member of the National Symphony Orchestra, enjoys a varied career of orchestral, chamber and solo playing. Prior to her appointment to the National Symphony she was the Principal Cellist of the Kennedy Center Opera House Orchestra. Her solo and chamber playing have taken her across the country and abroad to Europe and the Middle East. She has appeared as soloist with the National Philharmonic, the Peabody Symphony Orchestra, the New England Conservatory Chamber Orchestra, and the National Symphony Orchestra's Summer Youth Ensemble. She has appeared as a chamber artist at the Garth Newel Music Center, with the National Musical Arts Society, the Embassy Series, the Washington Music Ensemble, the Contemporary Music Forum, on WGBH and WGMS Radio and at the White House. In addition, Ms. Young has added her sound to a short film, a CD of bluegrass music, and a DVD of works of Schoenberg. She also serves on the Board of the Kindler Cello Society.

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Upcoming Programs

Saturday, February 21, 2009 ◆ **"Recalling Valentines"**
Some Valentines we like to remember, and others we'd prefer to recall. Music for both. With Delores Ziegler, mezzo, and Mark Bleeke, tenor.

Jacob Druckman - *Valentine* • Nicholas Maw - *Voice of Love* •
Love songs and piano pieces by David Froom, Jessica Krash, Peter Robinson, Milton Babbitt, Augusta Read Thomas •
Robert Beaser - *Songs from the Occasions*

Saturday, April 4, 2009 ◆ **"Music of Magic and Light"**
Invoking spring with light (Jenny Holzer's "For SAAM"), magic and music. With soprano Lucy Shelton
Eric Moe - *Strange Exclaiming Music*
William Doppmann - *Spring Songs*
Marjorie Merryman - *Bending the Light*
Jacob Druckman - *Lamia*

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J. Michael Hamilton	Mary Kate O'Neill	Michael Toman
& Myung Hee Nam	Anne O'Reilly	Stephen & Leslie Vandivere
Pam Hamilton	Victoria O'Reilly	Edward Weismiller
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Compiled February 2008